

- General Economic Development Initiatives – See IV.B.5.
- Recreation – See IV.B.6.
- Wireless Communication Facilities (Towers) – See IV.B.7.

E.2 McKownville

McKownville developed as part of the City of Albany's first suburban growth ring, dating back to the early 1920's. It is distinguished by its mature, tree-lined streets, single-family homes, and well-established neighborhoods consisting of long-time residents. Due to its proximity to the City, McKownville was developed with an urban atmosphere, very similar to that of other residential areas within the City of Albany. The general extent of this planning area is shown on Figure 17.

The residential character of McKownville has changed significantly over the years due to commercial and office development along the Route 20 corridor. Today this development consumes most of the frontage along Route 20 and is beginning to encroach on adjacent neighborhoods (first streets in from Route 20) through the development of larger buildings, more parking area, and traffic. Some homes remain along Route 20 but are expected to become commercial or professional office in the future. Increased traffic on Route 20 and associated road widening has created a pedestrian unfriendly environment, forcing neighborhood residents to use their vehicles for trips to nearby stores and services.

McKownville is serviced by aging water and sewer infrastructure. It contains a small park with a playground and softball field. Other community services within this planning area include three religious institutions, a fire station, a post office, and a portion of the SUNY Albany campus. Therefore, despite the limitations/impacts that have resulted from development over the years, McKownville offers an urban-like atmosphere with shopping, services, recreation, education, and community gathering places, all in close proximity. Efforts to improve pedestrian access and control land use conflicts will increase the quality and desirability of this area. Land use recommendations to achieve this include the following:

- Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of vacant/underutilized buildings and sites.
- Repair and upgrade existing infrastructure.
- Buffer residential uses from commercial, office and other conflicting uses that rely on vehicular transportation, except when employing well-designed, pedestrian friendly new urbanism/mixed use concepts.
- Connect residential neighborhoods to shopping and recreational opportunities by providing sidewalks and/or trails. These connections

should be carefully made in conjunction with landowners to prevent any unintended conflicts and nuisances.

- Encourage continued public meetings at the neighborhood level with the intent of developing a neighborhood master plan. This next level of analysis is necessary to better define neighborhood boundaries, identify residents' goals for their neighborhood, determine desirable pedestrian linkages, and to identify the theme that will direct design guidelines for future development and redevelopment.
- Where appropriate and only after continued discussions with residents of McKownville, encourage higher density development here and in other developed neighborhoods to take advantage of public transportation, the availability of both essential and non-essential services/products and a pedestrian environment that provides linkages to shopping, recreation, and cultural resources.

Transportation recommendations specific to this planning area include the following:

- Use streetscaping, medians and other traffic calming methods to design a gateway to the community.
- Provide an efficient and safe crossing of Route 20 at the entrance to the SUNY campus. At a minimum this should include a pedestrian controlled signal and crosswalk. Consideration should be given to the use of a pedestrian median to shorten the distance of travel that would encourage use of this area. The appropriate method of crossing should be identified as part of the corridor beautification/pedestrian plan.
- Provide sidewalks and safe crossing points on Fuller Road to support the heavy pedestrian traffic from residential neighborhoods and the University to Stuyvesant Plaza.
- Add a sidewalk along McKown Road and a safe crossing of Western Avenue at McKown Road and Norwood Street to facilitate access between residential areas of McKownville and Abele Park off Schoolhouse Road.
- Provide safe pedestrian access to the CDTA bus stops on Western Avenue.
- Investigate upgrading the recreation potential of the McKownville Reservoir by adding pedestrian access.
- Upgrade storm drainage in the areas, both along the Krum Kill downstream from the Reservoir, and within the residential neighborhoods north of Western Avenue.

E.3 Westmere

As the suburban ring moved outward, Westmere was the next neighborhood to evolve. Similar to McKownville's pattern of development, homes first built up along the Route 20 frontage and larger lots were later subdivided to create the neighborhood. Housing stock at the core of this planning area is 40+ years old with more recent housing radiating outward. As shown on Figure 17, the grid