

MAKING DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE A REALITY

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Syracuse

Downtown Action Agenda 2001

One of America's Great Downtowns

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August 6, 2001

The Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc.
1900 State Tower Building
Syracuse, NY 13202

RE: **Syracuse Downtown Action Agenda 2001**

Dear Members of the Downtown Committee:

It is with great pleasure that we submit to you this Action Agenda for the continued enhancement of Downtown Syracuse. We commend you for your long-standing Downtown revitalization effort and for providing the leadership necessary to focus attention on this issue.

This Action Agenda is based on the actions taken over the last five years, on your community's shared vision for Downtown Syracuse, and on the subsequent steps necessary to get you there. As always, continuation of a strong, private-public partnership will be key to the success of your efforts. This Action Agenda is meant to guide all of the partners participating in the on-going enhancement of Downtown Syracuse -- and it is meant to build on the considerable strides made since completion of the Syracuse Downtown Action Agenda 1996.

We salute your commitment to making Syracuse a healthier and more vital community and offer our continued support of your efforts.

Sincerely,



Doyle G. Hyett



Dolores P. Palma

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I. Introduction

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1996, Mayor Roy Bernardi and the Syracuse Common Council contracted with the National League of Cities for an Action Agenda to further enhance Downtown Syracuse. The Action Agenda was defined with involvement from the local business sector, the local government, and members of the community. And, the process used for completing the Action Agenda was spearheaded and funded by the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc.

Over the five year period spanning from 1996 to 2001, that Action Agenda has been diligently implemented by the Downtown Committee in partnership with the City of Syracuse, the Downtown business community, and many local non-profit entities.

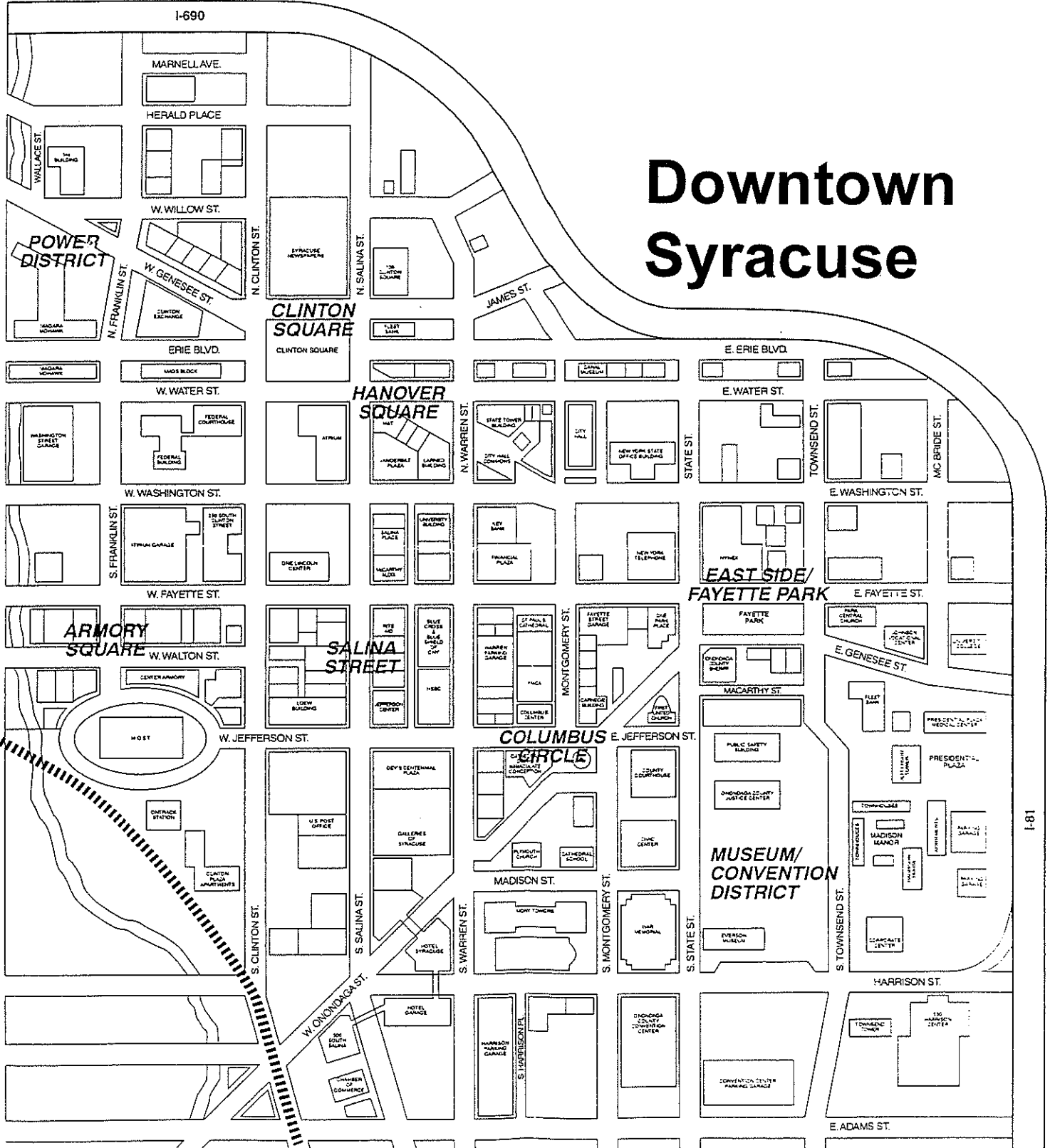
In March of 2001, the Downtown Committee held a Strategic Plan Retreat. One of the outcomes of the retreat was a determination that the time was at hand to update the Downtown Action Agenda. The goals of doing so were to:

- Assess progress made to date in implementing the 1996 Action Agenda;
- Involve the community in updating the vision defined for Downtown Syracuse in 1996;
- Through discussions with community leaders, identify issues currently facing Downtown; and
- Chart a new course of action -- in order to attain the community's vision and address Downtown issues -- that would be implemented over the next five years through a continued partnership between the private and public sectors.

The Action Agenda shown in the following pages is viewed as building upon the Downtown Committee's Strategic Plan Retreat and was specifically tailored to meet the above goals. A map of Downtown, as defined for this project, is shown on the following page.

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Downtown Syracuse



II. Executive Summary

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following is an Executive Summary of the Course of Action presented in the document titled ***Syracuse Downtown Action Agenda 2001***, prepared for the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc., by HyettPalma, Inc.

Course of Action

Much progress and many accomplishments have been realized in Downtown Syracuse between 1996 and 2001. This bodes well for the future of Downtown Syracuse. And, based on the strides made in the last five years, HyettPalma believes that the time is right to build on this momentum and move Downtown Syracuse on to an even higher level of success. This must be done by focussing on the **priority** issues currently facing Downtown. These are:

- Creating additional market-rate housing in Downtown;
- Addressing the appearance and business mix of the 300 block of South Salina Street;
- Creating the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor;
- Ensuring that Downtown remains -- and is perceived as being -- clean and safe;
- Ensuring that Downtown's parking is adequate; and
- Marketing Downtown throughout the region and beyond.

The following Course of Action addresses these **priority issues** as well as **additional issues** important to Downtown Syracuse's future economic success.

Priority Issues

When completing a strategy to further enhance any American Downtown today, particularly a Downtown as dynamic as Syracuse's, a plethora of initiatives are normally identified as needing attention. And, in most communities, scarce resources and time constraints do not allow for the immediate completion of all needed actions. Therefore, it is important to align needed actions with funding and time constraints in a manner that enables critical, priority actions to move forward in an expedient manner, setting the stage for all other needed actions.

The following issues were determined to be of high priority by those participating in completion of the Action Agenda. It must be noted that, based on national experience in Downtown enhancement, HyettPalma concurs that the following are the priority issues which must receive focused attention over the next five years.

■ **Housing**

In completing the Downtown Action Agenda, creating additional housing was defined as the community's top priority for Downtown. It must be noted that, in Downtowns nationwide and in communities much smaller than Syracuse, Downtown housing is proving to be very sought after by people of all ages. And, an increase in Downtown housing brings an increased vitality to Downtown. Therefore, it is very important to continue to make the introduction of more housing into the commercial district a high priority in Downtown. The goal should be to create the greatest number of housing units possible, limited only by demand expressed for rental or sale of units in the marketplace.

■ **300 Block of South Salina Street**

The further enhancement of South Salina Street -- particularly the 300 block -- remains a top priority of the community. A continued, concerted effort should be made to condition the real estate in the 300 block of South Salina Street, to induce a greater level of investment.

During the short-term, every effort should be made to improve the appearance of the first floors of buildings and businesses in the 300 block by taking the following actions.

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- A facade study of buildings in the 300 block should be completed to identify appropriate small-scale, cost-effective improvements which could be made to improve the facades, windows, and signs of first floor building space and businesses within the block.
- Design assistance should be offered to business and property owners of building space within the 300 block.
- The Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should work together to design, fund, and offer a 50/50 matching grant program for facade, window, sign, and awning improvements in the 300 block.

Actions that will take longer to complete, but which should be started concurrently with the short-term actions noted above, include the following.

- Working with the real estate community and property owners in the 300 block of South Salina, the Downtown Committee should actively and aggressively recruit appropriate developers and businesses for the 300 block.
- The Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse should offer every level of assistance to qualified developers who desire to undertake quality renovation or adaptive-use projects in the 300 block. In addition, the Downtown Committee should continue to discuss with development teams the feasibility of assembling a number of properties in the 300 block and redeveloping or enhancing them for new uses.
- The Downtown Committee should determine -- on a case-by-case basis -- if financial or other forms of assistance are needed to recruit businesses and developers to the 300 block.

Finally, as noted in the 1996 Action Agenda, consideration should be given to putting parking back on both sides of South Salina Street, going from four lanes of traffic to two (with a center turn lane, if needed), and encouraging sidewalk cafes.

■ **Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor**

In completing this Downtown Action Agenda, the community identified creation of the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor as being a top priority. The following steps should be taken to create the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor.

- Care should be taken to build on and leverage the cultural venues already in place along, and connecting to, the defined corridor.
- Additional art, culture, and entertainment tenants should be sought for the corridor.
- Streetscape improvements should be made to the corridor.
- The Downtown Committee should work with the City of Syracuse to review codes and requirements on Downtown sidewalks to prohibit asphalt paving and to require appropriate pavement drainage within the central business district.
- The Powelson Building site should be recognized as an excellent location for housing. Therefore, efforts should be made to create housing on this site -- either in a renovated Powelson Building (if possible) or in a new infill structure.
- Viable projects should be sought for the Mizpah Towers and Masonic Temple buildings, such as a mixture of uses, including art related establishments and housing.
- Efforts should continue to create upper story housing along the corridor whenever feasible.
- A limited number of additional restaurants would be appropriate along the corridor, if deemed feasible, and if appropriate building space can be provided.

■ **Clean & Safe**

Nationwide, this issue has been recognized as being vitally important to a Downtown's economic well-being. In Syracuse, the Downtown Committee has also recognized the importance of these basics and has paid particular attention to them. The following steps should be taken to augment that good work.

- The Downtown Committee, City of Syracuse, and Onondaga County should continue to place maximum emphasis on Downtown maintenance and public safety.
- The Downtown Committee's staff, in cooperation with representatives from appropriate departments/divisions of the City of Syracuse, should conduct a "maintenance audit" and define a process for ensuring that the identified maintenance needs are resolved through on-going, regular maintenance improvements.
- The Downtown Committee should consider establishing a maintenance "hot line" -- or a "hot e-mail" address -- that the public can use to report maintenance concerns.
- Actions should be taken to repair or replace damaged sidewalk pavers, street lights, tree grates, public signs, and any other streetscape elements -- as soon as the damages occur.
- Additional trash receptacles should be placed on sidewalks where high pedestrian activity occurs.
- All major entrances to Downtown should be examined to ensure they are clean, well-maintained, and made welcoming through landscaping and public signs.
- The City of Syracuse should establish a maintenance fund -- of approximately \$25,000 to \$35,000 per year -- to enable the Downtown Committee's Operations Division to maintain an inventory of typically needed replacement items.

- The City of Syracuse and Downtown Committee should be encouraged to routinely budget funds for the on-going maintenance of all future public improvements made in Downtown.
- The Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse should continue to augment Downtown public safety with foot patrols, bike patrols, and any other friendly policing methods.
- The City of Syracuse should take every legal action possible to prohibit panhandling throughout Downtown Syracuse.

■ **Parking**

Those participating in completing the 2001 Action Agenda identified parking as a priority issue. The desire was to ensure that parking is adequate to accommodate Downtown's customers, clients, employees, residents, and visitors. The following actions should be taken to ensure that parking supports Downtown's growing economic success.

- Steps should continue to be taken to deal with specific, known parking needs -- such as the need for additional parking on the east side of Downtown.
- A comprehensive parking analysis should be undertaken by a qualified parking professional, with extensive experience working in Downtowns, and should address parking supply, management of both on-street and off-street parking, maintenance of parking facilities, and administrative issues related to Downtown parking, such as:
 - Assessing the current financial situation to determine if debts and costs can be restructured to be less burdensome on the City government; and
 - Determining if Downtown public parking -- both on- and off-street -- should be operated by a central entity.

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- A goal of the parking analysis should be to make Downtown's parking system as user-friendly as possible for all Downtown parkers.
- ***Marketing***
During completion of the 2001 Action Agenda, community members recognized the importance of marketing Downtown, naming this as one of the top priority issues to address over the next five years. The following steps should be taken to market Downtown Syracuse.
 - After completion of the 1996 Action Agenda, staff of the Downtown Committee -- working in conjunction with local marketing and public relations professionals -- developed a Downtown marketing campaign. This campaign was not implemented due to lack of public sector funding. The marketing campaign must be resurrected. And, funds to implement the campaign must be sought from both the private and public sectors.
 - Care should be taken to ensure that an adequate budget -- defined by the Downtown Committee working with marketing professionals -- is established for implementing the marketing campaign.
 - The Downtown marketing campaign should be implemented by the professional and very capable staff of the Downtown Committee -- working with marketing professionals and in cooperation and collaboration with City Hall.
 - The Downtown Committee should approach the Pyramid Companies about potential cooperative marketing initiatives between Downtown and Carousel Center.

Additional Issues

The following additional issues should also be addressed over the next five years -- as staff time and resources allow. While not identified by the community as being priority issues, attempting to make some degree of progress on the issues shown below is important since these secondary issues will:

- Affect the level of success that is attained in dealing with the primary issues; and
- Impact the overall economic vitality realized in Downtown Syracuse.

It is important to note that, while some degree of progress should be sought in addressing these issues over the next five years, it should not be expected that the actions recommended below will be completed within that timeframe.

■ **Additional Real Estate Development**

The following additional real estate development projects should be addressed as part of the overall Downtown Syracuse enhancement effort.

1. **Convention Center Hotel**

Every effort should be made to develop the hotel facility adjacent to the Oncenter complex at the earliest possible date.

2. **Office Development**

A specific effort should be made to fill the MONY Plaza and former NYNEX buildings at the earliest possible date.

3. **Problem Properties**

When considered appropriate, and if funding is available, the Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should consider acquiring Downtown problem properties, with the intent of marketing the properties to qualified developers.

■ **Economic Development**

The following economic development initiatives should be addressed.

1. **University Involvement**

The Downtown Committee should meet with appropriate representatives from the University to discuss whether or not there is the possibility of the University re-entering an enhanced Downtown in some fashion.

2. Armory Square

There appears to remain a degree of friction between entertainment and residential uses within the Square -- although to a much lesser degree than in 1996. This situation should continue to be monitored and addressed by the Downtown Committee working with the Armory Square Association and property owners in order to maintain the balance between enhancing the area as a retail/restaurant/entertainment destination while protecting residents's quality-of-life.

3. Lighting of Historic Buildings

The facade of the Niagara-Mohawk Building has been lighted in a highly professional, mesmerizing, and awe-inspiring manner. And, this should serve as the impetus for lighting additional historic facades -- built in a variety of time periods -- throughout Downtown, as it is understood that the County also intends to do.

4. Continue to Gain a Better Understanding of Downtown's Market Potential

Downtown Committee staff should continue to document market trends and potentials of Downtown Syracuse in order to establish a reliable, respected base of market information which can be used by a broad range of parties to justify further significant investments in Downtown.

5. Downtown Development Districts and Clusters

Downtown Syracuse currently has a number of specific districts -- such as Armory Square, Clinton Square, Salina Street, Columbus Circle, Hanover Square, the convention center area, etc. All of Downtown's various districts should be given a clearer and more specific economic orientation and each district should be further enhanced to contain a specific, defined range of desired businesses and uses.

6. Retention Assistance to Downtown's Existing Businesses

Every effort should be made by the Downtown Committee to provide the highest levels of assistance possible to Downtown's existing businesses, to make the businesses more aware of market opportunities and to encourage improvements which better serve the Downtown marketplace. Specific initiatives to better assist Downtown's existing businesses should include the following actions.

- **One-On-One Consultations**

Personalized, one-on-one assistance should be offered to every existing business in Downtown Syracuse by Downtown Committee staff.

- **Marketing**

The overall marketing campaign for Downtown Syracuse, previously discussed in this document, should place maximum emphasis on promoting the broad range of goods and services offered in Downtown Syracuse.

7. Attraction of More Downtown Retail Businesses

A concerted effort should continue to be made by the Downtown Committee to aggressively seek additional, appropriate, quality retail businesses for Downtown Syracuse.

8. Attraction of Offices

Downtown Committee staff, working with the Office Development Committee of the Downtown Committee and the Action Response Service, should continue to focus on filling existing office space throughout Downtown.

9. Carousel Center Expansion

Ground breaking for a \$900,000,000 expansion of Carousel Center is scheduled for the Spring of 2002. While it is premature to determine the exact impact which the expanded mall will have on Downtown, the following are certainties.

- Downtown's economy must be strengthened as much as possible between now and the Spring of 2003, so that Downtown's businesses have the greatest opportunity to successfully co-exist with those in the mall.
- Downtown must continue to be different from any other shopping mall or venue in the region -- in terms of its physical ambience, mix of unique businesses, and personalized customer service.
- The Downtown marketing campaign -- previously discussed -- must be implemented immediately, aggressively, and continuously.

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There has been some discussion locally about whether or not to try to "link" Downtown to Carousel Center via joint marketing efforts and efforts to link the two commercial areas via transit, trails, etc. Further linking Downtown and the Center should be beneficial to both -- even if doing so results in attracting only a small percent of the customers to patronize both commercial areas.

Public Amenities

The following public amenities should be addressed in Downtown.

1. Clinton Square

Efforts should continue to complete the project as quickly as possible. To see that Clinton Square becomes a year-round destination, the City should ensure that a full program of events is scheduled for Clinton Square on a year-round basis.

2. Public Market

Creation of a Downtown public market should be addressed as recommended below.

- Care should be taken to ensure that, if created, a Downtown public market is of the utmost quality in terms of product, facility, marketing; and management.
- A visit should be made to cities having popular Downtown public markets -- such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Atlanta -- to quantify the elements that are essential for success.
- It should be realized that public markets are typically not self-sustaining. Therefore, the determination must be made locally as to whether funds should be raised and earmarked for the long-term subsidy of a Downtown public market -- assuming that the market will require some level of subsidy.

3. Public Art

High quality, professional public art should be placed throughout Downtown in a coordinated manner.

Planning

The following planning concerns should be addressed in Downtown Syracuse.

1. Traffic Flow

Every effort should continue to be made to ensure safe, efficient and convenient traffic flow throughout Downtown Syracuse. A comprehensive analysis of Downtown traffic flow should be undertaken by a qualified transportation engineer, with extensive experience working in Downtowns and familiar with contemporary transportation planning and engineering practices, such as traffic calming.

2. Connectivity

An often stated Downtown enhancement goal of many in the community is to "connect-the-dots" by increasing the connectivity between Downtown attractions, between Downtown and Franklin Square, and between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. The following actions should be taken to connect these areas.

- **Sidewalks**

Downtown's sidewalk system should be connected with each of the surrounding neighborhoods -- to the maximum degree possible -- to ensure a safe and convenient pedestrian connection between Downtown and all surrounding areas.

- **Streets**

Safe/convenient traffic flow should be ensured throughout Downtown and between Downtown and each of the surrounding neighborhoods. In conjunction with the comprehensive Downtown traffic analysis recommended above, the following specific concerns should be examined and appropriate steps taken to:

- ▶ Improve vehicular and pedestrian access between Downtown and Franklin Square;
- ▶ Improve pedestrian safety along thoroughfares to encourage walking and biking between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods;
- ▶ Place additional bike racks in Downtown; and

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- ▶ Ensure appropriate street lighting in areas connecting Downtown with adjacent neighborhoods.

- **Wayfinding System**

A comprehensive wayfinding system should be designed and installed to enhance ease of vehicular and pedestrian movement to and through Downtown, and to ensure that all of Downtown's attractions and amenities are easy to find.

- **Creekwalk**

This very important project should be embraced and completed at the earliest possible date.

3. **Comprehensive Plan**

The Syracuse Common Council is interested in updating the community's comprehensive plan. This is a very important growth management tool which should be supported and completed at the earliest possible date.

4. **Clinton Street Combined Sewer Overflow**

The Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse should continue working with the County to mitigate any negative impact which the system may have on Downtown Syracuse.

Management

The Downtown Committee and staff have professionally and ably led the Downtown enhancement effort for twenty-five years. And, in doing so, they have formed important partnerships with City Hall and others. The following recommendations are meant to build on and further the efforts of the Downtown Committee and to further strengthen those partnerships.

1. **Partnership**

It is understood locally that a continued partnership among the Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse is essential for Downtown's continued success. This partnership must not only be continued but further strengthened over time.

In doing so, it is suggested that the following roles be assumed.

- The Downtown Committee and its staff must continue to play the lead role in spearheading the Downtown effort.
- The Mayor and Common Council of Syracuse should also continue to be advocates of Downtown. In addition, Syracuse's elected officials should continue, and publicly convey as often as possible, their commitment to Downtown and its enhanced future.
- To further strengthen the partnership between the City and the Downtown Committee, it is suggested that the Downtown Committee and Common Council hold a work session together on a regular basis -- perhaps as often as once a month.

2. Downtown Committee

With the pace of investment quickening in Downtown, there is a need to further quantify, document, and demonstrate results being realized. To do so, the Downtown Committee should establish a baseline of data, update that data at least annually, and distribute the results widely.

3. Expanding Boundaries

There has been some discussion locally about expanding the boundaries of the Downtown Committee -- for the first time in twenty-five years -- to include Franklin Square. This should occur only if it is determined to be mutually beneficial for Franklin Square as well as for the Downtown Committee.

4. Funding

The Downtown Committee, working cooperatively with the City of Syracuse, should continue to seek appropriate funds from all appropriate internal and external sources to ensure the successful implementation of the Action Agenda.

III. Accomplishments to Date

III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

Since completion of the *Downtown Syracuse Action Agenda 1996*, a new awareness has emerged regarding the importance of Downtown Syracuse to the quality-of-life and overall growth and prosperity of the entire Syracuse community. This renewed interest and confidence in Downtown is being displayed from all levels.

For example:

- The town meeting held during the evening of May 22, 2001 -- designed to discuss the public's desire for their future Downtown-- drew an enthusiastic and diverse group of over 100 individuals, including elected and appointed officials, Downtown business and property owners, Downtown residents, and Syracuse citizens to discuss their vision for the future Downtown Syracuse;
- The Downtown Committee of Syracuse has conscientiously and aggressively worked to implement actions to further enhance Downtown Syracuse, consistent with the findings of the 1996 Action Agenda;
- The business community has displayed a growing interest in investing more in the future growth and prosperity of Downtown Syracuse, with the development of additional market-rate housing, construction of new lodging, and the continued conditioning and leasing of office and retail space within Downtown Syracuse;
- The cultural community has worked very aggressively to ensure that Downtown Syracuse retains its position as the community's cultural center, through projects such as the introduction and successful operation of the Bristol IMAX® Omnitheater, the continued enhancement of the Landmark Theatre, the planned expansion of the Everson Museum of Art, and creation of the emerging Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor;

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- The City of Syracuse has been an active partner in the further enhancement of Downtown Syracuse, showing tremendous support for the development of additional housing and parking, and the further enhancement of Downtown's public spaces;
- Onondaga County has continued to display its confidence in Downtown Syracuse through active support and participation in the development of a new hotel adjacent to the Oncenter complex and the construction of a new Downtown courthouse; and
- Continued support for Downtown enhancement projects is being shown by the federal government, particularly in recent support for the development of more market-rate housing in Downtown through assistance provided by Congressman Walsh's office.

One of the primary purposes of the overall Downtown Syracuse enhancement effort is, and has always been, to induce a higher level of investment and investor confidence in Downtown. And, without question, investor confidence has increased in Downtown Syracuse since 1996, as is evidenced by a significant number of new financial investments made in Downtown Syracuse, including:

- The \$40,000,000 expansion and upgrading of the Syracuse Newspapers building;
- Construction of the new Onondaga County Courthouse, at a cost in excess of \$25,000,000;
- The upcoming \$15,000,000 expansion of the Everson Museum;
- The \$8,500,000 reconstruction of Clinton Square;
- The \$2,000,000 renovation of the public areas of the Landmark Theatre;

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- The near completion of 34 market-rate apartment units at 230 West Genesee Street and the upcoming introduction of 20 new market-rate units in Hanover Square and 15 new market-rate units in the Loew Building in the 300 block of South Salina Street;
- Reconstruction of the former MONY garage by the City of Syracuse, resulting in the introduction of 600 new Downtown parking spaces;
- Completion of the sixty-room Hawthorne Suites Hotel, located in the renovated Dome Hotel building;
- Conversion, renovation and occupancy of several significant office facilities in Downtown, including the former Dey Brothers and Sibley's department store buildings, the former Syracuse building, 250 Harrison Street, and the Hills building;
- The net absorption of over 335,000 square feet of vacant Downtown office space between 1997 and 2000;
- The continued increase in the number of Armory Square retail and restaurant businesses;
- The renovation of 70 SRO units at the Downtown YMCA; and
- The net gain of approximately 132 Downtown business expansions and openings between 1994 and 2000.

In addition, the following additional new future investments are anticipated in Downtown Syracuse:

- The continued construction of market-rate housing in Downtown Syracuse;
- The development of additional quality lodging facilities in Downtown;
- The continued filling of vacant office space in Downtown;

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- Renovation and adaptive use of the Carnegie building for a middle school for the arts;
- Creation of the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor along Montgomery Street, resulting in the renovation of several historic buildings and the introduction of additional mixed-use arts venues clustered along the corridor;
- Renovation of the Central Technical High School building;
- Continued renovation of the Landmark Theatre; and
- Completion of the Creekwalk project, connecting Armory Square to Onondaga Lake.

Each of the above noted accomplishments, actions, investments, and anticipated initiatives serves as solid evidence that the dedicated efforts of all those working to further enhance Downtown Syracuse are yielding significant returns -- returns on the investment of time, energy and money made by both the private and public sectors. The marketplace is responding well to the concerted Downtown renaissance effort.

However, Downtown Syracuse is not without its issues and concerns. Several significant and related initiatives identified in the 1996 Action Agenda which have not been fully addressed during the past five years include:

- Creation of a significant critical mass of Downtown market-rate housing;
- Satisfaction of Downtown parking concerns -- both real and perceived;
- The provision of a clean and safe environment throughout Downtown Syracuse;
- The implementation of a Downtown marketing campaign; and

- The expansion of the Downtown Committee's funding base beyond, primarily, special assessments.

During the next five years, the community must remain dedicated to addressing the above noted remaining concerns, must make every effort to continue leveraging the successes of the revitalization effort, and perhaps most importantly, must:

***Program and implement enhancement actions
through a solid partnership of
the Downtown Committee of Syracuse,
the City of Syracuse,
Onondaga County,
Downtown business owners,
Downtown property owners,
Downtown's residents,
area-wide institutions,
and the entire Syracuse community.***

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IV. Downtown Syracuse 2006

IV. DOWNTOWN SYRACUSE 2006

A series of discussions and meetings were held to define the community's preferred vision of Downtown Syracuse -- as it would ideally exist in the year 2006. A compilation of the thoughts and preferences expressed during those sessions is shown below.

By the year 2006, Downtown Syracuse would be a friendly and inviting place that is an arts, culture, and events destination, has storefronts filled with thriving businesses, and is bustling with activity day, evening, and weekends.

In 2006, there would be an enhanced awareness of the value of Downtown's architecture. Efforts would continue to retain and enhance Downtown's historic architecture, additional facades would be lighted -- as Niagara-Mohawk has done and as the County is planning -- and historic markers would be placed on buildings. Dynamic modern architecture would be mixed with the old, compatible infill structures would be built on vacant lots, and there would be a substantial increase in mixed-use buildings -- that include shops, housing, offices, and parking. To further Downtown's physical appeal, Downtown's squares would be incorporated into the overall plan for Downtown and used to create a unique Downtown identity. And, public art would be added to Downtown in the form of murals and sculpture.

By the year 2006, Downtown would have many more residents as well as the infrastructure to support residents -- such as retail, services, and businesses open later at night. This would make Downtown a neighborhood -- a place to which people gravitate, a place people want to live, a place where people know their neighbors.

Downtown would have a variety of art and cultural facilities. These would include new additions to Downtown's cultural mix as well as improving the cultural facilities now in place to make the best use of them and to enable them to attract a larger number of users.

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Downtown would have more retail businesses -- large and small, for the daily needs of Downtown residents as well as specialty businesses. And Downtown would continue to have a variety of restaurants -- in terms of food, prices, and hours of operation.

Downtown would be extremely pedestrian-friendly with lights, signs, walks, pedestrian crosswalks, traffic speed, and light timing designed to give as much preference to pedestrians as to vehicles. In addition, better snow removal, particularly around the Civic Center, would aid pedestrian access.

Downtown would be clean and would be made more attractive with landscaping and greenery that are well-maintained.

Downtown would be safe and perceived as safe. This would be accomplished with continued security presence, increased street lighting, and additional lighting of building facades.

Downtown would have adequate parking for all its users. Downtown's parking lots would be more attractive, have better lighting, and be open for use by the general public -- as opposed to being used for government vehicles. Downtown would have fewer surface lots and, instead, more parking garages. And, these would be designed as attractive additions to Downtown's physical appeal.

There would be increased "connectivity" between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and among Downtown attractions. This might include welcoming pathways and creative signs. In addition, the entrances to Downtown from 690 would be more attractive and welcoming. And, Onondaga Creek would be cleaned-up and the Creekwalk completed, affording additional connectivity.

By 2006, Downtown would include the following uses:

- ▶ Housing -- for many more residents;
- ▶ Retail -- convenience retail for residents as well as specialty shops;

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- ▶ Food establishments -- of various types, having varied prices, and open later on weekends;
- ▶ Art and culture -- additional theaters, museums, movies, galleries, artist studios, etc.;
- ▶ Professional offices;
- ▶ Service businesses;
- ▶ Government offices and facilities;
- ▶ Educational facilities;
- ▶ Hotels;
- ▶ Meeting spaces;
- ▶ A "new and user-friendly transportation center;"
- ▶ Recreation; and
- ▶ Green space.

This mix of uses would be able to attract the following users:

- ▶ Downtown businesspeople;
- ▶ Downtown residents;
- ▶ Adjacent neighborhood residents;
- ▶ Residents of the region;
- ▶ College students;

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- ▶ University and medical complex users;
- ▶ Lodging guests;
- ▶ Convention-goers;
- ▶ Artists;
- ▶ Transit users;
- ▶ Sporting and music event-goers;
- ▶ Carousel Center shoppers;
- ▶ Tourists; and
- ▶ A variety of generations -- including families, young professionals, school kids, empty nesters, retirees, etc.

By 2006, Downtown Syracuse would be known far and wide as having the following image.

***A fun, inviting, and exciting place
that's "got it goin' on."***

***A cultural, business, and educational
melting pot
offering a tremendous amount of
Downtown cultural activities
for a city of its size.***

***A good economic experience
where businesses and investors
make money.***

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***A family-friendly,
clean, well-kept, and safe Downtown
that offers big city living
along with an excellent quality-of-life.***

***A multi-cultural place
to live and visit
that draws a diversity of people
and is alive with activity and activities
all four seasons of the year.***

A Downtown of beautiful architecture.

***A destination,
a regional center,
and a gateway to other tourist destinations.***

***A Downtown that lives up to its name
as the grand heart of New York State.***

***A Downtown that is
a nationally recognized and marketed
success story.***

V. Course of Action

V. COURSE OF ACTION

As was stated earlier, much progress and many accomplishments have been realized in Downtown Syracuse between 1996 and 2001. And, this progress involves accomplishments both tangible and intangible. In the latter category, the 2001 assessment of Downtown revealed:

- A change in public attitudes since 1996 -- from mild skepticism about improvements that might be possible in Downtown to a marked optimism about Downtown's future;
- A quickening of the pace at which private sector investment is occurring in Downtown; and
- A healthy impatience and desire for realizing additional Downtown improvements in the shortest amount of time possible.

These intangible improvements bode well for the future of Downtown Syracuse. And, based on the strides made in the last five years, HyettPalma believes that the time is right to build on this momentum and move Downtown Syracuse on to an even higher level of success. This must be done by focussing on the ***priority*** issues currently facing Downtown. These are:

- Creating additional market-rate housing in Downtown;
- Addressing the appearance and business mix of the 300 block of South Salina Street;
- Creating the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor;
- Ensuring that Downtown remains -- and is perceived as being -- clean and safe;
- Ensuring that Downtown's parking is adequate; and

- Marketing Downtown throughout the region and beyond.

The following Course of Action addresses these priority issues as well as others which are important to Downtown Syracuse's future economic success.

PRIORITY ISSUES

When completing a strategy to further enhance any American Downtown today, particularly a Downtown as dynamic as Syracuse's, a plethora of initiatives are normally identified as needing attention. And, in most communities, scarce resources and time constraints do not allow for the immediate completion of all needed actions. Therefore, it is important to align needed actions with funding and time constraints in a manner that enables critical, priority actions to move forward in an expedient manner, setting the stage for all other needed actions.

The following issues were determined to be of high priority by those participating in completion of the Action Agenda. It must be noted that, based on national experience in Downtown enhancement, HyettPalma concurs that the following are the priority issues which must receive attention over the next five years.

Housing

In completing the Downtown Action Agenda, creating additional housing was defined as the community's top priority for Downtown. This is an interesting change from 1996 when many in the community were skeptical regarding whether or not Downtown was a viable location for housing.

Today, all market-rate housing in Downtown is 100% occupied. This fact demonstrates both the possibility and the demand for Downtown housing.

It must be noted that, in Downtowns nationwide and in communities much smaller than Syracuse, Downtown housing is proving to be very sought after by people of all ages. It is also important to note that, as a result of creating housing units, America's Downtowns are experiencing a new vibrancy that further stimulates their economic viability. Therefore, it is very important to continue to make housing a high priority in Downtown Syracuse. This should entail the following actions.

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- The Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should make the development of additional Downtown housing a top priority over the next five years.
- The specific number of housing units appropriate for development in Downtown Syracuse should be based on absorption of units in the marketplace, rather than by defining a specific number of new residents or units appropriate for Downtown -- as was suggested in the 1996 Action Agenda. The production of additional Downtown housing sufficient to accommodate 2,002 new Downtown residents by 2002 was a recommended goal of the 1996 Action Agenda. A specific goal for the number of units should not be defined during the next five years. Instead, if further market analysis determines the need for housing production limitations in the future, appropriate and feasible limitations on the number of units appropriate for Downtown Syracuse should be considered at that time. For the immediate future, however, the goal should be to produce the greatest number of housing units possible, limited only by demand expressed by the rental or sale of units in the marketplace, rather than by a subjective production goal for number of residents or units.
- The Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should jointly convey a message of confidence to the investment community. That message should make it clear that both entities believe Downtown is a viable location for additional market-rate housing and that they will make every effort to aggressively support the development of additional units in the future.
- The effort should focus on creating market-rate apartments and lofts -- both for rent and for sale, if feasible -- in the upper stories of Downtown's older buildings as well as in new infill structures throughout Downtown.
- The City of Syracuse, the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, and all parties interested in the further introduction of more quality market-rate housing in Downtown Syracuse should continue to seek progressive state building code regulations which will allow the development of more units in Downtown Syracuse -- at a reasonable cost.

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- The City and the Downtown Committee should address the issue of parking for Downtown residents. This should be done by ensuring that Downtown's public parking facilities are open 24-hours per day for use by Downtown residents. Current restrictions on parking garage ingress/egress during the evening hours, it is felt, are acting as a deterrent to additional quality housing development in Downtown Syracuse.
- The Downtown Committee should continue to actively seek out potential developers of Downtown housing -- through direct solicitation or issuance of requests for proposals for specific buildings or projects -- and provide needed technical and financial assistance to stimulate the highest degree of quality housing production possible throughout Downtown Syracuse.
- It is understood that, at this time, a gap may exist between the cost of developing Downtown housing and the revenue stream which it will generate. Steps should continue to be taken to narrow the financial gap -- as much as possible -- so that as many housing deals as possible can be implemented. Steps to narrow the financial gap should include the following:
 - ▶ Confirming that the development and operating expenses built into each development scenario/pro-forma are reasonable;
 - ▶ Realizing that, in many communities, rents/sales prices for Downtown housing units often exceed those charged in the suburbs, as Downtown becomes a location of choice;
 - ▶ Ensuring that potential developers are fully aware of all tax incentives available to them -- such as the Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC) and those available through the Syracuse Empire Zone Program; and
 - ▶ Continue involving local lenders to discuss possible methods of narrowing the financial gap.

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- Once the gap has been narrowed, financial assistance should be made available -- through all possible local, state and federal sources -- to housing developers on a case-by-case basis. And, the community should certainly continue to seek all outside assistance possible -- state and federal -- to stimulate the development of additional Downtown housing.
- Over time, the goal should be for Downtown housing development deals to be self-sustaining so they do not require financial assistance.

300 Block of South Salina Street

Virtually every effort directed at the further enhancement of Downtown Syracuse for the past two decades has placed considerable emphasis on the further enhancement of businesses, buildings, and both public and private spaces along the South Salina Street spine -- particularly the further enhancement of the 300 block of South Salina Street. While all of South Salina Street is important to the further prosperity of Downtown Syracuse, the 300 block is and has always been recognized as a barometer of Downtown's overall health and prosperity, due to the critical central location of the block in the very heart of Downtown Syracuse.

The further enhancement of South Salina Street -- particularly the 300 block -- remains a top priority of the community.

Every effort should be made to condition the real estate in the 300 block of South Salina Street, to induce a greater level of investment, through the following actions.

- Maximum attention should be given by the Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse to ensure that the 300 block's streets and sidewalks are as free of litter as is practically possible, that snow is removed in a timely manner from streets and sidewalks, and that all public amenities in the block -- such as street furnishings, landscaping, sidewalks, etc. -- are properly maintained.
- The highest levels of public safety should be maintained in the 300 block by both the Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse. Specific emphasis should be placed on decreasing panhandling in the block -- through the exercise of every possible legal measure -- and improving the perception of

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public safety by maintaining a visible day and evening police/security force presence in the 300 block. As reported by the public and by the Downtown Committee's security personnel, panhandlers have become more numerous and, without question, panhandlers are perceived as threatening by Downtown patrons. According to security personnel of the Downtown Committee,

A person can be hit up for money three or more times in one block. The storefront (Downtown storefront security facility) has had an increase in complaints regarding this.

- The Common Center bus transfer points should be relocated to a less congested area within Downtown -- in a modern, climate-controlled facility.
- Every effort should be made to continue the quality renovation of the Landmark Theatre in order to make it a star attraction within Downtown and of the 300 block, which will help attract additional investment to South Salina Street.
- Residential units are being added to the upper floors of the Loew Building and should be added to the upper floors of other appropriate buildings in the 300 block of South Salina.
- Developers should be supported and encouraged in their efforts to continue locating retail and restaurant uses on first floors of buildings within the 300 block.
- Offices should also be located on the upper floors of appropriate buildings in the 300 block.
- The enhancement of Clinton Square should be completed at the earliest possible date, since this project will provide a valuable new amenity in proximity to the 300 block and serve as a viable new anchor for the northern end of South Salina Street.

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It must be realized that few first-floor vacancies exist in the 300 block of South Salina Street at this time, which likely will limit the community's ability to make major changes in the mix of street level businesses here within the short-term. Therefore, every effort should be made -- during the short-term -- to improve the appearance of the first floors of buildings and businesses in the 300 block by taking the following actions.

- A facade study of buildings in the 300 block should be completed by a qualified, professional architect retained by the Downtown Committee. The intent of the facade study should be to identify appropriate small-scale, cost-effective improvements which could be made to improve the facades, windows, and signs of first floor building space and businesses within the block. The results of the facade study should be widely promoted to illustrate how the block's appearance would be vastly improved via facade changes.
- Design assistance -- provided by a qualified, professional architect retained by the Downtown Committee -- should be offered to business and property owners of building space within the 300 block -- placing emphasis on first floor improvements. Resulting designs should be consistent with the recommendations of the facade study completed for the block.
- The Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should work together to design, fund, and offer a 50/50 matching grant program for facade, window, sign, and awning improvements in the 300 block. Improvements should be consistent with the facade study and recommendations of the retained architect in order to qualify for receipt of grant funds.

NOTE: It is understood that 50/50 matching facade grants and design assistance have been offered in the past, with some success. At this time, the program should be refunded and remarketed.

The short-term actions noted above should be undertaken to improve the curb-appeal of street level businesses in the 300 block and further develop the upper floors of buildings on the block.

Actions which will take longer to complete, but which should be started concurrently with the short-term actions noted above, include the following.

- While a more in-depth examination of the market might reveal other appropriate uses or mixture of uses, it is felt that some amount of specialty retail, convenience retail to serve employees and residents of Downtown, visual arts to link with the Columbus Corridor Cultural Corridor and Landmark Theatre, and restaurants will be appropriate uses for first floor space. The upper floors will likely be identified as appropriate for a mixture of housing and offices.
- Working with the real estate community and property owners in the 300 block of South Salina, the Downtown Committee should actively and aggressively recruit appropriate developers and businesses for the 300 block from throughout the community and region.
- The Downtown Committee should also consider the active solicitation of business prospects during the annual International Council of Shopping Center's meeting in Las Vegas.
- The Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse should offer every level of assistance to qualified developers who desire to undertake quality renovation or adaptive-use projects in the 300 block, designed to achieve the goals and objectives of the overall Downtown Syracuse enhancement effort. Specifically, for example, if a qualified developer needs assistance in assembling property -- through condemnation or other actions -- with the intent of renovating the first floor for retail uses, introducing housing and offices on the upper floors, and constructing a through-building pedestrian connection between South Salina and Armory Square, every reasonable effort should be made to assist that developer in assembling the property and completing a valuable project which will benefit Downtown. Or, if a qualified developer needs financial assistance to close the gap in financing an appropriate adaptive-use housing project in the upper floors of buildings in the 300 block, every level of appropriate financial assistance should be considered. In addition, the Downtown Committee should continue to discuss with

development teams the feasibility of assembling a number of properties in the 300 block and redeveloping or enhancing them for new uses.

- The Downtown Committee should determine -- on a case-by-case basis -- if financial or other forms of assistance are needed to recruit businesses and developers to the 300 block. And, as determined appropriate, assistance should be provided on a case-by-case basis to appropriate new businesses or uses. The key should be to take a flexible approach to offering incentives in order to address the individual needs of each prospect and to obtain the best improvements for Downtown.

Finally, as noted in the 1996 Action Agenda, consideration should be given to putting parking back on both sides of South Salina Street, going from four lanes of traffic to two (with a center turn lane, if needed), and encouraging sidewalk cafes.

Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor

In completing this Downtown Action Agenda, the community identified creation of the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor as being a top priority.

Today, cities are increasingly turning to the arts as a way of creating additional anchors in their Downtowns. In doing so, they have found that the arts can become an effective magnet that attracts consumers, residents, and investors back to Downtown. Therefore, creating the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor is a community priority that should be embraced -- since it will help make Downtown an even richer mixed-use area. The following steps should be taken to create the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor.

- Care should be taken to build on and leverage the cultural venues already in place along, and connecting to, the defined corridor.
- Additional art, culture, and entertainment tenants should be sought for the corridor.

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- The following streetscape improvements should be made to the corridor:
 - ▶ Introduction of pedestrian-oriented landscaping;
 - ▶ Inspection of sidewalks, to ensure they are in good repair along the corridor;
 - ▶ Placement of high quality public art; and
 - ▶ Placement of creative banners on street light poles along the route, announcing that this is the Cultural Corridor.
- It is understood that the Powelson Building is in need of extensive repair, and therefore, might need to be demolished. The Powelson Building site should be recognized as an excellent location for housing. Therefore, efforts should be made to create housing on this site -- either in a renovated Powelson Building (if possible) or in a new infill structure. It must be noted that, if an infill structure is built, open space should be incorporated into the site design. However, due to the design nature of a "circle," it would not be appropriate to leave the site solely for open space.
- Viable projects should be sought for the Mizpah Towers and Masonic Temple buildings, such as a mixture of uses, including art related establishments and housing.
- Efforts should continue to create upper story housing along the corridor whenever feasible. In particular, it should be recognized that the scale and ambience of Montgomery, between Fayette and Jefferson, make this block especially attractive as a location for additional Downtown housing.
- Due to the overall character of development and structures along Montgomery, it is unlikely that the area will ever accommodate the development of general retail uses. A limited number of additional restaurants, however, would be appropriate along the corridor, if deemed feasible, and if appropriate building space can be provided.

Clean & Safe

The priority of ensuring that Downtown is actually -- and is perceived as being -- both clean and safe was also stressed by the community during completion of the 1996 Action Agenda. Nationwide, this issue has been recognized as being vitally important to a Downtown's economic well-being. So much so, that business improvement districts nationwide are returning to the basics of guaranteeing that Downtown is clean and safe. In Syracuse, the Downtown Committee has also recognized the importance of these basics and has paid particular attention to them. The following steps should be taken to augment that good work.

- The Downtown Committee, City of Syracuse, and Onondaga County should continue to place maximum emphasis on Downtown maintenance and public safety.
- The Downtown Committee, as well as the City government and Onondaga County, must continue to recognize that these factors greatly affect a Downtown's business climate and a Downtown's ability to attract businesses, investors, residents, consumers, and tourists.
- The Downtown Committee's staff, in cooperation with representatives from appropriate departments/divisions of the City of Syracuse, should conduct a "maintenance audit." This should entail walking every street in Downtown and noting any maintenance needs. Based on the results of the audit, Downtown Committee staff and the City of Syracuse should define a process for ensuring that the identified maintenance needs are resolved through on-going, regular maintenance improvements.

NOTE: **An audit should be conducted at least every 6 months. And, if additional items needing maintenance attention are identified during times between audits, the additional maintenance concerns should be added to the listing of improvements.**

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- The Downtown Committee should work with the City of Syracuse to review codes and requirements on Downtown sidewalks to prohibit asphalt paving and to require appropriate pavement drainage within the central business district.
- The Downtown Committee should consider establishing a maintenance “hot line” -- or a “hot e-mail” address -- that businesses and citizens could use to report maintenance concerns.
- Actions should be taken to repair or replace damaged sidewalk pavers, street lights, tree grates, public signs, and any other streetscape elements -- as soon as the damages occur.
- Additional trash receptacles should be placed on sidewalks where high pedestrian activity occurs.
- All major entrances to Downtown should be examined to ensure they are clean, well-maintained, and made welcoming through landscaping and public signs.
- The City of Syracuse should establish a maintenance fund -- of approximately \$25,000 to \$35,000 per year -- to enable the Downtown Committee’s Operations Division to maintain an inventory of typically needed replacement items -- such as trees, tree grates, benches, etc. -- to enable the timely replacement of items when needed.
- The City of Syracuse and Downtown Committee should be encouraged to routinely budget funds for the on-going maintenance of all future public improvements made in Downtown.

NOTE: **The recommendations of the “Report of the Comprehensive Maintenance Program Committee of the Downtown Committee of Syracuse,” completed in 1994, should be followed.**

- The Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse should continue to augment Downtown public safety with foot patrols, bike patrols, and any other friendly policing methods. This is extremely important since, when their customers and employees feel intimidated due to public safety concerns, business owners begin to consider alternate business locations. Therefore, further enhancing the perception of public safety is essential for Downtown economic success.
- As previously noted for the 300 block of South Salina Street, the City of Syracuse should take every legal action possible to prohibit aggressive panhandling throughout Downtown Syracuse.

Parking

Those participating in completing the 2001 Action Agenda identified parking as a priority issue. The desire was to ensure that parking is adequate to accommodate Downtown's customers, clients, employees, residents, and visitors.

Parking must be noted as an ancillary use, as opposed to a primary use, in every Downtown. This means that people do not come Downtown primarily to park. Instead, they primarily come Downtown to work, shop, eat, be entertained, live, etc. In doing so, they need the ancillary amenity of parking. And, as efforts are made to attract additional residents, consumers, art lovers, employees, and others to Downtown, attention must also be given to parking. Therefore, the following actions should be taken to ensure that parking supports Downtown's growing economic success.

- Steps should continue to be taken to deal with specific, known parking needs -- such as the need for additional parking on the east side of Downtown.
- Downtown Syracuse covers a large geographic area having a variety of parking facilities, parking regulations, and parking needs. To ensure that the entire system is functioning at optimum levels, a comprehensive parking analysis should be undertaken.

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- The parking analysis should be undertaken by a qualified parking professional, with extensive experience working in Downtowns, and should address parking supply by:
 - ▶ Quantifying Downtown parking demand vs. current supply;
 - ▶ Quantifying any existing parking surpluses or deficits; and
 - ▶ Recommending the most creative and cost-effective ways of alleviating parking deficits.
- The parking analysis should address the management of both on-street and off-street parking by:
 - ▶ Determining how to maximize the number of on-street spaces -- e.g., by limiting the number of loading zones and no parking areas, by considering the use of angled parking on less traveled streets, by increasing turnover of key on-street spaces through more progressive enforcement in select locations, etc.;
 - ▶ Maximizing the use of on-street spaces by the general public, as opposed to allocating spaces to be used by government vehicles;
 - ▶ Examining the feasibility of shared parking facilities (i.e., an office which needs off-street parking during the daytime hours, only, sharing the spaces with a restaurant which needs the parking during the evening hours); and
 - ▶ Maximizing the use of parking garages and parking lots by making them available to the public on a 24-hour per day basis.
- The parking analysis should address maintenance issues, such as:
 - ▶ Lighting, signing, landscaping, and paving of off-street parking; and

- ▶ Improving facilities in need of special attention, such as the Warren Parking Center.
- Lastly, the parking analysis should address administrative issues related to Downtown parking, such as:
 - ▶ Assessing the current financial situation -- cost of operating public parking vs. revenues being generated -- to determine if debts and costs can be restructured to be less burdensome on the City government; and
 - ▶ Determining if Downtown public parking -- both on- and off-street -- should be operated by a central entity.
- The goal of the parking analysis should be to make Downtown's parking system as user-friendly as possible for Downtown customers, residents, employees, visitors, and all other Downtown parkers.
- The Downtown Committee should encourage the City of Syracuse to require the landscaping of all Downtown parking lots.

Marketing

During completion of the 2001 Action Agenda, community members recognized the importance of marketing Downtown, naming this as one of the top priority issues to address over the next five years. It should be noted that marketing was also identified as a very important initiative in the 1996 Action Agenda.

The importance of marketing a Downtown cannot be overstated since a Downtown marketing campaign can be used to:

- Raise the profile of Downtown and the Downtown enhancement effort;
- Spotlight improvements and investments being realized in Downtown;

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- Convey the important role a vibrant Downtown plays in a community's overall quality-of-life;
- Build a constituency for Downtown and the enhancement effort;
- Generate excitement about Downtown;
- Improve a community's self-image and pride;
- Improve the ability to garner resources and support for the Downtown effort; and
- Stimulate Downtown's economy by attracting investors -- in the form of businesses, real estate purchasers and developers, consumers, tourists, and residents.

In fact, it would be difficult to find a Downtown in this country that has been enhanced without the use of a marketing effort. Therefore, the following steps should be taken to market Downtown Syracuse.

- After completion of the 1996 Action Agenda, staff of the Downtown Committee -- working in conjunction with local marketing and public relations professionals -- developed a Downtown marketing campaign. This campaign was not implemented due to lack of public sector funding. The marketing campaign must be resurrected. And, funds to implement the campaign must be sought from both the private and public sectors -- including the Downtown Committee, the City of Syracuse, and other private sector sponsors.
- Care should be taken to ensure that an adequate budget -- defined by the Downtown Committee working with marketing professionals -- is established for implementing the marketing campaign. If an inadequate budget is settled for, the desired results will not be achieved -- and, this will make it extremely difficult to garner funds for any future marketing.

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- The Downtown marketing campaign should be implemented by the professional and very capable staff of the Downtown Committee -- working with marketing professionals and in cooperation and collaboration with City Hall.
- As noted later in this document, the Downtown Committee should approach the Pyramid Companies about potential cooperative marketing initiatives between Downtown and Carousel Center.
- Those involved in funding the marketing campaign should be aware of the following truisms:
 - ▶ Marketing Downtown will require a long-term commitment and a continual, year-after-year effort;
 - ▶ Marketing requires patience and perseverance -- results will not be realized immediately; and
 - ▶ Marketing should be recognized as a critical investment in Downtown's future -- it should not be viewed as an expense.

As noted in the 1996 Action Agenda, in addition to the creative initiatives added to the marketing campaign by Downtown Committee volunteers and staff, the City of Syracuse, and retained marketing professionals, the following Downtown marketing concerns and initiatives should also be incorporated into the comprehensive Downtown marketing campaign.

- The marketing campaign should reinforce the following three items in the minds of the public.
 - ▶ First, the campaign must establish Downtown's image as:

***Everyone's first neighborhood
of distinct, colorful districts and gracious public squares and spaces.***

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***Replete with historic buildings --
each an architectural gem
of exceptional grandeur, elegance, and craftsmanship.***

***Alive with a variety of top-notch attractions
-- things to do and see and enjoy --
in a pedestrian setting
that invites strolling from place to place to place.***

- ▶ Second, the campaign must raise the visibility of Downtown as a whole, Downtown's distinct districts, the work of the Downtown Committee, and the improvements made Downtown.
- ▶ And third, but in no way least, the campaign must position Downtown Syracuse as "One of America's Great Downtowns" -- and this message must be conveyed throughout the region, throughout the State, and nationally.
- Currently, it is clear that the marketing campaign must target -- and communicate with -- several specific audiences. These are shown below. However, it must be noted that a market analysis, if completed, will reveal specific consumer groups which the marketing campaign should target.
 - ▶ **Internal Constituents** -- The marketing campaign should be used to improve the attitudes of Downtown business owners, property owners, and investors. A large segment of these internal constituents do not realize how great the vibrancy -- and how great the potential -- of their Downtown. In part, this can be conveyed through the monthly newsletter of the Downtown Committee, which documents Downtown improvements being made, actions being implemented, and successes being realized.
 - ▶ **Four-County Market** -- The marketing campaign should chisel Downtown's improved image into the minds of residents living within the four-county area. The goal of image development efforts would

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be to instill in residents a sense of pride, enthusiasm, and interest, which will motivate them to become Downtown patrons and advocates. At a minimum, image development efforts should include story placement in a variety of media and the use of direct mail.

- ▶ **Built-In/Adjacent Markets** -- Downtown is fortunate to currently have a number of built-in markets. Among these are Downtown's nearly 30,000 employees; patrons of Downtown's anchors -- such as the Onondaga County Convention Center, the 9,000-seat War Memorial, the 2,500-seat Civic Center, the 2,900-seat Landmark Theatre, Downtown's museums, IMAX® patrons, etc.; Downtown residents; and Downtown event-goers -- just to name a few.

In addition, Downtown has a significant adjacent market in the form of the University Hill area -- residents living in the University Hill area, a major university and medical complex with more than 16,000 workers, approximately 20,000 students, and the 50,000-seat Carrier Dome.

The marketing campaign should target and attract members of Downtown's built-in and adjacent markets by using direct mail; placing newsletters and flyers in staff/student lounges; helping Downtown's anchors effectively cross-market; placing Downtown ads in programs produced for cultural events, convention center events, special events, and sporting events; and using the Downtown Committee's Web site.

- ▶ **National Audience** -- The marketing campaign should include efforts to raise the awareness of both Downtown and the Downtown Committee on a national level. Positioning and establishing Downtown Syracuse as "One of America's Great Downtowns" will attract visitors; raise local pride; benefit the Onondaga County Convention Center, as well as Downtown's cultural facilities; and have the spin-off benefit of enticing investors -- business owners, developers, financiers, potential residents, etc. -- to "check out" Downtown Syracuse.

National exposure should be gained through placing stories with national media -- such as USA Today, the Wall Street Journal, network news morning talk shows -- and by using the Internet.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

The following additional issues should also be addressed over the next five years -- as staff time and resources allow. While not identified by the community as being priority issues, attempting to make some degree of progress on the issues shown below is important since these secondary issues will:

- Affect the level of success that is attained in dealing with the primary issues; and
- Impact the overall economic vitality realized in Downtown Syracuse.

It is important to note that, while some degree of progress should be sought in addressing these issues over the next five years, it should not be expected that the actions recommended below will be completed within that timeframe.

Additional Real Estate Development

The following additional real estate development projects should be addressed as part of the overall Downtown Syracuse enhancement effort.

1. Convention Center Hotel

As documented in the study titled ***Proposed Convention Center Headquarters Hotel to be Located in Syracuse, New York***, prepared in 2000 by Pinnacle Advisory Group, a market exists for the development of a quality hotel facility with 350 guest rooms, approximately 20,000 square feet of meeting space, one three-meal restaurant, and a lounge. A new hotel facility of this type, as noted by the report, would serve as a proper headquarters facility for the Oncenter complex in Downtown Syracuse.

Every effort should be made to develop the hotel facility -- as recommended in the Pinnacle Advisory Group report -- at the earliest possible date adjacent to the

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Oncenter complex. The addition of the new hotel facility will greatly improve the city's ability to attract conventions and additional business visitors.

As currently understood, the hotel will likely be developed on the existing surface-level parking lot located due east of the convention center building, and hotel guests would park in the existing convention center parking garage. It is also understood that users of the convention center are expected to park in the existing convention center garage, as is now the case. However, in the event that parking demand generated by the new hotel exceeds the number of parking spaces now available in the convention center parking garage, then additional parking facilities should be constructed in proximity to the hotel facility.

2. Office Development

The community has had great success in filling office vacancies over the last five years. The good efforts of the real estate community, property owners, and the Downtown Committee working to fill the vacant office space should be commended, encouraged, supported, and continued.

A specific effort should be made to fill the following offices within the immediate future.

- **MONY Plaza**

This building, it is felt, would be most appropriate as a location for offices. In addition, the location here of convenience food establishments and consumer-oriented businesses would also be appropriate.

- **Former NYNEX Building**

Every effort should be made to work with the owner of this building to fill the vacant space with appropriate office users, if the building can be adequately conditioned to ensure occupancy by a viable office occupant or occupants. Otherwise, the building should be removed, if market demand deems redevelopment feasible, and the site should be utilized for the development of a new office building or mixed-use building.

3. Problem Properties

When considered appropriate, and if funding is available, the Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should consider acquiring Downtown problem properties, with the intent of marketing the property to a qualified developer.

If all else fails, the City of Syracuse should consider acquiring through condemnation the most troublesome properties held by owners who refuse to repair properties and refuse to transfer ownership to a more progressive owner. Again, this should be considered as a last resort and only after a determination by the City's attorney that the taking is allowed in accordance with appropriate local and New York laws and regulations governing the taking of property through eminent domain by the City of Syracuse.

Economic Development

The following economic development initiatives should be addressed.

1. University Involvement

There is interest locally in seeing Syracuse University have a physical presence in Downtown. It is understood that doing so is not a part of the University's campus master plan. However, the Downtown Committee should meet with appropriate representatives from the University to discuss the possibility of the University re-entering an enhanced Downtown. Specifically, attention should be given to exploring whether or not the University might have a future interest in:

- Locating departments or programs in the upper floors of Downtown buildings;
- Holding classes in Downtown buildings; and
- Having a presence on the Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor.

2. Armory Square

Armory Square appears to contain even more retail, food, and entertainment establishments than it did in 1996. And, there appears to remain a degree of friction between entertainment and residential uses within the Square -- although to a

much lesser degree than in 1996. This situation should be addressed in the following manner.

- The Downtown Committee should continue to work with the Armory Square Association and area property owners to monitor the balance between enhancing the area as a retail/restaurant/entertainment destination while protecting residents's quality-of-life.
- Any new entertainment uses opening in the area should be encouraged to soundproof their establishments.
- Additional upper story housing should continue to be developed. Doing so will bring additional residents and, thereby, give additional weight to the concerns of Armory Square residents.
- The Downtown Committee should contact owners of properties that have entertainment uses on the first floors and vacant upper floors, to encourage and assist them in filling the upper floors with housing and/or offices. Doing so will give property owners an inducement to address the concerns of their entertainment, office, and residential tenants.

3. Lighting of Historic Buildings

It was stated in the 1996 Action Agenda, and warrants stating again: **Downtown Syracuse has an incredible collection of historic architecture that must continue to be valued, saved, and used.** This is extremely important since, in large part, these structures are what give Downtown its image and make Downtown unique.

Since 1996, the facade of the Niagara-Mohawk Building has been lighted in a highly professional, mesmerizing, and awe-inspiring manner. The entire Syracuse region should thank Niagara-Mohawk for this progressive initiative. And, this should serve as the impetus for lighting additional historic facades -- built in a variety of time periods -- throughout Downtown, as it is understood that the County also intends to do.

4. Continue to Gain a Better Understanding of Downtown's Market Potential

Downtown Committee staff should continue to document market trends and potentials of Downtown Syracuse in order to establish a reliable, respected base of market information which can be used by a broad range of parties to justify further significant investments in Downtown.

And, every effort should be made to involve Downtown's customers, and potential customers, in the identification of market needs and desires -- determined through surveys, focus groups, etc. It was obvious from the town meeting and other research conducted in association with the completion of this 2001 Action Agenda that the public wants to be more involved in defining the future Downtown Syracuse. And, without question, the completion of market research would be an excellent way to further engage the public in the enhancement of Downtown Syracuse.

It is understood that the Downtown Committee has concerns relative to the benefit of market analysis and the cost of such research. And, to some extent, the Committee also feels that site specific market research -- such as the analysis of the potential for new lodging facilities in Downtown -- is of more benefit to Downtown.

It is felt that the findings of general market research -- completed by staff, as they have been doing to a significant extent during the past -- would be a cost-effective method by which to continue gaining more insight into the needs and market potential of the Downtown marketplace.

Therefore, as time permits, Downtown Committee staff should continue market research which will address the following specific concerns, as a minimum:

- The identification of specific types of retail businesses which are appropriate for Downtown Syracuse;
- The identification of specific types of offices which are appropriate for Downtown Syracuse;

- The identification of specific types of housing, size of housing, and types of occupants which are appropriate for Downtown Syracuse;
- Status of building occupancy throughout Downtown;
- The identification of specific retail, office and housing market niches which should be created in Downtown Syracuse in order to distinguish the commercial district from all others;
- The identification of specific customer and user groups which should be the primary targets of Downtown's retail businesses and offices; and
- The identification of locations where retail, office and housing uses should be located -- resulting in the design of a clustering strategy for the placement of these uses throughout Downtown Syracuse.

Market information should be used to:

- Assist existing businesses in their efforts to better serve the marketplace through product line/service enhancements, re-orientations, expansions and contractions;
- Induce a higher level of investment in Downtown by existing businesses, quality new businesses and real estate developers;
- Provide a solid base of growth potential data which will better substantiate the merits of investing additional public dollars in the business district; and
- Document Downtown's realistic growth potential in order to gain a higher level of lender confidence in the business district.

Again, the market analysis should be completed by Downtown Committee staff, with the involvement of other appropriate, qualified professionals, if deemed necessary by the Downtown Committee.

5. Downtown Development Districts and Clusters

Downtown Syracuse currently has a number of specific districts -- such as Armory Square, Clinton Square, Salina Street, Columbus Circle, Hanover Square, the convention center area, etc. All of Downtown's various districts should be given a clearer and more specific economic orientation -- as determined through the market research noted above -- and each district should be further enhanced to contain a specific, defined range of desired businesses and uses. When business owners wish to open a business in Downtown Syracuse, they should know exactly where to locate their business in order to have the best chance of success and to fill a defined market niche.

The purpose of more clearly defining the economic niche of Downtown's districts is to create pronounced business clusters throughout Downtown. As has been seen in the most progressive business districts and commercial developments throughout the world, clustering complementary businesses increases variety and convenience for customers and patrons. As a result, more customers and patrons frequent the defined districts and their clustered businesses and uses. The broad appeal and market support of Armory Square proves that the clustering of complementary businesses works in Syracuse.

The clustering plan, for the foreseeable future, should be used as a guide for the placement of businesses throughout Downtown Syracuse and should be applied voluntarily. And, consistent with the use of the clustering plan as a guide, not a requirement, businesses should be supported in their efforts to locate in appropriate areas of Downtown Syracuse, consistent with the City's zoning ordinance. However, when possible and appropriate, new business prospects or businesses which are relocating within Downtown should be informed of Downtown's clusters and shown the suggested locations for specific types of businesses within Downtown, consistent with the clustering plan. And, as deemed appropriate, businesses should be encouraged to locate in appropriate business clusters within Downtown Syracuse.

6. Retention Assistance to Downtown's Existing Businesses

Every effort should be made by the Downtown Committee to provide the highest levels of assistance possible to Downtown's existing businesses, to make the

businesses more aware of market opportunities and to make improvements to better serve the Downtown marketplace.

Specific initiatives to better assist Downtown's existing businesses should include the following.

- **One-On-One Consultations**

Personalized, one-on-one assistance should be offered to every existing business in Downtown Syracuse by Downtown Committee staff. This is one of the most beneficial technical assistance services that can be provided to business owners to meet their individual business needs. This should be provided by Downtown Committee staff meeting individually with business owners -- on a regular basis.

The consultation sessions should focus on:

- ▶ Discussing the overall Downtown enhancement strategy and how it is designed to enhance the business climate of Downtown Syracuse and soliciting each individual business owner's active participation in the enhancement effort;
- ▶ Discussing the findings of the Downtown market research and how its findings pertain to, and can be used by, each individual business owner;
- ▶ Seeking, arranging, and coordinating the delivery of additional technical assistance from other appropriate business service providers in the area -- such as services provided by the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, the Small Business Development Center at Onondaga Community College, Syracuse University, etc.; and
- ▶ Discussing the range of incentives -- technical and financial -- available to Downtown's businesses to improve the overall look and appeal of businesses and helping businesses obtain that assistance, if needed.

- **Marketing**

The overall marketing campaign for Downtown Syracuse, previously discussed in this document, should place maximum emphasis on promoting the broad range of goods and services offered in Downtown Syracuse. The marketing effort should place particular emphasis on the fact that Downtown Syracuse contains a collection of related businesses, operating with a clear economic focus and consistent with a clearly defined enhancement strategy.

7. **Attraction of More Downtown Retail Businesses**

A concerted effort should continue to be made by the Downtown Committee to aggressively seek additional appropriate retail businesses for Downtown Syracuse.

- **Types and Locations of Retail Businesses**

Retail businesses sought for Downtown Syracuse should be those which are identified as appropriate by the market research. The further enhancement of Downtown must be focused and selective in terms of retail business attraction -- rather than seeking any type of retail business. Equally important is the location of retail businesses. Retail businesses should be encouraged to locate in appropriate clusters, when feasible -- consistent with the recommendations of the market research.

The Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse should offer assistance -- both technical and financial -- to retail business prospects deemed appropriate for Downtown Syracuse.

- **Pro-Active Effort**

An aggressive, pro-active effort by the Downtown Committee staff should be continued in seeking appropriate retail businesses for Downtown Syracuse. Rather than waiting for prospects to seek Downtown space, prospects should be targeted and aggressively sought to open an additional business in Downtown, or relocate to Downtown. Prospects should be sought, at a minimum, from throughout the region.

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Emphasis should be placed, initially, on independent retail businesses. Once the Downtown market becomes stronger, the nationals will likely seek space in the commercial district. This will occur when Downtown meets their criteria in terms of customer traffic, ambience, business mix, and market potential.

The Downtown Committee should seriously consider annual trips to the International Council of Shopping Centers' annual retail convention in Las Vegas. An increasing number of Downtown organizations are attending the convention annually. This will help the Committee and staff better define and determine appropriate recruitment techniques -- and recruitment timing -- to employ with nationals, when the Downtown Syracuse market is ready for this type of retail business.

- **Incentives**

Information concerning existing incentives available to Downtown business prospects -- from all sources -- should be compiled and packaged. This will make it easier for prospects to determine what is available and what is appropriate for them. Emphasis should be placed on the provision of technical assistance rather than financial assistance. While some degree of financial assistance will likely always be appropriate for "special" groups -- like start-up businesses or minority owned businesses or women owned businesses -- placing major emphasis on financial assistance tends to draw marginal, under-capitalized business prospects -- which Downtown Syracuse does not need.

- **Condition of Retail Building Space Shown to Prospects**

Property owners should ensure that all retail space offered to prospects is:

- ▶ Conditioned -- with old fixtures/furnishings removed and systems working;
- ▶ Showable -- clean and with lighting; and
- ▶ Readily Available -- for lease or purchase and ready to move-in or ready for final alterations leading to immediate occupancy.

Owners of retail space should, as a minimum, ensure that their properties meet this test. Otherwise, prospects should not be shown inappropriately conditioned space.

- **Start-Up Businesses**

While Downtown Syracuse should welcome some number of start-up retail businesses, enhancement efforts should not focus on the attraction of a significant amount of these types of businesses. Start-up businesses, nationwide, continue to experience a very high degree of attrition. Therefore, retail business development efforts should be focused on the attraction of well-established businesses seeking an additional or a new location.

- **Target Retail Businesses for South Salina Street**

Every effort must continue to be made to create a higher level of street animation on South Salina Street through the attraction and operation of a greater number of impulse retail uses. Armory Square has attracted a large number of associated businesses which encourage browsing and which have created a very high level of street animation. The Armory Square market momentum should be pulled-up and expanded from Armory Square to Salina via side streets and, if feasible, mid-block connectors. This does not mean that South Salina Street should necessarily have the same types of businesses found in Armory Square -- the market research should determine this. It does mean, however, that South Salina Street should contain a collection of first floor businesses which encourage customers to move from store-to-store -- as in Armory Square. And, quality dining establishments similar to those found in Armory Square would be an ideal addition to Salina Street's offerings -- particularly restaurants and cafes which provide outdoor seating -- in addition to specialty retail, convenience retail, and art.

8. Attraction of Offices

Downtown Committee staff, working with the Office Development Committee of the Downtown Committee and the Action Response Service, should continue to focus on filling existing office space throughout Downtown. And, since the Downtown enhancement effort has been successful in attracting a significant number of new office occupants during the past five years -- resulting in a significant reduction in the amount of "occupiable" vacant office space in Downtown Syracuse -- greater

emphasis should be placed on the development of new office space in Downtown in the near future.

- **Office Tenant Types**

It is suggested that emphasis be placed on the attraction of office tenants of all types and sizes -- unless future market research indicates otherwise.

- **Pro-Active Effort**

Downtown Committee staff should continue an aggressive, pro-active effort to seek appropriate offices for Downtown Syracuse, working with the Office Development Committee of the Downtown Committee and the Action Response Service. Prospects should be sought, at a minimum, from throughout the region.

- **Condition of Office Building Space Shown to Prospects**

Property owners should ensure that all office space offered to prospects is:

- ▶ Conditioned -- with old fixtures/furnishings removed and systems working;
- ▶ Showable -- clean and with lighting; and
- ▶ Readily Available -- for lease or purchase and ready to move-in or ready for final alterations leading to immediate occupancy.

Owners of office space should, as a minimum, ensure that their properties meet this test. Otherwise, prospects should not be shown inappropriately conditioned space.

- **Marketing of Office Building Space**

A specific, high quality marketing piece should be produced for the attraction of office prospects. The piece should be produced to tie into Downtown's overall marketing campaign.

- **Amenities Sought by Office Building Space Prospects**

It must be understood that Downtown amenities will have an impact on the ability to attract quality office tenants. Several of the most important amenities which are sought by quality office tenants include:

- ▶ A clean and safe commercial environment;
- ▶ Quality retail and food establishments -- in proximity;
- ▶ A high degree of street animation -- which enhances the feeling of safety and excitement;
- ▶ Convenient and safe parking; and
- ▶ An overall marketing campaign which is designed to attract service business customers and clients.

9. Carousel Center Expansion

Groundbreaking for a \$900,000,000 expansion of Carousel Center is scheduled for the Spring of 2002. While it is premature to determine the exact impact which the expanded mall will have on Downtown, the following are certainties.

- Downtown's economy must be strengthened as much as possible between now and the Spring of 2003, so that Downtown's businesses have the greatest opportunity to successfully co-exist with those in the mall. This should be accomplished through aggressive implementation of the 2001 Action Agenda.
- Downtown must continue to be different from any other shopping mall or venue in the region -- in terms of its physical ambience, mix of unique businesses, and personalized customer service.

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- The Downtown marketing campaign -- previously discussed -- must be implemented immediately, aggressively, and continuously. This is essential to position Downtown in the marketplace as a not-to-be-missed destination.

There has been some discussion locally about whether or not to try to "link" Downtown to Carousel Center via joint marketing efforts and efforts to link the two commercial areas via transit, trails, etc. It should be realized that the expanded Carousel Center will attract large numbers of people who would most likely not be coming to Syracuse otherwise. Therefore, it could not hurt to try to link Downtown to the Center -- even if doing so results in attracting only a small percent of the mall's customers to Downtown or Downtown's customers to the mall.

Marketing efforts to link Downtown and the mall should include the following.

- The Downtown Committee should request a meeting with the Pyramid Companies -- the developer of Carousel Center -- which is also located in Syracuse. This meeting should be held specifically to discuss marketing efforts that could be implemented cooperatively so that they are mutually beneficial for both Downtown and the mall. These efforts might be as simple -- and inexpensive -- as mentioning both Downtown Syracuse and Carousel Center in ads that are run, in stories that are placed, etc. Doing so would position Syracuse as having a number of destinations that visitors can enjoy. As a very large, successful, and locally based corporation, it is hoped that Pyramid's officials will choose to display their civic interest by participating with Downtown in such cooperative and mutually beneficial marketing efforts.
- Whether or not Pyramid agrees to cooperatively market with Downtown, as part of its marketing campaign, the Downtown Committee should consider marketing Downtown within the same trade area being targeted for the expanded Carousel Center. Again, the message should be that Syracuse, and its Downtown, offer visitors a multi-faceted destination -- where there's more to do than visit shopping malls.

- The Downtown Committee should work with the State of New York to market Downtown at the tourism center, which is being considered for Carousel Center.

Again, it is premature to determine what impact the expanded Carousel Center will have on Downtown. However, it can be expected that it will have an impact – whether in diverting customers away from Downtown or bringing additional customers to the marketplace who Downtown can try to attract. It is also a certainty that the City government will realize increased revenues from the mall's expansion. To ensure that the mall's expansion does not adversely impact Downtown, the Downtown Committee should request that the City earmark a portion of these increased revenues – on an on-going, annual basis – for use in Downtown. These funds could then be used to further strengthen Downtown and ensure that it continues to successfully co-exist with Carousel Center.

Public Amenities

The following public amenities should be addressed in Downtown.

1. Clinton Square

The City of Syracuse is currently completing an \$8.5 million reconstruction of Clinton Square. This is an excellent project since it will:

- Improve the public's perception of Downtown;
- Create an additional anchor in Downtown; and
- Create an additional year-round Downtown draw.

The City should be commended for undertaking this project. And, efforts should continue to complete the project as quickly as possible.

To see that Clinton Square becomes a year-round destination, the City should ensure that a full program of events is scheduled for Clinton Square on a year-round basis.

2. Public Market

In 1996, a public market was cited as being desired by the community. And, in 2001, a Downtown public market was also mentioned by some in the community. Therefore, this project should be addressed as recommended below.

- Care should be taken to ensure that, if created, a Downtown public market is of the utmost quality in terms of product, facility, marketing, and management. A less-than-quality operation will not act as the desired Downtown draw.
- A visit should be made to cities having popular Downtown public markets -- such as Philadelphia, Baltimore and Atlanta -- to quantify the elements that are essential for success.
- It should be realized that public markets are typically not self-sustaining -- meaning they require subsidies in order to stay in operation. Therefore, the determination must be made locally as to whether funds should be raised and earmarked for the long-term subsidy of a Downtown public market -- assuming that the market will require some level of subsidy.

3. Public Art

High quality, professional public art should be placed throughout Downtown in a coordinated manner. To do so, a public art plan should be created for Downtown. The public art plan should:

- Identify the best locations for public art -- ideally at locations that experience high levels of pedestrian traffic;
- Identify the most appropriate type of public art for each location; and
- Develop a process for selecting, funding, and placing the artworks.

Consideration should be given to creating a portfolio that shows the public art pieces selected and the location in which each will be placed. The portfolio should

be used to seek purchasers -- or "benefactors" -- who would buy each piece so that it can then be created.

It is suggested that FOCUS Greater Syracuse spearhead the effort to create and implement the Downtown public art plan.

Planning

The following planning concerns should be addressed in Downtown Syracuse.

1. Traffic Flow

Every effort should continue to be made to ensure safe, efficient and convenient traffic flow throughout Downtown Syracuse. It is recommended that the following steps be taken to properly address traffic flow throughout the commercial district.

- A comprehensive analysis of Downtown traffic flow should be undertaken by a qualified transportation engineer, with extensive experience working in Downtowns and familiar with contemporary transportation planning and engineering practices, such as traffic calming. Consideration should be given to seeking funding from the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council to finance the study.
- Specific emphasis should be placed on:
 - ▶ The creation, operation, and maintenance of a safe and convenient system of traffic flow -- maintaining a balance between vehicular movement and pedestrianization;
 - ▶ A thorough examination of the impact on traffic flow which closing Erie Boulevard, in conjunction with the enhancement of Clinton Square, will have on Downtown;
 - ▶ Determination of appropriate actions which should be taken to ensure minimum disruption of traffic due to the Erie Boulevard closing;

- ▶ Potential modifications which could be made to traffic lanes and flow patterns on South Salina Street to enable the placement of the maximum number of on-street parking spaces, creation of the highest levels of pedestrianization, and a reduction in bus congestion on the thoroughfare; and
- ▶ An examination of traffic light timing -- particularly on South Salina Street and coordinated with the City's signal interconnect program -- to ensure efficient and safe traffic flow throughout Downtown, with emphasis on a reduction in delays resulting from inappropriate traffic signal synchronization.

2. **Connectivity**

An often stated Downtown enhancement goal of many in the community is to "connect-the-dots" by increasing the connectivity between Downtown attractions, between Downtown and Franklin Square, and between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. There is, without question, a symbiotic relationship between these areas and, therefore, every effort should be made to connect them to the maximum degree possible.

The following actions should be taken to connect these areas.

- **Sidewalks**

Downtown's sidewalk system should be connected with each of the surrounding neighborhoods -- to the maximum degree possible -- to ensure a safe and convenient pedestrian connection between Downtown and all surrounding areas. The sidewalk system should be well-maintained and attractive (meaning with quality, well-maintained streetscape) at all times. In addition, the City should consider extending Downtown's streetscape treatment into the area north and east of Fayette Park, to link this area of small businesses and new investment more closely to the Downtown core.

- **Streets**

Safe/convenient traffic flow should be ensured throughout Downtown and between Downtown and each of the surrounding neighborhoods. Within the immediate

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future, and in conjunction with the comprehensive Downtown traffic analysis recommended above, the following specific concerns should be examined and appropriate steps taken to:

- ▶ Improve vehicular and pedestrian access between Downtown and Franklin Square;
- ▶ Improve pedestrian safety along thoroughfares to encourage walking and biking between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods;
- ▶ Place additional bike racks in Downtown; and
- ▶ Ensure appropriate street lighting in areas connecting Downtown with adjacent neighborhoods.

- **Wayfinding System**

A comprehensive wayfinding system should be designed and installed to enhance ease of vehicular and pedestrian movement to and through Downtown, and to ensure that all of Downtown's attractions and amenities are easy to find. Downtown currently has some elements of a wayfinding system -- meaning some signs that direct patrons to various attractions -- but there is a need for an overall, coordinated, creative sign system to direct motorists to Downtown and to all major attractions within Downtown.

- **Creekwalk**

The Onondaga Creekwalk currently exists within two areas in the Syracuse Lakefront Development Area -- through the Franklin Square District and along the NYS Barge Canal at the Syracuse Inner Harbor. The City of Syracuse plans to extend the Creekwalk in three areas:

- ▶ To the north, joining the south shore of Onondaga Lake;
- ▶ To the south, joining to Armory Square in Downtown Syracuse; and

- ▶ A new linking segment between the existing sections in Franklin Square and the Inner Harbor.

This very important project should be embraced and completed at the earliest possible date.

3. Comprehensive Plan

The Syracuse Common Council is interested in updating the community's comprehensive plan. This is a very important growth management tool which should be supported and completed at the earliest possible date.

As part of the comprehensive plan update, specific attention should be given to the following concerns:

- ▶ Addressing the relationship between the development of Downtown, the lakefront, the Carousel Center area, and the land in between to ensure that each of these areas complement rather than compete with each other -- specifically addressing land uses, roadways, and pedestrian connectors; and
- ▶ Adopting the 2001 Action Agenda as the Downtown element of the comprehensive plan.

4. Clinton Street Combined Sewer Overflow

As it is currently understood, Onondaga County is currently engaged in a \$380,000,000 project to restore Onondaga Lake. One of the significant problems with the lake is the runoff from the city's combined sewer systems. The county is building a series of small sewage treatment plants along Onondaga Creek to correct the problem. The Downtown Committee and City of Syracuse should continue working with the County to mitigate any negative impact which the system may have on Downtown Syracuse -- ensuring the replacement of any displaced parking and completion of the Downtown segment of Creekwalk at the earliest possible date.

Management

The Downtown Committee and staff have professionally and ably led the Downtown enhancement effort for many years. And, in doing so, they have formed important partnerships with City Hall and others. The following recommendations are meant to build on and further the efforts of the Downtown Committee.

1. Partnership

It is understood locally that a continued partnership among the Downtown Committee and the City of Syracuse is essential for Downtown's continued success. In truth, it would be impossible to point to a successful Downtown in this nation that was created without such a partnership. Therefore, this partnership must not only be continued but further strengthened over time.

In doing so, it is suggested that the following roles be assumed.

- The Downtown Committee and its staff must continue to play the lead role in spearheading the Downtown effort and its implementation. In addition, Downtown Committee Board members must be tireless advocates of Downtown and the enhancement effort -- being nothing but positive in the public comments they make about both.
- The Mayor and Common Council of Syracuse should also continue to be advocates of Downtown. In addition, Syracuse's elected officials should continue, and publicly convey as often as possible, their commitment to Downtown and its enhanced future. It is a fact that government confidence in a Downtown has an unparalleled impact on lender confidence and investor confidence. In other words, government confidence spurs lender and investor confidence -- and, therefore, private sector investment -- in Downtown.
- To further strengthen the partnership between the City and the Downtown Committee, it is suggested that the Downtown Committee and Common Council hold a work session together on a regular basis -- perhaps as often as once a month. This will allow the two bodies to discuss and resolve Downtown issues in partnership.

2. Downtown Committee

With the pace of investment quickening in Downtown, there is a need to further quantify, document, and demonstrate results being realized. To do so, the Downtown Committee should establish a baseline of data, update that data at least annually, and distribute the results widely. Downtown organizations doing this extremely well -- and with which Downtown Committee staff should confer -- include the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation and the West Palm Beach Downtown Development Authority.

3. Expanding Boundaries

There has been some discussion locally about expanding the boundaries of the Downtown Committee -- for the first time in twenty-five years -- to include Franklin Square. This should occur only if it is determined to be mutually beneficial for Franklin Square as well as for the Downtown Committee.

4. Funding

The Downtown Committee primarily operates using special assessment funds. Many Downtown organizations find that they must seek additional funds in order to increase their activities. Sources of funds typically used -- and that should be targeted by the Downtown Committee -- include:

- ▶ Developers;
- ▶ Banks;
- ▶ Utilities;
- ▶ Institutions;
- ▶ Foundations;
- ▶ Major employers;
- ▶ Area-wide corporations and industry;
- ▶ Bed tax revenues;
- ▶ City government;
- ▶ County government;
- ▶ State government;
- ▶ Federal government; and

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- ▶ Any individual, entity, or institution that stands to benefit from an enhanced Downtown Syracuse.

In addition, the appendix to this document includes specific findings of research completed by HyettPalma, in association with the Downtown Idea Exchange, relative to various methods by which to fund Downtown enhancement organizations. This information should be considered in future efforts to identify appropriate funding for the further enhancement of Downtown Syracuse -- beyond funding which is obtained through current special assessments. It should be noted, however, that the funding examples are not intended for duplication in Syracuse. Instead, they are meant to offer "food for thought," which the Downtown Committee can use to broaden their funding considerations.

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VI. Implementation Sequence

VI. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

This document contains numerous actions recommended for revitalizing Downtown Syracuse. The Action Agenda recommended in this document shows actions that should be taken to attain the Downtown vision and address key issues. This chapter shows the same actions in the sequence in which they should be implemented and the timeline for implementation of actions.

The timelines noted on the implementation sequence matrices are:

Short-Term (ST) -- Actions to be completed within 12 months;

Mid-Term (MT) -- Actions to be completed within one to three years;

Long-Term (LT) -- Actions to be completed within three to five years; and

Ongoing (OG) -- Actions that should be implemented on a regular basis.

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence

Management Actions

City of Syracuse and Downtown Committee adopt *Syracuse Downtown Action Agenda 2001* as official guide for further enhancement of Downtown Syracuse.

<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
X			

1. Partnership

Continue partnership between Downtown Committee and City through assumption of the following roles.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| ▶ | Downtown Committee and its staff continue spearheading Downtown enhancement effort. | | X |
| ▶ | Syracuse's Mayor and Common Council continue to be advocates of Downtown. | | X |
| ▶ | Downtown Committee and Common Council hold work sessions on a regular basis -- perhaps once a month. | | X |

2. Downtown Committee

Downtown Committee establishes a baseline of data, updates data at least annually, and distributes results widely.

X

3. Expanding Boundaries

Expand Downtown's boundaries to include Franklin Square only if determined to be mutually beneficial for Franklin Square and the Downtown Committee.

X

4. Funding

Seek additional funding to finance operations of Downtown Committee, in addition to special assessments.

X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

<u>Priority Issue -- Housing Actions</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
Downtown Committee and City make development of additional Downtown housing a top priority.				X
Create greatest number of housing units possible, limited only by demand expressed for units in the marketplace.				X
Downtown Committee and City jointly convey a message of confidence to the investment community that Downtown is a viable location for additional market-rate housing.				X
Focus effort on creating market-rate apartments in the upper stories of Downtown's older buildings as well as in new infill structures throughout Downtown.				X
City, Downtown Committee, and all parties interested in the further introduction of more quality market-rate housing in Downtown, continue to seek progressive state building code regulations which will allow the development of more units in Downtown Syracuse -- at a reasonable cost.	X			
City and Downtown Committee address issue of parking for Downtown residents, ensuring that Downtown's public parking facilities are open 24-hours per day for use by Downtown residents.	X			
Downtown Committee continues to actively seek out potential developers of Downtown housing and work with City to provide needed technical and financial assistance to stimulate the highest degree of quality housing possible throughout Downtown.				X
Continue steps to <u>narrow</u> the financial gap in housing deals so that as many housing projects as possible can be implemented.				X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

<u>Priority Issue -- 300 Block of S. Salina Actions</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
Give maximum attention to ensuring that the 300 block's streets and sidewalks are as free of litter as is practically possible, that snow is removed in a timely manner from streets and sidewalks, and that all public amenities are properly maintained.				X
Maintain the highest levels of public safety in the 300 block.				X
Relocate the Common Center bus transfer points to a less congested area within Downtown -- in a modern, climate-controlled facility.		X		
Continue the quality renovation of the Landmark Theatre.			X	
Add additional housing to the upper floors of appropriate buildings in the 300 block of South Salina.				X
Support and encourage developers in their efforts to continue locating retail and restaurant uses on first floors of buildings within the 300 block.				X
Locate offices on the upper floors of appropriate buildings in the 300 block.				X
Complete the enhancement of Clinton Square ASAP.	X			
Complete a facade study of buildings in the 300 block.	X			
Offer design assistance to business and property owners of building space within the 300 block -- placing emphasis on first floor improvements.				X
Downtown Committee and City work together to design, fund, and offer a 50/50 matching grant program for facade, window, sign, and awning improvements in the 300 block.	X			

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

<u>Priority Issue -- 300 Block of S. Salina Actions</u> (Continued)	<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
Working with real estate community and property owners in the 300 block of South Salina, Downtown Committee actively and aggressively recruits appropriate developers and businesses for the 300 block from throughout the community and region.				X
Downtown Committee and City offer every level of assistance to qualified developers who desire to undertake quality renovation or adaptive-use projects in the 300 block.				X
Downtown Committee determines -- on a case-by-case basis -- if financial or other forms of assistance are needed to recruit businesses and developers to the 300 block. And, as determined appropriate, assistance is provided on a case-by-case basis to appropriate new businesses or uses.				X
Consider putting parking back on both sides of South Salina Street, going from four lanes of traffic to two (with a center turn lane, if needed), and encouraging sidewalk cafes.		X		
 <u>Priority Issue -- Columbus Circle</u> <u>Cultural Corridor Actions</u>				
Build on and leverage the cultural venues already in place along, and connecting to, the defined corridor.				X
Seek additional art, culture, and entertainment tenants for the corridor.				X
Complete corridor streetscape improvements.		X		
Create housing on the Powelson Building site.		X		
Continue every effort to create upper story housing along the corridor.				X
Encourage a limited number of additional restaurants along the corridor.				X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

<u>Priority Issue -- Clean & Safe Actions</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
Downtown Committee, City, and County continue to place maximum emphasis on Downtown maintenance and public safety.				X
Downtown Committee's staff, in cooperation with representatives from appropriate departments/divisions of the City of Syracuse, conduct a "maintenance audit."	X			
Based on the results of the audit, Downtown Committee staff and City of Syracuse define a process for ensuring that the identified maintenance needs are resolved through on-going, regular maintenance improvements.		X		
Downtown Committee considers establishing a maintenance "hot line" -- or a "hot e-mail" address -- that the public can use to report maintenance concerns.		X		
Take actions to repair or replace damaged sidewalk pavers, street lights, tree grates, public signs, and any other streetscape elements -- as soon as the damages occur.				X
Place additional trash receptacles on sidewalks where high pedestrian activity occurs.	X			
Examine all major entrances to Downtown to ensure they are clean, well-maintained, and made welcoming through landscaping and public signs.		X		
City establishes a maintenance fund -- of approximately \$25,000 to \$35,000 per year -- to enable Downtown Committee's Operations Division to maintain an inventory of typically needed replacement items.	X			
City and Downtown Committee routinely budget funds for the on-going maintenance of all future public improvements made in Downtown.				X
Downtown Committee and City continue efforts to augment Downtown public safety efforts with foot patrols, bike patrols, and any other friendly policing methods.				X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

<u>Priority Issue -- Clean & Safe Actions</u> (Continued)	<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
City takes every legal action possible to prohibit panhandling throughout Downtown Syracuse.	X			
 <u>Priority Issue -- Parking Actions</u>				
Continue steps to deal with specific, known parking needs.	X			
Undertake a comprehensive Downtown parking analysis, addressing all concerns noted in the Action Agenda.		X		
 <u>Priority Issue -- Marketing Actions</u>				
Resurrect the Downtown marketing campaign and seek appropriate funds to implement the campaign from both the private and public sectors -- including the Downtown Committee, the City of Syracuse, and other private sector sponsors.	X			
Implementation of Downtown marketing campaign by the staff of the Downtown Committee -- working with marketing professionals and in cooperation and collaboration with City Hall.				X
Downtown Committee approaches the Pyramid Companies about potential cooperative marketing initiatives between Downtown and Carousel Center.		X		
 <u>Additional Issue -- Additional Real Estate Development Actions</u>				
1. <u>Convention Center Hotel</u>				
Develop the hotel facility at the earliest possible date adjacent to the Oncenter complex.		X		
 2. <u>Office Development</u>				
Fill the MONY Plaza and former NYNEX buildings at the earliest possible date.				X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

Additional Issue -- Additional Real Estate Development Actions (Continued)

ST MT LT OG

3. Problem Properties

Downtown Committee and City consider acquiring Downtown problem properties, with the intent of marketing the properties to qualified developers, if deemed necessary.

X

Additional Issue -- Economic Development Actions

1. University Involvement

Downtown Committee meets with appropriate representatives from the University to discuss whether or not there is the possibility of the University re-entering an enhanced Downtown in some fashion.

X

2. Armory Square

Address friction between entertainment and residential uses within the Square, as per recommendations of Action Agenda.

X

3. Lighting of Historic Buildings

Light additional historic facades.

X

4. Continue to Gain a Better Understanding of Downtown's Market Potential

Downtown Committee staff continues to document market trends and potentials of Downtown Syracuse in order to establish a reliable, respected base of market information which can be used by a broad range of parties to justify further significant investments in Downtown.

X

5. Downtown Development Districts and Clusters

Define location for appropriate clusters and use as guide for placement of businesses and uses throughout Downtown.

X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

Additional Issue -- Economic Development Actions ST MT LT OG (Continued)

6. Retention Assistance to Downtown's Existing Businesses

Downtown Committee makes every effort to provide the highest levels of assistance possible to Downtown's existing businesses.

X

- **One-On-One Consultations**

Downtown Committee staff offers personalized, one-on-one assistance to every existing business in Downtown.

X

- **Marketing**

Promote the broad range of goods and services offered in Downtown Syracuse.

X

7. Attraction of More Downtown Retail Businesses

Downtown Committee continues concerted effort to aggressively seek additional, appropriate, quality retail businesses for Downtown Syracuse.

X

8. Attraction of Offices

Downtown Committee staff, working with the Office Development Committee of the Downtown Committee and the Action Response Service, continues to focus on filling existing office space throughout Downtown.

X

9. Carousel Center Expansion

Make every effort to link Downtown to the Center -- even if doing so results in attracting only a small percent of the mall's customers to Downtown.

X

Additional Issue -- Public Amenities Actions

1. Clinton Square

City ensures that a full program of events is scheduled for Clinton Square on a year-round basis.

X

Downtown Syracuse Implementation Sequence (Continued)

<u>Additional Issue -- Public Amenities Actions</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>LT</u>	<u>OG</u>
<p>2. <u>Public Market</u> Address creation of a Downtown public market as recommended by the Action Agenda.</p>		X		
<p>3. <u>Public Art</u> Place high quality, professional public art throughout Downtown in a coordinated manner.</p>			X	
 <u>Additional Issue -- Planning Actions</u>				
<p>1. <u>Traffic Flow</u> Complete a comprehensive analysis of Downtown traffic flow and make improvements as determined appropriate.</p>			X	
<p>2. <u>Connectivity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Sidewalks</u> Connect Downtown's sidewalk system with each of the surrounding neighborhoods -- to the maximum degree possible. 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Streets</u> Ensure safe/convenient traffic flow throughout Downtown and between Downtown and each of the surrounding neighborhoods, as per recommendations of the Action Agenda. 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Wayfinding System</u> Design and install a comprehensive wayfinding system. 		X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Creekwalk</u> Complete this very important project at the earliest possible date. 		X		
<p>3. <u>Comprehensive Plan</u> Update the community's comprehensive plan.</p>		X		
<p>4. <u>Clinton Street Combined Sewer Overflow</u> Downtown Committee and City continue working with County to mitigate any negative impact the system may have on Downtown.</p>		X		

HyettPalma

VII. Appendix

VII. APPENDIX

The following information is excerpted from *Funding Your Downtown Organization*, produced by HyettPalma Publications.

HyettPalma

Without question, money is essential to operate a successful Downtown organization. What's difficult to determine is:

In communities nationwide, how is that money being generated?

In 1998, HyettPalma conducted a national survey of Downtown organizations, in association with Downtown Idea Exchange, to answer that question.

A total of 197 communities, from throughout the nation as well as from Canada, took part in that survey.

Survey Results

Survey respondents were asked:

What sources of funds are being used to cover the operating and programmatic expenses of your Downtown organization?

"Operating and programmatic expenses" were defined as:

- Expenses related to administrative costs, including salaries, benefits, rent, office supplies, insurance, and other overhead costs; and
- Expenses related to implementing programs and projects, such as Downtown marketing campaigns, newsletter production, special events, business attraction programs, etc.

In specifying funds they receive for operating and programmatic expenses, survey respondents were asked:

"Not to include funds used for capital improvements such as streetscape projects, facade loans, sign grants, etc."

Further, respondents were asked to specify the percentage of their Downtown operating budget that is garnered from each source of funding they receive.

Overall Responses

The table on the below shows all responses given to this question by the 197 communities participating in the survey.

**What sources of funds are used to cover
the operating and programmatic expenses
of your Downtown organization?**

<u>% of Communities</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
58%	City Funds
42%	Special Assessment District Funds
42%	Membership Dues
34%	Events
25%	Other Government Funds
20%	Contributions from Business/Corporate Sponsors
17%	Banks
10%	Utilities
9%	Private Foundation Grants
8%	Investment Income (interest, dividends)
8%	Event Sponsorships and Fees
7%	Fees (management, maintenance, administrative, etc.)
6%	Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Revenues
6%	Private Contributions from Individuals
4%	Parking Revenues
4%	Merchandise Sales
4%	Advertising Revenue
5%	Other

Top Five Funding Sources Cited

The table above illustrates that the top five sources of funds cited by communities participating in the survey include government funds (including "City funds" and "other government funds"), voluntary and mandatory contributions from those who stand to benefit most from the Downtown organization's efforts (through "special

HyettPalma

assessment district funds" and "membership dues"), and events. These five funding sources were cited by 25% or more of communities participating in the survey.

1. *City Funds*

Not surprisingly, over half (58%) of the communities participating in the survey reported that a portion of their Downtown organization's operating budget comes from City funds. This implies that City Hall remains a strong -- and essential -- partner in local Downtown enhancement efforts.

Of the 58% of communities indicating that their Downtown organization receives City funds:

- 30% said that City funds account for between 1% and 25% of their annual operating budget;
- 44% said City funds account for between 26% and 50% of their budget;
- 10% said City funds account for between 51% and 75% of their budget; and
- 16% said City funds account for between 76% and 100% of their annual operating budget.

These results are also shown in the following table.

<i>% of Downtown Organizations that Receive City Funds</i>	<i>% of Annual Operating Budget from City Funds</i>
30%	1% - 25%
44%	26% - 50%
10%	51% - 75%
16%	76% - 100%

Responses to this question indicate that a higher percentage of respondents are receiving City funds than any other type of funds. However, as shown above, for the vast majority of Downtown organizations receiving City funds (74%), these funds account for half or less of their annual operating budgets. Only 26% of communities

receiving City funds said that those funds account for over half of their Downtown organization's annual operating budget.

2. *Special Assessment District Funds*

Also making a strong showing was special assessment district funding -- with 42% of communities reporting that part or all of their Downtown organization's operating budget comes from assessment district revenue. This reflects the national trend of Downtown assessment districts increasing in number all across the country.

Of the 42% of communities that reported using special assessment district revenues as part of their Downtown organization's annual operating budget:

- 9% said that special assessment revenues account for between 1% and 25% of their annual operating budget;
- 26% said special assessment revenues account for between 26% and 50% of their budget;
- 23% said special assessment revenues account for between 51% and 75% of their budget; and
- 42% said special assessment revenues account for between 76% and 100% of their annual operating budget.

These results are shown in the following table.

<i>% of Downtown Organizations Receiving Special Assessment Funds</i>	<i>% of Annual Operating Budget from Special Assessment Funds</i>
9%	1% - 25%
26%	26% - 50%
23%	51% - 75%
42%	76% - 100%

As the table above illustrates, for 35% of Downtown organizations that receive special assessment revenues, these funds account for half or less of their annual operating budgets. And, conversely, a majority -- 65% -- of Downtown organiza-

tions receiving special assessment revenues said that those funds account for over half of their annual operating budgets.

When considering these top two responses to the question -- *what sources of funds are used to cover the operating and programmatic expenses of your Downtown organization* -- it can be said that:

- A higher percentage of Downtown organizations (58%) are receiving City funds than special assessment district funds (42%);
- For 65% of the Downtown organizations that receive special assessment district revenues, these funds account for **more than half** of the organization's operating budget; and
- For 74% of Downtown organizations that receive City funds, these funds account for **half or less** of their annual operating budgets.

Therefore, while special assessment district funds are not as prevalent as City funding, they comprise a much more significant portion of a Downtown organization's operating budget than do City funds.

3. Membership Dues

Equally as prevalent as special assessment district revenues were membership dues -- with 42% of respondents saying that membership dues accounted for part of their Downtown organization's operating budget. These dues were received primarily from Downtown business owners.

Of the 42% of communities indicating that their Downtown organization receives membership dues:

- 63% said that membership dues account for between 1% and 25% of their annual operating budget;
- 20% said membership dues account for between 26% and 50% of their budget;

- 10% said membership dues account for between 51% and 75% of their budget; and
- 7% said membership dues account for between 76% and 100% of their annual operating budget.

These results are shown in the following table.

% of Downtown Organizations Receiving Membership Dues	% of Annual Operating Budget from Membership Dues
63%	1% - 25%
20%	26% - 50%
10%	51% - 75%
7%	76% - 100%

As mentioned earlier, 42% of survey respondents said that their Downtown organizations receive special assessment district revenues. And, the same percentage (42%) reported receiving funds from membership dues. The above table indicates, however, that membership dues comprise a much smaller percentage of the annual operating budgets of responding Downtown organizations, than do special assessment revenues -- e.g., for 83% of Downtown organizations receiving membership dues, these account for **half or less** of their operating budget. However, for 65% of Downtown organizations that receive special assessment district revenues, these funds account for **more than half** of their operating budget.

4. Events

Just over one-third (34%) of communities reported raising money through events (such as auctions, golf tournaments, etc.) as a means of funding the operating/programmatic expenses of their Downtown organizations.

As with membership dues, revenues from events comprised a small percentage of the annual operating budgets of most responding Downtown organizations. In fact, three-quarters of those garnering funds from events said these funds comprise one-quarter or less of their annual operating budget, as shown in the following table.

**% of Downtown Organizations
Receiving Funds from Events**

75%
19%
5%
1%

**% of Annual Operating
Budget from Events**

1% - 25%
26% - 50%
51% - 75%
76% - 100%

5. Other Government Funds

One-quarter (25%) of respondents said they receive government funds, other than City funds, to operate their Downtown organizations. Not all respondents specified the sources of these funds. However, those that did often mentioned County funds, Borough funds, and hotel/motel tax funds.

Again, as shown in the following table, government funds (other than those from City Hall) comprised 25% or less of the annual operating budgets of most responding Downtown organizations.

**% of Downtown Organizations
Receiving Government Funds
(Other than City Funds)**

83%
10%
0%
7%

**% of Annual Operating
Budget from Other
Government Funds**

1% - 25%
26% - 50%
51% - 75%
76% - 100%

Additional Sources Cited

The next four types of funding, that were most often mentioned by survey respondents, primarily involve private sector contributions and donations. These were contributions from:

- Business/corporate sponsors -- received by 20% of Downtown organizations responding;
- Banks -- received by 17%;
- Utility companies and public power utilities -- received by 10%; and

- Private foundation grants -- received by 9%.

The vast majority of Downtown organizations that reported receiving these four sources of funds said they comprised 25% or less of their annual operating budgets. This is illustrated in the following tables.

% of Downtown Organizations Receiving Business/Corporate Contributions

84%
11%
5%
0%

% of Annual Operating Budget from Business/Corporate Contributions

1% - 25%
26% - 50%
51% - 75%
76% - 100%

% of Downtown Organizations Receiving Contributions from Banks

100%
0%
0%
0%

% of Annual Operating Budget from Bank Contributions

1% - 25%
26% - 50%
51% - 75%
76% - 100%

% of Downtown Organizations Receiving Contributions from Utilities

94%
6%
0%
0%

% of Annual Operating Budget from Utility Contributions

1% - 25%
26% - 50%
51% - 75%
76% - 100%

% of Downtown Organizations Receiving Private Foundation Grants

81%
19%
0%
0%

% of Annual Operating Budget from Private Foundation Grants

1% - 25%
26% - 50%
51% - 75%
76% - 100%

The remaining nine funding sources cited were mentioned by 8% or less of respondents. Five of these sources involve fees/profits that are generated by activities undertaken -- and services provided -- by the Downtown organization, as follows:

- Sponsorships and fees received for special events held by the Downtown organization (8% of survey respondents);
- Fees received for services performed by the Downtown organization -- for management, maintenance, administrative functions, etc. -- (7%);
- Revenues received for managing Downtown parking (4%);
- Profits from sale of special merchandise -- e.g., (limited edition prints, holiday ornaments, etc. -- 4%); and
- Profits from cooperative and bulk advertising arranged by the Downtown organization (4%).

Rounding out the list of sources cited by participating communities were interest and dividends on investments (8% of Downtown organizations), tax increment financing revenues (6%), private contributions from individuals (6%), and "other" miscellaneous sources (5%), which included items such as gift certificate sales, real estate sale/rental revenues, estate donations, etc.

When Downtown organizations reported receiving these funds, in most cases they comprised not more than 25% of the organization's annual operating budget -- with the exception of tax increment financing (TIF) funds, as the following table shows.

Source of Funds	% of Downtown Organizations Saying Funds Comprised 25% or Less of their Operating Budget
Private Contributions	100%
Fees for Services	100%
Advertising Revenues	100%
Investment Income	93%
Merchandise Sales	88%
Event Sponsorships & Fees	86%
Parking Revenues	63%
TIF Funds	9%
Other	60%

In the case of TIF monies, the vast majority of Downtown organizations receiving these funds said they comprised between 76% and 100% of their annual operating budgets, as shown in the next table.

% of Downtown Organizations Receiving TIF Funds	% of Annual Operating Budget from TIF Funds
0%	1% - 25%
9%	26% - 50%
0%	51% - 75%
91%	76% - 100%