


**Better Town Toolkit** PLACES BEST PRACTICES CASE STUDIES ABOUT



# Improve your community

**Your guide to design and develop spaces in the Tri-State area.**

Our goal is to help you improve the prosperity, sustainability and quality of life in your community by providing you with the best practices for design and development in your area. [Learn more »](#)

NEED HELP? SEE OUR FAQs ▾


- Fix a Place**  
[See Places](#)
- Do it Right**  
[See Best Practices](#)
- See Examples**  
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Place Type → Best Practice Strategy → Tools and Actions → Design Detail

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## Places

Browse by place type.



- Downtowns**
- Edges**
- Corridors**
- Crossroads**
- New Neighborhoods**
- Rural**

Place Type → Best Practice Strategy → Tools and Actions → Design Detail

### Downtown Development Approaches

Preferred Conventional

- Zoning regulations promote traditional, compact mixed-use developments.
- At larger redevelopment areas, the surrounding street area, block pattern is extended into the site and new greenways and other connections are created.
- Environmental features are reinforced and help organize the center. Natural features, especially stream courses, are linked to elements of urban forestry (new parks, street trees) to create new linkages and amenities for residents.
- Design guidelines ensure compatibility with context.
- Flexible, creative parking regulations (shared parking, reduced requirements, location/configuration guidelines) enable contextual design solutions with high coverage and minimum setbacks.
- Where land and development values can support it, parking is in structures but parking structures are not allowed to compromise the pedestrian experience; garages are lined with street-friendly uses and are architecturally compatible with adjacent architecture.
- Buildings and sidewalks are designed to support existing or potential transit stops. This includes active streetfronts for buildings, adequate space for bus stops or other transit facilities and some increase in density near transit stops.



Place Type → Best Practice Strategy → Tools and Actions → Design Detail

#### Preferred Best Practices for Downtowns

Nature Links Communities



- Create an Urban Forest**
- Create Green Streets
  - Landmark Parks and Plazas
- Create Linked Open Spaces**
- Link Recreational Resources Across Districts and Parks
  - Create and Link Parks and Greenways
- Protect Natural and Scenic Resources**
- Protect Forestlands
  - Create Regional Green Parks and Corridors
  - Protect Wetlands and Inhabited Wetlands
  - Monitor Conservation Subsidies

Nature

#### Preferred Best Practices for Downtowns

Nature Links Communities



- Design Streets for People**
- Design Beautiful Streets
  - Design for Pedestrians and Bicycles
- Manage the automobile**
- Public Car or Bus
  - Alternative Street
  - Use with Parking Capacity
- Maximize Community**
- Create New Public and Commercial Jobs and Services
  - Supportiveness
  - Create a Job Network
  - Create Connected Street Network

Links

#### Preferred Best Practices for Downtowns

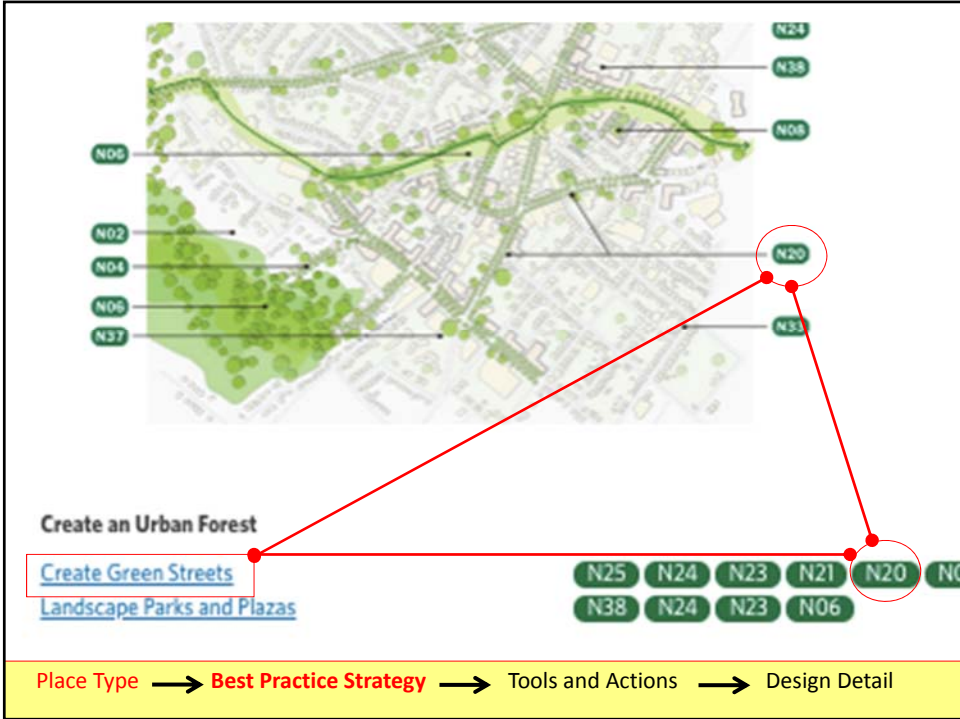
Nature Links Communities



- Create Beautiful Neighborhoods**
- Promote Compact Neighboring Density
  - Design Buildings to Streets
- Create Diversity of Land Use**
- Provide for Flexible Use Mixed-Use
  - Integrate Non-Residential Core Uses
  - Create Diversity of Street Types
  - Create Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Areas
- Promote Mixed-Use Buildings**
- Promote JMI Development
  - Create Mixed-Use Encouragements

Communities

Place Type → Best Practice Strategy → Tools and Actions → Design Detail



## Create Green Streets

Create an Urban Forest

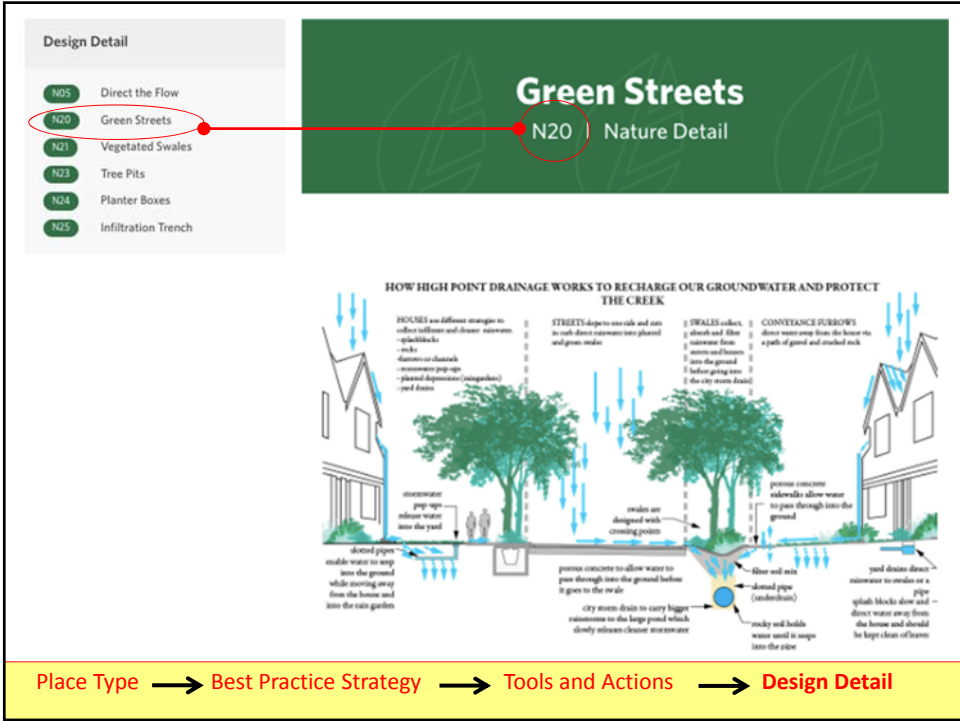
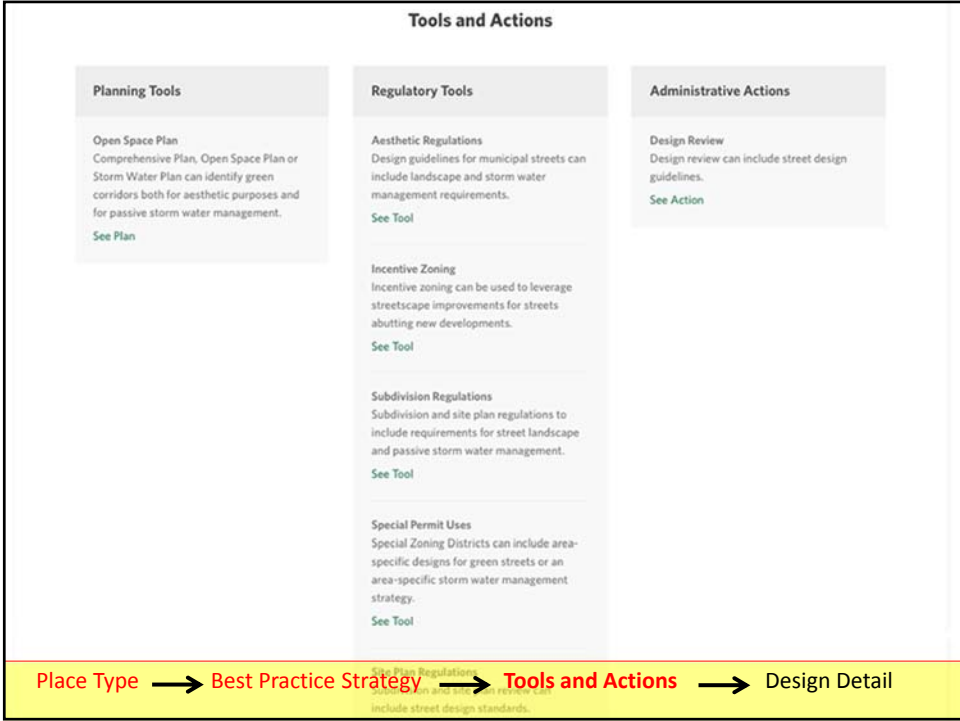
### Overview

**Design Detail**

- N05 Direct the Flow
- N20 Green Streets
- N21 Vegetated Swales
- N23 Tree Pits
- N24 Planter Boxes
- N25 Infiltration Trench

Green streets are streets that employ green infrastructure techniques, such as bio-swales and street tree trenches, to absorb run-off and provide shade. Green streets add to the beauty of neighborhoods and can play an essential role in stormwater management and maintaining water quality.

Place Type → Best Practice Strategy → **Tools and Actions** → Design Detail



# Places

Browse by place type.



Downtowns



Edges



Corridors



Crossroads



New Neighborhoods



Rural

## Downtown Development Approaches

Preferred

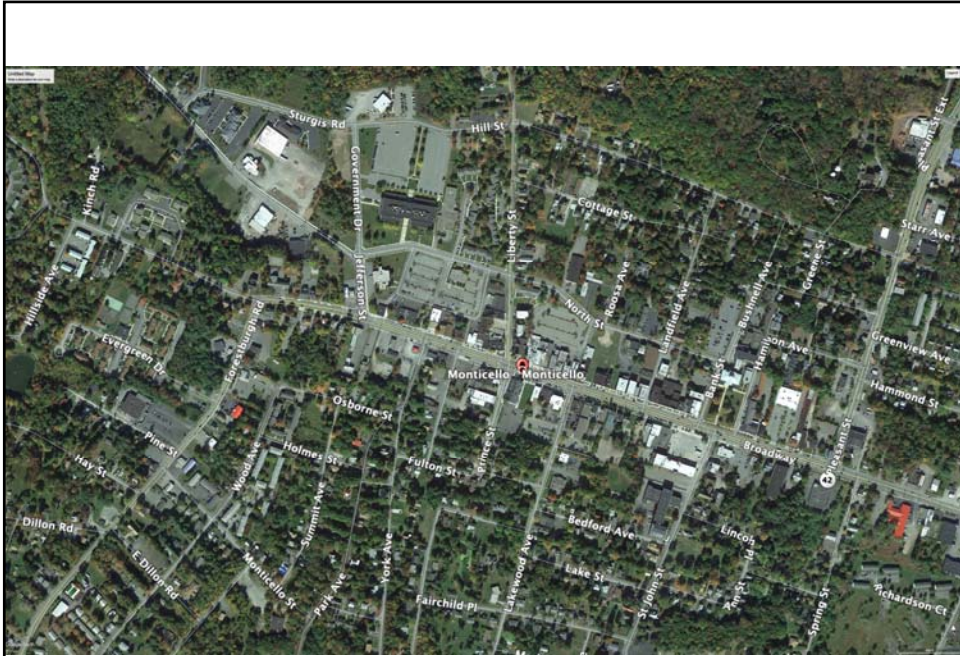
Conventional

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Downtown: Monticello



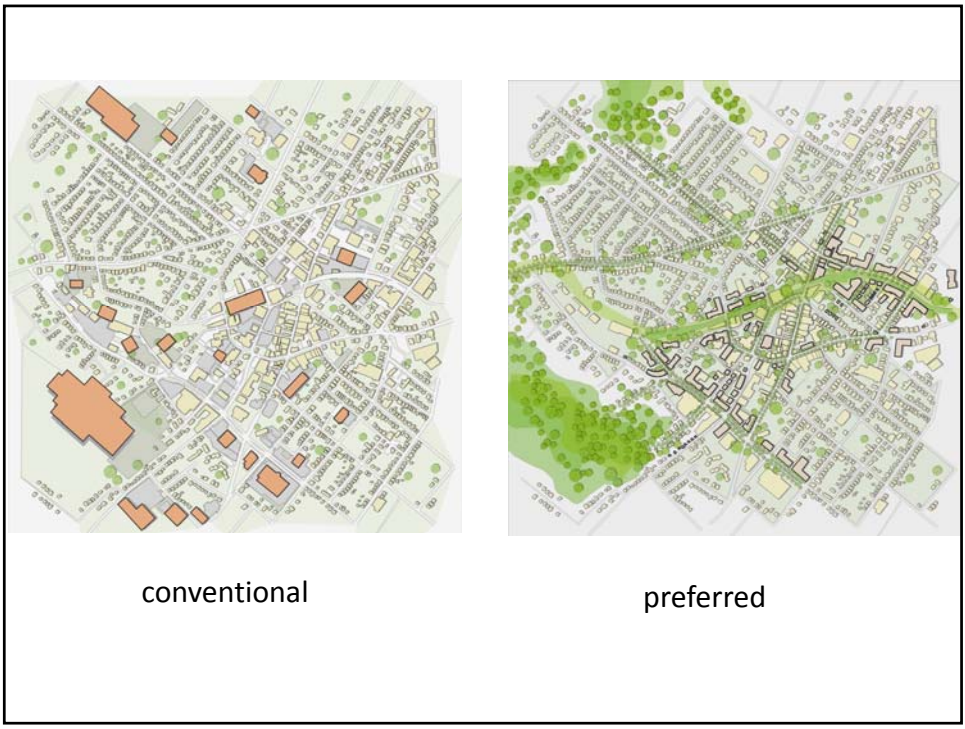
Downtown: Liberty



Downtown: Roscoe



Downtown: Jeffersonville



conventional

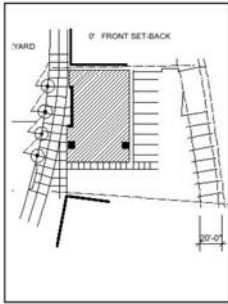
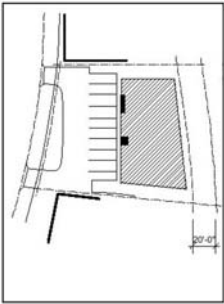
preferred



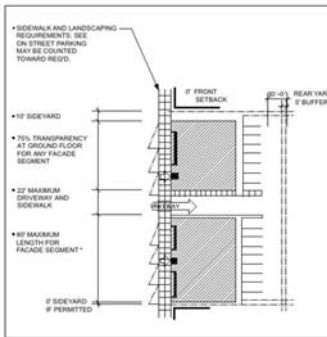
**Fig. 23.1: Unacceptable:** Photosimulation of unacceptable commercial development. This building has no relationship to the sidewalk and forces pedestrians to walk by a surface parking lot.



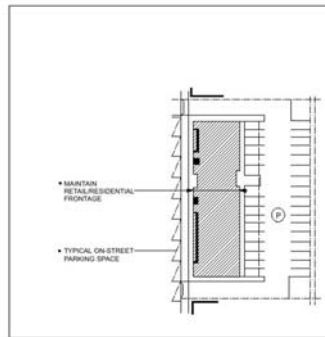
**Fig. 23.3: Preferred:** Photosimulation of preferred configuration for a pedestrian- and sidewalk- oriented commercial development.



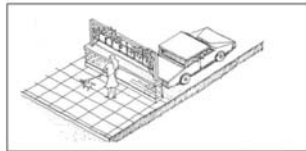




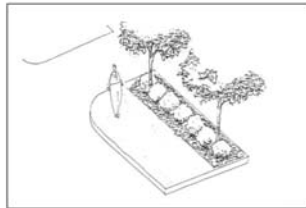
**Fig. 7.1:** Site plan for intermediate infill site with long frontage and two separate structures.



**Fig. 7.2:** Site plan for intermediate infill site with surface parking lot partially beneath building. (See also photos, Figures 7.3 and 7.4.)



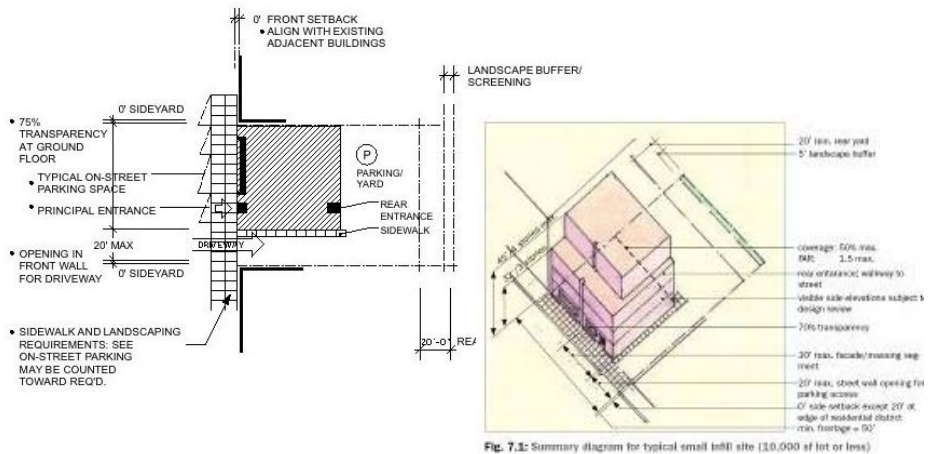
**Fig. 16.1:** Surface parking screened by an architectural wall and trellis.



**Fig. 16.2:** Surface parking screened by hedges and trees



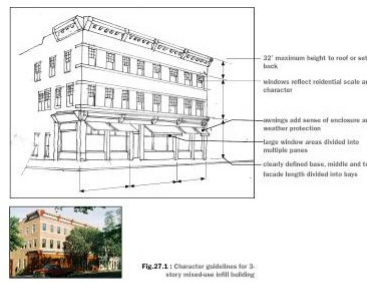
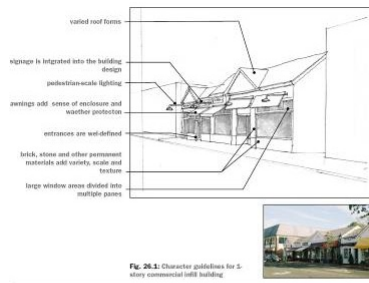
Calibrate guidelines and regulations to local capability:  
Standards for Administrative Review



You can do a lot with basic zoning toolbox:

- Building location, height and set-back
- Ground floor transparency
- Parking Location and Quantity

Calibrate guidelines and regulations to local capability:  
Guidelines for Discretionary Review



Design Review Requires Civic Infrastructure:

- Design Review Board
- Design Guidelines





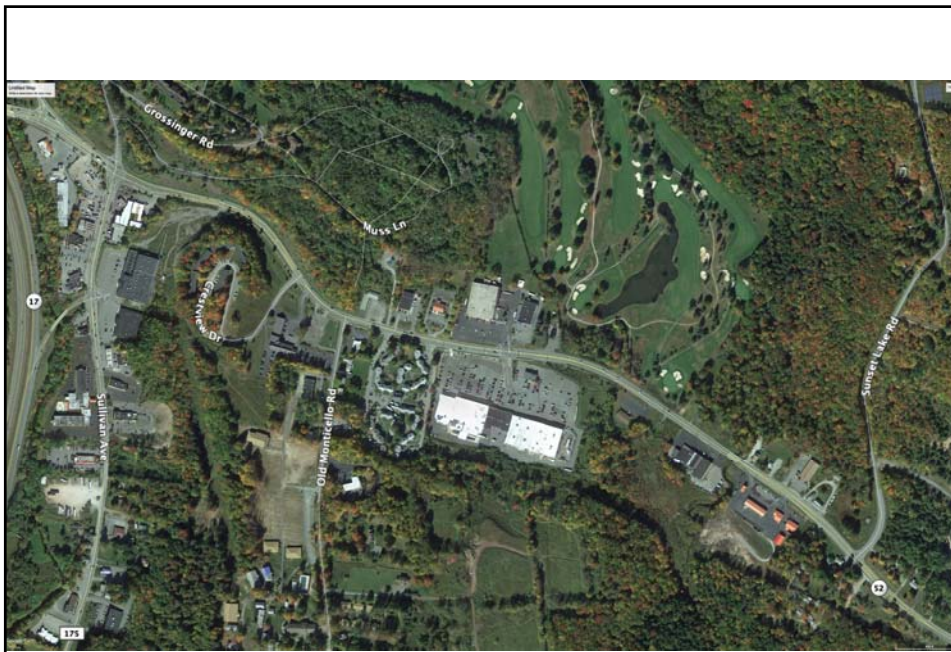
### Corridors Development Approaches

Preferred

Conventional

- Through progressive redevelopment, buildings are sited uniformly along the corridor.
- Connections are made between parcels to minimize traffic on the commercial arterial.
- New through connections are made between the corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Urban forestry (street trees, new pocket parks, etc.) are used to create a continuous greensward, protecting natural systems and enabling a network of pedestrian connections between the corridor and the surrounding areas.
- Parking areas are reduced in scale either by redesigning

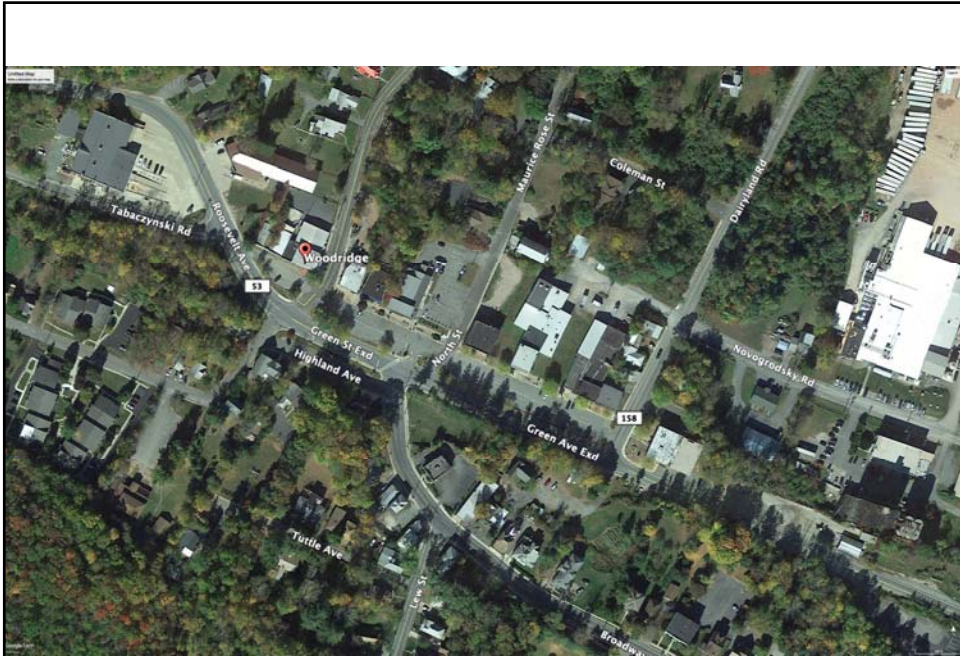
- them more efficiently or by allowing shared parking.
- Zoning allows a diverse mix of uses.
- The auto-corridor is re-conceived as a shared pedestrian-oriented public space. While even a well-designed commercial corridor will not be a true main street, a pedestrian environment is created. There are uniform streetscape standards for lighting, paving and landscaping; there is a complete network of sidewalks.
- Along important roads, there are uniform setback standards.
- Parking is on the sides or behind buildings.



Corridor: Liberty - Rt. 52 from Sunset Lake Rd to Old Monticello Rd.



Corridor: Monticello



Corridor: Woodridge

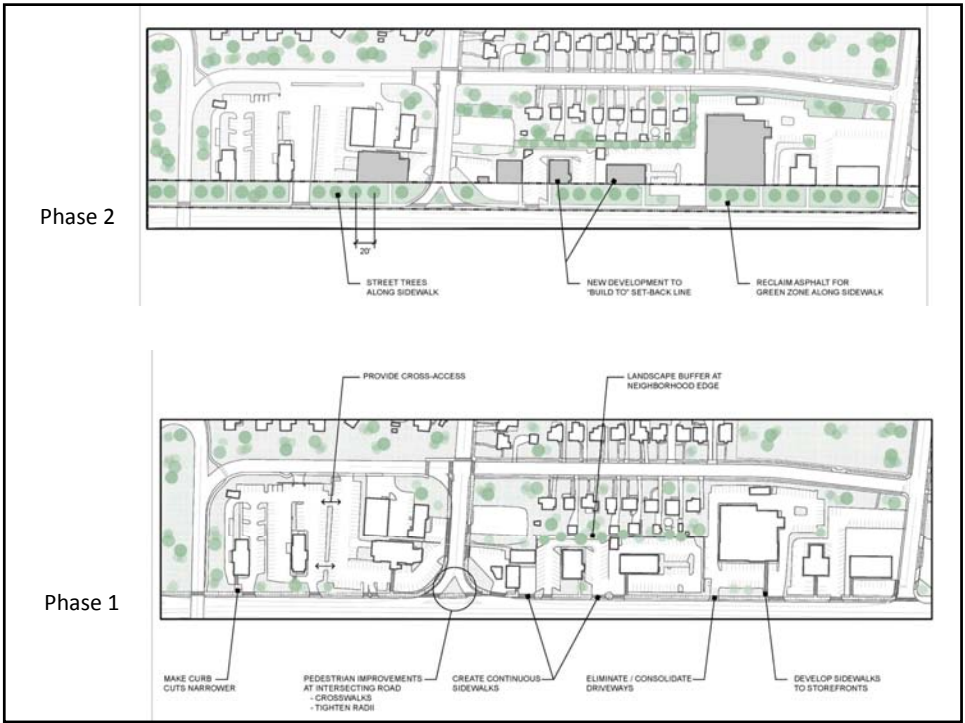


**Corridor: Rock Hill**

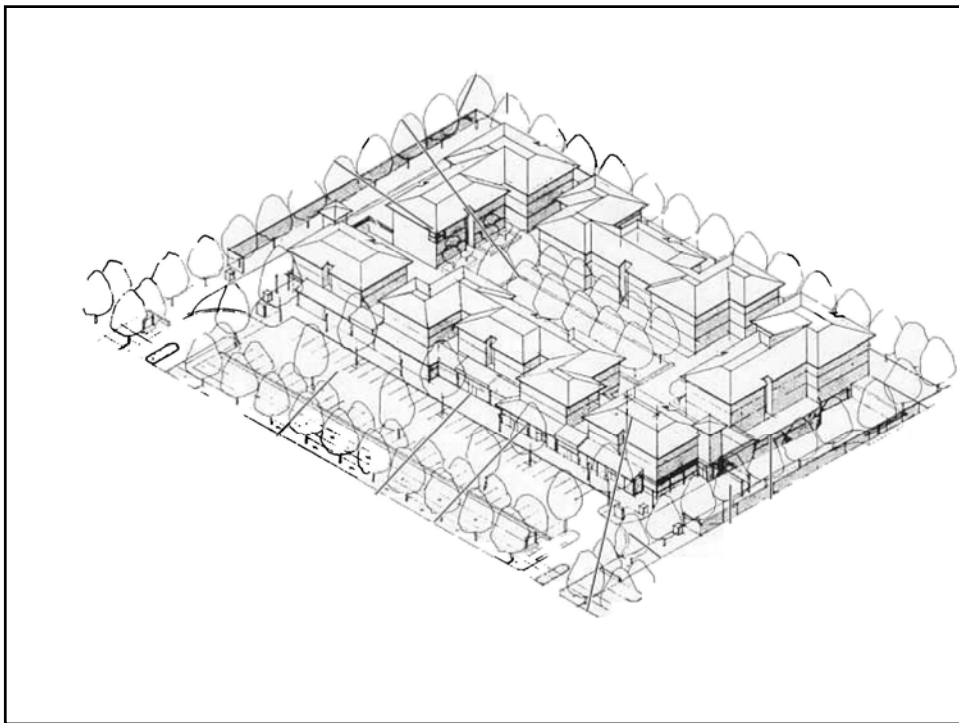
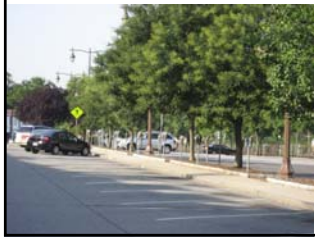


conventional

preferred







## Crossroads Development Approaches

Preferred

Conventional

- Land uses include a mix of activities that together comprise a complete community with a distinctive identity, including a variety of housing types, institutional uses such as schools, daycare or community centers, and parks and public open spaces.
- Environmental features are preserved and enhanced.
- Parking is organized into multiple interconnected lots behind the retail and mixed-use buildings.
- Design guidelines give the streets and buildings some visual coherence.
- Adjacent residential areas are planned and designed according to best practice

principles for complete, sustainable neighborhoods, including a street and block network with a high degree of connectivity, diversity of housing types, compact development patterns and protection and support of underlying natural systems.

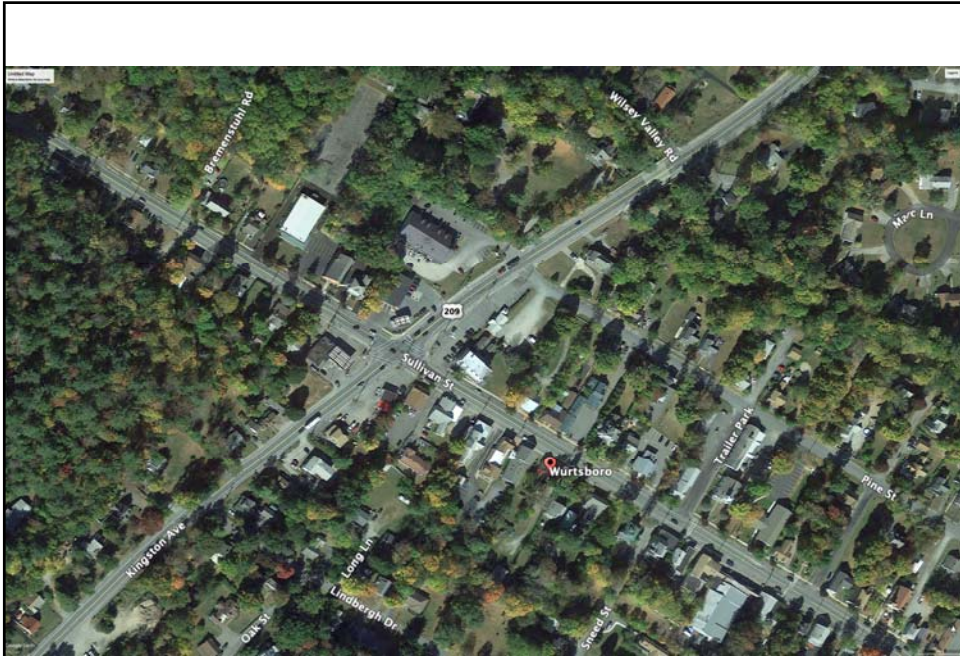
- Buildings in the commercial area are planned and designed according to best practice principles for commercial corridors with ample accommodation for the pedestrian experience, high level of connectivity to surrounding areas, parking behind the commercial area and to the sides of buildings, buildings oriented toward the street and signage and other elements organized to create a coherent street front.



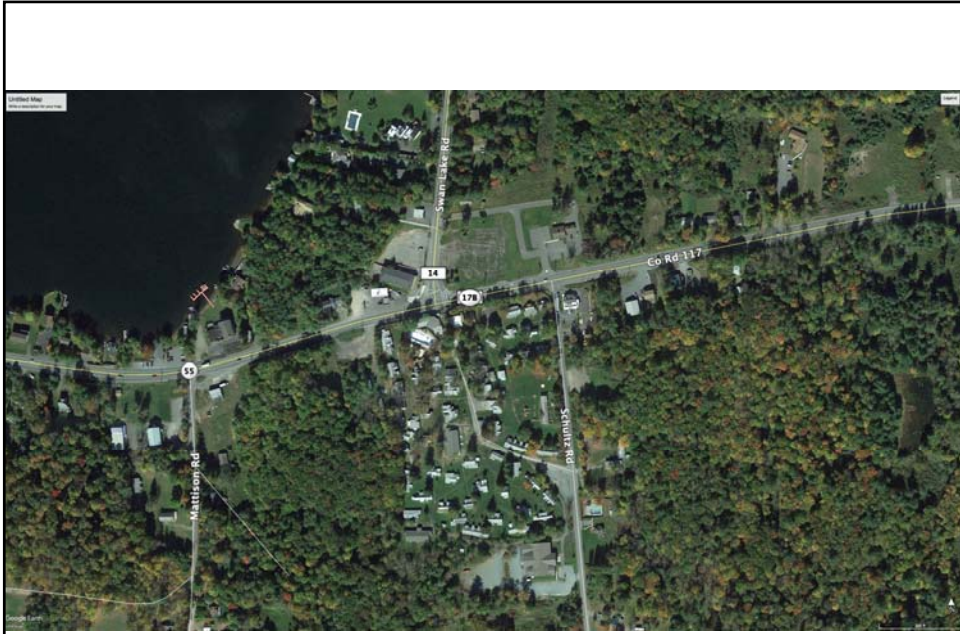
Crossroad: Barryville



Crossroad: Callicoon Center



Crossroad: Wurtsboro



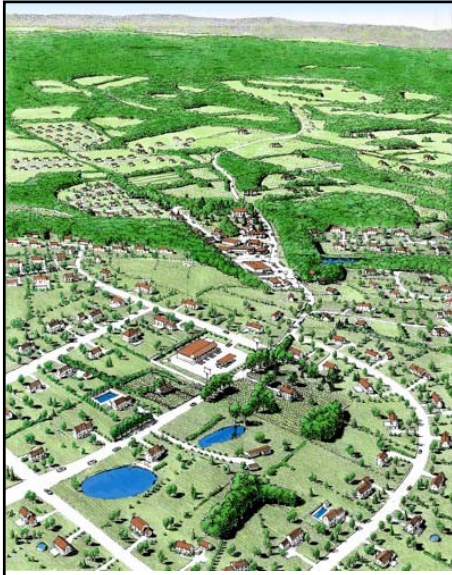
Crossroads: White Lake



conventional



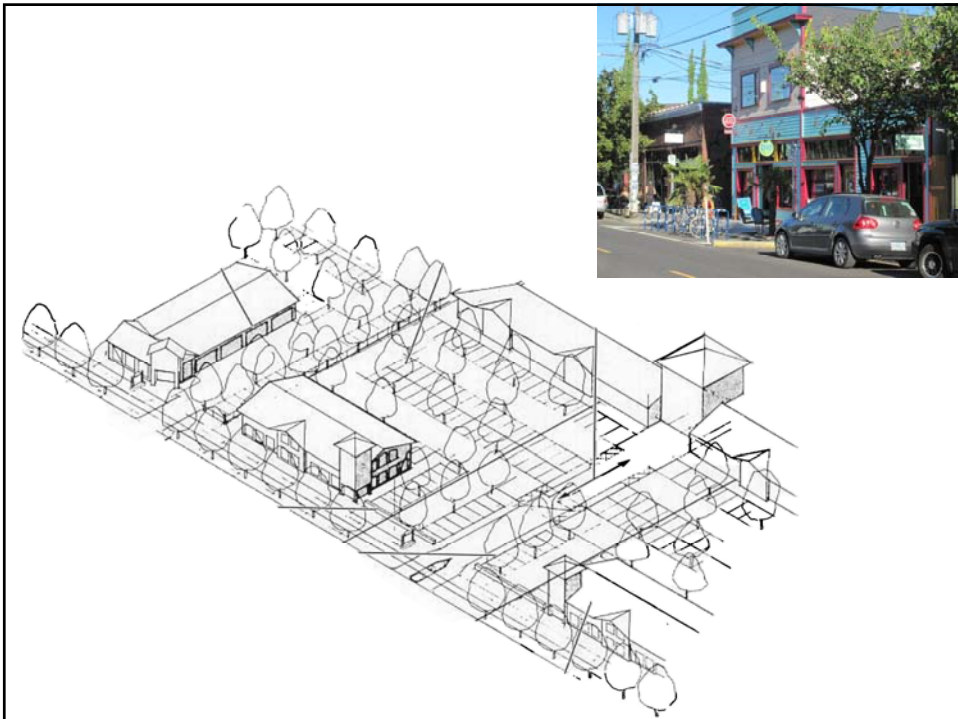
preferred

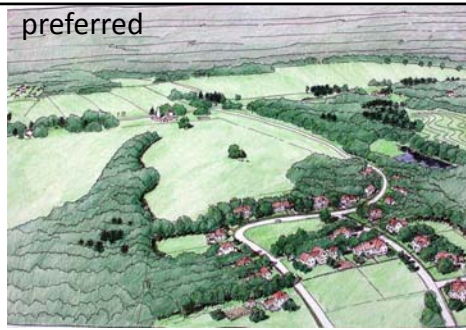


conventional



preferred





## Exercise Part 1

Step 1: Sketch a solution **5:35 to 6:20**

- Look at Preferred Development Approach for the “big ideas”
- highlight natural features first
- outline connections you want to make: new trails, road networks
- draw footprints of new buildings to define streets and public spaces

### Graphics:


- use *black marker* to make lines
- use the *color key* to select colors



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## Best Practices: Details, Tools and Actions

Explore through each theme below.




**Nature**

The underlying framework of natural resources and open spaces where development patterns must be organized in order to protect the environment and preserve the integrity of natural systems.



**Links**

The linking of all built environment elements by creating a fine grained street-and-block network and by enabling all forms of mobility to reduce dependence on the automobile.



**Communities**

Where people can live, work, shop, and recreate within walking distances; complete communities are essential to reduce dependence on automobiles, advance equity, and foster social interaction.


[View all Design Details](#)

[View all Tool and Actions](#)


## Nature

Make your community more nature friendly


**Protect Natural and Scenic Resources**




Protect Farmlands



Create Resource-Specific Plans and Regulations




Protect Watersheds and Freshwater Wetlands




Mandate Conservation Subdivisions

**Create an Urban Forest**




Create Green Streets




Landscape Parks and Plazas


**Create Linked Open Spaces**



Link Protected Resource Areas On Individual Parcels

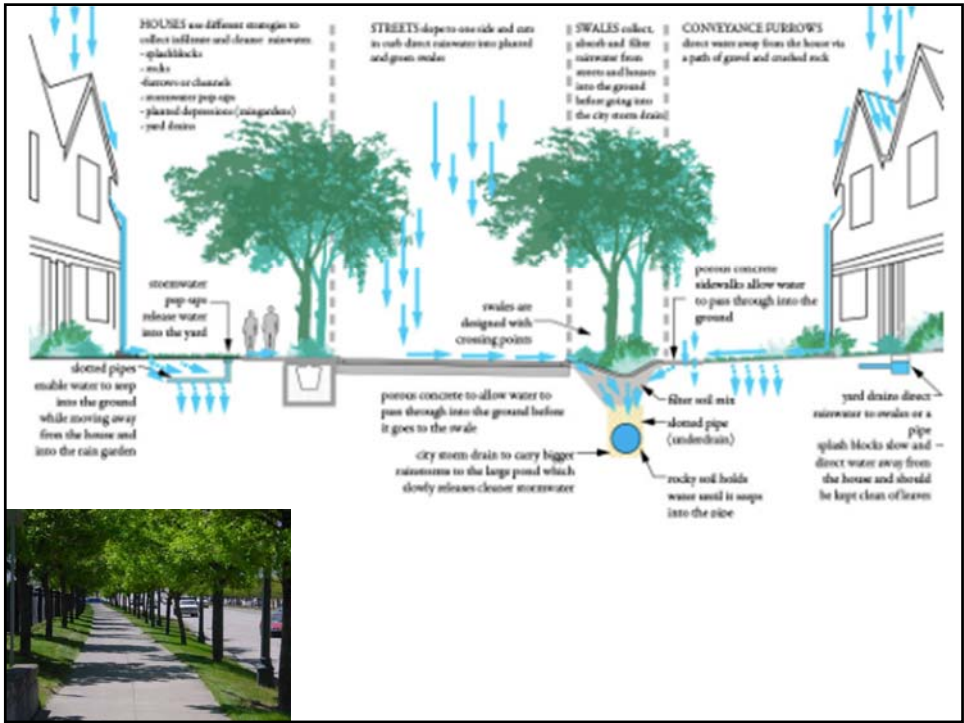


Create and Link Parks and Greenways



**Nature**

The underlying framework of natural resources and open spaces where development patterns must be organized in order to protect the environment and preserve the integrity of natural systems.









## Links

Create safe and smart connections for drivers, bikers and pedestrians.


**Manage the automobile**



Traffic-Calm Roads




Accommodate Transit




Deal With Parking Creatively

**Design Streets For People**




Design Beautiful Streets

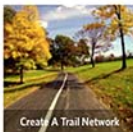


Design For Pedestrians and Bicycling


**Maximize Connectivity**




Create New Roads and Connections Into and Between Developments



Create A Trail Network



Create Connected Street Network



Links

The linking of all built environment elements by creating a fine grained street-and-block network and by enabling all forms of mobility to reduce dependence on the automobile.

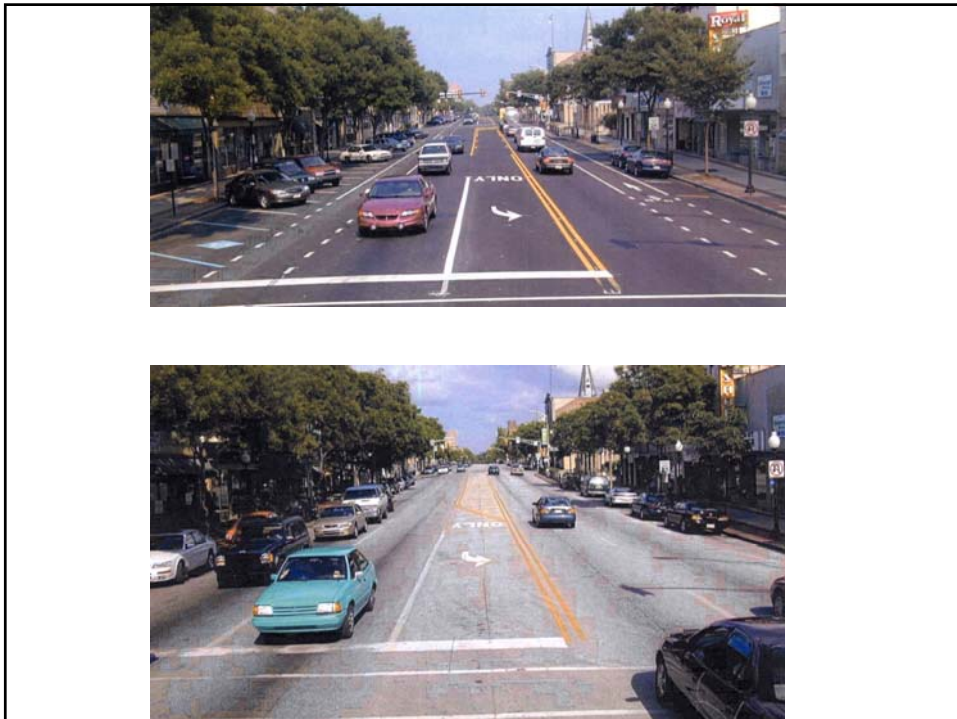


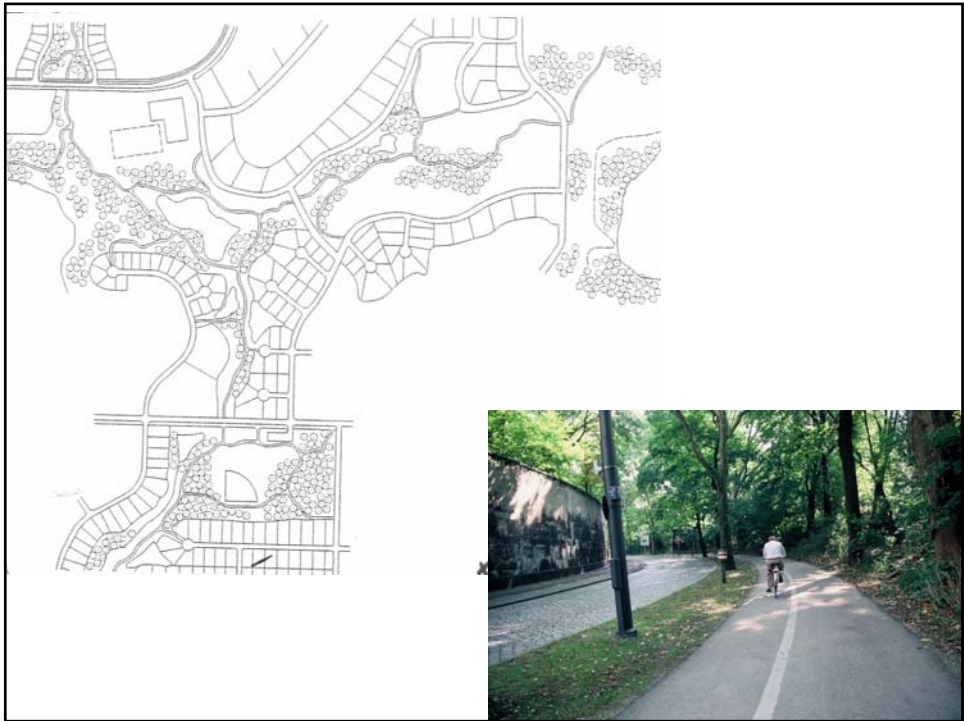
Acceptable



Preferred

Unacceptable







## Communities

Create compact, mixed-use neighborhoods where people can live, work, shop, and recreate


**Create Diversity of Land Use**



Provide For Elastic Use/Mixed-Use




Integrate Neighborhood Civic Uses




Create Diversity of Housing Types


**Create Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Areas**



Promote Mixed-Use Buildings




Promote Infill Development




Create Main Street Environments


**Create Beautiful Neighborhoods**



Promote Context-Sensitive Design



Orient Buildings to Streets

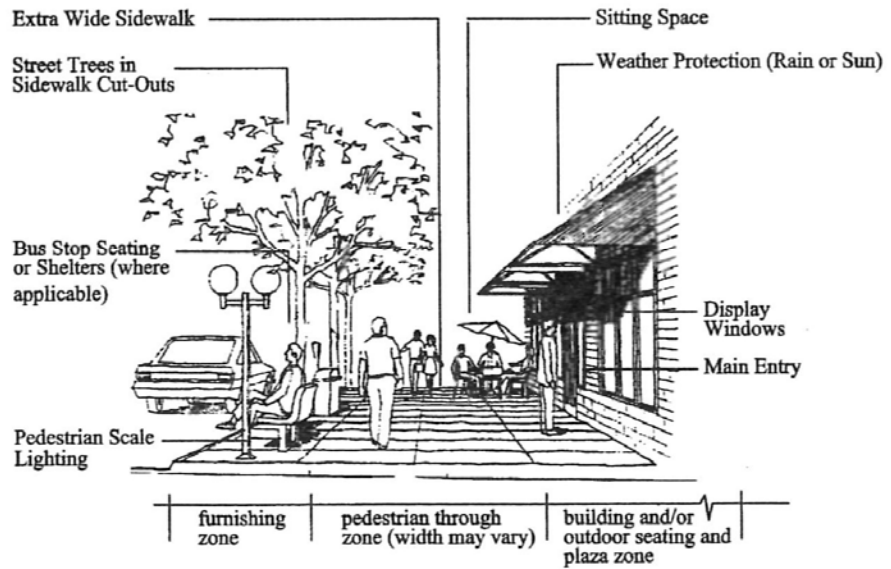


## Communities

Where people can live, work, shop, and recreate within walking distances; complete communities are essential to reduce dependence on automobiles, advance equity, and foster social interaction.



**Figure 2.3.180 – Examples of Pedestrian [and Transit] Amenities**



## Exercise: Part 2



### Step 2: Discuss best practices from Nature, Links and Communities

6:30 to 7:00

- Select the Tools and Actions you want to use to implement the best practices we have preselected.
- To make your selection, review the Tools and Actions appendix with your facilitator with special attention to the local capacity issues.

**Deal With Parking Creatively**  
Managing Imperviousness

**Overview**

Parking consumes space that could otherwise be used for open space amenity or community-supportive development. Excessive off-street parking requirements for individual properties results in excess supply. When parking is located between the front of the building and the street, it makes access for pedestrians and transit requirements, by reducing the burden of off-street parking, can help promote pedestrian-orientation.

**Design Detail**

- Parking Lot Placement - Accessible
- Parking Lot Placement - Unconstrained
- Small Parking Lot Partially Beneath Buildings
- Parking Lot Retrofit
- Large Parking Lot Design
- Parking Lot Screening

**Tools and Actions**

Planning Tools	Regulatory Tools	Administrative Actions
<p><b>Area Specific Plans</b> Manage parking plans for centers and more intensively developed street car areas can be done as either a section of an or addition to the comprehensive plan. Area specific plans can promote flexible parking requirements.</p> <p><b>Form-based Codes</b> Form-based codes provide for more parking with</p> <p>See Plan</p>	<p><b>Basic Zoning</b> Zoning can include reduced amount of parking ratios and flexible and creative parking strategies such as shared parking, remote parking, and reduction in parking to transit.</p> <p>See Text</p> <p><b>Aesthetics Regulations</b> Design guidelines for placement and design of parking lots.</p> <p>See Text</p> <p><b>Subdivision Regulations</b> Subdivision regulations can include flexible parking requirements, maximum and site plan review. Locally includes parking design and placement.</p> <p>See Text</p> <p><b>Site Plan Regulations</b> Site plan regulations can include flexible parking requirements.</p> <p>See Text</p> <p><b>Parking Districts and Parking Authorities</b> Parking districts and parking authorities can manage parking concentrations through pricing and marketing strategies, in-lieu-of fees, and by holding facilities in public.</p>	<p><b>Design Review</b> Design review can include issues related to parking design and placement.</p> <p>See Action</p>

## Exercise: Part 3

### Step 3: Select and locate relevant details

7:00 to 7:10

- Pick from the details associated with the best practice.
- Cut them out and paste them to your sketch.

**HOW HIGH POINT DRAINAGE WORKS TO RECHARGE OUR GROUND WATER AND PROTECT THE CREEK**

**Design Detail**

- N05 Direct the Flow
- N20 Green Streets
- N21 Vegetated Swales
- N23 Tree Pits
- N24 Planter Boxes
- N25 Infiltration Trench

**Diagram Labels:**

- ROOFS use diffuse strategies to collect diffuse roof drain waterways - gutters - downspouts - downspout caps - downspout diverters - downspout caps - downspout caps
- STREETS depave curbs and sidewalks to allow stormwater to infiltrate and/or evaporate
- SWALES collect, absorb and filter rainwater from streets and lawns into the ground before going into the city storm drain
- CONVEYANCE FURROWS absorb stormwater from the house into a path of good and stacked rock
- permeable pavers - rainwater into the yard
- rain gardens - rainwater into the yard
- permeable concrete to allow water to pass through into the ground below it goes to the soil
- city storm-drains to carry bigger rainwater to the large pond which slowly releases cleaner stormwater
- stone walls - allow water to pass through into the ground
- permeable materials - allow water to pass through into the ground
- stone walls - allow water to pass through into the ground
- yard drains down - rainwater to streets or a pipe
- pipe - splash blocks down and - direct water away from the house and should be kept close to them
- sticky soil holds water used to seep into the soil

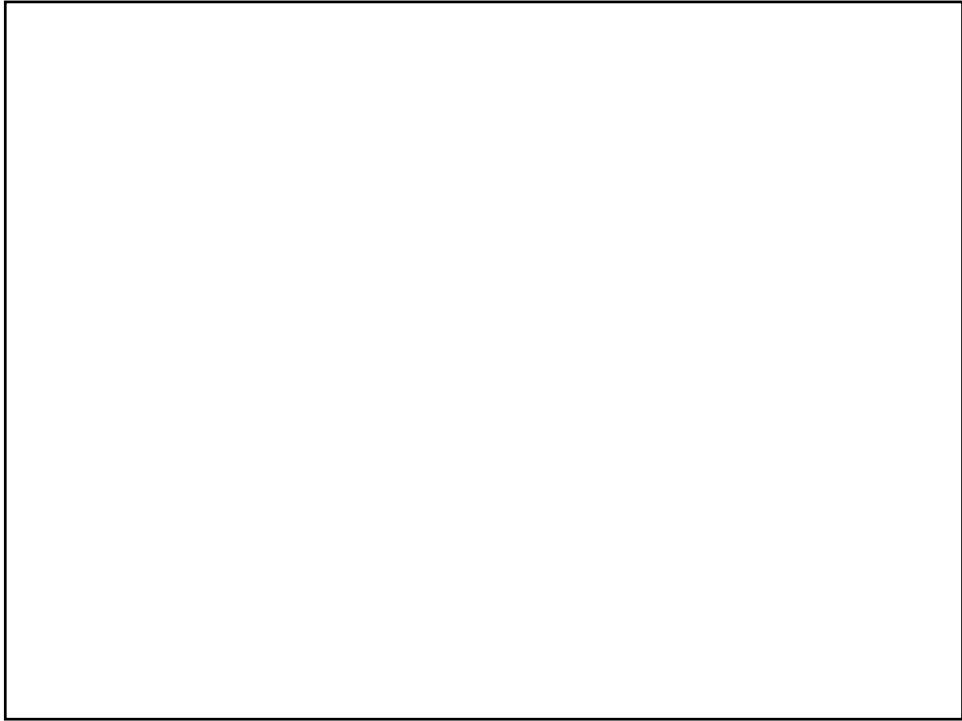
## **Exercise: Part 4**

### **Step 4: Report-back**

***7:10 to 7:30***

- **Present your vision:**  
***What were your 3 biggest design ideas?***
- **Present your implementation plan:**  
***What were your 3 biggest actions you need to take?***





Downtown or Corridor: Livingston







**Pedestrian Friendly Features as Controlling Elements**



Developed by Steve Price  
in association w/ Dover Kohl & Partners  
& Glatting Jackson  
for Johnson City Tennessee

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