



Place Branding Amherst:
an identity proposal for pedestrian & vehicular signage

Alex Bitterman, PhD
Adam Blair
Melanie Shorey
Kyle Smith
Cameron Worczak



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All

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

The Town of Amherst, in addition to its need for a comprehensive infrastructure for walking, needs for a more cohesive and recognizable identity that can be deployed throughout the Town. Traveling through the Town is difficult even for residents familiar with it, as it becomes difficult to discern one hamlet from the next, or when they have crossed the Town border. Moreover, it is challenging for visitors and guests in the Town to develop an accurate spatial image, relying on only main thoroughfares, shops, and schools to identify their location.

Place branding, in its most basic sense, uses graphic and environmental design to attract visitors and tourists, businesses, and to community a sense of “place” in a cohesive and desirable manner to all. Place branding is not only used as a vehicle for public relations but is also used to implement wayfinding and place marking. Place branding can, for example, be applied to a transportation system to make the journey through a city, town, or village less confusing.

Place branding does not consist of simply changing a town logo or writing a new catchphrase, but rather involves a collaborative and holistic approach to creating an identity for place, utilizing all physical and digital mediums that a resident or tourist might come across in their car, on foot, or on the Internet.



INTRODUCTION.

This publication outlines one design proposal for and identity for the Town of Amherst, New York.

Undergraduate students in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Buffalo School of Architecture & Planning Amherst Branding Practicum undertook study the place brand and identity for the Town of Amherst, along with Dr. Alex Bitterman, an recognized place branding researcher and scholar. This book is a result of that effort.

Place branding is a relatively new phenomenon with questionable efficacy. Graphically communicating a diverse place is a difficult endeavor, as the notion of place varies among the stakeholders of any community. Neighborhood pride, historic hamlets, and a sense of belonging to other distinct areas within a larger town further challenges the ability of a place brand to accurately convey an accurate notion of what a place “is.”

Despite this, the demand for place brands in cities, towns, and villages around the world continues to grow. Proponents of place branding note that consistent signage, street furniture, and other amenities used to convey a place brand help not to establish a sense of place, but to send the message of custodial care; the sense that something is being done to improve and celebrate community with a geographic boundary.

The proposal put forth in this publication is one approach to branding and enhancing the identity of the Town of Amherst. Undoubtedly, there are many equally appropriate approaches, the following proposal is the one that we feel is the most appropriate for the *future* of the Town of Amherst. Through this publication, we hope to underscore the positive benefits of a place brand for Amherst, and to stimulate a debate about it amongst all stakeholders in the Town.

Facing Page: Typical Amherst commercial setting

Image by Eric Poniatowski



A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMHERST.

The Town of Amherst, New York began as a small pioneer settlement in the late 1700s. Settlers chose Amherst because of the natural power source created by Ellicott Creek Falls. The town's first building, called The Evans House was built behind the falls in 1799.

The earliest immigrants were mostly German farmers and Irishmen who came to work on the construction of the Erie Canal. The early pioneer era was interrupted by a large American army encampment in the Village of Williamsville during the War of 1812. During this war, nearby Buffalo was burned and many of the homeless moved toward Amherst.

Following the War of 1812, Amherst continued to be a prosperous farming community, producing grain, fruit, vegetables, and a variety of livestock. There are still over 200 British and American soldiers buried in the town's War of 1812 Cemetery. Horses were bred to competitively race in the nearby racetracks. Much of Amherst's agriculture served a rapidly growing Buffalo.

Amherst was officially created by the State of New York on April 10, 1818 with a population of only 768 residents. The town gets its name from Lord Jeffrey Amherst, a British soldier who earned his fame during the French and Indian War.

Amherst continued to grow and flourish throughout the nineteenth century largely due to the success of its neighbor, Buffalo and those traveling along the Erie Canal. It naturally began attracting new people towards activity centers which eventually became hamlets like Eggertsville, Swormville and Getzville. In 1900, the population of the town had grown to 4,200 people. The introduction of the railroads brought building materials for the housing boom of the 1920s.

Trolleys and trains replaced carriages and allowed people to escape the city. Wealthy people came first, followed next by those with more modest income.

Today Amherst has become a major economic, educational and medical hub for the Western New York region. Daemen College, ECC, and SUNY at Buffalo continue to produce graduates who make up a large portion of the region's workforce. Amherst's healthy character of business climate has also attracted numerous major corporate headquarters and commercial investment.

Facing Page: Seven-Years-War officer
Lord Jeffrey Amherst

Image courtesy of Amherst Museum:
<http://www.amherstmuseum.org/history.htm>

1797

Holland Land Company Purchases
Western NY Land from Senecas

1811

Williamsville Water Mill
on Spring Street purchased

1811

First building in Eggertsville,
Main and Eggert.

1812

American soldiers temporarily
settle in Williamsville

1818

Town of Amherst
Officially created by New York

1832

Oziel Smith builds
The Eagle House

1850

Village of Williamsville
is incorporated

1854

First business in Getzville opens

1879

First Issue of Amherst Bee

1902

Begin

1799

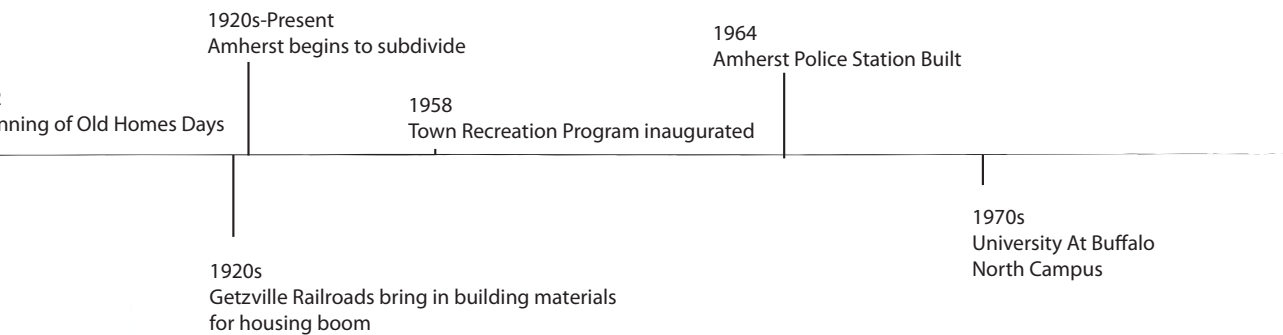
Scott/Evans house built.
First home in Erie County

1808

Amherst holds first
town meeting

1840s

Snydersville (Snyder)
begins to form at Main and Harlem



CURRENT CONDITIONS.

Population

The Town of Amherst grew in population from 1990 to the year 2000 from 111,725 persons to 116,510 persons (2000 U.S. Census Bureau). The population change from 1990-2000 resulted in a 4% increase. The Town of Amherst has decreased in total population from 116,510 people in 2000 to 113,908 people in 2007 (2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey). The change from 2000 to 2007 resulted in a 2% decrease in population.

Total Housing Units

The number of total housing units in Amherst has increased from 43,000 units in 1990 to 45,300 units in the year 2000 (American Factfinder 1990, 2000). The amount of total housing units in the Town of Amherst increased from 1990 to 2000 by 5%. From the year 2000 the Town of Amherst is documented as having received an additional 3,612 total housing units, bring the total number to 48,912 units in 2007 (American Factfinder 2000, American Community Survey, 2007). In the Town of Amherst, the amount of housing units from the year 2000 to 2007 increased by 8%.

Median Household Income

The median household income may seem as though it is increasing from 1990 to the year 2000 when the dollar amounts in the United States Bureau of Census are considered. The median household income reported in 1990 was \$41,466, while the median household income in the year 2000 was \$55,427 (American Factfinder, 1990, 2000). When adjusted for inflation using the Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator, these values when converted to 2009 dollars, the median income decreases.

Between the years 1990 to 2000 the median household income drops from \$70,958 dollars to \$70,596 when calculating for inflation for 2009 (CPI Calculator, American Factfinder 1990, 2000). The median household income from 2000 to 2007 is reported as increasing from \$55,427 to \$62,941 (American Factfinder 2000; American Community Survey, 2007). In 2009 dollars the median household income shows a decrease of \$70,596 dollars in 2000 to \$66,248 dollars in 2007 (CPI Calculator, American Factfinder 2000; American Community Survey, 2007).

Median Housing Unit Value

The median housing unit value for owner occupied housing in The Town of Amherst in 1990 was reported as \$102,100 and \$120,000 in the year 2000 (American Factfinder, 1990, 2000). In 2009 dollars the median housing unit value is actually decreasing from \$174,717 dollars in 1990 to \$152,840 in the year 2000 (CPI calculator, American Factfinder 1990,2000). In 2009 dollars the median housing unit value dropped by 12.5% from 1990 to 2000. From the years 2000 to 2007 the median housing unit value is reported as changing from \$120,000 to \$162,000 (American Factfinder, 2000; American Community Survey, 2007).

In 2009 dollars the change in median housing unit value is increasing from \$152,840 in 2000 to \$170,723 in 2007 (CPI calculator; American Factfinder 2000; American Community Survey, 2007). The median housing unit value in the Town of Amherst increased by 12% from 2000 to 2007.

Median Gross Rent

The median gross rent of the Town of Amherst is reported as \$504 in 1990 and \$681 in 2000 (American Factfinder, 1990, 2000). In 2009 dollars the median gross rent increased from \$863 dollars to \$867 from 1990 to 2000 (CPI calculator, American Factfinder, 1990, 2000).

The median gross rent in 2009 dollars shows a half of a percent increase, which is almost negligible. For the Town of Amherst, the median gross rent was reported as changing from \$681 in 2000 and \$745 dollars in 2007 (American Factfinder, 2000; American Community Survey, 2007). In 2009 dollars the median gross rent is shown to decrease by almost 10%, going from \$867 in 2000 to \$784 in 2007 (CPI calculator, American Factfinder, 2000; American Community Survey, 2007).

Median Year Structure Built

The median year in which the housing units were built during 1990 was 1965 (American factfinder, 1990). The median year to which housing units were built during the year 2000 was 1967 (American Factfinder, 2000). The median year in which housing units were built in 2007 was 1969 (American Community Survey).

Travel Time to Work

The mode travel time to work for the people of the Town of Amherst was between 20-24 minutes for 1990, 2000, and the year 2007 (American Factfinder, 1990, 2000; American Community Survey).

Racial Composition

The racial distribution during 1990 for the Town of Amherst was 93% white, 3% African American, and 4% other races (1990 U.S. Census Bureau). In the year 2000, Amherst was 90% white, 4% African American, and 5% other races (2000 U.S. Census Bureau). In the year 2007, the racial composition of the Town of Amherst was 82% white, 6% African American, and 9% other races (2007 American Community Survey). From 1990 to 2007 the white population has been decreasing, the African American population has been increasing by 1% each decennial census and the other races have been increasing as well.

PRECEDENTS.

The Precedents we examined are a collection of brand concepts, brand implementations, as well as experimental wayfinding systems and performances.

We found that in order to successfully develop an identity for Amherst that there had to be an understanding of the varying processes and methods of inquiry involved in branding. Through this we were able to gain inspiration and a critical knowledge of what should be developed for Amherst.

As a result of studying these precedents on both a critical and visual level we were able to approach the Amherst branding process from a broad and diverse basis. This process was inclusive of developing Amherst's identity and translating that into physical systems of pedestrian and vehicular signage.

PRECEDENTS: THE PINK TRAIL.

Artist's Statement:

Typeradio and Bruno Setola collaborated with University of Applied Science directed by Prof Heike Grebin, Elvira Barriga and students of Prof Henning Wagenbreth, Universitat der kunste Berlin on a special event called Sweet Sixteen.

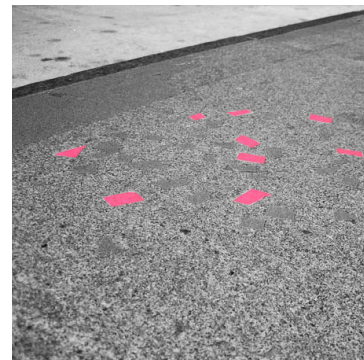
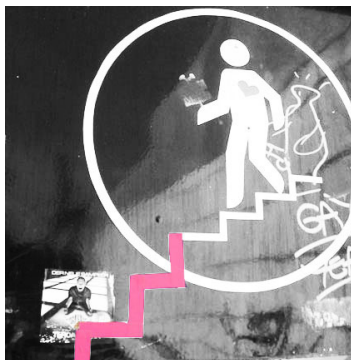
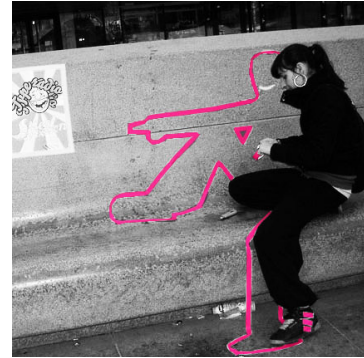
For this event, I directed a dedicated team of students from Hamburg to create a pink trail showing the way to Typo Berlin visitors to find M12, the gallery where a big typeradio after party was being organized.

The Pink Trail can be seen in the July 2007 Creative Review.

Relevance:

As a temporary wayfinding system we looked to this project to inform us on how pedestrians interact with their environment on an instinctual basis.

This was a catalyst for creatively interpreting directional systems, for both pedestrian or vehicular traffic.



Source: brunosetola.com/post/sweet-sixteen

PRECEDENTS: NEWMARKET, ONTARIO.

The Town of New Market, Ontario with a population near that of Amherst and with similar residential, commercial, and educational institutions served as a realistic and applicable precedent for our design process.

We investigated the way in which the design firm represented Newmarket based on history and future aspirations.

More specifically we examined the process that the branding team went through. Readily available were multiple presentations which were informative of how the mindshape firm actually developed an identity strategy for New Market. These presentations detailed the process of community assets, logo concepts, and how to make their town more recognizable and known to the greater Ontario region.

We viewed this as a successful brand because of the design firm's broad examination of the Town and the subsequent creation of a town logo which is modern and recognizable.



● Focus Group Results





enjoy an
experience
breathe
easy
S
Your City
the City

E. North ST

ONE WAY

P W. North ST

ONE WAY

W. North ST
HALLS
DARK
O

NO RIGHT TURN

PRECEDENTS: GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA.

Beginning in the 1970s the city of Greenville, South Carolina undertook a revitalization of its downtown. Focusing on the city's main street they reduced the 4 traffic lanes down to 2, introduced free angled parking, and planted trees which now act as an overhead canopy. Along with this, new streetscape features were added to improve both pedestrian and traffic experiences.

More recently, Greenville embarked on establishing a brand for their city. They developed a recognizable and unique logo, new destination and traffic signage, as well as many other visual identities.

As part of developing this unique downtown Greenville has experienced an enormous growth in commercial, retail, and residential investment. The city is regularly rated as a top small city to live and work and just recently selected by *fDI Magazine* as the number one North American micro-city of the future.

Taken as a whole the City of Greenville is the most comprehensive and successful brand implementation that we examined. Their branding strategy was an example of how to develop a successful town identity along with both pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding systems. We were able to examine more so than any other precedent physical elements of design and their placement.

Although Greenville is an Urban environment, we concluded that the Town of Amherst could benefit from many of the elements they implemented. As an example, Greenville's Main Street (left) uses prominent street sign devices that accommodate subsidiary elements such as traffic signals and directional markers. This reduces roadside clutter and leaves more room on the ground for diagonal parking and pedestrian spaces.



Downtown Greenville, South Carolina
Source: Rested Traveler Photography
<http://theatolite.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/cfiles33831.jpg>

City of Greenville logo
Source: <https://jobs.greenvillesc.gov/Images/CityLogo.gif>

City of Greenville directional sign.
Source: www.greenvillesc.gov/.../images/Wayfinding1.jpg

A BRAND FOR AMHERST.

an iconographic “circle A” can be used as part of the overall logogram or separately



unique, bright color accommodates a number of materials and is visible from a distance, as well as easy to discern in a visually crowded area

bold, clear typography clearly identifies the place brand and stands out from the visual noise of the suburban streetscape

In designing a brand for the Town of Amherst, it was necessary to not only convey to residents and visitors a sense of unity, but to also portray activeness and vitality.

Because the brand will be applied to roads and right of ways as well as pedestrian and bike paths, we chose colors and shapes that would encourage residents and visitors to want to move and become active.

The color is also unique to the natural landscape, but not offensive. It is iconic and is readable from a distance. The color is easily replicated using a variety of different materials, and across a wide variety of media.

The brand is deployed across three separate areas:

1. Proposed walkway/safe routes to school system.
2. General pedestrian wayfinding signage.
3. Vehicular wayfinding signage.



This is the Walk Amherst path system diagram with views/examples of the Amherst brand applied to the pedestrian wayfinding system.

Images by Eric Poniatowski

1. WALKWAY SYSTEM

In conjunction with the Amherst Branding Practicum studio, another studio group researched and designed how Amherst could become more walkable. After surveying all pedestrian paths in the Town of Amherst, the Walk Amherst studio group rated each path and developed a design proposal which outlined a five phase implementation process to begin defining and better accommodating pedestrian paths.

With their help, this book was able to conceptualize a walking network in which to apply a special application of the Amherst brand identity to the Walk Amherst project. Most specifically looking at ways paths can be marked for clear and effective pedestrian wayfinding.

Since Amherst is the largest suburb in Western New York, this pedestrian walking network altogether is too large for the user to perceive and identify as one conglomerate system and should instead be demarcated into smaller subsidiary paths by special signage. The advantage to this is that smaller paths within a greater system help to let people know where they are in relation to their place in Amherst as a whole and within the greater path system.

By aggregating the information the Walk Amherst studio group compiled, the Amherst Branding Practicum was able to develop a diagrammatic concept consisting of smaller paths making up a larger system. To be the most functional, the paths were prioritized based on their ability to be direct in taking walkers to amenities and destinations. The signage and other unique wayfinding elements in this proposal highlight these destinations and uses to make it easy and enjoyable for walkers to use this path network.

The elements used to coordinate this system were a series of things experienced at the pedestrian scale. These include sidewalk paint with the Amherst logo, shorter bollards and tall wayfinding signs that help pedestrians know what path they are on and how far along a path they are. All the elements are holistic in that they all conform to a particular scale, color, shape, and typography consistent with the Amherst identity/brand.

To elaborate, the tall wayfinding signs are used at farther distances along each path segment; each signs showing a scale of how long the path is while also showing what point one is along the path coming from either direction. The smaller bollard type elements also mark in feet the length from the last bollard (usually 250-300ft.) and are equally spaced between the larger path signage to aid pedestrian and lead them along each path within the larger network.

SYSTEM DEMARCATION.

The taller wayfinding tool is meant to show the length of a path and where one is along it, while also relying which direction one is going after approaching at least two consecutive signs. This simple concept uses shapes, colors, and symbols to explain distance and location. As seen in the fin shaped board, there is a column of colored spheres. The number of spheres is indicative of how many miles a pathway is in its entirety. The color of the spheres is the color of the pathway the sign is on to which all other wayfinding elements will be consistent. The larger, white sphere calls out what location along the path that particular sign is.

So if the first sphere is large and white, then that sign is at the beginning of the path. If the fourth sphere down the column is large and white, then that sign is four miles down the pathway.

Along with the spheres being a representation of distance, there are symbols or letters to the left of the spheres that help to guide pedestrians in either direction of the pathway. Here the symbols are universal like the alphabet; numbers can also be used. This insures that, should someone approach the path near the middle and begin to head south, the letters would increase toward the end of the alphabet (X, Y, Z). If one were to travel north they could see after coming across two signs, which direction along the path they were going as the letters approach the beginning of the alphabet (C, B, A).

It is unlikely that these signs would be visible at their one mile increments and to further define each pathway, a series of intermediary elements are necessary. Also shown are smaller stakes or bollards that guide pedestrians in between the mile markers. They are shorter and should be spaced between 250-300 ft. apart to maximize visibility.

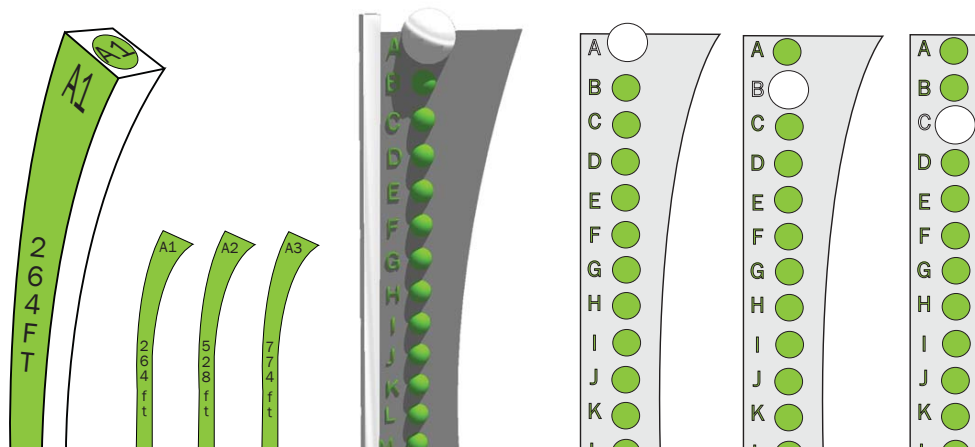
The colors of the stakes/posts will be consistent with the paths overall color identity. Each stake is labeled with a letter the way the spheres are, to indicate that one is traveling from sphere/mile marker A to B. Along with the letter, each stake/post is numbered and also given its distance in feet from the start of the pathway. These are great tools for path users and they give pedestrians a sense of distance in case they wanted to limit their walk to a particular length. This technique also ensures that these pathways are easily navigable and functional for its users.

As seen to the right a path segment was taken that is approximately 12 miles long. This path segment will need two kinds of pedestrian wayfinding. The larger signs work best to be spaced every mile. The larger signs have spheres that represent one mile. As you move from the start of the path segment you begin at A which is where the large white sphere is located. Every mile, as you approach another large sign, the large white sphere moves down the row. To reinforce a sense of direction, letters have been incorporated allowing people to understand if they are going up or down. All the spheres, which are spaced every mile, let people know how many miles there are to the path segment.

The smaller bollards or posts are used in between the large mile markers. These smaller markers are spaced every 264 feet along each mile segment. This spacing helps with visibility and also allows for an equal number within each mile. The smaller markers are labeled with a letter and a number, along with how many feet past the last marker it has been.

Pedestrian wayfinding bollards and tall signs to be applied to the WalkAmherst pedestrian path system.

Image by Melanie Shorey





A

n important part of laying out and deciding how to accommodate pedestrians with a walking path is to offer excitement and variety to encourage and promote use. Careful examination of the specific geological and topographic context is necessary to generate characteristic routes that each give options to users and can help manage a larger system. It is also important to look at the social context behind certain places in order to uphold the unique character of that place through design and implementation of the Amherst Brand and Walk Amherst Path system. No two paths are exactly the same and need their own unique qualities. On the next two pages trails or paths are shown in their context and give a sense of how it would feel to experience the complete system with all of its series of wayfinding and other elements.



In the two images top and bottom the elements of the path network can create a pedestrian environment where there exists only a small dedication for walking. Instead of sidewalks and walking being an afterthought, a well thought out wayfinding system can make people feel that they are partaking in something only meant for walkers. These elements create and high light pedestrian use on paths and sidewalks that are otherwise bare and vacant. This is an attractive and inviting technique that piques the interest of children, creates purpose and motivation for adults, and helps the visually impaired or the elderly. Sometimes these elements can present to pedestrians that there is an area with a special pathway that they may have not noticed or knew existed before.



As seen above the pedestrian path guides one along by a series of Amherst Brand bollards and sidewalk paint. These elements let cars know that this is a pedestrian space. The color is consistent within all the elements and the shape and typography of the logo used helped to let pedestrians know they are in the Walk Amherst path network and that they are on an assigned path with a particular color. The design and implementation of these elements are meant to be fun and celebratory to encourage people to walk more in Amherst.





As seen below the elements of pedestrian wayfinding will use a different color to distinguish each path. These colors were decided by the Amherst branding Practicum based on the unique and complimentary qualities. The seven that were chosen were modeled after the seven district hamlets that compose the Town of Amherst.



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a

m

h

e

r

s

t



2. PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE.

The presented system of pedestrian signage is intended to serve as a way-finding device for pedestrians.

The plan is to implement a series of fixed, pedestrian-oriented directional and informational signage for the entire Town of Amherst. The goals were to create a signage system that displays cohesive, logical and functional wayfinding information visually to enhance the pedestrian experience throughout the town. The use of the town's new "Amherst Brand" will be further perpetuated through its inclusion within the system.

The signage needed to be designed on a pedestrian scale due largely to the fact that pedestrians tend to approach these types of signs more closely and spend much longer reading them. This also allowed for a much larger amount of information to be included. However it was the designer's decision that simplicity would be paramount and consistent with the new, clean identity of the Town of Amherst.

Feature:

The signage design features the use of removable plaques on the faces.

Reason:

It was important to consider that although the signs are likely to be affixed to their location, the information presented on them needed not be as permanent. The removable plaques featured on the design of the signage allows for continuous modification to occur when necessary.

Feature:

The signs are predominantly a neutral grey color with prominent features appearing more brightly and with higher contrast. The Amherst "Circle A" or "Script Logo" will always appear in the same color.

Reason:

Whether viewed at close-range or long-distance the signs needed to be clear and legible. The information should also be accurate and intuitively obvious to all users. They are free of visual clutter. Neutral grey was chosen for its modern look and non-obtrusive qualities, while the "Amherst green" was chosen for its uniqueness and the clean and active associations it carries with it while representing Amherst.

Feature:

The signs are of a "modern" design style.

Reason:

The design of Amherst's new signage needed to be consistent with the proposed new identity. Because the signage may be used in a variety of different ways in numerous locations throughout the town, visual consistency is absolutely essential. Because of their individuality and custom design qualities, the signage will be easily recognized as Amherst's regardless of their location, use of plaques or condition.

Feature:

Signage is done at "pedestrian scale."

Reason:

All information on the signs is presented at or below eye-level (5'10" and lower), and no lower than 24" from the ground so it can be easily read. They are designed such that they are recognized as being wayfinding signs when seen from a distance and are useful when viewed up close. The signs are pedestrian scaled also in that they represent information and destinations that are realistically accessible on foot.



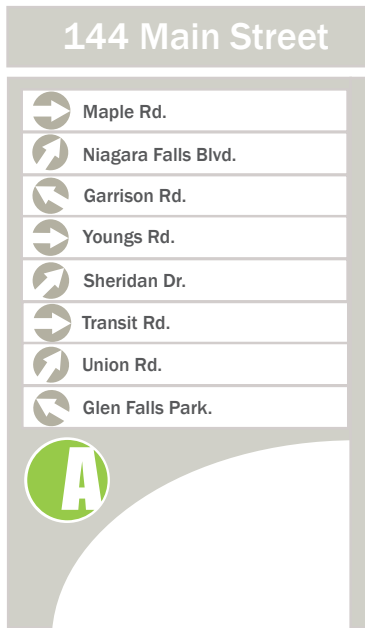
Design 1

Features an arched top enclosing the Amherst A logo. The uppermost text clearly displays the location of the sign. A color coded system points toward neighboring hamlets or perhaps towards other nearby points of interest. The bottom of the sign is notched for the purpose of crime prevention and increased public safety.



Design 2

Features the “Amherst” logo atop a rectangular bodied sign. The logo itself is cutout and is semi-translucent. The body of the sign features removable plaques that can be interchanged easily and to suit whichever purposes necessitate them. They can be changed for temporary events or can be removed entirely as well. The bottom of the sign is also designed in such a way that prevents crime and increases public safety.



Design 3

Features a face-plaque that prominently displays the location. The rectangular body of the sign also features removable plaques that can be changed easily and at any time. They may also be modified to show distances to destinations as well as direction. The “Amherst A” is placed more discretely and toward the bottom. The base of the sign is stylishly cut for both aesthetic as well as public safety purposes.



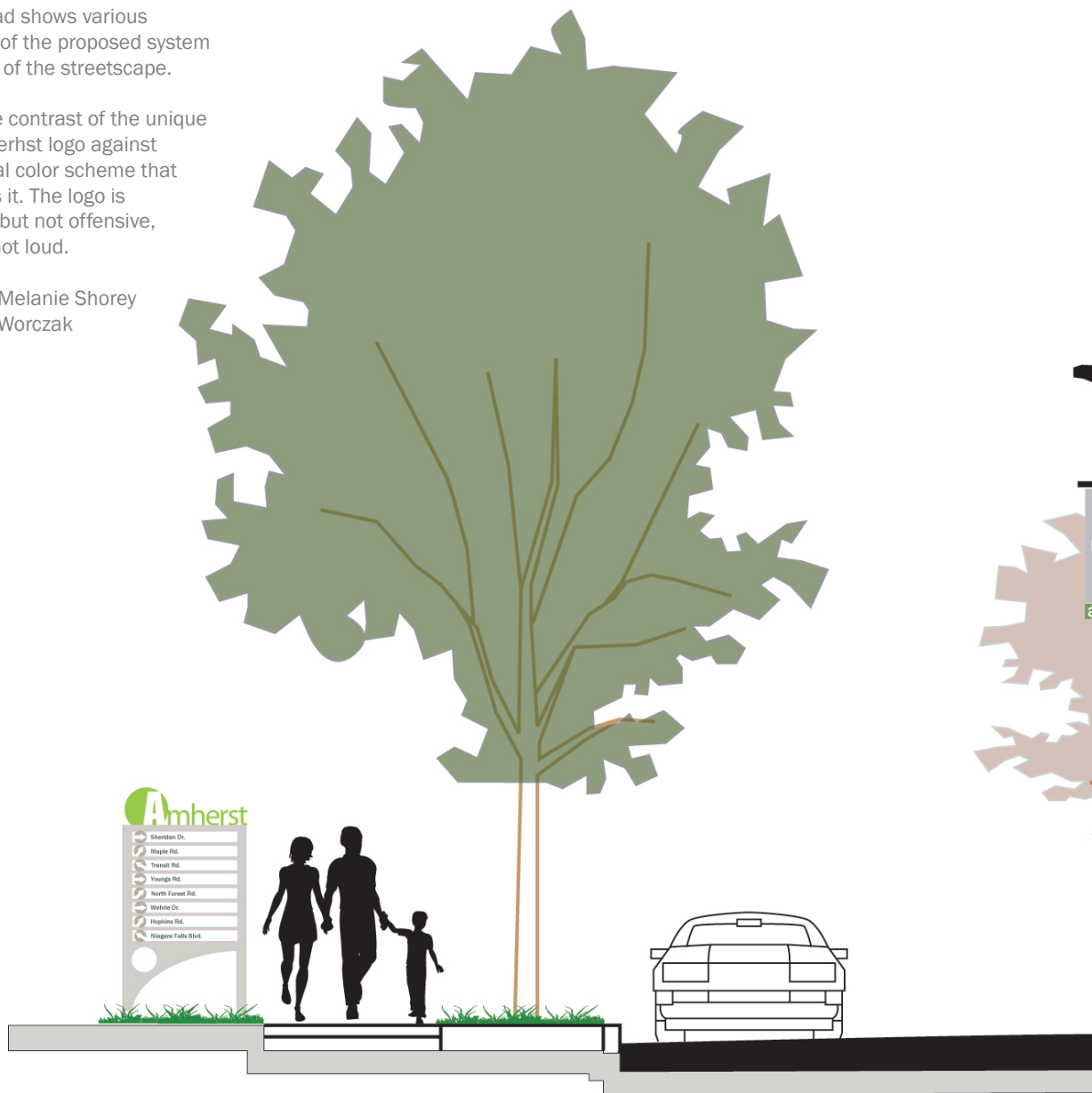
Design 4

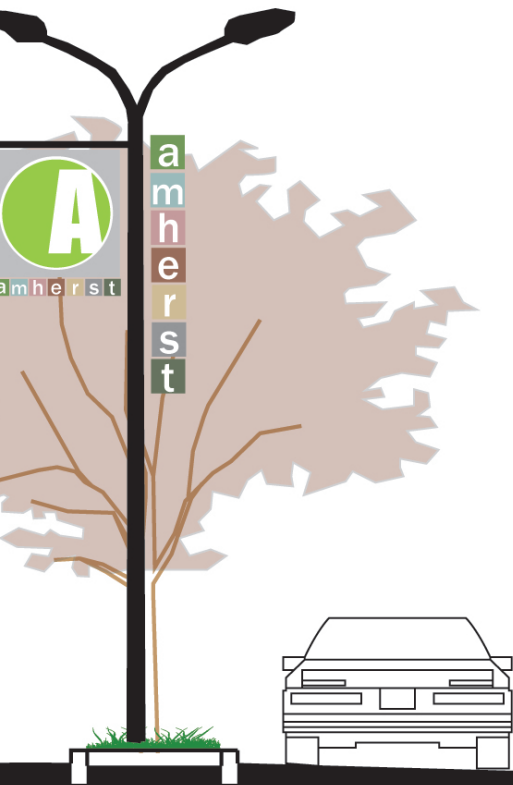
Features a unique design. Due to its inclusion of an Amherst map and list of points of interest, the sign is much larger. The top is adorned with a multi-color themed arrangement of plaques that spell “amherst” in lowercase letters. The destination points are color coded as well and point towards the hamlets or major thoroughfares throughout Amherst. The bottom is angularly notched for aesthetics and public safety.

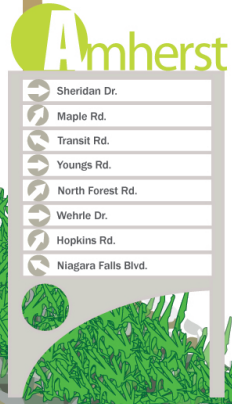
This spread shows various elements of the proposed system in context of the streetscape.

Notice the contrast of the unique green Amerhst logo against the natural color scheme that surrounds it. The logo is noticable but not offensive, bold but not loud.

Image by Melanie Shorey and Cam Worczak







The following pages feature images of the four proposed signage designs placed within familiar Amherst locations. The images aim to show the high aesthetic quality of the signage and practicality of the signs when placed in locations where they're most necessary. It's easy to see how the signage lends itself positively both to the new Amherst identity and the surrounding areas themselves. The new signage will undoubtedly help to improve the pedestrian experience within Amherst by connecting points of interest, pedestrian walkways, important thoroughfares etc., as well as to perpetuate the town's new identity.



St Peter and Paul is one of Amherst's most recognizable pieces of ecclesiastical architecture and can be seen from numerous points across the town's landscape. By placing pedestrian

signage here and in locations like this it can be guaranteed that the signage will be seen and experienced by the numerous individuals who encounter the building each day.

Image by Cameron Warczak



Locations like the one seen above at Main Street and Lafayette Blvd offer pedestrians a place to stop, relax and perhaps familiarize themselves with their location within Amherst. The stone,

pedestrian archway also helps to reinforce the pedestrian-scale and remind walkers that they are within an environment which is walkable and pedestrian friendly. These locations have a natural

tendency to attract walkers and should certainly be considered when planning where the new signage belongs.

Image by Cameron Warczak



It's very important to include pedestrian signage within areas of multiple points of interest within close proximity. The signage above is shown on Main Street in front of the Williamsville Branch

Public Library. Here, Island Park, Amherst Town Hall, The Red Mill, The Eagle House, and Glen Park are mere steps away but may be difficult to find by a pedestrian who is unfamiliar with the surrounding

area without the assistance of signage.

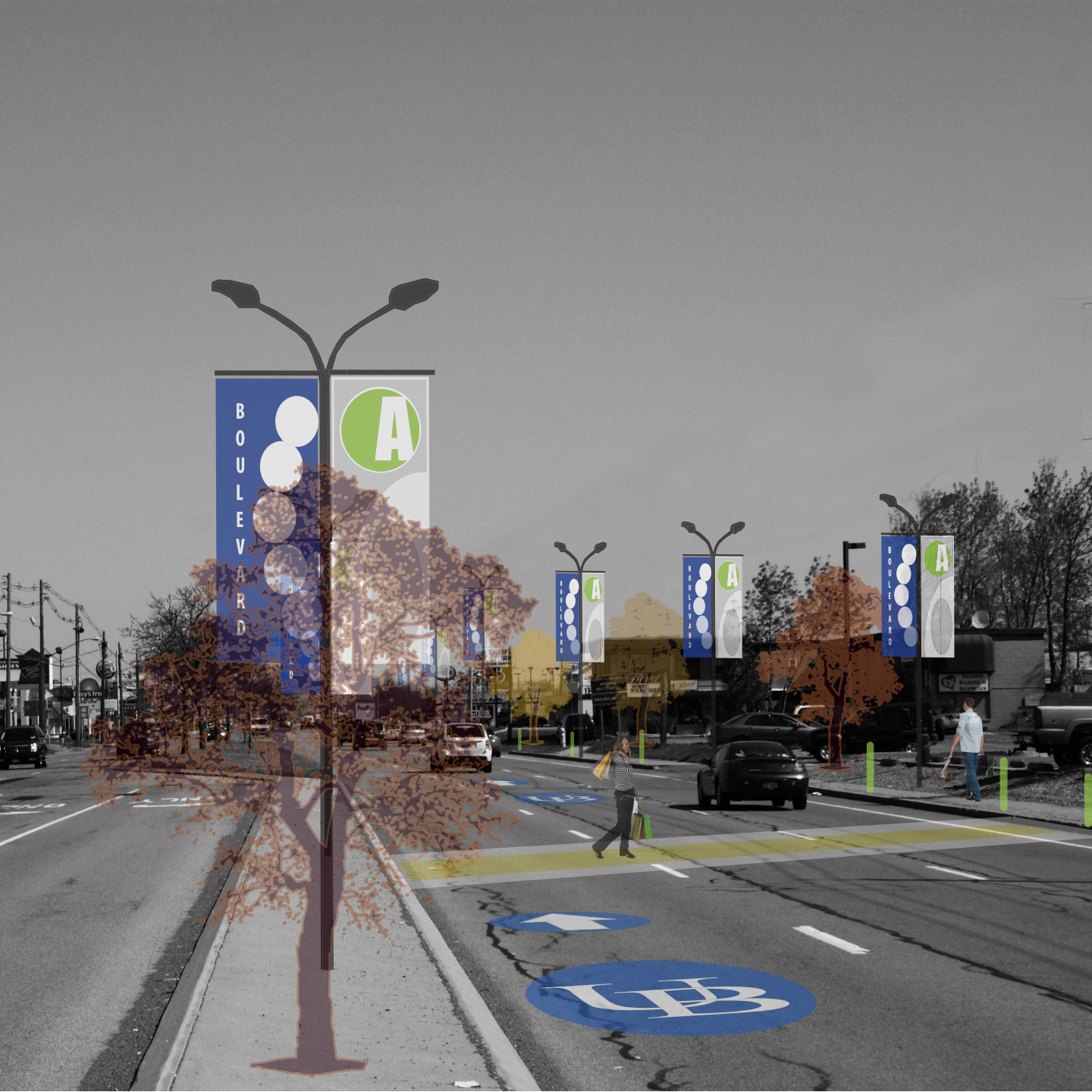
Image by Cameron Warczak



The image above shows signage on E. Spring Street in Williamsville near the Red Mill. Signage is important in locations like this because it offers pedestrians the opportunity to venture off busy

streets like Main, and gives them the opportunity to explore the town's natural features and historic landmarks without the distraction of automobiles and noise.

Image by Cameron Warczak



3. VEHICULAR SIGNAGE

Developing vehicular oriented signage for the Town of Amherst that was consistent with the Identity and brand was a challenge on two parts. The first being that Amherst is a town made up of a number of distinct commercial, residential, and educational institutions. The second being that along with our decision to maintain one unified identity for the Town of Amherst we also had the challenge of maintaining each individual hamlet's presence within the broader context of Amherst.

To solve these issues we designed signage to operate on several degrees of variation . The primary distinction between signage has become scale and style. We have found that what will work aesthetically and functionally for one area such as Niagara Falls Boulevard will not work for Main Street in the Village of Williamsville. What we are suggesting then is the willingness on the part of the town to invest in a fairly wide variety of signage.

The three primary systems of signage that we recommend will be referred to as *periphery/gateway* signage, *village & focal area* signage, and *residential corridor* signage.



Above: Typical Amherst Streetscape, Before
Facing Page: Typical Amherst Streetscape After application of vehicular signage.
Images by: Kyle Smith

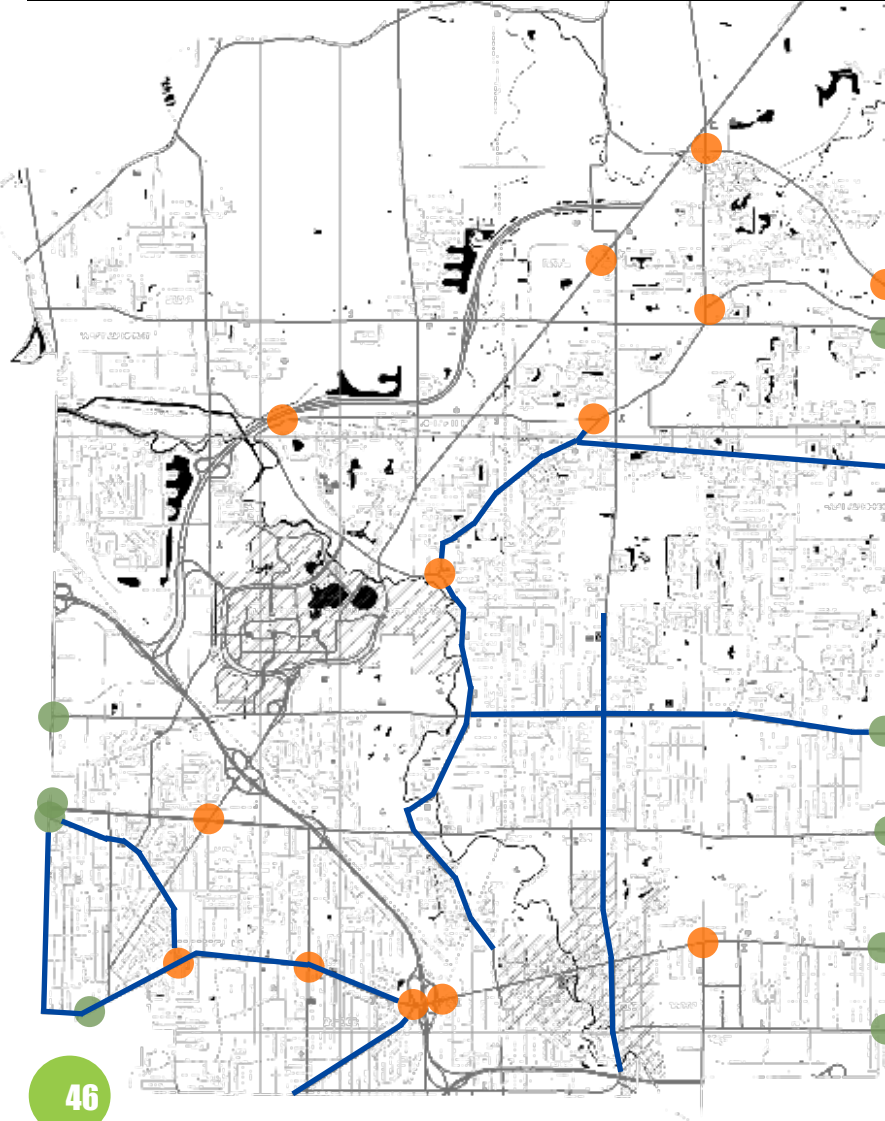
The signage developed will be able to accommodate a number of subsidiary systems. This hierarchy will display information regarding specific destinations (such as the University at Buffalo), interstates and highways, and other important wayfinding devices. The benefits of this system will be a less cluttered and a more prominent display of pertinent information. Along with this subsidiary system on physical

signage, techniques such as placing symbols directly on the pavement can aid in directing vehicular traffic to Amherst's wide variety of destinations (Universities/colleges, parks, etc.)

Lastly, the location of each of these signage systems are critical to the effectiveness. A sign phasing strategy has been developed which recommends a number of justifiable new signage locations.

vehicular signage

phasing:



The vehicular signage phasing system developed is inclusive of three types of signage: Periphery & Gateway, Village & Focal Areas, and lastly Residential Corridors. The different systems are numbered by priority and desirability, while the map (left) shows feasible locations.

The rationale behind implementing the signage in three phases is for both practical and aesthetic reasons. Those areas deemed a periphery or gateway will potentially receive the most vehicular exposure to outside residents. Because of this, the signage should be prominent, inviting, and a top priority in order to bring people into Amherst for retail and educational purposes. Those areas deemed residential corridors are areas which serve as arteries to a wide variety of neighborhoods. This is being considered low priority as it will potentially receive the lowest exposure and is primarily aesthetic.

The system operates based on community priorities and potential return on the Town's investment.

1

Periphery & Gateway

At present, the Town of Amherst lacks an effective visual tool to signal to traffic that they are entering the town. Significant arteries on the periphery of Amherst such as Niagara Falls boulevard on the West and Transit Rd. to the east provide opportunities to create visually stimulating environments that welcome visitors and residents.

2

Village & Focal Areas

Amherst has within its borders a number of distinct commercial, educational, and retail locations. Enhancing the identity of these locations through traffic-oriented signage will create for residents and visitors a greater understanding of where they are where they've been before. Creating this lasting visual impression aims to enhance these businesses and institutions.

3

Residential Corridors

In the last phase of implementation, residential corridors offer a more personalized experience of Amherst. For residents, these unique systems aim to establish a greater sense of individuality for their neighborhoods while maintaining the overall identity of Amherst.





After



49
Before

Images Previous Pages: Amherst vehicular signage elements and Amherst intersection before and after installation.

Images by: Kyle Smith

COLOPHON.

This book was set in Franklin Gothic Book, a typeface designed by Morris Fuller Benton in 1902 and issued by the American Type Founders in 1905.

The book was designed by Adam P. Blair on an Apple MacBook using Adobe InDesign CS4.

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