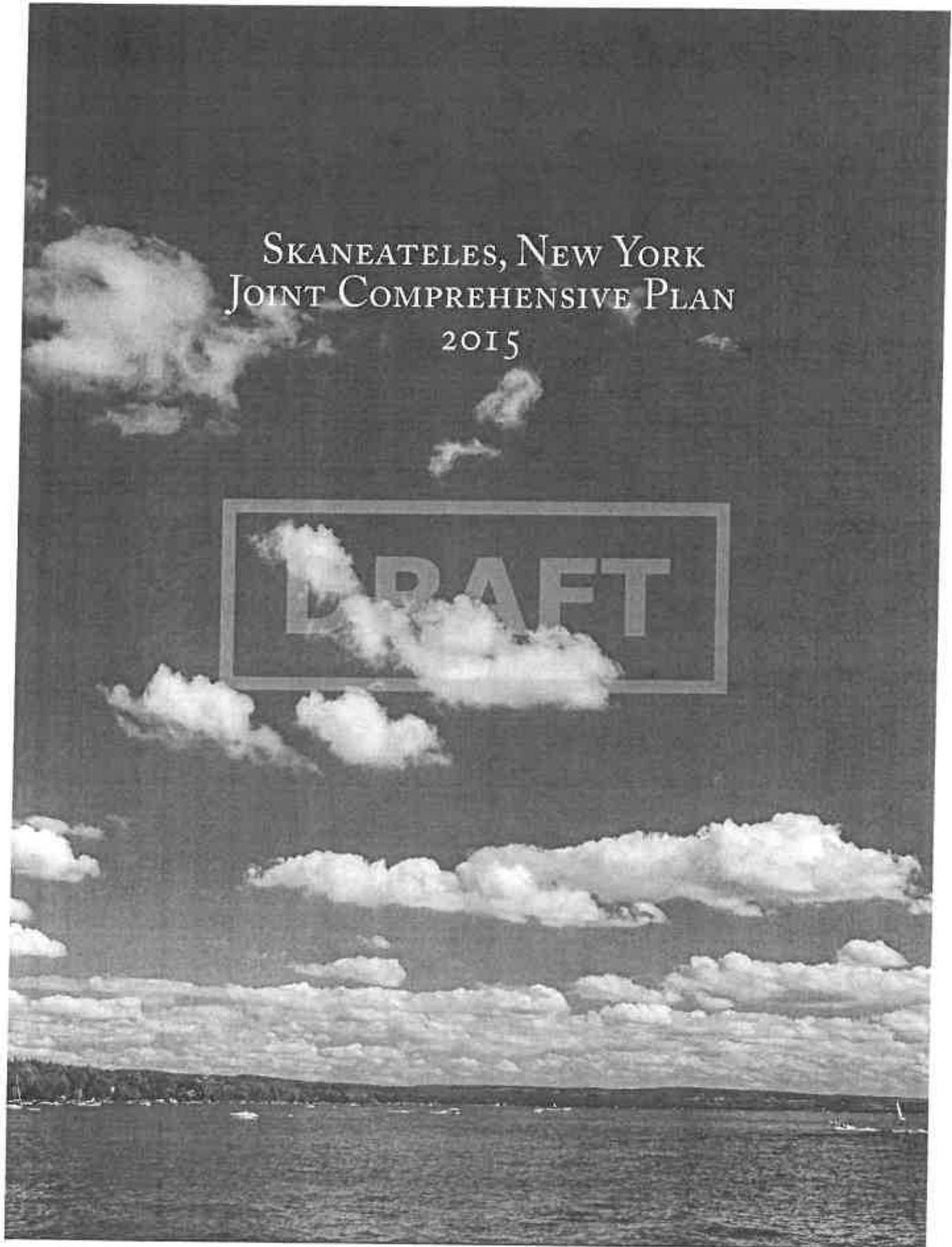


SKANEATELES, NEW YORK
JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2015

DRAFT



As of April 12, 2015

Image courtesy of Tom Dwyer

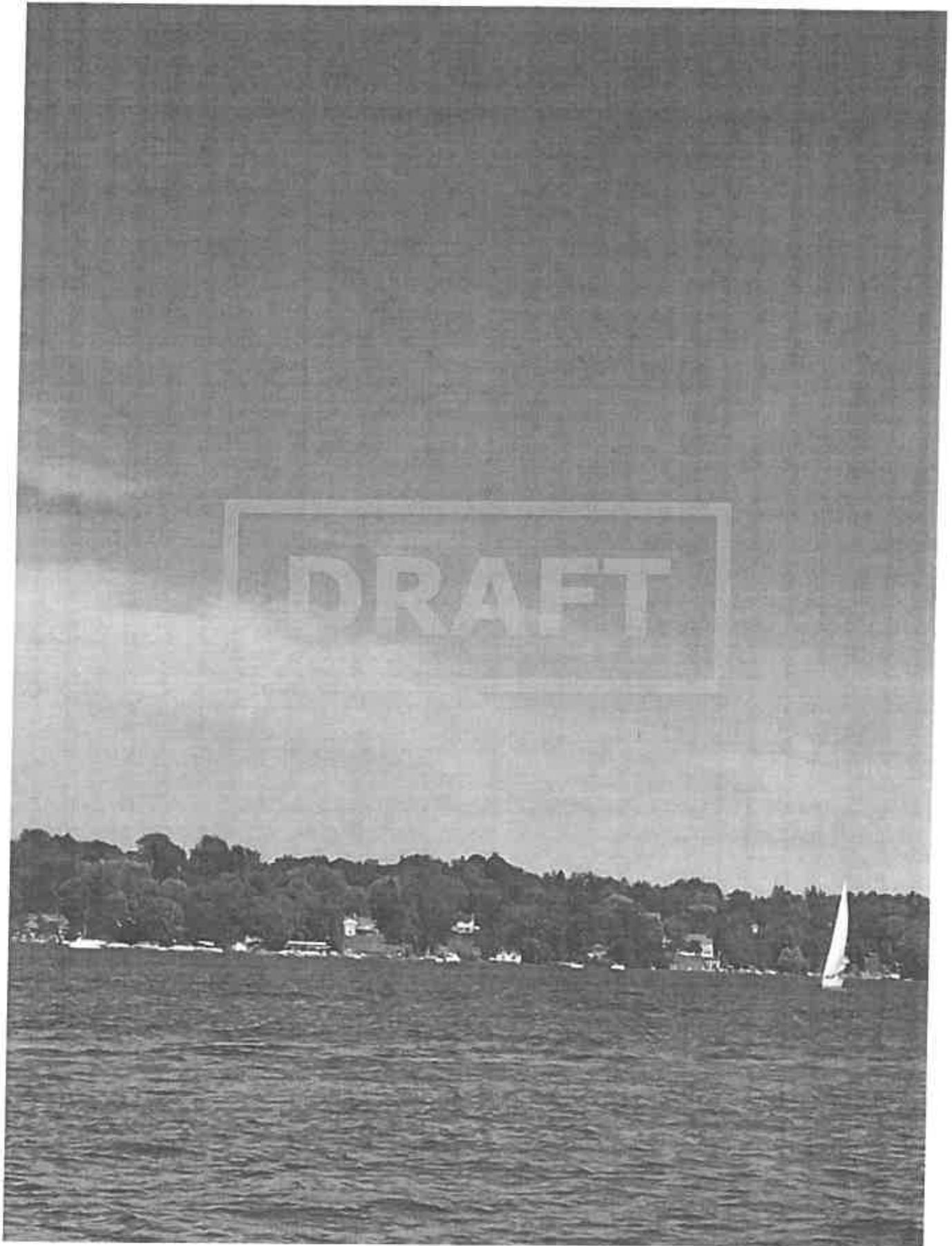


Image courtesy of Sue Dove

As of April 12, 2015

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A. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- a. This Joint Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) is the fundamental tool for steering the planning and development process for the Village and Town of Skaneateles. While the Plan covers planning and action recommendations for both the Town and Village, responsibility for implementation rests with each municipality for those actions that are within its respective jurisdiction. The Plan is predicated upon cooperation between the two municipalities, recognizing that they are in reality one community.
- b. The Plan is based on a group of broad goals and is intended to be used to guide the continued social, economic and physical development of the Town and the Village. The Plan identifies goals, objectives and actions intended to ensure the community and the environment are preserved for future generations. The Plan relies and builds upon the general continuation of laws, practices, services and actions that are currently in force and effect in the community. This framework has made Skaneateles a uniquely desirable place to live and visit. Maps and drawings are an important part of the Plan document as they depict a graphic example of the Plan's recommendations.
- c. The Plan recognizes that all communities change as a result of environmental, economic, political and other factors. The purpose of The Plan is to influence and channel such change in order to ensure that the fundamental attributes valued by the community are protected for generations to come.



2. VISION FOR SKANEATELES

- a. Settled along historic Route 20 on a pristine lake in a rural setting, Skaneateles is a unique community with abundant natural beauty combined with a quality of life that appeals to year-round residents as well as thousands of annual visitors and seasonal residents. The Plan's vision for the future stems from the past. Prior generations have established an ideal, small, upstate rural town with a charmingly vibrant village center. These characteristics must be preserved.
- b. The goal for Skaneateles is to maintain what currently makes it so attractive – a small community with defined and identifiable areas – rural, hamlets, village – while recognizing that change is inevitable, and in fact, desirable if guided by a set of thoughtful, well-defined principles. It is believed that new development can benefit the community, the economy, and the environment if it is carried out in a manner that embraces a set of principles frequently referred to as “smart growth”.
- c. A “smart growth” planning movement gathered momentum in the mid-1990s that was broadly based on a set of best practices, strategies, and policies that include:
 - i. Mixed land uses.
 - ii. Compact design.
 - iii. A range of housing opportunities and choices.
 - iv. Walkable communities.
 - v. Distinct, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
 - vi. Preservation of open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
 - vii. Development directed towards existing communities.
 - viii. A variety of transportation options.
 - ix. An atmosphere where development decisions can be predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
 - x. Encouragement of community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.
- d. These smart growth principles contribute to the enabling actions, goals, objectives, and actions guiding the Comprehensive Plan.
- e. Consistent with these principles, the Plan encourages incentive-driven, traditional neighborhood development that features pedestrian-friendly, walkable neighborhoods and focused mixed-use development, while protecting large areas of the rural landscape. In addition, by focusing infrastructure improvements in areas where growth is desired, less desirable development becomes less attractive to pursue.
- f. The Plan provides guidance for achievement of these widely held values and long-range possibilities.



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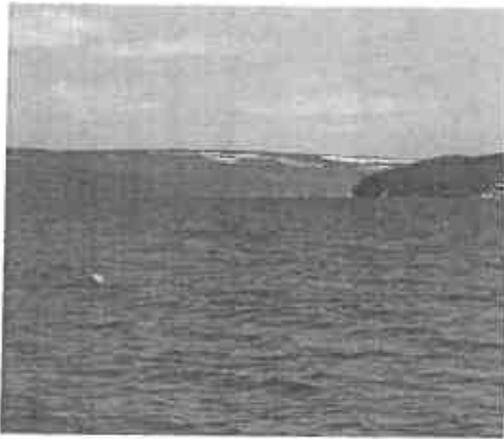
3. CONCERNS

- a. The Plan is based on issues and broadly held fundamental values recognized as enduring and necessary in shaping the future of Skaneateles. The Skaneateles community particularly values:
 - i. The pristine condition of the lake's waters and the beauty of its surroundings.
 - ii. The historic character and ambiance of the Village and its role as both the commercial and public center in the life of the Village and Town.
 - iii. The beauty and character of the rural and agricultural areas and natural landscapes throughout the Town.
- b. In establishing guidelines for the long-term maintenance of these characteristics, the Plan recognizes that the attributes that make this a desirable community also attract growth and new residents, which, if not managed wisely, could endanger the very features that appeal to these newcomers. By maintaining and managing the capacity to grow and change in ways that enhance the community's vitality and attractiveness, Skaneateles can ensure that the current quality of life is preserved for generations to come.
- c. A number of broad issues are addressed in The Plan:

- i. *Threats to the environment, including the purity of Skaneateles Lake:*

The water quality of Skaneateles Lake is paramount to the quality of life in the area. The lake is the source of unfiltered potable water for the City of Syracuse, the Villages of Skaneateles, Jordan, and Elbridge and all or parts of the Towns of Skaneateles and Elbridge. Skaneateles is also endangered by other threats not exclusive to the area, such as the spread of invasive species, non-renewable energy consumption, and threats to the water table.

- ii. *Undesirable land utilization:* While the population of Skaneateles has declined, the number of housing lots has increased. Large residential lots are consuming rural land. In October 2010, the Onondaga Citizens League released a report promoting sustainability in Onondaga County, *"What Does it Mean to be Green"*. That report stated that "...the rate of sprawl in Onondaga County has been nothing short of relentless. Since 1970 the amount of 'urbanized' land in the county has increased 92 percent...all with no new population growth." In 2010, New York State adopted the *"Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act"*, which requires that state infrastructure funding be consistent with smart growth principles, with funding priority given to existing infrastructure and projects which are consistent with local governments' plans for development.





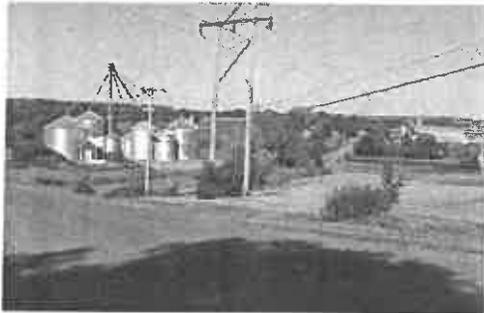
- iii. *Population trends:* During the period from 1970 – 2010, the population of the Town (including the Village) declined by 8 percent, most of which occurred between 1970 and 1980. Between 2000 and 2010, the median age of the town population increased by 5 full years (to 47.3). A declining and aging population can become a problem for a community, as there are functions that require scale and active engagement from its residents in order to offer quality and cost-effective services and robust community activities. For example, sufficient population and a strong tax base are needed to support services such as superior school system and recreation facilities. In addition, a robust population provides a level of community involvement necessary to sustain the quality of life and environment valued by residents of Skaneateles.
- iv. *Housing availability:* Due to the attractiveness of the area, demand has driven housing and land costs higher than in other upstate New York communities. This has resulted in limited availability of smaller, affordable homes for young families, senior citizens and others. The lack of affordable housing for young, starter families has contributed to the relative aging of the Skaneateles population.
- v. *The future of the northern hamlets:* The northern hamlets (Skaneateles Falls, Mottville and Willow Glen) have been the community's center for investment in industrial production and jobs for more than 150 years. But without modern infrastructure and a fresh, pro-active and pro-business approach, it will be difficult for the community to compete for significant new jobs in the years ahead.

4. ENABLING ACTIONS

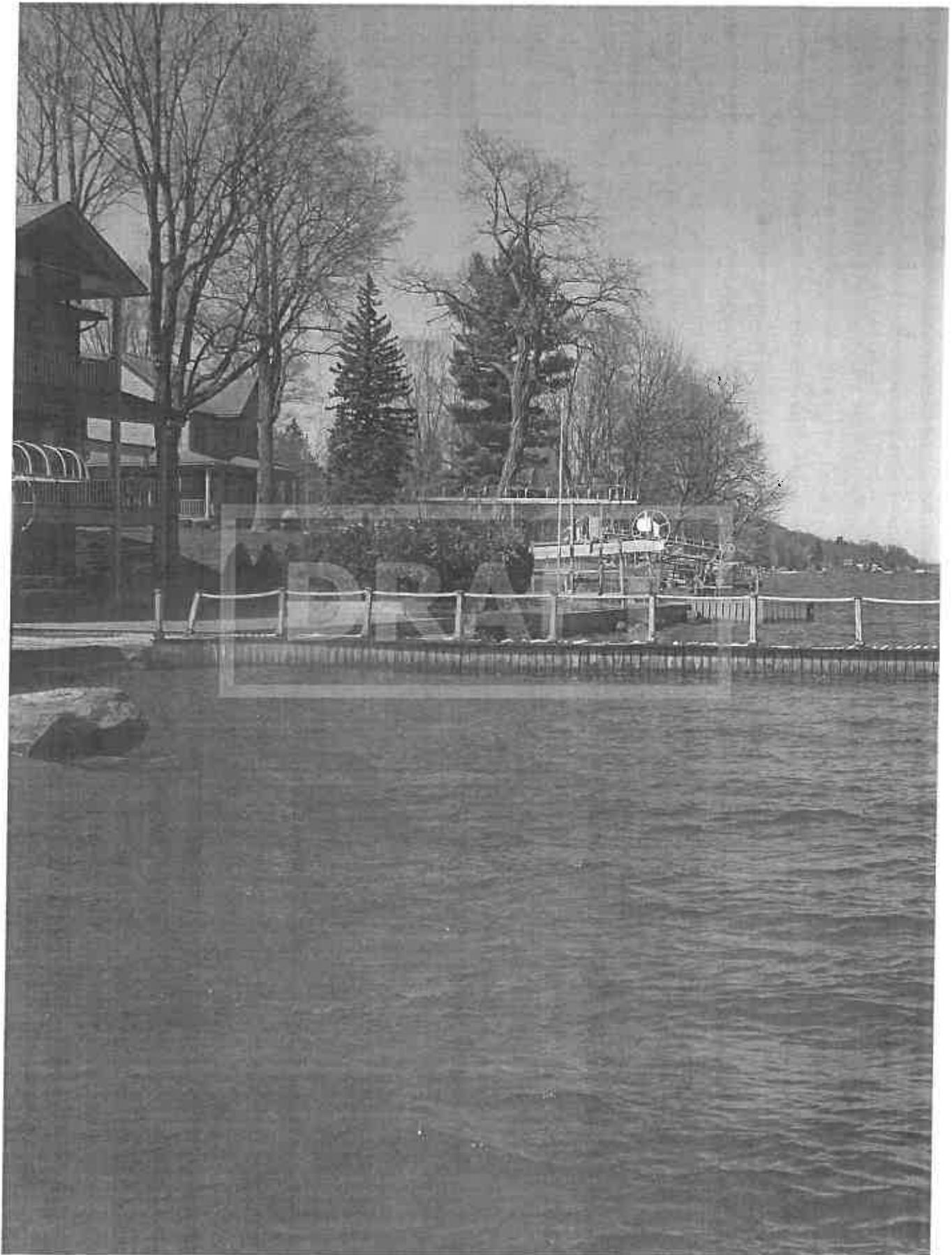
- a. The Plan is designed to move the Town and Village in the direction of realizing their desired future. The projected future land uses, building and development patterns and supporting infrastructure described in the Plan are both illustrative and prescriptive. The Plan and its implementation strategies are intended to help guide market, economic, governmental and political forces in an efficient, coherent, attractive and sustainable direction.
- b. The Plan is intended to be a guide for ongoing public and private actions in Skaneateles; its broad concepts intended to be used as a resource in public decision-making. To achieve the Plan's major goals and objectives, it is intended that both the Town and Village will use available land development regulations, environmental review techniques, capital improvement planning and other measures as necessary to accomplish this end.
- c. The Plan itself should evolve and be reevaluated from time to time. It is the intent of the Plan that the Town and Village:

- i. *Establish enabling procedures and processes that are consistent with Plan objectives.* Simple and clear procedures for projects that are consistent with the Plan's goals and objectives will encourage desired actions, while discouraging contrary actions.
- ii. *Update the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to include "Density-Neutral" Conservation Zoning and Subdivision provisions that promote the preservation of valuable farm land, natural habitat and scenic open space.* Conventional zoning and subdivision ordinances ultimately produce little more than house lots and streets. Density neutral conservation zoning and subdivision ordinances produce the same number of house lots, often with less area devoted to costly streets and infrastructure, while protecting prized natural features. The end result typically is a more attractive and pleasing environment that adds value to the house lots that are developed.
- iii. *Create a thoughtful strategy to help attract and shape growth and investment in the hamlets.* Strategic infrastructure investment and financial inducements can be used to attract new jobs and vitality to the hamlets and to spur industrial growth and encourage the development of smaller, more affordable housing for young families, seniors and others.
- iv. *Develop a joint Town/Village master plan to enhance the appearance and function of the village gateways.* A master plan should identify desired and intended land use patterns, densities, transitional elements and green space in the village gateway areas. The goal is to provide for incremental growth through a logical extension of the Village's traditional street and sidewalk network to neighboring parcels in the Town. Along the main traffic corridors, the goal is to address signage, landscaping and other ways to improve the physical appearance of the gateways.



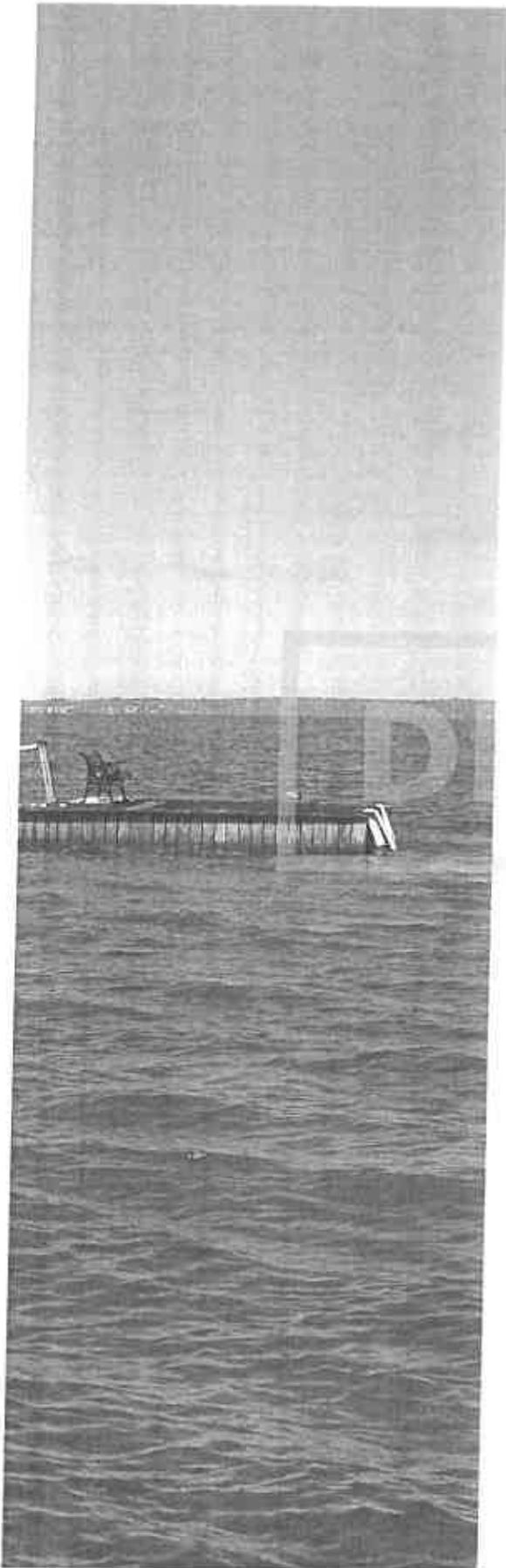


- v. *Use rural-to-urban transect concepts as a basis for implementing The Plan.* The Plan is predicated upon the desire to protect the rural nature of the town, and to channel housing, retail and industrial development toward targeted areas, the northern hamlets in particular. Clear demarcations of rural zones from village and hamlet zones provide a sense of order and logical boundary for those traveling through the community. Commercial development shall be directed to the northern hamlets and the core downtown area of the Village.
- vi. *Update as necessary Town and Village land use regulations to be consistent with the Plan.* The Plan encourages consideration and adoption of the concepts of form-based zoning, those outlined in "Strategies for Sustainable Skaneateles" and the green and sustainable neighborhood concepts set out in "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development". The Plan encourages substantial projects in the Village and Town to strive for a net zero energy addition to fossil fuel use and green house gas emissions of the community.
- vii. *Utilize innovative financing mechanisms to aid Plan implementation.* The Plan encourages creation of conservation easements and other tools to preserve valuable farmland and other prized open space. Exploration of various funding mechanisms and best practices already being utilized across Upstate New York is recommended to achieve the desired ends.
- viii. *Create a list of specific criteria against which achievement of Plan objectives can be measured.* Appoint a joint Comprehensive Plan Committee to review implementation of the Plan and from time to time recommend revisions to the Plan as appropriate. The Plan is a document that should be periodically revisited, updated, and improved.
- ix. *Inform and educate the public about the intent and provisions of the Plan.* The Plan outlines a strategic approach to insuring the community's attractive and sustainable future. The more widely the Plan's purposes and provisions are understood, the more successful will be its implementation.



B. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Some of these actions are intended to be undertaken solely by the Town or Village, some will require joint efforts by both governments, and some will require the cooperation of the private sector, the school district, and/or other agencies or entities. The Plan is meant to be user-friendly and serve as a continuing reference for Boards and their committees.
2. What follows are the specific goals, objectives and actions needed to support this vision for Skaneateles.



GOAL I.

SUSTAIN SKANEATELES' NATURAL RESOURCES FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Background

Skaneateles' Natural Resources include Skaneateles Lake, Skaneateles Creek and other major drainage ways, fertile farmland, undeveloped land (meadows and woodlands), mineral deposits, fish and wildlife, wetlands and floodplains. These resources help define the community and contribute to its character.

Skaneateles Lake has exceptionally high water quality and is one of the few large system surface water supplies in the country that is approved as an unfiltered water supply. Skaneateles Lake and its tributaries are AA rated by the NYS DEC. The purity of its waters is in part the result of many years of active government and citizen oversight with careful attention paid to the avoidance of adverse environmental impacts.

Skaneateles Creek and its watershed is rated C by the NYS DEC. The best usage of Class C waters is fishing. The Village treatment plant carries a NYS DEC SPDS permit for discharge into the creek.

The quality of ground water in the Town of Skaneateles is determined on a site-by-site basis through water sample testing. Past contamination of ground water at the Stauffer Chemical facility has been addressed with DEC coordination. Likewise, previously identified petroleum leaks in the Town have been mitigated.

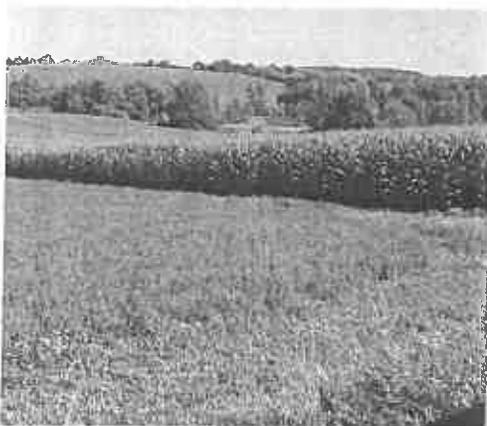
Mineral deposits in the Town of Skaneateles are currently being extracted at eight different mines. Settlement patterns have resulted in controversies in the Mining Overlay District (MOD). New York State has prohibited hydraulic fracturing (hydrofracking) within the Skaneateles Lake Watershed. The Town of Skaneateles has extended that prohibition, to include heavy industrial uses to all parts of the town.

Invasive species are a concern in Skaneateles Lake and on the lands surrounding it. Concerted efforts directed toward the eradication of Eurasian Milfoil have been successful and an active program to prevent its widespread recurrence is managed by the Skaneateles Lake Association.

1. Objective: Accelerate efforts to protect Skaneateles' high water quality.

- a. **Action:** Continue coordinated efforts to monitor the water quality of Skaneateles Lake and the groundwater within the Town of Skaneateles. Take necessary actions when and where water quality is threatened.
- b. **Action:** Identify components of the Skaneateles Lake ecosystem as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA). Encourage similar designations by adjacent Towns and Counties in order to maintain unfiltered, potable water quality.
- c. **Action:** Continue cooperation with the city of Syracuse, the NYS DEC, the USDA, other concerned agencies, neighboring towns and private organizations such as Skaneateles Lake Association (SLA), landowners and private sector professionals in formulating regulations protective of waters and watersheds within the town from chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, sedimentation and other pollutants emanating from residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural sources.





- d. **Action:** Educate the general public about the relationship between water quality and the importance of vegetative buffers and voluntary reduction in the use of chemicals, fertilizers and pesticides.
 - e. **Action:** Work with the City of Syracuse and the Skaneateles Lake Watershed agricultural community to apply “Best Farm Management Practices” within the Skaneateles Watershed.
 - f. **Action:** Continue to exert home rule rights to prohibit natural gas and/or petroleum extraction, exploration and/or the production, storage or disposal of extraction wastes.
 - g. **Action:** Move expeditiously and cooperatively with other lake-bordering municipalities to secure home rule rights to regulate shoreline structures.
 - h. **Action:** Work with the City of Syracuse, other municipalities and public and private agencies as necessary to prepare and implement a state-mandated Skaneateles Lake Watershed Management Plan outlining an action plan and priorities, introduction and spread of invasive species.
2. **Objective:** *Provide enhanced protection of valuable wetlands and watercourses.*
- a. **Action:** Adopt a community wetland and watercourse protection and restoration program.
 - b. **Action:** Create GIS mapping of wetland and watercourse resources and assess the functions and values of these identified wetlands and watercourses to determine areas of special importance.
 - c. **Action:** Prioritize these wetlands and watercourses in terms of preservation and, in the case of degraded assets, restoration potential.
3. **Objective:** *Protect and preserve high value natural resource areas.*
- a. **Action:** Prepare a detailed open space plan to identify all of the priority natural resource areas that need protection, and to recommend tools and techniques to preserve them.
 - b. **Action:** Support the objectives of the Finger Lakes Land Trust and others to purchase and sustain lands in permanent conservation.
 - c. **Action:** Maintain varied ecosystems to preserve and protect native fauna and flora.
 - d. **Action:** Strengthen Town Codes to protect sensitive environmental areas such as streams, drainage ways, ditches, wetlands, wooded areas, steep slopes, stream banks and watersheds.
 - e. **Action:** Strengthen Town Codes to reinforce intent of zoning districts with regard to density, land coverage, and watershed protection.
4. **Objective:** *Provide means for enhanced water quality and recreational opportunities along Skaneateles Creek.*
- a. **Action:** Take actions that address the sources of pollution entering Skaneateles Creek with the goal of elevating the stream to a higher quality water resource.
 - b. **Action:** Explore opportunities along Skaneateles Creek in the Village, hamlets and rural areas to improve habitat for trout and other cold water fish.
 - c. **Action:** Develop improved access in the Village, hamlets and rural areas for fishing and recreational opportunities along Skaneateles Creek.



GOAL 2.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE TOWN'S LARGELY RURAL AND AGRARIAN LAND.

Background

The rural land and landscape is being consumed by sprawl, which is enabled by zoning that encourages low density, single-use development. Owners of large undeveloped parcels subdivide and sell individual lots along existing roads. This development pattern results in wasteful, high per capita land consumption with the loss of open space that is critical to the character of the area. This development practice undermines the very attributes that attracted people to the community in the first place.

1. Objective: Develop and implement a rural and agricultural preservation program to conserve open land.

- a. **Action:** Strictly regulate future development to eliminate strip subdivisions, haphazard development, sprawl and waste. Re-zone agricultural and undeveloped land to protect important scenic and agricultural assets.
- b. **Action:** Employ development practices that preserve and protect significant topographic and natural features.
- c. **Action:** Encourage the use of conservation easements to protect and maintain valued natural features.
- d. **Action:** Adopt "Density-Neutral" Conservation Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance provisions to require higher density clustered development on small portions of large, master-planned tracts with the balance of land put into permanent conservation.
- e. **Action:** To preserve the rural character of the Town's rural roadways, develop regulations that require wide spacing between driveways or curb cuts along rural roads and that establish significant building setbacks from rural roads.
- f. **Action:** Develop policies and procedures for agricultural lands removed from production.
- g. **Action:** Plan to eventually reclaim spent mines as green space. Create a "restoration fund" financing mechanism to support rehabilitation of degraded lands once active mining ceases.
- h. **Action:** Restrict mining operations to the current Mining Overlay District and discourage expansion of land uses adjacent to active mining areas that are incompatible with mining operations. Compress the current mining overlay district to exclude established residential areas, wetlands, watercourses, and high value agricultural areas.

"Density Neutral" Conservation Zoning:
The overall number of dwellings is the same as in conventional developments.





2. *Objective: Support agricultural activities and encourage land use alternatives for open spaces and agricultural lands that preserve the rural character in the Skaneateles and Owasco Lake watersheds.*
 - a. *Action:* Establish clear limits to non-farm growth in the watersheds.
 - b. *Action:* Develop and implement an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan that advances open space, recreation, and farmland protection. The current Open Space and Recreation Plan, available in the Town and Village Offices, is hereby incorporated by reference.
 - c. *Action:* Promote the purchase and/or transfer of development rights and other preservation tools to redirect development from valued agricultural and open space zones to priority areas for new investment.
 - d. *Action:* Establish and promote enhanced, dedicated funding mechanisms such as a Real Estate Transfer Tax on conveyances of certain real property for open space, recreation, and farmland protection.
 - e. *Action:* Encourage and enable agriculturally-related businesses (e.g. roadside farm markets, vineyard tasting rooms, equestrian centers and other forms of agritourism).
 - f. *Action:* Promote the creation and expansion of agricultural districts. Develop agricultural protection zoning in consultation with the farming community designed to stabilize the agricultural land base, discourage land uses other than agriculture and limit the density of residential development within these districts.
3. *Objective: Recognize the unique characteristics of the Town and Village of Skaneateles with the thought and goal of preservation.*
 - a. *Action:* Review, identify and define exceptional features and areas within the Town for the purpose of preservation. The SAVIT document, which was produced through a committee process during the 1995 comprehensive planning process, was a good beginning that should be updated and expanded. It is attached in the appendix.
 - b. *Action:* Encourage conservation efforts such as purchasing/acquiring conservation lands, maintaining wildlife friendly areas and good fishing habitats.
 - c. *Action:* Establish and maintain a distinct transition between rural and non-rural land uses.
 - d. *Action:* Seek approval from NYSDOT for designation of Routes 41 and 41A as scenic highways.
 - e. *Action:* Develop criteria and a land use approval process for review of new utility and telecommunication structures in the rural landscape.
 - f. *Action:* Continue efforts to limit non-local truck traffic in the Village and Town.
4. *Objective: Protect important lake and rural landscape view sheds as viewed from roads and other public spaces.*
 - a. *Action:* Develop policies and programs designed to identify, preserve and protect view sheds. Ensure development approval processes take into account these view shed conservation recommendations.
 - b. *Action:* Target view sheds as important additions to Town conservation holdings. Consider acquisition of development rights to preserve and protect the best of these view sheds.



GOAL 3.

ENCOURAGE GROWTH AND INVESTMENT IN THE NORTHERN HAMLETS (SKANEATELES FALLS, MOTTVILLE AND WILLOW GLEN) IN THE FORM OF MIXED USE AND WALKABLE COMMUNITIES.

Background

Smart growth principles encourage the accommodation of future growth in areas already served by infrastructure and commercial activity, and clustered residential development which supports walking as a viable choice for mobility. Specifically, Goal 3 is centered on promoting clean industry job growth in and around the northern hamlets. In conjunction with clean industrial growth, the development of a variety of housing types that will be affordable to a large cross-section of Skaneateles residents is encouraged, as is neighborhood supportive retail in hamlet population centers where there is sufficient demand to make a service or retail business viable.



1. *Objective: Actively attract “clean” industry and other compatible businesses to the northern hamlets.*

- a. *Action:* Establish a broad-based economic development committee with representation from existing hamlet employers, residents and other interested parties to develop a comprehensive and proactive strategy for attracting and/or expanding desirable businesses in the hamlets.
- b. *Action:* Include in this analysis a thoughtful and strategic economic development program to support growth and investment while adding to the appeal and long-term economic viability of the hamlets.
- c. *Action:* Prepare a master plan supportive of the economic development program that incorporates clean industrial investment side-by-side with the traditional neighborhood development patterns that have existed in the hamlets for more than 150 years.
- d. *Action:* Consider economic incentives to attract economic development consistent with the Plan.

2. *Objective: Encourage development of Town water and sewer infrastructure in and adjacent to the northern hamlets to support targeted economic investment*

- a. *Action:* Engage engineers to provide advice about safe and innovative wastewater disposal and treatment technologies and management arrangements, including constructed wetlands and package treatment plants.
- b. *Action:* Consider creating wastewater management zones in and adjacent to the hamlets where innovative wastewater technologies and/or management arrangements such as constructed wetlands can be employed.
- c. *Action:* Evaluate various equitable means of financing and operating potential new water and wastewater facilities in and adjacent to the hamlets without burdening all Town residents.



3. *Objective: As the opportunities allow, encourage incremental mixed-use traditional neighborhood growth with a diversity of uses and housing types, especially those that serve the needs of young families and senior citizens.*
 - a. *Action:* Encourage neighborhoods within walking distance of a mix of clean industry, commercial, residential, recreational, religious and civic uses.
 - b. *Action:* Encourage the development of a “third place” within each hamlet to serve as a neighborhood anchor and informal gathering place.
 - c. *Action:* Refine land use classifications and prepare a zoning map that allows for a variety of housing types such as single-family houses, attached row houses, multifamily housing, carriage houses, and residences above stores.
 - d. *Action:* Adopt zoning incentives and programs to encourage housing that is affordable to a broad segment of the Skaneateles community.
 - e. *Action:* Encourage the conversion of large older buildings, including barns and mill buildings, to apartments and small businesses.
 - f. *Action:* Consider creating a supply of permanently deed-restricted affordable housing using zoning incentives and other mechanisms.

4. *Objective: Beginning with the northern hamlets, become a model community for protecting the environment and reducing the community’s carbon footprint. Support sustainable building initiatives, renewable energy utilization, and environmentally-friendly industrial and agricultural practices and development.*
 - a. *Action:* Encourage alternative storm water management techniques to control quantity and quality of run-off into streams, outlets, and municipal storm water systems.
 - b. *Action:* Incorporate “Complete Streets” in planning new or renovated roads, providing pedestrian and bicycle use and landscaping.
 - c. *Action:* Develop standards and incentives for subdivision design that are consistent with Traditional Neighborhood Design “TND” and/or the principles of “LEED for Neighborhood Development” and educate local builders and building owners on sustainable benefits, including integrated design strategies that reduce operational costs and improve building performance.
 - d. *Action:* Evaluate the possibility of reintroducing limited hydro energy generation along Skaneateles Creek to encourage investment and job growth.
 - e. *Action:* Prepare and adopt a Town Climate Action Plan.



GOAL 4.

ENCOURAGE GATEWAY ENHANCEMENT AND THE EXTENSION OF HIGHER DENSITY, MIXED USE AND WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS WITH A DIVERSITY OF HOUSING TYPES TO THOSE AREAS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS.

Background

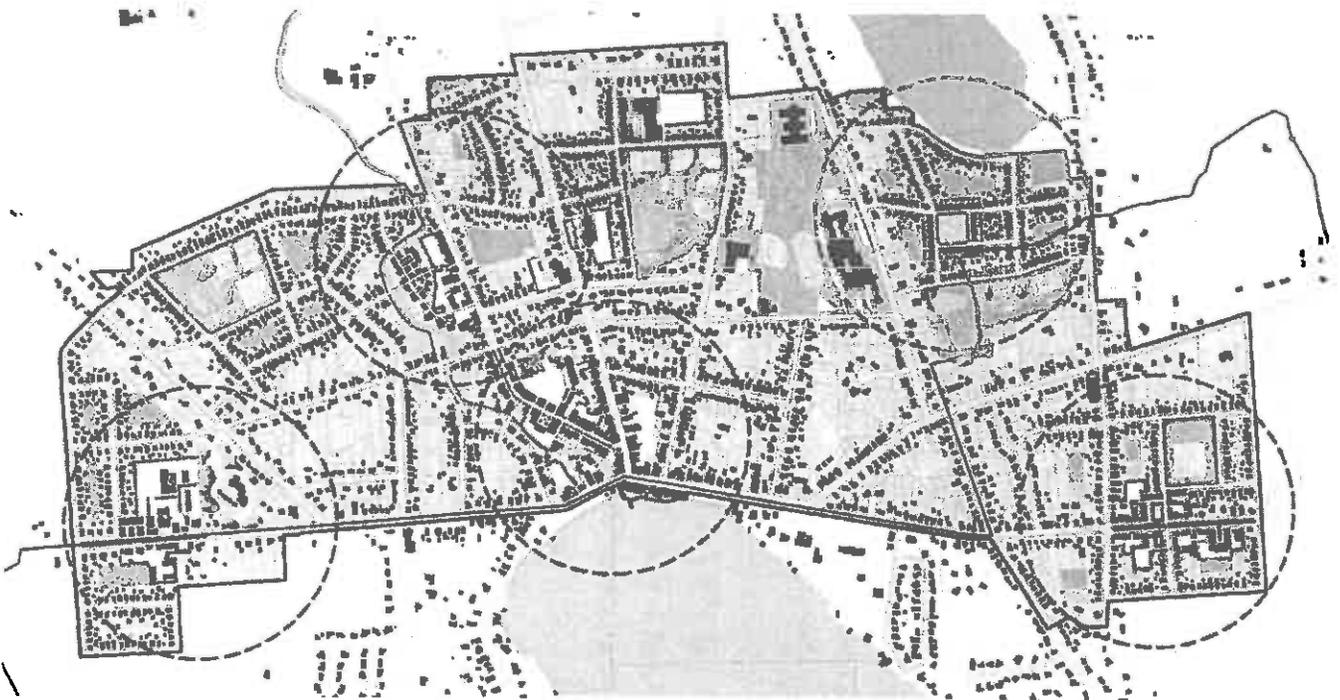
There are about 1.7 square miles within the political boundary of the Village of Skaneateles. However, the effective economic boundary of the village extends further east and west on Route 20, north on Route 321 and south along Route 41 and 41A. The village and town should consider planning and zoning changes that accommodate future growth adjacent to the village that is compatible with the attractive and historic building patterns and walkability of the village.

1. *Objective: Create gateway areas that provide clear transitions from town to village.*
 - a. *Action: Prepare master plans for gateway areas at both the east and west Village/Town lines that identify desired and intended land use patterns, streets and sidewalks, densities, transitional elements and green space. Apply the resulting master plan principles in the review and approval of proposed development in each zone.*
 - b. *Action: Adopt appropriate gateway principles in master plans for the other major village gateways at Routes 41, 41A and 321.*
 - c. *Action: Develop methods and models for financing public infrastructure, and apply for public infrastructure grants to make gateway proposals feasible.*
 - d. *Action: Avoid creating large parking areas near and visually intrusive upon adjacent roads. Require parking areas associated with commercial and industrial sites to be located to the rear or side of buildings and to have landscaped screening from the road and adjacent properties.*

2. Objective: Consider Village and adjacent Town neighborhoods as an interconnected system.

- a. **Action:** Develop a master street plan consistent with principles outlined in the “Strategies for a Sustainable Skaneateles” report. The expansion of new streets from the Village to the immediately adjacent Town should be consistent with the traditional street network of the Village that provides connectivity, promotes the efficient use of land and infrastructure, and reduces traffic congestion through the alternate routes.
- b. **Action:** Ensure adequate sidewalks and walking paths on at least one side (and ideally both sides) of all Town streets and roads that are adjacent to the Village (especially within one mile of schools) to connect Town residential areas with Village services and businesses.
- c. **Action:** Consider creating incentives and bonuses for developers and property owners who conform their development proposals to approved master plans.
- d. **Action:** Encourage a diversity of housing types, especially those that serve the needs of young families and senior citizens.

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GOAL 5.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND VIBRANCY OF THE VILLAGE.

Background

The Village has been and continues to be the residential center of Skaneateles and the Village's downtown has successfully functioned as its commercial, retail and public service core. Set amidst historic neighborhoods, the village center has also provided residents and visitors alike with access to public parks offering broad views of beautiful Skaneateles Lake. To keep the village center thriving and its character intact it is desirable to strengthen the retail core with housing options that allow for new downtown residents while maintaining the character of the downtown and adjacent retail areas.

1. **Objective:** *Protect historically significant architecture, valued neighborhood character and important public open spaces throughout the Village.*
 - a. **Action:** Identify (from prior and supplementary studies) significant buildings and neighborhood attributes and public assets to be retained in the face of development pressure.
 - b. **Action:** Develop location-specific design guidelines to be applied through the Village Planning Board's review processes and zoning regulations that can protect traditional Village neighborhoods.
 - c. **Action:** Prepare master plans for parts of the Village and connected areas of the Town in which significant architecture and valued neighborhood character are present and where new development is desirable and/or likely.
 - d. **Action:** Consider additional historically significant parts of the Village for designation as historic districts. Develop incentives for such designation.
 - e. **Action:** Develop a long-term plan in the Village to eliminate overhead power and telecommunication lines in the downtown area and key near-by locations as designated by the Village Board.
2. **Objective:** *Ensure that the village center remains the primary focus and destination for retail activity in Skaneateles.*
 - a. **Action:** Take such steps as are necessary to implement the development characteristics of the Fennell Street corridor study. Encourage traditional forms of mixed use development along the Fennell Street corridor that are similar to the residential-over-commercial forms that distinguishes many of the historic structures along Genesee Street.
 - b. **Action:** Limit the scale and type of non-residential development in areas outside of targeted development areas. Commercial development shall be directed exclusively to the hamlets and the core downtown area of the Village.
3. **Objective:** *Develop policies to encourage a broad array of housing in new and existing commercial areas to support local walkable neighborhoods.*
 - a. **Action:** Consider modifying the Village Zoning Code to allow for a designated variety of housing types (e.g. townhouses and multi-family housing) in specific zones and locations within the Village, subject to appropriate design standards and site and infrastructure considerations.



- b. *Action:* Formulate and adopt policies that can provide density bonuses and/or reduce or mitigate property tax burdens on property developers for providing housing designated by the Village as furthering the public interest (e.g. accessible housing and multiple family housing).
 - c. *Action:* Establish design standards and site and structural requirements for designated areas in the Village where new, density traditional neighborhood development is considered desirable.
4. *Objective: Ensure that public and private parking facilities are available in a reasonable supply to support expected activities and land uses.*
- a. *Action:* Create a downtown parking committee of merchants, downtown property owners, renters, employees and village and town residents who shop and use the downtown to advise the Village Board on parking matters.
 - b. *Action:* Work with property owners to encourage cross-easements and shared use of private parking lots to expand the quantity of available parking in the aggregate and for each participating property.
 - c. *Action:* Evaluate the feasibility of operating a shuttle bus to serve perimeter parking lots during summer months and on busy weekends.
5. *Objective: Extend walkability in the village to all streets and neighborhoods.*
- a. *Action:* Provide adequate sidewalks on both sides of all village streets, supplemented with walking paths as appropriate to provide continuity and to connect all contiguous residential areas with services and businesses and the village center.
 - b. *Action:* Provide adequate shade, resting places, and visual enhancements to make pedestrian movement a pleasant experience.
 - c. *Action:* Explore the feasibility of construction of a pedestrian bridge over Skaneateles Creek to create improved linkage between the Fennell Street and Genesee Street commercial areas.
6. *Objective: Make Skaneateles a model community for sustainable and available energy and utilities.*
- a. *Action:* Prioritize and implement strategies to reduce both the Town's and Village's energy use and green house gas emissions. Complete and adopt the Village's "Climate Action Plan" proposal.
 - b. *Action:* Develop and expand a "smart grid" for power, data and telecommunications services.
 - c. *Action:* Evaluate the costs to the Village and the options available to electric power users in the Village to monitor and modulate their power consumption to result in peak load "shaving."
 - d. *Action:* Review the rate structure for electric power in the Village to create incentives for efficient and economical utilization of power and disincentives for profligate or excessive power use.
 - e. *Action:* Pursue a community-based renewable energy program promoting sustainable energy production with a goal of generating clean carbon-free energy, creating local jobs, and stabilizing current and future energy cost for residents. The program could be modeled after similar programs in Madison County and elsewhere across New York State.



Image courtesy of Finger Lakes Land Trust



GOAL 6.

PROVIDE YEAR-ROUND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY.

Background

Recreational opportunities for all ages are important in a healthy community. Sports, wellness, fitness, and social opportunities contribute to the overall quality of life in Skaneateles. Fishing, hiking, hunting, swimming, ice skating, skiing (downhill and cross-country), snowmobiling, and boating are just some of the indoor and outdoor recreational activities available to the community. The community has invested in facilities such as the Community Center, but should strive to provide broad opportunities for both indoor and outdoor activities that promote active lifestyles.

1. *Objective: Develop and implement a walkable environment.*

- a. *Action:* Establish zoning and subdivision regulations that address the installation of sidewalks, walking paths and/or creekwalk (as appropriate) in subdivisions and zoning applications, and establishment of creekwalk easements (as appropriate) elsewhere.
- b. *Action:* Take such actions as necessary to establish continuous sidewalks or paths linking the Eastern Gateway with the Western Gateway.
- c. *Action:* Expand the existing trail system including The Charlie Major Trail and Steve Krause Trail along Skaneateles Creek to create a continuous path from the village center to Skaneateles Falls.
- d. *Action:* Support the Finger Lakes Land Trust's program to develop a recreation trail with scenic views along the eastern highlands, and explore ways to extend the path to eventually connect Borodino with Shepard Settlement.
- e. *Action:* Explore the idea of developing a year-round activity and hiking trail along the western highlands from Mandana to the Village of Skaneateles.
- f. *Action:* Explore the idea of establishing a sidewalk or bike trail from Welch Allyn along Route 321 to the Village center. Welch Allyn is a major employer of local residents. Establishing an easy way to walk or bike to work could have a beneficial impact on our carbon footprint.
- g. *Action:* Establish a small working group to make and prioritize specific recommendations on where new trails and paths should be located and how best to finance, develop and maintain these facilities.



2. Objective: Create a bicycle-accessible community.

- a. **Action:** Establish bike lanes on major commuter roads and the Fennell Street Corridor.
- b. **Action:** Coordinate with the Towns of Spafford, Scott, Sempronius and Niles to establish a safe and well-identified bike trail around the lake.
- c. **Action:** Install bicycle racks in the village and hamlets.

3. Objective: Make more public land available for recreation.

- a. **Action:** Acquire additional conservation lands and develop them into accessible natural areas available for recreation such as camping, hiking, and fishing.
- b. **Action:** Identify opportunities to finance and acquire new public lake access for swimming, picnicking, canoeing, and kayaking.
- c. **Action:** Provide for more localized outdoor recreation facilities by providing and maintaining small neighborhood parks as illustrated in "Strategies for Sustainable Skaneateles."
- d. **Action:** Explore opportunities to establish more park, recreation and public fishing opportunities along Skaneateles Creek.
- e. **Action:** Consider using the approximately 90-acre parcel owned by the Town and located on Route 20 at the junction of Route 175 for recreation. Consider other surplus town-owned land for new and expanded trails and parks.

GLOSSARY

Words and phrases within this document shall have an ordinary dictionary meaning except as may be defined otherwise hereafter. If a term is not defined herein, then the municipal attorney or other authorized person shall determine the correct definition.

Affordable Housing: dwellings consisting of rental units or for-sale units. Both shall be economically within the means of the starting salary of a local elementary school teacher or law enforcement officer.

Agricultural District: an area of land certified by the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Markets (pursuant to Agriculture and Markets Law, Article 25, sections 303 and 304) for the purpose of encouraging agricultural activity and protecting farm land.

Alley: a narrow local urban passage, typically along the rear of building lots used for secondary vehicular movement as well as providing service areas, parking access, and utility easements. (Rare in Skaneateles.)

Apartment: a residential unit sharing a building and a lot with other units and/or uses; may be for rent, or for sale as a condominium.

Avenue: a thoroughfare of high vehicular capacity and low speed, of interchangeable importance with boulevards in the hierarchy of thoroughfares. Avenues typically have trees on both sides of the roadbed and commonly front commercial activity.

Bicycle Lane: a portion of the public right-of-way dedicated for bicycles running within a low- or moderate speed vehicular thoroughfare, demarcated by striping.

Bicycle Route: a thoroughfare suitable for the shared use of bicycles and automobiles moving at low speeds.

Bicycle Trail: a bicycle way running independently of an automobile thoroughfare (Syn. Bicycle Path).

Block: the aggregate of private lots, passages, and rear alleys, circumscribed by thoroughfares.

Boulevard: a thoroughfare designed for high vehicular capacity and moderate speed, of interchangeable importance with avenues in the hierarchy of thoroughfares. Boulevards are typically treed on both sides of the divided roadbed with a landscaped median or medians which may include areas for pedestrians and monuments.

Brownfield: an area previously used primarily as an industrial site.

Building Stories: the number of habitable floors within a building counted from the ground floor to the underside of the ceiling of the floor below the roof eave line. Attics and raised basements are not considered stories for the purposes of determining building height.

Build-to Line: a line appearing graphically on the code diagrams stated as a dimension, along which a façade must be placed, usually a designated minimum of the lot depth or width.

Carriage House: an outbuilding traditionally used for the storage of carriages and other vehicles, but more contemporarily used for housing automobiles with an occupiable dwelling unit above (Syn: Coach House).

Center: an area of focused community activity, a common destination. It may include without limitation one or more of the following: a Civic Space, a Civic Building, a commercial hub, or a transit station, and may act as the social core of a neighborhood.

Civic Building: a building designed specifically for a civic function, religious or secular, operated by government or not-for-profit organizations, often found in a Civic Use zone.

Coach House: Syn: Carriage House.

Code: the portions of this document which govern the design of streets; the building types permitted on building lots and their location and height; and the parking requirements for private parcels of land.

Commercial: that which involves the exchange of cash, goods, services, or any other remuneration for goods, services, lodging, meals, or entertainment in any form; or the right to occupy space for commercial purposes over a period of time. Also, the term collectively defining workplace, office, retail and lodging functions.

Complete Streets: a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation. Complete Streets allow for safe travel by those walking, bicycling, driving automobiles, riding public transportation, or delivering goods.

Constructed Wetlands: an artificial wetland created as a new or restored habitat for native and migratory wildlife, for anthropogenic discharge such as wastewater, stormwater runoff, or sewage treatment, for land reclamation after mining, refineries, or other ecological disturbances such as required mitigation for natural areas lost to a development.

Corner Lot: a lot with two or more street frontages (typically two).

Cottage Court: a collection of single family detached and duplex dwellings, typically having smaller lots than the surrounding neighborhood, oriented toward a shared sidewalk perpendicular to the primary street frontage.

Curb: the edge of the vehicular pavement that may be raised or flush to a swale. It usually incorporates the drainage system.

Density: the number of dwelling units within a standard measure of land area.

“Density Neutral” Conservation Zoning: a form of land regulation that encourages flexible design solutions in order to promote environmentally sensitive and efficient uses of the land. Conservation subdivisions are generally “density-neutral” - meaning the overall number of dwellings built is not different from that done in conventional developments. With land subdivided through a conservation subdivision regulation, local government can preserve unique or sensitive natural resources such as groundwater, floodplains, wetlands, streams, steep slopes, woodlands, and wildlife habitat. Conservation subdivisions entail the clustering of houses and structures on smaller lots with less environmentally sensitive soils, which reduces the amount of infrastructure including paved surfaces and utility easements necessary for residential development.

Design Speed: is the velocity at which a thoroughfare tends to be driven without the constraints of signage or enforcement. There are four ranges of speed: Very Low: (below 20 MPH); Low: (20-25 MPH); Moderate: (25-35 MPH); High: (above 35 MPH). Vehicular lane width is determined by desired Design Speed.

Development Rights, Purchase of: a voluntary program, where a land trust or some other agency usually linked to local government, makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer, or to try to negotiate a higher price. Once an agreement is made, a permanent deed restriction is placed on the property which restricts the type of activities that may take place on the land in perpetuity. In this way, a legally binding guarantee is achieved to ensure that the parcel will remain agricultural, or as open (green) space forever. This is because the agency involved retires the development rights upon purchase. The deed restriction may also be referred to as a conservation easement, or, since most PDR programs are designed to preserve agricultural use, an agricultural conservation easement.

Development Rights, Transfer of: a land use regulation technique that can be used to ensure that the open space requirements of the municipality's planning goals are met without causing a financial burden to landowners or restricting needed development. TDR permits all or part of the density potential (established in the local zoning law or ordinance) of one tract of land to be transferred to a noncontiguous parcel or even to land owned by someone else. The development rights become a separate article of property, which can be sold to a landowner whose property is better suited to greater densities. After selling the development rights, a landowner still retains title and all other rights to his land. These other rights permit farming, forestry, some recreational uses, and other nonintensive uses.

Disposition: the placement of a building on its lot.

District: an area identified for a large single-use institution and its purposes that by its intrinsic function, disposition or configuration cannot conform to one of the normative transect zones defined by this document. Districts may include institutional campuses, industrial sites, etc. (Syn. Special District).

Drive: a thoroughfare along the boundary between an Urbanized and a natural condition, usually along a waterfront, park, or promontory. One side has the urban character of a thoroughfare, with sidewalk and building, while the other may have the qualities of a road or parkway, with naturalistic planting and rural details.

Elevation: an exterior wall of a building not along a frontage line.

Encroachment: any structural element that breaks the plane of a vertical or horizontal regulatory limit, extending into a setback, into the public frontage or right-of-way, or above a height limit.

Façade: the exterior wall of a building that is set along a frontage line. (See Elevation).

Form-Based Zoning: a classification system based primarily on density and building type (form) rather than use. (See Transect-Based Zoning.)

Frontage Line: those lot lines that coincide with a public frontage.

Greenfield: a development planned for an undeveloped area outside the existing town or city fabric.

Greyfield: an area previously used primarily as a parking lot. Shopping centers and shopping malls are typical greyfield sites.

Industry: uses which are designed to serve the needs of the community and may be offensive to nearby commercial or residential uses by producing adverse impacts such as:

- noise at a level greater than typical street or traffic noise;
- hazardous solids, liquids, or gases emitted in the environment;
- offensive odors or glare;
- offensive vibration;
- any other adverse impact as may be determined by the Town Architect, based on evidence presented.

Infill: noun - new development on land that had been previously developed, including most greyfield and brownfield sites and cleared land within urbanized areas. verb- to develop such areas.

Land Use: the human use of land. Land use involves the management and modification of natural environment or wilderness into built environment.

Layer: a range of depth of a Lot within which certain elements are permitted.

Light Industry: uses which are designed to serve the needs of the Community for industrial activity and which are not offensive to nearby commercial or residential uses. Light industry includes manufacturing or assembly processes carried on completely within the walls of a building. Light industry shall be uses which by their nature and implementation on the site do not produce any of the following adverse impacts, as determined at the boundary of the lot:

- noise at a level greater than typical street or traffic noise;
- hazardous solids, liquids, or gases emitted into the environment;
- offensive odors or glare;
- offensive vibration;
- any other adverse impact as may be determined by the Town Architect, based on evidence presented.

Lightwell: an open space or shaft, either open to the sky or with a glazed roof, reaching down several stories, typically to grade in order to increase access to natural light and ventilation for interior rooms.

Live-Work: a mixed use unit consisting of a commercial and residential function. The commercial function may be anywhere in the unit. It is intended to be occupied by a business operator who lives in the same structure that contains the commercial activity or industry.

Lot: a parcel of land accommodating a building or buildings of unified design.

Lot Coverage: for the settlement as a whole, the ratio of the total of all building footprints, excluding civic building footprints, divided by the total land area in the settlement. For a single lot, the total building(s) footprint(s) on the lot divided by the lot's area, including setbacks.

Lot Line: the boundary that legally and geometrically demarcates a lot (Syn. Property Line).

Lot Width: the length of the principal frontage line of a lot.

Master Plan: the illustrative visual document formed as guidelines for development.

Mixed-Use: multiple functions within the same building through superimposition or adjacency, or in multiple buildings within the same area by adjacency.

Office: premises available for the transaction of general business but excluding retail, artisanal and manufacturing uses.

Outbuilding: an accessory building, usually located toward the rear of the same lot as the associated primary building which may be detached from the primary building or attached by a single-story structure such as a breezeway. Outbuildings may include garages, sheds, carriage houses, farm buildings or playhouses.

Package Treatment Plant: A hybrid sewage treatment plant designed to use less space to treat difficult waste and intermittent flows. Such plants often combine at least two stages of the three main treatment stages into one combined stage.

Path: a pedestrian way traversing a park or rural area with landscape matching the contiguous open land. Paths should connect directly with the urban sidewalk network.

Park: a Public Space that is a natural preserve available for unstructured recreation. A large open area available for public recreation, usually located at a neighborhood edge, and fronted by buildings. Its landscape comprises paved paths and trails, some open lawn, trees and open shelters, all naturally disposed and requiring limited maintenance. Dedicated for pedestrian enjoyment and active or passive recreation.

Parking Structure: a building containing one or more stories of parking above grade (Syn. Parking Deck).

Plan: the Master Plan and Regulating Plan which depicts the site and proposed standards for development of the area under consideration. The Plan (with its accompanying Code), if approved by the appropriate authorized officials will supersede prior zoning classifications of property within said area, and govern all subsequent development therein.

Planter: the element of the public frontage which accommodates street trees, whether continuous or individual.

Plaza: a continuous paved public space fronted on at least two sides by buildings, used primarily for public gatherings and activities, and for parking as a temporary use by permission.

Primary Building: the main building on a lot, usually located toward the primary frontage.

Private: that which is neither public nor communal.

Property Line: Syn. Lot Line.

Public: the residents of the City, including governmental agencies.

Public Space: an area with clear public access, designated for community use by a public or private entity, and fronted by buildings.

Regulating Plan: the official map or maps that are part of the zoning code and delineate the boundaries of individual zones and districts.

Right-of-Way (R.O.W.): the composite public area dedicated to circulation, including the vehicular way and the streetscape.

Roundabout: a type of road junction at which traffic enters a one-way stream around a central island. Roundabouts are typically implemented as a means of relieving traffic congestion.

Rowhouse: a single-family building type that shares at least one party wall with another of the same type and occupies the full Frontage Line. (Syn: Townhouse)

Secondary Frontage: on corner Lots, the Private Frontage that is not the Principal Frontage.

Setback Line: a line which is parallel with parcel or lot boundary lines and rights-of-way, which line delimits the closest a structure may be erected, with respect to the perimeter of a parcel or lot.

Shared Parking: any parking space or spaces intended for utilization by more than one commercial or civic use at different times of the day or week.

Smart Growth: an urban planning and transportation theory that concentrates growth in compact walkable urban centers to avoid sprawl. It also advocates compact, transit-oriented, walkable, bicycle-friendly land use, including neighborhood schools, complete streets, and mixed-use development with a range of housing choices. Smart growth values long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over a short-term focus. Its sustainable development goals are to achieve a unique sense of community and place; expand the range of transportation, employment, and housing choices; equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development; preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources; and promote public health.

Smart Growth Principles: There are 10 accepted principles associated with smart growth.

1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. Create walkable neighborhoods
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

Special Districts: syn. District

Sprawl: is low density, auto-dependent land development of natural or agricultural land taking place on the edges of urban centers, often leapfrogging away from current denser development nodes, to transform open, undeveloped land, into single-family residential subdivisions and campus style commercial office parks and diffuse retail uses.

Square: a public space fronted by buildings on at least two sides, with a ground plane consisting of paved walks, lawns and trees.

Story: a habitable level within a building, excluding an attic or raised basement.

Street: Generically, a street is any paved thoroughfare designed in accordance with the standards of the Master Plan and this document. Specifically, a street is one type of thoroughfare designated in this document.

Strip Subdivision: linear lot development along a public highway that includes three or more of the following characteristics: broad road frontage, predominance of single-story buildings, limited reliance on shared highway access, lack of connection to any existing settlement or surrounding land uses except by highway, and limited accessibility for pedestrians.

Sustainability: a concept based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations. Sustainability is important to making sure that we have and will continue to have, the water, materials, and resources to protect human health and our environment.

Terminated Vista: a location at the axial conclusion of a thoroughfare. A building or monument located at a terminated vista designated on a regulating plan is required or recommended to be designed in response to the axis.

Thoroughfare: a vehicular path incorporating moving lanes and parking lanes within a right-of-way.

Townhouse: See Rowhouse.

Traditional Neighborhood Development: the development of a complete neighborhood or town using traditional town planning principles that include a range of housing types, a network of well-connected streets and blocks, humane public spaces, and have amenities such as stores, schools, and places of worship within walking distance of residences.

Transect: a system of land classification deploying the conceptual rural-to-urban spectrum to arrange the typical elements of urbanism in useful order according to density of human occupation.

Transect-Based Zoning: a classification system based primarily on density and building type (form) rather than use. (See Form-Based Zoning.)

Viewshed: The geographical area that is visible from a location. It includes all surrounding points that are in line-of-sight with that location and excludes points that are beyond the horizon or obstructed by terrain and other features (e.g., buildings, trees). Conversely, it can also refer to an area from which an object can be seen. In urban planning, viewsheds tend to be areas of particular scenic or historic value that are deemed worthy of preservation against development or other change. Viewsheds are often spaces that are readily visible from public areas such as from public roadways, public parks or high-rise buildings. The preservation of viewsheds is frequently a goal in the designation of open space areas, green belts, and community separators.

APPENDICES

1. STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SKANEATELES
2. RURAL TO VILLAGE TRANSECTS
3. SAVIT
4. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN
5. FENNEL STREET CORRIDOR STUDY
6. VILLAGE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

