

## TOWN OF CANANDAIGUA

### **Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment**

Use the following questions as a guide to help determine the appropriate level of VIA documentation. This questionnaire assists the VIA preparer (i.e. Landscape Architect) in estimating the probable visual impacts of a proposed project on the environment and in understanding the degree and breadth of the possible visual issues. The goal is to develop a suitable document strategy that is thorough, concise and defensible. Enter the project name and consider each of the ten questions below.

#### **PROJECT NAME:**

#### **CHANGE TO VISUAL ENVIRONMENT**

***1. Will the project result in a noticeable change in the physical characteristics of the existing environment?***

*Consider all project components and construction impacts - both permanent and temporary, including landform changes, structures, noise barriers, vegetation removal, railing, signage, and contractor activities.*

***2. Will the project complement or contrast with the visual character desired by the community?***

Evaluate the scale and extent of the project features compared to the surrounding scale of the community. Is the project likely to give an urban appearance to an existing rural, suburban or agricultural community? Do you anticipate that the change will be viewed by the public as positive or negative? Research planning documents, or talk with local planners and community representatives to understand the type of visual environment local residents envision for their community.

***3. What level of local concern is there for the types of project features and construction impacts that are proposed?***

Certain project improvements can be of special interest to local citizens, causing a heightened level of public concern, and requiring a more focused visual analysis.

***4. Will the project require redesign or realignment to minimize adverse change or will mitigation, such as landscape or architectural treatment, likely be necessary?***

Consider the type of changes caused by the project ,i.e., can undesirable views be screened or will desirable views be permanently obscured so a redesign should be considered?

***5. Will this project, when seen collectively with other projects, result in an aggregate adverse change (cumulative impacts) in overall visual quality or character?***

Identify any projects in the area that have been constructed in recent years and those currently planned for future construction. The window of time and the extent of area applicable to possible cumulative impacts should be based on a reasonable anticipation of the viewing public's perception.

## **VIEWER SENSITIVITY**

### ***1. What is the potential that the project proposal will be controversial within the community, or opposed by any organized group?***

This can be researched initially by talking with local Planning staff familiar with the community's sentiments as evidenced by past projects and/or current information.

### ***2. How sensitive are potential viewer-groups likely to be regarding visible changes proposed by the project?***

Consider among other factors the number of viewers within the group, probable viewer expectations, activities, viewing duration, and orientation. The expected viewer sensitivity level may be scoped by applying professional judgment, and by soliciting information from Planning staff, local agencies and community representatives familiar with the affected community's sentiments and demonstrated concerns.

### ***3. To what degree does the project's aesthetic approach appear to be consistent with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, policies or standards?***

It is critical for the developer to understand the importance that this community places on aesthetic issues. The Town Comprehensive Plan and other planning documents will provide the developer with the vision of the community.

### ***4. Are permits going to be required by outside regulatory agencies (i.e., Federal, State, or local)?***

Permit requirements can have an unintended consequence on the visual environment. Anticipated permits, as well as specific permit requirements -which are defined by the permitted, may be determined by talking with the project Planner and Project Engineer.

### ***5. Will the project sponsor or public benefit from a more detailed visual analysis in order to help reach consensus on a course of action to address potential visual impacts?***

Consider the proposed project features, possible visual impacts, and probable mitigation recommendations.