

# Town of York

## 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

In addition to the general public that participated through public meetings, and the Town Board that provided the funding as well as guidance throughout the process, there was a steering committee that volunteered a significant amount of time to this project. They are listed below with thanks.

### **Steering Committee Members**

George Worden	Planning Board
Robert Susz	Planning Board
Frank Rose	Planning Board
Mark Vitale	Planning Board
Davies Nagel	Planning Board
Heather Ferrero	Livingston County Planning
Dick Ellis	Zoning Board of Appeals
Lynn Parnell	Town Board
Brother David Wilson	Abbey of the Genesee
Robert Noble	Farming Community
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## **CHAPTER 1 - OVERVIEW**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This Comprehensive Plan for the Town of York serves as a guide for growth and preservation within the community and to accommodate future development in a manner that best protects the environment, preserves current community values and maintains the rural character of the Town. This Plan represents a summary of the desires, opportunities and policies of the Town of York at this point in time.

In order to be meaningful, the Comprehensive Plan, including its policies and action statements, should be referred to and used by community officials charged with making decisions that directly impact on land use and development. The Plan should not be a static document, but should be reviewed every few years and amended, as necessary, to reflect changing conditions and emerging issues. This revision, completed in 2006, is an update of the 1992 Plan. Similarly, this plan should be reviewed again in 3-5 years to recognize changes in the Town.

This update was completed with the assistance of a steering committee (see Appendix A for a listing of members and meeting minutes), three public meetings (information on these meetings is also included in Appendix A), and by updating existing conditions information in Chapter 3.

The creation of a comprehensive plan represents a conscientious commitment by the Town Planning Board to influence the nature of land use and development in the Town of York. The focus of such a plan should be:

1. Long Range: The comprehensive plan looks beyond the day-to-day issues and concerns to establish a framework for future development. In order to serve its intended purposes, most comprehensive plans generally look 10 to 20 years into the future.

2. Comprehensive: A comprehensive plan addresses a community's physical, social and economic concerns and integrates each of these areas into a cohesive policy statement.
3. Flexible: As a policy document, the comprehensive plan cannot be rigid. It must be flexible and should provide Town officials with an opportunity to respond to changing conditions over time. The plan should be specific enough, however, to assist Town officials in making the important land use decisions that shape the community.

## **B. THE NEED FOR PLANNING**

When we look at the County and Region around us, we can identify problems that can occur when there is a lack of planning or inadequate attempts at planning. These problems are evident regionally as reflected in: misuse and neglect of prime agricultural soils; pollution of ground water and water resources; the location of incompatible land uses immediately adjacent to one another; serious traffic safety problems due to inadequate access controls; and, the lack of consistency in land development policies.

As York considers the establishment and adoption of policies to guide future development, Town officials and residents alike must recognize that existing problems will intensify and new ones will emerge - problems that must be dealt with at the taxpayer's expenses. A successful comprehensive planning program will enable the Town to anticipate and deal with these growth and development problems rather than reacting to them on a "crisis" basis. The York Comprehensive Plan serves as the Town's message to its residents, to developers and to other levels of government that the community has given consideration to its environs and has completed a development program based upon sound planning principles. It is important for the Town to have such a policy document, backed with appropriate supporting information, in order to provide the basis for zoning and other land use regulations needed to achieve the desired land use patterns.

Business and industrial firms and, to some extent, individuals all look toward the future in order to provide direction and goals for their day-to-day activities. Communities, too, must have some direction for their day-to-day activities. Most businesses and industrial firms project their anticipated needs and goals for a five—year period. Due to the complexity of governmental issues, however, communities should think ahead ten to twenty years. A comprehensive plan can provide the necessary insight and direction for community action in the following ways:

1. By dealing with minor problems so that they do not become major problems in the future.
2. By limiting the impact of changes which can be foreseen and which will occur in the future.
3. By shaping new development to the community's needs.
4. By guiding both public and private actions to save money, time and effort.
5. By providing continuity for community improvement activities.
6. By providing a focal point for the coordination of community interests and the commitment of funds for public improvements.

The responsibility for preparing the Town Comprehensive Plan is the role of the Town of York Planning Board. This responsibility is specified in Section 272a of the Town Law of the State of New York. The implementation of the Plan is the joint responsibility of the Planning Board and the Town Board as well as the many other officials and appointed boards serving the Town of York. Although several boards and agencies have a role to play in carrying out the recommendations of the Plan, the Town Board must assume the primary responsibility to achieve its goals. This will be achieved through the enactment of zoning and other ordinances as well as providing the funding required to carry out specific projects recommended in the Plan.

Through the use of zoning, the Town has considerable influence in determining the way in which the land is used within the community. The regulation of land, buildings, facilities and improvements will give form to the community and stimulate or constrain the development of privately owned land. The Town Board's decision to provide the financial resources to

create this Comprehensive Plan demonstrates that it recognizes the importance of having an overall plan to guide day-to-day development decisions within the community. In addition the Courts have held that local zoning must be based on an overall plan, which establishes land use and development policies for the physical development of the community.

### **C. THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Many sources of information must be collected and analyzed in order to produce a plan document that provides the direction and insights needed to effectively guide future growth and development. This documentation is essential in order to help the Town Board and the Town Planning Board determine the most appropriate future distribution and intensity of land use within the community. For the 1992 Plan, the Town Planning Board completed several background studies to provide the necessary base of information upon which to project future land use needs and to understand and define community objectives. These studies included:

1. The gathering of current data and the preparation of base maps.
2. The completion of a land use survey, including the mapping of existing conditions, and the analysis of land use trends.
3. A detailed resident's survey to assist in determining local priorities and opinions and to begin the process of establishing local planning objectives.
4. An inventory and analysis of natural features, including topography, floodplains, wetlands, soil characteristics and other related physical resources.
5. An assessment of housing conditions and needs, population trends and projections and business and economic potentials.
6. An assessment of community facilities and services, including public water and sewer services, natural gas and electrical services, transportation and storm drainage.
7. The identification of constraints and opportunities which relate to land development and the provision of services.

For the 2006 update, much of the same information was gathered and analyzed with the exception of a detailed resident survey. The update relied on public meetings to gain input from the community regarding any necessary changes to community goals, issues, and opportunities.

Based upon the findings of these analyses, a series of goals and policies have been developed. These statements are designed to meet the needs and objectives of the Town of York and to assist community officials in responding to significant issues and opportunities. These policies have been translated to specific land use recommendations and thus provide the basis for the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan depicts the most desirable pattern for future land use and defines areas for residential, commercial and industrial development as well as for conservation and open space uses.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

The Town of York Comprehensive Plan is a graphic and written document that provides direction (both policies and actions) to guide future growth and development. The Plan represents the land use and development objectives of the community at this time. It is with this sense of community that this Comprehensive Plan has been created and will hopefully be embraced, implemented and maintained. Planning is a process and not just an event, which works most effectively when part of a continual and integrated process.

## **CHAPTER 2 - PLAN OBJECTIVES AND GOALS**

### **A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OBJECTIVES**

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of York is based on a premise that the Town will continue to grow at a modest rate and that this growth will be greatly influenced by decisions made at all levels of government and in the private sector as well. The acceptance of this premise places a burden on Town officials to make prudent decisions that will influence the location and type of future development that will occur in the Town. In this regard, the Town will have to establish regulations that are essential to achieve these development objectives.

The Town of York Comprehensive Plan has been designed to incorporate the following major objectives:

1. The Town of York will remain a predominantly rural residential community during the twenty-year horizon of this plan.
2. The majority of future residential development within the Town will be channeled to the existing Hamlets of Linwood, Fowlerville, York, Wadsworth, Greigsville, Retsof, Piffard and to areas immediately adjacent to these hamlets where public services are available or could reasonably be extended to support development.
3. Support the viability of the farming community to help keep agriculture a dominant use in the Town of York.
4. The conservation of environmentally sensitive areas will be initiated or continued. Particular attention will be given to areas with steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, woodlands and other critical environmental features.
5. The need for access regulations and the control of frontage development along the Town's major highways, especially Routes 63 and 36, will become increasingly important.
6. Efforts will be undertaken to attract new industrial employers to sites in Piffard and Retsof in order to broaden the Town's property tax base, with particular emphasis in the area covered by the Empire Zone.

7. Improvements to public recreation facilities including trails, parks and community gathering spaces as well as pedestrian accommodations where logical.

## **B. TARGETED GOALS**

Several overriding goals for the community have been identified, in addition to a specific goal statement for the major components of the community. These create the setting for the comprehensive plan and work together with the existing conditions analysis to create the future land use plan.

### **1. General Community Goals**

- The Town of York will coordinate land use, public and community facilities, and transportation needs in a manner that will work toward the goals outlined in the established Comprehensive Plan.
- The Plan will direct future growth to areas that are physically capable of supporting development while minimizing potentially harmful impacts on the Town's natural resources.
- Priority will be given to achieving a greater intensity of land development in non-agricultural areas with adequate infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, etc.) capacity and which have the fewest number of development constraints.
- The Town will preserve and promote quality residential development and strive to meet the varied housing needs of the population.
- New commercial development will be encouraged to locate in the larger hamlet areas and to reinforce existing retail and service uses. Neighborhood or hamlet scale business uses will have preference over regional or highway oriented commercial land uses, except in the future mixed use area designated in the land use plan on Route 63.
- The Town's industrial development program will include the infilling of existing industrial areas as well as the identification and promotion of new sites for industrial development, with emphasis on supporting and marketing the

Empire Zone. The purpose of the Town's industrial development program will be to provide opportunities for local employment and to strengthen the tax base without compromising the quality of the Town's residential character.

- Transportation systems and activities will focus on moving cars, pedestrians, and goods in a safe and efficient manner.
- The planning program will emphasize the protection of York's important natural resources, productive agricultural soils and the community's significant environmental assets.
- Effective communication with the community will be achieved through the use of multiple media sources (mailings, internet, newspaper).

## **2. Land Use**

The Town of York will remain a predominantly agricultural and rural residential community with a small town character.

## **3. Economic Development**

The Town of York will work to promote a vital and diverse local economy characterized by an expanding tax base and varied employment opportunities that make wise and efficient use of the community's resources.

## **4. Resource Conservation**

The Town's natural resources, including its historic and cultural heritage, should be protected and conserved to the greatest practical extent.

## **5. Agricultural Resources**

The Town will give priority to the protection and enhancement of agricultural resources and viable farming areas and will support agriculture as an industry and land use.

## **6. Rural Residential Development**

The Town will provide opportunities for the establishment of rural residential areas which minimize conflicts with established farming operations.

**7. Residential Development**

The Town will strive for a healthy housing market by providing an adequate supply of housing options with a variety of residential types in order to meet the needs of people of all demographic and economic scales.

**8. Government Services and Facilities**

The Town of York will provide public services and facilities which support the community's land use goals in a cost effective and timely manner.

**9. Transportation**

The Town will promote a transportation system that provides access for cars, trucks, pedestrians and bicyclists in a safe and efficient manner.

**10. Recreation**

The Town will strive for a variety of recreational opportunities for the community, which could include parks, ball fields, trails and skateboard/rollerblade parks.

## **CHAPTER 3 - ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS**

This chapter of the Town of York Comprehensive Plan examines the basic conditions and features that characterize the community. These conditions have a major impact on land use and can exert considerable influence on the type and magnitude of future development. The existing community conditions, which have been examined, include population, housing, land use and natural features in addition to permit activity and development trends. This analysis is designed to provide a baseline of factual information upon which to build the land use plan and overall recommendations.

Wherever data is available, information for the Town of York has been evaluated in comparison with Livingston County as a whole. This information helps to understand the relationship between York and surrounding county. The comparisons also provide important reference points and help to produce a clear picture of conditions in the Town.

For some community features, such as housing and population, census data from earlier periods has been collected and analyzed. This is useful in identifying trends and helping to place existing conditions within a historical perspective.

### **A. POPULATION**

As shown in **Table 1**, the population of the Town of York grew steadily between 1960 and 1990 without any periods of population decline, however from 1990 to 2000 there was an approximately 8 percent decline, taking the Town's population back down to the 1980 total. While Livingston County did not lose population from 1990 to 2000 the percent increase (3.1%) was the lowest it had been in several decades.

The population of the Town grew at its highest rate during the baby boom era of the 1950's and 1960's. From 1960 to 1970, York's population increased by 471 persons, or 17.5 percent.

The Town's rate of growth subsided during the 1970's. During this ten-year period, York's population was nearly stable, increasing by just 46 people, or 1.5 percent. Population growth rebounded in the 1980's, perhaps as a result of reproduction among the maturing baby, boom population. York's rate of population growth increased considerably during the 1980's, reaching a total of 3,513 by 1990, a gain of 9.4 percent over the Town's 1980 total.

**TABLE 1**  
**POPULATION - TOWN OF YORK/ LIVINGSTON COUNTY**

Year	Town of York	% Change	Livingston County	% Change
2000	3,219	-8.4%	64,328	3.1%
1990	3,513	9.4%	62,372	9.4%
1980	3,212	1.5%	57,006	5.5%
1970	3,166	17.5%	54,041	22.7%
1960	2,695	-	44,053	-

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

How much population growth can the Town of York reasonably expect to experience during the ten to twenty year horizon of the Comprehensive Plan? **Table 2** presents population projections for the period extending from 2000 to 2030. These projections were prepared by the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council in 2003. In addition to the projections, the table also includes the actual 1990 and 2000 population figures reported in the most recent Census.

The Town of York is projected to see mild growth of about two percent per ten-year period. This growth is similar to the level of growth anticipated for the County as a whole. It is an upward population trend, which is contrary to the decline realized from 1990 to 2000 in the Town of York.

**TABLE 2**  
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS - TOWN OF YORK/ LIVINGSTON COUNTY**

	Historical			Projected					
	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % change	2010	2000 - 2010 % change	2020	2010 - 2020 % change	2030	2020 - 2030 % change
Livingston County	62,372	64,328	3.1%	65,979	2.6%	67,333	2.1%	68,481	1.7%
Town of York	3,513	3,219	-8.4%	3,290	2.2%	3,355	2.0%	3,407	1.5%

Although the potential for error does exist and should be recognized, the future population projections for York provide a reasonable basis for estimating future development opportunities and the level of public services needed to support the Town's needs. It should be noted, however, that by modifying the Town's current land use regulations or by improving existing infrastructure, York has the ability to exert a significant influence on the amount of population the community may be able to attract.

The age of a population is often another important statistic to consider during a comprehensive plan. Public facilities like parks, demand on schools, types of housing that may be in demand, etc. are all impacted by the relative age of the population. **Table 3** shows the age breakdown for the Town of York and Livingston County. The Town of York's age distribution is very similar to the County's, with an average age of the population in York of 36.86 years and the County's at 35.98 years. The Town of York has a slightly higher percentage of its population in the 15 and under category (21.6%) compared to the County (19.0%).

**TABLE 3**  
**POPULATION BY AGE - TOWN OF YORK/ LIVINGSTON COUNTY**

	Town of York		Livingston County	
	#	% of Total	#	% of Total
15 or under	695	21.6%	12194	19.0%
16-24	376	11.7%	11973	18.6%
25-44	984	30.6%	18586	28.9%
45-64	798	24.8%	14247	22.1%
65+	366	11.4%	7328	11.4%
Average Age	36.86		35.98	

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

The median household income in the Town of York is \$43,229, which is extremely close to the New York State median of \$43,393, and is slightly higher than the County median of \$42,066.

## B. HOUSING

The Town of York experienced a considerable increase in the number of housing units between 1970 and 1990. During this twenty-year period, the Town's total housing stock grew from 931 in 1970 to 1,233 in 1990. This represents an increase of 302 units, or 32.4 percent. From 1990 to 2000, the Town added only 5 housing units, with a 2000 housing stock of 1,238. The growth in housing from 1970 to 1990 far outpaced the 11 percent increase in population that occurred in York during the same period, while the minimal housing stock growth from 1990 to 2000 is reflective of the population decline.

This data is consistent with and reflects the substantial reduction in the Town's average household size during the thirty-year period between 1970 and 2000, as shown in **Table 4**. The formation of new and smaller households in the Town of York as well as in many other communities has created a demand for additional housing far in excess of that which would be expected if measured solely on the basis of population growth.

**TABLE 4**  
***HOUSEHOLD POPULATION - TOWN OF YORK***

	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>
<i>Persons in Household</i>	3,166	3,162	3,469	3173
<i>Number of Households</i>	897	1,042	1,203	1,181
<i>Average Household Size</i>	3.47	3.03	2.88	2.69

*Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing*

Factors such as the increasing rate of marital divorce, later marriages, couples having fewer children, and increasing longevity all contribute to the trend toward smaller households. These factors have produced an increase in the demand for housing, even in communities experiencing stable or declining population.

Additionally, many communities like York have a housing stock that is not diversified, and therefore a growth in housing units is often a reflection of new types of housing stock being added to the municipality including modern expanded single family homes, apartments, patio homes, and senior living facilities.

### **C. LAND USE and ZONING**

York's overall land use pattern is dispersed along a grid pattern (i.e. rectilinear) with occasional higher concentrations of development located at certain points where lines of the grid intersect. Several of the Town's hamlet areas developed at these intersections. The Town's highway system is generally oriented in north/south and east/west directions as straight lines that intersect at right angles. Except for the occasional diagonal stretch of road, such as the section of Route 36 between Craig Road and Route 63 and the segment of Route 63 that connects Geneseo and Piffard, this orientation of roads produces a "grid-like" pattern of land use and development.

The dispersed low density development pattern which characterizes most of York is interrupted by readily identifiable areas where houses and other urban land uses are clustered. These areas of more concentrated development generally are referred to as hamlets and include: Fowlerville, Greigsville, Linwood, Piffard, Retsof, Wadsworth and York. The hamlets of Greigsville, Retsof and Wadsworth are in the same geographic area of the Town and may actually be viewed as one large cluster.

The range of services and facilities available in the hamlet areas varies considerably as does the number, type and intensity of land uses. Many residents identify with the particular

hamlet in which they live, rather than the Town of York as a whole. This makes it difficult to create an identity for the Town, which is important in order to effectively deal with communitywide issues.

Examining current land use conditions and trends is vital in assessing development patterns and determining likely future needs within a community. A summary of current land uses is shown in **Table 5**.

**TABLE 5**  
***EXISTING LAND USE - TOWN OF YORK***

Use	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	24,804	82.8%
Residential	2,930	9.8%
Commercial	230	0.8%
Recreation/Entertainment	26	0.1%
Community Service	113	0.4%
Industrial	417	1.4%
Public Service	135	0.5%
vacant	1,317	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,972</b>	

This data clearly demonstrates that the Town of York is a rural community with agriculture as the predominant land use feature. The vast majority of land in the Town (83%) is devoted to agricultural uses. From a land use planning perspective, land classified as agricultural, even when actively farmed, is considered undeveloped because it is susceptible to conversion to housing, commercial or industrial use or to other forms of urban development. The next largest category is residential, with nearly 10% of the total acreage.

Commercial land uses, such as retail stores, gas stations and other service businesses, include a total of only 113 acres. Commercial land areas occupy less than 1 percent of the Town's total land area. Industrial uses occupy a much greater amount of land with 417 acres, or 1.4% of the Town acreage being used for industrial purposes.

The Town also has several areas of recreation, including parks in several of the hamlet and two trails, the Groveland Extension and the Genesee Valley Greenway.

An interesting, and informative comparison to make is the current land use versus the amount of land in the Town currently zoned for various uses. **Table 6** shows a breakdown of the Town's current zoning, shown as total acres and percentage for each zone. A zoning map is provided as **Figure 1**.

**TABLE 6**  
**EXISTING ZONING - TOWN OF YORK**

Zone	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	27,596	92.1%
Residential - RA	818	2.7%
Residential - RAA	60	0.2%
Planned Development	18	0.1%
Public	321	1.1%
Business	73	0.2%
Industrial	1,086	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	29,972	

Two particularly noteworthy differences between current land use and zoning are the business and industrial uses. Whereas there are only 73 acres zoned for business purposes, 230 acres are being used as a commercial use. This means that there are

commercial operations happening where the intended land use is not commercial, rather an industrially zoned piece of property, or possibly a residentially zoned area is being used as commercial. The lack of properly zoned commercial land is clearly an issue within the Town. The second significant mismatch is with industrial uses. In this situation there is an abundance of land zoned for industrial (1,086 acres) but only about a third (417 acres) are currently being used as industrial. This indicates that some of the land currently zoned industrial could be rezoned to a different use if appropriate.

To get a better idea of the trends of development, building permit activity for the last 5 years has been examined and is summarized in **Table 7**.

**TABLE 7**  
**BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY - TOWN OF YORK**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b><i>Residential</i></b>	12	8	14	18	11	10
<b><i>Industrial</i></b>	0	1	0	0	1	1
<b><i>Commercial</i></b>	0	0	2	0	0	2

*Source: Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council; Land Use Monitoring Report, 2006.*

This data shows when building permits were issued and what the type of building permit is for. The last 5 years have seen a consistent trend of about 10-15 residential permits per year, an occasional industrial permit, and a few commercial permits. One large subdivision, the attraction of a new business to the Empire Zone, or a surge in commercial development could occur at any time and significantly alter these trends.

The overall trend in Livingston County is that the northern municipalities (Avon, Caledonia, Geneseo, Lima, Livonia and York) are experiencing the most overall residential growth, and although York has seen the least growth of these municipalities in recent years, data suggests that the growth may not be in the distant future.

Another consideration as to where development has occurred and will likely to occur in the future is the availability of public water and sewer service. Compared to other rural communities, the Town of York is well served by public water, with the availability of sewer service as well along a good portion of Routes 36 and 63 and adjoining areas. As shown in **Figure 2**, these public utilities blanket a large percentage of the Town. In several areas public water was extended to address water quality or quantity issues.

In discussing future development types, whether it be new housing or a new commercial business, it is important to understand the tax implications of these types of developments. Each type of land use (residential, commercial, agricultural) has a different cost of development, which is determined by assessing the amount the use would pay in taxes versus what that use would require in services (school, fire, utilities, etc). A recent study in the Town of Byron, NY, which has similar characteristics to that of York, determined the cost of development as follows:

*For every dollar of revenue (taxes) brought in by the following land uses, the municipality has to pay the following for services:*

- Residential = \$1.30
- Commercial/Industrial = \$0.77
- Agricultural = \$0.49

This data shows that agricultural uses require far less in services than what they pay in taxes, commercial and industrial uses also are a positive net development in terms of taxes, paying a dollar in taxes but only take \$0.77 in services, whereas residential development takes more services to support, than it pays in taxes. So, when thinking about the future development of York and the tax implications of development, it is important to keep in mind that new housing needs to be balanced by agricultural, commercial and industrial uses or there will be a further tax burden on the community.

## D. NATURAL FEATURES

The Genesee River, the rich and productive agricultural soils and the salt deposits at Retsof are the most notable natural features that characterize the Town of York. These features, although very different in form, all exert a significant impact on land use and development in the Town. In addition, the Genesee River is a key to understanding how many of the Town's other major natural features interact and the extent to which they impact upon development.

The River and its tributaries are largely responsible for shaping the topography of the Town and contouring its landscape. Although the terrain in York is relatively flat with some rolling hills, there are no exceptional changes in elevation. The natural grade throughout most of the Town is less than 5 percent. There are a few relatively small areas in the Town with slopes of more than 10 percent. The steeper sloped areas are not extensive and, having been formed by water erosion, are most prevalent in the valley areas where the tributaries of the Genesee wind their way to the River.

The Genesee River and its many tributaries provide a natural system of surface water drainage in the Town. Rainwater and water from melting snow collect in the tributaries that flow into the Genesee, and ultimately into Lake Ontario. Flood hazard areas, officially designated and mapped by the Federal government, follow the path of the River and Christie, Brown and Salt Creeks as well as several other smaller streams in the Town. **Figure 3** depicts the location of the flood hazard areas in the Town which are generally in narrow bands that straddle the paths of these creeks and also shows other natural features such as the rivers, and wetlands. The most extensive flood hazard area in the Town is located near Piffard along the Genesee River.

The flood hazard areas, or floodplains, perform important natural functions. They temporarily store higher than normal volumes of surface water caused by heavy rain and melting snow. Floodplains help minimize downstream bank erosion and property destruction by diverting and storing the excessive surface water runoff. As a result these areas may be periodically submerged by flood waters and may create concerns for public safety.

It should be noted, however, that flooding becomes more severe and extensive if the natural functions of the floodplains are obstructed by the construction of buildings and pavement within the floodplain. Development controls are necessary to protect the floodplain and to limit potential property damage that would occur as a result of flood conditions.

In addition to floodplains, there are New York State designated and mapped freshwater wetlands in the Town. Wetlands are another important water resource that provides important natural functions and benefits. These functions include groundwater recharge/discharge, water quality maintenance and wildlife habitat. The wetlands also provide protection from flood and storm drainage and offer opportunities for recreation as well as environmental education.

Forest areas, or woodlands, are also a significant natural feature within York and currently occupy about 3,400 acres of land in the Town. The Town's major concentrations of forested areas, like wetlands, floodplains and areas with steep slopes, are most prevalent along the Genesee River and its tributaries.

These woodland areas are important to the community in a number of respects. They provide wildlife habitats, help to conserve soils and purify the air. Woodlands also provide a buffer for winds, storms and noise. In addition, the visual screening and pleasant view that woodlands provide add to the attractiveness and appeal of the area.

Lands that are currently part of Livingston County's Agricultural District #1 are also shown on **Figure 3**. Parcels that are part of this voluntary program carry certain protections and regulations aimed at protecting farming activities including restrictions on tying into public utilities and protection against nuisance lawsuits.

## **CHAPTER 4 - FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

### **A. LAND USE PLAN OVERVIEW**

This chapter describes the proposed future land use pattern for the Town of York and the various activities and facilities that will have to be carried in order to support and achieve the proposed development pattern. The recommended plan has evolved based upon the information derived from the preceding chapters, including the analysis of existing conditions, infrastructure, development opportunities and constraints and goals and policies. The proposed plan demonstrates how the Town of York can guide future development in a manner that would maximize potential opportunities and limit the potential adverse effects of new development.

**Figure 4** depicts the future land use plan and delineates the geographic relationship of various land uses to one another. The Plan builds upon the strengths of the Town's existing characteristics. The land use categories, their description, and overall rationale are provided below.

In general, the areas in and surrounding the hamlets have been identified for denser development where infrastructure, population density, and public utilities exist. In addition, the overall development potential for new residential units in the agricultural areas is being reduced while at the same time providing alternatives to large lot developments that chew up farmland and disrupt the visual environment.

Appropriately sized commercial uses are encouraged to continue in the hamlets, with a few key areas along Route 63 identified for future commercial growth. Light industrial and industrial activities are appropriately placed near rail lines and in areas with existing industrial activity. The potential benefits of the Livingston County Empire Zone are also taken advantage of by providing the proper zoning and infrastructure to those areas.

Creating opportunities for walkable developments, close to the schools, future public open space, and commercial uses is also provided

## **B. LAND USE CATEGORIES**

### **1. Agricultural**

Active agricultural operations and agri-businesses are the predominant uses that characterize these areas, as reflected in amount of parcels that are in Livingston County's Agricultural District #1. The Plan recommends that such uses continue to be permitted in these areas. Residences would also be allowed, but the construction of new non-farm dwellings needs to be limited in order to:

- preserve the rural character of the area;
- minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural activities; and
- maintain a viable farming industry and farm friendly environment.

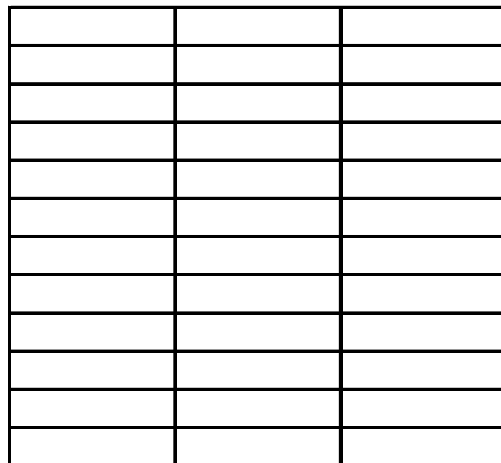
Various regulatory approaches can be used to achieve this objective. Some of the techniques which are commonly used are designed to limit the amount of development by requiring large lot. This method is used because farming operations need substantial acreage in order to be viable. Zoning regulations which require large lots also limit the number of new residential sites that can be created from existing parcels and prohibit further subdivision of existing lots that are smaller than the minimum required size. Although this technique may limit large scale residential subdivisions, it will require farmers to sell off more land than is normally required or needed for an individual residence. As such, this method may actually work counter to the desired objective, resulting in the loss of even more farmland.

The method being recommended in this plan is to apply a uniform ratio to this area of one residential lot per 3 acres. Density averaging as it is called, does not

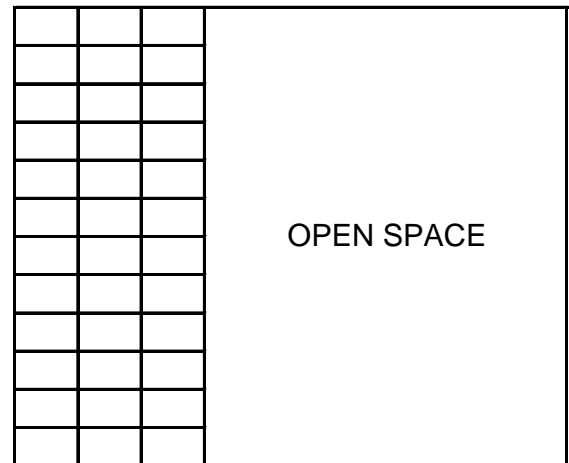
require each lot to be 3 acres, rather it encourages the parcel to be planned so that houses be clustered together while capping the total number of houses in the planned area. Density averaging provides more flexibility than traditional clustering. It controls the overall number of lots that can ultimately be developed on a given parcel, while allowing flexibility as to where houses are placed. This recognizes the diverse nature of agricultural parcels, and provides maximum flexibility for placing houses in such a way to preserve viable farming areas when feasible and desirable.

For example, on a 100-acre site, the landowner could plan for a total of 33 houses. However, rather than using all 100 acres, the plan could cluster those houses on 1/2 to 1 acre lots, using less than 35 acres (with infrastructure, setback, etc. incorporated) of the property and continuing to farm the remaining 60 or more acres, as depicted below. The undeveloped acres would have a permanent development restriction for any additional houses to be built, but could be continued to be actively farmed. In addition, development standards in this area could also include provisions for guiding the residential development to occur on the portion of the site that is least suitable for productive agricultural uses, giving forethought to placing road access, and avoiding environmentally sensitive areas.

100 acres  
33 houses; 3 acre lots



100 acres  
33 houses; 1 acre lots; 67 acres open



Public utilities should only be extended to these areas in cases where there is a significant water quality or quantity issue.

## 2. **Residential**

Three residential categories have been created to best fit the needs of the York community now and into the future. In planning for residential growth five major goals were used:

- allow residential uses (at varying densities) in all districts except industrial;
- minimize the extent to which public facilities would have to be expanded or improved to serve new development and
- most efficient use of existing facilities;
- minimize the potential loss of productive agricultural resources and the disruption of environmentally sensitive areas that would occur through conversion to other uses; and
- reduce the distance that residents will have to travel to reach employment and shopping opportunities in the Town.

The three categories are as follows:

- i. **Hamlet Residential** – Areas within one of the seven hamlets where public utilities are available and that have a denser development pattern. This district would predominantly allow the continuation of residential uses with a minimum lot size of one-half acre.
- ii. **Residential** – There are areas within the Town that are not in Hamlet areas but are served by public utilities, are in close proximity to more highly developed areas, and have existing areas

of higher density. These areas of Town are envisioned to have a minimum lot size of one acre.

The areas within this land use district need comprehensive design regulations guiding their development given their location and overall development potential. Most significantly is the large area just south of the Hamlet of York that spans between Route 36 and Retsof Road, which is a focal point of the community. Given the proximity to the school, availability of public utilities, and amount of total land available, incorporating the following guidelines into the Town's Code is critical.

- Minimum open space requirements (recommend 20-30%)
- Requiring clustering be considered – if not feasible, justify why not and make other considerations that achieve similar results
- Maximum curb cut allowances per development – requiring access drives versus individual driveways, etc.
- Designing residential developments around existing natural features
- Incorporating recreation and/or open spaces that link to other alike spaces
- Reducing frontage development to preserve visual character

- iii. ***High Density Residential*** – This district allows for denser housing developments, including multifamily housing, mobile home parks, and townhouse/condo style housing. The anticipated minimum lot size for a single family home is  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre, with multifamily homes having an overall density of 8 units per acre. With the exception of the mobile home park in the northern portion of Town, these areas

have been located near the school, commercial areas, and where public utilities exist, maximizing use of, and access to, these facilities.

### 3. Commercial Uses

With modest growth in population anticipated to occur within the Town of York during the next twenty years, the projected base for commercial activity in the Town will continue to be rather small. The Plan expects residents to continue to satisfy much of their major shopping, personal service and other commercial needs in Geneseo and Avon and several of the other larger communities in the area. However, neighborhood scale, convenience commercial uses are desired and anticipated within the Town.

- i. **Commercial** – General commercial uses which would cater to local residents as well as people using the main routes for travel. This district would be appropriate for a mixture of retail, service, and general business uses that are less than 5,000 square feet. Consideration should be given to controlling access to the commercial areas, particularly along Route 63 where there is heavy truck traffic. This district would also allow residential uses with a minimum lot size of ¼ to ½ acre.
- ii. **Hamlet Commercial** – This land use category recognizes areas in the hamlets that have businesses geared toward serving the local residents. These are small-scale businesses (less than 2,000 square foot buildings) that primarily serve the local market and includes businesses such as tavern, car repair, convenience store, etc. This district would also allow residential uses with one-half acre lots.
- iii. **Mixed Use** – A new mixed use district is proposed to allow expansion future commercial, office or small light industrial businesses. Residential

is not anticipated to be an allowed use in this district. For this district, the Town should enact development standards to include:

- access restrictions (shared driveways/ single access road to development)
- maximum building size (10,000-15,000 square feet)
- promote future development to occur in “plaza-like” settings
- buffered from adjacent residential uses

#### 4. **Industrial Uses**

Recognizing that manufacturing uses have different characteristics than non-manufacturing industrial uses, two land use categories have been created for industrial-oriented uses.

- i. **Light Industrial** – Non-manufacturing industrial uses, which could include warehousing, research and development, packaging, etc., are good for the local economy, providing jobs and a solid tax base. There are several areas throughout the Town where these uses are successfully operating. The future land use plan acknowledges these areas and denotes them as light industrial for the future. Several are located along the active rail line.
- ii. **Industrial** – Industrial activity in York is a historical use with very successful businesses. The focus of this district is manufacturing uses. The main industrial area is in the area of the salt mine, which is now designated as an Empire Zone, making it an attractive location for future businesses. The second industrial district is in the southeast corner of Town. Residential is not anticipated to be an allowed use in this district.

Given the proximity of the industrial and light industrial districts to sensitive community uses such as residential areas and the school facilities, the Town should adopt site plan development standards to minimize the potential adverse impacts of new industrial uses on neighboring land uses. Among other things, the standards should address such concerns as access controls both to and from major roads and within industrial parks, as well as buffers to protect non-industrial neighbors.

## 5. **Public, Recreation and Open Space**

In rural towns, there is often an oversight when planning for recreation and open space areas because there is so much open land that it's hard to imagine there ever being a lack of space. Also, public uses, particularly for schools, are rarely planned for in a comprehensive plan. However, many towns have made the mistake of not planning in advance for such lands and ended up paying much more for the land that they could have gotten at a fraction of the price years before. In addition, there is still a desire in rural areas to have a gathering place for the community to come together for recreational purposes, and to have access to trails for recreation and transportation purposes. To this end the land use plan identifies current trails, potential future trailways, public recreation spaces, and a strategically-placed open space district.

- i. **Trails** – Two major trails exist currently in the Town, the Genesee Valley Greenway and the Groveland Extension, however they are not connected. A connector trail is envisioned to link them in their southern portions, traversing the historical “Little Italy” area just northeast of the school property. Genesee Transportation Council has on record a long-term trail that would connect the two trails, however it does not take advantage of the historical area.

- ii. **Public Recreation** – Several of the hamlets have small parks with varying facilities. Some are limited to an open area of grass, while others have playground equipment and/or ballfields. An opportunity may exist in the future for the Town to acquire the playground and ballfield space behind Town Hall that is currently owned by the fire department. Additionally, if the firehouse were to relocate at any time, the building may present an opportunity to gain space for a community center and/or gathering space. Additional parking around the current fire hall could also be gained for public parking if that acquisition were to come to fruition.
- iii. **Open Space** – An area on the north side of Route 63 in the vicinity of the school facilities is denoted on the future land use plan as open space. This area is envisioned to be a designated “forever wild” area for monitored public use, which could include a nature trail and observation area for the school to use as an educational experience, as well as some passive trail areas. This area includes the historic “Little Italy” in Retsof. The development rights for this area would either need to be purchased by the Town, donated to the Town, or bought by an outside agency such as the Genesee Valley Conservancy.
- iv. **Public** – The school campus, located on the south side of Route 63 in the Hamlet of Greigsville, is shown on the land use map as Public, with additional space surrounding the current facility to allow for future expansion when and if warranted and desired. This district would allow residential uses at a density similar to that of the High Density Residential district, and would also allow public facilities associated with the school if they were to purchase and develop the land as such.

## 6. **Adult Use Overlay**

Adult entertainment uses are protected under the First Amendment freedom of speech and expression provision, and therefore, must be allowed within any and all municipalities. Both the United States Constitution, in the First Amendment, and the New York State Constitution, in Article 1 Section 8, provide for the protection of every citizen's right to the freedom of speech and expression. Many forms of adult entertainment, including printed materials, films and live entertainment, are protected by the First Amendment. Municipalities are, therefore, not permitted to enact local regulations that totally suppress the freedom of expression associated with these activities. It should be noted that constitutional protections do not cover activities or material deemed to be obscene, and these materials and activities may be banned by municipalities. However, many of the most common adult entertainment activities, such as adult book and video stores and nude dancing establishments, while sexually explicit, are not considered obscene, and are protected by the First Amendment.

For this reason, the land use plan shows an adult use overlay district intended for the light industrial district on Route 20 in the northern portion of Town. Adult entertainment would only be allowed in this area with several considerations including minimum setbacks from any house, public use, etc. and also should have sign standards applicable to adult uses.

## **CHAPTER 5 - RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations, if implemented, will move the Town in the direction envisioned in this plan. The overall issues, along with recommendations to address these issues are provided in the following sections.

### **A. PLAN ADOPTION AND UPDATE**

**ISSUE:** The Comprehension Plan needs to be formally adopted by the Town Board by resolution stating that it is the official planning document for the Town of York and that all subsequent actions should be evaluated within the context of their consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

**Recommendation:** The Town Board should adopt the plan, and publish and distribute it to all boards, departments, and interested citizens in the Town. A copy should also be supplied to the Livingston County Planning Department.

**ISSUE:** While it is intended that a comprehensive plan looks into the future up to 20 years, development trends and community issues can change quite rapidly.

**Recommendation:** The Town Board should initiate a yearly discussion of the comprehensive plan, seeking input from the Planning Board as to how well the plan is being used as a guide, and what progress has been made toward implementing the recommendations of the plan. The discussion should include dialogue regarding whether an update is required or not. In most cases, a minor update can be undertaken by the Town Board and/or Planning Board every 3-5 years, while a 5-10 year update may be more significant and require outside assistance.

### **B. TOWN ZONING CODE**

**ISSUE:** The Town's Zoning Code is outdated and if the comprehensive plan is adopted, the zoning code will not reflect the Town's Official Comprehensive Plan.

**Recommendation:** The Town Board should commission a full zoning rewrite for the Town that includes zoning districts, sign regulations, access management guidelines, site development regulations, etc. The Town's Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for zoning and should be used as a guiding document in completing the new zoning code.

### C. FARMLAND PROTECTION AND SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

**ISSUE:** Protecting farm land and supporting the agricultural industry within the Town of York is a dominant theme when developing the goals for the comprehensive plan. Creating a supportive environment for the farming community is critical in today's economy.

**Recommendations:**

- Provide guidance to farmers when subdividing for residential uses – create a handout regarding development options showing examples of clustering, etc.
- Whenever new residential development is proposed in proximity to farmland, utilize subdivision regulation and site plan approval processes to create a sufficient buffer to limit potential conflicts.
- Minimize any future extension of public water or sewer to agricultural areas except in cases of significant water quality or quantity issues.
- Allow flexibility for agribusinesses in the agricultural zoning districts.
- Continue to work with Livingston County on farmland protection efforts already underway.
- Work with Livingston County to consider Purchase of Development Rights for any appropriate farms that have particular community importance or are experiencing significant development pressure.

### D. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

**ISSUE:** Providing a variety of recreation opportunities and active and passive open spaces is important for quality of life. There are needs now within the Town to improve facilities, and

also to plan now for future facilities to maximize the potential to be able to finance and complete them.

**Recommendations:**

- Look for an opportunity to expand park land and facilities in the Hamlets.
- Improve signage to exiting park facilities.
- Acquire the current York Fire Department facility and associated lands in the Hamlet of York if they become available for possible future use as a Town Park and municipal parking lot.
- Work with the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) to investigate feasibility and desire to modify the long-term trail identified in their Regional Trails Initiative linking the Groveland Extension and Genesee Valley Greenway to incorporate the historic Little Italy area.
- Identify any additional facilities needed in the community including the possibility of a community center or gathering space.
- Explore options for purchasing development rights of open space on the north side of Route 63 across from the school.
- Work with the school district to identify opportunities for shared facilities.
- Create bicycle and/or foot paths linking community, residential, institutional, and business districts together

**E. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

*ISSUE:* A variety of residential development is currently on the doorstep of York. Anticipating and planning for this development is key to create the environment envisioned in this plan.

**Recommendations:**

- Allow residential development in all districts (at varying densities) except Industrial
- Encourage cluster development.
- Monitor public utility capacity as development continues to occur.

- Ensure all necessary infrastructure is in place prior to issuing building permits for new houses.
- Look for opportunities to create passive open spaces in larger residential development.
- Create linkages from residential developments to public facilities or commercial areas when appropriate.
- Work with local emergency response officials to ensure new developments can be adequately served.
- Create comprehensive design guidelines, particularly for the areas classified as Residential (R) on the land use plan, that control density, layout, access, open space, etc..

## F. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

*ISSUE:* Industrial uses are historic in York and are a positive economic use for the Town, providing jobs and tax dollars for the community. Taking full advantage of ideal sites for future industrial businesses is critical to attracting new businesses.

### **Recommendations:**

- Work with County Industrial Development Agency to market industrial land, particularly in the Empire Zone and other areas where appropriate zoning and infrastructure exists.
- Require buffers between new industrial developments and adjacent residential and public uses to minimize conflicts and negative impacts.

## G. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

*ISSUE:* As York continues to grow and develop, additional commercial uses are likely to be attracted to locating, or expanding in York. Identifying where the most appropriate locations are for this growth, and guiding how they will look and operate, is essential.

### **Recommendations:**

- Incorporate access management standards to create safe and efficient access.
- Encourage small scale developments in hamlet areas while focusing larger developments along Route 63 and Route 36 in designated areas.
- Create design guidelines that will guide commercial development regarding landscaping, signage, façade, and lighting.

## H. TRANSPORTATION

A transportation analysis was completed for the Town of York to look at several transportation issues in various parts of the Town. Through a site visit, public comments, and discussions with municipal and NYSDOT representatives, the following information was gathered and analyzed to determine what the major issues are and how they may be resolved. The issues are also identified on **Figure 5**.

### A. Roadways and Intersections

*ISSUE:* Route 63 continues to raise safety concerns. The intersection of Routes 63 and Route 36 presents major concerns due to the heavy volume of truck traffic, high travel speeds and the proximity of the York Central School. This intersection was identified as a safety concern during NYSDOT's Route 63 Corridor Study. During this study, accident research showed an average of 10 accidents per year, and this intersection exceeded the statewide average for a similar intersection by a factor of two. Five truck accidents were identified out of fifteen total intersection accidents (three-year period). The predominant accident type (32 percent) at this intersection was a right-angle collision between a westbound vehicle and a southbound vehicle.

Based on public comments received during the development of the comprehensive plan, westbound tractor-trailers have been observed by Town

residents running this light, especially at night. One potential reason for this activity could be due to the fairly steep grade on NY Route 63 to the west of Greigsville. By stopping at this intersection, a tractor-trailer may have more difficulty traveling up the grade without a significant speed loss.

**Recommendation:** *The Town should request NYSDOT to consider modifying the NY Route 63/NY Route 36 traffic signal into a semi-actuated mode during off-peak periods (night), so that the light stays green for NY Route 63 until a car arrives on either of the Route 36 approaches. This would minimize delay for NY Route 63 through traffic and potentially help to reduce red light running accidents.*

**Recommendation:** *The Town should request NYSDOT to consider the installation of “traffic signal ahead” signage on westbound NY Route 63 to the east of the NY Route 63/NY Route 36 intersection.*

**Recommendation:** *Given a concern to make NY Route 63 in the vicinity of York Central School more a part of the hamlet, the Town should request of NYSDOT that consideration should be given to “calming” this section of NY Route 63 with the provision of curbing, (consolidated access, where needed), shared- use lanes (shoulder plus bicycle) and streetscape features, such as street trees, street lights and Town banners. The concept is to help emphasize the sense of place, slightly narrow the feel of the road, and hopefully slow traffic down and increase driver awareness. This would include the construction of sidewalks on both sides of NY Route 63 between the York Central School and NY Route 36 and improved pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian crosswalk signals.*

**ISSUE:** A sight distance concern was expressed by Town citizens at the intersection of NY Route 63 with Chandler Road. Chandler Road connects to a curved section of NY Route 63 on the east end of Town. Leaving Geneseo, NY Route 63 travels north and then curves gradually to the west before entering the hamlet of Piffard. Chandler Road terminates at NY Route 63 during this curve. While the sight visibility is not impaired by physical obstructions, the horizontal

curvature “hides” the fact that northbound left-turns on NY Route 63 are unprotected (in the travel lane without an exclusive turn lane). If a car is waiting to turn left onto Chandler Road, the following vehicle may come upon it suddenly and currently there is only one travel lane with a shoulder. In addition, there is no electricity, and hence no street light at this location, adding to the visibility problem.

**Recommendation:** *The Town should request NYSDOT to consider potential solutions for the intersection of NY Route 63 with Chandler Road, including:*

- 1. The construction of a bypass lane to allow through traffic to pass motorists waiting to turn left onto Chandler Road on the right without traveling on the shoulder, or*
- 2. Installation of a solar light to improve visibility and safety at this intersection.*

**ISSUE:** York Road West, a County Road, has deteriorated and is in need of extensive repair, including shoulders, resurfacing and/or rebuilding of drainage improvements.

**Recommendation:** The County has scheduled this section of road for improvements in the next few years. From time to time the Town receives comments and/or requests from property owners living along unpaved roads to surface them. Although the Town continues to pave these roads as budget allows, there is not a prescribed schedule.

**ISSUE:** Fowlerville Road, a County Road, is used fairly heavily as a cut-through route/shortcut into the Town of Avon, and anecdotal reports indicate that through traffic travels at high speeds. Accidents involving animals (including dogs and cats) were raised as a common occurrence on this roadway.

**Recommendation:** *The Town should request to the Livingston County Sherriff's office to periodically patrol/monitor Fowlerville Road through traffic and speeding. One potential option is the use of mobile roadside*

*speedometers to inform drivers of their travel speeds and periodic monitoring and ticketing.*

***Recommendation:*** *The Town should request to the Livingston County Department of Public Works to evaluate sight distance and speeding concerns along Fowlerville Road. Potential solutions include the posting of “intersection ahead” signs or the reduction of the speed limit in a more highly developed section of the roadway.*

### **B. Bridges**

Bridges within the Town are owned and maintained by either the State or County. Both the County and State continue to maintain their inventory as needed. There are no bridges in need of major repair at this time. Weight limits have been imposed on the Retsof Road Bridge which will have a new deck installed shortly. The roadway network is generally in good structural condition at the present time and should be able to allow the present and anticipated volumes of traffic to move at acceptable rates.

***ISSUE:*** The rail bridge underpass (located on NY Route 63 on the west side of Greigsville) is maintained by the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad. This section of rail is not currently being used, and the rail right-of-way ends approximately one mile to the north (where it becomes the Groveland Trail). This bridge is posted with a clearance of 12’ 10”. According to state law (State Vehicle and Traffic Law (Section 1640.22(d)) ), bridge clearance signage is required when the measured overhead clearance is less than 14 feet and specifies that the legal clearance shall be one foot less than the measured clearance. Therefore, the actual clearance on this bridge should be no less than 13’ 10”. To verify this, FRA field measured the clearance on this rail bridge, and the lowest clearance measured occurred on the west side of the bridge structure. The clearance for the northern single white line was approximately 13’ 11”, the double yellow line clearance was 14’, and the southern single white line was 14’ 1”. Concern was raised that

tractor-trailers traveling westbound on NY Route 63 frequently stop suddenly when they see the bridge posting, and then try to turn around in residential driveways. An advance clearance warning sign should be posted at a site that will provide truck operators with an adequate alternate route.

***Recommendation:*** *The Town should request NYSDOT to post a bridge clearance warning ahead sign on westbound NY Route 63 near the York Central School to notify truck drivers of the clearance restriction in advance of the NY Route 36 intersection. In addition, consideration should be given by NYSDOT to the posting of an advance clearance sign on northbound NY Route 36 in advance of its intersection with NY Route 63. This sign could state “Trucks over 12’ 10”, Use NY36 to US20 as an alternative to NY63 North.” An actual clearance sign could also be posted to indicate, from each direction, what the true clearance is for the travel lane under the bridge.*

### **C. Parking**

***ISSUE:*** During sporting and other school events, on-street parking occurs on NY Route 63 between the rail overpass and NY Route 36. Vehicles typically park on either the paved shoulder or grass area bordering it. Given the volume of traffic on NY Route 63 and the high percentage of tractor-trailers, this is an undesirable activity. New “No Parking” signs were recently added to this section of roadway. The impact of these signs is yet to be determined.

***Recommendation:*** *If the newly added signage does not sufficiently address the parking problem, curbing could be added to this segment of road, restricting the feasibility of parking along the side of the road. This curbed area could be grassed, adding visual appeal and creating a safe walking area for pedestrians.*

**ISSUE:** During Town hall meetings, on-street parking occurs on NY Route 36 particularly on the west (southbound) side of the street. While this is an activity that one would expect within a hamlet, there may be an opportunity to improve the existing connection between the Town hall parking lot and the fire station to provide overflow parking. This could include the addition of parking spaces on the drive connecting the two properties (bordering a Town park).

**Recommendation:** *The Town should consider the improvement of existing parking lot connections between the Town hall and the fire station, potentially include the addition of parking spaces.*

**ISSUE:** Site visibility problems exist for cars coming off of East and West York Roads and turning onto Route 36 due to on street parking.

**Recommendation:** *The Town should consider the elimination of on-street parking on the west (southbound) side of NY Route 36 in the vicinity of the Town hall driveway entrance to improve visibility for vehicles exiting the Town hall parking lot.*

**Recommendation:** *The Town should consider the elimination of 3 to 4 on-street parking spaces on the west (southbound) side of NY Route 36 immediately north of York Road to improve visibility for vehicles traveling eastbound on York Road.*

**ISSUE:** There are several businesses in the hamlet of York, including the Post Office, with limited or angled parking. The angled parking occurs along a partially-curbed frontage with no sidewalks.

**Recommendation:** *Consideration should be given to eliminating the angled parking. Given the population in York that is served by this post office, the relocation of this facility to site where adequate off-street parking could be provided should be considered. The Town would need to coordinate with the US Postal Service to investigate this concept.*

## **D. Pedestrians**

**ISSUE:** Midblock pedestrian crosswalks can be provided on state roads, such as NY Route 36 or NY Route 63; however, the evaluation process to do so involves many factors, such as volume and frequency of crossing use (by pedestrians), sight distance, vehicular travel speeds, and other factors. NYSDOT evaluates the need for midblock pedestrian crossings on a case-by-case basis using engineering judgment and an assessment of risk. During the development of the transportation plan, potential pedestrian crossings were identified on NY Route 63 in Greigsville in front of the York Central School and in Piffard at the Genesee Valley Greenway.

**Recommendation:** *After conducting a site visit for each location, we recommend the following: Crossing in front of the York Central School – implement traffic calming measures (as recommended in the roadway section and re-evaluate once these improvements are in place). Given the location of this potential midblock crossing within the hamlet, the provision of sidewalks, narrower travel lanes and streetscape features may help to minimize this concern.*

**Recommendation:** *Streetscape improvements as described previously. Piffard – Genesee Valley Greenway – The visibility of this crossing is a concern, especially since the trail is located on the east end of the hamlet of Piffard and the presence of pedestrians or snowmobiles may be sudden to drivers on NY Route 63.*

**Recommendation:** *The Town should request to NYSDOT to evaluate the need for improved signage and crosswalk markings on NY Route 63 at its intersection with the Genesee Valley Greenway.*

**Recommendation:** *Existing and Proposed Trail System – The Town should continue to work for the improvement and expansion of pedestrian/multi-use trails within the Town. Potential east-west trails, as shown on the Transportation Issues map, should be explored.*

***Recommendation:*** *New residential development occurring along this trail corridor should be encouraged to participate, either through financial contribution from development, right-of-way dedication, or construction of a portion of the trail, or all of the above.*

### **E. Access Management**

Improved access management is needed, primarily at commercial properties, to consolidate driveway access points, eliminate a wide-open and undefined frontage, and to provide inter-parcel connections where possible. Recognizing that these types of improvements are typically only completed when either development or re-development occurs or as part of roadway construction projects, we recommend that the proposed streetscape improvement project on NY Route 63 include the improvement/ consolidation of access for adjacent properties. Encouraging, or even mandating, shared driveways is often undesirable for retail developers, however the concept is becoming more common, and therefore more accepted throughout the country.

For future development, the use of minimum driveway spacing standards and minimum corner clearance standards would help significantly. Corner clearance is used for intersections to help keep driveway access points from being located too close to the intersection, as driveways located too close to an intersection can add to safety concerns. Additionally, specifications for a maximum number of curbcuts per business, and maximum driveway opening should be implemented. Potential access standards are provided below that would be appropriate for implementation within the Town.

#### ***a) Zoning***

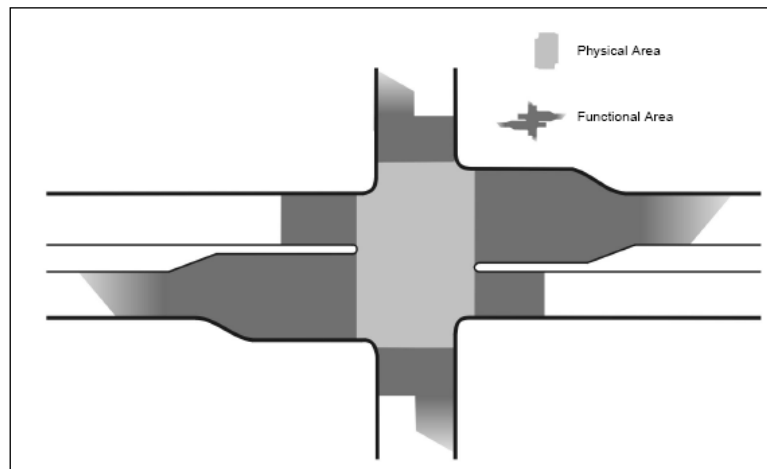
There are several regulations that could be put into the zoning code, likely through the creation of an overlay district that would provide additional

guidance and regulations, in addition to what is specified in the existing underlying zoning.

**i. Corner Clearance**

Corner clearance addresses the distance between an intersection and the nearest driveway. Corner clearance is especially a concern as driveways located near intersections are often located within the functional area of an intersection. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)<sup>i</sup>, “driveways should not be located within the functional area of an intersection or in the influence area of an adjacent driveway.” The difference between the physical area of an intersection versus the functional area of an intersection is depicted in **Figure 6**.

**Figure 6 – Functional Intersection Area**



Source: *Access Management Manual*, TRB, 2003, Figure 8-12, p. 132.

Adequate corner clearance should be provided at all signalized and unsignalized intersections on Route 63 in particular and possibly on Route 36. The following standards are recommended:

- Small generator (less than 1,000 daily trips) = 200 ft
- Large generator (more than 1,000 daily trips) = 400 ft

## ii. Driveway Spacing

The separation of conflict points simplifies the driver decision making by giving drivers a longer time to respond to successive access related events. Since driveways generate turning movements, driveways that are inadequately spaced create several functional and safety problems, particularly on roadways meant to be predominantly a through road. Providing adequate distance between driveways is a critical measure for controlling the flow of traffic, and the safety of ingress and egress.

For Route 63 the minimum driveway spacing standards should be:

- Small commercial generator (1,000 or less daily trips) = 150 ft
- Large commercial generator (more than 1,000 daily trips) = 350 ft full access; 150 ft right-in-right-out
- Single family residential = 20% of lot width

## b) Subdivision Requirements

The subdivision of large lots to create several smaller ones creates an opportunity to make critical access control decisions that will have a significant impact on how well, or poorly, those parcels can be tied into the transportation network. The following should be considered for incorporation into the Town's subdivision regulations:

- Access plan for full parcel must be submitted prior to subdivision approval
- Internalize access to extent possible (minimize curb cuts on public roads) and provide adequate spacing from main intersection

- Allow for easements/ cross connections to abutting properties
- Look for potential to cross-connect to multiple roads
- Require collectors be built to higher standards
- The number of access points for each development should be limited to one unless the frontage is greater than 1,000 feet.

## I. FACILITY, FISCAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

**ISSUE:** Identifying projects requiring Town resources, and investigating funding possibilities is essential to complete many of the recommendations outlined in this Plan.

**Recommendations:**

- Ensure all current and future Town-owned buildings and facilities are in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.
- Establish a Capital Improvements Program for the Town, including the expansion or improvement of sidewalks, roadways, recreation facilities, etc.
- Pursue State and Federal sources of funding to help reduce the local cost of carrying out major capital projects.
- Actively pursue grant programs and low interest loans to implement various projects and programs identified in the Plan.

## J. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**ISSUE:** It is important for the community to have access to information and to be involved in community issues and decisions. Also, with a rural town like York, creating opportunities to bring the community together is always beneficial to residents.

**Recommendations:**

- Create Town website that provides the community with information on upcoming meetings, projects, laws, guidelines, forms, contact information, etc.

- Expand newsletter to include more information on important land use and zoning issues, significant proposed projects, etc.
- Investigate interest in a Town-wide festival.

## **CHAPTER 6 - IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of a comprehensive plan happens during the subtle course of everyday Town business, such as when reviewing site plans, holding a public information meeting, or hearing requests for rezoning, and more obviously when the Town purchases new recreation land, writes and adopts new Town Code, or implements a sidewalk investment program. Both of these are equally important in implementing the vision set forth in the plan.

The recommendations provided in Chapter 5 are reiterated below with direction on who is a likely lead for implementing the recommendation, a planning level cost estimate if appropriate, and a relative priority. Grant source information is included in Appendix B.

### **A. PLAN ADOPTION AND UPDATE**

**Recommendation:** The Town Board should adopt the plan, and publish and distribute it to all boards, departments, and interested citizens in the Town. A copy should also be supplied to the Livingston County Planning Department.

**LEAD:** *Town Board*

**PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:** *N/A*

**PRIORITY:** *High*

**Recommendation:** The Town Board should initiate a yearly discussion of the comprehensive plan, seeking input from the Planning Board as to how well the plan is being used as a guide, and what progress has been made toward implementing the recommendations of the plan. The discussion should include dialogue regarding whether an update is required or not. In most cases, a minor update can be undertaken by the Town Board and/or Planning Board every 3-5 years, while a 5-10 year update may be more significant and require outside assistance.

**LEAD:** *Town Board*

**PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:** *Free if done internally, \$15-\$30K for consultant to prepare 5-10 year update.*

**PRIORITY:** *High*

## **B. TOWN ZONING CODE**

**Recommendation:** The Town Board should commission a full zoning rewrite for the Town that includes zoning districts, sign regulations, access management guidelines, site development regulations, etc. The Town's Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for zoning and should be used as a guiding document in completing the new zoning code.

**LEAD:** *Town Board*

**PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:** *\$40-\$50K*

**PRIORITY:** *High*

## **C. FARMLAND PROTECTION AND SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY**

### **Recommendations:**

- Provide guidance to farmers when subdividing for residential uses – create a handout regarding development options showing examples of clustering, etc.
- Whenever new residential development is proposed in proximity to farmland, utilize subdivision regulation and site plan approval processes to create a sufficient buffer to limit potential conflicts.
- Minimize any future extension of public water or sewer to agricultural areas except in cases of significant water quality or quantity issues.
- Allow flexibility for agribusinesses in the agricultural zoning districts.
- Continue to work with Livingston County on farmland protection efforts already underway.

- Work with Livingston County to consider Purchase of Development Rights for any appropriate farms that have particular community importance or are experiencing significant development pressure.

***LEAD: Planning Board, working with Town Board and Livingston County Planning***

***PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE: N/A***

***PRIORITY: High***

## **D. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

### **Recommendations:**

- Look for an opportunity to expand park land and facilities in the Hamlets.
- Improve signage to existing park facilities.
- Acquire the current York Fire Department facility and associated lands in the Hamlet of York if they become available for possible future use as a Town Park and municipal parking lot.
- Work with the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) to investigate feasibility and desire to modify the long-term trail identified in their Regional Trails Initiative linking the Groveland Extension and Genesee Valley Greenway to incorporate the historic Little Italy area.
- Identify any additional facilities needed in the community including the possibility of a community center or gathering space.
- Explore options for purchasing development rights of open space on the north side of Route 63 across from the school.
- Work with the school district to identify opportunities for shared facilities.
- Create bicycle and/or foot paths linking community, residential, institutional, and business districts together

***LEAD: Town Board***

***PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:*** *Some items have no cost, but others like adding signage to parks, acquiring additional land, etc. will require funding.*

***PRIORITY:*** *High*

## **E. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Recommendations:**

- Allow residential development in all districts (at varying densities) except Industrial
- Encourage cluster development.
- Monitor public utility capacity as development continues to occur.
- Ensure all necessary infrastructure is in place prior to issuing building permits for new houses.
- Look for opportunities to create passive open spaces in larger residential development.
- Create linkages from residential developments to public facilities or commercial areas when appropriate.
- Work with local emergency response officials to ensure new developments can be adequately served.
- Create comprehensive design guidelines, particularly for the areas classified as Residential (R) on the land use plan, that control density, layout, access, open space, etc..

***LEAD:*** *Planning Board/ Town Board*

***PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:*** *N/A – only recommendation requiring funding is the last one (design guidelines) which is covered under zoning.*

***PRIORITY:*** *High*

## F. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

### **Recommendations:**

- Work with County Industrial Development Agency to market industrial land, particularly in the Empire Zone and other areas where appropriate zoning and infrastructure exists.
- Require buffers between new industrial developments and adjacent residential and public uses to minimize conflicts and negative impacts.

**LEAD:** *Town Board*

**PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:** *N/A*

**PRIORITY:** *Medium*

## G. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### **Recommendations:**

- Incorporate access management standards to create safe and efficient access.
- Encourage small scale developments in hamlet areas while focusing larger developments along Route 63 and Route 36 in designated areas.
- Create design guidelines that will guide commercial development regarding landscaping, signage, façade, and lighting.

**LEAD:** *Town Board/Planning Board*

**PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:** *\$5-\$10K for design and access management guidelines*

**PRIORITY:** *Medium-High*

## H. TRANSPORTATION

The recommendations outlined in the transportation section of Chapter 5 highlight the key players (NYSDOT, Highway Department, GTC, etc) for each recommendation. The transportation elements in general should be viewed as high priorities given the safety and

functional problems they address. In many cases they also improve the character, look, and development potential of the main portions of the Town of York, adding to their importance.

There are several sources of transportation funding available, including state and federal programs. Grant information is provided in Appendix B.

## I. FACILITY, FISCAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

### **Recommendations:**

- Ensure all current and future Town-owned buildings and facilities are in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.
- Establish a Capital Improvements Program for the Town, including the expansion or improvement of sidewalks, roadways, recreation facilities, etc.
- Pursue State and Federal sources of funding to help reduce the local cost of carrying out major capital projects.
- Actively pursue grant programs and low interest loans to implement various projects and programs identified in the Plan.

***LEAD: Town Board***

***PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE: N/A unless a consultant is hired to prepare grant applications.***

***PRIORITY: Medium***

## J. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### **Recommendations:**

- Create Town website that provides the community with information on upcoming meetings, projects, laws, guidelines, forms, contact information, etc.
- Expand newsletter to include more information on important land use and zoning issues, significant proposed projects, etc.

- Investigate interest in a Town-wide festival.

**LEAD:** *Town Board/ Town staff*

**PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE:** *\$5K-\$10K per year for web hosting, newsletter preparation and distribution*

**PRIORITY:** *Medium*

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<sup>i</sup> American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, A Policy on Geometric Design for Highways and Streets, 2004, p. 556-558.

# York Comprehensive Plan

## ~Implementation Matrix of Key Recommendations~

Lead Agency	Recommendation	Priority	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Potential Funding sources
Town Board	Adopt and maintain comprehensive plan	High	N/A	N/A
	Revise zoning code	High	\$40-\$50K	Town general fund
	Yearly discussion of comp. plan	High	N/A	N/A
	Park and Trail Improvements - including acquisition of additional park land, potentially when/if fire house and facility in the Hamlet of York becomes available; improved signage to existing parks, etc.	High	Varies	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; NYS Quality Community Grants; Genesee Transportation Council
	Market industrial land	Medium	N/A	N/A
	Design guidelines for commercial development, access management standards	Medium-High	\$5-10K	NYS Main Street Program; Small Cities
	Establish a Capital Improvements Program	Medium	Internal	Local tax dollars
	Expand Town website, expand newsletter, investigate Town-wide festival	Medium	\$5-10K/Year	N/A
Planning Board	Provide farmers guidance on subdividing their property - encouraging clustering	High	Internal	N/A
	Ensure new developments are properly assessed for impact on public utilities and public services	High	N/A	N/A
	Work with developers to identify opportunities to create passive open spaces, preferably that link to existing facilities	Medium	N/A	N/A
Town Staff	Work with Livingston County to investigate Purchase of Development Rights programs for area farms of particular community importance	Medium	N/A	N/A