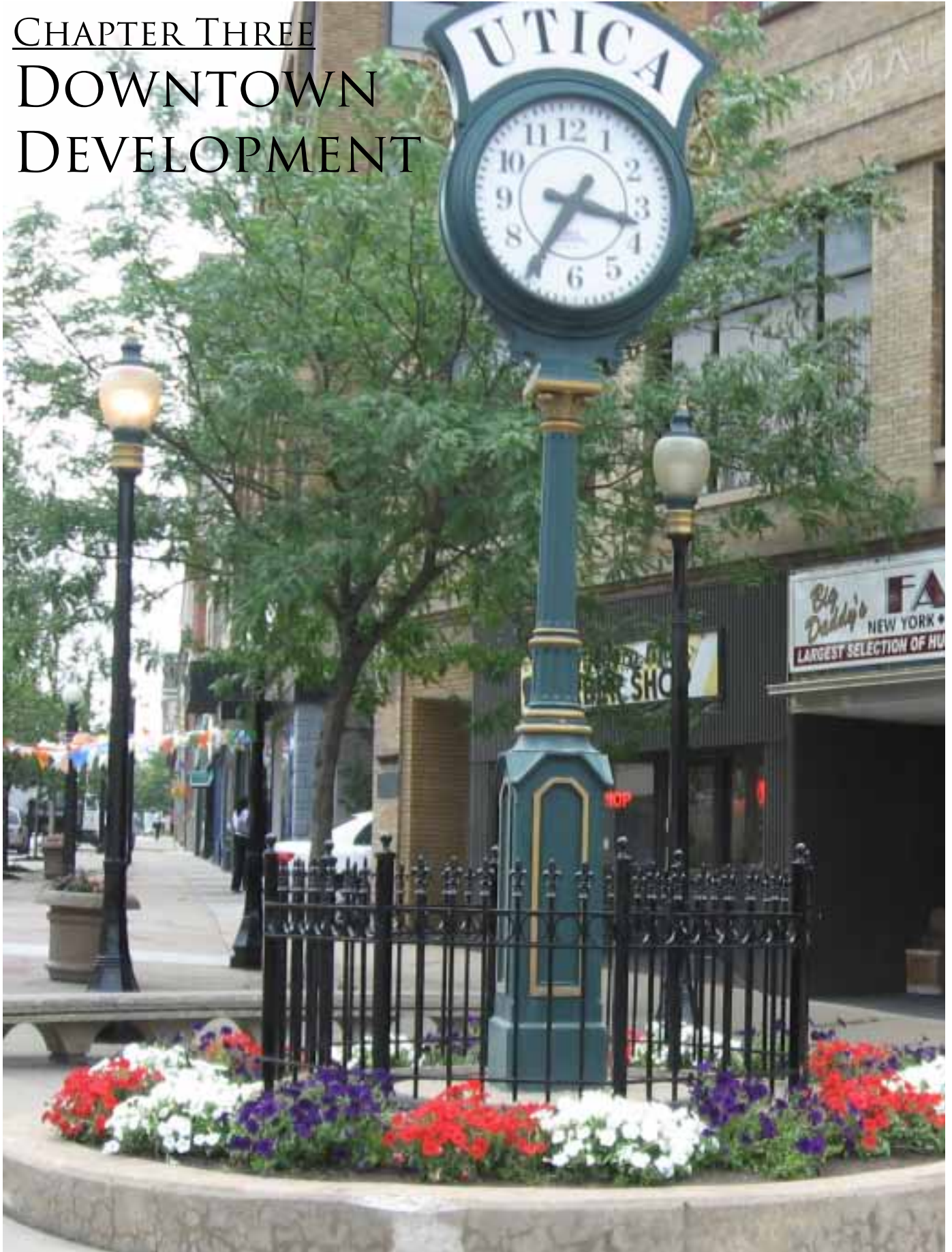


CHAPTER THREE
DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Across the country, people are moving back into downtown areas. Studies across the country are finding that cities are more attractive because they are vibrant places. A report by the Harvard Business School's Initiative for a Competitive Inner City tracked 100 urban areas and found that the influx of people has boosted these core areas. The study found that median household incomes rose faster than the national average and poverty fell faster as well. These and other statistics illustrate the promise of cities. This happens in cities with vibrant downtowns. People enjoy being amidst the culture, services, and historic architecture of urban places. More and more businesses, especially those in the creative and knowledge industries, move to cities because that is where they can find the workers they need.

One important challenge facing Utica and its downtown is the regional economy. As a whole, central New York continues to lose population. Through the master planning process, Utica residents and business leaders have described a vision for the city's future that builds on the architectural character and diversity of downtown. For many in Utica, the success of downtown is the foundation for further success within the City's other neighborhoods. This vision is one that enhances the quality of life for existing residents as well as creates an attractive place for new residents, visitors, and businesses. Boosting historic and cultural resources located in downtown will serve to help strengthen Utica as a more exciting place for people and businesses. Downtown can also be a core of sustainability, a significant element of this Master Plan. Although a city street seems an odd place to protect the environment, it offers many opportunities to reduce stress on a region's ecosystem. This is particularly true if the road network is designed to include bio-swaales and permeable pavements as well as bike and pedestrian amenities.

There are many challenges that were identified during the master planning process including lack of a common "brand" for downtown, threats to historic character, lack of market rate units to

attract downtown residents, perceptions of poor safety, and zoning that works against traditional forms. The city, business improvement district, and local merchants already strive to overcome some of these hurdles. Still, in a community such as Utica, which is located in a generally sluggish region of Central New York, these challenges must be dealt with over the long-term.



The bottom line is that Utica's downtown needs to become an interesting, safe and easy place to move around. Downtown success in the 21st century requires that places be pedestrian-oriented. Cars are not going away soon, but in too many places the transit balance has shifted to favor automobiles over walkers. This has proved to be one of the most environmentally and economically unsustainable problems for cities around the nation.



People like to window shop – walking from store to store – as long as the experience is comfortable, interesting and safe. A fun and engaging place will get people out of their cars. That same kind of place can become a destination for regional residents and even travelers on their way to places beyond Utica. Realizing this, many private developers now build “town center” developments to attract shoppers – trying to recreate what Utica has already on its Genesee Street. Utica has the potential to capture travelers along the Thruway to points east and west. Further, Utica is a gateway community to the Adirondacks. Opportunities not only exist to bring highway travelers into the City, but also canal boat travelers.

The statistics show that such a strategy bears economic fruit. In 2005, an International Council of Shopping Centers survey found that customers spent an average of \$57.50 an hour in enclosed shopping malls versus an average of \$84.00 an hour in town center developments.

In some ways, downtown Utica could take a lesson from the most successful new retail developments.

DOWNTOWN RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES

To identify retail opportunities in Utica’s Downtown area, sales leakage analysis was conducted to help determine in which retail categories Downtown Utica is strong and where it is losing potential sales. A Leakage Analysis looks at a variety of merchandise categories and determines if the shopping district is capturing its full retail sales potential. This is done by comparing demand, in terms of consumer expenditures, and supply, in terms of retail sales, within the trade area. Consumer expenditures were taken from the Consumer Expenditure Survey published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, while retail sales were derived from the Census of Retail Trade published by the U.S. Economic Census. For goods that are not readily available within the identified trade area, or when a greater selection and/or better prices are available elsewhere, residents will travel outside the area to make purchases. When purchases are made outside the area and merchants capture the expenditures that

local residents, businesses, or employees could otherwise have made with local merchants, this is called a “leakage.” When non-residents, businesses or employees outside the local area make purchases from local businesses, this is called an “injection of retail sales.” When retail sales exceed what local residents, businesses and employees expended, this indicates a “surplus,” meaning that local merchants have captured sales from consumers outside the local area. A “leakage” indicates an opportunity for a specific merchandise line or retail type, while a “surplus” indicates that the local need is already being met and that there is possible saturation for a specific retail type or merchandise line.

CASE STUDY: BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN

One of the most successful new downtown developments is in Mashpee, Massachusetts, where developers created a true downtown called Mashpee Commons. “We felt we could have an impact,” says Douglas Storrs, one of the developers, who is trained as an environmental planner. “We had seen what had happened to commercial patterns on Cape Cod, and we didn’t want to exacerbate the problems of poor planning in the past.”

Mashpee Commons follows typical downtown designs with sidewalks, comfortable pedestrian envelopes to separate pedestrians from cars, and engaging facades to generate customer interest. The layout makes it enjoyable to walk amongst the more than 80 shops and restaurants arrayed along a small network of streets. The buildings are all built right up to the sidewalk allowing window shopping and easy walks.

At first, Storrs admits, national chains eyed Mashpee Commons warily. To woo a hesitant Gap, the developers offered to build out the store and to take a portion of the sales revenue instead of rent. In essence, Storrs explains, it cost Gap nothing to move in. “In a year, Gap was doing so well that it was paying the highest rent in Mashpee Commons.” Since then, the clothing store has quadrupled in size to occupy 12,000 square feet on two floors. According to Storrs, the chain’s experience in Mashpee encouraged it to open stores in downtown areas elsewhere. Today, most of the national chain stores are represented at Mashpee Commons.

Residents within a 1-mile radius from the Intersection of Genesee Street and Columbia Street spent almost \$166.60 million, while retailers sold over \$276.85 million. This indicates that Downtown Utica is able to draw customers from outside the Downtown area. Within a 3-mile radius from the Intersection of Genesee Street and Columbia Street, residents spent approximately \$954.85 million, while retailers sold a total of \$1,052.50 million. Retailers and services within a 3-mile radius of Downtown Utica captured sales of over \$97.64 million from consumers outside this trade area, which covers the entire City of Utica. These two trade areas indicate opportunities for Downtown Utica with the appropriate businesses.

The Leakage Analysis shows there are opportunities for all types of Food and Beverage Stores within Downtown Utica and the City of Utica. These stores include Supermarkets and Grocery Stores; Convenience Stores; and Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores. In 2008, Downtown residents spent \$24.6 million in groceries, while City of Utica residents spent almost \$120.5 million, while existing grocers and supermarkets sold around \$105.3 million. The majority of the opportunity exists in Downtown Utica, indicating the need for a smaller-footprint supermarket or grocery store. Opportunities exist for Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume Stores; and Other Health and Personal Care Stores, which include services such as nail shops, hair salons, barbers, tanning salons, and day spas. There are substantial opportunities for all types of Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores. These include Men's, Women's, Children's and Infants, Family and Clothing Accessories Stores, and Other Clothing Stores. There are also opportunities for Jewelry Stores. These types of stores are staples for many downtown shopping districts and would help draw customers to Downtown Utica.

The Leakage Analysis indicates that there are not enough stores related to Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores within Downtown Utica. This indicates a substantial opportunity for such types of stores to relocate to downtown. The types of stores that fall under this category include Sporting Goods Stores; Hobby, Toys and Games Stores;

Sewing/Needlework/Piece Goods Stores; Musical Instruments and Supplies Stores; and News Dealers and Newsstands. These types of stores would thrive in Downtown Utica due to the demand shown in the leakage analysis for the 1-mile, 3-mile, and 10-mile radii.

	1-Mile Radius	3-Mile Radius	10-Mile Radius
Total Consumer Expenditures	\$166,594 M	\$954,847 M	\$2,195,419 M
Total Retail Sales	\$276,851 M	\$1,052,488 M	\$2,423,781 M
Total Retail Opportunity Gap/ Surplus	(110,257 M)	(97,641 M)	\$225,261 M

The Retail Opportunity Gap analysis shows that there are opportunities for more *Full Service Restaurants* and *Limited-Service Eating Places*. The analysis also shows that the needs of residents are being met for *Special Food Services* and *Drinking Places* such as bars and taverns. While these types of establishments have drawn customers from outside the Downtown Area and the City of Utica, it is important to continue building a cluster of such food service and dining places to help support other retail categories and create a destination in Downtown Utica.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW RESTAURANTS IN UTICA

The NPD Group, a worldwide market research company, reports that despite 2007's weak economic conditions, the restaurant industry remained stable for most of 2008 with visits and earnings higher than 2007, but with traffic and earnings dipping in the fourth quarter due to the worsening economic crisis.

Experts believe that consumers will not abandon restaurants and dining completely – they will just be more cost-conscious in their choices. "There will be no recession in eating; there will just be winners and losers. The restaurants that deliver value and make it easy to get food cheaper, in new and compelling ways, will win."

While national trends seem to favor chains, ethnic and independent restaurants in Downtown Utica could thrive under this situation. Following the model set by quick-

service restaurants, these small independents could capture the dining public through a variety of strategies. These include aggressive marketing, providing affordable choices with ambience, and offering promotions and discounts that draw the cost-conscious diner.

	Number of Households	Potential Spending Power (\$000)
Downtown Utica	3,706	\$10,907
City of Utica	26,178	\$75,230
Utica-Rome MSA	294,731	\$847,057

The Consumer Expenditure Survey shows that the typical American household in the Northeast spent an average of \$2,874 in 2007 on food away from home. Based on this data, downtown residents have the potential to spend approximately \$10.9 million on food away from home, while city residents as a whole have the ability to spend over \$75.2 million on dining outside the home. Households within the Utica-Rome MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) have the potential to spend over \$847.0 million on food away from home.

Downtown restaurants have the potential to draw over 7,700 customers from the City of Utica alone based on household income profile, with special focus on households earning over \$50,000 per year. Demographic data also shows that there are almost 13,500 residents in the 35 – 54 age cohorts. While other age cohorts could potentially be restaurant customers as well, mid-lifers, or those within the 35 – 54, age cohort have the highest levels of disposable income and highest levels of restaurant usage.

	City of Utica	Utica-Rome MSA
Residents 25 - 54	11,594 24.3% of population	82,847 28.1% of population
Household income:		
• \$50,000 - \$74,999	1,736 14.2% of households	24,556 19.4% of households
• \$75,000+	1,972 15.2% of households	31,209 24.3% of households

(Source: Esri/Geographics 2008, Analysis by Saratoga Associates)

DOWNTOWN AREA HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the nationwide housing crisis, downtown living is thriving in urban areas across the United States. According to Christopher Leinberger, an urban planning professor at the University of Michigan and visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, “the American dream is absolutely changing.” Shifting lifestyles, rising gas prices, and long commutes have changed developers’ focus on accommodating the growing number of empty-nesters, baby boomers, young singles, and couples who are looking for housing close to downtown and/or major transportation corridors. Across the country, many households are choosing to trade life in suburbia for the convenience of denser and revitalized neighborhoods. This allows for a greater variety of and better access to jobs, a wide range of shopping, restaurants, cultural amenities, entertainment, and services, as well as easy access to public transit and shorter work commutes.

This shift to downtown living is reflected in a recent survey of real estate agents with Coldwell Banker. The survey indicates that 78 percent of prospective home buyers are now more inclined to live in an urban area, due to high fuel prices. This demand has subsequently spurred much investment in downtowns over the past several years. U.S. Census Bureau statistics show that Houston, Seattle, Chicago, Denver, Portland, Atlanta, Memphis, and San Diego all experienced greater percentage increases in their downtown populations than in their entire urban areas over the past decade. Other cities, including Cleveland, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Detroit incurred downtown population increases while losing population as a whole.

New lofts, condominiums and apartments have emerged to cater to this rising demand for downtown living. For example, in downtown Nashville, Tennessee, the number of residential units jumped from 1,380 to 2,146 units between 2001 and 2007, an increase of over 55 percent. In the same location, the number of condominiums in the housing stock grew from 15 percent in 2003 to 35 percent of all housing units in 2006. This indicates the significant

demand for such detached units in downtown Nashville.

Downtown Utica and its adjoining neighborhoods have an unusually high percentage of rental units. Over 77 percent of all units in the Downtown area are rental. These areas are also experiencing a very high vacancy rate, with 18 percent of all units vacant in 2008. Vacancy is higher with rental units than with for-sale units. High vacancy rates the Downtown area indicates the need to renovate vacant structures and convert these to housing unit types that may be more attractive to potential new residents.

The Zimmerman/Volk housing study identified the need for market-rate housing units that include lofts/apartments with leaseholder and condominium/co-op ownership arrangements and for-sale townhouses/rowhouses for Downtown Utica. Household growth, despite population decline during the first decade of the 21st century, indicates a trend towards smaller households in Downtown Utica. Potential target market segments for Downtown housing include single professionals, young couples with no children, empty-nesters, active seniors and young retirees.

Vacancy in the City of Utica at 12.2 percent, while still considered high, is typical of vacancy rates throughout the Utica-Rome MSA. Reflective of trends in many urban areas, the City of Utica has an almost even distribution between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. Over 51 percent of occupied units in the City of Utica are owner-occupied, while almost 49 percent are renter-occupied.

Housing trends in the Utica-Rome MSA in its entirety are typical of rural and suburban areas, with a higher percentage of owner-occupied units than renter-occupied units. Almost 71 percent of all occupied units in the region are owner-occupied, while just over 29 percent are renter-occupied.

Downtown Utica has an unusually high percentage of structures with more than 50 units per structure, as evidenced in the chart. This could be attributed to public housing administered by the Municipal Housing

Authority (MHA). The Municipal Housing Authority website lists 9 public housing developments in the City of Utica.

Units in Structure (Source: Esri/Demographics 2008)			
	Downtown Utica	City of Utica	Utica-Rome MSA
1-unit, detached	18.1%	41.1%	62.7%
1-unit, attached	1.6%	1.8%	1.4%
2-units	15.8%	26.9%	11.8%
3 - 4 units	17.3%	12.7%	6.4%
5 - 9 units	11.2%	4.8%	3.3%
10 - 19 units	7.6%	3.0%	1.8%
20 - 49 units	6.3%	3.0%	1.5%
50+ units	23.7%	6.3%	2.9%
Trailer	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%
Other structure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The City of Utica is well positioned to capture demand for downtown living. Four major factors drive demand for housing in the City of Utica:

1. The immigrant population
2. High-technology
3. Arts, history, and culture
4. The City of Utica's urban setting

THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION

With its rich industrial heritage, first as home of the textile industry in the late 19th century and later with the tool and die industry in the early 20th century, the City of Utica was home to a population of over 100,000 from 1930 to 1960. Population declined over the next decades with the demise of these manufacturing industries. The arrival of new immigrants starting in the late 1970's has reportedly stanching the population decline.

HIGH TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE-BASED RESOURCES

The City of Utica has the advantage of having a cluster of higher-educational institutions. There are several knowledge-based resources in the City of Utica and the Utica-Rome MSA that could drive demand for housing in Downtown Utica. These educational resources include Utica College, the State University of New York Institute of Technology, Pratt at Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, the Mohawk Valley Community College, and the Utica

School of Commerce. Colleges and educational institutions in the region include Hamilton College in Clinton, New York; Herkimer County Community College in Herkimer County, New York; and Colgate University in Hamilton, New York. Leveraging the strengths of these academic resources is important in bringing about economic revitalization. These area colleges and universities provide technology-related courses that could leverage new industries with higher-paying jobs, which could drive demand for housing in the City of Utica. The key is to provide an environment that will be attractive to high-tech workers and companies.

ARTS, HISTORY AND CULTURE

The City of Utica is distinguishing itself for its arts, history, and culture. The City has established Scenic and Historic Preservation Districts, that include Genesee Street from the New Hartford town line to Water Street at the railroad tracks; an eastern extension off Genesee Street including areas around South and Rutger streets, Park Avenue and Steuben Park; Pleasant Street and the Parkway east to Tilden Avenue; Herkimer Road in North Utica from Leland Avenue to the Schuyler town line; and in West Utica, an area known as “The Brewery District,” bordered roughly by Varick, Schuyler and Columbia streets.

THE CITY OF UTICA’S URBAN SETTING

The City of Utica provides an urban setting that is often attractive to creative class workers: bohemian type artists, graphic designers, media workers, venture capitalists and consultants. Internationally renowned economic and social trend forecaster, Joel Kotkin, noted in his book, *The New Geography*, that revitalized inner cities are often characterized by a mixture of diversity, retail, art, and culture. These urban places have not only drawn the younger set of technology workers, but have also been attracting middle-aged, middle-class educated people.

Within the Mohawk Valley and Central New York, the City of Utica has the potential of attracting creative class urban dwellers, particularly singles, professionals, empty

nesters and retirees. In a *Place and Happiness* Survey conducted as research for his book, Richard Florida writes that urban dwellers “value their ability to meet new colleagues and make new friends; they prize their access to diverse cultural resources such as theaters, museums, art galleries, live music, and vibrant nightlife filled with bars, clubs, and restaurants.

They appreciate the availability of public transit. They also derive satisfaction from living in communities that are open to a wide range of groups – racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, young people, and gays and lesbians...there are other incentives for living in cities: Some people trade their suburban house for an urban condo when the kids move away, or they decide to live closer to the city center.”

As shown in the Zimmerman/Volk Housing Study for the City of Utica, there are several market segments that could have interest in housing in Utica's Downtown area. These include:

> **Empty Nesters and Retirees:** These are older households, many with grown children, as well as retirees with incomes from pensions, investments, savings, and social security.

> **Traditional & Non-Traditional Families:** Non-traditional families include a wide variety of family households such as grandparents with children; single parents with children; and same sex couples with children. Traditional families are married couples with children.

> **Young Singles & Couples:** This market segment is comprised of younger, mostly childless couples that are attracted to urban neighborhoods that exhibit diversity, history, and culture, as well as singles.

> **New Immigrants & Minority Households:** These include individuals and households that have settled in the Mohawk Valley Region, whether new immigrants from Eastern Europe, Asia, or Latin America, as well as minority households looking to move into the region.

Potential Pool of Homebuyers from the Utica-Rome MSA (Source: Esdemographics 2008; Analysis by Saratoga Associates)					
	Income Needed to Afford	Empty Nesters & Retirees	Traditional & Non-Traditional Families	Young Singles & Couples	Immigrant & Minority Households
Soft Lofts: 1- and 2-bedrooms					
First-Time Homebuyer	\$25,100 to \$40,000	9,234	21,507	5,330	2,244
Non-first-time home-buyer	\$30,000 to \$54,500	5,987	14,978	3,338	1,354
Luxury Apartments: 2- and 3-bedrooms					
First-Time Homebuyer	\$34,750 to \$91,000	7,458	25,449	3,258	1,091
Non-first-time home-buyer	\$68,000 to \$95,000	7,491	25,937	3,203	1,078
Townhouses: 2- and 3-bedrooms					
First-Time Homebuyer	\$45,500 to \$78,500	10,653	32,073	5,367	1,914
Non-first-time home-buyer	\$50,000 to \$88,000	8,202	27,542	3,685	1,223

Potential Pool of Renters from the Utica-Rome MSA (Source: Esdemographics 2008; Analysis by Saratoga Associates)					
	Income Needed to Afford	Empty Nesters & Retirees	Traditional & Non-Traditional Families	Young Singles & Couples	Immigrant & Minority Households
Hard Lofts: 1- and 3-bedrooms	\$26,400 to \$50,400	14,518	28,272	7,822	3,044
Soft Lofts: Studios to 3-Bed-room	\$36,000 to \$69,600	10,967	13,309	2,840	1,155

MASTER PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

The goals and strategies outlined in Utica's Master Plan reflect an approach to strengthening downtown – one that recognizes the vital need for collaboration between public and private actions as a continuous and evolving process. The plan aims to identify general initiatives and specific projects that will maximize private investment while enhancing the public realm and Utica's fiscal stability.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE SAFE, COMFORTABLE AND EFFICIENT MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop a self-sufficient public parking strategy to accommodate future public and private development/redevelopment
- Visually link downtown providing common streetscape amenities while still allowing for improvements to express the unique attributes of the various districts
- Create a bicycle and pedestrian plan for on-street and off-street routes that connect key destinations and link to adjoining neighborhoods and regional trails, including the waterfront
- Ensure that the pedestrian links within downtown are accessible and well maintained
- Rejuvenate the Genesee Street and Oriskany Street corridors as boulevards
- Provide bike storage space.
- Develop a parking education and signage strategy for downtown
- Upgrade existing infrastructure to include environmentally sustainable technology and design into infrastructure reconstruction projects
- Implement Transportation Demand Management strategies to increase the efficiency of the transportation system

GOAL 2: PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK, GUIDELINES, AND ACTION PLAN FOR THE ARTS THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO CREATING A CULTURALLY DYNAMIC DOWNTOWN.

- Market the downtown area as one suitable for arts and trades, as well as, a great place to live
- Allow for and encourage live/work space in appropriate areas and districts of the downtown
- Institute form-based code in downtown area
- Incorporate public art in all new construction downtown
- Market and encourage the development of a "Restaurant Row" that celebrates the diversity of the City's ethnicity

GOAL 3: IDENTIFY WAYS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WORKING TO SUPPORT A DYNAMIC DOWNTOWN WITH AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT.

Implementation Strategies:

- Work with and support Utica College's efforts to create a museum and seminar space downtown
- Work with higher education institutions to create off-campus housing opportunities downtown
- Create a public safety and visitor assistance program for downtown to build an atmosphere of safety, friendliness and goodwill
- Develop a tourism marketing plan and a tourism-readiness training program for staff in tourism industries and downtown business owners
- Develop a program that integrates "green" building technologies in all buildings downtown, public and private alike
- Ensure a continuing dialogue between the City and the downtown businesses through DUDA

GOAL 4: ENSURE A SAFE DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENT.

Implementation Strategies:

- Create a public safety and visitor assistance program in Downtown to build an atmosphere of safety, friendliness and goodwill
- Implement "Safescape" principles to enhance sense of comfort and safety downtown

GOAL 5: RECOGNIZE DOWNTOWN AS A COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACE.

Implementation Strategies:

- Farmers' Market - Establish a high visibility permanent location that is easily accessible by the public
- Support an aggressive schedule for outdoor festivals and events
- New zoning should foster and encourage an environment for outdoor seating in front of restaurants at ground level

GOAL 6: FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENT FOR ECONOMIC VITALITY DOWNTOWN.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop a brand identity for downtown
- Give Downtown locations the highest priority when siting City and government facilities which have significant employment or destination potential
- Develop a marketing plan to sustain a long-range marketing and communication plan to attract investment and talent to Downtown
- Offer a resource, perhaps through a BID (Business Improvement District), to help shop owners succeed
- Fill vacant storefronts with art or other signs of life
- Create a technology plan for downtown that is integrated into regional economic development plans and undertake a "Wireless Utica" initiative that ensures high-speed wireless Internet access is available throughout Downtown Utica
- Make a strong, visible connection between the Utica Auditorium and the commercial core
- Create a comprehensive system of signs to help pedestrians and motorists alike navigate Utica
- Identify and develop Downtown sub-districts that encourage development to radiate from existing prominent business and activity centers

GOAL 7: USE DOWNTOWN TO EXPRESS THE PRIDE OF UTICA RESIDENTS.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop sign ordinance to create standards, which results in signs oriented to the pedestrian instead of the motor vehicle
- Use street banners to celebrate Utica
- Support ongoing efforts of existing organizations to promote civic and community events that foster community pride and promote Downtown Utica
- Foster and encourage opportunities to display public art downtown, potentially utilizing vacant storefronts
- Recognize the intersection of Genesee Street and Oriskany Street (Route 5) as a key gateway into downtown to welcome residents and visitors and redevelop the area to "Celebrate Utica"

GOAL 8: PROMOTE RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT DOWNTOWN THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH UTICA'S HERITAGE AND ARCHITECTURE.

Implementation Strategies:

- Utilize local, state, federal and private dollars for the rehabilitation of historic buildings and buildings that contribute to Utica's historic character
- Develop design standards for that complement and enhance predominant use and architecture in each of downtowns neighborhoods and sub-districts
- Provide a diversity of housing options, particularly condominiums and high quality rental units
- Encourage multifamily housing as part of mixed-use development within Downtown Utica in the appropriate areas and sub-districts
- Work with higher education institutions to provide downtown student housing opportunities

CASE STUDY

In Troy, New York the city partnered with local businesses and building owners to expand its existing wireless network. A private firm worked with building owners to place 26 wireless transmitters in strategic locations. All are backed up with emergency generators to keep the network alive during power outages. The City paid for access to the broadband network. Residents and visitors can either pay for internet access or connect free if they agree to watch a 30 second commercial every two hours.

CASE STUDY: BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN

A Local Model for Green Building.

In 2006 Hage & Hage LLC bought a vacant building with the intent of integrating green building technologies and “making it a prime model of best practices for green construction and innovation”. In November 2008 the office was occupied by the staff of Hage & Hage LLC. During construction, a green building education initiative was created; through this initiative tours were provided to members of the public, local business owners, politicians, and utility companies. Today the building is a living, breathing model of how energy efficient technologies and sustainable methods can be applied to benefit building owners, occupants, and the environment.

The building achieved LEED NC Gold Certification from the USGBC’s Green Building Certification Institute. Some key features of the building’s Green Technologies include:

- LED & compact fluorescent lighting*
- Daylight harvesting & occupancy-light sensors*
- Geothermal HVAC system*
- In-floor radiant heat*
- Thermally efficient windows and glass*
- Vegetated roof*
- Innovative storm water management*
- Recycled & recyclable materials*
- Water saving fixtures*
- Energy-Star or higher computers & appliances*

CASE STUDY:

*PEOPLE GENERATORS HELPING DRAW CROWDS TO
DOWNTOWN SCHENECTADY*

In the days before the suburban malls, Schenectady’s downtown was once a thriving destination, the economic and social hub of the county.

Today, many Capital Region residents are finding an attractive destination in downtown Schenectady because of what it has to offer. New restaurants, like Bombers Burrito Bar, coupled with a new movie complex downtown and Proctor’s Theater, are creating a critical mass of activities that are making downtown a preferred destination for business owners, residents, and those seeking entertainment opportunities. Much of the change is being led by the Metroplex Development Authority, which was created 10 years ago to revitalize downtown.

From the start, Metroplex placed the central focus of the downtown revitalization on Proctor’s. After significant investment funded by Metroplex, the theater has once again become a regional venue for Broadway shows, dance, movies and other entertainment. Opening bars and restaurants was part of the strategy to revive downtown, creating an arts/entertainment/technology district. A significant people generator was the opening of a new, modern movie theater complex operated by Bow Tie Cinemas. Further refinements are planned, including relocation of the Schenectady branch of the Capital District YMCA to downtown.