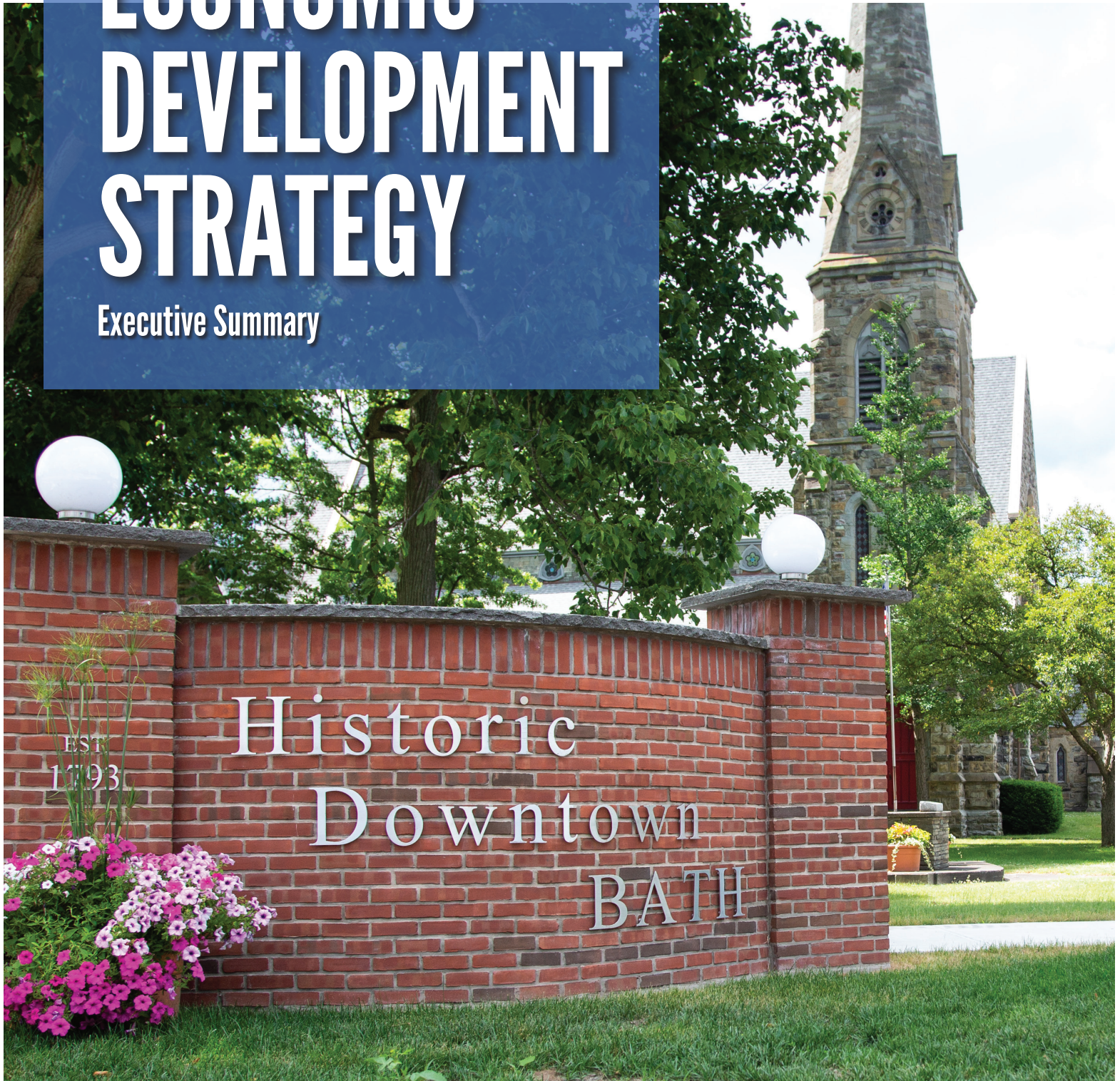


December 2020

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Executive Summary



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I. INTRODUCTION

The Village has created this Economic Development Strategic Plan that focuses on two zones: the Liberty Street Historic District and I86 Exit 38 Gateway District.

Background, Objectives and Acknowledgements

The Village of Bath has experienced significant changes over the past decade. The net effect of these changes has reduced quality and quantity in housing and commercial real estate investment, retail operations, lodging, and food and beverage options. Consequently, the Village struggles for relevancy with major consumer groups such as downtown workers, residents of the Village and Town of Bath, area residents, the traveling public, and regional tourists.

At the same time the Village has retained and continues to improve key assets that help create positive change. The Village has created this Economic Development Strategic Plan that focuses on two development zones: the Liberty Street Historic District and I86 Exit 38 Gateway District.

Economic data, business analytics, knowledge and insights of the consulting team, and the opinions and experiences of business owners, investors and stakeholders in the Village form the basis of this Economic Development Strategic Action Plan.

Strategic Priorities

1. Strengthen Real Property Tax Base
2. Become a Destination by Leveraging Assets
3. Attract Public and Private Investment
4. Grow Customer Base



Both zones have development
OPPORTUNITIES



The Village of Bath is making positive progress in assembling these ingredients through planning, completed projects, and routine maintenance of the assets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan has been developed with generous and collaborative efforts of many.
We wish to thankfully acknowledge the following:

Village of Bath Economic Development Committee:

Mike Sweet	Village of Bath	Mayor & Committee Chairperson
William von Hagn	Village of Bath	Former Mayor
Jeanne Glass	Village of Bath	Deputy Mayor
Mark Alger	Village of Bath	Resident
Mitch Alger	BEGWS	Assist. Director of Municipal Utilities
Erin Bonacci	BEGWS	Director of Municipal Utilities
Amy Dlugos	Steuben County Planning	Director of Planning
Kelly Fitzpatrick	Steuben County. Legislature	Rep. District 3 (Bath)
Brad Hill	Village of Bath	Code Enforcement Officer
Jamie Johnson	Steuben County IDA	Executive Director
Robin Lattimer	Steuben Co. Legislature	Rep. District 3 (Bath)
Nick Pelham	Steuben County Fairgrounds	Fair Grounds Manager
Joe Rumsey	Bath Central School District	Superintendent
Jacqueline Shroyer	Village of Bath	Clerk/Treasurer
Matthew Sousa	Steuben County Planning	Senior Planner
Jill Staats	Steuben County IDA	Deputy Director of Operations

We appreciate the assistance from Chief of Police Chad Mullen.

We appreciate the business owners, investors, and stakeholders who agreed to be interviewed.

The Project Team:

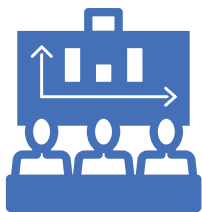
Susan Payne	Strategic Planning & Economic Development Consultant
Tyler Manning	Hunt EAS, GIS/Mapping Specialist
Marty Muggleton	Hunt EAS, Senior Economic Development Specialist
Tim Steed	Hunt EAS, Principal-in-Charge
Jennifer Vaughn	Hunt EAS, Project Manager

INGREDIENTS TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC VITALITY

The Village of Bath's proximity to the I86 corridor, its status as the Steuben County seat and the proximity to the many activities and destinations surrounding Keuka Lake area, means the Village's economic vitality has wide ranging implications and influence throughout the region. There is a clear need to retain and attract residents, create opportunities and motivate the impoverished populations to join the workforce, and attract regional consumer groups by pursuing projects and initiatives that revitalize buildings and neighborhoods, and create business and job opportunities.

A vibrant downtown, such as the Village's Historic District, is made up of several factors, including:

- Capacity and organizational structure that optimizes how people, policies and investments work together to achieve the goal of a vibrant downtown.
- Streetscape enhancements.
- Mix of housing options, with an emphasis on upper-story market rate housing that is attractive to persons with the resources to financially support and be active in the neighborhood.
- A diverse and sustainable retail and commercial mix that supports the neighborhood.
- Public and private investment in the adaptive reuse of underutilized properties.
- Preservation and renovation of buildings with character and historic significance.
- Building façade improvements.
- Safety outreach and presence.
- Parking and pedestrian friendly environments.
- Interesting and authentic destination experiences.



Recent planning activities and participation include:

Historic District Designation, Design Guidelines for Liberty Street Corridor, Steuben County Fairgrounds Economic Development Study, Revitalizing the Interstate 86 Corridor Bath & Savona Economic Development Plan, Comprehensive Urban Forestry Management Plan, Steuben County Housing Demand Analysis.



Village completed projects include:

Municipal parking addition, removal of parking meters, sidewalk improvements, Historic District façade improvements, Historic District gateway sign, urban forest planting, farmers market, and significant investments in water and sewer infrastructure.



Community assets that the Village can leverage include:

Convenient highway accessibility, wide historic center streets and sidewalks with parks and trees, proximity to Finger Lakes tourism, historic buildings, municipal owned utilities, high-speed internet access, and designation as the county seat.



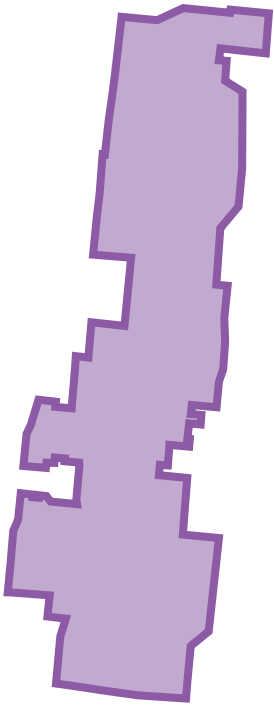
Completed Project:

Historic District façade improvements through
the NY Main Street Program



Village of Bath Overview Map

This map outlines the two main areas for future development.



ZONE A - HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Historic District is defined and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Village enacted a local ordinance for the purpose of protecting buildings on the Liberty Street Corridor from insensitive rehabilitation and adopted design guidelines for façade improvements. The Historic District has the proper features to return to its role as the downtown neighborhood that people experience and enjoy. It has been and will become a district that includes shopping, personal and professional services, food and beverages, entertainment, and music.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH IN ZONE A:

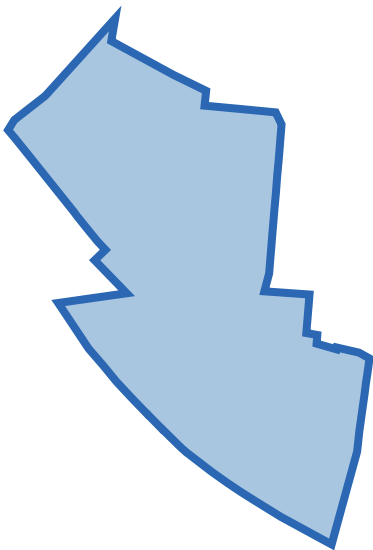
- The designation of the Village of Bath's Historic District is a benefit in attracting investment to renovate properties, especially upper story development for both commercial and market rate housing units, because the standards and other associated design requirements will maintain consistency and style.
- Once there is momentum in attracting investment and pursuing the target customer groups, research indicates properties within a local historic district typically appreciate at rates greater than the local market overall.
- The large number of vacant first floor commercial spaces provide the Village with an opportunity to work with property owners to actively recruit a desirable and targeted retail mix.
- The historic buildings represent charm and desirable environment as a destination for visitors and home for residents in upper story market rate housing, as well as unique and trademark developments to attract tourists such as a destination hotel.
- The attractive lighting, Pulteney Park, streets and curbs in good condition and sidewalks wide enough to support outdoor dining and street retail are all important attributes that make the downtown district desirable for prospective businesses.
- Pulteney Park offers an opportunity for both expanded Farmers Market, as well as a prime site for a variety of entertainment and other outdoor venues.

ZONE B - I86 EXIT 38 GATEWAY AREA

Interstate 86 is the major east-west thoroughfare in the Southern Tier, the targeted development area included in I86 Gateway Area is centered on the I86 Exit 38 (Bath-West). The Gateway District is the entry way for downtown workers, traveling public, and visitors to the many nearby destinations in the Finger Lakes area to the north. It is the location of hotels, banks, and convenient style food and services.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH IN ZONE B:

- Enhanced lodging facilities both downtown and at the I86 exit 38 would provide an opportunity to support an anticipated increase in post-COVID tourism traffic resulting from enhanced promotion programs launched by Finger Lakes Wine Country and new business development in the Village's Historic District.
- The Fairgrounds is a venue for events, and its potential can be increased with an increased quality in lodging facilities, primarily at the I86 exit 38 area.
- New business development in both vacant buildings and parcels in the I86 Exit 38 area will add to the Village's revenue and tax base, as well as create jobs and destinations for an increased volume of consumers.





II. LEVERAGING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

TO ATTRACT INVESTMENT AND ACHIEVE A
SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC BASE

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The Village of Bath is well positioned to capture both regional workers and visitor traffic with its location on the I86 Corridor, proximity to Keuka Lake and surrounding destinations, top-rated wineries and breweries, small town charm and proximity to a nature setting.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH:

1

The Village of Bath is situated to capture visitor traffic from the north, east and west traveling via I390 and I86; particularly the large volume of visitors from the Rochester, Buffalo, Fairport, Lockport, Geneseo, Henrietta and Cheektowaga areas.

2

Based on market research, the Village is the gateway to the most popular destinations for tourists including Keuka Lake, Downtown Hammondsport and Depot Park, Finger Lakes Trail, Glenn Curtiss Museum, winery and brewery trails, and Finger Lakes Boating Museum.

3

The Village is a gateway to the most popular events for tourists including the Steuben County Fairgrounds, Hammondsport Festival of Crafts and Wings and Wheels event.

4

The top-rated wineries among visitors to Finger Lakes Wine Country are located along Keuka Lake and in proximity to the Village including Bully Hill, Heron Hill, Dr. Konstantin Frank, and Ravines Wine Cellars. The top-rated breweries among visitors to the region include Keuka Brewing Company, Steuben Brewing Company, and Brewery of Broken Dreams ... all located in the nearby Hammondsport area. And Farmhouse Brewing recently announced opening of a new location in the region scheduled for 2021.

5

Both overnight and day tripper visitors are interested in festivals, concerts, live music, unique Farmers Markets, farm-to-table dining, and hands-on experiences with arts and crafts/wine/brewery/food production.

6

The Village is positioned to provide specialty retail, restaurants and lodging in response to the primary motivations for overnight visitors including water trails with canoeing and kayaking, biking, unique dining/good food, winery experiences, craft beverages including breweries/cideries/distilleries, artisan crafted products and local experiences, and unique destination lodging.

QUALITY OF LIFE:

LEVERAGE ASSETS TO ATTRACT RESIDENTS AND MEET EXPECTATIONS OF DAYTIME AND OVERNIGHT VISITORS

The Village's quality of life is critical to retaining and growing the residential base, as well as attracting investors and providing a welcoming atmosphere for daytime workers and regional visitors. Quality of life assets of a healthy community include a mix of quality single-family and rental housing, a vibrant downtown with revitalized buildings and attractive atmosphere, and a strong mix of dining, retail, and entertainment options. Quality of life also is represented in restored and revitalized public spaces through streetscaping activities, improved safety, and convenient pedestrian and auto access. The Village has made significant strides in creating an attractive community and convenient downtown; however, there are additional steps to be taken that will allow the Village to reverse population trends, expand and strengthen the consumer base, and position it as a highly desirable residential community and visitor destination.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH:

1

There is opportunity to achieve enhanced economic stability by reversing the declining and aging population trends and attracting younger individuals and families with greater residential and consumer buying power. By attracting families, increasing the rate of home ownership will grow the local consumer base. This could be achieved by promoting assets such as low cost of living, a slower-paced lifestyle, basics such as groceries and household supplies, healthcare, outdoor activities, inexpensive utilities, proximity to a major interstate highway (186), high-speed internet access.

2

There is an opportunity to fill the gaps in consumer demand for housing options with a mixed-use strategy in the Historic District involving mixed-use development of upper story housing and a retail mix plan that meets the expectations of the various target market groups.

3

Diversity and quality housing options, together with the desirability of the downtown core, are factors for retention and attraction of an economically strong population base.

4

It will be important for the Village of Bath to position itself as a desirable community to attract individuals and families who will become permanent residents, buy and invest in upgrading the housing stock that will increase in value, reduce the high percentage of rental housing in neighborhoods, and become the core of a strong consumer base to support retail and services, particularly in the Village's Historic District.

5

The Village has the opportunity to leverage existing assets and address deficits that will make the community attractive to future residents and a solid consumer base.



Quality of life assets of a healthy community include:

A mix of quality single-family and rental housing, a vibrant downtown with revitalized buildings and attractive atmosphere, and a strong mix of dining, retail, and entertainment options.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN ASSETS & OPPORTUNITY

Create an Authentic Destination Experience and Respond to Changing Consumer Patterns

The Village of Bath's historic downtown is among its greatest assets and can be a valuable tool in stimulating the economy.

The unique and attractive downtown and community gathering places defines its identity and can be leveraged to enhance the Villages' overall desirability for future residents and destination for visitors. The Village has the opportunity to leverage its many downtown assets such as Pulteney Park, wide sides walks, adequate parking, compact and convenient layout, walkability, and vintage setting to recreate the sense of community and connectedness so desirable in a downtown retail setting.





OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH:

1

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3

The Village has the opportunity to leverage existing assets and address deficits that will make the community attractive to future residents and a solid consumer base.

4

Post COVID trends suggest home buyers and renters are attracted to the following:

- Attractive and stable neighborhoods
- Updated/modern and well-maintained houses and apartments
- Choices in competitive price points: houses and rentals
- Quality options for market rate rentals
- Access to quality healthcare and schools
- Vibrant and attractive community centers
- Close access to the outdoors and open spaces
- Close access to services
- Reasonable property taxes

CHANGING CONSUMER PATTERNS

There is shifting demand for retail and other consumer activities. E-commerce has changed retail and technology is becoming a dominant factor in how people experience shopping.

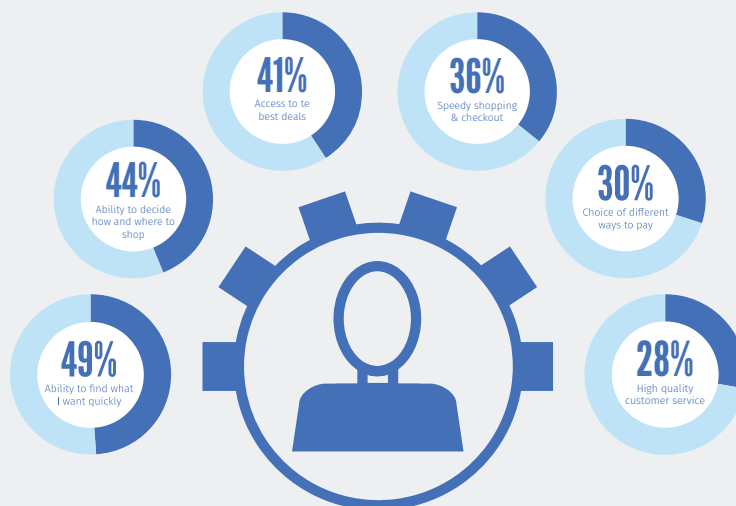
BUT...

The retail industry is not disappearing, rather the focus is on fun and interesting consumer experiences.

AND...

Retail is sustainable if it evolves with changing consumer expectations.

For example, over the past 3 years the market for secondhand stores has grown 21 times faster than the retail apparel market and is expected to continue growth through 2023 (GlobalData June 2020).



Question: What are the most important things to you when shopping across channels?





OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH:

- 1 Leverage the Village's broadband strength to communicate with all consumer groups and provide businesses with the tools to provide a dynamic consumer experience.
- 2 Capitalize on the compact walkability and convenience of the Historic District.
- 3 Provide an authentic local experience with sidewalk restaurant venues and retail shopping while matching consumer buying trends.
- 4 Take advantage of popular consumer trends by offering "shoppertainment", services and recreation.
- 5 Provide a destination experience where the experience of being in the place is as important as the goods and services purchased.

Target Market Groups



Downtown Workers

There are an estimated 1,800 daily workers in the downtown Bath area, with the majority being employees of Steuben County government.

- The daytime population in the Village is 5,475, which includes 1,800 workers at the various businesses and government offices. Among the downtown workers, nearly 60% are employed in white collar jobs.
- Nearly 60% of downtown workers live within a 15-minute drive of the downtown area, and therefore are prospective customers after hours and on weekends.
- They are potential customers of restaurants, services, retail goods and entertainment. Direct promotion, special incentives and coordinated programs with the employers could result in an increase in foot traffic and consumerism.



Local and Year-Round Regional Residents and Workers

In order to maintain a viable year-around business base, it will be important to attract the regional residents and daytime workers within a 5 to 10-mile radius as part of the consumer base in order to supplement the Village population's consumer buying power.

- There are an estimated 11,000 residents and 4,027 day-time workers within 5 miles of the Village's downtown core; and there is a daytime population of more than 12,000.
- Nearly half of the residents in this radius have a household income of \$50,000+, and another 30% have a household income of \$75,000. This group becomes a prime consumer group.
- Residents and workers within a 5 to 10-mile radius of the Village spend their money on retail goods, meals at restaurants, entertainment, recreation, apparel, and personal services.



Seasonal Residents and Visitors to Finger Lakes Wine Country

The Village of Bath is well positioned to capture tourist traffic with its location on the I86 Corridor, proximity to Keuka Lake, top-rated wineries, small town charm and proximity to a nature setting.

The visitor groups most attracted to the Finger Lakes region include young travelers ages 22-34 without kids and affluent travelers with an annual household income of \$100,000+.

- 1. Young travelers (ages 22-34) without kids.**
- 2. Affluent travelers (annual household income \$100,000+).**

Top 5 Activities of Overnight Visitors:

- Dining - unique, local - 77.5%
- Driving / sightseeing - 62.5%
- Shopping - 58.9%
- Wineries - 52.7%
- Museum / Gallery / Art - 51.8%



OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE OF BATH:

1

Based on market research, the Village is the gateway to the most popular destinations for tourists including Keuka Lake, Downtown Hammondsport and Depot Park, Finger Lakes Trail, Glenn Curtiss Museum, winery and brewery trails, Finger Lakes Boating Museum, and the Hammondsport Festival of Crafts and Wings and Wheels events.

2

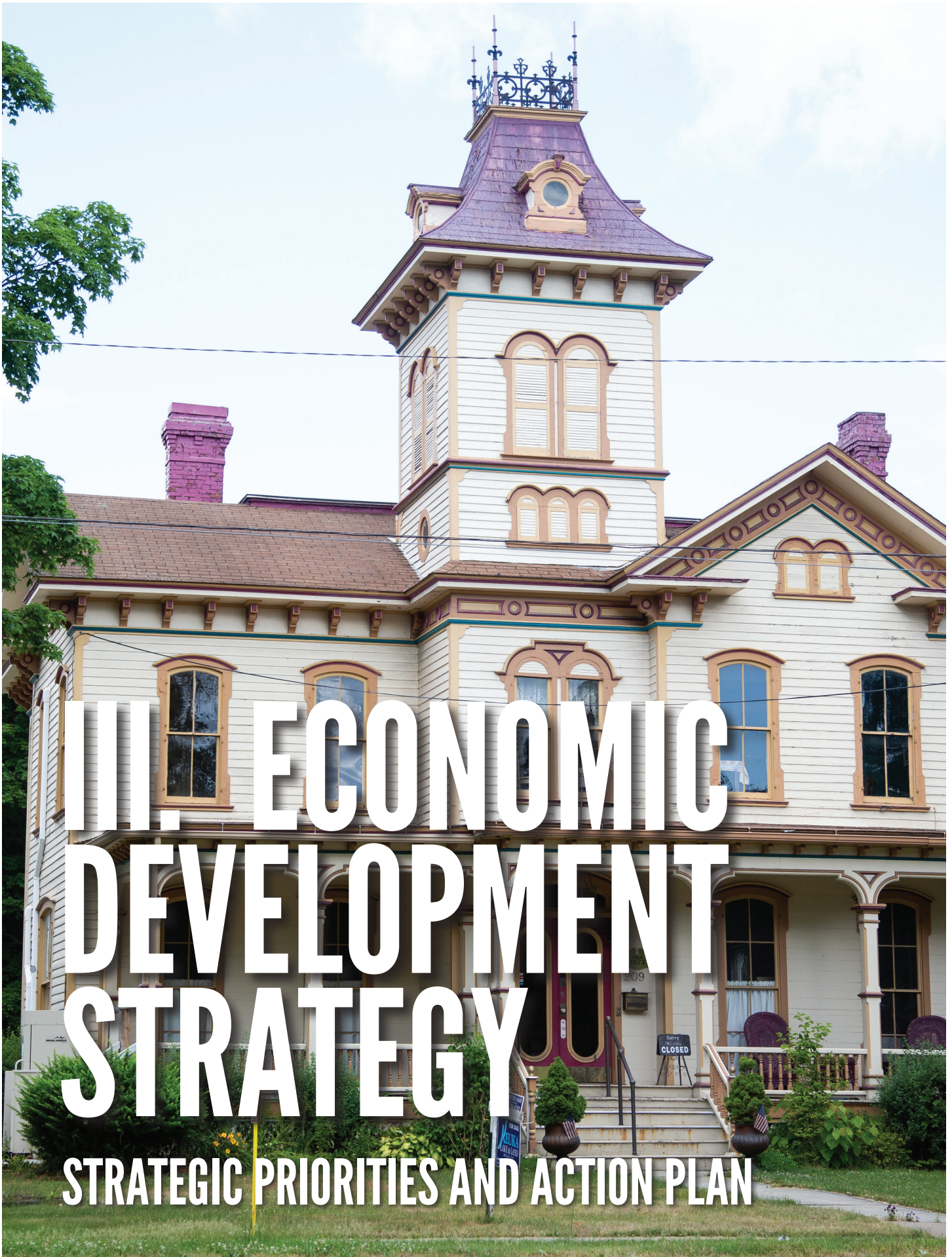
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The Village is positioned to provide specialty retail, restaurants and lodging in response to the primary motivations for overnight visitors including water trails with canoeing and kayaking, biking, unique dining/good food, winery experiences, craft beverages including breweries/cideries/distilleries, artisan crafted products and local experiences, and unique destination lodging.



III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



STRENGTHEN REAL PROPERTY TAX BASE



BECOME A DESTINATION BY LEVERAGING ASSETS



ATTRACT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT



GROW CONSUMER BASE

ACTION PLAN

These broad strategic priorities will guide execution of the plan and provide the framework for these ten action steps to be undertaken during the next 2-3 years.

1. Village Support of Equitable Tax Assessments
2. Continue High Level of Code Enforcement
3. Develop and Improve Commercial and Upper-story Residential Spaces in the Historic District
4. Create a Viable Retail Mix in the Historic District
5. Support Historic District Walkability, Outdoor and Street Dining, and Street Retail
6. Create Destination Based on Local Food and Beverages
7. Engage Downtown Workers as Consumers
8. Attract Local and Area Residents as Consumers
9. Strengthen Lodging Options
10. Attract Tourists and Travelers as Consumers

IV. DOWNTOWN RETAIL MIX



Downtowns are “cool” again and the Village of Bath has an opportunity to capture the interest and buying power of target customer groups with a retail mix that will be desirable to many and also achieve sustainability in the long-term. The Village’s downtown provides an ideal environment to offer that eclectic mix of new and old, unique experiences, and personalized services that appeal to a wide range of customers who seek a more personalized environment and experiential shopping and dining experience in a comfortable setting.



DOWNTOWNS ARE COOL AGAIN!



Food & Beverage

(Feature outdoor dining and live entertainment when possible)

- Neighborhood restaurant/coffee shop serving breakfast and lunch specials
- Bakery with specialty coffees, sandwiches/subs, and seasonal ice cream; feature small eat-in area
- Specialty restaurant; particularly farm-to-table fare featuring local products and wines
- Ethnic restaurants such as Mexican or Italian
- Barbeque and smoked food restaurants
- Pubs/tavern with food offerings such as burgers, wings, specialty pizza, BBQ, etc.
- Micro-Brewery: brewery/production facility, tasting room and light fare

Retail

- Bodega – small neighborhood mercantile and grocery with basic food and pharmacy items, deli with salads and sandwich offerings, and basic goods such as socks
- Artisan and hand-made goods shop; with a focus on Finger Lakes products
- Second-hand store
- Bicycles and scooters – rentals, tours, repairs, sales
- Furniture Upcycler: vintage furniture sales and repair/upholstery services. Perhaps combine with antique exchange
- Specialty store featuring health foods and Finger Lakes locally made products

Personal Services

- Hair salon
- Dog grooming and training
- Small gym, yoga studio and/or fitness class center; offer programs for Steuben County employees

Professional Services

- Event planning – weddings, etc.
- Professional Services (insurance, attorneys, real estate)

Tourism Related

- Tourist support services -- Hiking and biking tours, nature tours and instructions, fishing gear, supplies, etc.
- Water sports outfitters for both lakes and rivers – sell and rent gear and equipment
- “Taste of the Finger Lakes” -- Wine/Beer/Spirits Tasting and Sales Room, and a retail component with locally made products such as ciders, wine flour, sauces, Chef William’s sauces, cheeses, Keuka Fudge, hats/totebag, sweatshirts with FLWC brand, etc.
- Finger Lakes Cooking Classroom

Arts & Crafts

- Woodworking crafts, lessons, and sales
- Craftsmen workshop and sales
- Artist and Creative Maker spaces; including retail area

Entertainment

- Blackbox theatre

Lodging

- Destination hotel
- Airbnb lodging in historic building

Other

- Education and training, i.e. HS student entrepreneurial enterprises

V. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Rigorous evaluation and accessible reporting are keys to inclusive and equitable success in the revitalization of the Village. Reporting should focus on the direct connection between investments and outcomes and demonstrate alignment with the four Strategic Priorities. Metrics to track development and encourage transparency include the following:

- 1 Dollars of Investment**
- 2 Acquisition & Property Transaction**
- 3 New Business Investment Attracted**
- 4 Reduction in Vacancies**
- 5 Upper-story Apartments Created**





PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Keys to Success for the Village of Bath



The Village of Bath

The Village of Bath is the county seat of Steuben County. The community was named either for the English city or for Lady Bath, daughter of William Pulteney, one of the original landowners. After decades of working to make the Village of Bath better this Strategic Action Plan is presented with clear priorities and action steps.



VILLAGE OF BATH

New York

110 Liberty Street Bath, NY 14810
Phone: (607) 776-3192

www.villageofbath.org