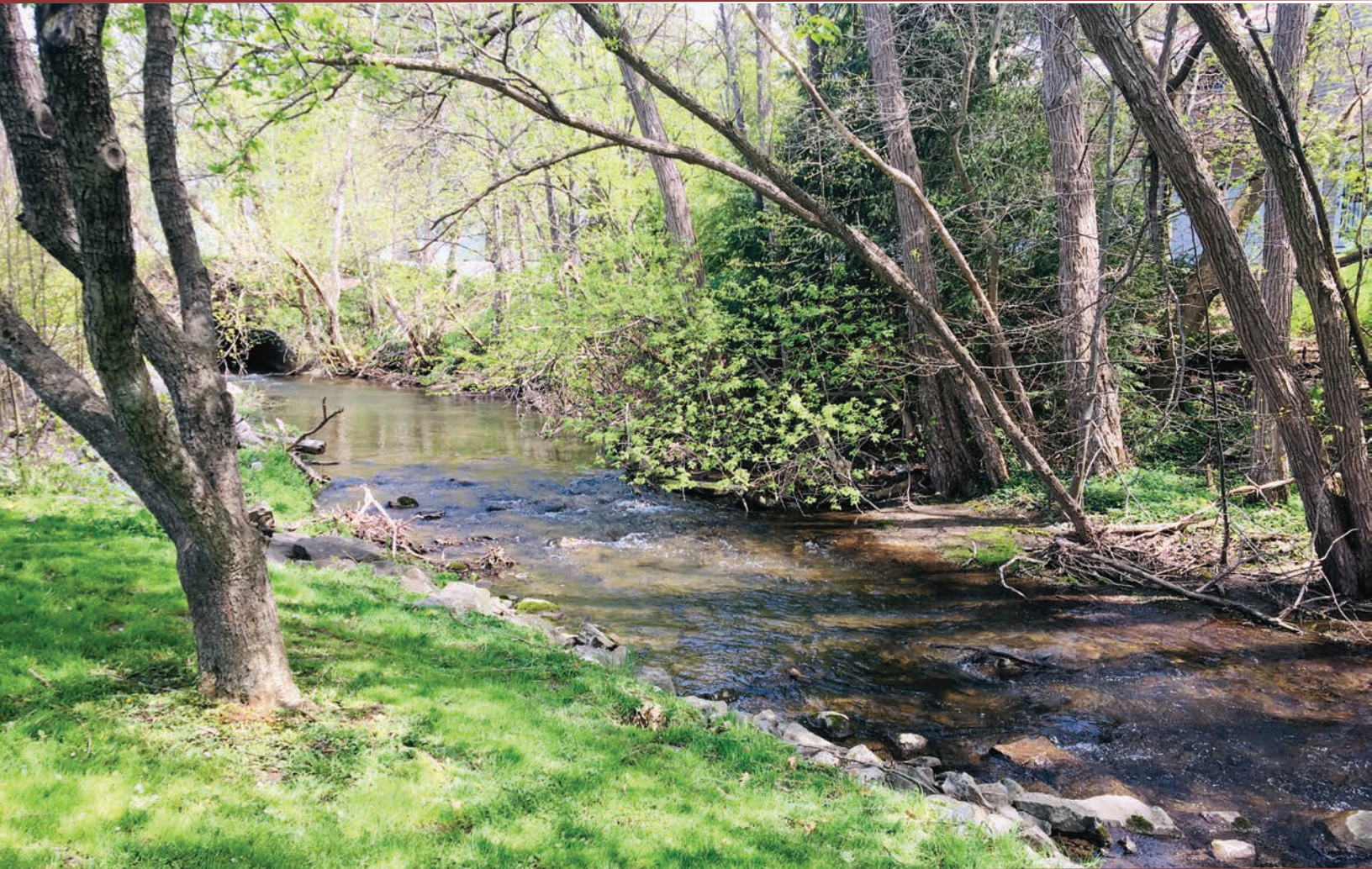


INITIATIVES FOR SPRINGVILLE: OPTIONS FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING



**Nathaniel Bonafede, Alexis Duwe, Ruth Fatolitis, Eric C. Johnson,
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**Graduate Practicum in Urban Planning
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
University at Buffalo, May 2021
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Springville, NY is a rural village spanning 3.69 square miles with a population of 4,296 people. Located at the southern edge of Erie County within the Town of Concord, it is situated between two well-connected, and heavily-trafficked roadways; New York State Route 219 to the west and New York State Route 240 to the east. Named for the numerous natural springs which run through the village, Springville has a deep-rooted history and a distinctive rural charm that has been maintained for centuries. Residents avidly protect the alluring character of the village, such as its proud agricultural industry and unique architectural style.

Permanently settled in 1808, Springville was formally incorporated in 1834 as a way to better serve the residents of the densely-populated section of Concord. Springville quickly became a prosperous village, boasting strong access to other towns via railroads. A wealth of industrial and manufacturing businesses drove development of the village, along with a formidable agricultural economy.

Presently, Springville is home to a strong, historic downtown business district on Main Street, primarily composed of locally-owned shops. Additionally, there is a bustling strip of big-box establishments along South Cascade Drive. Together, these areas host a variety of shopping opportunities and important services to both residents and highway travelers. Notably, Springville is also a prominent source of medical care. Bertrand Chaffee Hospital is the primary healthcare provider for a wide surrounding area. Surrounding the village, the landscape is dominated by farmland and beautiful natural attractions, including a direct link to the gorges at Zoar Valley. Springville is also a hub for outdoor recreational activities, such as snowmobiling, hiking, fishing, skiing, camping, and picnicking. Some hotspots for these activities are Scoby Dam Park, Spring

Brook, and the Pop Warner Rail Trail. The Springville Center for the Arts is another avenue for experiencing the charm of the village through art and music.

Although Springville has many assets, there remains incredibly potential to improve upon its strengths. As part of the University at Buffalo Master of Urban Planning graduate practicum, we have been invited by Mayor William Krebs and Erie County's Deputy Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development Mr. Daniel Castle to work for the Village of Springville in order to explore and analyze options for comprehensive regional planning.

Practicums are an integral part of urban planning education. More commonly known as "studios," these specialized courses are an educational method in which a group of graduate students, under the supervision of a professor, study real world planning issues and develop solutions for a client. Our practicum began in February 2021 and concluded in May 2021. We presented our findings to community members at open webinars in both April and May 2021. Although we had the opportunity to visit the village on multiple occasions, due to restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, much of our work was conducted virtually. Through this medium, we conducted extensive research on Springville, utilizing many resources such as Census data, maps, prior studies, and reports. We also had valuable discussions with local residents, stakeholders, business owners, and government officials.

We believe that it is necessary to classify our findings as a broad-based report and do not claim the following document to be a comprehensive plan for Springville. Rather, we present this information as a guide to lead initiatives and lay groundwork for the possibility of a future comprehensive plan at the discretion of Village leaders.

Importantly, although we cover a breadth of critical planning areas, we unfortunately were hindered by time constraints and were unable to discuss some important subjects, namely transportation, municipal energy, and broadband connection. It would be appropriate to include such information in a complete comprehensive plan.

Through the progression of our studio, it became clear that Springville is a memorable and distinguished place to live. The village has a dependable, proud foundation with a strong economy and spirited, stable population. However, the village also faces its own challenges. It was our goal to address these challenges and provide recommendations so that Springville can realize its full potential as a rural New York landmark. Some select topics of interest included improvement of the traditional downtown area, affordability and maintenance of homes, regional connections to natural amenities, economic development, management of the water system, and preservation of invaluable village history through culture and architecture.

Our studio is not the first to examine Springville and search for ways to induce positive change. There have been previous comprehensive planning efforts which sought to analyze its present conditions, identify sectors that could benefit from improvement, and devise proposals that could take the Village to a higher level of livability and growth. We researched some of these previous endeavors and relied on them to focus our efforts. We read through the 2014 Village of Springville Comprehensive Plan, the 2018 Town of Concord Comprehensive Plan Update, and the 1999 Town of Concord and

Village of Springville, Erie County, New York: Joint Comprehensive Plan. The 1999 document was especially important as it was one of the first plans to direct the development of the two municipalities.¹ The plans in 2014 and 2018 include elements from, and improve upon, the work and recommendations of this initial project.^{2,3} The Village of Springville Comprehensive Plan and Town of Concord Comprehensive Plan Update contain multiple goals and objectives that often overlap with one another. There may be slight variation regarding how the topics were analyzed, but both plans investigate and address the environment, economic development, residential development, parks and recreation, community services, transportation, infrastructure, urban design, and historical preservation. Our report builds upon many of these subjects. We seek to provide additional analysis and recommendations in accordance with the established objectives.

Overall, the Village of Springville has fared well through tough times in its history, including the recent COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast to much of upstate New York, Springville remains relatively stable and even shows signs of growth. It has a vibrant downtown, a strong retail strip, and a robust, fairly diversified economy. It also has extraordinary scenic resources that regularly attract outsiders and showcases a unique sense of place. All things considered, Springville's future is promising and there are plentiful opportunities to establish itself as a well-known, lively Western New York village. The following chapters in this report outline and explore initiatives for Springville in order to realize its full potential.

Endnotes:

¹ Nutter Associates, Community Planners, et al. Town of Concord and Village of Springville, Erie County, New York - Joint Comprehensive Plan. Aug. 1999.

² Springville Committee Members, and KHEOPS Architecture, Engineering and Survey DPC. Village of Springville Comprehensive Plan, Adopted 2014.

³ Wendel Companies. Town of Concord Comprehensive Plan Update, 2018. Erie County Department of Environment and Planning.

Chapter 2: Data and Trends

Table 2.1: Springville Population Change from 1960 to 2019

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019
Springville Total Population	3852	4350	4285	4303	4249	4296	4298
Change	n/a	+498	-65	+18	-54	+47	+2
% Change	n/a	+12.14%	-1.50%	+0.41%	-1.26%	+1.10%	+.04%

In order to understand Springville's attributes and potential, we reviewed data on Springville's population and economy. We looked at data, sourced from the US Census Bureau, over time and compared to other villages. Overall, Springville has a stable population and economy, an asset in Upstate New York, which has seen economic and population declines.

As shown in Table 2.1, Springville's population between 1970 and 2019 has fluctuated around 4,300 with very little difference from decade to decade. Once again, in comparison to generally difficult and declining conditions in the rest of Upstate New York, this is a good performance.

Our group believed it would be useful to compare Springville data to other villages in New York State, so we chose 34 villages from eight counties in Western New York. We selected all villages in the counties that (1) were comparable in size to Springville, with population sizes ranging from 1,000 to 7,000 people, and (2) like Springville, were

not suburbs of large cities. Of 34 villages in this group, East Aurora was the largest and Springville was the fifth largest. Figure 2.1 illustrates the comparison, with villages grouped by county.

Populations varied within our chosen range, and variances were even more dramatic when comparing population change in the villages selected (Figure 2.2). Of the 34 villages compared, only four saw population increase between 1990 and 2019, the highest growth being in Alden at 3.7%, possibly attributable to an influx of previous suburban Buffalo residents. Springville came appears in sixth place with a decline of 0.3%, which just amounts five persons, demographically indicating an unchanged population.

We also broke down the profile of Springville's population by demographics (Figure 2.3). Springville's population is almost 97% white, while about 1.6% is American Indian, likely reflecting the proximity to the Seneca Nation, located to the west of the village.

Figure 2.1: Population Sizes of Comparable Villages

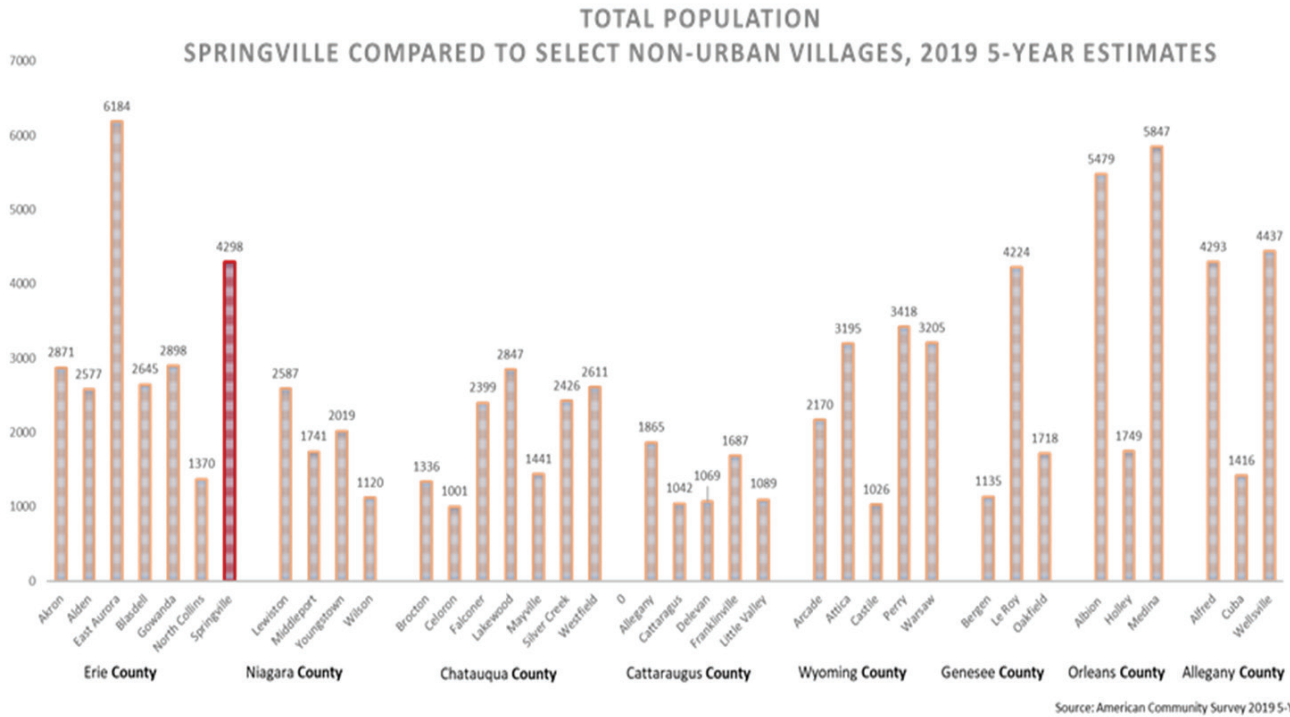


Figure 2.2: Population Change in Comparable Villages

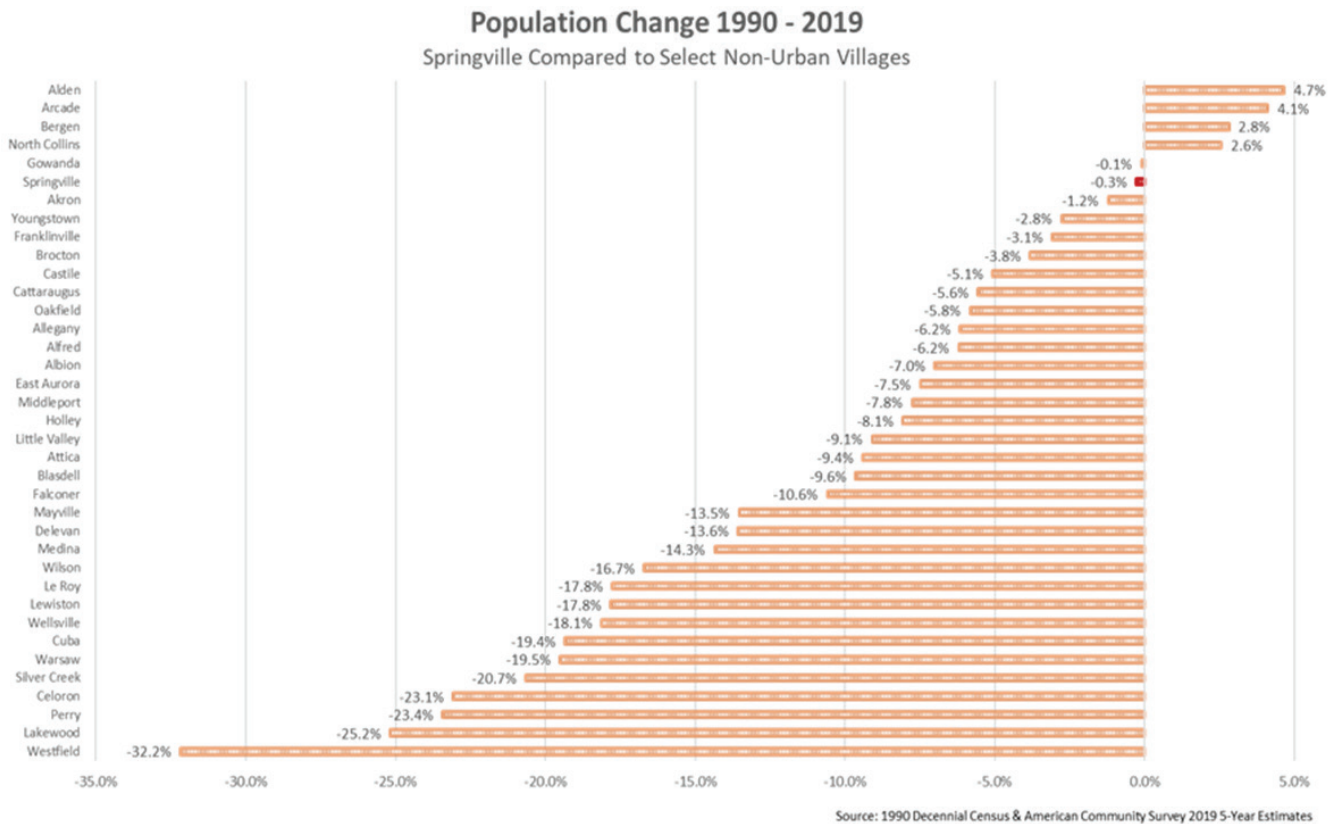
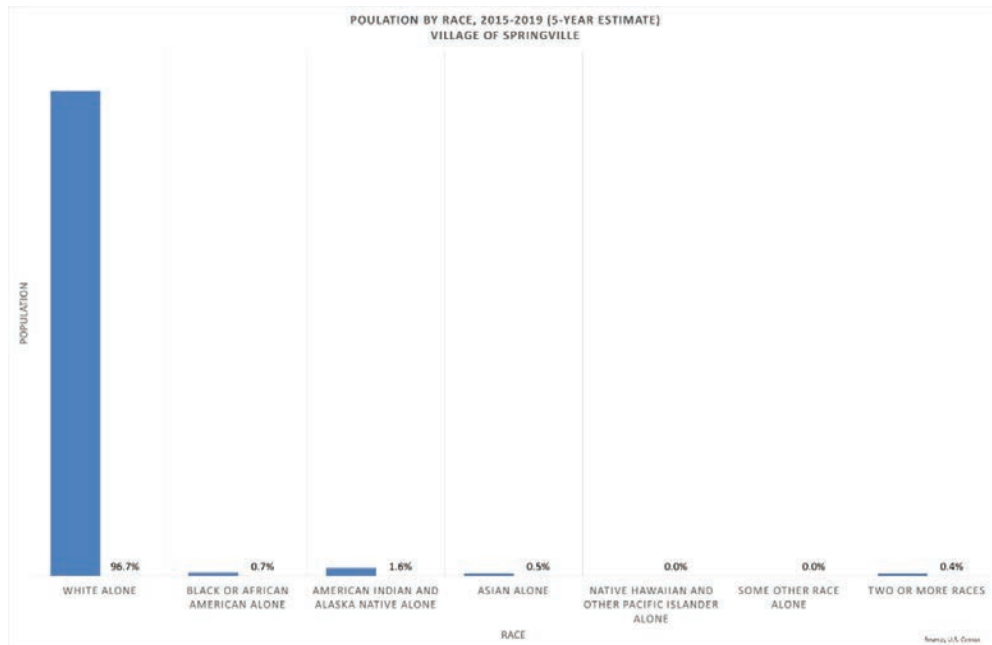


Figure 2.3: Population by Race

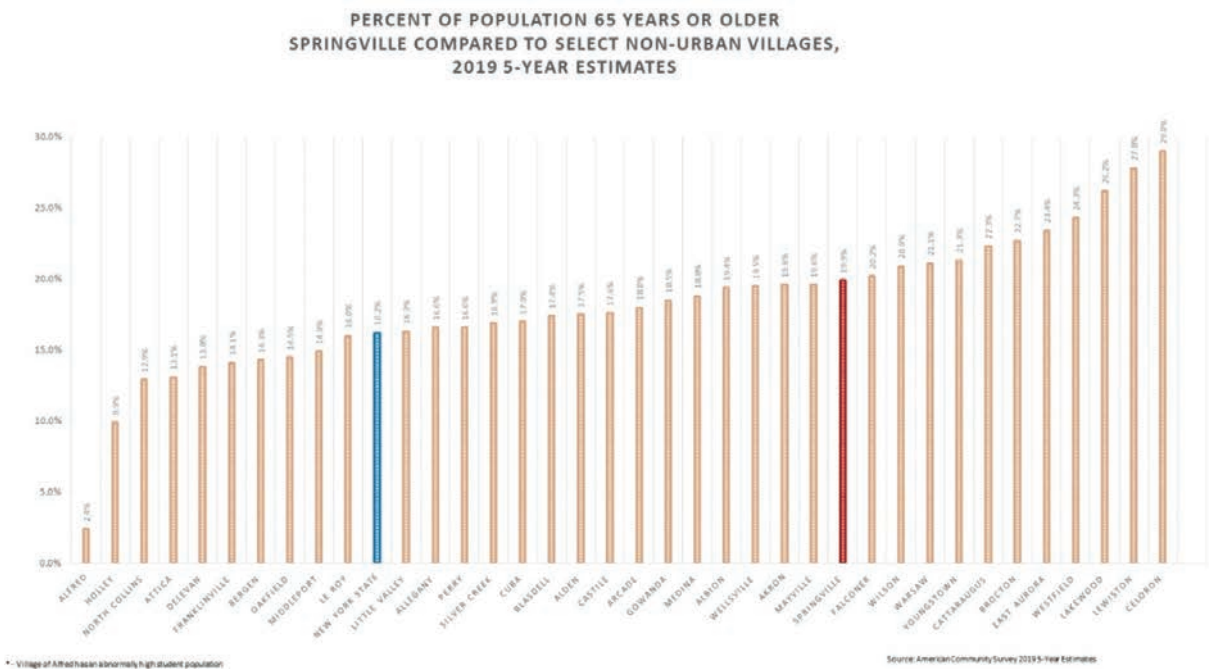


Of Springville’s population, just under 20% is 65 years of age or older. That puts Springville in 12th place compared to peer villages, in terms of percent that is elderly. However, even that percentage is significantly higher than the state average (Figure 2.4).

According to Census estimates averaged over 2015-19, Springville has an educational

profile similar to the other villages surveyed. Among adults 25 years old and older, the highest number (1333) have completed their high school education, and only 219 have less than a high school education. Another 882 have some college, and 442 have a high school degree (Figure 2.5). When compared to the average of other villages (Figure 2.6),

Figure 2.4: Population Over 65 Years of Age Compared to Select Villages



Springville has a higher concentration of people having high school as their highest educational attainment: 43% in Springville compared to 33% as a village average.

Though Springville has a relatively high concentration of adults with high school as their highest attainment, it is not especially high in adults who have less than high school. As seen in Figure 2.7, of Springville's adult

population, just over 7% have less than a high school education, putting it in 22nd place in that category. It should be clear that the village with lowest percentage without high school diplomas is Alfred, which also has the highest percentage of adults with college degrees. However, Alfred is a college town, so is not directly comparable to the others.

Figure 2.5: Educational Attainment

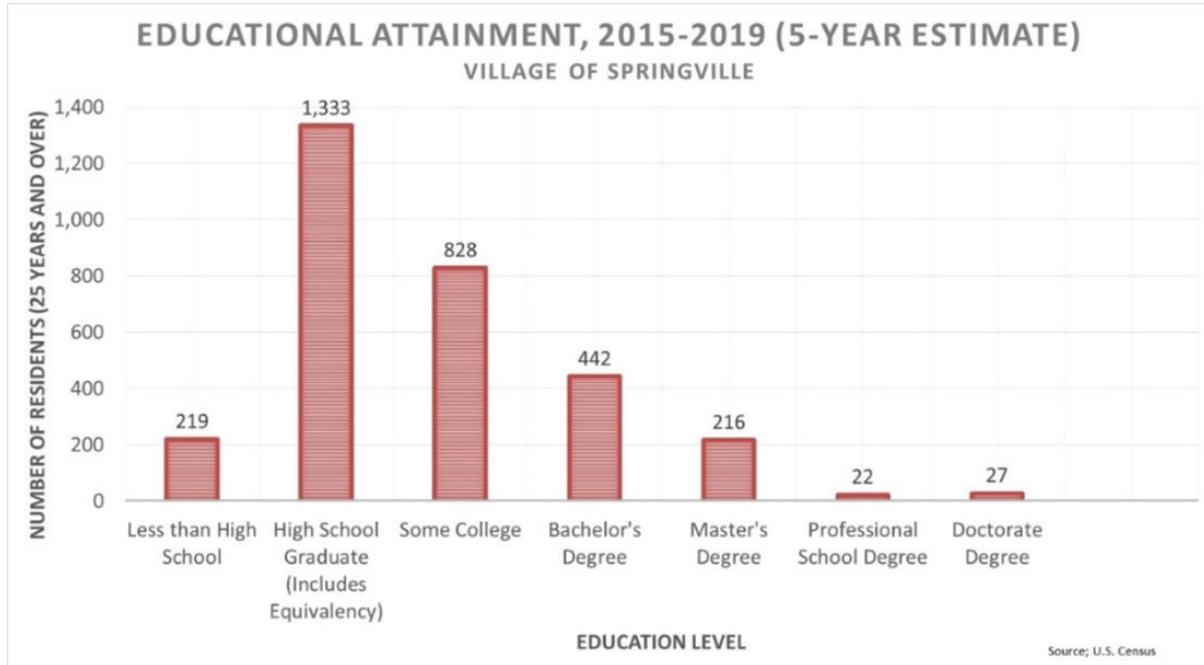
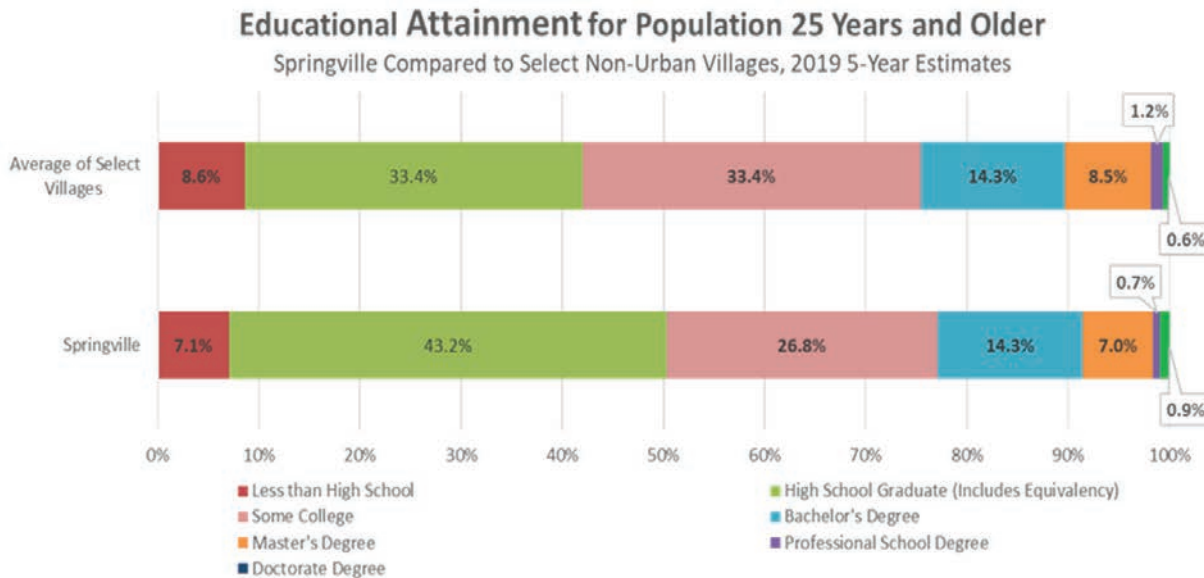


Figure 2.6: Educational Attainment in Springville vs. Average of Selected Villages



In the comparison of villages according to percentages who have received bachelor's degree or higher, Springville is fifteenth out of 34, putting it at about the middle of comparable villages (Figure 2.8).

Our next table examines US Census data for income in Springville's households (Figure 2.9). The village's median household income stands at just \$53,611, putting it 13th in comparison to the other villages. Though the village has incomes typical of peer villages, it has been more successful than its peers in maintaining economic stability.

One reason for the village's economic stability is its relative strength in certain economic sectors (Figure 2.10), even as many other rural villages have lost jobs and employers. As will be discussed in the final chapter on economic development, important employers include Bertrand Chaffee Hospital and other healthcare service organizations, the school district, and large national retailers which serve a larger area than the village itself. Despite the large retailers at the western edge of Springville, the village has also been able to retain a healthy downtown with active small businesses.

Figure 2.7: Villages Compared: Educational Attainment Less than High School

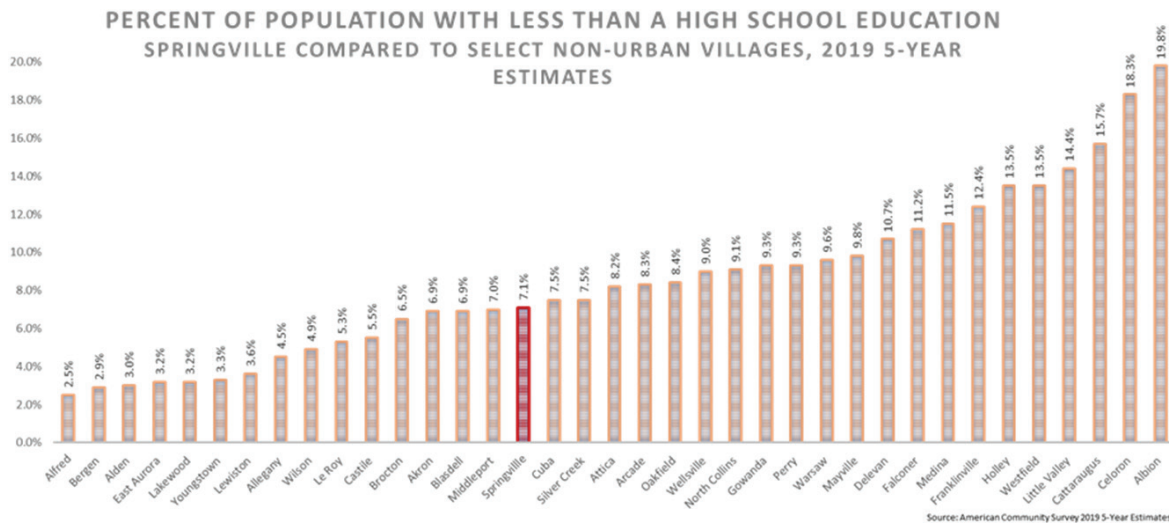


Figure 2.8: Villages Compared: Educational Attainment of Bachelor's Degree or Higher

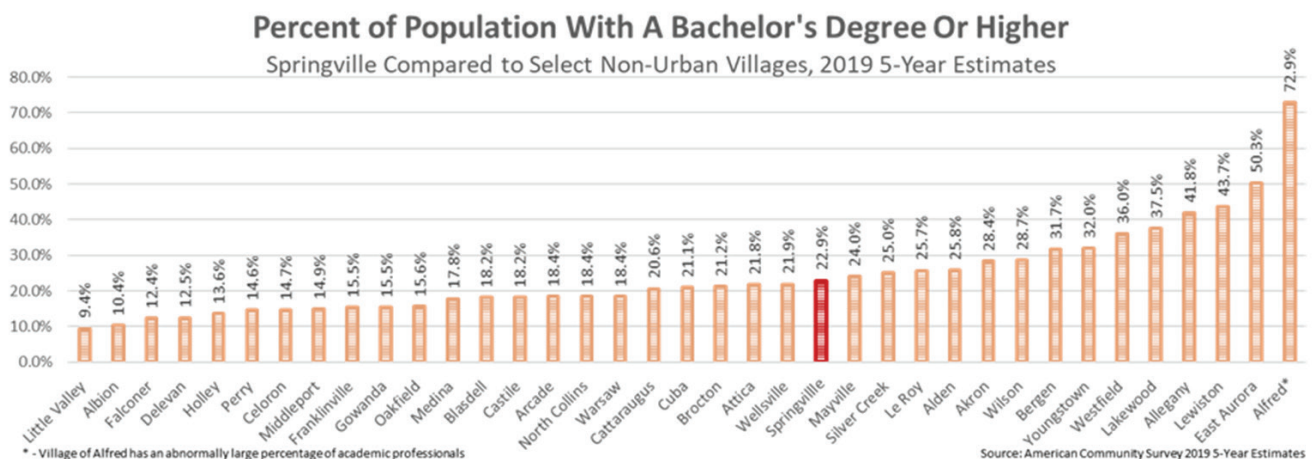


Figure 2.9: Median Household Income Compared to Selected Villages, 2019 est.

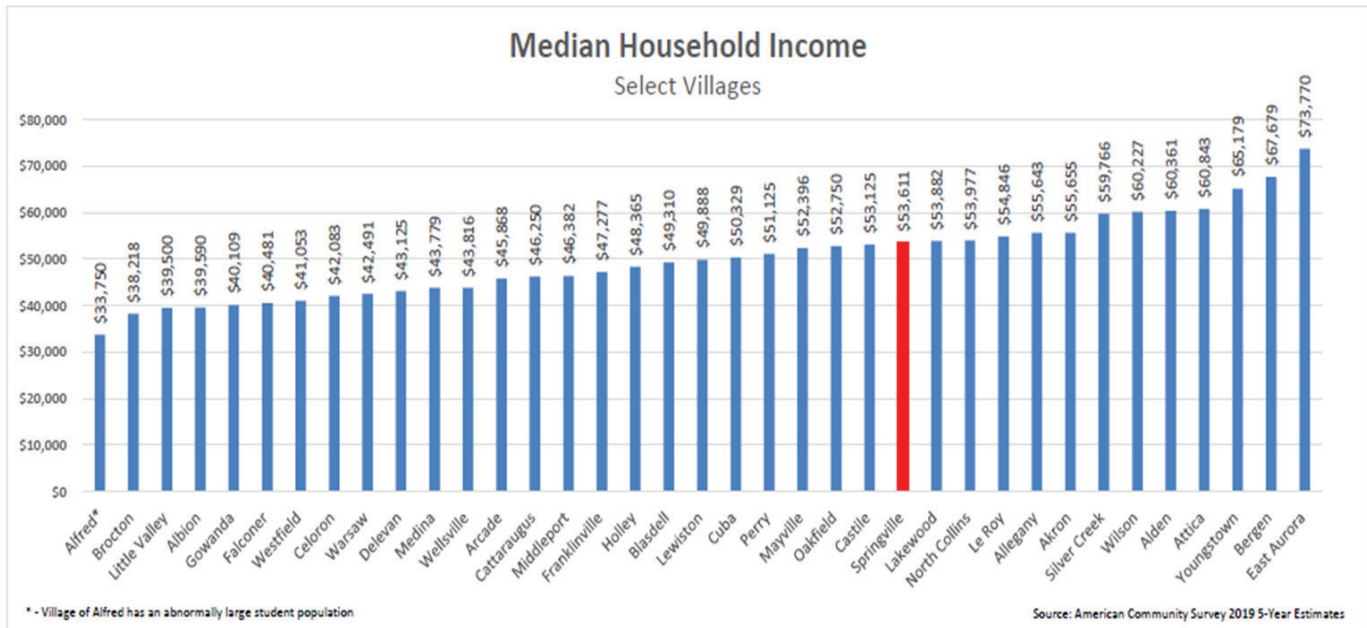


Figure 2.10: Industries by Occupation

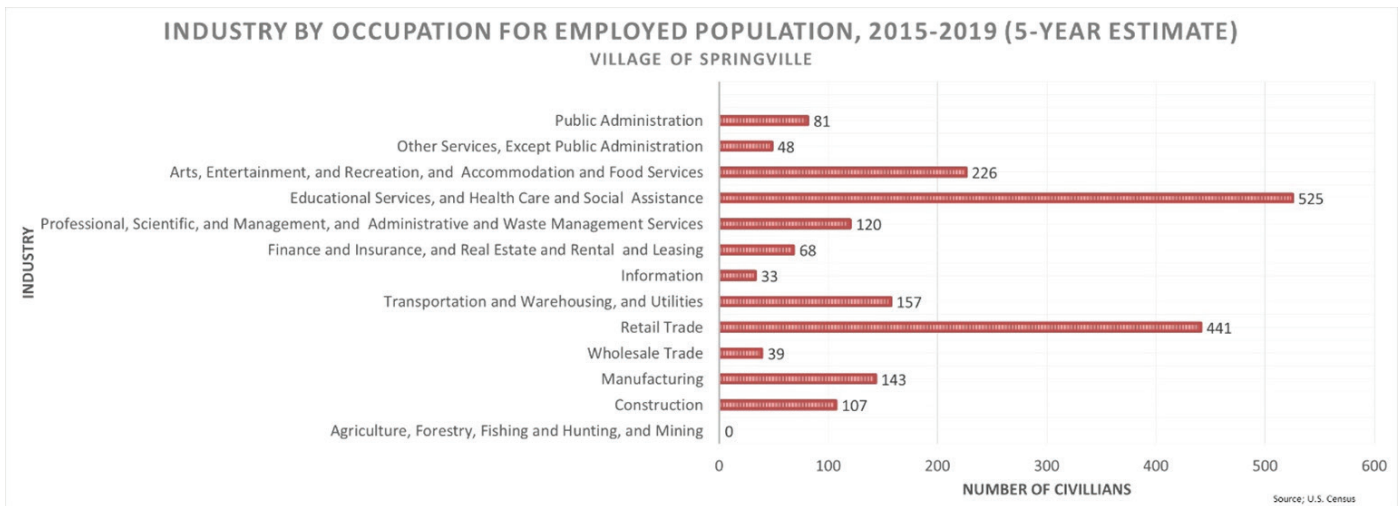


Figure 2.11: Inflow and Outflow of Workers in Springville

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2018



A major observation we made about Springville’s economy is that it is both a center of employment, attracting people who work in Springville but live in the surrounding region, and a center of residence, attracting people who live in Springville but are employed outside it in the greater region. Figure 2.11 illustrates the relationship and shows that a relatively low percentage of people both live and work in the village.

A related observation is that of employed Springville residents, the majority work outside the village. Overall, over a quarter work in the surrounding Town of Concord (Figure 2.12). Similarly, of employed persons living in the Town of Concord, 21% work in Springville. Both populations of employed persons are heavily dependent on employment in the rest of Erie County and the Western New York region (Figure 2.13).

Figure 2.12: When Springville Residents Work Outside the Village: Where They Work

Jobs Counts by County Subdivisions Where Workers are Employed - All Jobs	Count	Share
Concord town (Erie, NY)	472	26.50%
Buffalo city (Erie, NY)	186	10.40%
Hamburg town (Erie, NY)	108	6.10%
Cheektowaga town (Erie, NY)	100	5.60%
Orchard Park town (Erie, NY)	81	4.50%
Amherst town (Erie, NY)	78	4.40%
Arcade town (Wyoming, NY)	61	3.40%
West Seneca town (Erie, NY)	50	2.80%
Lancaster town (Erie, NY)	28	1.60%
Tonawanda town (Erie, NY)	28	1.60%
All Other Locations	590	33.10%

Overall, Springville turns out to have a stable economy and population as compared to Upstate New York and to peers consisting of 34 nearby rural villages of similar size. For factors other than employment and population, Springville ranks in the middle of its peer group or exceeds comparable villages. As indicated by destinations of people who travel for work, its economy is closely connected to that of the Town of Concord, and vice versa.

Overall, Springville has a healthy generator of local and regional employment

in its health and retail sectors. The village is also a bedroom community for people working throughout the region, sending commuters as far away as Buffalo. It is with this picture of relative stability, if not growth, that we can begin to examine opportunities for Springville's future.

Figure 2.13: When Residents of the Town of Concord Work Outside the Village: Where They Work

Jobs Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers are Employed - All Jobs, 2018	Count	Share
Springville village, NY	816	21.00%
Buffalo city, NY	497	12.80%
Cheektowaga CDP, NY	148	3.80%
West Seneca CDP, NY	103	2.70%
Arcade village, NY	89	2.30%
Hamburg village, NY	63	1.60%
East Aurora village, NY	57	1.50%
Tonawanda CDP, NY	57	1.50%
University at Buffalo CDP, NY	46	1.20%
Orchard Park village, NY	39	1.00%
All Other Locations	1,968	50.70%

Chapter 3: Housing and Affordability



Housing is one of the most critical assets of any village, town, or city. Providing safe, quality, affordable housing is necessary to ensure the well-being of all current and future residents of Springville. The village has a historic housing stock that brings pride to the community. The unique composition of homes is a valuable asset and creates a strong sense of place in Springville. However, the diverse, historic housing stock also comes with challenges. We have identified two specific priority areas for action:

- 1. The need to create more subsidized affordable housing*
- 2. The need to maintain the quality of existing homes*

3.1 Housing and Income Statistics

Springville contains 1,245 residential structures which tend to be older. As shown in Figure 3.1-1, over a third of residential structures were built before 1900 and around three-quarters were built at least sixty years ago. Many of the pre-war homes in particular are quite large. These homes are often more difficult and expensive to maintain due to

their size and age. Housing construction in Springville has also been relatively sparse in recent years. Since 2010, there have only been seven new homes constructed.

Springville currently has 1,816 households, as shown in Figure 3.1-2. A household is defined as a dwelling unit and all of its occupants.

Springville has a relatively large number of households when compared to the similar villages discussed in Chapter 2. However, this is mainly due to Springville having a larger population than most villages on the list. When compared to only villages with populations around 4,500, such as Le Roy and Wellsville, the total number of households is about average.

Figure 3.1-3 illustrates housing tenure in the village. 57% of housing units are owner-occupied while 43% of housing units are renter-occupied. Owner-occupied means that the inhabitants own the unit outright or pay a mortgage, while renter-occupied means that the inhabitants lease the unit, typically by paying a monthly rental fee.

Figure 3.1-1: Age Distribution of Housing Structures

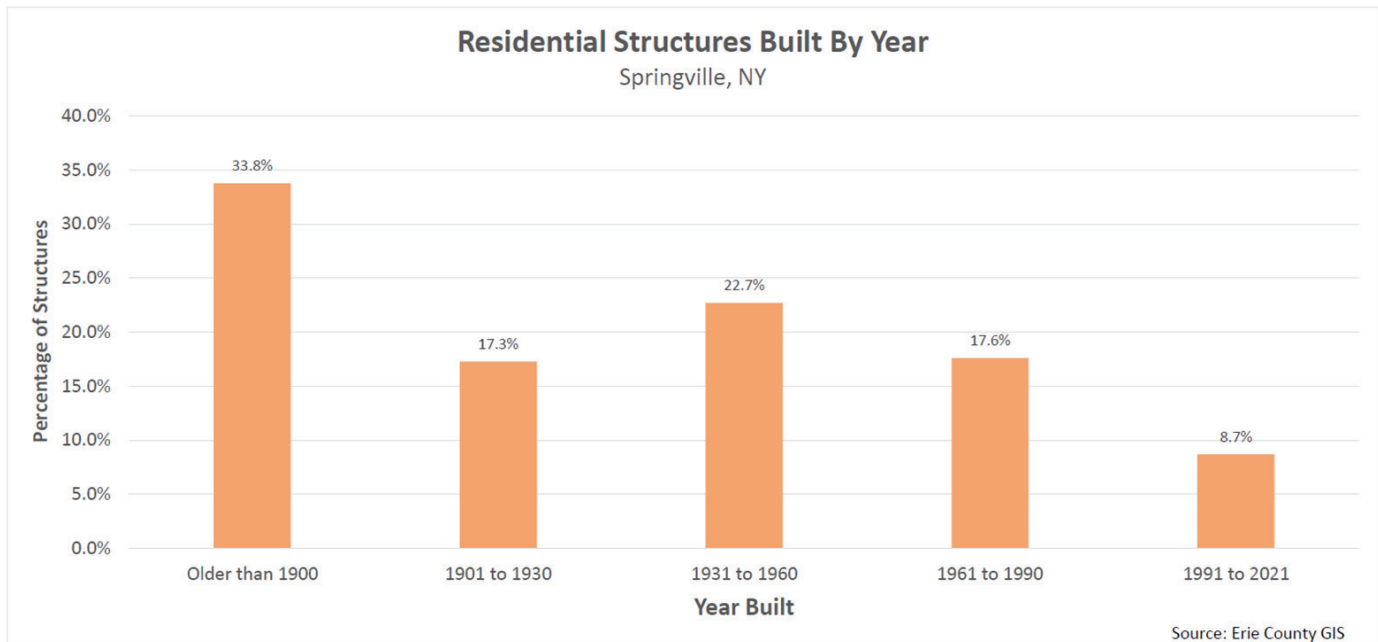


Figure 3.1-2: Total Households in Springville and Comparable Villages

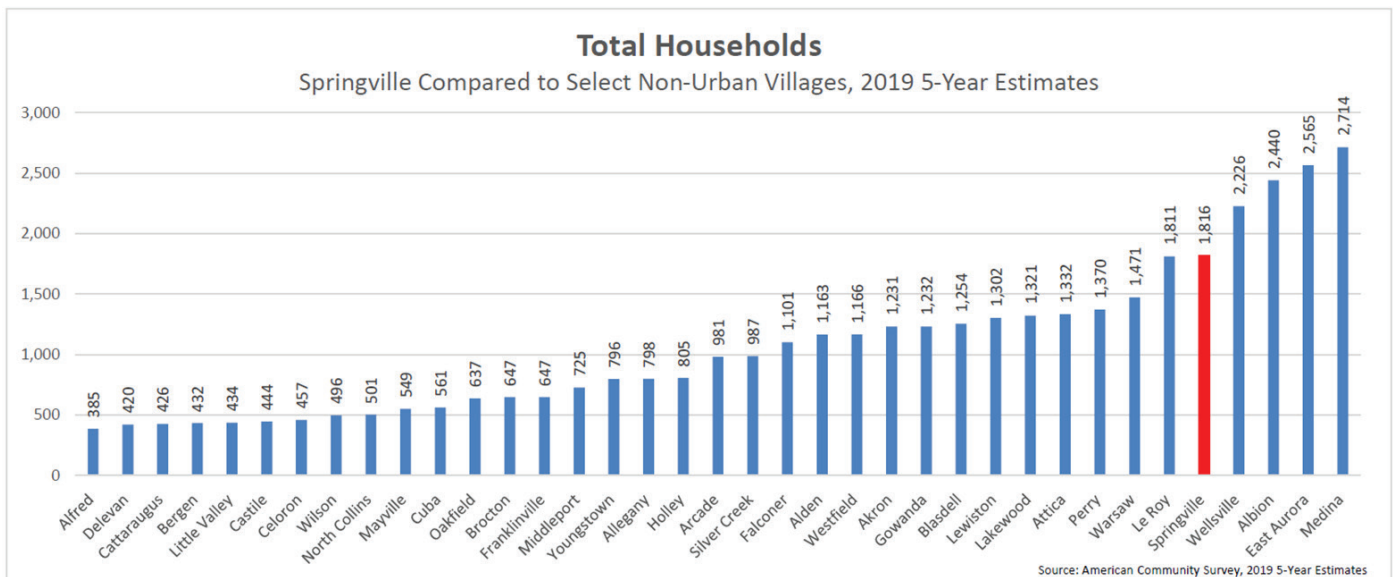
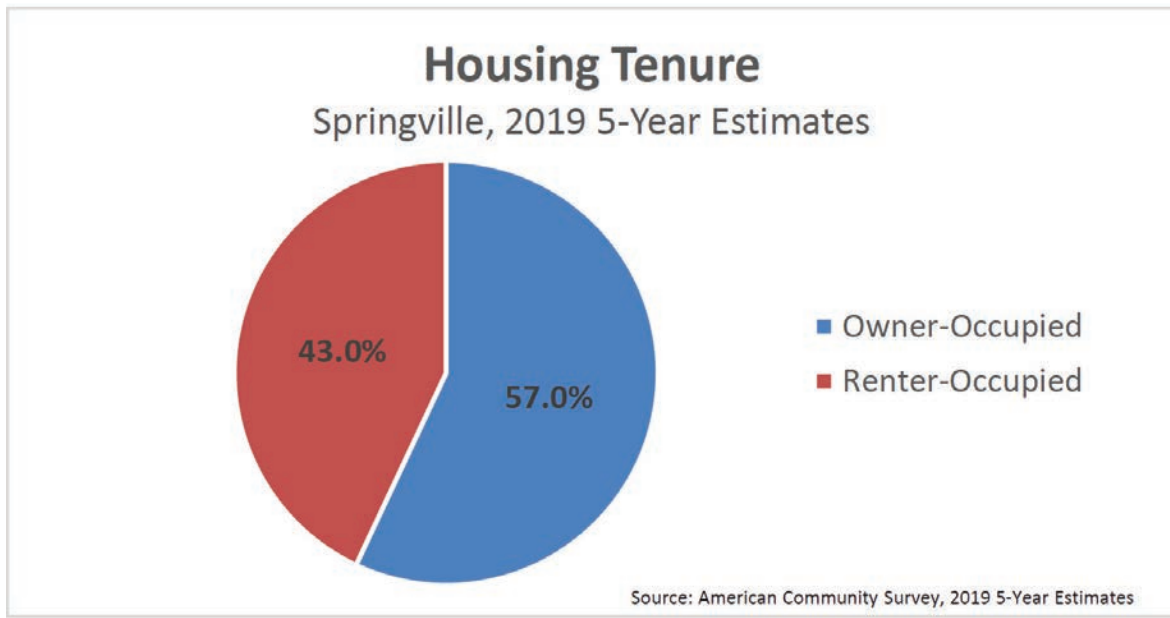


Figure 3.1-3: Housing Tenure



Around 35.2% of renting households are rent-burdened. Rent-burdened is defined as spending more than 30% of household income on rent, which is the accepted maximum expenditure according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This is cause for concern because rent-burdened households suffer from financial fragility and may have difficulty affording other necessities such as healthy food, transportation, or medical care.¹ Additionally, rent-burdened households have significantly lower qualities of material life and are much less likely to spend money in the local retail economy.²

Figure 3.1-4 compares the percentage of rent-burdened households in Springville to similar rural villages. At face-value, it may appear that Springville is faring well in terms of rent-burden. However, it is important to consider that rental affordability is a notorious problem in the United States and that 35.2% is still a rather large proportion of the renter population.³ Nonetheless, this graph highlights that rent burden is not an insurmountable challenge and that Springville has the capacity to overcome it.

Figure 3.1-5 illustrates that Springville has a relatively high percentage of renting households compared to other rural villages. Importantly, this data suggests that the

absolute number of rent-burdened households is higher in Springville than in villages with a lower percentage of renters. This indicates that the local government has an opportunity to assist its large number of renting households, especially those that are rent-burdened.

Figure 3.1-6 is a chart of the local low-income area-median income (AMI) bands. Low-income AMI bands are income standards established by HUD that are calculated for different regions. The AMI bands in this chart are based on the median income for the area around Springville. They are utilized for affordable housing funding to determine what it means to be low-income and to distinguish between various levels of low-income earnings. If a household earns 80% or less of the area median income, it is considered low-income. If a household earns 50% or less of the area median income, it is considered very low-income. Finally, if a household earns 30% or less of the area median income, it is considered extremely low-income. The income limits change as household size increases. For example, if a household of one in Springville earns \$30,000 per year, it would be considered low-income. However, if a household of two earns \$30,000 per year, it would be considered very low-income.

Figure 3.1-4: Rent Burden in Springville and Comparable Villages

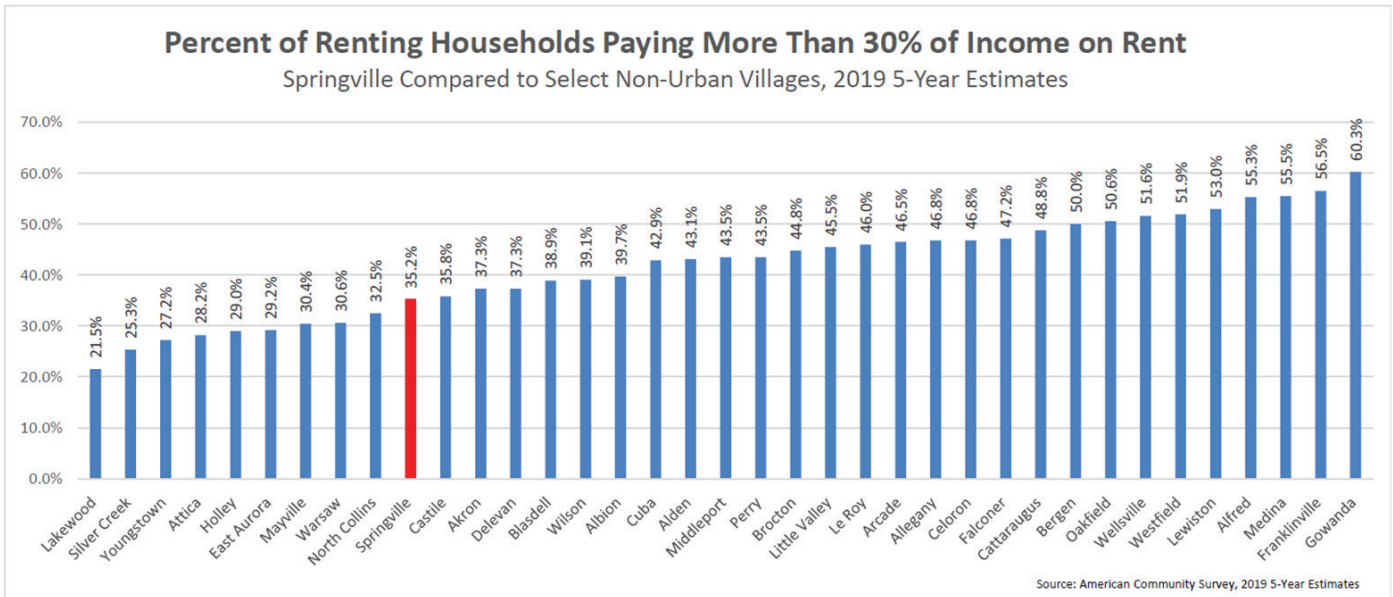


Figure 3.1-5: Renter-Occupied Housing Units in Springville and Comparable Villages

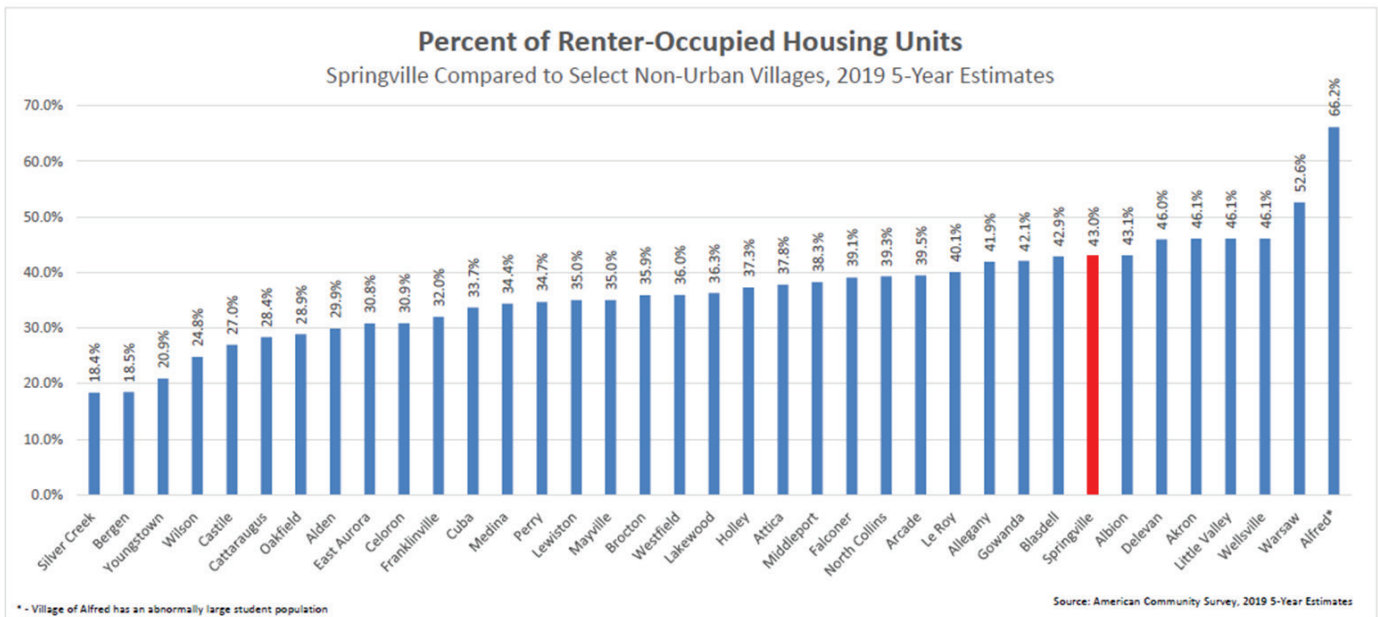


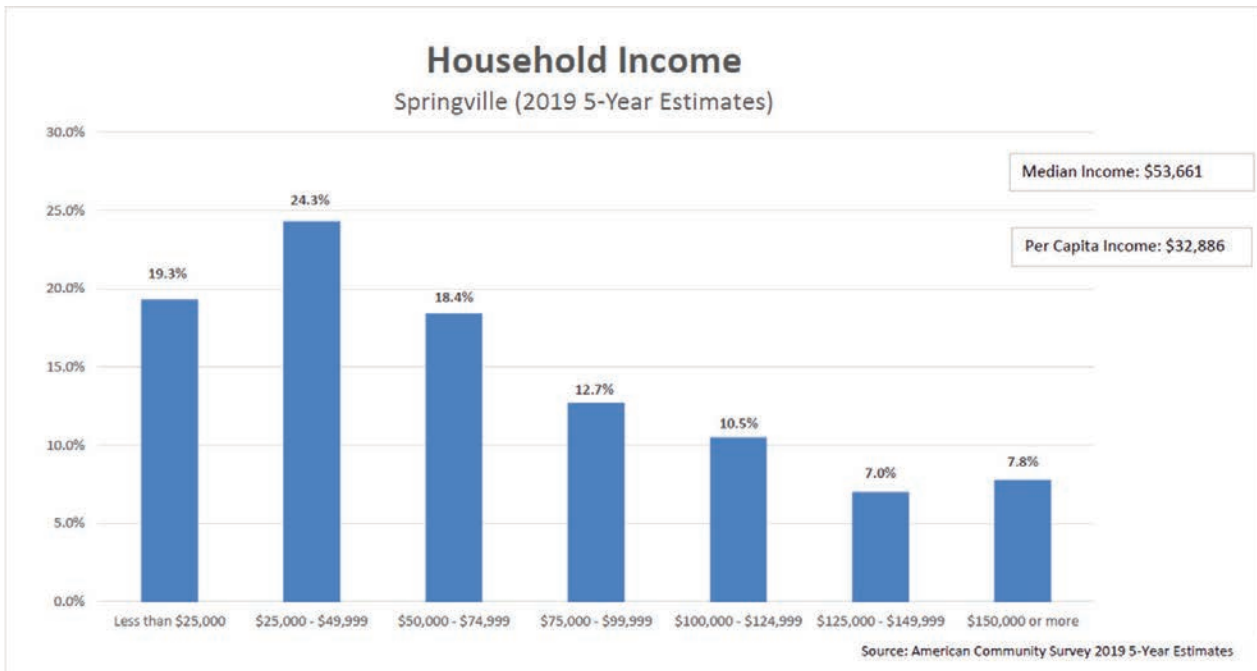
Figure 3.1-6: AMI Bands for the Springville Area

AMI Band	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person
30%	\$16,600	\$18,950	\$21,960	\$26,500	\$31,040	\$35,580
50%	\$27,650	\$31,600	\$35,550	\$39,450	\$42,650	\$45,800
80%	\$44,200	\$50,500	\$56,800	\$63,100	\$68,150	\$73,200

In Springville, 19.3% of households are very low-income or extremely low-income as defined by these guidelines. As seen in Figure 3.1-7, 19.3% of households earn less than \$25,000 per year, which would be at least very-low income for any household size. It is

likely that most, if not all, of these households are renters. It is likely that this figure is even higher than estimated. The magnitude is difficult to precisely measure because data on income and size is not readily accessible for each individual household.

Figure 3.1-7: Household Income Distribution



3.2 Current Affordable Housing Options

Springville currently has four subsidized affordable housing complexes for a total of 159 units. Based on our research, all units are occupied, suggesting a market exists for more affordable housing options. Two of the four complexes are shown in Figure 3.2-1.

The smallest of the complexes is 508 East Main Apartments on 508 East Main St. The developer of this property took advantage of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and participates in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Section 521 Rental Assistance program. Through LIHTC, the developer has received a tax credit which gives the owner the flexibility to offer affordable rents while still maintaining profitability. As a LIHTC participant, rents are capped at 30% of the monthly income for 50%

AMI. Households must be very low-income or extremely low-income in order to apply. As such, some households still may be rent burdened even with the cap. Under Section 521, the tenant will only pay 30% of their income while USDA covers the difference up to the actual rent rate. 508 East Main Apartments has 15 one-bedroom units and does not accept households with children, but does accept seniors over 62 and disabled individuals.

Community Village is another development located at 10-50 Colonial Drive. This property was financed through USDA Section 515, a program that provides low-interest mortgages for affordable housing. Eligible tenants at this complex are very-low income, low-income, and moderate-income seniors or disabled individuals. Moderate-

Figure 3.2-1: Community Village (left) and Spring Brook Apartments (right)



income households are defined as earning income up to \$5,500 above the low-income limit. Though, since Community Village is also a participant of USDA Section 521, priority must be given to very-low income or extremely low-income applicants. Based on Section 515 guidelines, tenants at Community Village pay basic rent or 30% of household income, whichever is greater. However, households that cannot afford basic rent will still only pay 30% of their income as USDA Section 521 covers the difference. At this property, households with children are not accepted and all 40 units have one bedroom.

On 276 Waverly St. is People Inc. Orchard Senior Living. This affordable housing development was financed through the HUD Section 202 and HUD Section 811 programs. Section 202 provides interest-free capital advances to private, non-profit sponsors who build supportive housing for the elderly,

while Section 811 provides similar loans for supportive housing projects for disabled individuals. Orchard Senior Living accepts very low-income or extremely low-income seniors and rents are capped at 30% of a tenant's income per Section 202 and 811. There are 43 one-bedroom apartments, one of which is specifically designed for visual or hearing-impaired individuals.

Finally, the largest complex is Spring Brook Apartments, located at 109 North Buffalo St. Spring Brook Apartments is a HUD Project-Based Section 8 development, meaning that tenant rent payments are capped at 30% of income with a minimum contribution of \$25. Under this program, HUD pays the difference between the tenant payment and the market rate value to the owner. Spring Brook Apartments has 62 units in total. *The location of each housing complex is show in Figure 3.2-2.*

3.3 The Need for Affordable Housing

We believe that Springville requires more subsidized affordable housing. Despite the presence of 159 affordable housing units, 35.2% of renting households are still rent-burdened. This is a total of 275 households and indicates that there is a direct undersupply of 275 affordable housing units in the village.

Additionally, while 19.3% of households in Springville are confirmed to be very low-income or extremely low-income, it can be assumed that there are more. It is reasonable to believe that all these households rent their place of residence as well.

Further, 43% of households in

Figure 3.2-2: Current Affordable Housing Developments



Springville are renters. Since the village shows no significant signs of population decline, it is doubtful that rent rates will decrease as there is clearly a strong demand for rental units. Many of the existing affordable units are also available exclusively to seniors and only 12 units are open to households with children, yet there are at least 70 households with children in Springville living below the federal poverty line. If these households do not reside in one of those 12 units, it can be assumed that they are rent-burdened. It is likely that there are additional low-income households with children that are rent-burdened as well.

Finally, affordable housing often has an expiration date. Most subsidies, such as Section

515, Section 521, LIHTC, and Project-Based Section 8, only guarantee affordability through a certain regulatory period. Beginning when the property first opens, the owner is often required to participate in the specific program for 30 years, although circumstances can vary. At the end of the mandated timeframe, the owner is free to rent their apartments entirely at market rates. Therefore, there is no assurance that the existing 159 units will still be affordable to low-income households long-term.

Due to these factors, we recommend that Springville increase the number of subsidized affordable housing units in order to meet the needs of all renting households.

3.4 Affordable Housing Recommendations

In Erie County today, affordable housing construction is largely driven by private developers. Housing construction can be expensive, so in order to keep units affordable while still maintaining profitability, developers will generally participate in government-funded programs such as LIHTC,

USDA Section 515, USDA Section 521, HUD Project-Based Section 8, HUD Section 202, and HUD Section 811. This is not an exhaustive list but includes all the programs that are currently being utilized by affordable rental property owners in Springville. *See HUD inset for additional resources.*

HUD Funding Sources

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), which are distributed to public entities and may be used for affordable housing.
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds, which are distributed through state and county governments to private developers as loans or grants for affordable housing.

Division of Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). Some select programs through HCR that may be relevant to Springville include the: New Construction Program,

Community Investment Fund, Small Rental Development Initiative, and the State Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. *See NYS HCR inset for additional information.*

NYS HCR Funding Sources

- New Construction Program (NCP), which provides very low-interest loans to developers for projects where at least 50% of units are affordable to households earning 60% AMI or less
- Community Investment Fund (CIF), which provides tax credits to both non-profit and for-profit affordable housing developers
- Small Rental Development Initiative (SRDI), which offers HOME grants to multi-family affordable housing developers for projects with 25 units or less
- State Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (SLIHC), which offers tax credits similar to the federal LIHTC program

Currently, one of the most important funding options is the HOME program. Through the American Rescue Plan, the federal stimulus package passed in March 2021, Erie County will be receiving four times the normal amount of HOME funding from HUD while also embracing a new role in housing that benefits rural communities. Essentially, the County will be helping municipalities outside the core Buffalo area with affordable housing by encouraging developers to look for suitable sites in outer lying towns and villages. We believe that the combination of these conditions creates a strong opportunity to increase the number of affordable housing units in Springville.

In order to effectively capitalize on this unique situation, the Village must be vocal to Erie County that affordable housing development is desired. The County must be aware that new affordable housing construction is supported by the

local government or it will recommend that developers look to municipalities where there is an outspoken political voice. Additionally, while Springville can advertise that it is looking for developers and can meet with them directly, working closely with Erie County will likely result in the best outcomes.

Lastly, although funding is one of the essential components of subsidized affordable housing, it is equally as important to create the type of environment that is suitable for development and to have project proposals. First, it is crucial to have a decent site available. It is less costly for a developer to build on a site that is clear of trees and other obstacles that inhibit the construction of a building. It is easier to rent apartments in desirable locations as well. Location is also an important factor in the quality of life of the tenant. Second, funding does not necessarily cover all costs associated with development, so land must be affordable and the site must not pose

significant strains like costly sewer connection fees. Third, obtaining building permits and other government approvals can be both time-consuming and expensive. Developers are more likely to build in areas where there is a short time from project conception to

project completion. Overall, municipalities move higher up on a developer's list if there are shovel-ready sites and pre-approved project proposals available. A streamlined process benefits the developer, the Village, and community members.

3.5 Potential Sites

We have identified four sites that we believe are suitable for potential affordable housing development. The first location is the Academy Site at the corner of West Main St. and Academy St. We believe that the Academy Site is a strong location for multiple reasons, including:

- Downtown location offering residents access to shops and parks without a personal vehicle.
- Adding activity and density to the Main St. corridor.
- Land does not appear to have construction challenges such as obstacles or steep hills.
- Fairly large area that can accommodate many units.
- Open space that allows for design flexibility
- Simple utility connections along existing lines.
- Development of land that is underutilized.

The adaptability of the Academy Site is ideal for affordable housing development and would be a desirable location to both residents and the builder. We believe that the Village should consider this location for affordable housing and that it may be in the interest of the Village to create a multi-family residential overlay zone on the site. This would simplify the approval process and create a developer-friendly environment. The Academy Site is combined with a proposal for commercial development: more detail will be presented in upcoming chapters on downtown and economic development.

The second site that we have identified is the Shuttleworth Site, located next to

Shuttleworth Park on the large municipal parking lot adjacent to West Main St. We believe that the Shuttleworth Site would be desirable for numerous reasons, including:

- Downtown location offering residents access to shops and parks without a personal vehicle.
- Adding activity and density to the village core. Proximity to Shuttleworth Park and views of Spring Brook.
- Land does not appear to have construction challenges such as obstacles or steep hills.
- Fairly large area that can accommodate many units.
- Open space that allows for design flexibility.
- Simple utility connections on existing lines .
- Development of land that is underutilized

The Shuttleworth Site is a unique location that would be desirable for both residents and developers. We believe that the Village should consider this location for affordable housing and that it may be in the interest of the Village to zone the project-specific area as multi-family residential. As noted previously, this would simplify the approval process and may help to encourage affordable housing development on the site. There are important features to consider about the municipal parking lot and of Shuttleworth Park in order to make the site feasible. The intersection between these elements, precise placing of the building, and of other relevant project proposals will be discussed in more detail in upcoming chapters, particularly Chapter 4.

Figure 3.5-1: Proposed Development Sites



The third site that we have identified is the Waverly Site, located across the street from Orchard Senior Living. We find that the Waverly Site would be a decent location due to multiple factors, including:

- Short distance to big box stores along South Cascade Dr.
- The lots across the street are currently zoned as multi-family residential.
- Land that does not appear to pose constructional challenges, such as immovable objects or steep hills.
- Fairly large area that can accommodate many units.
- Open space that allows for design flexibility.
- Simple utility connections along existing lines.
- Development of land that is underutilized.

The Waverly Site is an adaptable location that is well-suited for an affordable housing project. We recommend that the Village consider this site.

The final location is the Barnstead Site, located at the corner of Barnstead Dr. and West Main St. We believe that the Barnstead Site is

an apposite location for a variety of reasons, including:

- Short distance to big box stores along South Cascade Dr.
- Proximity to lots that are currently zoned as multi-family residential.
- Land does not appear to have construction challenges such as obstacles or steep hills.
- Fairly large area that can accommodate many units.
- Open space that allows for design flexibility.
- Simple utility connections along existing lines.
- Development of land that is underutilized.

The Barnstead Site is a solid location that is compatible with an affordable housing development. We suggest that the Village consider this site for such development and we believe that it may be in the interest of the Village to create a multi-family residential overlay zone on this site. Once more, this would simplify the approval process and may help to encourage construction of affordable housing.

3.6 Maintaining the Quality of Existing Homes

After affordability, the second high-priority housing issue for Springville is the age and mismatch of the existing housing stock. By mismatch, we mean that there is a significant percentage of units that may be too large for future demand. Many of the houses in Springville are quite sizable, particularly Victorian-era homes. However, owning such a large home is not as desirable as it used to be. Households across all generations now tend to pursue smaller housing units and renting is becoming a more popular long-term option.⁴ There are multiple reasons for this phenomenon, including smaller average household size and wage growth that has not kept pace with inflation.⁵ These trends can be concerning when considering the age of Springville’s housing stock. Over a third of all homes were built before 1900 and more than three-quarters are at least 60 years old. Maintaining the quality of these homes is critical but becomes increasingly difficult over time. Since housing demands have shifted, it may prove challenging to sell these large properties in the future. Consequently, it is probable that a substantial number of existing homes will become vacant and fall into disrepair.

Due to these factors, we find that certain regulations in Springville’s zoning code necessitate re-examination in order to reflect the current needs of the village. Presently, Springville’s three residential zoning districts are:

- R-8.5, which permits only single-family detached dwellings.
- R-6, which permits single-family detached and two-family detached dwellings.
- RM, which permits single-family detached, two-family detached, and dwellings with three or more units

In all three zoning districts, conversion of single-family homes into multiple dwellings is not permitted as-of-right. In R-6 and RM, the zoning code stipulates that a special exception

must be granted, while it is entirely prohibited in R-8.5.

However, two homes at 105 East Main St. and 119 East Main St. were formerly single-family Victorian homes that have been converted into multi-unit dwellings (see in Figure 3.6-1). Both homes are located in the R-8.5 zone, which means that variances were granted for their conversion. For the home at 119 East Main Street, the variance was approved in 2015 by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and can be found under File Number 7943. This file reads “...the ZBA shall grant a variance to allow use of the property in the manner detailed in the manner below, which is the minimum variance that should be granted in order to preserve and protect the character of the neighborhood and the health, safety and welfare of the community.” Specific emphasis was placed on the preservation and protection of neighborhood character, and on the health, safety, and welfare of the community as cause to grant the variance. We agree with this sentiment and find that it sets an important precedent. Converting homes into multiple residences will make it easier to maintain the home, preserve the village’s history, improve community character, as well as provide

Figure 3.6-1: Multi-unit Conversions in R-8.5



more housing units at affordable and market rates. However, this is currently a difficult and potentially lengthy process since special exceptions or variances are required. We believe that these specific zoning laws deter conversions and warrant reconsideration.

Second, we believe that the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) is needlessly over-regulated. Section 200-79 of Springville’s zoning code describes ADUs as “accessory apartments” and prohibits them under all but extremely specific circumstances. The code stipulates that residents of an ADU must be family by blood or marriage and that facilities must be removed after tenancy ends. We believe that this hinders the desire for homeowners to construct ADUs on their

property and theoretically rent them to deserving tenants, including but not limited to friends or family members.

Additionally, the regulations defining an ADU can be unclear. Section 200-2B defines an accessory apartment and an accessory use. Section 200-78 defines the conversion of a single-family home, while Section 200-79 again defines an accessory apartment in more complex terms. The language between all these sections is convoluted. It is particularly difficult to determine what constitutes the conversion of a single-family home into multiple residences and what constitutes the construction of an attached accessory apartment or ADU, setting the stage for legal challenges.

3.7 Opportunities to Reduce Regulations

The Zoning Board of Appeals is already granting variances to convert single-family homes into multi-unit dwellings “to preserve and protect the character of the neighborhood and the health, safety and welfare of the community.” Considering this, we recommend that the conversion of single-family homes into multiple units be allowed as-of-right in all residential zoning districts. We believe that this will encourage more conversions by simplifying the process, opening up the possibility to all residential properties, and allowing developers to buy old homes to adapt into multi-unit buildings. This will help prevent the deterioration of homes, maintain the village’s character, and provide more residences at affordable and market rates.

Second, we conclude that relaxing the current specifications of ADUs will contribute positively to the housing market.

We recommend eliminating the regulation that requires a tenant to be a family member and the regulation that requires facilities be removed after tenancy ends. This will give homeowners increased freedom to construct ADUs if desired and rent to tenants they deem deserving.

In both situations, the creation of more residences is especially important given the need for affordable housing. Increasing the supply of multi-unit homes and ADUs will likely lead to more affordable rent rates and decrease the number of rent-burdened households. Additionally, it will simply create more choice in the housing market, potentially encouraging younger households to settle in Springville. Households that are searching for market rate residences will have more opportunities to find the type of unit that best suits their needs.

Endnotes:

^{1,2} Yumiko Aratani et al., *Rent Burden, Housing Subsidies and the Well-Being of Children and Youth*.

(New York Columbia University, 2011).

³ Marcia Fernald (ed.), *America’s Rental Housing 2020* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2020).

^{4,5} Louise Keely et al., *The Shifting Nature of US Housing Demand* (New York: The Demand Institute, 2012).

Chapter 4: Downtown and West End Streetscape



Map of Downtown & West End Business Districts

Source: Google Earth

The Village of Springville has an impressive number of assets, resources, and connections within its downtown area. We believe it has a strong foundation for becoming a denser activity center, full with people living there, shopping, strolling, and enjoying the arts.

Among Springville's greatest assets is the sense of community that Main Street exudes. Staple shops line the street, and various local green spaces can be found nearby. In good weather there is a relatively strong human presence. With this and more, the area has many facets of a successful downtown area. Through the following proposals, our studio aims to take advantage of these assets and achieve the area's true potential as a vibrant and lively community space for residents and visitors alike.

The boundaries for our focus area span from South Central Street to Elk Street, and from Shuttleworth Park up to Church Street. The boundaries established for Springville's downtown area were chosen based on the concentration of resources, connections, and potential for future development that has been located here for decades. Special attention will be given to multiple potential sites for new development, and more specifically at the intersection of West Main Street and Academy Street.

Our focus on Springville's downtown area is divided into four parts: Streetscape improvements, new downtown development, and future design. With each respective proposal, we hope to provide potential initiatives for the Village to increase activity on Main Street.

Part 1: Streetscape Improvements and Activating Downtown

This section will discuss ways to reimagine Springville’s streetscape and how the way we interact with them can increase pedestrian activity on Main Street.

Part 2: New Downtown Development

Here we will cover potential estimates for new residential and mixed-use buildings in the downtown area.

Part 3: Historical and Cultural Assets

This section will examine the existing stock of cultural and historical resources within the Village and how they contribute to the Village’s character.

Part 4: Future Vision

Here we will aim to provide a vision for the proposed new developments in Springville’s downtown area and prioritize building upon the Village’s historic character.

While this chapter only focuses on Springville’s downtown, we also believe the West End deserves further examination as well. As the Pop Warner Rail Trail, historic railroad station and other amenities are located here, we see this as a great area for continued development.

Part 5: The West End

This final section discusses the connections and assets located within Springville’s West End, focusing specifically on the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railroad Station and Gentner’s Auction.

4.1 Streetscape Improvement and Activating Downtown

A vibrant downtown area is one where pedestrian traffic is given equal consideration to vehicular traffic. The famous urban theorist Jane Jacobs first addressed this concept in her 1961 book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Jacobs mentions that a vibrant and lively streetscape is one where human presence is clearly established and where pedestrians feel comfortable. One of Jacobs’ most influential observations is her concept of “eyes on the street.”¹ “Eyes on the street” refers to human presence on public streets, which elicits feelings of enthusiasm, liveliness, and safety among its “natural proprietors.” “Natural proprietors,” as Jacobs calls them, are the residents who use the street and identify it as a part of their home. Importantly, people walking along the street produces tangible economic benefits that help support the life of downtown.^{2,3} Pedestrian-oriented designs are particularly critical for small retail

establishments.^{4,5} As former NYC Department of Transportation Commissioner Jannette Sadik-Khan lays out in her book *Streetfight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution*, “[c]ars don’t shop, people do. Better streets mean better business.”⁶

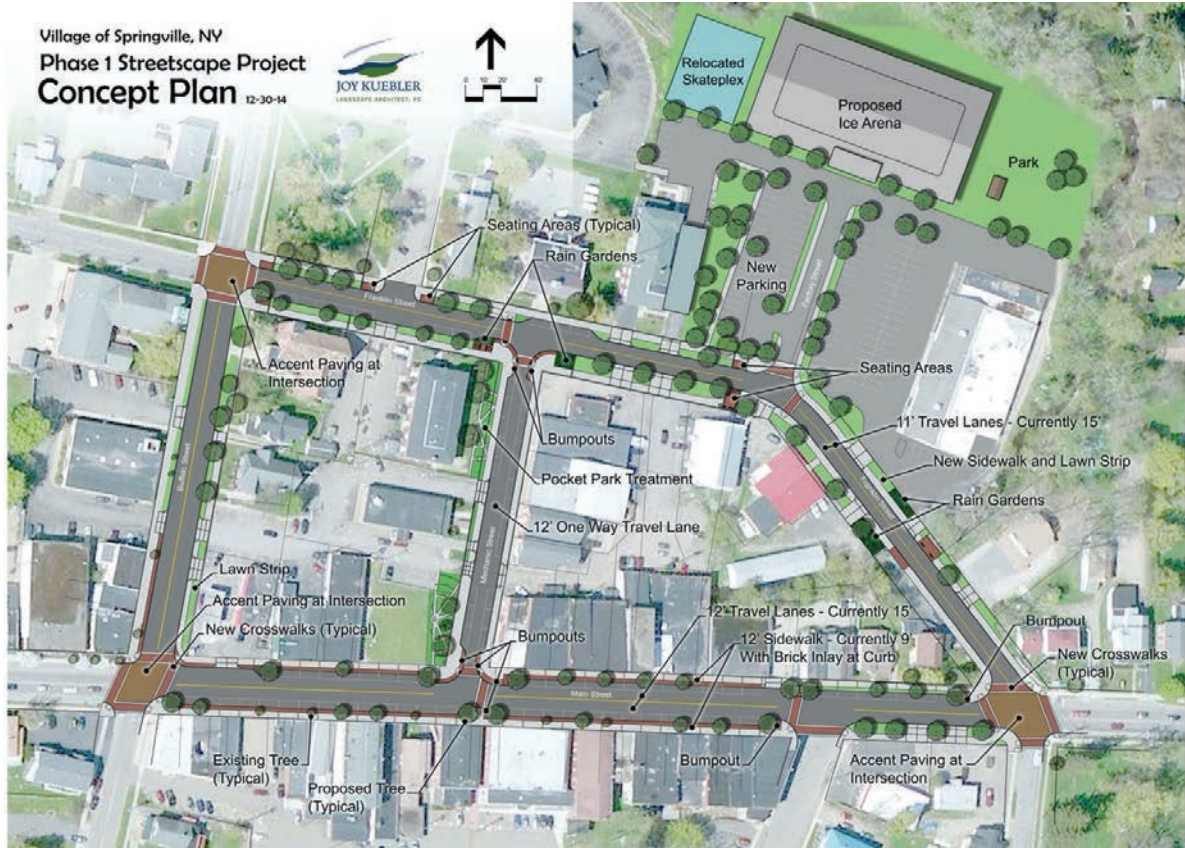
Across the United States, small communities and urban areas alike have developed new strategies to enhance the vibrancy of their streetscapes. After studying several examples of these initiatives, we have proposed the following in order to revitalize the streetscape of downtown Springville:

- The implementation of parklets along East Main street between Buffalo street and Elk Street.
- A streetscape redesign along Mechanic Street.
- The introduction of a formal East to West connection through the municipal parking lot south of East Main Street.

Notably, all of our suggestions coincide with the proposals set forth in Joy Kuebler’s Phase One Streetscape Concept Plan (Figure 4.1). Some of our proposals can be taken as alternatives, while others build upon those

that are currently in place. In either situation, our proposals and Kuebler’s plan share the same goal: to transform downtown Springville into a vibrant and lively area through a reimagining of the streetscape.

Figure 4.1: One Streetscape Concept by Joy Kuebler



Source: Joy Kuebler, Landscape Architect

4.1-1 Streetscape Improvement and Activating Downtown

A vibrant downtown is one that entices people to park, walk, and explore the area. With retail and dining destinations lining the street – alongside community staples such as medical practices, barbershops, and banking institutions – the area already has important generators of pedestrian activity. These establishments draw people downtown and create the bustling environment that residents currently enjoy. However, that sense of vitality is still limited. More can be accomplished to create activity while thoughtfully accommodating the presence of pedestrians. In order to meet these goals, we recommend the introduction of *seasonal parklets* along Main

Street.

Parklets function as extensions of the sidewalk that utilize curbside parking spots to create new pedestrian spaces. While typically applied as an annex for curbside restaurant seating, some other examples of implementation include the conversion of one or two consecutive parking spots into:

- Community lounge spaces
- Nano-parks
- Art installations
- Temporary vendor stalls
- Sidewalk bypasses to accommodate restaurant seating along the public sidewalk

These urban design elements have become increasingly popular in areas with narrow and barren sidewalks. Parklets are intended to increase usability of the street for the pedestrian without having to physically alter the existing right-of-way. Additionally, parklets have the capacity to function as pedestrian generators, further driving human activity through their distinct and unique characteristics. This proposal is pertinent to East Main Street in particular because it allows for the creation of new pedestrian spaces along the right-of-way without sacrificing any travel lane footage. This would allow for a more equitable balance between the vehicular and the pedestrian realm.

The city of San Francisco, CA has fully embraced the adoption of parklets along its streets and has reaped their benefits through a combination of permanent and temporary installations. A 2011 impact study published by the City documented the effects of parklet implementation on adjacent areas. This study noted many benefits, including:

- A 44% increase in pedestrian foot traffic
- A self-reported increase in activity for adjacent businesses
- A positive reaction to the parklets by pedestrians (based on survey results)
- No negative reports by adjacent businesses regarding the loss of parking space
- An incremental increase in the number of bicycles parked in the area

The parklet approach has several advantages to physically widening the sidewalks because of its adaptable nature. Crucially, parklets can be temporary installations in order to gauge their reception in the area of implementation. This allows for the spaces to be reverted back to traditional curbside parking should the Village decide to do so. Further, their temporary nature allows them to be removed in winter when the Village needs additional space for snow removal. Most parklet designs can also be fully realized at costs under \$1,000, with guides readily available to construct parklets for as low as \$600. Finally, parklets allow for the production of new pedestrian spaces along the streetscape without sacrificing space along vehicular travel lanes.

We propose that parklets initially be implemented adjacent to restaurants along East Main Street. This would be approached either through joint funding between the Village and interested businesses or as an independent project funded by the business. This provides an opportunity to test out the urban design initiative in its most traditional setting, while providing opportunities for expansion following their initial success.

(Please see Figure 4.1-1 info-graphic on the following page outlining our streetscape proposal.)

4.1-2 Reimagining the Mechanic Street Right-of-Way

Mechanic Street is an important element to the overall downtown environment. The street serves as a necessary corridor, providing a direct connection from the pedestrian hub of Main Street to Fiddler's Green and Heritage Park. The roadway has already been subject to some urban design initiatives that have yielded positive results. However, the area also falls victim to an unnecessary auto-centric design.

The approximately 30-foot roadway hosts curbside parking on both sides of the

street for the entirety of its length. Yet, there are several municipal parking opportunities within less than a quarter mile radius from Mechanic Street. Additionally, while the bump-outs at its intersections with Main Street may initially slow traffic, the roughly 15-foot travel lane quickly encourages an increase in speed.

To address these issues and emphasize the importance of Mechanic Street as a connecting corridor, we suggest the creation of a pedestrian-friendly transition

East Main St. Streetscape Activation Proposal: *“Parklets on Main”*

What is a parklet?

“Parklets are public seating platforms that convert curbside parking spaces into vibrant community spaces.”
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide



Their Impact:

A 2011 parklet impact study conducted by the City of San Francisco noted the following outcomes at locations where parklets were implemented:

- A 44% increase in pedestrian foot traffic.
- An incremental increase in the number of bicycles parked at each location.
- An overall positive pedestrian reaction to the parklets (based on survey results).
- A self-reported increase in activity for businesses located adjacent to installations.
- No documented reports of business concerns regarding loss of nearby street parking or other impacts on their business.

Typology Examples

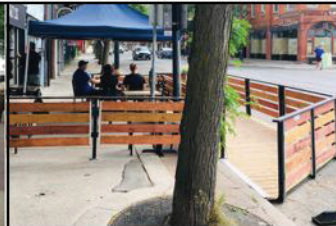
Curbside Restaurant Seating



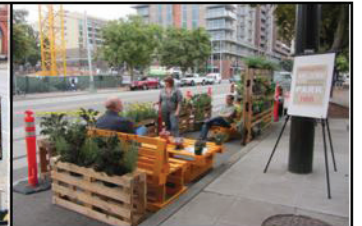
Nano Park



Sidewalk Bypass



Public Lounge Space



Potential Locations for Implementation



*Image sources can be found under

Key Notes*

- Parklets typically start as temporary installations
- Parklet installations can be fully realized at NACTO safety standards for costs as low as \$600 depending on configuration.
- Parklets help enhance the streetscape for pedestrians in minimally intrusive & cost-effective ways.
- Parklets are limited only by the designer's creativity.

between Main Street and Franklin Street. This transition would establish a walkable, pedestrian-oriented link to the aforementioned greenspaces.

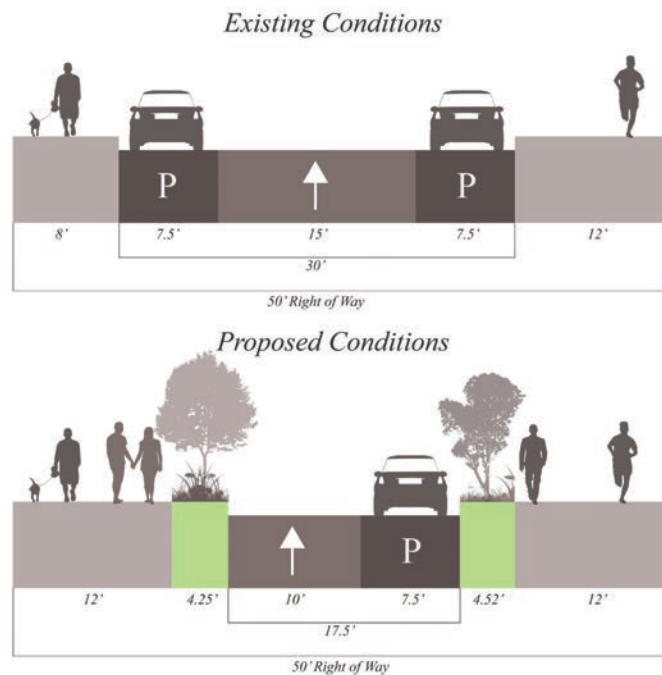
First, we propose the existing travel lane on Mechanic Street be narrowed from its current state to the NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials) minimum safe standard of 10 feet. Mechanic Street has no need for such a wide travel lane since it also has no need for rapid vehicular travel. Its wide lanes unnecessarily encourage speed increases, endangering both pedestrians and drivers. The reduction in speed along Mechanic Street will help create a safer environment for pedestrians transitioning between Main Street and Franklin Street, while helping to realize the effect that the bump outs initially attempted to achieve. This connection is crucial in order to link two of Springville’s most important parks to the hub of village retail.

Second, we propose that vehicular parking be eliminated on the left-hand side of Mechanic Street in order to widen the sidewalk on one, or both, sides of the road. In conjunction with green infrastructure

elements to help mitigate storm water runoff, these characteristics would improve the overall visual aesthetic and foster a pedestrian-friendly environment. Together, these changes would reflect the aesthetic of a “green alleyway,” leading a pedestrian from village retail on Main Street to Fiddler’s Green or Heritage Park. The existing streetscape concept plan currently leans in the direction of a green alleyway typology with the existing pocket park on the south end and the yet-to-be-implemented pocket park on the north end (Figure 4.1-1).

These elements, along with the sidewalk expansion and introduction of green infrastructure, would tie together the green alleyway that is already rooting itself in the streetscape concept plan. Accordingly, the gap between the pedestrian zones north and south of Main Street would be seamlessly connected. This design will help unify the overall downtown area and promote a well-connected, pedestrian-oriented, walkable environment, as opposed to their current standing as isolated zones. Figure 4.1-2 illustrates our proposed changes.

Figure 4.1-2: Mechanic Street Existing Conditions and Proposed Conditions



4.1-3 The Shuttleworth Site: An East to West Connection Between Pearl Street and Buffalo Streets

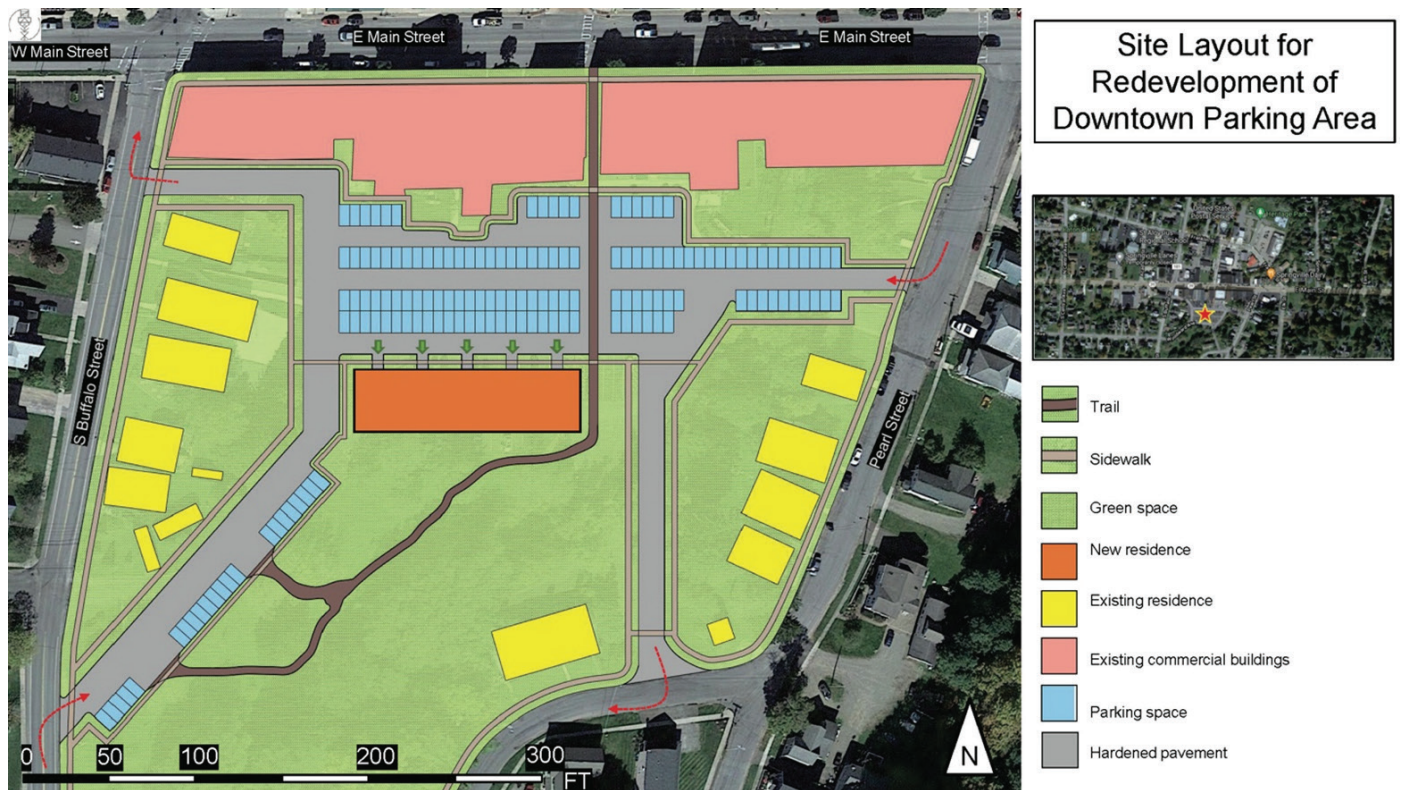
The Shuttleworth Site can be found directly south of the downtown retail strip on East Main Street. Currently, the Shuttleworth Site is used as an extensive municipal parking lot. We find that, in its existing state, this setting is one of Springville’s most underutilized assets. Given that nearly every street in the downtown area offers curbside parking, that there are several parking lots within a quarter mile radius of the Shuttleworth Site, and that approximately 590 public parking opportunities cater to about 96,000 square feet of commercial space, Springville has a surplus of parking opportunities in the overall downtown area. With ample parking in such close proximity, the municipal parking lot south of East Main is a redundant use of valuable land, especially considering that is rarely occupied at levels approaching full capacity.

Given these factors, we propose that the municipal parking lot south of East Main street

be reduced from its current capacity in order to introduce a formal east to west roadway connection from Pearl Street to Buffalo Street. For this proposal, we present two options (Figure 4.1-3):

The introduction of two-way split traffic lanes will help guide the flow of traffic through the site in ways that both improve permeability throughout the downtown area and reduce the risk of accidents. The establishment of a formal road system also allows for parking to be planned in a more efficient way, with the proposed lanes bounding the parking lot more structure is provided for the flow of vehicular traffic. The organization of the lot allows for a seamless transition between the connecting roadways, which provides access points to the lot. Additionally, the formal roadways help create a distinct demarcation between the public realm of the parking lot and the private realm of a proposed residential development on the southern end of the site.

Figure 4.1-3: Proposed Reorganization of the Shuttleworth Site



Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

The opportunity for new development at the southern end of the site is an important piece of this proposal, especially if the downtown area continues to grow. The development would be a 22,000 square foot, two-story structure with 20 three-bedroom apartments. Figures 4.1-4, 4.1-5, and 4.1-6 illustrate a potential design. Introducing development to the Shuttleworth Site accomplishes an important goal of keeping density within the downtown area. Keeping new development within the established

downtown boundaries and increasing urban density is important to mitigating the effects of sprawl that often eat away at the strong foundations and natural amenities of small towns such as Springville.

The reorganization and new development work in tandem to activate the Shuttleworth Site and create a more holistic downtown area. As opposed to a municipal parking lot, these proposals better align with the Springville's goals of downtown vibrancy and revitalization.

Figure 4.1-4: Parking Lot View of Proposed Development on the Shuttleworth Site



Figure 4.1-5: Aerial Park-Side View of Proposed Development on the Shuttleworth Site

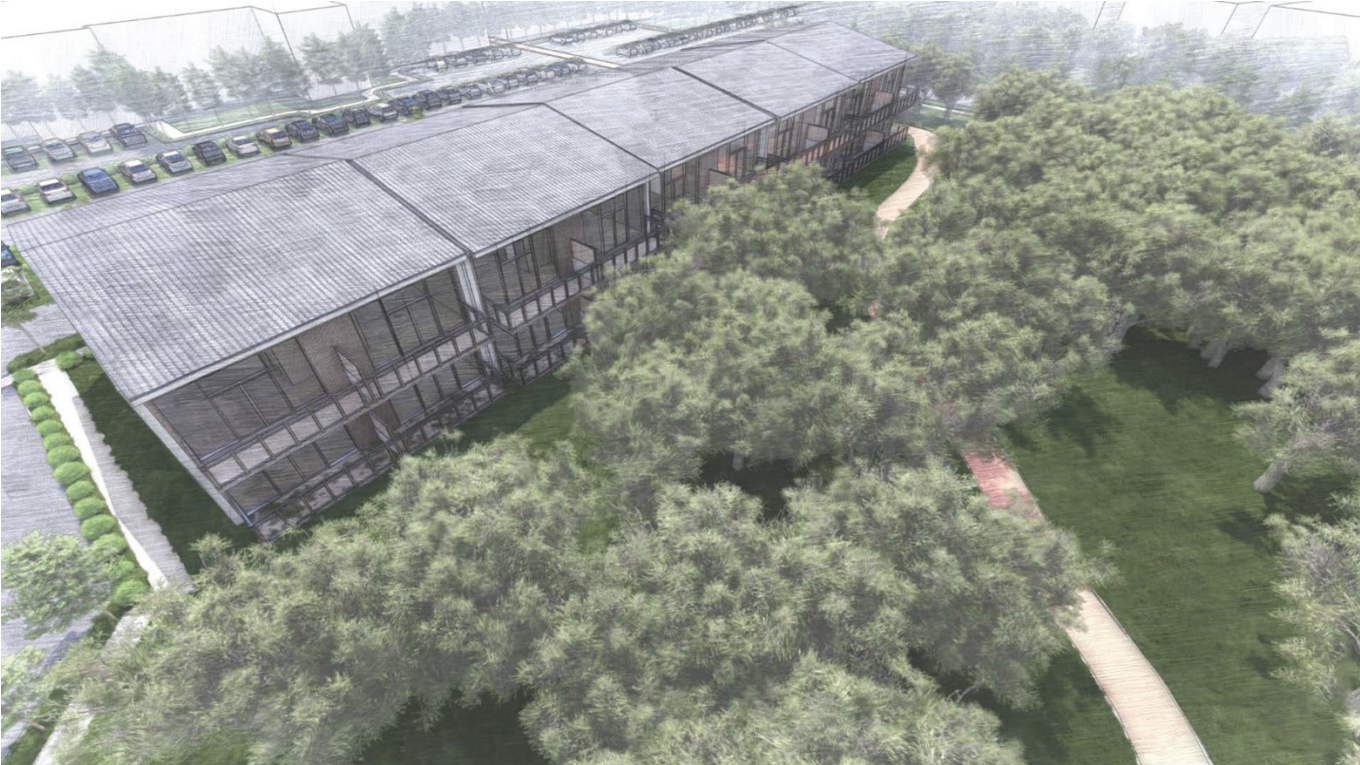
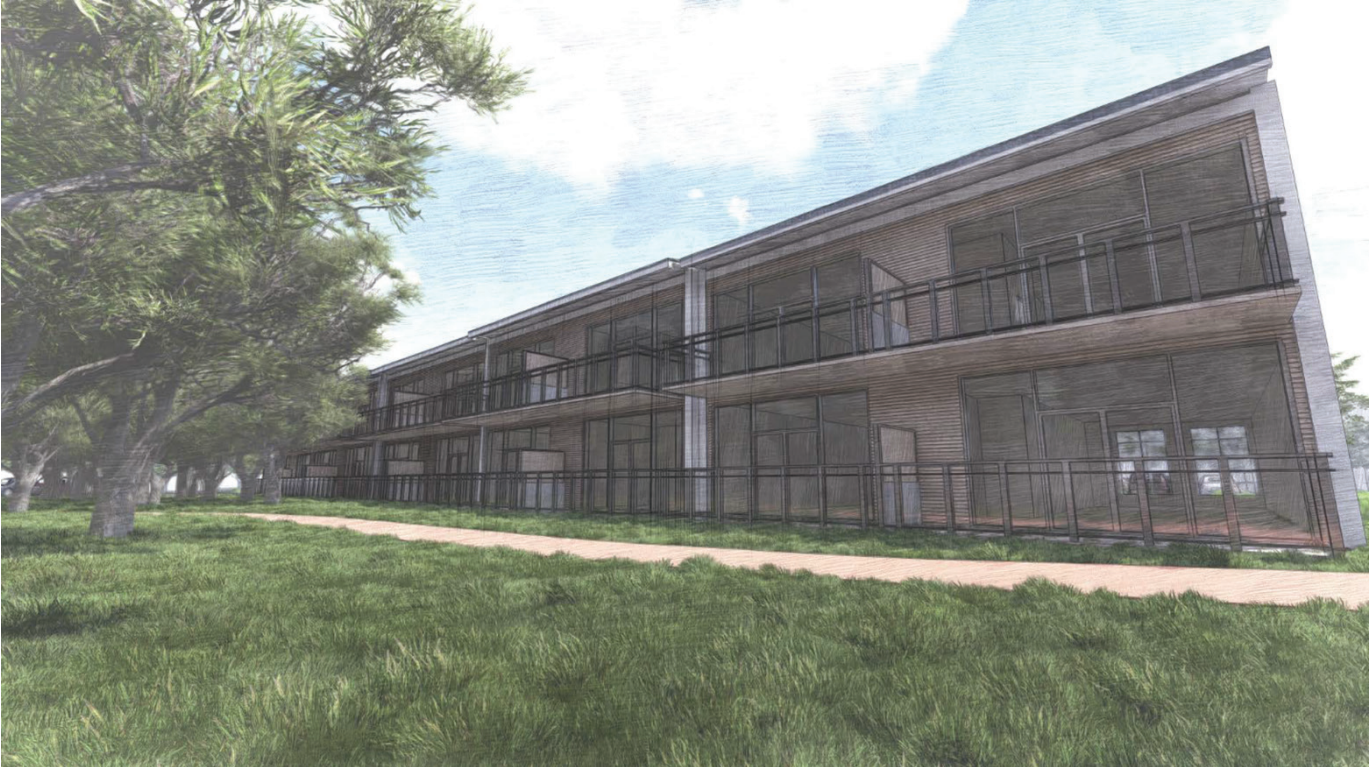


Figure 4.1-6: Ground-Level Park-Side View of Proposed Development on the Shuttleworth Site



4.2 New Downtown Development

New development is one of the strongest ways to strengthen a downtown. Residences and businesses increase the number of people coming and going, using the streets, and patronizing local businesses. In order to focus and reinforce activity downtown, the Village should consider opportunities for potential new development.

Over the past decade, Western New York has seen growth in new development due to economic incentives, low interest rates, and more demand for commercial and

residential properties in some areas. While many buildings in downtown Springville have undergone renovation, there has been little new development. New structures can reinforce activity, increase housing and employment opportunities, and benefit the community and local economy. This section will explore potential locations and uses for new development, determine if new development is financially feasible, and provide pathways to encourage new development in downtown Springville.

4.2-1 Potential Sites

While approaching planned new development, we focused on finding spaces that would reinforce existing activity in downtown Springville. In order to focus and increase activity, developable space should include some or all of the following:

- Location in the downtown area
- Land or building vacancy or other indication of potential availability
- Underutilized or unoccupied buildings, or buildings with visible disinvestment
- Location along a major street

Based on these criteria, we identified three potential sites for planned development (Figure 4.2-1). The first potential site is the East Main Site, located on East Main Street and Franklin Street. This site consists of three properties: a parking lot at 70 East Main Street owned by one owner; a commercial building at 74 East Main Street owned by another owner; and a commercial lot with a small warehouse at 26 Franklin Street owned by a third owner. This site met our criteria and has exceptional potential as it is located in the most active part of the downtown area. However, we considered this to be a complex site that should be considered in the future because it could have a more active use.

The second potential site, the Shuttleworth Site, is currently covered by a municipal parking lot between East Main Street and Shuttleworth Park. This site has great potential in that it is centrally located in an underutilized part of downtown, is located near existing amenities, and has wonderful views of Spring Brook. The Shuttleworth Site would likely require the creation of an east-west street between South Buffalo Street and Pearl Street to be considered for new development.

The third potential site is the Academy Site, located the corner of West Main Street and Academy Street. The entire site is 68,000 square feet and could accommodate one major development or two separate development projects. Based on an assessment of these potential sites, we chose to explore the Academy Site as it has great potential and considerable space for new development. This site consists of three properties:

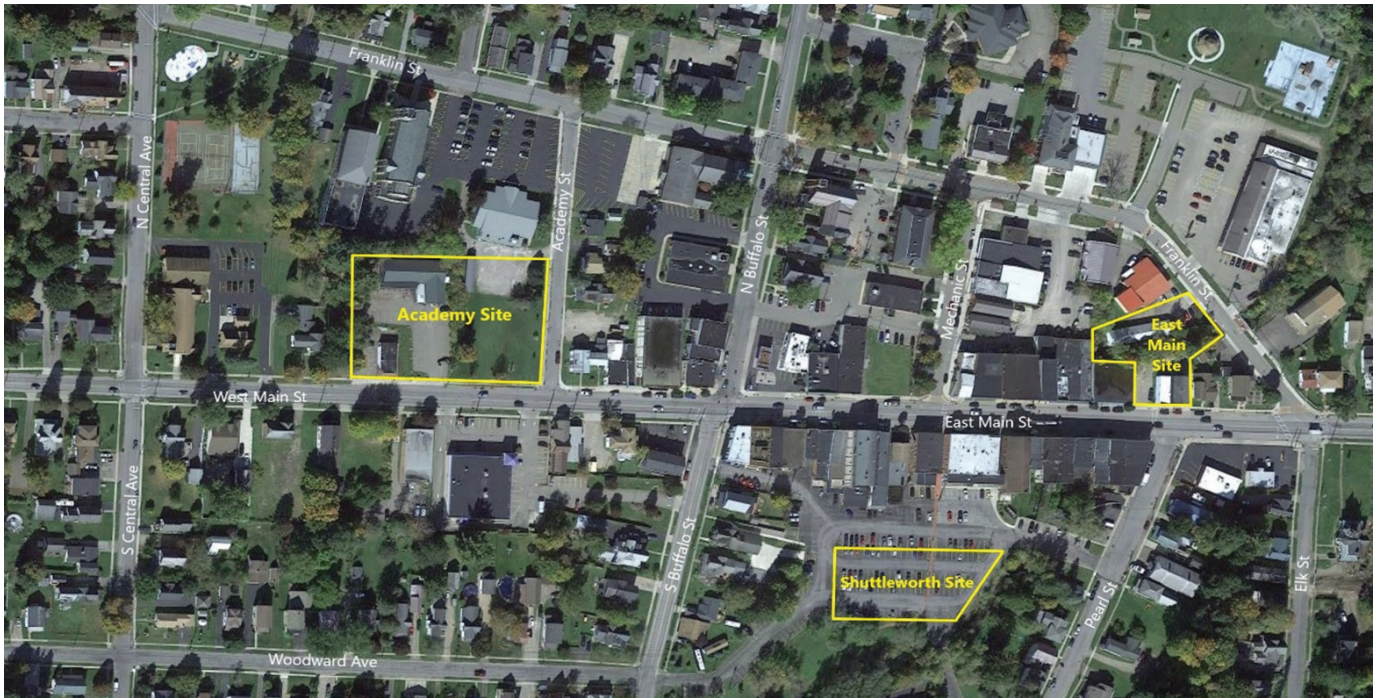
- Corner of West Main Street and Academy Street - potentially available land owned by St. Aloysius Church that is not currently for sale.
- 53 West Main Street - commercial building of the former Springville Bowling Alley that is currently for sale.

- 57 West Main Street - commercial building of the Panda House restaurant that is not currently for sale.

We considered possible uses for the site that would increase activity and benefit the community, including:

- Apartments or townhouses that would increase the housing stock, provide housing options with new amenities and less maintenance, and potentially offer affordable housing.
- Office or retail development that would provide space for local business, including but not limited to medical or professional services.

Figure 4.2-1: Potential Sites for New Development



Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

4.2-2 The Market for Commercial and Residential Buildings

Demand for commercial buildings was assessed for development viability. We considered **residential**, **office**, and **retail** as development categories for downtown:

1. Residential

The first type of property we considered was multi-unit residential. Multi-unit or multi-family usually means three or more housing units in a single building. Investment and new construction of multi-unit buildings has been strong in the metro Erie County region, but not in downtown Springville. According to the commercial real estate consulting firm CBRE,

multi-unit housing has grown rapidly due to increased demand for new apartments, low interest rates for developers, and a changing trend in consumer preference from owning to long-term renting. Additionally, households across all generations now tend to look for smaller housing units than before. Regionally, rental growth and demand for multi-unit housing is strong, vacancy rates are low, and most new multi-unit developments are filled by the time the projects are completed.^{vii} These are positive trends for potential investment in multi-unit construction.

We believe that there is demand for new multi-unit housing in downtown Springville as well. The existing housing stock of large homes does not meet the current needs of residents, especially as consumer preference is increasingly shifting to long-term renting rather than owning.⁸ Smaller average household size across all generations is also shifting consumer demand toward housing units with smaller square footages. This suggests the need for modest housing units and multi-unit housing, rather than large single-family homes. Further, the older housing stock in Springville can become expensive for households to maintain as it requires more renovations and repairs. High-quality rental units provide existing residents with more housing options, while increasing residential density and activity downtown.

2. Office

The second category of property we considered was office space. We found that the downtown area does not have many office buildings and does not have major office employment. However, we believe that this may be, in part, because it does not have high quality offices. Offices are typically classified as A, B, and C class. Commercial office space by class types is further explained in Table 4.2.-2. Most of the office space in downtown Springville is considered Class C and the few Class B spaces are occupied. Class C buildings make up the lowest 10 to 20 percent of the commercial real estate market, offer a low level of building services, and are often older

or poor-quality buildings that do not meet the needs of many sectors in the commercial office market.⁹ The lack of Class B office space may be a barrier for attracting new businesses that are interested in Springville but require a high-quality office building. It may be somewhat risky to create a building that is exclusively office space, so one possibility is that the office units are part of a mixed-use building. Office uses that should be considered are business incubators, co-working and makers' spaces, medical services, and professional services.

3. Retail

The third type of property we considered was retail. We recognize the great changes that have impacted retail due to the pandemic and e-commerce, however certain types of retail are still popular, have potential for investment, and can provide amenities for the community. The commercial retail sector includes niche stores, restaurants, and service-based retail, like entertainment and salons. Currently, the national and local markets for the retail sector vary, however, there is a demand in lifestyle centers, mixed-use buildings, and spaces that can be converted and used for office or retail.¹⁰ Again, a building that is exclusively retail may be risky, so a mixed-use building of office and retail is recommended. Retail uses could include, but are not limited to, outdoor recreation or health and wellness establishment, a grocery store, a book store, a clothing store, or restaurant with outdoor seating.

Table 4.2-2: Commercial Office by Class

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Rents in the market	High	Moderate	Low
Location	Employment center	Employment center	Varies
Transit, vehicle, and pedestrian access	Good	Good to fair	Varies
Near retail and restaurants	High	Moderate	Moderate to low
Building maintenance	Above-average	Average	Below-average

4.2-3 Financial Feasibility - Academy Site

A development feasibility study was conducted to assess the financial viability for two proposed developments on the Academy Site. Each feasibility study included a cost analysis, a comparable properties analysis, a ten-year operating forecast, and an internal rate of return analysis. The inputs in the analyses were based on assumptions of average costs in the region in order to reflect a realistic estimation of costs and values of the proposed new development projects. The internal rate of return (IRR) is an analysis that determines the discount rate of the present value where the initial net investment equals the future annual cash flow before taxes (CFBT) for each year. The resulting IRR may indicate whether an investor will choose to move forward with a development project, if and how much in incentives is necessary in order to move forward, or if the project seems too risky and is not financially feasible.¹¹

1. Market-Rate Apartments at the Academy Site

The Academy Site for market-rate apartments is located mid-block near the intersection of West Main Street and Academy Street (Figure 4.2-3). The proposed site is approximately 34,000 square feet, with a lot width of approximately 160 feet and a lot depth of approximately 210 feet. Accounting for parking, green space, and limiting building heights to two levels, the maximum residential space considered for this estimation is 20,000 square feet. The financial feasibility analysis includes a cost analysis, an analysis of comparable leases, a ten-year operating forecast, and an internal rate of return analysis. The cost analysis includes the cost of acquisition, closing costs, site development, construction costs, and soft costs based on the square footage. As a result of the analysis, the cost for 20 units of market rate apartments

Figure 4.2-3: Proposed Site for Market-Rate Apartment Development



Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

(1000 square feet per unit) is estimated at \$3.275 million (see Appendix). As part of the value analysis, comparable market rate apartments in Orchard Park and Hamburg were evaluated to determine a rental price that is consistent with the level of quality found in new development in the area. This resulted in an average of \$16 per square foot for annual rent (see Appendix), or a rental price of \$1300 to \$1400 per month for 1000 square feet. The ten-year operating forecast is an estimation of the itemized incomes and expenses that result in the net operating income for each year. The forecasting model is based on the initial input of "Potential Gross Rent" in Year 1, which in this case is \$336,000, with the assumption of \$16,800 annual rent per unit (\$1400 per month) for 20 units (see Appendix). The ten-year operating forecast produces an estimated net operating income for each year, during the first ten years of operation. These forecasted net operating incomes can then be applied in calculating the internal rate of return.

The internal rate of return is an analysis

that determines the discount rate of the present value where the initial net investment equals the future annual cash flow before tax (CFBT) for each year.¹² Table 4.2-3 shows values that make up the loan, which include total project cost, loan to value, equity, and result in the annual debt service (\$186,500). Table 4.2-2 also shows the cash flow before tax in year 10 (\$61,100), which is determined by the net operating income in year 10 (\$247,600) less the annual debt service. The sale in year 10 was \$3,809,300, and was determined by dividing the net operating income in year 10 (\$247,600) by the assumed cap rate of 6.5%. The mortgage balance and the sale cost were deducted from the sale in year 10 to determine the net proceeds, which is \$2,195,600. The values were used in determining the internal rate of return, which included the initial net investment, and the subsequent future annual cash flow before tax for each year, for 10 years of the investment. The internal rate of return for the analysis was determined to be -10%.

Table 4.2-3: Proforma and IRR Analysis for New Development of Market Rate Apartments

Market-Rate Apartments: Proforma and Internal Rate of Return		
Total Project Cost		\$3,275,000
Loan to Value	75%	\$ 2,456,250
Equity	25%	\$ 818,750
Annual Debt Service	4.5% / 20 year	\$ (186,500)
Net Operating Income		\$ 247,600
Less Debt Service		\$ (186,500)
Cash Flow Before Tax		\$ 61,100
Sale in Year 10		\$ 3,809,300
Mortgage Balance		\$ (1,499,400)
Sale Cost		\$ 114,300
Net Proceeds		\$ 2,195,600
Internal Rate of Return		-10%

Market-Rate Apartments at the Academy Site Conclusion

The financial analysis for a potential development of market rate apartments resulted in an internal rate of return of -10%. This number tells us that the aggregate of cash flow for ten years will not account for the initial net investment and that the investment in this scenario should not move forward. However, it is not uncommon for a preliminary financial analysis to result in an internal rate of return that is unappealing. Our financial analysis did not account for tax incentives that may make up part or all of the gap if other variables are also considered. A more in-depth analysis may determine lower costs in variables of the cost analysis, the square footage and rental price can also be adjusted, and many of the costs in the ten-year operating forecast can also be adjusted. Essentially, this financial analysis tells us that a development of 20 market rate apartments at a construction cost of \$140,000 per unit with an annual rent of \$16,800 is not financially feasible without procuring incentives.

This gap in feasibility can be overcome through various incentives, including subsidies and tax exemptions, or increases in rental prices. Incentives would require a combination of market-rate and affordable units in this residential development. Given that a sizable percentage of the population in Springville consists of low-income households, the village would be a good candidate for affordable housing construction. Options to fund such development has been previously discussed in Chapter 3. Regionally, subsidies and other incentives are often used for new construction of multi-unit housing due to rising construction costs. With these incentives or other sources of funding, it is possible to arrange a mixed-income structure for multi-unit housing that brings the project to a level that attracts private investment.

2. Office and Retail at the Academy Site

The Academy Site for office and retail development is located directly at the intersection of West Main Street and Academy Street (Figure 4.2-4). The entire site is approximately 34,000 square feet, with a lot width of approximately 160 feet and a lot depth of approximately 210 feet. Accounting for parking, green space, and limiting building heights to two levels, the maximum retail and office space considered for this estimation is 26,000 square feet. The financial feasibility analysis includes a cost analysis, an analysis of comparable leases, a ten-year operating forecast, and an internal rate of return analysis. The cost analysis includes the cost of acquisition, closing costs, site development, construction costs, and soft costs based on the square footage. The cost analysis for 26,000 square feet of office and retail space is \$4.366 million (see Appendix). As part of the value analysis, comparable office and retail space leases in the south submarket were evaluated to determine a lease price that is consistent with the level of quality found in new development in the area. This evaluation resulted in an average of \$11.20 per square foot for annual rent after operating expenses, and an average net operating income of \$5.20 per square foot (see Appendix). The ten-year operating forecast uses a comparable rent price of \$18 per square foot before operating expenses. The ten-year operating forecast is an estimation of the itemized incomes and expenses that result in the net operating income for each year. The forecasting model is based on the initial input of "Base Year Gross Rent" in Year 1, which in this case is \$464,000, with the assumption of 26,000 total square feet at \$18 per square foot for an annual lease (see Appendix). The ten-year operating forecast produces an estimated net operating income for each year, during the first ten years of operation. These forecasted net operating incomes can then be applied in calculating the internal rate of return.

The internal rate of return is an analysis that determines the discount rate of the present value where the initial net investment equals the future annual cash flow before tax (CFBT) for each year.¹³ Table 4.2-3 shows values that make up the loan, which include total project cost, loan to value, equity, and result in the annual debt service (\$248,600). Table 4.2-3 also shows the cash flow before tax in year 10 (\$88,600), which is determined by the net operating income in year 10 (\$337,200) less the annual debt service. The sale in year

10 was \$3,458,200, and was determined by dividing the net operating income in year 10 (\$337,200) by the assumed cap rate of 9.5%. The mortgage balance and the sale cost were deducted from the sale in year 10 to determine the net proceeds, which is \$1,355,500. The values were used for determining the internal rate of return, which included the initial net investment, and the subsequent future annual cash flow before tax for each year, for 10 years of the investment. The internal rate of return was calculated to be -8%.

Figure 4.2-4: Proposed Site for Office and Retail Development



Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

Office and Retail at the Academy Site Conclusion

The financial analysis for a potential development of office and retail development resulted in an internal rate of return of -8%. This number tells us that the aggregate of cash flow for ten years will not account for the initial net investment and that the investment in this scenario should not move forward.¹⁴ However, our financial analysis did not

account for tax incentives that may make up part or all of the gap if other variables are also considered. A more in-depth analysis may determine lower costs in variables of the cost analysis, the square footage and rental price can be adjusted, and many of the costs in the ten-year operating forecast can be attuned as well (Table 4.2-4). Essentially, this financial analysis tells us that a development of 26,000 square feet of office or retail space

at a construction cost of \$150 per square foot and a rental price of \$18 per square foot is not financially feasible without procuring incentives.

Again, the gap in feasibility is typically overcome through various sources of funding, public incentives, or increases in rental price. In the case of a mixed-used project, new development may be eligible for incentive or funding programs. The Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) offers tax incentives, tax abatement programs, and tax discounts.¹⁵ Funding eligibility for new development through the Western New York Economic Development Council (WNYREDC) must align with established

regional strategies. Our proposal for a new mixed-used development would be eligible for various types of funding given the record of past projects that have been awarded funding through WNYREDC.¹⁶ Additional funding is also available through the USDA Rural Development division, which offers grants for businesses and cooperative developments.¹⁷ In any funding or incentive scenario, the development project will require private investment and the creation of new jobs. We believe this type of project presents Springville with many opportunities for economic growth, direct community benefit, and creative ways to bring activity downtown.

Table 4.2-4: Proforma and IRR Analysis for New Development of Office and Retail

Office and Retail: Proforma and Internal Rate of Return		
Total Project Cost		\$ 4,366,000
Loan to Value	75%	\$ 3,274,500
Equity	25%	\$ 1,091,500
Annual Debt Service	4.5% / 20 year	\$ (248,600)
Net Operating Income		\$ 337,200
Less Debt Service		\$ (248,600)
Cash Flow Before Tax		\$ 88,600
Sale - Year 10		\$ 3,458,200
Mortgage Balance		\$ (1,998,900)
Sale Cost		\$ (103,800)
Net Proceeds		\$ 1,355,500
Internal Rate of Return		-8%

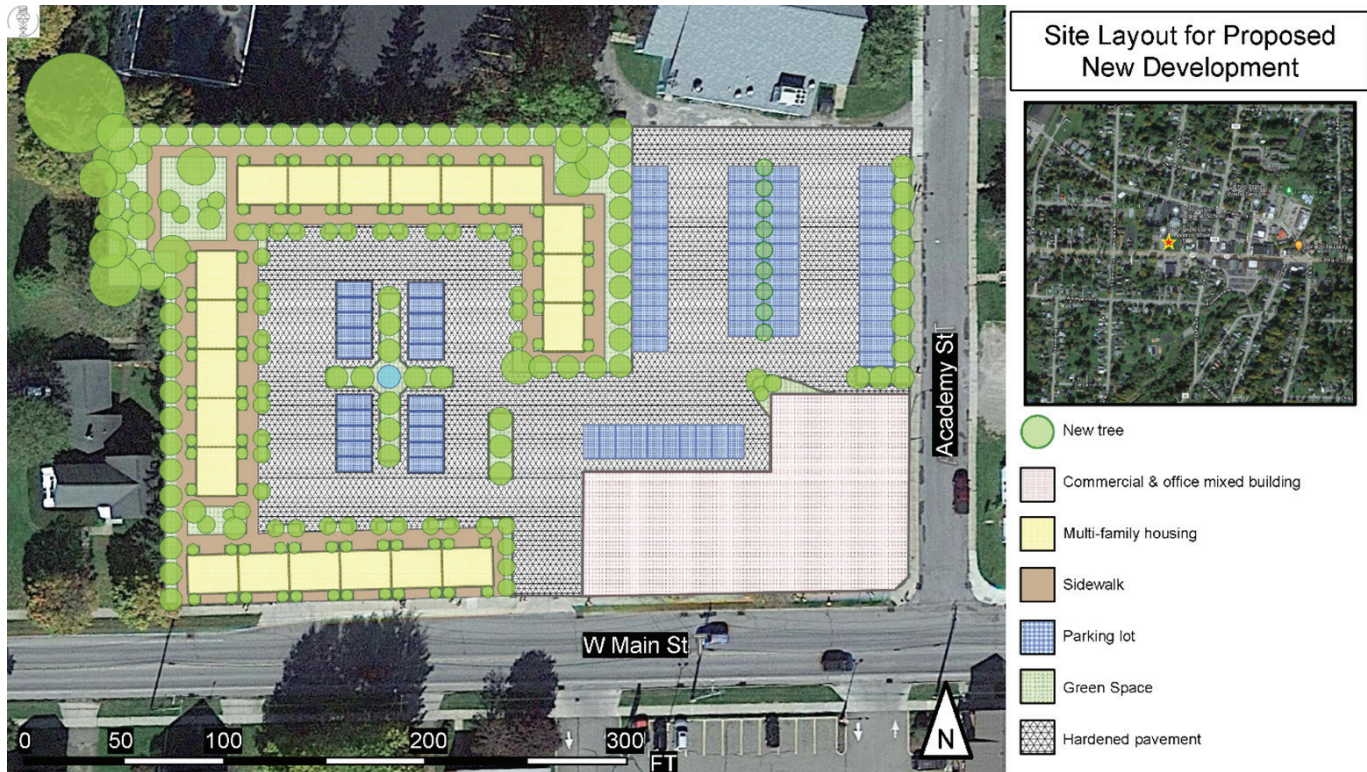
3. Site Layout for Proposed New Development

A potential layout for a new residential development and mixed-used building on the Academy Site is shown in Figure 4.2-5. The site layout for apartments (on the left) shows how 20 units can be situated on the proposed site, totaling 20,000 square feet of residential

space. The proposed development is laid out in a manner to utilize the space efficiently while providing parking spaces and green space for each unit. The site layout for office and retail (on the right) shows how a mixed-use building can be situated on Academy Site with an office and retail space of 26,000 square feet. The zero-lot setback and rear parking was designed

to increase interaction between the buildings and the street in order to promote activity downtown. We believe that any development on the Academy Site should follow this zero-lot setback guideline.

Figure 4.2-5: Proposed Site for Office and Retail Development



Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

4.2.4 Recommendations for Downtown Development

In order to encourage downtown development, we propose the following recommendations:

- Promote development opportunity sites on the Village of Springville website
- Take advantage of assistance through the ECIDA
- Create a Springville Community Development Corporation
- Explore community-owned development

First, interested developers and business owners often use online material to seek

out opportunities for investment. Including easily-accessible information on the Village of Springville website will only encourage further analysis by developers. We recommend posting information regarding potential sites under a tab labeled “Economic Development Opportunities.”

Second, the Concord Industrial Development Agency recently lost its authority to offer tax incentives and subsequently has ceased its operations. In light of its absence, the Village of Springville should take advantage of the resources offered by the ECIDA. The

ECIDA can assist in making new development projects financially feasible through loans, bonds, tax incentives, and other financing mechanisms.

Third, we highly recommend initiating a plan that will eventually result in the formation of a non-profit development corporation. This organization could promote economic growth and investment through a wide variety of strategies and would be eligible for several types of funding that promote new development. A development corporation can assist in commercial construction, acquisition, revitalization, improvement, business expansion and startup, and infrastructure costs, such as water and sewer connections. More information on the recommendation of a local development corporation can be found in Chapter 9 of this report.

4.3 Historical and Cultural Assets

The Village of Springville has an impressively strong cultural core and a notable number of historic resources. There are four buildings individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and four nationally recognized historical districts with over a hundred contributing structures. The village previously had five buildings listed until the beloved Leland House burned down in 2006. While this certainly was a tragic loss, it created a renewed interest in the village's cultural resources. Thenceforth, a number of recommendations from a 1998 Reconnaissance Level Survey of Springville have been implemented.

Since 1998, the Village of Springville has successfully become a Local Certified

Finally, community-owned or shared-equity development should be explored as a type of land tenure and development strategy. The Rural Development office of the USDA offers extensive resources and grants for cooperative businesses and encourages this model as an effective strategy for development in rural areas. Community-owned development includes cooperatives, such as housing, credit and financial services, grocery stores, and agribusinesses. Rural communities have increasingly found advantages of community-owned development in reducing the burden to facilitate private development through subsidies and tax incentives. This form of development can be initiated by a local non-profit organization, a local development corporation, and in collaboration with local government.

Government, making them a recipient of the Federal Historic Preservation Program. In recent years, the Village has expanded and created new historical districts and is currently working to list another eligible structure on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2014, the Village also crafted a *Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation* guidance document for owners of historically significant properties to appropriately maintain them and many buildings today can reflect these standards.

Much of the village's historical accomplishments can be attributed to the dedicated residents of Springville, their mayor, and both the Concord Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission.

4.3-1 *The Concord Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission*

The Concord Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission have done an impressive job managing the village's historical and cultural resources. The Concord Historical Society's mission to "preserve, educate, and promote" the village's rich history has been well-achieved. The Society offers an array of educational opportunities throughout the village at such places like the Lucy Beasley Center, the Mercantile, the Heritage Building, the Warner Museum, and the Carriage House. These all act as popular cultural destinations in the village and truly provide a unique opportunity to tie the past to the present.

Likewise, the Historic Preservation Commission has done exceptionally well in recent years with the addition of three new historical districts in the village and the drafting of a building standards guideline for historic structures. The Commission has played an immense role in maintaining and enhancing the village's historic character while also fostering harmonious growth. As Springville moves forward with future development, the Commission will continue to play a critical role in ensuring distinctive elements of the village's character remain intact.

4.3-2 *Existing Resources*

The Village of Springville is home to four historic districts recognized by the National Register: The East Main-Mechanic Streets Historic District (2002), the East Hill Historic District (2015), the West End Historic District (2018), and the Fiddlers Green Historic District (2018).

The East Main-Mechanic Street Historic District contains 26 contributing buildings, primarily consisting of architecture from the late Victorian era and Mid-19th century.²³ Styles range from Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Neo-Grec. As this district is located in the commercial core of the village, the functions of these buildings primarily relate to specialty stores, restaurants, and professional practices.

- *The East Hill Historic District* is the largest of the districts, containing 92 contributing properties of architectural significance from 1835 to 1935.²⁴ This district primarily represents the evolution of early residential development in the Village of Springville and still remains as a residential area today. Styles ranging from the Romantic, Victorian, Eclectic, and Modern eras can be found here.

- *The West End Historic District* is significant as a representation of community planning and development of a residential neighborhood and architectural style of such developments in the Village of Springville.²⁵ This district contains an array of styles ranging from Italianate, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Shingle style, and Colonial Revival.
- *The Fiddlers Green Historic District* serves as a highly intact civic center that was developed around a green space dating back to 1807.²⁶ The district is significant as an area of community planning and development, as well as its religious, civic, cultural, and residential buildings having architectural significance.

The Village of Springville also has four individual structures listed on the National Register and a fifth building eligible to be listed as well.

Listed Structures:

- *The Springville US Post Office* was built in 1937 by famous architect Louis E. Simon in the Colonial Revival style. It was constructed using brick masonry and retains much of its integrity while still acting as the local post office.
- *The Citizens National Bank*, now currently the Village Municipal Building, was constructed in 1939 in the Art Moderne style and features a hidden Depression era mural by Louis Grell. When the opportunity arises, the Village should seek to re-expose this painting. Additionally, the defining material in this structure is the use of concrete. Ensuring that this material is well-maintained on the exterior should be a concern for the Village.
- *The Former Baptist Church*, now currently the Springville Center for the Arts, was built in 1869 in the Late-Gothic Revival style. The use of red brick and limestone trim adds to the overall presence of this historic structure.

4.3-3 Structures of Interest

The Citizens National Bank

The Village Municipal Building on East Main St, formerly known as Citizens National Bank, is individually listed on the National Register as of 1996. It was built in 1939, serving as a prime example of the Art Moderne style and Modern movement of the 20th century (Figure 4.3-3a). Today it currently acts as the local municipal building.

The exterior of the building remains intact and shows no signs of deterioration or damage. However, general maintenance and a methodological approach to cleaning the outside masonry of the building will be necessary. Routine maintenance of historic structures is highly recommended as a precautionary measure to prevent deterioration and avoid future repair expenses that may

- *The Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railroad Station* was constructed in 1910 and features stylistic elements from the Eclectic era. Today it remains unaltered and a great standing example of a late masonry railroad station. As this is a unique asset in the West End, the Village ought to explore further utilizing this structure.

Eligible Structure for National Register:

The Joylan Theatre was built in 1949 in the Art Moderne style. It remains highly intact and is notable for its red- and buff-colored tiles and aluminum marquee on the façade. The structure is well on its way to be listed on the National Register and is an extraordinary asset for the Village to possess.

Additional Notable Structure:

The Grand Army of the Republic (G. A. R.) Post was built in 1881 as a cabin. It served as a former G.A.R. Post for Union Army veterans. Today it stands intact as a private residence and has the potential to be expanded as a cultural resource for the Village.

incur. As the Village Municipal Building is located at the corner of South Buffalo Street and West Main Street, a focal point in the Village's downtown center, cleaning the exterior would further elevate the charm and ambiance of this hub.

In addition, the interior has undergone low-impact renovations. The inside was converted into an office space when the village acquired the building in 1968 and original features of the Art Moderne style have been covered for over fifty years. Most notably, a Depression era mural painted by Louis Grell was also covered during these renovations. In Figure 4.3-3b, decorative elements on the ceiling and the original mural on the wall can be seen. These renovations are readily reversible.²⁷

Figure 4.3-3a: Exterior of the Village Municipal Building



Figure 4.3-3b: Interior of the Village Municipal Building



The Former G.A.R. Post

The former G.A.R. Post is found at 46 South Buffalo Street. This building was constructed following the Civil War in 1881 and is styled in a log cabin fashion (Figure 4.3-3b). As a former G.A.R. Post, this building served as a fraternity-like organization for Union Army veterans and is a lasting legacy of Springville's involvement in the Civil War.²⁸ Today, it currently acts as a private residence and is still in very good condition.

Since the cabin is a recognized as a former G.A.R. Post by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, we believe the Village should further utilize this structure as a cultural asset. Its level of use will depend on the willingness of the cabin's current owners to participate. The Village should seek to establish a partnership with the owners in order to build upon its history. If the cabin shall remain a private residence, all parties involved should consider placing a marker outside of the cabin to indicate its historical significance.

Figure 4.3-3b: Former G.A.R. Post at 46 S. Buffalo Street



4.3-4 Recommendations for Historical and Cultural Assets

- The Village should utilize Section 106 processes of the National Historic Preservation Act to reverse renovations in the interior of the Village Municipal Building.
- Section 106 processes should be utilized for the general maintenance and methodological

cleaning of the exterior of the Village Municipal Building.

- For the former G.A.R. Post, the Village should explore if a joint project with the owner would be possible to expand the cabin as a cultural resource.

- The Village should seek to visually identify the former G.A.R. Post with a plaque or marker to indicate the structure is locally significant and a legacy of the Civil War.

- All National Register recognized structures and districts located within the village should be subject to routine maintenance. This will

ensure the structural integrity of the buildings and their key stylistic elements are maintained, and thus much costlier repairs avoided in the future.

4.4 Future Visions of Village Character and New Development

The downtown core of Springville successfully harnesses the essence and charm of a small town. It is the central point of pedestrian activity, is lined with an array of defining architectural styles, and has a strong business and cultural presence. As some parts of the Village core are nearly over a hundred years old, the layers of time have created a high degree of intrinsic value. Replicating that intrinsic value and the feelings we associate with it is a key part to continuing that charm and character.

As the Village of Springville prepares for future development, it should also be looking to past developments for guidance. Since this area acts as the commercial core for small business and is partially an historical district, it is especially important to recognize what elements here contribute more to the historic character and elevate that intrinsic value. This can be expressed through a structural style, the materials used, and natural appearance of time and wear on a structure.

Within the commercial core of Main Street, styles largely consist of Greek Revival,

Italianate, Second Empire, Neo-Grec, and Art Moderne. Each style brings a unique presence to Main Street and their use of ornamentations, patterns, and textures greatly adds to the historic character. Maintaining these styles and character defining aspects is a great way to keep the history of the Village intact. They can also be used to inspire future design. The Village *Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation* does an exceptional job at highlighting how these styles can be treated.

The materials used to create the commercial core are character-defining as well. In the Village of Springville, the materials most commonly seen are stone and brick, concrete, stucco, glass, and finishing wood. The varying fine-grain textures of the brick and stonework is the most distinguishable material lining Main Street. This brick is accompanied by wooden storefronts and glass windows to create a layered look. The use of materials is important because these greatly influence and define village character.

4.4-1 Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation

In 2014, the Village Historic Preservation Commission published its own set of design standards for buildings of historical significance or for those located within an historic district. The document provides ample amount of information on how to maintain structures of architectural or historic

significance. While property owners are not required to adhere to these standards, the document still acts as an indicator for what features the Commission has found to be character defining of Springville.

The *Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation* emphasizes features that

are primarily on the façade of a building. Notable elements in the Village would include the treatment of windows, awnings, and how storefronts are maintained. Each of these elements are the main points of connection between pedestrians and the build environment. Windows interact with pedestrians walking by and greatly contribute to the ambiance of Main Street. They should be as transparent as possible to help increase business activity and visibility. The use of awnings is encouraged as well and should be harmonious with building style.

4.4-2 Mixing the Old and the New

According to the National Park Service,

“Preservation planning is the rational, systematic process by which a community develops a vision, goals, and priorities for the preservation of its historic and cultural resources. The community seeks to achieve its vision through its own actions and through influencing the actions of others. Goals and priorities are based on analyses of resource data and community values”²⁹

With this said, preserving community character is typically of high importance to historic villages like Springville. Therefore, addition of any new features to Main Street should be a mindful process. We will further discuss how defining features of the Village can be carried over and built upon in new contemporary development designs.

4.4-3 Contemporary Building Designs

To best match village character, we found that the use of contemporary designs could best act as a bridge between existing and new architecture. As mentioned previously, the most common features present in the downtown area are brick structures with large windows and particular window patterns,

Finally, the storefront, and by extension the façade, needs to be distinguishable, inviting, and enhance connectivity with the street. Adhering to the Village design recommendations elements will elevate the experience for pedestrians strolling along Main Street.

The incentives for property owners to comply with Village design standards would be increased property values, an increase in economic and pedestrian activity, retaining and building upon existing character, and overall community enhancement.

The Village of Springville has already highlighted what it recognizes as character defining features in the 2014 *Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation*. For any developer or architect coming into Springville, this document serves as an excellent resource to help tie in future designs.

Features from this report to emphasize would include the use of brick and similar materials, large windows on the first level, open glass storefronts, and awnings on the façade. In addition, future buildings within the downtown area should follow similar height, setback, and other such building standards to maintain continuity. Reusing previous building materials is always encouraged as well.

wooden storefronts, and awnings. Combined, these elements create a semi-open business environment. This type of environment is what we want to proceed with in new development designs.

As we are making recommendations around a contemporary design, we want to

continue to emphasize the brick and windows on the new structures while also adding in new steel and wooden designs. The use of steel gives an older industrial look, which would help tie to the timeless feel of the existing structures. Incorporating new wooden and brick designs would also aid in giving new structures a modern look to match the nearby Art Moderne styles.

In addition, new designs should also reuse previous materials as well to maintain a sense of place. The timelessness and sense of history that comes with a naturally-aged material is hard to replicate in new designs, so it is highly recommended to reuse materials where possible.

4.4-4 Vision for the Future

The following renderings provide an example of what the future of Springville's downtown could look like when mixing existing elements with contemporary designs. While these are just broad examples and subject to change with the input of locals and professionals, they are meant to inspire the Village Planning Board and help provide a vision for new developments.

Figure 4.4-4a is a rendering of a mixed-used structure located at the intersection of West Main Street and Academy Street. This image coincides with the Academy Site proposal as previously discussed in Part 2, and is meant to show the potential of the lot to accommodate a new project. For this section,

the use of materials is the main focus. The design of this structure will vary but how the materials are employed should remain a conscientious process.

Special attention should be given to the use of awnings, larger windows, and the exposed steel. The use of awnings helps create an open business environment and acts as a point of connection between pedestrians and the built environment. Likewise, larger windows allow for more transparency that enhances connection for pedestrians walking by. The addition of other elements, like wooden details and green roofs, can also increase granularity and create a contemporary appearance.

Figure 4.4-4a: Hypothetical Mixed-Use Structure



The incorporation of steel in the first image was chosen because it complements the existing brick features in downtown Springville. As we want to uphold and expand village character, the exposed steel acts as a noticeable but subtle introduction of newer architectural trends. The steel also ties in contemporary designs that would be an indicator of historic architectural evolution in Springville. As this new structure would be the first new build within the downtown area in recent years, it should act as prideful milestone of growth.

Figure 4.4-4b is a rendering of a hypothetical residential building on the Academy Site, adjacent to the proposed mixed-used building. Again, as the design of these units will vary, the main focus here is the use of contemporary styles and materials and how they pair with existing structures on Main Street. The designs in this rendering utilize old and new materials to continue the fine-grain precedent and appeal of Main Street.

Elements to note are the use of brick, the abundance of windows and their placement,

and smooth, nonconforming surfaces. The brick is the most important material here as it will act as a visual connector to old and new structures. The brick, paired with similar window spacing of the existing buildings on Main Street, acts as a visual indicator that this structure is part of the downtown environment. The additional use of integrated smooth surfaces also creates an asymmetrical pattern on façade that contributes to a contemporary appearance. Smaller details, like using black window encasings, visible steel supports, or incorporating living walls or green roofs can be fitting contemporary additions as well.

The important takeaways from these renderings are the incorporation of mixed-use development, how such designs can increase pedestrian activity, and the capacity Springville has to expand economically and aesthetically. The key aspect of future design is ensuring the style of new developments naturally merges in with the rest of the village.

Figure 4.4-4b: Hypothetical Residential Units



4.4-5 Recommendations for Future Design

The Village should prioritize maintaining the local character when embarking on new development projects and ensure additions coincide with the historical evolution of Springville.

The design of new structures should visually connect to the existing environment through the mixing of existing and new materials, and utilizing similar building codes.

New structures should naturally merge with the existing environment but also stand out as a symbol of village growth, architectural range, and act as a successful milestone for village evolution.

For structures individually listed and located within historical districts, it would be in their interest to follow the design recommendations highlighted in Springville's 2014 *Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation* document and reference the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for historic properties.

The Village's *Building Design Standards for Historic Preservation* should continue to be periodically updated to account for contemporary additions and the emerging architectural trends of the 21st century.

4.5 The West End

The West End district serves as a small but rising secondary economic hub in Springville. While it is not as expansive as the downtown area of East Main Street, the West End has potential due to its location and connections (Figure 4.5-1). The district is located on West Main Street and spans from Gentner's Commission Market to the intersection of Waverly Street and Cochran Avenue. The West End hosts multiple

restaurants, hair salons, childcare facilities, a gym, and an entrance to the Pop Warner Rail Trail. Two particularly notable features are the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh (BR&P) Rail Station and Gentner's Commission Market. Although we cannot provide a full plan of the West End in this chapter, we do recommend that special attention be given to these two assets.

Figure 4.5-1: West End District



Source: Google Earth

4.5-1 Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad Station

The BR&P Railroad Station was built in 1910 by then Springville resident L. J. Shuttleworth to serve as a passenger and freight hub. Accordingly, the property is located adjacent to the Pop Warner Rail Trail. Architecturally, it features unique late 19th century eclectic designs. The station's defining features include two-story polygonal forms, hip roof dormers, and a distinguishable polychrome band on the bricks in the sill lintels. The building is an excellent example

of a turn-of-the-century rail station and its listed historic significance is for these design patterns. The National Register of Historic Places has deemed the building to be in "fair condition," impressively unaltered, and has noted its substantial potential for adaptive reuse. Although we cannot yet offer a comprehensive vision for the West End area, we believe that the BR&P station should serve as its anchor point under any potential plan.

Figure 4.5-2: Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railroad Station



Source: Wikipedia.org

The BR&P Rail Station is a Certified Historic Structure and has been listed on the National Register for Historic Places since 1991. With this status, the structure qualifies for federal historic preservation tax incentives. Developers can utilize state and federal tax credits for 20% of rehabilitation costs - given development is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards. According to the National Park Service, the 20% credit is available for properties rehabilitated for commercial, industrial, agricultural, or rental residential purposes.

The station has been privately-owned for over three decades and is currently up for sale, providing an opportunity for reinvestment.

We strongly suggest that possible uses for the BR&P Rail Station include:

- Venue for weddings and other special event rental space
- Restaurant or small coffee shop with outdoor seating
- Visitor center, together with the adjacent bike hub that is mentioned in the Springway chapter

In the final chapter of this report, a development corporation is also recommended. Such an organization could play an important role for the BR&P Rail

Station by developing local partnerships, seeking funds, and participating in negotiations to work toward reuse of the structure.

4.5-2 Gentner's Commission Market, the "Springville Auction"

Agritourism, as defined by the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, is "activities that include visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation to enjoy the rural setting, be educated, or be involved in a special activity." In Springville, a prime example of agritourism is Gentner's Commission Market. Aside from being a proud locally-owned business, Gentner's hosts the Springville Auction which attracts buyers from all over Western New York. The auctions take place every Wednesday, with peak season during the summer months of May through August. Gentner's consists of three main attractions that occur simultaneously: a flea market, a produce market, and a livestock/farm supply auction.

The livestock auction in particular attracts individuals from Buffalo and its suburbs looking for animals that fit their religious and cultural standards, either for personal consumption or for processing into cultural foodstuff that is then resold at their own local shops. Gentner's is also a crucial marketplace that generates significant revenue for local farmers looking to sell their surplus.

The Springville Auction is a staple attraction in the village that welcomes thousands of visitors each year from all across Western New York. In order to further capitalize on the influx of visitors, it would be desirable to develop improved linkages, such as road and signage connections, between the auction and the rest of the West End.

4.5-3 Connection to Gentner's Commission Market and the Future West End

Despite being less than half a mile from Springville's downtown area, the West End has rooted itself as an independent district with its own unique identity. While the area is still emerging as a new economic hub, it holds great potential through the presence of regional assets that are specifically unique to Springville. In order to solidify the West End as a vibrant, unique neighborhood that hosts amenities only found in Springville, we propose multiple recommendations that build upon its existing assets.

Special attention must be given to Gentner's Auction house and its associated functions when considering any plan for future development, especially during peak season. As previously mentioned, one approach would be to create secondary linkages to the rest of the West End. Introducing wayfinding signage,

pictorial maps, or establishing advertising partnerships with local businesses are a few ways to effectively engage the sheer number of visitors the area experiences on Wednesdays. With this approach, some of the human traffic could be directed to the rest of the West End and even downtown. This guidance may work as a relatively inexpensive way to bolster the local retail economy as a whole.

Another alternative for creating secondary linkages is to introduce a formal, physical connection from Gentner's to the BR&P Rail Station via an access road. This access road would leave the auction house and connect via Carolina Street. We recognize that there is currently a proposed manufactured housing development located between Gentner's and Carolina Street which may inhibit the creation of a formal roadway.

As such, we have provided three alternative routes, as shown in Figure 4.5-3.

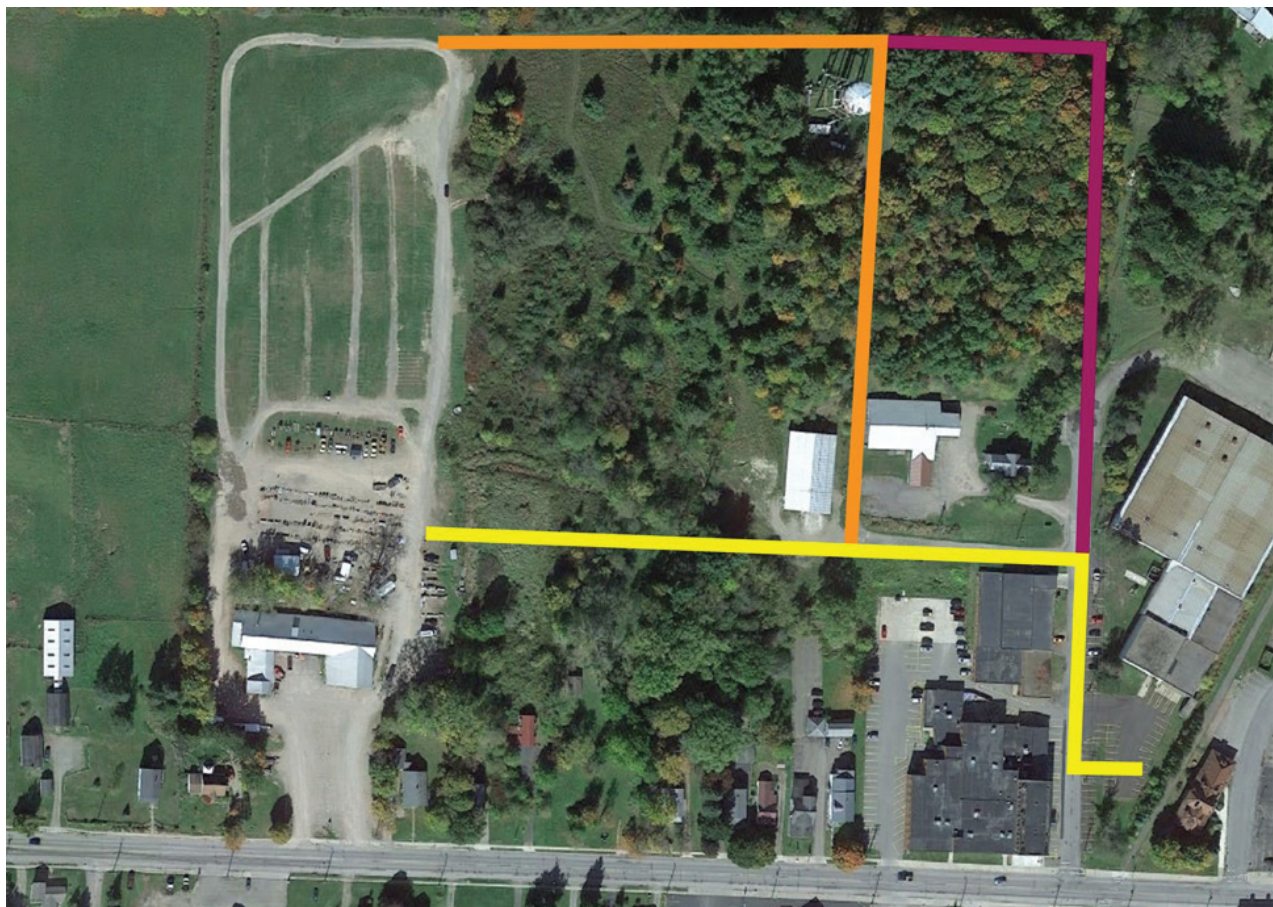
The introduction of a secondary access road would provide the means to physically channel the traffic present in at Gentner's to the rest of the West End. Additionally, these access roads would help ameliorate any traffic congestion that occurs at the auction house during its hours of operation. We acknowledge that this connection would require approval from relevant stakeholders and the community. Nonetheless, we still believe that it is an important option to consider.

With the idea of building upon the existing assets of the West End, we also

recommend that adaptive reuse of the existing Rail Station, as previously discussed. The structure has the potential to introduce amenities that are currently not present in Springville. Specifically, the creation of a private event space/rental venue provides a particularly valuable asset to the village. This approach doubles as an attraction for people both in and outside of Springville looking for a unique location with historical value.

The West End holds great potential for the future of Springville. With several immediate opportunities to bolster the economic vitality of the area, it is only a matter of time before the its true potential is realized.

Figure 4.5-3: Proposed West End Access Road Connections



Legend

Option 1	
Option 2	
Option 3	

Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

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^{20,22} "Cooperative Services." U.S Department of Agriculture Rural Development. www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/cooperative-services. Accessed 9 Apr. 2021.

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- ²⁴ National Park Service. "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for East Hill Historic District." *NYS Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS)*
- ²⁵ National Park Service. "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the West End Historic District." *NYS Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS)*
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Chapter 5: Springway



Spring Brook near Youth Inc. athletic fields

This Chapter will identify how the Village of Springville can create a greenway that interconnects the many parks, natural resources and points of interest within Springville. We call it the “Springway,” which is a system of local paths meant for walking, biking, running, etc.

Some definitions to keep in mind when reading this chapter:

- **Greenway:** A path or trail for bicycles, pedestrians, and other non-motorized users that mainly occur in natural, attractive areas, such as along a stream bed and/or in a wooded area, or along a street with an attractive, wide right of way. A greenway does not need to exclusively occur in a complete natural area; there could be built infrastructure in the surroundings as well.
- **Multi-Use Trail/Corridor:** A trail/corridor that serves various motorized (including cars if development is taking place on a street) and non-motorized uses. These uses occur simultaneously on the same right of way but may be separated from each other.
- **Springway:** A proposed system of local multi-use trails and greenways that generally are located within the municipal boundaries of the Village of Springville, with a few exceptions.

5.1 Why Trail Systems and Greenways are Important

Local trail systems and greenways generally have positive effects on the local municipalities in which they are located. They are effective in increasing the vibrancy of a community by activating streets, providing more recreational opportunities, and attracting visitors. They can improve the overall health of the community as well, giving users an effective method of reducing their risk for heart disease, cancer, and other ailments. They also can have positive effects on a local economy. A study conducted by faculty in the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture, Health and

Natural Resources concluded that the presence of multi-use trails and greenways heightened area property values and increased tourism to the area, bringing revenue to local businesses.¹

Erie County already has several multi-use trail systems, with a few examples being the Shoreline Trail/River Walk along the shores of Lake Erie and the Niagara River and the Tonawanda Rail to Trail system in North Buffalo. With many municipalities now developing local trail systems, it is appropriate for Springville to consider it as well.

5.2 Overview of Springway

The Springway Proposal comprises a series of multi-use trails and greenways that utilize existing infrastructure and conceptual routes located in the Village of Springville. The goal of this proposal is to connect Springville's existing resources into a local network of trails, providing both recreational and economic opportunities for the village and its residents. The proposal is depicted in the map shown as Figure 5.2-1 below, the figure shows both existing and proposed infrastructure that are included in the concept as well as the locations of parks and points of interest in the vicinity.

The planned "Spring Loop" will be the largest proponent of the Springway and will be supplemented with additional sections that create broader connections outside of the loop. Other sections of Springway include the Cascade Extension (labeled in dark brown), and the existing Christopher Stone Loop proposal (labeled in light brown). Below, each of the three segments of the Springway identified will be discussed.

Spring Loop

Spring Loop is central to the Springway concept. It forms a roughly 4.5 mile loop around central Springville. It utilizes the Pop Warner Rail Trail (labeled in solid green), North and South Buffalo Street (labeled in

dashed green), and a conceptual segment located along Spring Brook south of Main Street (labeled in orange, red, black and blue dashed lines).

Figure 5.2-1 shows a dense concentration of parks and points of interest along the proposed routes. The Spring Loop will serve as a path that interconnects these points, allowing users to easily travel from one to another.

Cascade Extension

The Cascade Extension consists of two connector paths that link Cascade Drive to Spring Loop, Waverly Street to the north and an existing service trail to the south. The Cascade Extension corridor will cover the entirety of S Cascade Drive between Main Street and the village's southern border.

Christopher Stone Loop

The Christopher Stone Trail is a proposal developed in the early 2000s by the nonprofit organization Green Springville. It was developed with the goal of promoting sustainability and creating new recreational opportunities for both Springville and Concord residents. The proposal would provide about 6.5 miles of trail that would connect existing community assets like rail trail, community parks, the school, the village's historic district,

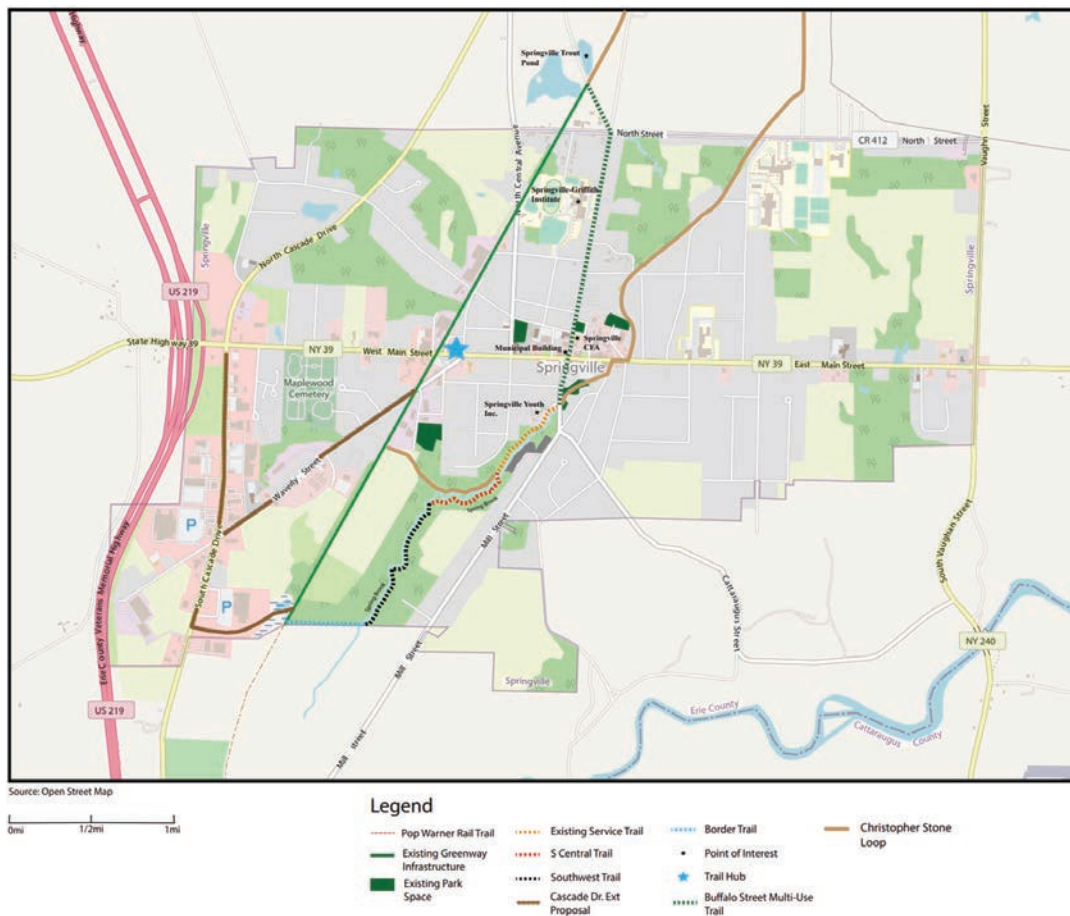
and Spring Brook together.

While the Spring Loop generally stays within the boundaries of the village, the Christopher Stone Loop goes well north into Concord, connecting places like the Concord Town Park and the Community Trout Pond to locations within Springville.

The Spring Loop that we propose here draws inspiration from some parts of the older Christopher Stone Trail Proposal.

Both proposals share the goals of improving Springville by interconnecting existing points of interest and creating greater recreational opportunities for residents. While both would be effective in achieving this goal, we recommend that Spring Loop and the Cascade Extension be the main focus in this report based on our belief that they are probably easier and less costly to initiate and will present greater opportunities for the village.

Figure 5.2-1: The Springway Concept



5.3 Segments of the Spring Loop

The Spring Loop represents the highest priority trail within Springway. It has been divided into three different segments, all of which are unique and present different opportunities for users. Each segment will be discussed in detail:

Pop Warner Rail Trail Segment

The western side of the loop utilizes roughly 2 miles of the existing Pop Warner Rail Trail between Buffalo Road at its northernmost point and the southern boundary of the Village of Springville at the southernmost point. The trail will not have to be altered as part of this

proposal, as it already serves as an effective multi-use corridor. Its existing condition and heavy use imply future success for a larger proposal. Its connection with the Springway network will allow for rail trail users to have easy access to the village's downtown and many points of interest.

Springville Trail Hub

Within the Pop Warner Trail, we propose the creation of a Trail Hub to serve all of Springway as well as travelers from the Greater Zoar Network (to be discussed in Chapter 6). The recommended location of the Springville Trail Hub is represented as a blue star in Figure 5.3-1. This location is significant

Figure 5.3-1: Proposed Buffalo Street Multi-Use Corridor



for multiple reasons. First, it would be situated adjacent to a place of historical significance in Springville, the Buffalo-Rochester-Pittsburgh Rail Station. We believe its proximity to the rail station will make the bike hub a popular attraction in the area (Figure 5.3-2). Secondly, it is situated in a perfect location to serve as a gateway to the village. Signs that depict a map of the Springway, attractions within the village, and places where people may stay or eat should be erected at the hub. The listing of different attractions and points of interest may attract passers by using the rail trail into the village, increasing the amount of tourism traffic and revenue for local businesses.

We recommend that the trail hub be built on land or parking lots adjacent to the station. It is highly desirable that the station itself be converted into an active use area, such as a visitor center.

Buffalo Street Segment

The eastern section of the Spring Loop should run along North Buffalo Street and part of South Buffalo Street. This section can be observed in Figure 5.3-1.

Buffalo Street was selected to serve as a major right of way in Spring Loop due to the opportunities its existing design presents. It is a significant north to south roadway featuring wide shoulders and a sidewalk on each side. The roadway, with a width of approximately 35 feet, could provide a safe separation of cyclists from the main travel lanes, and even a safer separation for pedestrians, who will use the existing sidewalk system. The North Buffalo Street Segment would encompass the length of the street between the northern border of the village and Main Street. The South Buffalo section will be much shorter than its northern counterpart, with only roughly 760 feet of trail.

The proposed corridor would traverse the Village of Springville north and south for approximately 1.09 miles. As depicted in Figure 5.3-1, the origin will be located at the intersection of Buffalo Road and the Pop Warner Rail Trail and will travel south

until it eventually breaks away at the Spring Brook overpass adjacent to Springville Youth Incorporated.

Figure 5.3-1 also depicts both parks and points of interest that occur along or near the proposed corridor. Multiple parks and other points of interest are located on or near Buffalo Street. Located on the roadway (from north to south) is the Springville-Griffith Institute, Fiddlers Green, Springville Center for the Arts, the historic Springville Municipal Building, and Shuttleworth Park, while Heritage and Eaton Parks lie within 0.2 miles west and east of Buffalo Street respectively. All of these locations listed above will be accessible from the corridor, which will likely increase the number of people visiting them.

Additionally, renovation of the street to include the new infrastructure, specifically the inclusion of narrower vehicle lanes and barriers, would likely serve as a traffic calming measure, causing drivers to travel more

Figure 5.3-2: Example of a Bike Hub



Source: Virginia, *Roses in the Rubble*

carefully through the corridor.

Not many physical challenges are posed for the development of North Buffalo Street, as the roadway design is near ideal for development as part of the Springway Proposal.

However, the design of South Buffalo Street may present some challenges. The road is slightly narrower at a width of approximately 30 feet. To make up for lost space, the road would likely need to be widened by 2 feet to adequately accommodate cycling lanes without a separating barrier, and 5 feet if the separation barrier would be included. While there is room between the side of the road and the sidewalks to do this, issues may arise with local landowners who would be affected by a potential widening of S Buffalo St.

This alteration to Buffalo Street, like all of our proposals, will require public support, especially from those living along the roadway. It is important to spread awareness within the community about how important the conversion of the street into a multi-use corridor would be for the village.

Spring Brook Segment

The proposed Spring Brook segment can be a dramatic and interesting addition to Springville's assets. To explain it, we divided it into four lengths: The Existing Service Trail, the South-Central Trail (starting with a proposed pedestrian bridge), the Southwest Trail, and the Border Trail (starting with a proposed pedestrian bridge). The trail lengths and points of interest are labeled in Figure 5.3-3.

In Figure 5.3-3, the sections are colored in orange (Existing Service Trail), red (S Central Brook Trail), black (Southwest Trail), and blue (Border Trail) dashed lines. Each stretch will be discussed separately.

The Spring Brook segment utilizes what is arguably the village's most significant natural resource. With the lack of a designated trail along the stream currently, this would provide an opportunity to connect village residents with the waterway. This proposed segment will provide users with a very

Figure 5.3-3: Spring Brook Trail Greenway



different experience than they would have on Buffalo Street and the Rail Trail. Surroundings will mainly consist of the waterway and vegetation, giving the user a greater sense of environment. Additionally, its hilly terrain would provide greater exercise opportunities compared to the generally flat landscapes seen on Buffalo Street and the Rail Trail.

Some of the Spring Brook segment will necessarily occur on privately owned land. The village could negotiate with the landowners and create an easement for public access. The fact that the trail would be at the rear ends of the properties that, we believe, are currently overgrown and unused could aid negotiations. It is critical to recognize that terrain along Spring Brook past the existing Service Trail may at points become dangerous, with cliffs and possible erosion creating hazards along the stream banks. It would be essential for it to be geologically assessed and surveyed before any development were to take place. Since the area is also subject to erosion and flooding, the Spring Brook segment should be planned in

coordination with efforts at flood remediation and development of green infrastructure for stormwater control. Some of these ideas will be discussed in Chapter 7.

The four subsections of the Spring Brook segment:

Existing Service Trail. Spanning from the current parking lot serving Springville Youth Incorporated, located on S Buffalo St., is a service path that is regularly maintained by the village. It runs along the northern bank of Spring Brook for roughly 3/10 of a mile, ending about 100 yards past the Springville Sewage Treatment Plant.

Pleasant views of Spring Brook are offered from various locations along the service path, both up close and from afar (Figure 5.3-4). At times, there are access points to where a pedestrian may approach the creekside safely, which opens opportunities to fish or enjoy nature.

We view this length as a significant asset

to be included as part of the Spring Loop. Its terrain is hilly, and it lacks a straight away path like those seen along the other sections, providing a different experience for its users.

South Central Brook Trail. The South Central Brook Trail gains its name due to its proximity to the South Central Ave cul-de-sac. This is the section directly continuing from the Existing Service Trail. The proposal includes a crossing of Spring Brook at the northernmost point of the trail. After the crossing, the path continues for approximately 3/10 of a mile along the southern bank before it becomes the Southwest Trail.

Terrain along the proposed S Central Brook Trail is generally consistent with terrain on the service trail, with numerous hills and turns as it runs parallel to the brook. Current vegetation consists mainly of brush and small trees along the stream banks, similar to what is observed along the previous section. As a result, we saw this extension as a feasible option with important benefits, although some issues with private land holdings would arise.

Southwest Trail. The Southwest Trail segment consists of the entirety of the proposed half mile trail section as it turns south along Spring Brook heading towards the village's southern boundary. The Southwest Trail is planned to be in a section of a both privately and publicly owned wooded area sitting between two open parcels of land. Here, the vegetation transforms from brush and small trees to a denser concentration of medium to large size trees. Less is known of this section's terrain, but research shows that the banks of Spring Brook become steeper cliffs rather than just a general downslope to its banks.

This trail will create greater connections between recreational users with the surrounding environment, as it would likely be canopied with trees and will not contain any adjacent municipal and/or residential structures. It continues in a general north/south direction until reaching the southern border of the village, where it then becomes the Border Trail.

Figure 5.3-4: View of Spring Brook and the Sewage Treatment Plant from Existing Service Trail



Border Trail. The Border Trail segment of the Spring Brook Segment is the only one that does not follow the banks of the stream. It runs parallel with the municipal boundary in an east/west direction between the Southwest Trail and the Pop Warner Rail Trail, a distance of approximately 0.25 miles. This section serves as the connector path that completes the Spring Loop.

Like the land surrounding the Southwest Trail, little is known about the terrain on which the Border Trail will sit. We were unable to visit, but we believe the area to be generally flatter than the previous section.

Also like the Southwest Trail, the Border Trail will likely be highly vegetated with a canopy of trees and minimal land development, which serves as both an opportunity to connect users with nature and an uncertainty due to its terrain and vegetation.

5.4 Cascade Extension

With Cascade Drive being an important corridor within the village, it is valuable that multiple uses have access to the location. A multi-use right of way would open the opportunity for residents to walk, bike, or use another alternative mode of transportation to access retail along the stretch of road. Figure 5.4-1 depicts the Cascade Extension.

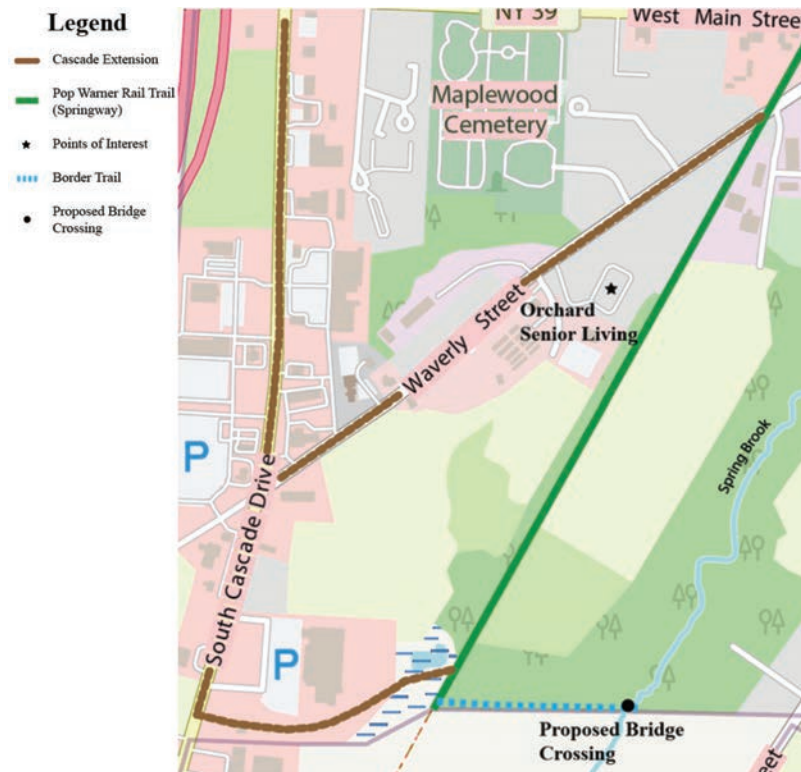
The Cascade Extension consists of two connection routes between the Pop Warner Rail Trail (green) and Cascade Drive. These two connector paths are Waverly Street to the north and a service path adjacent to a Lowe's Home Improvement Store to the south. The extension spans from the southernmost part of Cascade Drive in the village to the northernmost store

before the road's intersection with West Main Street.

The current design on Waverly Street between the rail trail and Cascade Drive would need upgrading to become a multi-use route. As for the southernmost access point, issues generally mirror those regarding the Spring Brook Trail. It would require full development on land with little to no existing infrastructure and would likely require easements on private property.

Though we do believe the path would provide important non-motorized access to the large stores, we do think that Cascade Extension is a secondary priority. Highest priority should be placed on Spring Loop.

Figure 5.4-1: South Cascade Drive Connection Proposal



5.5 Future Connections to Regional Networks

Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail

As stated previously, the western edge of the Spring Loop is proposed to occur along the current Pop Warner Rail Trail. Outside of Springville, the trail is the Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, which runs north/south between the Village of Orchard Park and Erie County's border with Cattaraugus County. This connects Springville to some of Buffalo's southtowns, potentially bringing cycling and, to a lesser extent, pedestrian traffic into the Springville area.

GoBike Buffalo Proposal

GoBike Buffalo has proposed a southern tier trail system that extends the current Erie Cattaraugus/Pop Warner Rail Trail to connect with regional trail systems such as the Shoreline Trail/River Walk along the shorelines of Lake Erie and the Niagara River in Buffalo and the Genesee Valley Greenway beginning in Hinsdale, NY. Greater connectivity between

the Pop Warner Rail Trail with areas both to the north and south of Springville would effectively bring more traffic into the area. This proposal will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6.

Future Connections with Zoar Valley

It would be important to connect the Springway with a regional network of trails and greenways serving Zoar Valley. This trail system, which will be discussed in Chapter 6, would connect Springville with the region's most valuable natural resource, Zoar Valley.

The likely connector path between Springway and the larger regional network would be the section of West Main Street between the Pop Warner Rail Trail intersection and Zoar Valley Road. Developing Main Street into a multi-use trail system would be a lengthy process, but we believe that it should potentially be considered if the two concepts are implemented.

5.6 Proposed Action

Springway's presence would bring great benefit to the Village of Springville. Its paths would connect different areas of interest in the village, creating a network of parks, historic buildings and districts, and natural features. It would provide valuable opportunities for recreational activity and improvements to general health and quality of life. It would potentially bring visitors into the village, increasing tourism revenue and help grow the local economy. It is also a large amenity that would likely increase the desirability of Springville as a place to visit and live.

It is for these reasons that we suggest the Village of Springville consider the implementation of this proposal. Below we will provide some preliminary steps that the village could follow if a decision to go forward with Springway development.

General Actions:

- Priority of development for each section of Springway ranked: 1) Spring Loop, 2) Cascade Extension, 3) Christopher Stone Trail.
- Hold community information sessions and charrettes to educate residents, facilitate public intervention, and gain support for development.
- Apply for grants, funding, or other programs specific to the development of multi-use trails and greenways.

Springville Trail Hub:

- Explore trail hub location options near the Buffalo-Rochester-Pittsburgh Rail Station. Adjacent parking lots would be considered the best option.
- Fit the hub with proper infrastructure such as bathrooms, benches, bike racks, air pumps, and possibly bike repair sites.
- Include maps that depict the Springway System and identify the locations of significant locations that lie along the network.

Buffalo Street:

- Develop an urban design plan where Buffalo Street would be transformed into a multi-use trail and greenway.
- Implementation on Buffalo Street should include: the construction of bike lanes that are separated from the roadway by barriers, the striping of the road to explicitly identify traffic lanes and bike lanes, and the designation of each sidewalk as a one direction right of way for pedestrians.

Spring Brook Trail

- Negotiate with residents whose land would be affected by the proposed development.
- Perform geological assessments and surveys on the land where the trail would be developed and identify any potential physical hazards.

Cascade Drive Connection

- Develop an urban design plan where Waverly Street would be transformed into a multi-use trail. The plan should consider redesigning Waverly Street in a similar fashion as Buffalo Street.
- Negotiate with local landowners whose land may be affected by the proposed development.
- Negotiate with store owners along Cascade Drive to determine the feasibility of the addition of bike infrastructure in parking lots.

Endnotes:

¹ McDonald, J., & Brown, L. (2015, August). The Economic Impact of Multi-Use Trails. Retrieved April 26, 2021, from <https://communities.extension.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1301/2015/10/NRGLiteratureReviewFinal-10-8-15.pdf>

Chapter 6: Greater Zoar Valley Regional Network



This chapter identifies a set of regional interconnections where the Village of Springville acts as a hub for scenic biking. Springville is in a unique position located at the juncture of multiple attractions such as Shuttleworth Park, the Community Trout Pond, Scoby Dam, world-class fishing locations, golf courses, ski resorts and other scenic resources such as Cattaraugus Creek, the Southtown's Scenic Byways, and the Pop Warner Rail Trail depicted in Figure 6-1.

Perhaps the most magnificent natural attraction in the region is Zoar Valley. Through regional efforts between Cattaraugus County and Erie County, it is possible to link these resources into a recreational travel network, especially for biking. Springville should be particularly interested because the village will find itself at the center of this greater regional network.

Figure 6.1 Pop Warner Rail Trail



6.1 Benefits

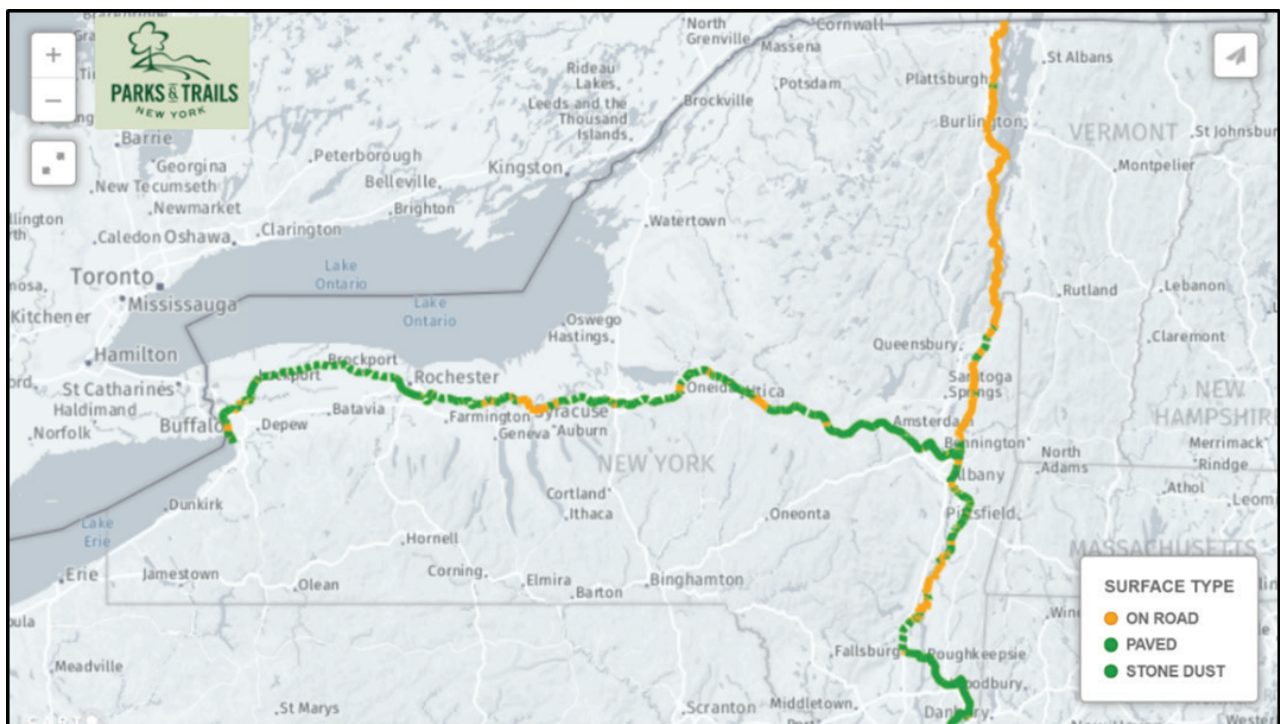
Improved regional interconnection takes advantage of resources close to Springville that will bring visitors of various kinds such as passing drivers, avid fishers, hikers, and bikers. According to the Adventure Cycling Association, bicycling is one of the fastest growing types of outdoor recreation and tourism nationwide with roughly 48 million people bicycling recreationally per year, contributing \$96.7 billion per year to the economy. Bicycling also contributes to better community health, environmental health, happiness, and less traffic congestion. Bike tourists are also geotourists who desire destination points that offer distinctive characteristics, niche attractions, culture, landscape, and history. They also prefer to make meaningful cultural connections and explore off the beaten path.¹ Bicycle Touring Pro states the average bicycle tourist will cycle between 40 to 60 miles each day.² It is therefore important for communities such as Springville to understand ways of creating bike networks that bring together attractive

bikeways and interesting several local destinations within a daily ride.

Bike networks have ample benefits: connecting Western New Yorkers and visitors to natural, historic and cultural splendors of the Western New York region; increasing physical activity; improving mental health; increasing transportation alternatives; historical education; increasing recreation-based tourism; increasing property values; enhancing the ability to attract new employers and employees; preserving fragmented habitats; and improving safety as off-road trails provide safe recreational opportunities for various users.³

New York State supports and encourages regional trail systems and has the most multi-use trails in the nation, such as the Empire State Trail Project in Figure 6.1-1. In Springville, the Pop Warner Rail Trail is already extremely popular. According to Parks & Trails New York, this is the nation's longest multi-use trail that has brought substantial health, economic, and environmental benefits

Figure 6.1-1: Empire State Trail System



to New Yorkers who live along the trail.⁴ The Empire State Trail project stands as a testament to New York's ability to implement interregional connection at a massive scale. It shows that ideas such as these are possible,

6.2 Current Initiatives

Multi-use trails such as the Pop Warner Rail Trail, the Tonawanda Rails to Trails, and the Empire State Trail have been very successful and have provided significant economic and recreational value. Other organizations have recognized the significant positive impacts these trails offer and have generated multiple initiatives to further connect New York State via a system of trails.

GObike Buffalo, with Alta Planning & Design, conducted a feasibility study for constructing an 80-mile multi-use trail in and adjacent to the Buffalo Pittsburgh rail corridor between the City of Buffalo and the Town

Figure 6.2-1: GObike Southern Tier Trail



popular, and beneficial. The system also serves as a precedent for expansion in the future to the greater Zoar region, which has Springville as the hub.

of Hinsdale. This project is supported by funding from Ralph C Wilson, Jr. Foundation and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Funds administered by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.⁵ A terrain view of the Southern Tier Alignment is illustrated in Figure 6.2-1.

The Western New York Land Conservancy has also stressed interregional connectivity via greenway corridors that would touch all eight counties in Western New York (Figure 6.2-2). Its goal is to create a system of connected and protected forests from Pennsylvania to the Great Lakes and the Finger Lakes, from Western New York to the Adirondacks, providing a corridor for wildlife to move back and forth.⁶ According to the Conservancy, the Wildway will be an extensive series of protected lands that will allow plants and animals to migrate across the land as they once did, to move as climate changes, and to expand their ranges and ensure their survival.⁷

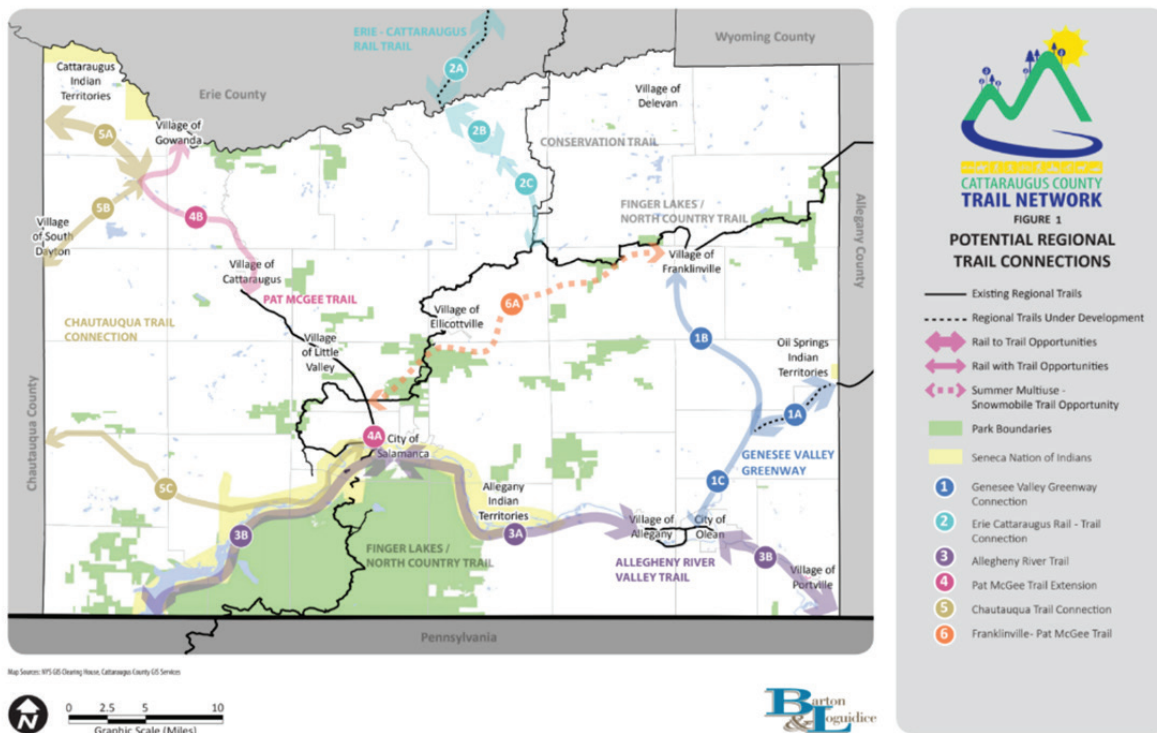
Figure 6.2-2: Preliminary Map of the Western New York Land Conservancy "Wildway"



Cattaraugus County has also prepared a countywide trail system plan in 2017 depicted in Figure 6.2-3. According to the plan, the purpose of the Countywide Trail System is to preserve and promote the County's natural resources, maximize opportunities for outdoor recreation, and capitalize on the outdoor tourism industry. The plan explicitly states that the trail's benefits include decreased impact

on the environment through reduced motor vehicle usage and increased environmental awareness; health benefits through increased physical activity and reduced stress; and economic benefits through increased tourism.⁸ The county commitment to a regional trail network bodes well for the creation of a larger Zoar Valley regional network.

Figure 6.2-3: Cattaraugus County County-wide Trail System Plan 2017



6.3 Zoar Valley

Zoar Valley is arguably the most magnificent natural recreational resource in the region. Figure 6.3-1, which depicts the NYSDEC map, shows the locations of foot and multi-use trails, as well as parking locations and scenic vistas. To begin the creation of a regional network, we propose prioritizing cyclists and pedestrians on the existing connections between Gowanda and Springville.

Bicyclists can begin in Springville, bike along Zoar Valley/Gowanda Zoar Roads

to Zoar Valley, and loop past the Village of Gowanda and onto Route 39. Bicyclist can also utilize other multi-use trails within the area. As the whole loop is between 30 to 40 miles long, this is a perfect course for avid bicycle tourists.

We examined road conditions, blind spots, and steep grades on routes such as Waverly Street, Zoar Valley Road, and Gowanda Zoar Road. The conditions of the roads are good with only minor cracks. In fact, these roads were relatively smooth and offered ample picturesque views of Cattaraugus Creek

and vegetation that gave it a surreal feel. The inclines and declines in elevation also made the trip feel more fun.

Public access to Cattaraugus Creek is a key challenge. Cattaraugus Creek is one of the best steelhead trout fisheries in the East and has a primary fish species of brown and rainbow trout.⁹ We propose signage and new

road design to facilitate safe and attractive connections to Zoar Valley. Fishers and bikers together will increase tourism, stimulate the local economy, and also bring travelers of other recreational activities such as skiers, snowmobilers, hikers, and bicyclists. Together, they will increase the likelihood of business spin-offs as hotels and restaurants.

Figure 6.3-1: Zoar Valley Multi-Use Area Trail Map

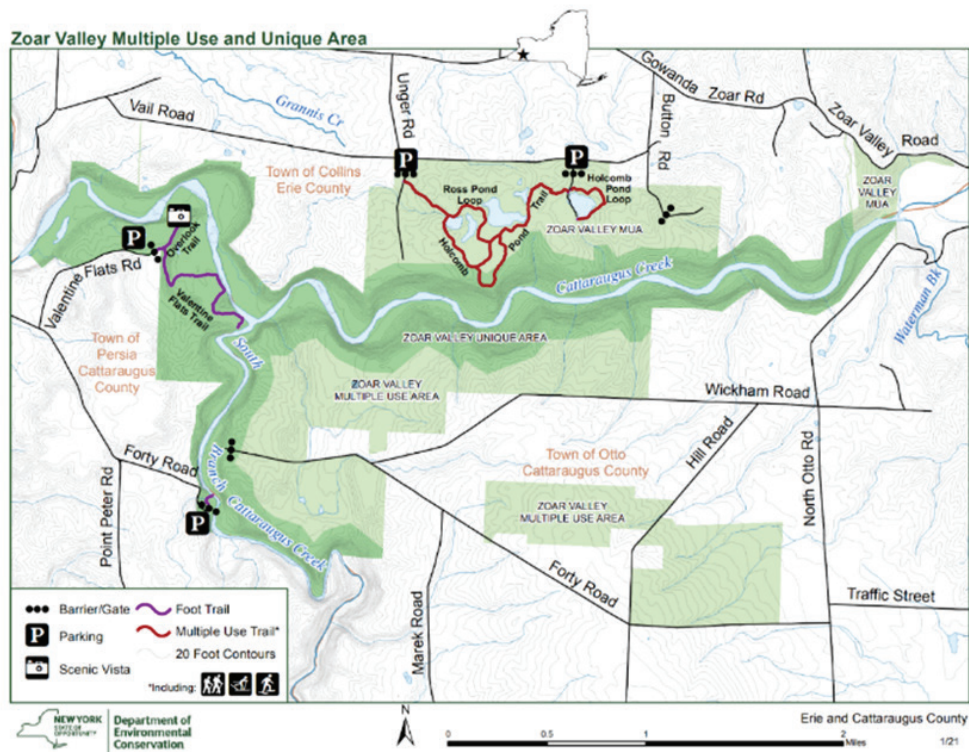


Figure 6.3-2: Zoar Valley



6.4 Building Greater Regional Networks

To improve Springville’s regional connectivity, we identified existing regional alignments that could be used to connect the Village of Springville to Zoar Valley, Gowanda, Ellicottville, Yorkshire, and Buffalo. We also used current initiatives such as GOBike’s Southern Tier Trail proposal, the Cattaraugus

County’s Wide Trail System, the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council’s Regional Bicycle Plan, and the Empire State Trail Project as inspiration to identify other paths that may connect to Springville which is at the hub.

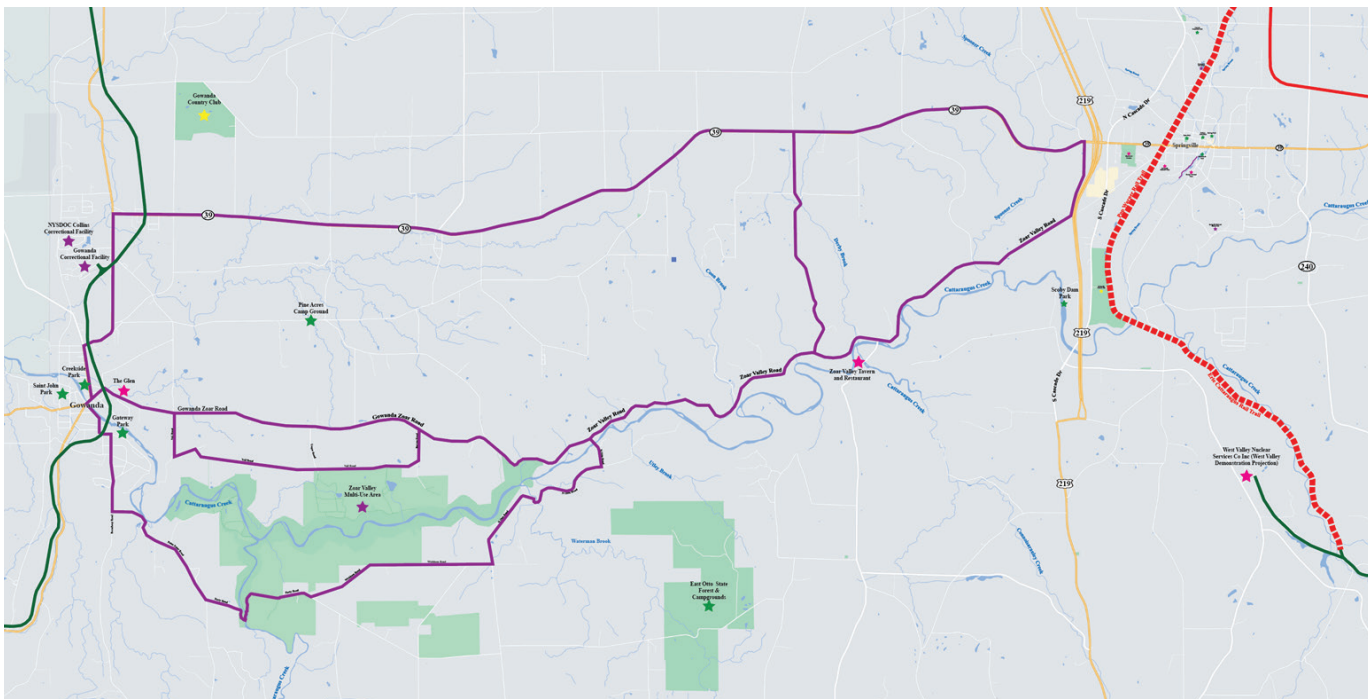
6.4.1 Zoar Valley/Gowanda

Figure 6.4-1 depicts our Greater Zoar Loop concept that would improve linkages to Zoar Valley and the Village of Gowanda. Improved connectivity can be achieved through funding for new signage and road rehabilitation, while marketing can increase awareness.

State Route 39, which extends across the northern section of the loop, may be worth designating as a bikeway. According to the Empire State Trail Design Guide, standard bike lane width along the Empire State Trail corridor is 7 feet with a minimum width of 6

feet adjacent to on-street parking.¹⁰ Although Route 39 is considered an express driving route, the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) has designated bike routes along State Highways 31 (Bike Route 5) and State Highway 263 (Bike Route 517).¹¹ All three are 2-4 lane highways with speed limits between 40 and 55 miles per hour and wide shoulders. The designation of State Highways 31 and 263 as significant regional biking routes could justify Route 39 as a bikeway in the Greater Zoar Loop Concept. The southern section of the trail could also be scenic biking routes that offer picturesque

Figure 6.4-1: Greater Zoar Loop Map Concept



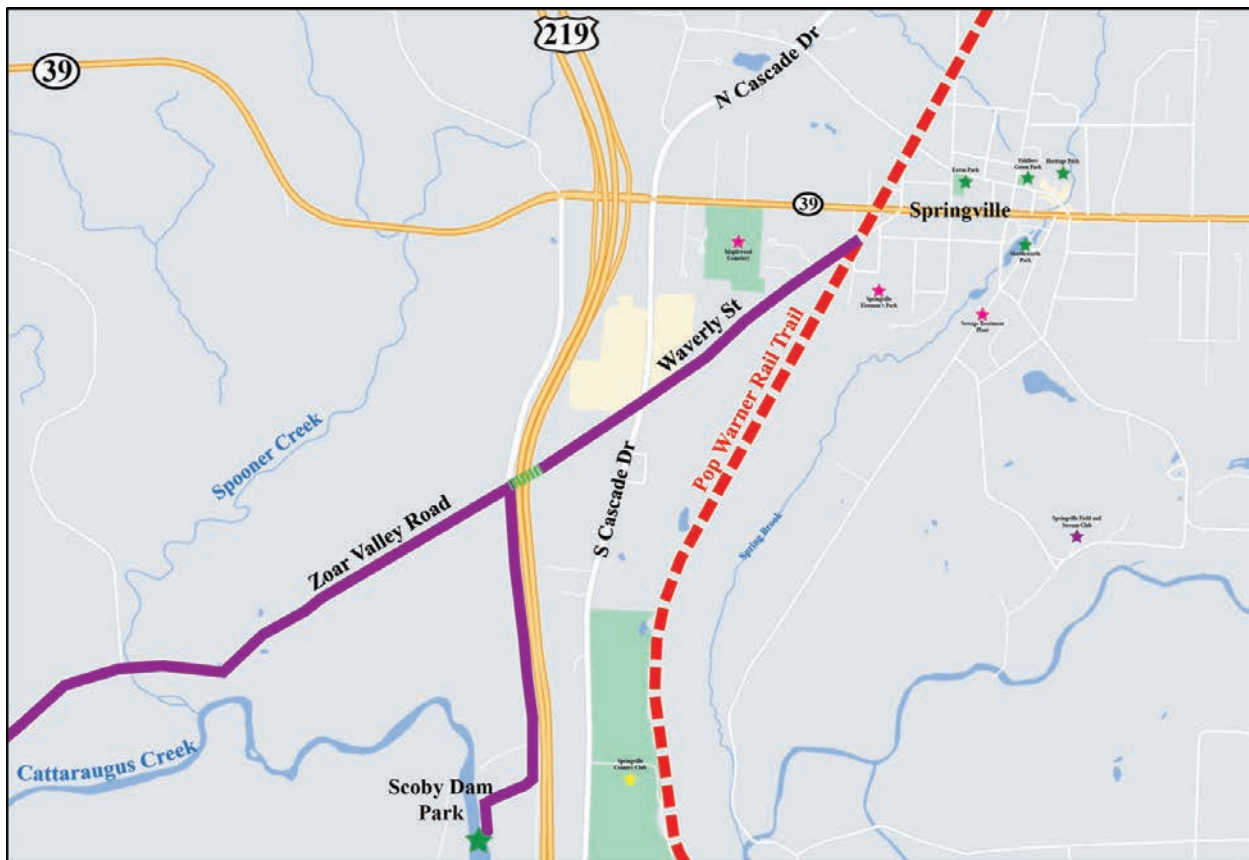
views of Cattaraugus Creek, highly vegetated areas, meandering roadways, and unique destination points.

This concept also provides options to those who do not wish to complete the full loop to Gowanda. For example, Grote Road shares similar visual and topographical features with Zoar Valley Road. This road, among many more, can be used as an

alternative route for novice cyclist. In addition, there are many snowmobile trails and utility routes that intersect the Greater Zoar Loop. These paths can be used year-round as other alternative routes and could serve off-road bikers and all-terrain vehicle motorists.

The previous Greater Zoar Loop Concept takes advantage of existing rights of way that could be used to connect Springville

Figure 6.4-2: Greater Zoar Bridge, New Development Concept



to Zoar Valley. However, there is a significant opportunity to implement new development that will improve Springville's access to Zoar Valley, Cattaraugus Creek, and Scoby Dam. Figure 6.4-2 depicts our tentative concept of a new multi-use bridge over Route 219, connecting Waverly Street to Zoar Valley Road. We also propose an improved off-road alignment that begins from Zoar Valley Road and continues south to Scoby Hill Road. This concept not only reduces travel time, but also

improves connectivity to the Pop Warner Rail Trail (or the tentatively proposed Springway Loop), Scoby Dam, and Cattaraugus Creek. The Greater Zoar Bridge concepts also addresses Springville's public access concern and increases the recreational options for those living in Springville and for others who are visiting the area. Figure 6.4-3 offers an aerial view of where the proposed Greater Zoar Bridge would be located if Springville were to adopt and implement this idea.

Figure 6.4-3: Aerial View of the Greater Zoar Bridge Location



6.4.2 Buffalo to Ellicottville

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council and its partners have also developed a regional bicycle plan for Erie and Niagara Counties that utilizes existing off-road greenway trails similar to GObike's proposal.¹² There are already regional plans proposed by many, such as GObike Buffalo and the GBNRTC, that seek to further connect Springville to Buffalo and Ellicottville as shown in Figure 6.4-4. According to Figures 6.4-5 and 6.4-6, there is even a possibility for GObike's trail to connect to the Empire State Trail System at the intersection of Erie Street and Perry Boulevard in Downtown Buffalo. If undertaken, this would be a huge regional accomplishment that would yield significant value for Springville.

Figure 6.4-4: Proposed Alignment by Priority

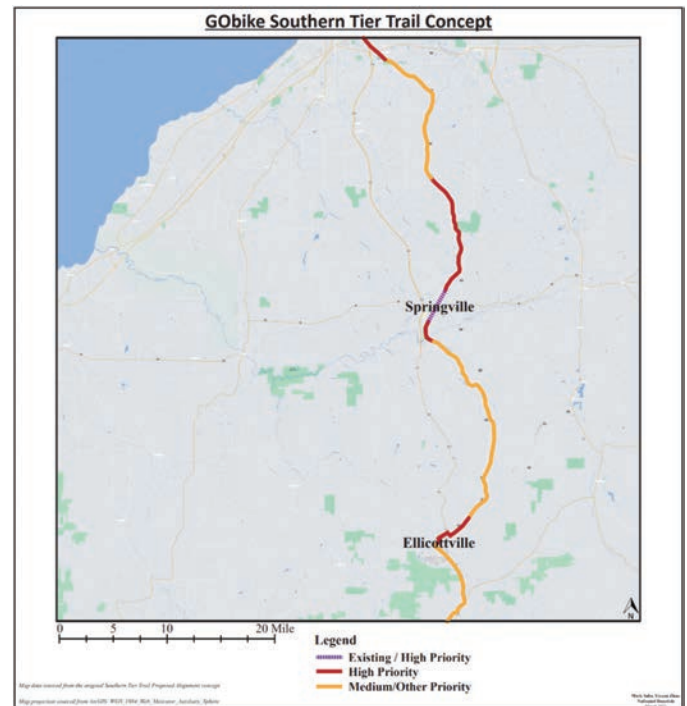


Figure 6.4-5: Empire State Trail

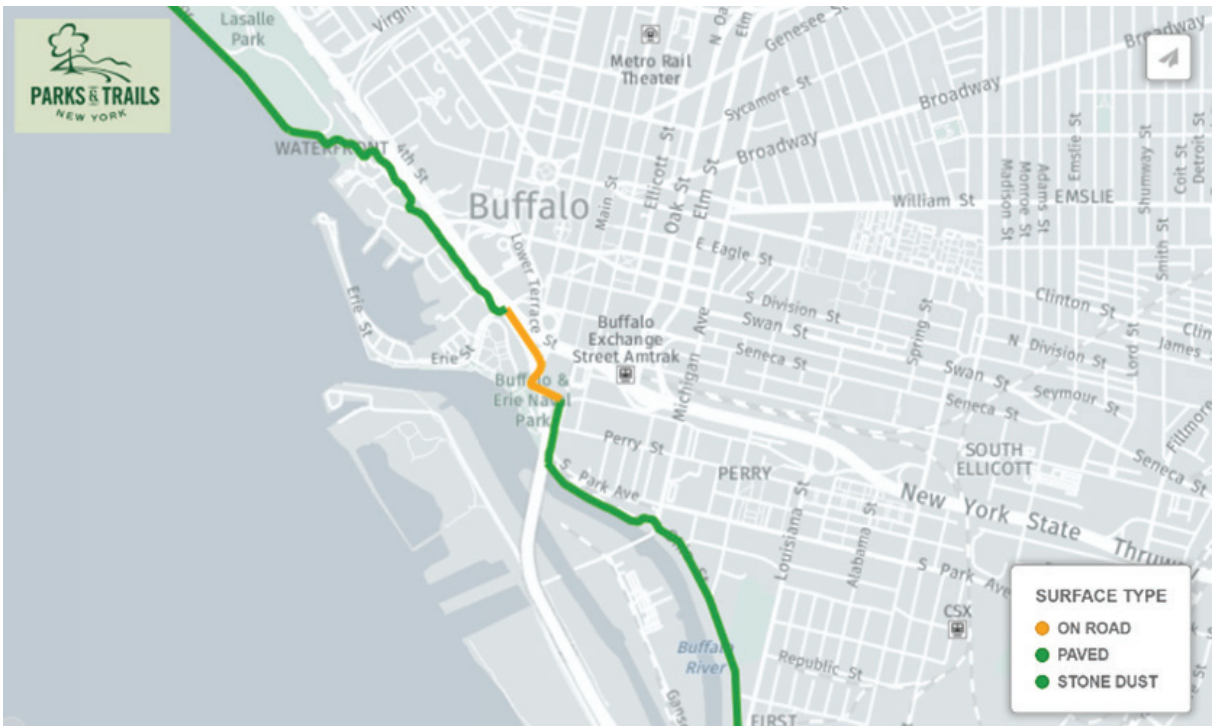
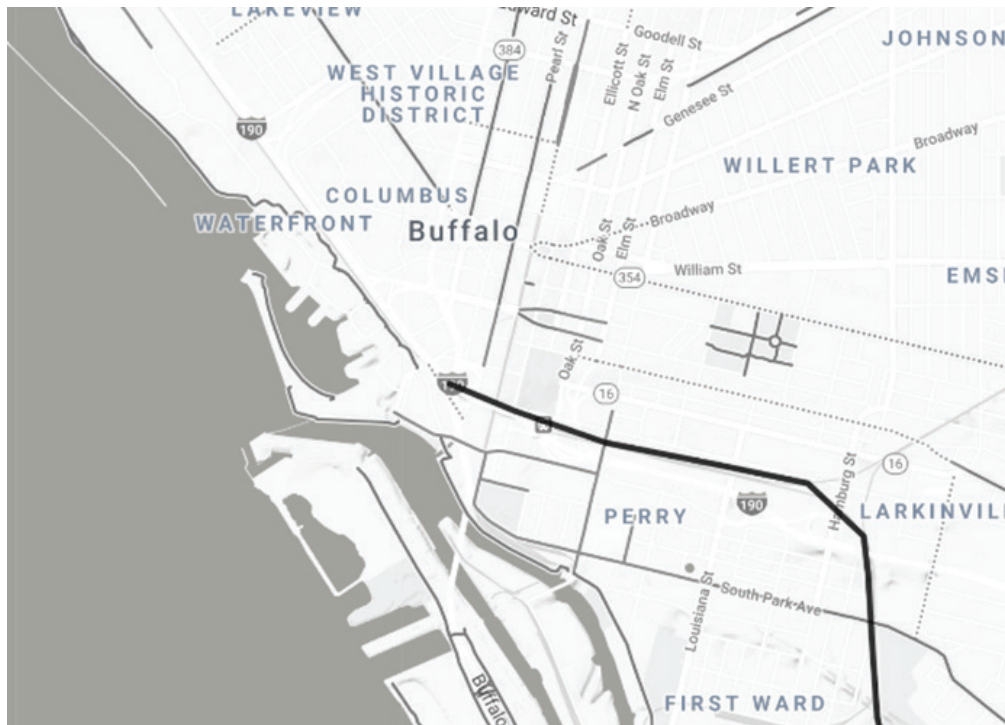


Figure 6.4-6: GObike Trail



6.4.3 Other Possible Extensions

6.4.3 Other Possible Extensions

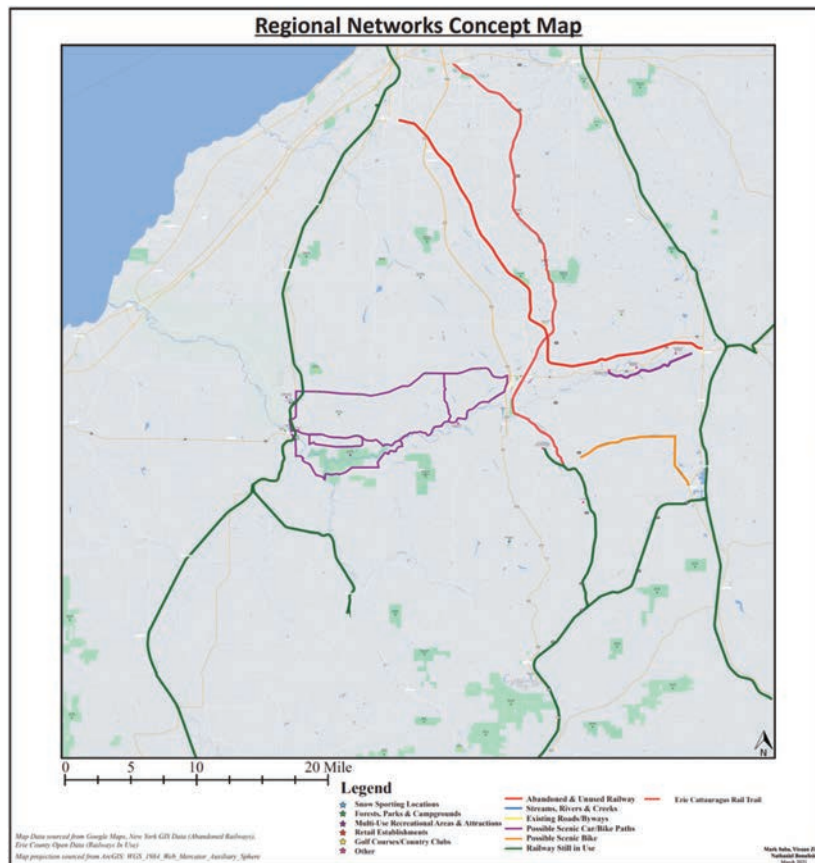
This section offers highly preliminary suggestions for other important scenic alignments that could be renovated and made safer. Figure 6.4-7 represents a set of regional interconnections that connect Springville to neighboring jurisdictions. The map includes possible scenic bike paths, driving routes, and abandoned railway paths. In addition, Figure 6.4-7 includes destination points such as snow sporting locations, forests, parks, campgrounds, multi-use recreational areas, retail establishments, golf courses, country clubs, and many more.

Yorkshire is a hamlet in Cattaraugus County that lies roughly 10 miles East of Springville. The hamlet is connected to Springville via State Route 39 and Creek Road. There are many public fishing locations and other attractions along Cattaraugus Creek

that may warrant further investigation of Springville's eastern connections (Figure 6.4-8). Determining a starting point for this endeavor also needs more study.

Further possibilities could be sought by observing other rights of way such power lines and snowmobile paths. Figure 6.4-9 represents snowmobile trail map overlaid with electric transmission lines. New York State has an extensive snowmobile trail system that includes over 8,000 miles of trails spanning throughout the entire state. These trails are administered by state government organizations, specifically the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and are generally maintained by the many local snowmobile clubs that operate throughout the state. Many of these clubs are affiliated with the New York State Snowmobile Association (NYSSA)

Figure 6.4-7: Preliminary Regional Networks Map



and the funds generated by their snowmobile registration fees, in part, are used to maintain the trail system (NYSDEC).¹³

We suggest that this extensive system may be used for recreational purposes other than snowmobiling. This may include, but is not limited to, pedestrian use, cycling, mountain biking, ATV riding, and hiking. A publication developed by the American Council of Snowmobile Associations (ACSA) through funding by the US Department of Transportation (DoT) states that many snowmobile trails are used by hikers, bicyclists, equestrian riders, ATV riders, and

a host of other recreationalists during the summer season.¹⁴ In addition to snowmobile paths, almost all of the electrical utility routes, including the ones in the area of Springville, are owned by the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation. Examples such as the Power Trail, a four-mile-long pedestrian walkway that runs under electric utility lines in Fort Collins, CO (Rails to Trails Conservancy) serves as proof that utility routes can be an effective way of expanding a region's trail system. In the right conditions, a trail along a utility route can increase alignment options to bicyclists.

Figure 6.4-8: Yorkshire Connection Map

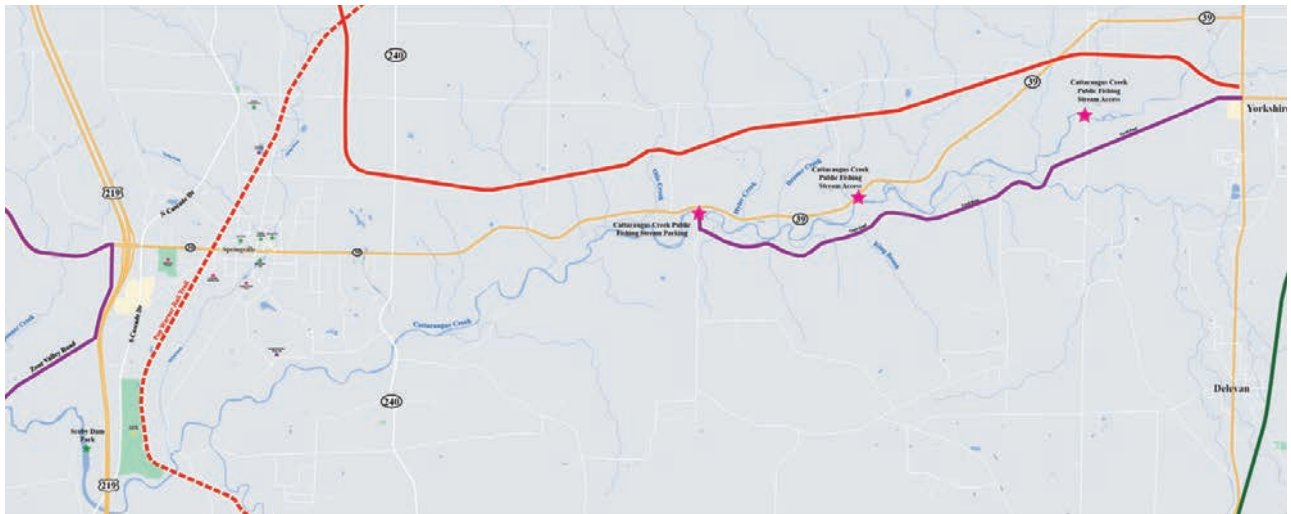
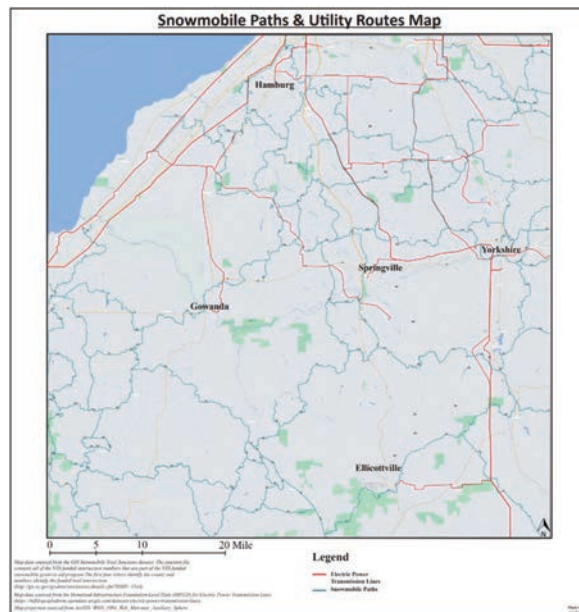


Figure 6.4-9: Snowmobile Paths and Utility Routes Map



6.5 Proposed Actions & Concluding Recommendations

The benefits for our proposal are no different than those in other trail systems discussed. Improved connections to significant environmental attractions like Zoar Valley can increase the number of recreational options to those who live in Springville and for those who are visiting the area.

More multi-use connections from Buffalo, through Springville, and past Ellicottville will also prove to be extremely valuable, especially if such a trail system can connect to the Empire State Trail system. More scenic corridors create greater connectivity between people and the environment. Greater enjoyment and quality of life is sure to follow which could potentially transform Springville

into a center for tourism. Overall, this makes Springville a more enjoyable place to work, visit, and live.

There are a variety of funding options that Springville can take advantage of. New York State provides grants for tourism and marketing initiatives. For example, the 'I Love NY' Market New York – Tourism Grant Program provides funding for regional tourism marketing, tourism capital and tourism special events. Funding may also be available from other sources such as those represented in Figure 6.5-2.

Figure 6.5-1 Greater Regional Concept

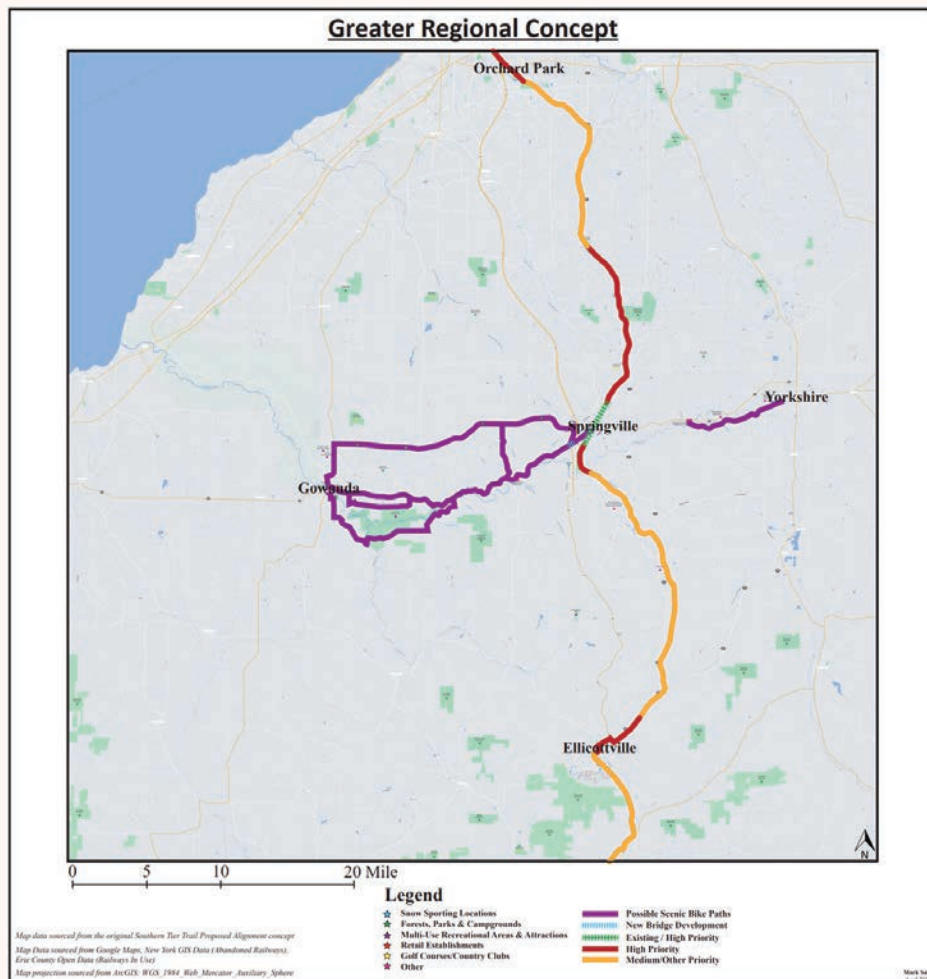


Figure 6.5-2 Possible Sources for Funding

Funding Source	Category
National Highway Performance Program	Federal
Highway Safety Improvement Program	Federal
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality	Federal
Transportation Alternatives	Federal funding administered by NYS DOT
Recreational Trails Program	Federal funding administered by NYS OPRHP
Highway Safety Section 402 Grants	Federal
Urbanized Area Formula Grants	Federal
HUD Community Development Block Grants	Federal funding administered by NYS OHCR
Consolidated Local, State, and Highways Improvement Program	State
Market NY Empire State Development Grant	State
Local Waterfront Revitalization Program NYSDOS	State
Environmental Protection Fund Grant Program for Parks, Preservation, and Heritage	State
The Green Innovation Grant Program	State
The Greater Rochester Health Foundation	Regional
Bikes Belong Coalition	Private
National Trails Fund	Private
Global ReLeaf Program	Private
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	Private
The Conservation Alliance Fund	Private
Suburban Environment/Community Revitalization	Private

The Cattaraugus County-wide Trail System Plan also mentions that assigning trail coordinator positions within each county would help coordinate other trail efforts to grow New York’s trail system.¹⁶ Trail coordinators could also work on grant writing projects to fund these trails and manage the logistics involved in maintaining and building trail systems. Erie County’s Planning and

Economic Development Division has also stressed the importance of improved regional interconnection via regional trail networks. The Western New York South Towns Scenic Byways, US 219 Expressway and NYS Route 240, are scenic driving routes that connect the Village of Springville North and South, but are not for scenic biking. On the other hand, Springville has unofficial scenic routes such as

those that connect the village to Zoar Valley and Gowanda in the West. These routes should be advertised and improved.

It is also important to emphasize that Springville cannot bring about interregional connection by itself. It involves cross-municipal collaboration that can bring about positive change to all communities involved. In addition, there is substantial economic value in considering this proposal. Therefore, based on the total review of the possibilities, we propose that Springville develop a cross-municipal coalition to make interregional connectivity happen. We also propose that that Springville works closely with other municipalities to implement North and South multi-use trail systems. In addition, it would also be extremely valuable to work with Erie

County and Cattaraugus County to improve the connection to Zoar Valley. This can be done through new signage, new roadway improvement to meet safety standards, and reducing travel time by building the Greater Zoar Bridge. It would be up to Springville and any other municipality or organization to reach out to each county, the DEC regional offices, New York State Parks, bike groups such as GObike, and foundations for funding. Overall, the Greater Zoar Regional Networks and tentative concepts are intended to guide development in and around Springville. The concept itself should also be used as a framework for Springville and any other partners to achieve greater public access, tourism, and interregional connectivity.

Endnotes:

- ¹ "Bicycle Tourism 101." Adventure Cycling Association, 2021, www.adventurecycling.org/advocacy/building-bike-tourism/bicycle-tourism-101.
- ² Alff, Darren. "Bike Tour Planning: How Far Should You Plan To Cycle Each Day? –." Bicycle Touring Pro, 12 Jan. 2018, bicycletouringpro.com/bike-tour-planning-how-far-should-you-plan-to-cycle-each-day/#:~:text=The%20average%20individual%20conducting%20a,recommended%20for%20most%20bicycle%20tourists.
- ³ "Southern Tier Trail Feasibility Study." GObike Buffalo, 25 Feb. 2021, gobikebuffalo.org/project/southern-tier-trail-feasibility-study.
- ⁴ "Parks & Trails New York : Empire State Trail." Parks & Trails New York, 2021, www.ptny.org/explore/empire-state-trail.
- ⁵ "Southern Tier Trail Feasibility Study." GObike Buffalo, 25 Feb. 2021, gobikebuffalo.org/project/southern-tier-trail-feasibility-study.
- ⁶ "Land Conservancys Wildway Plan Seeks to Connect Protected Areas." The Buffalo News, 2021, buffalonews.com/good-morning-buffalo-land-conservancys-wildway-plan-seeks-to-connect-protected-areas/article_7345fc7c-9988-11eb-8c2d-b3efde1852b8.html#:~:text=Sharon%20Cantillon-,Land%20conservancy's%20Wildway%20plan%20seeks%20to%20connect%20protected%20areas,elephants%20and%20rhinoceroses%20in%20Africa.
- ⁷ "Western New York Wildway." Western New York Land Conservancy, 2021, www.wnylc.org/western-new-york-wildway.
- ⁸ Cattaraugus County Countywide Trail System Plan. Barton & Loguidice, DPC, 2017, www.cattco.org/planning/trail-system-plan#:~:text=Cattaraugus%20County%20Countywide%20Trail%20System,on%20the%20outdoor%20tourism%20industry.

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16. Cattaraugus County Countywide Trail System Plan. Barton & Loguidice, DPC, 2017, www.cattco.org/planning/trail-system-plan#:~:text=Cattaraugus%20County%20Countywide%20Trail%20System,on%20the%20outdoor%20tourism%20industry.

Chapter 7: Water Infrastructure



Source: MA Watershed Coalition

Springville's concerns about water infrastructure include stormwater discharge, the wastewater treatment plant, and the potential for flooding. The wastewater treatment problem has gained particular urgency since the Village was placed under a Consent Order from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). In addition, there are important relationships between wastewater and flood management and proposals for recreational access to Spring Brook.

Some of these problems, particularly those related to the wastewater treatment plant, will need to be dealt with by specialized engineering studies. Alongside such studies, we propose to assist the village from a more holistic perspective. Flooding and excessive wastewater discharge are not necessarily two separate issues to be addressed by separate structural interventions. A long-term approach for decreasing hazards posed to and by water in the village may even be combined with an eye to the green recreation proposed in the previous sections. In this section of the report, we will discuss identified threats to Springville's water infrastructure as well as our approach to addressing them.

7.1 Wastewater

Currently, one of the most pressing issues facing the Village of Springville is the future of its wastewater treatment plant located at 145 Mill St. The plant's measurement for solid waste has been in excess of the DEC standards at random measures since 2017. As a result of being cited for wastewater overage, the village has been issued a consent

order. Although we were notified that there are engineers currently working on the issue, we have also been notified that in order to undergo major modifications and construction, the plant would have to be non-functional.

According to the Consent Order, the Department of Environmental Conservation issued Springville a Notice of Violation

around August 20, 2018. The Notice related to 23 effluent exceedances documented in Springville's Discharge Monitoring Reports submitted from November 1, 2017 through May 31, 2018. Through the Notice, the DEC informed Springville that it must prepare and submit a correction plan by September 28, 2018, including a date by which the Village proposed the facility would return to compliance. Springville submitted an engineering plan in September 2019 which laid out corrective action alternatives and a recommended plan of action.

However, the plan did not include a commitment to undertake the work or a proposed date by which the facility would return to compliance. From November 2017 to August 2020 the facility recorded 26 effluent exceedances, over 90% of which resulted from higher than allowed Total Suspended Solids. Therefore, by discharging even more effluent from Springville's wastewater treatment plant that exceeds the effluent limitations of State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit, the Village was in violation and waived its right to a hearing as provided by law, consented to the issues presented, and agreed to be bound by the provisions, terms, and conditions contained in the Consent Order.

Addressing the Consent Order is not the only source of increased costs to the wastewater plant and its users. From 2017-2018 to 2020-2021, the budget allocated to the sewer fund has risen from under \$800,000 to

over \$1 million. The rise in cost for the village and village customers has been linked to aging infrastructure and resulting violations of New York State Pollution Discharge Elimination System regulations. It is our understanding that there are also issues stemming from stormwater intrusion into the wastewater system: during heavy snow or rain, stormwater is able to enter pipes running to the treatment plant, overwhelming treatment capacity and leading to excessive effluent discharges. The treatment plant can only handle so much, and in times of heavy stormwater, inadequately treated wastewater is discharged into Spring Brook.¹ Structural interventions lining aging manhole covers and pipes have somewhat mitigated but not eliminated the issue.

One option we considered was expanding the sewer system to partner with surrounding towns which would allow the Springville system to become non-operational during construction periods. However, distances to other public sewer systems and elevation changes across the region appear to be too great to make this affordable. This, among many upgrades to the existing system, is both potentially and currently costly. There are therefore long-term concerns regarding the viability of the village plant given its age and the relatively small size of its user base. In this chapter, we will discuss the possibility of interventions outside the plant itself in order to decrease the wastewater burden.

7.2 Flooding

The most significant natural hazard faced by the village is flooding as a result of heavy rain events. Figure 7.2-1 illustrates the current flood hazard areas in Springville as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Severe flooding has resulted in declaration of a state of emergency on at least one occasion. However, given the risk posed by flash flooding and - according to information given to us - the

politically complicated nature of floodplain mapping, the FEMA maps do not necessarily convey the full story. We also consulted the flood risk maps generated by Flood Factor (Figure 7.2-2), a nonprofit tool which claims to look at which properties actually flood as opposed to merely what is in the floodplain.²

Another topic adjacent to flooding is erosion along the banks of Spring Brook which currently threatens the Springville

Youth, Inc playground and other properties adjacent to the brook. In 2009, erosion caused by street runoff damaged the foundation and caused the collapse of the S Buffalo St culvert, necessitating the closure of the street for months. In 1998, serious flooding caused the declaration of a federal state of emergency, and erosion in an unnamed tributary of Spring

Brook caused the collapse of a house on Woodward Avenue.³ Erosion frequently occurs as a result of fast-flowing flash flood waters running off impervious surfaces faster than they can be infiltrated into the ground. The same factors cause intrusion of stormwater into municipal pipes and general runoff pollution of surface water bodies.

Figure 7.2-1 Flood Hazard Areas for Springville

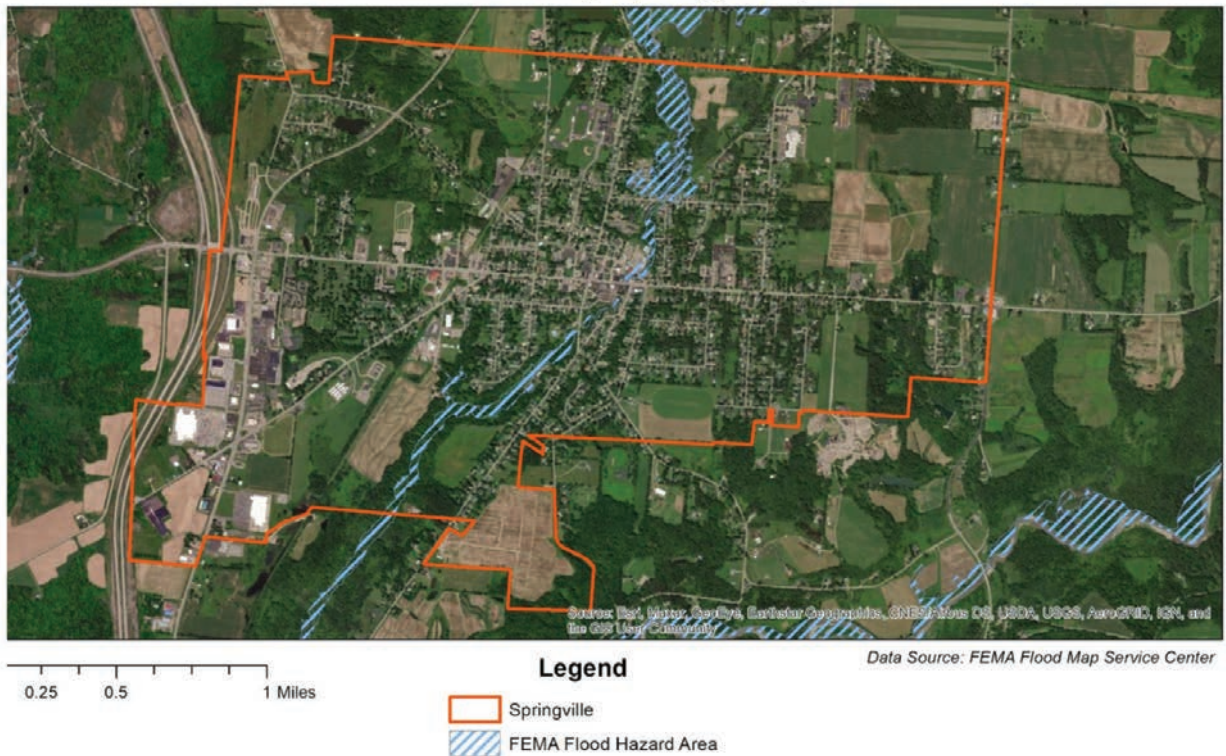
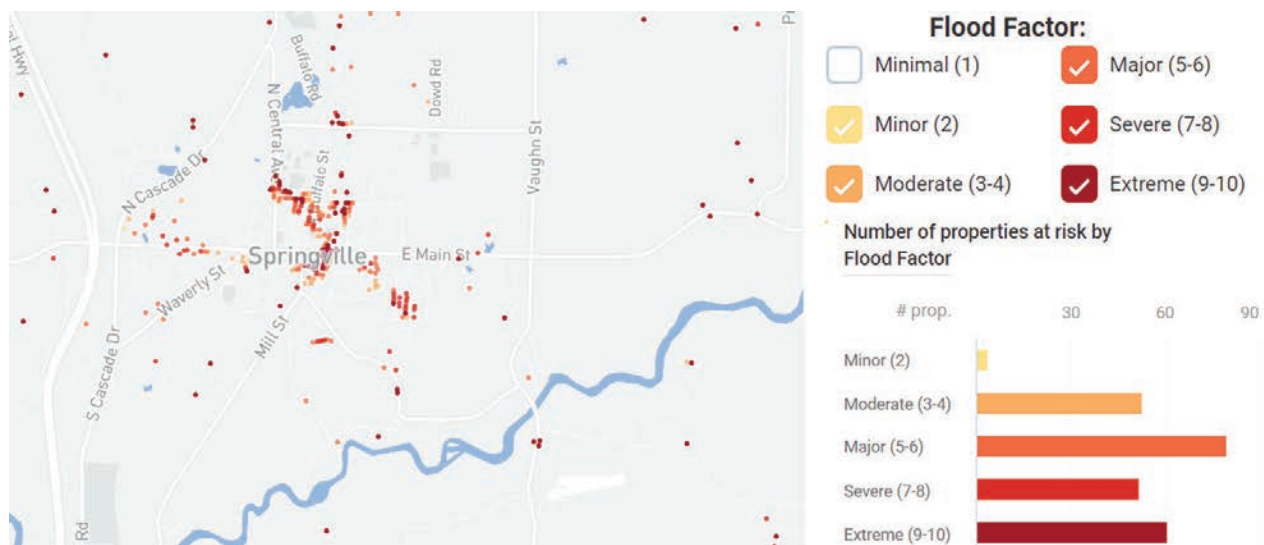


Figure 7.2-2 At Risk Properties as Determined by Flood Factor Tool



7.2.1 Drinking Water

Levels are monitored daily and there are currently no concerns with quality or quantity of drinking water in the village.

7.3 Potential Solutions: A Coordinated Green Infrastructure Approach

The Environmental Protection Agency defines green infrastructure as “the range of measures that use plant or soil systems, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspire stormwater and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters” (emphasis ours).⁴ Given the current state of the village wastewater plant, which has few users, increasing maintenance costs, low capacity, and links between flooding and wastewater issues, additional green infrastructure may be a promising pursuit for the Village. What’s more, it may serve to slow runoff during heavy rainfall events and, if placed adjacent to waterways, absorb some overflow from flash

flooding upstream. As it stands, Springville currently has some green infrastructure in the form of rain gardens around Franklin Street, which manages the runoff from parking lots, and the green roof on the Springville Center for the Arts building (Figure 7.3-1). This is notable because Springville is not required to incorporate green infrastructure by law.⁵

There are various options for green infrastructure with a vast range of upfront capital costs, not including costs of construction and maintenance. The large amount of open land in the village would work to their benefit in implementing green infrastructure.⁷ Figure 7.3-2 offers options for suitable locations of new infrastructure.

Figure 7.3-1 Springville Center for the Arts Green Roof ⁶



Some possibilities could include stormwater wetlands contiguous to existing wetlands and bioretention investments such as bioswales and rain gardens. As noted earlier, Springville has some rain gardens already, and the zoning code encourages shared driveways due to space constraints, which also reduces impervious surfaces.⁸ Conserving existing open space, forest, and wetlands is also among the most economical ways to address flooding.⁹ The village has many parcels of open unpaved land, pictured below (Figure 7.3-3), some of which may also be promising candidates for green infrastructure interventions. This is particularly true for open parcels which lay in floodplains or which have a high flood factor.

But there are possibilities which go beyond wetlands or gardens on vacant open land. Previous sections of this report discussed the proposed Spring Way, intended to connect the Pop Warner Rail Trail to Spring Brook and downtown. Our proposed designs include a trail alongside the waterway, an area which we think would be an excellent candidate for incorporating green infrastructure as an aesthetic and sustainability improvement. The trail proposal also partially overlaps with vacant land alongside Spring Brook, allowing additional space to incorporate wetlands or retention ponds to hopefully address flash flooding.

Figure 7.3-2 Environmental Map of Springville, NY

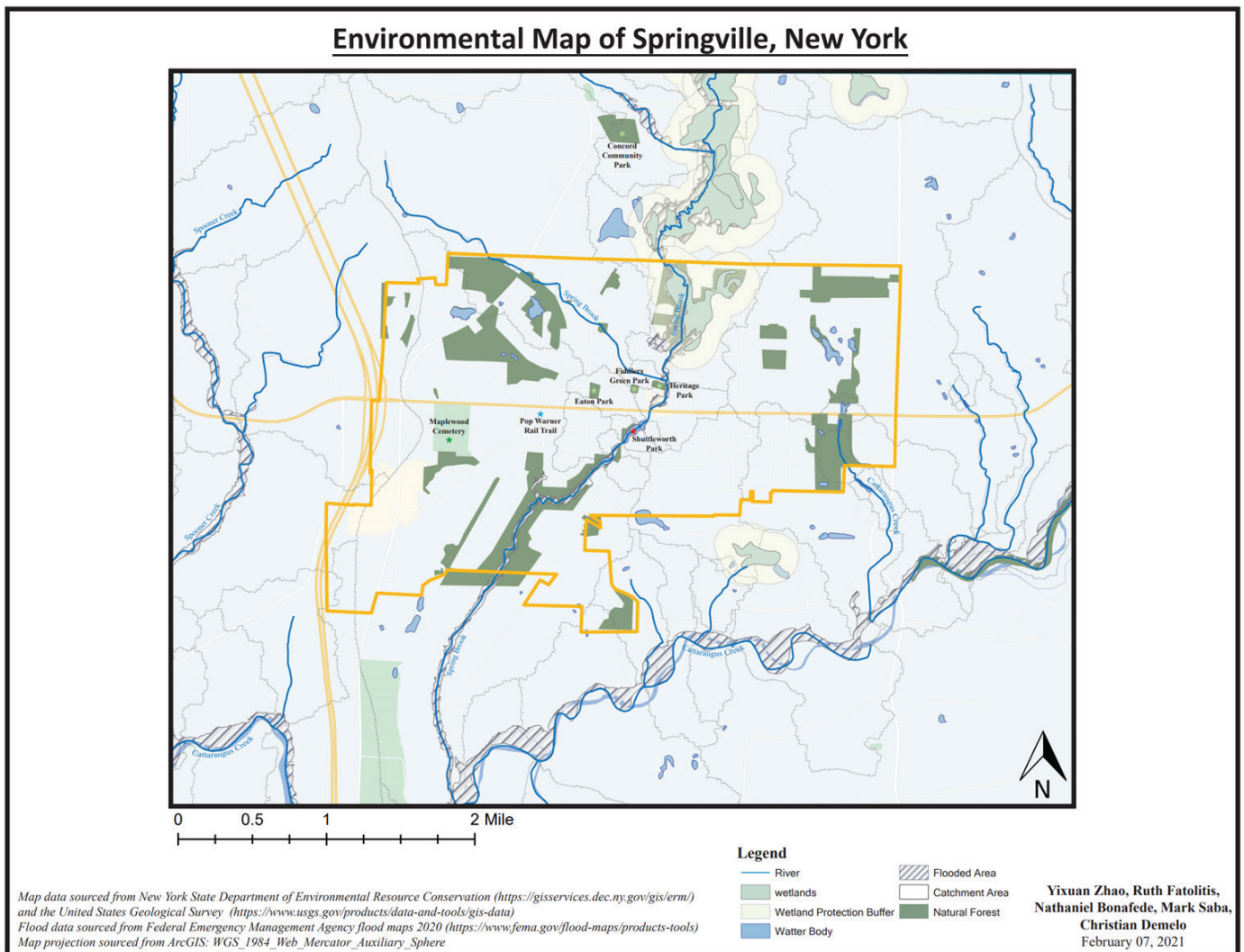
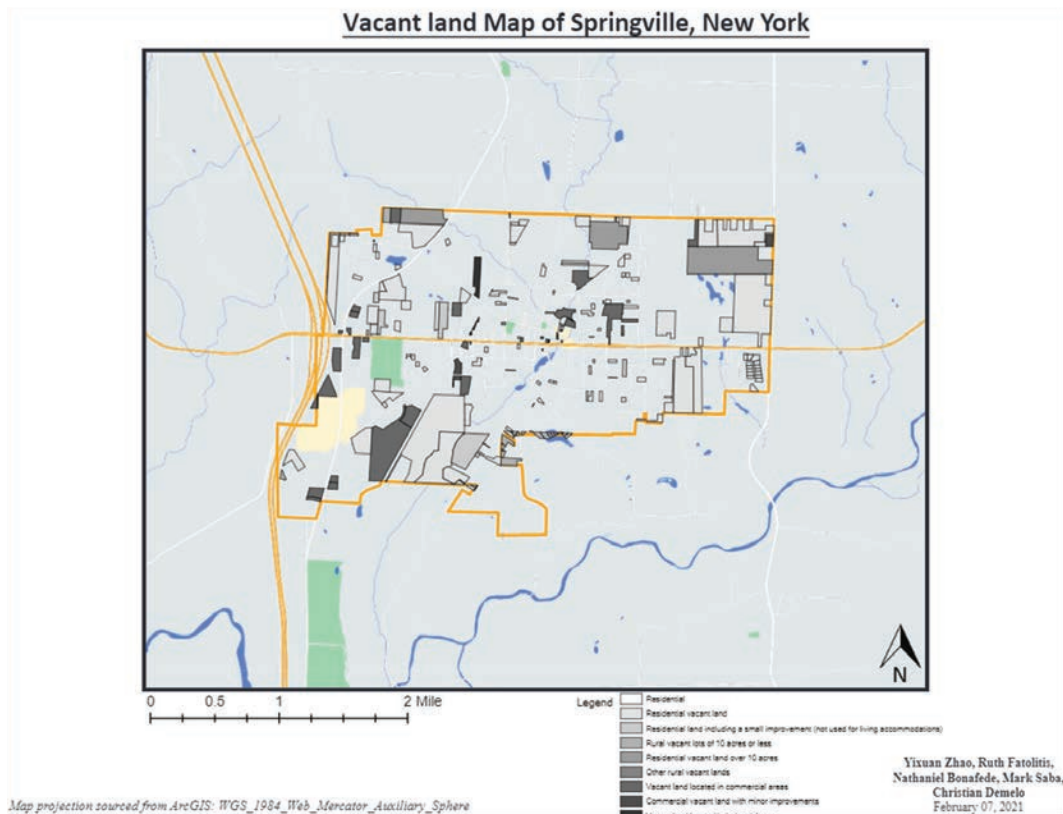


Figure 7.3-3 Vacant Land Map of Springville, NY



7.4 Water Infrastructure Conclusion

At this point, we hope we have established that the water systems and issues faced by the village are interrelated and may be addressed, though to different degrees, by similar means. However, physical upgrades and construction planning will likely need to be outsourced to an engineering consultant. Furthermore, one of the concerns cited by village leadership is the constantly climbing sewer cost burden faced by the Village and its citizens, and any fix would involve at least short-term increases in cost. We acknowledge that this report does not specifically address planning for the wastewater treatment plant, largely because that is an engineering issue. Rather than focus on structural interventions, we hope to have drawn attention to the potential benefits of addressing wastewater and flooding as a joint issue.

In addition to a coordinated green infrastructure approach, the village may want

to look into pricing out an upgrade to a more contemporary wastewater system. Upfront costs will be high, especially considering the need to hire an engineering consultant (if one has not been contracted) if current employees cannot do necessary evaluations, but it may be cheaper in the long run than constant piecemeal upgrades to outdated infrastructure. The process would likely be as follows: assessment of current needs, which are already more or less known; selecting an engineering consultant; preliminary design and cost comparison; and estimating the cost and budget for the upgrades, including “assessing the severity of need, current financial situation, ability to pay for new improvements, developing an estimate of the costs – both capital and operation and maintenance. User fees may include user fees, loans, grants, and possibly bonds.”¹⁰ It is worth noting that Springville is set to receive roughly \$950,000 in

the upcoming American Rescue Plan bill, and according to Meehan, 2021, recent provisions would permit that money to be used toward water and sewer infrastructure. Though the Village has plans for the first round of funding, it is possible that some of the second round may be put toward the wastewater system.

Further investigation is required to determine possibilities for the village's wastewater infrastructure. It may be necessary to hire an engineering consultant to determine whether green infrastructure would reduce flows as much as necessary during stormwater events. County recommendations do include restoring vegetation alongside riparian corridors in the village, which could be incorporated into the Springway design.¹¹ In any case, a connected approach to green infrastructure along floodplains and flood-prone properties will neither increase flooding nor stormwater risks.

If and when the Village comes to the point of hiring an engineering consultant

to address its wastewater challenges, it should look for one with a proven record of integrating green infrastructure implementation. Wastewater discharges, waterway pollution, and flooding are three highly interrelated issues which may be addressed via overlapping methods. What's more, they can easily be integrated into initiatives for greenway connectivity along the brook shoreline and existing recreational space. As long as the proposed Springway trail is to be implemented along Spring Brook, we urge the Village and any involved designers to pay special attention to the ways in which proven flood mitigation infrastructure may be integrated in an attractive fashion. We are hopeful that flood and wastewater mitigation measures can go beyond being a structural tool and combine with new green amenities to add to the aesthetic and environmental resources of the village.

Endnotes:

¹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, "Consent Order Case No. R9-20200415-28" (Albany, 2020).

² First Street Foundation describes the tool as follows: "Flood Factor scores increase as the 30-year cumulative flood likelihood increases, or as the projected depth of flooding increases. Properties with higher Flood Factors are either more likely to flood, are more likely to experience high floods, or both" (Springville, NY, n.d.). So for example, a score of 7 indicates a range between a 20% chance of flooding 2 feet or a 98% chance of flooding 3 inches. Although the Flood Factor maps show a much higher risk than those pictured in the FEMA maps, it is important to note that this is risk of properties flooding, not structures.

³ "Erie County to Get Funds for Storm Damage," Buffalo News, (Buffalo, NY), Dec. 24, 2000.

⁴ Environmental Protection Agency, "What is Green Infrastructure?" (Washington, D.C., 2020).

⁵ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, "Regional Niagara River Lake Erie Watershed Management Plan - Phase 2" (Buffalo, 2019), 6-74.

⁶ Photo courtesy of <http://artscafespringville.com/green-roof/>

⁷ See Office for Coastal Management report linked in citations for estimates and more detail.

⁸ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, "Regional Niagara River Lake Erie Watershed Management Plan - Phase 2" (Buffalo, 2019), 6-77.

⁹ Office for Coastal Management, “Green Infrastructure Options to Reduce Flooding,” (Washington, D.C., 2015).

¹⁰ “Wastewater Planning 101,” Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission, 2021, <https://midmorpc.org/other-services/community-planning/wastewater-planning-101/>.

¹¹ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, “Regional Niagara River Lake Erie Watershed Management Plan - Phase 2” (Buffalo, 2019), 6-77.

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Office for Coastal Management, Green Infrastructure Options to Reduce Flooding, 2015, <https://coast.noaa.gov/data/docs/digitalcoast/gi-econ.pdf>.

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“Springville, New York.” Flood Factor, accessed April 9, 2021. https://floodfactor.com/city/springville-newyork/3670442_fsid.

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Water, Sanitary Sewer, Electric and Storm Sewer Systems, Village of Springville General Legislation Chapter 193, 2016). <https://ecode360.com/34158799>

Chapter 8: Economic Development



This chapter offers a general description of Springville’s economy and suggests some directions for the future. Our conversations with local businesses confirmed the Village’s diverse and stable economy. Similar to other New York villages, the central business district is experiencing renewed interest in redevelopment as it navigates the new retail paradigm established by the presence of regional and national stores. The cultural dynamism and diversity of local eating establishments downtown creates an inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors providing a solid foundation for continued economic development.

8.1 The Village Economy

The Village’s close proximity to Buffalo and Ellicottville coupled with its “small village feel” influences the stability of its population. Over the past five decades, the population has hovered around 4,300 residents with very little change (Table 2.1). The consistency of population coupled with a strong percentage of residents with an educational attainment of a high school diploma (93%) or having a

bachelor’s degree or higher (22%) provides context to the stability of the economy (Figure 2.7 and Figure 2.8).

Two additional factors contribute to this stability: First, the Village is a center of employment drawing people from the Town of Concord (26.50%), Buffalo (10.40%) and neighboring villages in both Erie and Cattaraugus counties (Figure 2.1). Second, the

Village is a center of residence, with people commuting to the Town of Concord, the Buffalo metropolitan area, and nearby “south towns” for employment. This dynamic flow of employees and residents was supported by conversations with Bertrand-Chaffee Hospital. Their service area for patients is a 15–20-mile radius around Springville, which mirrors the commute area of their employees.

This illustrates the dual economic roles Springville plays. It serves as a bedroom community to Buffalo and valued by these persons for the quality of life in the village. It also services as an employment center, drawing people from the region to the diversity of employment sectors. In the sections that follow, we will describe some of these sectors and afterward offer a few possibilities for economic improvement.

8.2 Employment Sectors in Springville

8.2.1 Retail

As a retail location, Springville is easily accessible from the Hwy 219 and Hwy 39 (Main St) interchange. The South Cascade Business District is composed of national and regional retail stores which draws visitors and local residents within a 20 +/- mile radius. Springville is the last exit along Hwy 219 to Ellicottville and captures a number of visitors from Buffalo and Canada before they leave the county. Retailers such as Walmart, Tops Market, and Lowe’s Home Improvement are the largest employers in this district. These establishments have a long history in Springville, the majority having a greater percentage of full-time employees than part-time employees. The longevity of these businesses coupled with the employee status reinforces the stable economy present in the Village (Table 8.2-1). Additional niche retailers such as Maurice’s, T J Maxx, and The Shoe Dept round out the district.

Desirable employee skills are in the customer service field, in addition to general math skills, critical thinking skills, and the ability to work in teams. The auto dealerships look for these skills in addition to specific automotive specific technical skills. Lowe’s in particular provides additional training for employees as the need for specialized product knowledge (plumbing, electrical, etc.) is important.

The Cascade corridor is the front door to the Village and sees a lot of activity by tourists and residents. There is ample space within right-of-way to link this district with the proposed Springway extension providing pedestrian and bicycle access through-out this district. Reinforcing this infrastructure through thoughtful placement of landscape elements and new development could enhance the accessibility and overall aesthetics of the district.

Table 8.2-1: Major Retailers and Employers, Springville 2021

Retailer	Years in Springville	Number of Employees	Employee % FT/PT	Geographic Customer Base
Walmart	25 yrs.	275-300	60/40	Springville, Ellicottville, Canada
Lowe’s Home Improvement	14 yrs.	120-150	60/40	Springville, Ellicottville, Canada
Tops Friendly Market (Grocery)	20 yrs.	70 +/-	40/60	Springville, Gowanda, E. Otto
Maurices Women’s Fashion	16 yrs.	5-7	20/80	Springville, Ellicottville, Hamburg
Emerling Ford	35 yrs.	90 +/-	75/25	South towns & northern Catt. County
Jim Murphy auto dealership	40 yrs.	15-20	100/0	South towns & northern Catt. County
Source: Telephone survey				

8.2.2 Education

Springville-Griffith Institute is one of the largest employers in the Village of Springville, employing 175 teachers and 140 supplemental staff. SGI provides educational services to 1,700 students in the Village of Springville, Towns of Ashford, Aurora, Boston, Colden,

Collins, Concord, East Otto, Sardinia and Yorkshire. The district is headquartered in the Village of Springville and covers 149 square miles of rural towns and villages, and is one of the most geographically expansive districts in the state.

8.2.3 Medical

Bertrand Chaffee Hospital (BCH), as the regional hospital for southern Erie County, northern Cattaraugus County, and western Wyoming County, serves approximately 50,000 residents. As an affiliate of Catholic Health Services, it is able to extend health care services beyond the five focus areas that include an acute care center and pharmacy, a heart center, a surgical center, and a primary care center. The hospital has a staff of approximately 350 physicians, nurses, and supporting staff for all of their operations. The HANYS report provides an economic and community benefit survey that summarized in the following table (Table 8.2-2). It illustrates the financial impact the hospital has in the Village where as their services impact the long-term health of the Village.

The Jennie B. Richmond Nursing Home opened in 1974 and is located on the hospital campus. The 80-bed facility is a Medicare/Medicaid certified center that provides short-term rehabilitative care for hospital patients as well as long-term care. The staff provides a special level of care that includes physical and

occupational therapy in addition to social services.

A new Primary Care Center will open on the BCH campus in spring 2021. This three-level building will be the new location for the existing primary care physicians currently located on the third floor of the hospital (Figure 8.2-1). The second and third floors will be available for lease to additional health and wellness providers and allied services. The close proximity to the hospital will provide convenience to patients and reinforces the services BCH currently provides.

Additional medical services for the Village include four local dental practices, an independent pharmacy (Springville Pharmacy) and to two national chain pharmacies (Rite Aid and Walmart). There are five physician offices not affiliated with BCG in the Village and provides pediatrics, OB/GYN, urology, orthopedics, and general healthcare services. Overall, the healthcare sector adds to the Village's diversity and stability of employment.

Additional medical services for the

Table 8.2-2: Bertrand-Chaffee Hospital Economic and Community Benefit, 2021

600 Jobs Generated	\$52,000,000 Economic Activity	\$17,000,000 Payroll Expenditures
\$6,700,000 Tax Dollars Generated	\$621,000 Community Benefits & Investments	71% Medicare & Medicaid Reimbursement
71,000 Outpatient Care Provided	9,600 Emergency Room Care	800 People Admitted to Hospital
Source: Hospital Association of New York State (HANYS) ⁱ		

Figure 8.2-1: Bertrand-Chaffee Primary Care Medical Offices



Village include four local dental practices, an independent pharmacy (Springville Pharmacy) and to two national chain pharmacies (Rite Aid and Walmart). There are five physician offices not affiliated with BCG in the Village

and provides pediatrics, OB/GYN, urology, orthopedics, and general healthcare services. Overall, the healthcare sector adds to the Village's diversity and stability of employment.

8.2.4 Agribusiness

Springville features a number of important agribusinesses that supply goods and services to local farmers and other agriculturalists in surrounding rural towns. That said, there are also a number of important agribusinesses that exist just outside of the Village within the Town of Concord.

Located in both the West End and closer to Downtown, these enterprises can be classified as agribusinesses or agriculture-related:

- Gentner Commission Market
- Landpro Equipment (equipment dealer)
- Gramco Inc. (livestock feed, wholesale and retail)

- Tractor Supply Co. (farm and garden supply)
- Lamb & Webster (equipment dealer)
- Springville Veterinary Services (large/farm animal services)

The retail overlay district, labeled as R-O in §200-8.1 of the Zoning Code, could be seen as a way to protect and preserve these long-standing businesses and encourage the industry's growth. According to the Code, the purpose of the R-O district is to maximize the business potential of residential neighborhoods located on major thoroughfares in the Village. At this time, only one small R-O district has

St, between Newman St and Vaughan St, the eastern border of the village. The R-O district is relevant to agriculture because it permits, among other things, greenhouses or plant nurseries, veterinary offices, clinics, or

hospitals, and agricultural retail or wholesale business with outdoor storage. The addition of this district was recent (2009), and the addition of the lattermost permitted use, agricultural retail or wholesale, was added in just 2018.

8.2.5 Manufacturing and Engineering

been delineated on the Zoning Map: the easternmost section of East Main

8.2.5 Manufacturing and Engineering

The manufacturing industries in Springville are longstanding entities in the community producing precision metal products for a myriad of industries across North America and the globe. Relying upon highly skilled labor, the three precision machining companies Winsmith, Horschel Companies, and Springville Manufacturing have over 100 primarily full-time employees (Table 8.2-3). Each company has a significant number of long-term employees that adds to the value these businesses provide to the community and reinforces why people come to Springville for work.

Two engineering firms call Springville home, Encorus Group and InTomes Technical Services. Together they provide a range of engineering and design services, product testing, and project management to local and regional business as well as the U.S. Department of Energy.

Overall, Springville has seen very little employment growth from high-tech and internet based industry. Given the high quality of life in the Village, and the expected improvements in broadband access, Springville could have a stronger future in newer forms of information-based enterprises.

Table 8.2-3: Manufacturing and Engineering Firms in Springville, with their Employment, 2021

Manufacturer	Years in Springville	Number of Employees	Employee % FT/PT	Geographic Customer Base
Winsmith	97 yrs.	70 +/-	100% FT	U.S., Canada & International
Springville Manufacturing	63 yrs.	15 +/-	100% FT	U.S. & Canada
Horschel Brothers Precision	37 yrs.	125 +/-		U.S. & Canada
Encorus Group	25 yrs.	70 +/-	100% FT	U.S., Canada & International
InTomes Technical Services	16 yrs.			U.S.

Source: Telephone survey and business website research

8.3 Economic Development and Directions for the Future

Springville’s economy depends upon resources that many employers depend on. The future of the economy in part depends on them. The resources we emphasize here are education, water, recreation, medical, and

business and industrial lands. We also briefly mention resources of the electrical systems and communication that we did not get the chance to research during our project.

8.3-1 Education

The Springville-Griffith Institute (SGI) is a resource for skills development and employment opportunities in many sectors. Their partnerships within the greater community include Future Farmer's Association and the Erie County Cornell Cooperative Extension. SGI is also focused on programming for workforce development through the recently created WNY Careers in Advanced Manufacturing P-TECH Academy (CAM P-TECH Academy). This program is offered through a partnership with Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES (E2CCB) and is located at a separate facility on the SGI campus. The P-TECH academy is an international program formed through public-private partnership that develop skills in STEM careers². Although each campus has a specific STEM focus, there are commonalities in the education model. Freshman students accepted into the program will spend six years in the project-based learning environment and

earn a NYS Regents Diploma and an associate's degree from Alfred State in Computer Information Systems or Electrical Construction & Maintenance Electrician.

Adult education programs are offered regionally through E2CCB educational centers in Lake Shore, East Aurora, Fredonia, Cassadaga and Jamestown. An opportunity to expand offerings for adult education in the Village should also be considered. Local businesses in manufacturing and professional services, Bertrand Chaffee Hospital, and SGI would be suitable partnerships for pursuing an initiative to expand local workforce development. An expansion of services to include adult education would be eligible for various grants through New York State, including the Workforce Development Challenge and the Unemployed Worker Training Program.

8.3-2 Recreational Assets

Highway 219, as part of the Western NY Scenic Byways, is the primary corridor that shuttles Canadian and northern Erie county visitors to the region. The restaurants, hotel, and retailers on Cascade Drive are the beneficiaries from this traffic. The challenge is directing attention to the other cultural and recreational amenities in the heart of Springville that will encourage visitors to linger and explore local businesses.

The area's scenic and natural assets can bring far more tourists through the Village, especially ones who are physically active and enthusiastic about outdoor recreation. Recognizing the possibility of tourism related economic development, Springville has already invested in the 'Pop Warner' Rail Trail and has

identified historic districts within the downtown area. Utilizing these assets, Springville should position itself as a recreational hub for multi-season activities, connecting these existing amenities with other nearby regional amenities while continuing to invest in local trails that will encourage tourist to linger in the Village. The proposed Springway takes advantage of the "Spring Loop" and connects Downtown to the 'Pop Warner' Rail Trail (Figure 5.2-1). The Cascade Extension provides a recreational path to the shopping district on the west side of town (Figure 5.4-1). The Greater Zoar Valley Loop solidifies the link between Springville and the dynamic Zoar Valley through existing infrastructure.

8.3-3 Cascade Drive Shopping District

Cascade Drive is the front door of Springville, welcoming people off Highway 219 to the Cascade Drive shopping district. The popularity of this shopping district is evident as an average of 5,280 daily trips occur on this section of Cascade Drive³. National and regional retailers are taking notice as two new businesses have opened since December 2020.

Currently there is ample space for new businesses to locate in an existing shopping plaza or invest in a new building. Overall, we suggest that the Cascade Drive area has continuing promise for business and employment development, while providing better pedestrian and biking access. The end of this chapter has a summary recommendation.

8.3-4 Bertrand-Chaffee Hospital

The recent construction of the Primary Care Center at the BCH campus will provide new medical office space for the current primary care physicians on staff. It also opens the door for additional health and wellness providers to locate a permanent or satellite office in the Village, thus reducing the need for local residents to travel to Buffalo for specialty services. The hospital is positioning itself for growth by looking into important national designations that will reinforce the quality of care and potentially draw additional specialty services to the campus.

BCH has expanded its Community Service Plan beyond addressing chronic diseases – heart and lung disease, diabetes, and smoking cessation - to include mental health and substance use disorder prevention. Initiatives that support this mission are primarily educational and occur at the hospital and within the community setting. A variety of partnerships within the community share and support the healthy lifestyle initiatives of the hospital. Linking these initiatives to existing and future recreational activities will continue to reinforce BCH's place in the community.

8.3-5 Land Development

Springville has existing space ready for new development and redevelopment in the Downtown Business District, West Main Street District, and along South Cascade Drive. Although the preference amongst local businesses is to maintain the “small town feel” that still leaves plenty of opportunity to utilize existing commercial spaces in new and unique ways.

Within Downtown, new commercial development can reinforce activity and increase job opportunities. The main thoroughfare downtown, Route 39, offers high levels of east-west traffic that can support future commercial businesses. The addition of the Primary Care medical facility at Bertrand-Chaffee Hospital will increase the medical assets of the area and draw more people to downtown.

We have in this report already identified promising options for future private-sector based redevelopment:

- The Academy Site, a commercial mixed-use complex and multi-family housing
- The Shuttleworth Site residential development
- Additional options for affordable housing in these and other locations

Communities looking for economic development will consider business parks or technology parks as a method of attracting development. There are advantages and disadvantages to rural business parks. It is important to weight the advantages and disadvantages to see if a business park is an appropriate

investment. Additional considerations:

- It can take time for the right business to build in the park.
- The turn-around on investment has its risks.
- Location of the nearest business/technology park to Village.
- Proximity to transportation network.
- Available property within existing commercial or industrial zone are easier to prepare
- Shovel-ready sites are attractive to developers as it is easier to construct a building

- ⊙Already surveyed
- ⊙Already subdivided
- ⊙Utilities are present

Review of current data on real estate trends suggests that there is a need for warehouse space and cold storage instead of the traditional business park. These structures appeal to a variety of industries including agriculture, 'last-mile' fulfillment, and cold-storage. It appears that the area well suited to distribution and warehousing industries is Cascade Drive. Therefore, we have an overall recommendation for land development on South Cascade Drive.

8.4 Conclusion and Recommendations for Economic Development

Economic development opportunities should be prioritized along South Cascade Drive. It is an important corridor within the village because of the strong retail and industrial sectors. We have two recommendations, one that centers on the retail district and another that looks at available properties zoned Commercial-Industrial.

West Main Street and Waverly Street frame the primary retail district. As new retail development comes to the district, consider concentrating this development around existing parking, taking advantage of this common resource. In essence, plan for density within the existing retail areas. One advantage to this type of arrangement, is that shoppers can park in one central location and walk to many stores without having to drive to the next store. To enhance the retail district and provide accessibility to multiple users, consider the following:

- Continue the urban design plan for Waverly Street by extending it along South Cascade Drive north to West Main Street. Create a cohesive network of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- Springway linkage - negotiate with land-owners about the proposed Cascade Extension and incorporate bicycle infrastructure within the shopping plazas to reinforce these linkages.

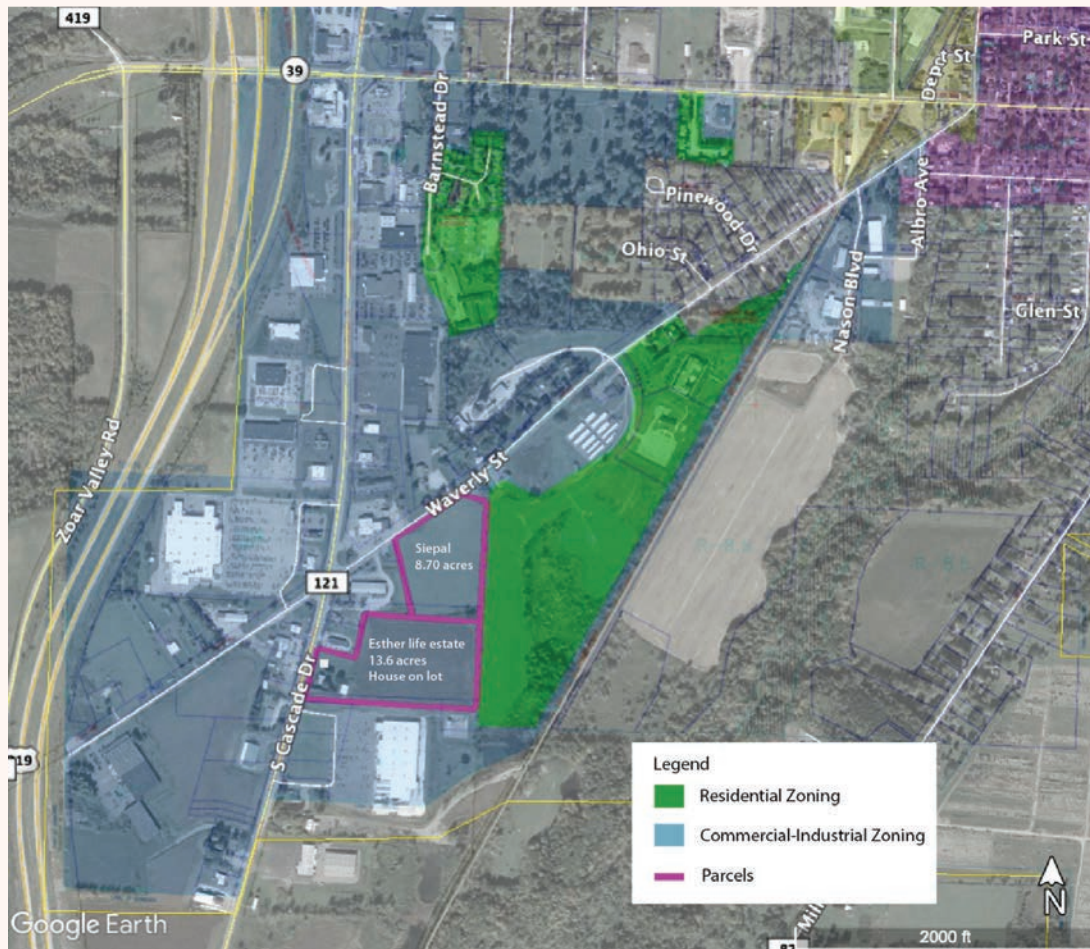
- Stormwater management – utilize green infrastructure to capture and treat stormwater from parking lots while defining the interior access roads. This will help meet stormwater management goals.

The majority of the properties zoned Commercial Industrial are already occupied by industrial or commercial uses. During our research we looked for properties that might be suitable for larger scale development, particularly warehouse space for distribution type industries. These industries prefer to have access to a road network that can accommodate truck traffic and is secluded enough so that operations do not disturb their neighbors. With this in mind, we identified two parcels that might be suitable for this type of operation (Figure 8.4-1). Each parcel is currently zoned Commercial-Industrial and share a common property line. Access to the parcels is on South Cascade Drive and Waverly Drive. It would be worthwhile to research the possibility of combining these two parcels as their total area would be around 22-acres. In addition, it would be worthwhile to limit the entrance to South Cascade Drive as the land-uses transition from Commercial-Industrial to residential at the property line of both parcels at Waverly Drive.

The economic development initiatives presented in this chapter align with other initiatives presented in the report. They require additional research and discussion to determine if they are a good fit for the Village

and its residents. The expertise provided by a community development corporation can help with these decisions, research the options, and actively seek businesses to round out this commercial district of the Village.

Figure 8.4-1: Map of South Cascade Drive Commercial District and Identified Vacant Parcels



Source: Google Earth, edited by authors

Endnotes:

¹ The Healthcare Association of New York State. "Bertrand Chaffee Hospital: Economic & Community Benefit." HANYS, The Healthcare Association of New York State, 2021, https://www.hanys.org/government_affairs/community_benefit/

² Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES. "Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES." WNY Careers in Advanced Manufacturing P-TECH Academy, Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES, 2018, www.e2ccb.org/Ptech.cfm?subpage=1991542.

³ New York State Department of Transportation. Traffic Data Viewer, New York State Department of Transportation, 2019, www.dot.ny.gov/tdv.

Chapter 9: Conclusion and Recommendations

In the preceding chapters, we have provided an array of initiatives and recommendations that cover a wide range of planning topics for the Village of Springville. These include projects that are currently feasible, projects that require further investigation, recommendations that can be initiated now, short-term and long-term goals. It is critical to foster the momentum created around these planning efforts and to build off of that energy to pursue prioritized initiatives. For the Village of Springville, an entity does not currently exist that is entirely focused on selecting projects for the village's future, the management of plans and projects, applying for grants, providing the community with resources, promoting economic development, and addressing housing conditions.

Therefore, before we provide a summary of proposed community initiatives, we stress the importance of an ongoing organization focused on carrying out projects for the village's future.

9.1 Springville Development Corporation

For many places, this type of organization takes the form of a non-profit local development corporation (LDC) or a community development corporation (CDC). The main difference between a CDC and an LDC is that a CDC is often focused on community revitalization, whereas an LDC is usually focused on economic development. Since these are both non-profit organizations, New York State grants these entities the same authorities and are both eligible for available funding. We recommend that the organization be involved in both economic development and community development initiatives.

The Springville Development Corporation (SDC) would be a suitable name for the organization and is currently available, according to the New York State Corporation and Business Entity Database. Establishing a name for the corporation is a significant step later in the non-profit incorporation process. The creation of the SDC will require some preliminary work such as forming a committee, community participation, and developing a plan for funding.

Steering Committee

The committee should undertake all preparations to establish a well-organized

development corporation. This involves creating initial proposal plans, organizational plans, the commitment of a board of directors, and fundraising efforts. Board members of the SDC steering committee should represent leaders from various aspects of the community. This may include representatives from local government, non-profit organizations, local business owners, or other residents that are highly committed to the community and can offer their skillset to the future SDC. It is crucial to have certain skillsets available to the SDC, including expertise or professional skills in grant-writing, fundraising, legal services, bookkeeping, and public relations. Committee members may become future SDC board members or take an active role in future projects. Another important preliminary task is to prioritize the projects that the SDC will carry out and then present these projects to the community.

Community Participation

The New York Department of State offers a guide to non-profit incorporation which applies to community development corporations. As part of the incorporation process, the purpose(s) of the organization must be declared. This involves stating, in

detail, the organization's mission, objectives, what it hopes to accomplish, who will benefit from its actions, and how its goals will be achieved. Community participation meetings focused on determining the priorities of future initiatives are essential to provide the answers to these questions and maintain the integrity of the SDC. This will also help the SDC to decide which of the proposed initiatives will be the first major priorities. Community participation should also be a routine function of the development corporation as community support for the SDC is essential to its success.

Initial Funding

A fundraising plan should be a priority for the steering committee and is necessary to establish its legitimacy in the non-profit incorporation process. These funds should cover the expenses of the SDC, including legal, consulting, and accounting services. Fundraising strategies, like special event income, can cover these initial costs and other expenses. Special event income should remain separate from funding, like grants, that cover SDC projects and programs. Financial support from local government should be carefully considered as it can lead to discrepancies in distinguishing the role of the SDC in carrying out government functions. Initial funds needed will depend on which project(s) the SDC plans to undertake in its first year of operation.

Future Funding

In considering future projects that can be undertaken by the SDC, it is important to keep in mind funding eligibility for various aspects of a proposed project. Projects and programs that can be funded by grants and managed by a development corporation include :

- Commercial property construction, acquisition, revitalization, improvement
- Residential property construction, acquisition, revitalization, improvement

- Land preservation, resource conservation, recreation
- Land acquisition, development, infrastructure costs for projects
- Business expansion and start-up funding
Equipment and fixed asset acquisition
- Education and training (as part of business development)
- Marketing and business recruitment

It's also important to keep in mind the strategic goals and grant program requirements for various sources of funding. For example, many state-funded grant applications are received by the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process through the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (WNYREDC). The approval, priority, and amount of funding for a project is based on meeting program requirements and its alignment with established strategic goals. The core strategies of WNYREDC are smart growth, entrepreneurship, and workforce development, in addition to various sector strategies . Other sources of funding, such as the USDA Office of Rural Development, will also have their own program requirements that must be met for grant approval. It is essential that the SDC is familiar with available funding sources and program requirements to find grants that are best-suited for projects and create attractive project proposals.

The Role of the Springville Development Corporation

The primary purpose of the development corporation should be to provide the community with affordable housing and creating opportunities for economic development. Springville should consider utilizing the development corporation to further the development of affordable housing units, as well as provide programs to support renters and homeowners in the community. Common housing programs include first-time homebuyer programs, rent-to-own

programs, housing repair and maintenance grants, and administering funding from various federal and state programs to residents in the community. In regards to economic development, the development corporation can take on various roles including providing local business owners with grants and loans for improvements and business expansions. The SDC should also promote development opportunity sites and create partnerships with local landowners, business owners, and developers to advance projects. Future funding sources may depend on special event income, grants from various sources, fundraising, and other funding mechanisms. A revolving loan fund is a common mechanism used by development corporations to provide

funding for loans offered to residents and business owners. This system relies on the repayment of loans to maintain the loan fund and offer future loans. Although affordable housing and economic development should be considered primary purposes of the SDC, it is also important to recognize the value in undertaking community-based projects. This would provide the development corporation with a feasible project that will have a positive outcome in the near future and gather community support for the SDC. Many of the recommendations provided in our report could be considered potential projects for the SDC. The following section will summarize the initiative that we have provided in this report.

9.2 Recap of Recommendations

Housing

1. The section on housing identified the undersupply of affordable housing units and the existence of rent-burdened, low-income households. We determined that there is an undersupply of approximately 275 affordable housing units in Springville. The creation of more affordable housing units is needed to address this community need. Springville should pursue the creation of more affordable housing units through subsidies and partnerships. Springville should pursue partnerships with developers and Erie County to determine best pathways to build affordable housing, including logistical and funding strategies. Funding is available through federal sources, including HOME and USDA Rural Development and through New York State. Springville should also create project proposals and shovel-ready sites to appeal to developers.

2. The housing section identified the conditions and mismatch of the existing local housing stock. Maintain the quality of existing homes while addressing the housing mismatch. Shifting trends in housing show that there

is less of a demand for large homes, and an increasing need for smaller-sized rental units. Springville can address this mismatch by amending zoning codes to allow for accessory dwelling units and conversions of single-family homes to duplexes and multi-unit properties. Also, due to the age of many houses in Springville, costly maintenance is another major concern. Springville should also pursue strategies that incentivize property owners to invest in rehab projects, like tax abatements or offer home repair assistance.

Downtown Streetscape

3. In assessing the downtown streetscape, we focused on ways to increase pedestrian activity by creating public space downtown, primarily on East Main Street. Parklets are one way to make an atmosphere of activity by creating space for people to stay and linger on East Main Street. Springville should plan and implement for parklets to create public space, which is currently lacking downtown. Common parklet types include curbside restaurant seating, nano parks, sidewalk

bypass, and as a public lounge space. Parklets are adaptable, very affordable, and can be implemented temporarily. We recommend implementing this strategy as outdoor seating areas and sidewalk bypasses in front of restaurants and cafes on East Main Street.

4. The section on downtown streetscape focused on ways to increase pedestrian activity by modifying the existing sidewalk and street layout. The layout of streets and sidewalks can either encourage or discourage walkability and pedestrian activity. Springville should implement the Mechanic Street Streetscape redesign to reinforce the connection between the East Main Street, Fiddler's Green, and Heritage Park. The redesign includes narrowing the traffic lane, limiting parking to one side of the street, a new greenway, a sidewalk expansion, and green infrastructure. These modifications to Mechanic Street will help to increase walkability, connections, and improve pedestrian experience.

5. As we looked at the downtown streetscape, we found ways to increase pedestrian activity by improving accessibility to parking areas and increasing residential density in underutilized spaces downtown. Springville should pursue a reorganization of the Shuttleworth Municipal Parking Lot to create a more organized driveway and parking system and to include a new apartment building. This involves creating an east to west connection between Pearl Street and Buffalo Street to improve the flow of traffic and reorganizing parking spaces to make efficient use of the space. The Shuttleworth apartment development would offer an opportunity for increased residential density in the downtown area. This is an exceptional location with views of Spring Brook and near downtown amenities and should be utilized at its full potential.

New Downtown Development

6. In considering ways to reinforce activity downtown, we looked at the opportunity to

increase residential density through creating new buildings. Springville should pursue a residential development at Academy Site to transform this underutilized space and create new housing options. We proposed a 20-unit townhouse-style apartment development. This would offer new housing options and increase residential density downtown. Our financial feasibility analysis also indicated that the residential development would most likely need to include a combination of market-rate and affordable housing units in order to qualify for subsidies and appeal to developers. These are common strategies to encourage new residential development.

7. As we focused on ways to increase activity downtown, we found opportunities reinforce density and activity by providing businesses with space and residents with services and job opportunities. Here, we proposed a 26,000 square foot commercial building with space for office and retail uses. Springville should consider the potential of a mixed-use development at Academy Site to make better use of the existing vacant lot, create employment opportunities, and provide amenities to the community. The office uses we suggested include professional services and businesses that advance entrepreneurship. The retail uses we suggested include niche stores, service-based retail, and a restaurant, or grocery store with outdoor seating.

Historical and Cultural Assets

8. The downtown historical and cultural assets section emphasized the importance of preserving historical assets, especially those that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Springville should seek restorative cleaning and reverse renovations of the Village Municipal Building. This building was constructed in 1939 and has a Depression era mural that is currently covered in the interior of the building. The Village should pursue reverse renovations to expose the mural located inside of the building. The exterior

of the building is made of concrete and is in visible need of restorative cleaning. The Village can utilize Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to pursue actions that should be taken to properly maintain this historically significant building that is located at a main intersection downtown.

9. As we focused on downtown historical and cultural assets, we conveyed the importance of recognizing historical points of interest in the Village. Springville should formally recognize the former G.A.R. Post as a cultural resource and display a marker to emphasize it as a Civil War legacy. The former G.A.R. Post was built in 1881 as a cabin and served as a post for Union Army veterans. It is currently a private residence so a partnership should be formed between the owner and the Village to pursue recognizing the former G.A.R. Post for its historical significance.

10. In the downtown historical and cultural assets, we emphasized the importance of preserving historical assets, especially those that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Springville should require that structures listed on the National Register in the Village's Historical Districts commit to routine maintenance. This measure is recommended to avoid future deterioration and costly repairs for historical structures. This also supports the integrity of the established historical district and the historically significant assets within the Village.

Contemporary New Design

11. As the Village looks at the potential for new development, it should prepare for how new buildings look and fit in the existing built environment. Springville should create a set of design standards for new structures that will introduce modern architecture balanced with the existing historical character of the village. New design elements should visually connect to the existing environment by mixing of new and old materials, adhering to similar building

codes, apply contemporary architectural trends, and compliment historical buildings. New structures should also merge with existing buildings yet stand out as a symbol of progress, architectural variety, and act as evolutionary markers for the village.

The West End

12. In the West End section, we assessed this district as part of the greater area of Downtown Springville and highlighted the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh (BR&P) Rail Station as a unique asset for the village. The BR&P Rail Station, or commonly known as the train depot, is a Certified Historic Structure and listed on the National Register for Historic Places. The Village should pursue the BR&P Rail Station as an adaptive reuse project and utilize available rehabilitation tax credits. This building could potentially function as a village-owned visitor and event center that generates village revenue. As the building is now for sale, we strongly recommend that Springville look into acquiring this property or ensure that private ownership will adequately utilize this unique asset.

13. In assessing the West End, we focused on ways to connect centers of attraction in this area to the downtown district. We proposed three alternative West End access road connections from Genter's Auction to Carolina Street, keeping in mind that there is already a housing development plan for this area. An access road connection would divert the traffic flow from the West End to downtown and encourage the circulation of potential commercial activity. Springville and the developers of the project should consider a road connection to channel traffic and ease traffic congestion with the future housing development. Springville should also recognize importance of Genter's Auction, BR&P Rail Station, and the Pop Warner Rail Trail as major assets in this district and that commercial activity of visitors can be diverted to local businesses downtown.

Springway

14 In the Springway section, we focused on connecting the local parks within the Village. Springville should consider the proposed Springway to create interconnections between local parks, historic sites, natural features, and attractions in Springville. The Springway is made up of four sections and the priority for implementation is: 1) Spring Loop, 2) Cascade Extension, 3) Christopher Stone Trail. Springville should consider the Spring Loop section to initiate the planning and implementation of this project. The Springway is also a supporting aspect of other proposals, including implementing green infrastructure and the Greater Zoar Regional Network.

15. In looking at the connections between local parks and points of interest, we considered the benefit of a central hub. Springville should consider the potential of the proposed Springville Trail Hub as an attraction for visitors and residents using the Pop Warner and Springway Trails. Springville should explore the trail hub location options near the BR&P Rail Station. Nearby parking lots should be considered the best option for the location of the hub. The Trail Hub should include bathrooms, benches, bike racks, and a bike servicing station. Maps should be provided that show the Springway System and points of interest along the trail network.

Greater Zoar Regional Networks

16. In the Greater Zoar Regional Network section, we looked at how an interconnected network of trails would benefit the area and ways to create this network. This initiative involves various collaboration with various agencies including the Town of Concord, Erie County, Cattaraugus County, the Seneca Nation. Springville should develop a regional coalition to emphasize cross-municipal collaboration and further the continued progress of the Greater Zoar Regional Network. The coalition should

assign a regional trail coordinator to manage trail projects, expand the trail system, and pursue funding. Travel connections would be improved through Village signage, development of the Greater Zoar Bridge and connections to Waverly Street, Zoar Valley Road, and the Spring Loop of the proposed Springway.

Water Infrastructure

17. In the section on water infrastructure, we assessed the issues related to the existing wastewater system and flood management. The outdated wastewater system has created major issues during stormwater events and excessive wastewater discharge has resulted in costly consequences. Flash flooding and flooding induced erosion of Spring Brook banks are also major concerns related to lack of flood mitigation. Springville should combine the issues of wastewater management and flash flooding with a holistic approach and implement green infrastructure strategies. The Springway project provides an opportunity to implement the green infrastructure initiative. Flood mitigation strategies can be implemented as part of the Springway Trail alongside Spring Brook, and in the form of bioswales and rain gardens throughout Springville.

18. The issues surrounding the wastewater system will require future investigation conducted by engineering specialists. Springville should pursue future engineering studies, project planning, and construction of a new wastewater system. It may be more cost effective at this point to replace the old wastewater system and upgrade to a new contemporary system, instead of investing in costly routine upgrades to an outdated system. Physical upgrades and construction planning will require an engineering consultant and we recommend selecting a consultant with expertise in implementing green infrastructure.

Economic Development

19. In looking at ways to further economic development in Springville, we focused on the major center of retail and commercial activity on South Cascade Drive. Springville should keep new commercial construction in this area limited to in-fill development and take advantage of existing parking lots. Springville should also focus on creating a network of pedestrian and bicycle paths to create “shopping square” and a linkage to the Springway trail for the Cascade Commercial District. These measures will encourage non-motorized access and situate this area as an attractive retail destination for the surrounding rural towns.

20. As we looked at ways to promote economic growth, we considered the existing area on Waverly Street, south of West Main Street. This area is currently zoned for industrial purposes

and would be suitable for future warehousing and distribution centers. Springville should consider and further evaluate the potential of this location in attracting new businesses that are looking for shovel-ready sites. The task of evaluating areas as potential opportunity sites for development would be a task that is undertaken by a development corporation.

Springville Development Corporation

21. Plan and establish the Springville Development Corporation to lead community-based initiatives. The organization’s primary purpose should focus on community-based needs, such as affordable housing, home repair assistance, workforce development, local business assistance, and offer grant and loan programs. The development corporation should also be involved in projects which are prioritized through the steering committee and community input.

We hope that our proposals and initiatives will help to reimagine Springville and to spark new ideas towards a future comprehensive plan. Some of our recommendations could be undertaken in the near future. The SDC could play a major role in implementing these plans and providing support for future community projects.

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