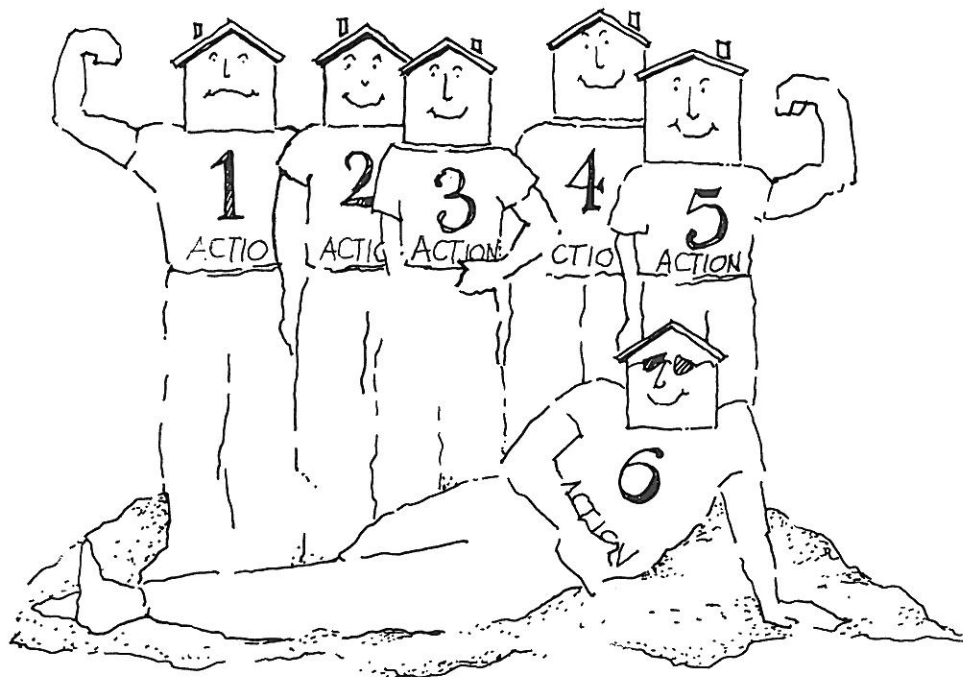


## Part Four

# Model Action Programs

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*“Identify the problem; get it clear in your mind.”*

*“Get others motivated and interested.”*

*“Take concrete steps to solve the problem.”*

**TROUBLESHOOT** first... Identify the problem—get it clear in your mind, look at the real opportunities and constraints in the hamlet and establish achievable goals and directions. **Get help if you need it or even if you think you don’t need it**—contact your county planner and professionals for technical assistance and help in grant writing. **Get others motivated and interested**—network, delegate, outreach. **Take concrete steps to solve the problem**—link solutions to one problem and to many problems—analyze, develop, implement.

**PLAN FOR THE LONG RANGE** later... Establish in-place regulations and guidelines for implementation over time—zoning, laws, maps, districts.

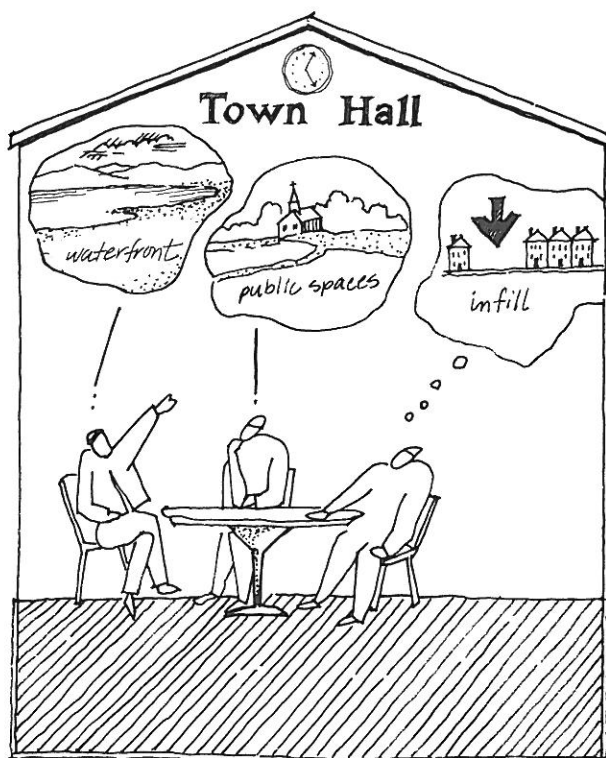
On the following pages, six Action Programs for a problem-based approach are described. They intend to link local resources and assistance to specific hamlet redevelopment issues and problems, and can be used to stimulate improvements.



## Model Action Programs

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### Action One



#### Action One: How to Determine Unique, Marketable Features in a Hamlet

Action ONE involves determining the unique characteristics or attributes in a hamlet that can be optimized for marketing purposes. The first, and sometimes most important, step in attracting development to a hamlet is to sell the positive

features of its historical significance or the natural features of the surrounding landscape. Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the Adirondack hamlets is proximity to nature. Every hamlet in the Park has some *amenity frontage* providing outstanding recreational opportunities (trailheads, boat launches, ski slopes, etc.) within a natural setting. A hamlet should define what it can offer as amenity frontage and capitalize on it by providing support facilities and services.

**Historical Survey**—Historical features are also hamlet amenities that should be comprehensively documented and made known to the public. An historical survey of buildings and sites conducted by an expert is a good place to begin.

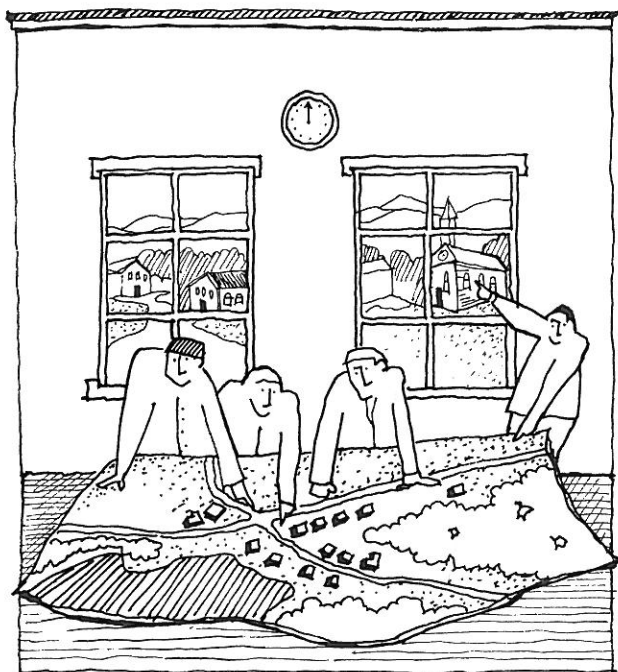
**Identity Areas Analysis**—Other positive features in a hamlet such as parks, an interesting main street, a waterfront or outstanding views, can also be documented and described through an analysis technique known as “identity area analysis.” A hamlet identity area is an area of distinct character with significant attributes—a commercial core, a town green, a civic center, an historic district. By combining the concepts of amenity frontage, historical surveys and identity area analysis, a hamlet can begin determining the unique and marketable attributes it can offer for redevelopment.

*"Community support and involvement remain the key to a hamlet's planned development."*



**Model Action Programs**

## Action Two

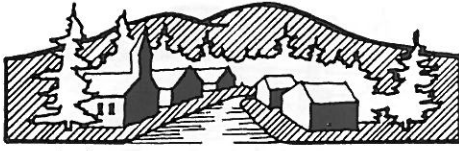


### **Action Two: How to Locate a Hamlet's Most Central, Important Space For Public Improvements**

Action TWO involves taking the ideas generated in Action ONE and attaching them to real, tangible places in the hamlet where public

improvements could conceivably occur and be successful. For example, if an exceptional waterfront is your hamlet's key feature—determine where the development should take place to ensure the greatest impact on the economic, aesthetic and social vitality of the community. Conduct a Site Survey of your hamlet using on-site observation as a tool. If you don't have a base map of the hamlet, rough one out. Ask others for input and assistance, and as you walk through the hamlet (probably more than once) you'll be looking for the following:

- Look for maximum visibility sites which will have a positive impact on hamlet image
- Consider where the most viable combination of public and private investments are apt to occur
- Look for the site which is apt to stop traffic, "trap" investments and encourage spending
- Look for the site and location where the multiplier effect may occur—where even a small investment will have a big impact
- Look for key physical characteristics and how they interrelate, such as land uses, significant buildings and landscapes

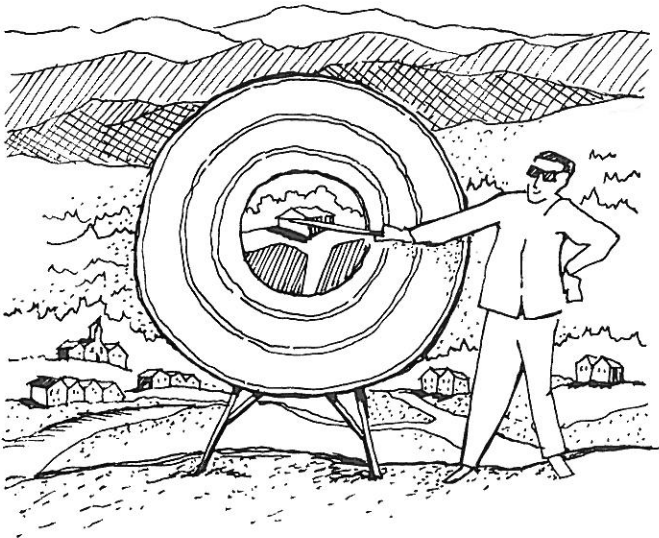


## Model Action Programs

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*"Get help if you need it or even if you think you don't need it."*

### Action Three



#### **Action Three: How to Target Specific Sites For Future Development Opportunities**

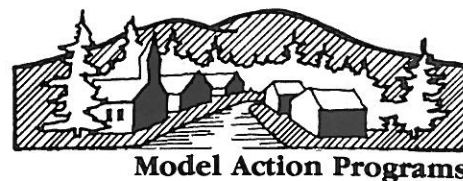
**Cost/Benefit**—The success of any development, large or small, is measured by a cost/benefit equation. The hamlet should be concerned from the outset with reaping the maximum gains or benefits from a development. This means that the right location for a specific use, improvement or development must be carefully

chosen. For example, misplaced buildings in a small hamlet can have an unforeseen long-term negative impact.

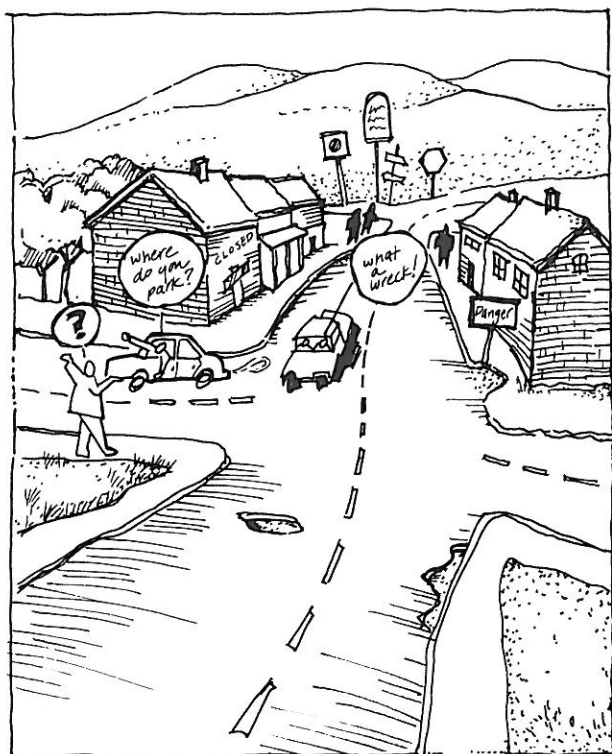
**Goal Setting**—Furthermore, the type of development which will occur must represent the interests and concerns of the community at large. Setting community goals and directives is the key to ensuring that input occurs. An Action Plan will logically result when the community has the opportunity to express approval or disapproval. Steering a project to success begins with initial public support and involvement; only *then* can an Action Plan become the tool for planning decisions.

**Targeting Developable Sites**—After a general direction for future development is set, the next step is to locate available sites and begin negotiating between property owners, the municipality, and state or federal funding sources. County planners, IDA agents and APA staff should be consulted for assistance in securing financing, regulatory approvals and development recommendations. This *targeting* approach may involve some of the economic development tools outlined on page 70 such as "fast-track sites" with pre-designed building shells and revolving loan funds.

*"Pinpoint problem areas that detract from the quality of life and economic success in your community."*



## Action Four



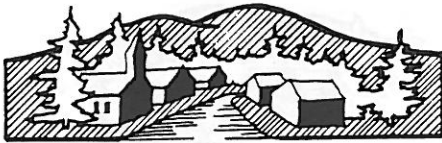
### Action Four: How to Pinpoint Problem Areas That Detract From Quality of Life and Economic Success

Identifying the typical problems that inhibit a hamlet's capacity to capitalize on its assets and opportunities results from an objective, self-critical analysis. We learn to live with our own peculiarities and handicaps until we forget they exist. A hamlet must look at itself in the mirror

and measure things honestly. Pinpoint the problems and the roots of the problems which detract from the quality of life and economic success of the hamlet. Rather than resigning itself to its problems, a hamlet must be ready to make changes. Issues should be specific—zoom in and identify real cause and effect relationships. Typical problems might include:

- The hamlet lacks parking facilities in the core commercial zone
- The hamlet is not consistently oriented to pedestrians—major gaps in sidewalks exist at specific locations
- Public buildings, including the town hall and library, located at the center of the hamlet, are in need of restoration, painting and signage
- Poor community services in the hamlet are discouraging development, e.g., sewer, water
- The town park has no public amenities—grass is not mowed, plantings are not maintained, benches are non-existent
- The overall hamlet has a worn-out, depressed appearance.

After problems have been identified, the obvious next step is to **DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM!** Improving the quality of the hamlet is a necessary prerequisite for attracting economic development.



## Model Action Programs

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*"Be sure that short term decisions are not causing long term negative impacts."*

### Action Five



#### Action Five: How to Assure That Short-Term Decisions Are Not Causing Long-Term Negative Effects

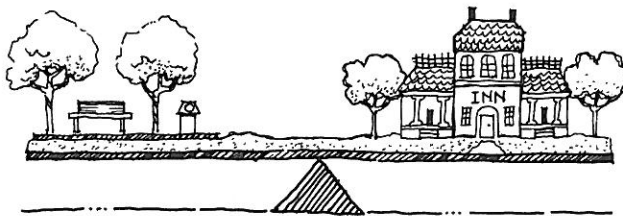
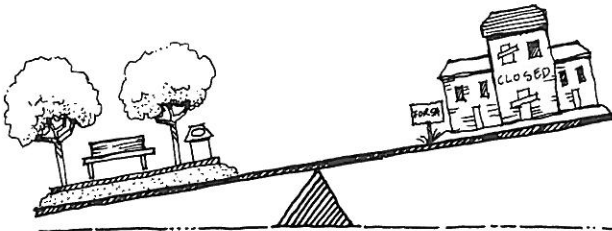
Making decisions in your hamlet demands a high degree of forward-thinking—that is, thinking about how decisions interrelate now and in the future. The most important consideration when making a decision to develop, enhance or change your hamlet is what long-term impact that decision will have on the community. Avoiding negative problems or solving problems in ways which do not create new problems is not always a simple process.

Successful projects result from knowledgeable and thoughtful decisions. Planning for your hamlet's future will involve many levels of understanding about how the physical, cultural and economic environment fits human needs, behavior and goals. **Structures** (buildings, stores, signage), **land activities** (walking, driving, parking, shopping, relaxing) and **living things** (trees, people, animals) are all related to a pattern which is unique to a particular hamlet and subject to future management and change by the hamlet itself.

- **Know your hamlet**—create a data base of the hamlet's critical information in a form which provides a useful record for measuring the impact of change. A hamlet base map is an invaluable tool for both making and recording planning decisions.
- **Keep the long term in mind**—by being cautious when decisions are being made. Remember that planning decisions are cyclical—they begin and end with the definition of goals and directions.
- **Maintain the upper hand**—by protecting your power and responsibility to make decisions concerning the future of your hamlet. A community does not have to sell itself short even to the most "well-intentioned" developer.



## Action Six



### Action Six: How to Leverage One Project Into Other Improvements

**Interconnected Projects**—All successful urban development processes involve not one, but a series of interconnected public and private projects. For example, a public park is very often developed to the benefit of successful private offices along its perimeter. The restoration of a waterfront often attracts seasonal condominium developers. An understanding of this interconnectedness can be a major advantage in hamlet redevelopment where wisely placed public investment has the power to ignite significant private development. This “joint development” concept is based on leveraging projects with well-designed open space and results in **investment continuity**. Privately

sponsored new resort communities are totally planned around the investment continuity approach which maximizes existing natural amenities and integrates them into a comprehensively designed environment. Adirondack hamlets can and should borrow from this development concept.

**Clever Staging**—Joint development approaches require well thought-out staging strategies that structure investments into predetermined sequences. Everything can’t or shouldn’t come at once, but should instead be phased over time. Knowing just when to make what investment is a science attempted by many but mastered only by a few. (James Rouse, the well-known developer of Columbia, Maryland and Quincy Markets, Boston, is one of the notable masters.) An investment staging plan is important to successful hamlet revitalization and local governments should seek help from private consultants and/or county planners and Industrial Development Agencies.

**Strong Concept**—A strong development concept for a hamlet is essential—in the end it is probably the most important hope for survival and revitalization. The development concept has to evolve from a synthesis of the ideas discussed in this manual overlaid with the unique aspects of a particular hamlet. The most critical factors are an understanding of the individual issues in a community and how these fit into the whole program for a hamlet. Developing a concept might also require outside help to provide assistance to local government in formulating a strong strategy for revitalization.

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*"A strong redevelopment concept is essential for the survival of Adirondack hamlets."*



*It's up to the hamlets themselves....*



# Glossary of Terms

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- amenity** Any feature, natural or manmade, which improves or enhances the appearance and experience in or around a hamlet.
- base map** A measured plan of existing physical conditions.
- cluster development** The clustering of buildings and facilities on a site in a manner which preserves common open space for the benefit of the whole development.
- common ownership** Land or facilities owned by multiple parties usually under the legal arrangements of a condominium deed or similar ownership instrument.
- core** The central area of a hamlet, often identified by a cluster of buildings grouped in close proximity, containing activities such as retail shops and services.
- cost/benefit** The ratio of investment of time and money to the gains from said investment.
- fast-track sites** The pre-planning and preparation of development sites in order to rapidly secure approvals and permits for implementation.
- hamlet** A group of 40 or more structures with at least one commercial facility within a prescribed geographic area.
- identity area analysis** A method of determining unique physical/activity areas in a hamlet or village.
- infill** Refers to the "filling in" of major open or vacant spaces with either new structures—residential or commercial buildings—or open space uses such as parks.
- infrastructure** The utilities or public support systems in a community including water, sewage, gas, electric and telephone. In a larger sense the term can also identify roads and sidewalks, bus lines, schools, and other community services.
- investment continuity** Long-term investments which provide continuous economic return.
- kiosk** A freestanding structure 10–12 feet high usually placed in a public space, used for the display of tourist information, bulletins and public announcements.
- land banking** The purchase or control of land by a municipality or public organization for the purposes of reserving property for future development.
- mixed-uses** A planning term used when several different land uses and/or activities are combined within one building, project or site.
- multiplier effect** Benefits accrued by a hamlet beyond an initial improvement or investment.
- node** A location or point of major activity within a hamlet; a place where pedestrians and traffic converge.
- public space** An open area within a hamlet used by the residents and visitors and maintained as a public facility. Areas such as parks and pedestrian squares fronting on major buildings are public spaces.
- released waterfront sites** The change of uses on a waterfront from active industrial to vacant land posing significant opportunities for reuse and development.
- spatial definition** Defined boundaries or edges of a specific space—in this context an outdoor space formed by buildings or landscape features.
- sprawl** A term used for random, unplanned, low density development spread out around the fringes of an established settlement area.
- strip development** Refers to a linear pattern of highway commercial development generally characterized by an abundance of large signs and parking lots.
- subregional** An area of land smaller than the entire Adirondack Park but larger than the area around a specific hamlet or town. Refers to a group of hamlets in fairly close proximity.
- wilderness outpost area** The geographic area approximately in the center of the Adirondack Park containing hamlets, trailheads and boat launch sites which provide access to the vast wilderness region.
- zero-lot-line** A zoning or subdivision term referring to the absence of side-yard setbacks which results in the location of exterior walls of a building directly on a lot-line.

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