

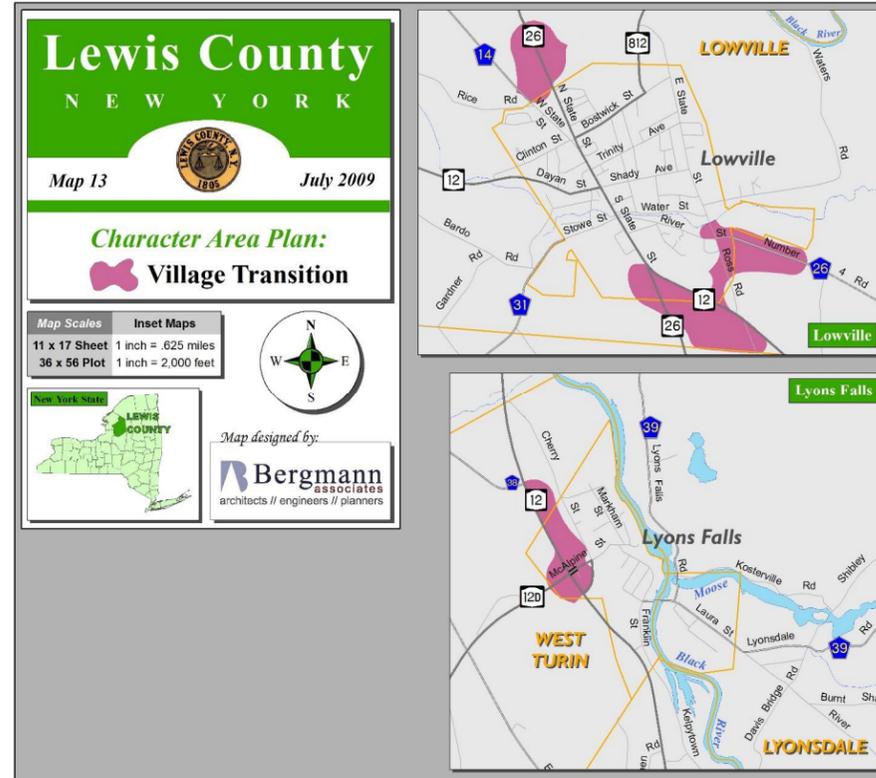


VILLAGE TRANSITION CHARACTER AREA

Overview

Beyond the boundaries of the Village Center and Village Living Character Areas is a transitional zone of commercial activity that lies between urbanized areas and surrounding farmlands, forests, and rural-residential areas. While a few villages in Lewis County contain an occasional business that fits into the Village Transition category, only the north and south side of Lowville and the west side of Lyons Falls contain a concentration of such uses that form a distinct Character Area. These areas, though quite small in size, are somewhat suburban in character. The south side of Lowville in particular contains a small collection of national chain restaurants and retailers, as well as some residences that are different in character than those found in villages.

This character area should be cognizant of the surrounding rural land use patterns while providing opportunities for development of a scope and scale different from that of the Village Center. Whereas the Village Center provides a greater density of services and development, commercial development within the Village Transition Character Area includes larger, predominantly single-story buildings on large parcels with greater setbacks from the



road and increased distances between adjacent properties. Most properties are designed exclusively for access by automobile, although the Village and Town of Lowville have constructed a sidewalk along Route 12 through this area to enhance pedestrian connectivity.

All areas currently undeveloped within Village Transition Character Areas have been identified as locations for potential growth and development. For example, the Village Transition areas outside of the Village Center in Lowville contains a good deal of space for future retail and commercial expansion. The Route 12 corridor outside of Lyons Falls also contains areas capable of absorbing new development into the foreseeable future. The identification of areas for potential growth differentiates the Village Transition and Village Living character areas from the others, and permits development in locations most beneficial to Lewis County communities.



Examples of transitional corridors outside of Lewis County. The top corridor depicts desirable design aspects such as shared and cross access, while the bottom example shows conventional transitional corridor development patterns.



Contrasting architectural styles outside Lewis County. The left building features architectural elements that compliment the area's rural and agricultural heritage, while the right example is typical of auto-oriented development with limited attention to overall design.

Recommended Land Uses

Typical land uses recommended within this Character Area include retail, restaurants, convenience retail, office, and residential. Towns and villages should consider working together on land use regulations and design guidelines for these districts so that Village Transition areas do not compete directly with Village Centers.

Gateways

Gateway areas should denote a sense of arrival and provide a distinct transition point between adjacent village and rural areas. Gateways should be located at both ends of the Village Transitional Character Area to denote that motorists are entering a uniquely separate part of Lewis County. Gateway designations should be improved through the use of signage, landscaping, and streetscape enhancements.

The suburban nature of existing uses in the Village Transitional areas hinders the possibility of creating a scale and density consistent with Village Center Character Areas. However, future development should strive to uphold certain principles found in village cores, including sidewalks and other pedestrian connections between businesses, shorter building setbacks, tree-lined streets, and parking lots in the rear or side yards. Municipalities should consider the development of modest design guidelines for building form, site design, parking placement, and pedestrian connectivity to enhance the continuity of development with adjacent areas.



The graphic above depicts a potential gateway scenario in the Village of Lowville at the intersection of Routes 12 and 26. Improvements could include the addition of grass medians, trees, landscaping, and gateway signage welcoming motorists into the heart of the village.

Design Considerations

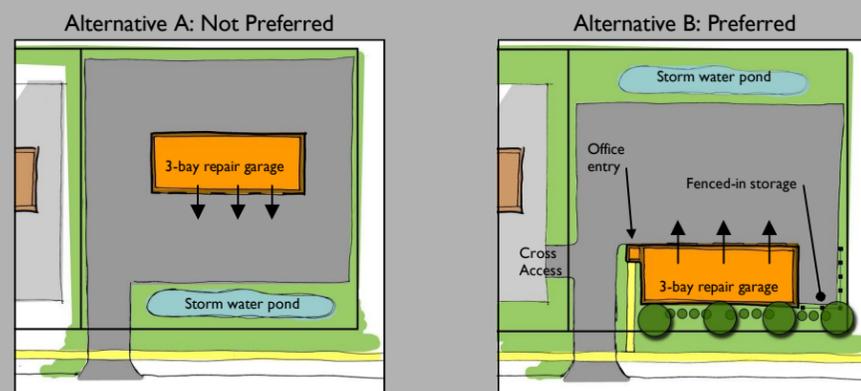
Primary design considerations within the Village Transitional characters areas deal with the interaction of pedestrians and vehicles, as well as the built form of new development. The areas along the outskirts of town and village centers tend to be automobile dominated, and offer little connectivity and access for pedestrians. As well, the design character is typically at odds with the historical development patterns currently in place or adjacent to the district. As a result, new development appears out of scale and place, and is difficult to access other than by car.

Municipalities should make a concerted effort to extend existing sidewalk networks along the transportation corridor in Village Transition areas. In the event that fiscal constraints dictate that only one side of the roadway shall receive sidewalks, adequately striped crosswalks should provide cross access at appropriate locations. The provision of an expanded shoulder, either by restriping or additional pavement, on the opposite side of single-sidewalk roadways would be beneficial to providing enhanced pedestrian and bicyclist safety along the corridor. In addition to sidewalk accessibility along the right-of-way, developers and property owners should be encouraged to provide sidewalk connections from principal building entrances to the sidewalk system, improving corridor connectivity, safety, and appearance.

Guidelines for Development

The graphics below depict two development scenarios that are often found in transitional corridors. The hypothetical building below is a 3-bay automobile repair/service garage typically found in the transitional corridor setting. Alternative A can be considered conventional development practices, whereby the building is surrounded by paved areas and disconnected from the street. Due to large required setbacks that move buildings and development away from the street, storm water ponds are often placed in front yards for efficient use of available land.

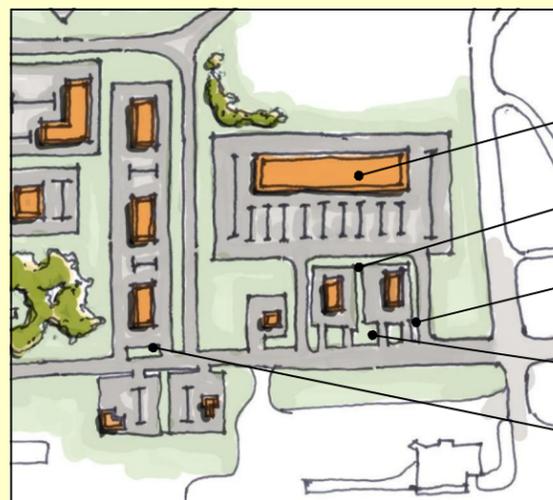
Alternative B locates the building close to the right-of-way, and connects the business office area with the sidewalk area along the road. The storm water pond is located in the rear of the property, and a majority of the site's parking is behind the building, with the service bays facing the rear of the property. Additionally, cross access to the adjacent parcel is created, reducing the number of turning movements onto the roadway. Finally, the front of the parcel is enhanced with landscaping and trees, improving its appearance from the street.



Development in the Village Transition Character Area should strive to improve access management through limitations on the number and frequency of curb cuts, as well as the promotion of shared access, parking, and cross access between adjacent parcels. A reduction in the number of vehicular trips on public and private drives will also lead to a decrease in the number of accidents and traffic volumes. See the sidebar below for more information on access management in the Village Transition Character Areas.

The design of development within these zones should provide high quality built form, and should attempt to minimize the visual impact of parking lots, loading areas, and storage yards. Architectural styles should take cues from vernacular buildings, including the use of pitched roofs, multi-story buildings, and added detailing around entryways, windows, and doors. The placement of buildings and parking areas is also important to the visual appeal of the corridor for both pedestrians and motorists. Buildings should be pushed close to the corridor right-of-way, and parking areas should be encouraged to the sides and rear of buildings, with occasional exceptions made for a single convenience row of parking between the building and roadway. Landscaping and trees should be provided in the front yard to enhance curb appeal and better define the shape of the roadway. For additional information, see the sidebars below and at left.

Option A: Conventional Development Scenario



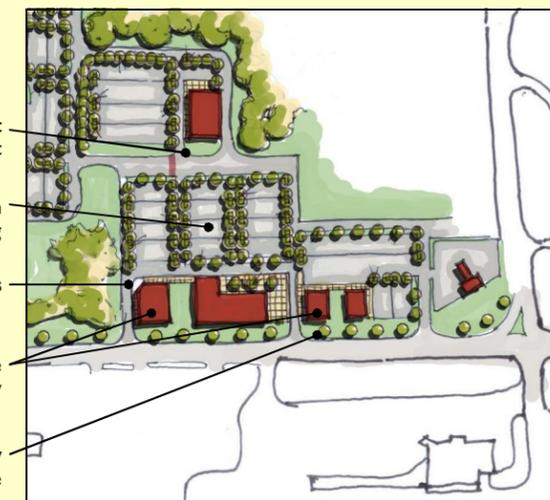
- Buildings lack relationship to road
- No shared parking or cross access
- Lack of shared access
- Lack of landscaping
- Multiple driveways

Access Management

The two graphics presented here offer contrasting scenarios relative to access management for development along a rural corridor. The scenario at left is typical of conventional development, with multiple driveways for each development, a lack of shared access, a lack of cross access, and no shared parking. The scenario at right is a modified approach, bringing the buildings closer to the roadway, and placing parking areas behind the structures. Parking is shared, and accessed via shared drives. The reduction in the number of driveways improves safety along the corridor for both motorists and pedestrians by providing fewer potential conflict points.

In Lewis County Village Transitional Areas, development should strive to achieve the form of Option B. Development in this manner will provide a smoother transition from Village Center to Rural Living Character Areas, while improving the sense of place for these busy corridors.

Option B: Preferred Development Scenario



- Cross access with adjacent development
- Shared parking lots with landscaping
- Shared driveways
- Relationship to road helps provide good structure to roadway
- Landscaping along roadway frontage