

Section 5

Findings and Recommendations

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5.1 Introduction

The following section of the Plan provides the Findings and Recommendations as they relate to the six major goals of the Regional Comprehensive Plan communities (summarized from the individual community goals):

- Subsection 5.3 Preserving Community Character
- Subsection 5.4 Management of Future Growth and Development
- Subsection 5.5 Provisions for Economic Development
- Subsection 5.6 Transportation System Management
- Subsection 5.7 Protection of Significant Environmental Resources
- Subsection 5.8 Recreational Opportunities

Utilizing the information found in Section 4 (Existing Conditions of the Communities in the Region), opportunities and constraints to achieving the Goals and Objectives of each community and the region were found. Based on these opportunities and constraints, general findings were made covering the region and its communities. Utilizing ideas and recommendations generated in over one year of public input, community meetings, community surveys and research, a finalized listing of recommendations was generated for these goals. Ideas and recommendations were refined, evaluated, and/or built upon based on the Opportunities and Constraints analysis. Additional ideas and further revisions were formulated based on the Consultant's experience, topic research, and community and Advisory committee input.

The generalized Findings (Opportunities and Constraints) are presented in subsection 5.2, which is followed by the Recommendations, subsections 5.3 – 5.8 noted above. Each of these subsections has an information section that summarizes the findings as they relate to that specific goal. This methodology helps in illustrating which recommendations are most important. If a recommendation can help to achieve several goals, it will have a higher priority in the Implementation section. This is not the only factor in determining priority and the Implementation section should be referred to, to obtain more information on recommendation prioritization.

The final subsection 5.9 contains the Vision Maps and supporting narrative, which are tools to help illustrate the ideas and recommendations generated in this section.

5.2 Generalized Findings

Before providing the recommendations of this plan, the following subsections provide a synopsis of the major findings, opportunities/constraints/conclusions and issues dealing with the region and its communities.

- Subsection 5.2.1 Regional Perspective
- Subsection 5.2.2 Summarized Regional Goals and Objectives
- Subsection 5.2.3 Summarized Regional Needs and Desires and the County Guiding Principles
- Subsection 5.2.4 Regional Assets and Constraints
- Subsection 5.2.5 Summarized Needs/Desires of Communities
- Subsection 5.2.6 Individual Communities - Opportunities/Constraints/Conclusions
- Subsection 5.2.7 Zoning Issues of the Communities

5.2.1 Regional Perspective

Typically a major city is surrounded by first ring suburbs. Transition communities (sometimes referred to as second ring suburbs) are the areas between the first ring suburban centers and rural and/or

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agricultural uses. At the outskirts of the metropolitan area are rural and agriculture areas. Looking at Erie County under this typical scenario, Elma, Aurora and East Aurora would be considered second ring suburban communities, and Wales and Holland rural communities.

As can be seen by the growth history of the region in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's, the first ring suburbs are now more populous than the City. The built-out, urbanized area of the City is now represented not only by Buffalo, but also by Tonawanda, Amherst, Cheektowaga, Lackawanna and parts of West Seneca. The "first ring" of suburbs outside this urbanized area are now Towns that were previously transitional areas, such as Grand Island, Clarence, Lancaster, Hamburg, northern Orchard Park and parts of Elma and northern Aurora (including East Aurora). Thus, a transition zone can be placed on those more outlying Erie County communities like Newstead, Alden, Marilla, Wales, and southern Aurora. Holland may still be just outside of this new transitional area. This is due to the fact that the growth trends are pushing towards the northern communities more than the Southtowns.

What does this mean for the Regional Comprehensive Plan communities? It means that Elma and Aurora are now beginning to come under direct growth pressures from the expanding growth ring around the City of Buffalo. This is illustrated in the higher growth rates of these two communities (Elma: 9.2 percent growth in population from 1990-2000; Aurora: 7.9 percent growth in population from 1990-2000). Holland and Wales saw 0.9 percent and 1.5 percent growth respectively. East Aurora is under a different sort of growth pressure, as can be seen in the business district which is experiencing pressures of change. Acknowledging this growth pattern, each community must plan properly to meet their goals and objectives and vision for the future.

The Village of East Aurora acts as the regional service center for much of the Towns of Elma, Aurora and Wales, and for the northern areas of Holland. The Holland hamlet is a rural service center that is an important component of the Town of Holland. Locally important rural service centers exist at the fringe of the East Aurora service area, in the hamlets of Wales Center, West Falls, South Wales, and Springbrook/Blossom area (See Map 14 - Rural Service Centers).

The rural character of the region is an important component of all five communities. Each community, though, has specific characteristics and concepts that drive this rural character goal and each community can affect the others' character.

Elma is under development pressures from the Towns of Lancaster, West Seneca and Orchard Park. Aurora is under some development pressure (less than Elma) from the Town of Orchard Park and from growth coming out of the Village of East Aurora. Wales and Holland are under little development pressure. Wales' only development pressure comes from the Village of East Aurora and the Route 400 interchange. Holland's only development pressure comes down the Route 16 corridor.

In Elma, spillover traffic from Lancaster and traffic along Transit Road are causing localized problems. Holland's traffic problems occur from pass through traffic and event traffic along Route 16 in the hamlet. Localized traffic problems in and around the Village of East Aurora have not been caused by development. Rather, there has been an overall increase in the number of cars on the roads and general traffic patterns that have an impact on the Village. The usage of the Main Street in the Village and other roads around the Village as highways accessing the Village business district and communities surrounding Aurora, have led to volume problems in certain locations. Increases in cars on the road (AADT) have also been due to the number of cars per household, which has continued to increase through the 1990's.

The economics of farming and the lack of a next generation of farmers are resulting in a loss of active farmland in Wales and Holland. Aurora's active agricultural lands are limited, with a concentration

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located along the Wales border. Elma's agricultural lands are spread throughout the Town and are also limited.

The major connecting features between the regional plan communities (not including roads) are the stream corridors. Buffalo Creek and its tributaries flow from Holland through Wales and into Elma (small reaches extend into the Village of East Aurora and a small section of Aurora). Cazenovia Creek (the East and West Branches) and its tributaries flow from Holland through a corner of Wales into Aurora, the Village of East Aurora and Elma. Watersheds of these two creeks make up over 90 percent of the plan communities.

Before dealing with each community individually, this plan focuses on how the five communities can work together, or at least not conflict with each other, as they properly manage their growth. To accomplish this, consideration must be given to each community's goals and objectives, their individual and regional constraints and assets, and the needs of their residents, the region, and the County.

5.2.2 Summarized Regional Goals and Objectives

The following is a summarized version of the common goals and objectives or issues of the five communities. These issues were reiterated during the public meetings and through the public opinion surveys, and a full listing of the goals and objectives can be found in Section 3.0 of this Plan.

- All five communities want to maintain or preserve their community character. Each may perceive this slightly differently, but the overall sense is that the region is rural and has that small town/small village flavor.
- All understand the importance of the economy of the region and its needs, and are willing to encourage to some extent the growth of business within their community.
- The five communities understand that the natural environmental resources of their community are a major component of their character. Many of these resources cross municipal boundaries and each community's plan must reflect this.
- Recreational opportunities are important to the region, including the availability of these opportunities. Another common issue deals with passive recreation and how the public can utilize their open space assets.
- All consider transportation a key issue in their community. Addressing existing problem areas and preventing the creation of new problems or worsening of existing problems is part of this goal. The communities, to varying degrees, also acknowledge that the region is too automobile dependent and alternatives or solutions to this situation must be found.
- Although not a major individual goal for any of the communities, the issue of housing (affordable, senior, diversity in the housing stock, etc.) is a common area of concern. All acknowledge that residential growth will occur and that the region predominately is dominated by single family home construction. As the population continues to age, accommodations must be made for their housing needs.
- Finally, although each community is in a very different situation, public water is a major issue. In general, the region desires the benefits of public water in those areas of need, but is concerned over its effects.

5.2.3 Regional Needs and Desires and the County Guiding Principles

The following are the needs and desires of the region from the perspective of its residents. Unlike the previous section of this plan that gave the summarized opinions of the residents as they relate to their own community, this section provides their opinions as they relate to the region. These comments are based on the public meetings and the surveys, especially the last survey (see the appendix for summaries of these meetings and surveys):

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- The most important issues relating to establishing the rural character of the region are open space and lot size (farming was a close third).
- The issues with the greatest support for a regional approach were natural resources, public services, drainage, agriculture, utilities and recreation.
- In those communities not having public water, the residents prefer that a variety of controls be put in place if waterlines are extended into those communities.
- Most residents in the region support the concept of regional cooperation (over 90 percent surveyed), but opinions vary on how to accomplish this.
- The residents in the surrounding Towns believe that the Village of East Aurora is integral to the region. The most common reasons to go into the Village include shopping and attractions (museums, etc.).
- In all cases except the Town of Holland, a majority of residents believe that large retail/commercial uses are not suitable for the region.
- A large majority of residents believe that there should be some level of public access along creek corridors. For residents of the Town of Wales, though, this majority was much smaller.
- As stated throughout this study, the most common expressed opinion about the region was the concept of preserving the character of the area. Many cited other more suburban communities as examples of what they wished to avoid in their own community.

To obtain a more regional perspective, from the County level, the following goals are taken from the County of Erie's Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning. They represent some of the goals that were developed for the Regional Comprehensive Plan communities.

- Preserve/protect the rural service centers (and Villages) of the region.
- Protect farmland in the County's State Designated Agricultural Districts and those farms surrounding these districts.
- Recognize and protect regional environmental resources such as major stream corridors, ground water resources, steep slope areas, watersheds and wetlands.
- Incorporate the State and County Park System into local comprehensive planning.
- Identify and protect locally and regionally significant historic and cultural resources.
- Provide appropriate affordable and senior housing opportunities.

5.2.4 Regional Assets and Constraints

The following are the major regional assets and constraints of the study area:

- Each community and the region as a whole have a very strong rural character feel. There are very few examples of what people would term suburban sprawl. Residents usually point to examples of sprawl in surrounding communities as something to avoid.
- Several large creek corridors run in the northwesterly direction across large areas of these communities. These creek corridors connect from the Town of Holland through the other communities.
- Large areas of agriculture exist in the Towns of Holland and Wales, and to a lesser extent in the Towns of Elma and Aurora.
- Large areas of vacant and undeveloped lands exist in all four Towns. The Village of East Aurora is almost completely built out.
- The Towns of Aurora, Wales and Holland have very few areas serviced by public water and sewer. The Town of Holland's hamlet area has both a Town-owned water and sewer system, but the remainder of the Town is unserved. The Town of Wales has no public water or sewer systems, and the Town of Aurora has some areas of public water, and very small areas with public sewer. The Town of Elma, on the other hand, is completely watered, and the Town has some small sewer

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districts. The Village is also completely watered and has a sewer system servicing the entire Village and parts of the Town of Aurora. It should be noted that all five communities are presently participating in a regional water study (Southtown's Water Consortium) that will help identify the best means of supplying water in the region.

- Route 400 services the region, with interchanges in Elma (Transit, Jamison and Maple), Aurora/East Aurora (Route 20A and Olean Road/Route 16), and ending at the Aurora/Wales/Holland boundary. Service is continued to the south via Route 16. Route 16 runs from the West Seneca area southeasterly through Elma, Aurora and the Village of East Aurora, connecting to the Route 400 terminus and continuing south through Wales and Holland. It then continues by Arcade, through Franklinville and Olean, and into Pennsylvania.
- The Norfolk Southern railroad (old Pennsylvania railroad) runs through all five communities, connecting the region and points to the south into Arcade, Olean and then Pennsylvania. It also extends westerly into the City of Buffalo.
- Route 20A ties the Towns of Hamburg and Orchard Park (including the Village) to the Town of Aurora, Village of East Aurora and the Town of Wales. Route 20A continues to the east into Warsaw and further east.
- The Village of East Aurora serves as the regional service hub of the communities. The Holland hamlet is also a rural service center and begins the transition of the southern part of Holland out of the service area of the Village of East Aurora. Other strong delineators of the Village's service region are the Village of Orchard Park to the west, and the Towns of West Seneca and Lancaster (especially the Transit Road corridor) to the north/northwest. To the south, the hamlet of Colden serves as a rural service center to the Town of Colden. Parts of Marilla are in the service region of East Aurora, but it is also serviced by Lancaster and Alden. Service centers to the east are miles away (see Map 14 - Rural Service Centers, for an illustration of these service centers).
- Large areas of residential housing are available in the surrounding communities to the west and north. Orchard Park, Hamburg, West Seneca and Lancaster have large housing stocks and are continuing to develop at high growth rates, with many available subdivisions. Marilla and areas to the east, southwest and south (Colden, Boston, Sheldon, Java, Sardinia) have much smaller housing stocks and are growing at slower rates.
- Elma and the northern portion of Aurora have better soils with only small areas of environmental limitations and therefore present fewer impediments to development. The Towns of Wales and Holland have much greater areas of environmental limitations (especially steep slopes) that limit development.
- All of the study communities have standard zoning codes with much of the lands zoned a form of rural residential or rural agricultural.

5.2.5 Summarized Needs/Desires of Communities

The following is a summary of the specific Needs and Constraints of each community. It is based on the goals and objectives, the surveys, and extensive public outreach.

Town of Aurora

- The Town is strongly in favor of preserving its rural character and controlling growth, although there are differing opinions on what this means.
- Economic opportunities are needed, but not at the sake of community character or the synergy with the Village.
- Development should be concentrated near the Village and in areas of proper infrastructure.
- The Village should be maintained as a focal point of the Town.
- Services should be provided in an efficient and economic manner, without impacting intrinsic resources such as character.

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Town of Elma

- The residents are generally very satisfied with the community and want to preserve its character.
- Residential growth should be controlled at a low density, and commercial and industrial growth should occur in existing targeted areas.
- Residents support preserving the important open space features of the Town.
- Residents feel existing services in the Town are good, and need to be maintained as such.
- There is concern over change to the community, as they watch what is going on around them in adjacent, more suburbanized communities.

Town of Holland

- Traffic problems in the hamlet need to be resolved.
- The residents would like Holland to remain the way it is (preserve the existing way life).
- They would like to improve the ability of the residents to enjoy the open space features of the Town without impacting property owners.
- Growth should be targeted in the hamlet area where infrastructure exists.
- Agriculture is an important component of the community, but there is not a consensus of what should be done to help maintain this resource.

Town of Wales

- Agriculture is an important component of the community and should be left alone.
- Residents want to keep Wales the way it is by encouraging open space preservation and low growth rates.
- Concentrate limited business development in the hamlet areas and along major routes.

Village of East Aurora

- Improve traffic and circulation problem areas within the Village.
- Maintain the Village as a desirable place to live, work and shop.
- The appearance (aesthetics) of the Village must be preserved and protected.
- Pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the Village is very important.
- Protect, promote and revitalize the uptown Main Street business district.

5.2.6 Individual Communities - Opportunities / Constraints / Conclusions

Town of Aurora

- Lack of public infrastructure has limited growth within the community. The availability of public water will increase some opportunities for development, but is a public need. Sewer, if could be made available, should be very carefully planned for those targeted growth areas.
- Much of the land in the Town (+/- 90 percent) is located in the Agriculture zoning district. This zoning district allows all types of residential uses, as well as shopping and industrial centers by special use permit. Therefore, this zoning category, which applies to the majority of the land area in the Town, provides little direction on where different types of residential and commercial/industrial development should be placed.
- The Town has few designated commercial zoning districts. As previously discussed, however, the Agriculture zoning classification allows shopping and industrial centers by special use permit.
- There is a perception that the Town is a bedroom community (mostly rural residential), with little other land uses.
- West Falls is a locally significant rural service center with low growth potential. The residents have expressed a desire to stay rural, but would like to become more self-reliant, with more services and opportunities for business provided locally.
- Opportunities for growth could be established around the Village. This growth, if managed properly, would be beneficial to both the Town and the Village. Residential growth around the Village should

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be undertaken in a manner that complements the aesthetics of the community and affords walking and bicycling opportunities.

- Areas where business and commercial development could occur, that would not conflict with the Village or adversely impact the character of the community are very limited. The location of the Village's Business Park, Commerce Green, at the Town's border is a possibility. This could be an area for the logical, long-term expansion of this business park. Another location is Route 16, south of the Village line to Blakeley Road. This area is rural, but due to existing conditions and uses, may be suitable for restricted commercial, small office and light industrial (agrarian/rural type) developments. This area is actually two areas split by the Route 400 (see discussions in other sections of the Plan). Development of these areas would require proper diligence to ensure project proposals that are in concert with the surrounding area, are timed so as to not compete with existing park development, and that would not result in any negative environmental impacts to the area.
- The accessibility issue in the Town of Aurora also limits development. The Maple Street and Route 20A exits off Route 400 provide a poor connection to much of the Town, funneling traffic through the Village. Route 20A and Jewett Holmwood also provide connections but through the Town of Orchard Park. Transit Road and Seneca Street provide some additional connections from the north.
- The planned State Park facility, Knox Park, may impact transportation patterns within the Town by drawing an increased number of visitors to this area of the Town and Village.
- Although not targeted for growth, the south central part of Aurora has few environmental constraints to restrict development. In other words, since the area has little environmental restrictions for development, restricting/controlling growth will have to be done through Town legislation.
- Growth pressures from Orchard Park are affecting the western portion of the Town, where large subdivisions abut the Town. Presently, Aurora buffers this suburban growth from the communities to the east and southeast.
- The combination of agricultural properties (and the Town's only State Agricultural District), the Cazenovia Creek corridor, rural atmosphere (beautiful views), and the corresponding rural area in Elma, make the northwest corner of the Town a prime area for conservation. This section of the Town is designated by the County as an agricultural transition zone.
- Subdivision regulations are fairly standard, and may need to be updated to *include* rural development type guidelines.

Town of Elma

- Elma exhibits the greatest development pressures in the region. This pressure comes from Lancaster to the north and West Seneca and Orchard Park to the west. Development pressures have not resulted in large subdivision growth, though, due to lack of sewer services and more restrictive zoning.
- There are three exits to the Route 400 expressway in the Town: Transit Road, Jamison Road and Maple Street. This is beneficial in one respect, but also increases the chances of development pressures.
- The Town has a well-developed industrial area located around Route 400, between the Maple Street and the Jamison Road exit. This area is also accessible to the Norfolk Southern railroad and includes a major rail siding. This area is an important component of the community, providing jobs and tax dollars. It should be protected and areas for expansion determined.
- Although there are three rural service centers, or hamlets, in the Town (Blossom, Springbrook and Elma Center), there is really no Town center. The Village of East Aurora provides many needs of the Town of Elma residents, and to a great extent acts as its Village.
- Water service is provided throughout the Town of Elma, with little problems or complaints. It has been noted as one of the best water systems in the County. Sewer service is provided in several

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small areas throughout the Town. There was little interest expressed in meetings or surveys to extend sewer service, except in and around existing commercial/industrial growth areas.

- Some interesting components of the Town's subdivision regulations help to direct growth: major subdivisions are only allowed in Residential A or B, and lots must have percolation of 1 inch in 30 minutes or better. If they do not, they can be split under the chapter entitled "Acreage Lot Development" (these require lot sizes of five acres or more). These regulations have helped to slow development in the Town.
- Three large stream corridors run through the Town. These corridors contain significant open space. The Buffalo Creek flows along the eastern boundary of the Town, where there are agricultural areas (within State Agriculture Districts), and environmental restrictions. This area is also abutted by the rural agrarian Town of Marilla. The stream then runs westerly through the northern part of Town, joining the Pond Brook branch of the creek and continuing westward into West Seneca. This stream corridor acts as a buffer to the development in Lancaster. The Pond Brook branch flows from the Village of East Aurora north through the Town and joins with the Buffalo Creek as described previously. The Pond Brook stream corridor contains important open space and acts as a buffer to the industrial areas in the Jamison Road area. Finally, the Cazenovia Creek runs through the southwest corner of the Town, providing an area of large open spaces.
- The Transit Road corridor (and areas off of this corridor), Seneca Street (Route 16), Bowen Road near Bullis, and the Maple Street exit area are the only commercial areas in the Town. Isolated commercial zonings have been removed over the years (some remaining along Clinton). Each area is unique. The Transit Road area contains more intensive uses. The Bowen Road area has a retail plaza. The Maple Road area has automobile-dependent businesses and mixed uses, and the Seneca Street corridor is characterized by small businesses.
- Agricultural properties are spread throughout the Town, but with concentrations along the eastern side of Town. This area also includes a State Agricultural District. Another grouping of farms exists in the western/northwestern part of Town. Again a State Agricultural District extends from the northwest corner into the southwest corner of the Town. The County considers much of the Town of Elma (excluding the northwest area) an agricultural transition zone. The northwest corner of the Town is the area most under development pressures and is therefore most likely to lose its farms and open space features.
- Most of the Town of Elma contains prime farmland soils or prime farmland soils (when drained). Typically prime farmland soils are also soils that are conducive for development.
- Residential C – Agricultural zoning is the predominant zoning in the Town. This zoning is the least restrictive but generally results in residential development with homes on lots of one to five acres in size (due to percolation problems and avoiding reviews.) Residential C only allows residential and agricultural uses. Pockets of lower density residential zoning (Residential A and B) occur in the northeast corner of the Town (Elma Center to the north, south and west), the southern portion of the Town between the industrial area and the Town of Aurora, and in the southwest corner along North Davis Road. These zonings allow residential uses and business uses by special permit. Development usually occurs at lower densities, but changes to the code could better ensure these results. The residential zones allowing business by special use permit could be problematic.

Town of Holland

- Holland is physically divided by three major creek corridors (Buffalo Creek, Hunter Creek and East Branch of Cazenovia Creek), whose valleys and corresponding hills (steep slopes) make it difficult to develop.
- Most of the Town is incorporated into a State Agricultural District, with concentrations of farming in the eastern/northeastern, southwestern, and central valley sections of the Town. The isolation of these areas helps limit development pressures.
- The Town's hamlet is considered a rural service center of regional significance. The hamlet downtown serves as the residential and business hub of the community.

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- Due to the Town's isolation, lack of infrastructure outside of the hamlet, and topography (steep slopes), the Town is under little development pressure.
- More than 90 percent of the Town is zoned either Conservation and Open Space (largest percentage) or Rural-residential/Agriculture. Much of Route 16 from Wales to the hamlet is zoned Highway Business. The hamlet area includes medium density residential, general business and an industrial area. The zoning is an attempt to focus development on the Route 16 corridor and in the hamlet.
- The Town's major transportation connection is Route 16. The Norfolk Southern railroad also runs through the Town, following a path generally parallel to Route 16. This singular access (Route 16) can become problematic to the residents in the hamlet on certain occasions (weekends, special events, etc.) because there are no good alternative routes when there is congestion.
- The Town's codes are fairly standard, but include provisions for cluster development and PUD's. However, the regulation's requirements for usage—25 acres for cluster and a minimum of 100 units for PUD—clearly limit their use. Certain businesses are allowed in the residential-agricultural zone by special use permit, if they meet some restrictive requirements.
- Agriculture is beginning to disappear, not due to development pressures but for economic reasons (based on meetings with local farmers).

Town of Wales

- Most of the Town lies in a State Agricultural District. Agricultural lands are concentrated in the eastern side of the Town, but other farms are scattered throughout the Town. Again, like Holland, farms are beginning to disappear, not from development pressures but for economic reasons.
- The major connective feature in the Town is the Route 20A corridor, which runs east and west through the Town, and links it to East Aurora, Route 400 and points to the west and east. Route 78, which runs concurrent with Route 20A in the western part of Town, splits off and runs southeasterly through the Town. Route 16 also runs through the southwestern corner of the Town.
- The Town has two hamlets of local significance (rural service centers): Wales Center and South Wales. Both are located along the major highways (Route 20A and Route 16) and provide minimal business services to the residents. The Town of Wales is primarily serviced by the Village of East Aurora (business, cultural, etc.).
- There is little development pressure in the Town of Wales. There is some pressure from the Village of East Aurora/Route 400 interchange/Route 20A traffic, and Route 16 provides some minimal development pressures in the hamlet of South Wales. Other influences on South Wales are the Gow School, Emery Park in Aurora, and the Railroad.
- The Buffalo Creek corridor, which runs through areas of concentrated agriculture, provides an important open space and aesthetic component of the Town. The Hunters Creek corridor flows through other important open space features in the Town (including Hunters Wilderness Creek Park and Kenneglenn). Both corridors are important to the rural character of the community.
- The Town of Wales had the strongest "No Growth" sentiment in the region.
- Zoning in the Town is mostly agricultural. Residential zoning exists in small pockets and in the vicinity of the Wales Center, Wales Hollow and South Wales hamlets. Commercial zoning is located along the three state highways (Routes 20A, 78, and 16), but all commercial uses require special use permits.

Village of East Aurora

- The redevelopment style of the Main Street business district is one of the most important issues in the community. Change will occur, but how that change occurs is the controversial issue.
- Transportation/traffic through the Village is also a major issue in the community. Traffic along Main Street, and avoiding this congestion by using alternative routes, greatly impacts the community.
- Development pressures mostly relate to the redevelopment pressures along Main Street, and the development pressures surrounding the Village in the Town.

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- Infrastructure is a major asset of the Village. It should be maintained and improved. Methodologies to improve efficiencies of providing these services must be found.
- Zoning modifications in the community have been focused on the commercial zoning codes and relate to aesthetics, transportation and other of issues, not changing zoning boundaries.
- The Village has a great image in the region, and represents to many the ideals of Village life.
- The mixture of uses, and the ability to access the uses by non-automobile means is an important component to the Village.
- The Village with its central business district is a regional service center for the communities of this study. It also has a larger draw due to features such as the Roycroft and the Fisher Price Toy Museum. Conflicts can be created between this local service role and the tourism aspects of the community.

5.2.7 Zoning Issues of the Communities

The following are general observations made about the existing zoning of each community (the major land use control that a municipality utilizes to manage development), and some considerations about the existing zoning regulations:

Town of Aurora

- The Agriculture zoning district, which covers approximately 90 percent of the land area in the Town, is problematic. The issue is that this zoning classification is hierarchical to other residential districts in the Town (e.g., it allows all other residential uses). The Agriculture zoning also allows commercial and industrial uses by special use permit. Thus, this classification provides loose regulation over development, and lends poor direction for land use management.
- The zoning ordinance needs more up-to-date (neo-traditional type) standards to address protection of rural character, such as cluster development regulations.
- Proper locations must be found for appropriate commercial and light industrial development, as recommended in Section 5.2.6. The key words in locating commercial/industrial areas are "suitable" and "appropriate". Much discussion has taken place over where this type of development should take place and what it should consist of. Two areas have been identified for further investigation, the Commerce Park area and Route 16 south of the Village.
- The zoning regulations must better address road frontage development, which is the most common development pattern.

Town of Elma

- Some creative sections of the Town's subdivision regulations help in controlling growth in the Town (restrictions on lots with poor soils).
- The Town's creative subdivision requirements typically result in large lot development. The perception may be that this controls growth within the Town. However, some would argue that this approach does not effectively control growth, it just encourages sprawl by promoting lower density and a greater consumption of land area.
- Commercial zones allow residential uses, with the exception of the Restricted Commercial district, which does not.
- To control the type and appearance of commercial development in the Transit Road area, an overlay zoning district could be considered.
- To create a hamlet center in the Elma Center area, zoning ordinance revisions and/or zoning district changes could be implemented.
- Zoning in the southwest corner of the Town should be looked at for changes. The area may be more suitable for a rural-estates type zoning.
- Instead of only lot size controls, the Town should consider creative techniques that may focus on density over lot size.

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Town of Holland

- The names of the two major zoning districts in the Town are confusing considering the similarity of the bulk regulations (i.e., minimum lot size, setback requirements, lot width and depth requirements) and land uses permitted in these areas. The nomenclature is confusing as well, considering that many of the Town's farms are in the Conservation Open Space zone, and many of the important open space features are located in the areas zoned Agriculture.
- A zoning overlay along Route 16 could add extra guidance to development along that corridor and help preserve its character.
- Due to limited growth pressures, any code revisions would be long term plans, and only be implemented when necessary.
- Any code revisions in the central business district (hamlet) should address aesthetics and access management, but also not discourage redevelopment efforts.
- The existing (1994) comprehensive plan meets the needs of the Town and fits fairly well with this regional plan.

Town of Wales

- In general, the Town is very satisfied with its present zoning and zoning codes.
- Commercial development along the state highways is controlled by special use permits. To provide more direction, the Town may consider additional standards (under the Special Use Permit), specific to certain areas, to control potential commercial development.
- Zoning overlays or other controls should be considered to add more protection around the Town's major open space features (stream corridors, etc.).

Village of East Aurora

- Issues of standard zoning (uses, bulk requirements) are typically less important in built-up villages. More creative zoning techniques (such as overlay districts, incentive zoning, etc.) are needed to control redevelopment and changes in the community.
- One area in the Village that has been subject to zoning scrutiny over the past years is the Main Street business corridor. The Village has attempted to massage and revise the present zoning codes and districts to best protect the character of each section of the Main Street corridor (from uptown to downtown). Other zoning tools (overlay districts, etc.) or actions (legislative or projects) may be necessary to further guide this redevelopment.
- Recent discussions and actions would indicate that the Village prefers smaller, architecturally acceptable business uses in most of the community. Size, scale and design issues are particularly important in the uptown area, but all uses should be designed in context with the character of the Village. The zoning should be adjusted to reflect these desires.
- The southeastern part of the Village has some larger estate type parcels that may warrant a different zoning category or an overlay to protect the low-density character of the area.
- Traffic congestion problems appear to be localized. Traffic volumes are problematic during peak hour travel periods that bring a lot of pass through traffic to the area. Traffic problems in the Village are also seasonal in nature, with higher volumes experienced during the summer months.

Findings and Recommendations for the Region and the Communities

5.3 Preserving Community Character

The Regional Comprehensive Plan study area is characterized by its rural landscape. The area contains a wide variety of significant natural and man-made resources that enhance this rural character. Scenic vistas, agricultural land uses, historic structures and a range of natural resources can typically be found in each of the five communities.

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The region contains four major watersheds with creek corridors that add to the quality and character of the area. Many creek corridors are enhanced by the presence of ravines, cascades, waterfalls and other natural features. The rolling hills and steeper topography in the southern portion of the region further highlight the quality of the area. Many of the hills are characterized by open fields and croplands, woodlands, and meadows. In many places, the buildings associated with farming activities, including older barns, outbuildings and farmhouses, contribute to the character and appeal of the area.

The region also contains many public parks that offer open lands for recreation, walking trails and scenic features. In addition, the visual quality of the built environment is enhanced by mature street trees and wooded areas. The built environment also possesses a number of architecturally and historically significant elements that further complement the overall character of the communities.

At the various meetings and public workshops that were held in the communities, the importance of preserving the rural character of the Regional Comprehensive Plan area was emphasized. Public opinion gathered throughout the planning process indicated strong support for the preservation of open space, farmland and rural character. This includes not just protecting and preserving cultural, historic and environmental resources, such as wetlands, but also managing growth and development in each community in a manner that protects and maintains the ambiance of the landscape.

5.3.1 Regional Recommendations

The five communities must recognize the significance of community character and take the necessary steps, through the adoption and amendment of land use guidelines, standards and regulations to preserve the rural quality of the region. All five of the communities have a rural character, but each perceives it slightly differently. Elma has large lots and large areas of open space, but is aware of the development pressures and acknowledges that development could change the character of the community. Aurora has areas of open space and sparse development, with hamlets and areas around the Village that exhibit somewhat more dense development patterns. There are mixed feelings about the development that has occurred and that may occur in the future. Holland is a very rural community that does not have development pressures immediately around it. Therefore, there is less of an attitude that something needs to be done to preserve the Town. Wales is also a very rural community, buffered from development pressures by surrounding rural communities. Wales, however, perceives the possibilities of development changing the community and, thus, wants controls in place to preserve its rural character. East Aurora is a family-oriented, built-out community that is concerned about development taking place around it as well as redevelopment that is occurring within its boundaries.

Recommendations:

- The regional planning communities must continue to cooperate together on land use decisions and controls to ensure that the character of the region is protected and that the communities do not approve actions that would negatively impact the character of another partnering community. Therefore, all zoning actions, new laws, and applications for large developments should be referred to neighboring communities within the regional plan area, as well as the County (through 239-m referrals), for their information and input.
- The communities with active farmland need to look at ways to help preserve these lands, as well as the important farm soils that cannot be replaced once they are developed. Adopting and utilizing more effective agricultural zoning regulations, right-to-farm laws, overlay districts, conservation easements and other such techniques are recommended. Although each of the five communities may approach these tools differently, there is overall agreement on the desire to protect farmland.

Utilizing the vision maps, the communities should prioritize the protection of agricultural lands that are highlighted on these maps in an effort to keep as much contiguous agricultural land as possible. As

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with the State Agriculture Districts, it is best to keep as much agricultural land in the region connected as possible. Agricultural committees, or groups from each community, should meet at least annually in an attempt to keep their plans complementary. Working together, and possibly on joint agricultural protection plans, may help in accomplishing this task (other Regional Farmland Protection Plans have been successful – see recently completed "Brant, Evans and North Collins Plan").

- Areas in the region with special regional scenic qualities need to be identified and preserved. As shown on the vision map, several of these major regional scenic features include the creek corridors and hilltops. Coordinated efforts to protect and preserve these features will greatly help in preserving the region's character.

Also, the implementation of the land use pattern depicted on the vision map will also protect the character of the region. This general development pattern of rural agrarian and large lot zoning, with high-density development patterns in and around the Villages and hamlets of the region can be achieved with coordinated planning. Land use planning in the region should be continued by having the Regional Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee meet annually to discuss implementation, issues and problems, the need for revisions to the Regional Comprehensive Plan, and joint projects. To keep the Advisory Committee intact and active, at the discretion of the Supervisor/Mayor of each community, a representative from the Town/Village Board and Planning Board/Commission should be designated to sit on the Committee.

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5.3.2 Town of Aurora

The Town of Aurora is characterized by rural open space. Land use in the Town is predominantly rural residential, with limited agricultural uses. Residential development is typically low-density, frontage lots, with few subdivisions, which are primarily located around the Village of East Aurora. Residential density increases in the vicinity of the Village and West Falls hamlet. There is limited commercial development in the Town. It is primarily located in the West Falls hamlet, and along Route 16 near the Elma Town border and to the south of the Village of East Aurora, along Route 16 out to Blakeley Road. There is also very limited industrial use, typically small-scale uses along Route 240.

Land use in Aurora is enhanced by the many environmental features including creek corridors (primarily the East and West Branches of Cazenovia Creek) and tributary streams, steep slopes, open fields and woodlands. These features add to the character and aesthetic charm of the area. Scenic resources, accented by steep wooded hillsides and creeks, are an important asset to the community. Historic resources, which are scattered along Route 16 and in the western central portion of the Town (in the vicinity of Luther and West Falls Roads), also add character to the Town.

With the exception of the Route 400 Expressway, which cuts through the eastern half of the Town, the major thoroughfares in the region include Route 20A, Route 16/78, and Route 240. The majority of the remaining roadways are two-lane rural roadways. Roads typically have open ditches with no curbing or sidewalks, limited street lighting and few areas with paved shoulders. There is also one active rail line that runs through East Aurora to South Wales and beyond, and an abandoned rail line that extends south from Orchard Park through West Falls.

The preservation of rural character in the Town of Aurora through proper growth management and open space preservation is strongly supported by the public (although surveys indicate that there is an unwillingness to pay for this preservation). In an effort to help preserve the community character of the Town of Aurora certain measures should be undertaken. These include: revising the agriculture zoning district regulations to better manage residential growth (and rezoning some of the lands presently zoned agriculture); adopting architectural standards or guidelines to control aesthetic issues; preserving the character and quality of the West Fall hamlet area; managing future sewer line extensions; preserving natural barriers to growth; protecting important viewsheds; implementing non-traditional development techniques to control growth and preserve open space; adopting rural development guidelines to avoid sprawl characteristics; identifying significant areas for open space preservation (ensuring that development considers these features); and controlling development in a manner that will not necessitate roadway widening and the loss of street trees and roadway foliage.

Recommendations:

- As identified in the Existing Conditions section of this Plan (Section 4.0), a large percentage of the land in the Town (approximately 90 percent) is zoned Agriculture. This zoning classification allows all residential uses and shopping and industrial centers by special use permit. This provides very little direction for land use and development in the Town. In the analysis of existing conditions of the community, and the goals and objectives for the Town and region, it was determined that areas zoned Agriculture should be reviewed and revised to designate land for rural residential development, under a new zoning classification, and for agriculture under the existing classification (which should be revised to eliminate the allowance of commercial and industrial uses by special use permit), or under a new classification. The areas in closer proximity to the Village of East Aurora should be considered in the future for more standard residential zoning and development, similar to Village requirements

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For the rural residential areas, a new zoning district (as noted above) should be created that allows single-family residential development only, on lots with a minimum of two acres, and residences with barns and other facilities for keeping animals, such as horses. Properties with animals would have to be larger, based on the number of animals to be kept on site. Existing farms in the area that house animals would be grandfathered. This district would not be hierarchical to any other district and would not allow commercial, shopping or industrial development by special use permit.

For agrarian areas, such as those found in the eastern portion of the Town, a new agricultural district could be created (or the existing one revised) to allow farms, associated agricultural uses and small family-operated businesses (in association with farming practices). Residential uses would be allowed separate from a farm, on property with a standard minimum lot size of five acres. This lot size actually represents the proposed residential density of the area (of one house per five acres). The Town should consider having this zone be a density zone and allow lot sizes down to one acre. This would allow a farmer to sell some smaller lots and in doing so reduce the development rights of the remainder of the land. For example, the idea is that for a farm of 50 acres, the farmer could sell 10 one-acre lots and then could not develop anymore of the remaining acreage. Therefore, 40 acres would be preserved as farmland or open space for the future. This land (the 40 acres) would have an agricultural conservation easement on it, protecting it from development. It would stay with the owner or could be included on one of the lots and sold with its deed restriction.

- The areas presently around the Village of East Aurora (see the vision map) noted as growth areas should be zoned rural residential until appropriate plans and utilities are made available. At that time, (when proper plans and utilities are provided) rezoning for higher density residential use could be considered. These plans would include elements for preserving community character, connection to the Village, and would meet the objectives of this Plan.
- Architectural standards or guidelines should be adopted to control aesthetics and bring about designs that are appropriate to the character of the area, particularly in the West Falls hamlet and around the Village of East Aurora. For areas close to East Aurora, these standards should be compatible with the character of the Village.
- To accomplish this control, zoning overlays should be created for the West Falls hamlet and the areas around the Village (stressing the major entranceways into the Village). These overlays will focus on the architectural standards or guidelines for these areas. These guidelines for residential structures will not be too restrictive for architecture, but focus more on setbacks, landscaping and parking features (closer allowable setbacks, trees at the right-of-way, etc.).
- Historic preservation standards or guidelines should be adopted to preserve and protect important structures, particularly in the West Falls hamlet and Griffin Mills areas.
- Future sewer line extensions, wherever feasible, should be controlled to manage growth and, in turn, preserve the character of the community. In areas where sewer lines may be extended, standard subdivision designs that are not consistent with the character of the surrounding area should be discouraged. Clustered development and other similar techniques that preserve open space and community character should be encouraged.
- Sewer extensions should be primarily focused on commercial or high-density residential development around the Village. In all other areas sewers should not be extended (unless significant public health and safety problems exist that warrant such action).
- Natural barriers to growth, such as creek corridors, steep slopes, wetlands, large stands of mature vegetation and other such natural features, should be preserved and protected. Such natural features should be integrated into proposed development plans to preserve the quality and character of the surrounding area. The preservation of these resources also aids in habitat conservation. See the following recommendations on non-traditional development techniques for methodologies to accomplish this.

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- Important viewsheds should be identified in the community and development should be managed in a way that preserves and protects these aesthetic resources. Many of these viewsheds relate to the stream corridors within the Town. Others can be identified through an open space/green space plan (see other recommendations) or a special committee. Once identified, these can be protected through requirements in the zoning and subdivision regulations.
- Non-traditional development techniques, such as open development areas, overlay districts and cluster development should be implemented, and the Town should adopt and enforce the use of rural development guidelines to control growth, manage sprawl and preserve open space. Such development guidelines are geared at avoiding typical sprawl-inducing development practices. Samples of these techniques are included in the appendix. An example of utilizing these tools is as follows: once the plan is adopted, the subdivision regulations can be amended to require reference to the comprehensive plan. Important features identified in the plan must be incorporated into any design. Some communities add overlays to reinforce this in certain areas, and then require the use of cluster developments to preserve these features.
- Identify significant areas for open space preservation. This can be accomplished through an up-to-date Open Space/Green Space plan.
- The intensity, size and scale of development should be controlled through appropriate growth management standards and measures. Following the development strategies in this plan should help to avoid the need for roadway widening (that would result in loss of street trees and roadway foliage) and other such improvements to increase roadway capacity.
- Necessary roadway improvements to address drainage and safety concerns, that are undertaken in rural areas of the Town, should not include sidewalks, curbing and/or street lighting as part of the overall project, where the addition of such amenities would not be in keeping with the rural character of the area. Other means of improving safety and non-automotive accessibility must be found.

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5.3.3 Town of Elma

The Town of Elma is the most suburbanized of the four Towns in the regional plan area. It is characterized by a mix of low-density rural and some suburban development. Some agricultural parcels remain in use, but agriculture is no longer a predominant land use in the Town. Most of the residential land use is low-density, with some subdivision development at a slightly higher density. This newer housing in the Town, although occurring on larger lots, has a tendency to affect the rural character of the area; particularly those that have occurred in standard subdivision fashion on former agricultural property that lack mature vegetation. Due to pressures exerted from the Town of Lancaster to the north and the Town of West Seneca to the west, the character of the Elma community is under the greatest threat of development of the five communities in the region. Public sentiment indicates that the preservation of rural character, open space and natural resources is a prominent concern.

Commercial development in the Town is centered in the vicinity of the Elma Plaza at Bullis and Bowen Roads, along Transit Road, and at or near intersecting roadways in the small hamlet areas. There is also some limited commercial development along Seneca Street. Elma also has a major concentration of industrial development in the vicinity of Jamison Road, Maple Road and Route 400. Older industrial uses are situated along New Bullis and Pound Roads, near Transit Road.

Land use in Elma is characterized by open fields and meadows, woodlands, and creek corridors (Buffalo Creek and Cazenovia Creek in particular) and tributary streams, which are interspersed with housing. Cazenovia Creek has areas of State regulated wetlands and significant habitats, including a heron rookery. Much of the area in the Town maintains a rural quality. The original Elma Village Center area, along Bowen Road, just south of Clinton Street, contains numerous historic features that add to the character and appeal of this area of the Town.

Roadways in Elma tend to be rural, two-lane thoroughfares with open ditches, no curbing or sidewalks, and limited street lighting and paved shoulders. These roadways are experiencing increasing levels of traffic associated with growth that is occurring to the north and west. There is also an active railroad line that runs through the center of the Town.

In an effort to help preserve the rural community character of the Town of Elma, certain measures should be undertaken. Major issues of concern with regard to community character include limiting future (potential) sewer line extensions and preserving remaining agricultural uses and prime farm soils. Appropriate lands for open space preservation, including creek corridors, should be identified. To avoid sprawl-inducing development practices, rural development guidelines should be adopted and enforced. Site clearance standards should be considered to preserve open space. The establishment of design standards for industrial development would be useful to avoid uniformity of design and insure that these uses are designed to fit with the character of the community. Emphasis should also be placed on the preservation of historic structures in the Town. Growth in the Elma Plaza area should be encouraged to develop this area as a future Town center, but protection of significant environmental resources in this area should also be taken into account.

Recommendations:

- Implement non-traditional development techniques, such as open development areas, overlay districts and cluster development, and adopt rural development guidelines, to control growth, manage sprawl and preserve open space. Open development area regulations should state limitations on usage and design guidelines.
- Overlay districts should be considered for the Elma Plaza (Town center) area, for Transit Road (north of Route 400), for the Maple Road/Route 400 interchange and for the Seneca Street (Route

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16) corridor. These overlays could also help to identify areas where cluster development regulations and rural development standards can be used.

- Future sewer line extensions should be controlled to manage growth and, in turn, preserve the character of the community. In areas where sewer lines may be extended—or where for extenuating circumstances they are extended—standard subdivision designs that are not consistent with the character of the surrounding area should be discouraged.
- The areas that should be considered for sewer are in the areas of the hamlet or to assist with industrial development expansion in the industrial corridor.
- Institute appropriate programs to preserve the remaining important areas of farmland and prime farm soils. Farming is no longer a dominant industry in Elma but certain farming uses and areas of important soils exist that should be protected through conservation easements and other such appropriate mechanisms. A farmland protection plan should be considered to identify the best ways of protecting the remaining aspects of this important resource.
- Creation of a purchase of agricultural conservation easements program (PACE) for agricultural lands should be considered. Local farmers and owners of large agricultural lands (including following properties) should be approached once a conservation easement program is established.
- Identify significant lands for open space preservation and protection, particularly along creek corridors, where limited access could be provided (in some areas). Emphasis should be added to those lands identified on the regional vision map. It is not the intent of this objective for the Town to own all of these lands; some may only require conservation easements. Most of these areas that are being protected will not have public access. Only areas around existing public spaces should be considered for public ownership and access.
- Adopt architectural guidelines to control the quality of design in the Town and to ensure that it is compatible with the character of existing development, and historic preservation standards to preserve and protect important structures, particularly in the historic Elma Village area. For non-residential structures, the guidelines will provide general requirements to ensure that structures are complementary to surrounding uses. It is not the intent of these guidelines to require certain types of buildings. Residential structures will not be regulated, except under the zoning code that requires certain sizes, setbacks, etc.
- The Town's present zoning and density requirements, combined with the objectives of the vision map, should help in controlling the growth in the Town to levels that will not require major roadway improvements. Improvements to the industrial corridor should be evaluated for their impact to local roadways.
- Necessary roadway improvements to address drainage and safety concerns, that are undertaken in rural areas of the Town, should not include sidewalks, curbing and/or street lighting as part of the overall project, where the addition of such amenities would not be in keeping with the rural character of the area.

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5.3.4 Town of Holland

The Town of Holland is characterized by rural open space, steep slopes and wooded hillsides, creek corridors (in particular East Cazenovia Creek, Hunters Creek and Buffalo Creek) and tributary streams, open farmlands, and older residential structures mixed with newer homes on large lots. Residential development is dense in the vicinity of the hamlet of Holland, but is very low density throughout the remainder of the Town. There has been little to no major subdivision activity in Holland. There are a number of active farms in the Town and a great amount of open land. Much of this land is characterized by steep slopes and woodlands. There is strong public sentiment in Holland to preserve open space and protect farmland, particularly through the control of density and lot size. There was no strong sentiment to actively pursue the purchase of open space properties.

The hamlet area is the primary location of the commercial development in the Town. This area is a designated rural service center for the surrounding community. Some commercial and retail uses are also spread sparsely along Route 16, particularly near the South Wales vicinity. With the exception of Route 16, which is the main thoroughfare, the roadways in the Town are very rural in nature and there are not a lot of them. These roadways have open ditches, no curbing or streetlights (with the exception of portions of the hamlet), and very few areas have paved shoulders. There is an active railroad line that runs in a northwest direction through the Town.

The hamlet area contains a mix of commercial, retail and residential uses on small lots, as well as some small areas of industrial development. The hamlet contains a high number of historic structures. Historic features are also found along Route 16 as you move toward South Wales. These historic resources enhance the rural character and attraction of the area.

In an effort to help preserve the community character of the Town of Holland (expressed by the residents as "keeping Holland the way it is"), certain measures should be undertaken. Major issues of concern with regard to community character include reassessing the zoning along Route 16 to avoid commercial sprawl and reinforce commercial development in the hamlet area. Preserving lands along the northeastern side of Route 16 that possess scenic vistas and good soils is very important. Preserving farmland and good farm soils and adopting a right to farm law would acknowledge the public's concern for these resources in the Town. Residential lot sizes should be reassessed and increased in certain areas to better manage future growth, and non-traditional development techniques should be implemented to preserve open space. Rural development guidelines should be instituted to avoid sprawl (e.g., better guidelines or standards for road frontage development and encouraging more creative development techniques). Also important is the protection of important viewsheds and improving the visual quality of the hamlet.

Recommendations:

- Require the use of non-traditional development techniques, such as open development areas, overlay districts and cluster development, and adopt and enforce rural development guidelines, to control growth, manage sprawl and preserve open space and farmland.
- Unlike some of the other communities in the regional plan area, less emphasis should be placed on these tools due to the reduced level of development pressures and the small growth rates. The tools should be used as follows:
 - Enabling the Planning Board to utilize open development areas could be helpful along Route 16 and in areas that have important views or environmental resources that could be preserved. Using this tool (possibly combined with cluster development regulations) could allow minor subdivisions to be creatively designed and not just placed along the frontages.

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- The overlay zoning tool could be used also along Route 16 to help identify these areas that should have more creative designs. It could also include other aesthetic requirements (landscaping, etc.) and setback requirements.
- Rural development guidelines may not have as high of a priority if the other tools are utilized. However, the Town should begin the preparation of rural development guidelines by researching what they like and dislike in subdivision design.
- Cluster development rules should primarily focus on small subdivision that are road frontage in nature. This tool could be used where some creativity could lead to a better layout of lots: preserving some feature or improving the looks of the road frontage development.
- Institute appropriate programs to preserve important areas of farmland and prime farm soils through a purchase of development rights program, conservation easements and other such mechanisms. Again, because of the levels of development pressures, the Town should begin this process by working with the County and/or other communities and drafting an agricultural protection plan. Agricultural conservation easements may be the first step to take, and long term plans can be made in case a full purchase of development rights (PDR) program is necessary. The Town would need to evaluate the economic impacts of a purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) program on the community. (As mentioned in earlier sections of the Plan, this agricultural planning can be done in conjunction with other communities).
- Keep Route 16 zoned for controlled Highway Business and Agricultural Business use and reinforce commercial development in the hamlet area. Changes to the commercial zones outside the hamlet should restrict uses in those areas, and help to target appropriate businesses uses in the central business district. The Town should revise its commercial highway business zone to better reflect the type of usage desired along Route 16, outside of the hamlet. These uses should not only be rural (small scale) or agrarian in nature, but also be designed in a manner that does not compete with businesses in the hamlet center.
- A zoning overlay along Route 16 will further help to control this development outside the hamlet area. This overlay will help to ensure that the character of this development meets the rural nature of the area. The zoning and availability of infrastructure in the hamlet helps to target residential growth in this area. The Town is presently working with a \$250,000 grant to improve the hamlet area. Residential housing programs coming out of this grant may also help to encourage residential development and redevelopment in the hamlet.
- Development should be undertaken in a manner that would preserve lands along the northeastern side of Route 16 that possess scenic vistas and good soils. This area will be helped by the suggested overlay, but conservation easements may be necessary to help preserve these features.
- Limit sewer extensions to manage growth. Sewer line extensions should be limited to the area in and around the hamlet and should not extend into designated agricultural districts.
- Institute programs to preserve farmland and good farm soils, and adopt a right to farm law. The right to farm law would be complementary to the county's law and offers more protections to unwarranted complaints about noise, odor, etc.
- Adopt historic preservation standards or guidelines to preserve and protect locally significant historic structures.
- Other important viewsheds in addition to the Route 16 viewshed should be identified in the community and development should be managed in a way that preserves and protects these aesthetic resources. For additional protection, beyond the identified Route 16 viewshed, the Town may consider general language in the subdivision regulations that provide guidance on preserving views.
- Reassess residential lot sizes in certain areas to manage growth. This suggested change tends to be a controversial issue within rural communities and may not result in effectively managing growth unless the lot sizes are made big enough (over a five-acre minimum) to keep large tracts of land in place. Otherwise the desired results for certain zones is the development of smaller lots residential

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lots that do more to generate "larger lot" suburban sprawl than to preserve open space and rural character (which is the actual intent of large lot zoning).

- Improve the visual quality of the hamlet and adopt architectural standards to improve design aesthetics in this area.
- Necessary roadway improvements to address drainage and safety concerns, that are undertaken in rural areas of the Town, should not include sidewalks, curbing and/or street lighting as part of the overall project, where the addition of such amenities would not be in keeping with the rural character of the area.

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5.3.5 Town of Wales

Similar to Holland, the Town of Wales is characterized by rural open space and farmland. Wales includes the hamlets of Wales Center, Wales Hollow and South Wales, which each contain historic features that enhance their character. The Town has vast areas of open land and many scenic environmental resources, including steep wooded hillsides, creek corridors (primarily Buffalo Creek and Hunters Creek) and tributary streams. All of these features significantly contribute to the rural character and country atmosphere of the Town. There is also strong public sentiment in Wales to preserve and protect open space, farmland and the overall rural character of the Town.

Residential development in the Town of Wales is very low density, with denser development in the vicinity of South Wales, Wales Hollow and Wales Center. Residential use outside of the hamlets is typically frontage development on large lots; many homes are associated with existing or former farm uses. There are no major subdivisions in Wales.

Commercial and industrial uses are limited throughout the Town, and scattered along Routes 20A and 16. Retail and commercial uses are concentrated in South Wales and Wales Center. Commercial uses are also found at the intersections of 20A and Two Rod Road, and 20A and Route 78. Like Holland, the Town of Wales is not overdeveloped with roadways. Most roads are very rural in nature, with open ditches and no curbing, streetlights or paved shoulders. Routes 20A, 78 and 16 are the major thoroughfares; Route 400 also terminates at Route 16 in South Wales.

In an effort to help preserve the community character of the Town of Wales, certain measures should be undertaken. Major issues of concern with regard to community character include controlling the influx of public water and water extensions that could have the effect of encouraging development and sprawl. Significant lands should be identified for open space preservation, including important farmlands, and for protecting important viewsheds. The Town should also continue its support of the County's Right-to-Farm Law and its commitment to farming. Lot size requirements should be reassessed in certain areas and non-traditional development techniques, including cluster development and planned residential development, should be implemented to control growth and preserve open space. Development should be concentrated in and around the hamlets and properly managed with architectural design standards to eliminate uniformity of design and enhance rural character. Rural development guidelines should also be adopted to avoid sprawl, eliminate the need for new roads, and aid in the maintenance of population density. Every planning effort undertaken in the Town should take the maintenance and protection of rural character into consideration, with a focus on historic preservation as well.

Recommendations:

- Encourage non-traditional development techniques, such as overlay districts and cluster development, and adopt rural development guidelines, to control growth, preserve open space and farmland, and avoid typical sprawl-inducing development practices. In utilizing these tools, the Town should carefully design the regulations, so as not to encourage development but to discourage poorly planned development. Rural development guidelines may be the most important tool to show potential developers what type of development is desired in the community. Reference to these guidelines can be placed in the zoning text or subdivision regulations requiring their utilization. The zoning overlay tool can help in the areas along the state highways (see commercial development recommendation). Cluster regulations should be carefully designed to help preserve features in the community and to not allow over-development of long narrow farm lots. The cluster rules would not allow large reductions in lot sizes, but allow some other creativity as it relates to other dimensional requirements.

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- Support and encourage appropriate programs to preserve important areas of farmland and prime farm soils through a purchase of development rights program, conservation easements and other such mechanisms. To begin this, the Town should participate with the County and other surrounding communities in an agricultural protection plan. With this information, the Town could investigate a purchase of agricultural conservation easements program (PACE), and possibly look for other programs and funding sources.
- Limit water extensions in the Town to eliminate the potential for extensive growth. Water extensions should only be considered in the areas abutting the Town of Aurora that have potential public health and safety concerns. Consideration should be given to controlling development on individual parcels in these areas by utilizing tools such as lateral (water line) restrictions. Sewers are not an issue in the Town of Wales and none are anticipated in the foreseeable future.
- Identify significant lands for open space protection and develop mechanisms for protecting this land. Although this is an important objective, it is not a high priority. The Town should begin this task by first generating an inventory of open space lands. Attention should be paid to the vision map (see Subsection 5.9) to help focus on regionally significant open spaces. Long-term plans should include conservation easements and other creative solutions (such as Kenneglenn), with little focus on public ownership.
- Employ appropriate measures for preserving agricultural uses in the Town, and publicize and support the County's Right-to-Farm Law. Help farmers identify programs and incentives to help improve the financial success of their business.
- Reassess lot size/density requirements in certain areas to better manage the density of future growth and development. Consideration should be given to amending the agricultural zoning district for the areas predominated by farms and a creating rural residential/agricultural zoning district for the remaining areas within the existing agricultural zoning district. The rural residential/agricultural zoning district should have the same lot size requirements that exist now. The new agricultural zoning district should have larger lots or decreased density requirements (same lot size but reduced densities).
- Encourage reuse and redevelopment of existing structures, consistent with the character of the area, particularly in the Wales Center and South Wales hamlets. This can be done with the use of zoning overlays to identify additional requirements for redevelopment of structures. This overlay can also help to streamline the development process to encourage this type of development.
- Adopt historic preservation standards or guidelines to preserve and protect important structures.
- Important scenic vistas should be identified in the community and development in the vicinity of these features should be designed in a way that preserves and protects these aesthetic resources.
- Properly concentrate commercial and residential development in and around the hamlets to manage growth and avoid sprawl.
- Necessary roadway improvements to address drainage and safety concerns, that are undertaken in rural areas of the Towns, should not include sidewalks, curbing and/or street lighting as part of the overall project, where the addition of such amenities would not be in keeping with the rural character of the area.

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5.3.6 Village of East Aurora

East Aurora is a charming and picturesque community. Although more developed than the surrounding Town communities, it possesses rural appeal with a small-town atmosphere. The Village of East Aurora is densely developed and has an active commercial center that spans Route 20A. There are no agricultural uses and limited areas of undeveloped land. The commercial district along Main Street (Route 20A) historically reflects two separate hamlets. The uptown area, near the eastern end of the Village, is more traditional in nature, and the downtown area to the west has more newer storefronts and buildings.

Residential development in the Village of East Aurora consists of one and two-family units on small lots. There is also a greater supply of multi-family residential development, exceeding what is found in the other four communities in the study area. A number of structures in the commercial district have second-story residential space. Most of the housing stock is older, enhancing to the character of the community.

The commercial district functions as a rural service center for the surrounding region, and contains a high number of historic structures, as well as public uses. The business district supports a street side social ambiance that adds to the unique character of the Village. The area is pedestrian friendly, which also contributes to its appeal.

The Village contains a number of natural resources that also accent its character. These include the east branch of Cazenovia Creek and the Tannery Brook tributary, which stretches east through much of the Village. The abundance of street trees and mature urban vegetation are also important to the area (reinforced by a recent tree survey performed in the Village). This is combined with the interesting architecture and historic features that all add up to make East Aurora an attractive and interesting community.

Recommendations:

- Promote walking and the preservation of the pedestrian friendly atmosphere throughout the Village. This issue is closely linked with the community character of the Village.
- Adopt architectural design standards and historic preservation standards to preserve and protect important structures, and ensure that new development or redevelopment is designed in harmony with the character of the community. Architectural standards should be based around the vision plan contained in Subsection 5.9, and the Streetscape Plan, which both reflect distinct areas along Main Street. Outside of the Main Street areas noted on the vision map, the residential areas should not have any additional architectural guidelines. These proposed architectural guidelines could be referenced through the creation of a Main Street zoning overlay with separate area requirements. Emphasis on overlays shall be focused on the redevelopment of properties. New builds will have strong design requirements and limit standard franchise buildings (see the Appendix for a sample outline of this overlay and guidelines).
- Adopt landscaping standards to help improve the look and quality of commercial and industrial development and redevelopment in the Village. These landscaping standards should be referenced in the zoning text, and apply to all commercial and industrial development and redevelopment requiring Village approvals.
- Develop community gateways at the major entryways to the Village (see vision map and streetscape plan).
- Manage growth (as shown on the Vision Map) and properly plan highway projects to avoid roadway widening that could result in the loss of street trees and roadside foliage.
- Properly manage tourism to aid the local economy but at the same time preserve the character of the Village as a community. Tourism shall be focused in the cultural center/business support area

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denoted on the vision map. Although this will provide a focal point, adjoining areas will also provide support and ancillary attractions. For example, the uptown/traditional Main Street business area provides shopping and retail support services. Design issues (aesthetics), parking and transportation impacts must be evaluated when planning tourism related facilities. Designs should reflect the character of the area, and non-automobile connective features to tourism areas must be provided. Parking issues can also be problematic, and the Village should begin to plan for the possible needs for a new public parking facility.

- Institute appropriate measures to manage traffic in the Village to preserve the quality of life and maintain a safe environment for pedestrian activity. Presently, the Village is working with the NYSDOT in designing the Route 20A improvement project. This project must accommodate bicycle and pedestrian access to the maximum extent possible. The project must also consider the parking needs of the area, and the need for a downtown pace of traffic. The Village should complement this plan by ensuring that proper pedestrian and bicycle access points from the surrounding neighborhoods tie into Main Street and its improvements.
- The Village should also investigate access management issues in the downtown (west end) business district. The traffic circle represents an excellent means of traffic calming and this combined with a good access management plan will help to properly manage traffic.
- Since traffic may continue to increase in the Village (tourism, new state park, development outside the Village, etc.), the Village will need to continue to work with the NYS Department of Transportation, the Town of Aurora, and others in planning how to accommodate these increases in traffic (access management planning—new traffic control devices, signal timing, driveway conflicts, etc.). Road widening or by-pass projects should not be considered to solve the congestion problem, because they would create too many other problems.
- Preserve and diversify the housing stock. Since there are very limited areas for standard multi-family housing, creative methodologies to further diversify the housing stock should be utilized. The Village needs to provide for "in-law" apartments and other means of providing diverse housing in the community.
- Strive to maintain a mix of uses in the business district areas to contribute to the prosperity and social and economic environment of the area. However, uses permitted in these areas should be evaluated to avoid creating a competitive atmosphere between the Uptown and Downtown retail areas in the Village.
- Implement streetscape improvements along Main Street in the business district (see streetscape plan) to improve the aesthetic quality of the area and enhance social interaction in this area (continue the enforcement of the Tree Preservation Law in the mid-Main area and consider expanding to other areas).

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5.4 Management of Future Growth and Development

At all points during this study, residents, committee members, community officials and others expressed strong opinions concerning the management of growth within their community. Each community listed as a major goal: "Properly manage future growth and development". Many of the other goals stated by the communities were also directly related to the management of future growth: community character, economic development, environmental resource protection, etc. To manage growth, you must understand the history of growth in your community, what is going on around you, and where the community appears to be going versus where you want to go.

As discussed in the existing conditions section of this plan, and in general in section 5.2, the five communities of the regional plan area are in the outer rings of the City of Buffalo/Erie County growth areas. Elma, Aurora and East Aurora are seeing the affects of growth in the communities to their north and west, and Holland and Wales are buffered by these communities, and low growth communities to the east and south. This has resulted in larger growth rates in Elma and Aurora, smaller growth rates in Wales and Holland, and redevelopment pressures in East Aurora.

5.4.1 Regional Recommendations

- All four Towns should consider the adoption of rural development standards with common ideals but individual goals and methodologies. This can be accomplished by each community promulgating their own rural development standards. These standards or guidelines would be applied in general to all subdivisions and site plans, or more specifically to certain areas through the use of overlay zoning. In general these standards/ guidelines would be applied to those areas depicted on the regional vision map as low density/rural residential.
- In the areas on the regional vision plan denoted important agriculture and open space, these standards could be utilized, but the plan recommends stronger guidelines/regulations for these areas.
- Competing land uses in the service area of the Village should be discouraged in the surrounding communities. As noted on the regional vision map, and discussed in subsection 5.6, the communities around the Village want to build upon the Village regional service center by concentrating development around it. Each municipality, though, in building upon this feature should not try to compete with it, but provide complementary or non-competitive uses.
 - In Elma, the industrial area and commercial area around the Maple Road interchange of Route 400 should take advantage of the transportation features in that area, but not compete with the Village's central business district. Development in this area should compliment, and not duplicate, the types of development currently found in the Village of East Aurora. The small commercial area in Elma Center is a neighborhood type business area, and the Transit Road corridor is outside of the Village's service area.
 - In Wales, the business uses along Route 20A are rural commercial uses and in general do not compete with the Village. Future businesses would be controlled through the special use permit process.
 - In Aurora, the West Falls and South Wales hamlets have small rural business uses that do not compete with the Village. The Town would also like to plan for business uses in two other areas. At the west end of Route 20A, near the Village, the Town would like to see a future, complementary expansion of the Commerce Green Industrial Park. The Route 16 corridor, just outside the Village, also offers future opportunities for office, light industrial, and restricted retail uses. This area must be planned correctly to ensure that it does not compete with Village business district.
- Unique business zoning (uses) should be created to meet the needs of each community but not conflict with each other. Zoning revisions for each community should be coordinated with the other. As discussed previously, and in other subsections, some of the communities will be proposing

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commercial and industrial code revisions and zoning amendments. These changes should be referred to adjoining communities for their input.

- A Regional Comprehensive Plan implementation committee should be formed with representatives of the legislative and planning boards of each community and the County, as noted in Section 5.3.1. All implementation actions and zoning issues that would have a regional impact should be coordinated through this committee, and used to coordinate input from the County. This committee will also provide yearly reports to the communities on implementation items archived, implementation items in progress, plans for the coming years, and observations about successes or failures. They could also recommend any revisions to the plan.
- Infrastructure improvements should be coordinated with surrounding communities, the region and the County.
 - Water issues are the most important, and continuation of the Southtown's water consortium should be a priority.
 - Sewer issues should be coordinated between the Town of Aurora and the Village of East Aurora. Sewer will be very important to the Town of Aurora and its potential growth areas.
- To help with the preservation of rural character, the communities should jointly plan the preservation/protection of important open space features.
 - Stream corridor preservation should be prioritized and coordinated, and joint funding sought.
 - Active and passive recreation features should be tied between communities, as shown on the vision plans. This can be accomplished by on-road bicycle/walking lanes, off road trails, or a combination of both.
- The South Wales area, including the Emery Park area and the Gow School, should be planned together. Zoning issues should be coordinated and planned as a simple hamlet area. This will necessitate the Towns of Aurora and Wales working together, with the assistance of the County, to form a plan.

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5.4.2 Town of Aurora

In general, the Town of Aurora in defining their goal to "properly manage future growth and development", has provided objectives that include the need for proper development and the need to preserve rural character and features. Future development should provide a mixture of uses, be planned in such a way that is efficient and is coordinated with the Village, and does not change the character of the community, or destroy its important features. The Town would also like to cost effectively provide infrastructure and services in a way that does not induce improper growth (sprawl issues).

- Coordinate revisions to the zoning ordinance revisions and other regulation updates with the extension of public water. Although public water is being extended for public health and safety reasons, it will also arguably affect growth patterns in the Town. Therefore, the zoning revisions recommended in this plan should be prioritized in those areas receiving public water. This will help to assure that growth occurs in the way that the Town desires in that area.
- Related to the public water issue, as waterlines are extended throughout the Town, education programs concerning care and maintenance of septic systems should be started. In some cases the Town should help in seeking grants or low interest loans to help fix failing septic systems. This is a perfect time to do this, as people are planning infrastructure improvements. It is also known that when public water is first received, usage in households typically rise, and this could adversely affect the existing septic systems. The Town should take the lead in contacting the US Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), County or other agencies to provide this education program. The Town could also help in researching the availability of grants or low interest loans for property owners to help fix older, potentially failing septic systems.
- The Town should continue its participation in a Southtown's water consortium group to ensure the effectiveness and economy of waterline improvement projects.
- Sewer extensions, if warranted and then determined to be feasible, should only be targeted in growth areas around the Village. Priority focus should be given to the potential commercial/ industrial/business areas surrounding the Village in the Town. This feasibility will also help to prioritize the potential business growth areas.
- The following types of zoning code and zoning district revisions should be considered:
 - The existing agricultural "A" zone should be removed from the zoning map and the zoning regulations. The areas noted on the vision map as agricultural protection areas and resource protection should have a new agricultural (residential) district. These areas either include a grouping of agricultural operations or are in the state agricultural district.
 - The area in the northwest portion of the Town has the last remaining state agricultural district in the Town, and several farms. On a regional level, it also connects to the agricultural lands in Elma, helps protect the stream corridor in the area (hence the name "Resource Protection"), and provides a buffer to the Town of Orchard Park and the growth occurring there. This new agricultural zoning is compatible with the large lot residential development in the area.
 - The other area is in the central eastern part of the Town. This area contains a concentration of agricultural properties and abuts to agricultural properties in the Town of Wales. This district would allow farms, associated with agricultural uses, and small family-run businesses (in association with the farming practice). Residential houses, not on a farm, would also be allowed based on a low-density requirement (see section 5.3.2 for complete description).
 - The other areas, previously zoned agriculture ("A"), that are noted as rural residential areas on the vision map, should be zoned a new rural residential zoning category. This district would allow single family residential homes, and "estate" residences with barns and facilities for animals, such as horses (see section 5.3.2 for a complete description).
 - Although the areas around the Village are noted as "growth areas", these areas would be rezoned the new rural residential district. These areas would only be rezoned to higher density residential districts when appropriate plans are provided that incorporate neo-urbanist

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standards (walkability, connections to the Village, Village style housing, etc.). It will also be necessary to have sewer extensions, to achieve this higher density housing.

Those areas adjoining the Village, with accessibility to sewers could also be considered for multi-family housing. These areas being considered for multi-family housing should also take into consideration the surrounding land uses in the Village. Some areas may not be suitable, or would require the use of buffers (setbacks, landscaped, or open-space features, etc.). These multi-family housing proposals would also have to include Village aesthetic standards and neo-urbanist concepts (see glossary for definition).

- Whether in the growth areas on the plans, or in any other district in the Town, there should be no rezoning to allow for standard-higher density existing road frontage development (i.e. strip-frontage zoning/development). If a rezoning is requested to accomplish smaller single-family lots along an existing road frontage in an appropriate area, then certain design standards should be imposed. Creative road frontage layouts and clustering should be considered along with Village type guidelines (aesthetics, houses closer to road, connectivity to Village, etc.).
- The Hamlet growth transition area in West Falls should not be treated like the area around the Village. This area would stay as it is presently zoned, unless a plan is presented that depicts a design that is rural in nature and provides connectivity to the Hamlet. Lot sizes will not be able to be reduced to less than 3/4 of an acre due to the lack of sewers.

The following subdivision code changes should be considered:

- Subdivisions should provide for mandatory buffers along designated stream corridors identified in this plan. The buffers should be reasonable areas and sometimes can be accommodated through layouts of the project. It is not the intent of these buffers to make properties undevelopable, just change how they are developed (avoid "takings" issues). These corridors can be preserved through conservation easements. Dedication or access easements should only be considered for the two major creek corridors (east and west branch of Cazenovia Creek).
- The Town should create rural development guidelines that could apply to all proposed subdivisions in the agricultural zone and the rural residential zone. These rural development guidelines should focus on preserving certain features, improving aesthetics of road frontage development, and allow for creative designs without increasing densities (creative shaped lots, open development areas, flag lots, etc.).
- Like the Town of Elma, lots proposed in an area not getting adequate percolation test results, should be limited to very large lots (5 acres or greater) for major subdivisions.
- Creative cluster development regulations should be adopted to address rural subdivisions in non-sewer areas, with important environmental features. These regulations would address how to create a cluster subdivision without the need to construct a new road, and would accommodate larger sized lots (minimum of 1/2 acre for good percolation results). Normal cluster development regulations typically allow for much smaller lots.
- Subdivision of land taking place within or near the hamlet areas (West Falls, South Wales) should consider provisions for accessibility (walking, biking). It is imperative that non-automobile transportation be considered in these designs. This does not always mean sidewalks; but paths and other features should be considered.
- The Town should consider requiring all subdivisions to have Planning Board approval, including minor subdivisions and large lot divisions. Issues of future plans for the property and possible conservation can be discussed. This information can be used to better plan the community.
- Take actions to maintain and improve West Falls as a rural service center hamlet. Zoning modifications, Town actions and projects, and neo-urbanist techniques will help in keeping the West Falls community a vital hamlet.
- A hamlet zoning category surrounding the commercial frontage areas should be created. This zoning category would be flexible enough to allow mixed-uses that are in concert with and support

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rural character of this area. The zoning would allow rural commercial uses (restrict sizes and types of uses), with pedestrian friendly designs (parking in rear), and allow second-story accessory residential uses. These commercial/mixed use areas should be targeted for limited areas such as at Route 240 at South Davis and Route 240 at Mill.

- A companion zoning change to the hamlet zoning category along the commercial-highway areas would be a West Falls hamlet zoning overlay over the entire hamlet area. This overlay would stress some of the issues discussed for this hamlet: rural character, aesthetics, landscaping, connective features, protection of resources, etc.
- Walkability of the area should be an important focus, with ties from Route 240 to the surrounding residential areas and important features.
- The West Falls library should remain in operation and services should be expanded, if warranted (address parking needs).
- Maintain the rural atmosphere and protect the surrounding environmental features of the area.
- Pursue possible streetscape improvements along the Route 240 corridor. Image and aesthetic issues can help to improve the hamlet appearance.
- The Waldorf School and Nicely Park are important features of the hamlet and should be recognized and utilized as important public facilities for the citizens of West Falls.
- Local merchants and the Town should work together to guide business development in the West Falls area. A business association should be formed to accomplish this and possible actions such as promoting the region to skiers, fall foliage tourists, and the historic qualities of the area should be emphasized.

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5.4.3 Town of Elma

The Town of Elma is under the greatest growth pressure of the five communities. Pressure points include the Town of Lancaster to the north, the Transit Road corridor, and West Seneca to the west. Although these pressures exist, the Town has seen only moderately small growth rates over the last ten to twenty years (compared to other communities in the regional plan area, the highest, but to other suburban communities it is very modest).

The Town's present codes and regulations (and lack of sewers in many areas) have limited residential growth rates, and restricted commercial and industrial growth to targeted areas.

The Town would like to accommodate continued directed commercial and industrial growth (very targeted areas) and allow for a mixture of residential uses. This residential growth should be controlled and be rural in nature (by density or design).

Recommendations:

- Further sewer extensions in the Town should only be considered for commercial/industrial uses in the Jamison Road corridor, or within existing sewer districts. The top priority is for industrial uses in the area in the vicinity of Route 400 and existing light manufacturing uses, which has been targeted for additional uses of this nature.
- Large-scale commercial development should be limited to the northern Transit Road area. A zoning overlay along this corridor should address aesthetic issues (give it an Elma flavor – different than West Seneca, possibly rural guidelines), access management, landscaping, signage, and size of structure.
- The commercial zoning that exists around the Maple Street exit of Route 400 should be continued, but should be evaluated to target appropriate uses and include aesthetic and improved design standards. In other words, create a new zoning category or design a zoning overlay district that would allow uses different from what is permitted along Transit Road. This area should accommodate more transportation dependent uses and small businesses rather than full-scale commercial uses (e.g., supermarkets, department stores, etc.) and not present direct competition with the Village of East Aurora.
- Commercial development along Seneca Street should also be controlled through a new commercial zoning category or a zoning overlay district specific to this area. It should limit the type and size of uses and structures. These zoning regulations should address buffers to residential properties, aesthetics, landscaping, separation of driveways, location of parking (rear and side of building), setback of the building, etc., to protect the character of the surrounding community and preserve the rural nature of this area.
- The Elma Plaza is in the Elma Center area and is the focus of this important rural service center. Expansion of this commercial area should be permitted in a focused manner, with no commercial rezoning outside of this area. This area should be targeted for developed as the Town center, with emphasis on improved walking and biking opportunities, and increased opportunities for commerce, convenience retail, and public services.
- Rural cluster development regulations should be created to address low-density residential clustering in non-sewered areas of Town. These regulations should allow for small decreases in lot sizes and creative lot layouts to accomplish the preservation of important open space features and rural atmosphere (non-standard lots). These clusters would not be allowed in areas with the poor soils.
- Additional lands should be targeted for industrial development (in a campus style) in the Maple/Jamison Road/Route 400 area. In determining these areas, care should be taken to buffer any surrounding residential uses (see vision map for areas to be studied).

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- Areas around the Aurora boundary near the Village should have improved non-automobile accessibility to the Village. This area, as denoted on the vision map, is an area under direct influence from the Village of East Aurora. Although this area is uniquely Elma, it should be tied into the village to afford the areas residents the ability to take advantage of the Village atmosphere (improved accessibility).
- The components of the subdivision regulations that limit major subdivisions to Residential A and B zones, and require a 1-inch in 30 minutes percolation, should continue to be enforced. These are excellent controls for residential growth issues, and the protection of resources.
- Zoning overlays should be established along the three major creek corridors (Buffalo Creek, Pond Brook and Cazenovia Creek). These overlays will establish buffer areas, incorporation of open space into designs, and requirements for access or conservation easements. They will not take away the right to develop, just control how it could be done.
- To accomplish protection of important environmental features, and agricultural and open space features, the Town should consider zoning modifications in the southwest corner, and along the eastern border of the Town. These areas should be considered for an agricultural/conservation zoning category or a zoning overlay (instead of the present mix of Residential B and Residential C.) The southwest corner of the Town could keep its present zoning layout if a zoning overlay were placed over the area. This overlay would accommodate the mixture of uses, zones and features (farms, Residential B and C categories, state agricultural district, creek corridors, etc.) of the area but provide a continuity of design and a protection of character. The eastern border of the Town, in areas presently zoned Residential C – Agricultural, would also likely benefit from a strengthened Agricultural/Conservation zoning district. This area includes a state agricultural district, a grouping of farms, and is adjacent to the Town of Marilla (a strong agricultural community). This zoning could also help in the protection of the important stream corridor through this area.
- The Residential C – agricultural zoning should remain in the areas through the center part of Town extending to the northwest corner. This area also has a state agricultural district and some remaining farms, and therefore should keep this zoning category. There are other areas of the Town with the Residential C – agricultural zoning and these should remain. In the area along the Lancaster border (between the creeks and the border – see Vision Map), the Town should also consider a zoning overlay. This overlay would give design and layout requirements (rural development guidelines) that would keep this area rural and help to buffer the suburban residential development taking place in Lancaster.
- The Residential C zone should be based on densities and allow a reduced density requirement, but still allow 3/4 to one-acre lots. In other words, the density could be 1 house per 2 acres, but the minimum lot size could still be 3/4 to one-acre lots. Theoretically, you could get 5 lots on a 10-acre parcel, but could build 5 one-acre lots and conserve the remaining 5 acres (provide a conservation easement or dedicate to the Town).

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5.4.4 Town of Holland

The Town of Holland is a rural agrarian community outside of the growth rings of the City of Buffalo and Erie County. It has seen minimal development pressures over the last 10 to 20 years, and its growth rates have been very small. It has an independent, regionally significant rural service center, the Holland hamlet, and would like to see growth and redevelopment in this hamlet area.

Recommendations:

- The hamlet is a rural service center of regional significance and has recently been awarded a \$250,000 grant to help revitalize the downtown. All actions taken in this area should be coordinated with this effort (see section 5.5 for additional recommendations).
- The hamlet's industrial area is an important component of this area, and should be protected from infringement from non-compatible uses. Expansion of industrial uses is a possibility.
- Improvements in infrastructure should be focused in this area (may need to bring water supply in from areas outside the Town).
- Working with the NYS Department of Transportation, the Town should consider streetscape improvements along Route 16. Traffic calming and other roadway improvements should also be investigated to improve safety issues. Traffic increases may continue and without the possibility of alternate routes, this road will need to accommodate this flow.
- Accessibility, sidewalks, and walkability of the hamlet should be targets for improvements.
- Parking issues must be considered in all roadway projects, and in development projects.
- The success of a rural hamlet is also related to the ability to provide a good mix of residential and commercial/business property (live and work in the community). Housing programs and zoning codes that allow mixed uses will help to keep a vibrant residential mix to the area.
- Agriculture is an important component of the community, but the farmers do not want interference in their land rights. The Town should experiment with loosening up of the zoning requirements to allow farmers to make ends meet with creative land uses (this could allow home occupations and other business pursuits, as long as they are associated with a working farm). Along with this, the Town should consider a purchase of agricultural easements program (PACE), and a limited purchase of development rights (PDR) program. The Town may not be under significant enough development pressures to warrant state assistance and the PDR program. The Town should join in with other surrounding communities to do a farmland protection plan.
- The Town should adopt rural development guidelines that will ensure that roadside development will occur in a way that won't destroy the character of the Town (these guidelines would apply to areas outside the hamlet).
- The Town's cluster development regulations should be reviewed, and updated as necessary, to include standards for smaller subdivisions. These regulations would limit the lot size reductions to fairly large lots, but help in providing more creative layouts of lots and preserving of important open space.
- The highway business district along Route 16 may need slight modifications to ensure the preservation of rural character, the aesthetics of the area, and access management issues. This could also be accomplished with a zoning overlay along this part of the corridor. This overlay would help to ensure rural character, preservation of views, and possibly limit uses.
- The Rural-Residential/Agricultural zoning does not match where the agricultural uses are located. In addition, the Rural-Residential/Agricultural classification and the Conservation Open Space classification have the same bulk regulations and essentially permit the same uses. The Town should look at revising the existing zoning to include only one district to eliminate the confusion and redundancy in the zoning. Otherwise, a review should be undertaken to properly redistrict lands that currently fall within these zoning districts.

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5.4.5 Town of Wales

The Town of Wales is fairly isolated from the growth pressures in Erie County, and represents a rural (sparsely populated) agrarian (much of the Town is in a state agricultural district) community. Its only development pressure comes from its proximity to the Village of East Aurora and the Route 400 interchange at Route 20A. Its zoning code, other regulations, and past actions all indicate that they would like to keep this rural character, and maintain a limited and targeted growth trend. In directing this limited growth, the Town wishes to maintain and effectively supply public services, and provide for the needs of its residents. These needs include: proper housing, preservation of open space, adequate water, places to work, and a balanced and well planned mix of business and residential uses.

Recommendations:

- Areas for waterline extensions should be limited, and sewers are not needed in the Town. Areas that are in need of public water, due to the health and safety issues, and where it can be provided in a cost effective manner, will be investigated for public water. It is anticipated that these areas will be limited to areas along the Town of Aurora border. In areas that are provided public water, the zoning will not be changed to a higher residential zoning category (i.e. – no smaller lots or greater density). It is not the intent of these waterline extensions to encourage residential development. In some instances (due to agricultural districts) it may be necessary to institute a lateral restriction policy (water only provided to existing residents).
- The Town should continue its participation in studies concerning its groundwater resources. The first choice will always be to improve groundwater conditions, prior to installing waterlines. The results of these studies may indicate ways of better protecting or improving this important groundwater resource. Educational programs should be sought to help the citizens in maintaining their septic systems and wells. Agencies such as the US Natural Resource Conservation Service, County and State agencies, and self-help groups may be able to provide this assistance. The Town may also look for grants to help with improving or replacing wells and septic systems.
- The Town should slightly amend its zoning maps and codes to better address the commercial zones and zoning along the state highway routes. Presently all commercial proposals require special use permits, but stronger guidelines should be set-up. For example there are three specific commercial areas in the Town: Route 20A from Aurora to approximately Hunters Creek Road, the hamlets, and the Route 78 corridor. Each should have a different special use requirements (aesthetics, distances from other uses, lot size, allowable uses, etc.). Another methodology would be to set up zoning overlays in these areas, each with different requirements.
- The Town should continue to give input and assistance in the development of Kenneglenn and Hunters Wilderness Creek Park. These should be properly developed as passive recreation facilities.
- Zoning overlays in the areas of Buffalo Creek and Hunters Creek should provide protective buffers to these important open space features. These overlays would not change the existing zoning in the area or take away development rights, they would just add additional requirements for development (distances to creeks, incorporation into design, drainage standards, etc.). Conservation easements should also be considered in these areas (the Town would promote their use).

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5.4.6 Village of East Aurora

The Village of East Aurora is a regionally significant rural service center and it is the hub of the five-community area (the Holland hamlet and South Wales are under less influence). The Village is beginning to feel the pressures of growth as it projects from the City of Buffalo through Lancaster, West Seneca, Orchard Park, and on into Elma and Aurora. This development pressure manifests itself differently in the Village as redevelopment issues. There is a limited amount of land available for development in the Village, with infrastructure that is lacking in the surrounding Town of Aurora, therefore, there is pressure to convert existing uses in the Village to new uses.

The Village is not adverse to these development/land use changes. However, there is a strong desire to properly manage where and how they occur. This effort will help to maintain the Village's character and quality of life. This is important because the Village has many roles and is many things to many people (place to live, work, play, retail center, tourism center, cultural resource, and industrial center) and must provide a proper balance to these many differing, and sometimes conflicting, roles and uses.

Recommendations:

- The Village should continue its examination of the business district to amend the code to match the established vision. The Village has basically four business districts/areas along Main Street. Over the years, the Village has made minor changes to the regulations that have affected use and bulk (size, setbacks, etc.) requirements in this area. Additional changes will be necessary to provide better guidelines and regulations for each of these distinct areas. In the Uptown/traditional Main Street area (see vision map for exact location) redevelopment of existing structures should be stressed with minimized demolition. Architecture/façade standards, signage, sidewalks and other connective features, and parking issues need to be addressed. In the cultural center/business support area, which is centered around the Roycroft Campus, building design and appearance should complement (not match) the Roycroft elements.

The Village commercial support area is a transition area between the cultural/business support area and the downtown/west end business district. This area is a mixed use area that should provide connectivity to the surrounding areas and the Village. Architecture and issues such as parking lots and signage should be consistent with the Village character and atmosphere.

The downtown business district includes some of the newer commercial uses in the Village. Regulations in this area should guide new development and redevelopment to ensure development in this area is compatible with the character of the Village and surrounding area, that commercial and retail uses in this area are balanced with the Uptown district to avoid competition, and that adverse impacts, such as traffic, are adequately assessed.

- All of the districts along Main Street must address the streetscape issues shown in the Village's streetscape plan. Each area, although unique, needs to have the issues of parking, access management, pedestrian and bicycle access, and landscaping properly addressed.
- Overlay zoning districts could also be created for these districts to add another dimension of requirements for each specific area (architecture, landscape/streetscape issues, building finishes, etc.). These restrictions should also regulate how commercial and industrial buildings can be redeveloped.
- The development of the Knox State Park could have a major impact on the Village (traffic) and its business district (economic impacts). The Village should work closely with the NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation in determining the final usage of the property and site access, and the potential traffic patterns that may result from the use and access plans. Efforts should be made to manage park traffic in order to mitigate potential impacts to the Village.

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- Gateways to the Village should be created at the major entrances into the Village (see vision and streetscape design map). These gateways and other areas around the Village should provide connections to the surrounding communities and important features for walking and bicycles. Gateways from Buffalo Road should match the feel of the Knox State Park property.
- Traffic and parking will play a key role in the development/redevelopment of the downtown business district. A full traffic study and parking/circulation plan will be needed to lay the groundwork for this plan.
- Additional parking will most probably be needed in the "Cultural Center/Business Support District" and "Uptown/Traditional Main Street Business District". The Village should continue investigations into locating an area for a parking lot (possible in an area around the railroad tracks to service both areas).
- The Village should continue to work with the NYS Department of Transportation on the Main Street reconstruction project. On-street parking, aesthetics, drainage, public safety, pedestrian and bicycle access, and traffic flow are all important aspects in this project.
- Walkability of the Central Business District and its connections into the surrounding residential areas needs to be a high priority. Traffic generated outside the Village will be difficult to control, but traffic from within the Village should be minimized (give residents other options). The streetscape improvement plan provides some details to assist with this recommendation.
- The "Cultural Center/Business Support" district includes the Roycroft Campus. This area, like its name, should not be only focused on tourism aspects. Although tourism may be a component of the success of the business district, it should be only a part of it. The area should also continue to support the local needs. This area should be tied into the Uptown area and surrounding business areas to let tourists take advantage of the other areas of the Village. Typically, successful tourism involves overnight stays, and the ability to keep people in the community to spend money. This is a difficult issue: how to keep a proper balance between tourism (to help the local businesses) and yet not become a full fledged tourist community, which could destroy the character of the Village and create seasonal congestion. To accommodate this need, a small area should be set aside for overnight accommodations. Presently the Village has a proposal for a hotel, if it is approved, the Village should limit the location of additional hotels/motels. Another method to accommodate the issue of overnight stays is through the use of bed and breakfast facilities. Again, a targeted area near Main Street should be set aside for this use (allow by special use permit – set appropriate use parameters).
- As the industrial office park area (Commerce Green) continues to fill, cooperative efforts with the Town should be explored to expand this area into the Town.
- A traffic study should be done to evaluate conditions within the entire Village and where improvements could be made.
- Although there are a few people that believe the traffic circle is problematic, it is a good traffic calming device and should be kept and improved upon.
- As discussed previously, there have been complaints about the level of traffic within the Village. This situation though is not easily solved. An "engineered" solution of creating a bypass around the Village, could do more harm than good. The Village although impacted by traffic travelling through it, would lose business if traffic were bypassed.

Making the Route 20A/Route 400 interchange a full service interchange would reduce some traffic, including trucks, from the area. Some fear that this would cause development pressures in the Town of Aurora and Wales if this were to occur.

It is recommended that, as a long-term objective, the redevelopment of the interchange for full access be investigated and modified if such action is found to be feasible. This would help traffic in the Village, and provide opportunities for directed growth (see economic section). The development pressures feared by some would be handled by the implementation of this plan, which

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provides the land use direction for the region. However, it must be determined that the long-term benefits would far outweigh potential impacts to the character of the surrounding community.

- Estate residential zoning should be considered for the southeastern corner of the Village to match the conditions in the area (concern about redevelopment of large parcels into smaller ones).
- Multi-family, senior citizen type housing is needed within the Village and should be considered for the Buffalo Street and Main Street areas. Due to limited available areas within the Village, consideration should be given to accommodate this need through the use of in-law apartments and other multi-use options within existing structures. Again, it is very important to allow multi-uses in and around the Main Street area.

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5.5 Provisions for Economic Development

There is a desire in the region to provide sufficient economic development activity to provide diverse job opportunities for residents, to provide needed services to the community, and to balance the tax base. What this means in each community, however, will differ. The type and scale of economic development that should be encouraged in each community must take into consideration the unique characteristics of each. At the same time, a regional approach strengthens each community's position in terms of economic development, in that collectively, the region has much greater clout (market, demographics, quality of life amenities) than any one community individually.

Employment trends in Western New York have led to a decline in the proportion of manufacturing jobs, and an increase in the reliance on the service sector. With the loss of factory-based employment, employment tends to be more dispersed across the county. There has been a dramatic shift in the location of the Buffalo area's manufacturing employment, with a greater proportion of jobs located in suburban areas, in new industrial and office parks. Elma, and to a lesser degree, East Aurora, have benefited from this trend, with strong concentrations of employment in their industrial areas.

The character of retailing in Western New York and the nation has also changed. Stores are no longer as concentrated in traditional downtown districts. Increasingly, retail outlets are located in strip plazas, easily accessible by car. Across Erie County, "big box" retailers comprise a larger share of the retail environment. These trends present new challenges to traditional community shopping centers, such as the Village of East Aurora and the hamlet of Holland.

In terms of industrial development, the Town of Elma has the strongest competitive advantage, with the convergence of the Route 400 Expressway and the rail line. Elma also benefits from the availability of utilities, as well as the availability of larger parcels of land for industrial uses. It is expected that Elma will continue to be the primary location of industrial development in the region, with some in-fill development occurring in existing industrial areas in East Aurora and Holland. Industrial development in the remaining communities will most likely be small-scale.

The Village of East Aurora is the primary retail service center in the area. Its influence extends into the Towns of Aurora, Elma, Wales, and to a lesser extent, Marilla and Orchard Park. The hamlet of Holland is a rural service center of countywide significance, although its market area is primarily confined to the Town of Holland. Smaller, locally important significant hamlet areas exist throughout the area, including South Wales, West Falls, Wales Center, Wales Hollow, Elma Center, Springbrook and Blossom. Although all the hamlets are important in terms of community identity, their importance as retail centers varies, with some, such as Wales Hollow, having little or no commercial activity, while others, such as Elma Center, having more retail prominence.

Tourism is also an important component of the regional economy. This is most evident in the Village of East Aurora, which has a significant concentration of tourism related assets such as the Roycroft Campus and the Millard Fillmore National Historic Landmark, but tourism-related development is also possible in the other communities, particularly Holland. The new Knox State Park in Aurora and East Aurora will have some tourism implications. Agriculture and forestry are also important components of the region's economy.

5.5.1 Regional Recommendations

- The importance of the existing businesses in the region should be acknowledged and supported. It is easier to retain existing businesses than to recruit new industry.
- The emphasis of economic development in the region should be on strengthening existing business and industrial areas through in-fill, expansion and redevelopment.

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- New commercial and industrial development should only occur where there is sufficient capacity, in terms of roads, sewer, water and other infrastructure, to accommodate growth.
- Retail development should be concentrated primarily in the Village of East Aurora and in the hamlets that have traditionally provided retail services. Retail development outside these centers should be closely evaluated and well planned so as not to compete with the Village center.
- The sprawl of automobile-oriented retail outlets along major highways has not become a major problem in any of the five communities of Aurora, East Aurora, Elma, Holland or Wales, and steps should be taken to ensure it does not become a concern in the future. There needs to be careful controls on site planning, traffic access management and the size and scale of development that is allowed. On a longer-term basis, the municipalities may want to consider zoning changes that encourage more compact development and discourage sprawl, such as the creation of overlay districts that guide development standards along particular roadways.
- Non-retail commercial development has not been a major activity in the region, and there is potential for some commercial development of office space, business incubators, and business services.
- Tourism-related activity should build upon each community's inherent character: e.g. heritage tourism in East Aurora; eco-tourism and outdoors-related activities in Holland; agriculture-related tourism in Wales. The level of activity should be compatible with the capacity of the community to accommodate it.
- Agriculture and forestry and associated support services (e.g. farm equipment sales) should be recognized as an important part of the region's economy. Operators of these businesses should have access to the same type of support (financing, economic development incentives, etc.) available to commercial and industrial businesses.
- There should be greater coordination between the business community and the school system (particularly BOCES) to ensure the availability of a local labor pool with appropriate employee skills.

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5.5.2 Town of Aurora

The lack of utilities has limited economic development opportunities in the Town of Aurora, and traditionally, commercial activity in Aurora has centered in the Village. It is a goal of Town officials, however, to establish new areas for commercial and light industrial businesses within its borders outside the incorporated Village. In discussing this goal throughout the planning process, many issues were raised, with strong arguments both in favor and against this goal. Concerns about encouraging this type of development in the Town outside the Village include:

- This type of development could hurt the rural character of the area and lead to sprawl.
- Businesses outside the Village, particularly if retail in nature, would compete with Village businesses, drawing away market share and potentially leading to the failure of established businesses.
- The Town does not have the needed infrastructure (sewer and in some cases, water) to support business outside of the village.
- There are potential environmental impacts to consider.

Arguments in favor of designating certain areas in the Town where commercial and light industrial development would be allowed include:

- The Town cannot be simply a bedroom community, and needs balanced development to help improve its tax base.
- Economic development is needed to provide employment opportunities, particularly for the younger residents so that they may have the option of remaining in the area.
- Residents of the Town need more diversity of shopping opportunities, and often have to travel to adjacent communities, such as Hamburg, for certain basic needs.
- Development of additional businesses in the Town can help support Village businesses.

There are some small-scale commercial/retail uses within the hamlet of West Falls. These businesses are primarily service local surrounding area. North of the hamlet of West Falls there is a small industrial area where some additional in-fill development is feasible. Given the lack of infrastructure in this area, no significant changes to the existing character of the area are expected especially if the recommendations of this plan are implemented (overlay district, etc.).

The only significant existing commercial development in the Town outside the Village has occurred along Route 16 south of the Village to Blakeley Road. This is also the best suited location for the expansion of commercial development in the Town, although the area is limited by environmental constraints, its rural atmosphere and the lack of sewers.

Some additional areas may be considered for commercial or light industrial development in Aurora. The most promising of these locations is along Route 20A west of the Village. The Commerce Green Industrial Park in the Village is located off Route 20A near the Village-Town border. There are lands in the Town in this vicinity where similar type of development may be feasible, particularly if sewer infrastructure is extended. It is acknowledged that there is no present demand for this type of development (there are currently vacancies in Commerce Green), but based on the long term needs of the Town and County (guiding principals) this area should be set aside to accommodate future needs.

Recommendations

- The Town of Aurora must acknowledge the importance of the Village as the focus of economic activity in the Town. The success of both communities depends on the recognition that the Village is an integral part of the Town, and the two communities need to maintain continual dialogue to ensure coordination and cooperation regarding economic development issues.

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- The West Falls area serves as a rural hamlet, and continued small business development should be supported within this area. There are some small areas zoned for commercial uses, and the Town should consider rezoning additional *targeted* areas for commercial *and mixed* uses to accommodate small-scale retail and service businesses. The business community should work with the Town in identifying specific goals for this hamlet area (tourism, community services, etc.), and ways to accomplish them.
- To more carefully control future commercial development within the West Falls hamlet, the Town should consider implementing an overlay district in the hamlet that would provide criteria and standards for commercial projects and also provide some direction on residential development. The intent should be to preserve the rural hamlet nature of the community, by encouraging an appropriate mix of uses characteristic of traditional small hamlets.
- It is important that any development that occurs along Route 16 south of the Village is compatible with surrounding uses, and does not directly compete with the Main Street corridor in the Village. Uncontrolled development along Route 16 could lead to inefficient strip development, sprawl, and traffic congestion. Issues such as site design, scale of development, highway access consolidation regulations (limit driveways and curb cuts) and allowable uses should be carefully controlled to ensure that appropriate development occurs. Environmental features, such as flood plains and wetlands, must also be taken into consideration in any development proposals in this area.
- It is recommended that the Route 16 corridor (from the Village line out to Route 400) be targeted for commercial uses, such as office parks, and limited retail development. This could also be the location for a start-up business incubator, an office facility with support services (in-house secretarial service, shared conference rooms, etc.), or possibly light industrial uses (warehousing, assembly etc.) Commercial recreational facilities, such as the existing driving range or a skating rink, are also compatible uses. Retail uses should be limited in scale and in type, and preferably be part of a mixed-use development. For example, if an incubator park were developed, small-scale retail catering to the tenants (e.g. coffee shop) would be appropriate. Large-scale retail uses (big boxes) should not be allowed along the Route 16 corridor, between the Village boundary and Blakeley Road.
- Route 16, as it continues south from Route 400 to Blakeley Road, contains a mixture of small commercial and residential properties. This area should also be zoned a new zoning category that allows low-density single family homes and small commercial businesses by special permit. In considering the special permit for a proposed commercial operation, the code would require consideration of the size and character of the use, how it fits into the rural character of the area, its buffering from residential uses and avoidance of agricultural uses.
- Throughout the Route 16 corridor, the Town should consider a road frontage overlay district that would help the Town address issues such as architecture, building and parking setbacks, location and layout of parking, landscaping/greenspace, and other design standards.
- The Town should also consider creating an overlay district for this area to address architectural standards, parking layouts, greenspace and other design issues.
- Alternatively, the Town could establish a unique Planned Business Area Development ordinance, which would include the types of commercial and/or industrial uses that would be allowed, and set forth other design requirements (setbacks, sizes, appearance, greenspace, protection of environmental features, etc.) As opposed to a new zoning district, the Planned Business Area would be a "floating" zone, not attached to any physical space in the Town. If an appropriate plan is submitted to the Town, the Town could rezone the land to Planned Business Area. This alternative provides more flexibility, but is less clear-cut than a physical rezoning.
- The Town should explore the feasibility of industrial park-style development on Route 20A near the western Village border, in the vicinity of the existing Commerce Green Industrial Park. This area provides the best opportunity in the near term for industrial development in the Town. There are existing water lines, and Route 20A is a major transportation route. Adjacent uses would be compatible (Commerce Green and Highway Garage), and there are some vacant lands available.

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- There is some potential for tourism-related development, particularly along the small stretch of Route 78/16 opposite the new Knox State Park. This area is presently zoned for business use. As in the case of Route 16 south of the Village to Blakeley Road, growth should be carefully controlled. In particular, consideration should be given to site design and highway access to ensure that any development is compatible with the surrounding area, and can be accommodated by the available infrastructure.
- Although there is relatively little agricultural activity in the Town of Aurora, farming should be supported. There are agricultural lands in the eastern part of the Town that are not within the protection of a designated Agricultural District. It should be determined whether extending the Agricultural District from Wales west to incorporate these properties would benefit these parcels. If so, the Town should support getting these lands included within the district.

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5.5.3 Town of Elma

The Town of Elma has strong economic development potential along the existing industrial corridor that runs along the Route 400 Expressway. This area has water, sewer and rail service, and excellent access to the interstate system via Route 400. The Maple Road industrial area (Jamison and Route 400) is the most promising industrial development area in the region. The presence of Moog and other industries provides an anchor for industrial development, creating an identifiable and marketable industrial area.

Commercial centers in Elma are primarily convenience retail. Retail concentrations include the small plaza near Elma Center and scattered retail uses along Route 16, especially in the hamlet of Springbrook area near Transit Road. Some commercial uses also extend along Transit Road. These are not primarily geared to the convenience retail market, but consist of a mixture of larger uses, such as auto sales. Some retail and commercial development is also occurring in the vicinity of the Maple Road exit off Route 400.

Recommendations:

- The area around the Jamison Road and Maple Road exits on the Route 400 Expressway should be reserved for industrial development, and land uses not compatible with industrial uses should be discouraged. In addition, consideration should be given to careful site planning to maximize the regional economic development potential of this area.
- Any new retail development in the Town of Elma should be concentrated near where existing retail is already located. These areas include the Elma Plaza area, Transit Road, Seneca Street in the vicinity of the Spring Brook hamlet, and in the immediate vicinity of the Maple Road exit of Route 400.
- The area in the vicinity of the Plaza should be developed as a Town center or more distinct hamlet-like area. Additional retail development in this area should be encouraged in a manner that promotes a walkable scale, and serves surrounding residential uses. The area should contain a mix of land uses, including residential and public uses, to help support the retail and better form a Town center.
- As previously noted, additional commercial development could be accommodated at the Maple Road exit of Route 400, although such development should be balanced with the need for industrial land and should not include uses that would directly compete with the Village of East Aurora business districts. This location is appropriate for more automobile-oriented uses, such as those that already exist in the area.
- The possibility of allowing larger-scale retail development on Transit Road, in the northwest corner of the Town should be considered. Such development would be consistent with existing development along this corridor in adjacent communities. To control sprawl, however, it is recommended that larger scale retail uses be concentrated at the northern end of the Town only, and not be allowed south of the Route 16 intersection.
- Smaller scale commercial and retail uses are appropriate for Seneca Street (Route 16), particularly in the vicinity of the Spring Brook hamlet. However, these uses should be controlled and designed to be in character with the rural nature of the surrounding area. Commercial sprawl and strip development should be avoided along this roadway.
- There are a number of agricultural properties in Elma, providing large amounts of open space in the Town. These properties contribute significantly to the community's identity, and should be preserved. The Town should investigate how it can help support the farms, and preserve these lands as open space.

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5.5.4 Town of Holland

The hamlet in the Town of Holland is a rural service center of countywide significance. It is a mixed-use area, supporting retail, commercial and industrial development, surrounded by residential development. It is also the center of civic life for the Town. Commercial and retail uses in the hamlet serve primarily on a local market, providing goods and services for residents of the Town. The hamlet's economic value also contributes to the character and identity of the community.

Several of the major goals of the Town relate to maintaining a vibrant and successful hamlet and central business district. The Town has done many things in trying to accomplish this goal. They completed a Comprehensive Plan in 1994 that addresses development in the hamlet, supporting an emphasis on services, specialty retailing and convenience retailing in a pedestrian-scale environment. The Town has also been working with the NYS Department of Transportation in planning improvements along Route 16 as part of a road project. The greatest opportunity lies with the \$250,000 grant recently obtained by the Town from Erie County through the Village Center Reinvestment (VCR) initiative to help revitalize the Holland hamlet area. This grant supports a "circuit rider" planner to provide technical assistance. The Town's immediate challenge is to determine how best to invest the grant money to achieve their goals.

Additional industrial development in Holland is limited by constraints of topography, utilities and available appropriately zoned-land. One asset the community does have is railroad access to the major industrial parcel in the Town. A tenant for the former Fisher-Price plant has been secured, filling the largest industrial vacancy in the Town. While there is additional land zoned for industrial use, it does not have adequate road access. The 1994 Town of Holland Master Plan Update recommends the creation of an industrial park adjacent to the existing industrial area in the hamlet with a new access road from Route 16. However, this access road must cross the Cazenovia Creek, and would be very expensive to build. Alternate access via an extension of Canada Street is not a satisfactory solution, because it would cause increased truck traffic on a predominately residential street. However, without new road access, any additional industrial development will be small-scale and incremental.

Agriculture remains an important component of the economy in Holland. There is also significant potential to capitalize to a greater degree on tourism-related development. The area already is known for its Speedway, but spin-off benefits from this facility have been limited. There is also a base of recreational tourism, related to winter sports, outdoors activities, campgrounds and trails.

Recommendations:

- This Regional Comprehensive Plan reinforces the Town's earlier Comprehensive Plan and also illustrates how the Town fits into the region. Both Plans acknowledge the importance of the Holland hamlet as a rural service center of regional significance.
- The health and vitality of the hamlet downtown district should be a priority. Economic development efforts should emphasize supporting the retail core, filling in vacancies and maintaining an appropriate mix of goods and services.
- Given the strategic importance of the hamlet, it is recommended that a more detailed "hamlet revitalization" project be pursued to explore market strengths and weaknesses, potential market niches, and issues affecting the central business district in more depth. These include physical factors such as traffic, parking, façades, and streetscape and landscaping standards, as well as factors relating to business support and operations such as marketing, merchandising, financing, and technical support to help existing businesses be more profitable, and to assist entrepreneurs in starting up new businesses.
- The grant money from the County VCR initiative gives the Town with the opportunity to provide support to local businesses to help ensure their continued viability. The Town should institute an

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extensive outreach campaign to ensure all eligible parties are aware of all available programs and how they can take advantage of them.

- A common theme found with most successful downtown revitalization programs is the formulation of a local committee that takes responsibility for overseeing the process. Successful shopping centers must continually go through a process of adjusting to changing market conditions, identifying new niches and ensuring a proper mix of uses that meet market demand. It is recommended that a hamlet revitalization committee be established to take responsibility for this role in Holland. The make-up of the committee should include business and property owners and government officials. Its main focus should be monitoring what is going on, identifying problems and issues, and continually working to come up with appropriate solutions.
- It is recommended that all business and property owners in the hamlet be contacted to determine what their needs and concerns are. This will enable the Town and the hamlet revitalization committee to design programs that address the actual needs in a more effective manner.
- The Town should also consider targeting the 485-b exemptions on business improvements to help support upgrades and improvements in the hamlet area.
- One major issue is the need to upgrade the retail inventory while preserving the unique architectural character of the hamlet. With greater street appeal and more targeted merchandising, many of the existing businesses in the hamlet would be able to attract a greater proportion of shoppers from the through-traffic along Route 16. Façade and streetscape improvements, building restorations and sensitive infill development should be supported. The Town should consider targeted grant and loan programs to assist with this effort.
- Business support and retention should be the first priority, but targeted business recruitment/development should also occur. The goal is to provide a mix of businesses and services that meet local needs. For example, surveys suggest interest on the part of residents for a coffee shop or casual restaurant. If the hamlet revitalization committee verifies this demand, they should then work to try to bring such a use to the area.
- There are national groups that help support small downtowns. The National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation is probably the most prominent. The Town should take advantage of their materials for technical support and assistance.
- Traffic congestion and parking are also issues that must be addressed to fully realize the retail potential of the hamlet. On-street parking should be maintained for the convenience of customers, and encourage shoppers to stay in the hamlet. Additional off-street parking, preferably at the side or rear of businesses should also be available to provide more parking spaces.
- Measures to encourage pedestrian traffic to help limit congestion should be instituted. These include improved sidewalks, crosswalks, appropriate street lighting, landscaping and "streetscape" features that make walking more pleasant and convenient (shade trees, benches for resting, high-quality design).
- Encouraging pedestrian traffic will also help support business development, by encouraging more activity on the street, and making the hamlet area a more vital and interesting—and therefore more inviting—place to frequent.
- The Town should continue to work with the NYS Department of Transportation on incorporating roadway design features that will support the hamlet. Improvements should not focus exclusively on traffic considerations, but also be sensitive to the needs of local businesses and residents. Particularly through the hamlet area, focus should be on traffic calming measures and aesthetics. Adequate parking and access must also be maintained.
- To the extent feasible, retail development should be concentrated in the hamlet. Commercial development may be allowed along Route 16 outside the hamlet, but it should be focused on services and businesses that are not retail-based.
- Supporting residential development in the hamlet will also help economic development efforts, particularly if the hamlet is pedestrian-friendly. Encouraging apartments over businesses (mixed dwelling and non-dwelling uses are allowed in the General Business zoning district), promoting

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appropriate infill residential development, and creating strong links (walkways, crosswalks, landscaping) between residential and business areas will further help support the hamlet.

- Additional recreational-oriented economic activity (campgrounds, riding stables, etc.) should be supported. Support services for the recreational sector, such as restaurants, specialty retail and recreational services catering to visitors to the region, should also be encouraged.
- The Town of Holland should continue its participation in the Southtowns Water Consortium, with the ultimate goal of finding an improved or alternative source of public water in the Town and hamlet. The reliance on public well water limits industrial development potential.
- In order to encourage any further industrial development, the Town must also address the access problem for appropriately zoned industrial lands within its borders. The Town should consider a site study for its industrial parcels. The study would address issues such as access, site layout, extension of utilities, etc., and present scenarios showing how to develop the site(s) in the most effective manner. The study should provide guidance on phasing and preliminary cost estimates as well.
- An important component of the economy in Holland is agriculture, and the Town should do all it can to support agriculture and related support businesses. Issues of preserving agricultural lands as a land use for their open space characteristics are addressed in a separate section of this report. However, it is important to also acknowledge the importance of farming as an economic activity in Holland.
- Non-agricultural uses should be discouraged on prime agricultural lands, and any new residential or business development adjacent to agricultural lands should be properly buffered to protect farmers from conflicts.
- The Town should consider passing a right-to-farm law, and should investigate other methods of supporting agriculture as an important economic activity in Holland. Agri-tourism is another possible source of additional income to farm operators.
- The Town should also consider more creative and proactive means to support farming as an economic activity. For example, farms should be eligible for the same type of business incentive programs offered to other types of industry. Loan programs to fund farm equipment purchases, or even "loan equity" programs similar to home equity loans to enable farm operators to have access to investments tied up in capital purchases or equipment are other possibilities.

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5.5.5 Town of Wales

The Town of Wales prefers to remain rural in nature at this time. There is no water or sewer service in the Town of Wales, and the dependence on individual wells and septic systems helps to control development pressures. There has been relatively little commercial development in the Town of Wales, and this is consistent with the Town's vision for its community. Agriculture is the primary economic activity in the Town.

If more extensive economic development were to occur, the most likely location would be along Route 20A in the western area of the Town. This area is already characterized by some commercial/industrial development. It also has easy access to Route 400, and could potentially connect to infrastructure services in the Village of East Aurora. Topological concerns (steep slopes), which limit development elsewhere in the Town, are not a great problem in this area, which is relatively flat along the road frontage.

Recommendations:

- The Town should adopt policies and procedures that recognize the importance of agriculture to the local economy.
- Non-agricultural uses should be discouraged on prime agricultural lands, and the farmers' right to farm should be affirmed through support of the County's Right-To-Farm Law.
- While recognizing that the primary economic base is agricultural, not tourism, there is some potential for a limited amount of tourism activity related to agri-tourism (e.g. farm tours, farmer's markets).
- New commercial development should not be encouraged, except to the extent that it meets local demand. It should be small in scale, and sited near existing retail areas.
- Re-use of existing structures and new in-fill development in the hamlets (Wales Center, Wales Hollow and South Wales) should be encouraged in preference over new strip development.
- Business development along the highways outside the hamlet areas should be primarily non-retail.
- All economic development that occurs within the Town of Wales should be screened and landscaped to minimize visual impacts and conflicts with surrounding non-commercial uses.
- The Town should consider the possibility of designating the area along Route 20A near the Town of Aurora border for potential future non-retail commercial or light industrial uses. As a long-term recommendation, the Town should consider the possibility of allowing a small industrial/business park in this area. This would tend to concentrate this type of activity in one location instead of having it scattered across the Town, and make it easier to adequately screen and landscape the site.

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5.5.6 Village of East Aurora

The Village of East Aurora is the primary retail service center in the regional plan area. It also serves as a community center, and its retail district is an important component of the community's character. Only the hamlet in Holland plays a comparably significant role. The retail district in the Village consists of two separate concentrations with distinct characters, and a transitional mixed-use zone separating them. Much of the retail core is built-out. However, there is significant potential for the re-use of existing structures, and for some in-fill development. The area in the vicinity of the traffic circle offers greater opportunities for new development, whereas the uptown region at the eastern end of the Village is better suited for re-use and controlled redevelopment.

The challenge for the Village of East Aurora will be to maintain its unique identity, and provide a distinct retail experience that can successfully compete with large retailers on a wider regional basis. Stores like Vidler's and the Roycroft shops target a niche market and provide retail services that do not compete directly with large retailers. This effort will be facilitated by the traditional strength of the Village as a retail center, the culture of the community and the presence of the Roycroft Campus, which will help support the tourism base of the economy.

Fisher-Price and Commerce Green are stable industrial areas. Additional industrial development can be accommodated within Commerce Green, where available sites are developing privately. No additional vacant lands suitable for industrial development were identified within the Village. There are some scattered buildings housing industrial uses elsewhere in the community, primarily along the rail line and Route 16. These are in older buildings that cannot easily be adapted to meet the type of space needs typically in demand by modern commercial and/or light industrial users (single story, campus setting, adjacent parking, landscaping, etc.)

Recommendations:

- It should be a priority to support and preserve the vitality of the Main Street retail corridor in the Village.
- The Village Main Street (Uptown) business district actually consists of several distinct areas, and this differentiation should be preserved. It helps diversify retail offerings, and establish distinct areas that can target different retail niches. The Village has already taken steps, such as the zoning changes along Main Street, to achieve this goal. These efforts should be continued.
- The eastern end of the Village tends to be more tourist-oriented, given its mix of stores and services, including Vidler's, and its proximity to the Roycroft Campus. Architectural style, setbacks and scale are very important in this area, and emphasis should be on the reuse of existing structures and infill. Businesses in this area should consider adjusting their business operations to take advantage of the tourism market (e.g. adjusting hours of operation).
- Any new structures along the Uptown area of Main Street should be compatible with existing businesses in size, scale and setback. Diversity of architectural style should be allowed and even encouraged, as long as it is compatible with the character of the area. As noted above, however, design standards should be strictly enforced.
- Shopping in the western end of the Village is less tourism-oriented. Stores and lots tend to be somewhat larger, and new construction can be more easily accommodated in this area. While there can be more flexibility in size and scale at the west end of the Village than uptown, large, "big box" developments are not appropriate, and any new developments must be consistent in size and scale with surrounding uses.
- At the plaza in the Downtown area, any new development must be subject to careful site review, examining issues such as parking, accommodation of pedestrians and siting of buildings to minimize car-pedestrian conflicts and traffic impacts.

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- All new retail development should be assessed in terms of its impact on the area surrounding the Downtown, and land use regulations (zoning) should be evaluated to discourage the allowable uses and the development of retail centers that would compete with the Uptown Main Street business district. This is also an area where cooperation with the Town is necessary and essential, because given the fact that the Village is largely built-out, the most likely location of competing retail centers would be outside the Village limits along Olean Road (Route 16) and possibly Route 20A.
- The Village must continue to work closely with the Town of Aurora to ensure that development outside the Village does not undermine redevelopment efforts in the Village. The Town and the Village need to maintain a cooperative relationship, because the Village is part of the Town and contributes to its tax base. Efforts that are detrimental to the Village ultimately are detrimental to the Town as well.
- A certain level of congestion is a sign of a healthy retail district. If not carefully controlled, however, traffic congestion can have a negative effect on the economic vitality and character of the Main Street corridor. Projects and policies designed to encourage walking and biking in the Village will help alleviate traffic congestion and parking problems. The Village has the opportunity to address this issue with the proposed streetscape improvements accompanying the upcoming NYS Department of Transportation Main Street Reconstruction project. The Village should work with the NYS Department of Transportation to ensure that this project addresses important traffic safety issues.
- More specialized solutions are needed in specific areas where congestion is significant, such as the traffic circle and the west end of Route 20A. These areas would merit transportation studies to look at traffic patterns, turning motions and possible solutions. This issue is addressed more specifically in the transportation section of this Plan.
- Along these lines, the proposed Streetscape project should be pursued to the greatest degree feasible. In addition to helping mitigate traffic conditions, this project will help support economic and tourism development in the Village.
- The Village has excellent resources for additional tourism development, but this is a two-edged sword. The Village must plan for the increase in visitation, and carefully balance new tourism-related development with the capacity of the community to accommodate it.
- In general, economic development efforts within the Village should target retail and commercial development. Industrial development efforts should focus primarily on ensuring the continued success and potential expansion of existing industries in the Village, such as Fisher Price. The Village should also support continued development within Commerce Green, which provides the major opportunity for new industrial development in the Village. The most appropriate uses for this property are small light industrial users who do not need easy interstate or rail access, or possibly office park development.
- For older industrial buildings in the Village, it may be difficult to find new industrial users when existing tenants vacate buildings. In many cases, redevelopment to a non-industrial use may be a preferred option, particularly in areas nearer the retail core. Business incubators, office buildings, or even retail uses should be considered in addition to industrial use, if the building's location and layout can accommodate such uses, and if appropriate industrial tenants cannot be identified.

5.6 Transportation System Management

The major transportation routes through the regional planning area include State Routes 400 (a limited access highway), 16 and 78, and U.S. Route 20A. These roadways extent through or into portions of all five communities. Route 400 extends through Elma and Aurora. Route 400 (as well as Routes 20A and 16) is the major feature connecting this region to the rest of the County. This roadway has excess capacity and will adequately service the region for the foreseeable future.

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Route 400 has four interchanges and its southern terminus situated in the region. Only two of the four interchanges are full service; the Maple Road and Route 20A interchanges only allow travel in certain directions, forcing vehicles to seek alternative routes to reach their destinations. Neither of these interchanges have southbound entrance or northbound exit ramps. Thus vehicles, in particular trucks, must move through the Village of East Aurora, to reach southerly destinations, between the Village and Holland. More traffic is forced to utilize Olean Road (Route 16) as a result, which has precipitated the need for a left turn signal for southbound movements off of Main Street.

Much of the roadway system in the region consists of rural, two-lane roads that support local travel. These roads typically have narrow shoulders, no curbing or street lighting, and are served by roadside drainage ditches. Public transportation services in the region are minimal and represented by bus service only. The region is heavily automobile dependent. There are several designated on-street bicycle routes in the region including: Town of Aurora - Center Street, Davis Road, Emery Road, Jewett Holmwood Road, NY 16/NY 78 (Buffalo Street), NY 78/US 20A (Main Street), NY 187 (Transit Road), NY 240 (Ellicott Road), and US 20A (Quaker Road); Village of East Aurora - Center Street, Pine Street, US 20A (Quaker Road), and NY 78/US 20A (Main Street); Town of Elma - East Aurora Porterville Road, Girdle Road, Rice Road, Schwartz Road, NY 16/NY 76 (Seneca Street), US 20/NY 78 (Transit Road), and NY 187 (Old Transit Road); Town of Holland - NY 16 (Olean Road); Town of Wales - NY 16 (Olean Road), and US 20A/NY 78 (Big Tree Road). Local roads, particularly in Elma and Aurora, are handling increased volumes of traffic as a result of internal and external regional growth. Route 16 through Holland is also experiencing increased traffic flow, particularly during the summer months. The problem arises as to how to address the demands on local roadways without undertaking widening or other such improvements that would negatively impact the rural character of the communities.

The NYSDOT continually identifies certain locations where accident rates and/or design deficiencies are resulting in congestion or other traffic problems. Since these priority investigation locations (PILs) and priority investigation intersections (PIIs) are always changing (those identified in this plan are already outdated), the communities should annually work with the NYSDOT to help prioritize these problem areas.

The region is also traversed by a Norfolk Southern railroad line which runs through the Town of Elma, East Aurora and Aurora, and into Holland through the southwestern corner of Wales. This line has three active switches, one in South Wales, one in Holland and the one near Jamison Road in Elma. The railroad is an important asset to the region and provides opportunities for industrial development. It may provide long term opportunities for pedestrian/commuter travel in the future, as well.

5.6.1 Regional Recommendations

Recommendations for transportation improvements are offered on a regional basis, rather than for each individual community, because traffic and transportation issues typically are not confined to one particular location or community. They cross municipal boundaries and are common to all communities in the region. These are also issues that should be collaborated on in an effort to develop more effective programs and solutions that will better serve the region.

- The railroad is a valuable asset of the region for the transport of freight (and the potential transport of people) and should be protected. Don't let incompatible uses that would not benefit from such a location encroach along the rail corridor. Municipalities should lobby to ensure that railway service is continued through the area. The system should be protected for possible use in the future for commuters. In addition, potential inter-modal transport services and opportunities should be explored as a means of improving economic development in the region.

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- The Town of Aurora and the Village of East Aurora, with input from the Town of Elma as well, should work with the New York State Office of Parks and Historic Preservation, on the planning and design for Knox State Park. These communities should have input into decisions for recreational activities at the park, and signage in an effort to properly manage traffic and other impacts that may result from future park operations. Signage is particularly important so that park users can be guided to the facility in a manner that best distributes traffic on local roadways to reduce impacts.
- The five communities should collaborate on a corridor/access management traffic study to effectively address future growth and roadway usage in the region. Although the Regional Comprehensive Plan has reviewed traffic and transportation conditions in the region, the scope of this Plan was not specific enough to properly study and analyze traffic problems and solutions. Together the five communities could comprise a sub-area of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) allowing for an examination of problems and issues on a regional and local basis. Funding would be sought from the State as well as the County, with the support of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council. A regional traffic study, that looks at the issues of increasing traffic flow on local roads, problem intersections, traffic congestion in East Aurora, heavy and increasing traffic volumes on Route 16, and other issues is the best way to address these problems. It will enable the communities to properly identify issues and devise and analyze appropriate solutions. This is important because the traffic and transportation problems that effect each community are not necessarily just localized. Roadways in the region cross municipal boundaries and, in many cases, so to the traffic problems.
- Consideration should be given to reconstructing the Route 400 interchanges at 20A and Maple Road for full directional service at some point in the future (but only if shown to be feasible). The above recommended traffic study would better realize the need for this action.
- The Towns and Village should work closely with the NYS Department of Transportation to address issues on State roadways. This should be a continuous process, and should occur prior to, in conjunction with, and after the (previously noted) proposed regional traffic study is undertaken. The Route 20A corridor should be carefully planned for to continue its service as a major east/west corridor (bypassing the Village and widening of Main Street are not viable options). Route 16 also should be studied for additional ways of improving its service (a bypass of the Holland hamlet is not a viable option). Care should be taken in the Village and hamlets to preserve the character of each area.
- The Towns and Village should work closely with the County to address the issues of accessibility (bikes and pedestrians) and road improvement on County highways. Accessibility issues are focused on the Village, hamlet areas, and connections to important public facilities. Improvements should also be targeted in these important regions.
- In other sections of this Plan, the use of zoning overlay districts has been recommended. As these overlays are designed to address certain land use issues, there may be situations where traffic issues should be included in the planning process. Traffic issues go hand in hand with land use decision making. Therefore, access management should be considered as overlays are designed to address other relevant planning issues. In addition, in hamlet and village areas, overlay that specifically focus on access management issues (curb cuts, setbacks, timing/location of traffic lights, siting and separation distances, etc.) should be considered.
- Along the same lines, traffic issues should become a more prominent focus in overall decision making for development and redevelopment in the five communities, particularly in the Village and in and around the hamlet areas in the Towns. Protecting the character of the region (and each individual community) is a goal of the Plan and was explicitly brought to light by the public. Only through proper land use planning decisions, that start to incorporate smart growth thinking, can you effectively manage traffic and transportation impacts that result from new development. Each of the regional planning communities, in one way or another, is experiencing the impacts of growth in neighboring communities in the region and County. Each development decision has an incremental impact on traffic volumes and flow. The idea here is not to deny development opportunities, but to

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plan them wisely so that a balance can be struck between economic development and land use planning. Therefore, good site planning and subdivision review that takes into account density, site orientation, existing roadway and capacity conditions, existing and proposed traffic patterns, the cumulative impacts of other proposed development and access management, is required. Plans should also be referred to the NYSDOT or County as early as possible in the process to elicit their input on any development projects. The SEQRA process is a perfect tool to begin this early evaluation.

- Non-traditional types of development, that avoid sprawl and foster efficient use of both land and transportation facilities should be strongly encouraged. Development that would result in excessive traffic, and inefficient and disruptive improvements or roadway expansion, should be discouraged. Roadway widening and other such capacity expansion projects should not be undertaken outside established sewer districts or within agricultural districts. Also, development should be encouraged to occur near already developed areas, where biking and walking are more feasible, and where services exist, through appropriate zoning measures.
- Industrial development should be directed to areas with easy access to Route 400. This would allow for efficiency and reduce truck traffic on local roadways. This planning should be tied to the examination of Route 400 interchange improvements.
- Retail development should be directed to areas in close vicinity to residential markets, and residential development to areas where services exist. This way vehicular traffic would not be the only means of access.
- In addition to working within the individual communities to be vigilant about transportation planning, it is important to share ideas and collaborate with your partnering communities, as well as your neighbors, to manage traffic issues. Cooperation is especially important for large-scale projects located near municipal boundaries. Input should be solicited from the adjoining communities that would be effected. To help facilitate these situations, the County, NYSDOT and/or GBNRTC should also be involved.
- The State and County should continue to accommodate bicycles in their roadway redesign plans. Pedestrian accessibility (sidewalks) should be highly considered in the Village, and certain areas of the hamlets. Outside the hamlets or designated growth areas around the Village, sidewalks should *only* be constructed if necessary to connect important features and when other methods for improving pedestrian access are not feasible. However, the communities should work with the County and State to devise appropriate measures to more safely accommodate bicycles and pedestrians (and in certain areas, equestrians) along their jurisdictional roadways (improved/widened shoulders, roadway striping and pavement treatments, signage). This same approach should be considered for local roads as well.
- Existing public transportation services should be maintained and creative alternative modes of transport, such as jitneys, para-transit services or loop buses should be explored to increase opportunities and address seasonal traffic and transportation problems.

5.7 Protection of Significant Environmental Resources

As discussed in Section 4.3, the Regional Comprehensive Plan area contains a variety of significant environmental features. These include watersheds, creek corridors, tributary streams, wetlands and hydric soils, floodplains, steep slopes and large expanses of mature woodlands. Many of these resources provide important wildlife habitat for numerous species of fish, birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Although the region contains significant environmental resources, it has relatively few environmental resources that would severely limit development.

The region is traversed by a number of important creeks (see Map 10: Environmental Constraints, in Section 4.0). These include Buffalo Creek, which extends through Elma and Wales; and Cazenovia Creek, which extends through Elma into Aurora where it splits into the west branch that flows from the

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Town of Colden, and the east branch that reaches east through South Wales and Holland. The watersheds of these two creeks make up more than 90 percent of the five communities. Hunters Creek, which flows through Wales from its headwaters in Holland, is a significant tributary of Buffalo Creek. Tannery Brook, a major tributary of Cazenovia Creek, branches east through the Village of East Aurora to its headwaters in Wales. A small portion of Little Buffalo Creek flows through the northeast corner of Elma. Pond Brook, which is tributary to Buffalo creek, flows north through Elma from its headwaters in the vicinity of Sinking Ponds. All of the large creeks and tributaries noted above have smaller tributary streams that extend throughout the region.

The creeks are typically surrounded by floodplains (see Map 10: Environmental Constraints in Section 4.0). Significant areas of floodplains are situated along Buffalo Creek and Cazenovia Creek in Elma, Buffalo Creek in Wales and the East Branch of Cazenovia Creek in Aurora. Tannery Brook in East Aurora also has some extensive areas of floodplain, particularly in the vicinity of its confluence with Cazenovia Creek. There are, however, individual areas of flooding at street crossing culverts.

The creek corridors are lined in many areas with steep slopes (Map 6: Steep Slopes in Section 4.0). Some of these slopes represent the actual boundaries of these corridors; others define the outer extent of valleys. The steep slopes in the region measure in excess of 15 percent, constraining land use in many areas in the Towns of Holland and Wales (see Map 6). Slopes over 15 percent are generally unsuited for development. Steep slopes are also present in the vicinity of the Sinking Ponds in East Aurora and Aurora, and in the southeastern and southwestern portions of the Town of Aurora.

Wetlands are also present in the five communities (see Maps 10 and 13 in Section 4.0). Although all of the communities contain areas of wetlands regulated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, they are limited in extent. Small areas of identified Federally regulated wetlands exist throughout the region as well.

Many areas in the region derive their potable drinking water from private groundwater wells. Wales, much of the Town of Holland and portions of Aurora rely on groundwater resources. Presently, the five Regional Comprehensive Plan communities are among 18 Erie County communities that are participating in a regional water supply study to determine ways to optimize the delivery of a reliable and cost-efficient supply of water to current and future users in the overall study area.

Much of the region does not have public sewers. East Aurora is the only community that is fully serviced by a public sewerage system; limited portions of Elma, Aurora and Holland also have public sewers. Wastewater disposal in the remaining portions of these Towns and in the Town of Wales is handled by on-site septic systems. The East Aurora wastewater treatment plant operates effectively, however, the collection system of underground piping was installed in the 1920's and 30's, and is subject to inflow and infiltration problems. This has reduced the capacity of the treatment plant to accommodate additional out of district service. Where feasible, some lines have been replaced, but additional replacement work is required to correct existing problems. In unsewered areas, failing and poorly maintained septic systems threaten water quality.

Stormwater drainage in all of the regional planning communities is handled through a network of pipes, culverts and roadside ditches that discharge to local creeks and streams. In certain places due to heavy rainfall events or significant snowmelt, localized flooding is a problem. Undersized culverts along Tannery Brook in East Aurora have caused significant flooding problems. Wales also experiences problems along Buffalo Creek. Streambank erosion is also a problem along many of the creek corridors in the region (see Map 11: Streambank Erosion). As a means of preventing localized flooding problems in the five communities, drainage and erosion control measures should be implemented.

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There are a number of other environmental issues that effect the communities in the region. These include the protection and limitation of development on steep slopes and in floodplain areas, and the protection of wetland areas through appropriate buffering. Of critical importance is the protection of groundwater and surface water quality. Other important issues are the preservation of habitat for wildlife and the provision of adequate corridors for wildlife movement as development occurs. The protection of environmental resources is directly tied to the preservation of community character and growth management. All planning decisions in the area, whether through the State Environmental Quality Review process or as a part of routine decision making, must take environmental impacts into account.

5.7.1 Regional Recommendations

Recommendations for environmental protection are offered on a regional basis, rather than for each individual community. As with traffic and transportation issues, environmental issues typically are not confined to one particular location or community. They cross municipal boundaries and are common to all communities in the region. These are also issues that should be collaborated on in an effort to develop more effective programs and solutions that will better serve the region.

- The Towns of Aurora and Elma (targeted due to increasing development pressures) should prepare open space plans to assess where priority lands exist for protection and conservation, including areas along important creek corridors.
- The prominent creeks that flow through the region are important components of the rural character of the area. They should be preserved and utilized to tie the communities together, provide trail systems, connect other important resources (parks, wildlife areas, etc.) and provide corridors for wildlife movement. In the areas of the five communities that contain important resources, zoning overlay districts should be developed for environmental protection purposes (e.g., steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands and habitats, scenic vistas, mature woodlands, creek corridors, etc.). Methods for protecting the creek corridors, such as conservation easements, deed restrictions, zoning setbacks and restrictions, and land acquisition, should be examined by each community through closer study to determine where appropriate measures should be applied locally.
- The Towns should consider the adoption of local wetland regulations to protect State and Federal wetlands. This is particularly important for areas of hydric soils and isolated (non-jurisdictional) wetlands, particularly where septic systems and private wells are in use.
- Consideration should also be given to the adoption of site clearance standards to prevent sites from being completely cleared of vegetation during development or redevelopment. The preservation of on-site vegetation helps to maintain community character and connected areas of wildlife habitat.
- Extra measures should be taken to maintain and improve the water quality in the creeks. The communities should continue to cooperate with other agencies in studying and adopting watershed management strategies for these areas, including best management practices.
- As another means of protecting surface and groundwater quality, consideration should be given to adopting best management practices that would apply to site development, the use of fertilizers and pesticides, road salt use and application, and the disposal of hazardous materials. The US Natural Resource Conservation Service, in East Aurora, can lend assistance to the communities, particularly with helping to educate the public on ways to protect water quality. The Towns should also investigate alternative de-icing materials and work to reduce the quantities of road salt applied to local roadways.
- Creek corridors require protection from sources of erosion and sedimentation. Development should be limited near their banks through the adoption of setback standards to establish vegetated buffer areas along creek corridors. Communities should also be required and enforce the use of erosion and sediment control for all new development and redevelopment. In addition, stronger drainage requirements, based on State guidelines, should be adopted. These measures should be aimed at

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reducing the erosion of roadway ditches (as well as the overall maintenance of these appurtenances) and exposed ground surfaces.

- Groundwater quality must be protected, particularly in areas dependent upon these resources for potable water. Efforts should be undertaken in communities with on-site sanitary waste disposal systems to ensure that these systems are properly maintained, and that failing systems are detected and properly mitigated. The communities should work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in East Aurora to address this problem through public education programs and the provision of technical assistance to help residents understand and address this important issue.
- In concert with the existing regulations in the Town of Elma, the Towns of Aurora, Holland and Wales should adopt standards to require percolation testing in areas with no public sewers. Development density for potential subdivision activity should be adjusted based on the outcome of this testing.
- Steep slopes are best used for open space and for recreational purposes. They also add to scenic quality and should be protected. The Towns should ensure, through appropriate regulations, that development does not occur on slopes in excess of 15 percent.
- The communities should pursue joint efforts (grant applications, pooling resources, joint studies, joint environmental conservation committees, etc.) as a unique and useful strategy for preserving and protecting resources and addressing other cross-jurisdictional environmental problems.

5.8 Recreational Opportunities

As documented in Section 4.8.1, there are numerous parks and recreational facilities within the study area for the Regional Comprehensive Plan. These facilities are owned by each of the localities, by Erie County and by New York State. In addition, recreational programs and services are provided by the Towns, the school districts, and private organizations. Many of the recreational programs are offered on a multi-jurisdictional basis. For example, the Village of East Aurora relies on the recreational services provided through the Town of Aurora. The Tri-Town recreation program offers programs for residents of Elma, Wales and Marilla, as does the privately owned EMW sports organization. There is cooperation between the communities and the school districts, and many private organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, also serve residents from a number of communities. As these examples show, recreation is an area where there is already a significant degree of regional interaction. It is also an area where increased cooperation and interaction can help improve the quality and availability of recreational services to residents of the region.

The parks and recreational umbrella covers a diverse array of activities. Facilities and services range from the County forests, which have no formal provision for public access, to heavily used athletic fields. These facilities are providing a variety of opportunities, including passive recreation (picnicking, nature study, and enjoyment of the outdoors), and more active recreational programs, such as sports and events. These purposes and activities can conflict, so appropriate programming of the facilities is important. Also, programming of park space must be sensitive to the conditions of the individual facilities. Active use, that would degrade resources, should be discouraged in environmentally sensitive areas, and steered toward facilities physically able to handle it, by virtue of topography and availability of support services such as adequate parking.

The majority of facilities serve a populace based either locally, or within the immediate region. Other facilities, however, such as Hunters Creek County Land Bank, draw visitors from a wider area. Hamlin Park in East Aurora, hosts events such as the ToyFest, which attracts attendees from throughout Western New York. The number of visitors to parks in the region will be increasing, particularly with the development of Knox State Park. It is important that the region be prepared for these increased numbers, and for the communities to work with the County and State to plan for potential impacts.

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Also, some parks in the region are overburdened. A more regional approach to programming and services may help alleviate this overcrowding.

The quantity and quality of recreational opportunities in the region is a quality of life issue that is supported by the public. Citizens want the existing park system maintained, and where appropriate, improved. They want high quality recreational services, and there is demand for additional park space, for new facilities and for new programs and activities. The existing system is particularly strained in Elma, where the existing active athletic fields must be shared by a number of different sports organizations, creating capacity problems. Demand for recreational facilities is less strong in the more rural communities of Holland and Wales.

There is also demand for a system of trails, bikeways or green ways. This linear recreational system would serve several purposes. It would be a recreational asset in its own right, providing opportunities for hiking, biking, and other trail uses (including horses). It could also be designed to better link existing recreational facilities and other community assets (schools, community centers, etc.), both within each community, and across the region. This would improve access to these facilities, alleviating some traffic and parking problems associated with some parks, and making the parks and athletic facilities more available to residents without access to vehicles. Another unique feature of the region is the abundance of equine activities. These activities are not only important as recreational activities but they also contribute to the economy and rural character of the region.

5.8.1 Regional Recommendations

- The capacity and usage of facilities should be analyzed from a regional perspective to determine if greater coordination and cooperation among communities, school districts and privately provided recreational opportunities would help improve service capacity and availability.
- The localities should also cooperate on any recreational needs with a regional basis. For example, it has been argued that there is a need for an indoor ice rink to provide skating and ice hockey programs. If such a facility is needed, it makes sense to share its cost and usage on a regional, rather than local, level.
- The local municipalities should consider designating important parks, creek corridors and open space areas as critical environmental areas, under the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act.
- From a regional perspective, there is a need for greater connectivity between the communities through a multi-use trails and greenway system. Public resources, such as parks and schools, and other activity centers in each of the communities should be linked with a network of trails. Utility easements should be investigated as one option for connections. Railway corridors and stream corridors are other possibilities. Multi-use trails should consider the needs of hikers, bikers and equestrians. Where off-road facilities cannot be made available, safe and convenient routes for bicyclists and pedestrians should be provided along roadways. It is a strong recommendation that the communities work together in planning these connective features (multi-use trails, greenway corridors, etc.). A plan should be completed, areas prioritized and joint grant applications considered.
- There should be increased public access to the creeks. This can take the form of pocket parks, canoe launching areas, or even just scenic overlooks, depending on the circumstances of each potential access location.

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5.8.2 Town of Aurora and Village of East Aurora

The Town of Aurora and the Village of East Aurora cooperate on the provision of parks and recreational facilities for their residents. As noted on Figures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 in Section 4.0, the two communities own a number of recreational facilities, and there are also County and State facilities in Aurora. The Town recently purchased land on South Street (the Majors property) to help further increase recreational offerings.

Despite this large inventory of facilities, there are some problems with capacity, particularly at Hamlin Park and the Town Pool. These facilities are both located in the densely populated Village and are heavily used. There is evidence that the demand for sports facilities will continue to grow in Aurora, potentially further straining existing facilities. There are proposals for sports fields on the new Majors Park facility to help alleviate this demand. However, given the scenic nature of this park and its topography, any new active sports facilities on this property should be sensitive to its value as a passive recreational facility. The Town and Village should also actively pursue discussions with the State regarding the types of facilities that will be provided at the new Knox State Park. The State Park site may be more suited to sports fields, such as soccer, and could more easily accommodate an appropriate level of parking. This type of activity should be pursued with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Residents want to maintain the high quality of recreational programs and facilities, and increase opportunities. There is strong support for increased opportunities for bicycling. Residents want to be able to safely bike to parks, schools, and other community facilities. This would have the additional benefit of alleviating some of the parking congestion at existing parks. Increased public access along the creeks is also supported.

Recommendations:

- The Town of Aurora should prepare an Open Space/Recreation Plan to identify appropriate lands for future recreational use and/or environmental conservation. The plan should address demographic trends in an effort to accommodate the needs of local youth and the elderly in area, including use of local facilities by Village residents. This plan should also examine the current usage of existing Town recreational properties and other recreational facilities in the area, including the schools.
- There is strong demand for a more extensive trail system. Residents want to be able to walk or bike *or horseback ride* more easily between park facilities, local schools and other community facilities. Trails should also connect the population centers of the Village to outlying facilities (e.g. the High School). A multi-use trail system is required to satisfy this need. Based on the areas prioritized in this plan, a study should be done to assess feasibility and provide a schematic plan.
- Where trails are not provided, utility easements and roadway shoulders in the Town should be improved to enhance opportunities for hiking and biking.
- Opportunities should be examined to address the recreational needs (and demand) for facilities for youth (youth center), particularly in West Falls.
- The Town and Village should continue to cooperate with the School District in the provision of recreational opportunities. These opportunities should be provided for all segments of the population, including adults and seniors in addition to school-aged children.
- The Town and Village should encourage the School District to evaluate the potential for developing recreational facilities (such as sports fields) on the vacant property adjacent to Parkdale Elementary School in the Village of East Aurora.
- In response to increased demands for recreational opportunities, the Village should reevaluate existing facilities for expansion, improvements or modifications. These sites include Hamlin Park, Warren Park, Old Baldy Park and Sinking Ponds.

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- Points of access should be increased along the Cazenovia Creek corridor for scenic viewing and passive recreation. In some cases, this would simply be scenic overlooks. In other locations, more extensive access, such as pocket parks or canoe launching facilities may be appropriate. For example, some have suggested possible boat launching facilities next to the Willardshire Bridge, land along Grover between Jewett Holmwood and Luther, or at the Majors property.
- Emery Park (a County facility) needs to be revitalized. This park offers great opportunities for recreation, but suffers from a lack of maintenance. In particular, there is support for the reestablishment of the Emery Inn for some type of small commercial activities (catering, conferences, restaurant, lodge, etc.).
- Opportunities should be identified for use of the old railroad line in the Town for a rails-to-trails project. (Coordinate this effort with surrounding communities, the County and the State.)
- The State is preparing plans for the development of the Knox estate into a public park, with a focus on equestrian activities. The impacts of this project must be adequately assessed to avoid adverse impacts to the Town and Village. In particular traffic and parking are concerns. The Town and Village should proactively work with the State to ensure that the park master plan for this site is responsive to the demand for local recreation facilities (ball fields, trails, picnic space, etc.).
- New residential development should include some provision for increased recreational demand. Where feasible, land should be provided within the development for recreational use.
- Although most Tannery Brook sites are held in private ownership and/or the Brook is piped, there may be some opportunities for a pocket park along this important natural asset. The Village must keep an eye open for available properties for such use (for example, the abandoned vehicle repair shop at Riley and Fillmore). Any site, however, may be controversial and receive local opposition and must be properly assessed.
- A part of the passive recreational resources in the Town includes the scenic nature of many areas and roads throughout the area. Some such areas include Mill Road, Grover Road, Luther Road, Lower Underhill/Upper Hubbard Roads, Willardshire Road, Knox Road, and Sweet Road. Special attention should be made when approving any development in these areas. If needed in the future, the use of overlay zoning districts could be applied to protect these scenic resources or, as a more proactive action, acquiring some of these resources (a long-term plan).

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5.8.3 Town of Elma

The Town of Elma is very supportive of sports and recreation. The Town conducted a resident survey on recreation needs and adopted the Town of Elma Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Five-Year Plan in the mid-1990's. On the basis of this report, the Town developed the Elma Senior Center and its adjacent park in 1997. The report also noted a need for additional sports fields for soccer, football and baseball. Usage of the Elma Town Park on Creek Road for these purposes has led to a serious capacity problem. Parking congestion, pedestrian safety and overuse of the park are concerns. Private fields and the Wales Town Park have met some of the excess demand. However, because the Town Park is where the concession stand is located, the sports organizations prefer this location over alternative sites. The third park owned by the Town, Knabb Road Town Park, is currently undeveloped open space with no recreational facilities.

Much of recreational service in Elma is actually provided by privately operated organizations, such as EMW Sports. The Town-funded Tri-Town recreation organization provides sports leagues, swim programs, and other recreational services in Elma, Marilla and Wales. The Iroquois School District and the Boys and Girls Club of Elma, Marilla and Wales also have sports activities. Elma Meadows Park, a county facility, includes a public golf course and offers additional recreational opportunities to the public.

Surveys conducted by the Town do not show support for the purchase of additional parklands in Elma. However, residents are supportive of improving facilities at existing parks, and increased passive recreational opportunities.

Recommendations:

- The Town of Elma should prepare an Open Space/Recreation Plan to identify appropriate lands for future recreational use and/or environmental conservation. The plan should address demographic trends, which show increased in the number of young people and elderly in Elma. This plan should also examine the current usage of existing Town recreational properties and other recreational facilities in the area.
- There is a growing need (and demand) for additional sports fields. The Town needs to investigate other Town facilities as potential sites for active recreation. Cooperative use of local school facilities should also be explored.
- The Elma Town Park on Creek Road needs improvements. The ball fields at this site are heavily utilized and it is becoming difficult to meet demands. The Town must explore ways to meet this need, including increased use of other Town recreation facilities (as noted above), as well as off-site alternatives such as the Wales Town Park.
- The Town property owned on Knabb/Handy Roads is currently unimproved and could be developed with play fields and picnic areas. A plan should be developed for the improvement of this site.
- The lands behind the senior center should be considered for additional recreational opportunities, including picnicking and field sports.
- Where feasible, sites for public access should be identified and provided to the creek corridors for passive recreation and scenic viewing. Walkways should be provided wherever possible along creek corridors, especially along Buffalo Creek, where there is an existing pathway.
- Roadway shoulders should be improved to accommodate hiking and biking throughout the Town.
- Walking trails should be provided to link important community facilities. In particular, there should be a trail linking the Knabb Road Park, the Elma Village Green and the Iroquois School facilities on Girdle Road. Additional linkages along the creeks, and to major resources in other Towns (e.g. Knox State Park) should also be investigated.
- Utility easements should be examined as potential means of trail connections within the Town and between the other regional planning communities.

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- Provisions for recreational space should be incorporated in all new residential development. Where feasible, land should be provided within the development for recreational use.
- The Town should continue, and possibly expand, participation in the EMW Sports and Tri-Town Recreation Programs.

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Findings and Recommendations

5.8.4 Town of Holland

There is one Town Park in Holland, which was purchased and developed by the Town in the early 1990's. This facility has vastly increased recreational opportunities within the Town. Other facilities within the Town are owned by Holland Central School District, and the Boys and Girls Club of Holland. In addition, the County maintains four public forests in the Town of Holland. While there are no formal provisions for public use of these lands, the County is exploring the possibility of allowing some passive use of the forests.

Recreational resources in the Town of Holland tend to be more focused on outdoors activities. While there is some interest in sports leagues and other recreational programs, it is not as strong a priority as in Aurora and Elma. Instead, there appears to be greater interest in facilities, such as snowmobile trails, that can serve a dual purpose. They meet the recreational needs of the community, but also serve as a potential economic development tool by increasing recreational tourism. Interest in trails includes snowmobile trails, bike routes, equestrian trails, hiking trails, and other interconnections. It is important that these trails be designed in a manner that is sensitive to private landowners and local residents. There is also an interest in winter recreation (snowmobiling, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc.).

There is some conflict between some trail users and private landowners. In particular, dirt bike and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) users are sometimes using private lands, and are creating a problem with noise. This problem could be addressed either by establishing appropriate, designated areas for this type of use, or by instituting stricter regulations to minimize their impacts.

Recommendations:

- The hills in Holland provide ample opportunities for hiking and bike riding. Holland needs to capitalize on its existing snowmobile activities. It should create new, and improve existing, trails for this use. The existing link to the Finger Lakes Trail that runs through the Town should also be revitalized for multi-season use. Snowmobile trails should also be mapped and promoted.
- Trails in Holland should be rural in nature, and accommodate uses such as horseback riding.
- The trail system needs to be carefully planned to avoid conflicts among users. For example, snowmobile use is not compatible with equestrian trails. In some instances, separate systems may be required.
- The Town should investigate the feasibility of providing trails for horses and all-terrain vehicles, or adopt standards to regulate these uses.
- Access should be provided at identified locations along the creek corridors for passive recreation and scenic viewing. The potential for trail linkages along the creeks connecting to the Town of Wales should be examined.
- Capitalize upon the winter activities for recreational tourism in the Town.
- The Town needs to ensure adequate recreational facilities for the Town's youth.

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Findings and Recommendations

5.8.5 Town of Wales

The Town of Wales, like Elma, relies to a great extent on recreational facilities and services provided through EMW and Tri-Town recreation organizations. The Town itself has one park, which is used by these local residents and these sports organizations.

Trails and outdoors recreation is a recreational priority in Wales. Although currently, recreational use of Hunters Wilderness Creek Park or Kenneglenn is not officially permitted, it is anticipated that use of these facilities will gradually increase in the future. Although these facilities are not Town-owned, the Town will need to make accommodations for this increased usage.

Recommendations:

- Outline appropriate and restricted passive recreational uses (such as hiking, bird watching, limited picnicking) for the Kenneglenn property, which is owned by the Western New York Land Conservancy, as well as the Hunters Wilderness Creek Park property. Active recreation should not be permitted on these sites.
- Opportunities to connect the Town of Wales with Holland and Aurora, whether along roadway, creek corridors and/or utility easements should be identified.
- Recreational access should be provided for fishing along Cazenovia Creek; appropriate sites should be identified for such public access.
- Continue, and possibly expand, participation in the EMW Sports and Tri-Town Recreation Programs.

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5.9 Vision Plan

Based upon the findings and recommendations outlined in the previous sections, and in consideration of identified environmental constraints and opportunities, the following Vision Plan (Map 20) was developed for the Regional Comprehensive Plan area. It was created to illustrate how the vision for the five communities fits together and to ensure that conflicts are minimal. Individual plans have also been developed for the communities to more specifically illustrate vision concepts applicable to these areas (see Section 5.10). The individual vision maps must be utilized as the reference tool for recommendations and not the regional map (which is too difficult to read at this scale). Overall, the vision map was developed to illustrate the vision and desire for proper management of growth and development in the regional planning communities. The vision map is a visual representation of the goals and objectives for the Regional Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations portrayed on this map is based upon an analysis of the existing land use patterns and roadway system, economic conditions and environmental resources and constraints, in conjunction with the issues and opportunities identified by the public. This map is not a future land use map or a zoning map. The vision map is a guidance tool that represents overall vision for the region and can help with the recommendations outlined in the plan. It should not be used independently of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

The general reasoning behind the vision planning for each community is outlined below.

5.9.1 Regional Vision

- Streams should be protected from development and, where practicable, utilized for public recreation through the establishment of limited access corridors.
- Planning along community boundaries should be considerate of land use conditions and desires in adjoining communities to allow for a smooth transition of uses and to avoid use conflicts.
- Open space preservation is strongly favored in all five communities. Planning efforts should be focused on managing growth and encouraging non-traditional development practices that preserve open space as well as rural character.
- The five communities should work together to protect natural resources through the consistent use and adoption of guidelines and standards that benefit the region and provide cohesive protection that extends across municipal boundaries.
- Regional efforts to provide public services are recommended. Whether it is utility services, recreational services or other types of municipal programs, there are benefits to finding innovative ways for the communities to work together, including joint agreements and possibly cost sharing programs.
- Community linkages should be strengthened, particularly for recreational activities. Cross-Town multi-use pathway and trails for a variety of uses (biking, jogging, walking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, etc.) should be developed. These linkages should be aimed at connecting public parks and other public facilities in the region.

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5.9.2 Town of Aurora

- Aurora is subject to growth pressures from Orchard Park (Route 20A) and pressures from the Village of East Aurora. Orchard Park is experiencing growing residential subdivision activity; East Aurora is pushing out beyond the Village boundary. Growth areas should be established around the Village to concentrate growth around the rural service center, but managed to avoid the continuation of residential sprawl from the west.
- The rural character of the area north and south of Route 20A, in the vicinity of Transit Road (Route 187) near the Orchard Park border, should be protected from growth pressures from Orchard Park. This area contains remnants of farms and prime farmland soils. This area could support limited, and effectively designed office park or light industrial activity in the vicinity of Stoney Brook Road, uses that are more compatible with rural farm uses. Denser residential development should be avoided. Any new development around Stoney Brook Road should be sited and designed to be in concert with the potential use of the surrounding area for continued farming or other similar rural land uses.
- Establish a growth area around the Village to form a logical support area to the Village business district. Planning for, and encouraging, growth in this area helps to avoid sprawl throughout the center of the Town, and keeps development in closer proximity to the Village for walking and biking.
- The area of the Town situated south of Village, out to the High School in the vicinity of Center Street, should be developed as a growth transition area to help tie the communities together.
- The area around West Falls, which is a hamlet of local significance, could accommodate some moderate growth. The idea is to keep the area a small, functioning hamlet with denser residential development, and a variety of housing styles to satisfy the needs of varying household types. Commercial uses should be small-scale, targeted commercial/retail and community support type uses. Development decisions should be sensitive to this area, limiting size and scale. The West Falls area is buffered to the east by the Creek corridor, and this buffer area should be protected and maintained. A zoning overlay district would be well suited for this hamlet.
- Limit commercial and targeted retail uses in the Town out Route 16, south of the Village to Blakeley Road. This growth should consist of uses that complement the Village center (non-competitive) and should be limited in size and scale to be consistent with the character of the surrounding area.
- Light industrial and office park development is suited (over the long term) for the area adjoining the Commerce Green Business Park. Other areas suitable for business growth are both located on Route 16; one situated between the Village line and the Route 400, and the other located between the Route 400 and Blakeley Road.
- Long range vision for the interchange of Route 20A and Route 400 includes full operation with northbound ingress and southbound egress (pending a regional transportation study). This study would need to show how this could be done, whether it would resolve existing problems, and that it would not create problems. If this could be accomplished, the Town would need to ensure that steps (zoning, etc.) were taken to preserve the character of the surrounding area.
- The south central portion of the Town of Aurora should remain rural and should be considered for a different zoning category (rural residential). The current zoning in this area does not effectively restrict the type and density of residential development that should occur in this area and would not allow for the protection of the rural character of the area.
- The area east and southeast of the Village of East Aurora, south of Route 20A, should stay rural to blend into Wales. Agricultural uses should continue and be supported in this area.

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5.9.3 Town of Elma

- Development pressure is coming from Lancaster and West Seneca. Pressure from Lancaster is overflow residential development (sprawl) with resulting transportation impacts. Pressure from West Seneca is commercial development and population migration (West Seneca is 90 percent built out).
- Open space preservation is highly favored in Elma and, therefore, growth needs to be redirected to areas better suited for growth.
- Creek corridors constitute a physical buffer to Lancaster, and should remain as such to retain a rural residential atmosphere in this area. Zoning should be adjusted to encourage these conditions.
- The area north of Buffalo Creek, around Clinton Street should be managed to avoid the continuation of residential sprawl from Lancaster, which would negatively impact the rural character of this part of the Town.
- A commercial center area should be established around the Elma Plaza area to encourage the establishment of a more formalized Town center. South of this, below the railroad corridor, rural residential conditions should exist. The area around this center, north and east of the railroad corridor, could accommodate more development that would benefit from its proximity to the Town center. Growth in this area, however, should be guided to ensure that it is compatible with the overall rural character of the Town and is respectful of existing natural resources.
- The area south and west of the railroad corridor, and north of the industrial area, contains good soils, active farms and important resources. This area should be preserved and protected from intense development activity.
- Marilla is an agricultural community. The creek corridors, agriculture uses and open space areas in the eastern portion of the Town, along with existing low-density residential uses, help to blend the area into Marilla. The area also corresponds with the existing agricultural districts. Growth in this part of the Town should be properly managed to preserve and protect this existing character.
- The creek corridor and low-density residential uses and golf course in southwest portion of the Town provide a buffer for areas to the west (West Seneca). This area should remain rural with low-density residential uses and open space. This would transition well into the Town of Aurora, which has a land area in the northwest portion of the Town (particularly in the vicinity of Cazenovia Creek) that should be treated in the same manner. An environmental overlay district should be considered for this area to protect existing resources, particularly the creek, and manage growth.
- The hamlet of Springbrook, which includes the Transit Road corridor and Seneca Street corridor, is an area that will likely experience growth pressures from the west. The Route 400 Expressway exit at Transit Road is a growth factor. Land use along Seneca Street should be managed to control the type of uses that develop here, as well as the size and scale.
- The area along Transit Road, which extends south from Lancaster, will eventually be built with more intensive commercial uses. Smaller scale, rural character businesses could spread south of the Route 400 Expressway to Seneca Street and down along the Seneca Street corridor. The area around Seneca Street, north of Jamison Road, is also suitable for denser residential development that does not infringe on the creek corridor or natural resources in that vicinity.
- The area immediately east of Transit Road, to the north of the Route 400 Expressway could accommodate light industrial development and some limited higher density residential development, but this growth should be controlled to not extend beyond Winspear Road. This area is considered more of a mixed use area.
- The industrial corridor is centered around Jamison Road, in the vicinity of the Route 400 Expressway. It is bordered to the west by Seneca Street and the east by the 400 exit at Maple Road, with West Blood Road to the south. This area has access to a railroad spur. The agriculture/open space areas to the north and Seneca Street to the west provides a good buffer around this area.

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- The area south of the industrial corridor, which lies generally east of Seneca Street and west of Girdle Road, is a natural growth area for the future expansion of the Village. This area could accommodate medium density residential uses that would support the Village of East Aurora and provide a transition to the industrial area.
- The area around the Maple Road interchange with Route 400 should be developed with commercial uses, similar in nature to what exists there now. These uses could blend with the industrial uses, extending north toward Jamison Road. Long range vision for this area includes the full operation of the interchange, allowing northbound ingress and southbound egress.

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Findings and Recommendations

5.9.4 Town of Holland

- Growth pressure in Holland is currently non-existent. Issues in the Town are centered more on farmland preservation and economic development. Growth should be centered around the hamlet and well managed to revitalize this area.
- Agricultural areas extend through the valleys from Wales into Holland. Much of eastern Holland is open space and agricultural lands that should be preserved.
- Route 16 transitions from South Wales hamlet/small businesses to continued small business growth along the Route 16 corridor in Holland. The stretch of Route 16 that extends between south Wales and Holland hamlet should be developed with small scale agricultural-related and roadside commercial uses. These uses should not compete with the hamlet. Care should be taken to protect scenic quality of the areas along this roadway that contain significant viewsheds.
- Holland hamlet is the primary growth area of the community. However, issues exist around the need to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources in this area. Thus, growth in this area must be designed cognizant of this resource.
- Revitalization and improvement of the hamlet area is important. Any future industrial growth in this area should be light industrial in nature and properly controlled. Extensive development of this nature is constrained by the need for a creek and railway crossing and additional roadway access to allow for efficient operation and to reduce impacts to the hamlet and local roadways.

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5.9.5 Town of Wales

- The only growth pressure in the Town of Wales is from the Route 400 interchange, to the east, extending down Route 20A.
- Wales is rural America. This should not change. The vision map identifies large areas of important agricultural lands and open space that should be planned for wisely to preserve the rural nature of the Town.
- Growth along Route 20A, west of Wales Center, should include a blend of commercial and light industrial uses. These uses should be in character with the area (size and scale) and, where necessary, buffered from residential uses. Out Route 20A, east of Wales Center, and along Route 78, commercial uses should be targeted and consistent with the rural character of the surrounding area.
- Limited growth will occur along the Route 20A corridor into Wales Center. Wales Center is a rural service center of local significance and will accommodate some growth. This growth should be controlled and focused on small neighborhood retail and commercial uses that support the community. The development that occurs along Route 20A to the east should transition into this area. A zoning overlay district would be well suited to achieve specific objectives for this hamlet.
- Large areas of agricultural lands and important open spaces are predominant throughout the Town. Agriculture areas border Marilla and Bennington to the north, Sheldon to the east and Holland to the south. These areas also contain stream corridors, steep slopes and important natural resources. The preservation of these areas, through effective zoning and planning decisions, is important to the overall maintenance of the character of the Town of Wales.
- South Wales is a rural hamlet of local significance. This area will experience limited growth spreading into both the Towns of Wales and Aurora. The idea is to keep the area a small, functioning hamlet with denser residential development and some alternative housing styles to satisfy the needs of varying household types. Commercial uses should be limited to neighborhood retail and community support type uses. Development decisions, however, should be sensitive to this area, limiting size and scale. Here again, a zoning overlay district should be established.
- The Village of East Aurora provides essential retail and commercial services too much of the Town of Wales. This relationship should continue, eliminating the need for extensive commercial development in the Town of Wales to satisfy resident needs.

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5.9.6 Village of East Aurora

- The Village is the regional service center for the five community areas. Therefore, the vision map should guide land use, particularly commercial uses along the Main Street corridor, to be consistent with historic growth pattern, but at the same time to accommodate the need for focused growth.
- The traditional commercial business area is centered on the Main Street and along the railroad corridor. This area should allow for expansion of commercial activity within the presently zoned commercial areas and supply the necessary support services, such as parking areas, to supplement this commercial activity.
- There are distinct areas along Main Street to be planned for and around. These include the cultural center, which contains the Roycroft campus and the Millard Fillmore house, as well as a number of area churches. This area should be treated as a support area to the Uptown and Downtown commercial areas and as an area for tourism.
- The Village functions as a cohesive community with no barriers or boundaries that separate or isolate community interaction. Ties with the Town of Aurora should be strengthened through consistent planning and through the establishment of growth transition areas in the Town, around the Village, to accommodate future growth in a managed fashion.
- The walkability of the Village is important and linkages should be developed within the Village and to outlying areas. Areas of greenspace should be linked as well.
- There are a number of critical transportation connections linking the Village with the outlying communities. Support should be given to the construction of north and southbound ramps at the Route 20A interchange of the Route 400 Expressway. This would enable traffic, particularly trucks, easier access to the expressway, eliminating the need to enter the Village and reducing traffic flows along Route 16.
- The Village residential areas and the existing housing stock should be preserved and protected to enhance and continue the unique character of the area. Infill residential development should be encouraged and, where possible, the provision of affordable, alternative housing opportunities to serve the needs of varying household types, should be provided.

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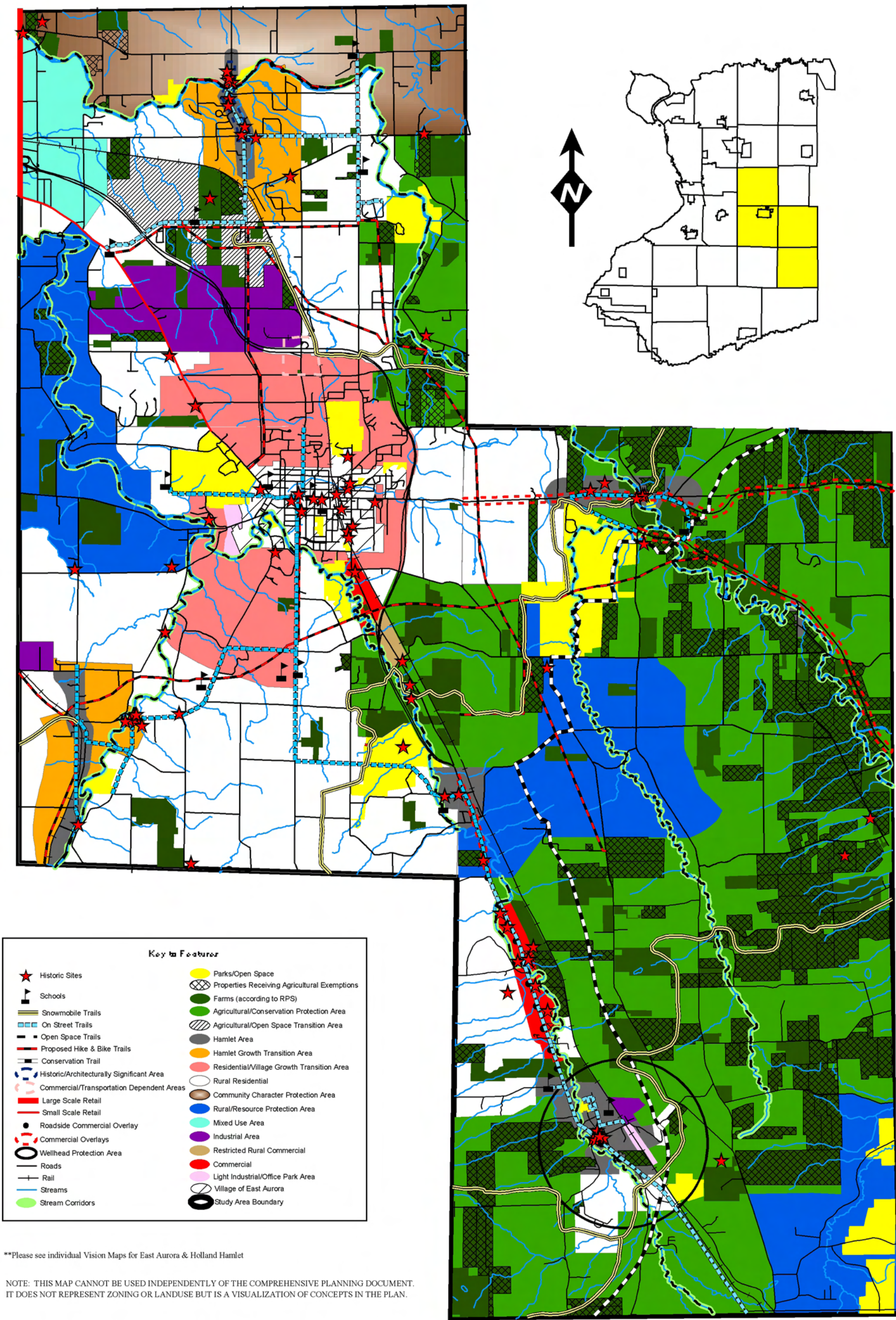
Findings and Recommendations

5.10 Community Vision

The community vision maps provide a closer look at the five communities, and in particular the Village of East Aurora and the Holland hamlet. Overall, the vision maps were developed to illustrate the vision and desire for proper management of growth and development in the regional planning communities. These maps are a visual representation of the goals and objectives for the Regional Comprehensive Plan. As with the regional vision map, the recommendations portrayed on these community maps are based upon an analysis of the existing land use patterns and roadway system, economic conditions and environmental resources and constraints, in conjunction with the issues and opportunities identified by the public. Keep in mind, however, that these maps are not future land use maps or zoning maps. They are guidance tools that represent the overall vision for the individual communities and the region, and can help with the recommendations outlined in Sections 5 and 6 of the Plan. These maps should not be used independently of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Vision Map - Regional



**Please see individual Vision Maps for East Aurora & Holland Hamlet

Section 5.0

Findings and Recommendations

5.10.1 Town of Aurora

The major features affecting the vision of the Town of Aurora include the Village of East Aurora, the rural agrarian character of the adjoining Town of Wales, the Route 400 Expressway, the Route 20A corridor, West Falls and South Wales hamlets, and the Cazenovia (east and west branch) creek corridors. These features, the community's goals and objectives, and environmental and regional objectives have lead to the following vision components, depicted on Map 21, for the Town of Aurora.

- Growth areas around the Village of East Aurora (residential growth area), extending south to the schools and southwest to west branch of Cazenovia creek. This growth area also extends northward into the Town of Elma (towards the Route 400 Maple Street exit), west to Seneca Street (and the Knox Estate Park), and east to the Route 20A/Route 400 interchange. This area concentrates future development around the Village to support local businesses and to afford logical infrastructure extensions (sewer). This area of the Town should remain rural residential in nature until infrastructure is made available and proper plans maintaining the character of the area are presented to the Town (also look for neo-urbanist designs).
- Park features are concentrated in the growth area and around the two hamlets.
- The area denoted as "agricultural/conservation protection area" abuts a very rural/agrarian area in the Town of Wales and includes a concentration of agricultural properties and the east branch of Cazenovia creek corridor. This area is bounded by the Emery County Park and the South Wales community, Lapham Road in the north and Underhill Road to the west. This area should include the proposed new agricultural zoning district, and environmental protection standards.
- The West Falls hamlet includes two distinct areas: the linear hamlet area along Route 240 and the hamlet growth *transition* area surrounding this corridor. The linear hamlet area is a mixed use area of residential, rural commercial businesses and hamlet support features (community facilities). **It is** not the intent of this area to provide a linear commercial strip corridor. There are pockets of commercial use along this road corridor with residential uses in the remaining areas. A zoning overlay (road based) could help to address redevelopment in these mixed use areas and the zoning should only allow new commercial uses in very targeted areas. The hamlet growth *transition* area includes the residential area supporting this hamlet and includes the area that has been historically called Griffin Mills. This area is not an area of higher density development (lack at sewers), but an area that should be tied into the hamlet area. The entire area should be kept "walkable" by including sidewalks in selected areas, widened roadway shoulders and bike lanes. The plan for this area (both areas) should include the use of rural development guidelines to maintain the character of the area.
- The northwestern protection area includes another area of the Town that contains farms, and is traversed by west branch of Cazenovia Creek. This area provides a buffer to the growth occurring to the west in Orchard Park, and provides a rural character feature that leads to the westerly entrance into the Village of East Aurora. This area is intended to be mainly rural residential and agrarian in nature, and could include a zoning overlay to help protect the character and features of the area (see also the discussion of business growth in the community).
- Although Aurora is overall a rural-residential community, the Town would like to have some balance of proper commercial and industrial usage. These uses, though, should be targeted and strategically located to best service the community, protect its rural character, and to compliment the Village and the surrounding region. To accomplish this, the plan proposes the following:
 - As mentioned previously, two hamlet areas (one in West Falls and one in South Wales) provide opportunities for rural commercial uses, mixed with residential, to help keep these hamlets vital and viable. These areas would provide small commercial convenience services to the surrounding area.
 - A targeted commercial area just outside the Village on Route 16 is proposed. From the Village to the Route 400 crossing would provide an area of restricted commercial growth in an

TOWN OF AURORA VISION MAP

★ HISTORIC SITES

🏫 SCHOOLS

🌊 STREAMS

🟢 STREAM CORRIDORS

— ROADS

🚊 RAIL

🛷 SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

🚶 ON STREET TRAILS (SIDEWALKS IN LIMITED AREAS)

🚴 OPEN SPACE TRAILS

🚴 PROPOSED HIKE & BIKE TRAILS

🟡 PARKS

🌾 PROPERTIES RECEIVING AGRICULTURAL TAX EXEMPTIONS

🏡 FARMS (ACCORDING TO TAX ASSESSMENT RECORDS)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

🌿 AGRICULTURAL/CONSERVATION PROTECTION AREA

🏘 VILLAGE OF EAST AURORA

🏠 RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREA

🏡 HAMLET AREA

🏡 HAMLET GROWTH TRANSITION AREA

🏡 RESTRICTED RURAL COMMERCIAL

🏡 TARGETED COMMERCIAL

🏡 INDUSTRIAL

🏡 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE PARK AREAS

🏡 RURAL RESIDENTIAL

🏡 RURAL/RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

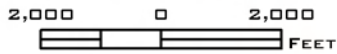
NOTE: THIS MAP CANNOT BE USED INDEPENDENTLY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING DOCUMENT. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT ZONING OR LANDUSE BUT IS A VISUALIZATION OF CONCEPTS IN THE PLAN.

WENDEL DUCHSCHERER ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS, P.C. SHALL ASSUME NO LIABILITY FOR:

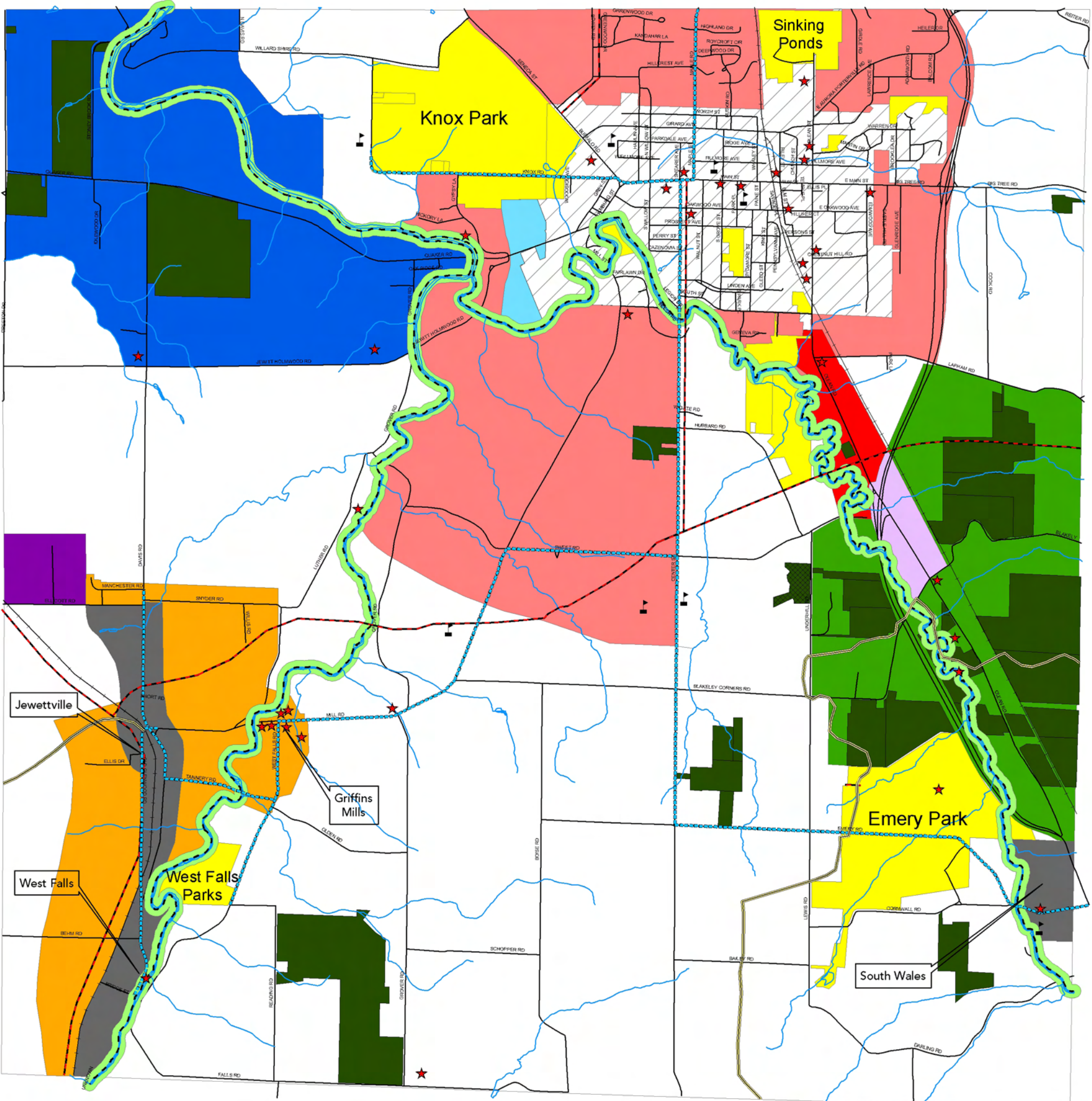
1. ANY ERRORS, OMISSIONS, OR INACCURACIES IN THE INFORMATION PROVIDED REGARDLESS OF HOW CAUSED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HISTORIC SITES, SCHOOLS, STREAMS, STREAM CORRIDORS, ROADS, RAIL, SNOWMOBILE TRAILS, ON STREET TRAILS, OPEN SPACE TRAILS, HIKE & BIKE TRAILS, PARKS, PROPERTIES RECEIVING AGRICULTURAL TAX EXEMPTIONS, FARMS (ACCORDING TO TAX ASSESSMENT RECORDS), AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION; OR

2. ANY DECISION MADE OR ACTION TAKEN OR NOT TAKEN BY THE READER IN RELIANCE UPON ANY INFORMATION OR DATA FURNISHED HEREUNDER

DATA SOURCES: ECODEP, TOWN OF HOLLAND, NYSDRHP



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environmentally limited area. A new commercial zoning category would restrict the size, scale and type of business operation. This area is not intended to compete with the Village uptown business district or be developed as a major retail center.

- This commercial corridor would also extend further south on Route 16, from the Route 400 Expressway to Blakeley Road. This area would be zoned with another new commercial zoning category that would allow residential homes and very targeted rural type commercial businesses on larger lots (mixed use district). These businesses would be rural in nature and be designed in such a way (large lots, setbacks, parking in the back, etc.) to preserve the character of the area. These uses could also be controlled through a special use permit.
- An area in the Town is also noted as light industrial/office park on the plan. This area is targeted for possible expansion of light industrial uses. These uses would be off the road, screened from the road, or be very rural in nature. This area would be a logical extension to Commerce Green as the existing park begins to fill in; it could help to meet the future demand for office and light industrial uses. Design standards would be strict (including buffers) to help maintain the image of the entranceway to the Village.
- The remainder of the Town denoted as rural residential, includes low-density residential areas that are anticipated to see more limited growth of single-family homes. The areas will remain rural in nature and include vestiges of its agricultural past.
- The final features of the Aurora vision map are the trails and stream corridors. The stream corridors highlighted on the Plan are the regionally significant corridors that should be protected. The plan suggests a zoning overlay or identification of these areas in an open space/greenspace plan. Development in these areas would have to take into account these natural features (preserving to the maximum extent possible), and include conservation easements, dedication or other means of permanent protection. These areas, at a minimum, should be conserved for the movement of wildlife, and only in specific instances should be considered for public access (noted as open space trails).

The on-street trails represent roadways that tie major features of the community, and are typically identified in regional plans. These areas should be considered for bike lanes, widened shoulders, or in some cases sidewalks (focused in hamlets, Village area, and around public facilities). The hike and bike trails are typically off-road features (some on road) that are usually associated with some existing utility rights-of-way or easement. They also provide connections within the community and to other communities in the region.

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5.10.2 Town of Elma

The major features affecting the vision of the Town of Elma include: the rural nature of the Town, with large areas of open space, some lingering agricultural uses and the rural nature of existing development; the Cazenovia Creek, Buffalo Creek and Pond Brook stream corridors; the Route 400 Expressway that extends through the Town; and the light industrial development that has occurred in the vicinity of this major highway. These features, the community's goals and objectives (which emphasize a desire to maintain the rural character of the Town), and environmental and regional objectives have lead to the following vision components depicted on Map 22.

- To effectively manage growth pressures exerted from the Town of Lancaster, an area is proposed that lies north of Buffalo Creek, for the protection of rural character (see Map 22). In this area, rural development guidelines would be implemented to control how development occurs. Emphasis would be placed on preserving open space and the rural nature of this area, encouraging clustered development, open development areas (280A designs) and other non-traditional development practices that do not promote sprawl. This is also an area that lacks sewer service, so water quality, particularly in the vicinity of Buffalo Creek, should be considered. Zoning changes that would permit standard subdivision designs, with increased development densities, should be discouraged in this area.
- The area situated near the border with the Town of West Seneca has been designated for mixed use development. This area is closer to Transit Road and the Route 400 Expressway, and is more suitable for a mixture of land uses, including residential, small businesses and limited light industrial (if properly placed). Commercial development is envisioned for Transit Road, from the Lancaster Town boundary to Seneca Street. Transit Road would be the only area in the Town where larger scale commercial development should be permitted.
- Seneca Street has been designated for smaller scale retail development, which is designed and operated in character with the surrounding area. This area has remained somewhat rural in nature and this character should be protected. Commercial uses along this roadway should be neighborhood business type uses that service the nearby residential uses, with denser development encouraged in and around the Spring Brook hamlet. Further to the south and east along Seneca Street, the extent and intensity of commercial use should be reduced, particularly in the vicinity of Knox State Park. Since the entire Seneca Street corridor is zoned for commercial use, the idea is to better manage how commercial development occurs along this roadway to avoid sprawl and strip development. This way, character and appeal of roadway development is improved and more in line with the character of the surrounding area.
- The area around the Elma Plaza is proposed for long term development as a Town center. Elma currently lacks a distinct, identifiable center, where commerce and services are provided. This area along Bowen Road, at Bullis Road, provides such an opportunity. This is where convenience retail and professional/personal services, as well as public services, should be centered. Growth would be encouraged around this area, with a focus placed on walkability and easy access to the centralized services. The Town center hamlet would encompass the area that extends along Bowen Road, north from Woodard Road to Clinton Street. This area would include the plaza and other commercial establishments in the vicinity, the Pond Brook apartment complex, and the historic Elma Village area (including the senior center complex, area churches and other facilities). In addition, the area between Clinton Street and Bullis Road would be designated as historically significant, as it contains a number of structures with historic character that warrant recognition and preservation.
- Moving away from the proposed Town center and the surrounding hamlet growth transition area, rural residential development would be encouraged. The area situated south and west of the railroad corridor has been designated as an agricultural and open space transition area. This area supports some active farming and contains high quality soils, which are good for farming as well as

TOWN OF ELMA VISION MAP

KEY TO FEATURES

HISTORIC SITES

SCHOOLS

STREAMS

STREAM CORRIDORS

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

ON STREET TRAILS

OPEN SPACE TRAILS

PROPOSED HIKE & BIKE TRAILS

COMMERCIAL ROADS

LARGE SCALE RETAIL

SMALL SCALE RETAIL

ROADS

RAIL

HISTORIC/ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT AREA

COMMERCIAL/TRANSPORTATION DEPENDENT AREAS

PARKS

PROPERTIES RECEIVING AGRICULTURAL EXEMPTIONS

FARMS (ACCORDING TO RPS)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION AREA

AGRICULTURAL/OPEN SPACE TRANSITION AREA

HAMLET AREA

HAMLET GROWTH TRANSITION AREA

VILLAGE TRANSITION AREA

RURAL RESIDENTIAL

COMMUNITY CHARACTER PROTECTION AREA

RURAL/RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

MIXED USE AREA

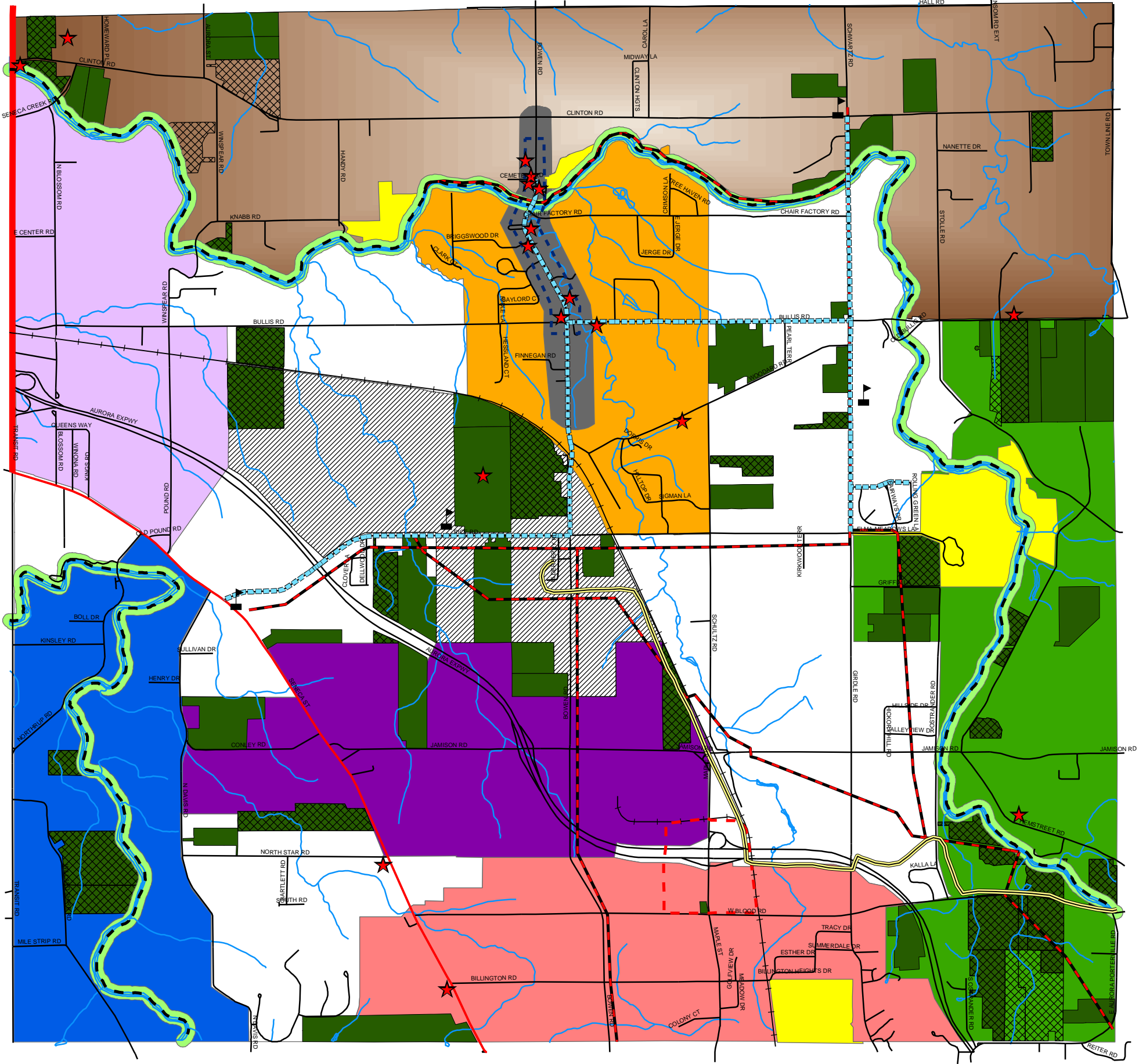
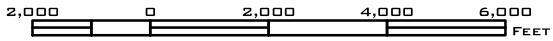
INDUSTRIAL AREA

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DATA SOURCES: ECDEP, TOWN OF ELMA, NYSOPRHP



Section 5.0 Findings and Recommendations

residential development. However, residential development in this area should be approached with consideration to the protection and preservation of these soils. Clustered development and other such techniques that protect resources and preserve open space should be considered for this area. Once good farming soils are lost to development, they can never be recovered, so care should be taken to preserve what remains of these resources in the Town for the future.

- South of the agricultural/open space transition area is the area designated for light industrial/industrial development. This area currently supports a number of industrial facilities and has been deemed suitable for a continuance of such use. The area has ready access to the Route 400 Expressway and an active railroad line. The transition area to the north creates a good buffer between this area and the proposed Town center.
- To the west, along the border with the Town of Orchard Park, an area has been designated for resource protection. This is an area of the Town that contains a significant creek corridor, important habitat (including a heron rookery), and rural open space. It is an area of the Town that should be protected from intense development to protect existing resources as well as to provide a barrier from development pressure that may arise in the future from the west. This area extends and is consistent with the rural nature of the northwestern area of the Town of Aurora. Development practices that preserve open space and avoid sprawl should be encouraged here, including clustering and open development areas. More progressive techniques to control development density should also be explored. Zoning changes and standards subdivision designs should be discouraged in this area.
- The area north of the Village of East Aurora, out to the Route 400 Expressway, is envisioned as a village growth transition area. Over time, as growth and development push out beyond the Village, this is the area most suited to absorb this activity. This area could accommodate medium density residential uses that would support the Village of East Aurora, and provide a transition from the light industrial area to the north.
- Finally, the area to the east, that lies proximate to the Town of Marilla, contains significant open space, farms and the Buffalo Creek corridor. This area is very rural in nature and should be preserved. This area provides a transition of land use into Marilla and should be developed in a manner consistent with this neighboring community. As with the areas to the far north and west in Elma, this area should be protected from over development and intensive land use practices that would promote sprawl and result in denser residential development. Zoning changes and standard subdivision practices should be discouraged in this area.
- To improve connectivity to other communities and enhance recreational opportunities in the Town, a trail system should be developed. This system should include both on and off-road trails, utilizing existing roadways, utility easements and creek corridors. With respect to the creek corridors, the Town should devise a means of establishing a continuous trail system along Buffalo Creek and Cazenovia Creek, linking with the Towns of Wales and Aurora.

Section 5.0

Findings and Recommendations

5.10.3 Town of Holland

The major features affecting the vision of the Town of Holland include: the very rural agrarian nature of the Town (concentration of farms in the central and eastern portion of the Town); extensive areas of steep slopes; the east branch of Cazenovia Creek, Hunters Creek and Buffalo Creek stream corridors; and the Route 16 State highway corridor, which extends from Wales Center and Holland hamlets. These features, the community's goals and objectives, and environmental and regional objectives have lead to the following vision components depicted on Map 23 (Holland hamlet is also detailed on Map 24).

- Much of the Town of Holland is comprised of steep slopes, and agricultural lands and undeveloped open space. The Town is very rural, with the exception of the developed hamlet area and areas along Route 16. The vision map for this community shows that much of the Town is designated for agricultural and open space protection and the preservation of rural character is an important issue. Much of the area outside the hamlet is characterized by steep slopes and lacks public sewer and water. Development that occurs in this area should be low-density residential, with larger minimum lot sizes, and care should be taken to protect and enhance the rural natural of the Town. Techniques should also be developed and implemented to protect and continue the agricultural industry in the Town.
- Higher density residential development should be confined to the area around the hamlet, where public services are available to support it, and where retail and commercial services exist.
- The hamlet center should be the primary location for commercial and retail uses, with non-competitive retail uses locating along portions of Route 16, outside the hamlet. The goal is to revitalize commercial activity in the hamlet center to make the area more prosperous, and provide greater benefit to the surrounding community.
- Commercial uses along the section of Route 16, between Cazenovia Creek and North Canada Street, should be restricted to agrarian support services and uses and other retail uses that would not compete with the hamlet. The size and scale of these uses should be regulated to ensure that such development is in keeping with the character of the surrounding community. Forethought should also be given to managing the number of curb cuts to Route 16 over the long term.
- Consideration should be given establishing an historic district in the hamlet, acknowledging the numerous structures that possess historic and architectural significant, and add to the character of this area. Although certain of these structures have been inventoried by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, there are other noteworthy structures in the hamlet that warrant recognition.
- An area in the hamlet, along the railroad corridor, has been designated for light industrial development, complementing the existing industrial development to the northwest.
- An on-road trail should be developed that links the hamlet and the middle school, on Partridge Road, with Wales Hollow, Emery Park and other parts of Wales and Aurora.
- Buffers around creek corridors should be maintained and required as properties are sited for development. These corridors provide habitat, protection to streambanks and avenues for wildlife. They also could provide future public access via a connected trail system.

TOWN OF HOLLAND VISION MAP

KEY TO FEATURES

★

HISTORIC SITES

■

SCHOOLS

—

ROADS

+

RAIL

—

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

—

CONSERVATION TRAIL

—

ON STREET TRAILS

—

OPEN SPACE TRAILS

—

STREAMS

—

STREAM CORRIDORS

—

PARKS/COUNTY FORESTS PRESERVES/OPEN SPACE

○

WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREA

●

ROADSIDE COMMERCIAL OVERLAY

—

AGRICULTURAL

—

PROPERTIES RECEIVING AGRICULTURAL EXEMPTIONS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

—

AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION AREA

—

AGRARIAN COMMERCIAL

—

HAMLET (SEE SEPARATE PLAN)

—

RURAL/RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

—

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

—

INDUSTRIAL

—

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

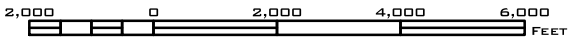
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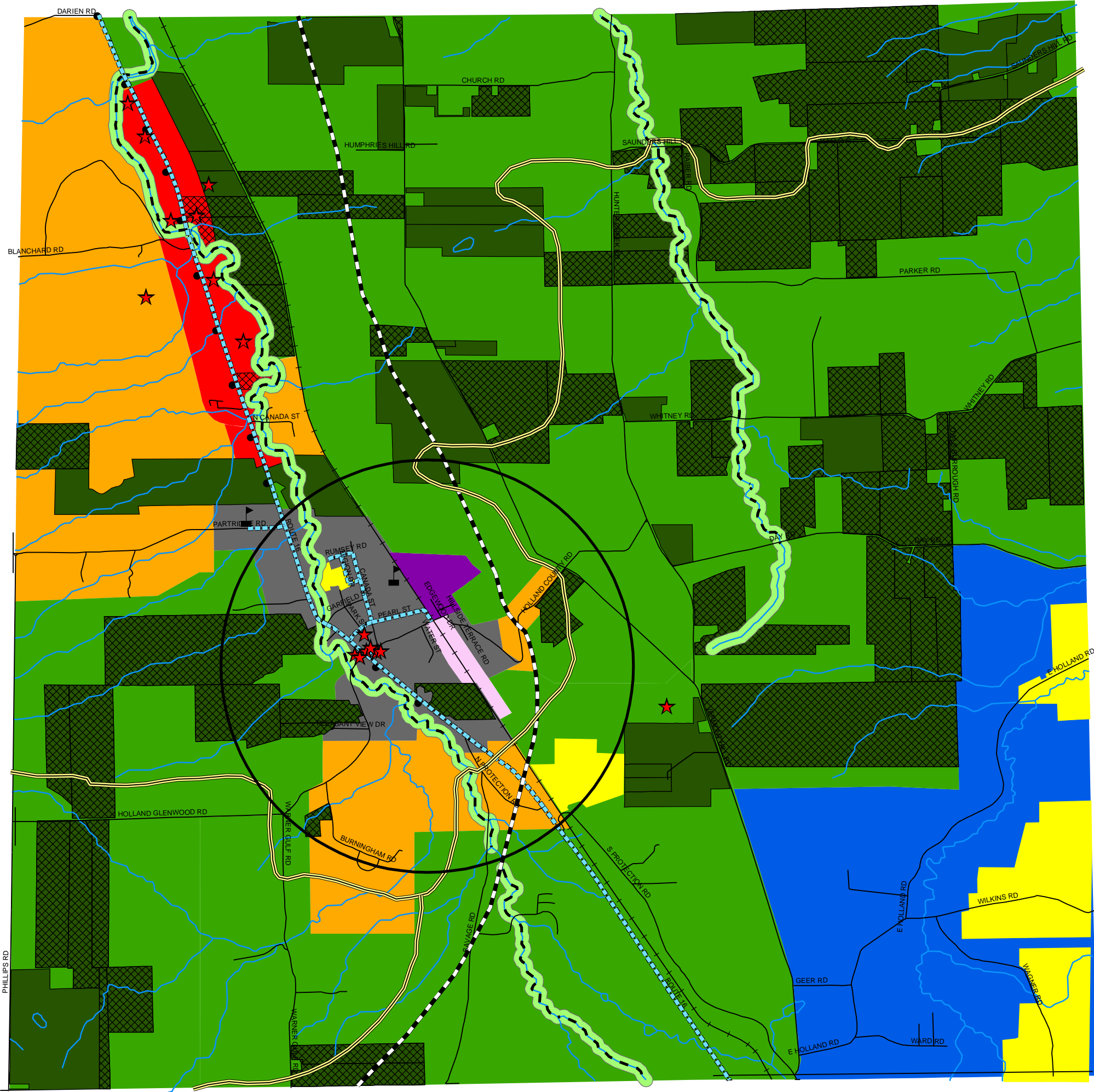
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DATA SOURCES: ECDP, TOWN OF HOLLAND, NYSOPRHP



PROJECT #2744-12-RCP

JUNE 2004



TOWN OF HOLLAND - HAMLET AREA

VISION MAP



KEY TO FEATURES

ROADS

RAIL

ON STREET TRAILS

OPEN SPACE TRAILS

STREAMS

SCHOOLS

WELLHEAD

WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREA

AGRICULTURAL RELATED BUSINESSES

HISTORIC SITES

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY

COMMERCIAL/RETAIL

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

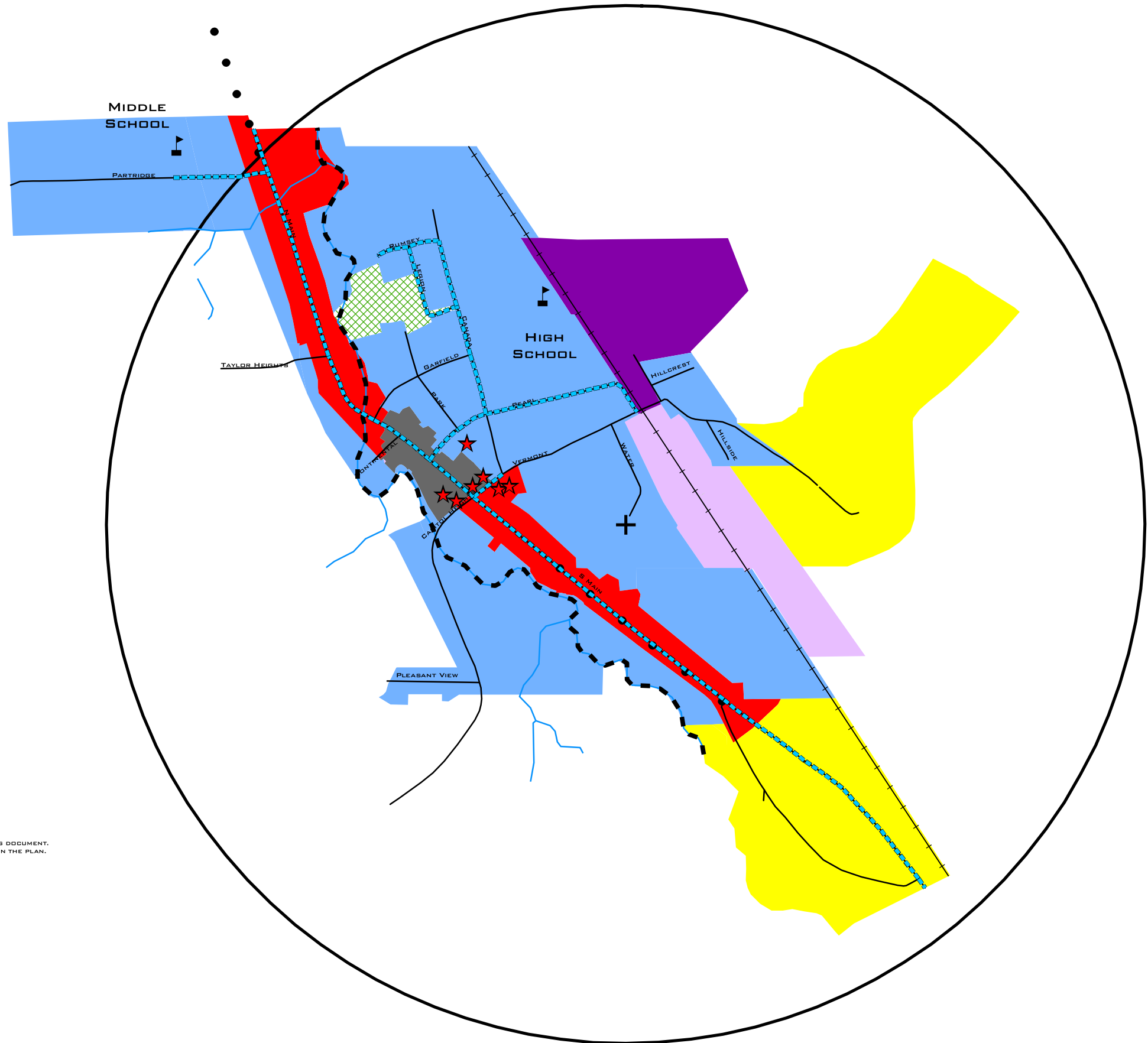
INDUSTRIAL

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

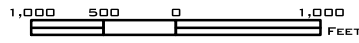
MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

RURAL RESIDENTIAL

PARK



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DATA SOURCES: ERIE COUNTY DEP, TOWN OF HOLLAND

Section 5.0

Findings and Recommendations

5.10.4 Town of Wales

The major features affecting the vision of the Town of Wales include the influences of the Village of East Aurora, the very rural agrarian nature of the Town (concentration of farms in the easterly portion of the Town), the large open space feature of Hunters Creek, the two major stream corridors; Buffalo Creek and Hunters Creek, the two major state highways (Route 20A and Route 78), and the Wales Center and South Wales Hamlets. These features, the community's goals and objectives (including their strong objective of remaining rural), and environmental and regional objectives lead to the following vision components depicted on Map 25.

- Much of the Town is shown as an agricultural protection area. These areas should remain agricultural - low-density residential areas. These areas would include zoning techniques (overlays, rural development guidelines, reduced density) to protect the rural character and the agricultural operations in the Town. Other proactive measures have also been recommended to protect this area, including restricting infrastructure improvements and possibly some agricultural land preservation techniques such as purchase of development rights (PDR), purchase of agricultural conservation easements (PACE), and Right-to-Farm legislation.
- The area noted as rural/resource protection area is also a rural residential area, but has a smaller concentration of farming, and some significant environmental features. A zoning overlay would help to protect these features, and direct any development to incorporate rural guidelines.
- The two hamlets, Wales Center and South Wales, are identified and represent areas of mixed uses in a village-type atmosphere. These areas also include the only areas for on-street trails. These on-street features (bike lanes, widened shoulders or limited sidewalks) help keep the connectivity of the hamlets.
- As noted above, the hamlets are mixed use areas and include commercial uses. Outside of these areas the Route 20A corridor and Route 78 corridor are denoted as commercial overlays. These areas presently allow commercial uses by special use permit. These areas should also continue to allow commercial uses by special use permit, but additional guidelines should be added through the use of zoning overlays along these important corridors.
- The remaining features of this map include stream corridors, open space trails, hike and bike trails, conservation trails and snowmobile trails. These features provide wildlife corridors, connections to surrounding communities and community features, and for passive recreational opportunities.

TOWN OF WALES VISION MAP

KEY TO FEATURES

 HISTORIC SITES

 SCHOOLS

 SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

 CONSERVATION TRAIL

 ON STREET TRAILS

 OPEN SPACE TRAILS

 PROPOSED HIKE & BIKE TRAILS

 STREAMS

 STREAM CORRIDORS

 ROADS

 RAIL

 PARKS/OPEN SPACE

 COMMERCIAL OVERLAYS

 PROPERTIES RECEIVING AGRICULTURAL EXEMPTIONS

 FARMS (ACCORDING TO RPS)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

 AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION AREA

 HAMLET AREA

 RURAL/RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

 RURAL RESIDENTIAL

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DATA SOURCES: ECDEP, TOWN OF HOLLAND, NYSOPRHP



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PROJECT #2744-12-RCP
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MAP 25

Section 5.0

Findings and Recommendations

5.10.5 Village of East Aurora

The major features affecting the vision of the Village of East Aurora include the influences of the surrounding Towns, the more densely developed, urban (built out) nature of the Village, the functioning of the area as a center for regional commerce, Route 20A (Main Street) and the concentration of public services and civic/cultural land uses. These features, the community's goals and objectives (including their strong desire to protect the unique character of the Village), and environmental and regional objectives lead to the following vision components depicted on Map 26.

- Most of the Village is depicted as "Village residential", which illustrates the major residential areas in the community that will experience little or no change over the next 15 to 20 years. These areas may be different in style, layout or housing type, but they represent the overall residential stability of the community.
- Two other dominant residential areas exist in the Village and are denoted on the vision map. The area in the southeast section (estate/large lot residential) has an abundance of large lots. The low-density nature of this area should be preserved, possibly through a new zoning classification or a zoning overlay district. This would help to preserve and limit subdivision activity in this area.
- The area on Main Street, east of the Uptown business district, is noted as historic Main Street residential on the map. This area should be protected for its historic significance and as a gateway into the Village. Higher standards for redevelopment should be utilized in this area (limiting the re-subdivision of the lands and control of the aesthetics).
- The Village includes one major industrial area – the existing Fisher Price area. It is an important element of the community and should be protected. The Village should work with Fisher Price to possibly create a new zoning category for this property that limits major industrial uses on the property but focuses on light industrial, research and development, office, etc. (representing the present usage).
- There are two areas in transition in the Village. The first is the office/small business district, which is along the railroad corridor, south of the Uptown business district. This area is changing into an area of small businesses and offices, with an evident lack of retail uses. An example of this is the current use of the former school building as an office building. The other transition area is the developing Commerce Green business park, which has been promoted over the years as the last vacant land area available for light industrial and office development. Both of these areas are employment centers that can help to bring people into the Village center.
- The backbone of the Village is Main Street, which extends through the center of the Village from one end to the other. This area includes four distinct districts/areas. As discussed previously and noted on the vision plan, these areas do not directly relate to zoning but are used for reference for the common issues and ideas relating to these areas. The Village's streetscape plan should also be utilized in any actions planned in these four areas.

1. Downtown (West End) Area

This area represents the part of the Village that includes some larger, more suburban-style uses such as a supermarket, shopping plaza, franchise fast food restaurants, etc. This part of the Village contains some older, smaller commercial uses, residential uses, public uses and a traffic circle. It is located in close proximity to the Commerce Green Business Park area, and surrounding residential areas. It is an area truly in transition, and has seen some significant changes in the recent past (new supermarket, abandonment of some existing businesses, more drive through establishments, the addition of "chain-stores", etc).

This area also represents an important gateway into the community from the west, and the traffic circle is an important feature of this gateway. It is not only a destination for those outside the Village, but it also draws people from the Village (supermarket, business park, retail chains,

Section 5.0

Findings and Recommendations

etc.), and, therefore, is subject to transportation related issues. Although there are distinct areas depicted on the vision map along Main Street, one of the challenges is to ensure continuity between these areas.

The recommendations for this area do not include any major zoning district boundary changes, but zoning changes that could help with the aesthetics, transportation related issues, and for helping to ensure continuity with the adjoining Main Street area. The recommendations include an overlay zoning district that addresses issues such as aesthetics (landscaping, streetscaping, architecture, etc.), and transportation (access management, walkability, bike access, etc.). The area around the traffic circle should have special requirements that encourage revitalization of this area and continuity with the Main Street area to the east (Village commercial area). For this revitalization area, the overlay may need to restrict the type, size and aesthetics of any proposed use to better match the Main Street character. To compliment these restrictions, some incentives should be added to encourage desired uses.

2. Village Commercial Support Area

This area, which is located between the Downtown business district and the Cultural Center on Main Street, is somewhat a mixed-use area that includes some residential uses and small commercial operations. The plan does not recommend any changes to the zoning district boundaries in this area. When commercial redevelopment takes place in the designated commercially zoned parcels on Main Street, it must be designed in relation to abutting residential uses and the character of the surrounding area. It is important that the aesthetics of this area are maintained and kept consistent with the character of the Village, allowing for a visual connection with other areas along Main Street.

3. Cultural Center/Business Support Area

This area of Main Street includes small businesses, schools, churches, residential housing and government services. The area's flavor is set by the Roycroft campus. Although this component of the area is focused on tourism, it should continue to serve the Village community. Connections to the surrounding areas, especially the Uptown business district, are crucial. This area should be preserved as the cultural center of the community and capitalized on in this regard. The area depicted on the vision map generally extends south to Oakwood Avenue and north to Fillmore Avenue, but does not include the residential dwelling located along either of these roadways (see Map 26). This area includes properties that will be influenced by the development and redevelopment of the business and cultural features of this area. Again, the plan is not calling for any zoning boundary changes, but an overlay to address aesthetic, cultural and transportation related issues. Other government actions may also be needed to properly guide this development and redevelopment in this area.

4. Uptown/Traditional Main Street Hamlet

This area of Main Street represents the traditional business district or downtown, as seen in many villages. The Main Street area consists of retail and service oriented businesses. The character of the area must be preserved through appropriate design standards that would direct any development or redevelopment of the area. These standards should be established with sufficient public input to ensure that the area is designed in a manner that portrays the desires of the community. The area surrounding the downtown is also vital to the district. This surrounding mixed-use area provides support to the downtown (parking, patrons, complimentary support uses). Again, it is important to note that there is also a synergistic relationship between this area and the cultural center/business support district. These areas support and benefit one another through an exchange of services and people. This relationship should be recognized and protected. It is important to note that the plan does not specifically

Section 5.0

Findings and Recommendations

call for any zoning boundary changes in this area. This area, as stated previously, is a large mixed use area that acts somewhat like a small hamlet within the Village (thus the name given it). The Village should take extreme care in considering any future rezoning requests in this area and avoid impacts to surrounding uses. Any actions in this area should consider aesthetic, transportation, and accessibility issues.

An overlay zoning district in the Main Street portion of this area should also restrict the removal of the existing structures, have strong design standards and incentives for the improvement of the existing structures. Parking, streetscape issues, lighting, signage, bike and pedestrian access, and compatibility with surrounding areas are some of the other issues that need to be addressed in any future actions or zoning text amendments (or overlays).

- The vision map illustrates a wide system of on-street trails. These trails are essential to preserving, protecting and diversifying the "walkability" of the Village. Focus needs to be placed on making it easier and more convenient to move around the area in a non-motorized fashion (without a car). Trails that link internal features and components in the Village, as well as the Village with the adjoining Town, are vital. Over the long-term, a means of utilizing the existing railroad corridor as a multi-purpose trail should also be considered.
- A buffer should be established and maintained along Cazenovia Creek for streambank protection, wildlife habitat and travel, and public access.

VILLAGE OF EAST AURORA

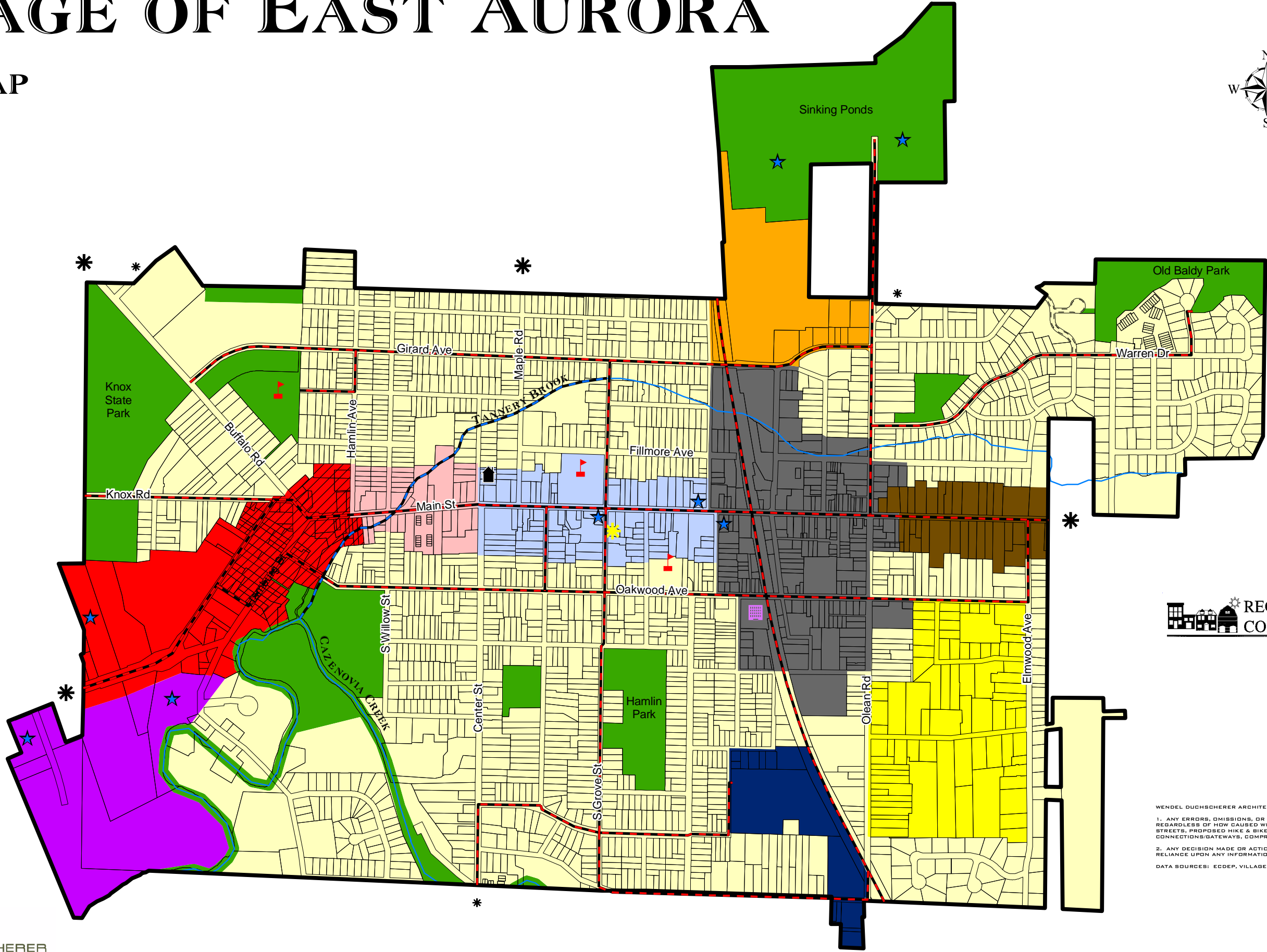
VISION MAP



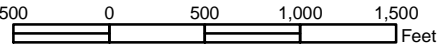
KEY TO FEATURES

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Streams
- Piped Streams
- Paper Streets
- Proposed Hike & Bike Trails
- Community Features
 - Government Buildings
 - Schools
 - Senior Center
 - Millard Fillmore House
 - Roycroft Campus
- Transportation Connections/Gateways
 - Major
 - Minor
- Comprehensive Plan Vision
 - Cultural Center/Business Support Area
 - West End Revitalization Area
 - Downtown (West End) Area
 - Estate/Large Lot Residential
 - Historic Main Street Residential
 - Restricted Industrial/R&D
 - Light Industrial/Office Park
 - Office/Small Business Area
 - Uptown/Traditional Main Street Hamlet
 - Village Commercial Support Area
 - Village Residential
 - Open Space & Recreation/Public Facilities

***Please Note:**
This is not a zoning map and should not be used to interpret zoning or to directly correlate to zoning. This map should be used in conjunction with the Text in Section 5-9 of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.



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DATA SOURCES: ECDEP, VILLAGE OF EAST AURORA



Section 6

Implementation

Section 6.0 Implementation

6.1 Introduction

The preparation and adoption of the Regional Comprehensive Plan is only the beginning of an overall planning process. The Regional Comprehensive Plan is an active document and should continually be updated. Therefore, the Towns and Village must take the necessary steps to ensure that the recommendations of this Plan are implemented. Thus, this section of the Plan outlines an implementation strategy for accomplishing *some* of the recommendations set forth in Section 5.0 and achieving the goals and objectives, as outlined in Section 3.0. This section does not include all the recommendations outlined in the Plan (see Section 5 for all discussions), just those recommendations that must occur in a planned order or are strongly prioritized. The following implementation strategy includes a step by step approach with established priorities.

It should be understood that because the Regional Comprehensive Plan is an active document, over time, as local conditions change, so too may the priorities of the five partnering communities. Therefore, upon adoption of the Plan, one of the first priority actions is for the communities to designate an Advisory Committee, or a designated committee in each community, as the entity(s) responsible for the implementation of this document. The local legislative board in each community shall maintain the authority to appoint representatives from their respective community to assist with this action. Furthermore, information contained in this Regional Comprehensive Plan must be kept current so that the recommendations, as well as the implementation process, are based on, and reflect, existing conditions. As outlined in Section 8.0 of this Plan, a bi-annual review process should be established to allow for the continuing review and updating of this plan.

In addition, members of the Advisory Committee or their designated representatives should meet with local, County and State agencies to discuss the Regional Comprehensive Plan and determine how these agencies could help with the implementation of this Plan.

6.2 Utilization of this Section

This Implementation section is broken into subsections for each participating community. It is important that each community can look at its implementation section and know the steps they need to take to accomplish their vision and the goals and objectives of the region.

Each community has a list of Priority 1 Actions that should be completed first and are anticipated to take place in the first two years after plan adoption. Priority 2 Actions are those that can take place after a particular priority 1 action takes place or as the community desires in the years 1-5 after plan adoption. Priority 3 Action items are those items that are either long term actions, those that may or may not be necessary depending on future scenarios, or are alternative ideas for certain priority 1 or 2 actions (that may not achieve the desired results). Priority 3 items are considered "Tool Box" actions that can be utilized by the community when needed or never utilized, if so desired.

For the priority 1 and 2 actions, there are four categories that the actions have been broken into: Zoning, Other Codes and Regulations, Cooperative Actions, and Other Actions. The first two categories, "zoning" and "other codes and regulations" are those actions most utilized by legislative boards to control land use in their communities. The next category "cooperative actions" are those actions that should be done with, or in cooperation with, the other regional planning communities, or the County and/or some other agency. The final category contains all of the other actions to be taken by the community.

Under each of the categories, there is also a methodology section that explains who should complete these actions and how they should be accomplished. Finally, a general estimate of cost is given for these actions and potential sources of funding.

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6.2 Town of Aurora

➤ *Priority One Actions – Years One to Two*

- Adopt the Regional Comprehensive Plan and continue, or form a new, Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation and updating of the Plan.
- Establish an annual budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Rewrite the agricultural zoning district and make it a standard agricultural zoning district (no hierarchical uses).
- Create a new rural residential zoning category.
- Rezone land as indicated in this Plan to the recommended new categories.
- For the Route 16 corridor area south of the Village (to the Route 400), decide whether a new commercial zoning district, tailored to the issues discussed in the Regional Comprehensive Plan, is to be created, or a planned business development area zone ordinance (floating zone) be promulgated. Create the selected ordinance and adopt and enforce it.
- Create a new "rural mixed use" zoning district for the area along Route 16 from the Route 400 to Blakeley Road.
- In conjunction with the Route 16 corridor zoning discussed above, the Town should also formulate a new Route 16 zoning overlay district. The overlay should compliment the above zoning changes and should control design issues relating to residential, commercial and all other business uses.

Responsibility/Methodology

The Town through its Planning Board or a committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would draft new regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Town Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant of legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$5,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Town monies or possible County comprehensive plan implementation monies.

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Amend the Site Plan Review regulations to lend more focus to issues of community character, traffic impacts, aesthetics and historic preservation.
- Research what neo-traditional techniques would be best suited for the Town (budget for year 2).
- Prioritize areas for use of these new techniques, but include waterline extension areas as a high priority. Consider adoption of these tools for these areas as water is extended.
- Cluster development regulations should be created that can be utilized in rural areas and for small road frontage subdivisions.
- Establish a procedure for the review and approval of minor subdivision actions (four lots or less) and for large lot divisions (lots five acres or more in size).
- Research and develop rural development guidelines for the Town and add references in the subdivision regulations (many sample guidelines are available).

Responsibility/Methodology

These actions should be lead by the Town Board, but could be assigned to the Planning Board or a committee to research them and to complete the code revisions. This may necessitate the

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need for hiring a consultant, but many sample codes exist to minimize this need. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction \cong \$1,000 - \$3,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- The new Regional Comprehensive Plan committee (implementation committee) should meet two times per year for the first two years, and then annually thereafter, with representatives from the other partnering communities to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the Plan, and possible joint projects or agreements between communities.
- Conduct joint planning efforts and request input from the Village of East Aurora and other partnering communities through the referral of project and other significant actions that could have an impact.
- Continue participation in the Southtown's Water Consortium Plan.
- Maintain continual dialogue with the Village concerning economic development issues.
- Continue cooperative planning with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation on the Knox State Park facility (including East Aurora and Elma).
- Work with Erie County while they complete their Master Park Plan, in identifying the needs of Emery Park.
- Work with the Village of East Aurora to site, design and construct a joint municipal building in the central portion of the Village.
- Work cooperatively with the School District in assessing the recreational opportunities in the Town. Evaluate programs run in the area for children, seniors and families (usage of school facilities and others).
- All zoning and code revisions and large development projects should be referred to the other regional planning communities for their input.
- Work cooperatively with the other communities in developing the neo-traditional zoning techniques and the rural development guidelines that are compatible in nature.
- In considering zoning revisions to the areas denoted for commercial uses, work with the Village to ensure that these areas do not compete with the Village business district, but complement it.
- Begin conversations with the other partnering communities to set up a regional open space/stream corridor preservation committee.
- Begin planning a regional transportation study in association with the Village of East Aurora and the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council.
- Consider amending the site plan review and subdivision regulations to allow for a better review of transportation impacts to the region. The partnering communities should work together to ensure that amendments are similar and achieve the same results.
- All five communities should adopt similar site clearing standards (protect watersheds).
- With assistance from the US Natural Resources Conservation Service, work with the other communities to develop erosion and sediment control guidelines to protect creek corridors from the impacts of development and excessive stormwater runoff.
- The communities should work together in promulgating and adopting best management practices (BMP's) for use of fertilizers and pesticides, road salt use and application, and disposal of hazardous materials. For these BMP's, the regional planning communities should seek the assistance of the agencies such as the US Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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- Work with the other communities to establish a committee to focus jointly on open space and stream corridor preservation, public access along creeks and community linkages, and water quality issues (including watershed management).
- Aurora should investigate the possible cooperative agreements, such as EMW Sports, or partnering with the Tri-Town Recreations Program and/or the Village of East Aurora, to help in providing recreation opportunities to Town residents.
- The Town should work with the Town of Wales and the County in formulating a Hamlet Plan for South Wales based on the principles of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

In most cases the Town Board or appointed committees (including Town Board members) will lead and facilitate these activities.

Funding/Costs

These planning activities will have minimal costs but involve a great deal of time (volunteers and Boards). Budget: \$3,000. Local monies will most probably be necessary.

D. Other Actions

- Research and implement education programs on septic systems in areas of waterline extensions.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board should contact various agencies to find one willing to complete this or assist Town volunteers. Programs can be run in targeted areas and/or mailings made to new waterline users.

The Town Board should work with their State and Federal representatives to research possible grant programs for septic system improvements.

Funding / Costs

Costs: Minimal

Funding: Utilization of assistant, agency resources.

➤ *Priority 2 Actions – Years Three to Five*

- Complete a comprehensive plan annual report and especially note those Priority 1 Actions that have not been completed. Target and reprioritize those actions. Assess any subdivision and site plan activity that occurred in the previous year to assess overall compliance with the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Also, evaluate the impact (desired results) of the Priority 1 implementation items that were completed. Recommend the Priority 2 Action items that should be undertaken in the coming year.
- Establish an annual budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Create zoning overlay districts for the West Falls business corridor, and for specific commercial areas around the Village.
- Create a new Hamlet zoning category for the West Falls Hamlet and/or consider creating a West Falls zoning overlay for the entire Hamlet (coordinate with above).
- Consider rezoning additional areas in the West Falls Hamlet for a commercial/mix use development (may necessitate for a new zoning category).
- Complete the rezoning of appropriate lands to the new rural-residential zoning category.

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Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town through its Planning Board or a committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would draft new regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Town Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$10,000

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Create general architectural standards for the Town's business/commercial/industrial areas (specific architectural requirements for West Falls or certain areas around the Village could be accommodated in the overlay zonings for those areas).
- Amend the subdivision regulations to reference regulations/requirements for developing near viewsheds.
- Amend subdivision regulations to require creative road frontage developments when proposed (can have penalties of larger lots if creativity is not utilized).
- Amend subdivision regulations to require buffers along designated stream corridors.
- Investigate amending the subdivision regulations to include making provisions for recreation in their designs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the rural development guidelines established in year one, and consider other non-traditional tools such as open development areas. Consider making the use of certain techniques (rural development, clusters, open development areas) in certain areas and for certain conditions.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These actions should be lead by the Town Board, but could be assigned to the Planning Board or a committee to research them and to complete the code revisions. This may necessitate the need for hiring a consultant, but many sample codes exist to minimize this need. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$8,000 - \$15,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- Research areas for possible sewer extensions in the commercial areas around the Village. Begin dialogue with the Village to accomplish this (prioritize areas).
- Begin research and discussions with the Village on the possibility of having a companion industrial park development adjoining the commercial green in the Town (concurrent with sewer extension work).
- Work with Erie County in prioritizing and beginning improvements needed at Emery Park. Can Emery Inn be reestablished?
- A regional farmland protection plan should be considered, and work done under priority one items should lead to a quick start-up on this. As part of this plan, the communities should evaluate business support issues including tax incentives, financing packages and economic development grants. This plan will also help to ensure that farms are treated as businesses and that they get support like the businesses in the communities.
- Based on research and preliminary planning done in the priority 1 tasks, the planning communities should consider completing a regional open space/corridor protection plan.

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- A regional tourism committee should be investigated and formed. This committee will look at tourism in the region and help to better coordinate the actions of the legislative boards.
- Based on the results of the investigation done in the priority 1 actions, the communities should have a regional corridor/access management traffic study completed.
- The communities should work jointly with the County, State and Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council (MPO) in accommodating pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas discussed in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- The communities should begin to cooperatively explore possibilities of increased public transportation or creative alternative modes of transportation connections to downtown Buffalo.
- Cooperatively pursue regional wetlands regulations with the other communities to regulate non-jurisdictional wetlands that are no longer regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Together with Elma and Holland, the Town should work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and US Natural Resource Conservation Service to design watershed management strategies and best management practices for Cazenovia Creek. This effort should include a public education element.
- Investigate, through a joint committee, the ability to connect regional features through a trail system. Public access to creeks should also be investigated in this study.
- Work with the Town of Holland to assist the Town of Wales in the development of a hamlet plan for the South Wales hamlet.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These are all actions that require strong Town Board leadership. Once the actions to be started for that year are determined (coordinate with other communities through implementation centers), assignments can be made to Boards, Committees or groups. These groups will work with appropriate agencies and/or consultants to address this action. Recommendations would be made to participating legislative boards for their implementation.

The Town Board should work with their State and Federal representatives to research possible grant programs for septic system improvements.

Funding/Costs

Costs to County for implementation of components: unknown. Costs to Town for consultant: \$5,000 - \$10,000.

D. Other Actions

- Identify and map important viewsheds and open space features in the Town (utilize comprehensive plan as basis with a Geographic Information System - - GIS, which is the best tool for this). Consider completing an up-to-date open space/green space plan.
- Research, plan, and look for financing to improve the West Falls school as a community center. In this work, identify the need to expand services at the library also. Study the needs of children, seniors and families for community services.
- Along with the open space/green space plan, the Town can begin to prioritize the possible connective features that can be accomplished in the Town (comprehensive plan as basis and utilize GIS). A more in-depth plan showing trails, walking and biking areas, their design makeup, etc. can be done. These connections will prioritize connection to important features: schools, community facilities, parks, Village, etc.
- Investigate the possible development of tourism related uses in the Route 78/16 area opposite Knox State Park.

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Responsibilities/Methodologies

For many of these tasks, the Town will need the assistance of the County and/or a consultant. The Town Board through committees or a Town Board liaison would hire a consultant to work with volunteers of the Town to create the open space plan.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$20,000

Funding: Local monies or possible State grant assistance.

➤ *Priority 3 Actions - Long Term and Optional (As Needed)*

- Historic preservation standards or guidelines should be adopted to preserve and protect important structures, particularly in the West Falls hamlet area.
- Provide sewer extensions in areas around the Village to accommodate denser development patterns around the Village.
- Necessary roadway improvements, to address drainage and safety concerns, should not include sidewalks, curbing and possibly street lighting, in the outer rural areas of the Town.
- Areas around the Village with infrastructure improvements (water and sewer) should be considered for rezoning to R1, R2 or R3. Improve overlay zoning requirements in these areas to protect character.
- Add poor soil condition requirements similar to the Town of Elma, to require increased lot sizes in areas of poor "percolation" (lots up to 5 acres).
- Implement accessibility improvements in and around the hamlets of West Falls and South Wales. Consider the addition of sidewalks to connect important features in these areas.
- Pursue streetscape improvements along the Route 240 corridor in West Falls.
- There should be greater coordination between the business community and the school system (particularly BOCES) to ensure the availability of a local labor pool.
- Consider expanding the State Agricultural District in the eastern part of Town (near the Wales Agriculture District).
- Consideration should be given to reconstructing the Route 400 interchange at Route 20A (full service access). This is a very long term, and much study must take place before any serious consideration can be given to this idea. Benefits must outweigh the risks, and all potential impacts must be mitigated.
- Expansion of public transportation or the addition of other forms of transportation should be explored.
- Protect the railroad corridor from unacceptable uses and lobby with appropriate agencies to maintain service corridor commuter usage and the possibilities of inter-modal transport.
- Work with the other communities to develop a regional recreation facility such as a pool, skating rink, etc.
- Consider acting with surrounding communities in designating important stream corridors as Critical Environmental areas (CEAs).
- Improve designated road shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles.
- Create and improve points of access along Cazenovia Creek for scenic viewing and passive recreation.
- Consider the usage of the abandoned railroad line in the southwestern portion of Town for a Rails to Trails program.
- The communities should pursue joint efforts to address issues that effect the regions by pooling resources, filing joint grant applications for funding, undertaking mutual studies, establish joint committees, etc.

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6.3 Town of Elma

➤ *Priority One Actions – Years One to Two*

- Adopt the Regional Comprehensive Plan and continue, or form a new, Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation and updating of the Plan.
- Establish a budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Consider the creation of a new commercial zoning district or a zoning overlay for along Seneca Street.
- Create an overlay zoning district for the southwestern corridor of the Town.
- Create a zoning overlay for the Transit Road corridor.
- Ensure that industrial and commercial division of land is reviewed by the Town. This may require a revision of the Town's subdivision regulations.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board through its Planning Board or a committee (with the assistance of a consultant) would draft these new regulations. The Town Board, once they were found to be acceptable, would follow normal zoning code amendment procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$3,000 - \$5,000

Funding: County implementation monies.

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Amend the Site Plan Review regulations to lend more focus to issues of community character, traffic impacts, aesthetics and historic preservation.
- Create a purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) program and approach agricultural property owners for their interest.
- Adopt a policy concerning sidewalks, curbing and street lighting for rural areas.
- Create Rural/Road Frontage Cluster Development regulations.
- Reinforce the requirements in the subdivision regulations (zoning code) limiting major subdivision in A and B zones and restrictions due to percolator rates (poor soils).

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The aforementioned PACE program should be jointly investigated with surrounding communities, with the assistance of the County and other agricultural related agencies and groups. The other regulations/ amendments and policies could be formulated through the Planning Board with assistance from a consultant and/or organization like the New York Planning Federation. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$3,000 - \$5,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- Recreational planning should be coordinated with the School District, EMW Sports, and the participating communities.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Zoning and Code implementation actions could be coordinated with the other communities that are considering similar neo-traditional planning tools.
- Agricultural protection programs should also be coordinated.
- All zoning and code revisions and large development projects should be referred to the other regional planning communities for their input.
- The new Regional Comprehensive Plan committee (implementation committee) should meet two times per year for the first two years, and then annually thereafter, with representatives from the other partnering communities to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the Plan, and possible joint projects or agreements between communities.
- Conduct joint planning efforts and request input from the Village of East Aurora and other partnering communities through the referral of project and other significant actions that could have an impact.
- Begin conversations with the other communities to set up a Regional Open Space/Stream Corridor Preservation Committee.
- Begin planning a regional transportation study in association with the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council.
- Continue participation in the Southtown's Water Consortium Plan.
- Work cooperatively with other communities to develop neo-traditional zoning techniques and rural development guidelines that are compatible in nature.
- Consider amending the site plan review and subdivision regulations to allow for a better review of transportation impacts to the region. The partnering communities should work together to ensure that amendments are similar and achieve the same results.
- Work with the other Towns to adopt similar site clearing standards (protect watersheds).
- The communities should work together in promulgating and adopting best management practices (BMP's) for use of fertilizers and pesticides, road salt use and application, and disposal of hazardous materials. For these BMP's, the communities should seek the assistance of agencies such as the US Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Work with the other communities to establish a committee to focus jointly on open space and stream corridor preservation, public access along creeks and community linkages, and water quality issues (including watershed management).
- With assistance from the US Natural Resource Conservation Service, work with the other communities to develop erosion and sediment control guidelines to protect creek corridors from the impacts of development and excessive stormwater runoff.
- Work with the Village of East Aurora and Town of Aurora on the cooperative planning efforts with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation on the Knox State Park facility.
- A regional tourism committee should be investigated and formed. This committee will look at tourism in the region and help to better coordinate the actions of the legislative boards.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

In most cases the Town Board or appointed committees (including Town Board members) will lead and facilitate these activities.

Funding/Costs

These planning activities will have minimal costs but involve a great deal of time (volunteers and Boards).

Costs: \$5,000.

Funding: Local monies will most probably be necessary.

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D. Other Actions

- Work with the US Natural Resource Conservation Service to establish program to educate residents on the maintenance of wells and septic systems. The Town should also investigate potential funding sources to assist homeowners with the improvement or replacement of these facilities.
- Create a plan for the area of the Elma Plaza (Town Center concept).
- Study and evaluate the recreational needs of the children and senior citizens of the community. Set up strategies to accommodate these needs.
- Create an important plan for the Creek Road recreation facility and begin improvements.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board would initiate these actions, and appoint or assign this to an appropriate committee. The committee, possibly working with a consultant would make recommendations to the Town Board for their acceptance and implementation. (The Town could also utilize the University for possible design concepts for the Town center.)

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$7,000

Funding: Local monies or implementation monies from the County.

➤ *Priority 2 Actions – Years Three to Five*

- Complete a comprehensive plan annual report and especially note those Priority 1 Actions that have not been completed. Target and reprioritize those actions. Assess any subdivision and site plan activity that occurred in the previous year to assess overall compliance with the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Also, evaluate the impact (desired results) of the Priority 1 implementation items that were completed. Recommend the Priority 2 Action items that should be undertaken in the coming year.
- Establish an annual budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Consider and possibly adopt zoning changes and/or the creation of a zoning overlay for the Elma Plaza area in accordance with the Plan completed under the Priority 1 actions.
- Formulate a new zoning category, and/or adopt a zoning overlay for the commercial area around the Maple Road/Route 400 interchange.
- Creek protection overlay districts should be evaluated and possibly created for the three major creek corridors (Buffalo, Pond Brook and Cazenovia Creek).
- The Residential A and B zones should be revised to not allow commercial uses (even by special use permit).
- Consider and possibly adopt a new zoning district (agricultural/conservation) for area along the eastern border of the Town, or consider an overlay district.
- Consider a zoning overlay along the Lancaster border to protect character.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town through its Planning Board or a committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would draft new regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Town Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$6,000 - \$10,000

Section 6.0 Implementation

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Evaluate, create and possibly adopt additional creative/neo-traditional land use tools such as: open development areas and rural development guidelines.
- Amend the subdivision regulations to better incorporate the need for recreational lands in major subdivisions.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These actions should be lead by the Town Board, but could be assigned to the Planning Board or a committee to research them and to complete the code revisions. This may necessitate the need for hiring a consultant, but many sample codes exist to minimize this need. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$3,000 - \$5,000

C. Cooperative Efforts

- Together with the other communities, the Town should work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and US Natural Resource Conservation Service to design watershed management strategies and best management practices for Pond Brook, Buffalo and Cazenovia Creeks. This effort should include a public education element.
- A regional farmland protection plan should be considered, and work done under priority one items should lead to a quick start-up on this. As part of this plan, the communities should evaluate business support issues including tax incentives, financing packages and economic development grants. This plan will also help to ensure that farms are treated as businesses and that they get support like the businesses in the communities.
- Based on research and preliminary planning done in the priority 1 tasks, the planning communities should consider completing a regional open space/corridor protection plan.
- Based on the results of the investigation done in the priority 1 actions, the communities should have a regional corridor/access management traffic study completed.
- The communities should work jointly with the County, State and MPO (GBNRTC) in accommodating pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas discussed in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- The communities should begin to cooperatively explore possibilities of increased public transportation or creative alternative modes of transportation.
- Cooperatively pursue regional wetlands regulations with the other communities to regulate non-jurisdictional wetlands that are no longer regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Together with Elma and Holland, the Town should work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and US Natural Resource Conservation Service to design watershed management strategies and best management practices for Cazenovia Creek. This effort should include a public education element.
- Investigate, through a joint committee, the ability to connect regional features through a trail system. Public access to creeks should also be investigated in this study.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These are all actions that require strong Town Board leadership. Once the actions to be started for that year are determined (coordinate with other communities through implementation centers), assignments can be made to Boards, Committees or groups. These groups will work with appropriate agencies and/or consultants to address this action. Recommendations would be made to participating legislative boards for their implementation.

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The Town Board should work with their State and Federal representatives to research possible grant programs for septic system improvements.

Funding/Costs

Planning Costs: \$15,000 - \$25,000.

Implementation Costs: Unknown.

Funding: Many different organizations can assist the Town with these actions. There are also some grant programs available for planning monies, but most would be for implementation (open space protection, public access, farmland protection, etc.).

D. Other Actions

- Work to ensure continued rail service through the Elma community.
- Evaluate the effects of the cooperative agricultural protection programs planning completed in the Priority 1 actions. Also evaluate or create a purchase of agricultural conservation (PACE) program for the community. Begin researching other ideas for agricultural protection if desired results are not being achieved (see cooperative actions).
- Begin evaluation of the possibility of sewer extensions in the proposed industrial expansion area in the Town. Based on these results, more accurately define the area for possible industrial zone expansion.
- Begin planning improvements for the Town owned lands at Knabb and Hardy Roads. Also evaluate and plan additional passive recreational opportunities at the lands behind the senior center.
- Plan and begin implementation of additional public access points along creek corridors in the Town, especially along Buffalo Creek.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board should take the lead in these actions, but work with Recreation or other committees to help implement these actions. Law changes or additions to laws require standard requirements for local laws. Work with the County in evaluating possible sewer extensions. Capital expenditures will require the normal procedures to accomplish funding. The Town Board should work with their State and Federal representatives to research possible grant programs for septic system improvements.

Funding/Costs

General Planning (and conceptual design work): \$8,000 - \$12,000.

Implementation (sewer extensions, park upgrades, public access): Unknown.

Funding: There are grant programs available for utilization on Parks and public access, and these should be pursued. Sewer components need to be coordinated with the County, and costs can be paid for by development, or through Town bonding (grant and low interest loan funds are available).

➤ Priority 3 Actions - Long Term and Optional (As Needed)

- Possible sewer line extensions in areas that would allow residential subdivisions, would necessitate the need for a zoning overlay to control the types of subdivisions to be built.
- Sewer extensions should be considered in the industrial area and if possible in the Hamlet.
- Adopt architectural guidelines to control quality of design in the Town. Historic preservation standards should be evaluated for areas containing structures of historic significance. Design guidelines should also be adopted for non-residential structures.
- If a major road corridor becomes adversely affected by increases in traffic, consideration should be given to decreasing residential densities in that area.

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- Expand the commercial area in the Elma Plaza area, to accommodate additional support businesses.
- Provide improvements for walking and biking opportunities in the Elma Center (Village) area.
- Begin expansion (rezoning) of the industrial zone as depicted in the Vision Plan, or as determined in previous studies.
- Provide walking, biking, hiking opportunities in the "growth area" around the Village to accommodate connections into the Village.
- Consider adding an agricultural/conservation zoning in the southwestern portion of the Town.
- Consider amending the Residential C zone to be based on densities (i.e., allow 3/4 to one-acre lots, with an over all density allowance of one dwelling unit per five acres, which would result in a certain amount of open lands that could be deed restricted for farming or preservation).
- There should be greater coordination between the business community and the school system (particularly BOCES) to ensure the availability of a local labor pool.
- Protect the railroad corridor from incompatible uses, and lobby with appropriate agencies to maintain service. Consider commuter usage and the possibilities of inter-modal transport.
- Consideration should be given to reconstructing the Route 400 interchange at Maple Road (full service access).
- Expansion of public transportation or the addition of other forms of transportation should be explored.
- Consider a regional recreation facility such as a pool, skating rink, etc.
- Consider acting with surrounding communities in designating important stream corridors as Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs).
- Provide trails to link Knabb Road Park, Elma Senior Center Park, Iroquois School facilities and other features in the town.
- Improve designated roadway shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles.
- The communities should pursue joint efforts to address issues that effect the regions by pooling resources, filing joint grant applications for funding, undertaking mutual studies, establish joint committees, etc.

Section 6.0 Implementation

6.4 Town of Holland

➤ Priority One Actions – Years One to Two

- Adopt the Regional Comprehensive Plan and continue, or form a new, Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation and updating of the Plan.
- Establish a budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- The Town should review the COS and RA zoning districts and consider either combining them into one district or redistricting the lands currently designated as COS and RA. If the COS and RA districts are combined into one new district, the Rural Residential/Agricultural classification should be used and a purpose or intent section should be added. Furthermore, the listing of permitted and special permit uses should be reviewed and revised, as necessary, for use under the new RA classification.
- In conjunction with the above item, consider including provisions in the zoning ordinance to allow development flexibility based on density. In other words, allow two-acre lots, with an overall density allowance of one dwelling unit per five acres, which would result in a certain amount of open lands that could be deed restricted for farming or preservation.
- Consider revising the clustered development regulations to require a lower minimum acreage and focus on small subdivision activity and road frontage developments (rural cluster requirements).
- Revise the Planned Unit Development regulations to reduce the number of required units per development to allow for easier use of these regulations.
- Make minor revisions to the commercial zoning outside the hamlet to target appropriate uses that do not compete with the hamlet business district. The idea is to ensure that zoning focuses commercial development in the hamlet with support uses situated along Route 16.
- Prepare a zoning overlay for Route 16 to guide development that is consistent with the rural nature of the area (include aesthetic, access management, landscaping and setback standards).
- Reassess residential lot sizes and/or adjust the lot frontage requirements in certain areas to better manage growth and preserve large tracts of land.
- Review zoning in the hamlet to ensure that it allows for a good mix of residential and commercial/retail uses (supporting walkability, work/live in the community) to support a vibrant community.
- Prepare a zoning overlay district for the hamlet to address aesthetics, landscaping, highway access, historic preservation and other design oriented issues in this area.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board through its Planning Board or a committee (with the assistance of a consultant) would draft these new regulations. The Town Board, once they were found to be acceptable, would follow normal zoning code amendment procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, SEQR, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$5,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Town monies or possible County comprehensive plan implementation monies.

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Amend the Site Plan Review regulations to lend more focus to issues of community character, traffic impacts, aesthetics and historic preservation.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Consider amending site plan review and subdivision regulations to allow for a more effective assessment of transportation impacts to the region. Work with the other communities to ensure that these amendments to the regulations are similar in nature, to achieve the same results.
- Utilize open development areas, particularly along Route 16 and other areas with significant views and environmental resources (this subdivision technique could be combined with clustering).
- Adopt rural development guidelines for use in land development projects and subdivisions.
- Adopt architectural standards or guidelines to manage design aesthetics in the area (these could be incorporated into an overlay district for the hamlet – see A. above).
- Through proper site plan review, encourage the reuse and redevelopment of existing structures, consistent with the character of the surrounding area; standards to this effect could be incorporated in A zoning overlay district for the hamlet.
- Adopt standards or guidelines to effectively buffer residential uses from non-residential uses.
- Utilizing the Town of Elma's regulations, review the Land Use Regulations and consider requiring percolation testing for development in areas with no public sewer. Development density could then be controlled based on the testing results.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The purchase of agricultural conservation easements (PACE) program should be jointly investigated with surrounding communities, with the assistance of the County and other agricultural related agencies and groups. The other regulations/ amendments and policies could be formulated through the Planning Board with assistance from a consultant and/or organization like the New York Planning Federation. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$3,000 - \$5,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- The new Regional Comprehensive Plan committee (implementation committee) should meet two times per year for the first two years, and then annually thereafter, with representatives from the other partnering communities to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the Plan, and possible joint projects or agreements between communities.
- Work cooperatively with the School District in assessing the recreational opportunities in the Town. Evaluate programs run in the area for youth, seniors and families (usage of school facilities and others).
- Work cooperatively with the other communities in developing the neo-traditional zoning techniques and the rural development guidelines that are compatible in nature.
- Work with the County and State to ensure that any proposed roadway projects (outside of the developed areas of the Town, such as the hamlet) do not incorporate sidewalks or curbing in keeping with the rural character of the area.
- Continue to work with the NYS Department of Transportation to institute roadway improvements for Route 16 and the hamlet.
- Work with the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) and the partnering communities to plan a regional transportation study.
- Work cooperatively with the County, State, the GBNRTC and local utility companies to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas identified in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Conduct joint planning efforts through the referral of projects and the request of input from adjoining communities for large development projects or other significant issues that could have a potential impact on these communities.
- Cooperatively pursue regional wetlands regulations with the other communities to regulate non-jurisdictional wetlands that are no longer regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Assist the Town of Wales in the development of a hamlet plan for South Wales based on the principles of the Regional Comprehensive Plan. This is important because changes and development in this area would impact the Town of Holland.
- Investigate, through a joint committee, the ability to connect regional features through a trail system. Public access to creeks should also be investigated in this study.
- Work with the other communities to develop similar site clearing standards.
- With assistance from the US Natural Resource Conservation Service, work with the other communities to develop erosion and sediment control guidelines to protect creek corridors from the impacts of development and excessive stormwater runoff.
- Work together with the other communities in promulgating and adopting best management practices (BMP's) to manage the use of fertilizers, road salt, pesticides and the disposal of hazardous wastes in an effort to preserve and protect water quality.
- Work with the other communities to establish a committee to focus jointly on open space and stream corridor preservation, public access along creeks and community linkages, and water quality issues (including watershed management).
- In conjunction with the other partnering communities, work with the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council to lay the groundwork for a regional transportation study.
- Consider amending site plan review and subdivision regulations to allow for a more effective assessment of transportation impacts to the region. Work with the other communities to ensure that these amendments to the regulations are similar in nature and consistent with one another, to achieve the same results.
- A regional tourism committee should be investigated and formed. This committee will look at tourism in the region and help to better coordinate the actions of the legislative boards.
- Work with the National Main Street Center and other organizations of this kind to secure technical assistance and other services to improve the hamlet area.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

In most cases the Town Board or appointed committees (including Town Board members) will lead and facilitate these activities.

Funding/Costs

These planning activities will have minimal costs but involve a great deal of time (volunteers and Boards).

Costs: \$5,000.

Funding: Local monies will most probably be necessary.

D. Other Actions

- Conduct a site study for industrial development and to address issues of access of existing industrially zoned lands.
- Work with the US Natural Resource Conservation Service to establish program to educate residents on the maintenance of wells and septic systems. The Town should also investigate potential funding sources to assist homeowners with the improvement or replacement of these facilities.
- Publicize and support the County's Right to Farm Law and help local farmers identify programs and incentives to help improve their business.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Work with local farmers to establish a local agricultural tourism program in Holland.
- Focus infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of the hamlet.
- Water extensions should only be considered in accordance with the Southtown's Water Consortium Study and the principles of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- Prepare a detailed hamlet revitalization study to determine market strengths, market needs, consumer desires, and other issues facing the area. Combine this with efforts to improve the aesthetic quality of the area (streetscape, façade improvements).
- Establish a Hamlet Revitalization Committee to assist with the aforementioned study.
- In combination with the hamlet revitalization study, and based on certain findings of this study, establish a revolving loan fund to support local businesses and property owners in the hamlet.
- Identify potential sites or means for improving parking in the hamlet area.
- Initiate a study to determine the potential for establishing trails for horses, all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, etc. through the Town. This study could be coordinated with the Town of Wales as a means of developing connections between the two communities.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board would initiate these actions, and appoint or assign this to an appropriate committee. The committee, possibly working with a consultant, would make recommendations to the Town Board for their acceptance and implementation.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$7,000

Funding: Local monies or implementation monies from the County.

➤ *Priority 2 Actions – Years Three to Five*

- Complete a comprehensive plan annual report and especially note those Priority 1 Actions that have not been completed. Target and reprioritize those actions. Assess any subdivision and site plan activity that occurred in the previous year to assess overall compliance with the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Also, evaluate the impact (desired results) of the Priority 1 implementation items that were completed. Recommend the Priority 2 Action items that should be undertaken in the coming year.
- Establish an annual budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Continue efforts commenced under Priority 1 to develop zoning overlay districts for the hamlet and Route 16. These efforts could be tied to the efforts and findings of the hamlet revitalization study.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town through its Planning Board or a committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would continue the efforts to draft new zoning overlay regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Town Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$7,000

Funding: Local monies or County implementation funds

Section 6.0 Implementation

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Consider adopting or utilizing for guidance historic preservation guidelines or architectural standards for particular use in the hamlet; consider designating Route 16, in the vicinity of Pearl Street as an historic district (these could be incorporated into an overlay district – see A. above).
- Consider adopting standards or guidelines to manage the use of dirt bikes and all terrain vehicles in the Town (with regard to respectful use or prohibition on private property).
- Amend the Subdivision Regulations to require creative road frontage developments, with larger lot size penalties imposed for standard development proposals.
- Include requirements for buffering along stream corridors in the Subdivision Regulations.
- Require the provision of recreational lands in the design of large subdivisions.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These actions should be lead by the Town Board, but could be assigned to the Planning Board or a committee to research them and to complete the code revisions. This may necessitate the need for hiring a consultant, but many sample codes exist to minimize this need. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$8,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- Continue participation in the Southtown's Water Consortium Plan.
- Cooperatively pursue regional wetlands regulations with the other communities to regulate non-jurisdictional wetlands that are no longer regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Together with Aurora and Wales, the Town should work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and US Natural Resource Conservation Service to design watershed management strategies and best management practices for Cazenovia, Buffalo and Hunters Creeks. This effort should include a public education element.
- Work with the Town of Wales to adopt mutual rural development guidelines to guide and manage growth, and to preserve open space and farmland and avoid sprawl inducing development techniques.
- With Wales, examine opportunities to connect the two Towns, along roadway corridors, creek corridors and utility easements.
- Work with the County and surrounding communities (including Wales) to develop a Regional Agricultural Protection Plan. Lay the groundwork for this program under the Priority 1 Action efforts. As part of this plan, the communities should evaluate business support issues including tax incentives, financing packages and economic development grants. This plan should help to ensure that farms are treated as businesses and that they get support like other businesses in the community.
- Work with the County and State to ensure that any proposed roadway projects do not incorporate sidewalks or curbing.
- In conjunction with the other regional planning communities, prepare a Regional Transportation Study, with assistance from the County, State and Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC).
- Continue to work cooperatively with the County, State, GBNRTC and local utility companies to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas identified in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Through the established Committee, continue the work with the other communities to jointly achieve open space and stream corridor preservation, public access along creeks and community linkages, and to address water quality issues.
- Continue to conduct joint planning efforts through the referral of projects and the request of input from adjoining communities for large development projects or other significant issues that could have a potential impact on these communities.
- The new comprehensive plan committee (implementation committee) should meet annually with the other community's representatives to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the plan, and possible joint projects or agreements.
- Continue to work with the National Main Street Center and other organizations of this kind to improve the hamlet area.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These are all actions that require strong Town Board leadership. Once the actions to be started for that year are determined (coordinate with other communities through implementation centers), assignments can be made to Boards, Committees or groups. These groups will work with appropriate agencies and/or consultants to address this action. Recommendations would be made to participating legislative boards for their implementation.

Funding/Costs

Planning Costs: \$15,000 - \$25,000.

Funding: Many different organizations can assist the Town with these actions. There are also some grant programs available through State and Federal agencies for planning monies, but most would be for implementation actions (open space protection, public access, farmland protection, etc.).

D. Other Actions

- Continue the industrial site study efforts initiated under Priority 1 above to address effecting existing industrially zoned lands in the Town.
- Work to ensure continued rail service through the Holland community.
- Conduct an inventory of important open space lands in the Town. This would be followed up by the identification and prioritization of certain lands for preservation, and the subsequent identification of appropriate methods and programs to achieve this goal.
- Continue to focus infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of the hamlet.
- Continue to implement the hamlet revitalization strategy started under Priority 1 to revitalize the hamlet.
- Based on the findings of the hamlet revitalization study, establish a business recruitment program for the area.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

For many of these tasks, the Town will need the assistance of the County and/or a consultant. The Town Board through committees or a Town Board liaison would hire a consultant to work with volunteers of the Town to undertake the open space/scenic inventory.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$15,000

Funding: Local monies or possible State grant assistance.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- *Priority 3 Actions - Long Term and Optional (As Needed)*
- Consider establishing a purchase of agricultural conservation easements program (PACE) for preserving important farmland in the Town.
 - Protect the railroad corridor from unacceptable uses and lobby with appropriate agencies to maintain service corridor commuter usage and possible inter-modal transport.
 - The communities should pursue joint efforts to address issues that effect the regions by pooling resources, filing joint grant applications for funding, undertaking mutual studies, establish joint committees, etc.
 - The communities should begin to cooperatively explore possibilities of increased public transportation or creative alternative modes of transportation.
 - Adopt architectural guidelines to control quality of design in the Town. Historic preservation standards should be evaluated for areas containing structures of historic significance. Design guidelines should also be adopted for non-residential development.
 - Add poor soil condition requirements, similar to those used in Elma, to require increased lot sizes in areas with poor "percolation" (lot sizes up to 5 acres minimum).
 - Implement accessibility improvements in and around the hamlet. Consider the addition of sidewalks to connect important features.
 - Work with the other communities to develop a regional recreational facility, such as a pool, skating rink, etc.
 - Improve designated roadway shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Consider acting with the other communities in designating important stream corridors as Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs).

Section 6.0 Implementation

6.5 Town of Wales

➤ *Priority One Actions – Years One to Two*

- Adopt the Regional Comprehensive Plan and continue, or form a new, Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation and updating of the Plan.
- Establish a budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Concentrate commercial and residential development around the hamlets through effective zoning map revisions to avoid sprawl. Ensure that the size and scale is limited to be consistent with the character of the community. Commercial and residential development outside the hamlet areas will be limited and be conducted on a smaller scale, which is more rural in nature.
- Revise the Town zoning map to reflect commercial and light industrial use along Route 20A, west of the Route 78 split. The map should also reflect zoning choices for Route 78 and Route 20A, east of Wales Center hamlet. Improved zoning for these areas could also be achieved through overlay districts to address the preferred uses and other regulatory requirements for these areas.
- Business uses along portions of Route 78 and 20A should be non-retail in nature; agricultural support businesses should be encouraged.
- Reassess lot density size and amend the agricultural zoning district, with larger minimum lot area and reduced density requirements, as required for areas that primarily support farming. Also, review the allowable uses in the agricultural zoning district to discourage the location of non-agricultural land uses in areas of prime farmland.
- Determine appropriate areas for overlay districts (hamlets, Route 20A and creek corridors) and establish a priority plan for developing the regulatory framework to implement these districts.
- Adopt clustered development regulations.

Responsibility/Methodology

The Town through its Planning Board or a designated committee (with the assistance of a consultant), would draft new regulations (including overlay district regulations), and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Town Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$10,000 - \$15,000

Funding: Town monies or possible County comprehensive plan implementation monies.

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Amend the Site Plan Review regulations to lend more focus to issues of community character, traffic impacts, aesthetics and historic preservation.
- Adopt rural development guidelines for use in land development projects and subdivisions.
- Through proper site plan review, encourage the reuse and redevelopment of existing structures, consistent with the character of the surrounding area; standards to this effect could be incorporated in zoning overlay districts for the hamlets.
- Adopt standards or guidelines to effectively buffer residential uses from non-residential uses. This is important along portions of Route 20A and Route 78.
- Utilize the Town of Elma's regulations as a basis for amending the Wales Subdivision Regulations to require percolation testing for development in areas with no public sewer. Control development density based on the testing results.

Section 6.0 Implementation

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The purchase of agricultural easements (PACE) program should be jointly investigated with surrounding communities, with the assistance of the County and other agricultural related agencies and groups. The other regulations/ amendments and policies could be formulated through the Planning Board with assistance from a consultant and/or organization like the New York Planning Federation. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction \cong \$3,000 - \$5,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- The new Regional Comprehensive Plan committee (implementation committee) should meet two times per year for the first two years, and then annually thereafter, with representatives from the other partnering communities to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the Plan, and possible joint projects or agreements between communities.
- Continue participation in the Southtown's Water Consortium Plan.
- Work with Elma (and Marilla) to improve and expand the Tri-Town Recreation Program.
- Together with Elma and Holland, the Town should work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and US Natural Resource Conservation Service to design watershed management strategies and best management practices for Buffalo and Hunters Creeks. This effort should include a public education element.
- Work with the County and State to ensure that any proposed roadway projects do not incorporate sidewalks or curbing.
- Work cooperatively with the County, State, the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) and local utility companies to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas identified in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- Work cooperatively with other communities to develop neo-traditional zoning techniques and rural development guidelines that are compatible in nature.
- Conduct joint planning efforts through the referral of projects and the request of input from adjoining communities for large development projects or other significant issues that could have a potential impact on these communities.
- Cooperatively pursue regional wetlands regulations with the other communities to regulate non-jurisdictional wetlands that are no longer regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Work with the Towns of Holland and Aurora to develop a hamlet plan for South Wales based on the principles of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- Work with the other communities to develop similar site clearing standards.
- With assistance from the US Natural Resource Conservation Service, work with the other communities to develop erosion and sediment control guidelines to protect creek corridors from the impacts of development and excessive stormwater runoff.
- Work together with the other communities in promulgating and adopting best management practices (BMP's) to manage the use of fertilizers, road salt, pesticides and the disposal of hazardous wastes in an effort to preserve and protect water quality.
- Work with the other communities to establish a committee to focus jointly on open space and stream corridor preservation, public access along creeks and community linkages, and water quality issues (including watershed management).
- In conjunction with the other partnering communities, work with the GBNRTC to lay the groundwork for a regional transportation study.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Consider amending site plan review and subdivision regulations to allow for a more effective assessment of transportation impacts to the region. Work with the other communities to ensure that these amendments to the regulations are similar in nature, to achieve the same results.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board should take the leadership role in these actions but assign them to appropriate other Boards or Committees.

Funding/Costs

These planning activities will have minimal costs, but require a great deal of time (volunteers and boards): \$5,000

Funding: would most probably be with local monies.

D. Other Actions

- Limit water extensions in the Town through the use of lateral restrictions to control the potential for extensive growth. Water extensions should only be considered in the areas abutting Aurora that are experiencing public health and safety problems with their private water supply.
- Publicize and support the County's Right to Farm Law and help local farmers identify programs and incentives to help improve their business.
- Work with local farmers to establish a local agricultural tourism program in Wales.
- Work with the US Natural Resource Conservation Service to establish program to educate residents on the maintenance of wells and septic systems. The Town should also investigate potential funding sources to assist homeowners with the improvement or replacement of these facilities.
- Work with the Western New York Land Conservancy to develop an effective plan for the Kenneglenn and Hunters Wilderness Creek Park properties to limit passive use of these facilities.
- A regional tourism committee should be investigated and formed. This committee will look at tourism in the region and help to better coordinate the actions of the legislative boards.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town Board would initiate these actions, and appoint or assign this to an appropriate committee. The committee, possibly working with a consultant, would make recommendations to the Town Board for their acceptance and implementation.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$7,000

Funding: Local monies or implementation monies from the County.

➤ *Priority 2 Actions – Years Three to Five*

- Complete a comprehensive plan annual report and especially note those Priority 1 Actions that have not been completed. Target and reprioritize those actions. Assess any subdivision and site plan activity that occurred in the previous year to assess overall compliance with the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Also, evaluate the impact (desired results) of the Priority 1 implementation items that were completed.
- Establish an annual budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Concentrate commercial and residential development around the hamlets through effective zoning map revisions to avoid sprawl.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- Prepare zoning overlay districts for areas identified as priorities, including the hamlets, Route 20A and Route 78.
- Consider the development of zoning overlay districts for Buffalo Creek and Hunters Creek to protect these resources and more effectively regulate land use along these creek corridors.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Town through its Planning Board or a committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would draft new regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Town Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Local funds or County implementation monies

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Adopt historic preservation standards or guidelines, and/or incorporate such standards into overlay districts for the hamlet areas.
- Amend the Subdivision Regulations to require creative road frontage developments, with larger lot size penalties imposed for standard development proposals.
- Include requirements for buffering along stream corridors in the Subdivision Regulations.
- Require the provision of recreational lands in the design of large subdivisions.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These actions should be lead by the Town Board, but could be assigned to the Planning Board or a committee to research them and to complete the code revisions. This may necessitate the need for hiring a consultant, but many sample codes exist to minimize this need. For those codes being adopted, the Town will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Any historic preservation standards or guidelines should be coordinated with the Wales Historical Society. They will help to produce the up-to-date list of properties to fall under this designation and how those standards will be written.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$2,000 - \$4,000

Funding: Local funds or County implementation monies.

C. Cooperative Efforts

- Work with the Town of Holland to adopt mutual rural development guidelines to guide and manage growth, and to preserve open space and farmland and avoid sprawl inducing development techniques.
- With Holland, examine opportunities to connect the two Towns, along roadway corridors, creek corridors and utility easements.
- Work with the County and surrounding communities (including Holland and Marilla) to develop a Regional Agricultural Protection Plan. Lay the groundwork for this program under the Priority 1 Action efforts. As part of this plan, the communities should evaluate business support issues including tax incentives, financing packages and economic development grants. This plan should help to ensure that farms are treated as businesses and that they get support like other businesses in the community.
- Work with the County and State to ensure that any proposed roadway projects do not incorporate sidewalks or curbing.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- In conjunction with the other regional planning communities, prepare a Regional Transportation Study, with assistance from the County, State and Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC).
- Continue to work cooperatively with the County, State, GBNRTC and local utility companies to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas identified in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- Through the established Committee, continue the work with the other communities to jointly achieve open space and stream corridor preservation, public access along creeks and community linkages, and to address water quality issues.
- Continue to conduct joint planning efforts through the referral of projects and the request of input from adjoining communities for large development projects or other significant issues that could have a potential impact on these communities.
- The new comprehensive plan committee (implementation committee) should meet annually with the other community's representatives to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the plan, and possible joint projects or agreements.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

These are all actions that require strong Town Board leadership. Once the actions to be started for that year are determined (coordinate with other communities through implementation centers), assignments can be made to Boards, Committees or groups. These groups will work with appropriate agencies and/or consultants to address this action. Recommendations would be made to participating legislative boards for their implementation.

Funding/Costs

Planning Costs: \$15,000 - \$25,000.

Funding: Many different organizations can assist the Town with these actions. There are some grant programs available through State and Federal agencies for planning monies, but most would be for implementation actions (open space protection, public access, farmland protection, etc.).

D. Other Actions

- Publicize and support the County's Right to Farm Law and help local farmers identify programs and incentives to help improve their business.
- Work with local farmers to establish a local agricultural tourism program in Wales.
- Consider establishing a purchase of agricultural conservation easements program (PACE) for preserving important farmland in the Town.
- Identify and provide public access sites along Cazenovia Creek for fishing.
- Conduct an inventory of important open space lands in the Town. This would be followed up by the identification and prioritization of certain lands for preservation, and the subsequent identification of appropriate methods and programs to achieve this goal.
- Identify important scenic vistas in the area and establish guidelines or standards to protect these important views. Such standards could be incorporated into zoning overlay districts, where applicable.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

For many of these tasks, the Town will need the assistance of the County and/or a consultant. The Town Board through committees or a Town Board liaison would hire a consultant to work with volunteers of the Town to undertake the open space/scenic inventory.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$15,000

Funding: Local monies or possible State grant assistance.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- *Priority 3 Actions – Long Term and Optional (As Needed)*
- Work with the County and State to ensure that any proposed roadway projects do not incorporate sidewalks or curbing.
 - The communities should begin to cooperatively explore possibilities of increased public transportation or creative alternative modes of transportation.
 - Identify appropriate methods and programs for preserving important open lands, as identified and prioritized through an open space inventory.
 - Consider establishing a purchase of agricultural conservation easements program (PACE) for preserving important farmland in the Town.
 - Consider (and protect) the active rail corridor through the Town as a future alternative source for transport and commutation.
 - The communities should pursue joint efforts to address issues that effect the regions by pooling resources, filing joint grant applications for funding, undertaking mutual studies, establish joint committees, etc.
 - Adopt architectural guidelines to control quality of design in the Town. Historic preservation standards should be evaluated for areas containing structures of historic significance. Design guidelines should also be adopted for non-residential development.
 - Add poor soil condition requirements, similar to those used in Elma, to require increased lot sizes in areas with poor "percolation" (lot sizes up to 5 acres minimum).
 - Implement accessibility improvements in and around the Wales Center, South Wales, and possibly Wales Hollow, hamlets. Consider the addition of sidewalks to connect important features.
 - Work with the other communities to develop a regional recreational facility, such as a pool, skating rink, etc.
 - Improve designated roadway shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Consider acting with the other communities in designating important stream corridors as Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs).

Section 6.0 Implementation

6.6 Village of East Aurora

➤ *Priority One Actions – Years One to Two*

- Adopt the Regional Comprehensive Plan and continue, or form a new, Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation and updating of the Plan.
- Establish a budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Amend the Site Plan Review regulations to lend more focus to issues of community character, traffic impacts, aesthetics and historic preservation.
- Examine the business zoning districts for the Downtown and Uptown areas, specifically the allowable uses to eliminate the potential for competition between these areas. Also examine the zoning in the other use areas, as established on the Vision Map, to ensure that the objectives for these areas can be achieved. Revise the zoning *ordinances* as needed.
- Amend the zoning districts, where required, to ensure proper setback and bulk requirements (size/scale) for the districts along Main Street to achieve the objectives of the Vision Plan.
- Consider allowing residential conversions, by special permit only, in the R (Single-family) Residential zoning district (this would allow for further diversification of the housing stock and address the issue of illegal in-law apartments/need for senior housing).
- Consider allowing bed and breakfast uses, by special use permit, along certain parts of Main Street. They are presently only permitted in R districts.

Responsibility/Methodology

The Village, through its Planning Commission or a separate committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would draft new regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Village Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$5,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Village monies or possible County comprehensive plan implementation monies.

B. Other Codes and Regulations

- Amend the Site Plan Review regulations to lend more focus to issues of community character, traffic impacts, aesthetics and open space preservation.
- Adopt landscaping standards to improve the appearance and quality of commercial and industrial development and redevelopment in the Village. These standards should be referenced in the zoning ordinance, or set up as a separate section of the ordinance.
- Adopt architectural review and historic preservation standards to require developers to design development and redevelopment that is consistent with the character of the Village.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The regulations/ amendments and policies could be formulated through the Planning Commission with assistance from a consultant and/or organization like the New York Planning Federation. For those codes being adopted, the Village will need to follow the regular procedures for code revisions.

Funding/Costs

Costs: Consultant, legal assistance, publication, reproduction ≅ \$3,000 - \$5,000

Funding: Local money or County implementation monies.

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C. Cooperative Efforts

- Work closely with the Town of Aurora to plan consistently for your border areas and to ensure that commercial development in the Town does not adversely impact/compete with the business districts in the Village.
- Work closely with the Town to address the expansion of light industrial and other appropriate uses beyond Commerce Green and into the Town.
- Conduct joint planning efforts through the referral of projects and the request of input from adjoining communities for large development projects or other significant issues that could have a potential impact on these communities.
- Continue cooperative planning with State Parks on the Knox Park facility (including the Towns of Aurora and Elma).
- Work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Transportation and County to properly plan highway improvements to avoid unnecessary street widening and the resulting loss of street trees and roadside vegetation.
- Continue participation in the Southtown's Water Consortium Plan.
- In conjunction with the other partnering communities, work with the Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council to lay the groundwork for a regional transportation study.
- Work closely with the NYS Department of Transportation and the Town of Aurora to manage traffic and address problem areas on State highways through the area.
- Work with the State to design an access management strategy for the Village, which addresses issues of driveway separations and conflicts, turning movements, new traffic control devices, signal timing, etc. and also studies the area in the vicinity of the traffic circle.
- Work cooperatively with the County, State, and Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas identified in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- Work together with the other communities in promulgating and adopting best management practices (BMP's) to manage the use of lawn fertilizers, road salt, pesticides and the disposal of hazardous wastes in an effort to preserve and protect water quality.
- A regional tourism committee should be investigated and formed. This committee will look at tourism in the region and help to better coordinate the actions of the legislative boards.
- The new comprehensive plan committee (implementation committee) should meet annually with the other community's representatives to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the plan, and possible joint projects or agreements.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Village Board should take the leadership role in these actions but assign them to the Planning Commission or other appropriate Boards or Committees.

Funding/Costs

These planning activities will have minimal costs, but require a great deal of time (volunteers and boards)

Costs: \$5,000

Funding: would most probably be with local monies.

D. Other Actions

- Undertake a streetscape project for Main Street. Continue to pursue funding for this action.
- Promote walking and other non-motorized means of travel, to manage traffic and transportation issues in the Village. Compliment the planned NYS Department of Transportation improvements along Main Street by developing a bicycle travel program through the Village to accommodate bicyclists, connect neighborhoods and tie outlying streets into Main Street.

Section 6.0 Implementation

- In support of tourism, and as a means of mitigating traffic impacts associated with increased tourism, plan for additional and more efficient municipal parking, particularly in the Uptown area of the Village.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings in the business district for commercial and other appropriate non-industrial uses.
- Study parking in the Uptown and Downtown areas to develop a plan for addressing current and future needs (this could be coupled with the larger transportation study that is recommended).

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Village Board would initiate these actions, and appoint or assign this to an appropriate committee. The committee, possibly working with a consultant, would make recommendations to the Village Board for their acceptance and implementation.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$7,000

Funding: Local monies or implementation monies from the County.

➤ *Priority 2 Actions – Years Three to Five*

- Complete a comprehensive plan annual report and especially note those Priority 1 Actions that have not been completed. Target and reprioritize those actions. Assess any subdivision and site plan activity that occurred in the previous year to assess overall compliance with the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Also, evaluate the impact (desired results) of the Priority 1 implementation items that were completed.
- Establish an annual budget for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

A. Zoning Issues

- Develop zoning overlay districts for the particular use areas along Main Street (as shown on the Vision Map) to address aesthetic, architectural, landscaping, access, setback, preservation and other issues relevant to these areas.
- Consider establishing an Estate-Residential district for the southeastern portion of the Village (to maintain larger lots and homes).

Responsibilities/Methodologies

The Village Board through its Planning Commission or a committee, and possibly with the assistance of a consultant, would draft new regulations, and prioritize land to be zoned to these new categories. The Village Board would then follow normal rezoning procedures to adopt these changes (public hearings, State Environmental Quality Review, notifications, referrals, etc.).

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$10,000

Funding: Local monies or County implementation funds

B. Cooperative Efforts

- Continue to work closely with the Town of Aurora to plan consistently for your border areas and to ensure that commercial development in the Town does not adversely impact/compete with the business districts in the Village.
- Continue to work cooperatively with the NYS Department of Transportation and County to properly plan highway improvements to avoid unnecessary street widening and the resulting loss of street trees and roadside vegetation.

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- Continue to work cooperatively with the County, State, and Greater Buffalo and Niagara Regional Transportation Council to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, especially in those areas identified in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- Continue to work with the other communities to develop on and off-road trail linkages between the areas.
- The communities should begin to cooperatively explore possibilities of increased public transportation or creative alternative modes of transportation.
- The new comprehensive plan committee (implementation committee) should meet annually with the other community's representatives to discuss implementation, issues and problems, potential revisions to the plan, and possible joint projects or agreements.

C. Other Actions

- Develop community gateways at the major entryways to the Village, as proposed on the Streetscape Plan.
- Continue to research parking in the Uptown and Downtown areas, as initiated under Priority to develop a plan for addressing current and future needs (this could be coupled with the larger transportation study that is recommended).
- Develop an economic strategy for marketing Commerce Green in an attempt to expand light industrial and office uses in the Village.

Responsibilities/Methodologies

For many of these tasks, the Village will need the assistance of the County and/or a consultant.

Funding/Costs

Costs: \$5,000 - \$15,000

Funding: Local monies or possible County assistance.

➤ *Priority 3 Actions – Long Term and Optional (As Needed)*

- The communities should begin to cooperatively explore possibilities of increased public transportation or creative alternative modes of transportation.
- Consider (and protect) the active rail corridor through the Village as a future alternative source for transport and commutation.
- Work with the Town of Aurora and NYS Department of Transportation to develop plans for the full use of the Route 20A/Route 400 interchange.
- The communities should pursue joint efforts to address issues that effect the regions by pooling resources, filing joint grant applications for funding, undertaking mutual studies, establish joint committees, etc.
- Adopt architectural guidelines to control quality of design in the Village. Historic preservation standards should be evaluated for areas containing structures of historic significance. Design guidelines should also be adopted for non-residential development.
- Work with the other communities to develop a regional recreational facility, such as a pool, skating rink, etc.
- Improve designated roadway shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Consider acting with the other communities in designating important stream corridors as Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs).
- Create and improve points of access along Cazenovia Creek and Tannery Brook for scenic viewing and passive recreation.

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Environmental Review

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7.0 Environmental Review

Typically, the potential environmental impacts of a Comprehensive Plan are evaluated through a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). To meet this requirement, the Comprehensive Plan itself can be set up to represent the GEIS (see §272-a.8 of Town Law and §7-722.8 of Village Law). This format enables the reviewers, the Lead Agency, all involved and interested agencies, and the public to review one comprehensive document that outlines plans for the future and the potential environmental implications of these plans. This section of the Comprehensive Plan has been provided to assist with the environmental review for this document.

A GEIS, like an Environmental Impact Statement, includes a section on Environmental Setting. Section 4 of this Comprehensive Plan provides a review and analysis of the environmental settings of the Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland and Wales, and the Village of East Aurora, as they exist now. Section 4 includes information on the following:

- Existing Land Use (4.1)
- Farmland and Agriculture (4.1.3)
- Land Use Regulations (4.2)
- Topography and Steep Slopes (4.3.1)
- Soils and Surficial Geology (4.3.2)
- Stream Corridors and Watersheds (4.3.3)
- Flooding and Erosion (4.3.4)
- Wetlands, Wildlife and Significant Wildlife Habitats (4.3.5)
- Scenic Resources (4.3.6)
- Environmental Hazards (4.3.7)
- Socio-economic Conditions (4.4)
- Economic Development (4.5)
- Transportation systems (4.6)
- Utilities (4.7)
- Parks and Recreation (4.8.1)
- Schools (4.8.2)
- Emergency Facilities (4.8.3)
- Government Facilities (4.8.4)
- Historic and Archeological Resources (4.8.5)

7.1 Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Impacts

The underlying purpose and a major goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote appropriate land use and avoid significant adverse environment impacts in the communities that it covers. However, it is important here to acknowledge and discuss potential adverse impacts. For this Regional Comprehensive Plan, the impacts specific to each community are outlined individually. Although this leads to some redundancy, it facilitates review of the document by all interested parties.

Short term/long term and cumulative impacts (also refer to Section 5 and the Findings)

Based on the environmental settings of the Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland and Wales, and the Village of East Aurora, the following potentially significant adverse environmental impacts could occur if these communities do not plan adequately and provide the proper tools for the management of growth and development. The Regional Comprehensive Plan is designed to properly guide growth in the Towns and Village to lessen the negative impacts of land use and development decisions.

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- a. Impacts on Land (See Environmental Constraints, Steep Slopes, US Department of Agriculture Prime Soils and Hydric Soils Maps in Section 4.0)

Town of Aurora

- The Town of Aurora is very rural in nature, a characteristic that is valued by area residents. Inappropriate planning and development actions could negatively impact the character of the Town.
- The Town of Aurora has significant areas of hydric soil, wetlands and floodplains. There are also areas in the Town with slopes greater than 15 percent, particularly in the southern part of the Town. Improper development of these areas could result in drainage, flooding and/or erosion problems within the Town and in downstream areas.
- There are areas in Aurora where the soils are categorized as prime farmland, or prime farmland when drained. Development of these areas could displace irreplaceable resources.
- Some locations in the Town of Aurora contain significant areas of mature woodland. Inappropriate development of these areas could have a negative impact on the rural character of the Town and important open space.

Town of Elma

- The Town of Elma is predominately rural in many areas, a characteristic that the community values. Inappropriate planning and development actions could negatively impact the character of the Town.
- The Town of Elma has some areas of steep slopes greater than 15 percent, particularly along creek corridors. There are wetland areas, floodplains and areas of hydric soils. Improper development of these lands could result in erosion, drainage and/or flooding problems.
- There are large areas of prime farmland soils where development could result in the loss of this irreplaceable resource.
- There are some areas of mature woodland in the Town of Elma. Inappropriate development of these areas could have a negative impact on the rural character of the Town and important open space.

Town of Holland

- The Town of Holland is very rural in nature, with basically one developed area, the hamlet. This rural characteristic was less discussed in the Town of Holland because of the amount of open space and the perceived lack of development pressures. Inappropriate planning and development actions, however, could negatively affect the character of the Town.
- The Town of Holland has a significant amount of land that is characterized by steep slopes of 15 percent or higher. There are also some wetlands, and some scattered areas of hydric soils and wetlands. Development of these areas could lead to erosion, drainage or flooding problems.
- There are areas of prime farmland soils. Development of these areas could result in the loss of this irreplaceable resource.
- There are many locations with significant areas of mature woodland, including State- designated forest areas. Development of these woodlands would negatively impact community character.

Town of Wales

- The Town of Wales is very rural in nature and the residents of the Town cherish this rural character and open space. Inappropriate planning and development actions could negatively affect the character of the Town.
- The Town of Wales has areas where there are steep slopes of greater than 15 percent, primarily along the streams and their tributaries. There are also some wetlands, and some scattered areas of hydric soils and wetlands. Development of these areas could lead to erosion, drainage or flooding problems.
- There are areas of prime soils for agriculture. Development of these areas could result in the loss of an irreplaceable resource.

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- There are locations with significant areas of mature woodland. Development of these woodlands would negatively impact community character.

Village of East Aurora

- The Village of East Aurora is an important rural service center for the surrounding area. Inappropriate planning and development actions could impact its character and its viability as an economic center.
- There are two areas with steep slopes within the Village boundaries. One is near the western border of the Village, overlooking Cazenovia Creek. The other is in the northeast corner of the Village. Development of these areas could lead to erosion problems.
- There are areas of wetlands and floodplains where inappropriate development would create problems with flooding and/or drainage.

b. Impacts on Water (See Environmental Constraints Map)

Town of Aurora

- Cazenovia Creek, West Branch of Cazenovia Creek, Tannery Brook and tributaries of these waterways run through the Town of Aurora. Floodplains surround portions of these waterways. Inappropriate development could lead to flooding or drainage problems, and hazards to public safety. These creeks are also important for environmental protection, open space preservation, drainage, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.
- Most of the Town of Aurora is within the Cazenovia Creek-Buffalo River watershed. The northeast corner of the Town is within the Buffalo Creek watershed. Inappropriate development in these watersheds could potentially have adverse impacts on water quality, groundwater resources and habitats in the Town and downstream of the Town.
- Much of the Town's residential development is dependent upon groundwater resources for their water supply. Nearly all residences also use groundwater for the discharge of sanitary waste (septic systems). The groundwater resource is under stress due to recent drought conditions, and the Town is investigating the possibility of extending water lines in the Town. This will relieve some pressures on the groundwater supply, but could cause additional problems with septic system failures. Future development could aggravate groundwater resource supply problems, or have adverse impacts on water quality.
- There are areas of wetlands and hydric soils. Inappropriate development in these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems, and adversely impact groundwater resources.

Town of Elma

- The Town of Elma is traversed by several creeks and their tributaries: Buffalo Creek, Little Buffalo Creek, Cazenovia Creek and Pond Brook (a major tributary of Buffalo Creek). Floodplains surround the major creeks, and many areas of wetlands are found in their vicinity. Inappropriate development of these lands could lead to flooding, erosion, and drainage problems. Threats to public safety could also result. These creeks are important for environmental protection, community character, open space preservation, drainage, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.
- The northern part of the Town of Elma falls in the Cayuga Creek watershed. The central portion of the Town is in the Buffalo Creek watershed. The southeastern portion of the Town is in the Cazenovia Creek-Buffalo River watershed. Inappropriate development could have adverse impacts on water quality, groundwater resources and habitats.
- Although most of the Town's residential development has public water, much of it is dependent upon groundwater resources for the discharge of sanitary waste (septic systems). Inappropriate development could have negative impacts on groundwater resource supply or water quality.
- There are areas of wetlands and hydric soils. Inappropriate development in these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems, and adversely impact groundwater resources.

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Town of Holland

- The East Branch of Cazenovia Creek, Hunter Creek and Buffalo Creek run through the Town of Holland. There are some areas of floodplains and wetlands in the vicinity of these creeks. Inappropriate development of these lands could lead to flooding, erosion, drainage problems and threats to public safety. These creeks are important for environmental protection, open space preservation, drainage, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.
- The Town of Holland is split into two watersheds. The eastern part of the Town is in the Buffalo Creek watershed. The western portion of Town falls in the Cazenovia Creek-Buffalo River watershed. Improper development could have adverse impacts on water quality, groundwater resources and habitats.
- Public water for the Town of Holland is provided by two deep wells in the hamlet area. Area residents outside the hamlet rely on private wells for potable water. Inappropriate development could cause problems with groundwater supply or quality. Protection of the Town's public wells is an important consideration in any development.
- There are sewers within the hamlet area, but the remainder of the Town is dependent upon groundwater resources for the discharge of sanitary waste (septic systems). Inappropriate development could have negative impacts on groundwater resource supply or water quality.
- There are some scattered areas of wetlands and hydric soils. Inappropriate development in these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems, and adversely impact groundwater resources.

Town of Wales

- Buffalo Creek, Hunter Creek and tributaries of these waterways run through the Town of Wales. Floodplains surround portions of these waterways, particularly Buffalo Creek. Inappropriate development could lead to flooding or drainage problems, and hazards to public safety. These creeks are also important for environmental protection, open space preservation, drainage, wildlife habitat and aesthetics, particularly in the case of Hunter Creek, which runs through two major open space parcels in the Town: Kenneglenn and Hunters Wilderness Creek Park.
- Most of the Town of Wales is within the Buffalo Creek watershed. The southwest corner of the Town is within the Cazenovia Creek-Buffalo River watershed. Inappropriate development in these watersheds could potentially have adverse impacts on water quality, groundwater resources and habitats.
- There are no public water or wastewater systems in Wales, and the Town's residential development is dependent upon groundwater resources for their water supply and the discharge of sanitary waste (septic systems). The groundwater resource is under stress due to recent drought conditions. Future development could aggravate groundwater resource supply problems, or have adverse impacts on water quality.
- There are areas of wetlands and hydric soils. Inappropriate development in these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems, and adversely impact groundwater resources.

Village of East Aurora

- Tannery Brook and Cayuga Creek run through the Village of East Aurora. Floodplains surround the major creeks, and many areas of wetlands are found in their vicinity. Flooding is a particular problem along Tannery Brook. Inappropriate development near these floodplains could lead to flooding, erosion and threats to public safety. Drainage problems could also result. The creeks are important for environmental protection, community character, open space preservation, drainage, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.
- Nearly all the Village of East Aurora is within the Cazenovia Creek-Buffalo River watershed. The very northern edge of the Village falls in the Buffalo Creek watershed. Inappropriate development could have adverse impacts on water quality and/or groundwater resources for downstream communities. Habitats could also be affected.

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- There are areas of wetlands and hydric soils. Inappropriate development in these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems, and adversely impact groundwater resources.

c. Impacts on Flora and Fauna (See Wildlife and Wetlands Map)

Town of Aurora

- The Town's expansive areas of open meadows, fields and woodlands, as well as the wetlands and creek corridors, support many non-threatened and non-endangered plant, avian and animal species. These areas provide important habitat for many resident and migrating species, and are an important element of the rural character of the Town. Over- development and poor site planning decisions could adversely impact these resources.
- Cazenovia Creek in Aurora north of the confluence with Tannery Brook has been identified as a good habitat for fish.

Town of Elma

- The Town supports many areas of open meadows, fields, woodlots and wetlands. It is also traversed by a number of creek corridors. These environments support a variety of non-threatened and non-endangered plant, avian and animal species. They are important habitats for resident and migrating species, and contribute to the community character of the Town. Inappropriate development and poor site planning could negatively affect these resources.
- Cazenovia Creek in the southern part of Elma has an area identified as a good fish habitat.

Town of Holland

- The Town's expansive areas of open meadows, fields and woodlands, as well as the wetlands and creek corridors, support many non-threatened and non-endangered plant, avian and animal species. These areas provide important habitats for many resident and migrating species, and are an important element of the rural character of the Town. Over- development and poor site planning decisions could adversely impact these resources.
- Buffalo Creek in the southeastern corner of the Town has been identified as a good fish habitat.

Town of Wales

- The Town has extensive areas of open meadows, agricultural fields, heavily wooded areas and wetlands, as well as creeks. These areas support habitats for native and migrating species of birds and animals, as well as native plant species. In most cases, the wildlife is non-threatened and non-endangered, although they contribute to the character of the community.
- Kenneglenn and Hunter Creek Land Bank, as land preserves, also provide habitats for a variety of species.

Village of East Aurora

- There are areas within the Village of East Aurora where there are open fields, hedgerows, wooded areas and wetlands. The two creek corridors through the Village also are important habitats for a variety of vegetation, avian and animal species. Inappropriate development or poor site design could have a negative impact on these areas.
- Sinking Ponds Wildlife Sanctuary provides habitats for a variety of species.

d. Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources (See Agricultural Properties Map and Agricultural Districts Map in Section 4.0)

Town of Aurora

- Agricultural land resources are an important part of the rural character of the Town and the region. However, agricultural land uses are not as prevalent as in the past. Only a small portion of the

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Town falls within a State-designated Agricultural District. The remaining agricultural lands in Aurora, therefore, are an important resource that could be threatened by non-sensitive development

- The northwest corner of the Town has been identified as an Agricultural Transition Zone by Erie County. The County notes that "Agricultural and open lands in this transition zone should be given general priority in planning and protection objectives." This area also is characterized by prime agricultural soils. Inappropriate development is likely to have negative impacts on agricultural resources, especially within the County identified Transition zone.

Town of Elma

- Elma still has a number of agricultural lands, and large areas of prime soils, particularly where drained. These lands are important to the rural character of the Town and the region, and inappropriate development could have a negative impact on these resources.
- Much of the Town falls within either State designated agricultural districts, and/or the county designated Agricultural Transition Zone. A few active farms are located throughout the Town. According to the County, "Agricultural and open lands in this transition zone should be given general priority in planning and protection objectives." Development pressures could have a major negative impact on these resources.

Town of Holland

- Agricultural lands comprise a significant proportion of the Town of Holland. Most of the Town falls with a State designated Agricultural District. Agricultural land resources are a critical element of the community's character. Improper development could have a negative impact on these resources.
- The Town of Holland is part of the Agricultural Reserve Zone, as designated by Erie County. The County emphasizes the importance of agricultural lands and farms in this Reserve Zone, noting that agricultural lands, farms and some open land in this zone "should be reserved for agriculture, exclusively if possible."

Town of Wales

- Agricultural lands comprise a significant proportion of the Town of Wales. Nearly all lands in the Town, excluding lands reserved as open space/ land banks, are within a State designated Agricultural District. Agricultural land resources are a critical element of the community's character. Improper development could have a negative impact on these resources.
- The Town of Wales is part of the Agricultural Reserve Zone, as designated by Erie County. The County emphasizes the importance of agricultural lands and farms in this Reserve Zone, noting that agricultural lands, farms and some open land in this zone "should be reserved for agriculture, exclusively if possible."

Village of East Aurora

- Agricultural lands are not a significant resource within the Village of East Aurora, although the agricultural lands in the surrounding communities are an important component of the character of the Village and the region.

e. Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

Town of Aurora

- The aesthetic resources of the Town of Aurora include significant views, open spaces, parks, historic buildings and creeks. These resources contribute to the atmosphere and character of the Town, and could be negatively affected by inappropriate development.

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Town of Elma

- The Town of Elma has many aesthetic resources, including significant views, open spaces, parks, historic buildings and creeks. These resources contribute to the atmosphere and character of the Town, and could be negatively affected by inappropriate development.

Town of Holland

- The aesthetic resources of the Town of Holland include significant views, wooded hillsides, open spaces, farms, historic buildings and creeks. The hamlet business district is also an aesthetic resource contributing to the character of the Town. Inappropriate development could have a negative impact on these resources.

Town of Wales

- The Town of Wales has many aesthetic resources, including significant views, open spaces, wooded hillsides, farms, historic buildings and creeks. These resources are important to the character of the Town, and could be negatively affected by inappropriate development.

Village of East Aurora

- The aesthetic resources of the Village of East Aurora include significant views, parks, creeks, historic buildings and landmarks. The Village downtown business, the tree-lined streets and the residential housing stock also contribute to the Village's aesthetic character. These resources could be negatively affected by inappropriate development.

f. Impacts on Historic and Archeological Resources

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland, and Wales and Village of East Aurora

- The historic resources of each municipality are described in Section 4.8.5. Inappropriate development could negatively affect these resources.

g. Impact on Open Space, Parks and Recreation

Town of Aurora

- Parks and recreation resources in the Town of Aurora are identified in Section 4.8.1.
- The Town also has important open space resources, including the Majors property.
- Inappropriate development, including increased demands caused by population increases, could have an adverse effect upon these resources. Present population trends show an increase in the number of seniors and children under the age of 18.

Town of Elma

- Parks and recreation resources in the Town of Elma are identified in Section 4.8.1.
- The Town also has important open space resources, including the undeveloped Town Park.
- Inappropriate development, including increased demands caused by population increases, could have an adverse effect upon these resources.

Town of Holland

- Parks and recreation resources in the Town of Holland are identified in Section 4.8.1.
- The Town also has important open space resources, including the County Forest lands.
- Inappropriate development could have an adverse effect upon these resources. Present population trends do not indicate that development will have a major impact on these resources.

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Town of Wales

- Parks and recreation resources in the Town of Wales are identified in Section 4.8.1.
- The Town also has important open space resources, including Hunters Wilderness Creek Park and Kenneglenn Nature Preserve.
- Inappropriate development could have an adverse effect upon these resources. Present population trends do not indicate that development will have a major impact on these resources.

Village of East Aurora

- Parks and recreation resources for the Village of East Aurora are provided by the Town of Aurora, and are identified in Section 4.8.1.
- The Village also has important open space resources, including Sinking Ponds Wildlife Sanctuary and lands along the creek corridors.
- Inappropriate development could have an adverse effect upon these resources. Although present growth trends in the Village are stable, growth trends around the Village in the Town of Aurora could place increased demand on these resources.

h. Impact on Critical Environmental Area

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland, and Wales, and Village of East Aurora

- There are no designated Critical Environmental Areas in any of the communities of the regional plan area.

i. Impact on Transportation

Town of Aurora

- The transportation system in the Town of Aurora is heavily based upon roadways and automobiles. Public transportation is very limited, and the rail line is used for commercial and freight uses only. No passenger rail is available.
- The major roadway corridors in the Town are described in Section 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. They include Routes 400, 20A, 16, 78 and 240.
- Travel for pedestrians and bicyclists can be difficult in the Town. There are a number of proposed on-street bicycle routes, but none are completed. Additional improvements are needed.
- Additional development in the Town has the potential to adversely impact the transportation network. In particular, more intensive development may aggravate areas where traffic congestion is a problem, or result in new areas of congestion. Development within the Town also affects the traffic in the Village. Development of the new State Park may also have impacts on the Town's transportation system.
- More intensive development may also increase potential conflicts between automotive and non-automotive modes of transportation.

Town of Elma

- The transportation system in the Town of Elma is largely concentrated upon roadways and automobiles. Public transportation is very limited. There is an active rail line, which is used for commercial and freight uses. No passenger rail is available.
- The major roadway corridors in the Town are described in Section 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. They include Routes 400, 16, 78 and 354 (Clinton Street).
- Travel for pedestrians and bicyclists can be difficult in the Town. Three designated on-street bicycle routes are proposed, but none have been implemented. Additional improvements are needed to support non-vehicular travel.
- Additional development in the Town has the potential to adversely impact the transportation network. In particular, more intensive development may aggravate areas where traffic congestion

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is a problem, or result in new areas of congestion. The new State Park in the Town of Aurora will also affect traffic patterns in the Town of Elma.

- More intensive development may also increase potential conflicts between automotive and non-automotive modes of transportation. Projects in the Town of Lancaster and in the Village of East Aurora also will affect roads within Elma.

Town of Holland

- The transportation system in the Town of Holland is almost exclusively automobile-oriented. Public transportation is very limited. There is an active rail line, which is used for commercial and freight uses. No passenger rail is available.
- The major roadway corridors in the Town are described in Section 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. Route 16 is the primary roadway through the Town.
- Travel for pedestrians and bicyclists can be difficult in the Town. There are sidewalks within the hamlet area. An on-street bicycle route is proposed for Route 16, but it is not in place. Additional improvements are needed to support non-vehicular travel.
- Additional development in the Town has the potential to adversely impact the transportation network. In particular, more intensive development may aggravate areas where traffic congestion is a problem, or result in new areas of congestion.
- More intensive development may also increase potential conflicts between automotive and non-automotive modes of transportation. Present transportation problems occur on Route 16 at peak hours and could be worsened by development patterns.

Town of Wales

- The transportation system in the Town of Wales is essentially dependent upon private automobiles. There is no public transportation, except for limited senior transport for medical purposes. The active rail line that services commercial and freight uses in the region cuts through a small portion of Wales, but no local businesses make use of it. No passenger rail is available.
- Route 20A is the major roadway corridor in the Town. Routes 16 and 78 also run through the Town.
- Travel for pedestrians and bicyclists can be difficult in the Town. On-street bicycle routes are proposed for Routes 20A and 16, but none have been implemented. There are sidewalks within the hamlet area near Town Hall. Additional improvements would be needed to support non-vehicular travel.
- Additional development in the Town has the potential to adversely impact the transportation network. In particular, more intensive development may aggravate areas where traffic congestion is a problem, or result in new areas of congestion.
- More intensive development may also increase potential conflicts between automotive and non-automotive modes of transportation.

Village of East Aurora

- While strongly oriented toward the automobile, the transportation system in the Village of East Aurora is more balanced. The Village has the most public transportation availability of the five communities, although it is still very limited.
- The Village also has a higher proportion of pedestrian and bicyclist traffic. This is because activity centers are close enough to support non-vehicular traffic, and the physical infrastructure (sidewalks, streets) makes it easier to walk or bike. Additional improvements to support non-vehicular travel are recommended. Traffic congestion is a problem, particularly at the western end of the Village at the traffic circle.
- GBNRTC has identified a number of on- and off-road bike routes that it supports in the Village of East Aurora. None have been fully implemented.

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- There is an active rail line, which is used for commercial and freight uses. No passenger rail is available.
- The major roadway corridors in the Village are described in Section 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. Route 20A (Main Street) is the primary roadway through the Village. Routes 78 and 16 are also major routes through the Village.
- NYS Department of Transportation will be reconstructing Main Street through the Village center in the near future. This redesign will incorporate improved pedestrian facilities and traffic calming features.
- Additional development in the Town or redevelopment in the Village has the potential to adversely impact the transportation network. In particular, more intensive development may aggravate areas where traffic congestion is a problem, or result in new areas of congestion.
- More intensive development may also increase potential conflicts between automotive and non-automotive modes of transportation.

j. Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

Town of Aurora

- The population of the Town of Aurora outside the Village grew by about 8 percent between 1990 and 2000. Projections suggest continued growth over the next decades at a similar pace.
- The rate of residential construction in Aurora outside the Village since 1990 has been about 34 single-family units per year on average. In addition, 38 units in doubles and apartments were permitted over the past decade.
- The Town's Goals and Objectives clearly indicate support for directing growth toward the areas of Town in or adjacent to the Village, and controlling the rate of growth in areas without services, or along rural road frontages in order to protect community character.
- The Village of East Aurora serves as the central business district and service center for the Town of Aurora. The Town recognizes the importance of the Village and wishes to provide support for these businesses.
- Present growth rates do not show a significant increase in population numbers in the Town, but how that development takes place may cause problems or affect the vision of the community. Fluctuations in this growth rate may also cause problems and could be anticipated due to growth pressures from surrounding communities.

Town of Elma

- The Town of Elma experienced the strongest growth of the five communities, increasing by about 9 percent between 1990 and 2000. Projections suggest the Town will grow by at least an additional 15 percent over the next two decades. Growth pressures from the Town of Lancaster and other communities could push this growth rate higher.
- The rate of residential construction in Elma since 1990 has been steady, with an average of 41 single-family units per year. All new housing has been single-family homes.
- The Town's Goals and Objectives clearly indicate support for directing growth toward the areas of Town deemed suitable for development, based on available services, and avoiding areas with environmental constraints.
- The Town supports existing business centers, such as the Elma plaza and the hamlet areas where businesses are located, and wishes to support these existing centers.
- Increases in growth rates, or poorly planned development may cause impacts to the environment or affect the vision of the community.

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Town of Holland

- The population of the Town of Holland remained stable between 1990 and 2000. While projections suggest that there will be strong growth over the next decades, with population increasing by 39 percent between 2000 and 2020, current trends suggest the population will remain relatively stable.
- The rate of residential construction in Holland since 1990 has been modest. An average of about 15 single-family units has been permitted each year. In addition, five apartment units were added to existing single-family homes.
- The Town's Goals and Objectives clearly indicate the preference for directing growth toward the hamlet area of Town, and to control the rate of growth in areas without services, or along rural road frontages in order to protect community character.
- The hamlet of Holland serves as the central business district and service center for the Town. The Town recognizes the importance of the hamlet business district and wishes to provide support for these businesses.
- Although it is possible that growth pressures may induce higher growth rates, it is more likely that the Town will struggle with maintaining its population base. Either extreme could cause environmental problems, and therefore the Town must concentrate on maintaining a proper balance of actions.

Town of Wales

- The population of the Town of Wales remained essentially stable, growing by a modest 1.5 percent between 1990 and 2000. Projections suggest this stable state will continue, with an increase of 1.4 percent projected between 2000 and 2020.
- The rate of residential construction in Wales since 1990 has been an average of 18 single-family units per year.
- The Town's Goals and Objectives clearly support controlling growth to protect community character.
- The Town has limited non-residential development. The Village of East Aurora serves as the central business district and service center for the Town of Wales.
- Increases in this growth rate will potential negatively affect the environment and will adversely impact the vision of the community.

Village of East Aurora

- The population of the Village of East Aurora remained stable between 1990 and 2000. Because the Village is primarily "built-out", projections suggest modest, if any, growth.
- The rate of residential construction in East Aurora since 1990 has been modest. Building permit rates have been an average of about 8 single-family units per year. Apartment dwelling units exceeded single-family development: 96 apartment units were permitted between 1990 and 1999, an average of about 10 per year.
- The Village of East Aurora is an important central business district and service center for the region. The Village is very supportive of the business district and supports efforts for continued investment in and revitalization of these businesses in order that the Village may continue to effectively fulfill its function into the future.

7.2 Adverse Environmental Impacts that Cannot be Avoided

With or without the adoption and implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, the region will continue to have new development that will impact the environment. The adoption of this plan will allow the Towns and Village to better manage growth and development, and reduce potential environmental impacts. All development actions taking place after the adoption of this plan will still be subject to the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process on a site specific basis. This comprehensive plan, though, will assist with the review of development actions. In the instance of a rezoning request,

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this plan will have a much greater impact on that decision and the SEQR process. Zoning must be in accordance with the community's comprehensive plan.

7.3 Growth Inducing Aspects of the Regional Comprehensive Plan

Most of the implementation actions outlined in this plan will help to control and moderate growth within the five communities. Certain actions will act to encourage development in specific areas of the region. Specifically, redevelopment in and around the Village of East Aurora, the hamlet of Holland, and the smaller hamlet areas in each of the Towns will be encouraged. These areas have been deemed to be the most appropriate areas for development. Development in the more rural areas of the Towns will be discouraged.

7.4 Mitigation Measures

It is the objective of this Comprehensive Plan to help to reduce the potential impacts that could be caused by the present development trends in the planning communities. This can be accomplished by providing techniques for changing the development trends of a community, such as amending zoning or other development regulations, or by providing tools to help mitigate the possible impacts of those development trends (improved infrastructure, increased/improved standards for development, etc.). A good Comprehensive Plan will supply techniques for changing the direction of the community, and the tools for reducing the impacts of development that themselves do not create other adverse environmental impacts. The following section discusses the Plan's recommendations and the logic as to why and how they help mitigate the potential impacts of future growth.

a. Impacts on Land

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland and Wales

- To protect the rural character of these communities and their environmental resources, this plan recommends zoning revisions, aesthetic regulations, infrastructure limitations, new development regulations and guidelines, and protection and preservation of important features.
- Agricultural lands in the Towns will be protected. In some cases the land will be preserved through various techniques:
 - Town of Aurora: Amendment of the Agricultural zoning district and addition of a new Rural Residential district, rural development guidelines, neo-traditional zoning techniques (open development areas, overlays and clusters) and control of sewer extensions.
 - Town of Elma: Creation of conservation easements for farming, control of sewer extensions, addition of a new agricultural overlay, implementation of neo-traditional zoning techniques, open development areas and clusters.
 - Town of Holland: Purchase of development rights (future), conservation easements, neo-traditional zoning, open development areas, overlays and clusters, reservation of Route 16 for agricultural business use and farms, limit sewer extensions.
 - Town of Wales: Protect existing agricultural districts and do not change the zoning of the Town. Limit infrastructure improvements in the Town.
- In general, the Towns of Holland and Wales are very low growth communities, under minimal development pressures. This plan basically allows these communities to continue this course, but provides techniques to help ensure its direction. The Towns of Elma and Aurora also have a low growth rate but both are seeing some development pressures in their community. This plan provides many techniques to protect the community's land resources, and also ways of directing growth to appropriate areas. Growth within the Village is primarily redevelopment, and impacts relate to other community resources discussed in other sections. The Plan also calls for protection of some of the remaining important open space features in the Village.
- Growth is directed away from steep slope areas, especially in the Town of Holland.

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b. Impacts on Water

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland and Wales and Village of East Aurora

- Surface Water
 - One of the major objectives of this plan is the protection and in some cases preservation of the important stream corridors within the five community area. Identification of these corridors on vision maps and utilization of tools such as overlays, buffers and conservation easements will help to protect them. Working together, and completing more intensive open space/green space planning will help in identifying and prioritizing those areas that should be permanently protected by public acquisition.
 - The plan also attempts to direct development away from these corridors.
 - Increased drainage standards, and avoidance of poor soil areas will also reduce impacts to surface waters from development.
- Groundwater
 - Directing growth to areas with public infrastructure will help in the protection of groundwater resources in the Towns of Holland and Aurora.
 - In Aurora, the adoption of public water may take the strain off of the groundwater system, but could cause groundwater quality issues due to development and failed septic systems. The plan suggests means of controlling this development and education and funding options for issues dealing with failing septic systems.
 - In Holland, growth is being directed towards the hamlet, which has public water. The difficult issue is that this is where the wells are, and the wells are presently under duress. A wellhead protection zone and a search for a new source of water (Southtown's Water Consortium) are mitigations to this potential problem. The hamlet is sewerage; therefore impacts to septic systems would not be a resultant problem.
 - In Wales, the low growth rates and previous groundwater studies have helped to keep impacts to groundwater low. The Town is considering adding public water in problematic areas along the Town's western boundary.

c. Impacts on Plants and Animals

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland and Wales and Village of Aurora

- As discussed previously, these communities will be taking efforts to protect and preserve the stream corridors and open spaces in the planning communities. By targeting these important habitats for protection, the Towns are minimizing impacts to the flora and fauna of the region.
- The plan also identifies important features like floodplains, wetlands and unique environmental features, so that they can be incorporated into designs and preserved. The plan also enhances the ability of the communities to plan together and save more contiguous features in the communities.

d. Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland, and Wales and Village of East Aurora

- As previously discussed, the Towns will be coordinating activities to protect and preserve agricultural land and agricultural operations. Joint farmland protection planning will be followed up by slightly different approaches to protecting and preserving land (zoning changes, overlays, Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs, etc.). Each community will take different steps to address their unique situations, but all will be focused on a common goal and trying to maintain contiguous farmlands and districts.

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- Other programs and ideas will be attempted as needed to try and assist farmers to stay in business. If the economics of farming can be helped, farming may continue which will assist with the agricultural land preservation.

e. Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

Towns of Aurora, Elma, Holland and Wales

- The preservation of community character is one of the major goals of the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Community character includes the aesthetic resources of the communities such as significant views, open spaces, farmland, important structures and the Towns' overall rural characters. Each community has identified these resources and the plan identifies actions to be taken by each community to proactively and reactively (in response to development) protect and preserve these features. Development guidelines help to maintain the rural character of these communities.

Village of East Aurora

- The Village has also identified its significant visual resources and the plan includes methodologies to protect and preserve these features. The Village also has a "Main Street Business District" that stretches from end of the Village to the other. The aesthetics of this district will be protected through recommended code revisions and will be improved through the vision of its streetscape plan.

f. Impacts on Historic and Archaeological Resources

- The plan identifies the location of historic resources in the communities and provides tools to minimize impacts to these historic resources and the surrounding areas.
- Archeological resources are not identified (not allowed by the State), and present rules and regulations protect these resources.

g. Impacts on Open Space, Parks and Recreation

- The plan identifies the features and provides methodologies to protect and preserve these resources during development in the communities.
- The communities can cooperatively plan these features, to ensure that open space features are protected to the maximum extent possible, recreational needs are efficiently provided, and parks are connected and considered in development scenarios in each community.
- These features are incorporated into the regional vision map and will be considered an integral part of the communities' future.

h. Impacts on Critical Environmental Areas

- There are no critical environmental areas in the Regional Comprehensive Plan communities. A long-term recommendation is to consider the creation of a critical environmental area along some of the major stream corridors in the region.

i. Impacts on Transportation

- Transportation in the communities of the regional plan area is heavily based on roadways and automobiles. There are localized problems within these communities along these roadways that have been caused by increases in traffic in the region. A major recommendation of this plan is to work with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (which is the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council) to study these traffic patterns and provide suitable solutions to these problems. Growth rates within these communities themselves, and those proposed for the future

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may not be the problem (and are controlled). Traffic problems may be related to development around the region and the routes people take to get to their destinations.

- To avoid sprawl, growth is being targeted around the Village and existing hamlets. This helps in preserving the character and environmental features of the community but can cause localized traffic problems. Actions such as access management plans are being suggested to minimize these impacts.
- One of the other issues of transportation relates to the region's accommodation of pedestrians and bicycles. The plan recommends continuing to improve pedestrian and bicycle access in the Village. In the Towns, these access issues are focused on the hamlets or near important features. On-street accommodations are to be made in the more rural areas, to keep the rural character.
- Public transportation in the region is minimal and the communities have committed to work with the County and Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority in trying to improve public transportation.
- The railroad running through Elma, Aurora, East Aurora, Wales and Holland is an important asset to the region. The communities have planned around this feature (continuing access to industrial areas and preventing encroachment of incompatible uses), and are strongly interested in the railroad remaining active. Long term plans for full utilization of this railroad have also been suggested (inter-modal services and commuter needs).
- Long term plans to improve access to Route 400 at the Maple Street and Route 20A interchanges are being considered. These changes need to be carefully considered; they could resolve certain problems, but create others (mostly growth issues).

j. Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- Growth rates in the five communities range from very low to low, and for the planning future these growth rates will not change drastically. Each community's plan accommodates this growth within appropriate areas, without impacting resources or the character of the community.
- It is clear in the Goals and Objectives of the region and each community, that they wish to protect the character of the community by controlling growth. Many of the plan's recommendations are ways to achieve just this. These actions are not excessive or overly protective since development pressures are small at this time. Additional tools are given if the patterns begin to change.

7.5 Evaluation of Alternatives

Throughout the planning process, alternatives for helping the five municipalities achieve their Goals and Objectives were evaluated. These recommendations and implementation alternatives were evaluated for not only their desired results, but also their impact to the environment, the needs of local residents and private property rights, and the vitality of each community.

It must be noted that long term recommendations were not thoroughly evaluated in this section since these actions are only to be considered in extenuating circumstances where the Towns and Village are seeing greater levels of growth pressure or where short term recommendations are not achieving the desired results.

Town of Aurora

Under the present growth conditions in the Town, the "No Action" alternative was considered. However, to enable the Town to properly plan for its chosen future, to prepare for potential development activity over the next 15 years, and to better direct and manage such growth and development, this alternative was deemed inappropriate. Furthermore, the chosen action plan will provide greater protection to the environment than the present course of action.

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Town of Elma

The "No Action" alternative was considered for the Town of Elma. However, this alternative does not adequately enable the Town to direct and manage growth trends toward the Town's vision. The chosen plan will more effectively lead to the Town's future goals, and provide greater protection to the environment than the present trends.

Town of Holland

Growth trends are relatively stable in the Town of Holland. However, the "No Action" alternative does not provide the level of protection for open spaces, the environment, and other important features that the proposed plan does. It also does not support the concentration of development and revitalization of the hamlet area as effectively. This plan made no major changes in the Town's existing Comprehensive Plan, which had been previously determined to have no significant environmental impacts.

Town of Wales

The "No Action" alternative was considered for the Town of Wales. The proposed plan provides a higher level of protection of the environmental features of the Town, and more effectively manages future growth and development in a manner consistent with the desired future as articulated by area residents and officials.

Village of East Aurora

The Village of East Aurora is largely built up. However, the proposed plan provides a higher level of protection to the environmental features of the Town, and more effectively manages future growth and development in a manner consistent with the desired future as articulated by area residents and officials.

Section 8
Annual Review

Section 8.0 Annual Review

8.0 Annual Review

The five partnering Regional Comprehensive Planning communities shall conduct an annual review of the Regional Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the plan remains a dynamic and useful document and to judge the accomplishments of the communities, individually and in partnership, in implementing and enforcing the goals and objectives of the Plan. This review will be conducted by the Regional Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, as designated and authorized by the individual Town and Village Boards. This annual review shall include some or all of the following.

- All major site plan and subdivision approvals issued during the previous year will be reviewed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to determine where this activity has occurred, if it has occurred consistent with the recommendations of the Regional Comprehensive Plan. These planning approvals should be assessed with regard to their overall impact on the general land use trends in the community issuing the approval and their potential impacts to adjoining communities.
- All major rezoning decisions approved during the previous year will be reviewed in conjunction with the Regional Comprehensive Plan to determine if these actions were consistent with the recommendations of the plan and the overall impact of the rezoning decisions on the general land use trends in the community issuing the approval and on adjoining communities.
- The priority listing of zoning amendments specified for each community in the Regional Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished and which ones should be undertaken in the coming years. The overall impact of these rezoning decisions should be evaluated with respect to general land use trends in the communities. The Committee should also determine if there are any new zoning actions that should be added to this list in each community.
- The list of other priority items, as contained in the implementation section of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (Section 6.0), will be reviewed for each community to determine which items were accomplished during the previous year. It should also be determined if there is a need to update or amend the individual community lists.
- Any comments from Town and Village Boards, departments and committees, and public input gathered during the previous year will be evaluated in conjunction with the information ascertained from the reviews outlined above. This information should be utilized to assist with the development of an action plan for Regional Comprehensive Plan implementation activities in the coming year.
- The Committee will prepare a statement outlining the accomplishments of the past year in each community, including a listing of all major site plan, subdivision and rezoning approvals, and a list of accomplishments in terms of zoning code amendments and other implementation achievements, as specified in the Comprehensive Plan (including joint efforts by the partnering communities). This information, along with the action plan for the continuing implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, should be presented to the individual Town and Village Boards for their review and approval.

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Utilizing this strategy on a yearly basis, the communities will be evaluating the Regional Comprehensive Plan, helping to keep the implementation process going and making minor adjustments to the implementation plan. The information generated from this process will be incorporated into each community's regional comprehensive planning files by formal acceptance by the respective Legislative Board.

Approximately every five years (or sooner if deemed necessary), the Regional Comprehensive Plan should be more extensively reviewed (using these annual reports) and updated as necessary through a formal adoption process (including draft changes, public hearings and SEQR review).

Glossary

The following are definitions of words and planning terms used in this document. It is an attempt to explain these items in common language for the benefit of the reader.

Aquifer

An underground source of water that lies within or between water bearing layers of permeable rock, sand or gravel.

Agricultural Preservation

A variety of techniques employed to help support farming as an economic activity and farmland as a land use.

Central Business District

The area of the Village or a hamlet, consisting of retail, commercial, institutional, and public service establishments, that functions as the primary location for commerce.

Clustered Development

Clustered Development is a design technique for development projects that concentrates residential buildings in specific areas on a site to allow the remaining land to be set aside for recreation, common open space or environmental preservation. This is done by allowing housing to be constructed on smaller lots as long as the original density (the number of houses that can be built as-of-right on the property under the existing zoning) does not change.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are a legal means of controlling development on a particular parcel in order to preserve open space. Lands subject to Conservation Easements have controls or regulations limiting development.

Corridor (stream, scenic, open space, habitat)

A connection linking open space, wildlife habitats or other environmental features.

Effluent

Outflowing material (such as stormwater or wastewater) that is discharged into the environment.

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)

The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council is the interagency planning group that establishes transportation policies and programs for Erie and Niagara Counties. In 1975, the GBNRTC (which was then known as the NFTC- Niagara Frontier Transportation Committee) was designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for transportation planning in these counties. The organization provides a regional decision-making forum for the development of a multi-modal integrated transportation system that best serves the Niagara Frontier.

Headwater(s)

The source or beginning of a stream, including the general area contributing runoff or drainage to the stream channel.

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Housing Stock

The overall supply of housing in an area, including all sizes and styles of residential development.

Hydric Soils

Soils are considered to be hydric if they are saturated, flooded or impounded long enough during the growing season to develop low oxygen levels and changeable chemical conditions in the upper layer. These soils are very poorly drained and have a high probability of containing wetlands.

Infrastructure

The underlying framework of public works systems that includes sewers, water lines, roadways, drainage piping, and other utility and service systems.

Level of Service

This term refers to a measurement of the amount of automobile traffic on roadways. Level of Service or LOS, as defined in the NFTC 2010 Transportation System Plan, is a qualitative measure describing the operational conditions within a stream of traffic. It is a means of quantifying or “grading” the operational quality of service provided by a roadway facility (NFTC, December 1994). LOS employs a rating system of “A” through “F”, with “A” representing the best conditions with minimal delays and “F” representing failing conditions with extensive congestion.

Neo-Urbanist Concepts

Neo-urbanist, or neo-traditional, planning concepts emphasize mixed-use development reminiscent of traditional “small town” type development. Traditional grid street patterns are preferred. Additional design standards typically found in neo-urbanist plans include smaller building setbacks so that buildings create a street-line, use of public buildings or parks as focal points in design, and pedestrian-friendly features, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, benches and street trees.

Overlay District

An Overlay District is created by identifying an area on a municipality’s Zoning Map and specifying additional regulations to supplement the underlying zoning regulations. The underlying zoning of the area does not change. Rather, additional restrictions are overlain onto the district. When development is proposed within the boundaries of an overlay district, the developer must comply with the requirements of the existing zoning district and the overlay district.

Passive Recreation

Passive recreation involves non-strenuous activities such as picnicking, bird watching, casual walking and scenic viewing.

Potentially Hydric Soils

Soils that drain somewhat poorly and contain some wetland characteristics. Most potentially hydric soils have a seasonally high water table.

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Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Planned Unit Developments (PUD) allow the mixing of commercial, industrial and residential uses on a single property. Typically zoning does not allow mixing uses, but this technique allows for a more creative site plan, subject to municipal approval. The usual use of PUD's is the creation of a planned community, with a proper mix of uses and layout. If they are allowed within a municipality, the Code specifies the minimum size of a PUD (acreage), and the requirements that must be followed. It must be understood that this zoning category is not an "open approval" to all uses. A plan must be submitted and approved by municipal authorities. A subcategory of PUD's is the Planned Residential District, or PRD. In this zoning category, only residential uses are allowed, but there is greater leeway in the mixing of housing types (single-family, duplexes, apartments, condominiums, etc.)

Subdivision

The division of any parcel of land into two or more lots for immediate sale or development with or without streets or highways.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

This is a legal mechanism for preserving land and open space, by allowing denser development elsewhere within the municipality. In the areas identified for protection, the "development rights" can be sold or transferred to a receiving area, where denser development is appropriate. The area that purchased the development rights is allowed increased density (more units per acre, for example). In exchange, development is prohibited in the area selling the development rights.

Wetlands

Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, or that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands include bogs, swamps, marshes, cattail ponds, wet forests and meadows. These areas may not be wet or covered by water throughout the year.

Zoning Districts

In a municipality there exists zoning which tells you what can be built on the property (the use), and how it shall be built on the land (bulk requirements including size, height, etc.). Each zoning district has specific regulations regarding uses and bulk which must be followed. The zoning districts are identified through a zoning map that depicts where the boundaries of the zoning district exist.