

Architecture
Planning
Interior Design

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Lansing Town Center Lansing, New York

Planning Guidelines

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HOLT Architects
MISSION STATEMENT:

We are committed to understanding our clients' dreams, and call upon our passion for architectural excellence to make them realities.

We strive to bring value to our clients in everything we do.

We employ a socially and environmentally responsible approach to our work by establishing sustainability as a core principle of our design.

We foster a working environment that nurtures the free exchange of ideas and encourages continuing professional development.

Process

In December 2009 the Lansing Town Board engaged HOLT Architects and Trowbridge & Wolf Landscape Architects to produce planning guidelines for a Lansing Town Center (LTC).

HOLT Principal David Taube, HOLT Associate Miles Cigolle, and Trowbridge & Wolf Principals Peter Trowbridge and Kimberly Michaels jointly directed the 5-month study working closely with members of the LTC Committee chaired by Kathy Miller.

After extensive review and summary of the 2006 Town of Lansing Comprehensive Plan and site visits across Lansing, the planning team presented project goals and initial findings to the LTC Committee. On January 19, 2010 over seventy Lansing residents turned out for a public meeting at the Grange to hear the planning consultants present their initial findings and gather resident opinions in an open discussion. The largely positive discussion was very helpful in directing the course of the study and was a clear indication of just how important a future LTC is to this community. On February 4, 2010 the planning consultants presented their recommended planning guidelines to the LTC Committee for input. It was agreed that both broad planning guidelines and specific first small steps would be most helpful in moving the complex process forward. On April 13, 2010 a final public presentation of planning guidelines for a LTC was made in Town Hall before twenty Lansing residents. Miles Cigolle prepared this final report, which reflects that presentation and includes a summary of the 2006 Town of Lansing Comprehensive Plan, project goals, summary of initial findings, public comment summary, concept development plan, before and after views for specific first steps, and long-term recommendations for successful future project implementation.

Executive Summary

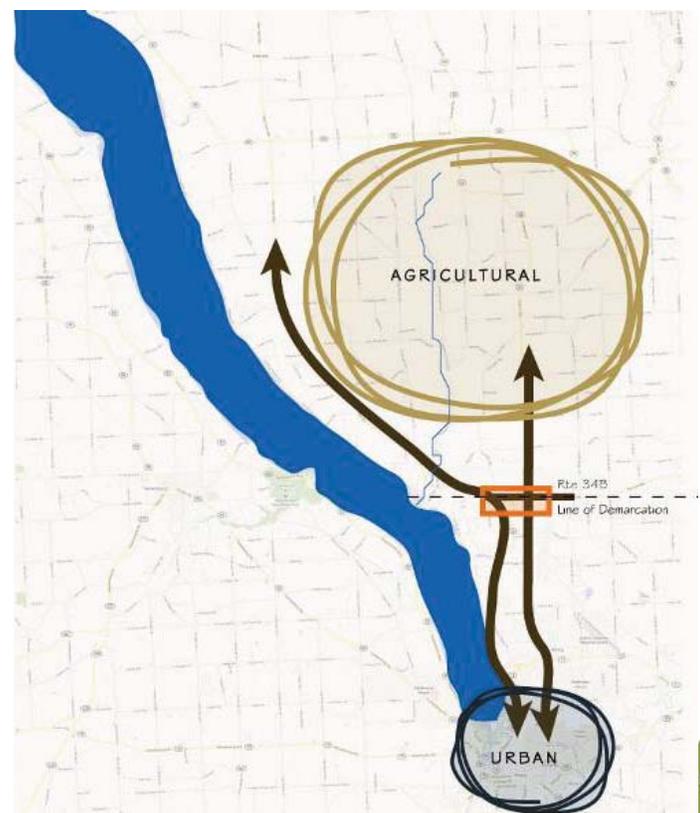
2006 Comprehensive Plan & Goals

The planning consultants summarized the key points of the 2006 Town of Lansing Comprehensive Plan in the Planning Principals & Recommendations which follow this executive summary. Numerous reoccurring issues address broad goals for a Lansing Town Center. Seven key items which remain valid today can be listed. These form the goals for a Lansing Town Center (LTC).

1. Community identity and character
2. Acknowledgment of Town Center activity
 - a. New Town Hall
 - b. Renovated Library
 - c. Historic Grange
3. Increased density
4. Mixed land uses
5. Pedestrian focus
6. Consolidated parking
7. Public sewers

Context

Lansing is a diverse rural community with deep agricultural roots and more recent ties to the vibrant academic centers in Ithaca just five miles to the south. With its unique setting overlooking Cayuga Lake and adjacent to historic Ludlowville, Lansing has important recreational and cultural opportunities that the concept for a new Town Center needs to embrace. Route 34 (Auburn Road) between Triphammer Road and East Shore Drive marks the point of demarcation between the more urban context to the south and the more rural context to the north.



Context

Town Lands & Concentration

The Town of Lansing owns key lands on both sides of Route 34 which can most easily be used to define the character of a vibrant future LTC. To the south on 18 acres are the Town Hall, Library, Grange, and playing fields. To the north is a much larger undeveloped internal parcel of over 150 acres that abuts agricultural fields to the north.

The existing and future concentration of commercial, institutional, and recreational assets along Route 34 near Town owned land should be encouraged. The opportunity to achieve the 2006 Comprehensive Plan goals of community identity, increased density, mixed land uses, pedestrian focus, consolidated parking, and public infrastructure are the greatest at this point of convergence.



Lansing Town Lands

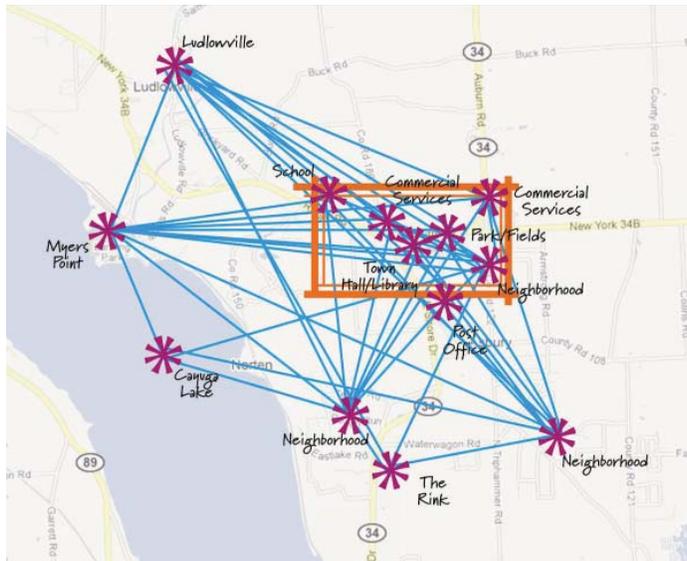


Concentration

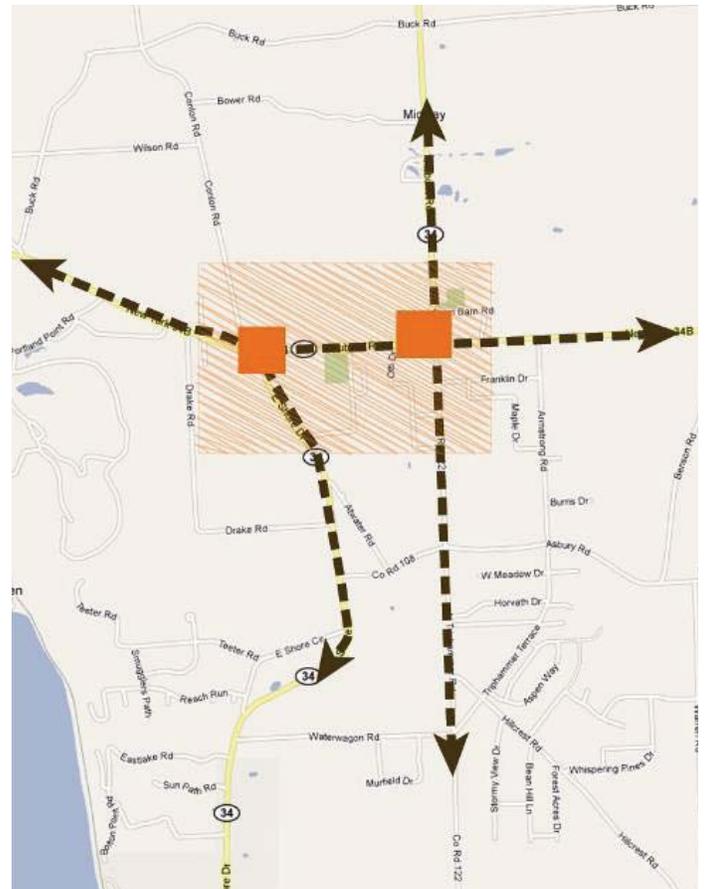
Linkages & The Center

Lansing has multiple centers including Myers Point and the Town Hall playing fields for summer recreation, Ludlowville for historic heritage, the Rink for indoor athletics, the Town Hall and Library for indoor community gatherings, and the High School for teen activity. These and other points are linked to each other and form a web of concentration along Route 34 between Triphammer Road and East Shore Drive.

The two signaled intersections along Route 34 at East Shore Drive and Triphammer Road create focal points at Rogues' Harbor and the new gas mart respectively. These two structures, one historic and the other contemporary, anchor the area of concentrated development between them.



Linkages



The Center

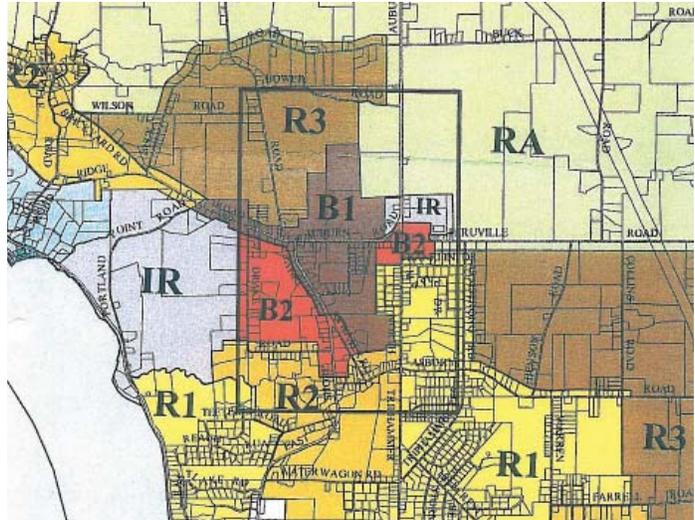
Public Feedback

On January 19, 2010 over seventy Lansing residents turned out for a public meeting at the Grange to hear the planning consultants present their initial findings for the LTC and gather public concerns. Those specific comments are included in the Public Comment Summary included at the end of this report. Multiple similar comments underscored common community concerns. Six key issues were raised.

1. Strategy - a plan is needed
2. Connections - unify the community
3. Improve Community Services
4. Support Development - small local businesses
5. Include Housing
6. Promote Green Space

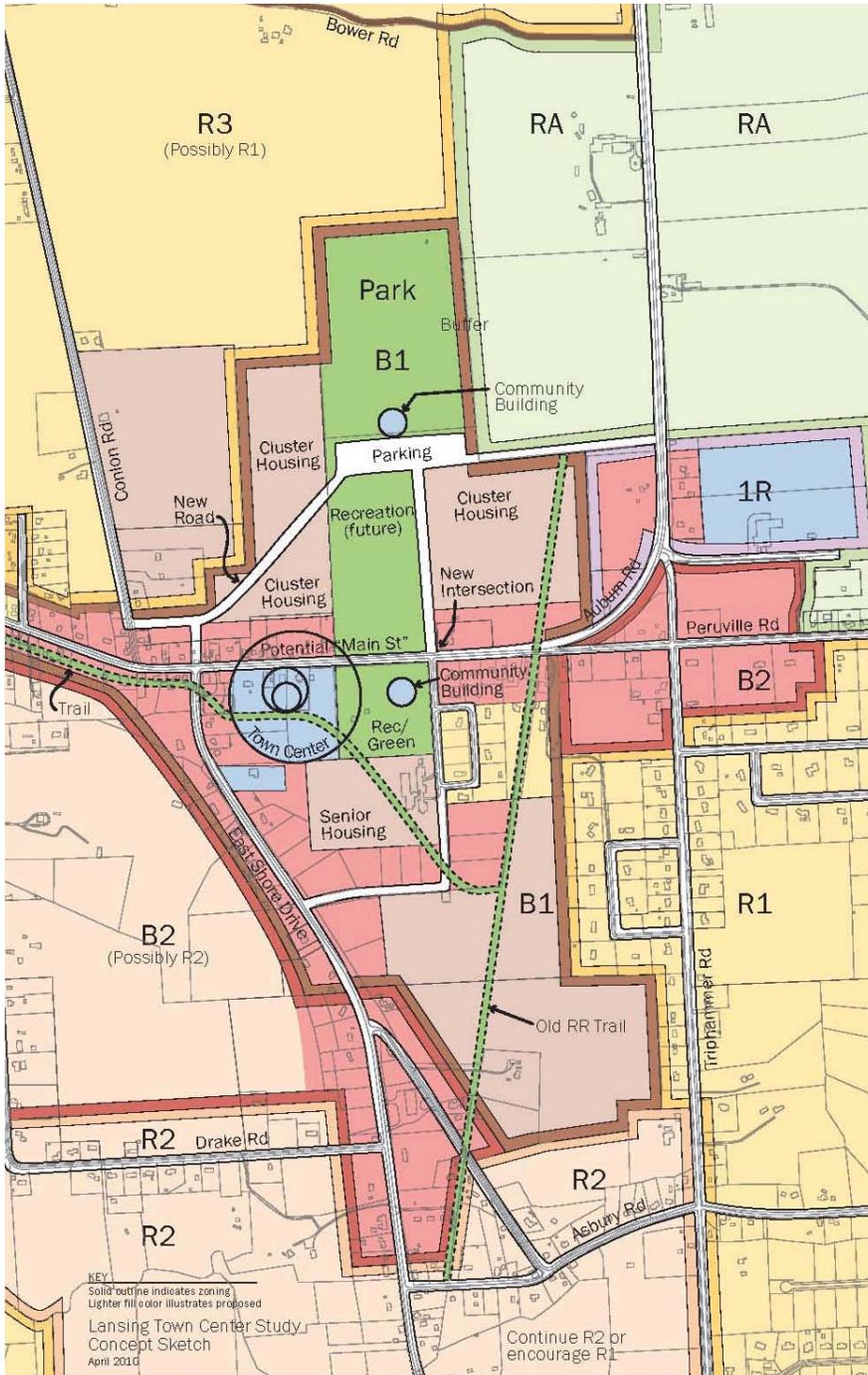
Zoning & Future Development

The existing Lansing Zoning Map defines business uses B1 and B2 at the core, residential uses R1 and R2 to the south, and agricultural uses RA to the north. This arrangement generally supports the concept of a LTC and does not need to be modified.



Existing Lansing Zoning Map

A closer look within these broad zoning guidelines suggests the flexibility to achieve a LTC that truly embraces Lansing’s shared community goals. Increased density can be achieved by keeping commercial concentration along East Shore Drive and the intersection of Route 34 and Triphammer Road. A potential Main Street can develop by encouraging development along Route 34 between Rogues’ Harbor and the new gas mart. New pedestrian sidewalks with plantings and lighting along Route 34 can create positive community identity and character. Mixed land uses within the internal parcels north and south of Route 34 can include cluster and senior housing near the core which will foster a true pedestrian community. A new loop road north of Route 34, extending East Shore Drive and Woodsedge Drive, can organize future northern development and concentrate density at the core around the LTC. Linked green spaces can radiate northward from the existing LTC playing fields across Route 34 toward the adjacent agricultural zone to the north. Outdoor activities in these green spaces can range from structured athletic games in the south to hiking trails in natural parkland to the north. Parking lots can be consolidated behind buildings and hidden from main roadways so that the streetscape is visually attractive. Reuse of the abandoned north/south railroad line, joined to new hiking trails, can create a pedestrian network that connects residential areas and remote outer centers with the LTC.



Future Development

First Steps

Improvements to the streetscape along Route 34 are relatively easy to achieve and can return maximum impact. Replacing existing open drainage ditches along Route 34 with covered culverts, adding new



Existing Main Street



Proposed Main Street Improvements

sidewalks, and introducing new plantings and historical street lamps would project a positive public image and promote pedestrian safety at the same time.

Redefining the abandoned north/south railroad line as a new jogging path would also be relatively easy to achieve and bring immediate benefit to Lansing residents. Connectivity and recreation could be addressed at the same time.



Existing Main Street



Existing Abandoned Railroad Line



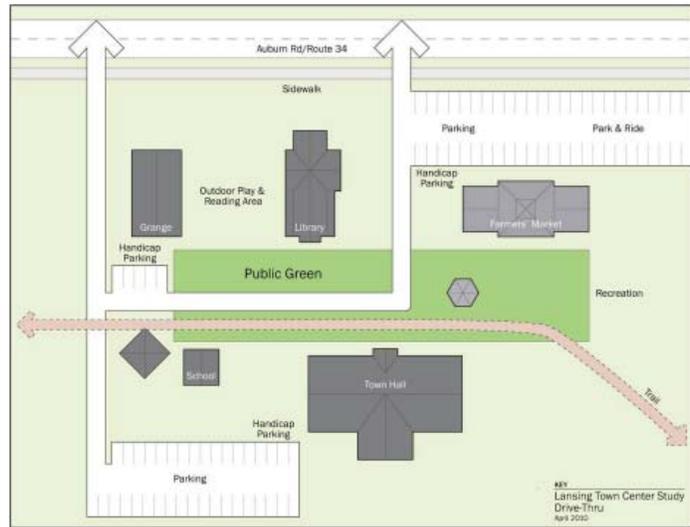
Proposed Main Street Improvements



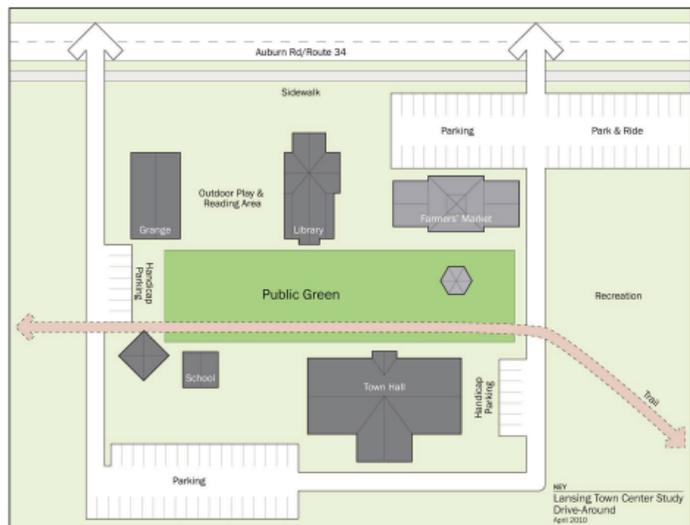
Proposed Jogging Trail

Town Green & Civic Pride

Traditionally the center of small towns in New York State has included a small park or town green with important town buildings such as the town hall, library or churches placed around the edges. Often a fanciful open air gazebo, benches, monument, or flag pole is placed in the center. This simple organization successfully creates a gathering place that fosters town identity and civic pride. Currently the outdoor space between the Lansing Town Hall, Library and Grange is largely asphalt paving for



Proposed Town Green with Drive-Thru



Proposed Town Green with Drive Around

roadways and parking lots. It would be possible to relocate the required roadway and parking lots to create a Public Green. The roadway could either pass thru the center of the Green or be restricted to the perimeter. The later arrangement is preferable because it keeps the entire Green intact for community events and activities. Handicapped parking could be accommodated near each building as required. To increase the importance and vitality of the Green, a Farmer's Market and Gazebo could

be added. These open covered structures could have multiple year-round uses including the sale of fresh produce and flowers, shelter for the adjacent park-and-ride, an attractive setting for art and antique fairs, community barbeques, and outdoor receptions, as well as covered space to support athletic events in the adjacent playing fields. A future trail network for hiking and cross country skiing might pass thru the Town Green so that residents could connect to the LTC from residential areas or depart to other recreational destinations such as Myers Point.



Existing Historic School House with Parking Lot



Existing Lansing Library and Grange with Parking Lot



Proposed Historic School House with Town Green



Proposed Lansing Library and Grange with Town Green

Recipe for Success

Why are some communities more successful than others in implementing complex community projects? Six common ingredients for smooth project implementation can be identified. Lansing will need to nurture each of these to be most successful in the future.

1. Community Consensus - adopt a plan
2. Political Will - lead the charge
3. Available Resources
 - a. In-house planning expertise
 - b. Outside planning consultant
 - c. Infrastructure consultant
 - d. Grant writing consultant
4. Potential Funding - be prepared
5. Ease of Implementation - keep it simple
6. Continual Re-Evaluation - ongoing commitment



Lansing Town Center
Planning Principals & Recommendations
Town of Lansing Comprehensive Plan 2006
10 December 2009

1. Agricultural Resources
2. Alternative Energy
3. Commercial Development
4. Community Life
5. Growth and Development
6. Housing
7. Industrial Development
8. Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources
9. Parks and Recreation
10. Sewer and Water Systems
11. Town Center – B1
12. Traffic and Transportation

1. Agricultural Resources

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Foster cooperation between farm and non-farm residents
 - ii. Conserve farmland and natural resources
 - iii. Support diverse agribusiness activities
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Enact Right-to-Farm regulations
 - ii. Establish dialogue between farm community and local government
 - iii. Develop land use regulations for rural areas

2. Alternative Energy

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Promote renewable energy sources
 - ii. Promote a cleaner safer future
 - iii. Aim to provide cheaper energy at a predictable cost
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Assess proposals individually
 - ii. Public opinion on new energy proposals is key
 - iii. Maintain rural atmosphere and open scenic value

3. Commercial Development

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Encourage measured commercial development
 - ii. Encourage commercial development in Zones B1 and B2
 - iii. Commercial development should follow infrastructure development
 - iv. Locate new commercial uses close to similar existing development
 - v. Concentrate commercial development
 - vi. Minimize strip development
 - vii. Target convenience and personal service needs of Lansing residents

- b. Recommendations
 - i. Identify suitable commercial nodes
 - ii. Encourage small convenience and personal service businesses
 - iii. Minimize number of commercial entrances on major roads
 - iv. Establish design standards for siting, lighting, signage, architecture and landscaping

4. Community Life

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. A rural community with diverse values
 - ii. Encourage active public involvement
 - iii. Promote individual and collective voluntary participation
 - iv. Encourage programs that support community interests
 - v. Integrate plans and programs of voluntary groups
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Provide government support to voluntary groups that demonstrate community value
 - ii. Support grant application process

5. Growth and Development

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Welcome growth
 - ii. Balance growth and conservation of environmental qualities
 - iii. Channel growth where concentration is desirable
 - iv. Safeguard natural and historic resources
 - v. Safeguard distinctive town characteristics
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Development should occur where public utilities are practical
 - ii. Pursue land use efficiency
 - iii. Establish limits to non-farm use of steeper upland lake slopes
 - iv. Modify land use regulations to achieve planning goals

6. Housing

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Encourage housing variety
 - ii. Support all age groups and income levels
 - iii. Land management regulations that promote land use efficiency
 - iv. Minimize disruption to viable agriculture and natural features
 - v. Retain open space
 - vi. Preserve traffic carrying function of major roads
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Diversified housing development
 - 1. Affordable
 - 2. Energy efficient
 - 3. Ecologically friendly
 - ii. Higher density residential development where public utilities are practical
 - iii. Encourage clustering to conserve land
 - iv. Protect environmentally sensitive areas from development
 - v. Enact regulations to reduce number of new residential driveways on major roads

7. Industrial Development

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Light industrial/research development is beneficial for tax base and jobs creation
 - ii. Suitable sites considerations
 1. Accessibility to regional transportation systems
 2. Availability of utilities
 3. Complimentary to adjacent land uses
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Establish land use and performance standards
 - ii. Support increasing importance of in-home businesses
 - iii. Build on existing assets to expand local economy

8. Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Protect natural resources
 - ii. Preserve environmentally sensitive areas
 - iii. Integrate preservation values into development
 - iv. Promote community awareness of environmental, historic, cultural, and economic interdependency
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Identify Critical Environmental Areas under State Environmental Quality Review
 - ii. Protect Cayuga Lake with sediment and erosion control
 - iii. Promote green development
 - iv. Promote appropriate trees at streets and parking areas
 - v. Evaluate historic resources
 1. Potential for historic site designation
 2. Property restoration
 3. Adaptive reuse
 - vi. Establish system of historic markers

9. Parks and Recreation

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Support variety of recreation for all age groups
 - ii. Promote recreation facilities within new development
 - iii. Pursue cooperative agreements that support recreation
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Integrate open space and recreation system
 1. Build on existing facilities and programs
 2. Incorporate unique natural assets
 3. Open space potential
 - ii. Set aside land for recreation in higher density residential areas
 - iii. Increase public access to Cayuga Lake and Salmon Creek
 - iv. Consider capital improvements budget for parks and recreation

10. Sewer and Water Systems

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Sewer/water facilities are essential for sustained concentrated development
 - ii. All major growth areas require these services

- iii. Encourage intermunicipal cooperation to establish coordinated policies
- iv. Consider existing sewer/water infrastructure with potential zoning changes
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Provide public sewer/water services
 - 1. Within major development
 - 2. Where there exists a serious need to safeguard the environment
 - ii. Support public sewer in southern part of Town where public water exists
 - iii. Relate land use and development density to need for sewer/water facilities
 - iv. Continue to participate in intermunicipal sewer systems

11. Town Center – B1

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Foster future identity and character for the community
 - ii. Acknowledge recent town center activity
 - 1. New Town Hall
 - 2. Renovation of old Town Hall for Library
 - 3. Historical Center
 - iii. Encourage increased density
 - iv. Encourage mixed land uses
 - v. Maximize access for pedestrian traffic
 - vi. Park once and access a variety of goods and services
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Adopt incentives for prospective developers
 - ii. Insure consistency, quality, and broad mix of land use activities
 - iii. Provide public sewer facilities
 - 1. Incorporate existing sewer needs into design capacity

12. Traffic and Transportation

- a. Planning Principals
 - i. Facilitate traffic movement and minimize points of conflict
 - ii. Provide efficient access to backland
 - iii. Promote a variety of modes in addition to motorized vehicles
 - iv. Land use should preserve the traffic carrying function of major roads
 - v. Limit future development at Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport
 - vi. Promote public mass transit system
- b. Recommendations
 - i. Use Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council classification system for Town roads
 - ii. Preserve functional classification at key roads
 - 1. North Tripphammer Road, Warren Road, NYS Routes 34 and 34B
 - iii. Minimize driveway cuts on roads identified as Urban Minor Arterial and Urban Collector
 - iv. Identify appropriate land uses in vicinity of airport
 - 1. Light manufacturing, R&D, warehousing and outdoor recreation
 - v. Establish logical pedestrian and bicycle network
 - vi. Use subdivision approval process to advance local road network
 - vii. Participate in discussion of a north-south traffic route through or around Ithaca

Lansing Town Center
Initial Findings Public Meeting
19 January 2010

Public Comment Summary

1. Strategy

- a. Why plan now? What is the cost?
- b. Prepare plans now so when funds are available we get our share.
- c. Elsewhere without plans, precedent was set, and then things went sour.
- d. Hold commitment to water & sewer. Let's study, not build, expensive projects.
- e. Planning for "Opportunity"
- f. Make a Project Goal – "Quality of Life in Lansing"
- g. Zoning and Space
- h. Sustainability / Demographics
- i. Must have a plan to move forward.
- j. Remember the Cornell connection.
- k. Recreation Pathway Committee – Supports improved quality of life.
- l. What about the Public Sewer?
- m. What about gas drilling and fracking?
- n. Plan will require Fortitude and Vision
- o. Stress Quality of Life
- p. "Make a Plan" – What and where?
- q. Make a better place to live.
- r. Vision of Town Center Historic Preservation – Gather heritage buildings!
- s. What works and what doesn't?

2. Connections

- a. Multiple Centers? Where is the center?
- b. Ludlowville as the Center? Ludlowville School?
- c. Meyer Point as the Center?
- d. Multiple Town Centers: Meyers, Ludlowville, North Lansing & South Lansing
- e. Bike Trail to Meyers - Funded but had hold outs - lost without public support.
- f. Connect Meyers Point to Town & Rink with safe biking.
- g. Bikeways
- h. Need safer walking and biking paths between library and schools.
- i. Use walking trails year round with cross country skiing in winter.
- j. Access to Lake – a great resource.
- k. Link to Lake

- l. Tie Places Together
- m. Can't more than one location be okay?
- n. Need better Transportation / Public Transit / TCAT
- o. Note changes to Bus Routes.
- p. Road System & Traffic Calming
- q. New Roads: 4-way at 34/34B feeding into new Town Land.
- r. Traffic at Triphammer & 34B
- s. What about truck traffic?

3. Community

- a. Build Community! – More spaces that build community.
- b. Arts Center – meeting space / flexible large space.
- c. Community Center – arts, pool, meeting space, flexibility, outdoor amphitheater
- d. Need 24/7 Meeting Space – HS get together – Coffee/Copy/Internet Café.
- e. Permanent Farmer's Market structure w/ nursery, flea market, etc.

4. Development

- a. We don't want "big developers". We want small stores and local services.
- b. Support "Local Businesses"
- c. Need laundromat, market, doctor offices, drug store and restaurants.
- d. Town Center Community Needs – more than 1 place to go – variety of businesses
- e. Need a Grocery / Market
- f. Need Fresh Produce
- g. More services – Clustering businesses promotes economic survival.
- h. Need Day Care.
- i. Aging population – senior housing and ease of travel.
- j. Housing? – Planning & Mitigation

5. Green Space

- a. Other agriculture + bedroom community examples?
- b. Ball Field is important.
- c. What to do with Town Land across 96B?
- d. Town Land across 96B: originally from State for recreation use only, but mixed use development is okay now.
- e. Promote Greenways.
- f. Gymnasium / Playing Fields
- g. Sports / Education / Seniors
- h. Build sports facilities and attract tournaments.
- i. Keep family friendly, make attractive for visitors and promote charm.