

City-wide Action Plan

Goal 1: *Create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of existing residents and businesses and creates opportunities to attract new residents and economic opportunities.*

The City of Corning recognizes the quality of its built environment as an important economic development tool and a key factor in local quality of life. The City has seen the benefits of nearly 30 years of rehabilitation and preservation of Market Street. With limited land available for new development, the economic future of the City will depend on wise use of existing land, rehabilitating, preserving and reusing structures where appropriate and sensitively redeveloping sites to reap economic and social benefits. The actions listed here describe the regulatory, programmatic and development efforts Corning will make to create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of residents and businesses in the 21st century. In its development efforts the City should work with property owners to negotiate mutually agreeable strategies to redevelop specific sites. The City will consider using its power of eminent domain if needed to implement a project with a compelling public interest.

Action 1.1 *Enhance code enforcement efforts.*

In every community meeting during the master planning process, residents expressed frustration with building conditions in neighborhoods throughout Corning. The condition of multi-family structures, conversions of single-family dwellings to multi-family structures and business facades along Bridge Street were raised as particular concerns. There is a clear consensus among Corning residents that code enforcement needs to be increased. The City currently has two code enforcement officers on staff, one to focus on residential properties and one on commercial buildings. Corning will consider additional staff resources to increase code enforcement efforts, enabling it to proactively and consistently apply codes throughout the City, rather than responding to crisis situations.

The City is considering creation of a third code enforcement officer position that will address rental housing issues and bring the City into compliance with the New York State law that requires that all rental units be inspected every three years. This new position would be largely self-supporting, paid for by fees charged for each inspection.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning
Estimated costs:	\$50,000 annually
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning, Community Development Block Grants, user fees

Action 1.2 *Create a comprehensive wayfinding signage program.*

The City of Corning has made a commitment to reducing signage, especially along its major entrances, to eliminate visual clutter and give the City a cleaner appearance. The City recognizes, however, that routes to its principal attractions need to be clearly delineated so that visitors can comfortably find them. Toward this end, the Corning Museum of Glass recently replaced its signage leading from all three Corning exits along Interstate 86. The City has also reviewed its signage along Denison Parkway, Centerway, and Market, Bridge and Pulteney Streets to determine how much existing signage can be removed. The City's plan is to replace signs with uniform DOT signage, rather than locally designed signage, so that visitors are

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immediately able to recognize directions. For example, City parking lots are to be identified with the green and white "P" sign with an arrow rather than the ornate Victorian-styled signs now in place.

Like the Museum of Glass, other attractions and businesses need to guide visitors and customers. To maintain continuity, the City will urge these organizations to utilize the New York DOT wayfinding program. This program uses blue-and-white signs, beginning on the Interstate and leading to the site of the program participant, to mark each "point of decision," or turn, that a driver must make to reach the specific destination. The program is available throughout New York and is instantly recognizable to drivers.

In many instances, these signs will be placed not only on State highways such as Denison Parkway and Centerway but also on City streets. The City is committed to helping those using this program to find locations for signs which achieve the goal of clear guidance while minimizing visual impact.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Finger Lakes Wine County Tourism Marketing Association, Corning Enterprises, Three Rivers Development Corporation, NYSDOT
Estimated costs:	\$15,000
Potential funding sources:	New York State Environmental Protection Fund, Finger Lakes Wine County Tourism Marketing Association, Corning Enterprises

Action 1.3 Revise zoning code to implement the Master Plan and recent New York State Empire Zone designation.

The City recently updated its zoning code, but Master Plan goals and the needs of the NYS Empire Zone designation are not reflected in the code. These recent efforts, which have included significant input from local residents and businesses and provide substantial economic development opportunities, need to be reflected in the implementing ordinance. The City plans to review the current zoning code for consistency with the Master Plan and Empire Zone needs and revise the code as necessary.

A number of the designated Empire Zone sites contain a mix of uses, in some cases including residential. Redevelopment of some sites will require a combination of rehabilitation and demolition with new construction. New development would include a mix of employment-based uses. Zoning for Empire Zone sites should provide flexible guidelines allowing for planned development districts that encourage redevelopment while minimizing conflicts with surrounding land uses. The zoning changes will need to address demolition and new construction needs as well as standards for building rehabilitation.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Empire State Development Corporation
Estimated costs:	\$15,000
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning, Empire Zone Administration funds

Action 1.4 Develop design standards for commercial development.

The planning process documented strong community support for new commercial development, but also raised concerns that recent new development did not support the desired community character. To address these concerns, the City plans to develop detailed design guidelines to



assist the planning and zoning boards and property owners to develop new businesses and make changes to existing structures that are compatible with the architectural character and scale of Corning's commercial districts.

The City's design guidelines should provide the tools needed to:

- Provide guidelines to property owners contemplating changes or additions to their building or lot
- Result in more appropriate changes that reinforce the character of the commercial districts
- Assist the local building industry including architects, contractors, and suppliers as well as City officials such as building inspectors and public works officials in understanding the nature of the City's commercial districts and how to reinforce their distinctive character
- Improve the design quality of future developments and growth in the City's commercial districts
- Protect property values and public investment by discouraging poorly designed and inappropriate projects
- Improve the quality of commercial signage and window displays to enhance the appearance of retail areas
- Set requirements for buffering and screening between uses
- Set requirements for parking lots and structures, including buffering and screening standards, landscaping and construction materials for structures

The design guidelines should be developed through a coordinated public process during which commercial and residential property owners can reach agreement on design standards to be implemented over time as new buildings are constructed and existing buildings undergo facade improvements.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Finger Lakes Wine County Tourism Marketing Association, Corning Enterprises, Three Rivers Development Corporation, local business improvement districts, property owners
Estimated costs:	\$25,000
Potential funding sources:	Environmental Protection Fund, Community Development Block Grant

Action 1.5 Revise code governing multiple unit housing conversions.

During the community involvement process, residents expressed concern about the impacts of the conversion of one and two family dwellings to multi-unit structures. Some issues raised included rapid turnover of tenants, noise, poor property maintenance and inadequate parking for tenants. The City of Corning will consider revising its zoning and building codes governing housing conversions to include provisions for adequate off-street parking for multi-unit conversions and to create enforcement provisions needed to discourage violations of the building and zoning code and the legal tools to effectively address those that do occur.

The City plans to review its current zoning districts and consider expanding the R-1 zoning to further restrict where conversions can take place. In addition, the City plans to investigate the feasibility of financial incentives to encourage the conversion of apartments back into single-family dwellings. While New York State does not offer specific tax incentives for home

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conversions, the City could offer grants funded by other levels of government to cover part of the cost of converting a property from multi-family to one-family use. Corning may be able to direct some of the region's housing grant funding to this effort.

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, neighborhood associations, property owners
Estimated costs: \$5,000
Potential funding sources: City of Corning, Governor's Office for Small Cities' Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal' (NYS DHCR) HOME Program

Action 1.6 Work with neighboring jurisdictions to protect the City's viewshed and surrounding steep slopes.

The City's viewshed is one of its strongest environmental assets, but one which Corning does not control. A regional strategy will be required to address viewshed preservation in the valley. The City plans to begin working with neighboring jurisdictions to create a land trust that would exist to purchase land or development rights in environmentally sensitive areas in the region. Corning also intends to work with neighboring municipalities to encourage the development of regulatory protections that will maintain and enhance the region's viewshed and environmentally sensitive steep slopes.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Towns of Corning, Erwin, Horseheads and Big Flats, Villages of Painted Post, Riverside, South Corning and Horseheads, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning Board, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Estimated costs: \$5,000-\$10,000 to set up land trust; \$100,000 initial capital funds
Potential funding sources: New York State Environmental Protection Fund, City of Corning, surrounding municipalities, private foundations

Action 1.7 Consider demolition and site assembly to create development sites and to address problem structures

Demolition and site assembly will be important tools to help the City of Corning create redevelopment opportunities needed to expand employment opportunities, broaden the City's housing stock, create parks and recreation facilities, provide municipal services and expand the tax base. Redevelopment of Empire Zone sites will require both demolition and site assembly to create suitable sites to attract new development opportunities. The City has recently demolished some nuisance structures that were becoming hazardous. It needs a formal program to facilitate such demolitions, market the vacant sites and promote appropriate redevelopment of sites. The City should consider using funds from the sale of City properties to fund a land bank program to purchase sites for planned development projects. Corning should consider whether it is more effective to act on its own or through the Corning Urban Renewal Agency (CURA) to manage and coordinate the redevelopment of properties within the City. The primary benefit of using the CURA is that it has its own bonding authority so that bonds issued by CURA would not count towards the City's bonding cap. Note: Some specific redevelopment



sites are discussed in Neighborhood 5 (Intown South) and estimated costs for redevelopment are included there.

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Time frame:	Medium to Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Corning Incorporated, Three Rivers Development
Estimated costs:	\$600,000 for site assembly and demolition
Potential funding sources:	IDA bonding, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

Action 1.8 Encourage the adaptive reuse of large homes as Bed and Breakfasts.

Many of the large, older single-family homes in the City of Corning are being converted into multi-family dwellings or professional offices while others are falling into disrepair. Bed and breakfast establishments are a recommended adaptive reuse of these buildings because they often require few alterations to the structure, and the nature of the business requires the building to be in excellent exterior condition. As the City of Corning has a large number of these homes in close proximity to the downtown commercial district, bed and breakfasts would offer a more compatible use for these buildings than residential uses and they would create additional accommodation choices for visitors to Corning.

The existing zoning ordinance for the City of Corning permits, with site plan approval, bed and breakfasts that have up to four bedrooms for guests with off-street parking for each guest bedroom. The owner of the building must also be an occupant of the building. Bed and breakfasts are permitted with a site plan review in Residential Transition zones and downtown Commercial zones throughout the City.

The City could further encourage the establishment of bed and breakfasts by easing some of the existing regulations related to their development outside of R-1 zoning districts. Specifically the City should consider the following changes:

- Amend the Use Regulation Table, which is pursuant to §240-21 in the Zoning Ordinance, to permit bed and breakfasts in the Commercial zones as of right if the bed and breakfast will not require expansion of the existing structure or new building construction. Should either expansion or new construction be required, a site plan will continue to be required. The site plan review process would still be required for the establishment of any bed and breakfast in a Residential Transition zone.
- Repeal the provision that requires that a bed and breakfast be “owner occupied” as this can be a burden for some owners (see §240-5) and eliminates the possibility of someone owning and operating more than one establishment.
- Consider establishing a less restrictive off-street parking provision than currently provided in §240-66, which requires an off-street parking space for each bedroom unless a waiver is obtained for off-site parking. A waiver may only be granted if a public parking lot or private lot where there is a contract to supply spaces to the bed and breakfast is within 400 feet of the bed and breakfast

Timeframe:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning
Estimated Costs:	\$2,500
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning



Action 1.9 Implement a façade improvement program

The City should delineate facade improvement districts where improvements are most critical from an aesthetic and community visibility aspect. Rear facades of buildings facing Market Street and houses along Sunset Drive were identified as potential areas during the planning process. The City should also begin development of a facade improvement program that takes voluntary tax or private donations from individuals and businesses and places them in a local low-interest loan pool. These funds could be used for small-scale improvements. At the same time, the City should attempt to secure funding from such sources as the Environmental Protection Fund that can be loaned or granted to property owners for larger scale improvements. Though fiscally difficult, the City should consider the development of tax incentives for those who want to participate outside of the loan/grant program.

Time frame:	Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning and local business owners
Estimated costs:	\$250,000
Potential funding sources:	Local Businesses, National Trust for Historic Preservation, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation - Environmental Protection Fund: Preservation Services Fund; Rural New York Historic Preservation Grants; The National Preservation Loan Fund; Inner-City Ventures Fund; Johanna Favrot Fund; Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors

Action 1.10 Improve access to private and public facilities for persons with disabilities

The City of Corning is committed to providing access in housing, goods, services and recreation for all residents of and visitors to the City. The City will work to continue implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act in new development and redevelopment and will work with public and non-profit partners to increase the accessibility of existing facilities throughout the City. One example of such efforts is the Vital Link program operated by the AIM, a local advocacy group for the disabled, that links Intown South shops and services to the Day Spring Apartments, which house elderly and disabled residents.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, AIM, local business owners
Estimated costs:	Staff time
Potential funding sources:	City resources

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Goal 2: Increase the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of municipal services.

High-quality municipal services are critical to the future development of the City of Corning. The comprehensive planning process identified a number of actions needed to make the delivery of City services more effective and to better utilize existing resources.

Action 2.1 *Purchase GIS software to improve the tracking and quality of information available about City services.*

High-quality, current information about the City's services and infrastructure is critical to effective planning and delivery of these services and is an important tool for Corning's economic development efforts. GIS database and mapping tools would provide the City with the capability to track past and current conditions, assess trends and project future needs. The City is considering purchasing GIS software and developing the staff resources to use it to enhance City services and infrastructure planning and development needs. Specific uses for the GIS software would include improved tracking for:

- code enforcement
- proposed community and economic development projects
- water, sewer and transportation conditions and projects
- police and fire services

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning
Estimated costs: \$50,000 annually to cover staff, equipment and materials
Potential funding sources: City of Corning, corporate donations

Action 2.2 *Consider the possibility of relocating City Hall to make the current site available for redevelopment.*

Corning's City Hall is located near Market Street, the City's most vibrant commercial area. The City will consider conducting a market study to determine the feasibility of and resulting property and sales tax benefits of redeveloping City Hall for commercial uses. If the site is redeveloped, City offices would be moved to a new location. One possibility would be to incorporate City offices into a redevelopment effort for East Market Street. City offices could also be moved to an existing building, possibly the Guthrie Building if the medical offices there now move to buildings in a new medical zone proposed for the area surrounding the hospital.

Time frame: Medium to Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Corning Chamber of Commerce, Three Rivers Development Corporation
Estimated costs: \$25,000 - \$50,000 to fund a feasibility study
Potential funding sources: City of Corning, private developer, Three Rivers Development Corporation

Action 2.3 *Consider the development of a new public safety complex that could combine police, fire, courts and county agencies in one facility*

Public safety services in the City of Corning are dispersed throughout the City, some in structures that are poorly suited for their current use. This results in both inadequate facilities for the services, and confusion for many users. Consolidation of services into one central location would provide ease of access as well as facilities that meet the needs of the public and



the agencies themselves. The City will investigate the feasibility of combining public services into a single public safety complex that would combine police, fire, courthouse, and county agencies in one location. The public safety complex could be considered as an anchor for redevelopment at several proposed locations around the City. Existing fire, police, and county facilities could be made available for commercial redevelopment, thereby enhancing the City's tax base.

Time frame:	Medium to long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Three Rivers Development Corporation, State of New York, Steuben County
Estimated costs:	\$25,000 to \$50,000 for a feasibility study
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning, private developer, Three Rivers Development Corporation

Goal 3: *Improve housing conditions and opportunities for Corning residents, meeting the needs of low and moderate income residents while providing attractive options to upper and middle income professionals, to create high-quality residential neighborhoods throughout the City.*

The quality and selection of housing is a critical concern for both residents and businesses located in Corning. Housing stock is older with nearly 75% of all housing in the City constructed before 1960 and over half constructed before 1940. The housing market is tight with low vacancy rates for rental and sale housing. Rents and home prices in Corning are higher than for comparable products in neighboring communities. New housing development is limited by the small amount of vacant land available. In community workshops, poor housing conditions and the lack of affordable housing in good condition were common comments from residents.

A number of potential housing strategies and implementation tools were considered as a part of the comprehensive planning process. One implementation tool considered was the reactivation of the City's Housing Authority to develop low and moderate income housing projects. The primary benefits of the Housing Authority are its ability to bond to fund projects and its power of eminent domain to use as required to develop a specific project. The City has the key tools provided by the Housing Authority including the authority to bond and to exercise eminent domain if needed, and a broad array of private and non-profit partners that can provide technical assistance and program administration. A key benefit of the Housing Authority is that its bonds do not count against the City's bonding cap, providing the potential for additional financial resources. The City will determine on a case-by-case basis the best tools to implement a specific project, using existing private and non-profit partners in concert with the City's and/or Housing Authority's resources and tools.

Action 3.1 *Identify target areas for housing rehabilitation improvements and secure funding to implement scattered site housing rehabilitation projects.*

During neighborhood workshops, the condition of housing in Corning was a key concern cited by residents. Many described the need for rehabilitation and programs to assist homeowners to complete the work. Specific areas of concern included the ability of older residents to continue to maintain their homes, maintenance problems with multi-family buildings, large, older single-family homes and affordable housing. Most felt that improved code enforcement was part of the solution, particularly for multi-family structures. Further, limited availability of contractors for rehabilitation projects is a problem. In addition to community concern, Corning Incorporated has expressed an interest in broadening affordable housing choices for their employees and recruits. One of the company's objectives is to find ways to make existing housing and rehabilitation a viable alternative to new construction in satisfying employee demand for housing choice.

As a part of an overall rehabilitation strategy, the City should identify concentrated areas of substandard housing. Once target areas have been identified, the City should prioritize those areas with the greatest needs in terms of housing conditions and income. Applications to funding agencies for financial assistance should then be pursued. In Corning, most rehabilitation needs are not concentrated in one neighborhood but spread out across the City. The City will likely need to submit separate funding applications for target area rehabilitation projects and scattered site rehabilitation efforts.

CDBG grants from the Governor's Office for Small Cities are a likely source of funding for housing rehabilitation. Grants for both target areas and scattered site programs are available through CDBG funding.



In order to determine the condition of housing in the area being considered by the City for a housing project, the City must conduct a Housing Condition Survey. Applicants must substantiate the substandard conditions being considered for funding. Applications must also include sample photographs of the housing conditions to be addressed as an exhibit. For CDBG funding, a household income survey must also be conducted to determine that at least 51% of households in the target area are low and moderate income.

In general, housing rehabilitation projects will be evaluated on:

- The severity of need shown in the project area, in terms of the proportion of the units that are substandard, the extent of disrepair in the units, and the income and other resources of the residents
- The extent of feasibility concerns, such as the availability of other resources, a need to comply with federal, state or local regulations (environmental, lead paint, historic preservation, etc.), engineering issues and/or marketability, which would hinder the timely completion of the project as proposed
- The number of low to moderate income persons benefiting from the outcomes of the project (Most funders require at least 51% - some programs require 100%)
- The appropriateness of the Program Design, including marketing/outreach to potential participants, designated grant limits, availability of grants vs. loans, sliding scale grants, loan rates and terms, and reuse of program income, as well as the extent to which the outcomes would support the community's goals for addressing its needs
- The reasonableness of program costs, given the extent of disrepair and the level of deterioration of the units
- The extent to which the project supports the strategic plan of a designated Empowerment Zone, Enterprise Community or (NYS) Empire Zone, if applicable, or a similar community-approved strategic/comprehensive planning document

Time frame:	Short to Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, property owners, Corning Incorporated
Estimated costs:	\$5,000 per funding application
Potential funding sources:	Governor's Office for Small Cities' Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Small Cities program; the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal's (NYS DHCR) HOME Program, Housing Development Fund program, and Residential Emergency Services to Offer (Home) Repairs to the Elderly (RESTORE); the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (New York Rural Development Rural Housing Services) Homeownership Loans, Rural Rental Housing Loans, Home Improvement and Repair Loans and Grants, and Housing Preservation Grant Program.

Action 3.2 Implement a homeownership assistance program.

The City of Corning should consider partnering with the private and non-profit sectors to implement a homeowner assistance program that will improve housing affordability and strengthen the tax base in under-performing neighborhoods. According to the 2000 Census, owners live in 52.3% of occupied homes in the City of Corning. This is down 1.5 percent since 1990, when owners comprised 53.8% of home occupants. Housing affordability is becoming a

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serious issue. Twenty-one percent of City residents spend more than 35% of their income on housing compared to Steuben County as a whole, where only 12.6% are similarly burdened.

The Tri-County Housing Council currently operates a Homeownership program in the City, however usage is very low. The major problem identified by Tri-County Housing staff is that the existing subsidy (\$12,100 maximum, but not more than 20% of the total home cost) is not adequate to close the gap between Corning's housing costs and the incomes of eligible program participants. Local non-profits have been reluctant to submit funding applications to fund larger subsidies for fear that they would not be competitive at the state and federal level.

High closing costs typically 8% - 10% of the purchase price for taxes, attorney fees and other related costs are a further challenge to housing affordability. By partnering with the private and non-profit sectors, the City would be able to work with state and federal funders to describe Corning's unique housing market and enable the preparation of competitive applications that would increase the subsidy available to potential homeowners.

Time frame:	Short to Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Tri-County Housing Council, Steuben Churchpeople Against Poverty, Local Banks, Local Realtors, Corning Incorporated
Estimated costs:	Program (for 2 Programs): \$ 800,000 Grant Preparation (2 applications): \$ 10,000
Potential funding sources:	Federal Home Loan Banks' Affordable Housing Program, the Affordable Housing Partnerships' Affordable Home Ownership Development Program and the Community Investment Program, the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewals' HOME Program, and the Governor's Office for Small Cities' Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Small Cities program.

Action 3.3 Expand senior housing opportunities available to City residents.

A key housing need described at neighborhood meetings and by local realtors is senior housing, particularly assisted living facilities and high-end independent living apartments and garden homes. Elderly residents are staying in their homes longer. As the community ages, the number of established households wanting to downsize is growing, but the City lacks a product to meet this market niche. Specific needs described included high quality construction with low maintenance requirements, large public rooms to accommodate family events and convenient access to goods and services by foot and by car.

The City should inventory existing senior housing options in the community and identify areas of need for this population. One clear benefit of this strategy would be to encourage seniors to sell their larger homes to new families moving into the community. As part of a more detailed market assessment for senior housing needs, the City should survey seniors to assess their specific needs and the likelihood that they would move if offered a suitable housing option.

The general housing market study conducted as a part of the master planning process did not demonstrate a need for subsidized housing for the senior population. The targeted senior housing market assessment will need to look at the potential niche markets (high-end, assisted living, etc.). Based on the outcome of that assessment, the City could then make a decision about the development of new senior housing that will best serve the community.



Time frame:	Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Tri-County Housing Council, Steuben Churchpeople Against Poverty,
Estimated costs:	Market Analysis and Senior Survey \$5,000 Funding Application \$5,000
Potential funding sources:	Governor's Office for Small Cities' Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Small Cities program, the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal' (NYS DHCR) HOME Program, HUD 202, and private sector financing

Action 3.4 *Encourage conversion of existing upper story office/commercial space on Market Street to residential use.*

During the neighborhood meetings, residents recognized that there is little opportunity for new residential development in the City. A frequently suggested alternative was to consider the conversion of the upper stories of Market Street, which are currently either vacant or used for storage, to residential uses. This would not only provide a new source of housing for City residents, but would maximize the economic reuse of existing structures on Market Street. A significant residential presence on Market Street would provide evening and nighttime support for businesses such as restaurants, retail and entertainment venues, enhancing the downtown urban environment.

Upper story housing on Market Street would provide a new residential option for a "niche" housing market that is gaining strength nationwide. Cities of all sizes are finding that a significant downtown residential presence is providing new life for their downtowns and enhancing the environment of the City as a whole.

The Market Street Restoration Agency has conducted some initial market analysis to determine the extent of the potential market and the existing inventory of upper-story space on Market Street including total space available, renovations needs and costs and rental rates. Further work is needed on occupancy characteristics, parking needs and funding opportunities.

Finding public funding sources may be a challenge because the strongest market for the housing is probably not low to moderate-income residents, and most state and federal funding programs are designed to serve low and moderate-income persons. Less traditional public and foundation resources should be considered, particularly those advocating "smart growth" and historic preservation.

Time frame:	Medium to Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	Market Street Restoration Agency, Three Rivers Development Agency, City of Corning, property owners
Estimated costs:	\$15,000 - \$25,000 for market analysis and feasibility study
Potential funding sources:	Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program, Empire Zone benefits

Action 3.5 *Utilize financial incentives available under New York State law to encourage home reinvestments.*

Many homeowners are reluctant to make improvements to their residences because they fear a property tax increase. Although not all types of home improvement projects result in increased taxes, it is a common misconception that serves as a disincentive for housing rehabilitation. The City should consider conducting a public outreach effort to make property owners aware of which improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation and which improvements

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do not. This effort could include the preparation of an informational brochure that is mailed to residential property owners throughout the City.

To encourage continued enhancement of Corning's residential neighborhoods, the City of Corning could implement the New York State 421(f) tax relief program. The 421(f) tax incentive program is authorized by the state and can be implemented by municipal resolution. The tax relief program can be used for buildings at least five years old for capital improvements that cost \$3,000 or more and increase the property's value by at least \$5,000. The exemption is limited to the first \$80,000 increase in value. Upon application to the assessor, the property owner may receive a 100% exemption on the increased assessed value of the property resulting from the improvement for the first year. The exemption decreases by 12.5% every year for seven years. The program should be complemented by a public outreach effort to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation.

Corning will continue its code enforcement efforts to discourage dilapidation. The City intends to step up property inspections, particularly on multi-family properties, cite violations and give owners a set period of time to make needed improvements. If repairs are not made by the due date, the City can then make the repairs, billing the property owner for services provided.

Finally, Corning could take advantage of recent and pending legislation enabling municipalities to encourage preservation of historic buildings and districts by creating tax incentives for private residential and commercial property owners for building rehabilitation. A full explanation of such tax incentives is included in Action 7.1 below.

Time frame:	Short to Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning
Estimated costs:	\$5,000 for brochure and mailing
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning



Goal 4: Fully utilize existing and potential recreation and education facilities to support opportunities for City youth and other residents.

The City of Corning has approximately 80 acres of parks and recreational facilities including a large community park (Denison), neighborhood parks, passive mini-parks and a Civic Center with skating facilities. Most of the parks are located on the periphery of the City, making park access inconvenient to many residents. Nonetheless, parks, recreation programs and playing fields are well utilized, though additional maintenance would improve the appearance and safety of all of the park facilities. In addition to improved park maintenance, key community needs raised during the planning process included better river and waterfront access, improved bike and pedestrian trails, better access to parks, and more youth programs, especially for 15 to 18 year olds.

Action 4.1 Develop a multi-year park improvement plan as a part of the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

The condition of Corning's parks was one of the issues raised at the Neighborhood Assets Workshops. Many neighborhood residents feel that local parks need improvement. Further, Synthesis Architects conducted a visual survey of the existing conditions of City-owned parks in April 2001. Synthesis noted that additional maintenance would enhance the appearance and safety of facilities and landscaping could better define and enhance all parks. The City includes park improvements as a specific element of its Five Year Capital Improvement Plan that will address the mix of recreation needs, land area and facilities, and include a multi-year capital improvement plan

Time frame:	Short to Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning
Estimated costs:	Costs for plan part of Capital Improvement Plan budget, funds needed for ongoing implementation
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Environmental Protection Fund

Action 4.2 Develop a bicycle and hiking trail

In 1999, a feasibility study for a hike/bike trail to be located on the Northside was prepared for the City of Corning. According to the feasibility study, "the proposed trail system would develop a circular 'closed loop-type' multi-purpose pedestrian trail system that would join retail areas, residential neighborhoods, and civic districts into a single, safe and aesthetically pleasing non-vehicular experience. The proposed trail system would also be linked to the existing Village of Riverside and Painted Post Recreational Trail System. The City should revisit the feasibility study and work on developing a bicycling and hiking trail. The City submitted a Transportation Enhancements Program funding application last year. NYSDOT is expected to announce funding awards during summer 2002.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Estimated costs:	\$2.4 million

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Potential funding sources: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), Transportation Enhancements Program, National Recreational Trails Program

Action 4.3 In partnership with the private and non-profit sectors, evaluate the feasibility of increased river access to create a riverfront trail and on-water recreation opportunities.

The Chemung River is an underutilized asset in Corning. The City has completed an engineering design for a riverfront bike/hike trail and improved access to the River, and a new boat launch is to be built in 2002.

According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, any riverfront trail would need to be constructed inside the existing levy. NYSDEC has not supported proposals for levy-top trails because of concern that such a path would compromise the integrity of the levy. The dikes are designed so that much of their strength comes from the grass growing on them. The interlocking root system of the grass holds the dirt together and forms a relatively impermeable surface for floodwaters. The informal bike and walk path on the northern dike is already compromising the integrity of the structure by wearing a dirt trail into the grass. A paved or gravel trail would further damage the safety of the levy system. NYSDEC reports that it is possible to create a levy that can support a trail, but the trail would need to be incorporated into the design, building a taller, wider structure to meet both flood control and recreational needs.

The NYSDEC has agreed to increase the number of access points across the dike if the bike trail is built. Crossings already exist east of East High School and at the extreme western end of the City, and these crossings have been incorporated into the trail's design. Further, the NYSDEC has agreed to permit two dike crossings at Bridge Street, one on either side of the street, to provide an alternate, albeit round-about, pedestrian alternative to crossing Bridge Street.

The NYSDEC will construct a boat launch on the river at the end of Conhocton Street in spring, 2002. This will significantly increase small craft access to the water. The City Recreation Department teaches kayak lessons on the river, and the boat launch will enable expanded programming on the water for a wide range of activities.

Time frame: Medium to Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Estimated costs: \$25,000
Potential funding sources: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Environmental Protection Fund

Action 4.4 Create a public/private funding partnership to make needed improvements to the Centerway Bridge and to develop it for recreation and related uses.

The Centerway Bridge connects the Market Street retail (Centerway Square) area to the Northside. It is an incredible resource for both residents and tourists, creating a well



defined and attractive pedestrian connection between attractions, including the Corning Museum of Glass on the Northside and retail shops and restaurants on Market Street, south of the river. Centerway Bridge is currently used as a pedestrian bridge, but it is in poor condition and has little signage to direct tourists to destinations on either side of the river.

The bridge has reached the end of its useful life for the New York State Department of Transportation, which has transferred maintenance responsibility to CIDMA. The City has received a grant from the New York State Department of State to develop a future vision for the Bridge. Key to this vision is the creation of a sense of place; to justify the investment into its long-term survival, the Bridge must be more than a way to cross the river. Because it is located between the Corning Museum of Glass and Market Street, the City's two principal tourist destinations, the Bridge, if developed properly, can draw people from both directions. The grant is funding design for three aspects of this vision: a bike trail along the river, which would be centered on the bridge; design of the surface of the bridge, which could include gardens, kiosk-style retail, park space, trains and other community uses; and specially designed lighting to enhance not only the Centerway but also the Bridge Street and Briscoe Bridges.

In fact, this lighting concept has already been completed by Ross DiAlessi, a world-renowned lighting designer based in Seattle. Mr. DiAlessi's work, whether in Cleveland or in Oslo, has created lighting designs which highlight architectural features and which become visitor destinations because of the delicacy and drama with which they are done. The lighting of Corning's three bridges can become another attraction which the City has to offer, and the lighting of the Centerway Bridge is central to that design. The Centerway Bridge is the most architecturally significant of the three, and it can be the most dramatically lighted. Although the City has placed the responsibility for the development of the lighting scheme with the private sector, it is supportive of the idea, having already provided the conduits on the Bridge Street Bridge as part of that structure's rehabilitation.

CIDMA will use the visioning process to build partnerships that will seek funding for the improvements necessary to stabilize the bridge. While the City may act as a conduit and project sponsor for funding generated through the public/private partnership, it will not contribute City funds to the project.

Time frame:	Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning
Estimated costs:	\$2.0 million to fix the bridge plus cost of improvements as desired
Potential funding sources:	CIDMA, foundation grants, federal transportation grants

Action 4.5 *Create a public art walking trail*

The City of Corning should consider creating a public art walking trail. The trail could capitalize on existing public art and expand to include art on locations on both sides of the river.

Time frame:	Medium to Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, 171 Cedar Arts Center, Chamber of Commerce, the Steuben County Visitors Bureau, Market Street Restoration Agency
Estimated costs:	\$50,000

Potential funding sources: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Environmental Protection Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, private foundations

Action 4.6 Create partnerships between public, private and non-profit sectors to strengthen youth centers, creating more programs and recreational opportunities for teens in the City.

Many residents at the Neighborhood Asset Workshops felt that there is a need for more youth activities for older kids. Additionally, youth were asked for their feedback on a variety of issues at two meetings held at local schools. The young people expressed concern about not having activities to do or places to gather that appeal to their age group. The young people see a need for youth centers, somewhere to hang out, and more youth-oriented activities. The young people also feel that current age-specific activities leave out those in the 15- to 18-year old age range. They would like to see more activities tailored to their age group. They also expressed an interest in having a community theater in a park, sports facilities and a library with hours and books that appeal to young people.

The City will continue to work with the YMCA, school district, the existing youth center and other appropriate private, public and non-profit stakeholders to develop more teen activities and to move the Youth Center to a more central location to enable easier access. Corning cannot construct or operate the new programs with City funds, but can act as a conduit for grant funding to create new programs and facilities.

Time frame: Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, The Youth Center, Family Services, New York State, YMCA, Corning City School District
Estimated costs: \$50,000 annually
Potential funding sources: YMCA, Corning City School District, private foundations

Action 4.7 Develop a system of pocket parks in neighborhoods throughout the City that are underserved by the existing park system

The Community Profile found that because most of Corning's parks are located along the periphery of the City, much of the central area of the City, particularly on the Northside, is underserved. In fact, many residents do not have a neighborhood park within a half-mile of their homes. This is particularly discouraging given the City's relatively small land area and high density.

Corning should consider working with local neighborhood associations to develop a system of pocket parks in these areas to help meet local recreational needs. These would be passive recreation spaces with simple landscaping and benches available. The City could identify appropriate vacant properties, purchase the sites and make needed improvements.

Time frame: Medium to Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning
Estimated costs: \$150,000 to fund three pocket parks
Potential funding sources: City Resources



Goal 5: Upgrade and maintain the City's physical infrastructure.

The City of Corning's water system is generally in good condition, with adequate supply, although the reservoir needs to be replaced. As with many older cities, the sewer system needs substantial repairs and pipe replacement. Sanitary and storm sewer systems are at or near capacity, and sanitary sewer capacity is limited by storm water inflows. New development projects must currently provide their own on-site storm water storage to regulate flows. Clearly, a long-term solution is needed to address the inflow problems. The City is completing an analysis of its sewer system that will describe improvements needed.

Action 5.1 *Implement sewer improvements recommended by the Department of Public Works sewer system study, targeting East Market Street, the Houghton Park Complex and the hospital zone as short-term priority projects*

The Department of Public Works is completing an analysis of the City's storm and sanitary sewer system. The sewer system needs substantial repairs and pipe replacement. The major problems of the City's sanitary system are insufficiently sloped mains and storm water inflow. The lines continually have a deposition of materials in the pipe from inverts that reduce the capacity, with storm water inflows adding to the capacity burden. Simply cleaning the collection system is not a viable option. The collection system piping is old and susceptible to damage every time the Department of Public Works attempts to use high pressure jetting to clean the pipe.

The analysis currently underway is expected to recommend system-wide improvements including pipe replacement and repair and changes to reduce infiltration and inflow problems. Extensive repairs will be needed and will take many years to fully implement, but initial efforts will be targeted to facilitate key redevelopment efforts identified in this plan.

New development proposed on the Northside will be severely impacted by sanitary sewer capacity issues. The sewer project to be completed by 2003 addresses many of the capacity and negative slope issues for the Houghton Plot neighborhood and for development along Centerway up to the new hotel, on the east side of Baker Street just north of Pulteney. Other lines are so restricted, either by capacity limitations or inadequate slope, that almost any new development proposed for the Northside will be impacted. Needed improvements are frequently extensive and, in many cases, distant from the proposed project. For example, redevelopment of Northside Blodgett School for residential use, a proposed catalyst project, would not necessarily require on-site improvements, but the school feeds into lines with inadequate slope which would need substantial off-site improvements.

Another catalyst project, rehabilitation or redevelopment of the Meadowbrook Apartments, could also be impacted by sewer restrictions. On-site facilities are adequate to handle increased outflows if the site is redeveloped at higher densities, but significant problems will occur "downstream." Once leaving Meadowbrook, sewage is piped under Reynolds to Williams Street, where it would run into problems with inadequate slopes between Dunbar and Dodge. It would then be constricted by capacity problems until it gets past Museum Way. This is a long-term project, with an implementation horizon of 8 to 15 years.

The sewer study currently underway will identify strategic system improvements that would expand development opportunities on the Northside. Some of the pipe slope issues on the Northside can be addressed with increased maintenance efforts as a medium-term interim measure, but the City budget needs to reflect these ongoing maintenance needs in lieu of near term capital investment.

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On the Southside of the City, the sewer collection system works reasonably well. While new development is limited somewhat by the system-wide capacity limitations caused by storm water inflows into the sanitary sewer system, most new development or redevelopment on the Southside can be accommodated with minor on-site or nearby improvements.

The City has identified several phased high-priority improvements. The short-term priorities are improvements to East Market Street to support economic development initiatives; the Houghton Park Complex to support the restaurant; and office development and the hospital and medical zone to support new medical-related development anticipated in that area. Medium term efforts include western Denison Parkway at Bridge Street to support redevelopment of the parking lot at the southeast corner of the intersection and central Denison Parkway to support the planned redevelopment at Pine Street. The long-term priority is improvements to support the redevelopment of the Meadowbrook Apartment complex as described above.

Time frame: Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Corning Incorporated, project developers,
Estimated costs: \$456,750 annually
Potential funding sources: New York State Revolving Loan Fund, municipal bonding, Corning Incorporated

Action 5.2 Construct new reservoir and other improvements recommended by the recent hydrologic study, focusing on initiatives to improve quality of life and development opportunities

The Department of Public Works recently completed a study of the City's water system. The water system is old, but in good operating condition. With the City's 1% per year water main replacement program, it should remain in good condition. The wells and reservoirs have excess capacity; however, the system does not meet New York State Insurance Services Office fire flows guidelines in several locations. The major capital issue for the system is the need to replace the failing Southside in-ground reservoir.

The water and sewer rate structure was recently changed to shift some costs from residential to commercial and industrial users. Historically residents have paid for a higher proportion of system costs than they received, while commercial and industrial users have paid for less than they used. The new water structure more accurately reflects the mix of use, but does not increase revenues for the in-ground reservoir or other capital projects. Reservoir construction funds will need to come from some outside resource. Potential pieces to the funding puzzle include the New York State Revolving Loan Fund, congressional or state legislature member items and the sale of municipal bonds.

From a technical standpoint, the better location for the new reservoir is on the Northside. From this location, the reservoir will have better flow characteristics. Locating a suitable site for a Northside location is problematic since there is limited vacant land, even less in public ownership. Condemnation proceedings under eminent domain would likely be required. The other option under consideration is to rebuild the reservoir on the current site. The challenges facing the Southside location are the short-term logistical issues of how to store and provide 3.2 million gallons of water while the old reservoir is demolished and the new one constructed and the long-term impacts of lower flows and pressures.

Time frame: Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning
Estimated costs: \$2.2 million



Potential funding sources:

Municipal bonds, New York State Revolving Loan Fund, municipal bonding state legislative member items, congressional member items

Goal 6: *Develop a multi-modal transportation and parking infrastructure that enhances economic development opportunities, supports strong neighborhoods and enhances the pedestrian environment and community character.*

The City of Corning's street system generally has adequate traffic capacity, though a few downtown locations experience traffic congestion during the afternoon peak. Most traffic problems can be fixed with minor changes such as signal timing adjustments. Lack of sidewalks and pedestrian safety were key concerns described during the community involvement process. Physically, the street system is in poor condition with 70% of the City's streets needing complete reconstruction or major rehabilitation. Parking was identified as a major issue by business owners in both the Northside and Southside central business districts and in some residential areas throughout the City.

Action 6.1 *Continue implementation of the Department of Public Works Road Surface Management System.*

In 1996, Corning worked with the Cornell Local Road Program to develop a Road Surface Management System (RSMS) to prioritize road improvement investments. The system has created the structure to implement the most cost effective maintenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction solutions to the City's considerable road surface improvement needs. Using current resources, it will take ten years to fully implement the plan. At full implementation, the percentage of City streets requiring full reconstruction or rehabilitation will decrease from 70% to 6%, roads requiring no maintenance will increase to 50% of the total system and roads in good condition will increase to 94%.

The poor condition of the street system is a major concern for City residents and businesses. The City will use the RSMS to continue to prioritize the funding resources needed to continue implementation of needed improvements. It is critical that the visible annual progress continues on this vital effort.

Time frame:	Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Corning Incorporated, NYSDOT
Estimated costs:	\$1 million to \$1.5 million annually to full implementation
Potential funding sources:	FHWA, NYSDOT, Empire State Development Corporation, HUD, Governor's Office for Small Cities CDBG Program, City bonding

Action 6.2 *Implement pedestrian safety programs and capital projects.*

Throughout the planning process, residents said that they liked that the City is small enough to walk most places, and nearly 60% of survey respondents said that they walk for many of their daily trips to work, school and neighborhood locations. At the community assets workshops, residents identified pedestrian safety concerns as a barrier to walking. Concerns included lack of sidewalks in residential areas, unsafe street crossings and a lack of crossing opportunities on major commercial streets.

The City will continue to work with its neighborhoods to undertake a comprehensive examination of pedestrian needs throughout Corning, considering access to commercial areas, schools, parks and other community uses. As projects are undertaken or neighborhoods make priority areas known, the City intends to implement improvements as it has in the past. The City will attempt to identify funding sources and to identify needs for new pedestrian facilities,



amenities and safety features, which could include signage, crosswalks, curb extensions, signals, special pavement treatments at crossings and traffic signal improvements.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City, neighborhood associations, Corning Enterprises
Estimated costs: \$25,000 for research and grant writing needed to fund pedestrian safety projects identified by neighborhoods
Potential funding sources: Community Development Block Grants, U.S. Department of Transportation Enhancement Program, Community Development Block Grant

Action 6.3 Evaluate the need and potential solutions to noise generated by the I-86 bypass.

During the planning process, several residents living on Corning's Northside raised concerns about noise generated by the I-86 bypass, suggesting that sound walls need to be extended or other buffering measures implemented to reduce the level of traffic noise in the Northside neighborhoods. The City should request that the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) measure the noise levels at several neighborhood locations. As appropriate, NYSDOT could then work together to improve the current sound barrier system.

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: NYSDOT, City of Corning
Estimated costs: \$35,000 to evaluate the issue
Potential funding sources: NYSDOT

Action 6.4 Develop a City-wide Parking Plan that addresses the needs of commercial areas and residential neighborhoods, creating an adequate stream of income to effectively manage the commercial parking supply.

Parking supply and management have been identified by businesses, residents and the City as a critical economic development, quality of life and financial issue for Corning. The City provides parking in the commercial districts as a needed public service, and though it charges for parking permits and collects fees at metered spaces, the parking revenues do not cover the cost of operating the parking system. The City regulates on-street parking in residential neighborhoods, but charges no fees for service.

Corning intends to develop a City-wide parking strategy that addresses the supply problems in the commercial districts and simplifies parking regulation in residential areas and throughout the City. Parking shortages could be addressed through a comprehensive parking management system that results in better utilization of existing spaces and carefully considered and designed additions to the parking supply in the form of well landscaped lots and multi-story structures in key areas. A more complete evaluation of the City's parking needs and opportunities is included in a separate technical memorandum.

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Neighborhood Associations
Estimated costs: \$35,000 to redraft ordinance and re-sign streets
Potential funding sources: City of Corning

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Action 6.5 *Improve sidewalks throughout the City, creating a system to target improvements in each neighborhood.*

Poor sidewalk conditions are a major concern of residents in the City of Corning. Deteriorating sidewalks, and in some cases a lack of sidewalks, due to deterioration or neighborhood design, were mentioned by participants in every community meeting during the planning process. The City intends to consider creating a sidewalk management system, much like the one now used for roads. The system would catalog sidewalk conditions throughout the City and create criteria for prioritizing improvements based on sidewalk condition, the needs of the residential neighborhoods, matching resources available through neighborhood or business improvement districts and the potential to facilitate community and economic development.

Some areas of the City, including the Briarcliffe area, were designed to be developed without sidewalks. The appropriateness of adding sidewalks to this and other areas of the City would be a consideration in the sidewalk management system.

Time frame:	Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Neighborhood associations
Estimated costs:	Sidewalk construction costs are estimated to be \$8,800 per block (both sides of the street)
Potential funding sources:	City of Corning, property owners

Action 6.6 *Develop a street classification system, and implement a traffic calming strategy, creating a system to evaluate needs and target improvements to specific neighborhood areas.*

The City of Corning does not currently have a formal street classification strategy. Level of use of streets, along with condition, drives investment in street improvements, rather than a conscious policy to steer traffic onto specific streets and away from others. A street classification system would help the City determine appropriate roadway investments, prioritize street improvements, guide the installation and operational parameters of traffic control devices and address residents' concerns of through traffic in neighborhoods. For example, in most communities, many traffic calming strategies, such as speed humps, are limited to local streets and are not used for collectors or arterials, which are intended to carry higher volumes of traffic. Conversely, a traffic signal would only be considered at intersections that include a collector or an arterial because traffic lights are tools to increase the carrying capacity of a roadway.

The City of Corning anticipates reviewing its street system to determine the current function of its roadways, classifying each as an arterial, collector/distributor or local street. It would then consider what the desired function of its streets is, given surrounding land uses, access needs of commercial, employment, educational and residential uses and the availability of alternative routes. In order to change the function of certain streets, the City would make policy and network operational changes to the street system that would move a higher percentage of traffic off of designated local streets and onto arterials and collector/distributors.

Several neighborhoods described the need for traffic calming on residential streets that serve high volumes of traffic. Corning plans to develop a system to classify streets appropriate for calming measures and the type of calming measures appropriate. Neighborhood calming might include tree planting, road narrowing, curb bulbouts and other appropriate measures. Less intensive methods, focusing on streetscape improvements might be more appropriate in pedestrian-oriented commercial districts, such as Market and Bridge Streets, whereas traffic calming would not be an appropriate tool in more auto-oriented commercial areas or industrial areas.



The traffic calming strategy would include a prioritization system for making decisions about how to allocate traffic calming improvements. Most neighborhoods in the City have streets on which they would like to see some traffic calming. The role of a candidate street in the City's street classification system, other scheduled street improvements and potential contributions from neighborhood residents or private business would all play a part. Improvements would be distributed throughout the City's neighborhoods based on a system of documented need that might include street classification, speed and volume measurements from the Corning Police Department's mobile "traffic trailer," locations of parks and schools and the level of pedestrian traffic.

Time frame:	Short to Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, neighborhood associations, large commercial and institutional users
Estimated costs:	\$5,000 for initial classification, then \$30,000 annually to implement improvements
Potential funding sources:	U.S.DOT Transportation Enhancement and TCSP programs, City of Corning

Action 6.7 Develop a multi-modal transportation center to serve local transit, intercity bus, tour bus needs and passenger rail.

Though the City of Corning is small, its tourism market creates some big-City transportation needs. The City must be able to accommodate a large number of tour buses during the summer season. Businesses and tour operators complain that tour buses do not have a centralized parking location and passengers are often fearful of meandering too far from their bus, which hinders the overall shopping experience in the commercial district.

Balancing the local community's needs with visitor's needs is a big challenge with the current facilities. Motor coach visitors generally want to stay close to the coach and know where it is in case they need to return, but the size, weight and noise of the buses limit where they can practically travel and park. The designated motor coach pick up and drop off area on Wall Street in front of the Centennial Sculpture has space for only four coaches, not enough to allow all the buses to park there and wait until all of their passengers return. A center would provide a visible pickup and drop off location for tour bus passengers. A comfortable, enclosed waiting area, stocked with visitors' information and other services would provide a location for passengers to wait for their coaches, comfortable in the knowledge that the bus will return to this established location.

In addition to serving motor coach needs, a transportation center would provide a central transit facility for route connections and information, increasing the utility and ridership of the Corning/Erwin Area Transit System (CEATS). CEATS currently operates five lines including a Northside circulator, Southside circulator, service to Coopers Plains, Gang Mills and Painted Post. A downtown transit center at Denison Parkway between Cedar and Wall Streets would provide a convenient location and high quality passenger waiting area for transfers between lines. As a part of the transit enhancement package offered by the new transportation center, the City would work with CEATS to coordinate schedules and, where appropriate, create timed transfers between lines to make it easier for passengers to transfer. CEATS could even consider locating its offices in the transit center, offering transit tokens and passes for sale. The transit center would also serve commercial intercity bus travel, with facilities to purchase tickets and a central location for people arriving by bus.

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The transit center should be centrally located for convenient access to tourist destinations. It could be integrated with the City's visitors' center or other uses such as transit or inter-City bus line offices or retail to increase its community benefits. The City will investigate the feasibility of locating the transportation center along Denison Parkway between Cedar and Wall Streets. Cedar Street (Centerway) is a major connector between Northside and Southside. This central location provides easy access to Market Street, the Rockwell Museum, the Corning Museum of Glass, the planned bike/hike trail proposed along the Chemung River, and a number of surface parking lots.

In order to implement this project the City would need to:

- Develop a concept plan and financing strategy for the transportation center that includes phased development scenarios as appropriate
- Identify a lead agency (perhaps using CIDMA or a separate parking authority created to implement the City-wide parking strategy) and secure commitments from key stakeholders and partners
- Identify an appropriate site based on the concept plan
- Initiate grant writing and fundraising activities
- Acquire the site
- Upgrade public infrastructure and complete site preparations
- Begin first construction phase

Time frame:

Long Term

Potential stakeholders/partners:

City of Corning, Steuben County IDA, Corning URA, Corning Enterprises, CEATS, Corning Chamber of Commerce, Three Rivers Development, Finger Lakes Wine Country Tourism Marketing Association, inter-City bus service providers

Estimated costs:

\$3.0 - \$5.0 million

Potential funding sources:

U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, U.S. HUD Section 108 loan funds, Community Development Block Grants, IDA bonding, U.S. DOT

Action 6.8 Pursue passenger rail potential for the City.

The City of Corning and other municipalities along the Southern Tier Route have expressed interest in reinstating passenger traffic along the line. The logistics of sharing these busy freight tracks will be a critical issue for the reintroduction of passenger service, although Corning's tourism and employment markets provide some interesting market opportunities. A study is now underway to examine the restoration of passenger service on the Southern Tier Route as far as Binghamton, New York from Hoboken, New Jersey or New York City. If this effort is successful, there is potential to extend the service from Binghamton to Corning and perhaps further to Hornell.

At this point, the City's top priority must be to maintain freight access through Corning. The City should monitor any proposed changes to the freight system that would remove track or otherwise make the introduction of rail service more difficult. In addition, the City should pursue funding for a study to provide passenger rail, either as an extension of the potential future Binghamton service or on existing track through Pennsylvania. Passenger rail should be considered in conjunction to other transportation improvements, including the multi-modal



transportation center described above, local transit and intercity bus services, tour bus operations and hiking and biking trails.

Time frame: Long Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: NYSDOT, Norfolk Southern, Finger Lakes Wine Country Tourism Marketing Association, Corning Incorporated
Estimated costs: \$50,000 for a feasibility study
Potential funding sources: U.S.DOT, New York State DOT

Action 6.9 Implement pedestrian and streetscape improvements to Pulteney Street, investigating the feasibility of a boulevard treatment.

Residents described their concern about increasing traffic levels and a poor pedestrian environment on Pulteney Street during the planning process. East of Dodge Avenue, Pulteney is a commercial street serving many local needs. To the west, it becomes more residential in nature. Significant pedestrian and traffic flow improvements are needed to improve access to businesses along the street. As conditions require replacement and improvement, the City could design a streetscape plan for Pulteney Street that includes tree planting, sidewalk and pedestrian crossing improvements and signal timing changes.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, NYSDOT, Northside business owners, Neighborhood associations
Estimated costs: \$50,000 for a study
Potential funding sources: U.S.DOT

Action 6.10 Consider pedestrian crossing improvements to Denison Parkway and improve access from Denison to Market and Bridge Streets and the Chemung River

Significant streetscape improvements were recently made to Denison Parkway, but it remains a formidable challenge for pedestrians to cross and lacks wayfinding information for visitors attempting to find areas of interest within the City. The City could work to enhance pedestrian crossing opportunities at parking facilities, retail redevelopment areas and key residential neighborhood gateways. In addition, the City could provide better wayfinding signage to direct visitors to the City's considerable attractions including Market and Bridge Streets, the Corning Museum of Glass, the Rockwell Museum of Western Art and the Chemung River. (See earlier discussion in Action 1.2.)

The City of Corning could work with the New York State Department of Transportation to improve signal synchronization and pedestrian crossings along Denison Parkway. The goal of signal synchronization efforts would be to create traffic flows that provide significant gaps to allow for pedestrian crossing. The City could also work with NYS Department of Transportation to encourage installation of pedestrian signals with countdown timers at key intersections to provide pedestrians with more crossing safety information.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Three Rivers Development, Corning Enterprises, NYSDOT Finger Lakes Wine Country Tourism Marketing Association, Chamber of Commerce
Estimated costs: \$75,000
Potential funding: NYSDOT, USDOT, HUD infrastructure programs, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration

Goal 7: *Develop new and strengthen existing mechanisms for preserving and promoting the City's rich historic resources, supporting and enhancing the character and contributions of each neighborhood.*

Corning's rich architectural history presents excellent opportunities for expanding heritage tourism in ways that would complement Market Street, the Corning Glass Museum and Corning-Rockwell Museum. To support this additional preservation, efforts are needed on Market Street to complete facade restoration and rear facade improvement and enhancement. Additional preservation planning and/or historic resource survey work is needed as well, particularly on the Northside, to facilitate identification of potential historic districts. Many of the City's older and potentially historic homes are generally in need of facade improvement and rehabilitation to improve the general appearance of the City and to make the housing stock in these areas more attractive to potential home buyers and more competitive with other segments of the local and regional housing market.

Action 7.1 *Support building rehabilitation and historic preservation efforts by adopting tax incentives that allow for the phasing in of tax increases resulting from improved property values.*

Because nearly 51% of the City's housing units were constructed before 1940, and many buildings have not had significant investments since the 1972 flood, much of Corning's building stock is in need of major repairs and maintenance. However, many property owners are reluctant to invest in, or otherwise improve, their properties, owing to concerns that their property taxes will increase, or that they won't own the property long enough to reclaim their investment when they sell. As a result, maintenance tasks are often neglected or delayed. Buildings slowly deteriorate and neighborhoods become less and less appealing to potential property owners, tenants, investors, and others.

To reverse this trend, Corning could take advantage of recent and pending legislation enabling municipalities to create tax incentives for private residential and commercial property owners for building rehabilitation.

One such tax incentive allows owners of eligible historic buildings to defer tax increases for five years.¹ After this initial deferment period, the tax increase is spread over an additional five years. For example: a historic property has an assessed value of \$100,000. After rehabilitation work, the value increases to \$125,000. Under the new tax incentive, the owner of the property would pay taxes based on the original assessment of \$100,000 for five years. Over the next five years (years 6 - 10), the taxes on \$25,000 would be phased in at the rate of 20% a year. Therefore, in year 6, taxes will be based on a value of \$105,000; in year 7 on a value of \$110,000; and so on, until year 10, when taxes would be paid on \$125,000, the full value of the building.

Under the state legislation, both residential and commercial properties are eligible for the tax incentive, but a building must be a locally designated historic landmark or lie within a local historic district. In addition, planned rehabilitation work must be approved by the local landmark commission -- and completed by the owner -- before the tax incentive is granted.

¹See "A Long-Awaited Tax Break for Owners of Historic Properties," *News*, Preservation League of New York State, Volume 5, Number 2 (Fall 1997).



In 1997, the City of Ithaca became the first local government to adopt real property tax incentives for historic properties.² As of January 2000, approximately twelve NYS communities had established similar tax incentives.

To encourage enhancement of Corning's residential neighborhoods, the City could also consider adoption of a NYS Real Property Tax Law 485(b) program. This program is authorized by New York State but a municipal resolution is required for a community to adopt it. The 485(b) program would allow the City to give a property owner a 50% tax exemption on the increase in assessed valuation in the first year after an improvement has been made, decreasing at 5% per year for a period of ten years (i.e. a 45% exemption in year two, 40% in year three etc.). The program could be complemented by a public outreach effort to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation.

The following table reveals the impact on City and local school taxes resulting from creation of the 485(b) and historic rehabilitation tax credits. With no tax incentives available to property owners, the owner completing building improvements would pay \$905 in combined full taxes, of which \$187 would go to the City, \$507 to the school district and \$211 to the county; the property owner would pay \$9,055 in taxes on building improvements over 10 years. Over a ten-year period, a property owner taking advantage of the 485(b) program would experience gradual tax increases ranging from \$453 in year one to the full \$905 in year ten, realizing a total savings of \$2,490 over the ten-year period. Over the same ten-year period, a property owner certified under the building rehabilitation tax credit would pay no taxes on improvements for the first five years. In years 6 – 10, property taxes would increase from \$181 to the full \$905, allowing a property tax savings of \$6,338 over the ten-year period.

²See AA Proposal for the Use of a Local Property Tax Incentive to Encourage Historic Preservation in the City of Ithaca, a report prepared by Lynn Cunningham, Director of Preservation Services, Historic Ithaca, Inc., June 1994, updated February 1995. The legislative intent of Ithaca's local enabling legislation, which has become a model for other communities, is to increase incentives for property owners in historic districts to invest in the upkeep and rehabilitation of properties; provide an incentive for the restoration and rehabilitation of commercial structures which qualify as landmarks in order to provide financial advantages, not available elsewhere in the country, which may help attract and retain businesses in the City of Ithaca; assist homeowners who are interested in restoring their own properties, but may not be able to afford to do so when faced with potential increases in taxation as the result of alterations which would qualify for this exemption; provide financial incentives for investment in low income residential neighborhoods which may contain landmark buildings or districts designated within the area; and provide a concrete benefit for restoring or improving historically significant properties which are subject to the regulations of the City's Local Landmarks Ordinance.

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City of Corning Tax Incentive Program Impact					
Property Tax Rate	\$36.22 per \$1,000 Combined City, County, School (Year 2000)				
City Tax Rate	\$ 7.49 per \$1,000 City only (Year 2000)				
Equalization Rate	100.0%				
Year	Taxable Assessment	Combined Full Taxes	City Tax Portion	Taxes with 485(b)	Historic Rehab. Taxes
1	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$453	\$0
2	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$498	\$0
3	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$543	\$0
4	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$589	\$0
5	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$634	\$0
6	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$679	\$181
7	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$724	\$362
8	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$770	\$543
9	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$815	\$724
10	\$25,000	\$905	\$187	\$860	\$905
Totals		\$9,055	\$1,872	\$6,565	\$2,716
Savings				\$2,490	\$6,338

A program of local tax incentives could stimulate reinvestment that might not otherwise occur. There is ample evidence of disinvestment and deferred maintenance particularly in rental properties in several City neighborhoods. Property tax incentives combined with a City-wide housing rehabilitation and code enforcement program would go a long way to stabilize and revitalize some of the City's rundown residential neighborhoods.

In addition to these local tax incentives, historic homeowner tax credit legislation is pending at the State and Federal levels. Like the incentives above, these tax credits would be targeted to historic districts (probably National Register-listed historic districts) and would be designed to encourage the rehabilitation of historic residential buildings.

One final tax incentive is the national Historic Preservation Tax Credit, which is available to income-producing properties that are listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places. Income producing properties include both commercial and industrial properties as well as some rental property such as multi-family housing. In order to qualify for these tax credits, rehabilitation work must be formally certified by the National Park Service following submission of a formal application (technical assistance is available from the State Historic Preservation Office).

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Realtors, Contractors, Banks, Housing Development not-for-profits
Estimated costs: \$5,000
Potential funding sources: City of Corning



Action 7.2 *Create better tools to deal with nuisance properties, investigating the feasibility of increased fines, tax penalties and other civil penalties.*

The City of Corning's Municipal Code already has nuisance abatement laws regulating property maintenance, alcoholic beverages, animal control, curfew for minors, noise, general nuisance behavior, and parental responsibility. However, while the majority of these laws seem to be effective, residents expressed concern that additional efforts are needed to more strongly enforce building and property maintenance codes. Residents also indicated that property maintenance and elimination of nuisances of all types have a direct and obvious impact on neighborhood investment, pride, quality of life, etc.

To achieve this goal, City staff anticipates evaluating existing staff capacity, ongoing code enforcement efforts and needs, and the effectiveness of existing penalties for noncompliance. Based on this evaluation, code enforcement programs would be modified and strengthened, which may involve the hiring of additional personnel, training, outreach and support. Existing penalties and enforcement procedures would also be evaluated in terms of effectiveness, and strengthened as needed to accomplish nuisance abatement goals.

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning
Estimated costs: Staff hours
Potential funding sources: City of Corning

Action 7.3 *Develop and implement historic preservation and neighborhood conservation laws to maintain and enhance the character and integrity of Corning's older/historic building stock and neighborhoods.*

Although residents strongly indicated that they value Corning's traditional neighborhoods and architecture, and studies have consistently confirmed that local historic districts and laws have positive economic benefits, the City has few protections for these resources outside its current zoning and signage laws. Since the zoning ordinance is primarily concerned with land use, the City could adopt a local historic preservation law (including design guidelines) and a neighborhood conservation law. These laws would protect older and historic residential and commercial buildings and establish a formal basis for discussion and disposition of historic buildings in the City.³

Model historic preservation laws are available from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Preservation League of New York State. Such laws generally establish historic preservation overlay districts or protect designated historic districts and landmark buildings. They typically include the following elements⁴:

- **Title, Authority and Purpose.** This article identifies the state enabling provision that empowers the City with the authority to adopt a local historic preservation law, and spells out the community's reasons for adopting the ordinance. The statement of purpose links the rules and regulations listed in the ordinance to the community's values and goals. This provision is essential if the City wishes to withstand legal challenges questioning intent.

³Some of the tax incentives described above, as well as the pending historic homeowner tax credit legislation, are only available to property owners within local historic districts.

⁴See Katherine Raub Ridley's information sheet "Local Preservation Legislation" and model preservation law, as well as the model law provided by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

- **Definitions.** Like the purpose clause, this article of the local preservation law helps to establish the commission's intent, and often plays a vital role in legal challenges.
- **Districts, Landmarks and Boundaries.** This article identifies the historic resources regulated by the local law. Such resources may include National and State Register-listed buildings and districts as well as locally listed or designated buildings. The local law usually specifies district boundaries (or refers to an official map) and/or street addresses of affected buildings.
- **Administration.** This article establishes a historic preservation commission (which can also be a designated existing entity such as a community's planning board). The administration section includes number of commissioners; education, training or experience requirements; terms of office; operating procedures and powers.
- **Designation Process and Criteria.** This article provides the standards for determining which buildings are landmarks and which are not. The standards should be well-defined so that if a designation is ever challenged, a court will have a set of standards against which to measure the designation.
- **Permit Process and Review Criteria.** This section should spell out the commission's powers in reviewing changes to designated properties and should include the types of changes requiring review. Review criteria can be as basic as the Secretary of Interior's Standards or formal design guidelines (see below).
- **Hardship Clause.** This article sets forth the procedure and standards for determining whether a proposed project imposes economic hardship on a property owner. The burden of proof is with the owner. Hardship is typically defined as inability to earn a reasonable return (commercial properties) or inability to pursue charitable purpose (not-for-profits).
- **Demolition Delay Clause.** (See demolition plan recommendations below).
- **Maintenance Requirement.** This article helps a municipality prevent "demolition by neglect" and reinforces local nuisance abatement and property maintenance laws.
- **Enforcement Clause.** This article establishes a process for enforcing the provisions of the local law and usually includes penalties such as fines (which accumulate daily) and imprisonment for continued violation.

It should be noted that while many communities use the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rehabstandards.htm>), many municipalities are adopting formal, detailed, and community-specific design guidelines. Design review guidelines can be an effective and proactive tool. They educate building owners and residents about local historic resources and architectural styles; provide rehabilitation guidelines to ensure that new construction, additions, and alterations are compatible with historic buildings and neighborhoods; and educate building owners and developers about the importance of historic preservation. They typically include standards for signage, building rehabilitation, new construction and demolition, as well as for the determination of economic hardship and other issues. The guidelines should ultimately be in a graphic and instructive format, using photographs and drawings of typical existing conditions and appropriate rehabilitation treatments.

For example, the Village of Seneca Falls adopted *Guidelines and Standards for the Protection and Enhancement of the Seneca Falls Historic District* in 1986 as an aid to property owners in planning, maintenance, repair, alteration, addition or construction of structures within the Seneca Falls Historic District. This heavily illustrated document includes chapters on historic



awareness, preservation planning, definitions and concepts, architectural styles, historic district guidelines, and historic district standards, and appendix which includes the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, a glossary, a bibliography, a list of local resources, illustrations to help property owners identify architectural styles, and current fence and sign guidelines. The historic district guidelines have sections for both residential and commercial buildings and focus on facades, storefronts, roofs, porches, windows, entrances, shutters/blinds and signage. Historic district review standards provide information related to specific structural details to determine the appropriateness of proposed changes. This section includes an introduction and specific standards for masonry, wood, wood siding, synthetic siding, wood shingles, painting, colors, architectural metals, entrances, porches, roofs, doors, windows, trim and storefronts. The document includes numerous illustrations. It provides a rationale for historic preservation and a basis upon which the historic district review commission makes its decisions regarding certificates of appropriateness.

Other communities have taken a more streamlined approach to ensuring compatible design by working directly with property owners and local architects. Such communities establish target areas for facade and streetscape improvement (such as the central business district). Architects then work with property owners and neighborhood residents to develop appropriate facade and streetscape design drawings and specifications using annotated photographs and elevation drawings showing preferred designs. Building elevation drawings are developed for each block using photographs of each building that needs improvement. Photographs show the existing conditions of buildings and streetscapes and often include notes regarding building elements that are compatible and incompatible with the building's historic architectural character. Matching elevation drawings show appropriate designs and colors for building and streetscape improvement.

The development and implementation of design guidelines in Corning will most likely require the involvement of planning and/or architectural consultants, interested residents, local architects, City staff, and representatives of the City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission. In addition to City financing, likely sources of funding include the Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts.

In addition to adopting a local historic preservation law and formal design guidelines, the City should also enact neighborhood conservation districts, perhaps as part of the preservation law. Neighborhood conservation districts are less stringent than historic preservation laws. They provide protection for vulnerable neighborhoods and can be a first step towards historic district designation in neighborhoods that have suffered loss of historic character. Conservation zoning provides guidance and regulation of demolition, new construction and additions to buildings.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Planning & Zoning Commission, Market Street Restoration Agency, Corning-Painted Post Historical Society, Southside Neighborhood Association, Preservation League of New York State, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.
Estimated costs:	\$5,000 plus staff time
Potential funding sources:	Preservation League of New York State, New York State Council on the Arts

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Action 7.4 Implement commercial and residential building rehabilitation and facade improvement programs.

The dramatic impact of facade improvements and well-designed signage and streetscape elements is clearly evident in Market Street's success and vibrancy. However, outside Market Street and portions of the Southside Historic District, the original architectural character of many of Corning's residential and commercial buildings has been obscured by additions (such as porches), alterations and deterioration.

Commercial and residential facade improvement programs, which would provide grants and/or low- or no-interest loans to property owners, would help stimulate building rehabilitation and would strongly complement the tax incentives described above. Such programs typically work in targeted areas and involve design assistance (already provided by Market Street Restoration Agency), grants, loans, and assistance with the bidding process and/or working with contractors.

Facade improvement programs should be a priority within the Northside commercial area as well as within key gateway areas and corridors. For commercial buildings, they should encompass both front and rear facades as appropriate.

Time frame: Short to Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Market Street Restoration Agency
Estimated costs: \$600,000
Potential funding sources: Corning Incorporated, local banks, CDBG

Action 7.5 Target public amenity funding to protect property values with investments in streetscapes, including streetlights, furniture, trees, etc.

Corning could jump-start neighborhood revitalization in targeted neighborhoods, supporting private investment and public incentive programs (grants, loans, tax abatement) with public investments such as tree planting (see below), new and/or decorative street paving, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, signage (wayfinding, interpretive, and decorative or thematic), and similar activities. This type of public investment signals positive change in deteriorating neighborhoods and can help stimulate revitalization and renewed private investment.

Public amenity funding should be targeted and allocated based on recommendations of the professional staff with input from neighborhood associations, youth and other interested parties.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning
Estimated costs: \$250,000
Potential funding sources: CDBG, City of Corning, NYS EPF/Bond Act grants

Action 7.6 Develop a vacant building/vacant lot maintenance program.

As noted in the Community Profile, vacant land contributes less than 1% of the City's revenue and accounts for 13% of the assessed land area of the City. To return vacant lots to more productive use and reduce their often blighting influence on neighborhoods, the City should initiate an aggressive and proactive program to stimulate continuing maintenance of vacant buildings and lots.

Program elements should include enforcement of the existing property maintenance law (and strengthening of that law if necessary); evaluation of vacant lots in terms of redevelopment potential; incentives to stimulate cleanup, maintenance, purchase, and/or redevelopment; and



coordination with existing and new neighborhood associations to facilitate volunteer cleanup and maintenance efforts.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, Neighborhood Associations
Estimated costs: \$5,000
Potential funding sources: City of Corning

Action 7.7 Require demolition plans to address future use plans and appearance during transition for all demolition sites

Because developable land is extremely scarce in the City of Corning, it is likely that a certain number of existing buildings will need to be demolished to accommodate future development and growth. To ensure that demolition is consistent with neighborhood quality of life and revitalization goals, as well as the City's overall development goals, local laws should be enacted to minimize the impact of demolition. The local law(s) could be designed to:

- **Require future use plans.** Proposed demolition applications would be required to include future use plans as part of the permit approval process. Such plans would address not only the proposed future use, but financing and other criteria to ensure that demolition does not result in unnecessary or wasteful loss of buildings or expansion of the City's vacant land. Future use plans can also be used to prevent anticipatory demolition.
- **Provide for demolition delay procedures.** At least 62% of the City's housing stock is fifty years old or older. Most of these buildings are located outside the City's two historic districts. A significant portion has not been individually listed in National, State or Local Registers of Historic Places, and the City does not have a comprehensive survey of historic resources. To provide a basic level of protection for potentially historic buildings in Corning, the City should include a demolition delay clause in any local preservation law it may adopt. A demolition delay clause or ordinance would allow public review of demolition permit applications for potentially historic buildings (typically defined as all buildings above a certain age, with the age varying according to the municipality). The delay, which typically ranges from 30 days to one year, would allow time for the City and other interested parties to find a sympathetic purchaser, or to study, photograph and document the building for the permanent record. Demolition delay clauses and ordinances usually require preliminary review of historic and architectural significance by historic preservation staff or the historic preservation commission. A delay is only invoked if a building is determined to be historically significant upon formal application and review.

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, MSRA, Corning-Painted Post Historical Society
Estimated costs: Staff time
Potential funding sources: City of Corning

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Action 7.8 *Develop a tree planting program for all neighborhoods, with an annual budget allocation for planting and maintenance efforts throughout the City.*

As part of its neighborhood improvement efforts, the City should establish a formal tree-planting program to facilitate the planting of trees on public lands and rights-of-way (such as along curbside medians).

There are many ways to implement a tree-planting program, but many communities provide free trees and planting to residents who agree to water and maintain the trees, and who work with the City or its representatives to determine an appropriate location and species of tree. Trees are usually purchased wholesale from local nurseries (who can also plant the trees) through a competitive bidding process. Planting is done either by City DPW staff or planting contractors. Many municipalities also have annual tree giveaway days or purchase days, providing free or low-cost seedling and larger trees to individuals and volunteer groups. Seedlings (and other) trees can also be grown on public land (such as parks or school properties) as part of youth or neighborhood volunteer gardening programs.

Corning's tree planting program, which is currently in the planning and early implementation phases, should be coordinated with neighborhood associations and schools, and should be phased in City-wide on a targeted basis, beginning with the western portion of Northside. The City should allocate an annual tree budget to the Department of Public Works, which would use professional standards to determine planting needs. Locations of existing and new City street trees would be tracked in the City's GIS system.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City of Corning, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts and other youth groups, neighborhood residents/volunteers, local schools, local nurseries, cooperative extension
Estimated costs:	Staff and volunteer time, \$50,000
Potential funding sources:	Arbor Day Foundation

Action 7.9 *Conduct formal, intensive-level historic resource surveys in selected City neighborhoods not already designated as historic districts.*

Although the Southside Post Office, War Memorial Library, Patterson Inn, Market Street Historic District and Southside Historic District are already listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places, it is likely that a number of other areas in the City would qualify for, and benefit from, formal historic designation. Historic designation typically stabilizes and enhances property values and can establish owner eligibility for federal, state and local grant, loan and tax incentives. Formal historic resource surveys are used as planning tools, establishing a rational basis for determining which resources should be formally protected and enhanced.

Since historic resource surveys are fairly expensive to prepare, the City of Corning should consider completing surveys on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis (rather than as a comprehensive City-wide survey), beginning with the Northside. Historic resource surveys are generally undertaken in accordance with standards established by the National Park Service and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Surveys typically include photographs of every building within the target area, completion of NYS inventory forms ("blue forms") and completion of an evaluation matrix. This information is then used to establish the boundaries of potential historic districts as well as to identify individual historic designations.

When making decisions about areas to be surveyed, the City should remember that listing buildings in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as contributing



buildings within a historic district, makes them eligible for existing historic preservation tax credits (see Action 7.1 above). Historic homeowner tax credits, which will be available to National Register-listed buildings are pending at the State and Federal levels and are expected to be enacted in the next few years. Local rehabilitation tax credits are described above.

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City of Corning, MSRA, Corning-Painted Post Historical Society
Estimated costs: \$10,000
Potential funding sources: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Environmental Protection Fund, City of Corning

Goal 8: Reinforce neighborhood identity and augment planning capacity, providing support to form neighborhood associations and implement neighborhood-based initiatives.

Corning's neighborhoods are the building blocks of the City. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on the City's neighborhoods and the role they play in charting Corning's future course. While Corning currently lacks formal neighborhood associations for all but one or two areas of the City, residents' obvious pride and stewardship for the community create opportunities for strong neighborhood associations. The actions below outline a strategy to support the City's neighborhoods and provide the structure to implement the neighborhood action plans described in the neighborhood section of this report.

Action 8.1 *The City intends to encourage formation of neighborhood associations and designate staff contacts.*

Neighborhood associations provide an important and effective vehicle for communication between individual residents and the community in which they live, and between neighborhoods and City officials. The existing Southside Neighborhood Association is seen as a good example of this type of organization and may provide a model for other neighborhoods to follow. The City of Corning currently has only one organized neighborhood associations and believes that better communication with residents could be achieved through them. The associations could also assist with implementation of key neighborhood improvements.

Neighborhood associations provide an organizational body for local residents to affect improvement and change in their neighborhood. For City officials, neighborhood associations are a conduit for communication where officials can disseminate information and gauge resident response to proposed programs, projects and policies. Through formal neighborhood associations' input on Master Plan projects, the City staff can better guide project implementation to meet neighborhood concerns.

The City envisions an evolutionary process for many of these organizations. By convening neighborhood task forces to help implement initial Master Plan projects, residents can become familiar with City procedures and learn to have direct input into projects. These task forces can be transformed into neighborhood associations after the initial project has informed the residents how best to influence and help guide City planning and implementation. The City could consult with the newly formed associations to gain a better understanding of neighborhood issues and then use this information to target additional projects, services and programs. The City will be able to design projects to better meet residents' needs by involving the associations in project planning and implementation. To ensure its ability to respond to a wide range of issues, the City Manager intends to designate the Director of Planning and Economic Development to be the main point of contact with the neighborhood associations. The Director will have access to other City departments and can involve those department heads as needed.

Time frame:	Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners:	City, neighborhood associations
Estimated costs:	\$15,000 annually
Potential funding sources:	City resources



Action 8.2 *The City could create target area special assessment districts to fund sidewalk improvements, street trees, neighborhood park improvements and other actions identified by the emerging neighborhood associations.*

In response to limited City resources for infrastructure improvements, some neighborhood groups indicated an interest in forming special assessment districts that would generate revenues to fund improvements such as sidewalk construction, street trees and landscaping and park improvements. The City would work with neighborhood associations to create target area special assessment districts that would be used to fund specifically requested neighborhood improvements. A district would include all taxable properties within a given set of geographic boundaries, including both residential and commercial properties.

Special assessment districts can be established under Article 19A of the NYS General Municipal law, permitting monies to be collected by the City from property owners in the district, for the exclusive use of the district and for improvement purposes determined by the district. Special assessments can only be established with the consent of the property owners in the proposed district.

Neighborhood associations, as discussed in Action 8.1 above would be the forum for considering the creation of a special assessment district. The first step would be for the neighborhood to form a committee of property owners, merchants, and City representatives to explore interest in this idea and discuss potential projects with the City. The committee might gather literature and visit other successful districts and should prepare a concept plan for the district, including geographic limits, program of activities, administrative structure, budget and formulas for special assessments.

Typically a municipality will establish an “excluded basis,” where a flat dollar amount of the appraised value on all residential property is exempt from the assessment. This means that the owner of a property valued at less than the excluded value does not pay a special assessment. Furthermore, the assessment typically does not apply to churches or tax exempt properties.

A variety of services and benefits can be provided in the district including:

- Reduced interest rate loans for rehabilitation or historic preservation projects in the district
- New small business attraction programs
- Development incentives
- Special loan programs
- Technical assistance
- Professional planning
- Marketing support
- Design assistance
- Public improvements
- Management assistance relating to traffic calming, parking, maintenance, security and other public issues

The process of developing a neighborhood improvement district is established by state law. New York State typically requires:

- A petitioning and balloting process in which residents request and approve the assessment district
- Estimation of costs for physical improvements
- City Council approval that must include a public hearing

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- Creation of a process to protest the assessment or assessment system (which can be addressed through the City's existing appeals procedure through the Assessment Office)

Time frame: Medium Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City, neighborhood associations
Estimated costs: \$25,000
Potential funding sources: City resources

Action 8.3 Update 2000 Census data as it becomes available and make it available to the community.

2000 Census data began to become available in March 2001. While data regarding population, households, race and housing are now available, income, education and employment data and many of the more detailed analyses will not be available until summer or fall of 2002. The City will compile the new Census data as it becomes available and update the Master Plan to reflect it.

Time frame: Short Term
Potential stakeholders/partners: City
Estimated costs: staff time
Potential funding sources: City resources

Action 8.4 Create a monitoring and evaluation strategy.

The City intends to use its GIS tracking system to establish a monitoring and evaluation strategy that will enable the City to objectively identify and evaluate programs that are successfully delivering results, those that would benefit from additional technical assistance and programs that are not wise investments for the City. These determinations would then guide future investments.

City officials could use data collected on the number of code violations, police incidents, EMS and fire calls and other quality of life indices for each neighborhood to track neighborhood improvement. The City would annually review its investments in each neighborhood with regard to community programs and services, facade improvements, home rehabilitation, infrastructure, streetscape and landscaping improvements.

Time frame: Ongoing
Potential stakeholders/partners: City, neighborhood associations
Estimated costs: staff time
Potential funding sources: City resources



Goal 9: *Identify and develop economic initiatives that support the social fabric of the community, enhance the City's commercial districts, provide strong employment opportunities and meet residents' needs for goods and services.*

Economic development efforts in Corning have been somewhat fragmented and uncoordinated in recent years mostly due to lack of sufficient communication among the various entities engaged in and/or impacted by these activities. With the presence of Corning Incorporated and the tourist attractions available in the Finger Lakes Region, Corning is confronting economic development issues and needs that typically only large cities face. With the limited tax base and resources of a small community, Corning has found it difficult to keep on top of the economic development challenges for the City and the region. As part of the comprehensive planning process, the City has identified a number of supporting actions to advance economic revitalization in Corning.

Action 9.1 *Inventory parcels appropriate for land banking to create opportunities for new development; Identify available funding sources and a financing strategy for acquisition and redevelopment*

Through the Empire Zone planning process, the City identified a number of key development parcels that have subsequently received EZ designation. Other potential redevelopment sites have been identified in several neighborhoods through the comprehensive plan process. Utilizing this baseline information, the City could prepare a comprehensive data base of all appropriate development parcels in the City. The City could also work with other economic development partners to develop a funding strategy for acquisition and redevelopment of land bank parcels.

Time frame:	Short to Medium Term
Stakeholders / partners:	City of Corning, Corning URA, Corning Incorporated, Three Rivers Development
Estimated costs:	Inventory \$ 5,000 Acquisition \$2.0 - 3.0 million
Potential funding sources:	EDA; HUD 108,CDBG, EDI; NYS JDA; EZ tax incentives; IDA bonding; private investment

Action 9.2 *Implement Empire Zone tools to enhance business opportunities, create new jobs for residents and expand the local tax base*

Designation of Empire Zone (EZ) sites in Corning provides the City with significant economic development tools previously not available. This also comes at an advantageous time when EZ incentives have been substantially enhanced.

Corning's EZ is part of a County-wide designation that includes prominent sites in the City of Hornell. Other sites in Steuben County are also being contemplated. The Hornell Industrial Development Agency is the lead entity and will coordinate administration of the local zone program. The regional nature of the local EZ presents both opportunities and challenges.

The collaborative public-private partnership (Steuben County, Hornell, Corning, Corning Incorporated, Alstom Inc., etc.) should create great synergy and stimulate creative economic development opportunities throughout the region. Such collaborations are highly valued by most federal and state economic development funding programs.

The complexity of the program design will also require active and ongoing communication and coordination among the various partners in order to deliver EZ benefits to enhance business

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expansion and job creation in the region. The Director of Planning and Economic Development would be the logical City liaison with Zone Administrative Board and be responsible for distributing EZ information to existing and new businesses in Corning.

Time frame: Immediate and ongoing
Stakeholders / partners: City of Corning, Corning Incorporated, Empire Zone Coordinator, Steuben County IDA
Estimated costs: \$10,000 annually
Potential funding sources: City resources; EZ administrative funds; Corning Incorporated

Action 9.3 Develop and implement a Microenterprise Program

Development of a Microenterprise Program is discussed as an element of the Neighborhood 3 Catalyst project (Bridge Street Facade Program). In addition to providing technical, educational and financial support to Northside businesses, the program would also be of significant benefit to Market Street businesses (existing and new) as well as to new future commercial development along Denison Parkway. In consideration of recent Empire Zone designation, the City may want to collaborate with Steuben County and the City of Hornell on a regional micro program. As the Small Cities CDBG program is a primary funding source, a regional micro program would likely be a very competitive funding application to the Governor's Office of Small Cities.

The typical microenterprise program model consists of three primary components: a Business Education module utilizing classroom training; One-on-One technical assistance that pairs professional business consultants with entrepreneurs and existing business owners to address specific problems and improve business performance; and a Seed Capital Loan Fund with low interest, flexible financing to further assist program graduates.

The program budget delineated below (\$400,000) is designed to cover a two-year start-up period with two training sessions per year. Each classroom training session can accommodate 20-25 businesses. Up to 100 businesses could therefore be assisted over the first two-year period.

Time frame: Short Term
Stakeholders / partners: City of Corning, Corning Incorporated, Chamber of Commerce

Estimated costs:	Marketing & Outreach	\$ 25,000
	Business assessment/selection	\$ 20,000
	Business education training	\$ 20,000
	Individual Technical assistance	\$110,000
	Seed capital Loan Fund	\$170,000
	On-going business counseling	\$ 15,000
	<u>Program delivery/administration</u>	<u>\$ 40,000</u>
	Total program budget	\$400,000

Potential funding sources: CDBG; Corning Enterprises; other private donations

Action 9.4 Increase coordination of tourism development efforts

The Regional Tourism Partnership made up of Steuben, Schuyler and Chemung counties and Corning Enterprises was created to establish and market the Finger Lakes Wine Country brand. The partnership formed in response to a study done for Corning Enterprises by Longwoods



International which states that the region is not taking advantage of its tourism potential. "The region is perceived as one big outdoor adventure ... Outdoor vacationers have low yield in terms of economic impact and should not be our main target," according to the study. Attractions, cultural activities, shopping and hotels are the new focus.

Primary functions of the Partnership include advertising the region through various media, promoting events and attractions, creating a website and measuring the effectiveness of marketing strategies. The initiative complements efforts ongoing by the Steuben County Conference and Visitors Bureau.

As part of the comprehensive planning process, focus group discussions with tourism development entities have yielded a couple of key recommendations for where the City can enhance economic development efforts in this area. Some of the issues cited most often were improved directional signage for tourists, the need to designate appropriate areas for motor coach parking; the need to provide financial support for the Intown Information Center; and the need to develop additional funds to support park maintenance. A number of City-wide projects proposed in the action plan would also directly solve some of these issues.

The City recognizes the need to improve directional signage to primary tourist destinations such as Market Street, Corning Museum of Glass, Rockwell Museum of Western Art and other attractions. This effort will be a part of the wayfinding signage program described in Action 1.2. Other Comprehensive Plan efforts that will impact this initiative include design standards for commercial development (Action 1.4), which should help in suggesting appropriate design and format of directional signage. The City-wide Parking Plan (Action 6.4) will more than likely involve a change or replacement in existing signage and should be coordinated with the directional signage project.

The issue of designated areas for motor coach parking is addressed as part of City-wide Action 6.7 (Creation of a Transportation Center). As this is a long-term project, the City will work with the various tourism development entities in identifying and designating temporary parking and staging areas for motor coaches. City-wide Action 6.10 discusses some initial plans to create distinctive gateways to the City. City-wide Action 4.1 proposes the development of a multi-year park improvement capital plan that addresses the desired mix of facilities and uses to be made available in the City's parks. In addition the City will consider studying the feasibility of creating a theme park within Corning, perhaps at the site of the Fallbrook plan, if that is demolished.

Time frame:	Medium Term
Stakeholders / partners:	City of Corning, Corning Enterprises, Chamber of Commerce, Finger Lakes Wine Country; Corning Intown Promotions; Steuben County Conference and Visitors Bureau; Corning Museum of Glass
Estimated costs:	\$20,000 annually
Potential funding sources:	City in-kind; Corning Incorporated

Action 9.5 Expand and increase coordination of marketing of the City

This supportive activity builds upon the tourism development coordination efforts outlined in Action 9.4. The City's recent designation as an Empire Zone provides a unique opportunity for the City to capitalize on a joint marketing strategy delineated for the business development and human resource initiatives in the City's EZ Plan.

The proposed Empire Zone marketing campaign will be supported by the City of Hornell, the City of Corning, Steuben County and major local employers including Corning Incorporated with

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additional funding from other sources including the eligible funds for the state EZ program, and other private and public sources. Primary elements of the marketing campaign will include:

- Developing new marketing materials (print and video) demonstrating the key benefits of a Steuben County location
- Developing additional and new display materials for conferences, seminars and other marketing opportunities
- Establishing a schedule of marketing conferences and other events
- With the assistance of the IDAs, developing a prospect management system and coordinating that system with the Zone Marketing Committee
- With the Zone Marketing Committee, continuously reviewing the marketing program to assess results, evaluate performance, review information gathered from prospective businesses and make needed adjustments

Time frame: Short to Medium Term
Stakeholders / partners: City of Corning, Corning Enterprises, Chamber of Commerce, Finger Lakes Wine Country; Zone Marketing Committee
Estimated costs: \$ 10,000 - \$ 15,000 (City share)
Potential funding sources: City of Corning

Action 9.6 Create a hotel room tax to fund central City programs and maintenance efforts

The City will consider creating and implementing a hotel room tax to raise money earmarked for maintenance responsibilities and programs along Market and Bridge streets. Specific programs that the tax revenues could be used for include a tree replacement program on Market Street, streetscape improvements on Bridge Streets and funding to help support a downtown manager position. The City will evaluate the feasibility of a 2% room tax, which would yield approximately \$65,000 per year to fund needed improvements and programs.

Time frame: Short Term
Stakeholders / partners: City of Corning, hotel owners, Three Rivers Development, CIDMA
Estimated costs: \$2,500 cost to develop, with an initial revenue stream of \$65,000 annually
Potential funding sources: City of Corning

