DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE – DOWNTOWN TEMPLATE

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BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Southern Tier

Municipality Name: City of Elmira, NY

Downtown Name: Elmira Refresh

County: Chemung

Downtown Description - Provide an overview of the downtown and summarize the rationale behind nominating this downtown for a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award):

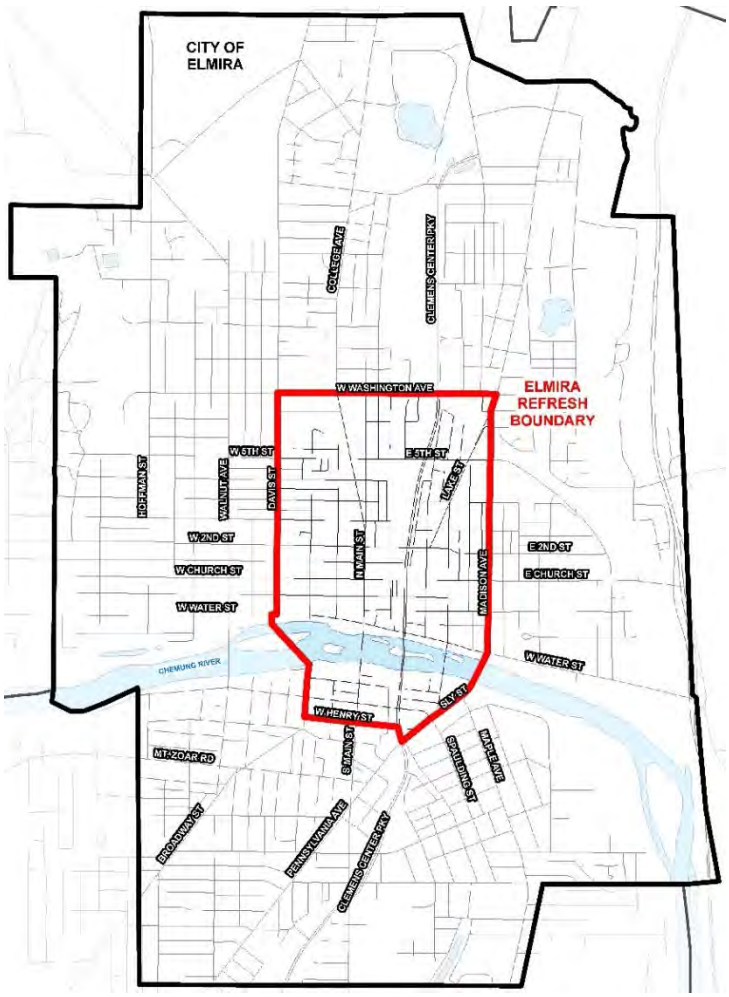
The City of Elmira is pleased to submit this request for designation as the recipient of the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Southern Tier region. We believe Elmira is in a position to leverage numerous opportunities with the resources available through the DRI program that will enable it to transform the City's downtown and make Elmira a diversified and vibrant community where tomorrow's workforce will want to live, work, and raise their families. The City's goals are to:

1. Create an active, desirable downtown with a strong sense of place
2. Attract new businesses, high-paying jobs, and skilled workers
3. Enhance and strengthen the arts and cultural attractions
4. Create a thriving environment that is a framework and stimulus for a diverse population, with residents and workers supported by complementary housing and employment opportunities
5. Increase the local property tax base
6. Develop amenities to support and enhance downtown living and quality of life

Below are highlights of this proposal.

- **The framework for a successful downtown revitalization strategy has been created**. Elmira's "three-prong strategy" for revitalization of the City's downtown rests upon the objectives of (1) establishing a Dynamic College Community; (2) strengthening Elmira's role as the eastern anchor community of the I86 Innovation Corridor plan through the provision of "supportive community infrastructure" essential to business and entrepreneurial growth; and (3) re-establishing Elmira as a vibrant community by reversing the trends of poverty and blight. Details of this strategy are provided in Attachment B.

- **Elmira's downtown is compact, with well-defined boundaries**. Elmira's 595.5-acre DRI target area, known as *Elmira Refresh*, includes 8,735 residents representing a diverse ethnic composition as well as the highest levels of economic distress within Chemung County. This DRI target area is compact and is bounded by major downtown corridors. The Chemung River, considered a major asset to the downtown, will be a focal point for redevelopment both on the east and west sides of the target area. Also within the DRI target area is a critical link between the business district and college district along the newly established N. Main Street *Cultural Connector Corridor*.



- **The DRI target area is of sufficient size and composition to support a year-round vibrant downtown.** The DRI target area includes the city's existing central business district, a business improvement district, three designated historic districts, adjoining neighborhoods, shopping, weekly farmers market, three grocery stores in or close proximity, two colleges, churches, governmental offices, arts education center, cultural institutions, and two major entertainment venues with regional draw. Together the assets provide a mix of housing options for various socioeconomic groups, as well as services, arts, entertainment and recreational resources.

- **The City of Elmira's future is being driven by new economic and social factors such as:** (1) designation as the eastern anchor of the I86 Innovation Corridor; (2) the continued growth of the region's health care industry; (3) increase in the education sector with anticipation of the new Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and significant expansion of Elmira College, which will require off-campus student housing as well as new faculty hires; (4) new business development and entrepreneurial activities in vacant downtown buildings, with an active business recruitment program underway; (5) expansion of several manufacturing businesses in the immediate area such as Hardinge, Cameron Mfg, DeMet's and (6) creation of 1,145 new jobs within the next 1-2 years in the immediate area within and surrounding the downtown; (7) documented demand for 330-400 market rate housing units in the downtown by 2022 and a total of 500 by 2027. In addition, a demand analysis completed in April of 2016 demonstrated that by 2021 Elmira is expected to have <u>no less than 500 new downtown residents, including professionals, students, physicians, college faculty, retirees and other persons</u>. <u>By 2027, 800 or more new residents are expected to reside within Elmira's downtown area.</u>

- **Elmira's DRI program will be coordinated with other New York State initiatives** including its recent designation as a participating city in the *Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative, Governor Cuomo's Healthy Schools and Communities, Housing and Community Renewal* housing programs, *NYS Department of State BOA Program, DOS Local Waterfront Development Program, NYSDERDA's Cleaner/Greener Initiative, NYS Land Bank Program, SHPO'S Certified Local Government Program, NYS Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program for Commercial Properties,* and Chemung County's *Age Friendly Communities* and other community enrichment programs to maximize the overall livability of the City's downtown area.

- **Elmira is prepared to capitalize on recent public and private investments in its downtown area. The DRI program resources will serve as a catalyst for additional future investments in Elmira's downtown.** During the past five years $26,299,268 in REDC and other Federal and State grant funds have been awarded in the Elmira area, which have leveraged an estimated $105,197,072 in additional funds. Over $11.6 million in Federal, State, and City investments in infrastructure upgrades within Elmira's downtown area are scheduled for implementation beginning in 2016. Preliminary commitments have also been made by the private sector to invest an estimated $26,157,000 in property revitalization and new business development in Elmira's downtown area over the next five years.

- **The City of Elmira, Chemung County, Southern Tier Economic Growth, Inc. (STEG), and other community organizations have formed a collaborative relationship and are actively engaged in planning activities to support the revitalization of Elmira's downtown.** For example, the City initiated a comprehensive master plan update project in 2015 that is expected to be adopted in September of 2016. The City of Elmira, Chemung County, and STEG, have also created a working committee with multiple community partners to design and implement an effective revitalization program for Elmira's downtown. The committee has developed a framework for development of a downtown revitalization strategy that would be supported by the DRI program. The group is now engaged in the analysis of needs and opportunities for successful downtown revitalization, including a recently completed assessment of demand for market rate housing and an evaluation of redevelopment designs for specific target properties and corridors within the City's downtown. The committee is also actively preparing for the City's participation in New York's new *Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative.*

- **Elmira embraces policies and best practices that will foster increased livability and quality-of-life features for residents of Elmira's downtown.** Elmira's updated comprehensive master plan, which is expected to be adopted in September of 2016, will incorporate a number of modern downtown development principles and suggested tools, such as a complete streets policy, form-based zoning for particular downtown corridors, age-friendly and pedestrian-friendly design standards, bikeability, efficient downtown parking design standards, energy efficiency, attractive streetscaping, public art aesthetics and similar Smart Growth principles. The City of Elmira continues to be served by an active downtown improvement district, and an application to create a Chemung County Land Bank has been submitted.

- **The City of Elmira and Southern Tier Economic Growth, Inc. (STEG) are prepared to assume the lead local role in the implementation of Elmira's downtown revitalization effort.** The DRI implementation committee created by STEG will provide an effective implementation mechanism that brings together all key downtown stakeholders, program managers, planners, engineers, funding officers, urban design consultants, and elected officials.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

This section should be filled out with reference to the criteria set forth in the DRI Guidelines.

1) **Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood.** Detail the boundaries of the targeted neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the neighborhood should be compact and well-defined. Core neighborhoods beyond a traditional downtown or central business district are eligible, if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment.

Elmira's 595.5-acre DRI target area, known as *Elmira Refresh*, includes the city's existing central business district, shopping and grocery stores, a business improvement district, three designated historic districts, two colleges, churches, governmental offices, arts education center, cultural institutions, and two major entertainment venues with regional draw.

The DRI target area is compact and bounded by major downtown corridors, including Washington Avenue on the north, West Henry Street and Pennsylvania Avenue on the south, Madison Avenue on the east and Davis Street on the west. The Chemung River and the Mark Twain Riverfront Park, considered major assets to the downtown, will be focal points for redevelopment both on the east and west sides of the target area.

The *Elmira Refresh* DRI target area is displayed in the attached maps contained in Attachment A.

Figure 1 - Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area Boundaries
Figure 2 - Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area by Census Tract Boundaries: 6, 7 and 10
Figure 3 - Current Land Uses within the DRI Target Area
Figure 4 - Properties Targeted for Redevelopment Within the Elmira Refresh DRI
Figure 5 - City of Elmira Poverty Rates by Census Tract
Figure 6 - Park and Open Space in Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area

The DRI target area also provides for a critical link between the downtown core and college district along the newly established N. Main Street *Cultural Connector Corridor*. The corridor will become an essential component of the downtown revitalization as the academic institutions grow off of the traditional campus into the downtown, extending to the Creative Corridor where arts and cultural institutions are primed for building connective identity.

Within these boundaries are a variety of rental and homeownership options for a wide range of socio-economic groups, grocery stores and a weekly farmers market, medical services, education ranging from early childhood to medical school, parks and recreation, neighborhood businesses, mass-transit, walking and biking options, ample parking for downtown residents and workers, and community services for both downtown workers and residents in all socio-economic categories.

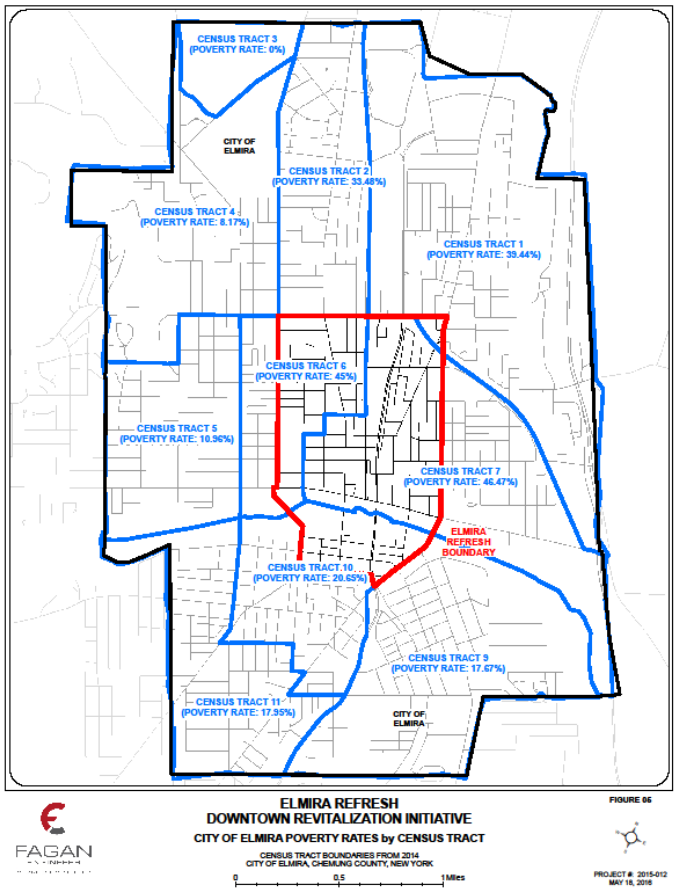
The *Elmira Refresh* DRI target area includes Census tracts 6, 7, and 10, whose 8,735 residents represent a diverse ethnic composition as well as the highest levels of economic distress within Chemung County. US Census Bureau records indicate that the poverty rate within these tracts is 47.3%; the annual per capita income level is $13,095, and the mean household income level is $31,086. The percentage of high school

graduates is 80.10%, and the unemployment rate among residents is substantially higher than that recorded for other residents of the City.

Elmira Refresh Socio-economic Conditions

	DRI Targeted Census Tracts (6, 7, 10)	City of Elmira
Population	8,735	29,046
Poverty Rate	47.30%	30.40%
Persons in Poverty in Family Households	42.00%	27.40%
Per Capita Income	$13,095	$17,460
Mean Household Income (All Families)	$31,086	$45,552
Educational Attainment		
Percent high school graduate or higher	80.10%	82.90%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	9.03%	14.10%
Unemployment Rate	9.83%	9.20%
Residents lacking health insurance	10.57%	10.30%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates



2) Size. Outline why the downtown, or its catchment area, is of a size sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown, with consideration of whether there is a sizeable existing, or increasing, population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown.

Elmira's existing catchment area provides sufficient numbers of residents and visitors to support a vibrant, year-round downtown in the years ahead. Elmira's downtown currently serves as the principal downtown destination for a regional population of over 125,000 persons who reside throughout Chemung County and its bordering communities. Elmira offers immediate access to the I86 corridor, is located in close proximity to a regional airport, and benefits from an active mass transit service. Elmira is also the central service location for many governmental, medical care, and business services provided to residents throughout the central Southern Tier and the Northern Tier regions in New York and Pennsylvania.

The City established criteria and underwent an extensive process to define the specific DRI target area to make certain it was sufficient in size and composition to support a vibrant and year-round downtown. Based on the following information, the City determined that the combination of its **strategic geographic location**, service as a **regional hub** for a large catchment area extending 20 miles, ability to accommodate a **diverse housing mix** for many different household income levels, **known future job growth of an estimated 1,200 in the immediate area** , and physical capacity to accommodate downtown workers and an increase of no less than **800 new residents living in the downtown and demand for 300+ market rate housing units** would be sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown.

Driving factors include the following.

- The strategic geographic location of Elmira's downtown is a significant asset.
  - ✓ Location at a major I86 exit (Exit 56) provides easy and convenient access to east-west destinations, and has a daily traffic volume (AADT) of 22,909 vehicles.
  - ✓ Distance from other downtowns: 15 miles from Corning, 33 miles from Ithaca and 19 miles from Sayre, PA where the Guthrie Healthcare campus is located.
  - ✓ Location on the Chemung River.
  - ✓ As the County seat Elmira is the central location for county, state and federal programs for a 25-mile radius.
  - ✓ Regional hub for major healthcare services, banking, legal and other professional services.
  - ✓ Primary residential option for major employers such as Arnot Health based in Elmira; as well as, Guthrie Healthcare System with its main campus located within a 20-minute drive to Sayre, PA and includes Robert Packer Hospital and Guthrie Clinic, as well as the administrative offices for system. Together they recruit more than 50 physicians per year.
  - ✓ Hub for an extensive transportation infrastructure, including the Chemung County Transit System, which is a public transportation service that operates routes within the City of Elmira and towns in Chemung County, as well as a Shopper Shuttle to area malls and commuter routes to Ithaca, Corning, Owego and Sayre, PA.
  - ✓ The Elmira-Corning Regional Airport is within a 10-minute drive from downtown Elmira.
  - ✓ Close proximity to several venues of national and regional significance located within close proximity of downtown Elmira such as the Corning Museum of Glass, the National Soaring Museum, Clemens Performing Arts Center and Tanglewood Nature Center and Museum.

- Elmira is the eastern anchor of the new I86 Innovation Corridor Initiative, which extends from Elmira to Hornell. There are twenty-two anchor employers with 10,450 workers within a 15-minute drive of downtown Elmira such as Arnot Health, CAF USA, Chemung Canal Bank, Community Bank, DeMet's Candy, Five Star Bank, Guthrie Corning Hospital, Hardinge, Hilliard Corporation, General Revenue Corporation, DePuy Synthes, Anchor Glass Container Corporation, Kennedy Valve, F.M. Howell, Emhart Glass, Cameron Manufacturing, Travelers Insurance, Swift Glass and Guthrie Healthcare and Robert

Packer Hospital in Sayre, PA.

- Elmira is the home of several major regional destinations including: The Clemens Center, a regional performing arts center that attracts nationally recognized performers; First Arena home of the Jackal's ECHL Ice Hockey Team and other regional sporting activities; Dunn Field Stadium, home of the Elmira Pioneers collegiate baseball team; the Mark Twain Study and Exhibit on the Elmira College campus, one of only two Mark Twain Studies centers in the world; the Arnot Art Museum and the Chemung Valley History Museum; and a schedule of regional events and activities held in downtown Elmira such as the weekly Wisner Farmers Market and annual Elmira Street Painting Festival that attracts more than 5,000 people.

- The City of Elmira offers a wide range of housing options for all levels of household income. In particular, the Elmira Refresh DRI target area has the capacity to accommodate low and moderate income housing, college student housing, upper story market rate housing, and single-family housing. For example, the DRI target area currently includes 136 LIH rental units, and construction of an additional 45 units is in the final approval stages. In addition, a demand analysis and building inventory study shows that there are buildings poised for redevelopment that have the capacity to accommodate 220 market rate units in the immediate downtown core. It has been demonstrated that over the next five years the demand will exceed 300 market rate units. Attachment A, Figure 4 is a map of existing properties within the downtown that are developable for housing and mixed use projects.

- Downtown Elmira offers accessibility and convenience with a wide-range of services and resources within a four-block radius of the center of downtown that are destinations for residents and employees. These include a retail shopping, grocery stores, regional transportation center, US Post Office, a central public library, Elmira City Hall, Chemung County Seat Offices, churches, banks and credit unions, New York State services, and professional services ranging from insurance to legal offices.

- Elmira is committed to Governor Cuomo's Health Foods/Healthy Communities initiative, and will make certain its ongoing efforts are a key component of the DRI program. Examples of the many existing programs to support and promote healthy communities include the following.
  - ✓ Arnot Health leads a joint effort of 30 community service providers and businesses to create healthy places in Chemung County that includes development of parks and playgrounds, sustainable community gardens, restaurants with healthy choices. Many of these are in the DRI target area.
  - ✓ Arnot Health and the EOP CFJP Bistro host a food training for medical residents on nutrition and healthy meal choices & prep. The program adapted from a Tulane Medical School public health model provides nutrition and food prep training to residents so they will be able to pass it on to their community patients.
  - ✓ Chemung County Food Bank has a mobile food unit that goes into Elmira neighborhoods.
  - ✓ Elmira's EOP also operates a summer feeding program.

- Elmira's downtown and surrounding area offers many options for groceries, as well as purchasing fresh and healthy foods. Wisner Farmers Market has been operating in downtown Elmira for twenty years from June to September. In addition, Wegman's, Weis Markets, TOPS Markets and Save-a-Lot are located in or immediately adjacent to the DRI target area. And through Elmira's Poverty Reduction Initiative, it is expected that programs such as a co-op grocery store will be created to address the 'food deserts' of the community, including sections of Elmira's DRI.

- Within walking distance or a short car ride of the DRI target area are located the Arnot Ogden Medical Center, ancillary medical services, physician offices and administrative offices. In addition, Guthrie Healthcare System's main campus is located within a 20-minute drive to Sayre, PA and includes Robert Packer Hospital and Guthrie Clinic, as well as the administrative offices for system.

- An important recent development has been the announcement of plans by two colleges to develop new facilities on sites adjoining Elmira's central business district. The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM), in partnership with Elmira College, has selected Elmira to establish a new medical school campus for the training of primary care physicians. Initially this facility will provide training for 80 medical students, growing to more than 300 students within five years. In addition, Elmira College has launched an aggressive recruitment campaign and estimates that its student enrollment level will increase from the current 1,100 students to 1,800 students between 2018 and 2027, with a corresponding increase of 80 to 90 faculty members during that period. The Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council has pointed out that these two institutions' projects "…will result in a major infusion of young talent and investments in housing and revitalized space for retail and commercial services."

- The City of Elmira's business base is stable and diverse, and does not rely on a single industry. For example, the banking industry has a significant presence in downtown Elmira, with main offices for Chemung Canal Bank, Community Bank, Elmira Savings Bank, and Five Star Bank. This contingency employs an estimated 300 in their downtown Elmira offices. These businesses have stable employment bases, and provides foot traffic for retail and service businesses. Manufacturing has a long history and stable presence within the city boundaries with major companies such as F.M Howell, Kennedy Valve and Hilliard Corporation. The healthcare industry has a significant presence in the city with two hospitals in the Arnot Health system, including Arnot Ogden Medical Center and St. Joseph's Hospital.

3) Past Investments & Future Investment Potential. Describe how this downtown will be able to capitalize on prior, and catalyze future, private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.

Elmira's proposed downtown target area has great potential for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative because it is well positioned to leverage Federal, State County and private sector investments. The result will be enhanced local property taxes, increased sales tax revenue, significant streetscape improvements, infill development, rehabilitation of vacant buildings and conversion to mixed-use developments in response to demand, and an enhanced quality of life.

- A total of $2,210,000 in Federal, State, County, and City funds have been expended for public infrastructure within the target area since 2012. An additional $11,720,000 is currently committed to road and bridge improvements, fiber installation, streetscape enhancement, transit facility upgrades, and other infrastructure improvement projects in the target area during the next three to five years.

- Elmira's existing cultural institutions invested approximately $571,308 to complete capital improvements of their facilities during the past three years, and an additional $500,000 in facility improvements or expansions are planned.

- Elmira's medical institutions have committed approximately $6 million for major improvements during the next three years.

- Other private investments by Elmira's existing industries, businesses, and homeowners for renovations or expansion of existing properties within the target area have exceeded $10,719,800.

- The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine is moving forward with its plan to launch a medical school in Elmira with an initial commitment to invest $8 – 10 million.

- The City of Elmira recently received formal approval to move forward with its partnership with the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA) and Housing Visions Consultants, Inc., to undertake the $14 million Chemung Crossing Neighborhood Revitalization project within the proposed DRI target area. This project will include the historic rehabilitation of two properties and the construction of new buildings resulting in 45 high-quality, energy efficient, and affordable residential units and 5,500 square feet of commercial space.

- Elmira College plans to take collegiate sports team practice/competition activities to the downtown by moving its hockey program off-campus to First Arena beginning in the 2017-2018 season. In addition, its athletic programs will be in downtown with construction of a new community athletic field house.

- A number of downtown street reconstruction and streetscape improvement projects totaling more than $6.8 million are funded and scheduled to get underway beginning in 2017 to enhance the City's downtown environment and establish a "cultural connector" corridor linking Elmira College and the planned LECOM facility to the City's central business district. These include the $4.2 million North Main Street Cultural Connector project, the $1.2 million West Water Street improvement project, the $1.4 million Main Street Bridge rehabilitation project and the Chemung River Development and Lake Street Pedestrian Bridge Renovation project that is in the planning stages.

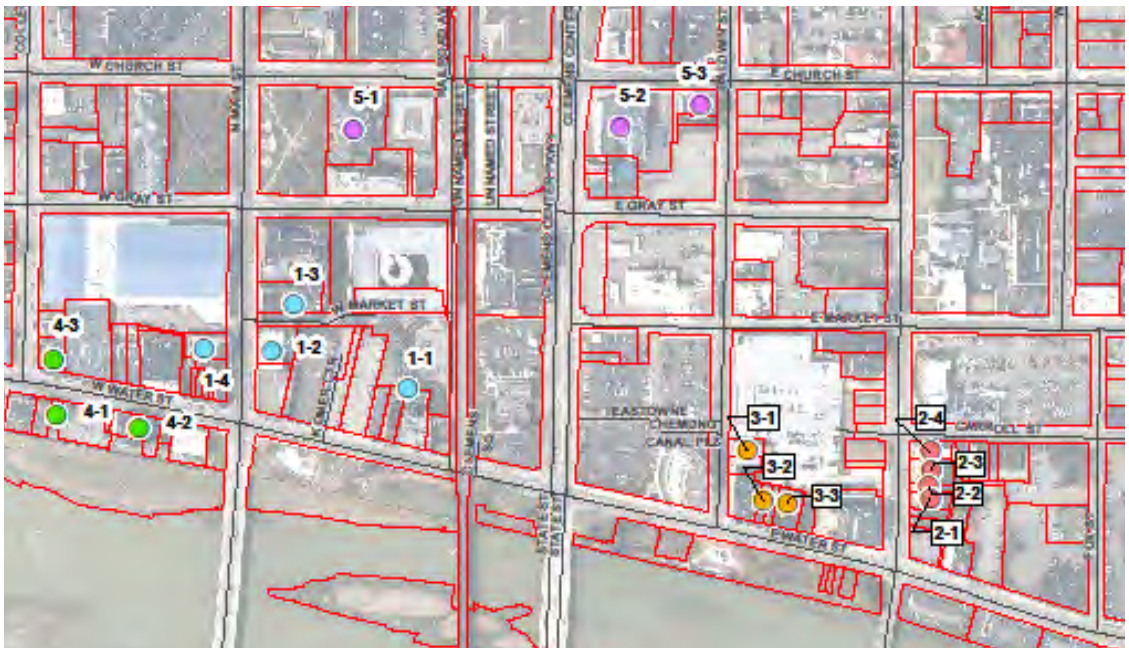
- A plan for in-fill development of a vacant segment of Water Street located at the center of Elmira's proposed revitalization target area has been completed. The plan envisions a much more inviting and functional community hub with attractive outdoor landscaping, premium new retail space, 49 market rate apartment units, walkable connections among buildings, and supporting enhancements. The City of Elmira and STEG are in discussions with local developers and contractors to determine the potential financing requirements and timeframes associated with this plan. The City of Elmira also has $2.3 million in Restore NY funding that was awarded to this site.

- An inventory of retail and commercial businesses was conducted and a gap analysis completed, which resulted in a preliminary determination of the types of businesses needed to support the expanded downtown population. A Product and Positioning Strategy has been developed and an implementation plan is ready for execution.

- In the first quarter of 2016 a detailed market rate housing demand study for Elmira’s downtown was completed. The demand study included direct input from 15 major employers and plans for expansion

of two colleges, together with an analysis of target market groups. The study clearly documented the demand for 320 market rate housing units in the next five years.

- An assessment of vacant or underutilized buildings in the downtown was completed and the Elmira Refresh Property Development Plan prepared in early 2016, which includes one infill development and 19 anchor buildings targeted for rehabilitation. Maps and property descriptions are included in Attachment D. The plan calls for 16 properties to be mixed use developments and 3 properties will be rehabilitated for commercial and high-tech operations. Of these buildings, 11 are located in historic districts and have received designation that allows them to be eligible for Federal and State Historic Tax Credits for Commercial Properties.



Properties in historic districts: **Cluster #1 (N. Main- Water Commercial Historic District)** 110-120 Main Street 150-152 N. Main Street 111-115 N. Main Street **Cluster #2 (Elmira Civic Historic District)** 112-114 Lake Street 116 Lake Street 118-122 Lake Street 124-126 Lake Street	**Cluster #4 (North Main- Water Commercial Historic District)** 227-229 W. Water Street **Cluster #5 (Elmira Civic Historic District)** 200-208 E. Church Street 214-216 Church Street 121 W. Church Street

4) Job Growth. Describe how recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to, the downtown will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.

New job creation in the downtown and immediate surrounding area is projected to be at least 715 within the next two years, and grow to a total of 1,145 within five years. These estimates are based on a study completed by STEG in early 2016, which documents growth in higher education, healthcare, manufacturing, high-tech businesses, downtown retail and support services.

It is important to note that ALL of the new jobs would be accessible to and from the downtown by foot or via public transit, and there is a diversity of job opportunities with different salaries/entry levels ranging from service jobs to highly skilled professionals.

Education Industry

Elmira College: Elmira College is positioning itself to return to a primary choice by college students and their parents seeking a quality education in a private liberal arts college similar to Bryn Mawr, Hobart, Union College, Skidmore and the like. A recruitment campaign is underway and the vision is to increase enrollment from the current 1,100 to a target of 1,800 over the period 2018-2027. The Elmira College physical plant is too expansive for its current enrollment, and with the exception of on-campus housing, has the capacity to accommodate a total student enrollment of 1,800 - 2,000. Consequently, there will be a demand for off-campus housing to accommodate the additional student enrollment.

In addition, the increased enrollment would require an additional 80-90 faculty to be hired during this same period; that is, increasing the total faculty count to 150 by 2027. In addition, the college rules regarding on-campus residency are changing, and beginning in the fall 2017 junior and senior level students will be permitted to live off-campus. This is expected to result in an estimated 100 students seeking off-campus housing as early as the fall of 2018, and potentially reaching a maximum of 500 students by 2027 when the college reaches it enrollment goals.

Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM): The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine has announced its plan to establish a campus in Elmira for the training of primary care physicians and is working to secure the necessary state and local approvals. Initially there will be 80 medical students, growing to more than 300 over a five- year period. In addition, it is projected that 15-20 faculty positions will be created over the same five-year period. LECOM intends to make an initial investment of $8-10 million.

Downtown Business Development Supporting Mixed Use Development

A study involving one-on-one interviews with major employers and anchor institutions in the area determined that no less than 800 new residents will be living in the downtown in the next five years. The retail and support services required to support this population increase is expected to result in the creation of 150 jobs.

New Major Downtown Employers

There are active discussions with two major employers that would occupy two vacant buildings and bring no less than 250 jobs to the downtown.

Healthcare Industry

The New York State Department of Labor predicts that employment within the health care business sector will continue to grow by 14% annually within the Southern Tier region through 2022. Arnot Healthcare, including St. Joseph Hospital and Arnot Ogden Hospital, is located in the City of Elmira. Guthrie Healthcare

has medical facilities within 20 minutes of downtown Elmira; including Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, PA and the new Guthrie Corning Hospital in the Town of Corning. In addition, there are numerous clinics and physician practices within the PMA. Together the healthcare industry in Elmira's catchment area employs an estimated 6,200 people.

During interviews conducted in early 2016, these major healthcare providers stated there is a "significant" demand for quality market rate housing in Elmira's urban setting is due to the current lack of market rate rental housing options in both Sayre and Elmira to support the 45 new physicians recruited annually, desire by some physicians and other healthcare professionals to live in an urban setting as opposed to the traditional apartment complex in a suburban setting, and commute time to the hospitals. Many physicians, particularly those working in Sayre, are forced to live in the Binghamton area due to lack of options currently available in Elmira that is located just 20 minutes away.

In addition, there will be an increase in the number of medical residents at Arnot Ogden Hospital and other area hospitals within the next year. Specifically, it is forecasted that the number will increase from the current 65 to approximately 80 – 90 residents. Although many will elect to live in apartments in Horseheads and other rental options such as duplexes and rental houses in the Elmira area, it also is expected that 20-30 of these residents will prefer to rent an apartment located in an urban setting in Elmira's downtown core and will reside in the downtown area on a 12-month basis during their training.

Manufacturing and High-Technology Businesses

STEG, the county's economic development agency, conducted one-on-one interviews with employers during the first quarter of 2016 to determine job growth projections during the next 12-24 months. Conservatively, there will be no less than 560 new jobs created within a 10-mile radius of Elmira's downtown core by companies including CAF USA, Cameron Manufacturing, De Met's Candy, Corning Incorporated, General Revenue Corporation, Hilliard Corporation and SEPAC.

5) **Attractiveness of the Downtown.** Identify the properties or characteristics the downtown possesses that contribute or could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, healthy and affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.

Notwithstanding its challenges, Elmira retains many exceptional resources for revitalization and future growth. These resources include Elmira's rich historical and cultural heritage within the Southern Tier region and the fact that the City remains the home of multiple educational, higher educational, and medical care institutions, museums and cultural arts centers, live sports and entertainment venues, churches, restaurants, retail and commercial businesses, government offices and grocery stores serving residents of the City and the County. The City also continues to offer its residents and visitors an array of downtown services and attractions, including public parks, a scenic riverfront and Mark Twain Park, a library, an active mass transit service, seasonal farm and crafts markets, retail shopping, historic districts, and other critical community growth assets.

Located in the heart of the downtown are the Steele Memorial Library, Elmira's main post office building, Elmira's City Hall, the Chemung County Courthouse, the Chemung County Transit Center, the Clemens Center, First Arena and the Elmira Promenade downtown walking route. In addition, Corning Community College has a presence in the downtown core with its Elmira Academic and Workforce Development Center.

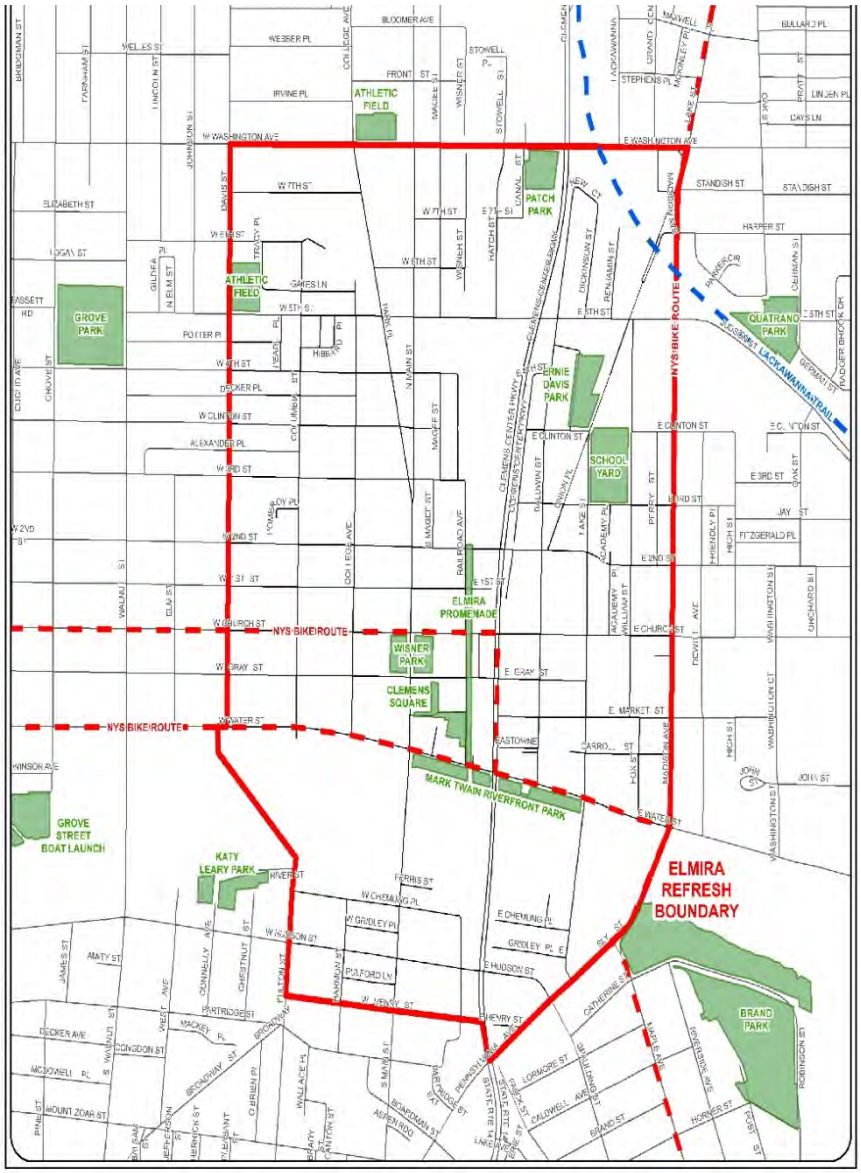
From an infrastructure perspective, Elmira offers several important assets that make it attractive for mixed-use development including wide sidewalks, pocket parks and two parking structures that are in sound condition and have the capacity to accommodate 1,200 vehicles. The downtown also received high scores for its walkability and bikeability, within the downtown and connecting the downtown to surrounding open space networks and regional destinations.

Southern Tier Network (STN) has created a fiber-optic backbone within the City of Elmira that creates the foundation for broadband accessibility. STN and ECC Technologies are now focused on expansion off the backbone and laterals or "Last Mile Development "and have had conversations with Elmira College, Hilliard, Chemung County Library District, Chemung County, Elmira Water Board, and the businesses at 227- 231 W. Water Street. Other broadband providers that exist are Time Warner Cable, Finger Lakes Technology Group, and Empire Access.

A diverse mixture of other banking, health care, insurance, light industry, retail, telecommunications, professional services, transportation, and related businesses are located within the City. WETM TV's broadcast studio and administrative offices are located at the center of the proposed target area. In addition, Wegman's, Weis Markets, and TOPS Markets all operate large grocery stores within or immediately adjacent to the proposed downtown target area; and Save-a-Lot is an affordable grocery option located within the DRI target area.

The City also hosts many distinctive historic properties and cultural and entertainment venues. These include the Clemens Performing Arts Center; Community Arts of Elmira, Inc.; the Arnot Art Museum; the First Arena hockey and entertainment facility, which hosts the Elmira Jackals ECHL professional hockey team; restored buildings and businesses located in Elmira's Near Westside and Maple Avenue Historic Districts the Elmira Civic Historic District, and the North Main and W. Water Commercial Historic Distric;, Woodlawn National Cemetery, which includes the gravesite of Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and his family; and the Dunn Field baseball stadium, which hosts the Elmira Pioneers collegiate and Elmira College Division III baseball teams. The Corning Museum of Glass is located 20 miles west of the City of Elmira, and the Newtown Battlefield Reservation is located just a few miles east of the City. Other regional attractions located in close proximity to the City include the National Soaring Museum at Harris Hill, the Tanglewood Community Nature Center and Museum, and the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm.

Active sports and musical programs are also presented by Elmira's various schools and churches, community arts centers and a succession of downtown events, festivals, farm and crafts markets, and holiday parades are presented throughout the year by Elmira Downtown Development, Inc., and by other community organizations. And, Community Arts holds a programmed schedule of open mics, cabarets, radio shows, recitals, jazz nights and more. There are ongoing festivals with large impacts on the city including Juneteenth, the Jazz Festival, the Elmira Street Painting Festival, and the Jewish Food Festival.



The City maintains more than 20 public parks within its boundaries. These include Eldridge Park with its restored carousel, walking trail, skateboard park, ball fields, and 15-acre fishing lake. The Mark Twain Riverfront Park, which parallels the Chemung River along Water Street is at the center of Elmira's proposed downtown target area. A new Lackawanna Rail Trail with a walking and biking surface, bicycle sheds, and exercise stations has been created along abandoned railroad rights of way linking Eldridge Park to the Chemung River within walking distance of the City's downtown center. An extension of this Trail is planned that will extend along the Chemung River eastward to the Town of Chemung. Public fishing, boat launch, and kayaking portage areas have been created at several locations along the Chemung River. The Harris Hill amusement park and the City of Elmira's Mark Twain municipal golf course are located within a short drive from the City's downtown. Designated bicycle lanes, decorative banners, public artwork, and tourism wayfinding signage exist along the City's major streets. Attachment A, Figure 6 is a detailed map of the parks and open spaces within the DRI boundaries.

There are several projects that have the potential to dramatically change the character of Elmira's downtown. For example:

- Downtown street reconstruction and streetscape improvement projects totaling more than $6.8 million have been programmed to enhance the City's downtown environment and to establish a "cultural connector" corridor linking Elmira College and the proposed LECOM facility to the City's central business district. These include:
  - ✓ The North Main Street *Cultural Connector,* a $4.2 million federally funded project, is expected to start final design in the fall of 2016 and construction in 2018. The project includes three blocks of full-depth road reconstruction, streetscape improvement, and gateway treatments to further connect Elmira College with downtown from Clinton Street to Second Street.

- ✓ A $1.2 million project using National Highway System (NHS) funding is anticipated in 2018 for the West Water Street upgrade project.
- ✓ The Main Street Bridge rehabilitation project, slated for 2017 will utilize $1.4 million in Federal Highway System funding, which also includes biking and walking paths.
- ✓ The Chemung River Development and Lake Street Pedestrian Bridge Renovation is being planned.

- The City has recently provided active support for adaptive mixed reuse projects such as the former George Washington School project on West Washington Avenue that will result in 58 new housing units, and the Richards-Werdenberg building renovation at West Water and North Main Streets that received CFA Round 5 funding.

- Community Arts of Elmira, Inc., is repurposing a historic mansion and city block in the Elmira Refresh target area for adaptive reuse and catalytic neighborhood revitalization. The organization is expanding interior working space to accommodate additional fine arts, community arts, performance arts practitioners and arts education, and is also developing plans for creation of new public arts spaces within Elmira's downtown target area.

- The City of Elmira has recently partnered with the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA) and Housing Visions Consultants, Inc., to undertake a $14 million Chemung Crossing Neighborhood Revitalization project within the proposed DRI target area. This project will include the historic rehabilitation of two properties and the construction of new buildings on nine existing lots located on S. Main Street, Henry Street, and Harmon Street resulting in 45 high-quality, energy efficient, and affordable residential units and 5,500 square feet of commercial space.

- In early 2016 a preliminary concept plan for redevelopment of a vacant segment of Water Street located at the center of Elmira's proposed revitalization target area was developed. The plan involves an in-fill development project on prime property facing the Chemung River in the heart of the downtown. The site was recently demolished to make room for this game-changing project that will launch Elmira's downtown revitalization. The project involves new construction to accommodate premium new retail space, 49 market rate apartment units, walkable connections among buildings, and supporting enhancements. The City of Elmira and STEG have initiated discussions with local developers and contractors to determine the potential financing requirements and timeframes associated with this project.

- Multiple properties located on West Water and North Main Streets in the center of Elmira's proposed downtown target area have just been added this year to the National and New York State Registers of Historic Places. In addition, the City of Elmira, Chemung County and Elmira City School District have within the last year adopted 444.a historic property tax exemption to further incentivize improvements. Ten of these properties are identified as priorities in the Downtown Property Redevelopment Plan and are eligible for possible tax credits. See Attachment A. Figure 4.

- There is a new studio/gallery (Satavani Studio) on Water Street, and the Triple Talent Academy, an education oriented performance arts studio, is seeking space in Elmira.

- Building on Elmira's ethnic communities, The ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes is developing an interactive map of traditional arts and culture in Elmira for use as both documentation of these cultures, and a tool for future programming.

- Elmira is a major destination on the Points of Inspiration driving tour, a collaborative project including The ARTS Council, the Chemung County Historical Society, and the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce.

- Community Arts of Elmira has put forth a creative neighborhood unification proposal, the Creative Corridor, which includes a footprint in the *Elmira Refresh Cultural District* and will include arts, historic, educational, service and residential development projects. Eventually the *Creative Corridor* will extend north and south, east and west, simultaneously complementing the *Cultural Connector Corridor*, and also catalyzing off shoots through other projects such as the *Elmira Landmark Trail* that begins in the *Refresh Elmira* --- *Creative Corridor* footprint.

- A *Public Arts Commission* and the expansion of a *Community Murals Project* (arts education based) discussions/implementation are also underway with Elmira Second District Councilman (and BOCES) for whom Community Arts serves as a resource for public arts development in the *Refresh Elmira* target area.

6) Policies to Enhance Quality of Life. Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, complete streets plans, or transit-oriented development. If policies achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.

The City of Elmira has a "City Manager" organizational structure. In addition, a Downtown Business Improvement District has been in existence since 1990.

To support an aggressive revitalization strategy, the City of Elmira recently has assembled a "fast track" approval process for developers seeking to invest in infill development projects and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings.

The City of Elmira, STEG, and Chemung County have submitted an application to create the Chemung County Land Bank. The creation of a land bank would provide an additional tool to address vacant, abandoned, and tax-foreclosed properties and return them to productive use. Once approved and formed, the land bank would focus efforts on the downtown target area.

In June of 2015, the City of Elmira undertook a comprehensive master plan update project with funding through NYSERDA's Cleaner, Greener Communities Program. This project has involved public visioning sessions, stakeholder meetings, and design charrettes and has identified opportunities to address the City's downtown revitalization needs. The City expects to adopt its new comprehensive master plan by September 2016, and a key planning recommendation will be to revise the City's existing zoning law to establish the framework for a more vibrant, walkable, and aesthetically attractive downtown community in the years ahead. Specifically, Elmira's updated comprehensive master plan will incorporate a number of modern downtown development principles including as a Complete Streets plan and policy, form-based zoning for particular downtown corridors, age-friendly and pedestrian-friendly design standards, bikeability, efficient downtown parking design standards, energy efficiency, attractive streetscaping, and similar Smart Growth principles.

A key planning recommendation from the draft of the new comprehensive master plan will be to develop a new zoning code that would encourage mixed-use development and uphold traditional urban design principles to achieve a pedestrian-oriented environment within the downtown. The development of a form-based code or hybrid code would support increased density in the urban core.

Preliminary steps have been taken to institute Smart Cities innovations designed to lower government costs while improving service delivery. For example, costs associated with streetlights have been lowered with the use of funding through NYSERDA and U.S Department of Energy to convert to LED streetlights. In addition, the Comprehensive Master Plan update will recommend City-wide sustainability efforts through great urban design, green infrastructure, incorporating LEED-ND principals.

Elmira offers an inclusive environment for New Americans in many different ways. In 2015 the data reports:

- 4.4% (3,912) Chemung County residents speak a language other than English in their homes.
- Foreign born persons in Chemung County: 2.6% (2,301)
- 4.8% (7,735) Steuben County residents speak a language other than English in their homes.
- Foreign born persons in Steuben County: 2.5% (2,466)
- 3.3% (611) of Schuyler County residents speak a language other than English in their homes

During the past year, Arnot Health Services has hired eleven physicians from foreign medical schools and provides them with support services to acclimate to this country and the Elmira area. In addition, EOP Literacy Volunteers of Chemung and Schuyler Counties, which is based in Elmira, provides English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for 40-50 ESL learners. In addition, an English Conversation Group is hosted creating an inclusive community for New Americans that facilitates a sense of self-sufficiency and creates deeper connections to the community. The EOP Literacy Volunteers student demographics are 70% ESL. They consistently have a wait list of ESL students.

7) **Local Support.** Set forth the local and community support that exists for the revitalization of this downtown and the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to building and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that will work with outside experts to convene a local DRI Planning Committee to oversee the plan.

The Elmira City Council adopted a resolution at its May 16, 2016 meeting approving submission of this DRI application. A copy of the resolution is contained in Appendix C. Elmira City Council Resolution.

During the fall of 2015 Southern Tier Economic Growth, Inc. (STEG), in cooperation with the City of Elmira, Chemung County, and various local community service organizations, assembled a working committee to develop and implement a strategic, multiyear community and economic development action plan supporting revitalization of the City of Elmira's downtown core. The working committee is composed of representatives of the Southern Tier REDC, STEG (county-wide economic development agency), Chemung County IDA, City of Elmira, Chemung County, the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, Elmira Downtown Development (BID), the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Opportunity Program of Chemung and Schuyler County, Community Arts of Elmira, Inc., the Arts Council of the Southern Finger Lakes; the Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council (ECTC); and the Chemung County Child Care Council. Upon designation as the Southern Tier's DRI, the committee will be expanded to include neighborhood associations and homeowners, property owners and local developers, higher education, local advocacy organizations such as the YWCA, social and public service organizations, and faith-based organizations.

The committee's proposed downtown revitalization strategy for Elmira is premised upon the commitment of all participants and stakeholders to achieve a thriving, diverse, and sustainable downtown community within the next ten years, and it is intended to build upon those regional economic revitalization recommendations set forth in the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council's *Southern Tier Upstate Revitalization Initiative Plan*.

Strong links also exist between Elmira's proposed downtown revitalization strategy and the Regional Council's emphases on (1) investment in entrepreneurship; (2) strengthening the advanced manufacturing industry sector; and (2) promotion of the Southern Tier's innovative culture. Elmira's proposed revitalization strategy is designed to reinforce Elmira's standing as a strong eastern anchor of the I86 innovation corridor and as a dynamic college community with a rejuvenated downtown and vibrant neighborhoods.

8) **Other.** Provide any other information that informed the nomination of this downtown for a DRI award.

Elmira envisions a future downtown area that is an attractive and livable community for diverse populations of all ages. The downtown revitalization effort planned will be undertaken in direct coordination with Elmira's new *Poverty Reduction Initiative* partnership with New York State and with Chemung County's *Age Friendly Communities* and other community enrichment programs to maximize the overall livability of the City's downtown area.

It is important to note that throughout the entire city of Elmira, 51% of the residents are low to moderate income; 65% are Medicaid eligible and 38.4% of the City's population consists of families with children under the age of 18 with 40.6% living below the poverty level (Census Bureau American Factfinder, 2010-2014). Of single female heads of households with children under 18, 59.7% live below poverty and for those with children under five, 71.9% live below poverty.

Elmira's aim is to achieve a continuously active and diverse downtown center offering additional housing options, a blend of retail, commercial, entertainment, arts and arts education, recreational uses, and attractive public spaces and streetscapes. The downtown envisioned will be highly walkable and will provide for maximum physical accessibility, with a complete range of supporting community business services and amenities (e.g., health care facilities, broadband service, library services, barber and hair care businesses, bicycling lanes and storage facilities, etc.). Elmira's future downtown residential population will include families of all incomes, college students, physicians and hospital medical residents, young professionals and college faculty members, engineers, scientists, and IT professionals, executives, and "empty nest" retirees.

The revitalization plan envisioned is intended to address a range of interrelated issues, including vacancies, deterioration, and disinvestment in the City's historic central business district; elevated unemployment and limited personal income levels among residents of neighborhoods adjoining the City's downtown core; an aged housing stock; scattered residential blight; property abandonment, crime, and property maintenance issues; outmigration of young adults and elevated high school dropout rates; a severely limited property tax revenue base; and a number of associated issues.

The pre-DRI working committee has been utilizing the strategic planning framework that appears in Attachment A. to create an active and desirable downtown with a strong sense of place and that will attract businesses and private investment, and result in an enhanced local property tax base. The group's principal goals in this proposed revitalization effort are as follows:

- To design and implement a downtown revitalization program for the City of Elmira's central business district. This effort, which has been captioned the "Elmira Refresh" downtown revitalization program, will include (1) the strategic redevelopment of vacant or underutilized downtown properties; (2) implementation of an area-wide streetscape and building façade enhancements program that will serve to establish a signature identity for the City's central business district; and (3) promotion of new mixed-use residential, retail, commercial, service, and entertainment uses through-out the City's downtown area and its adjoining neighborhoods. A key area of focus will be the potential for mixed use and

market rate rental housing development within the Elmira's DRI target area through infill and restoration of historic buildings.

- To leverage NYS programs and provide for the maximum local public incentives to attract and stimulate private investment within and neighboring Elmira's downtown core area.

- To strengthen the visual and cultural activity linkages between the Elmira College campus, the planned new Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, and the City of Elmira's central business district through a coordinated program of public and private capital projects. This effort will capitalize upon efforts now underway to strengthen the ties between Elmira College and the First Arena facility in Elmira's CBD.

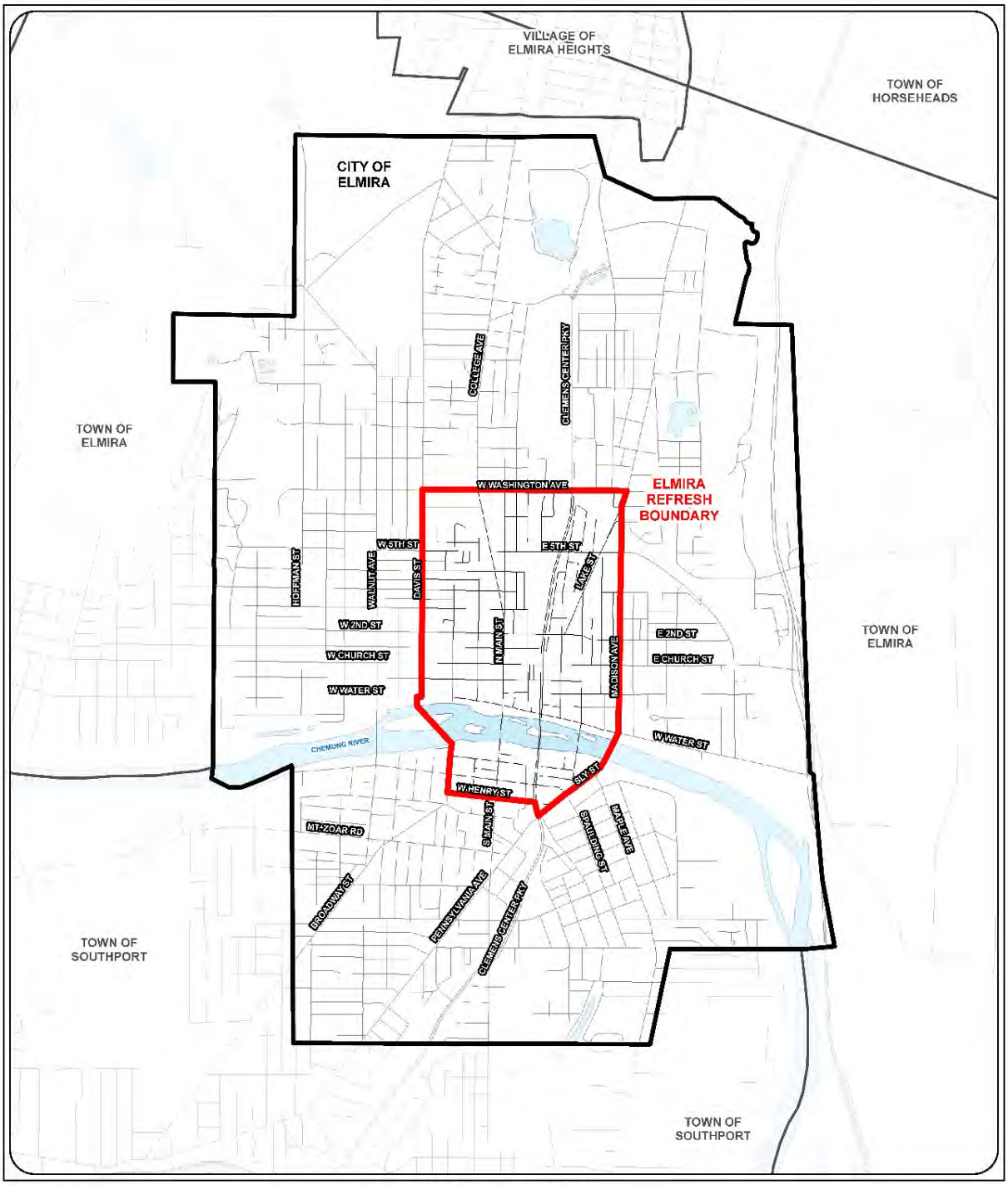
- To provide maximum public incentives for private investment and business development or expansion within and neighboring Elmira's downtown core area. The City and the working committee intend to establish strong working partnerships with Federal and State development assistance agencies and local financial institutions to ensure the successful implementation of this proposed revitalization effort. Several major redevelopment projects within Elmira's proposed target area have recently been awarded funding under New York State's 2015-2016 *Upstate Revitalization Initiative* program.

- To upgrade or redevelop the housing stock located within neighborhoods adjoining Elmira's central business district and to implement a program addressing corresponding needs of residents for adequate housing, medical care, child care, work training, and related services. The working committee has submitted an application for membership in the Purpose Built Communities organization to obtain that organization's guidance in this effort; and the City of Elmira also intends to participate actively in Governor Andrew Cuomo's *Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative* program (ESPRI) in 2016 and in succeeding years.

Attachment A. Maps

Figure 1 - Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area Boundaries
Figure 2 - Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area by Census Tract Boundaries: 6, 7 and 10
Figure 3 - Current Land Uses within the DRI Target Area
Figure 4 - Properties Targeted for Redevelopment Within the Elmira Refresh DRI
Figure 5 - City of Elmira Poverty Rates by Census Tract
Figure 6 - Park and Open Space in Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area

Figure 1 - Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area Boundaries



FAGAN ENGINEERS & LAND SURVEYORS PC

ELMIRA REFRESH
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE
TARGET AREA

AERIAL IMAGERY FROM 2014
CITY OF ELMIRA, CHEMUNG COUNTY, NEW YORK

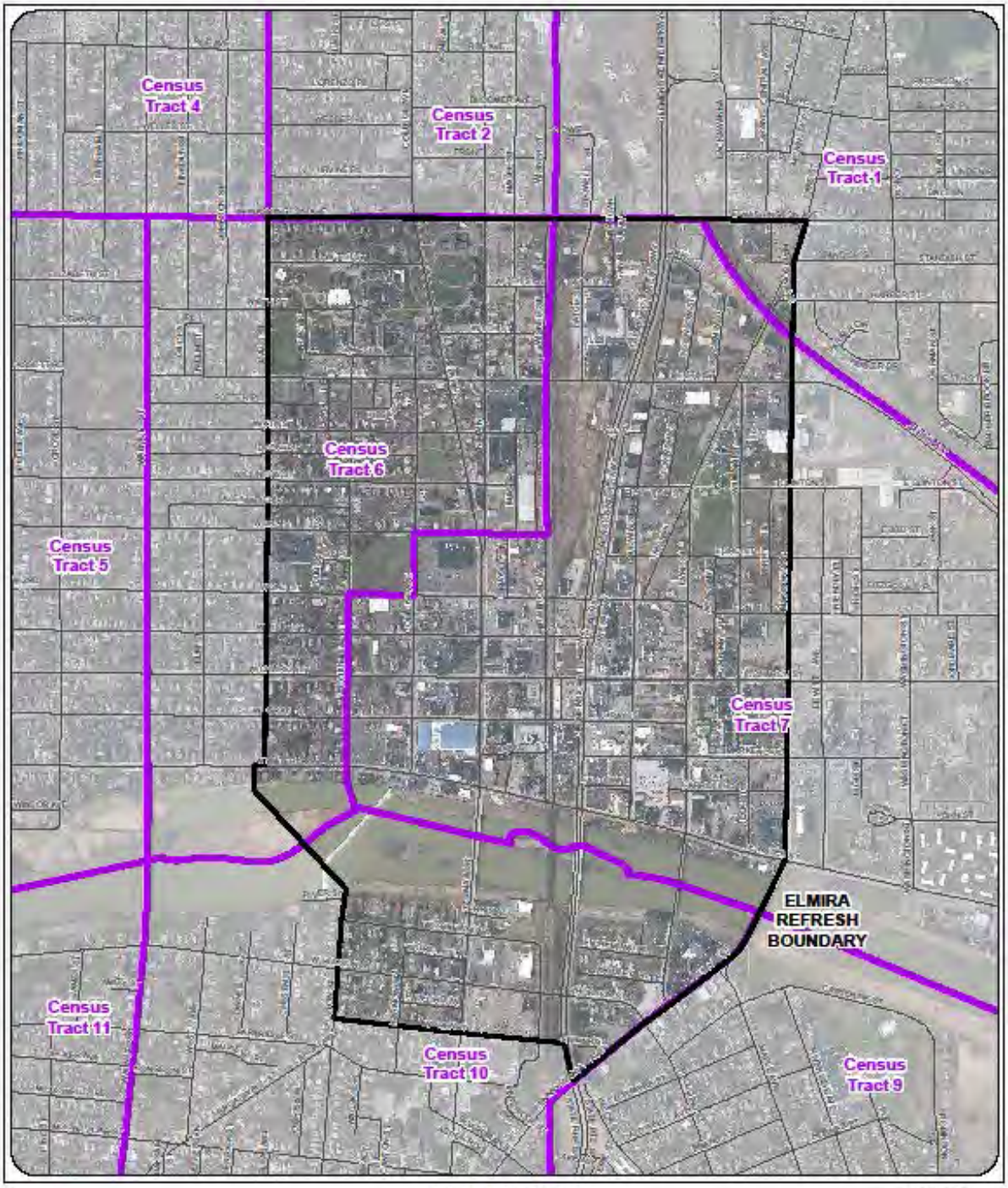
0 0.5 1 Miles

FIGURE 01

1 inch = 0.5 miles
(PRINTED 8.5x11)

PROJECT #: 2015-012
MAY 18, 2016

Figure 2 - Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area by Census Tract Boundaries: 6, 7 and 10



FAGAN

ELMIRA REFRESH
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

TARGET AREA with CENSUS TRACT BOUNDARIES: 6, 7, & 10

AERIAL IMAGERY FROM 2014
CITY OF ELMIRA, CHEMUNG COUNTY, NEW YORK

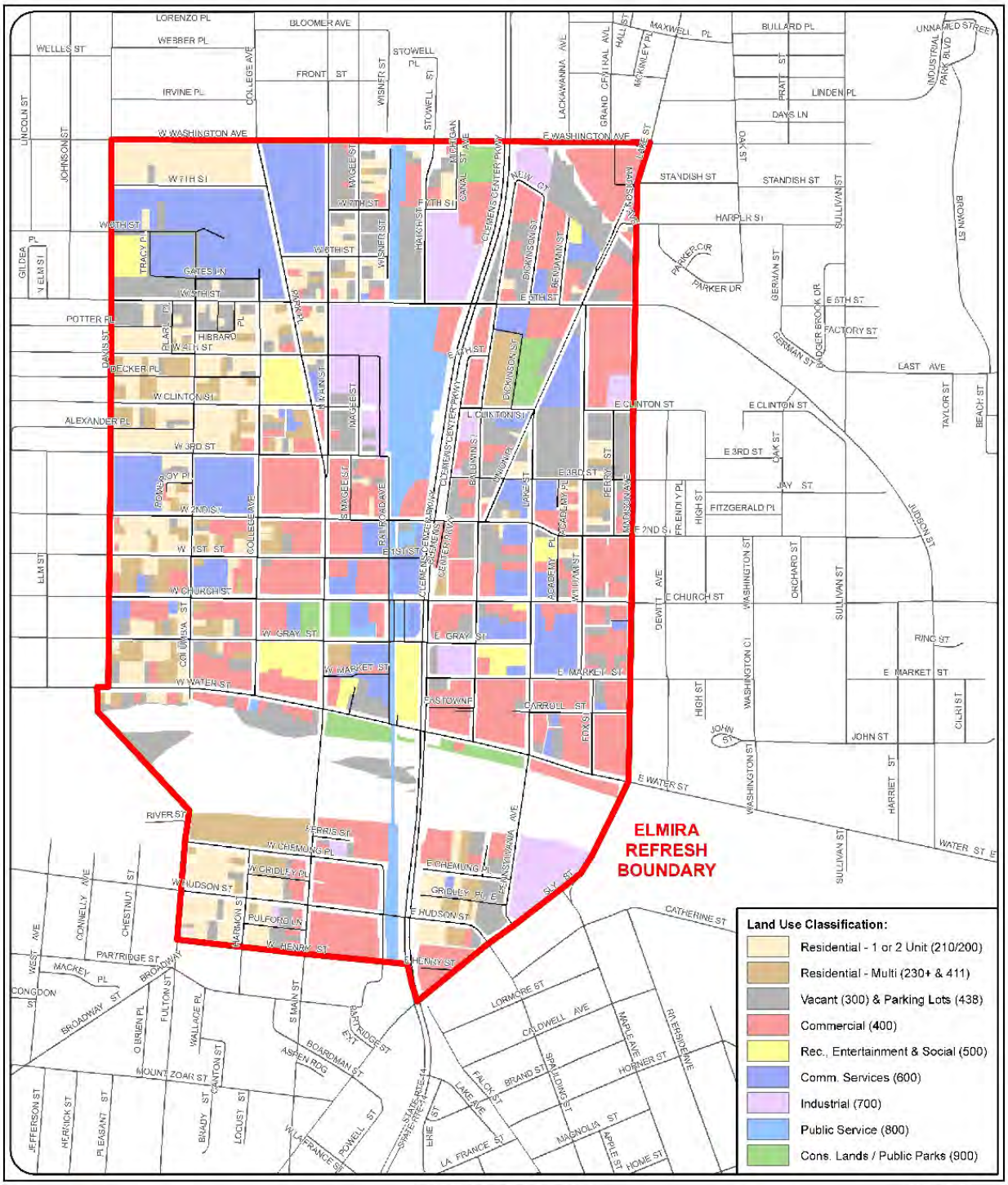
0 1,000 2,000ft.

FIGURE 02

1 inch = 1,000 feet
(PRINTED 8.5x11)

PROJECT #: 2015-012
MAY 06, 2016

Figure 3 - Current Land Uses within the DRI Target Area



FAGAN ENGINEERS

ELMIRA REFRESH
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE
CURRENT LAND USES within TARGET AREA

AERIAL IMAGERY FROM 2014
CITY OF ELMIRA, CHEMUNG COUNTY, NEW YORK

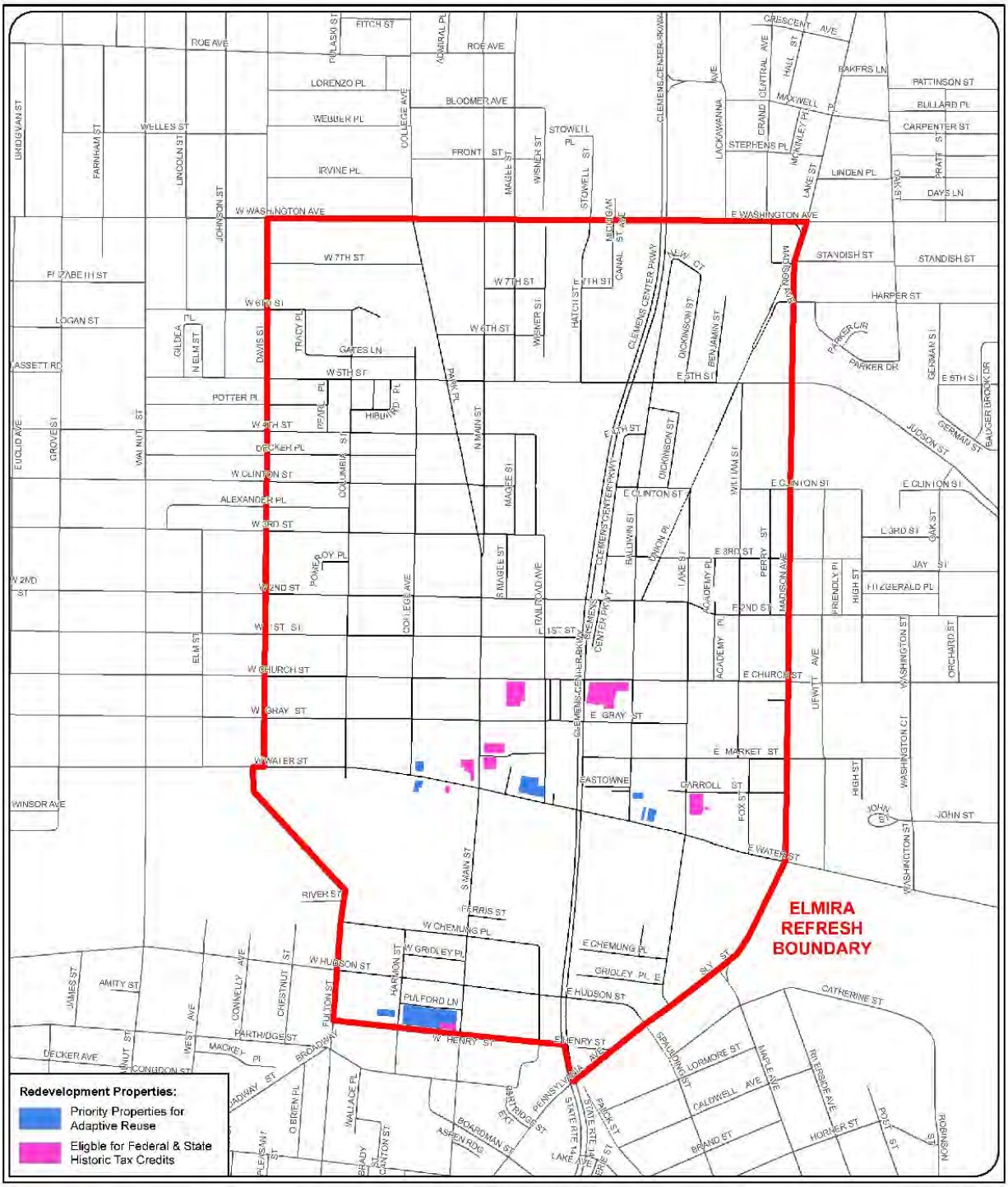
0 1,000 2,000 ft.

FIGURE 03

1 inch = 1,000 feet
(PRINTED 8.5x11)

PROJECT #: 2015-012
MAY 20, 2016

Figure 4 - Properties Targeted for Redevelopment Within the Elmira Refresh DRI



FAGAN ENGINEERS

ELMIRA REFRESH
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE
PROPERTIES TARGETED FOR REDEVELOPMENT within TARGET AREA

AERIAL IMAGERY FROM 2014
CITY OF ELMIRA, CHEMUNG COUNTY, NEW YORK

0 1,000 2,000 ft.

FIGURE 04

1 inch = 1,000 feet
(PRINTED 8.5x11)

PROJECT #: 2015-012
MAY 20, 2016

Figure 5 - City of Elmira Poverty Rates by Census Tract

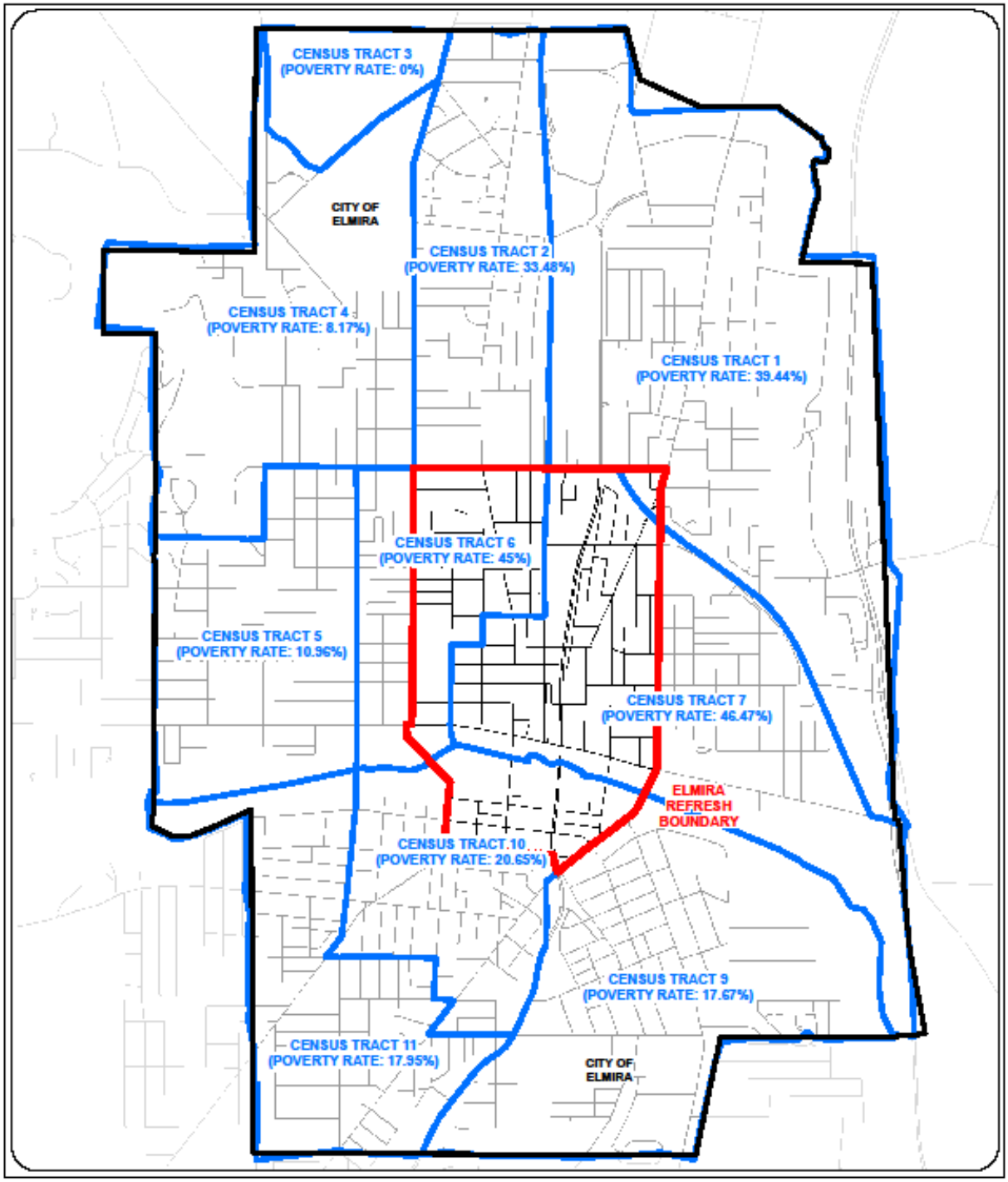
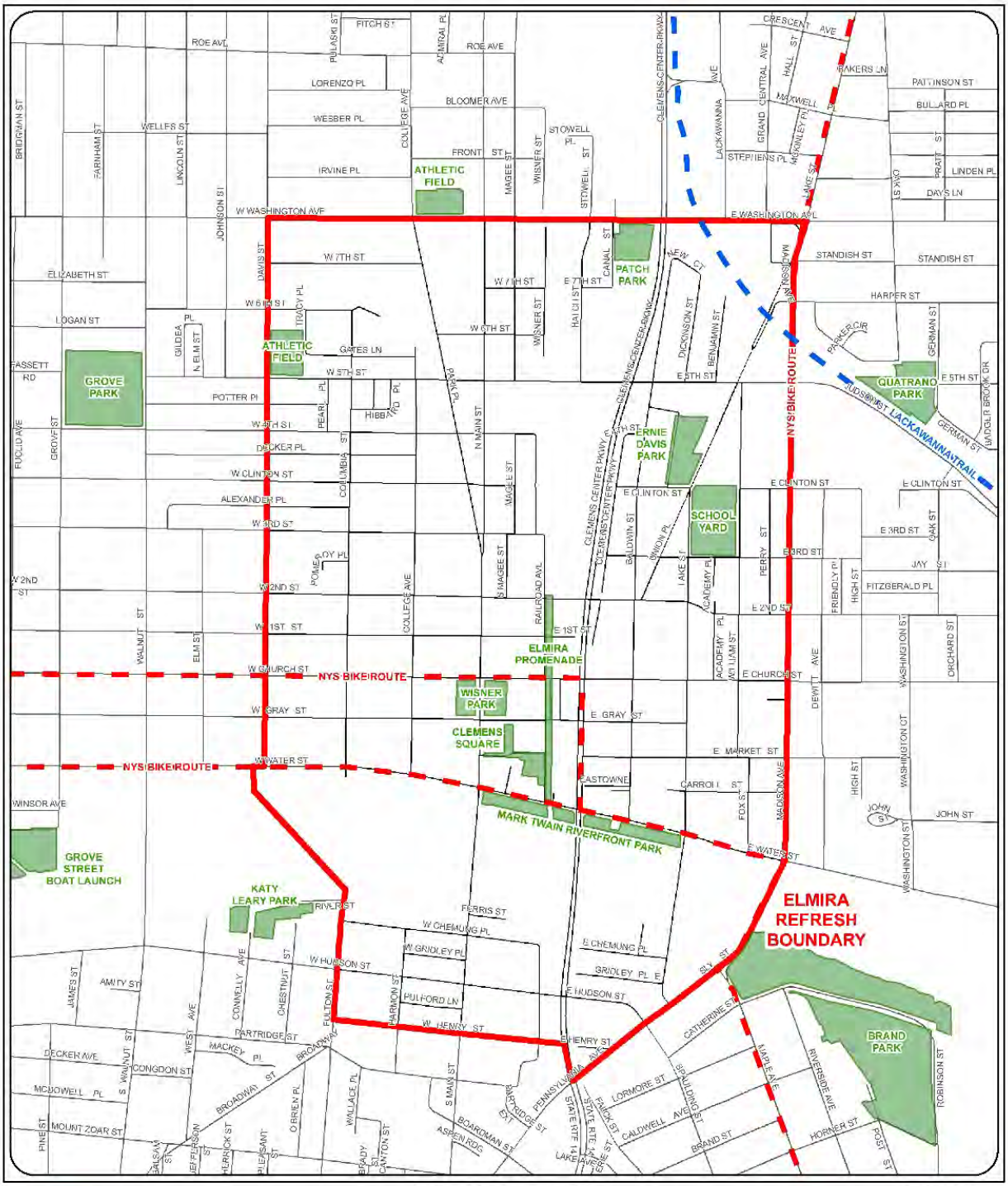


Figure 6 - Park and Open Space in Elmira Refresh DRI Target Area



FAGAN ENGINEERS

ELMIRA REFRESH
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE
OPEN SPACES, BIKE ROUTES, AND TRAILS

AERIAL IMAGERY FROM 2014
CITY OF ELMIRA, CHEMUNG COUNTY, NEW YORK

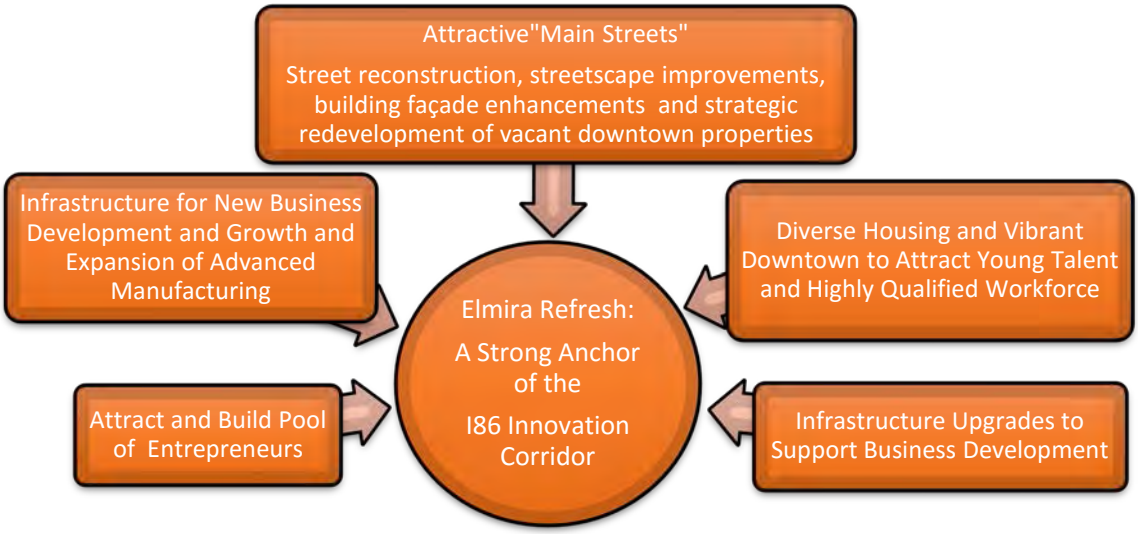
0 1,000 2,000 ft.

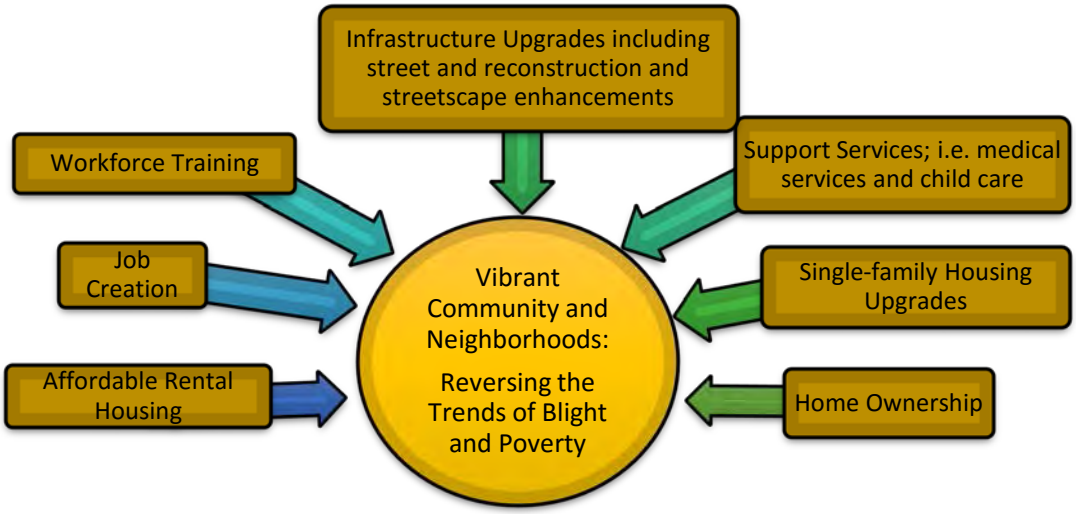
FIGURE 06

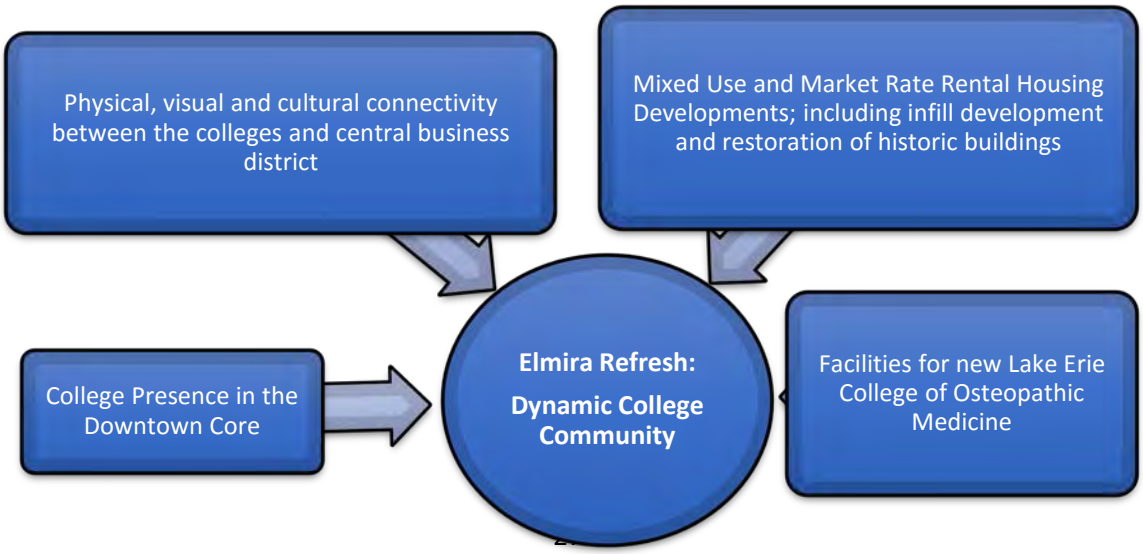
1 inch = 1,000 feet
(PRINTED 8.5x11)

PROJECT #: 2015-012
MAY 20, 2016

Attachment B. Elmira's Revitalization Strategic Framework







Attachment C. Elmira City Council Resolution

May 16, 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-176

RECEIVE COMMUNICATION FROM THE CITY MANAGER AND AUTHORIZE THE SUBMISSION OF A REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE FOR THE SOUTHERN TIER TO EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SOUTHERN TIER REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

By Councilmember STERMER:

WHEREAS, the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) will invest $10 million in each of 10 communities throughout New York State; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elmira's downtown is ripe for development to transform it into a vibrant community where tomorrow's workforce will want to live, work and raise families; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elmira, Chemung County, Southern Tier Economic Growth, Inc., and other community organizations have formed a collaborative relationship and are actively engaged in planning activities to support the revitalization of Elmira's downtown; and

WHEREAS, each Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) will nominate one downtown in their region best positioned to take advantage of the DRI and the City of Elmira desires to be the downtown selected for the Southern Tier.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Elmira's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Request for Designation is hereby approved for submission to Empire State Development and the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager is hereby authorized to submit the request to Empire State Development and the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE

AYES		NAYS
X	Councilmember Stermer	
X	Councilmember Moss	
X	Councilmember Bomburger	
X	Councilmember Blandford	
X	Councilmember Waters	
X	Councilmember Duffy	
X	Mayor Mandell	
7		0

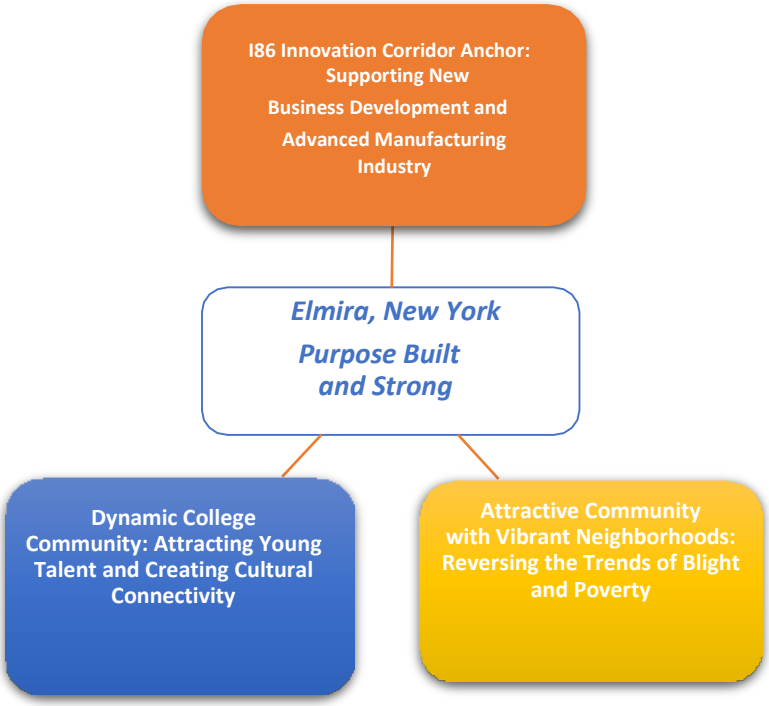
-Elmira City Hall - 317 E.Church street - Elmira New York 14901-
-www.cityofelmira.net - (607)737-5614 -

Attachment D.
Elmira Refresh Plan

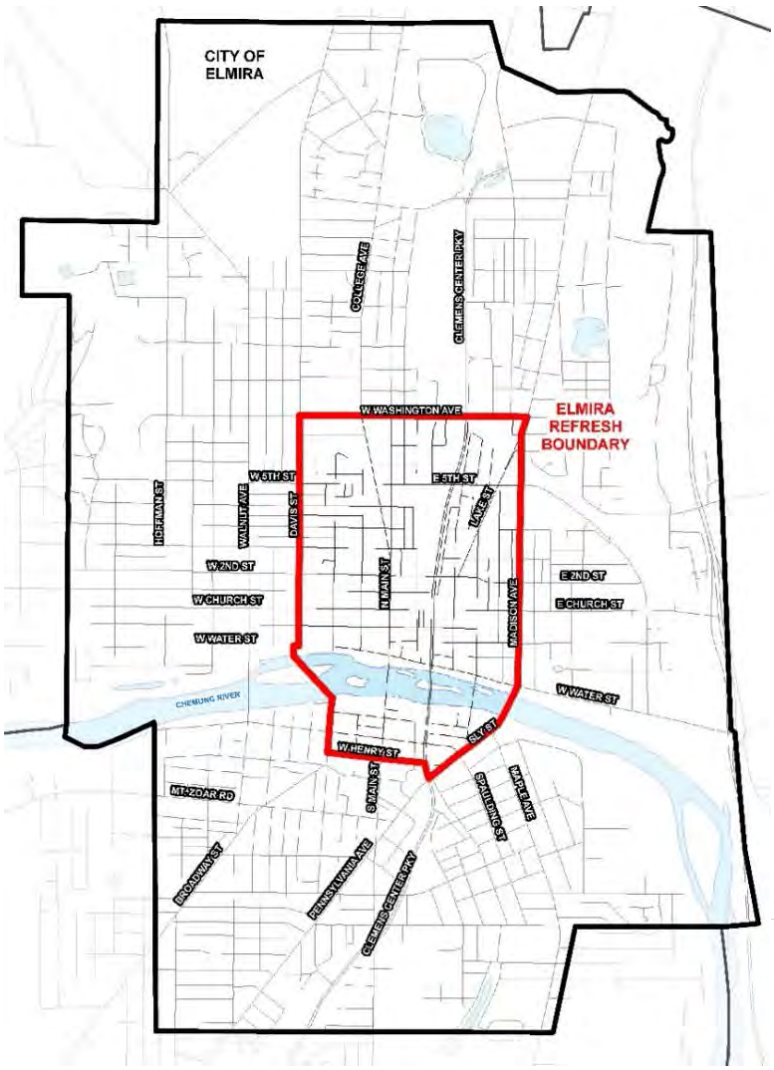
ELMIRA REFRESH

A PLAN FOR REVITALIZATION OF ELMIRA'S DOWNTOWN

Section 1. Vision and Strategic Framework



Elmira Refresh Vision: A Dynamic Downtown and Adjacent Neighborhoods, Leveraging Higher Education, the Healthcare Industry, Innovation in Advanced Manufacturing and Unique Cultural and Entertainment Assets



Challenges

- **Poverty and Blight**
- **Aged Housing Stock**
- **Vacant and Underutilized Historic Structures**
- **Limited Housing Options in an Urban Setting** for young talent, professionals, college students empty -nesters
- **Lack of Contemporary Identity & Brand**
- **Aging and Outdated Infrastructure**
- **Un-leveraged Assets such as the** Chemung River, historic buildings/structures, and charming neighborhoods

Assets to Leverage

- **Concentration of high quality and unique arts and cultural centers and attractions**
- **Regional sports and entertainment venues**
- **Downtown historic districts and buildings**
- **Chemung River, parks and open space**
- **Planned expansion of Elmira College and introduction of Lake Erie College of Osteopathic**
- **Stable employment base, with multiple anchor in downtown Elmira**
- **Two major regional healthcare systems**

Elmira Refresh is a 595.5-acre area that includes the city's existing central business district, shopping and grocery stores, a business improvement district, three designated historic districts, two colleges, churches, governmental offices, arts education center, cultural institutions, and two major entertainment venues with regional draw.

This target area is compact and bounded by major downtown corridors, including Washington Avenue on the north, West Henry Street and Pennsylvania Avenue on the south, Madison Avenue on the east and Davis Street on the west. The Chemung River and the Mark Twain Riverfront Park, considered major assets to the downtown, will be focal points for redevelopment both on the east and west sides of the target area.

Ingredients of a Vibrant Downtown

- Capacity and organizational structure that optimizes how people, policies and investments work together to reach the goal of a vibrant downtown.
- Streetscape enhancements.
- Recreation spaces such as pocket parks and bike lanes.
- Mix of housing options, with an emphasis on urban style market rate housing that is attractive to persons with the resources to financially support and be active in the "neighborhood."
- A retail and commercial mix that supports the neighborhood and is sustainable.
- Public and private investment in the adaptive reuse of anchor buildings.
- Preservation and renovation of buildings with character and historic significance.
- Building façade improvements.
- Parking and pedestrian friendly environment.
- Culture and entertainment venues.

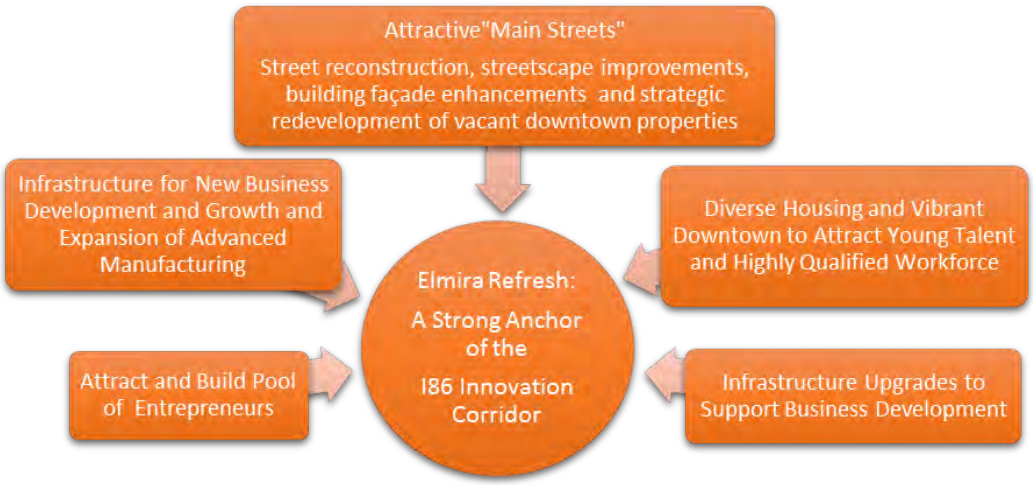
The combination of business, healthcare and academic institution expansions will impact the demand for housing in downtown Elmira, as well as cultural and social amenities. Simultaneously, this demand for housing will require an enhanced quality of life with strategies targeted at addressing blighted, vacant and underutilized properties, improving the aesthetics of downtown and capitalizing on assets such as the Chemung River.

Elmira's community leaders recognize that now is the time to capitalize on the opportunity to launch a comprehensive initiative that realizes the full potential of Elmira's downtown to be a walkable and vibrant neighborhood. Simultaneously, they have set forth an ambitious, but achievable goal to develop a plan of action that will strategically position Elmira's downtown to achieve long-term sustainability and become a desirable "neighborhood" with a diverse mix of housing, retail and commercial services, education and entertainment.

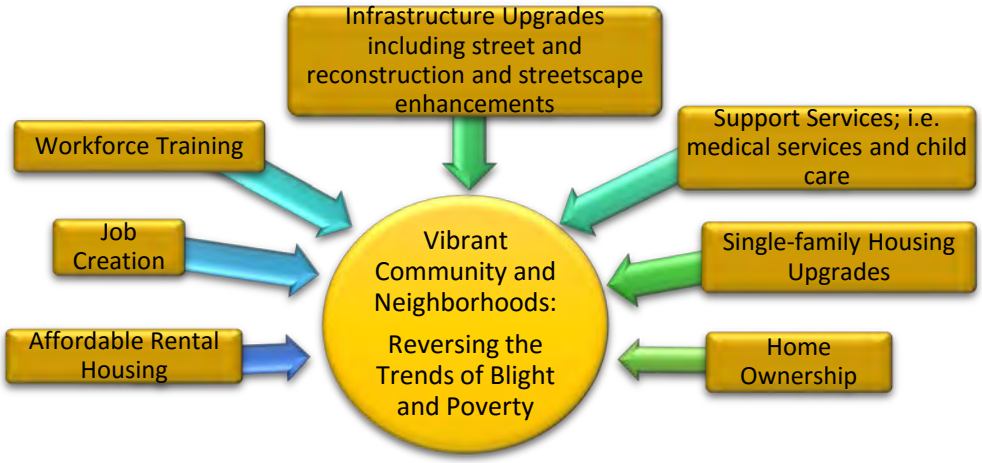
Elmira is making great strides in assembling the ingredients of a vibrant downtown with the formation of a work group composed of representatives of the city, county and community agencies; recent designation of a historic district; plans for creation of a land bank; early investment in the adaptive reuse of vacant buildings; support of entrepreneurial endeavors; planned expansion of Elmira College and investments to establish the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM); and commitments by anchor employers to remain downtown and throughout the surrounding area.

Elmira Refresh is Imbedded in the Overall Strategic Framework for the City of Elmira's Revitalization

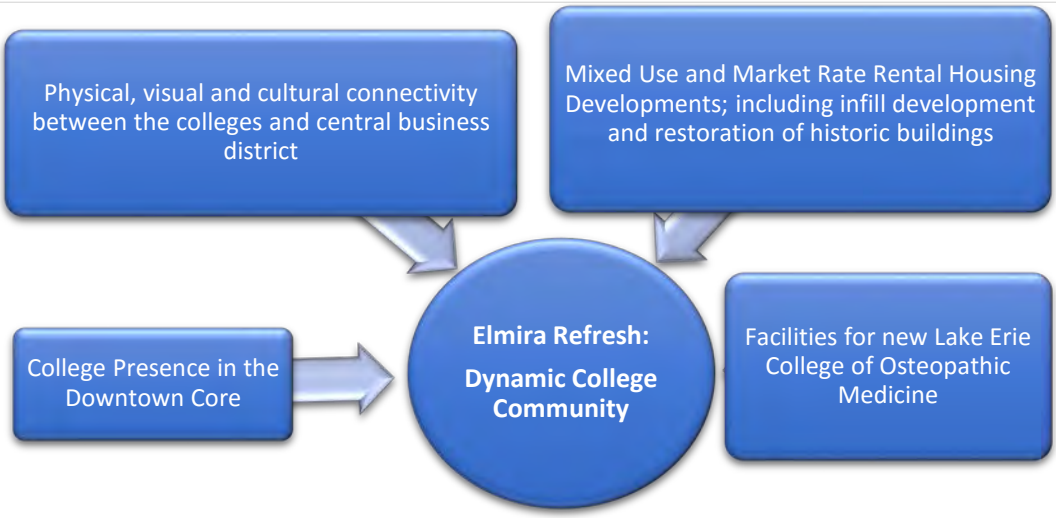
Strong Anchor of the I86 Innovation Corridor



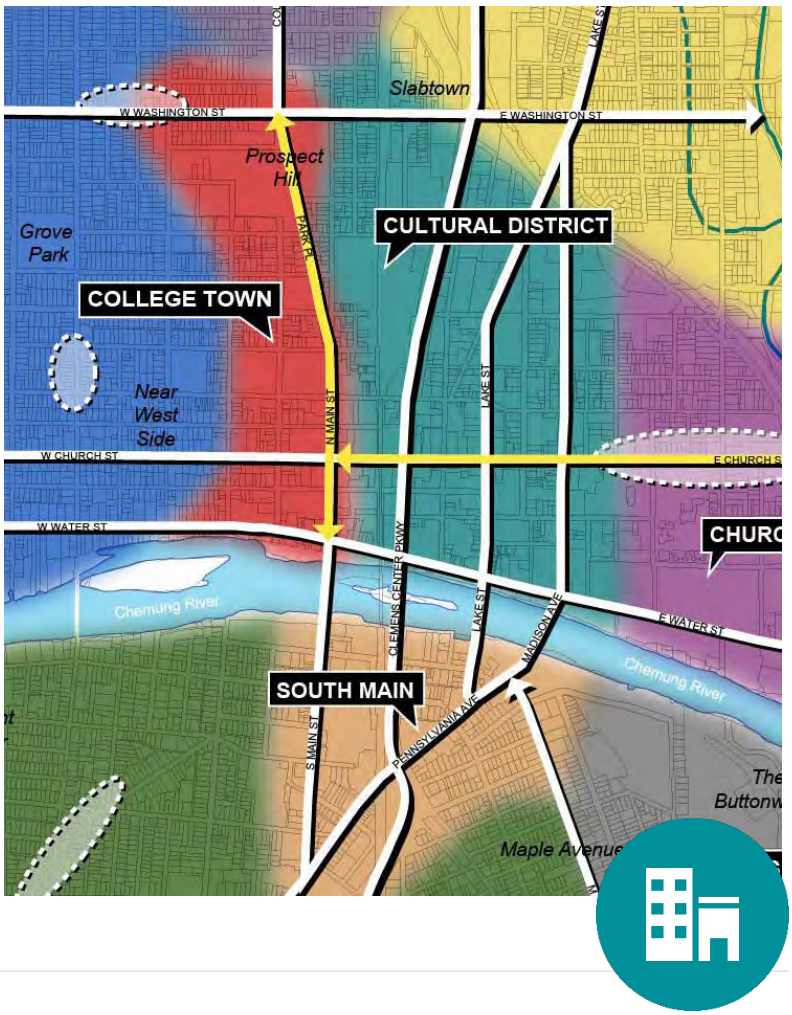
Vibrant Downtown and Neighborhoods



Dynamic College Community



Section 2. Action Plan for Revitalization



Strategy 1: Expand and Strengthen the Economic Drivers

The City of Elmira's future is being driven by new economic and social factors such as:

(1) designation as the eastern anchor of the I86 Innovation Corridor;

(2) the continued growth of the region's health care industry, particularly physician recruitment exceeding 50 per year and expanded medical resident programs;

(3) increase in the education sector with the new Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and significant expansion of Elmira College, both of which will require housing for off-campus students and new faculty hires;

(4) new business development and entrepreneurial activities in vacant downtown buildings, with an active business recruitment program to be launched;

(5) expansion of several manufacturing businesses such as Hardinge, Cameron Mfg, and DeMet's Candy

(6) creation of 1,145 new jobs within the next 1-2 years in the immediate area within and surrounding the downtown;

(7) documented demand for 330-400 market rate housing units in the downtown by 2022 and a total of 500 by 2027;

(8) convenient access to major north-south State highways, the I86 corridor, a growing regional airport, and an active freight rail line.

In addition, a demand analysis completed in April of 2016 demonstrated that by 2021 Elmira is expected to have no less than 500 new downtown residents, including professionals, students, physicians, college faculty, retirees and other persons. By 2027, 800 or more new residents are expected to reside within Elmira's downtown area.

Projects in Planning Stages

- $8-10 million investment committed by LECOM for new training facilities
- Expanded presence & participation of Elmira College in the downtown with athletic facilities in First Arena
- Adaptive reuse of vacant downtown buildings to house commercialization of technology and entrepreneurial ventures generated by the I86 Innovation Corridor
- Renovation of vacant buildings for mixed use purposes to house students, medical residents and faculty

Strategy 2. Create a Vibrant Downtown and Adjacent Neighborhoods

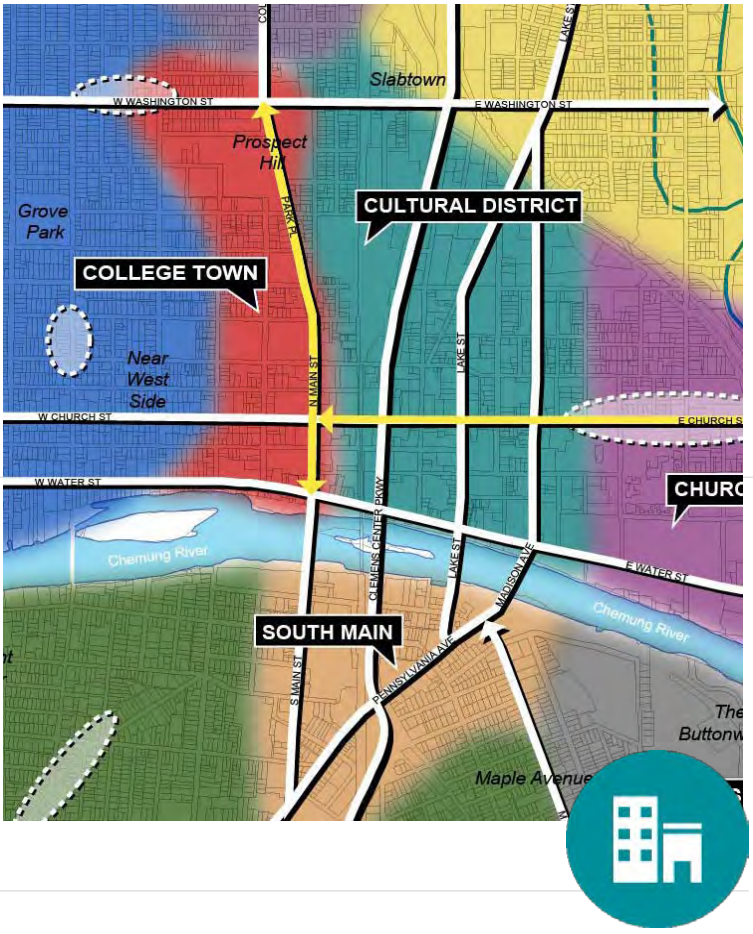
Projects Underway:

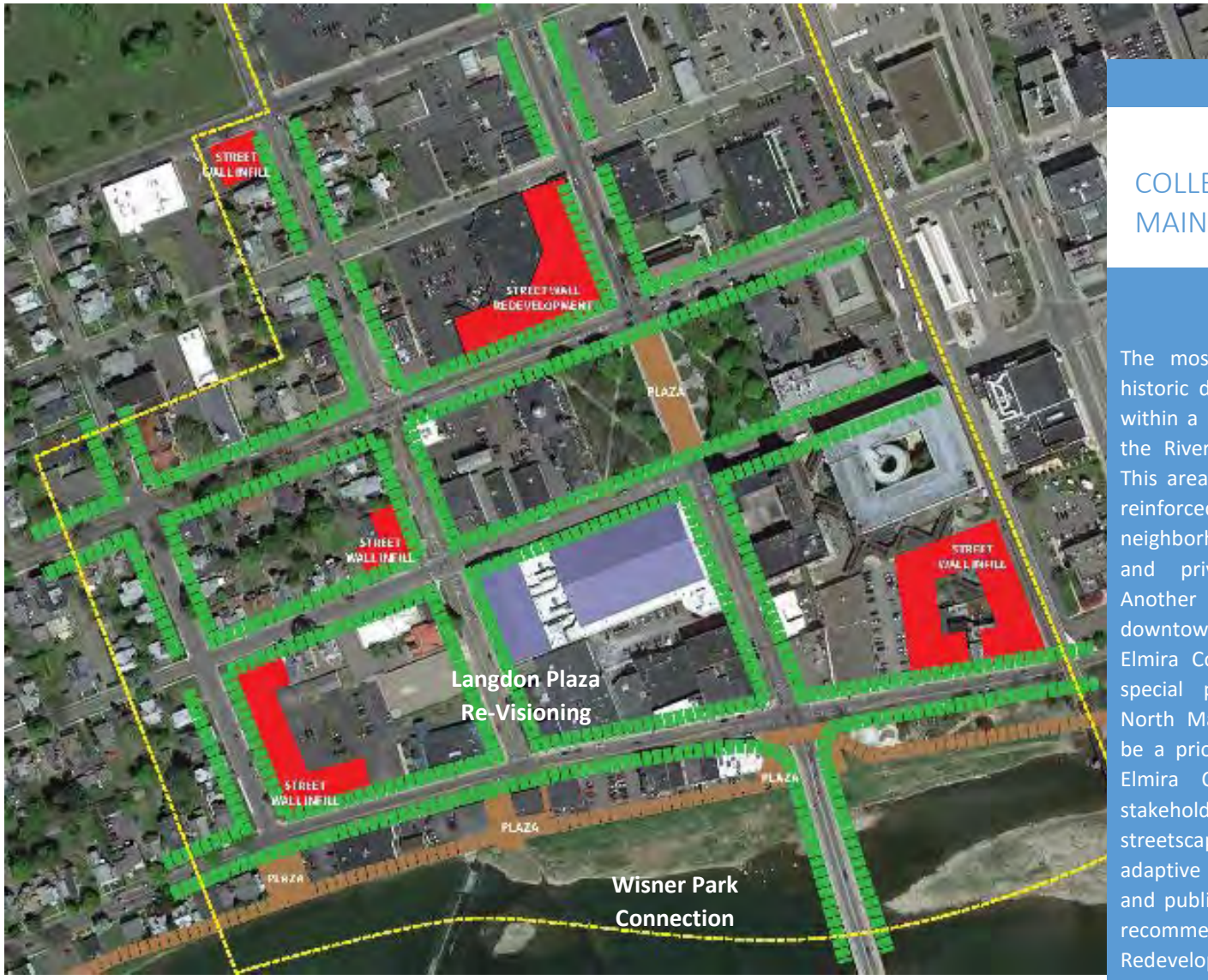
- Continuation of façade improvement program
- Creation of three targeted development areas: College Town, Cultural District and South Main
- Property development plan for the West Water Street Infill Project. Development mixed use project. Developer has been selected and first floor retail tenant recruitment underway
- Redevelopment plans for major anchors such as the former Federal and Star Gazette buildings
- Plan for adaptive reuse of 19 buildings within 5 clusters identified in the 2016 Market Rate Housing Demand Analysis. Examples of target properties include the Iszard's building, Midtown Plaza Building, Lake Street Block, East Water Street Properties, Baldwin Street Block. 16 properties will be mixed use developments and 3 properties will be rehabilitated for commercial and high-tech operations. Of these buildings, 10 are located in historic districts and have received designation that allows them to be eligible for Federal and State Historic Tax Credits for Commercial Properties.
- Construction of Chemung Crossings by Housing Visions in adjacent neighborhood in South Main District

Transformational Project Ideas:

- Establish GAP Financing Program for Adaptive Re-use & Infill
- Re-invent historic and underutilized buildings and build dense
- Reimage Clemens Square and Langdon Plaza
- Continue revitalization of the adjacent neighborhoods
- Create a Cultural Corridor program that knits together Elmira's prominent historic and cultural assets

Clemens Square Reimaged:





COLLEGE TOWN & THE MAIN STREET CORRIDOR

The most intact area of Elmira's historic downtown fabric is located within a block of Main Street, from the River, north to Church Street. This area has great potential to be reinforced as a vibrant urban neighborhood with focused public and private sector investment. Another historically intact downtown environment exists at Elmira College. Knitting these two special places together along a North Main Street corridor should be a priority of the City of Elmira, Elmira College, and other City stakeholders. A Main Street streetscape project, street trees, adaptive re-use, infill development and public realm improvements are recommended for this Corridor. Redevelopment of the "Clemen's Square" block is apriority.

SOUTH MAIN & HOWELL AREAS

The south side of the Chemung River has a design vision driven by the Southside Rising Plan prepared in 2014. The Plan recommends streetscape improvements, infill construction and public open space. The implementation of that Plan is recommended as part of this comprehensive strategy.

SOUTHSIDE RISING
Revitalizing Elmira's Southside

Images Courtesy of Johnson-Schmidt, Architect, P.C.

CLEMENS SQUARE INFILL SITE

A prime urban infill site has the opportunity to act as a design and land-use model for Elmira's downtown core. Located within the College Town area of Elmira on a block being called Clemens Square, this priority site has the ability to offer an exciting new housing product, strengthen the urban fabric, house destination attractions on a first floor, animate the streetscape, leverage existing parking availability, connect people to the Chemung River, build a downtown residential market to support local retail and commercial businesses, and much more. A moderate/high density of development (3-6 stories) is recommended in order to best leverage this prime location.

Strategy 3: Meet the Demand for Today's Downtown and Neighborhood Life Infrastructure

The City of Elmira will be a partner with the residents, businesses, higher education and healthcare institutions and private investors to provide diverse and high quality housing options, accessible internet service, upgraded streets and bridges, walkable streets, a dynamic and attractive waterfront and parks.

Projects Underway:

- Implementation of the Southside Rising Revitalization Strategy (September 2014)
- Create a Land Bank (in the process of being formed)
- Southern Tier Network (STN) has created a fiber-optic backbone within the City of Elmira that creates the foundation for broadband accessibility. STN and ECC Technologies are now focused on expansion off the backbone and laterals or "Last Mile Development "and are in conversations with Elmira College, Hilliard, Chemung County Library District, Chemung County, Elmira Water Board, and the businesses at 227- 231 W. Water Street. Other broadband providers include Time Warner Cable, Finger Lakes Technology Group, and Empire Access.
- Downtown street reconstruction and streetscape improvement projects totaling more than $6.8 million have been programmed to enhance the City's downtown environment and to establish a "cultural connector" corridor linking Elmira College and the proposed LECOM facility to the City's central business district. These include:
  - ✓ The North Main Street *Cultural Connector,* a $4.2 million federally funded project, is expected to start final design in the fall of 2016 and construction in 2018. The project includes three blocks of full-depth road reconstruction, streetscape improvement, and gateway treatments to further connect Elmira College with downtown from Clinton Street to Second Street.
  - ✓ A $1.2 million project using National Highway System (NHS) funding is anticipated in 2018 for the West Water Street upgrade project.
  - ✓ The Main Street Bridge rehabilitation project, slated for 2017 will utilize $1.4 million in Federal Highway System funding, which also includes biking and walking paths.
  - ✓ The Chemung River Development and Lake Street Pedestrian Bridge Renovation is being planned.

Transformational Planning and Project Ideas:

- Continue implementation of the Complete Streets Initiative
- Transform the downtown portion of the Clemens Parkway
- Undertake the Wisner Park Improvements/Connection
- Implement the Mark Twain Riverfront Park redesign and the Chemung River Trail Assessment and Comprehensive Master Plan
- Establish a network of walkable and bikeable routes and implement the Elmira-Chemung: Bicycle Pedestrian Trail 2035 Plan (March 2015)
- Improve Elmira's Walkability and Quality-of-Life through Development of Complete Streets
- Expand Downtown Public Wi-Fi
- Rehabilitate the Clemens Square Parking Structure
- Rehabilitate and re-imagine the Lake Street Bridge as a pedestrian bridge with park-like amenity

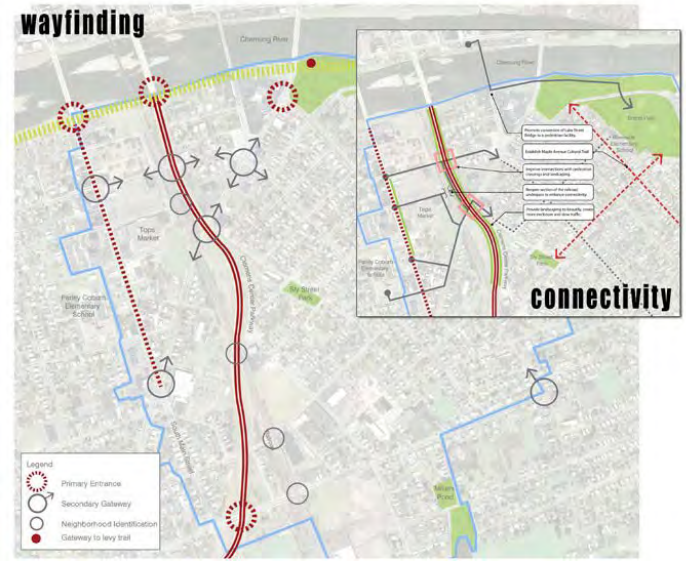
Clemens Square Parking Structure Connector Reimaged:

Examples of Projects

Campus Corridor - Mixed-use

The Campus Corridor area is located along North Main Street between downtown and Elmira College. It includes the areas on both sides of North Main Street as well as areas adjacent to the College and downtown. The goal to create a place of exchange between the campus and City communities and strengthen Elmira's desire to be recognized as a college town. It should encourage mixed-use development with retail, service and commercial uses on the ground floors with residential and office uses above. A mix of uses combined with quality urban design must be pedestrian-oriented and form a cohesive street wall.

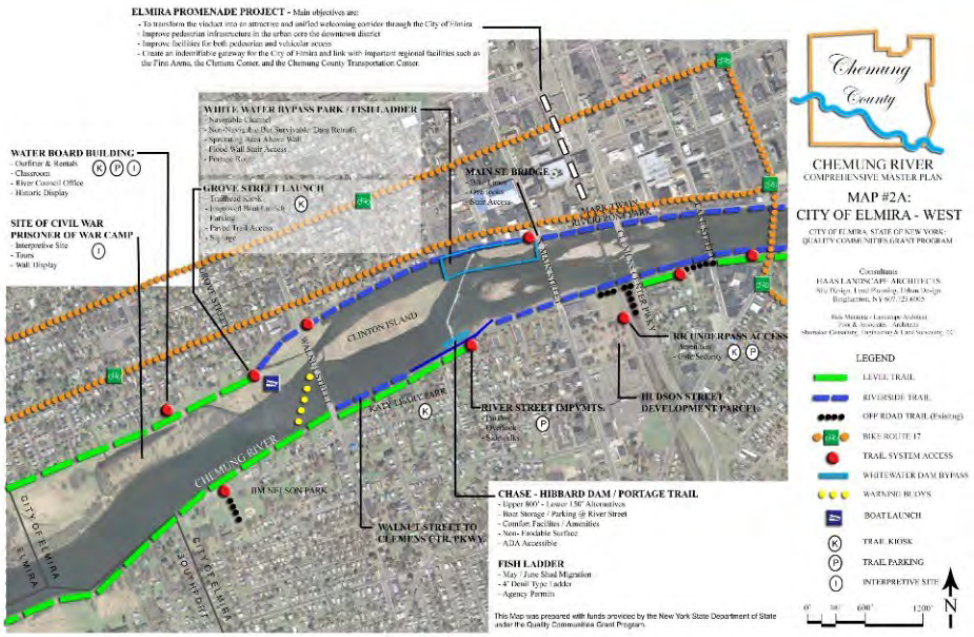
Southside Rising Revitalization Strategy (September 2014)



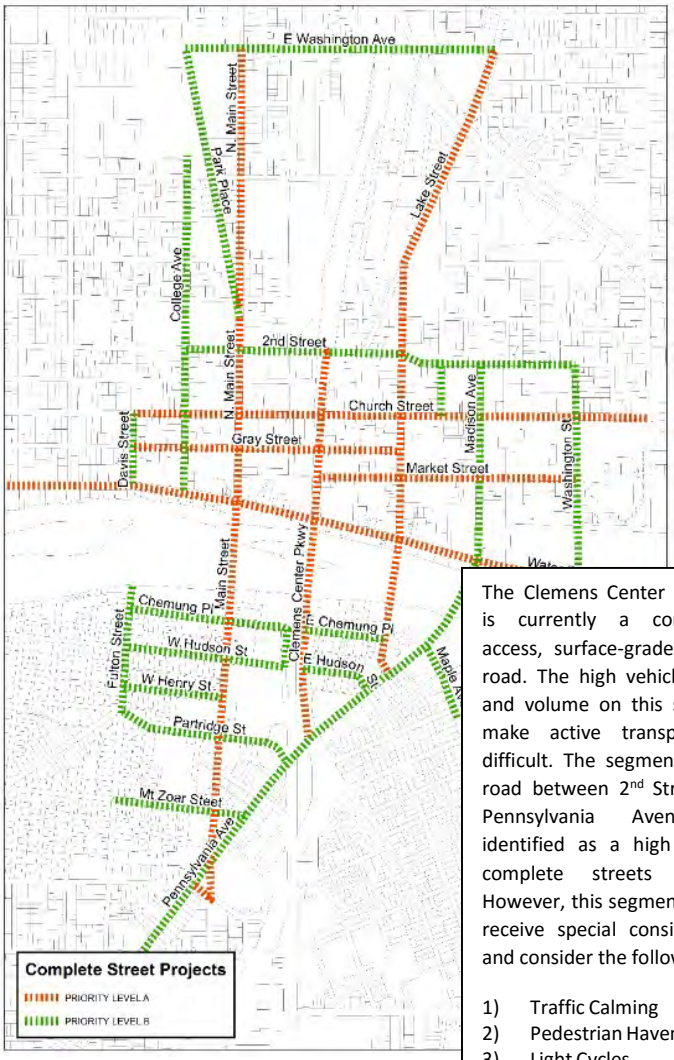
Through the NYSDOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program, the Southside Rising Revitalization Strategy was developed. The consultant team developed two master plans for the location. Recommendations were made for South Main Street, local parks, recreation, riverfront, connectivity, wayfinding, gateways, vacant sites, and economic development.

Southside Rising Master Plan, Wayfinding & Connectivity

Chemung River Trail Plan



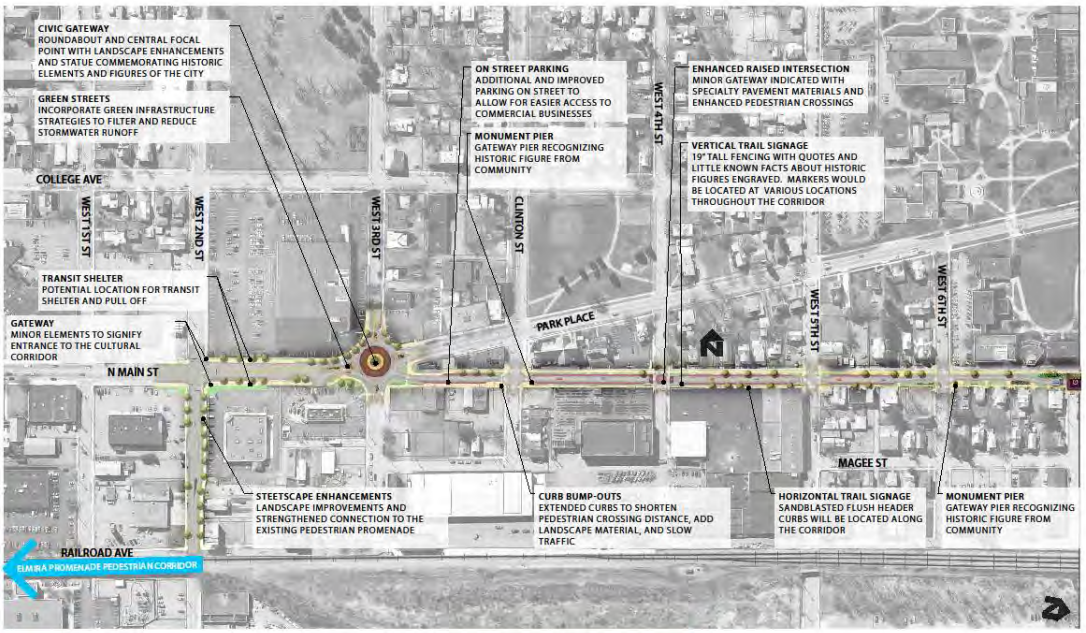
Elmira Complete Streets Plan



The Clemens Center Parkway is currently a controlled-access, surface-grade arterial road. The high vehicle speed and volume on this segment make active transportation difficult. The segment of the road between 2nd Street and Pennsylvania Avenue is identified as a high priority complete streets project. However, this segment should receive special consideration and consider the following:

1) Traffic Calming
2) Pedestrian Havens
3) Light Cycles
4) Study Speed Limit
5) Sight Lines/Delineators

North Main Street Cultural Connector Project



Bergmann Associates

North Main Street Cultural Connector - Project Plan
City of Elmira New York
Figure 2

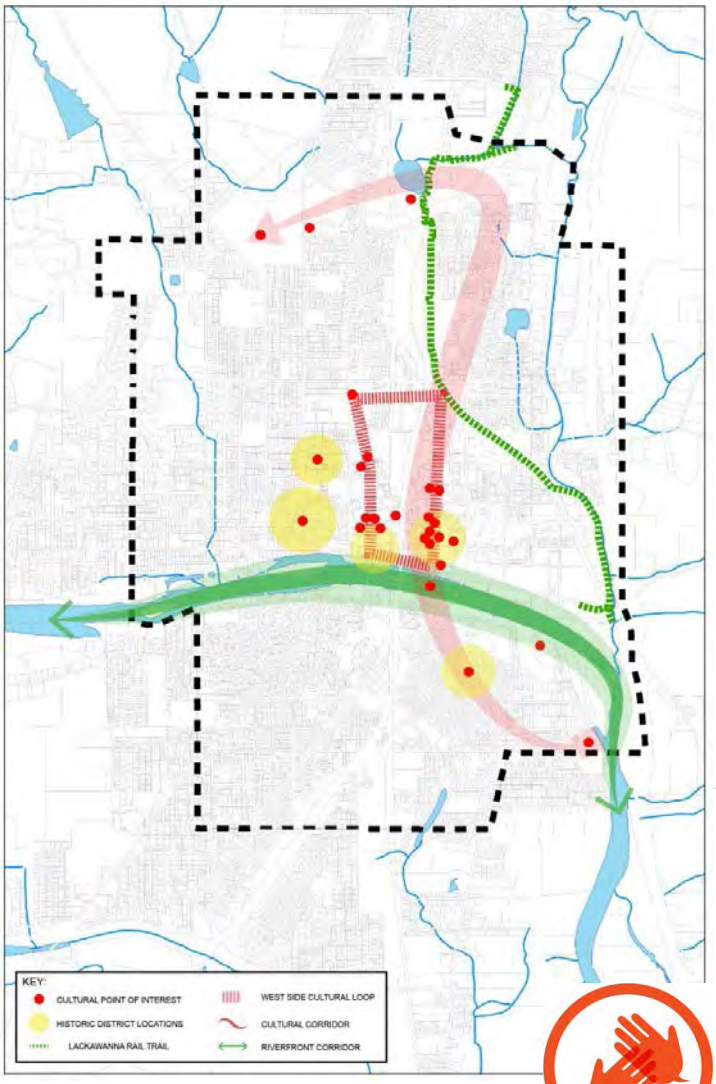
Strategy 4: Build the Technical and Support Resources Necessary to Attract and Support Investment

Nationally, land use planning and regulation is evolving rapidly from focusing on the regulation of the use of a property, to a focus on regulating the design of properties. In large part, this includes a shift from being vehicular oriented to pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Elmira can better achieve its vision as a vibrant urban place by following this trend. Neighborhoods can be empowered to play a heightened role in the planning and implementation.

Transformational Planning Ideas:

- Implement a Contemporary Mixed-Use & Design-Based Land Use Strategy
- Streamline the City's review and approval process for property development
- Establish STEG as the one-stop for business and property development

Strategy 5: Promote Downtown as a Retail Center, as well as the Entertainment and Cultural Heart of Chemung County



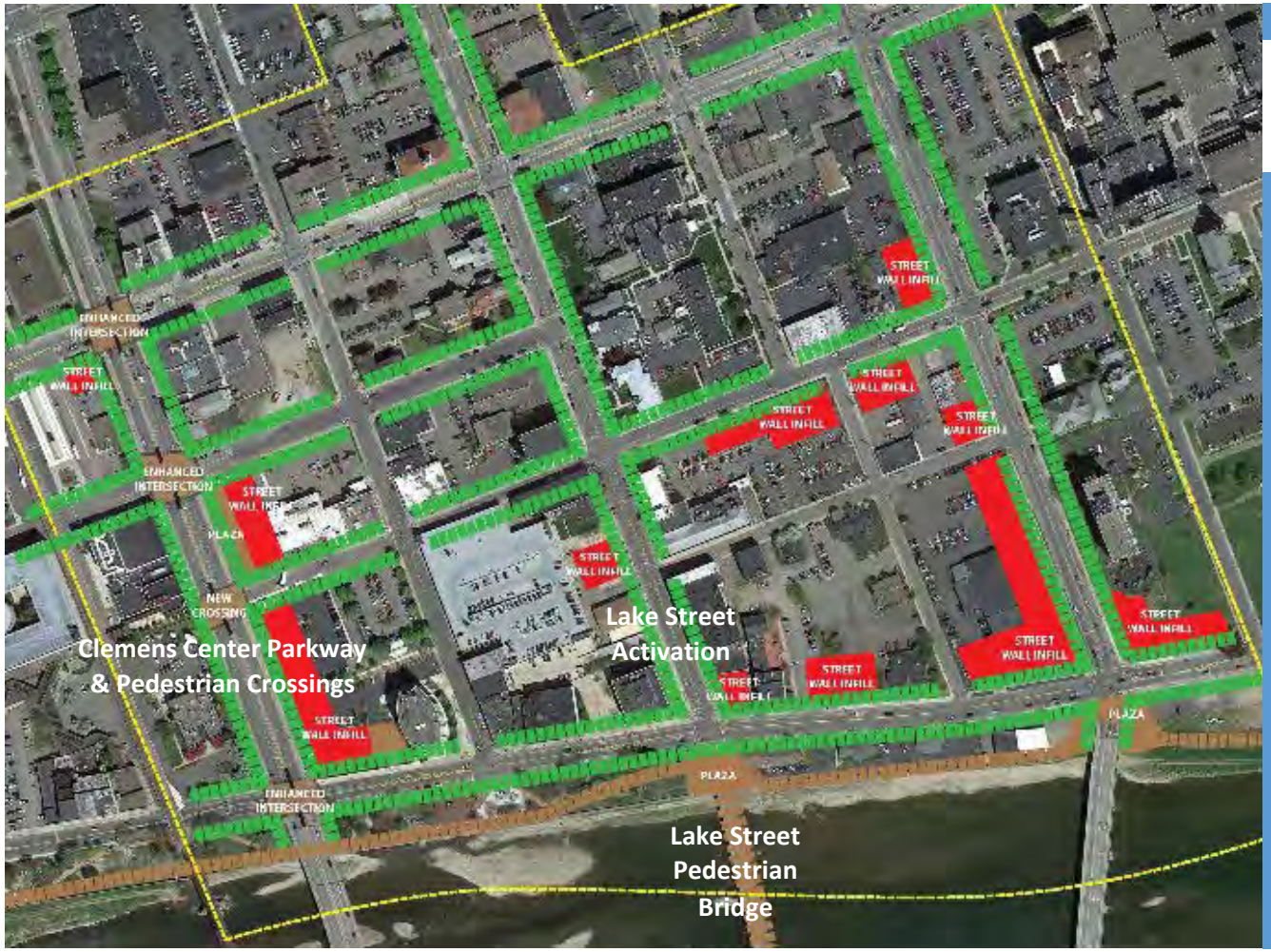
Elmira is well known for being a regional center for entertainment, the arts and culture. There is the opportunity to leverage this position.
In addition, the majority of entertainment and cultural destinations are located in the Elmira Refresh downtown core and walkable for its many existing and anticipated residents.

Projects Underway:

- Development and implementation of a formal Downtown Business Recruitment and Retention Program
- Continued investment in arts and cultural facilities and programs
- Conduct feasibility of converting historic buildings for use as art and cultural centers such as the former Federal Building

Transformational Ideas:

- Pursue implementation of the Cultural District.
- Implement plans for the Creative Corridor designed to promote creative arts, cultural activities, historic preservation and interpretation, educational programming, service and entrepreneurial cultural activities. The corridor would unify north and south Elmira, knit struggling neighborhoods together, connect both the built and the natural environment, and provide a platform for the repurposing of the Lake Street Bridge.
- Develop a Culture & History Signage & Interpretive Plan
- Downtown Athletic Facility: Study the potential for an indoor sporting facility located in downtown
Develop and undertake a Community Marketing Initiative that leverages key opportunities and promotes Downtown



THE CULTURAL DISTRICT

Much of Elmira's history and architecture is found within a 20 +/- block area north of the Chemung River, east of the railroad tracks, and including Church Street. This area included the historic Chemung Canal alignment and Lake Avenue, which was the original travel way to Watkins Glen and points north. The area became the center for government, and continues to house Chemung County's administrative campus and Elmira City Hall. Although this area was impacted greatly by flooding in 1972, much of the historic architecture and infrastructure remains, and represents the largest opportunity for growth.

Section 3. Existing Conditions

Socio-economic Conditions

The City of Elmira shares many of the economic revitalization challenges typical of former industrial centers throughout the Northeast. Since 2000 the City's resident population has decreased by 5%; 78% of its owner-occupied housing stock was built prior to 1950; 29.2% of its resident population is currently below the Federal poverty level; 51% of the residents in the City of Elmira are low to moderate income; 65% are Medicaid eligible and 38.4% of the City's population consists of families with children under the age of 18, 40.6 % of whom live below the poverty level (Census Bureau, *American Factfinder, 2010-2014*). Additionally, 38% of all properties within the City are currently tax-exempt; and the City is facing severe fiscal challenges in its efforts to sustain its public safety, community development, and public works services.

The City of Elmira has experienced a gradual population loss that began during the economic recession of the 1970s, when a number of long-established manufacturing employers closed or departed from the City. This decline was accelerated by widespread flooding damages inflicted within the City by tropical storm Agnes in 1972. Many of the City's downtown businesses and single-family homes were destroyed by floodwaters or replaced by subsequent Urban Renewal projects. More recently, the City's population decreased by 5% between 2000 and 2010, and the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the City's population has decreased by an additional 1.9% since 2010. The City's 2010 population totaled 29,200 residents or 34% of Chemung County's total population. By comparison, Elmira's population in 1950 totaled 49,716 persons, representing 57 % of the County's population at that time. The percentage of citizens in the City aged 65 and older has also increased significantly over time, and is predicted to continue to increase by 4% annually during the next five years. Census data reveals that in 2010, 124,835 persons resided within a 15-mile radius of Elmira's downtown target area.

In 2015, the HUD median income grew to $64,300. In the City of Elmira incomes equal to and greater than $50,000 grew by 40% or more since 2000, while income with less than $50,000 declined by 17%. Poverty in the City of Elmira has grown from 23% in 2000 to 36% in 2013. This means the gap between low income households and high income households widened.

The racial composition of the City's population in 2010 was 78.3% White, 14.6% Black or African American, 4.3% Hispanic or Latino, .04% American Indian, and .06% Asian. The 2010 Federal Census revealed that 23.3% of the City's residents were under 18 years of age, 49.4 % of all residents were female, and 11.8% of residents were 65 years or older in age. The City's home ownership rate between 2009 and 2013 was 48.1%. A total of 12,313 housing units existed in the City in 2010, 46.8% of which were rental units located within multiunit structures. The median value of owner-occupied housing units in the City was $67,400 in 2010. The median household income of City residents averaged $30,804 between 2009 and 2013, and during that period 29.2% of the City's residents fell below the Federal poverty level.

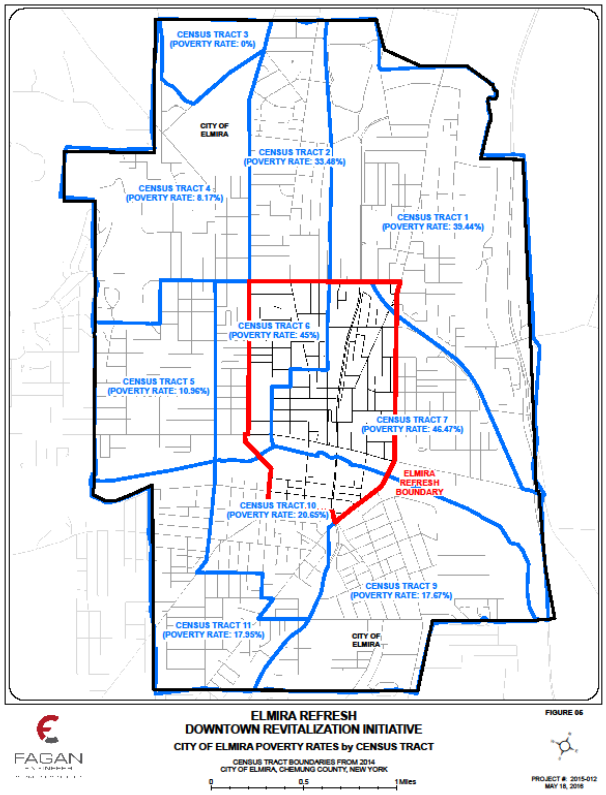
In 2015 the total enrollment of students in grades K-12 within the City of Elmira's public and private schools was approximately 7,000. The Elmira City School District operates eight elementary schools, two middle school academies, and one consolidated high school. Residents of the City are also served by a Public Charter School and four private schools.

The *Elmira Refresh* DRI target area includes Census tracts 6, 7, and 10, whose 8,735 residents currently represent a diverse ethnic composition as well as the highest levels of economic distress within Chemung County. US Census Bureau records indicate that the poverty rate within these tracts is 47.3%; the annual per capita income level within these tracts is $13,095, and the mean household income level is $31,086. The percentage of residents who have graduated from high school is 80.10%, and the unemployment rate among residents of these tracts is substantially higher than that recorded for other residents of the City and shown on the table below. The high level of poverty within these three Census tracts has served as the basis for Elmira's selection as one of the sixteen cities in New York State that will be included in the *Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative.* Under this new ESPRI program, the State will make targeted investments in capital projects that will improve the quality, efficiency, and reach of services that address poverty.

Elmira Refresh Socio-economic Conditions

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

	DRI Targeted Census Tracts (6, 7, 10)	City of Elmira
Population	8,735	29,046
Poverty Rate	47.30%	30.40%
Persons in Poverty in Family Households	42.00%	27.40%
Per Capita Income	$13,095	$17,460
Mean Household Income (All Families)	$31,086	$45,552
Educational Attainment		
Percent high school graduate or higher	80.10%	82.90%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	9.03%	14.10%
Unemployment Rate	9.83%	9.20%
Residents lacking health insurance	10.57%	10.30%



The Economy

The economy of Chemung County has remained essentially stable during the past three years. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate recorded for the Elmira MSA was 6% in December of 2015, significantly lower than the 9.2% rate recorded in May and June of 2009. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics records indicate that the Elmira MSA's civilian labor force totaled 38,200 persons in February of 2016. In 2015, the average annual wage within the Elmira MSA was $36,890. Wages earned by highly skilled professional and technical employees working as engineers, research and development specialists, health care technicians, and employees in similar occupations currently range from $75,000 to $125,000 annually within the Elmira MSA.

The City of Elmira's economy generates approximately $1.5 billion dollars annually (excluding government sectors), with over $485 million dollars spent on payrolls. Manufacturing and all industry (including wholesale trade) represents 11.5% of all businesses in the City of Elmira and generates over 37% of all gross revenues.

Retail, restaurant and residential service business makeup 68% of all businesses in the City of Elmira, and generates about 25% of gross revenues. Since 2000, despite a declining population, the number of employees has increased by 4.8% with respective payrolls growing by 56%. More employees reside outside the City of Elmira in 2013 than did in 2000.

Several major industrial employers operate within the City of Elmira. These include the Hilliard Corporation, the Kennedy Valve Company (a division of McWane Incorporated), and F.M. Howell & Company. Other major manufacturing employers located in neighboring communities include the Anchor Glass Container Corporation, Hardinge, Inc., CAF-USA, Inc., DeMet's Candy Company, the General Revenue Corporation, Emhart Glass, Cameron Manufacturing & Design, DePuy Synthes, CVS Caremark, Corning Glass, Schlumberger, and Elmira Heat Treating. Elmira continues to serve as the eastern anchor of the "I86 Innovation Corridor," which extends from Elmira to Hornell. Twenty-two manufacturing anchor businesses currently employ 10,450 workers at locations within a 20-minute drive of Elmira's downtown.

Primary non-manufacturing employers within the City include the Arnot Health Services organization, Chemung Canal Trust Company, Elmira College, and Travelers Insurance. The Elmira City School District, the Elmira Correctional Facility, and the governments of the City of Elmira and of Chemung County all employ significant numbers of City residents.

Health care services constitute one of the City of Elmira's largest current employment sectors. Cumulative employment in this sector totals approximately 6,200 within the Elmira urbanized area. Arnot Health Services employs 2,400 persons, including primary care and specialty physicians, and operates two main campuses within the City, including St. Joseph's Hospital for chronic care health services and the Arnot Ogden Medical Center (AOMC) for acute care services. The AOMC is a 266-bed tertiary medical facility with specialty services in cardiovascular care, cancer care, women's health and maternity services, emergency services, and surgery. Diagnostic, ambulatory, secondary and tertiary acute care, and psychiatric, substance abuse, rehabilitative, and wellness services are provided by the organization. In the summer of 2012, the AOMC organization launched a graduate-level Medical Education program that provides community-based training and residencies in the organization's core service fields and that has better positioned the organization to recruit and retain doctors. The number of medical residents serving hospitals within Elmira is predicted to increase from the current 65 residents to approximately 85 or more in the foreseeable future.

The Guthrie Medical Group, headquartered at the Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, Pennsylvania, also operates several primary care facilities within Chemung County. Guthrie Medical has recently established a partnership with the Mayo Clinic to improve the sharing of advanced medical knowledge and technology. Numerous medical clinics, physician practices, and medical, skilled nursing, and dental care offices also operate within or in close proximity to Elmira's proposed downtown revitalization target area.

History of Property Conditions

Elmira's central business district served as the dominant retail and commercial services center within Chemung County during the years prior to the 1970s. Industries within and surrounding the City actively participated in the production of war materials and consumer goods during the early 1940s and a large volume of regional freight traffic relied upon the City's extensive rail facilities. Aging building conditions, fire losses, and periodic River flooding damages gradually altered the City's downtown landscape during the postwar years, however. Other changes in the nation's economic environment also began to limit the growth that Elmira had enjoyed prior to 1950. These changes included a shift from rail to highway transportation modes, the growth of suburban retail centers, industrial automation, and a gradual migration of manufacturing employers to lower-cost areas of the country. Passenger rail service to and from Elmira was suspended in the 1960s.

Elmira's central business district suffered extensive damages from River flooding produced by Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972. All but one of the bridges linking Elmira's northside and southside neighborhoods were destroyed or seriously damaged, and virtually all structures located in the CBD were inundated. Assessment of the conditions of these buildings led to the determination that nearly all of the structures on the south side of Elmira's Water Street were unsalvageable and required demolition. With the support of the Federal and State governments, the City embarked on a flood recovery effort that substantially reshaped Elmira's downtown district and many of its adjoining residential neighborhoods. A major urban renewal program was launched by the City. A "New Elmira" plan was adopted that fundamentally altered the development framework for the City's downtown core area. New multistory parking garages with ground floor retail rental spaces were constructed, and cleared properties on the south side of Water Street were redeveloped by the City as a riverfront park. Multiple additional damaged business structures in the CBD were razed in the late 1970s to create a corridor for construction of a new north-south arterial highway. Concurrent with these changes, a succession of local industrial closures took place that profoundly impacted the City's and the County's economic base. A number of Elmira's surviving retail establishment elected to relocate to new suburban shopping centers in adjoining communities.

Since 1980 the City has exerted major efforts to stimulate its economic base and to restore the appearance and health of its central business district. In the late 1980s the City secured designation as a New York State Economic Development Zone (EDZ) and the Elmira Downtown Development business improvement district was established. Although a number of major private development projects have been successfully undertaken in recent years, private investment in Elmira's downtown revitalization effort has remained sporadic. Absentee ownership and disuse of some downtown structures has impeded efforts to implement a comprehensive downtown revitalization program. Adaptive reuse or redevelopment of these properties to create a rejuvenated, visually attractive and continuously active downtown environment remains a primary goal.

Elmira is also faced with the challenge of an aging housing stock and a lack of new housing units to replace the most stressed, under-performing housing units. There are more than 12,000 housing units in the City, with 52% of these units occupied by renters and 48% occupied by owners. Approximately 78% of the City's owner-occupied housing and 69% of its renter-occupied housing was built prior to 1950. Based upon a housing study completed by Asterhill, Inc., as a component of the City's comprehensive plan revision project, it is suspected that the insufficient supply of housing stock within the City is a significant factor in leading households to seek out homes in markets outside the City to meet their housing needs. The City's most recent CDBG *Consolidated Plan* reports that 8% of the City's population faces "severe" housing problems and that 55 substandard housing units currently exist in the City's central area; recent data collected by the City's Inspection Services Department indicates that there are 180 registered vacant units within the City. The largest concentration of rental units (2,679 in total) lies within Census tracts 6, 7, and 10. The median monthly rent (MMR) within the City is $610 per month; within Census tract 6 the MMR is $611, and within Census tracts 7 and 10, the MMR is $455 and $544, respectively.

Demand for Mixed-use Development in Downtown Elmira

In early 2016 a Downtown Market Rate Housing Analysis Study was completed. It was concluded that there will be a sizeable gap in meeting the demand in Elmira projected to be generated in the next decade. Significant demand for market rate housing in Elmira's downtown is being created by the healthcare and education sectors. This demand is being driven primarily by the on-going recruitment of physicians and healthcare administrators, an increase in medical residents, the presence of the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) and an enrollment increase at Elmira College.

Target market groups for this housing demand include Elmira College students (61%), LECOM students (19%), young professionals and college faculty (5%), physicians and healthcare administrators (5%), medical residents (4%), executives and upper management professionals (3%), engineers and scientists (2%), and upper income empty nesters (1%).

By the year 2022, the forecast for annual market rate housing demand is 330 – 400 units, with the largest target market groups being LECOM and Elmira College students. It is important to note that although the maximum forecast for Elmira College students seeking downtown rental housing is 500 by 2027, this does not translate into 500 separate rental units. Rather, it is expected that the actual number of rental units required to meet maximum demand in 2027 would be 130 – 135, with an estimated 120 being college suites designed to accommodate four students each. Another 150-165 units will be necessary to support the housing needs of LECOM students.

By the year 2027, there is the potential for a maximum annual occupancy of 510 to 815 new tenants living in Elmira's downtown. The primary factors that will determine these numbers include the rate at which Elmira College achieves its enrollment goals together with the number of LECOM and medical residents who will opt to live outside of the downtown core.

In order to be successful it will be important to create products that respond to the market segments and niche opportunities, and concentrate those products geographically so that even modest activity has the potential to change the long-term market dynamics. Simultaneously, getting the price points right in the short-term both will attract tenants and allow developers to be able to get a reasonable return on their investments.
A major challenge will be the cost of renovation and repurposing of the historic buildings. A designated historic district has been approved, which will allow the owner/developer to benefit from the federal and state historic tax credits.

Based on type of unit and monthly rent ranges, demand for rental housing during the period 2017 – 2022 is forecast as:

Unit Style	Number of Units	Monthly Rent Range
Studio	25	$550-695
Small one bedroom	37 - 42	$725-850
One bedroom	68 - 95	$950-1200
Luxury one bedroom	11 - 19	$1200-1475
Two bedroom	115 - 133	$1300-1600
Luxury two bedroom	14 - 22	$1700-2000
College student suites	60 - 63	$1800-2000

If these market rate rents are attainable, it is expected that developers will begin to approach rent revenue streams that could support new project development; but then rent levels are still below what would be necessary to support the total cost of design, construction and property taxes that must be incurred prior to occupancy. Gap financing will be required.

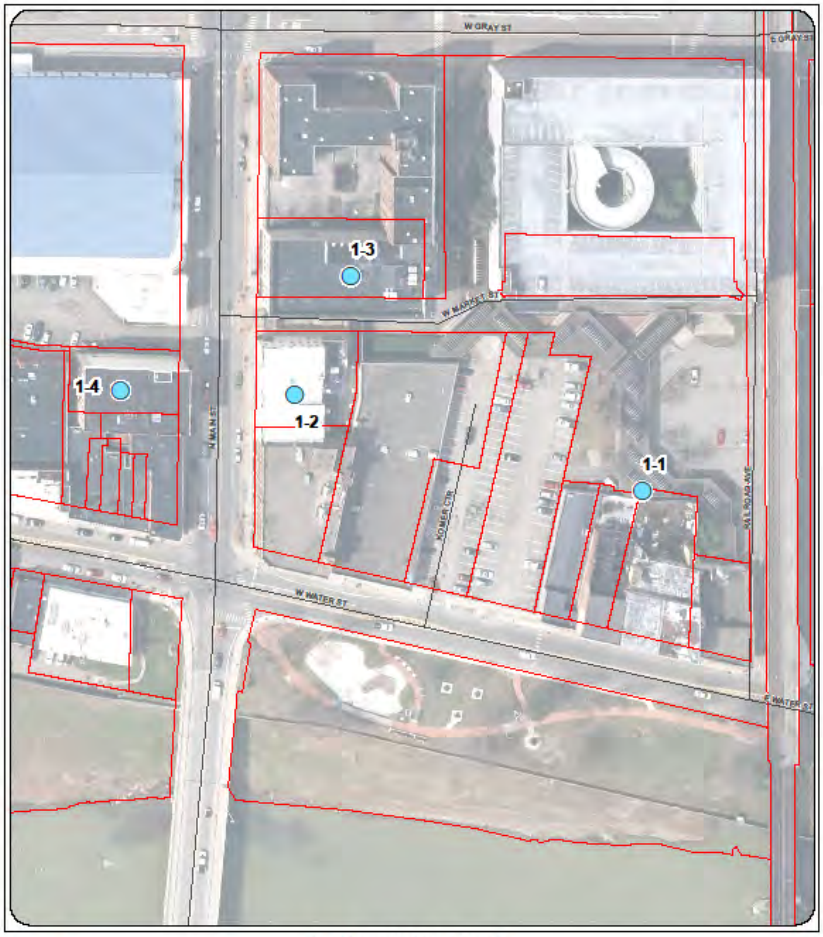
Sixteen (16) buildings and one vacant parcel suitable for infill development have been identified as potential development projects to respond to the forecasted demand. These properties would have the capacity to accommodate an estimated 190 – 220 apartment units.

DOWNTOWN ELMIRA
MARKET RATE HOUSING DEMAND STUDY

Prime Targets for Adaptive Reuse: Cluster #1

Cluster #1
Estimated Potential of New Housing Units: 100 - 115
Target Market Groups: LECOM and Elmira College Students
Possible development of a "College Town" housing, retail and entertainment district

Street Address	Owner (2015)	Parcel Size (Acres)	Gross Floor Area (SF)	Stories	Average GFA per Story (SF)
W. Water Street Infill	City of Elmira / STEG		TBD		
110-120 Main Street	First Air AGS, Inc.	0.22	18,249.00	2	9,124.50
150-152 N. Main Street	Iszards Associates LLC	0.28	50,226.00	4	12,556.50
111-115 N. Main Street	Elmira Real Properties, Inc.	0.16	24,379.00	4	6,094.75



FAGAN ENGINEERS

DOWNTOWN ELMIRA
MARKET RATE HOUSING DEMAND STUDY
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ELMIRA, CHEMUNG COUNTY, NEW YORK
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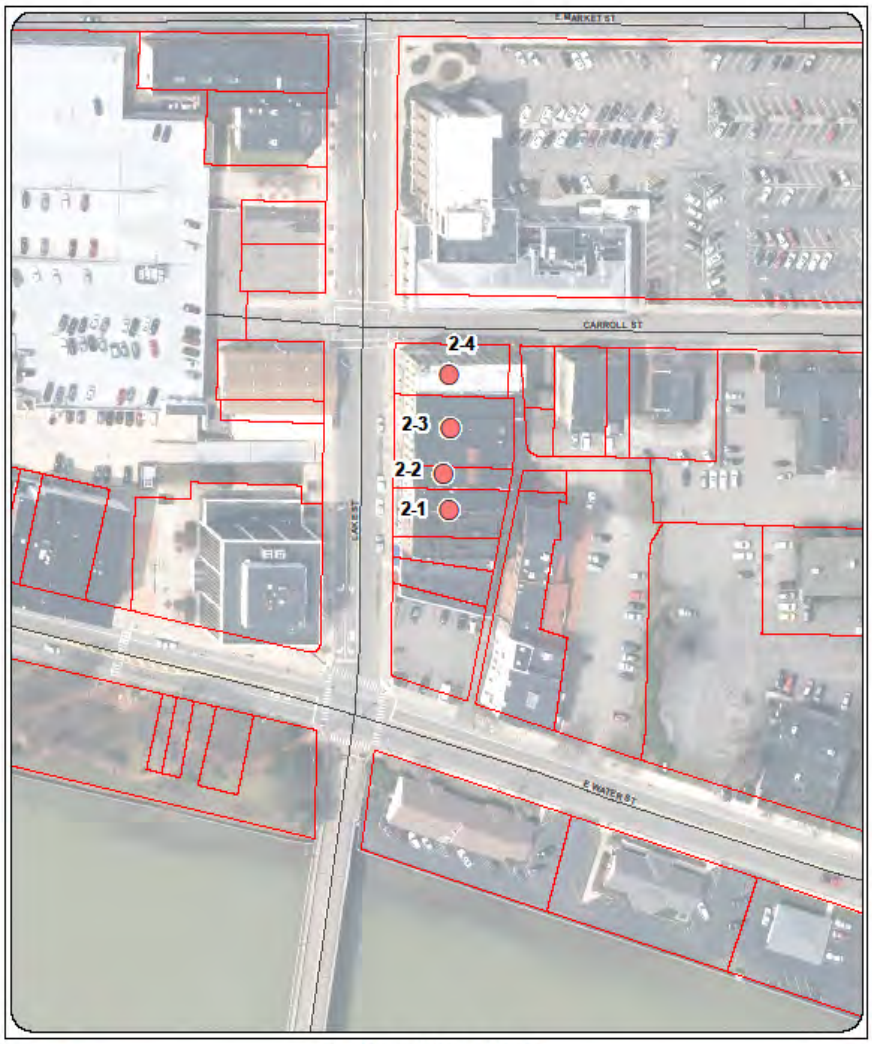
Prime Targets for Adaptive Reuse: Cluster #2

Cluster #2
Estimated Potential of New Housing Units: 30 - 35 upper story rental units
Target Market Groups: Medical Residents, young professionals, college faculty

Street Address	Owner (2015)	Parcel Size (Acres)	Gross Floor Area (SF)	Stories	Average GFA per Story (SF)
112-114 Lake Street	Braustein Family LP	0.09	10,728.00	3	3,576.00
116 Lake Street	T & R Realty Corp	0.05	6,172.00	3	2,057.33
118-122 Lake Street	Chemung County	0.15	16,020.00	3	5,340.00
124-126 Lake Street	Chemung County	0.11	14,320.00	3	4,773.33



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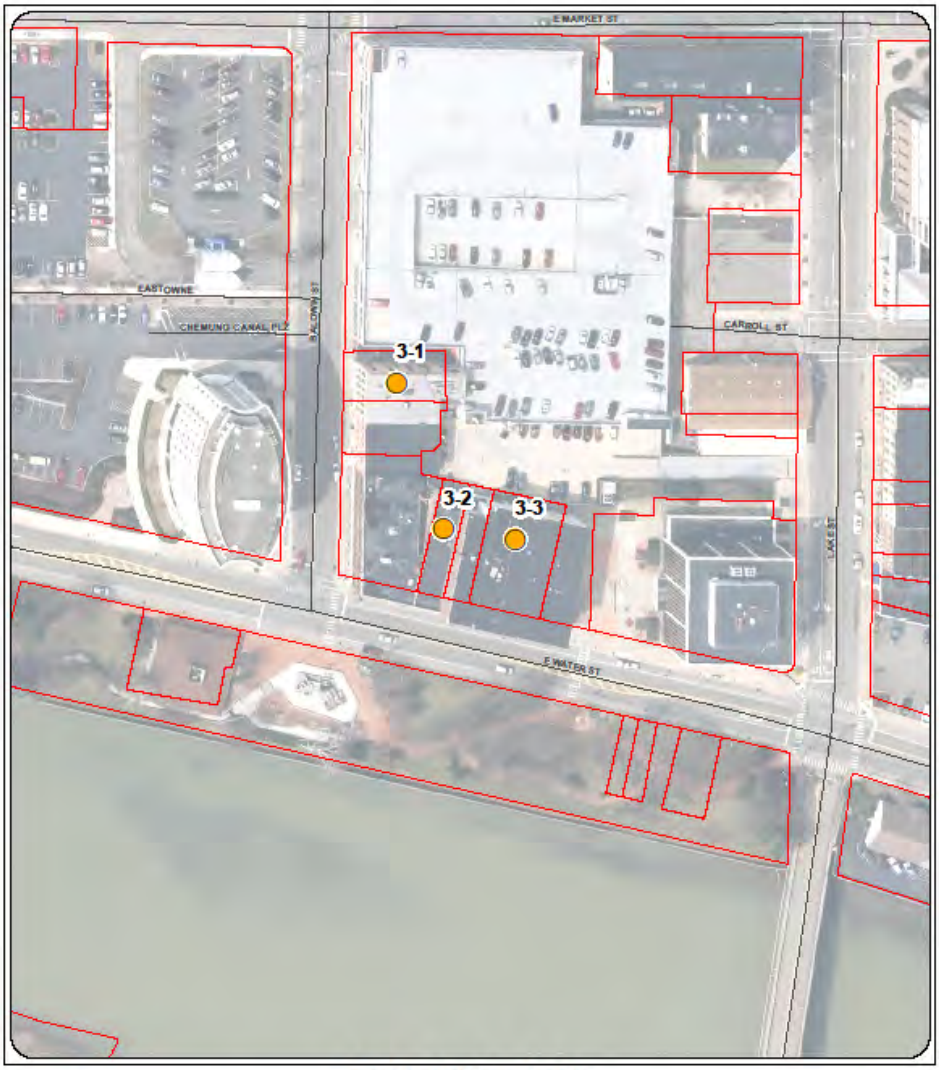
Prime Targets for Adaptive Reuse: Cluster #3

Cluster #3
Estimated Potential of New Housing Units: 30 - 35 upper story rental units
Target Market Groups: Executives, physicians, senior level administrators

Street Address	Owner (2015)	Parcel Size (Acres)	Gross Floor Area (SF)	Stories	Average GFA per Story (SF)
114-116 Baldwin Street	SG Elmira LLC	0.08	10,420.00	3	3,473.30
307 E. Water Street	Southern Tier News Co Inc	0.06	9,142.00	4	2,285.50
313-315 E. Water Street	Elmira Savings Bank		13,146.00	3	4,382.00



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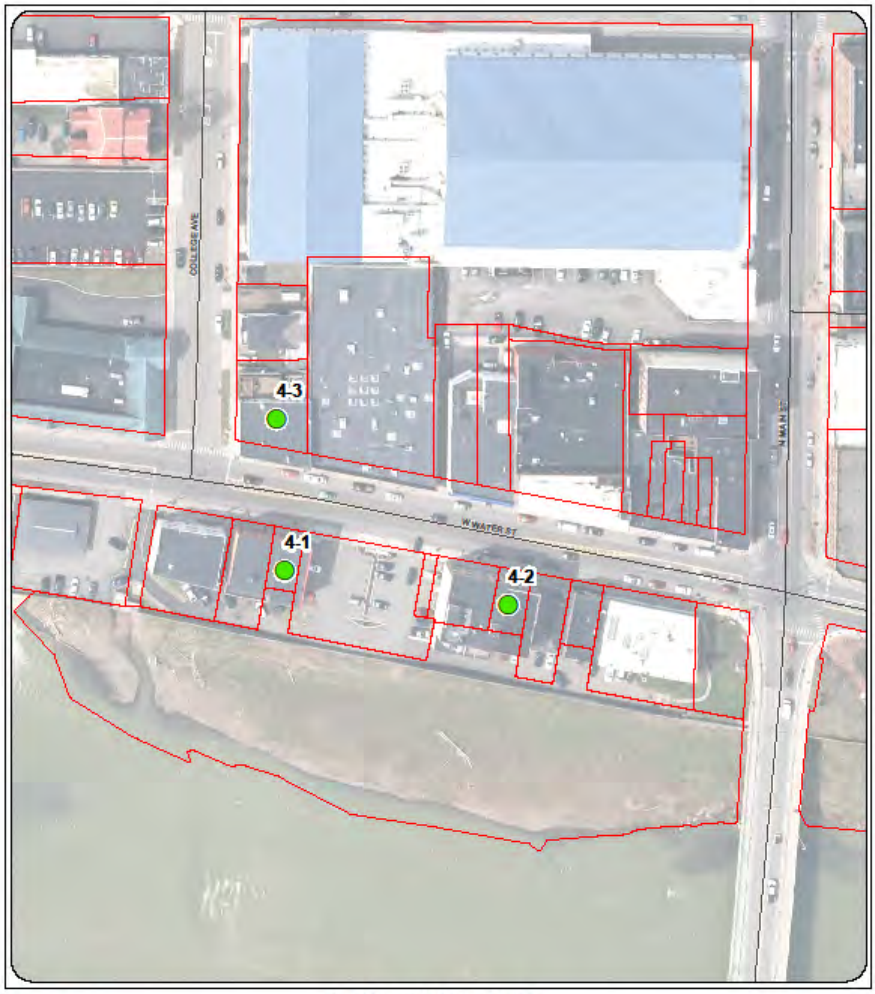
Prime Targets for Adaptive Reuse: Cluster #4

Cluster #4
Estimated Potential of New Housing Units: 7 - 10
Target Market Groups: Young professionals, college faculty

Street Address	Owner (2015)	Parcel Size (Acres)	Gross Floor Area (SF)	Stories	Average GFA per Story (SF)
251-257 W. Water Street	Eights Holding Company LLC	0.09	5,600.00	3	1,866.67
227-229 W. Water Street	Mitchell, Michael	0.04	5,966.00	4	1,491.50
248-252 W. Water Street	BATL Management LLC	0.13	7,814.00	2	3,907.00



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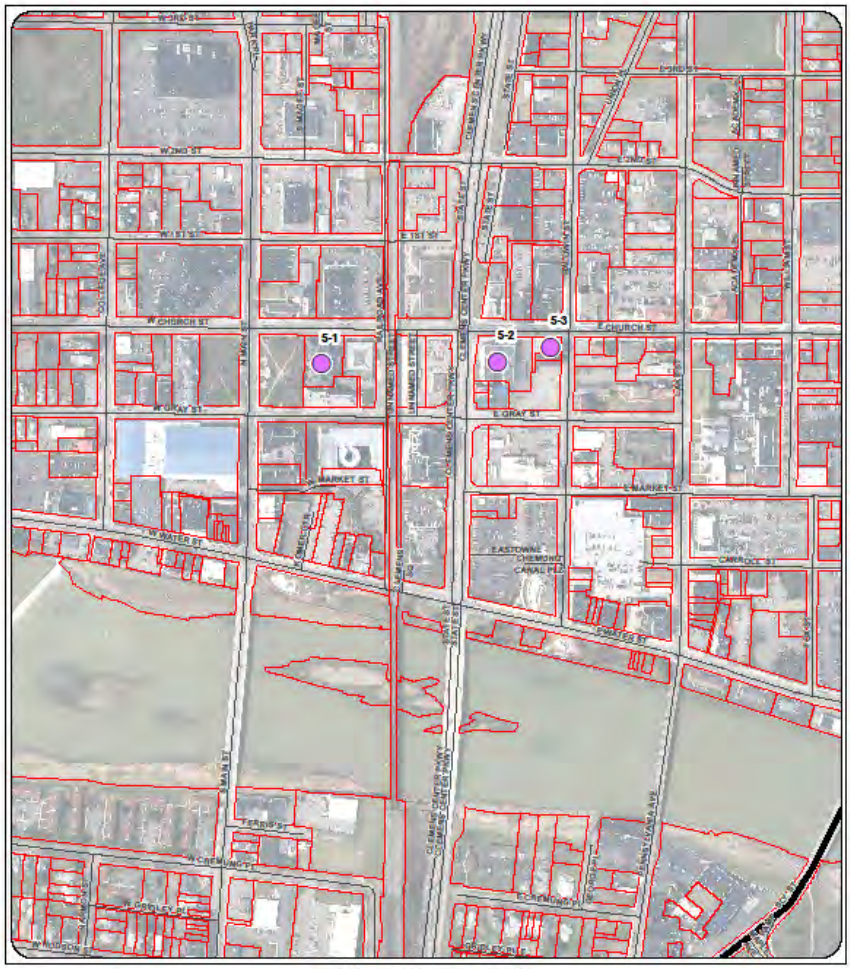
Prime Targets for Adaptive Reuse: Cluster #5

Cluster #5
Estimated Potential of New Housing Units: 40 - 45
Target Market Groups: Young professionals, executives and senior management, physicians and health professionals

Street Address	Owner (2015)	Parcel Size (Acres)	Gross Floor Area (SF)	Stories	Average GFA per Story (SF)
121 W. Church Street	Laurentiu, Marian	0.66	31,316.00	3	10,438.67
200-208 E. Church Street	City of Elmira	0.82	42,166.00	3	14,055.33
214-216 E. Church Street	Yunis Realty Inc	0.15	12,549.00	3	4,183.00



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