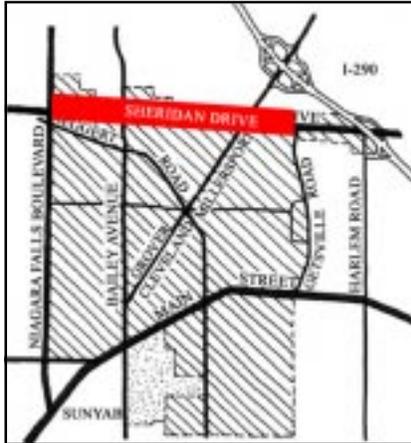


## **Sheridan Drive Corridor (From Niagara Falls Boulevard to Getzville Road)**

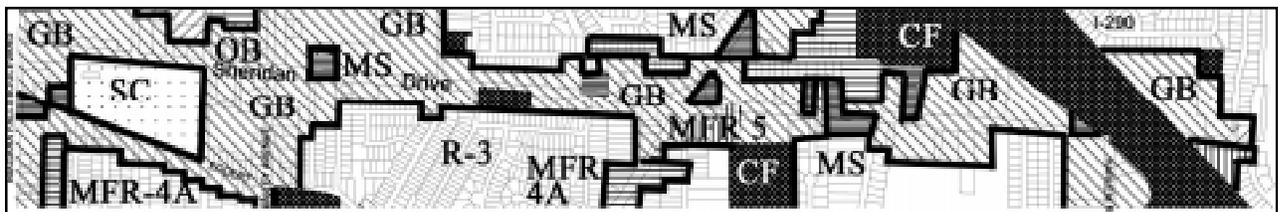


Sheridan Drive is a major east-west arterial forming the northern edge of Eggertsville and the limits of this study area (*See Key Map at left*).

The study area is part of a major commercial and office corridor serving a regional market. Over the years department stores, big box retailers, and specialty stores have found success along Sheridan Drive. However, turn over of these uses is quite frequent as national retailing trends and local market conditions evolve.

### **Findings**

- ❖ The Sheridan Drive Corridor is comprised of land primarily zoned for General Business (GB). The extreme southwest end of the corridor is zoned Shopping Center (SC). Several pockets for Motor Service (MS), Community Facilities (CF), and Commercial Services (CS) also exist. (*See Zoning Map below*)
- ❖ Land uses in the corridor include a mix of plazas, strip centers, freestanding retailers, restaurants, auto sales and services, offices, banks, and churches. Many of these uses attract regional shoppers, such as the Great Skate, while others appeal to a community market, such as Walgreens. Many of the community retailers benefit from the additional traffic drawn into the area by the regional retailers.
- ❖ Sheridan Drive is one of the largest and busiest arterials in Western New York. Six lanes of traffic with turning lanes and a landscaped median give Sheridan this character. Higher traffic volumes have attracted developers and national retailers to this important commercial corridor.



*For zoning codes refer to Appendix C.*

- ❖ Sheridan Drive is extremely unfriendly to pedestrians due to its excessive width, multiple driveways, high traffic volumes, turning movements, and large building setbacks with large pavement areas. Sidewalks do exist, however very few people walk along this corridor.
- ❖ The character of the Sheridan Commercial Corridor is typical of many suburban commercial/retail corridors in Western New York. Strip plazas and big box retailers set back behind large parking fields define the corridor. Pole signs provide signage for businesses set back from the street. Pedestrian access is difficult. Pedestrians are required to walk through parking lots rather than on sidewalks or designated walkways. Numerous driveways bisect sidewalks along Sheridan Drive further diminishing pedestrian access to the corridor.

The Sheridan Drive Corridor has been and continues to be a strong commercial location. The proximity to regional and super-regional shopping centers, high traffic volumes, strong retail trade area, demographics, and access to major highways are responsible for the success of this corridor. It is important to note that this corridor is much different than all other retail areas in Eggertsville. The health of the Sheridan Drive Corridor is much more closely tied to the health of nearby regional and super-regional shopping centers.

The challenges facing the Sheridan Drive Corridor stem primarily from constantly changing industry trends and health of the local economy. The growth of power centers, category killers, catalogue shopping, and e-mail shopping effect the amount of retail space the corridor is able to support. Even though new structures are under construction in the corridor, vacancies are visible (i.e., northwest corner of Sweet Home Road and Sheridan Drive).

Future developments of this corridor will remain in the hands of the private market. The Town's responsibilities are to ensure that existing and new investments continue to provide public benefits by providing attractive, user friendly environments for shoppers and surrounding neighborhoods, maintain attractive public spaces in support of new private investment, and shape the direction in which corridor growth should proceed through regulatory actions.

## ***Sheridan Drive Corridor Recommendations***

***(Niagara Falls Boulevard to Getzville Road)***

### ***Action 1***

**The Town Planning and Law Departments draft corridor design guidelines and guidelines for adoption by the Town Board.** These guidelines should address aesthetic character, site design, and relationship to the surrounding community. Appendix B, *Design Standards and Guideline for Large Retail Development*, City of Fort Collins, Colorado 1995, serves as a good model from which the Town Planning staff can draw. Key elements of these standards and guidelines address:

- ❖ Facades and exterior walls;
- ❖ Detail features,
- ❖ Roof lines;
- ❖ Materials and colors;
- ❖ Entryway design features;
- ❖ Back and side façade treatments;
- ❖ Parking lot orientation; and
- ❖ Pedestrian flow.

Cost: Not Applicable

### ***Action 2***

**Town Engineering and Planning Departments encourage the NYSDOT to undertake image enhancing improvements in the Sheridan Drive right-of-way.** Such improvements may include wider sidewalks, street plantings, street furniture, and stylized light guidelines.

Cost: Consultant Study - \$25,000 - \$30,000

Potential Streetscape enhancements \$1,000,000- \$1,250,000

### ***Action 3***

**Town or Amherst Industrial Development Agency explores the potential for grants, low-interest loans, or property tax abatements to property owners undertaking specific actions improve the district streetscape around existing establishments.** These incentives should be initially targeted to the following areas.

- ❖ TJ Max Plaza where a partially full parking lot and loading bay to Toys R Us dominate the view.
- ❖ Northtown Plaza — landscaping enhancements and parking lot safety islands to improve image and safety.

Cost: Not Applicable

#### *Action 4*

**The Amherst Industrial Development Agency identifies potential office developers/users that may be actively seeking space in Amherst.** The Amherst Industrial Development Agency determines their interest in locating in flexible back-office space converted from obsolete retail space as was done with Appletree Mall in Cheektowaga. The prime site a test of this concept would be the Plaza at the corner of Sweet Home Road and Sheridan Drive.

If developer/user interest exists, the Town Board should proceed with rezoning this site for office use.

Cost: Not Applicable