
6. Southwest/Mohawk Street Neighborhood

a. Location

This neighborhood is bounded by Mohawk Street to the east, the CSX rail lines to the south, Fourth Street to the west, and Route 5/West Albany Street to the north.

b. Description

The Southwest/Mohawk Street Neighborhood contains major commercial uses along its perimeter roadways. An eclectic combination of commercial uses are interspersed with residential uses along Mohawk Street. Virtually the entire neighborhood is zoned C-2 Commercial, and this has facilitated the expansion of commercial growth in the area. This main entryway into the Village from the New York State Thruway includes three gas station/mini-marts, several office and mixed use buildings, a car wash and used car lot, and a small retail shopping plaza.

Commercial uses are also located along Caroline Street, including a bowling establishment, pool supply business, and kitchen and bath showroom. Route 5 includes highway-type commercial uses and fast food restaurants.

Between Mohawk Street and Route 5 is a small enclave of homes along First and Second Avenues and Bellinger Street. West of Caroline Street is a mixed use area that includes the Herkimer County Highway Department, a ceramic supply company, and several single family homes.

c. Housing Conditions

This small, mixed use neighborhood includes 84 housing units, of which 56 (67 percent) are substandard. Of the substandard units, 26 (31 percent) are severely substandard. Poor conditions exist throughout the neighborhood, although the units are located in a Census Block Group that indicates only 35 percent of the residents are low income. A targeted housing rehabilitation program would be most appropriate for First and Second Avenues and Bellinger Street.

A Neighborhood Conditions Map illustrates housing conditions in the area.

d. Other Neighborhood Conditions

This area of Herkimer has been overwhelmed by high volumes of traffic along Route 5, Mohawk Street, and Caroline Street. As a prime entryway to the Village from the New York State Thruway and from eastbound travel on Routes 5 and 5S, the neighborhood has evolved into a fast food, highway commercial area that has virtually engulfed the residential uses in the area. Homes have been converted into offices, restaurants, and retail uses along Mohawk Street, while others have been acquired and demolished to accommodate commercial growth. Streetscape conditions along both Mohawk and Caroline Streets are very poor.

e. Summary of Major Needs

- ◆ Implement targeted housing rehabilitation program along First and Second Avenues and Bellinger Street.
- ◆ Improve property maintenance.
- ◆ Replace antiquated water and sewer lines.
- ◆ Streetscape improvements along Mohawk and Caroline Streets.

HOUSING CONDITIONS UNITS/%

Substandard 56 / 67%

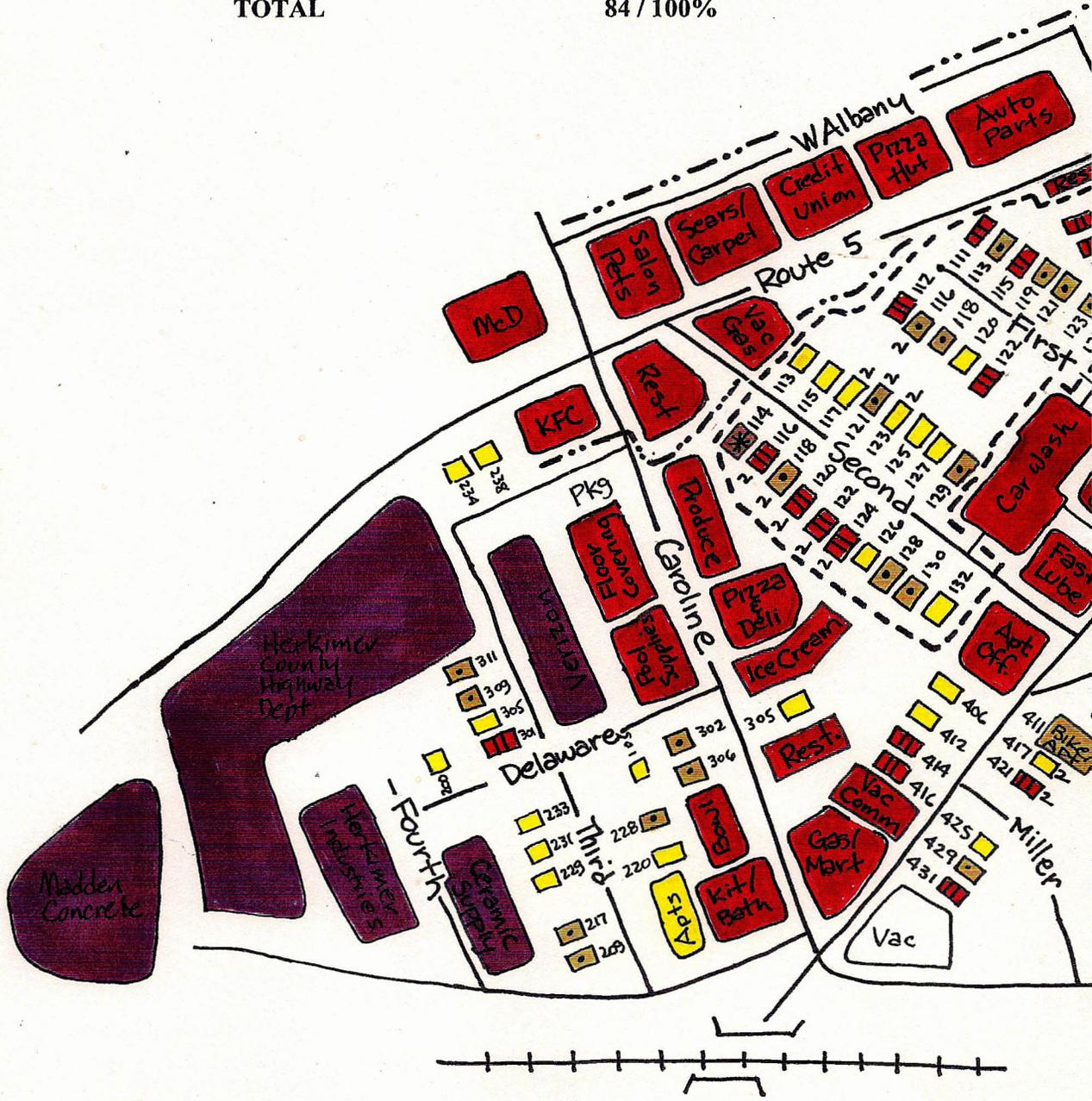
 **Moderately Substandard (29 / 35%)**

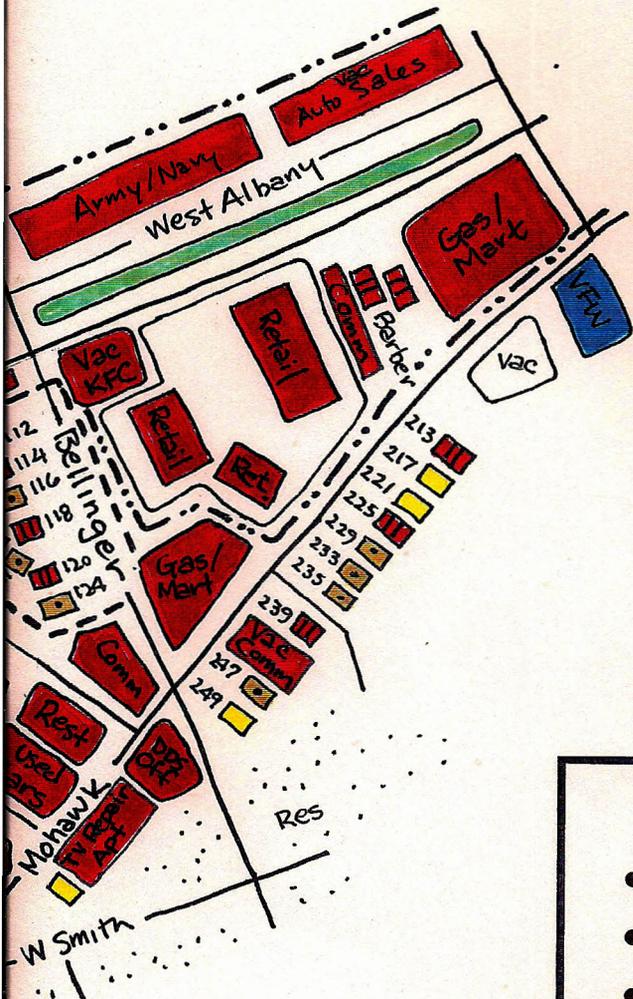
 **Severely Substandard (26 / 31%)**

 **Dilapidated (1 / 1%)**

 **Standard 28 / 33%**

TOTAL 84 / 100%





--- Potential Rehab. Target Area
- - - Route 5/Albany Commercial Corridor

- MAJOR NEEDS**
- Targeted housing rehabilitation
 - Property maintenance
 - Streetscape improvements along Mohawk Street
 - Replace antiquated water and sewer lines

Southwest/Mohawk Street
Neighborhood Conditions Map

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN
VILLAGE OF HERKIMER, NEW YORK MAY, 2002

C. Central Business District Conditions

The Herkimer Central Business District (CBD) is located at the geographical center of the Village. State Route 5 divides the CBD into north and south areas, with the larger northern area encompassing a five square block area between North Washington and Prospect Streets. The smaller southern area is limited to a one block area along South Main Street. These two areas and the Route 5/Albany Street Commercial Corridor that divides them are described below.

1. "North Main Street" Central Business District

a. *Buildings and Uses*

This portion of the Central Business District is centered on North Main Street. Retail uses in traditional storefronts extend along both sides of North Main Street from Route 5 to Mary Street on the east side and to Park Street on the west side. These storefronts include a variety of small restaurants, a popular hardware store, several beauty salons and taverns, a jewelry store, an art gallery, and a tattoo parlor, among other uses. The large Munger's Building, a former department store, is now underutilized as a craft store and for storage. The building dominates and blights the east side of North Main Street. Residential uses, primarily housing for HCCC students, along the east side of North Main Street have expanded considerably in recent years.

The west side of North Main Street north of Park Street includes the H.M. Quackenbush industrial complex, the Frank J. Basloe Library, and several office buildings, including a NYS Department of Environmental Conservation office.

The northern end of North Main Street is anchored by the "Historic Four Corners" District and the Herkimer County Office Building complex. The "Historic Four Corners" includes the Herkimer Historic Society headquarters and Museum, the County Court House, and two magnificent churches - the Dutch Reformed Church on the northwest corner of Church and North Main Streets, and the Christ Episcopal Church on the northeast corner of North Main and Mary Streets. The County Office Buildings and the County Jail are located on Mary, Court, and North Washington Streets. The Village Municipal Building complex dominates Green Street.

Park and Prospect Streets include more office than retail uses, the Post Office, several banks, and the Social Security office. North of Court Street along North Main Street are a concentration of office uses and the former Masonic Temple, a vacant three story brick building.

b. Infrastructure

The northern portion of the Central Business District includes deteriorated streetscape and sidewalk conditions. Deteriorated concrete and curbing conditions detract from the retail environment. Landscaping, green space, trash receptacles, and benches are substandard or nonexistent in some areas. Street lights along Main Street include overhead wiring because the underground conduit needs to be replaced. Street trees are limited. At the time of preparation of this *Strategic Plan*, the Village was undertaking sidewalk improvements, including brick accent pavers and street tree installation along North Main Street between Albany and Green Streets.

Poor facade and signage reflect deferred maintenance, and have evolved through the years without an overall plan or design scheme. These conditions detract from the CBD's history, architecture, and ambiance.

c. Parking

Parking facilities in the Central Business District are very poor. A study completed in the early 1980's counted a total of 1,370 on-street, private, and public spaces, and identified a deficit of over 400 spaces based on land use patterns and building size. Over the past 20 years approximately 50 spaces were lost at H.M. Quackenbush, but approximately 200 were gained when the County filled a portion of the Hydraulic Canal and expanded their lot on North Washington Street. This lot, with a capacity of 250 cars, is the largest parking lot in the Village and is filled to capacity throughout the day.

A second major lot is also located on North Washington Street between East Albany and Green Streets. This privately owned lot has a 75 car capacity. The lot includes no landscaping and is in generally poor condition.

Three additional major lots are located south of Church Street and north of the H.M. Quackenbush complex near the Historic

Four Corners area. These two lots together have a capacity of 200 cars and are not in good condition. The 70 car "north" lot in particular blights the adjacent uses with at least one abandoned car, a poor surface condition, and debris. This privately owned lot serves the County offices, Herkimer County Trust Company bank, and the northern portion of the North Main Street commercial area. The 57 car "central" lot serves North Main and North Prospect commercial facilities. A 70 car "south" lot is located behind the Library and Town of Herkimer offices. This publicly owned lot is in the best physical condition of the three lots, but it too lacks landscaping.

Parking facilities and conditions in the Central Business District remain a problem in 2002. The expanded County lot is filled to capacity for most of the day, existing public and private lots are generally deteriorated, and private lots are characterized by inefficient layouts, poor signage, poorly defined spaces in some cases, and are not well connected to business destinations. All lots lack amenities and landscaping.

Parking meters of Village streets are very unpopular with merchants, but bring needed revenue into the Village.

Diagonal parking along West Albany Street serves the CBD and Route 5/Albany Street commercial corridor. These metered parking areas are very blighting.

A comprehensive parking study to define long and short term parking, identify needed improvements, and create a unified public/private parking plan is needed.

Major parking needs may be summarized as follows:

- Additional parking is needed to serve the County Office Building complex.
- Public parking areas behind the Library, south of H.M. Quackenbush, and along West Albany Street require improved signage and landscape treatments.
- Private parking areas also require extensive improvements in the areas of layout, maintenance, and beautification.