

To kick off the Main Street Economic Development Strategy, the City of Poughkeepsie, along with the Land Use Law Center, hosted a public outreach session on Tuesday, October 14th. A team of facilitators and urban planners from the Center reviewed preliminary planning concepts and took public comments.

The Main Street Economic Development Strategy hopes to advance the conceptual ideas into a concrete set of transportation and land use improvements during the coming year. The purpose of this strategy is to reactivate the entire length of the Main Street corridor and reassert Poughkeepsie as the economic and cultural center of the Hudson Valley. It will capitalize on all of Poughkeepsie's assets while redressing enduring concerns about building vacancy, crime, public safety, open space, and the underutilization of land.

Action #1: Introduce Frequent Transit Service Along Main Street

Pros:

- Service all the way to water
- Extension to Shadows along waterfront – this is a nice option with current route
- Connects college students to downtown
- Frequent, high speed, reliable
- Consistency is good for commuting
- Transit could be FUN, interactive, vibrant
- City could rent a trolley from Grandview to test out
- Revenue opportunity for city
- Allows easy transit from train to downtown
- Connects Vassar students to train station
- Connects with waterfront with TOD
- Could bring more customers downtown from Vassar
- Will help residents along Main Street corridor get jobs
- Local businesses could advertise on bus routes/stops
- Connects anchor assets such as waterfront and Vassar
- Some kind of metro card could encourage more use/ease for tourists – reloadable
- Visitor center opportunity near train station
- Cable car from Waryas Park to Market Street? Tourist attraction
- Bus shelters – solar illuminated/local art work, more shelters
- Complete street design on Main
- Easy to use, with clear stops and signage with times
- Convenient to get from river to Vassar. Don't need car.
- Opens up opportunity for people to come in
- Place making on Main Street will draw people to Main Street
- Trolley ties into POK history unique, captivating, tourism
- Grandview trolley and county trolley are fun
- Affordable
- Easy to implement soon
- Brings people to main street
- May remove vehicle traffic and encourage more public transit
- Connects people from town to city
- Connects to Vassar – could integrate them better into city
- Frequency of stops
- Bus stops designated, shelters
- Businesses could sponsor shelters – local arts organization

- Vassar pays student fares = increased participation

Cons/Suggestions:

- How do we connect to Marist and DCC? CIA?
- Doesn't go to job centers/residences
- Will it connect to other bus system?
- Too many stops in too short a space
- Need designated bus stops
- Spacing undermines speed BRT = ½ mile
- Needs to integrate with other systems
- Transit is expensive. Do we have enough people to support it? Chicken & egg.
- This route misses 44/55 shopping centers
- Affordability – how to pay/who pays? City?
- Needs to be part of broader transportation plan
- Doesn't connect directly to walkway
- For tourism – needs to connect to all attractions
- What is the goal? Needs to connect to existing networks
- Transportation master plan
- How are businesses benefiting?
- What is streetscape? How are stops designed?
- Could there be a free-ride zone?
- How many stops? Frequency?
- Schedule – will it serve 9 – 5, dinnertime and 2am crowds?
- How does it connect to 44/55 shopping centers?
- How does it connect to walkway
- This route cuts out current Main Street service. Might need 2 bus routes
- Consider connection out to 44/55 shopping centers
- How does it connect to DCC and dorms? Also Marist?
- Needs to be fully accessible
- Consider integrating county and city systems into one
- Needs afterhours service
- Route to Arlington could take people away from city
- Crime needs to be addressed for success
- Will this prevent car traffic? Is the street wide enough?
- How does it interact with other bus systems and transfer?
- How to tie in Marist, walkway
- Needs to be price competitive with taxi service, late night service to Marist
- Right-of-way needs – how to accommodate all uses?
- How can it connect to Marist
- Not all needs can currently be met on Main St
- Bike safety factored into increased bus traffic
- Could there be free fares for students? Free fare zone?
- What incentives to use bus? (ex. Grocery stores validate fare)
- Bike racks on bus
- Maintenance of shelters

Action #2: Transform Market Street into a Complete Street

Pros:

- Converting two-way is hugely important
- Various crosswalks will slow traffic down
- Solar illuminated bus shelters, more of bus shelters with artwork
- Solar operated trash cans
- Bike share
- Visitor center at downtown, walkway, Waryas Park/train station
- Need community development to bring people to area
- Need to do something
- Streetscape improvement
- Bump outs
- Trees
- Food truck experience
- Signage
- More ped/bike friendly
- Two way traffic
- Creates walkability – need bi-direction (Church & Mill)
- Eliminate weave for environment then have parking at Civic Center
- Walkability brings people
- Coordinate with mass transit
- Access to Route 9 from Mill St to minimize traffic
- Make N-S bike lane – bring people to
- Main St hub
- City Hall
- Many connections
- Great idea
- Take small steps to make it happen
- At intersection put traffic circle
- Land near traffic intersection can have housing/development
- Many positives of having Market two-way
- Eliminating weave is great
- Phase it – do it quick
- Like it – can show people small change – make it cheap but make physical change (planters, paint)

Cons/Suggestions:

- Extend to library and Vassar and DCC
- Converting Columbus into two-ways impact on Market
- Two way difficulty crossing
- How to include bus /transit frequent into complete street
- How to incorporate public art
- Bike experience integrated with full plan – waterfront
- Funding to get it done (state and federal)
- Need leadership

- No T intersection traffic issues
- Include Main, Columbus, Market to be ped friendly
- Include from mansion to mall (post office to library)
- Where can bike happen on Market
- City bike plan
- Connect full bike experience – scenic Hudson (walkway) – metro-north
- Address paid parking/limited parking/parking lots – incorporate into plan
- Number of car lanes
- Traffic issue on market
- Other streets may benefit more from “complete”
- Where would parking be
- Already walkable
- Eliminating weave would add traffic
- Complete street must go beyond arterials (post office to YMCA to walkway)
- Funding
- N/S connection seems expensive negative perception
- Have more human engagement and infrastructure
- Think of people who are here – how keep them here
- Dropping Route 9 near train- Blvd. it
- Street names need continuity
- Negative perception that traffic would happen if two-way
- Where would bike lane end and where it goes – where future connections can be
- Making Church St dominate arterial – may eliminate traffic at Main however might increase the by passing of City Center
- Traffic circle instead of T

Action #3: Convert the Arterials into Boulevards

Pro:

- Raymond Ave worked well, good example
- Complete streets should be applied
- Pedestrian access is good
- Integrate short-term parking for retail uses
- Parking for visitors and green space and pocket park
- Green stormwater solution
- Increasing access good – it makes it easier for visitors
- Turning lanes good – historically passing the city was difficult
- Creating more options for E/W traffic flow
- Better pedestrian flow
- Use of mass transit is good
- Pedestrian/bicycle flow
- Bike lanes – must have slow traffic
- Two way traffic
- Bike parking
- Physical separation of bike lane
- Like concept but need state approval
- Smaller/test phase could be good (paint)
- All concepts here good: bike lanes, slow traffic, visually narrow lanes
- State should be sensitive to bypassing state park “walkway” and resources
- Likes removing barrier to downtown
 - Would like to preserve residential mature and neighborhood character
 - Could buffer strip to be added
 - Zoning address uses
- Starting small - demonstration

Cons/Suggestions:

- Bridge traffic
- Route 55 is a barrier – extend conversion to market
- Add murals and public art to slow traffic
- Crosswalk signals needs to be addressed
- Can N/S streets be designed to carry traffic faster (wider st)
- Bridge traffic/rush hour – where does traffic go
- To east in existing residential parking is challenging
- Solution should be low cost/maintenance
- CHAOS!
- Bridge traffic
- Bike lane/pedestrian connectivity
- Bike routes should be marked
- Existing roads are big pedestrian barrier
- High speed degrading property value
- 55/the T intersection needs to be included
- “city wide” holistic view of traffic circulation

- Consider “1” highway- eminent domain houses
- Time for a change – two-way traffic
- Change message from “slow traffic” to value this project brings – discuss holistic traffic flow
- Define beginning and end
 - From Route 9 to Raymond
 - Taft Ave to 44 and 55 to Arlington
 - As far east as possible
- Must restore residential character of 5th, 7th, 4th, north side (all residential areas touching arterial)
- Really like improving pedestrian access, median, bike lane
- From walkway to Main St – need plenty of ways to stop autos to permit pedestrian
- Roundabout
- This is very important – arterials currently hurt city
- Route 55 T
- Market survey of transit needs (MTA Study)

Action #4: Restore Main Street as the Region's Primary Commercial Corridor

Pros:

- Make unique
- Connect to walkway
- Community center
- Start with Main Street
- Form and identity of neighborhood = attract investors
- Maximize impact of art organizations in POK
- Have unique stores along the street – draw factor
- We should use buildings that we already have
- Have active mixed-use with artists
- Create neighborhood mural project on large scale
- Use private-public partnership to fund creative uses – create crosswalks with art & color
- Using banks and sharing costs
- Repair Main St sidewalks
- Improve streetscape – lighting, gardens with local horticulture groups
- Install more trash cans
- Pop-up cinemas and art
- Food trucks – taste of POK – healthy and fresh foods
- Appeal for neighbors
- Bikes/bike lanes/bike education
- Using partnerships
- Business incentive program – economic development program from city/county – POK open for business
- Have pop up uses – films, food
- Make One Civic Center Plaza public space
- Use PPS power of IO
- Promote businesses (many don't have websites)
- Strategies: flyer for walkway elevator users with map, big downtown attraction
- Entice with low rent
- To increase Main Street foot traffic, increase property values, sales tax, etc. Eliminate having parking in rear of Bardavon. People will walk West on Main to the anchor stores and recognize Main Street for its destination. Main and Market Street is a destination. Make them walk past satellite stores to reach anchor stores.
- Bring some new-age businesses to the Main Street Corridor to enable more investors, stakeholders and consumers. Shops, breweries, restaurants, nightlife and other things that give energy and change to Poughkeepsie are needed

Cons/Suggestions:

- Crime and comfort
- Lighting
- Trash
- Lack of streetscape
- Parking – over/under utilized
- Civic Center underutilized

- Need planning department
- Need rezoning for commercial
- Have unique stores along the street that do not displace
- 191 building is not vacant
- Plan should stress cleanliness and safety and crime and community policing
- Include lighting with no light pollution
- How will this part of the plan address crime
- Plan should connect with residents to provide education, training and safety
- Absentee landlords
- Poor trash management
- Food truck zoning
- Crime
- Have clean and safe campaign in MM
- Have movement now in plan to keep anchor businesses
- Create longer narrative in plan
- How does my afternoon on Main make me want to stay there
- Plan stops short – should keep going to grand
- Pedestrian friendly sidewalks and streets
- Concentrate resources to make impact – clustered phases (e.g. Beacon)
- Have public-private partnership – market with large firms in NYC
- Plan should have business development corp – group them all together
- Create pedestrian environment
- Include nightlife in plan
- Attract millennials
- Notion of CDC is vague
- Connect to LED lighting project
- Struggle with terminology
- Emphasize mixed-use – retail, prof business, office space
- Plan should use arterials to pull people into Main St
- Plan should address parking meter issues and ticketing – have parking validation

Action #5: Convert Vacant Lots Into Transit-Oriented Housing

Pros:

- Residential density downtown (24 hrs/day)
- Safety
- \$ investment/ideas
- Draw interest in community
- Interactive destinations
- Usable green-space
- Accommodate growing demographic groups
- Mixed income downtown housing
- Senior housing/integration
- Higher density
- Anti-sprawl
- Neighborhood safety
- Walkability
- Positive tax implications
- Creates a market downtown
- Open space/parks
- Green buildings
- Cultural tourism/interactive sites
- Programming
- Fill vacancy
- Community gardens
- Mixed income housing
- Enhanced transit hub
- Neighborhood safety
- Destination for young pro's
- Student housing
- Student transit facilitation

Cons/Suggestions:

- Funding public transit?
- Zoning limitations?
- Parking limitations (zoning)
- Parking analysis (Main St @ full capacity)
- Easily accessible transit system
- Innovative parking systems
- Vacant buildings privately owned
- Housing quality control
- Displacement sensitivity
- Vassar on campus only
- Taxpayers \$
- Parking lot use (snow)
- Ignores private vacancy
- Gentrification

- Long-term implementation
- Address neighborhood safety
- Is the market demand there?
- Address cleanliness
- Summer vacancy
- Lack of city planning staff

Strategies:

- Design connections (boardwalk)
- Mixed income and intergenerational housing
- Structure development to promote “nicer’ housing
- Smaller units
- Student housing
- Open space/gardens
- Broad purpose
- Anchor/attraction
- Create jobs
- Food trucks
- Land bank
- Community building
- Diversification of population (income)
- Student involvement/jobs
- Farmer’s market
- Parking perception management
- Institutional housing
- Transit connection to Marist
- Community building
- Artist housing/space
- Thematic district
- Anchor destination