University at Albany
Department of Geography & Planning
Graduate Planning Studio Fall 2005

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A Crossroads in American Cultural and Military History

At a Crossroads in its Own History
## Population 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town of Fort Edward</td>
<td>6,330</td>
<td>5,892</td>
<td>-6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Fort Edward</td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>59,330</td>
<td>61,042</td>
<td>+2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>17,999,778</td>
<td>18,976,457</td>
<td>+5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


## Per Capita Income 1989-1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town, Fort Edward</td>
<td>$10,639</td>
<td>$17,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village, Fort Edward</td>
<td>10,521</td>
<td>17,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>12,221</td>
<td>17,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>16,501</td>
<td>23,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town, Fort Edward</td>
<td>$30,766</td>
<td>$41,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village, Fort Edward</td>
<td>29,390</td>
<td>39,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>32,473</td>
<td>43,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>39,741</td>
<td>51,691</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Median Home Value 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town, Fort Edward</td>
<td>$63,900</td>
<td>$71,400</td>
<td>+11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village, Fort Edward</td>
<td>61,800</td>
<td>68,000</td>
<td>+10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>69,900</td>
<td>78,800</td>
<td>+12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>130,400</td>
<td>147,000</td>
<td>+13.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Full Value Property Valuation
### 1998-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town, Fort Edward</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Valuation</td>
<td>$159,389,454</td>
<td>$172,675,035</td>
<td>+8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Val.</td>
<td>$27,050</td>
<td>$29,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Village, Fort Edward</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Valuation</td>
<td>$87,103,324</td>
<td>$89,748,297</td>
<td>+3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Val.</td>
<td>$24,460</td>
<td>$25,203</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Results of Survey of 568 Town Residents

Best Aspects of the Town
- Small town rural and scenic character
- Historic quality
- Safe atmosphere
- Geographic location

Worst Aspects
- Truck traffic
- Lack of businesses
- Poor Main Street aesthetic quality
- Poor road conditions

Survey conducted by the Town of Fort Edward and its Master Plan Advisory Committee
Additional Economic Challenges Faced by Fort Edward

- Multi-year dredging operations that will generate additional truck traffic on local roads
- Negative economic impact due to interruption of pleasure craft traffic
- Negative public image associated with being the center for toxic waste clean-up
The Tasks Given to the Studio

- Assist in developing a tourism strategy built around the history and culture of the region

- Focus on historic sites, parks, trails, greenways and street links through the Village of Fort Edward

- Put forward proposals for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of the train station, enhanced Visitor and Heritage Center facilities, and for related business promotion, parking, campsites, boat launches, etc.

- Incorporate a fiscal impact analysis of the future development of Rogers Island to assist the Town and Village in assessing the long term financial benefits of investing in tourism development.
Fort Edward’s Strategic Location

Part of or close to a number of significant Heritage Areas:
- Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area
- NYS Canal System (Erie Canalway National Heritage Area)
- Lakes-to-Locks Passage

NYS Revolutionary War Heritage Trails
- NY Independence Trail
- Revolutionary War Trail
- Henry Knox Cannon Trail
Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
## Historic/ Cultural Sites Within 75 miles of Fort Edward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saratoga Battlefield</td>
<td>Stillwater, NY</td>
<td>24 miles</td>
<td>148,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYS Military Museum</td>
<td>Saratoga Springs, NY</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Ticonderoga</td>
<td>Ticonderoga, NY</td>
<td>49 miles</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Van Buren National Historic Site</td>
<td>Kinderhook, NY</td>
<td>72 miles</td>
<td>14,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubbardton Battlefield</td>
<td>Hubbardton, VT</td>
<td>42 miles</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennington Battlefield</td>
<td>Grafton, NY</td>
<td>60 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford Historic Museum</td>
<td>Waterford, NY</td>
<td>43 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Cottage State Historic Site</td>
<td>Wilton, NY</td>
<td>11 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillwater Blockhouse</td>
<td>Stillwater, NY</td>
<td>24 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Schuyler House</td>
<td>Schuylerville, NY</td>
<td>13 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skenesborough Museum</td>
<td>Whitehall, NY</td>
<td>24 miles</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary War Cemetery</td>
<td>Salem, NY</td>
<td>23 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry Hill</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>53 miles</td>
<td>3,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luykas Van Alen House</td>
<td>Kinderhook, NY</td>
<td>72 miles</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Broeck</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>53 miles</td>
<td>5,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort William Henry</td>
<td>Lake George, NY</td>
<td>16 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort George</td>
<td>Lake George, NY</td>
<td>16 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site</td>
<td>Fort Hunter, NY</td>
<td>56 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.S Slater</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>53 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watervliet Arsenal Museum</td>
<td>Watervliet, NY</td>
<td>49 miles</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown Point State Historic Site</td>
<td>Crown Point, NY</td>
<td>64 miles</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Regional Cultural Attractions

- **Mass MOCA**
  North Adams, MA
  - 94,000 visitors

- **Saratoga Performing Arts Center**
  Saratoga Springs, NY

- **The Hyde Collection**
  Glens Falls, NY
Research on Spending By Cultural Heritage Visitors

2004 Survey of Tourists in the Capital-Saratoga Region:

- Average age 47
- Average income $84,000
- Average trip: 1.7 days
- Average daily expenditure: $85

Findings of study of visitors to heritage sites in the Hudson River Valley:

- Visitors spent, on average, $237 per party, per trip

Dr. Ann Davis, Director of the Marist Collage Bureau of Economic Research
Characteristics of Visitors to Heritage Sites

- 90% come with their families
- 55% spend nights away from home
- 58% are employed full-time
- 64% are visiting the site for the first time

National Trust for Historic Preservation
Transportation Network

- **Average Daily Traffic**
  - I-87 – 44,000
  - SR 197 – 8,529
  - SR 4 – 16,180

- **Amtrak passengers (2005)**
  - On – 2,981
  - Off – 3,168

- **Number of pleasure vessels (2005)**
  - Lock C-7 – 1,758
  - Lock C-8 – 1,661
Sites of Historic Interest

State and National Register Historic Sites
- Rogers Island
- St James Episcopal Church
- Wing-Northup House
- Delaware and Hudson Railroad Station
- Old Fort House
- Old Champlain Canal
- Fort Miller Reform Church Complex

Historic Markers
- North East Bastion of Old Fort Edward
- Great Carrying Place
- Remains of Old Moat
- Fort Edward
- The Smythe House
- Tobias Van Veghten
- Jane McCrea Burial Site
A Cultural Heritage Tourism Strategy for Fort Edward

- Rogers Rangers / Special Operations Museum
- Archaeological Resource Center
Mission: “...to collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret significant historical property related to the history of special operations in the U.S. Army, including the Special Forces and Civil Affairs branches, the Ranger Regiment, the functional areas of Psychological Operations and Aviation, and its predecessor organizations from the American colonial period to the present.”

Annual visitors ranges from 37,000 to 59,000

Focuses primarily on World War II to present
Additional Recommendations for Rogers Island

- Preserve and develop the southern portion of the island (south of the railroad) as a local and regional environmental amenity.
Link Rogers Island to surrounding landmarks

To capture the economic spin-off benefits from Rogers Island, the town needs to create, reinforce and link Rogers Island to surrounding landmarks and nodes of activity.
Use historic preservation as a catalyst for reinvestment and economic development.

The Historic Railroad Station/Freight House, taken together, represent an important node that can anchor preservation efforts.

- Complete renovation of Train Station and open it to the public (estimated cost: $75,000-100,000)
- Sublet small portion to concession to sell newspaper, coffee, bagels, etc.
- Install better directional signage to Village.
Historic Freight House

- Restore Freight House estimated cost: $275,000

- The Possibilities...
  - Exhibition Space
    - Transportation history
    - Dredging-related / environmental
    - Local and regional history
  - Display historic rail equipment
  - Meeting Space
  - Store dredging-related documents

- Relocate Waste Management facility to allow site improvements
  - Farmers Market
  - Expanded parking and landscaping
The Old High School is a signature building that contributes to the identity of Fort Edward

- Its central location makes it a key node in the community
- Adaptive reuse is a cost efficient alternative to new construction
- Rehabilitate for exhibition and/or office space

The Possibilities...
- Visitors/Information Center
- Environmental Research Center
- Municipal office space
Revitalize and Improve Appearance of Commercial Core

- Gain certified local government status (complete historic building inventory)
- Establish a historic preservation commission - create a historic preservation ordinance and district
- Invest in rehabilitation and façade improvements to back-end of buildings facing yacht basin
- Encourage infill development
Make More Productive Use of Canal Corporation Property

- Develop site as a public amenity
- Construct bicycle and pedestrian bridge connecting Rogers Island and the site
Improve Vehicular, Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

- Replace SR 197 Bridge
- Provide 10 ft. wide pedestrian and bicycle lanes on both sides
Transportation Enhancements

- Reinforce and improve East Street corridor
- Improve trail linkages
- Create a walkable environment
Industrial Park

Possible alternative access route

Construction access route

Post construction access route
Implementation Strategy

- Involve the public
- Foster Village and Town cooperation
- Increase local capacity by hiring community development specialist
- Develop a marketing strategy
  - Create logo
  - Improve website
  - Develop walking tour brochure
  - Promote Fort Edward as a hub for heritage tourism
Capitalize on the Dredging Project

- Encourage environmental researchers to base their research in Fort Edward
  - Possible EPA research facility (?)
- Accommodate visitors and students interested in studying the PCB removal process. Prepare and display models depicting the clean-up process
The End