


# NEXT STEPS

5



This chapter identifies the key themes and trends that the Town faces and offers guidance on next steps that the Town should undertake with its partners. These next steps will help the Town make the vision outlined in this plan a reality.



## Introduction

The previous chapters of this plan are intended to provide guidance on a broad range of issues. The vision, goals, and future land use recommendations highlight the Town's priorities over the next decade. The leadership of the Town is actively addressing many of these priorities. For example, a comprehensive zoning code update is underway to align the zoning map and its requirements to the future land use framework articulated in this plan. A corridor study to help define the future of NYS Route 11 will begin in the coming months.

This chapter of the comprehensive plan is intended to highlight some of the key issues and trends facing the Town. These include:

- *Increasing our housing options;*
- *Developing an Active Transportation Plan to expand our pedestrian and bicycle network;*
- *Improving the operation and safety of our streets and highways for motorists; and*
- *Ensuring our parks and recreational opportunities keep pace with our population growth.*

The following pages offer guidance to some "Next Steps" that the Town should consider undertaking with its partners. These partners include but are not limited to:

- *Onondaga County*
- *New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)*
- *Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC)*
- *New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)*
- *Centro*
- *Local advocacy groups*

The human and financial capital that these groups can provide will be invaluable to achieving Cicero's vision.



Next Step 01

Conceptual Rendering of Mixed-Density Housing in Bridgeport

## Increase Housing Options

Onondaga County is calling for communities to update comprehensive plans and zoning codes to respond to regional trends and forecasted housing needs beyond the single-family home.

## Background

### Housing Onondaga and Regional Housing Trends

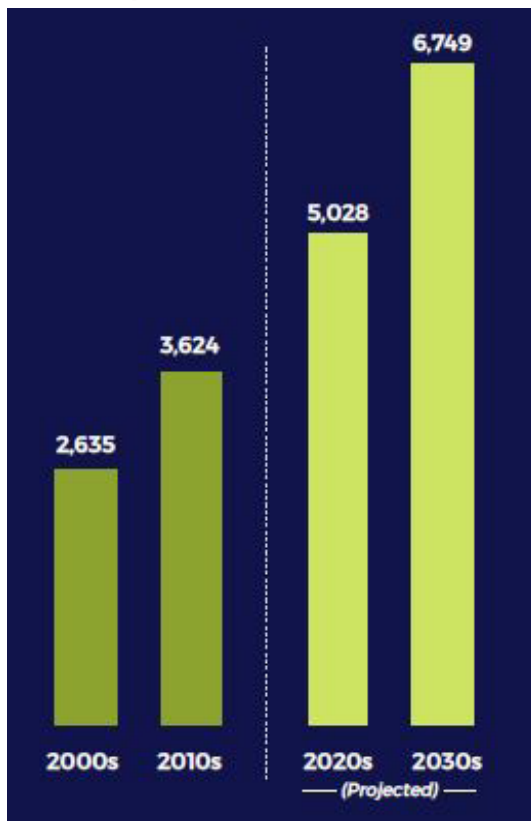
In 2023, Onondaga County adopted its new comprehensive plan, Plan Onondaga. One of the Plan's key themes was Housing and Neighborhoods, calling for more diverse housing options, stronger neighborhoods, and a better functioning housing market. The Plan recommended the County undertake a focused housing needs assessment, resulting in Housing Onondaga, which was adopted in May 2024.

According to Housing Onondaga, a key contributor to housing issues in the County is "business as usual development", including a legacy of single-family homes dominating the housing market. This countywide pattern is noticeable in Cicero. Though the Town's established residential neighborhoods are cherished community assets and are not envisioned to change, only 18% of housing falls beyond the single-family home and only 17% is renter occupied. This may indicate a disconnect between existing supply and emerging housing trends, where there is increased demand for multifamily housing.

The County Housing Plan indicates that the County outside of Syracuse is in transition. Traditional households of 3 or more people looking for a single-family home

are declining, while smaller and older households—who are more likely to buy a smaller home or look to rent—are on the rise. A significant portion of cost-burdened renters in the County struggle with affordability. The County’s suburbs suffer from low vacancy rates among multifamily rentals, despite new rentals

**Figure 12: Homeowners Aged 65+ Exiting Ownership Market**



Older households are increasing demand for rentals in the northern suburbs of Syracuse, including Cicero (Source: Housing Onondaga)

being constructed, which indicates that there is still unmet demand for this type of housing. Onondaga County communities, including Cicero, need to respond to these trends with a shift in the makeup of housing supply.

**The Impact of Micron**

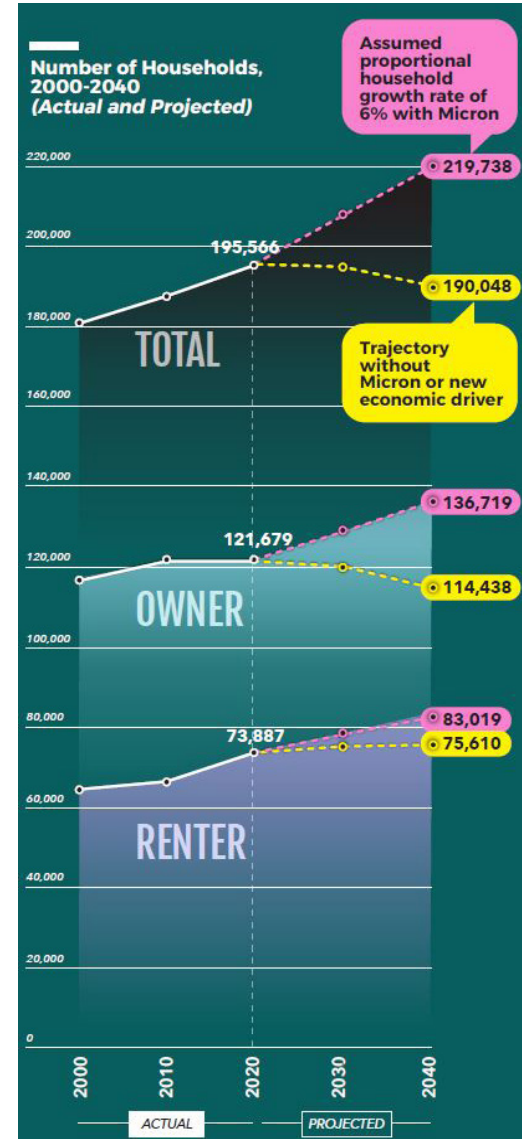
Housing Onondaga discusses the potential impact that Micron Technologies could have on the housing market. Referencing a recent study by Regional Economic Models Inc. (REMI), it projects that this once-in-a-generation investment could result in 36,000 new residents, or 24,000 new households, in the region. Consistent with general trends, these households are anticipated to be small and would drive demand for new types of housing. There is less certainty about how this incoming population will break down in terms of renters and homeowners. Cicero is one of the towns identified as being well positioned to capture a share of new housing demand, but it would require new types of housing beyond the traditional single-family home.

**Need**

With these factors in mind, Housing Onondaga emphasizes the need for communities like Cicero to update their comprehensive plans and zoning codes to align with county-wide strategies

**Figure 13: All Onondaga County Households, 2000-2040**

(Actual and Projected)



The investment of Micron is anticipated to increase demand for housing (Source: Housing Onondaga)

for smarter growth and housing development. This includes planning for higher-density housing, particularly in what Plan Onondaga refers to as existing and emerging centers. Cicero's Future Land Use Map identifies areas to accommodate a variety of housing types, including but not limited to the Town Center area at the intersection of Lakeshore Drive and Route 31, the Waterfront overlay district, the Hamlets of Bridgeport and Brewerton, and the various Residential Mixed-Use areas, along with other areas within the Town. Housing in these areas could include a mix of multifamily apartments, townhomes, duplexes, and single-family homes. While it is recognized that condominiums would increase the variety of opportunities for homeownership in the Town, land use policy does not govern owner vs. renter occupancy.

## Process

### Update Zoning Code

Local land use policy, which determines what can be built where and at what scale, plays a key role in shaping the housing market. Recognizing that each community is different, Housing Onondaga calls for communities in the County to use comprehensive planning and zoning code updates to determine what they can "Say Yes" to and incorporate this into their land use policy. The writing of this plan establishes Cicero's values and priorities for housing. The next step is to translate these values into an updated zoning code, including:

- Identifying appropriate housing types, scales, and levels of density in new and existing districts, ensuring that senior housing is also permitted.
- Ensuring that a variety of housing types are permitted where appropriate. This could include multifamily apartments, townhomes, and duplexes.
- Continuing to employ the Town's design standards to achieve and maintain high standards of quality for future housing development.

### Plan for Infrastructure

The presence of public sewer and water is a key driver of new development. Cicero must work with Onondaga County to accommodate expansion where needed in alignment with the Town's land use policy and the County's smart growth strategies as identified in Plan Onondaga.

### Leverage Programs to Support Increased Housing Supply

With policy in place and a plan for infrastructure, Cicero should leverage programs like the Onondaga County Housing Initiative Program (O-CHIP) to incentivize increased housing supply. rehabilitation, redevelopment, and new development that conforms to the adopted housing policy. This program seeks to incentivize private and non-profit investment in quality housing of all scales and densities, including senior housing.

## Outcomes

By finding synergy between Housing Onondaga and Cicero's zoning code, the Town will be in a position to capture the anticipated influx of residents to the region and focus new housing in mixed-use areas. This carries numerous benefits to the Town, including:

- Increased diversity of housing options
- New residents in mixed-use areas to generate demand for businesses and services, such as a grocery store in Bridgeport
- Reduced traffic congestion by locating residents near workplaces along with goods and services
- Improved affordability of housing through increased supply
- Enhanced collaboration between the Town and the County

## Success Stories

As Cicero considers ways to incorporate a greater variety of housing options, examples of multifamily housing developments within the community and in surrounding communities help to illustrate the types of multifamily housing that may best fit the context of the Town.



Spring Village Apartments is located on Knowledge Lane off Route 11 in Cicero and caters to seniors over the age of 55 as well as intellectually and/or developmentally disabled residents. The two-story property uses traditional architectural elements and ample landscaping. The property is located close to community services like the library and public transit.



Watertree Condominiums in DeWitt provides an example of owner-occupied multifamily housing. Though the development is older, it has been well maintained through a homeowners association.



Timber Banks, located in Baldwinsville, includes both apartment rentals and single-family homes for sale on the same property.



Next Step 02

## Develop an Active Transportation Plan

An Active Transportation Plan creates a roadmap for improving walking and biking conditions and enhancing non-motorized connectivity in Cicero.

### Need

Much of the public input received throughout the comprehensive planning process reflected a strong desire to make Cicero more walkable and bike-friendly. Work is already underway to plan for active transportation in the Town, including the September 2024 study to identify opportunities to expand trail, sidewalk, and bicycle connections to Brewerton. An Active Transportation Plan for the Town would build on current planning efforts. An active transportation plan can address the shortcomings of the Town's suburban layout, which currently prioritizes car-dependent travel, by creating safer and more accessible options for walking, cycling, and other non-motorized modes of transportation. An active transportation plan would also help create and strengthen much-needed connections between Cicero's residential areas, hamlets, and the Oneida Lake waterfront.

### Process

Active transportation plans are typically developed through a collaborative process involving community planners, transportation experts, and community stakeholders. This process often includes analyzing existing infrastructure, gathering public input, identifying key routes and destinations, and proposing improvements to create a comprehensive network that encourages



walking, cycling, and other non-motorized modes of travel. Developing an active transportation plan is part of a “plan-then-act” approach that helps communities identify priorities, leverage their planning work to access funding, and then use that funding to implement recommended actions.

## Outcomes

### Best Practices

An active transportation plan will identify several best practices for creating a connected community including:

- Traffic calming recommendations
- Priority locations for sidewalk, bike, and trail connections and improvements
- Intersection improvements for key locations
- Design recommendations for on- and off-road facilities
- Policy and programming recommendations to encourage active transportation
- Funding and implementation strategies

### Local Focus Areas

Cicero’s active transportation plan should include focus on local areas of need, including:

- Sidewalk/bike lane connections to the lake (including on Lakeshore Rd., South Bay Rd., Whiting Rd., Mud Mill Rd., and Button Rd.)
- Strategies to connect hamlets to surrounding residential areas
- Connections from the waterfront/marinas to downtown Brewerton
- New and enhanced pedestrian connections along Route 11



Photo: Texas Transportation Researcher

There is a strong desire to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections within and between neighborhoods in Cicero. For example, getting across Thompson Road for residents wishing to travel on foot or by bike will become increasingly difficult as traffic volumes increase over the next decade. An Active Transportation Plan will identify the most appropriate locations for non-motorized crossings. The Plan will also recommend treatments to improve the safety of designated crossings. One tool that is gaining popularity is the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). According to the Federal Highway Administration, “RRFBs consist of two, rectangular- shaped yellow indications, each with a light-emitting diode (LED)-array-based light source. RRFBs flash with an alternating high frequency when activated to enhance conspicuity of pedestrians at the crossing to drivers.” This tool and others like it should be considered by the Town to enhance the active transportation network in the community.

## Expected Benefits

The creation of an active transportation plan will allow the Town to create a cohesive vision for non-motorized connectivity and will put Cicero in a competitive position to apply for implementation funding. Funding is available from a variety of state and federal sources.

Numerous benefits are expected to result from the implementation of the recommendations identified in the active transportation plan. These benefits include:

- Improved safety for all users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists
- Increased accessibility and mobility options
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Enhanced public health by encouraging physical activity

## Near-Term Action Items

The development of an Active Transportation Plan generally takes 12 to 18 months. In the meantime, the Town can take these immediate steps to improve their multi-modal transportation network:

1. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to articulate a strong vision for other public agencies and private developers to follow when making transportation related investments in the Town. A Complete Streets Policy specifies how a community will plan, design, and maintain streets so they are safe for users of all ages and abilities. A strong policy begins transforming a community's practices, processes, and plans.
2. Ensure that Traffic Impact Studies are completed for new commercial, industrial, and large-scale residential projects. These studies should evaluate the effects of proposed developments on the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure of the Town as well as the motor vehicle impacts. They should also include recommendations for mitigating these impacts and improving the on-site and off-site pedestrian and bicycle network.



Encouraging active transportation like bicycling and walking goes beyond adding infrastructure like bike lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks. Investments like decorative signage and banner programs enhance the experience of being in the public realm by creating a sense of place within a neighborhood or corridor. When combined with other streetscape and active transportation investments, they can also contribute to improved safety by signaling to those who are driving that they are in a place of increased pedestrian activity. The image to the left is an example of a banner installation in downtown Ithaca, New York.



Next Step 03

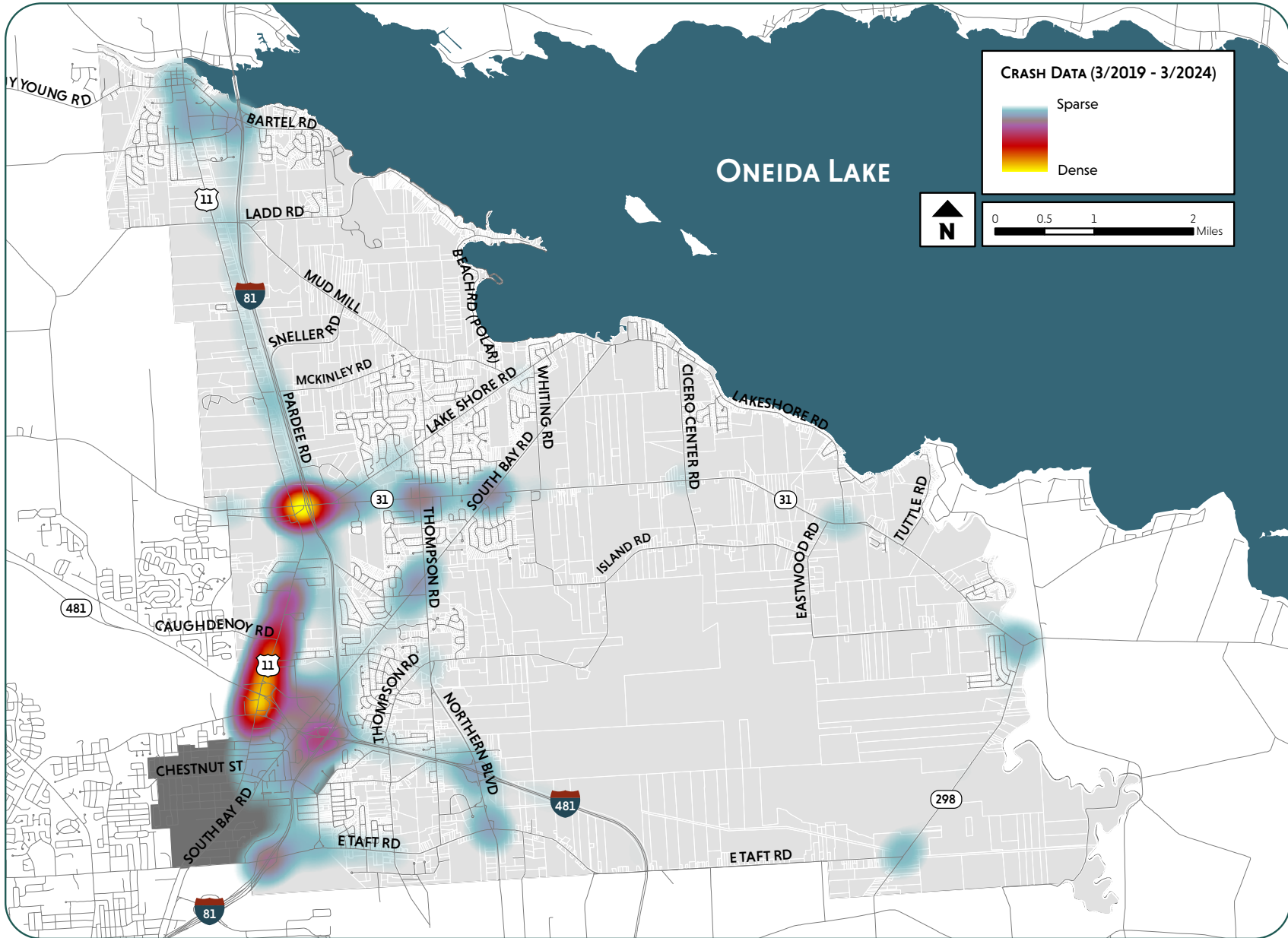
## Improve Vehicular Circulation & Access

Cicero should continue to work closely with County and State transportation officials to ensure a safe, accessible roadway network that serves commuters and residents efficiently and effectively.

## Need

Given the proposed Micron Plant in the Town of Clay and the anticipated development in Clay and Cicero, it is reasonable to assume that the traffic volumes on local roads will significantly increase over the next decade. Higher traffic volumes within the Town may contribute to increased levels of congestion and increased safety concerns for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. A review of crash data from March 2019 – March 2024 shows that there were approximately 5,000 crashes over that five-year period. The map on the following page shows that the densest clusters of crashes were located at the intersection of Route 11 and Route 31 alongside the I-81 interchange. A significant cluster of crashes was also located along Route 11 from approximately Bear Road to Caughdenoy Road. There are a variety of strategies the Town can use in coordination with NYSDOT and the County to maintain and improve the safety and operation of its roadways through thoughtful and context-sensitive design, as well as access management strategies, described in further detail on the following pages.

Map 11: Crash Clusters, 2019-2024



## I-81 Interchange

As noted in the Future Land Use Chapter, NYSDOT is proposing the construction of a new I-81 interchange in the general vicinity of Pardee Road, Sneller Road, and McKinley Road. This interchange will have significant implications for land use patterns, but also for local roadways within the vicinity of this proposed interchange due to additional connections to I-81. A close working relationship between NYSDOT and the Town will be required to ensure that the ultimate design of the new interchange fulfills the objectives of both the State and Town. Potential enhancements may include landscaping along entrance and exit ramps or signage welcoming travelers to Cicero.

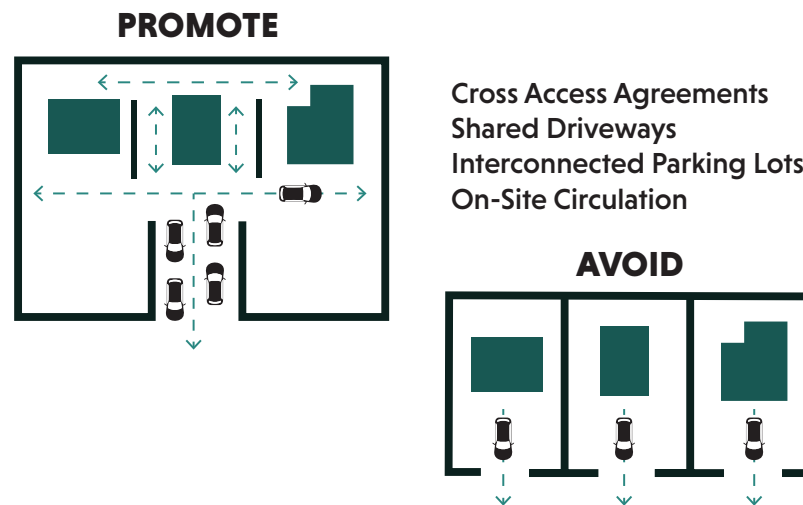
## Access Management

It is well documented that the number of curb cuts or driveways along a corridor directly impacts the operation, safety, and efficiency of a roadway. It also reduces the market area of local retail operations and the comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists. For example, as development occurs along major commercial corridors, the number of access driveways often increases and create additional turning movements and conflict points for motorized and non-motorized traffic. The Town should work with its partners to develop a strategy that reduces the frequency of access points and strategically locates them in a manner to create safe and consistent turning movements. Below are some potential techniques the Town could implement to balance the continued operational characteristics of Cicero’s major roadways with providing access to local goods, services, and residential areas.

### Shared Driveways and Internal Circulation

Access points should be shared between adjacent parcels where possible to reduce the frequency of conflicting turning movements from vehicles entering and exiting the main road. Once off the main roadway, vehicles can use internal access roads to access the various businesses that are served by the driveway.

**Figure 14: Access Management Principles**



Adapted from Wisconsin DOT Access Management Basic Principles

### Spacing, Placement, and Number of Access Points

The number of access drives permitted from a single property should be restricted, and driveways should be spaced appropriately based on the speed of the roadway, as determined in the NYSDOT Driveway Design Policy and other applicable standards. Where possible, access drives should be located off minor intersecting roadways instead of major roadways for corner lots. Access to properties and parking areas should be provided by a defined one or two-lane driveway rather than being provided by large expanses of pavement with no defined access point. (see photos on the following page).

### Non-Traversable Medians

Non-traversable medians can help to reduce the number and severity of collisions, reduce delays experienced by motorists travelling the corridor, and preserve the market area of local businesses. It accomplishes this by controlling the number and location of left-hand turning movements from major roadways. In order to be successful, a median must be accompanied by a plan to provide interconnections between parcels to allow motorists access to multiple businesses via a single signalized intersection. Engineering reviews and coordination with NYSDOT would be required when considering this intervention on state facilities in Cicero.



A median can also serve to provide an aesthetic enhancement to a corridor or become a gateway feature, such as the above depicted example in the City of Canandaigua, NY.

Source: [www.visitfingerlakes.com](http://www.visitfingerlakes.com)

### Transit Stop Locations

Although Transit service is currently limited in the Town, it is anticipated to be in higher demand due to the significant influx of residents and businesses associated with capitalizing on the presence of Micron. The Town should strive to ensure that any future bus stops should be design to promote accessibility. This can entail working with private developers to allow buses to provide access directly at or near building entrances off the public right-of-way. When bus stops are located within or directly adjacent to the public right-of-way, they should be considered in the context of where driveways exist, and bus turn-outs should be considered where appropriate.



A bus stop located in the parking lot of a Walmart in Greece, NY allows passengers to safely access the store without contending with traffic while crossing the parking lot from the public right of way, and pulls idling buses off of the roadway; reducing conflicts and queuing behind buses.

### Putting It all Together

The aerial photos shown on the following page are from NYS Route 11 in Cicero and NYS Route 441 in Penfield. The existing access points along Route 11 are often spaced too close together, they are not properly aligned with access drives across the road, and in some instances driveways are not defined; allowing vehicles to enter or exit the parking lot from any location. By comparison, Route 441 has a raised median and a limited number of well-defined driveways. This section of Route 11 has twice as many access points, nearly four times as much pavement devoted to site access, and numerous conflict points.

Cicero is poised to experience intensified development pressure. Adopting circulation and access management strategies like those shown to the right will help to mitigate the congestion and safety concerns associated with increased travel demand from new development.

### Route 11 near Sunset Terrace

Cicero, NY

**12 Curb Cuts**  
**980 ft. of Driveway Access**

- 1 No defined curb cut or entry point along property frontages
- 2 No shared access points between properties
- 3 No interconnected circulation between parcels
- 4 Lack of sidewalks on west side (east side sidewalks were recently completed)

### Route 441 near Route 250

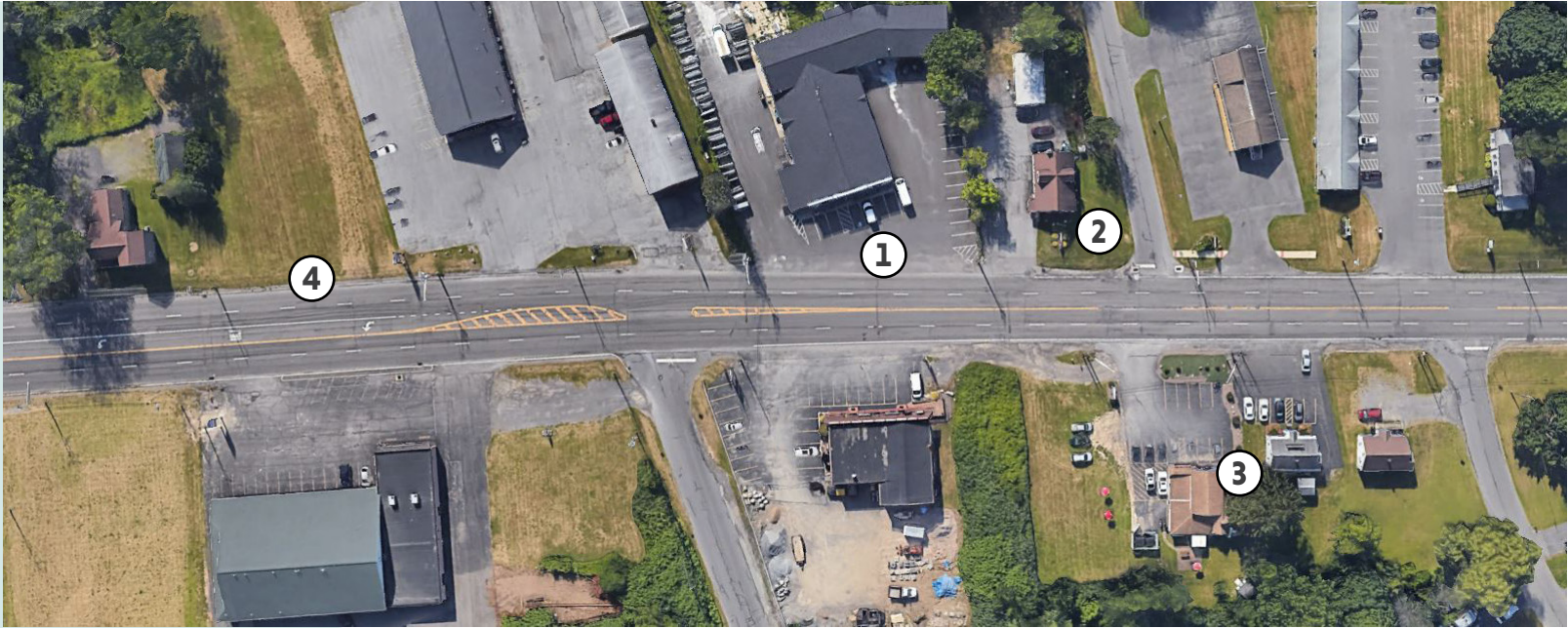
Penfield, NY

**6 Curb Cuts**  
**270 ft. of Driveway Access**

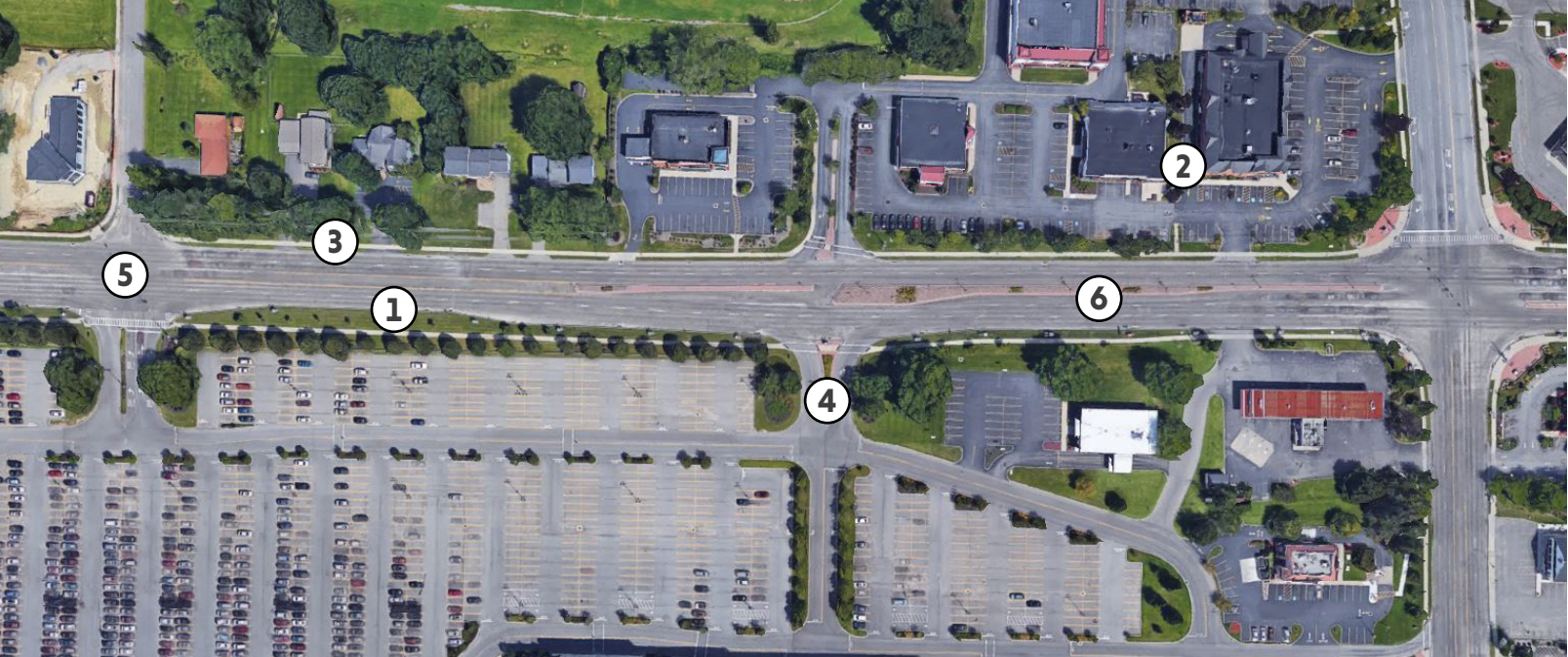
- 1 Properties are curbed with limited driveway access
- 2 Parking areas and circulation are interconnected between properties
- 3 Continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street
- 4 Right turn in and right turn out only controls flow of traffic
- 5 Signalized access to Plaza (south) and 6 properties (north)
- 6 Raised median

Figure 15: Corridor Access Management

Route 11 near Sunset Terrace  
Cicero, NY



Route 441 near Route 250  
Penfield, NY





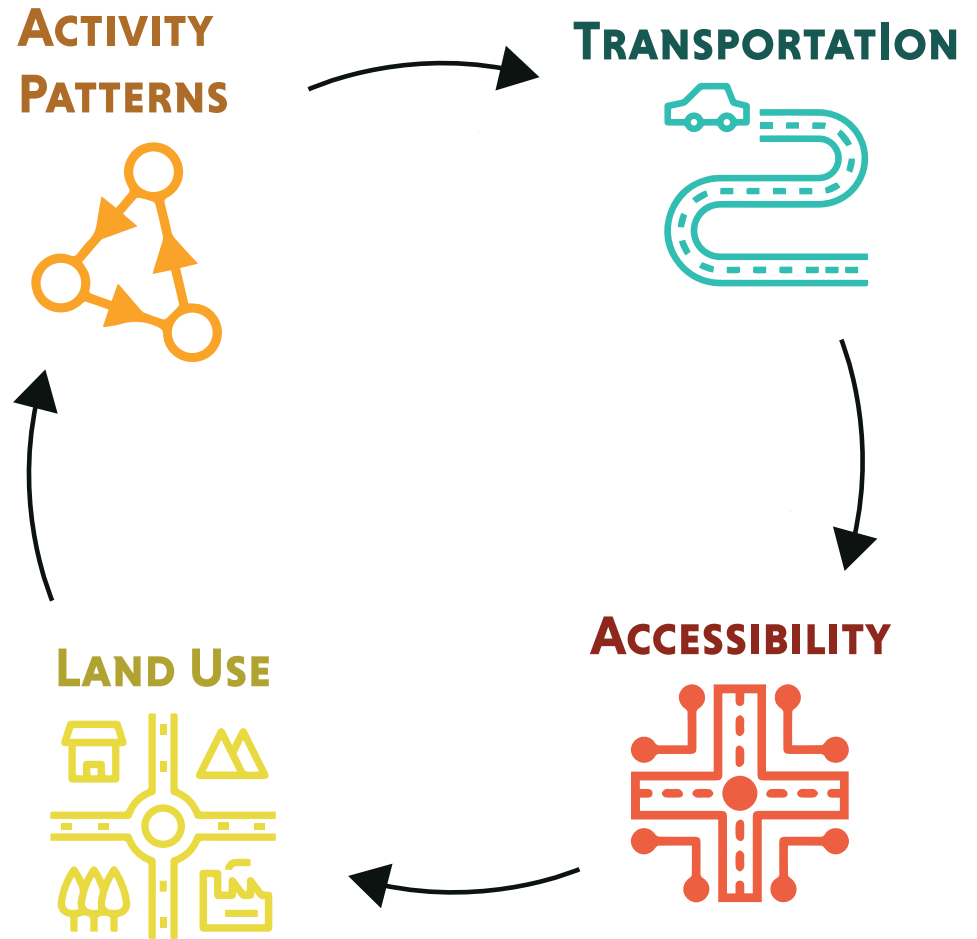
## Land Use / Transportation Cycle

Land use and transportation networks are inextricably linked. Land use planning helps to define the character and function of a community by encouraging and preventing certain types and intensity of development. Transportation planning can be seen as its own form of land use planning – through which the design, character, and functionality of the land that makes up the roadway is determined.

Land use and transportation decisions have direct impacts upon each other – land use patterns directly influence the type of roadway that is required to facilitate travel to and from any given area. Meanwhile, transportation investments can dictate what types of development may be attracted to locate along a given roadway based on its accessibility, character, and design.

The Future Land Use Chapter of this Plan is developed with existing and planned roadway capacity and characteristics in mind. Moving forward, any transportation planning decisions should refer to this Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use map to ensure that improvements to the roadway network help to support the desired development patterns of the Town.

**Figure 16: The Land Use / Transportation Cycle**





#### Next Step 04

## Enhance the Town's Parks & Recreation

Planning for and enhancing the Town's parks, trails, and other recreational amenities will elevate current and future residents' quality of life.

## Parks Master Plan

The Town needs to articulate a clear vision for its park system and provide a roadmap for decision-making on capital improvements, operations, and management over the next 10-20 years. A parks master plan will serve to accomplish this by providing a detailed inventory of the Town's parks and their facilities, including the Cicero Swamp Wildlife Management Area. From this inventory, the Master Plan could identify where there are deficiencies or gaps in the Town's facilities and programming that will not meet future demand. A Parks Master Plan would also provide short- and long-term recommendations to fill such identified gaps and ensure that the parks and recreational facilities of the Town continue to serve the community's needs. The Plan would create a roadmap for prioritizing investments in the Town's two waterfront parks, Joseph F. William Memorial Park and Riverfront Park. As part of such an effort, the Town may consider conducting a survey to better understand the community's wishes regarding parks and recreation over the next one to two decades.

## Trails

Throughout the planning process, the public expressed a clear desire for more walking paths and trails throughout the Town. Trails have a wide variety of benefits for a community, including increased physical activity, mental well-being, and desirability of the community for existing and potential residents. The Cicero Swamp Wildlife Management Area could benefit from walking trails to increase accessibility without disturbing wildlife habitat. The Town should work with NYSDEC to discuss the possibility of increasing access to the WMA to hikers and potentially bicyclists. In addition, Marie's Woods is a 66-acre nature preserve owned by the Central New York Land Trust on Lakeshore Road that has limited trails, and could also benefit from additional trails throughout the property. Connections to these proposed trails to a larger Town-wide active transportation network should be explored as a part of an Active Transportation Plan, noted on page 87 of this Chapter.



Trailhead at the Cicero Swamp WMA

## Dog Park

A Town dog park was another amenity identified as desirable to the community. As of the writing of this plan, work is underway to establish a dog park in Skyway Park on E. Taft Road, which will provide opportunities for residents to enjoy recreation with their dogs. The image to the left is an example of what a dog park could look like in the Town of Cicero.



