

**THE ROUTE 24 COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR:
DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS**

A Proposal

To: The Downtown Development Commission (DDC)
Borough of Madison

From: Project for Public Spaces, Inc
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BACKGROUND

In December, 1980, Project for Public Spaces completed its study "Downtown Madison: Revitalization through Design and Management." This study, funded by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, served as the guiding force behind a full range of downtown improvements undertaken by the citizens and elected officials of the Borough of Madison. As a result of that first study, the borough hired a downtown manager and began construction of sidewalk improvements along Main Street.

In 1985, recognizing the need to address areas and issues of the Central Business District not dealt with in the 1980 study which concentrated on the downtown central core -- Main Street from Community Place to Waverly Place and Waverly Place itself -- the Downtown Development Commission and the Borough of Madison requested that PPS once again assist the members of the community in addressing remaining issues and new issues affecting the commercial vitality and management of the Borough of Madison. In October of 1985 Project for Public Spaces completed its second study, "Downtown Madison: Revitalization Through Design and Management, Phase II Summary Report".

This study, also funded by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, once again served to guide the citizens and officials of the Borough of Madison in addressing key issues of continued improvement of the infrastructure of the downtown area, the need to maintain such improvements in both the public and private sector, ways and means of utilizing to the maximum extent possible available public and private parking, and the need to improve and maintain the many public spaces located throughout the downtown area.

Both plans have served the citizens of the borough, business owners, investors and property owners as a guide for the better design and management of the central business district. With the realization that the strategies for the better design and management of downtown have wider

application, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Madison and the members of the Downtown Development Commission wish to apply that strategy to other commercial areas of the borough. Towards that end, Project for Public Spaces, in conjunction with the Downtown Development Commission, proposes an examination of the Route 24 Commercial Corridors, that portion of Route 24 extending from Chatham Borough to Greenwood/Prospect Street.

THE CORRIDOR STUDY:ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Despite Madison's overall positive image within the region, the Route 24 commercial corridor, through which many visitors receive their first impression of Madison, has a disturbing number of undermaintained or visually unappealing commercial properties. Once exclusively residential and institutional in its uses, this portion of Main Street has undergone rapid change in the past few decades. Residential properties have been converted to office and other commercial uses, while others have been demolished for new shopping areas. Unfortunately, poorly maintained and designed parking lots and commercial properties detract from the image of the community. In addition, the more extensive development along the commercial corridor exacerbates environmental pressure on surrounding residential neighborhoods and neighbors undermining nearby residential areas, property values and the quality of life of families in the community.

The time is right for addressing the needs of this area. The street, despite commercialization, has not totally lost its "Main Street" character with its impressive historic homes, schools, churches -- framed by a canopy of trees. The Route 24 bypass as it nears completion will impact on traffic demands along the corridor. Proposed new development at the Exxon Station and the Prospect/Main Street Mall will all bring new change to the area.

In December, 1989, the Report of the Madison in the 1990's Committee was issued and several goals that clearly relate to the project were established. These include the desire to undertake planning to preserve the town's small town character, while encouraging new uses and development. In particular, there is a goal to create more affordable housing in a mixed use context -- such as over stores in shopping centers.

As with the previous work this study is premised on the need for public/private partnership which will replicate the successful design and management improvements already achieved in the downtown area. Working through the Downtown Development Commission, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board of Adjustment, the borough should encourage private investment towards greater public ends. By pooling resources, the ability to better design and manage the commercial corridor will be better assured. In order to facilitate the realization of a more pedestrian oriented commercial corridor, the review will recommend both improvements to individual properties as well as public improvements, primarily in the management of the commercial corridor. As in previous reports, PPS will emphasize improvements that are relatively simple and straightforward in their design and management approach.

During the course of the review PPS will examine existing land use patterns throughout the commercial corridor and the changes in those patterns which will affect the corridor and the changes in residential neighborhoods and the borough as a whole. PPS will also undertake an inventory of the general physical condition of the streetscape throughout the commercial corridor, providing an assessment of the level of maintenance needed for the streetscape, parking lots and commercial facades.

PPS, reflective of the concern of the people of Madison for the retention of a small town atmosphere and the need to preserve historic properties, will provide recommendations for creation

of a cohesive visual image along the commercial corridor which would support the pedestrian and shopper experience. PPS will also provide recommendations for improving this major "gateway" into the community.

GOALS

The following goals have been specifically established for this area:

- o To restore the traditional "Main Street" setting which has been lost along the commercial corridor.
- o To increase pedestrian utilization.
- o To better manage the development of the corridor and to encourage local business ownership and the introduction of new residential uses and uses with a stronger pedestrian orientation.
- o To protect nearby residential uses, values, and quality of life from the development of commercial corridor.
- o To strengthen the visual image of the commercial corridor as a gateway to the community.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The proposal submitted to the Borough/DDC will have a substantial public participation component inviting the general public, property owners and business owners along the corridor and residential neighbors adjacent to the corridor to participate in the preparation and review of the report's recommendations. The proposal will also anticipate at least one review with Mayor and Council.

The Downtown Development Commission will serve as the principal review body for the study. Presentations to the DDC are open to the general public who will be invited to participate and provide comment and input into the work. The DDC should also establish a special study advisory committee composed of an expanded Public Improvements Committee (PIC) to include property owners, business owners, and adjacent residents.

WORK PROGRAM

PPS will perform the following services:

1. Define Work Program / Workshop #1

This task will involve reviewing previous planning studies and meeting with the expanded PIC to determine goals, objectives, scope, study area boundaries, and products for the study. In addition to this work, PPS would conduct an introductory workshop with the DDC to review goals and objectives of the plan, identify critical issues, and review the project work plan.

2. Data Collection

Based on information gaps that may exist from previous planning studies and proposals and our initial observations, PPS would conduct additional research. This would involve analyzing the corridor in terms of pedestrian and vehicle use, existing architectural character and perceptions of the adjacent neighborhood. Local volunteers or interns may be required for some data collection.

Depending on specific issues to be addressed PPS would perform the following:

- 2.1 Observation and Time-Lapse Photography: Super-8mm film and systematic observations will be used as necessary to analyze vehicular and pedestrian flow and usage in the study area.

- 2.2 Interviews: PPS would conduct a series of interviews with key public and private sector individuals responsible for planning and development of the corridor, including private developers.
- 2.3 Surveys: PPS will conduct random sample surveys of residents and business owners to determine attitudes and perceptions about the corridor.
- 2.4 Physical Inventory: PPS would inventory and photograph the existing design of the corridor with regard to location and design of amenities and design and maintenance of existing and new buildings. Physical analysis of the project will also include building facade and signage, historic structures, visual qualities of the area, and environmental concerns. A base map of the corridor will be prepared.
- 2.5 Transportation Research: PPS would review existing transportation patterns (traffic, parking, public transportation) with particular emphasis on the Route 24 Bypass.
- 2.6 Zoning: PPS will review existing zoning and planning controls for the area.
- 2.7 Outreach: PPS will advise the DDC on additional ways to solicit public opinion through newspapers, schools, and civic groups.

3. Develop Preliminary Opportunities

Based on an analysis of the above, a range of opportunities will be developed in the following areas:

- 3.1 Development Options The results of the work above will be analyzed and a series of alternatives prepared for discussion. These alternatives will illustrate:
 - o Existing and potential land uses for the corridor, including opportunities for new retail, residential, office, and other uses.
 - o Size and configurations of new development, both those currently proposed as well as any new opportunities that may be identified.
- 3.2 Circulation and Access: Recommendations will include traffic, signage, parking, deliveries, public transit, and streetscape amenities. An important concern will be the issue of balancing pedestrian needs with the need for vehicle circulation and parking.
- 3.3 Design Improvements: This will include recommendations for improvements to building facades, signage, streetscape amenities, and public space design. At this point in the study, improvements will be described through slides of comparable designs in other cities and general written design program.
- 3.4 Management Recommendations: Recommendations for management programs (maintenance, merchandising, marketing, retail recruitment, leasing, events, etc.) will be explored and evaluated, particularly in terms of their impact on design and retail.

4. Workshop #2

PPS will review the findings and preliminary opportunities with the expanded PIC to gain consensus on what recommendations are the most feasible and which ones to explore further. PPS's presentation will include:

- o presentation of findings of research from the tasks above and its implications for the project, including time-lapse films.
- o presentation of design concepts and options.
- o discussion of alternative management programs and priorities in the areas of parking, retail, maintenance, events, promotions, and other areas of importance.
- o retail and development opportunities.
- o parking and traffic strategies for improving design of existing parking facilities and the impact of the Route 24 Bypass.

5. DDC Meeting: Following the PIC workshop, a separate DDC meeting will be held to solicit input from the commission and the general public.

6. Develop Final Recommendations and a Preliminary Management and Implementation Plan:

Based on the workshops, the selected design and management recommendations will be developed more fully in terms of purpose, and phasing. A draft report will be prepared to summarize the

issues of the study, including design, circulation and access, retail, new development, and management. A suggested plan for what group(s) should be responsible for implementing the various recommendations will also be prepared. Streetscape design and development recommendations will be illustrated in a series of color renderings and base maps. In addition, three properties will be selected to illustrate facade and signage improvements based on owner interest in constructing the improvements.

7. Workshop #3

PPS would meet with the expanded PIC to discuss the recommendations and options for implementation including funding sources and groups to be responsible. Based on this workshop, the final recommendations will be modified.

8. DDC Meeting

A DDC meeting will be held to review the final recommendations.

9. Mayor and Council Presentation

A separate final presentation to Mayor and Council will be made.

10. Design Workshop

In order to encourage property owners to upgrade their signs and facades, the PIC Committee will sponsor a "how-to" workshop to illustrate the design potential of the corridor, to be presented by Norman Mintz of PPS's staff.

11. Final Report

A final report will be prepared to summarize the findings and recommendations of the study. Fifty (50) copies of the report will be provided to the DDC.

STAFF

This project will utilize PPS's experienced staff in New York. Stephen Davies, who has directed the two previous Madison studies, will be principal in charge. Working with him will be Ann Liebenstein, a landscape designer, who will be project manager for the study; Norman Mintz, an historic preservationist; and Peter Hecht, Director of Research. In addition, Barbara Stanton, a former PPS staff person, will assist us specifically in evaluating the perceptions of adjacent neighborhood residents. Other PPS staff including Fred Kent, President, are available for specific aspects of the project, as necessary.

SCHEDULE

The project will take approximately six months to complete. The following is an approximate time schedule:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Task</u>
1	Define work program
2-3	Workshop #1/DDC Meeting
3-7	Data Collection
8-13	Analysis and Preliminary Recommendations
13-14	Workshop #2/DDC Meeting
14-19	Final Recommendations
19-20	Workshop #3/DDC Meeting
20-24	Public Meetings and Final submissions

PROJECT BUDGET

The total budget for this project is \$50,000, including expenses. A budget breakdown by task follows:

Labor

1.	Work Program	\$1,428	
2.	Data Collection	\$10,178	
3.	Preliminary Opportunities	\$8,930	
4.	Workshop #2	\$1,260	
5.	DDC Meeting	\$760	
6.	Final Recommendations	\$10,780	
7.	Workshop #3	\$1,260	
8.	DDC Meeting	\$760	
9.	Mayor & Council Presentation	\$1,260	
10.	Facade and Signage Workshops	\$1,400	
11.	Final report	\$5,568	
	Project Management	\$1,820	\$45,404

Expenses

	Travel (30 trips @ \$12)	\$360	
	On-site expenses	\$150	
	Film	\$400	
	Telephone	\$200	
	FAX/Federal Express	\$200	
	Report Production	\$1,000	
	Xerox & Reproduction	\$800	
	Survey tabulation	\$1,200	\$4,410

TOTAL

\$49,814 say \$50,000