



Canton Step 2 Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Study



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The Village of Canton Step 2 Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Study is sponsored by the Town and Village of Canton through the Office of Community Economic Development with funding provided through the New York State Department of State (DOS) Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program.

Project Partners

The Program is a three-step process that provides grants and technical support to help municipalities and organizations complete and implement strategies that work towards revitalization within their communities. During the program, communities are formally designated as Brownfield Opportunity Areas, thus increasing their competitive position for access to funding as well as incentives under the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Brownfield Cleanup Program, the Empire State Development Corporation's economic development

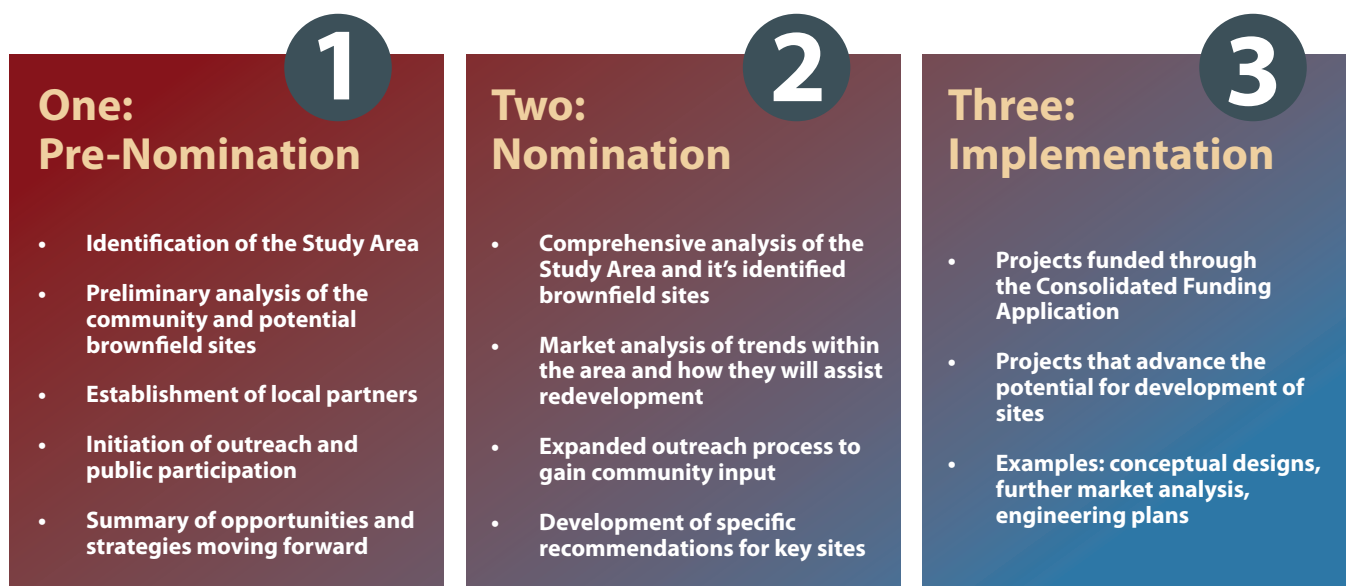



Figure 1: Three Step BOA Program

programs, as well as other State and Federal assistance opportunities.

Brownfield sites are typically former industrial, manufacturing or commercial properties where historic operations have either resulted in environmental contamination or are perceived as having resulted in environmental contamination. Many of these sites now sit vacant and detract from the strength of the surrounding area. The DOS and DEC have recognized that these sites have a tremendous negative impact on neighborhoods around them as a result.

The overall vitality of neighborhoods and corridors can be negatively impacted by the presence of vacant, underutilized, and brownfield sites. In many cases, property values





decline, reinvestment in the area decreases, and issues of safety arise when brownfield sites sit undeveloped. To combat these issues, the BOA Program assists communities in identifying and further analyzing these sources of neighborhood decline and then provides resources and capacity to develop implementation strategies that work towards the revitalization of sites that will catalyze resurgence in the neighborhoods surrounding them. However, being a planning program, the BOA does not provide direct funds for cleanup efforts. State and Federal programs exist for the cleanup and remediation of sites, such as the DEC Environmental Restoration Program and Brownfield Cleanup Program, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program. These programs focus on physical investigations and cleanup and provide further assistance to municipalities that deal with brownfield impacts on a day-to-day basis.





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SECTION

1

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town and Village of Canton completed their Step 1 BOA Pre-Nomination Study in July 2011. The Pre-Nomination Study was for a 207-acre study area within the Village of Canton focused on the downtown corridor along Main Street and surrounding major thoroughfares that were once lively centers of industrial activity along the Grasse River including Riverside Drive, Miner Street and Gouverneur Street.

In 2019, Canton was awarded funding to complete Step 2 of the BOA Program and move towards BOA designation. BOA designation typically happens directly after the completion of a Nomination document (Step 2).


The Town and Village of Canton's Step 1 boundary encompassed public and privately owned land as well as roadways and rights-of-way with the Village's downtown as the heart of the Study Area. Of the 207 acres, 27 sites totaling 65 acres were identified as potential brownfields. Additionally, 9 sites totaling 8 acres were identified for being either vacant or underutilized. As such, the vacant, underutilized, and brownfield sites occupied over 35% of the overall Study Area. The identified brownfield, vacant, and underutilized sites were primarily located along or within close proximity to five primary established focus areas for redevelopment which assisted with shaping the BOA boundary. The focus areas included:

- Riverside Area – Riverside Drive and portions of Main Street.
- Jubilee Area – Focus on vacant storefronts within the Jubilee Plaza and surrounding vacant lots located on Miner Street.
- County Highway Department Area – Focus on rail line that runs through the Village and directly abutting properties (Hoot Owl, St. Lawrence County Highway facility, residences).
- Bend in the River Area – Bend in the River Park and surrounding properties (inactive water treatment facility, Atlantic Testing, Recreation Pavilion).
- Gouverneur Area – Gateway corridor and properties abutting Gouverneur Street / the westerly bank of Grasse River.

These focus areas for redevelopment were selected during Step 1 of the BOA Program due to the high number of vacancies; deterioration of structures within the areas; potential for reuse that will directly impact the community; past commercial and

BOA designation provides tools for communities such as support from DOS, priority and preference when being considered for NYS grants, and opens the door for tax credit opportunities through the New York State Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP).





industrial uses on properties which may have caused environmental contamination; and possible contamination within close proximity to Canton's natural resources. In recent years, the Village of Canton has experienced significant challenges for years with attracting new investment on vacant properties within their downtown and surrounding major thoroughfares. New investment would assist the Village of Canton with their goal of not just being a college-town but rather being a destination for people to live, work, play and study year-round. Year-round activity within the Village would help small businesses, encourage the safe use of the Village's natural resources and build a continued population of community members who contribute to enhancing the Village's vitality.

During the Step 2 process, the BOA Steering Committee decided that the Study Area boundary for the Step 2 BOA should include all of the properties and streets identified in Step 1, but would also extend to include all parcels along Gouverneur Street within the Village. The target-area acreage increased to 215 acres and now includes all parcels that are located directly east and west of the Gouverneur Street right of way within the Village of Canton (Map 1).

Related Planning Studies and Existing Materials

The Brownfield Opportunity Areas program is designed to align with previous planning efforts undertaken by the community and to continue momentum within the area towards revitalization. In doing so, the Village and surrounding areas will benefit from years of thoughtful planning, analysis and idea generation, and can leverage additional data to further strategies and decision-making. The following section presents a brief summary of planning efforts that have been reviewed, considered and incorporated into this study starting with the most recent.

Town of Canton, Village of Canton, and Village of Rensselaer Falls Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Canton, Village of Canton and Village of Rensselaer Falls initiated the development of a joint comprehensive plan in the fall of 2017 funded by New York State Department of State's Environmental Protection Fund (EFP). The plan's purpose was to outline a current inventory and analysis of the study areas as well as provide a roadmap for future development. The Comprehensive Plan outlined a vision for the three municipalities:

"In ten years, Canton will be the most connected and accessible community in the North Country. Situated between the foothills of the Adirondacks and the St. Lawrence River, and home to two institutions of higher learning, Canton will offer an attractive, safe, and healthy environment for its residents and visitors to live, learn, work and play. With abundant waterfront resources along the Grasse and Oswegatchie Rivers,



a vibrant, historic downtown, and quiet independent communities, residents and visitors to Canton will benefit from its broad array of educational, recreational, and agricultural opportunities. Canton will continue to encourage innovation, connectivity and entrepreneurship while building upon its commitment to sustainability and diversity to welcome visitors and businesses.”

The plan also included four guiding principles:

- 1. Community identity**
- 2. Economic growth**
- 3. Resiliency and sustainability**
- 4. Transportation and mobility**

The document also included goals for the three municipalities and almost 130 recommended actions to achieve the vision of being the most connected and accessible community in the North Country.

The Comprehensive Plan will guide the municipalities on future planning to ensure cohesive and thoughtful development.

Canton Community Action Plan


In 2015, an Economic Development Steering Committee that consisted of multiple representatives from the Town and Village Boards, Economic and Community Development offices, local schools and universities and the Canton business community created a 5-year action plan for the Village and Town of Canton for 2016-2021.

The action plan included a vision to celebrate the vibrancy of the area as well as its rich history, culture, natural resources and available recreation. It also established five pillars to focus Canton’s energies. Action items to support each pillar were identified, and a total of 29 action items were identified.



Figure 2: Priority Goals





Canton is now in the process of updating the Community Action Plan to reflect new goals for the next five years.

Canton Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)


The Town of Canton received a grant in 2006 to develop an inter-municipal Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for the Grasse River waterfront within the Town and Village of Canton and completed the project in 2010. The LWRP was updated in 2018 and established an updated Waterfront Revitalization Area Boundary that encompassed the Grasse River waterfront south of the Town of Potsdam line, hugged the waterfront travelling south through the Village of Canton and stopped north of the Town of Russell line. An Inventory and Analysis was completed for the established boundary including factors such as land use, flooding and erosion, wildlife habitat, and environmental issues such as water quality or potential contamination. The LWRP then established land and water goals, initiatives, and projects and discussed projects that were completed following the 2010 LWRP. A number of new goals were established in 2018 that included items such as:

- Enhance existing and develop new waterfront parks to provide for greater public access and enjoyment of the Grasse River.
- Expand and enhance the land trails network and pedestrian linkages within and to the Waterfront Area.
- Protect sensitive waterfront, open space, and agricultural resources.
- Revitalize and strengthen the local economy by encouraging the development and redevelopment of waterfront properties into an appropriate mix of uses and densities that are compatible with the waterfront and the historic Village of Canton.
- Increase cultural and heritage preservation activities.
- Ensure that planning documents and local laws support the protection of the Grasse River waterfront and its community character and that they encourage appropriate economic development.
- Develop tourism as an economic engine.

Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan

In 2015 the Town of Canton was awarded funding from NYS DOS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to develop a Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan. The purpose of the plan was to bring communities surrounding the Grasse River together to create a holistic identity based on their connection to the river, to fully understand existing recreational resources and to identify ways to enhance the experience of the Grasse





as well as create new enhancement opportunities within the Grasse River corridor for both residents and visitors. The Blueway Trail boundary includes the length of the Grasse River starting in the Towns of Colton and Clare to the river's confluence with the St. Lawrence River in the Town of Massena. It includes the Main, North, Middle and South branches and most of the river's watershed. It also includes off-river land along the main branch with the exception of the Upper and Lower Lakes Wildlife Management Area and the Little River outside of the Village of Canton.

The Blueway Trail Plan was framed using the following goals:

- Promote and market the Blueway as a four-season natural resource and recreational amenity for residents and visitors.
- Increase and enhance safe access to on-river activities including paddling, fishing and swimming.
- Improve on-land amenities to enhance and complement the river experience including parks, land trails for different users, camping and other visitor infrastructure.
- Enhance community revitalization by connecting the river to hamlets, "main streets" and other intrinsic resources.
- Guide stewardship through education about the river's ecological importance and heritage and provide guidance on protection at the individual, community and regional levels.

Canton Master Trail Plan

The Canton Master Trail Plan was funded under the 2015 grant that also funded the Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan. The Canton Master Trail Plan was developed in 2018 for the Town and Village of Canton to act as a blueprint for further development of the multi-use non-motorized network of trails and pathways that act as a connection to infrastructure and recreational assets within the community. The Master Trail Plan provided details on existing trail networks and bike lands, proposed enhancement strategies and priorities and funding opportunities. Priorities for the Canton Master Trail Plan included:

- Inspire people to choose non-motorized means of travel.
- Promote recreational activities such as walking, hiking, bicycling, rollerblading, skiing, snowshoeing, and roller skiing.
- Integrate different people and locations within the Village and Town of Canton and enhanced encounters among community members / visitors.



BOA Boundary Description and Justification

The 215-acre Study Area encompasses the southwest portion of the Village of Canton and includes a portion of Grasse River which flows from south to north through the center of the Study Area. The Study Area includes Bend in the River Park as its southern boundary; the State University of New York at Canton (SUNY Canton) footbridge as its northern boundary; Gouverneur Street as its western boundary; and Park Street as its eastern boundary.

The Study Area contains a wide mix of uses including Canton's Main Street and associated commercial and retail businesses, former industrial properties that directly border the Grasse River, community parks and open space, large vacant commercial plazas, mixed-use areas that include single- and multi-family homes, automotive repair shops and the Canton Highway Garage. The Study Area also contains sites outlined in Step 1 and new sites added to the list throughout the Step 2 process.

The Study Area includes a number of important corridors and gateways within the Village. Riverside Drive, makes up a majority of the northern portion of the Study Area. Riverside Drive was once a major industrial, retail and commercial hub for the Village of Canton. Since the decline of industrialism, Riverside Drive went through major changes in land use and now lacks pedestrian activity. This is due to types of current land use, vacancies and lack of pedestrian-oriented streetscaping. The corridor has been auto focused for many years with a number of auto parts shops and mechanics. Due to past industrial uses and former garages that have since been demolished, there is uncertainty about the environmental integrity of properties along the Grasse River. There is also opportunity for reuse of vacant properties and new development to activate the corridor.

The Gouverneur Gateway, which is the main entrance into the Village of Canton for travelers coming from the south, has a wide-variety of uses ranging from human



Figure 3: Boundary Map Area



services to gas stations to residential homes. Unfortunately, the thoroughfare still suffers from a high amount of vacancy and streetscaping. Due to past uses, contamination may be a barrier to redevelopment. Furthermore, a majority of the vacancy directly abuts the Grasse River which then creates barriers to access for community members and visitors.

Key sites and features in the East End Study Area include:



Northern Boundary

The northern portion of the BOA includes all parcels abutting Riverside Drive and ends just south of the SUNY Canton footbridge that connects Riverside Drive to the SUNY Canton campus. The northern portion of the BOA also includes a portion of the Village's Main Street corridor. Prominent features in the northern portion of the BOA include Grasse River Heritage Park, the Cascade Inn, Canton's Town and Village Municipal Building, and the Wight & Patterson Feed Mill.



Southern Boundary

The southern portion of the BOA encompasses all parcels east of Stevens Street and parcels along Lincoln and Buck streets. Features within the southern portion of the BOA include Bend in the River Park, the Recreational Pavilion, vacant water treatment building, the St. Lawrence County Manufacturing building (past Kraft Food Plant), and the Atlantic Testing building.



Western Boundary

The western portion of the BOA includes the Gouverneur corridor starting north of the Train Trestle. The western boundary is primarily comprised of all parcels directly abutting the Gouverneur Street corridor, but also includes the westerly bank of Grasse River. Notable properties near the western BOA boundary include the Dairy Queen, the former Triple A Lumber, Bimbos Bakery USA building, and Mace Motors.



Eastern Boundary

The eastern portion of the BOA includes all parcels that fall west of Park Street and east of Grasse River. Notable properties near the eastern boundary of the BOA include the former Jubilee Plaza, the St. Lawrence County highway department and garage, and the Hoot Owl Express.

Figure 4: Keys Sites and Features

As the planning process progressed in Step 2, the boundary was expanded to include all parcels directly abutting Gouverneur Street. Since Gouverneur Street is one of Canton's gateways into the Village of Canton and the community vocalized that the entirety of the corridor should be taken into consideration when planning reuse of sites that could negatively impact visitors' perceptions of the area.



SECTION

2

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Purpose


Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Studies provide in-depth and thorough descriptions of existing conditions, identify new development opportunities and re-use potential for properties located within a community's Brownfield Study Area. The program emphasizes the identification and re-use potential of strategic sites to serve as catalysts for revitalization.

The Village and Town of Canton have been focused on many aspects of community renewal and revitalization with an understanding that, in order to succeed, the community must find new ways to take advantage of its assets and its setting. The community has been at work developing approaches specific to its Grasse River setting, and to address trails and multimodal accessibility. A new comprehensive plan, adopted in 2019, painted a vision for the community's future that emphasizes its Grasse and Oswegatchie rivers setting, historic downtown, and its diverse educational, recreational, and agricultural resources. In addition to the comprehensive plan, the community created the Grasse River Blueway Plan in 2018 and initiated a marketing plan in 2020 to support sustainable tourism and recreation on the entire river corridor from Russell to Massena; as well as a Master Trail Plan for the Village and Town, also published in 2018. These initiatives, like Brownfield Opportunity Area Step 1 Pre-Nomination and the present Step 2 Nomination Studies, position Canton to realize its vision for its future, to pursue funding, and to exploit opportunities highlighted in the market analysis.

To place itself in the best possible position to capitalize upon positive trends and augment existing efforts, Canton crafted a bold vision for the BOA that complements and supports the array of planning that has come before. The New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area program-funded study follows a Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study completed in 2011.

The BOA program ensures that the ideas for the future are local and aids implementation through a future, third step of the program. The local community's





strong voice in redevelopment planning for the study area ensures the recommendations have local support. To this end, the project team developed and implemented a series of engagement activities throughout the project. Public engagement is a cornerstone of the BOA program's success and the engagement activities were designed to gather community input and gauge sentiment about redevelopment options for the Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area. The public engagement program is designed to reach people who may not have been engaged previously and who could well become implementers and project partners in the future.

Community Participation & Visioning

This Brownfield Opportunities Area project included a Community Visioning process for vacant, underutilized, known and suspected environmental trouble spots throughout the BOA study area. To ensure that the scale of engagement was appropriate to the community it seeks to understand, the project followed a Placemaking methodology that utilized public engagement to build consensus, craft approaches to revitalization through creativity and collaboration, and to empower the community.

The project team was tasked not only with identifying site-specific solutions for vacant, underutilized and potentially contaminated sites, but also with finding possible solutions to quality-of-life concerns in the community, while seeking to ensure that the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental benefits can be met through the recommendations. Larger community initiatives – such as improvements to public and transportation infrastructure, future or proposed new developments and/or housing, and public amenities and recreational opportunities – were considered for appropriate placement in the BOA and were studied as part of the site analysis where the existing context of place best supports them as well as where future linkages, opportunities and community needs can be met.

Consultation Methods and Techniques to Enlist Partners

Due to the lack of interest and citizen participation in traditional public engagement methods, the project team approached these BOAs using non-traditional methods. The “Placemaking Vision Strategy” used in this Study is based on the way organizational development and team building experts approach problem solving and strategic planning with diverse user groups.

This approach to visioning is an excellent way to interact with citizens and stakeholders that is approachable and engaging. The “Placemaking Vision Strategy” helped the team obtain creative ideas, build relationships, and inspire imagination about the future of the Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area.



Specific Engagement Techniques

A Public Engagement Plan (PEP) was created at the onset of the BOA project to ensure a deliberate and comprehensive process to ensure the local community voice about redevelopment planning would be heard. This document is attached in Appendix A and includes the combination of methods for accomplishing public outreach activities. The specific methodology instituted included the following techniques:

- Steering Committee Meetings
- Small Conversations About Town
- Traditional Public Meetings
- Site Analysis and Visioning Tours
- Community Survey
- Social media



The Economic Development Committee and project team on the September 2019 “walkabout.” Above left, discussing the vacant Dollar Store. Above right, SUNY Jubilee Plaza. Left, considering Riverside Drive.



From the onset of the BOA project, the Village and Town Economic Development Committee served as the project Economic Development Committee and played a vital role supervising the BOA project. The committee members ensured that the project proceeded smoothly, that the engagement activities were sufficient in terms of frequency and content and worked closely and collaboratively with the project team. The project team and the Economic Development Committee met on a regular basis for review and feedback of analysis, project opportunities and the development of the BOA plans. The committee met with the project team three times in person (before the global Coronavirus pandemic ruled out in-person meetings) and additional times on the Zoom platform. The meeting minutes from these conversations are provided in the Appendix. At project kickoff, the group went on a walking tour of the study area with the project team, sharing unique perspectives and engaging in wide-ranging conversations about the study area.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS		
Michael	Dalton	Village of Canton Mayor
Mary Ann	Ashley	Town of Canton Supervisor
Leigh	Rodriguez	Village and Town Economic Development Office
Jeni	Reed	Village and Town Economic Development Office
Karin	Blackburn	Former Town Clerk
Ron	Burke	Superintendent of Schools
Varick	Chittenden	Community Member
Tim	Danehy	Town Council
Ben	Dixon	St. Lawrence University
Cindy	Lawrence	United Helpers
Tammy	Macklin	Canton Chamber of Commerce
Carol	Pynchon	Village Trustee
Katherine	Schleider	Canton Potsdam Hospital
Anna	Sorenson	Village Trustee
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PROJECT TEAM		
Dan	Riker	The C&S Companies
Emma	Phillips	The C&S Companies
Ellen	Pemrick	E.M. Pemrick & Company
Eve	Holberg	Joy Kuebler Landscape Architect

Figure 5: Steering Committee Members





College students visit the BOA project table at the Farmer's Market, Sept, 27, 2019, above left. Left, Mr. & Mrs. Remington stopped by the table at the Remington Arts Festival Sept. 28, 2019, left. Above, gathering input at the Feb. 6, 2020 Canton Chamber Dinner.


Small Conversations About Town and Small Group Engagement

Small Conversations About Town outreach includes “meeting the public in public,” that is, where they are, rather than inviting them to come to the project team. These small community discussions may occur at grocery and department stores, in the main area of the library, at local community services locations and even at school functions and sporting events.

The goal of the project team is to hear local perspectives from as many viewpoints as possible. By going to community members where they are, the team had many casual conversations that made real and valuable contributions to the study knowledge base, educated and informed the public about the studies, and recruited citizen-champions for the study.

The project team held small community discussions at the Canton Farmer's Market on September 27, 2019 and again at the Remington Festival of the Arts on Sept. 28, 2019.





The team had a table with a large map of the BOA study area and engaged passers-by in conversation. On February 6, 2020, the team had a presence at the Canton Chamber of Commerce annual dinner. Additional planned events were suspended because of the pandemic.

Input gathered during these events is summarized in the Appendix.

At each engagement event, the team distributed what came to be called “small conversations questions” for participants to complete. The questions were:

- I want a _____ on _____ Street in Canton's BOA Area!
- How can Canton's gateway areas be enhanced so they are more appealing?
- “My family and I would visit the Grasse River parks in the BOA more often if we could _____.”
- What kinds events and activities would enhance the Canton BOA?

A final question invited participants to rank a series of statements about revitalization in order of importance with 1 being most important to them and 4 being least important to them. The statements are:

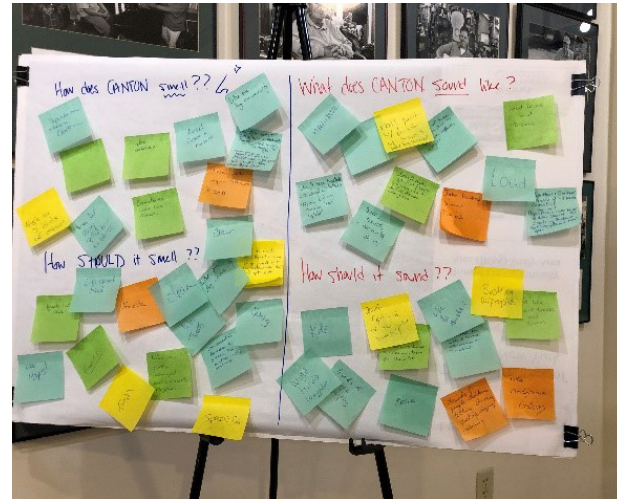
- Revitalize the housing stock in Canton's BOA
- Revitalize commercial areas with new shopping and dining options.
- Reuse vacant, underutilized, and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings to bring in more jobs.
- Develop Canton's tourism assets to support economic development.

Traditional Public Meetings

The project team understands that the public is the ultimate constituent and potentially the biggest champion for the Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area. The project team planned two public meetings for the BOA: one at the project's onset to explain the BOA program, review the BOA project scope of work, and to gather initial public input for the plan, and a second to introduce the study's vision, goals and objectives, and the findings and recommendations of the study.

The first public workshop was held on the evening of Nov. 20, 2019 in the upstairs community room at Traditional Arts in Upstate New York (TAUNY), 53 Main St. About 30 people participated in the meeting. The evening's activities began with a brief PowerPoint presentation about the Brownfield Opportunity Area and the study's purpose. Throughout the evening a member of the consultant team was available to answer questions about the Brownfield Opportunity Areas program and about the





Participants in the November 2019 Canton BOA workshop work on collaging their visions for the BOA's future, left. Above, Post-It Note answers to questions about the present and future of the BOA.

Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area in particular. A poster-sized map of the area was available to aid this discussion. Following the presentation, attendees were invited to participate in activities designed to draw participants out on their visions for a revitalized Canton BOA.

Two final public meetings were held on August 25th, 2021 at 2:30 and 5:30 PM. The meetings reviewed key findings from the Inventory and Analysis, Community Participation, discussed the Strategic Sites and next steps for Canton.

Site Analysis Tours

Site analysis tours are a 'boots-on-the-ground' approach to public and Steering Committee engagement. Together, participants discovered the challenges and constraints of the sites, discussed real solutions in real time, and identified creative ways to re-envision the areas as integral parts of the community. These tours allowed participants to move toward consensus much faster than traditional public meeting methods and provided participants with a shared sense of pride and ownership of the ongoing development of the final community vision and redevelopment plan. Visioning activity packet provided during the site analysis tour and an account of the discussions held during the tour are provided in the Appendix.

The project team, Steering Committee, municipal department heads, community members, and stakeholders participated in these Canton site analysis and visioning tours:

November 21, 2019 – Members of the steering committee and members of the community participated in an interactive site tour of the Gouverneur Gateway on Nov. 21, 2019. There were about a dozen participants on the tour. The tour began and ended at the Cascade Inn on West Main Street. The site analysis group walked the west





side of Gouverneur Street to the train trestle just beyond the Village line and back on the east side of Gouverneur Street.

The Gouverneur Street Gateway is one of St. Lawrence County's busiest corridors with almost 7,700 cars entering the Village from the south on Route 11 each day.

This was once a thriving mixed-use corridor with homes, local businesses and services including the local bakery, one of Canton's two lumber yards and a car dealership among many other uses. Over the years the character of the corridor has eroded. It lacks defined curb cuts, and features narrow sidewalks, few streetscape amenities, and no bike lanes. There are some deteriorating vacant and underutilized properties. The Gouverneur Street Gateway can be a welcoming image for the Village of Canton. It should communicate a sense of prosperity and vitality.

March 5, 2020 Interactive Site Tour – Members of the steering committee gathered for an interactive site tour of Main Street and Riverside Drive on Mar. 5, 2020. The tour was postponed from February 7, 2020 because of a winter storm. There were approximately eight steering committee and consultant team members on the tour. The tour began at the corner of Court, Park and Main streets and concluded on Riverside Drive.

Main Street and Riverside Drive define the downtown portion of the Brownfield Opportunity Area. The downtown area includes two of St. Lawrence County's busiest intersections: Main Street and Riverside Drive, and Main Street and Gouverneur Street, which was the focus of a November interactive site tour.

On Main Street, a diverse mix of businesses and services are present, and there is room for plenty more. NYS DOT has implemented some traffic calming measures, but the corridor lacks human scale and character. After some clean-ups and demolitions, Riverside Drive would provide a world of new opportunity for river access and views.

On March 22, 2020, New York State went into “New York on Pause” in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The remainder of meetings were held virtually.

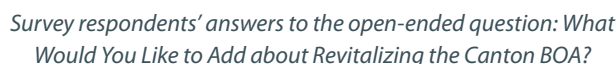
Community Survey

A community survey was developed to gauge community sentiments about several BOA-related issues. The community survey is part of a robust community engagement program for the Step 2 Nomination Study and is the only engagement technique that results in scientifically quantifiable results.

With the support of the Economic Development Committee, the survey instrument was developed for launching on the on-line Survey Monkey platform. The instrument included 11 questions, including numerous opened -ended questions and opportunities to add comments to closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions and closed-ended questions that allow a comment are important because they help overcome any unintended bias in the survey instrument and to allow survey



The survey opened on December 4, 2019 and stayed open until January 31, 2020. There were 291 responses received with a completion rate of 64%, meaning that 64% of respondents answered all questions, a respectable response rate. The responses to the survey can be assumed to accurately reflect public sentiment and revealed a high level of community consensus. As a result, there is no concern about the margin of error introducing a lack of confidence in the instrument or in responses to its individual questions.



Detailed charts, tables and discussion about the survey can be found in the Appendix of this document.

At the project outset a social media presence was established on Facebook. The Facebook page was updated frequently throughout the project and was used to publicize tours, workshops, and the survey. Later on, survey results were posted for review.



Community and Regional Setting



The Village of Canton encompasses 3.34 square miles and is located just 10 miles directly east of the Village of Rensselaer Falls. The Town of Canton is also home to the Hamlets of Pyrites and Morley.

Canton is located in the heart of St. Lawrence County (Map 3). St. Lawrence County is dominated by rural countryside and agricultural land with a number of small towns and villages.

As the St. Lawrence County Seat, Canton is home to many of the County's government operations and services. It also hosts two higher education institutions, St. Lawrence University and SUNY Canton. This combination of factors makes the Village a regional hub and focus for economic development and service provision.

St. Lawrence County is one of seven counties that make up the North Country. St. Lawrence is the largest county by area in New York State (2,821 square miles) and contains portions of the Adirondack Park as well as the St. Lawrence River, Oswegatchie River, and Grasse River among many other water bodies.

The Village of Canton is less than 30 minutes southeast of the City of Ogdensburg, which directly abuts the St. Lawrence River. The St. Lawrence River forms an international boundary that separates New York State from the Province of Ontario. Canton is an hour northeast of Watertown, New York, and Fort Drum, home of the US Army's 110th Mountain Light Infantry Division. The Village is also just over two hours northeast of Syracuse, New York and four hours north of New York State's capital in Albany. To the east, Lake Placid, in the heart of the Adirondack High Peaks Region, is an hour and a half by car.

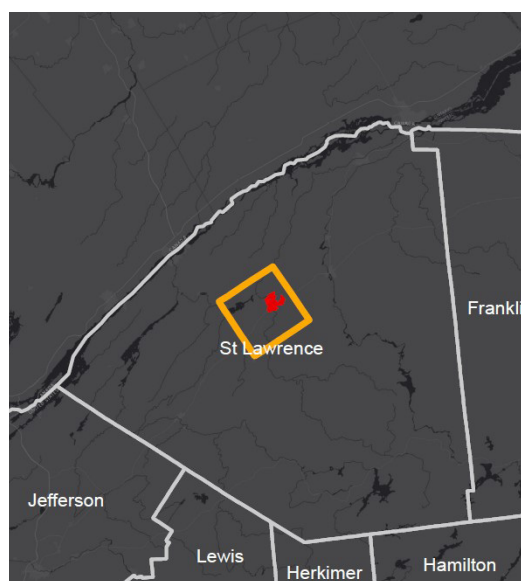


Figure 8: St. Lawrence County Boundary Map



Demographics and Socioeconomic Analysis

Populations and Households

The proposed Canton BOA encompasses 215 acres in the southwestern portion of the Village of Canton. With an estimated 2019 population of 820, the BOA study area accounts for approximately 13% of the Village's residents (Table 1).

Population Totals, 2000-2019							
	2000	2010	2019 (est.)	2024 (proj.)	% Change		
					2000-2010	2010-2019	2019-2024
Canton BOA	837	811	820	810	-3.10%	1.10%	-1.20%
Village of Canton	5,923	6,314	6,451	6,378	6.60%	2.20%	-1.10%
Town of Canton	10,334	10,995	11,145	11,003	6.40%	1.40%	-1.30%
St. Lawrence County	111,931	111,994	113,233	111,561	0.00%	1.20%	-1.50%
New York State	18,976,457	19,378,102	20,030,453	20,245,169	2.10%	3.40%	1.10%

Figure 9: Population Totals (Source: United States Census Bureau, ESRI, and E.M. Pemrick and Company)

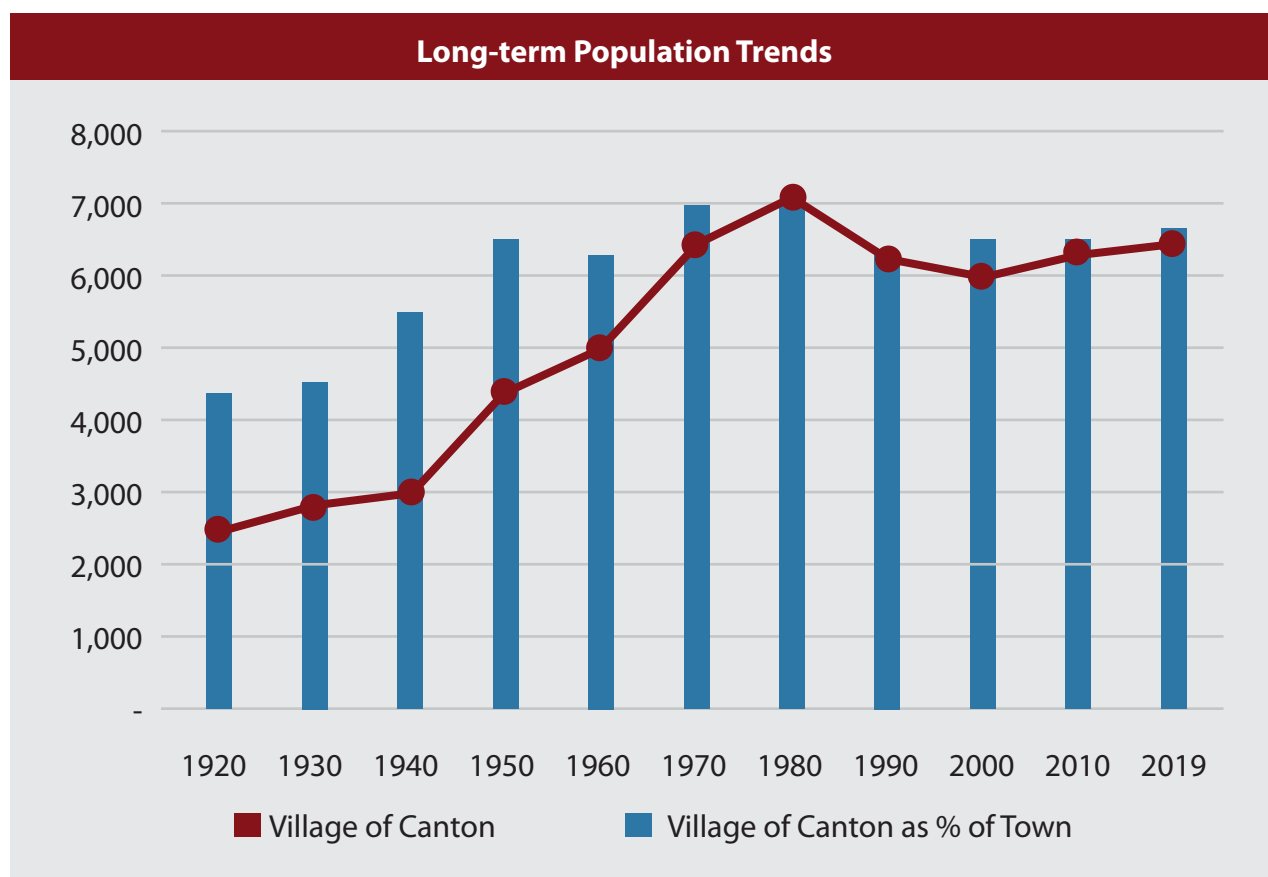


Figure 10: Educational Attainment (Source: United States Census Bureau and ESRI, 2019 estimate.)



As shown in Figure 10 above, the Village of Canton experienced steady population growth through most of the twentieth century, increasing from about 2,500 residents in 1920 to 7,055 at its peak in 1980. Over the next two decades, the number of residents in the Village declined, reaching 5,923 in 2000 before the population started to grow again. The current population of the Village is estimated at 6,451, including 2,672 individuals living in group quarters. Most of the group quarter's population in Canton is comprised of college students living in on-campus student housing at SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University.

The Census Bureau defines a household as all persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more persons living together, or any other group of individuals who share living arrangements outside of an institutional setting. Currently, there are 1,669 households in the Village of Canton, including 353 (21.2%) in the Canton BOA.

Household Trends							
	2000	2010	2019 (est.)	2024 (proj.)	% Change		
					2000- 2010	2010- 2019	2019- 2024
Canton BOA	337	355	353	346	5.30%	0.60%	-2.00%
Village of Canton	1,599	1,693	1,669	1,629	5.90%	-1.40%	-2.40%
Town of Canton	3,198	3,402	3,363	3,290	6.40%	-1.10%	-2.20%
St. Lawrence County	40,506	41,605	41,461	40,634	2.70%	-0.30%	-2.00%
New York State	7056860	7317755	7,541,262	7,611,733	3.70%	3.10%	0.90%

Figure 11: Household Trends (Source: ESRI and U.S. Census Bureau.)

Nationally, household sizes have declined over the last few decades due to an increase in single-parent households, smaller family sizes, and more people living alone. The average household size in the Village in 2010 was 2.04, compared to 2.21 in 1990. Current household sizes are smaller in the Village of Canton than in St. Lawrence County, and the County's household sizes are smaller than those in New York State as a whole. The average household size is 1.95 in the Canton BOA and 2.46 in St. Lawrence County, slightly below the New York State average of 2.58.

Age Distribution

As illustrated in Table 3, the Canton BOA, the Village, the Town, and St. Lawrence County all experienced substantial increases in the population of residents aged 55 and older between 2010 and 2019. The Village of Canton, for example, had a net gain of 56 residents between the ages of 55 and 64, an increase of 160 persons aged 65 to 74, and 83 persons aged 75 and over during the period. The comparison areas also



witnessed population growth among residents ages 25 to 34, although this trend is not projected to continue. In contrast, all four geographic areas exhibited a decline in the number of residents between the ages of 18 and 24. This age cohort, which includes many college students, accounts for 24.3% of the population in the Canton BOA and 45.5% of the Village's population.

Projections from ESRI to 2024 indicate that the fastest population growth in the Village of Canton, as well as in the BOA study area, will be in the 35-to-44 and 75-and-over age cohorts, followed by those between the ages of 65 and 74. These are also the fastest-growing segments of the state's population.

Distribution of Population by Age								
	Canton BOA		Village of Canton		Town of Canton		St. Lawrence County	
		% Chg		% Chg		% Chg		% Chg
Under Age 18								
2010 Census	156		676		1,803		23,844	
2019 (est.)	156	-	761	12.70%	1,705	5.40%	21,854	-8.30%
2024 (proj.)	154	-1.30%	746	-2.00%	1,672	-1.90%	21,531	-1.50%
Ages 18-24								
2010 Census	212		3,277		3,661		16,680	
2019 (est.)	199	-6.10%	2,935	-10.40%	3,644	-0.50%	16,532	-0.90%
2024 (proj.)	197	-1.00%	2,915	-0.70%	3,587	-1.60%	15,953	-3.50%
Ages 25-34								
2010 Census	95		499		990		12,538	
2019 (est.)	107	12.60%	548	9.90%	1,148	16.00%	13,814	10.20%
2024 (proj.)	99	-7.50%	478	-12.80%	1,034	-9.90%	12,178	-7.90%
Ages 35-44								
2010 Census	91		410		1,012		13,321	
2019 (est.)	88	-3.30%	445	8.50%	958	-5.20%	12,342	-7.30%
2024 (proj.)	96	9.10%	510	14.60%	1,078	12.50%	12,606	2.10%
Ages 45-54								
2010 Census	100		455		1,209		16,120	
2019 (est.)	85	-15.00%	464	2.20%	1,014	-16.10%	13,588	-15.70%
2024 (proj.)	77	-9.40%	415	-10.70%	902	-11.00%	12,383	-8.90%
Ages 55-64								
2010 Census	79		467		1,056		13,881	
2019 (est.)	90	13.90%	523	11.80%	1,115	5.60%	15,286	10.10%
2024 (proj.)	83	-7.80%	478	-8.50%	1,034	-7.20%	14,168	-7.30%



Ages 65-74								
2010 Census	41		253		627		8,396	
2019 (est.)	56	36.60%	413	63.50%	847	35.20%	11,776	40.30%
2024 (proj.)	61	8.90%	427	3.50%	880	3.90%	12,941	9.90%
Ages 75+								
2010 Census	35		278		638		7,164	
2019 (est.)	41	17.10%	361	30.00%	713	11.80%	8,040	12.20%
2024 (proj.)	45	9.80%	408	13.00%	814	14.20%	9,260	15.20%

Figure 12: Distribution of Population by Age (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ESRI, and E.M. Pemrick and Company.)

Educational Attainment

Levels of educational attainment in the Canton BOA and the Village of Canton are quite high relative to St. Lawrence County (Table 4). More than 44% of residents in the BOA study area and 47.9% of those in the Village overall have at least a bachelor's degree. Approximately 21% of Canton BOA residents and one in four Village residents has a graduate or professional degree. This high rate of educational attainment is likely due to the number of jobs at local colleges and universities and in the health care industry that require advanced degrees as well as County Government.

Educational Attainment Among Residents Age 25 and Over, 2019 Estimates			
	% with high school diploma/GED or higher	% with bachelor's degree or higher	% with graduate or professional degree
Canton BOA	88.90%	44.10%	21.10%
Village of Canton	92.90%	47.90%	25.00%
Town of Canton	90.80%	42.30%	24.20%
St. Lawrence County	88.50%	24.10%	12.20%
New York State	86.80%	36.50%	16.10%

Figure 13: Educational Attainment (Source: ESRI and E.M. Pemrick and Company.)

Income

Household income is an important indicator of purchasing power and personal wealth. Income levels impact the ability of residents to pay for housing, contribute to the tax base, and support the local economy. Based on 2019 estimates, the median income of households in the Village of Canton is \$55,936. The median household



income in the Canton BOA is somewhat lower at \$52,515, but above St. Lawrence County, where the median is \$51,412.

The distribution of households by income is compared in Figure 2.¹ There is a wide range of income diversity in the Village of Canton: 20.5% of households have annual incomes of less than \$25,000, and 22.7% earn at least \$100,000 per year. In the Canton BOA, 24.7% of households have incomes of less than \$25,000 per year, while 22.4% earn between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Fewer than 20% of households in the BOA study area earn \$100,000 or more annually.

Approximately 43.5% of households in the Village of Canton have low or moderate incomes – i.e., households with incomes below 80% of the St. Lawrence County median, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In the Town of Canton as a whole, 40.2% of households have low or moderate incomes. Both rates are lower than in the County as a whole, where more than 45% of households are considered low or moderate income.

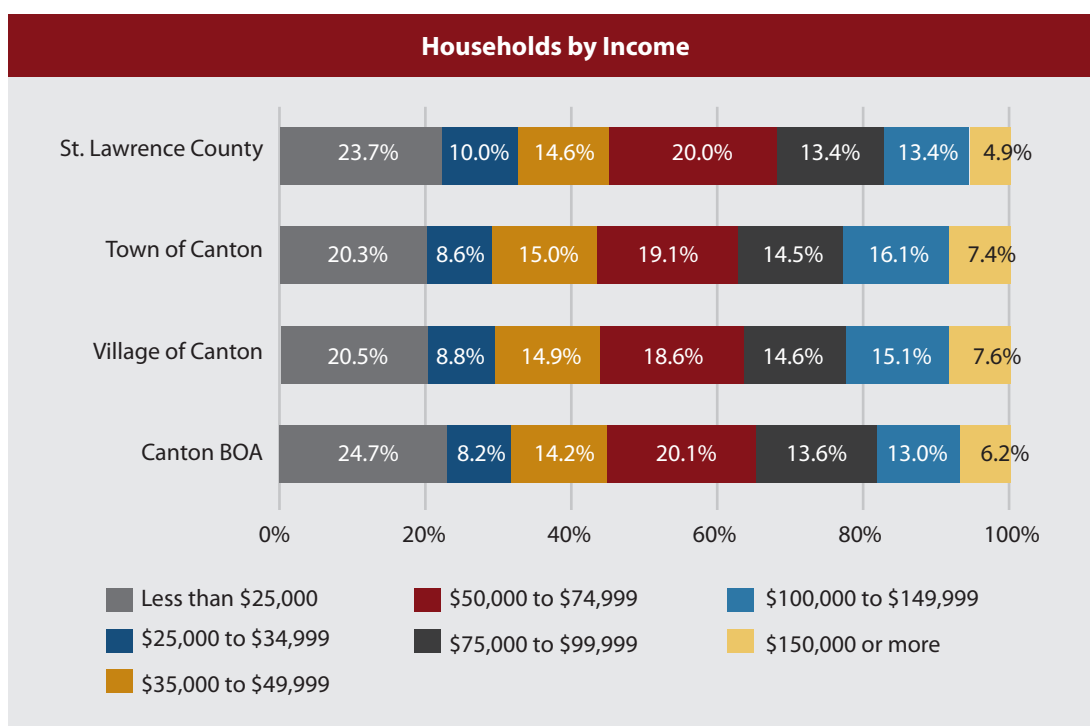


Figure 14: Households by Income, 2019 Estimates (Source: ESRI)

Student Enrollment

Student enrollment at colleges and universities in Canton and Potsdam has a substantial impact on the demand for housing (both on and off campus) and the

¹ It is important to note that these figures do not include college students living in on-campus housing; they reside in group quarters, not households.



market for goods and services available at shops, restaurants, and other types of businesses. As shown in Table 5, student enrollment at the two colleges in Canton totaled 5,657 as of fall 2019, with 3,223 students at SUNY Canton and 2,434 at St. Lawrence University. Of those enrolled at SUNY Canton, 1,219 (37.8%) reside on campus. The institution's residency policy requires full-time students "other than married students, single parents, students residing with a parent or legal guardian, students 21 years of age or older, and students living in College-approved Greek housing" to live on campus. Under some circumstances, however, students may be released from this requirement. Of the 2,004 students who reside off campus, 918 are online students, most of whom live outside the region. Thus, the number of SUNY Canton students living off campus in the Canton-Potsdam area is estimated at 1,086.

The student population at SUNY Canton is fairly diverse: 65% white, 15% African American, 11% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and 1% Native American, based on fall 2018 data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). One in four students at the college is age 25 or older.

Enrollment at St. Lawrence University as of fall 2019 is made up of 2,392 undergraduate and 42 graduate students; these figures include a total of 132 students studying off campus or abroad. Of the 2,302 students studying in Canton, 2,259 (98.1%) reside on campus or in sorority houses nearby; all first-year students are required to live on campus. This leaves just 43 students in off-campus housing.


According to the NCES, virtually all undergraduates enrolled at St. Lawrence University in fall 2018 were under age 25, and the composition of the undergraduate population was 78% white, 2% African American, 5% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. Unlike SUNY Canton, where most students are from in state, St. Lawrence University attracts a large share of its students from out of state (55%) and foreign countries (9%).

College Student Enrollment and Employment				
	Total Enrollment (Fall 2019)	Undergraduate Enrollment	Living On Campus	Living Off Campus
SUNY Canton	3,223	3,223	1,219	1,086*
St. Lawrence University	2,434	2,392**	2,259	43
SUNY Potsdam	3,336	3,336	1,851	1,485
Clarkson University	4,301	3,081	2,498	583
Total	13,294	12,032	7,827	3,197

Figure 15: Student Enrollment and Employment (Source: Officials at each of the colleges and universities listed.) * There are 2,004 students who do not reside on-campus, but 918 of students are online students, most of whom reside outside the region.

** Includes students studying off-campus or abroad.





Between SUNY Potsdam and Clarkson University, the number of students attending college in Potsdam is slightly higher than in Canton. In fall 2019, SUNY Potsdam had 3,336 students enrolled, with 55.5% residing on campus. First-year students must live on campus for two years or four semesters, unless they receive an exemption. Approximately 1,485 students live off-campus.

As with SUNY Canton, the undergraduate student population at SUNY Potsdam is diverse: 61% white, 13% African American, 15% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and 2% Native American, according to the NCES data. Only 5% of undergraduates as of fall 2018 were age 25 and older.

Enrollment at Clarkson University totaled 4,301 in fall 2019, but this figure includes graduate students at Clarkson's Capital Region Campus in Schenectady and its Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries in the Hudson Valley. The student population in Potsdam is made up of 3,081 undergraduate and 640 graduate students, for a total of 3,721. Roughly 81% of Clarkson undergraduates reside on campus, while 583 students live in off-campus housing.

Based on the NCES data, the racial/ethnic composition of undergraduate students at Clarkson as of fall 2018 was 80% white, 2% African American, 5% Hispanic, and 4% Asian. Like St. Lawrence University, Clarkson attracts many out-of-state (32%) and international students (2%).

Both SUNY colleges have experienced declining enrollment in the last five to six years. Between fall 2013 and fall 2018, total enrollment fell by about 8% at SUNY Canton and by 13% at SUNY Potsdam. In fact, the entire SUNY system has had a decrease in college enrollment. This has been attributed to several factors: a decline in the number of graduating high school seniors, the shrinking upstate New York population, and low unemployment, which has resulted in a shortage of labor and growing demand for workers. College enrollment is also decreasing nationally. If these trends continue, the market for off-campus student housing could be negatively impacted. According to an official with the Village of Potsdam, the community is already beginning to see an increase in vacancies among the "bottom-tier" of housing units that are usually rented to students.

Historical Analysis

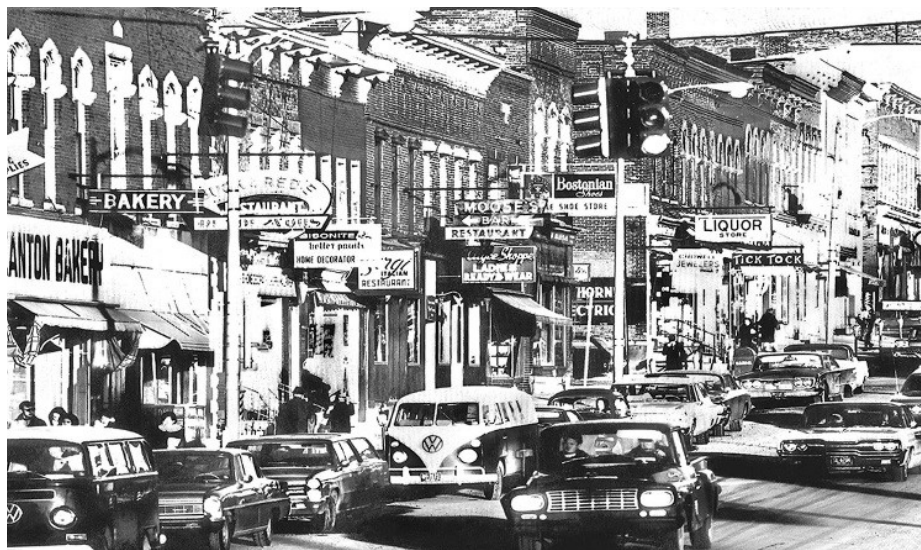
The Village of Canton was established on the banks of the Grasse River in 1801 when Stillman Foote, late of Middlebury, Vermont purchased a square-mile tract and built the first gristmill and a modest stone cottage on the east bank of the river. Stillman Foote's gristmill remained the only gristmill operating in Canton until after the War of 1812. But a lack of industry did not prevent others from following the Foote family to town, many of them also from Vermont. The county seat was moved from Ogdensburg to Canton in 1828.



By the time the Village of Canton was incorporated in 1845 – the Town of Canton was incorporated in 1805 – the fast-moving Grasse River powered mills, furnaces, forges and manufacturing businesses that lined the river on Riverside Drive and Falls Island. J. Henry Rushton came to Canton and established his boat building business in 1875. Businesses serving the villagers and outlying farm families included general stores, wagon makers, blacksmiths, and hotels. Local banks were established beginning in 1858 and by the 1890s, the St. Lawrence County Bank and National Bank of Canton were well established.

A school was established in the Town in 1804 and in 1831, a drive to found Canton Academy began, resulting in a new school building in 1839. St. Lawrence University, a private four-year liberal arts school, was founded as a Universalist seminary in 1856. The Agricultural School at St. Lawrence University was founded in 1906. This two-year state-sponsored school became independent in 1925. Now SUNY Canton, the school moved across the Village to its new home in the 1960s and now offers two- and four-year degree and certificate programs.


Canton became a bustling rural service center. In its heyday, stores, restaurants, and taverns kept the downtown's intact 19th



century corridor busy, bustling, and vibrant (as shown in the photograph, left, from the 1960s). With its location at the intersections of NYS routes 11 and 68, Canton became a transportation hub and Main Street was widened over the years to accommodate the trucks that brought goods into the North Country and ferried its products out.

But Canton's ability to continue to adapt in the face of colossal economic changes was limited and, like communities throughout the northeast, Canton has been buffeted by the transformations of the past 50 years. The once-bustling downtown is now much quieter with few options for shopping, dining and lingering. Wide Main Street is difficult to cross, despite successive efforts to calm the traffic, and the modern plaza built behind Main Street is now vacant and dilapidated. There are no grocery stores or pharmacies in the downtown; these businesses have either been shuttered or moved to the outskirts of the Village.





Canton's industrial age remains integrated in the fabric of the community, in the land and its buildings. Stillman Foote and Henry Rushton are still remembered today, the former by a series of foot races and an eponymous running club and the latter by his signature canoes and Canton Canoe Weekend founded in 1962 as the Rushton Memorial Canoe Race held annually on the Grasse River in Canton. Coakley and Falls islands in the Grasse have been developed as a downtown heritage park, celebrating and interpreting Canton's industrial legacy.

The mills that defined the Village of Canton as a Grasse River mill town are all gone now. The last of these – the Eagle Mill – was demolished in 1958 for the development of the Cascade Inn, now a complex of some historical interest itself. Although fire, flood and the wrecking ball have exacted their price on the Village in the Study Area, the Village still boasts a remarkably intact Main Street core. Main Street is part of the Village Park Historic District, originally designated as a National Register Historic District in 1975 and amended twice.

Overall, the buildings in the Village Park Historic District are representative of a 19th century business district. Some structures have been altered but many others have been carefully preserved with their decorative keystones, corbels, cornices and other details intact. All the buildings – with one exception – are constructed of stone or brick and feature a commercial first floor, some with a subterranean commercial level, and meeting halls, offices and residential units on their second floors. The exception is 70 Main St., formerly Merrill Brothers Hardware. The building was originally a bakery and was built in 1873. It is the only wood frame commercial building standing on Main Street.

The original historic district focused almost entirely on the Village Park area with its collection of historic church buildings and stately homes including the Silas Wright House, all outside of the BOA boundary. This original historic district boundary included just four buildings within the BOA Study Area:

- 100 Main St. at the south western corner of Park and Main streets, US Post Office
- 8 Park St., Canton Free Library (Benton Memorial Library)
- 10 Park St., Morgan's Ice House, formerly the Eskimo
- 14 Park St., United Fund Building

The historic district was amended in 1983 to include the entirety of the north side of Main Street from Court Street to Riverside Drive and the south side of Main Street from the post office to 70 Main St., the former Merrill Brothers Hardware engineering firm's offices. All the buildings to the west of the Merrill brothers building are modern structures, including the vacant former McDonalds, Municipal Building, Sunoco, H&R Block and former Family Dollar.






Buildings in the 1983 amended historic district boundary on the south side of Main Street are:

- 70 Main St., Merrill Brothers Hardware (former)
- 76 Main St., Commercial Press Building, currently occupied by Northern Abstract and a hair salon
- 80 Main St., Chase Manhattan Bank building, currently Community Bank
- 84 Main St., American Theater

There are 29 addresses listed on the north side of Main Street between Court Street and Riverside Drive in the 1983 boundary amendment. With some of their landmark uses, these are:

- The Sherman Block:
 - ↳ 7-9 Main Street in the north eastern corner of Main Street and Riverside Drive
 - ↳ 11 Main St. (Whit's Tavern, currently Nola's)
 - ↳ 15 Main St.
 - ↳ 17 Main St.
 - ↳ 19 Main St.
- Champlin Block, 21 Main St. (Nature's Storehouse)
- Block C, 25 Main St.
- Block D, the Healy Building, 31 Main St. (Sergi's)
- Block E1, 33 Main St.
- Block E2, 35 Main St.
- Block F, 39 Main St.
- Block G, Sackrider Building, 43 Main St, western corner of Hodskin Street
- Block H1, 45-51 Main St., eastern corner of Hodskin Street
- Block J, 53 Main St., Spencer Building former JJ Newberry store, currently TAUNY
- Block K1 and K2, Heaton Building, 63 Main St.
- Block L, Seymour Building, 67 Main St.
- Block M, Jamieson Building, 71 Main St.
- Block N, L.B. Storrs Building, 75 Main St., (St. Lawrence Plaindealer)
- Block O1, 77 Main St., (The Pear Tree)
- Block O2, 81 Main St.
- Block O3, 83 Main St., (Kellys Grocery)



- 
- Block P-Q, 91 Main St., (St. Lawrence National Bank)
 - Block R, Conkey Block, Barr Building, 95 Main St., (Rexall Drug Store)
 - Block S including 95 and 101 Main St., (Pearl's Department Store)

A second historic district boundary amendment is outside the BOA Study Area boundary.

Under the Village's Zoning, the Village Planning Board has the authority to approve applications for construction or alteration within the historic district; its decisions can be appealed to the Village Board.

Although not listed on the National Register, there are several other unique buildings and places within the Canton BOA. These include:

- 37 Riverside Drive, Riverside Liquors. Unremarkable from the front, a side view of this building reveals an historic stone structure. It was originally built as a blacksmith and may be the oldest building in Canton. It has been significantly altered and may no longer be eligible for a register listing as a result of these alterations.
- 4 W. Main St., Cascade Inn & Diner. An iconic 1950s style wayside for highway travelers, this site features a diner, bar and motel on the corner of routes 11 and 68. The Inn & Diner was developed in 1958, on the site of the Eagle Mill, which was Canton's last remaining mill building.
- 40 Park St., the Hoot Owl Express. Well renowned for decades as a college bar and hangout, it is also Canton's original New York Central Rail Station.
- Miner, Buck and West streets, Old Canton Cemetery. A historic cemetery is Canton's first and includes many historic grave makers. The Wright monument honors Canton's own Silas Wright, who served as a US Representative, New York State Comptroller, US Senator and finally, New York's Governor. Silas Wright and his wife, Clarissa Moody Wright, are interred in this cemetery.
- 8 Miner Street, Wight & Patterson Feed Mill. This business has been continuously operated in this location since the very early 1900s. Perhaps the more striking is its core central business district presence as a last vestige of rural Canton's agrarian heritage.



Land Use

Identifying existing land uses within a Study Area paints a picture of the types of activity taking place within a set of boundaries. A mix of land uses shows that an area is walkable, provides amenities, and maintains a balance for the community to carry out day-to-day activities. It is also important to know where certain land-uses stemmed from and how a community developed historically. An understanding of historic land use and development patterns within an area assists with identifying areas where environmental contaminants from past operations may impact properties, and how these issues could complicate future redevelopment.

As result of this, downtown activity developed along Main Street, Riverside Drive and Miner Street, all which lie in close proximity to the river and its then booming industrial operations. As a result of industrial success, new uses radiated outward from the Grasse River ranging from retail, lodging, offices, services, education, entertainment and recreation. Residential neighborhoods began to surround Main Street and Canton's land uses became more diverse as years passed, adapting to provide the community goods and services.

Development within the Village of Canton and BOA Study Area was historically centered on the Grasse River which served as the power-house for mills and other industries in the 19th and early 20th centuries.


Land Use within the Canton BOA Study Area			
Land Use	Parcels	Acreage	Percentage of Land within BOA
Residential - 200	136	56	34%
Vacant - 300	30	18	11%
Commercial - 400	101	48	30%
Recreation and Entertainment- 500	2	1	1.00%
Community Services- 600	9	13	7%
Industrial - 700	1	7	3%
Public Services - 800	5	23	14%
Total	284	166	100%

Figure 16: Land Use by within the Canton BOA Area (Source: Development Authority of the North Country, 2019.)

There is currently a wide variety of land-uses within the BOA Study Area (Table 6 / Map 4). As the County Seat, the Village of Canton is an economic hub in St. Lawrence County.

Fifty-six acres (34%) of the BOA Study Area consists of Residential land use. A majority of residential properties (136 total) fall south of Main Street within the southern portion of the Study Area with the densest residential pockets along Pine, Buck, and Miner Street.





Forty-eight acres (30%), comprised of 101 properties, are designated Commercial within the Study Area. Commercial properties are dispersed throughout the Study Area with high concentrations north and south of Main Street, east of Gouverneur Street, along Riverside Drive, and Miner Street.

Public Services (14% of the land mass) and Community Services (7%) account for 36 acres within the Study Area and are generally located along Main Street and in close proximity to the Grasse River. This includes parks and open spaces such as Bend in the River Park and Willow Island Park as well as the Canton Municipal Building, Canton Free Library, and the St. Lawrence Highway Garage west of Park Street.

Vacant land accounts for 18 acres (11%) and Industrial land totaling 7 acres (3%) round of the remainder of land use within the Study Area. Vacant land is scattered throughout the BOA and can be found in close proximity to the rail line and Miner Street. There is only one remaining parcel identified as industrial in the BOA, is located north east of Bend in the River Park, and is owned by a private company, St. Lawrence County Manufacturing. This property was previously owned by Kraft, Inc.

With over 10% of the BOA Study Area being vacant land, the Village should focus on redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties along its major thoroughfares that border the Grasse River.

Zoning

Zoning is a tool to ensure that new development within a specific area does not negatively influence the community in which it is proposed. Specific zoning measures are put in place to ensure that quality of life of community members is not impacted by new development on vacant lots or reuse of existing buildings. Zoning Districts regulate development to maintain or enhance the character of the community, protect view sheds and provide safety measures for those in the area. Often times, certain Zoning Districts directly abut or are within close proximity to each other due to similar characteristics. An example of this would be Retail Commercial and Business which are able to catalyze one another. The table provided below breaks down number of parcels and acreage of each Zoning District within the Study Area.

There are eight different Zoning Districts within the Study Area (Map 5). The highest acreage (43 acres) is dedicated to General Commercial (C-2). The C-2 district falls east and west of one of Canton's gateway corridors, Gouverneur Street. There are also C-2 zoning districts just north of Lincoln Street where Atlantic Testing Facilities resides and a cluster of General Commercial properties fall along the southern portion of Miner Street. Although C-2 has the highest dedicated acreage within the Study Area, this district type accounts for only 41 properties.

Retail Commercial (C-1) strikes a different profile than General Commercial. There are a total of 88 zoned C-1 parcels that fall directly north and south of Main Street. C-1 can



also be found both east and west along Miner Street and Riverside Drive. Due to this, portions of the Grasse River directly about C-1 zoning. These areas have been Canton's long-standing centers for small-scale retail and commercial properties. This still rings true today. Though C-1 lot sizes are typically smaller, totaling only 24 acres and 14% of the BOA zoned land, the C-1 District is a hub for activity in the town and Village of Canton and St. Lawrence County overall.

Zoning Districts within the Canton BOA Study Area			
Zoning District	Parcels	Acreage	Percentage of Land within Zoned BOA
B-1 Business	56	15	9%
C-1 Retail Commercial	88	24	14%
C-2 General Commercial	41	43	27%
O-S Open Space	4	27	16%
R-1 Residential - One Family	15	11	7%
R-2 Residential - General	69	30	18%
M-1 Manufacturing	6	12	7%
P-M Planned Manufacturing	5	4	2%
Total	284	166	100%

Figure 17: Zoning Districts (Source: Development Authority of the North Country (2019))

Other prevalent Zoning Districts within the BOA Study Area include Open Space (O-S) (16% of zoned land). Zoning for O-S is intended to protect environmental assets and preserve natural and scenic areas that are within close proximity to denser development. O-S zoning includes Bend in the River Park, Grasse River Heritage Park, and Willow Island Park. All three parks within the BOA Study Area provide direct access to Canton's waterfront and allow natural resources to thrive.

Fifty-six properties are located in Business (B-1) zoning totaling to 15 acres. B-1 zoning is located east of Park Street encompassing properties east and west of Pine and West Street. Properties within this zoning include the Hoot Owl Express and Morgan's Ice House.

The Zoning Districts with the least amount of acreage include Planned Manufacturing (P-M), One-Family Residential (R-1) and Manufacturing (M-1). M-1 and P-M zoning are found in the center of the BOA Study Area in close proximity to both the Grasse River and Canton's rail line. Combined, the two districts only account for 16 acres and 9% of





the zoned Study Area. The BOA Study Area is the only location for M-1 zoning within the Village of Canton boundaries.

R-1 zoning is located in the very western portion of the BOA along Gouverneur Street. Many of these one-family homes sit on larger residential lots, accounting for 11 acres total and 7% of Canton's Study Area.

As mentioned previously, a portion of the Village Park Historic District falls within the BOA Study Area. The historic district is focused on the Village Park and surrounding land including buildings that front Main Street ending east of Riverside Drive to the north and stopping just west of Merrill Brothers Hardware to the south. The historic district totals 4.75 acres within the BOA and overlaps with both Business and Retail Commercial zoning.

Currently, the Village of Canton is going through a rezoning process. The rezoning will be utilized as a tool by the Village to properly implement new development and specific land uses where deemed appropriate in areas such as Riverside Drive, the Gouverneur Gateway, Canton's downtown and open spaces. The rezoning process will also protect natural resources and scenic views and include overlays and restructuring of defined districts in close proximity to the Grasse River waterfront and Canton's downtown.

Land Ownership Patterns

Knowledge of land ownership patterns is crucial when planning types and potential impacts of development within a Study Area. Funding or permitting can differentiate between individual projects that are on publicly-owned property versus private development. Knowing who owns land early within a process is important to establish shared visions for the property, considering types of possible development, and taking into account the desires of the community surrounding it.

There are both public and privately owned properties within the Study Area.

As shown on Map 6, the Village and Town of Canton own 13% of parcels within the Study Area, totaling to 22 acres. Key public properties within the Study Area include the Town and Village Municipal Building (60 Main Street), the Recreational Pavilion, Silas Wright Cemetery, the Buck Street Playground, Department of Public Works, Bend in the River Park, and Canton Island Park. A majority of land owned by the Village and Town of Canton within the Study Area is highly utilized and serves the public.

Less than 1% of land is owned by the United States Postal Service located at 100 Main Street.

Canton is the County Seat, and 3.25% of parcels (5.5 acres) within the BOA are owned



by St. Lawrence County. St. Lawrence County owns the County Highway Garage located at 44 Park Street and the St. Lawrence County Housing Council located at 19 Main Street. Other County owned properties are located outside of the Study Area.

The remainder of land, (82.75%), is privately owned. Some of the most visible, privately owned properties include the Cascade Inn and Diner, located at the corner of Route 11 and 68, as well as the vacant Jubilee Plaza on Miner Street, Mace Motors located on the Gouverneur Street corridor, and the former Family Dollar at 2 Main Street directly abutting the Grasse River.

Land Ownership, 2019		
Ownership	Acreage	Percentage of Land Area
Town and Village of Canton	22	13%
St. Lawrence County	5.5	3.25%
Private	138.5	82.75%
Total land	166	100%

Figure 18: Land Ownership (Source: Development Authority of the North Country, 2019)


Brownfields, Vacant and Underutilized Sites

The most prominent objective of the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area Program is to assist communities that have been negatively impacted by the presence or possible presence of potentially hazardous sites. These sites typically have high impacts on the neighborhoods and businesses surrounding them, decrease surrounding property values, and hinder potential investment within the area.

Strategic, community-driven plans are essential to assist with the reuse of potentially contaminated or underutilized sites. The creation of a BOA Nomination Study includes a market analysis, determines immediate and necessary long-term steps to clean-up the sites and fleshes out community support to discover redevelopment that is both financially and environmentally feasible as well as most welcomed by those who live in or who may visit the area.

Brownfields also provide tax incentives for developers for projects within New York State. The Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) provides financial and technical assistance to help redevelopment become feasible and push projects across the finish line. Through the BCP, properties are remediated and, as a result, return to beneficial use supporting the local tax base. Typically, these properties or clusters of properties act as catalysts, revitalizing the areas around them.



A blue-tinted photograph of an industrial facility with various pipes, valves, and structural elements.

There is also federal funding through the Environmental Protection Agency for the assessment and remediation of brownfields. By establishing a brownfield inventory through the BOA process, communities are able to use information to apply and justify the need for EPA grants.

Clusters of brownfield properties are most common in areas that were once epicenters of industrial activity and trade. The Village of Canton Industrial history dates back to the 1801 when Mills and factories were developed along the Grasse River and as a result, the Village flourished. Former industries within the Canton BOA includes:

- Mills
- Gasoline / Filling Stations
- Blacksmiths
- Auto-service stations
- Co-Gen Facilities
- Food processing facilities

Due to the high amount of past industrial activity, the Village of Canton realizes the importance of identifying the impacts of historic industry on the Village's landscape and how these industries shaped their current systems. In both 2019 and 2020, the Village of Canton applied to receive funding from the USEPA for a Brownfield Assessments Grant which would provide capital for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs). The Village was awarded funding for a Target Brownfield Assessment grant for one site within the BOA in 2021. The Village will be reapplying for a USEPA Brownfield Assessment Grant for FY22 grant funding which would allow the Village to facilitate Phase I and Phase II ESAs in areas where there may be potential contamination. This includes sites throughout the entirety of the Village, not just the BOA Study Area. Phase I and Phase II Assessments are important factors in buying and selling property. In smaller communities, assisting developers with knowledge surrounding potential contamination can open the door to new investment.

The Brownfield Opportunity Area not only analyzes brownfield sites with potential contamination but includes vacant or underutilized sites as well. This is due to vacant and underutilized properties creating impacts similar to brownfields in such that they discourage any potential development within the area, can be sources of blight, and can be hazardous to one's safety.

The Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study for the Village of Canton listed 36 sites within the BOA as brownfield, vacant, and underutilized. This Brownfield Inventory for the Study Area has since been updated due to changes in ownership, new development, or vacancies within the boundaries.



The list of brownfield, vacant, and underutilized sites is intended to be used as guidance for the Village of Canton when marketing properties for redevelopment.

As mentioned previously, the Step 1 Pre-Nomination document for the Canton BOA established five Focus Areas based on locations of sites that were a part the Brownfield, Vacant, and Underutilized site inventory. When revising the inventory, it is evident that the previously established focus areas below have remained intact.

Since updating the inventory, 33 sites amounting to over 65 acres have been identified as brownfield, vacant, or underutilized (See Map 7).

- Canton Highway Department
- Riverside Area
- Jubilee Area
- Gouverneur Area
- Bend in the River Area

The Focus Areas and Brownfield Inventory sites within these areas are shown on Figure 18. The following table depicts these sites with their acreage, zoning, land use, and ownership. Detailed information regarding each site can be found in the Appendix.

Brownfield, Vacant, and Underutilized Site Inventory						
Property Address	Owner	Size	Land Use	Active	Zoning	Current Use
Canton Highway Department Area						
40 Park Street	Trackside 21 Inc	0.43	425	Y	B-1	Hoot Owl Express
5 West Street	Daniel Fay	0.31	449	Y	B-1	Warehouse building
7,9,11 West Street	Daniel Fay	1.7	484	Y	B-1	Multi-unit apt building
13 West Street	Trackside 21 Inc	0.47	411	Y	B-1	Apartments
59, 59 1/2 Miner Street	Henry Ford	0.33	441	N	B-1	Two vacant buildings
65 Miner Street	RRS Inc	0.96	443	Y/N	B-1	Two comm buildings
44 Park Street	St. Lawrence County	5.1	651	Y	C-2	Canton HWY Dept
Riverside Area						
6 Riverside Drive	William Miller	0.3	431	Y	C-1	Canton Auto Parts
11, 11 1/2 Riverside Drive	Martin Lamar	0.37	433	Y	C-1	Napa Auto Parts / Pikes Auto
18 Riverside Drive	Julie Miller	0.4	431	Y	C-1	Canton Tire / Optical
24 Riverside Drive	Don O'Neill	0.24	330	N	C-1	Vacant lot



25, 27, 29 Riverside Drive	Don O'Neill	0.17	482	N	C-1	Demolished summer of 2019
33 Riverside Drive	Dennis Walsh	0.68	484	Y	C-1	Riverside Liquor
30 Riverside Drive	Village of Canton	0.14	433	N	C-1	Vacant lot
2 Main Street	Bernard Proulx	0.92	453	N	C-1	Vacant Commercial
4 Main Street	Lavigne Enterprises, LLC	0.21	484	Y	C-1	HR Block
58 Main Street	7-eleven Inc	0.53	330	Y	C-1	Gas Station
Jubilee Area						
8 Miner Street	Wight & Patterson	0.42	443	Y	C-1	Feed Mill
19 Miner Street	Garry Cohen	3.4	452	Y/N	C-1	Vacant building in strip mall / vacant lot to the south of parking lot
21 Miner Street	Gamer Craze Entertainment	0.25	453	Y/N	C-1	Gamer Craze / Commercial business
25,27 Miner Street	Garry Cohen	0.56	311	N	C-1	Vacant lot with grass space
64 Main Street	Lettuce Feed You Inc	0.48		N	C-1	Vacant McDonald's
4 W Main Street	Cascade Inn, Inc	1.8	415	Y	C-2	Cascade Inn and Diner
Gouverneur Area						
23 Gouverneur St	Thomas Jenison	0.48	483	Y	C-2	Vacant Commercial
25, 27 Gouverneur St	Mace Motors Inc	3.7	431	N	C-2	Vacant store front with garage
15 Gouverneur Street	Triple A Lumber	1.8	485	Y	C-2	Vacant Commercial
61 Gouverneur Street	Clark Porter	0.79	262	N	C-2	Vacant Warehouse
Bend in the River Area						
30 Buck Street	St Lawrence County mfg	6.7	710	Y	M-1	St. Lawrence County Manufacturing
Off Buck Street	Village of Canton	0.61	853	Y	M-1	Lot Behind Kraft Food Plant
78, 84, 86 Lincoln Street	Village of Canton	17.1	822	Y	O-S	Park land, pavilion, garage, vacant water treatment facility
Off Stevens Street	Village of Canton	3.6	682	Y	O-S	Part of Bend in River park
Off Lincoln Street	Clifford Bisnett	3.6	314	N	R-2	Wooded lot
80 Lincoln Street	Atlantic Testing	7.03	449	Y	C-2	Commercial Business
Total		65.58				

Figure 19: Brownfield Site Inventory (Source: Development Authority of the North Country, 2019)





The Brownfield, Vacant or Underutilized Site Inventory accounts for 30% of land within the BOA Study Area.

Almost half (15) of the 33 Brownfield, Vacant or Underutilized sites (45%) fall into Retail Commercial (C-1) zoning. This is primarily due to the BOA Study Area being focused around the Grasse River and areas of past-industrial activity along the River which correlates to being in close proximity to Canton's downtown activity. Canton's downtown and commercial corridor has always been focused on Main Street and surrounding streets (Riverside Drive / Miner Street). Notable brownfield, vacant and underutilized sites within this zoning include the vacant Jubilee Plaza located at 19 Miner Street, the former Family Dollar located at 2 Main Street and the vacant McDonald's directly east of Canton's Municipal Building.

Seven sites within the inventory are zoned General Commercial and are located along Gouverneur Street, Main Street west of the Grasse River and directly abutting Canton's rail line. Sites zoned within General Commercial tend to be larger totaling 20.7 acres. Highly recognized sites with General Commercial zoning include Triple A Lumber, the Cascade Inn & Diner and Mace Motors.

Two of the sites are part of Canton's Bend in the River Park totaling 20.7 acres.

The remaining sites (9) are zoned Manufacturing, General Residential and Business. These sites are located on West, Buck, and Park Streets, further away from the more active areas of the Village.

Eighty-four percent of the sites identified within the inventory are privately owned. Sites owned by the Town, Village and County include a small vacant lot behind St. Lawrence County Manufacturing; Bend in the River Park which includes the public recreation pavilion, outdoor rink and vacant treatment facility; the Canton Highway Department on Park Street and 30 Riverside Drive; and a now-vacant lot directly abutting Grasse River just south of Riverside Liquors.

A number of these sites are of environmental concern due to past use, ongoing operations or potential residual contamination following demolition or spills within close proximity. Sites of high environmental concern include:

- 6 Riverside Drive – Canton Auto Parts
- 11, 11 ½ Riverside Drive – Napa Auto Parts and Pikes Auto
- 25, 27, 29 Riverside Drive – Former Riverside Laundromat
- 2 Main Street – Former Family Dollar
- 8 Miner Street – Feed Mill
- 44 Park Street – Canton Highway Department
- 25, 27 Gouverneur Street – Former Mace Motors



- 30 Buck Street – St. Lawrence County Manufacturing
- 64 Main Street – Former gas station

A number of the sites listed in the Brownfield Inventory have lower environmental concern because of past remedial efforts or have a history of past use that may not warrant environmental concern, including:

- 5 West Street
- 13 West Street
- 19, 21 Miner Street
- 25, 27 Miner Street
- 23 Gouverneur Street
- 30 Riverside Drive

The remainder of sites environmental concern is unknown. The remaining sites should be the subject of, at a minimum, Phase I Environmental Site Assessments to determine the potential for environmental concern.

Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Parks, trails and open space are important when it comes to the vitality of a community. Open space resources should serve as connections that link the community's residential neighborhoods, downtown, and amenities together. These


amenities also allow community members to socialize and enjoy natural resources as well as act as a draw for visitors to the area.



Having abundant parks, trails and designated open space is not only important for economic reasons but these resources are important in terms of a community's overall health.

Open space that is in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and easily accessible from main corridors can help ensure





that people will increase or maintain healthy levels of activity. Parks and green spaces are also important when considering mental health. Proximity to parks can assist with alleviating stress and more time spent in green areas can increase lead to improved mental health.

The Canton Parks and Recreation Department serves both the Town and Village of Canton. The Department oversees five parks and playgrounds including:

- Taylor Park
- Bend in the River Park
- Buck Street Playground
- Canton Island Park
- Priest Field

Bend in the River Park, the Buck Street Playground, and Canton Island Park are all within the BOA Study Area and serve community members and visitors year-round (Map 8). These parks are maintained from early spring through late fall. The three areas provide ample recreation to the surrounding community and are important assets to the Village of Canton, its residents, and visitors.

Bend in the River Park

Bend in the River Park is located in the southern portion of the Study Area off Lincoln Street, directly adjacent to the Canton Recreational Pavilion. The park includes a basketball court, volleyball court, one ballfield, a 1/3-mile paved multi-use trail and picnic shelter with grills. Both courts are open to the public and the picnic shelter is available to rent for parties and events. The Park's walkways are plowed throughout the winter.

Buck Street Playground

The Buck Street Playground is also located in the southern portion of the Study Area on the corner of Buck and Lincoln streets, directly east of the Department of Public Works. The playground includes swings, infant swings, a merry-go-round, a jungle gym, a sand box and several slides.

Canton Island Park

Canton Island Park is located just west of Canton's main downtown corridor. The park lies south of Main Street and is one of the first municipally-owned properties that is visible to those entering the downtown area from the west. The Park is owned by both the Village of Canton and Grasse River Heritage (GRH). The GRH is a local non-profit organization dedicated to restoring the Grasse River to a central place in the life of the





Canton community. The $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre piece at street level is owned by GRH and currently the site of the Grasse River Heritage Sculpture Park. The remainder of the property is close to two acres and commonly referred to as Canton Island Park. Canton Island Park is currently utilized for passive recreation including chairs for viewing the Grasse River and public art displays near its entrance. Canton Island Park is the subject of an LWRP implementation grant that will fund construction of a bandshell, playground, composting toilets and landscaping in 2020-25.

Dwight Church Park

Dwight Church Park was developed and is owned by Grasse River Heritage. This pocket park is located at the corner of Gouverneur and West Main Streets, and stands as a memorial to local photographer and pilot Dwight Church at the former site of his home and studio. Further development of this park including installation of artwork or other facilities to serve the public are being considered by GRH.

Grasse River Heritage Park

Grasse River Heritage Park was also developed by Grasse River Heritage and continues to be owned and maintained by GRH. The park encompasses Coakley Island and the less-developed Falls Islands. The islands are located between the Cascade Falls and Rushton Falls. Falls Island offers a walking trail and glimpses of the ruins of mills that powered Canton's original growth. Features include informational kiosk, interpretive signage, seating, landscaping, and ample parking. Grasse River Heritage Trail is located on Coakley Island and Falls Island within the BOA Study Area just north of Main Street and east of the Cascade Inn and Diner. The park includes the restored King Bowstring Iron Bridge, signage regarding local history, walking trails, and areas to picnic. The trail is located within Grasse River Heritage Park.

The BOA Study Area also is home to the Willow Island Sculpture Garden which is directly south of Main Street within Canton Island Park.

The Study Area offers a wide variety of outdoor green space and recreation for community members and visitors. The Village currently lacks multi-modal connections such as off-road trails, bike lanes and complete sidewalks. The installation and planning for multi-modal connections would increase safety, promote the use of existing green space within the Study Area and Village and encourage outdoor recreation.

Some available amenities within Canton's parks, such as the recreational pavilion and Buck Street Playground, could use further analysis and planning for updates. The recreational pavilion and associated outdoor rink has been deteriorating for many years. Updates to the rink and pavilion could help Canton draw more residents and visitors to the southern boundary of the Village that doesn't get as much pedestrian traffic as its downtown.





Key Buildings

The Village of Canton and its BOA Study Area have a number of buildings of significance that range in past-use and current condition. There are buildings within the BOA that contribute to Canton's vitality and community charm but there are also a number of buildings that have vast potential for improvement and could be an active contributor to growth surrounding them if reused (Map 9). The following buildings have been identified:

Former Family Dollar – 2 Main Street

This privately owned, one-story structure was built in 1950 and has had a number of retail uses, the most recent of which was as a Family Dollar. The building has been vacant since early 2019 due to an infestation problem. The building sits directly on the Grasse River waterfront and is visible from Main Street, Miner Street and Island Park. The building is currently for sale.

HR Block – 4 Main Street

The HR Block building is privately owned, one story, and was built in 1950. The building sits on the south side of Main Street in front of the vacant Family Dollar. The site was once a gas and automotive repair station.

Vacant Water Treatment Facility – Bend in the River Park

The vacant treatment facility is located just east of Bend in the River Park and south of the Canton Recreation Pavilion. Date of building construction is unknown.

Former Triple A Lumber – 15 Gouverneur Street

The former Triple A Lumber building is privately owned, two stories and was built in the 1970s and then expanded in 1995. The building once was home to several businesses including: Cool Connection, Bob's Barber Shop, Pro-Skate Sharpening, and residential apartments.

Former Mace Motors – 25,27 Gouverneur Street

The former Mace Motors building is privately owned, one story and was built in 1958. The building was primarily used for auto-service and auto sales.

St. Lawrence County Manufacturing Building

The St. Lawrence County Manufacturing Building is privately owned and was home to Kraft Foods until 2003. The building is one story, 93,000 SF, and was built in 1920. St. Lawrence County Manufacturing has occupied the building since 2006. The building directly abuts the rail line.



Atlantic Testing – Lincoln Street

The Atlantic Testing building is privately owned, three stories, 36,000 SF and was built in 1990. Prior to Atlantic Testing, the building was occupied by Tamarack Tree Service Inc. and a former co-generation facility.



Jubilee Plaza

The Jubilee Plaza is privately owned and was first home to an agriculture supply store in 1960. Since then, the Plaza has expanded with many storefronts all of which are now vacant. The Plaza has a large associated parking lot. Some of the remaining active stores within the Plaza are a small clinic and Gamer Craze.

Cascade Inn & Diner

The Cascade Inn & Diner was built in 1960 and is privately owned. There are two structures: the diner with a bar in the basement and a motel, located just west. The buildings have a small parking lot.



Canton Municipal Building

The Canton Municipal building is located at 60 Main Street in the heart of downtown Canton. The Building is two stories, was constructed in 1964, and is home to both Town and Village departments. The Village has suffered some wear and tear throughout the years and could use substantial upgrades to increase capacity for the Village and Town.

61 Gouverneur Street

61 Gouverneur Street is a privately owned building built in 1940. The structure is a combination of a traditional Quonset-hut and a small residential structure. Signs remaining after vacancy suggests the structure was used for recreational karate. The building sits at the entryway into the BOA when traveling north on Gouverneur Street.



64 Main Street

64 Main Street is home to the former McDonald's restaurant that now sits vacant within Canton's downtown corridor directly east of Canton's municipal building. The building is privately owned by Lettuce Feed You Inc. and has been vacant since 2015. The building sits on a 0.48-acre lot, is one story, and has a parking lot that it shares with the municipal building. The building is of high visibility for both local community members, Town & Village employees and visitors to the area. It does not add the historic charm of Canton's Main Street. There is also potential for the site to be potentially contaminated. Sanborn maps show the site being the location of an old gas station with Underground Storage Tanks (USTs).

Transportation Systems

The Village of Canton's transportation system is mainly automobile focused (Map 10). Major routes within the Village of Canton include Main Street (Route 68 / Route 11) as well as Gouverneur Street (Route 11). Route 68 travels north towards Ogdensburg. Route 11 travels south towards Gouverneur. Both Main Street and Gouverneur Street




are highly trafficked by semi-trailer trucks.

Route 68 and Route 11 are also highly utilized by local and regional traffic. According to the current New York State Department of Transportation Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, portions of Main Street are utilized over 16,000

times a day. Other highly trafficked streets that are of note but not nearly high as Main Street include Riverside Drive (5,217 AADT) and Park Street (4,593 AADT).

There are two Greyhound Bus stops within the town of Canton: one is located on the SUNY Canton Campus, and the other is located just off Canton's Main Street at 21 Miner Street within the BOA Study Area. Adirondack Trailways, Thousand Island Bus Lines, and Birnie Bus tours also provide service the area.





Public transportation is available through the St. Lawrence County Public Transportation system and its partnership with SUNY Canton. Since the two organizations have partnered, routes have been updated and expanded. SUNY Canton students can utilize the bus service for free with student ID and the public is able to ride any route for \$2 a trip. There are two stops within the Study Area including the Diane Burns Tower on Riverside Drive and the Buck Street Playground.

In terms of determining walkability for the Study Area, Walk Score is a company that measures the walkability of an address or location by analyzing public transportation, residences, nearby amenities, and pedestrian safety. “Walkability” of an area can be defined as ‘how easy it is to accomplish day to day activities by foot’. On a scale of 1 to 100, Walk Score will identify how walkable a location is. The higher the score the, more walkable a neighborhood is deemed to be.

According to the Walkability scale, the Village of Canton has a Walk Score of a 61 within the BOA boundary, meaning it is a “somewhat walkable” area. This also means that some errands can be accomplished on foot, without the need for a car. Areas become less walkable the further they are from a “city center” due to a dwindling number of amenities and services the further away one gets. Thus, the southern parts of the BOA have a lower walk score and areas closer to Main Street have a higher walk score. These factors culminate to create an automobile-dominated environment with minimal barriers between pedestrians and the street. It is possible to change a Walk Score over time with the increase of amenities close to residential neighborhoods; installation of bike lanes; and an increase in public transportation routes and pedestrian safety features such as adequate sidewalks, bumpouts, barriers between the pedestrian and roadway and crosswalks.

A feasibility study was conducted in 2011 for a viable strategy for a pedestrian crossing under the Route 68/11 Bridge to connect Coakley and Willow Island. Following the study which indicated that the project was feasible, Canton was awarded funding for the project.

Multi-modal Transportation

Currently, there are bike lanes located on the Route 68/11 Bridge due to Canton’s Complete Streets initiative. These are the only bike lanes present the Village and BOA Study Area. The Village of Canton is actively working with their Complete Streets Task Force to further multi-modal transportation and accessibility throughout the Village.

Rail Transportation

CSX Transportation operates freight service through the St. Lawrence Subdivision which connects Canton to Massena to the north and Syracuse to the south. Additionally, the New York & Ogdensburg Railway, a short line railroad subsidiary of the Vermont Rail System, operates in Canton and connects to Ogdensburg.





There are no passenger rail lines serving Canton, St Lawrence County or any bordering counties. The closest Amtrak stops are located in Rouses Point, NY, two hours east of Canton, and two and a half hours south of Canton in Rome, NY.

Parking

There is a wide-range of available parking within the BOA Study Area and the Village of Canton. Canton contains “Parking meter zones” on Court, Hodskin, Main and Park streets. All metered zones have a two-hour limit and surround Canton’s downtown.

On-street parking is not permitted within the BOA Study Area’s residential neighborhood of Pine, West and Buck streets.

There are a number of public parking lots including the lot just north of Main Street and east of Riverside Drive as well as another large lot north of Main Street and East of Hodskin Street. There is also abundant available parking in the Jubilee Plaza lot east of Miner Street and South of Main Street.

Overall, the Village of Canton offers substantial parking for visitors and community members within the BOA Study Area. The Village should not look into creating more parking unless major development were to happen that justifies it.


Infrastructure and Utilities

The BOA Study Area and Village of Canton as a whole contains infrastructure typically found in most small Villages including public water, water, electric, sanitary sewers, storm sewers and natural gas. Readily available access to existing infrastructure is an incentive for new development or reuse of properties due to the high cost of constructing new infrastructure. The Village of Canton also secured grants in 2019 for utility expansion including ongoing work in Bend in the River Park, located in the south west corner of the Study Area.

Water

Public water is available to the Study Area and is provided by the Town of Canton. The Town’s water source is the Upland System. The Upland System consists of subsurface collection galleries and wells located on Waterman Hill in the towns of Canton, Pierrepont, and Russell and is located six miles from the Village. The Upland System received its most recent upgrade in 2002 and consists of a 1.0-million-gallon reservoir, caisson and groundwater extraction wells. Water from the Upland System is chlorinated before being conveyed to the Village through a 12-inch transmission line. The treated water is distributed to consumers by a distribution system that includes two 1-million-gallon water storage towers, a flow control station, water mains, valves, hydrants and other appurtenances.





The water system serves 7,055 residents through 1,500 service connections. The total water produced in 2018 was 195,092,800 gallons with an average of 534,501 gallons per day.

St. Lawrence County Department of Health routinely tests the water supply for contaminants and the end results demonstrate that the system had no violations and remains in compliance with all State drinking water operating, monitoring and reporting requirements.

Sewer

Sanitary sewer is available to all properties within the BOA Study Area. Property owners are required to maintain their sewer lines within their property limits.

Gas and Electric

Liberty Utilities and National Grid are the main providers of gas and electric utilities within the BOA Study Area. Gas and electric utilities are currently available to all properties within the BOA Study Area.

Natural Resources and Environmental Features

Natural Resources and Environmental Features are extremely important assets within a community. When natural resources are accessible, they allow community members and visitors to the area to enjoy the outdoors. The quality and quantity of natural resources within an area are related to and directly impact the quality of life and economic development within a community.

Natural resources also contribute to economic vitality, encourage active and passive recreation, provide a boost tourism, and increase surrounding property values. Planning for future land use in coordination with existing environmental conditions promotes protection of natural assets that have been present within communities since their very beginning. This section describes natural resources and environmental features in the BOA.

Grasse River

The Grasse River is 115 miles long and flows northeast from the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains into the St. Lawrence Valley with its Tributary, the Little River. The Grasse River is located entirely within St. Lawrence County and flows directly through the Village of Canton (Map 11) and once served as a power source for several mills and other industries along the waterfront in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



The river is now used by many for recreational activities including canoeing and kayaking. The DEC reports that 85 out of the 115 miles are adequate for small-watercraft with a number of formal and informal access points within the County. It is noted by the DEC that the entire downstream (36 miles) from Canton to the Town of Massena can be canoed when the water is high enough.

The river is also highly utilized for fishing. The river has a variety of fishing opportunities including stocked brown trout, brook trout, walleye and smallmouth bass.

When moving forward with recreational and economic development it is crucial that reuse of properties surrounding the Grasse River within

and outside of the BOA to contribute to the maintenance of the river being a scenic resource.

The Grasse River is not only a recreational asset but also provides Canton and surrounding areas with opportunity for economic development.



Water Quality

The Grasse River has had pollution issues. This is common in rivers that are post-industrial due to harmful contaminants, dyes and slurries that were dumped into the water during times of industrial production.

The Grasse River water source was reclassified as an emergency water supply in 2003 and has not been utilized as a water supply since March of 2003.

The NYS DEC classifies the quality of New York State streams using the New York State Stream Classification and Usage System. The DEC classifies the water south of Main Street as Standard A, Class A and a majority of the water north of Main Street as Standard B Class B. Class A water supplies can be used for drinking, culinary and food processing purposes and is suitable for primary and secondary contact which includes swimming and fishing. Class B waters are suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation which includes kayaking and canoeing.

Ground Water Resources

Aquifers are geologic formations that transmits groundwater flow in sufficient



volumes to act as a drinking water source. Unconfined aquifers are characterized by an underlying impermeable layer and lack a confining upper layer, making them more susceptible to contamination from surface activity. According to data obtained by the NYS DEC and United States Geological Survey, the Study Area is not located over a primary aquifer.

Flood Hazard Areas

Flood Insurance Rate Maps provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency indicate that land immediately surrounding the Grasse River is designated AE. AE areas are subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood event.

Immediate land surrounding the Grasse River near the southern portion of Bend in the River park is designated A. A areas are subject to inundation by the 1% annual-chance flood event. No hydraulic analyses have been performed.

Being A and AE Areas, the land is within a 100-year floodplain or base-flood area.

A number of sites within the Brownfield Inventory are directly adjacent to the Grasse River. Therefore, flood mitigation measures should be taken into account when determining potential redevelopment options along the Grasse River.

Wetlands

There are no NYS DEC regulated wetlands identified within the BOA Study Area. The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) for surface waters and wetlands identifies the Grasse River as 1958-acre Riverine habitat with a R3UBH. The table below explains why the Grasse River is a R3UBH and its characteristics.

National Wetlands Inventory Grasse River Classification	
System Riverine (R):	Includes all wetlands and deep water habitats contained within a channel.
Subsystem Upper Perennial (3)	Characterized by a high gradient with no tidal influence and some water flows all year except during times of extreme drought. Substrate consists of rock, cobbles, or gravel with occasional sand.
Class Unconsolidated Bottom (UB)	Includes all wetlands and deep water habitats with at least 25% cover of particles smaller than stones and vegetative cover less than 30%.
Water Regime Permanently Flooded (H)	Water covers the substrate through the year in all years.

Figure 20: National Wetlands Classification (Source: National Wetland Inventory, 2020)





Topography

The topography of the Study Area is relatively flat with gradual hills traveling east to west and steep banks located along the Grasse River north of Main Street.

Soil Characteristics

According to the United States Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey (WSS), a variety of soils are present within the Study Area. Due to the BOA Study Area encompassing Canton's Main Street corridor, 44.4 acres (20%) of land is urban land. Urban Land is located along Main Street, Grasse River Heritage Park and the former Kraft Plant.

17.1% of land consists of Elmwood fine sandy loam (EmA) totaling to 36.8 acres. EmA can be found surrounding Buck Street, West Street, Pine Street and Miner Street.

Other soils with smaller percentages and considerably less acreages include loamy Udorthents, Muskellunge silty clay loam, Redwater fine sandy loam, Swanton fine sandy loam, Kalurah fine sandy loam, Heuvelton silty clay loam, Flackville loamy fine sand and Croghan loamy fine sand.

A Soil Map of the Study Area and breakdown of all soils can be found in Appendix A.

Threatened and Endangered Species

According to the NYS DEC Environmental Resource Mapper, the entire BOA Study Area contains both rare plants and animals.

Consideration of rare plants or animals when planning development is critical especially in areas of abundant natural resources that provide habitats. Since Canton is host to a number of natural resources that play a part in a larger ecosystem, a thorough ecological assessment is necessary when deciding new development or reuse of sites.


The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) provides information on species potentially affected by activities within a designated area. When analyzing the entirety of the Village of Canton for potential planning development IPaC resulted in the presence of no endangered or potentially endangered species. Nine migratory birds were identified with a probability of presence within the Village including the American Golden-plover, the Bald Eagle, the Black-billed Cuckoo, the Bobolink, the Buff-breasted Sandpiper, the Golden-winged Warbler, the Red-headed Woodpecker, the Snowy Owl and the Wood Thrush.

The IPaC identifies no critical habitats within the Village.

Visual Quality

There are a number of viewsheds with significant importance within the BOA Study





Area. These viewsheds primarily follow the Grasse River and are located within Bend in the River, Grasse River Heritage and Canton Island Park. When considering development, these viewsheds should be taken into consideration.

Summary

The BOA Study Area offers diverse land use and zoning measures, as well as a wide variety of natural and recreational resources. Due to this, the Village is a relatively walkable community that offers a modest supply of goods and services to residents, seasonal students and visitors.

Projections from ESRI to 2024 indicate that the fastest population growth in the Village of Canton, as well as in the BOA study area, will be in the 35-to-44 and 75-and-over age cohorts, followed by those between the ages of 65 and 74. Planning for the fastest growing (couples and small families as well as seniors) should be taken into account when implementing new initiatives.

Declining enrollment in local colleges has also been an issue within the last decade. If these trends continue, the market for off-campus student housing could be negatively impacted. Canton should keep an eye on existing student housing and work with property owners to transform student housing to multi-family or senior housing if demand for diverse housing continues.

There are some areas in which Canton can improve its built environment such as improving multi-modal connections (trails, bike lanes, complete sidewalks) and utilizing key buildings to their fullest extent such as the vacant McDonald's on Main Street and the vacant Jubilee Plaza. Utilization of existing development will assist with maintaining density within the Village and deter sprawl into greenfield areas.



ECONOMIC AND MARKETS TRENDS ANALYSIS

An Economic and Market Analysis was prepared as part of the Nomination Study and can be found in the Appendix. The analysis includes relevant information on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, economic conditions, and real estate market trends in and around the Village of Canton, and identifies opportunities for the redevelopment of sites in the proposed Canton BOA. The following provides a summary of report findings and conclusions.

Methodology

The methodology for the Economic and Market Analysis included a review of existing planning documents, the compilation and analysis of quantitative data, and primary research. Demographic estimates and projections were purchased from ESRI, a leading national provider of market information. ESRI's proprietary methodology is based on both federal and private data sources. To analyze local real estate, the consultant utilized information available from state and local real property offices and the St. Lawrence County Multiple Listing Service. In addition to the data analysis, individual interviews and meetings were held with a variety of stakeholders, such as municipal officials, employers, and residential property managers.

Demographic and Economic Trends

The Village of Canton experienced steady growth in population during much of the last century, peaking at 7,055 in 1980. Although the number of residents declined from 1980 to 2000, the Village's population has stabilized at about 6,400. This figure includes approximately 2,700 individuals living in group quarters, most of them college students residing in on-campus housing at SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University.

Residents between the ages of 18 and 24 make up 45.5% of the Village's population; however, this age cohort declined by about 10% between 2010 and 2019. Both the Village and Town of Canton as well as St. Lawrence County have experienced substantial increases in the population age 55 and older. Projections indicate that in the near term, the fastest population growth in the Village will be among residents ages 35 to 44 and those age 75 and over. These are also the fastest-growing population segments statewide.

There is a wide range of income diversity in the Village of Canton: 20.5% of households have incomes of less than \$25,000 per year, while 22.7% earn at least \$100,000 annually. The median household income is approximately \$56,000 per year, nearly 9% higher than the county median income.



Student enrollment at local colleges and universities – SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University in Canton and SUNY Potsdam and Clarkson University in Potsdam – totaled 13,294 as of fall 2019, with an estimated 3,200 living off-campus. The student body at SUNY Canton is diverse compared to the surrounding area; 35% of students are non-white, and one in four students is age 25 or older. St. Lawrence University attracts many students from out of state and foreign countries. Both SUNY schools have been experiencing declining enrollment over the last five to six years, similar to the SUNY system as a whole. If this trend continues, it could impact the market for off-campus student housing and reduce the demand for goods and services offered by local businesses.

Health care and social assistance is the largest industry sector in St. Lawrence County, and includes many of its leading employers. St. Lawrence Health System, United Helpers, Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center, and the ARC Jefferson-St. Lawrence, among others, have facilities in Canton, providing critical services as well as employment. Retail is the second-largest industry sector after health care, followed by leisure and hospitality and manufacturing.

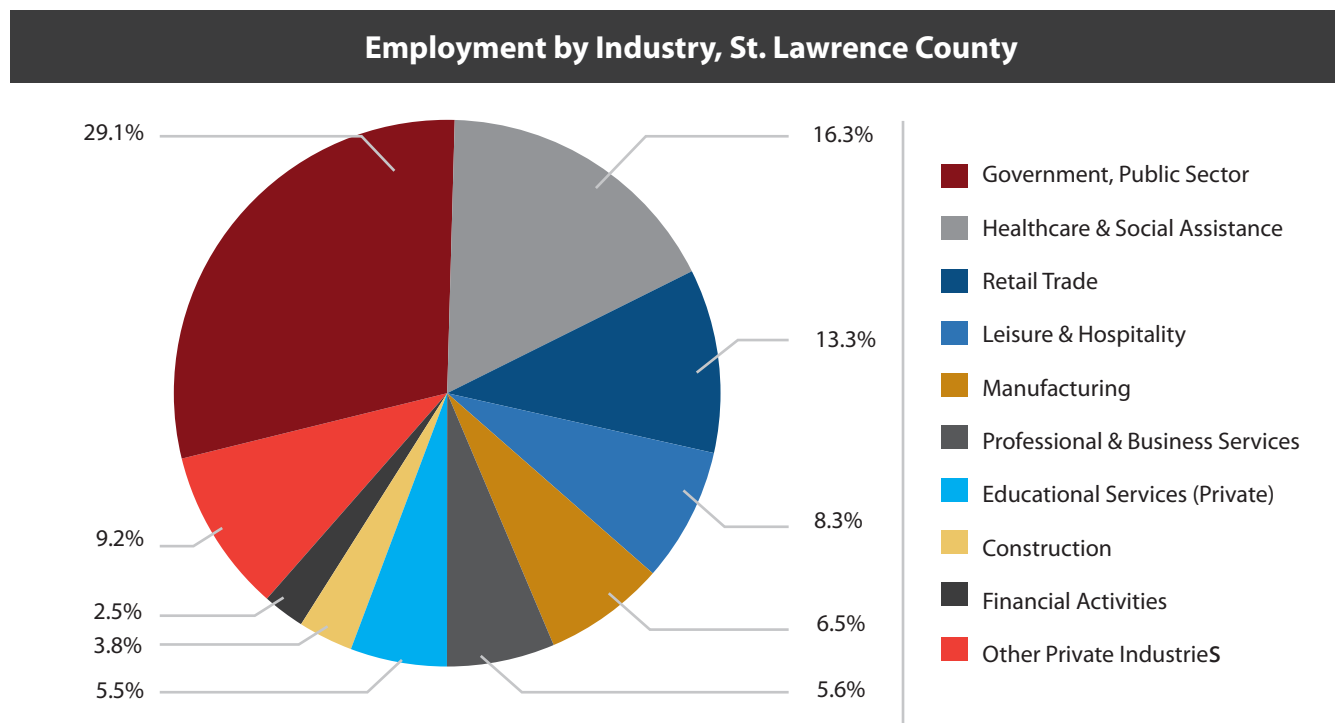


Figure 21: Employment by Industry (Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey (2019))

Another key industry is education, both public and private. Together, the area's four colleges and universities provide approximately 3,000 jobs and impact the local economy through community investments and the purchase of goods and services. They also draw thousands of visitors to the County every year for alumni weekends,



sporting events, performances, and graduations, generating sales at local hotels and restaurants.

The Village of Canton is a net importer of labor; there are more individuals commuting into the Village to work than there are residents leaving for jobs elsewhere. This provides a sizable daytime market for local businesses during the work week. About 25% of those employed in the Village travel at least 50 miles each way from home to work, many from locations outside St. Lawrence County. There is an opportunity to attract some of these commuters to live in Canton through the development of quality housing, which would also enhance the demand for various types of businesses.

Residential Market Analysis

Housing issues have been identified in recent plans and in meetings with community leaders, employers, college officials, and other stakeholders as among Canton's most serious challenges. The 2019

Comprehensive Plan, for example, cites a lack of quality affordable rental housing, an older housing stock, and a lack of good quality market-rate housing to recruit employees to the area. Other issues that have been identified include a shortage of independent senior housing for retirees and the need for workforce housing affordable to lower-salaried workers, who earn too much to qualify for subsidized housing but not enough to afford most market-rate units.

Given the importance of housing to the community, the Economic and Market Analysis examined housing characteristics, residential market conditions, demographic and socioeconomic trends, and housing affordability in and around Canton.

The study defined a Residential Market Area encompassing the Towns of Canton, DeKalb, Lisbon, Pierrepont, and Potsdam (as illustrated in the map at right) to evaluate the market for housing in the proposed Canton BOA. Based on data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, this area has an estimated 13,298 housing units, of which 61.0% are owner-occupied, 25.7% are renter-occupied, and 13.3% are vacant.

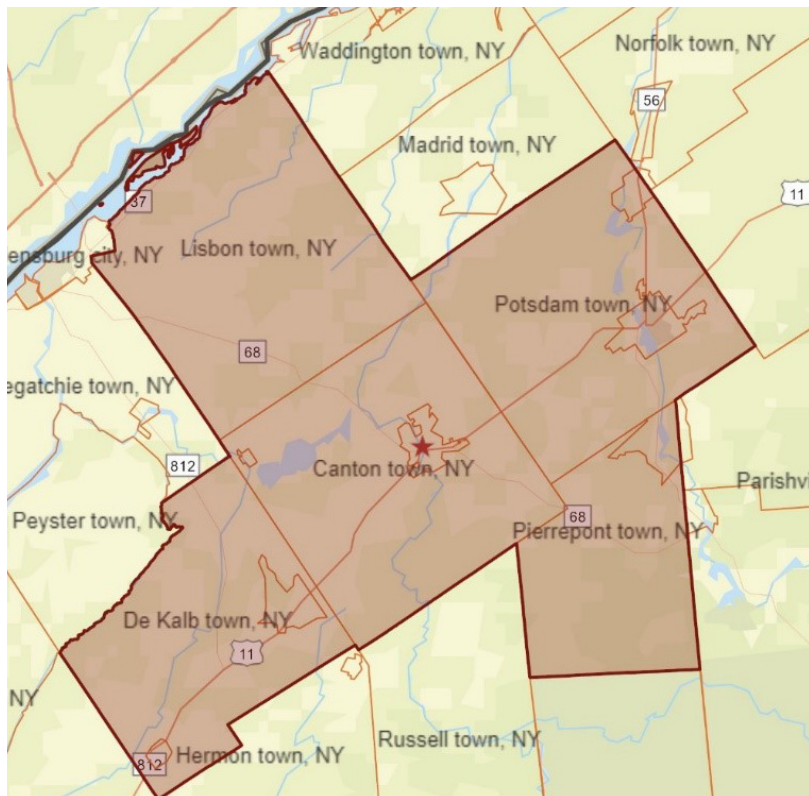


Figure 22: Housing Availability Map (Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019)





Housing Characteristics

A detailed analysis of the existing supply of housing and building permits issued for new construction in the Residential Market Area is provided in the full report. Findings include the following:

- Single-family detached structures make up the majority of the owner-occupied housing stock in the Residential Market Area. Nearly half of the owner-occupied units were constructed more than 60 years ago. The Town of Canton (which includes the Villages of Canton and Rensselaer Falls) accounts for about 28% of the owner-occupied units in the Residential Market Area. Approximately 13% of the homes were constructed since 2000.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Building Permits Survey, 1,965 new housing units were permitted in St. Lawrence County between 2008 and 2018. Of the permits issued for single-family housing during this period, 545 (33.3%) were for homes in the Residential Market Area, with a total of 105 (6.4%) in the Town of Canton and its villages.
- Countywide, permits were issued for 329 units of multi-family housing, with 81 (24.6%) in the Residential Market Area. Most of the approved multi-family units (52) were in the Village of Potsdam. The Building Permits Survey indicates that the last multi-family housing approved in the Village of Canton was in 2010.
- The Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) is a tool used to track home values and housing market appreciation over time; unlike median sales prices, it covers the entire stock of homes and not just those that sell in a given time period. According to the ZHVI, the median value of a single-family home in St. Lawrence County in January 2020 was \$84,723. This was among the lowest in New York State, one of just three counties where the median value was less than \$100,000 (the others were Allegany and Cattaraugus in western New York). Since January 2010, St. Lawrence housing values in St. Lawrence County have increased 11.4%; in Franklin and Lewis Counties, the rates of increase were 41.8% and 48.5%, respectively.
- The Residential Market Area has an estimated 3,400 rental housing units, 84% of which are in the Towns of Canton and Potsdam. About 41% of the renter-occupied units were built prior to 1960, while 28.1% were built between 1960 and 1979; relatively few units are less than 20 years old. Although many rental properties are well-maintained, the large percentage of older units and the lack of new construction in Canton may make difficult to attract new residents, especially those coming to the area from metropolitan markets with newer apartments.



For-Sale Market Characteristics

Data from the NYS Association of Realtors show that St. Lawrence County experienced a nearly 20% increase in residential sales activity and a 38% reduction in the number of homes available for sale between 2015 and 2019. Nevertheless, the County had an 8.6-month supply of homes on the market at the end of 2019. This suggests that the supply of housing continues to exceed demand. (An inventory of four to five months is average; anything over six to seven months is considered an oversupply, with more sellers than buyers.)



Single-family housing sales in the Residential Market Area from 2017 through 2019 averaged about 200 per year (based on arm's length transactions only). The volume was highest in Potsdam and Canton; together, they accounted for nearly three-quarters of the homes sold, although they make up about 67% of the single-family units in the Residential Market Area.

The Village of Canton averaged about 40 single-family home sales per year, with a median selling price of \$130,000, compared to \$122,750 in the Residential Market Area overall. Nearly 45% of the homes sold in the Village had four or more bedrooms. They were also larger than those sold in other parts of the Town of Canton.

Many of these large residences were constructed at a time when homes accommodated multiple generations and families had more children. Historic homes

are often an asset to the communities in which they are located, but they are generally not as energy-efficient as newer homes and may require additional resources to maintain and repair. As a result, they do not appeal to all buyers.





Rental Housing Market

Research on the rental housing market identified two dozen properties in the Residential Market Area with more than 10 units (rental units where the rates are per person/room by semester were excluded). These projects contain approximately 1,400 housing units, with 54% of them defined as affordable or subsidized and 46% market-rate. Information on the rental properties can be summarized as follows:

- Most market-rate apartment complexes in Canton and Potsdam date from the 1960s and 1970s. While some older properties show signs of deferred maintenance, others are very well-maintained, according to code enforcement officials.
- Only two large market-rate rental properties totaling 191 units have been built in the Residential Market Area within the last 20 years; both are in Potsdam. They tend to have the highest asking rents and prices per square foot, as they offer amenities not typically found at other properties, such as dishwashers, washer/dryer units, and garages.
- Asking rents for units at the market-rate properties for which prices are available range from \$450 to \$1,500 per month, or about \$0.56 to \$2.54 per square foot. The median gross rent, which includes utilities (and water fees, where applicable), is approximately \$835 per month.
- Although occupancy rates were not available for all large rental properties, rates are generally high and property owners are able to rent most vacant units within a month or two.
- The affordable rental housing in the Residential Market Area can be divided into three categories: 1) public housing; 2) housing subsidized through Section 8 project-based rental assistance or the USDA Rural Rental Assistance Program, where tenants pay 30% of their adjusted gross income towards rent; and 3) housing developed with the use of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs), where the rents are below market-rate. Nearly two-thirds of the affordable and subsidized housing units are targeted to or occupied by elderly and disabled tenants. Vacancy rates in affordable rental housing tend to be low and some properties have waiting lists.
- Currently, the only major housing project in the pipeline is the renovation and conversion of Clarkson University's Old Snell Hall in Potsdam into 59 units of affordable housing. Plans call for the creation of 30 studio, 28 one-bedroom, and 8 two-bedroom apartments, with one unit to be set aside for a building superintendent. A market study commissioned by the project's developer confirmed that there is sufficient demand for the units, which will be affordable to households with incomes at or below 60% of the area median.





Housing Demand Indicators

Among the key drivers of local housing demand are household formation and population growth, demographic shifts, income and wealth, housing affordability relative to income levels, and residential mobility. The information below summarizes the demand for housing in the Residential Market Area, including the Village of Canton:


- Projections indicate that the Residential Market Area will lose 1.3% of its population by 2024; the number of households is expected to decrease by 2.1%. These very modest declines (less than 1% per year) should not be a deterrent to housing development, as new units are needed to address gaps in the existing supply, respond to changing needs and preferences, and replace older housing in poor condition.
- Despite the overall reduction in the number of households, several market segments are projected to grow:
 - ➔ Householders ages 35 to 44 with annual incomes of \$75,000 and above;
 - ➔ Householders ages 55 to 64 earning \$100,000 or more per year;
 - ➔ Householders ages 65 to 74, divided equally between those earning \$50,000 to \$100,000 annually and those with annual incomes of \$100,000 and up; and
 - ➔ Householders age 75 and older of all income levels.

Households in these age brackets are more likely to be homeowners than renters; however, their housing needs differ. Householders ages 35 to 44, for example, may be first-time homeowners or families with children “trading up” to another home. Householders ages 65 to 74, on the other hand, may be looking to downsize, moving into a smaller house or even an apartment.

The development of single-story homes and “barrier-free” housing with features such as wheelchair access and handrails would allow older residents to comfortably age in place. Active seniors and empty nesters may value living in or near a walkable commercial district with easy access to shopping, dining, and services. More than 900 homes in the Residential Market Area are owned and occupied by individuals 65 and over who live alone; this group would be a good target for independent senior living.

- Other notable demographic trends in the Residential Market Area include a decline in the number of family households with children; an increasing number of small, 1- to 2-person households; and a dramatic rise in the number of households headed by an individual age 65 or older. These shifts have significant implications for the local housing market. Most local homes are





single-family detached, but some buyers may desire alternative options, including smaller homes and townhouses in maintenance-free settings. A more diverse housing stock would also benefit efforts to attract employees from outside the County.

- There is a gap in the supply of quality low-cost rental housing in the area. Although 59 units of affordable housing are being developed in Potsdam, the high incidence of housing cost burden and waiting lists for subsidized housing suggest an ongoing need for rental units affordable to households earning less than 50% of the area median income.
- According to Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies, high-income households have driven most of the growth in the U.S. rental housing market since 2010. This has not been the case locally, however. The majority of local households earning at least \$100,000 per year are homeowners, so the pool of potential tenants for higher-end rental housing, with monthly gross rents of \$2,500 and up, is relatively limited. There is a larger tenant pool for rental housing in the \$1,250-\$1,875 per month range.
- Projected increases in household income levels may support the development of some higher-end housing in the area, but additional research is needed to better understand the preferences and motivations of potential buyers (or tenants). Some affluent households live in lower-cost housing as a choice and may not be looking for something more upscale.
- Another potential source of housing demand is people who commute to work in Canton. Currently, about 60% of the jobs in the Village of Canton are held by people who live outside the Residential Market Area, commuting from other locations in St. Lawrence County as well as other counties. The development of new housing in the BOA could encourage some of these workers to move to Canton.
- High-density residential development in the Study Area could help to stimulate demand for various types of businesses, especially if the housing increases both the number and household income levels of consumers.

Commercial Market Analysis

An analysis of commercial real estate activity found that 11 commercial structures and a vacant parcel in the Village of Canton changed hands from 2017 through 2019. Most commercial properties in the Village are owned by individuals and business entities from within St. Lawrence County. Local ownership can be beneficial to revitalization efforts, as evidenced by the renovation of several downtown buildings and new business creation. These and other improvements in the downtown commercial district have been supported by state grant funding. Currently, there are





six commercial properties in the Village of Canton being offered for sale; four of them are vacant and underutilized sites in the proposed Canton BOA.

A partnership between the SUNY Canton College Foundation and a pair of private developers has prepared a proposal to replace Jubilee Plaza, a vacant downtown retail center, with a \$16 million mixed-use project. The project would include approximately 12,500 square feet of commercial space, 45 new housing units, and a SUNY Canton Entrepreneurship Center with a makerspace, co-working space, offices, and classrooms where free and low-cost programs would support existing and prospective business owners. At the end of 2019, Empire State Development awarded \$1.3 million towards the project, which is expected to serve as a catalyst to additional redevelopment.

Office Market Analysis

Office space demand is influenced by multiple factors, including local and regional economic conditions, business activity, and employment growth in the industries that are most likely to utilize office space, such as professional services, information/media, and financial services. Health care providers also occupy office space, but often locate in facilities near hospitals or in medical office buildings.

Some of these industries have a significant local presence. St. Lawrence County accounts for approximately 29% of the finance and insurance jobs in the North Country region, with several banks and credit unions and a regional operations center for Community Bank located in Canton. The County also makes up about 22% of the region's employment in professional, scientific, and technical services. If the County's share of regional employment in each industry is applied to long-term projections generated by the NYS Department of Labor, it could add an estimated 750 new jobs in office-using industries by 2026. This would require approximately 112,500 square feet of office space countywide, including 16,875 square feet in the Village of Canton. Vacancies in existing office buildings could absorb some of the growth, but new or renovated office space in other commercial and mixed-use structures will be needed as well.

Retail Market Analysis

Retail stores make up about 23% of the downtown business mix in the Village of Canton; the selection of everyday convenience goods such as groceries or personal care items, however, is limited, and residents must drive to the supermarkets and drug stores along U.S. Route 11 and NY Route 310 to purchase most of these products.

Based on the results of a community survey conducted as part of the BOA planning process, residents would like to see more retail uses downtown. People value Canton's walkability, historic buildings, and small-town feel, but they are concerned about the high rate of turnover among retail businesses and the number of unused and underutilized commercial buildings.



Accommodations and food service account for 19% of the businesses in downtown Canton, but there are fewer restaurants than there were in the past. Community members have expressed frustration about the limited diversity in dining options. They want opportunities for dining out other than pizzerias and sandwich shops: for example, a brewpub, steak and seafood restaurant, waterfront dining, or a sushi place.

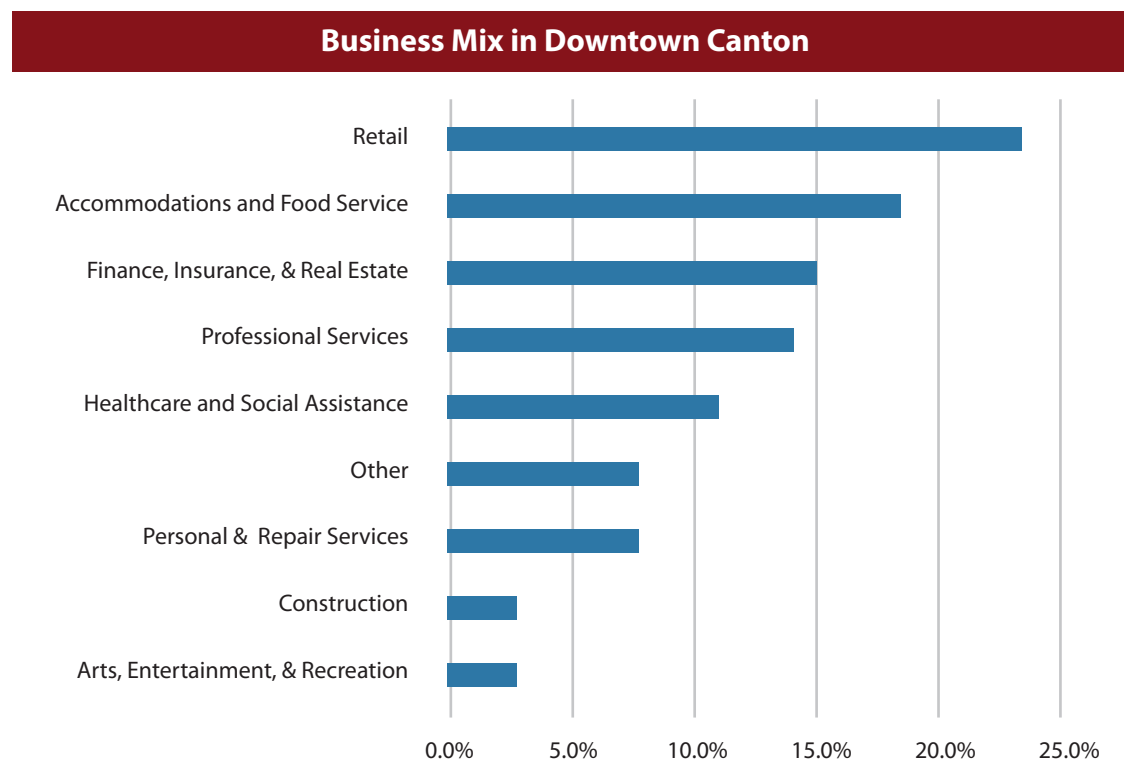



Figure 23: Business Mix (Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019)

A primary trade area is defined as the geographic area from which retail stores, restaurants, and consumer service providers draw the majority of their local customers. The study defined downtown Canton's primary trade area as being within a 20-minute drive of the intersection of Main Street and Riverside Drive.

Students attending local colleges and universities represent a key segment of this market. Although most have little to no income, they do not necessarily lack spending money. They spend a large share of their limited funds on food, including eating out; non-essential items like clothing and alcohol; and entertainment, which includes music, movies, and video games.

To supplement the purchasing power of year-round residents and college students, local businesses can also capitalize on the presence of workers, visitors, and seasonal residents. People employed in the public and private sectors add an estimated \$12.9 million in consumer demand to the Village of Canton and \$33.4 million in demand to the primary trade area. Daytime workers play an important role in supporting local





restaurants, but other types of businesses could generate more sales by tapping into this market. Attracting more visitors and part-time residents to Canton for events, dining, and shopping would also help to offset the exodus of college students and many faculty members during the summer months.

The retail market analysis did not identify any specific businesses that are strong candidates for recruitment to the Canton BOA; however, potential opportunities include additional specialty goods retailers, sit-down restaurants that offer waterfront dining or music, businesses related to the arts and recreation, and personal services.

Alternative business models that allow people to try out a business idea should be considered to encourage entrepreneurial activity and create interesting places downtown. Examples include pop-ups/temporary stores, shared spaces where people can rent a stall or a few hundred square feet to sell products, and retail incubators, and co-working space. A food hall, in which commercial space is carved up and leased to multiple food vendors under one roof, would be well-suited to the Village of Canton, as it would provide a wide range of dining options.

Canton Highway Department Feasibility Study

The Canton Highway Department was identified as a target property in the Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study within a subarea that surround the rail line that traverses through the Village. Historically, the area surrounding the railroad flourished until the 1950s. Following the decreased dependency on rail and the shifting of industries within the area, uses within the area changed and included the development of the St. Lawrence Highway facility. The appearance of the facility negatively impacts the surrounding residential neighborhood as well as a number of commercial businesses within close proximity. The land that is currently being used for the highway facility is felt to be underutilized and therefore a feasibility study for the site is suggested.



PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND VISION STATEMENT

The Town and Village of Canton have been diligent in undergoing planning processes and initiatives to continue revitalization and develop strategies on how to become an even better community. As part of the BOA process, a vision must be developed to guide actions moving forward including those that relate to the built environment or quality of life projects.

The vision statement below serves as a foundation for determining the BOA Nomination Study's goals and objectives. For the Canton BOA Nomination Study the vision statement was created with the BOA Study Area in mind but also to provide an overall framework for the entirety of the community moving forward with planning and development initiatives. The vision below is based on community feedback and Steering Committee guidance.

Vision

Engaged. Historic. Resilient.

We are an engaged community. We are active in civic affairs because we care deeply about our community and about one another. We are economically and socially inclusive. We support a diversity of business, education, housing, and recreational resources.

We are an historic community. We retain Canton's founding principles of hard work, hospitality, and ingenuity. Legacy North Country families and newcomers alike are integral to the vitality of our community and of the river that runs through it. The Grasse River is our heritage and our future.

We are a resilient community. We are climate conscious, and we prepared for an efficient, environmentally sustainable future. We have forged clean industries and returned our land to health. Together we craft a vibrant future.

Goals and Objectives

The overall goals were created from key themes that were noted during the planning process and are referenced within the vision. The Goals and Objectives also reinforced intentions established in Canton's Comprehensive Plan and other current planning initiatives. The following goals assisted with shaping the suggestions for site reuse and improvement projects suggested within the BOA Study Area.





Goal 1

To realize our shared ambitions and our personal ambitions through transparency, accountability, and mutual positive regard in all aspects of civic life.

Objectives

- Use the Step 2 BOA study as a marketing and communications tool to support community-wide ambitions for revitalization
- Fully engage the zoning update to ensure that it reflects objectives of the BOA plan
- Ensure that public realm improvements within the BOA study area are inclusive and accessible by all persons regardless of ability, socio-economic or any other status
- Inspire a spirit of “co-petition” to encourage a healthy mix of downtown businesses serving local residents, students and visitors (co-petition: an environment in which businesses support one another as cooperators at the same time that they rival one another as competitors).

Goal 2

To preserve, enhance, and interpret the historic and culturally significant qualities of BOA study area.

Objectives

- Maintain momentum and accomplishments toward returning the Grasse River to the center of the community with public and private projects that promote river access and enjoyment for everyone
- Develop the “infrastructure” necessary to develop historic downtown Canton as a hub supporting the local and regional leisure, tourism, recreation, and visitor industries including dining and shopping, accommodations, communication and information, multi-modal transportation, and nightlife
- Maintain and even increase momentum in placing public art and interpretive projects to communicate and celebrate Canton’s history and culture
- Urge regional and local economic development officials to adopt a policy of focusing incentives and funding on downtown and the Grasse River in the study area

Goal 3

To develop an ethic of environmental responsibility and understanding of the importance of durability, resiliency, and sustainability in community design and development.





Objectives

- Gather community and political support at all levels for the community's vigorous pursuit of state and federal funding to recycle brownfield and other vacant, abandoned, and underutilized sites and incentivize their redevelopment
- Promulgate economical, efficient solutions and retrofits owners can use to increase the efficiency, sustainability, and value of their properties
- Focus development and redevelopment on land inside the BOA boundary to prevent sprawl
- Incorporate green infrastructure measures to manage storm water runoff including permeable pavements, rain gardens, bioswales, shade trees, downspout disconnection, and green streets into the public and private realms



Strategic Sites

The Village of Canton, along with local and regional partners, has taken consistent measures towards reuse of vacant, underutilized, and/or deteriorating properties with the goal to not only contribute towards Canton's and the region's economic climate, but also to give back to the community and create spaces that bring people together.

Long before the start of the BOA process and the completion of the Canton Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study in 2011, multiple parties have taken vested interest in the redevelopment of properties that have the power to be transformative within the community and positively impact the surrounding North Country region. Many of these properties were identified in the Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study, are mentioned in other planning documents/studies, and are within the existing Step 2 Study Area and part of the Brownfield Inventory. Though a great deal of planning has gone into these sites already, it is still necessary to include them as Strategic Sites within the Step 2 Nomination Study to leverage previous planning and to remain diligent with consistent efforts towards reuse.

The following sites have not only been vetted by the community but the Village has also taken the extra steps to forming new partnerships focused on the sites, contributed to the advancement of conceptual designs, have included the sites in past planning documents, and have applied for different sources of funding to make redevelopment a reality. Maintaining the focus on sites that have been strategic in the community's eyes for years through the Step 2 BOA will assist in moving these properties forward in terms of development within the Study Area.

Sites that have not been identified previous to the BOA studies and have not advanced in terms of planning are shown with precedent image concepts. These images are to be used as a tool and inspiration for the Town and Village of Canton as well as local developers, stakeholders and community members who will continue to move new and existing projects forward following the completion of the Step 2 BOA. The precedent image concepts can be utilized in future grant applications, planning documents and as a marketing tool.



Strategic Sites					
Address	Owner	Acres	Land Use	Zoning	Use / Other Notes
25, 27, 29 Riverside Drive	Don O'Neill	0.17	482	C-1	Demolished summer of 2019
30 Riverside Drive	Village of Canton	0.14	433	C-1	Vacant lot
2 Main Street (Vacant Family Dollar)	Bernard Proulx	0.92	453	C-1	Vacant Commercial
19 Miner Street (Jubilee Plaza)	Garry Cohen	3.4	452	C-1	Vacant building in strip mall / vacant lot to the south of parking lot
21 Miner Street	Gamer Craze Entertainment	0.25	453	C-1	Gamer Craze / Commercial business
25, 27 Gouverneur St	Mace Motors Inc	3.7	431	C-2	Vacant store front with garage
15 Gouverneur Street	Triple A Lumber	1.8	485	C-2	Vacant Commercial
61 Gouverneur Street	Clark Porter	0.79	262	C-2	Vacant Warehouse
78, 84, 86 Lincoln Street (Bend in the River Park)	Village of Canton	17.1	822	O-S	Park land, pavilion, garage, vacant water treatment facility
Off Stevens Street	Village of Canton	3.6	682	O-S	Portion of Bend in the River Park

Figure 24: Strategic Sites (Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019)

Sites for Which Planning has Already Begun:

Jubilee Plaza

Jubilee Plaza, located on Miner Street just south of Canton's municipal building and the vacant McDonald's, experienced deterioration and disinvestment within the downtown core for many years. Although the plaza is partially occupied, the former Jubilee grocery store, which had the largest footprint within the plaza, has been closed and the building deteriorating for over 15 years. Since its closure, a number of plaza's tenants have also left through the years including the Partridge Café, Hackett's, Rite Aid and Green's Furniture. The Jubilee Plaza was once a thriving economic hub within the Village and provided both goods and services within walking distance to residents, business owners, and those employed in the Village. The entirety of the Plaza is just under four acres.

Canton and stakeholders in the community have been active in trying to redeem the space. The plaza and the parcels included in the property are privately owned so the process of revitalization takes longer due to negotiations, identifying funding sources and determining responsibilities pertaining to redevelopment.



In 2019, Canton submitted a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application and identified the plaza to become an Entrepreneurship Center. The Center was distinguished as an area for rebirth that would give back in a variety of ways including drastically impacting the downtown corridor, being a magnet for entrepreneurs and business owners, becoming a job creator, and providing the opportunity to bring in a new population of students, residents and visitors to the area.



Partnerships to make this transformation possible are already in place between the Canton College Foundation, Lakes Development NY, LLC, and DEW Ventures, LLC to advance their plan and enhance the mixed-use property. Assembling all of the parcels within the Plaza would allow for

the creation of the Entrepreneurship Center run by SUNY Canton with more than 12,500 square feet of commercial space and 45 new residential units. To achieve this, redevelopment includes:

- Acquisition and assemblage of property
- Demolition of existing deteriorating and vacant structures
- Construction of new buildings
 - ➔ SUNY Canton Entrepreneurship Center (makerspace, co-working space, offices, classroom)
 - ➔ 12,500 square feet of commercial space for retail, professional service and other businesses
 - ➔ 60,000 square feet of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom residential units
- Parking lot and accessibility improvements



Project benefits for redevelopment of the plaza include:

- A dramatic increase in the tax base
- Growth of both the business and resident population
- Job creation
- Enhancements to the attractiveness of Canton's downtown
- New vitality and diverse options for the community
- New construction of properties in place of blighted and underutilized properties

Following a pro forma analysis, project financials estimated the project total to be over \$16.2 million including acquisition, construction and contingency.

Due to the proposed project aligning with many of the established BOA goals, there is potential for funding through the Brownfield Opportunity Area Step 3 Implementation Grant as part of the NYS Consolidated Funding Act applications. Identifying the project as a strategic site that will assist the Village of Canton with revitalization will show grant sources how important redevelopment of the site is to the community.



CANTON DRI MIDTOWN PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT
FRONT ELEVATION STUDY

LAKER DEVELOPMENT NY, LLC
MACKNIGHT ARCHITECTS LLP



Former Family Dollar – 2 West Main Street

The former Family Dollar site was once home to Hotel Harrington. The hotel was built in 1864 and was cherished by the local community. The Hotel provided upscale dining, lodging and a space for weddings and events along Canton's Main Street and the Grasse River waterfront. The hotel operated for nearly 100 years but was sold in 1959 and demolished shortly after. Following demolition, a grocery store was constructed and occupied the property for many years until Family Dollar took occupancy of the 7,500 sq ft. building. The property is just under one acre.

Family Dollar's success was short lived and the building became vacant in 2019.

The former Family Dollar footprint is located just south of Canton's Main Street and sits directly east of the Grasse River and Willow Island. The building is surrounded by a large parking lot, H&R Block to the north east and a Feed Mill directly east. Being located on Main Street, which

is Canton's most traversed thoroughfare, makes the vacant Family Dollar constantly visible to community members, seasonal visitors to the area, and commuters who may not live or work in Canton but utilize Main Street as part of their daily routine.

Since vacancy, there have been community plans for redevelopment of the site with it most recently being included as a project listed in the Village's 2019 DRI application. The suggested reuse of the property includes waterfront dining with a recreational connection to the water that currently does not exist. Other renovation ideas for the property include:

- A small eatery (1,000 sq. ft. of the existing building)
- Full-service restaurant and tavern remainder of the first floor
- New windows on the easterly side of the building
- Potential outdoor dining deck providing views of the Grasse River and Willow Island

The property was also mentioned in Canton's Comprehensive Plan with the established goal to revitalize vacant buildings along the Grasse River, and in Canton's Community Action Plan and the Grasse River LWRP.



The Family Dollar could be a transformational project for the Village of Canton given its location along the Grasse River in the heart of the Village's downtown and relative accessibility just off Main Street, the larger size of the property, adjoining parking lot, and its walkable location from area bed & breakfast inns, universities and village parks.

The privately-owned Family Dollar building is located west and down-gradient from the Sunoco gas station and has gone through Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments since its vacancy in March of 2019.

Further environmental due diligence and investigation are recommended for the Family Dollar site which has a number of opportunities ahead of it, most likely include cleanup or capping the property depending on reuse. Cleaning up the property would be a longer process for the owner of the property, capping the property would create a safe environment for the property to be reused but with limitations. It is suggested that reuse of the property first identified and remediation techniques be identified following reuse plans.

A number of other items to create a site that has high utilization include:

- Safety improvements on the remainder of the parcel footprint including buffers and barriers from the feed mill as well as coordination with feed mill owners regarding the current lot being used as a cut through for vehicles and trucks.
- Wayfinding signage improvements
- Lot improvements with sidewalks and striping
- Landscaping of native plants and green infrastructure improvements due to the down gradient nature of the site



25, 27 and 29 Riverside Drive

Riverside Drive was once a bustling area within the Village and hosted a wide variety of downtown activities due to its close proximity to Canton's Main Street corridor to the south and businesses that complemented the Grasse River milling industries.

Since the end of river-dependent industry within the Village and more recently, the closing of Riverside Laundromat; 25, 27 and 29 Riverside Drive became dilapidated



and quickly transformed into an eye-sore. After being identified in the Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study as part of the Brownfield Inventory and as a redevelopment project as part of the Grasse River LWRP, the Town of Canton demolished

the unsound structure in the summer of 2019 to provide space for new development. There is now a small grass lot in its place that totals .17 acres.

Since demolition, the lot remains vacant and grassy along the river's edge, situated between Riverside Liquors to the north and NAPA Auto Parts to its south.

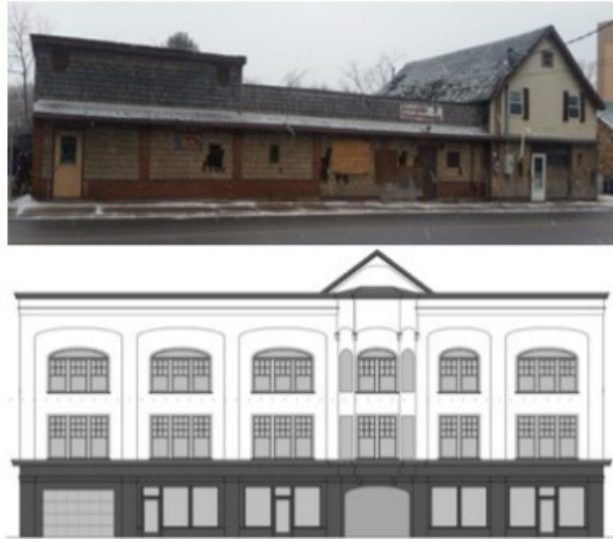
Canton's LWRP plan proposed this property to be transformed into a mixed use, three-story property with commercial tenants and dining on the first floor overlooking the Grasse River and residential units located above.



Following the completion of the Grasse River LWRP, Canton utilized previous planning and proposed 25, 27, 29 Riverside Drive as a DRI project known as 'Riverside Revolution'. A local community partner, Hailey Hodge, has plans to harness the potential of the waterfront by purchasing the property and developing mixed-use and residential units to fill the demand for non-student housing and bringing diverse commercial spaces to the corridor. A new mixed-used building would assist in transforming the visual streetscape of the corridor.



There is some concern that the property main be contaminated due to being down gradient and within close proximity to the former auto body shop to the east. When the auto body shop was demolished, some of the material transferred to the west of Riverside Drive. Due to this and past industrial operations along Riverside Drive along Grasse River, the property will likely need a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and may be eligible to be part of the NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup Program.



Being so close to both Canton's Main Street and the SUNY Canton campus makes this property an accessible and desirable option for university personnel and older members of the community who no longer want to maintain full-sized homes and are looking to downsize but remain in the area and close to Canton's downtown. The proposed project also addresses the need for diverse housing opportunities that the Village currently lacks.

Remaining Step 2 Sites

The remaining sites were identified through the Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study, community outreach, Steering Committee guidance, and the updated Brownfield Inventory as sites that could be transformative to the area around them and assist with the current needs of the community if redeveloped. Although no existing planning documents that have fleshed out conceptual designs, funding sources, community partners or suggested specific reuse for the following sites, the reuse of these sites is critical to the long-term success of the community.

Remainder of Riverside Drive

Riverside Drive is the northern gateway into the Village of Canton and home to a number of long-standing local businesses and senior living facilities. Riverside Drive also connects directly to the SUNY Canton Footbridge just north of the BOA Study Area and directly abuts the Grasse River to the west.

Businesses along Riverside Drive include Napa Auto Parts, Canton Tire Shop, North Country Auto Parts, senior housing units, and Riverside Liquors. While these businesses are utilized by community members, the land use does not promote a vibrant public realm. Due to this, the entirety of Riverside is included as a Strategic Site.

As mentioned previously, Canton has taken a variety of steps towards enhancing Riverside Drive such as remediation of 30 Riverside Drive (former Bells Auto Service -

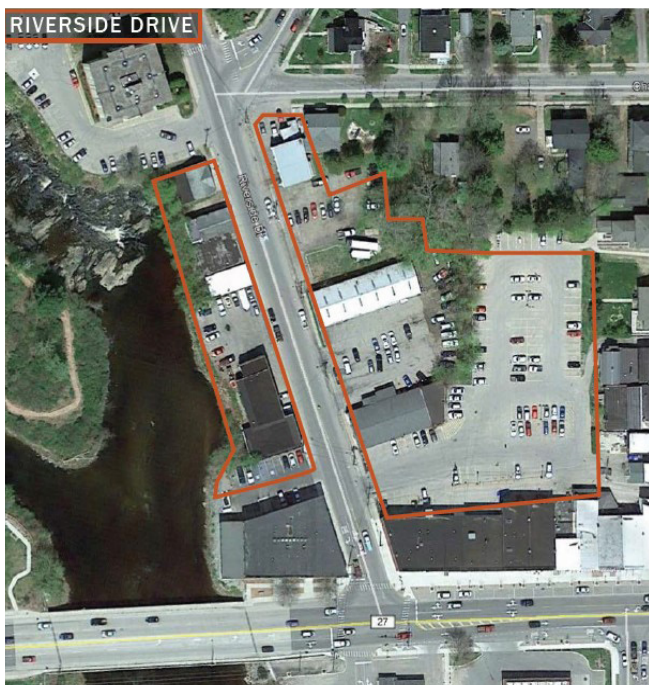


.14 acres) and the demolition of 25, 27, and 29 Riverside Drive (former dry cleaner and laundromat). There have been no site investigations of these sites since demolition. Due to this, the contamination is unknown and site investigation should be the first step towards redevelopment.

The thoroughfare has been part of past planning documents, including the LWRP, highlighting the need to continue ongoing work and planning for the area and its importance to the community.

Riverside Drive does not currently offer waterfront dining or entertainment. Now that there is vacant space within the corridor, there is opportunity for change. Many community members and local stakeholders have expressed the desire for opportunities to enjoy views of the Grasse River via restaurants and bars. The implementation of restaurants and bars can piggy-back off the current goal of a new mixed-use residential building being constructed on the vacant 25, 27, 29 lot.

This can also be implemented in the vacant lot directly west that was home to Bells Auto. These two properties can work in conjunction to provide a waterfront dining experience.



EXISTING AND POTENTIAL CONDITIONS
Riverside Drive offers enormous potential for waterfront and downtown revitalization. This revitalization has begun with the adaptive reuse of the Gray building and demolition of the dilapidated former nightclub building. Survey respondents very strongly indicated they feel there should be physical and visual waterfront access including waterfront dining in this area. Across the street, mixed-use development including housing could transform the corridor into a destination.



Because of the expected increase in pedestrian traffic with new development. Riverside Drive is also a candidate for streetscape improvements such as new shade trees, street furniture, new lighting fixtures, and the implementation of Complete Streets initiatives including bike paths and pedestrian signals.

The development of complete streets along Riverside Drive is likely to encourage an increase in pedestrian circulation including community members from local universities, the senior living facilities, those wanting to enjoy the Grasse River, and those who work in the downtown. An increase in pedestrians within the area will assist with Canton's goal of transforming the corridor into a mixed-use walkable experience.

Main Street Alley

An alley separating two Main Street buildings is located just south of one of the Village's public parking lot. Currently, this alley has little to no pedestrian traffic due to minimal lighting, lack of signage and the presence of barriers on either end that discourage use as a pedestrian thoroughfare.

The alley was identified in the Village of Canton DRI application as an underutilized public space that, with a few low-cost improvements, could create an increase in pedestrian traffic and create a safer environment stemming north from Main Street.

Low-cost improvements include the new vision of an "Arts Alley" with temporary outdoor gallery space for visual arts and a casual outdoor performing arts venue. The space could also be used for alfresco dining or seating space that is set back from Main Street and provides a quiet place to relax and meet up with small groups.

Since there are so many restaurants and small businesses nearby, the alley offers



a more urban feel and a different setting than Canton's more traditional gathering spaces such as traditional parks or indoor dining or concert venues.

The installation of string lights, small bistro seating tables, planters with native plants and temporary wall art depending on the season can transform the space and provide additional charm to Canton's Main Street. This would be a low-cost and low-hanging fruit option that can be quickly implemented and maintain momentum following the completion of the Nomination Study.

Gouverneur Gateway

The Gouverneur Gateway has seen a lack of investment for a number of decades. Many travelling north from Syracuse and Watertown use Gouverneur Street as a way to enter the Village of Canton. Despite this traffic, there remains a number of underutilized and vacant lots fronting Gouverneur Street. These lots also reach and are directly adjacent to the Grasse River. The Gouverneur Street area was identified in the Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study as a Focus Area with clearly identified sites and their reuse potential being critical to the future of the corridor.

Gouverneur Street currently includes a mix of uses including single and multi-family residential, retail, and commercial. Although there is a wide variety of uses, the area itself is not deemed pedestrian-friendly, experiences a high amount of automobile and truck traffic, and lacks density.



Gouverneur Street was once home to a number of commercial businesses that were essential to the economy of Canton including

- Triple A Lumber (15 Gouverneur) – 1.8 acres, privately owned, vacant, former mixed-use/residential
 - ➔ Potentially contaminated due to former uses
- Mace Motors (25, 27 Gouverneur) – 3.7 acres, privately owned, vacant, former car dealership and service center
 - ➔ Potentially contaminated due to former uses
- Quonset Hut (61 Gouverneur) - .79 acres, privately owned, former Karate school



In recent years, these businesses have gone out of business completely or relocated to a more compatible setting within Canton. Due to this, many properties now sit vacant and offer little to no value to local community members or those visiting the area. A significant number of people use services along this corridor but there are no options for dining or shopping outside of the Dairy Queen and Stewart's Shops. There are also a number of health and human services provided on or within close proximity to Gouverneur Street including The Arc for Jefferson and St Lawrence Counties, a local pharmacy, the Community Health Center, and the offices for the NYS Department of Health.

The Cascade Inn and Diner is located at the most-northern end of Gouverneur Street directly adjacent to the Grasse River. The Cascade Inn is a community gathering space, restaurant and provides lodging in close proximity to downtown Canton and the local universities.

The building was formerly the Eagle Mill and was demolished in 1955. The Inn and Diner are one of the few areas for lodging in close proximity to SUNY Canton and the downtown. The remainder of lodging options exists on Route 11 headed towards Potsdam.

Given Gouverneur Street's existing land uses, high amounts of vacancy and proximity to the Grasse River, the implementation of the following is recommended:

- Updated streetscaping to slow traffic (HAWK signals, striped crosswalks)
- The reuse of sites that complement the Grasse River (waterfront dining, residential units with easements for waterfront trails, or areas for small watercraft launches)
- Gateway entry features would provide a welcoming and attractive upgrade to the corridors

Examples of entry way features that Canton can implement at the rail underpass and the corner of Main and Gouverneur are shown below. These are just two examples of the hundreds of possible entryway features available to implement within communities. Entryway features are welcoming and assist with slowing traffic.





EXISTING AND POTENTIAL CONDITIONS

Gouverneur Street is a major gateway to downtown on busy Route 11. The whole corridor is in transition. On the west side of the corridor are some larger employers and service providers, but there are few food or shopping outlets to serve employees and visitors. The Cascade Inn, developed in the 1950s, occupies a signature site at the corridor's end with stunning visual access to the Grasse River as well as physical water access at the rear of the site.



Bend in the River Park

Bend in the River Park is the Village's largest public park and greenspace totaling 20 acres. The park directly abuts the Grasse River on its western and southern boundaries and is bound by the Atlantic Testing Facility to the north and residential properties and vacant land to the east.

Bend in the River Park is located in the southern portion of the BOA Study Area and encompasses a number of highly utilized community assets including the Canton Recreational Pavilion, courts and ballfields, a multi-purpose paved loop trail and a picnic shelter with grills. Although Bend in the River Park offers a number of amenities for community members and visitors to the area, the lack of gateway enhancements



and vacant building on site take away from its appeal as a sprawling and relaxing green space in the Village. The park is also tucked away from areas of high pedestrian and automobile traffic.



The park was identified in Canton's Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study as a subarea to focus on due to the land once being a landfill, being home to the inactive water treatment facility as well as being in close proximity to underutilized land directing abutting the Grasse River. The park is also just south of the Atlantic Testing being a former co-generation facility and the Village highway garage located just before the Park gateway.

Canton is a recreational community at heart but due to lack of local funding, the buildings on this property have decreased in value and have deteriorated over time.

Bend in the River Park has boundless potential due to its location on the Grasse River, land ready for development, and its location within the Grasse River LWRP Boundary which provides funding for a variety of enhancements.

To provide an experience for community members and to take full advantage of Canton's visitors surrounding local festivals, sports tournaments and seasonal swells in population, there are a number of ways Bend in the River Park can be improved to provide the ultimate recreational waterfront experience including:

- Wayfinding signage throughout the Village but specifically surrounding Main Street and in close proximity to St. Lawrence University and SUNY Canton
- Upgrades to the Canton Pavilion and outdoor rink
- The installation of new and complementary interpretative signage throughout the Park



- Installation of a small water craft launch along the River's edge
- Frisbee golf or bike track in vacant area just south of Atlantic Testing
- Streetscaping and gateway features along Lincoln Street

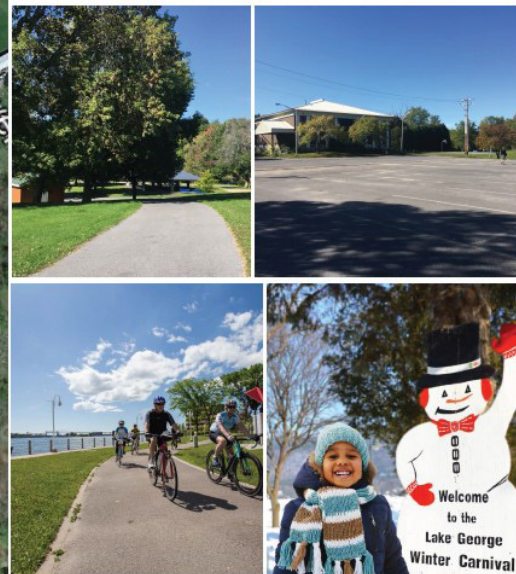


BEND IN THE RIVER PARK



EXISTING AND POTENTIAL CONDITIONS

Bend in the River Park is an underutilized gem in the BOA. There currently exists a mix of passive and active recreation resources and other uses including the Village highway garage and a closed landfill. Nearby, single-family homes, vacant land, the former co-generation facility, and former Kraft plant dominate the landscape. About a fifth of survey respondents visit this park at least once a month; more than 40% visit once a year or less.



Overview

Following the analysis of Canton's physical conditions and market climate, a set of key recommendations were formatted to assist the Village of Canton to achieve its established vision. The following recommendations include the need for environmental investigations, suggested capital improvement projects, partnerships, policy initiatives or changes, and regulations to assist Canton in its transformation into a destination and community where the community can work, live, and play in the North Country region.

The Town of Canton decided to pursue a Step 2 Nomination Study following the Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study that was completed in 2011. This Nomination Study included an inventory of potential brownfield sites as well as underutilized and vacant sites within the Village that were hindering Canton's economic prosperity and opportunities for growth. The following recommendations within this report will assist Canton with its ongoing efforts to revitalize its downtown, major corridors and natural resources.

This Implementation Strategy stitches together a 18-month planning process which included extensive community outreach that assisted with shaping the plan to reflect the community's hopes and desires for the Village's future.

An overview of the community participation process is included in Section 2.0 as well as Appendix A. After establishing a vision through public input and review of the market and housing analysis, an Implementation Plan grounded in economic realities was created to assist the Village of Canton and create impacts throughout St. Lawrence County and the North Country region.


Economic Development Strategies

The Town and Village of Canton's Department of Community and Economic Development has been a leader in furthering the success of economic development initiatives throughout the community that aid in revitalization. Below are strategies that Canton should continually refer back to assist with the inducing of development and prosperity within not only the local community but the North Country region.

Development of New and Diverse Housing

Canton's Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study suggested an in-depth housing analysis to have a greater understanding of current conditions within the area. When the Step 1 Pre-Nomination was complete, it was noted the Village had adequate housing for its





current market. Following more recent stakeholder interviews and outreach, it became evident the Village lacks diverse types of housing, specifically housing for a variety of incomes and sizes of family. This in turn hinders the community from attracting new residents from different industries including both healthcare and higher education. Those looking to move into the area then have to look outside the village and town boundaries. The Step 2 Nomination Study assessed Canton's current housing market and stock to identify gaps within existing housing and areas where Canton could implement housing within the Village to allow for an increase in residents which then should assist with density and increased flow of capital throughout Canton's local businesses. New housing also has the potential to increase the value of surrounding, existing housing and adding properties to the municipalities' tax base. Canton should

Marketing and Branding

Canton is mostly known as a college town complete with beautiful natural resources and a picturesque Main Street. Although Canton sees an influx in population due to its local universities – the community struggles to market itself as a destination for those who are traveling and exploring the North Country and Adirondack region. With the anticipated implementation of identified BOA projects and other ongoing improvement projects and initiatives within the community, Canton has the opportunity to leverage their existing planning and brand themselves as a destination for tourists as well as a great place to live, work, and explore.

Canton currently is part of a marketing project for the Grasse River. The Grasse River marketing plan spans across multiple municipalities. The goal of the marketing plan is to create heightened awareness and promote the strengths of the River.

It is suggested that Canton continues to work with St. Lawrence County and other stakeholders within the North Country as well as a marketing firm to highlight its positive attributes.

Continued Waterfront Enhancement and Development

Although Canton puts a great amount of effort into maintaining their local waterfronts, there are still many possibilities for continued enhancements and developments along the Grasse River. Noted in previous sections, Canton has multiple waterfront parks that provide scenic views and waterfront recreation. In recent years, streets and areas that were typically dominated by vacant or deteriorating buildings blocking the waterfront are now on the cusp on providing waterfront dining, entertainment and residential opportunities.

Canton is a historic community with a main street and natural resource asset that remains unexplored by many visiting the North Country region. Canton should continue their efforts to highlight the waterfront views and increase development in close proximity to the Grasse River.





Maintain a Supportive Small Business Climate

A supportive Small Business climate within a Village is crucial to its economic success. Small Businesses are the back bone of thriving communities due to offering goods and services in close proximity to residents and commuters. Without small businesses, areas become less walkable and inviting. Small businesses are direct investments into the community and as such deserve equal investment within their success. A supportive small business climate includes assistance with grant applications, including stakeholders and owners in planning and development conversations, and ensuring that businesses are up to date on any initiatives that may impact them or their customers.

Continue the Focus on Brownfield, Vacant and Underutilized Sites Inventory for new Development

Canton can continue their focus on brownfield, vacant and underutilized sites in a variety of ways including reaching out to local developers who are interested in brownfield tax incentives, maintain a working relationship with the DEC and EPA and continuing to apply for various environmental grants that are offered annually. Although many environmental grants do not guarantee complete redevelopment of sites, they offer funding for important steps such as Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, remediation, workforce development and continued reuse planning.


Funding Sources

Funding sources are one of the most important pieces moving forward with the advancement of projects that aid in economic revitalization and community enhancements. Funding typically comes from a variety of sources including private local entities, regional entities, state departments and federal organizations. Availability of funds dedicated to different programs varies year to year and typically requires meeting levels of criteria that may not be met by all strategic sites or suggested projects. Pieces of this BOA Nomination document can and should be used for applications to show an example of community want and need,

The maintenance of the momentum created by the Step 2 BOA process is fundamental to the advancement of transformative projects. Furthering the momentum created from community outreach, online and stakeholder engagement and development of new local champions who are passionate about strategic sites and other projects identified should be continued after the Canton BOA is designated.

The funding sources provided below should serve as a guide to the Village of Canton. All identified funding sources are provided due to being pertinent to one or multiple suggested projects. There are also sources of funding mentioned that may not directly pertain to Canton's BOA projects but can be utilized when considering other development within or close proximity to the BOA.





The Village of Canton already uses funding sources and grants to a great extent and it should be noted that the Town and Village have been successful in being awarded numerous contracts from the sources below.

Planning and Infrastructure

New York State Regional Economic Development Councils

- Each regional strategy is updated annually
- Use of funding is tied directly to advancement and implementation of regional economic development strategies(priority given to communities that meet councils strategies/goals)
- Procured through Consolidated Funding Application process
 - ➔ Consolidated Funding Applications are due once a year, typically in summer months.

Empire State Development Grant Program

- Up to \$150 million as of 2017(varies annually)
- No funding limits per project
- Used for business investment, infrastructure investment, or economic growth investment
- Must be a municipality, business, or non-for-profit corporation, county, regional commission
- Seeks to provide no more than 20% of project cost with applicant contributing at least 10%

Example: Lockport Downtown Revitalization Initiative, 2018

ESD Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

- Up to \$1 million available as of 2017
- \$100,000 max per project
- Must be at the municipal level
- Requires 50% minimum match in funds from municipality including 10% cash equity

Examples: Gowanda Area Redevelopment Corporation, 2019 (economic redevelopment study) | St. Lawrence County IDA, 2019 (strategic planning and feasibility study of industrial zoned property for mixed use development) | Syracuse-Onondaga County Strategic Planning County Plan, 2019





Market New York

- \$15 million available as of 2017(varies annually)
- No project fund limit
- Targets regional tourism marketing, capital, and special events

Example: Visit Rochester's Meeting and Convention Tourism Promotion, 2019 | Central New York Tourism Marketing Initiative, 2019

New York State Council on the Arts – Arts and Culture Initiatives

- Up to \$5 million available
- Local governments are eligible
- For planning grant: No match required; for implementation grants: 50% cash match, for workforce investment 25% cash match required.
- For planning grant: \$10,000 - \$49,500; for implementation grants: \$10,000 - \$75,000, for workforce investment - \$25,000 - \$49,500.

Examples: Torn Space Theater Neighborhood Festival, 2019 | Landmark Theatre Auditorium Seating, 2019

Community Development Block Grant

- \$20 million available as of 2017(varies annually)
- Intended use for public infrastructure, public facilities, community planning, and microenterprises
- Funding provided for small communities and counties
- Public Infrastructure and Public Facilities – 0% match required; Community Planning – 5% of the total project cost must be provided as a cash match; Microenterprises – 10% owner equity contribution.
- Public Infrastructure \$750,000, Joint Applicants – Public Infrastructure \$900,000, Projects with NYS Co-funding \$1,000,000; Public Facilities \$300,000; Municipality – Microenterprise Programs \$200,000 (individual grant amount to business ranging from \$5,000 - \$35,000), Municipality – Planning \$50,000.

Examples: Cortland County Housing Conditions Survey, 2019 | Village of Gouverneur Dorwin Street Upgrades, 2019

New York Main Street Program

- \$6.2 million available as of 2017
- Local governments or not-for-profits
- Must be in eligible target area



- 75% of total project costs can be reimbursed for all projects
- Traditional NYMS Target Area Building Renovation Projects – between \$50,000 and \$500,000; NYMS Downtown Anchor Project – between \$100,000 and \$500,000; NYMS Downtown Stabilization Program – between \$50,000 and \$500,000.

Example: Owego North Avenue Revitalization Program, 2019

Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) – Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) Municipal Grants Programs for Parks, Preservation and Heritage

- \$20 million available
- Local governments, not-for-profits, public authorities, state agencies
- For acquisition, planning, development, and improvement of parks, historic properties and heritage areas
- Half of the total awards given will be going to inner city/underserved areas
- Grants can fund 50% of total project costs & up to 75%
- Award cap of \$500,000

Examples: Amherst Central Park Plan, 2019 | Baltimore Woods Nature Center Expansion, 2019

DOS – Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)

- \$15.2 available as of 2017 (varies annually)
- Local Government located along New York's coast or designated inland waterways
- For planning, feasibility, design, or marketing of specific projects, and construction projects, to advance the preparation of implementation of strategies for community and waterfront revitalization
- Approximately \$10,000,000 will be spent for projects which are in, or primarily serve, areas where demographic and other relevant data demonstrate that the areas are: densely-populated and have sustained physical deterioration, decay, neglect, or disinvestment, or where a substantial proportion of the residential population is of low income, or is otherwise disadvantaged and is underserved
- Match required is 25% of the total project cost

Example: Erie Canal Bike Path Extension (North Tonawanda), 2019





Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) – National Recreational Trails Program

- \$1.9 million available as of 2017
- Local Government, Not-for-profits, public authorities, state agencies
- For the acquisition of land; project planning for ADA compliance; design & development, archaeological reporting; new construction or renovation; purchase and installation of trail amenities
- Grants can fund 80% of total project costs – Grant awards are capped at \$200,000.

Examples: Rochester CSX Corridor Acquisition, 2019 | Cato-Bruto Trail Bridge Construction, 2019

Canalway Grants Program

- \$1 million available
- Local government
- Constructing new buildings, vessels or structures, constructing additions or improvements that enlarge, expand, enhance or extend existing buildings, vessels or structures; New systems in existing buildings, vessels or structures; Substantial renovations or preservation of existing buildings, vessels or structures, including reconfigurations; Site preparation and improvements associated with a project; Acquisition of furnishings, fixtures, machinery and equipment with a useful life in excess of 5 years; Constructing or rehabilitating segments of Canalway trail; Constructing or rehabilitating dock or bulkheads for the purpose of public access to and from the Canal System; and/or hazardous waste clean-up associates with a project.
- 50% match will be required on all grants
- Requests must be between \$25,000 and \$150,000

Examples: Canalside Welcome Center Enhancements (Brockport), 2019 | Lakeland Park Canal Enhancement and Walkway (Cazenovia), 2019

NYSERDA Energy Efficiency Programs

- \$40 million as of 2016 (varies annually)
- NYSERDA Flexible Technical Assistance - Local Government, schools, and commercial and industrial facilities eligible; Small Commercial Energy Efficiency Programs: Energy Assessments – Small businesses or non-for profits; NYSERDA – Commercial New Construction Program (CNCP) – State and Local governments; NYSERDA – Commercial Implementation Assistance Program (CIAP) – Municipalities, State agencies, facility owners.



- NYSERDA Flexible Technical Assistance - Energy feasibility studies, Master Planning, Industrial Process Efficiency, Data Centers, Combined Heat and Power, and Farm Energy Audits; Small Commercial Energy Efficiency Programs: Energy Assessments – Lighting, Lighting controls, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditions, etc.; NYSERDA – CNCP – New buildings or space within a new building, or substantial renovations to existing buildings where the space has been, or will be, vacant for at least 30 consecutive days, or where there is a change of use; CIAP – Advance clean energy or underutilized technologies, deep-energy savings projects, or systems-based projects that expand the diversity of measures and depth of savings.
- NYSERDA will contribute 50% of the eligible study costs

NYSERDA Climate Smart Communities

- \$10 million as of 2017
- Municipalities
- 1. Climate Protection Implementation Projects and 2. Certification Projects
- Funding requests must be between \$10,000 and \$2,000,000; Certification Projects - funding requests must be between \$10,000 and \$100,000
- Projects must have a local match equal to 50% of the eligible project costs.

Examples: City of Rochester Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Heat Emergency Plan, 2019 | City of Ithaca Green New Deal Action Plan, 2019

Environmental

Cleaner, Greener Communities Program

- Up to \$1 million available
- Category 1 will be capped at \$5,000 per applicant for applicants representing a population of up to 30,000 residents and \$10,000 per applicant for applicants representing a population larger than 30,000 residents.
- Cities, Towns, Villages, or other entities having jurisdiction for permitting, land use planning, and zoning are eligible applicants.

Example: North Country Cleaner, Greener Communities One-Stop Shop, 2017

EPA Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant

- Single applicants may request up to \$300,000 and coalition applications may request up to \$600,000
- Applicants can submit one Community Wide Assessment grant proposal each cycle



- Provides funds for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments and redevelopment planning
- 0% match

Examples: City of Lackawanna, 2021

EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant

- An applicant may request up to \$500,000 to address one brownfield site, or multiple brownfield sites
- Applicants may submit one Cleanup Grant proposal each competition cycle
- Cleanup Grants require a 20 percent cost share
- Local Government, Land Clearance Authority or another quasigovernmental entity, Government Entity Created by State Legislature, Regional Council, Redevelopment Agency, State.

Examples: City of Cortland, 2019 | City of Rochester, 2020

EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant

- \$2,700,000 as of 2017
- Up to \$200,000 per applicant
- Consortia or Intertribal Consortia, Educational Institutions, Local Governments, Nonprofit Groups, State/Territorial Agencies, Indian Tribal Governments, Tribal Agencies, Universities
- Develop and implement training programs, including, but not limited to: brownfields hazardous waste training, solid waste management and recycling, emergency management and oil spill cleanup, Superfund cleanup-related training, including innovative and alternative treatment technologies, wastewater treatment and storm water management, integrated pest management, alternative energy technologies, and chemical safety and enhanced environmental health and safety training

Example: City of Rochester, 2019

National Grid

- Maximum allowable grant for a project is \$300,000
 - ↳ Of that \$300,000, a maximum of \$25,000 can be used for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments.
- Eligible costs include Demolition, Electric and gas infrastructure improvements, Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, and Costs associated with the local match for the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program
- Applicants must be a municipality, a non-profit working in tandem with the





municipality, or the owner or developer of an eligible site with endorsement from the municipality

Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant

- \$4.3 million available
- \$100,000 cap on applicants
- Eligible organizations are those located in the affected community, serving the residents of an area equal to or smaller than a town or city outside of New York City, or an area equal to or smaller than one of the five boroughs within New York City
- Projects must address a community's exposure to multiple environmental harms and include a new research component that will be used to expand the knowledge of the affected community

Example: North Tonawanda Sustainable Community Project, 2019

Step 3 Implementation Projects

Following Step 2 of the BOA process, communities are eligible to apply for funding through the NYS Consolidated Funding Application to receive Step 3 BOA grant funding. At one point, Step 3 funding was a continued planning process that provided communities with details conceptual designs, guidelines and improvements within their established Step 2 BOA Study Area.

In 2019, DOS altered the Step 3 framework to be more proactive and better able to continue momentum within communities. This includes allowing municipalities who have completed their Step 2 Nomination Study to applying for funding for activities such as: feasibility studies and analysis, marketing plans, trail design, enhancement planning, connectivity strategies, predevelopment activities, site-reuse studies, and multi-modal studies.

A full list of possible projects moving forward is provided in the Implementation Matrix below. The Implementation Matrix was created to address estimated timelines, potential funding sources, estimated costs and community partners who will assist with grant implementation. Not all suggested projects can be funded through the Brownfield Opportunity alone. It is recommended that Canton, along with community partners, look to a variety of funding sources for the projects within the Implementation Matrix.



Implementation Matrix

Project Recommendation	Priority	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Estimated Costs	Funding Resources
Implementation of Bike Lane network throughout the BOA	High	4-6 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office, St. Lawrence County, NYS DOT, Complete Street Committee	Varies	NYSDOT, Surface Transportation Program (STP), Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS)
Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments	High	3-5 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office, DEC, EPA	N/A Varies per site	USEPA Brownfields Grants, DEC assessment and cleanup grants, National Grid
Canton Pavilion and Recreation Center Rehabilitation and Bend in the River Park Improvements	High	4-6 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office	\$500,000	DOS BOA Step 3 Implementation Grant, Environmental Protection Fund: Parks, Preservation and Heritage Grants, DOS LWRP
Public realm improvement plan for Riverside Drive	High	1-6 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office	\$500,000	DOS BOA Step 3 Implementation Grant, NYS DOT, Empire State Development Market New York
Jubilee Plaza Pre-Development Initiatives	High	1-3 years	Village of Canton Community & Economic Development office	\$175,000	ESD Grant Funds, Strategic Planning and Feasibility, Study Project Grants (ESD SPFS)
25, 27, 29 Pre-Development Initiatives	High	1-3 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office	\$200,000	DEC Climate Smart Communities Program (CSC)



Gouverneur Gateway Enhancements and Streetscaping	High	1-3 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office	Varies	DOS, CFA, USDOT
Former Family Dollar Pre-Development Initiatives	Medium	1-6 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office, NYS DEC, EPA	\$500,000	DOS CFA, NYS BCP, EPA Brownfields Remediation Grants
Transportation and Access Plan	Medium	1-6 years	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office, NYS DOT, Complete Streets Committee	\$100,000	DOS BOA Step 3 Implementation Grant
Cascade Inn New York Main Street Technical Assistance Grant	Medium	1 year or less	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development Office, Property owners	\$1,000 for Technical assistance grant	NYS DOT
Main Street Alley Enhancements	Low	1 year or less	Village of Canton, Community & Economic Development office	Varies	New York Main Street Grant

Figure 25: Implementation Matrix

Priority Implementation Projects

A number of projects from the Implementation Matrix were selected with assistance of the Steering Committee to be fleshed out in greater detail. From this, the Village is able to use the narratives below for future grant applications or to contribute to and strengthen other community planning documents.

Transportation and Access Plan

The Village and Town of Canton, in partnership with their residents, can actively plan transportation improvements to create a more accessible and safer circulation system for full-time residents, University students, and visitors. Current efforts are chiefly around two ongoing projects: implementation of the 2018 Master Trails Plan and implementing recommendations developed by the Complete Streets Task Force.

Both the Trails Plan and the Complete Streets Task Force made recommendations for improvements to the circulation system within the BOA boundary. From the Trails Plan these are:





Main Street at Park and Court streets

The NYSDOT has tried to assist in traffic flow improvements including pedestrian operated buttons to control lights at each corner. Difficulties persist for bicyclists, however. The Trails Plan recommends adding and adjusting sensors that recognize bikes at the intersections so the lights can change to allow them through. The plan further recommends signs and a painted box on the pavement for each traffic direction, so the cyclists can ensure they are in the line of sight of the sensors. This recommendation should be implemented.

There are other issues and concerns with multi-modal circulation on Main Street including traffic volume, noise, and volume. An exercise in the November 2019 public workshop asked participants to add Post-It notes to a poster expressing how the BOA study area sounds. The responses were almost entirely about traffic and engine brake noise. A question about how the BOA smells drew similar traffic-related input, with participants indicating that it smells like brake dust and diesel fuel.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents to the community survey strongly agreed or agreed that tractor trailer and truck traffic is a safety problem. A smaller proportion, 58%, strongly agreed or agreed that this traffic is too noisy and a slightly higher proportion, 62%, strongly agreed or agreed that there is too much tractor trailer/truck traffic. Of the 141 responses to an open-ended question about where there are traffic problems, 92 mention Main Street, including issues involving pedestrian safety and visibility, crosswalk issues, dangerous turns, and others. Every intersection on the portion of Main Street within the study area was named.

It is recommended that the Village and NYSDOT address Main Street as a community safety and quality-of-life issue. The community has been involved in a conversation about the potential of a new road bypassing downtown for years. Even if a feasible alignment on which the community can come to consensus is identified, funding is unlikely given the overwhelming needs of existing infrastructure for maintenance and repairs. Therefore, Main Street solutions will have to take place on Main Street. These include providing incentives for the truck traffic to find its own ways to bypass the Village on alternative routes such as such as NY 37 and Ontario Highway 401. Narrowing the travel lanes so that traffic is forced to go slowly, lowering the Main Street speed limit to 20 miles per hour between Gouverneur Street and Romoda Drive (outside of the study area), along with robust enforcement could trigger this intended outcome. The community can also pass a truck noise ordinance, and outfit police cars with simple noise meters to aid in enforcement. Even if traffic volumes are not reduced, Canton can be known as a community that takes Main Street serenity seriously. There is nothing wrong with gaining a reputation as a speed- and noise-trap community.





Riverside Drive Intersection with Chapel Street and State Street

Riverside Drive is one of the Village's highest-volume streets with an excess of 5,000 cars daily. Chapel and State streets come together in a "V" intersection at the same point with which they intersect with Riverside Drive. This is an unsafe and potentially deadly configuration made even more dangerous with the senior citizens high rise residence's exit drive directly across the street. The Trails Plan recommends a minor adjustment of Chapel Street to meet State Street perpendicular to the current alignment just east of the Riverside Drive intersection. The graphic depiction in the Trails Plans appears not to require any real estate from 24 Chapel St., but a survey would have to be done as part of design and the necessary negotiations carried out if there is a taking. The Trails Plan concept could increase by a sliver the former Bell's property, currently a redevelopment parcel. This recommendation should be promoted for additional study.

The development of a passive park on Riverside Drive on the parcel where the former nightclub was recently demolished is depicted in the Trails Plan. There should absolutely be a shoreline trail alongside the Grasse River, as showed in the Trails Plan. But with so much land off the tax rolls in Canton already, development of additional public parks should not be supported. This trail should be developed but without the proposed passive park.

Complete Streets Task Force Recommendations

The Complete Streets ordinance helps the community apply sound multi-modal access principles across its entire road network. Complete Streets make sense and having the ordinance makes the local jurisdiction accountable even when state and federal funding is not used in transportation enhancement projects. Within the BOA boundary, the Task Force names "small" projects that could have major impacts. These include:

Main Street

- [NYSDOT signal light calibration](#)
- [Bicycle "trigger" markings at intersections](#)
- [Left turn marking for Riverside Drive eastbound from Main Street](#)
- [Bicycle "hoops" for parking meters](#)
- [NYSDOT signal light calibration and bicycle trigger markings as recommended by the Trails Plan](#)
- [In cooperation with Town of Canton, shoulder markings for pedestrian and cyclists](#)





Park Street

- Restore lane/sharrow markings from the railroad tracks to the edge of the Village (technically outside of the boundary)

Village Park and Park Place

- Installation (or at least repaint and sign) handicap parking space(s)

Park Street and Park Place

- Revision of proposal to modify traffic flow & parking

These recommendations should be implemented and should be extended throughout the study area where feasible and appropriate. Main Street recommendations that can also be implemented on Gouverneur Street within the Village should be identified.

Gouverneur Street Gateway Enhancements


The Gouverneur Street Gateway is one of St. Lawrence County's busiest corridors with almost 7,700 cars entering the Village from the south on Route 11 each day. This was once a thriving mixed-use corridor with homes, local businesses and services including the local bakery, one of Canton's two lumber yards and a car dealership. Over the years the character of the corridor has eroded. It lacks defined curb cuts, and features narrow sidewalks, few streetscape amenities, and no bike lanes. There are some deteriorating vacant and underutilized properties. The Gouverneur Street Gateway can be a welcoming image for the Village of Canton. It should communicate a sense of prosperity and vitality. A greener, cleaner and more comfortable atmosphere will naturally calm traffic and result in increased property values.

Members of the steering committee and interested members of the public participated in an interactive site tour of the Gouverneur Street corridor in November 2019. They departed from the Cascade Inn parking lot and traveled to the rail trestle just outside the Village line.

When the group returned to the intersection at Main and Gouverneur streets the traffic noise forced them to retreat to the Cascade Inn parking lot for a post-tour debrief. They had a difficult time crossing Main Street and noted that Dwight Church Park is all but lost in all the intersection activity. Members of the tour group wondered whether the intersection could accommodate a roundabout. While the real estate may be available, the grade changes may rule it out.

Overall, the group found the corridor unfriendly and unwelcoming. The public realm needs attention focused on multi-modal circulation, gateway and entry features and landscape design.





This high-volume traffic corridor is also a large employment center that is visited by people coming to do business and keep appointments, but a Stewart's Shop and the redeveloped Dairy Queen are the only retail/food outlets on the corridor. The Village should develop public realm design standards for Gouverneur Street including sidewalk and bike lane, street furniture and appurtenances, green infrastructure, rain garden and storm water management; and curb cut and parking lot standards. These standards should be extended to other corridors in the study area including Riverside Drive, Park Street, Miner Street, Hodskin Street and, of course, Main Street.

Gateway enhancements will improve the overall look of the corridor that has been dealing with issues of vacancy for years. Gateway improvements could be imperative to new development on brownfield inventory sites. The more welcoming and pedestrian friendly a corridor is, the higher chance of people wanting to live in the area.

Cascade Inn New York Main Street Technical Assistance Grant


The iconic Cascade Inn motel and restaurant with its appealingly retro downstairs watering hole, the Buccaneer Lounge (the Buc) is a Canton landmark. The building has presided over the intersection of Gouverneur and Main streets at the gateway to downtown for more than 50 years. Although it is not vacant and operations are ongoing, the Cascade Inn is underutilized in terms of its potential.

Due to age, it is in need of investment and with an aging and dwindling customer base, the owners may lack the necessary capital. The Village of Canton can help. Pending availability of funds, the Village of Canton should apply for a New York Main Street Technical Assistance grant from New York Homes and Community Renewal to support the owner of the Cascade Inn. The grant would be used to hire consultants to help determine the best course of action to renovate and update the property, identify its most pressing needs, and develop a business plan for operations going forward.

The Technical Assistance grant could provide up to \$20,000 to improve readiness for a future New York Main Street Anchor project. The applicant – Village or a qualified non-profit – must commit to a 5 percent cash match or at least \$1,053 that could ultimately leverage \$625,000 or more in public and private funds – none of these from the Village – to revitalize interior and exterior spaces of the Cascade Inn, including facades, access, roofs, building systems, and interior spaces.

Eligible activities under the Technical Assistance grant program are described below. Note that more complete guidelines are available in the NYS Main Street handbook available online and precedent projects can be reviewed here: <https://hcr.ny.gov/new-york-main-street-technical-assistance-nyms-ta-completed-projects>. The InSite Architecture study for 144-116 Montcalm St., Ticonderoga, completed in January 2019





is particularly relevant to the Cascade (the grant for the study was \$19,950).

An important objective of the building re-use/feasibility analysis Technical Assistance program is to prepare grantees for the **Downtown Anchor** or the **Target Area Building Renovation** grant program. Through the Technical Assistance grant project, the owner of the anchor building can fully develop a building improvement plan including designs and cost estimates, a business plan and financing strategy. This sets the stage for a ready-to-go anchor project that will be completed within the required two-year timeframe. Applicants can request between \$100,000 and \$500,000. The funds are deployed as a reimbursement grant not to exceed 75% of the project cost. Soft costs of up to 18% of the overall application amount can also be included in the grant request to cover design, engineering, and environmental review.

The match can come from building owners or from Federal or State community development or economic development programs, investors, or bank loans. Coordination of applications with other programs is encouraged. Aside from any cost of preparing the grant, there is no cost to the municipal or qualified non-profit applicant for implementing the grant. Applicants can include an additional 7.5% of the total amount for which it applies to assist with administration, either to cover its own salaries and other administrative costs or to hire a consultant to do it for them.

If liquid capital or bank financing are not adequate to cover the working capital needed for the renovation project, there are options available. Tax credits are available for renovations of historic properties and the Cascade Inn may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is unclear if and somewhat unlikely that the Restore NY program will be funded, but if it is, the Cascade could be eligible.

Another avenue of fundraising is online crowdfunding. There are two kinds of crowdfunding websites. The first seeks acts of direct charity, the second is for investors

On the first, individuals are invited to make cash donations toward a cause; donors do not hold a stake in the project being funded. There have been wildly successful campaigns, including a recent one that raised \$1.2 million more than double its \$500,000 goal for a family-owned gluten- and dairy-free restaurant operation in Roswell, GA. Success like that requires a very compelling story. Having a well-connected person to launch the campaign, in this case the founder of Humans of New York, also helps.

The other kind of crowdfunding is a mechanism for attracting investors. These sites may be purely investment-driven or may also have a social mission. They cast a wide net by offering small and average investors access to a kind of investment vehicle – real estate – that used to be available only to wealthy individuals and companies. They are federally regulated and the projects they list are well vetted. They also have fee structures.



A compelling story can certainly be told about the Cascade and the need to preserve and revitalize this important landmark. And with an expertly developed business plan and strategy, it may well attract investors. The owner may find both crowdfunding strategies worth exploring.

Canton Pavilion and Recreation Center Rehabilitation and Bend in the River Park Improvements

The Village of Canton Pavilion and Recreation Center is a crucial part of Bend in the River Park and an asset to the Canton community. Canton is known to be a hub for hosting sports tournaments and events throughout the year, especially within the winter months surrounding hockey. As such, it is important that their recreation facilities and parks reflect their identity as a destination for year-round gathering and sporting events. The building contains the Canton Ice Rink as well as the Recreation Offices for the Village.



The state of the Park’s current Pavilion and Recreation Center is outdated and worn with signs of visible wear and tear surrounding the exterior of the building. The building is also the first thing visitors and community members see when they enter the Park from the north on Lincoln Street. As such, the Pavilion and Recreation Center needs significant exterior and gateway improvements in order to maintain and increase the visitor ship to the Park and to the Village of Canton for events and tournaments.



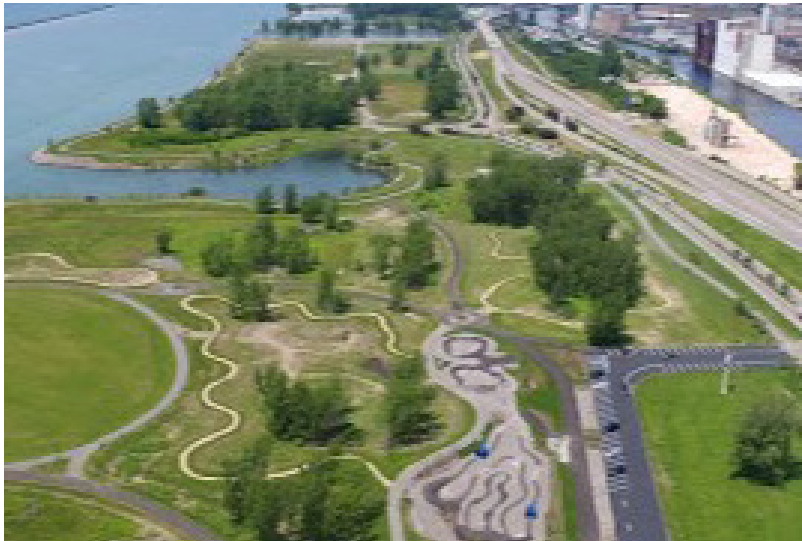
Suggested improvements to the Pavilion and Recreation Center include streetscaping and new sidewalks leading to the Park, façade improvements, new signage for the building, wayfinding signage within the downtown, lighting improvements and parking lot improvements such as striping and plantings.



Updates to the Recreation Center and Pavilion can also include accessibility improvements as well as outdoor seating areas with benches and tables.

Costs vary for facility assessments and improvements. It is suggested the Village first address relocation of the salt pile north of the Pavilion while simultaneously working with a firm to assess the current structures and improvements to the park and available recreational opportunities.

Bend in the River has seen a number of updates including paved trails and new benches but there is still a large swath of vacant land owned by the Village within the Park that isn't used for either active or passive recreation. The vacant land is located just north of the baseball diamond and south of the Atlantic Testing facility.



It is suggested that the Village start the process of transforming this area of land into an outdoor bike park as a second Phase to its Bend in the River Park improvements. Outdoor Bike Park and recreational bicycling have become increasingly popular within the 20th century. An outdoor bike park would encourage increased active recreation within the park and ongoing multi-modal initiatives within the Village. It also has the capability to bring in visitors from outside of the immediate area within the Village and local parks.

Outdoor Bike Parks can include a number of amenities such as paved and gravel trails, plantings, benches, and bike racks. They are also a way to incorporate public art and a place to hold small family gatherings, festivals and birthday parties.

Since the project is described in two phases it is suggested that the Village of Canton explore supplemental funding sources outside of the Brownfield Opportunity Area program such as the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and funding Environmental Protection Fund Parks, Preservation and Heritage Grants.

Riverside Drive Public Realm Improvement Plan

The Village of Canton has been continuously working on transforming Riverside Drive into an active corridor within the community. As it seeks to expand the traditional downtown outside of Main Street and draw people to the waterfront along Riverside Drive, a focus on the public realm is a crucial piece of the puzzle. Leveraging views of the Grasse River and redeveloping vacant space such as 25,27, 29 Riverside Drive, 24 and 30 Riverside Drive will assist in molding the corridor into an active, multi-modal





thoroughfare, where community members both live and gather.

As part of a focus on a public realm design plan and efforts to revitalize Riverside Drive, the Village of Canton should identify elements that tie the community together through streets, sidewalks and trails, as well as thematically. Public realm design elements can include:

- Interpretive signage/ kiosks – to highlight the community’s heritage and destinations
- Lighting – to add elements of delight and increase perceptions of safety and security
- Plants, plantings and trees – to delight the eye and provide shade
- Post flags/ banners – to celebrate the community and add interest
- Public art – to showcase the artists and artisans who live in the area and celebrate the community’s heritage
- Site furnishings – Including moveable seating such as Adirondack chairs
- Wayfinding – To organize the community for visitors, direct visitors to destinations within and outside of downtown and to encourage walking

Currently, many of the above items are not present on Riverside Drive. The current lighting isn’t tailored for pedestrians, there are gaps in the sidewalk and there are no plantings or seating options. With senior housing just north of the Study Area and located on Riverside Drive, improvements to the streetscaping are crucial to ensure the Village remains age-friendly and allows all community members to participate in civic activity.

Through the plan, the Village can engage the public and commercial building and potential new business owners to identify ways to customize the streetscape to provide space and opportunities for the culture of commercial districts to spill out onto the sidewalk and fully “own” the street. The plan should reflect Canton’s culture and history along the Grasse River.

Public real design plans can vary in cost ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000. For the BOA, the Village of Canton should apply for \$25,000 in funding to complete a public realm design plan for Riverside Drive.



A blue-tinted photograph of an industrial facility, likely a mill, with various structures and pipes.

Phasing

Having a phasing timeline for redevelopment throughout the Village of Canton is a helpful tool to stay on track and implement new major projects or improvements at an appropriate speed. The Village of Canton has a rich history along the Grasse River in its industrial with its ties to past mill operations which provided an ample number of jobs as well as allowed the area to flourish economically. After many mill operations moved out of the North Country and the vacancies that resulted in it, the Village of Canton had to move forward without a cohesive redevelopment plan.

The proposed phasing outlines projects that are High and Medium priority and then broken down into estimated time frame following the completion of the Step 2 BOA Nomination Study. It should be noted that some steps have already been taken or are being taken in the near future for a number of the projects listed below.

High Priority

1-3 years

- Jubilee Plaza Pre-Development Initiatives
- 25, 27, 29 Riverside Drive Pre-Development Initiatives
- Gouverneur Gateway Enhancements and Streetscaping

1-6 years

- Public Realm Improvement Plan – Riverside Drive

4-6 years

- Implementation of Bike Lane network within the BOA
- Pavilion and Recreation Center Rehabilitation and Bend in the River Park Improvements

Medium Priority

1 year or less

- Cascade Inn New York Main Street Technical Assistant Grant

1-6 years

- Former Family Dollar Pre-Development Initiatives
- Transportation and Access Plan

Low Priority

1 year or less

- Main Street Alley Enhancements

