

Canal Street Redesign



**Department
of State**

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About this project

The Canal Street Redesign project presents a vision and design for a segment of the Old Erie Canal between Main Street and Diamond Street in the village of Canastota. This corridor is at the heart of the commercial core of the village. The Empire State Trail, a 700-mile-long state-wide trail which attracts visitors from around the world, brings trail users through the village by way of Canal Street.

The village of Canastota is the only community along the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park between DeWitt and Rome in which the canal runs directly through the heart of a village center. This provides a tremendous opportunity for future growth and development along Canal Street. With renewed interest in the canal through the efforts of the village of Canastota, groups such as the Old Erie Canal Community Working Group, and with New York State's investment in the Empire State Trail, a true renaissance is underway along this corridor.

The village of Canastota is in the process of discovering how the canal can once again become a great engine of commerce and activity. Although there is widely acknowledged potential, Canal Street is currently challenged by lack of use due to underutilized storefronts and significant physical and visual barriers, including parked cars, which keep people from enjoying

and building on the possibilities of the canal corridor. Water quality in the canal is variable due to flow and seasonal fluctuations which can render the water level too low for non-motorized watercraft (i.e., canoes and kayaks). Canal Street does not safely accommodate cyclists and pedestrians through this critical corridor. Existing sidewalks are deteriorating, pedestrian and bicyclist amenities are lacking, and the canalfront properties are in need of reinvestment.

The village of Canastota worked with EDR to develop a streetscape design which would return the street to a place of prominence and importance within the community. Through this project, the village seeks to revitalize its historical canal area by creating physical and visual access to the water for activities such as walking, biking, kayaking, fishing, and winter ice skating. Streetscape enhancements will welcome local users and visitors arriving via the Empire State Trail by providing dedicated trail infrastructure and rethinking the configuration of the roadway.

Canal Street Redesign aims to inspire new development, events, community pride, tourism, and other investments in the village which will contribute to increased economic vitality.



Project scope

The project area encompasses Canal Street between Main Street and Diamond Street following the historical alignment of the enlarged Erie Canal through the center of the village. This area also encompasses what are currently on-road portions of the Empire State Trail through the village.

Canal Street is perpendicular to Peterboro Street which comprises the main commercial center of the village. Peterboro Street underwent significant renovations and upgrades as part of a Transportation Enhancement Program project in the recent past. Improvements included the addition of new street trees, lighting, banners, asphalt resurfacing, sidewalks with decorative brick stamped concrete tree planting strip, and the installation of a sculptural interpretive replica lift bridge at the intersection of Peterboro and Canal Streets. The program visually uplifted the historical commercial center of the village, and the community response to those improvements has been positive including the addition of flower planters, banners, and flags.

Canal Street Redesign will provide an extension of improvements similar to those made on Peterboro

Street. The thoughtful redesign of the Canal-front within the village will result in an improved experience for visitors and residents and will allow for increased engagement with the canal which will provide the potential for new programming and private development.

The proposed concept design is respectful of Canastota's history while also providing opportunities for supporting new activities including kayaking, cycling, and fishing. Targeted streetscape improvements on Canal Street will provide accommodations which are currently lacking for Empire State Trail users. A growing awareness for kayaking along the Old Erie Canal has developed in the past five years as amenities have been installed throughout the canal corridor, and events have generated demand for access. Canastota is well positioned to benefit from visiting kayakers looking for a destination-based experience. In addition, the village would like to improve water access for local recreation.

The successful implementation of the proposed improvements will support the continued revitalization of the village.

During the summer, the Canal water often becomes stagnant which leads to poor water quality, algae growth, and unpleasant odors. This stagnation needs to be addressed for the long term success of the project area.



Sidewalks are very narrow through this area and not accommodating for pedestrians. Curbs heights are an obstacle as they rise above the sidewalk in some locations.



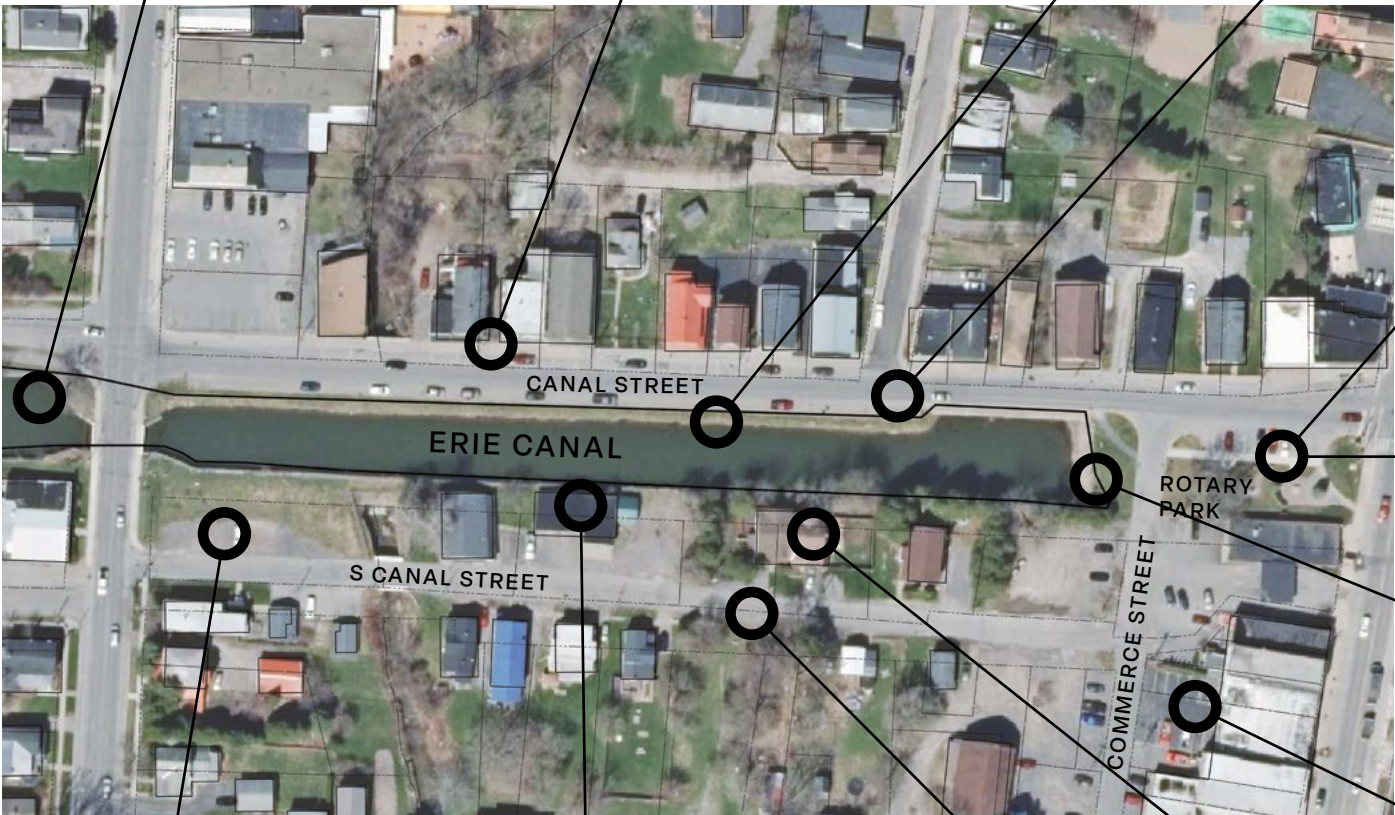
Creating better access directly to the waterfront and water itself remains a key goal.



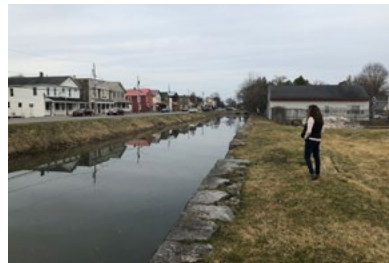
It is difficult for cyclists, pedestrians, and snowmobile traffic (in the winter) to effectively move through this area.



Creating a place for people to rest remains a goal. A place such as this could engage with colleges and universities by providing outdoor space for lectures and events. Creating a space for other arts or events such as a farmers' market is also possible.



This vacant lot could be turned into a public space for concerts. It is currently used for private parking. The village could approach the property owner to discuss sale or a right of first refusal.



The south side of the canal was historically industrial.



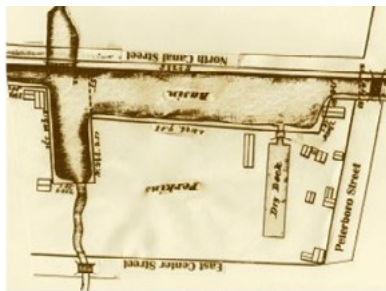
There may be opportunity to facilitate an alternative corridor for bikes, pedestrians, and snowmobiles along South Canal Street.



Both seasonal use, such as an ice rink and year round purpose are desired for this space.



This area contains a former widewaters as that was filled in.



Properties that back up onto commerce street could dress up their rear entries where they face toward the canal..



Community input



Rotary park is on NY State-owned land. The village has an agreement to utilize the land as a park and has been negotiating with the State to obtain this land (which was created when the canal was partially filled in back in 1962.)



The design process for Canal Street was influenced by community input about the site as it exists today and an understanding of the village's values and aspirations for the future. The project team worked closely with a steering committee established by the village to review an inventory of existing conditions, identify concerns and aspirations, and review concept alternatives.

In addition, the village hosted a stakeholder focus group session at the Canastota fire hall. This session helped to contribute valuable local knowledge about the project area's physical, social, and historical conditions. Steering committee input, represented on this page, contributed to the final design concept.

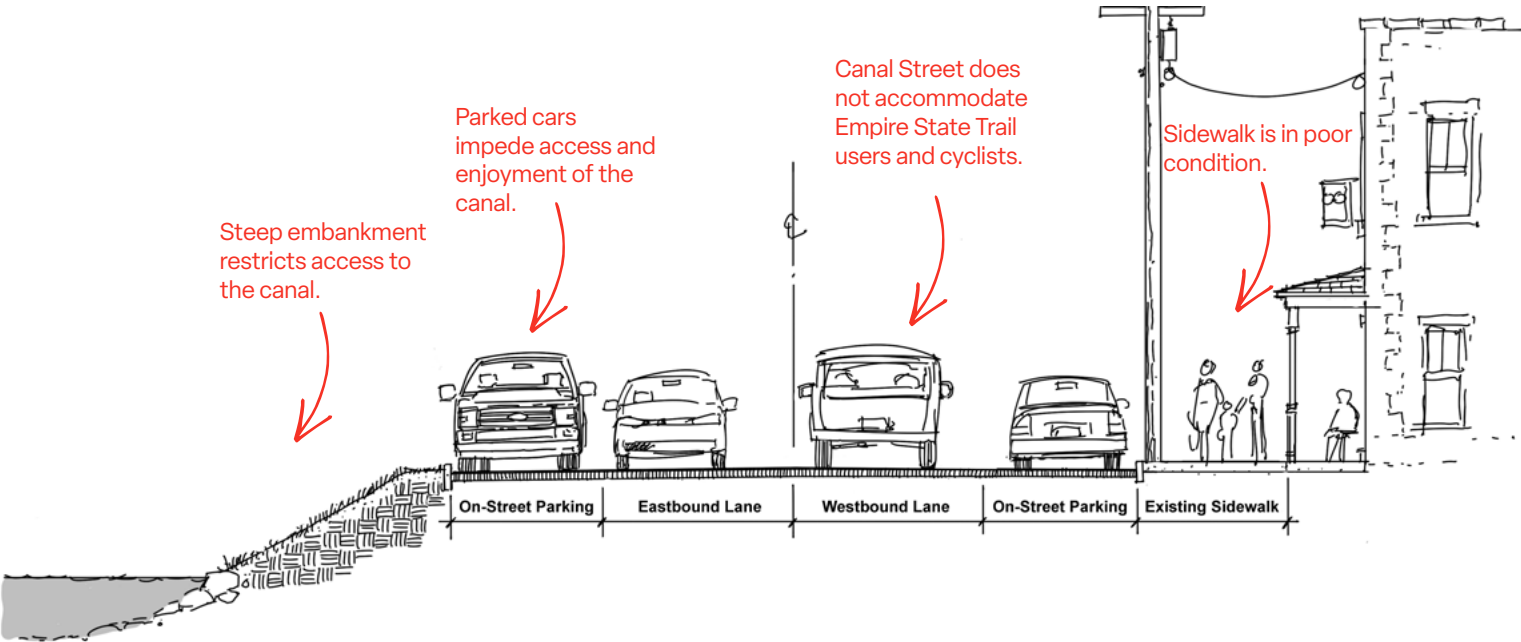
The design process also included a public meeting which invited the public to view and comment on design recommendations. Community preferences and ideas were a vital component of the selection and refinement of the preferred alternative.

Existing conditions

The existing conditions along Canal Street between Main Street and Commerce Street are depicted in the cross section below, and in the photograph to the right. The cross section drawing shows the current configuration of Canal Street looking west.

The steep embankment and eastbound on-street parking restrict access to the canal on the south side of the street. The two-way street and westbound parking lane leave only 8' of pedestrian sidewalk on the north side of the street. The existing sidewalk is narrow and in poor condition.

The street does not provide any accommodation for Empire State Trail users and cyclists. Currently, locals and visitors traveling on this world-renowned trail must depart the trail and ride unprotected on the road without wayfinding or navigational aids.



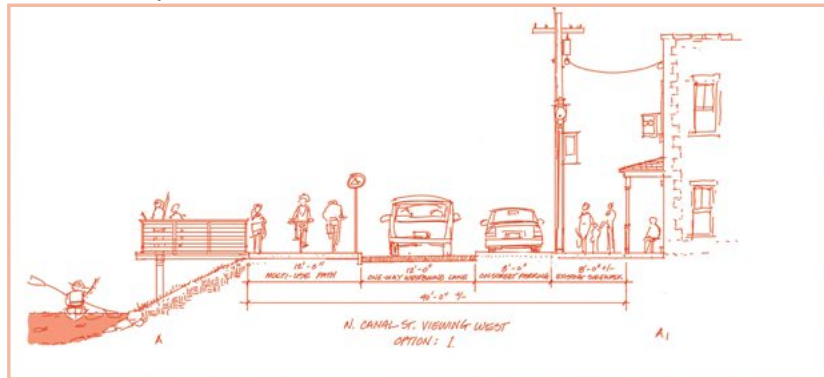
Exploring conceptual alternatives

The Canal Street Redesign process sought to explore potential alternatives for the reconfiguration of Canal Street to assess how various redesign approaches might address community concerns and aspirations while accommodating a diverse array of users.

Alternatives were evaluated based on an ability to provide more access to the canal and create a well-integrated setting supportive of recreation, commerce, and modes of travel on Canal Street.

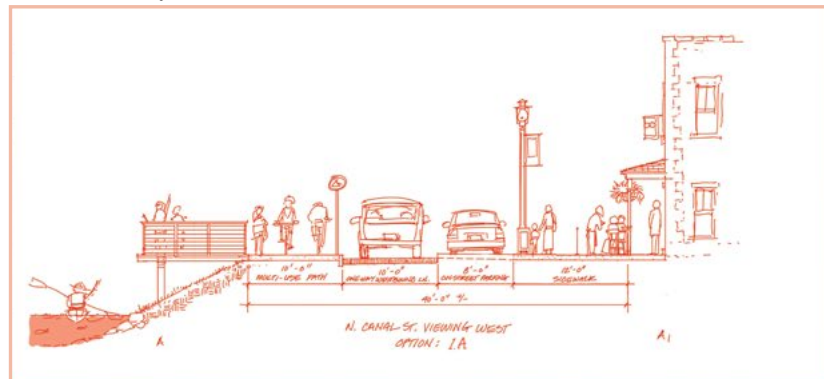
Each of the preliminary alternatives outlined below sought to explore ways of improving pedestrian and cyclist connections between the Canal Street area and village.

Preliminary Alternative 1



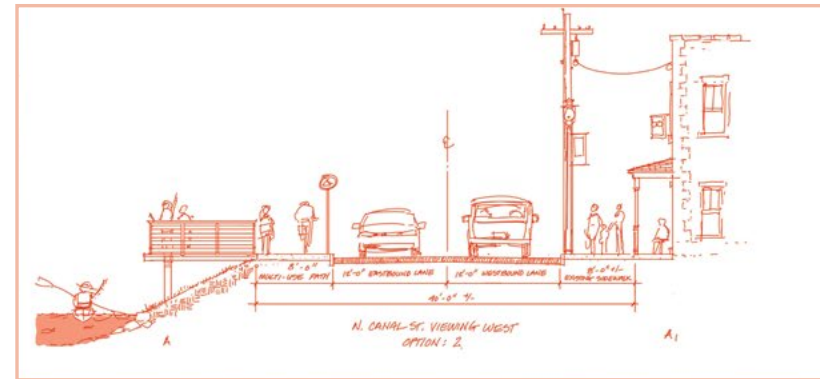
Alternative 1 converts Canal Street to a one-way street with one westbound driving lane to make space for a 12'-6" multi-use path located between the canal and the roadway. The multiuse path provides access to the canal, which is extended by a canal overlook cantilevered over the grass embankment along portions of the multiuse trail. The existing 8' westbound on-street parking, and the existing 8' sidewalk on the north side of the street are retained. Pedestrian scale lighting and signage are installed along the existing sidewalk.

Preliminary Alternative 1A



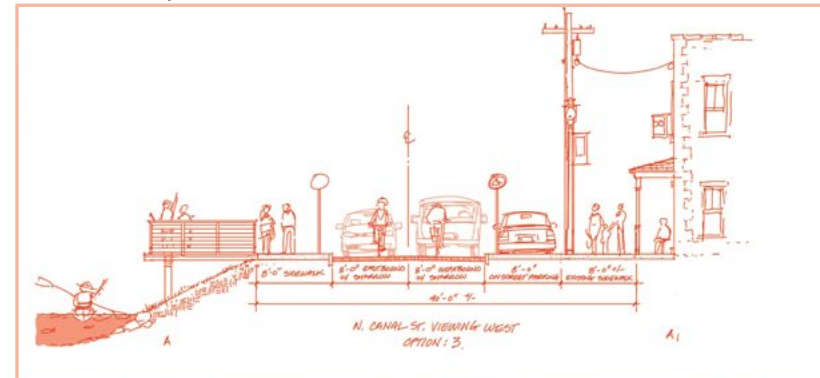
Alternative 1A is similar to Alternative 1, converting Canal Street to a one-way westbound street. The multi-use path and driving lane are 10' wide (narrower than the 12' in Alternative 1) which allows the sidewalk on the north side of to be widened to 12'. The existing 8' on-street westbound parking is retained. This alternative buries the utility lines and removes the utility poles which currently run along the sidewalk to the north reducing visual clutter along the street. This would add considerable cost and require additional coordination to implement.

Preliminary Alternative 2



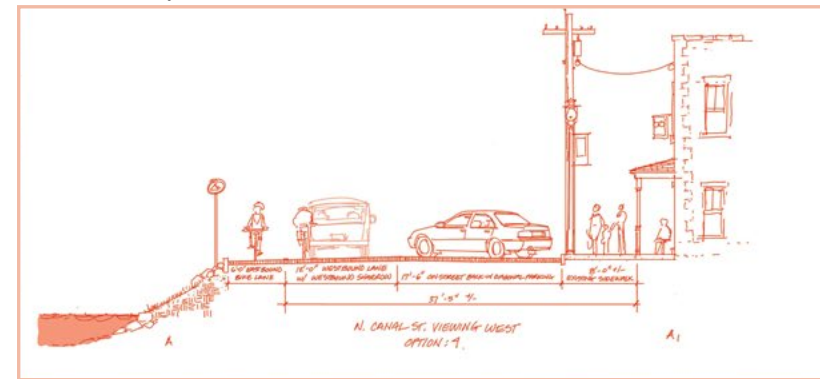
Alternative 2 retains the two-way road and increases the lane width from 8' to 12'. It removes on-street parking on both sides of the street. The existing 8' sidewalk on the north side of the street is preserved. On the south side, an 8' multi-use path is installed, which is narrower than the multi-use path shown in Alternatives 1 and 1A. This alternative also includes a canal overlook platform at locations along the canal embankment.

Preliminary Alternative 3



Alternative 3 retains the two-way road as it currently exists with 8' travel lanes in both directions. It keeps the 8' existing on-street westbound parking lane but removes the eastbound parking to make room for an 8' canal-adjacent sidewalk which connects to a canal overlook. Rather than including a multi-use trail, this alternative accommodates cyclists using sharrows in the driving lane. The existing 8' sidewalk on the north side remains in place with in-kind replacement.

Preliminary Alternative 4



Alternative 4 accommodates cyclists traveling eastbound on a 6' canal-adjacent bike lane and accommodates cyclists traveling westbound using sharrows on a 12' westbound driving lane. This alternative reduces the street to a one-way westbound road and provides diagonal back-in parking which can accommodate more parked cars than linear on-street parking. No canal overlook is included in this option. The 8' sidewalks on the north side of the street are retained in their existing form.

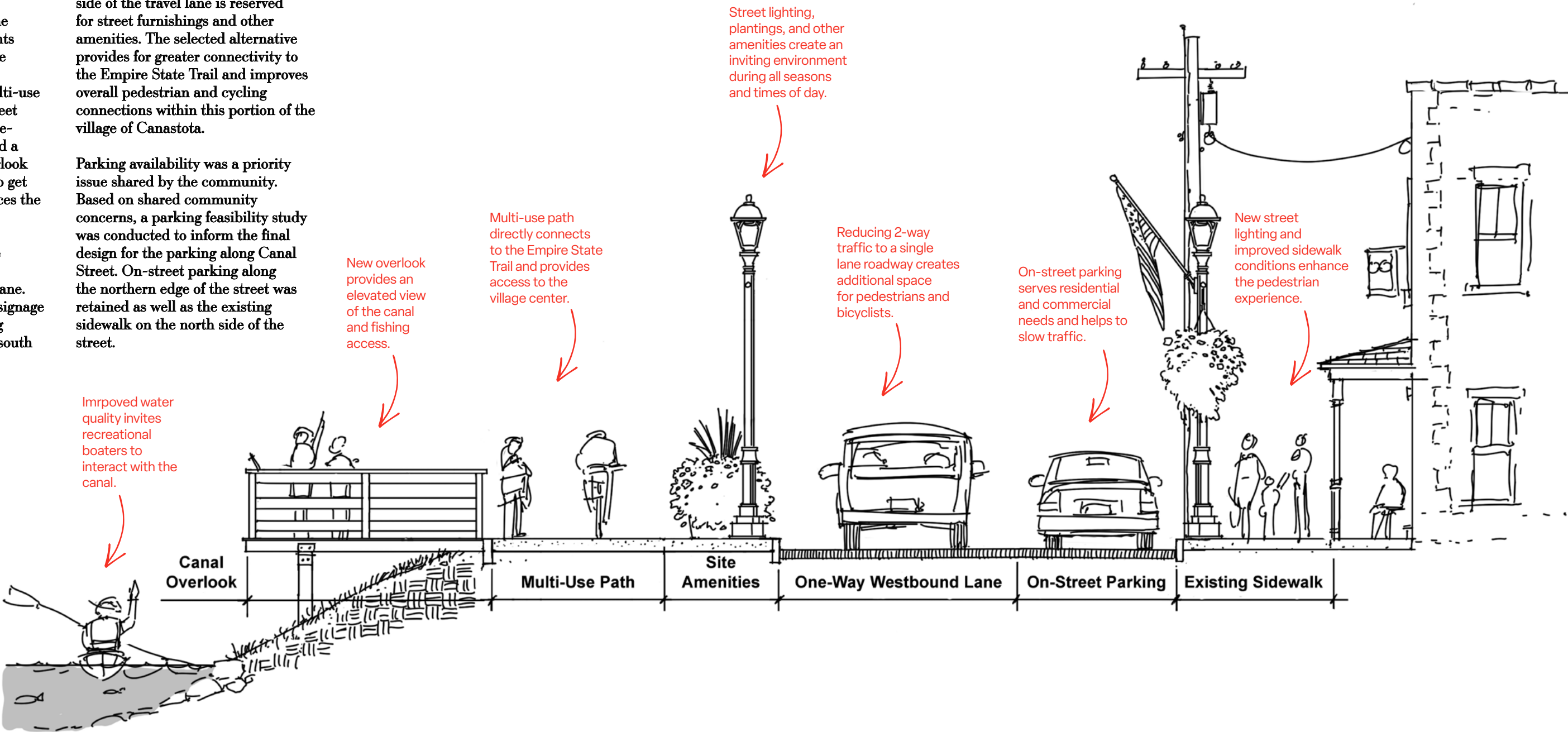
Selected option

Option 1 was selected as the preferred alternative with some additional design enhancements based on input from the village community. The proposed streetscape incorporates a multi-use path, new pedestrian scale street lighting, on-street parking, one-way vehicular driving lane, and a canal overlook. The canal overlook allows community members to get closer to the water and enhances the enjoyment of the canal.

Canal Street is proposed to be converted to a one-way street with a 12' westbound driving lane. Pedestrian-scale lighting and signage are installed along the existing sidewalk and a portion of the south

side of the travel lane is reserved for street furnishings and other amenities. The selected alternative provides for greater connectivity to the Empire State Trail and improves overall pedestrian and cycling connections within this portion of the village of Canastota.

Parking availability was a priority issue shared by the community. Based on shared community concerns, a parking feasibility study was conducted to inform the final design for the parking along Canal Street. On-street parking along the northern edge of the street was retained as well as the existing sidewalk on the north side of the street.



Selected option - plan view

The image below overlays the proposed improvements associated with the preferred alternative over an aerial photo. At either end of the proposed design (Nº1 and Nº24) new gateway signage will welcome Empire State Trail users to the village.

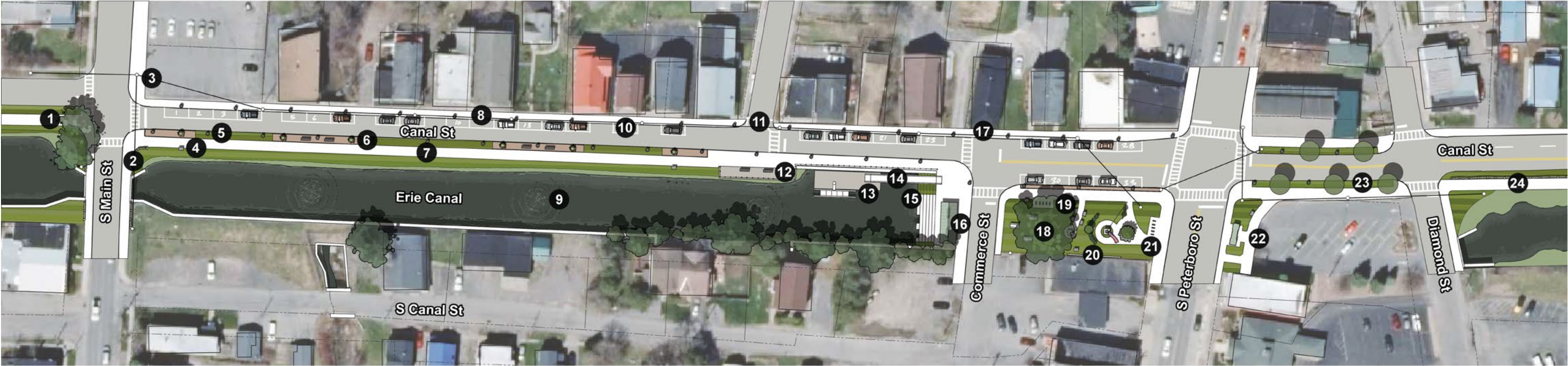
New crosswalks and stop signs at the intersection of South Main Street and Canal Street will improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

A multi-use path follows the edge of the canal basin along the southern

edge of Canal Street. Canal Street is depicted as one way westward from Commerce Street to South Main Street, and is proposed to be two-way between Commerce Street and Peterboro Street.

Aeration bubblers improve water circulation within the canal basin without interfering with the historical views of the canal corridor or water-based recreation (Nº9). Terraced seating provides access to the water at the eastern end of the canal basin

near Commerce Street (Nº15). A new dock gangway (Nº14) provides access to an accessible kayak launch and floating dock (Nº13). The proposed design maintains 33 total on-street parking spaces (Nº10).



- 01. Erie Canalway Trail - West Gateway
- 02. Timber Guide Rail, Typ.
- 03. Existing Overhead Utility Lines & Poles, Typ.
- 04. Interpretive Signage, Typ.
- 05. Pedestrian Scale Light Pole, Typ.
- 06. Special Pavement Seating Area with Planters, Typ.

- 07. Multi-Use Trail, Typ.
- 08. Sidewalk, Typ.
- 09. Canal Aerator Bubbler, Typ.
- 10. On-Street Parallel Parking (33 spaces +/-)
- 11. Crosswalk, Typ.
- 12. Canal Overlook with Seating

- 13. Accessible Kayak Launch & Floating Dock
- 14. Dock Gangway
- 15. Terraced Canalfont Seating
- 16. Canalfont Gateway Pavilion with Seating
- 17. Canastota Canal Town Museum
- 18. Picnic Tables, Typ.

- 19. Bicycle Racks, Typ.
- 20. Mural Wall - Free Standing, Typ.
- 21. Bill Sharpe Memorial Park (Rotary Park)
- 22. Village Gateway
- 23. Tree Lawn & Street Tree Plantings, Typ.
- 24. Erie Canalway Trail - East Gateway



Proposed View 1

View 1 shows a before-and-after glimpse of the canal in the location where the canal water enters the culvert running under Peterboro Street. The existing condition (bottom image) offers no accommodation for water access, and provides limited opportunities to sit and enjoy the waterfront view. In the selected design option (top image), the ramp and floating dock allow people wishing to canoe, kayak, or to go fishing the ability to enter the water. The option also features a covered pavilion with terraced concrete stadium-style steps that provide access to the water. The selected option creates a flexible, modern space to enjoy the canal from the village center as well as support events, markets, and festivals.



Existing View 1

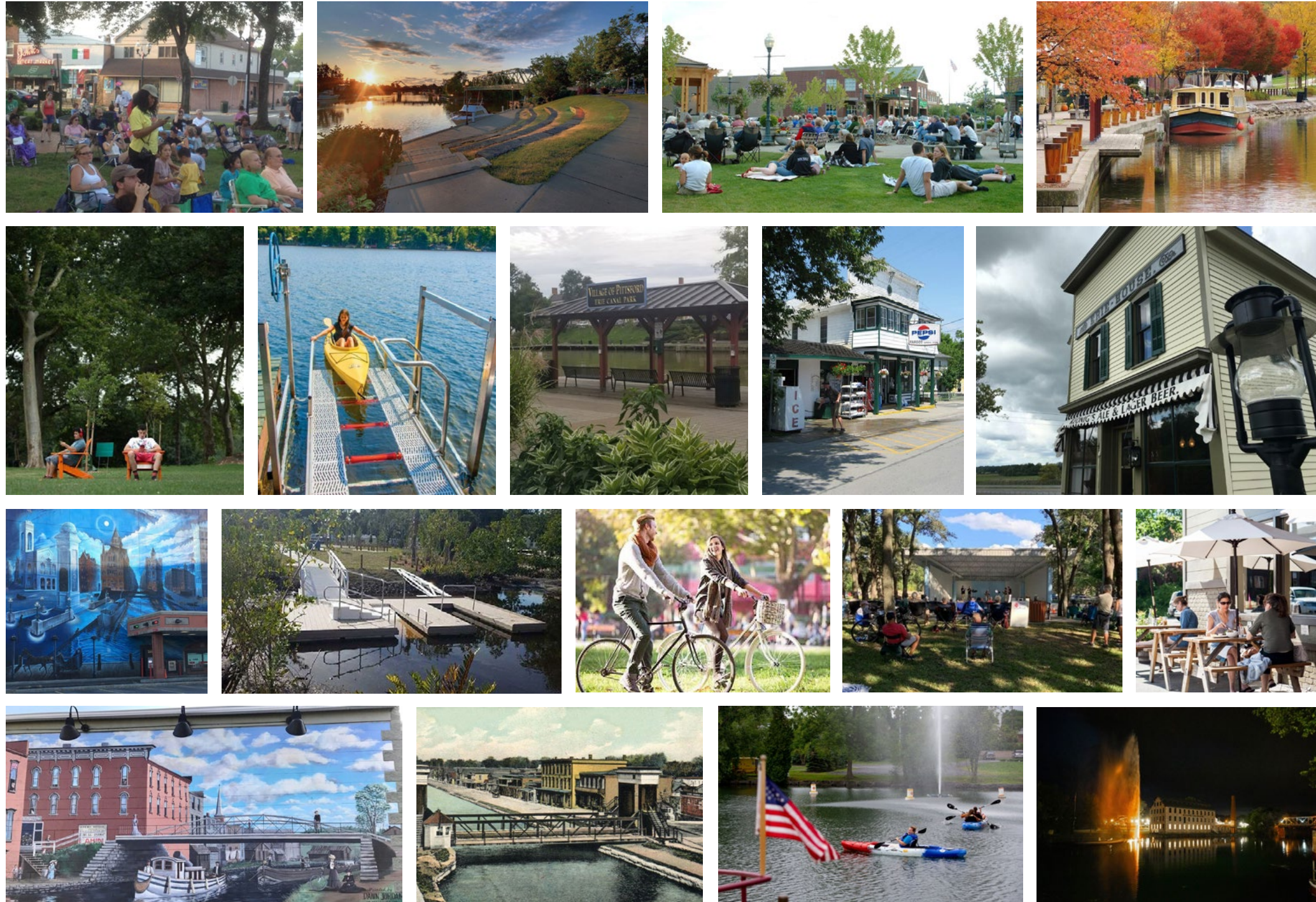


Existing View 2

View 2, looking east from the midpoint of Canal Street, shows the streetscape before and after the installation of the multi-use path. In the selected option (bottom) pedestrians and cyclists are accommodated by an 8' wide multi-use path with the installation of street furniture that compliments Peterboro Street and invites longer stays near the waterfront. Newly placed bubblers in the canal aerate and circulate the water. Pedestrian-scale lighting helps to define the space and makes it more user-friendly at night. The east-facing parking lane has been replaced by a multi-use path. The west facing parallel parking lane is retained to provide on-street parking options. The sidewalk on the north side of the street will be refurbished and new street lights will be added.



Proposed View 2



Looking forward

Canal Street Redesign imagines a street full of community life and vitality, where village residents and visitors share the experience of an invigorating and dynamic, yet historic setting. Once complete, the new streetscape will become the backdrop for heritage celebrations, boating and fishing activities, events, and festivals. Each summer, the Empire State Trail brings scores of cyclists through the center of Canastota. The investment in Canal Street will help to welcome these visitors by establishing an environment that encourages them to stop, explore, relax, eat, discover, and experience the canal history in Canastota.

Canastota's position along one of the few remaining stretches of the historical route of the Erie Canal makes it a unique destination for adventure paddling. The village may explore establishing a kayak share program to encourage visitors to experience the water. In addition to improving water quality and providing launch facilities for canoes and kayaks at Commerce Street, the village may consider establishing a launch site to the east of Diamond Street and providing wayfinding for boaters to navigate from one part of the canal to the other.

Through investments in local businesses, trail amenities, and new programming the village can establish itself as a must-see experience along the historical canal. In addition, the village will need to continue to encourage local property owners to restore the canal-era facades of adjacent buildings, activate the village's sidewalk network with streetside dining and merchandizing, and install public art and murals that celebrate village history.



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