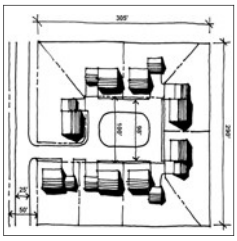


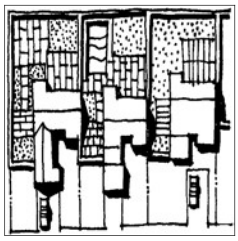



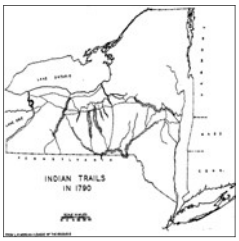

Town of Van Buren

Planning Reference Guide
&
Comprehensive Plan

May 2002

TOWN OFFICIALS

TOWN BOARD	Supervisor Mary M. Crego Councilman Daniel Quackenbush, Deputy Supervisor Councilman Harold Johnson Councilman Wade Marvin Councilwoman Darlene O'Kane Councilman John Resseguie, Sr Councilman Arie Scholten
TOWN CLERK	Sharon Klementowski
HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDANT	Edward L. Parks
PLANNING BOARD	Anthony Geiss, Chair Harold Crandon Charles Farrell Norma Goodman James Ruddock Derek Stolp Frederick Thomas
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	John Virginia, Chair Ron Abold James Bowes Robert Cleverley Allen Mitts
ZONING OFFICER	David Pringle
TOWN ATTORNEYS	Stokes & Knych Mackenzie Hughes
TOWN ENGINEER	Barton & Loguidice

Land Use Committee

- John Resseguie, Sr., Chair
- Ron Abold
- Charles Bowers
- James Bowes
- Rosemary Bucci
- Nadine Cole
- Mary M. Crego
- Charles Farrell
- Theresa Golden
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- Elizabeth McCarthy Bowers
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- Darlene O'Kane
- Bruce Porter
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Appreciation

Appreciation is extended to all who helped make this Comprehensive Plan Possible. Without their effort and knowledge, this project would never have been completed. A special thanks is extended to the Planning Work- shop Class, Spring 2001, from SUNY ESF for all of their hard work and effort. They include:

- Mario Albert Colone
- Heather Dora Davis
- Jamie Patrick Earl
- Cory M. Jenner
- Jesse Michael McLean
- Megan Anne Tennermann

In Memory of James Kilgallen

JAMES KILGALLEN

APRIL 2, 1939-OCTOBER 19, 2000

Jim was a Van Buren resident since May 5, 1974. He lived on Comstock Road with his wife Wanda. They had two children, son James, Jr. and daughter Cory. His grandchildren, Kara and Colin, were the joy of his life and he spent as much time with them as possible.

Jim worked for the Onondaga County Highway Department for 33 years, retiring in 1991. After "retirement" he worked for the Raddison Community for another 8 years.

Jim became very involved in town government after retirement and served on the Planning Board and the Board of Assessment Review. He was also a very regular attendee at Town Board Meet- ings.

Jim was most noted for his volunteerism. When Cecil Reeves donated the property on Downer Street for Little League fields, Jim was right there bulldozing and grading the property to get it ready for the baseball diamonds. He gave countless hours of his time for this and other projects.

Jim's pride and joy was his truck and he was always putting something new on it or washing it. He finally got his street rod and enjoyed riding around town in it with his family.

We will all miss his corny jokes and his larger than life smile. He was a man that you could be proud to call a friend.

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Part I. Reference Guide

I. Introduction

Planning Process

A town government faced with the challenge of preparing a comprehensive land use plan must utilize a process which insures highly effective use of the energies and resources of those participating in the project. This section presents a concept of a process for preparing a plan, which includes six major steps:

1. Collecting and Analyzing Data; Identifying issues, Problems and Opportunities

2. Formulating Goals and Objectives

3. Developing the Plan

4. Adopting the Plan

5. Implementing the Plan

6. Monitoring Implementation and Updating the Plan

The relationships among the steps of this conceptual, simplified model are illustrated in Figure 1.1 on page 8.

Although the steps are illustrated as separate activities transpiring in sequence, it is important to understand that in reality distinctions between steps often become blurred. Nonlinear feedback and re-evaluation occur throughout the process.

The diagram shows that citizen participation, intergovernmental consultation, and environmental reviews are also important aspects of the process. These considerations will be addressed following a discussion of the six major steps.

Collection and Analysis of Data; Identification of Issues, Problems, and Opportunities

Careful, in-depth collection and assessment of data and background information pertaining to existing conditions and trends serve as the basis for the many decisions that need to be made in order to complete a plan. To gain an understanding of conditions in the Town, how the Town's charac- teristics might change, and how a plan might best serve the community, basic studies addressing population, housing, land use, and the economy are undertaken during this first stage in the process. Hard base-line data on regional and local infrastructure is also obtained. Whenever information might be made more useful by displaying it geographically, maps are pre- pared.

The issues, problems and opportunities identified during this early stage of the planning process help to focus attention on the most relevant concerns requiring analysis.

A Planning Reference Guide summarizing the results of the initial research is presented as soon as an adequate amount of data and background information is obtained.

Formulation Goals and Objectives

Goals are the general expressions of community values that provide the direction for development in the Town. They define the ends toward which the Town intends its planning efforts to lead. Objectives are the more quickly attainable intermediate steps toward achieving a goal.

During this stage in the process a community consensus on a set of goals and objectives begins to be built. Proposed goals are evaluated, and relationships among the selected goals are discussed.

Developing the Plan

The objectives that have been decided upon are the directives and criteria for action that next must be translated into definite plans. Alternative sets of policies and proposals are developed during this stage. The alternatives address the amount, scale, location, and type of future development. Narrower concerns that were identified earlier in the process are also focused upon. A preferred plan is selected after evaluating the alternative policies and proposals with respect to potential environmental, economic and social impacts.

Adopting the Plan

The draft is revised to reflect any changes that have
been recommended, and the final draft is adopted by resolution.

Implementing the Plan

Implementation measures that follow from the adopted policies need to be considered and adopted in order for the plan to be truly effective. Such measures typically include zoning and subdivision regulations as well as other development guidelines and plan review procedures. Realistic plan policies are, of course, the key to implementation. A feasible plan is one containing policies which were developed with implementation measures in mind.

Monitoring Implementation and Updating the Plan

Since conditions change over time in every town, the plan must not remain unaltered indefinitely. Constant monitoring of the plan is necessary. Shorter-term plan proposals focusing most directly on implementation should be reviewed and revised periodically (annually, for example). When there is a broad consensus that policy changes are warranted, amendments to the plan should be considered. Extreme care must be taken, however, that consistency within the plan is maintained, and that amending it too

frequently does not erode the plan.

Although the plan is intended to serve as a guide to decision making well into the future, eventually there will come a point when needs have altered to the extent that overall revision is required.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation was encouraged throughout the planning process to ensure that the plan responds to the needs of the community as effectively as possible. An advisory committee of Town residents appointed by the Supervisor and chaired by a member of the Town Board was formed to review drafts of planning reports. Public presentations, discussions, and hearings provide opportunities for involvement of any other citizens who are interested in taking part.

Citizen involvement is most important in identifying major issues and opportunities, identifying community goals, evaluating alternative plans, and selecting the preferred alternative. Participation in formulating alternative policies is also enormously helpful.

The significance of securing active participation of Town residents cannot be overstated, since the success of the plan ultimately depends on the effectiveness of the citizen participation program.

Intergovernmental consultation

Mutual understanding of the concerns of all relevant local and county agencies is essential in the preparation and implementation of the Town Plan.

Conflicts between the Town and other governmental agencies can be avoided and more useful policies result by contacting these entities early in the planning process, exchanging plans and information as necessary and maintaining a relationship conducive to ongoing consultation and negotiation.

Environmental Review

Review of plan policies and proposals with respect to their potential environmental impacts is fundamental to the planning process. All such assessment and evaluation is carefully documented, with environmental conditions and effects described fully.

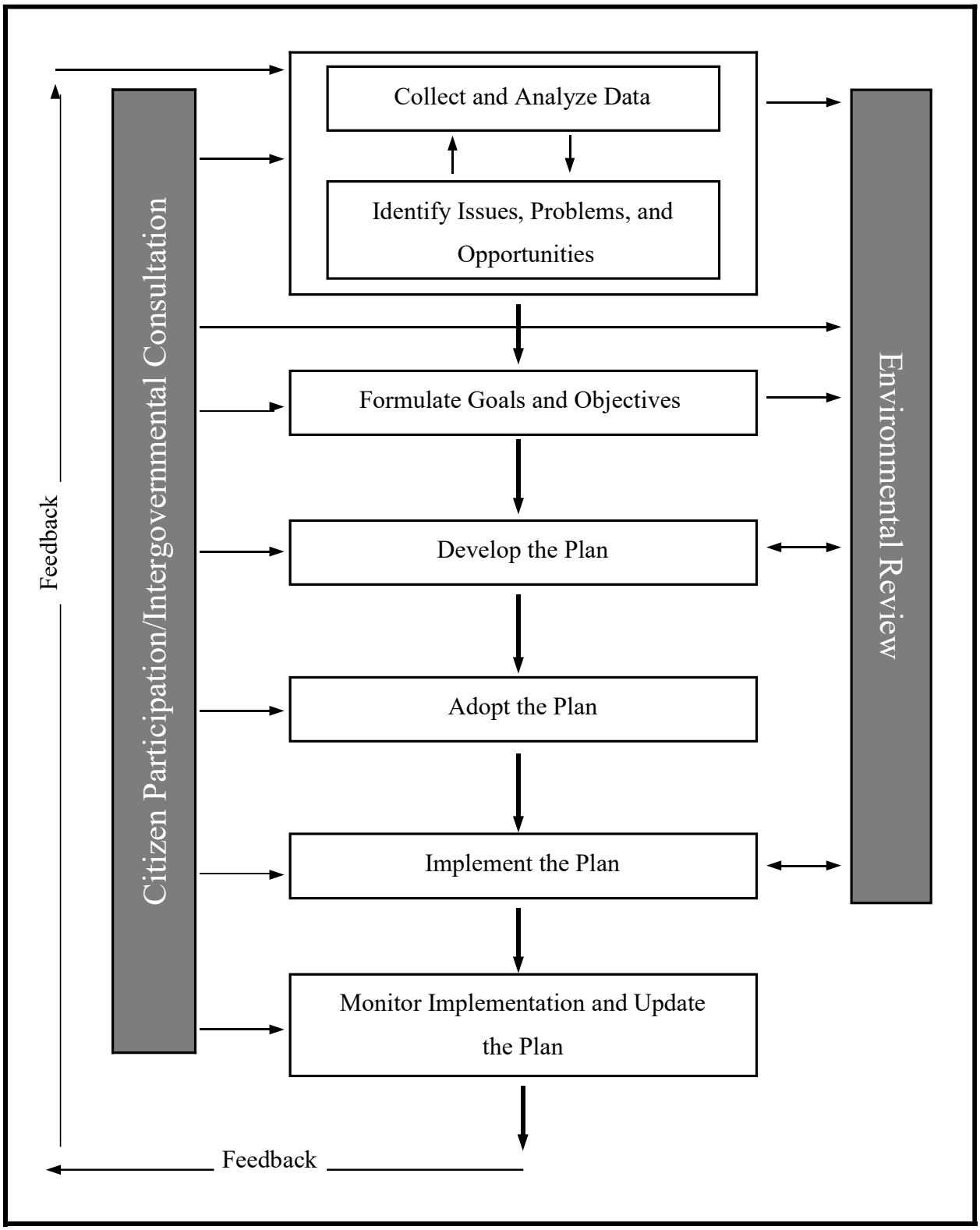
Plan preparation and environmental review are essentially parallel activities. Background information relating to natural systems obtained during the data collecting phase of the plan preparation process is incorporated into the environmental review document. Similarly, the analysis employed in the environmental evaluation of alternative policies during the develop- ment of the plan is the same as that utilized in the required evaluation of possible environmental impacts of the plan.

Conclusion

In its broadest interpretation, planning is an approach to problem solving, a process for dealing with existing conditions and providing for future needs. Through its preparation, adoption, implementation, and maintenance the Town Plan will serve as an identifier of community goals as they relate to land use and development, providing citizens with opportunities to participate in the process of Town government, establishing a guide to decision making, and informing everyone of the ground rules that will guide development in Van Buren for well into this century.

So while change is inevitable, its effects on the nature of development are not predetermined. The continuous, cyclical planning process outlined in this section will enable the citizens of Van Buren to translate their values and goals into policies and standards, and use these standards together with their knowledge and experience to control the future and provide for a quality environment.

Figure 1.1 The Planning Process for the Town of Van Buren



II. History of Development

The development history of Van Buren is the interrelated history of land, transportation, and human activity. The land has seen the Native Americans come and go. The land has seen the establishment of agriculture, the industrialization of agriculture, the consolidation and even disappearance of some agriculture. Settlers cleared the land, farmed the land, built homes and communities, and engaged in commerce. Those who followed the set- tlers down to the present time, continue to farm, to build homes and communities, and to engage in commerce.

Transportation underlies the development history of Van Buren. Less then two-hundred years ago the Seneca River, Dead Creek, and a few Indian trails that were only slightly modified by the settlers, were the means of transportation in Van Buren. They limited the extent of settlement in Van Buren. Early road and turnpike building followed by canal building and railroad building each in turn influenced the amount and location of settlement.

Ultimately, the canal gave way to the railroad. Later trolley cars and fi- nally the mass-produced automobile and paved highways made their im- pact on the Town. The trolley cars and railroads for the most part went the way of the canals. The Interstate Highway system and modern cars and trucks created new patterns of development in the Town.

Geological Development

Many years before the first human inhabitants, the region that is now the Town of Van Buren underwent vast geological processes and climatic changes. These earliest events shaped the land, created the creeks and deposited the soil.

Van Buren bedrock formed millions of years ago, and, as a result of fur- ther processes, the shape of the land was changed. Glaciers, which periodi- cally formed and receded, left behind much of the rich agricultural soils and flowing streams found in the Town today. Consequently, these are the

elements, which contributed to Van Buren's development into an agriculture and manufacturing community.

Onondaga County is divided into two quite different physiographic regions: the low, rolling Erie-Ontario Lake Plain to the north, and the more rugged, hilly Allegheny Plateau to the south. The Town of Van Buren is situated at the boundary of these two regions, a transitional area of hills and valleys.

1788 -- End of the Native American Era

What is now the Town of Van Buren was transferred from the Iroquois Confederacy to New York State in the Treaty of 1788. The Treaty set the stage for the subdivision of land and the arrival of the first pioneers over the traditional Indian water routes and trails.

Before the European colonization of North America, the Onondagas inhabited the area that is now Van Buren. The Onondagas were part of the Iroquois Confederacy, or Haudenosaunee Nation, that included the Seneca, Oneida, Mohawk, Cayuga and later the Tuscarora people. Long before the arrival of the Europeans, the Onondagas roamed much of the land that is now Van Buren, south from Onondaga Lake, north to Oswego.

In 1779, the settlements of the Cayugas and Senecas were disrupted by Continental troops, while other expeditions at this time attacked the Mohawks and Oneidas to the east. A detachment under Colonel Van Schaick, burned the villages of the Onondagas south of Onondaga Lake. The mili- tary expeditions of 1779 brought an end to the power of the Iroquois Confederacy, allocating the lands of the Onondaga country interior region to the State for settlement under their authority.

A treaty of peace was signed at Fort Schuyler in 1784 between the United Colonies and the Iroquois Confederacy. The territory of the present Town of Van Buren was part of the region that passed from the Iroquois Confederacy to the State by a treaty signed in 1788. There was no settlement in the Town during this period, although pioneers had begun to venture into

parts of the Onondaga country.

The tide of pioneers increased after the Treaty of 1788 seized the Onon- daga lands, turning them over for settlement under State authority. On Feb- ruary 28, 1789, an act was passed requiring the land-office commissioners to direct a survey of the Military Tract under the surveyor-general of the time, Simeon Dewitt. Legislative enactment had given specific directions as to how the tract was to be laid out. A Town was to have one-hundred lots with each of these to be made up of as close to six hundred acres as could be determined.

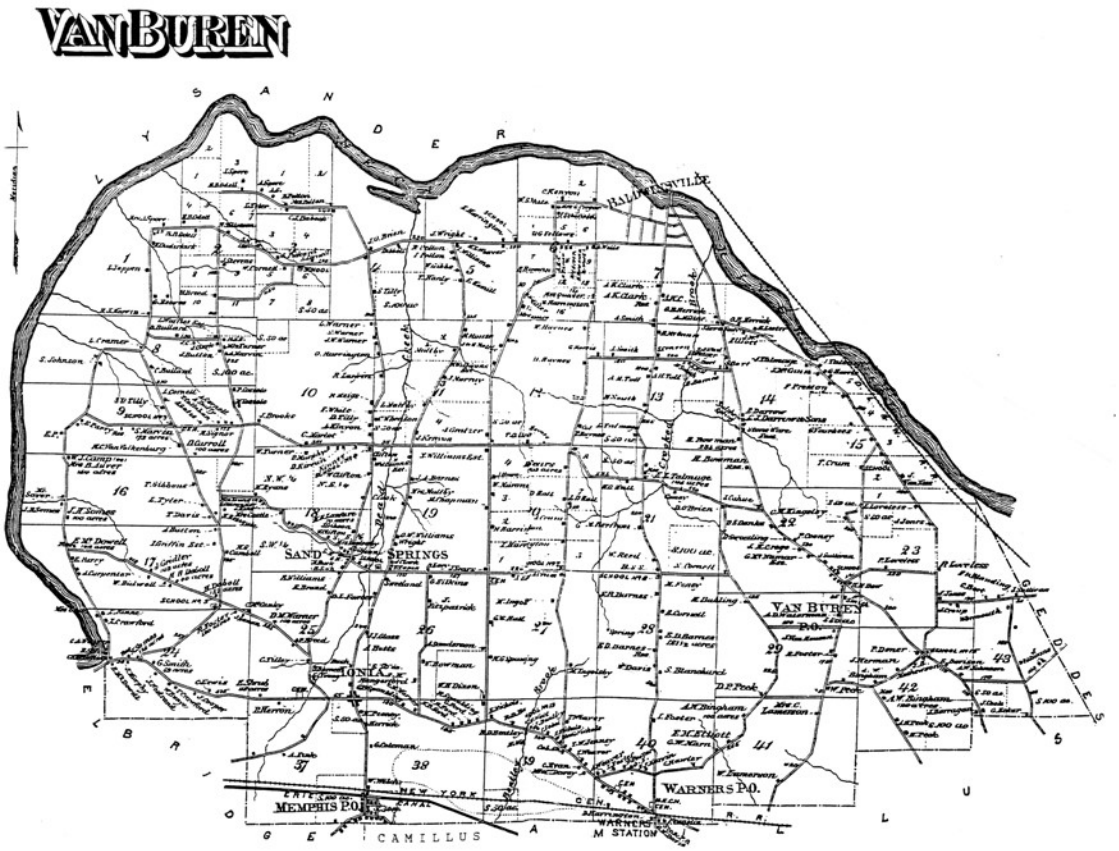
Out of the State land survey of 1789, two phrases came to be commonly used to describe the tracts of land from the old Dewitt survey. These were the "States hundred" and "Survey-fifty." They are applied to certain tracts of land of either fifty or one hundred acres each, which are scattered all throughout the County and were included within the bounds of the old Military Tract. These were set aside and reserved by the State to be granted to private owners.

The Revolutionary soldier was entitled to five hundred acres from the State and one hundred more from Congress. The one hundred acre portion granted by Congress was only done so after the soldier gave in return an assignment of his Congressional grant. In many cases such an assignment was not made and as a consequence, the State reserved one hundred acres from the lot granted to the veteran. These one hundred acre lots were laid out in square form in the corner of the six hundred acre lots. In about 1795 these lots were sold off to land speculators, described as the "State's hun- dred acres." There are seven of these tracts in the Town of Van Buren.

The "Survey-fifty" tracts were much more common than the States hun- dred. At the time the townships of the Military Tract were surveyed into lots, it was not the policy of the State to bear all of the expenses of the sur- vey work. A statute of 1790 stated that a fee of forty-eight shillings was to be assessed on each lot to pay for the expenses of the survey.

In case this assessment was not paid within two years, the surveyor-general

was instructed to reserve and sell a fifty-acre tract in one corner of the lot to be laid out in square form. There were fifteen of these fifty-acre lots lo- cated within Van Buren.



The Treaty of 1788 turned what is now Van Buren over to the new American Government. The subdivision of land and its distribution to Revolutionary War soldiers hastened the arrival of the first pioneers. The first pioneers used the rivers and streams long used by Native Americans to reach the Van Buren area. These early pioneers would continue to use the rivers and would quickly expand the trails and turn trails into roads.

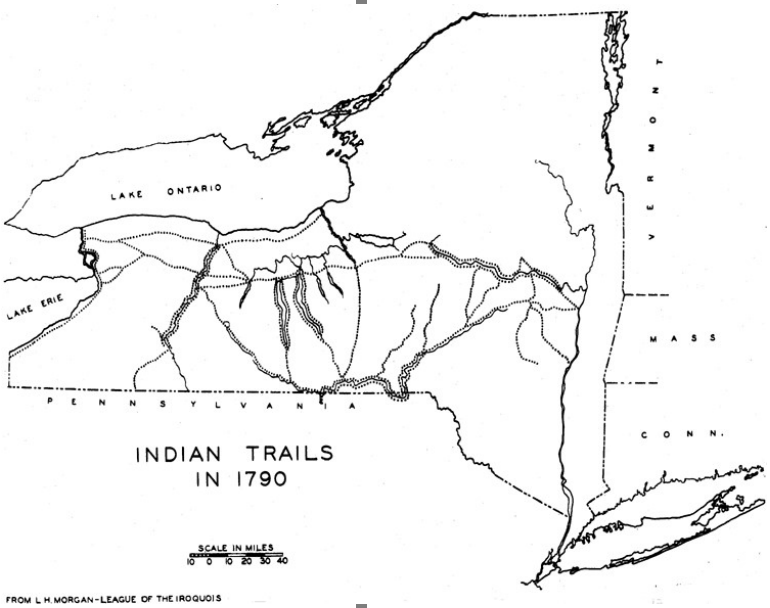
1792-1825 Pioneers, Road Building, Early Settlements, and the Erie Canal

The pioneer period begins with the first pioneer to arrive in 1792 and ends with the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. In between, a lot of road building opened a lot of land for settlement and clearing of fields for

farming. Home and communities are established. Settlements and industries are located to serve the agricultural needs of the area. Travel on the Seneca River brings economic activity to the area, and the first economic activity is established in Syracuse that impacts Van Buren. Finally, some road building activities outside the present Van Buren have an impact inside Van Buren. At the end of a very exciting period of great activity, the need is established for creating a town government for what is now Van Buren.

Early Settlers.--One of the earliest settlers to the area was John McHarrie who arrived in 1792. He built and lived in a log cabin for many years. McHarrie probably reached the area by one of the two earliest highways of travel to the region—water or old Indian trails. It was near the trails or the river that the earliest settlers established themselves.

With the exception of lakes and streams, the earliest routes of travel in the area were the Indian trails. The first pioneers moved by packhorse on trails that had been deeply worn from centuries of use. A party of pioneers established the first road through the region about 1791, extending from Whitesboro to Canandaigua across the present Town of Van Buren. Some years later the road was improved when the Old State Road was built; it enlarged and followed the same general route as early pioneers' road. The Old Genesee Road was another trail that was surveyed and laid out as a public road very early in this period.



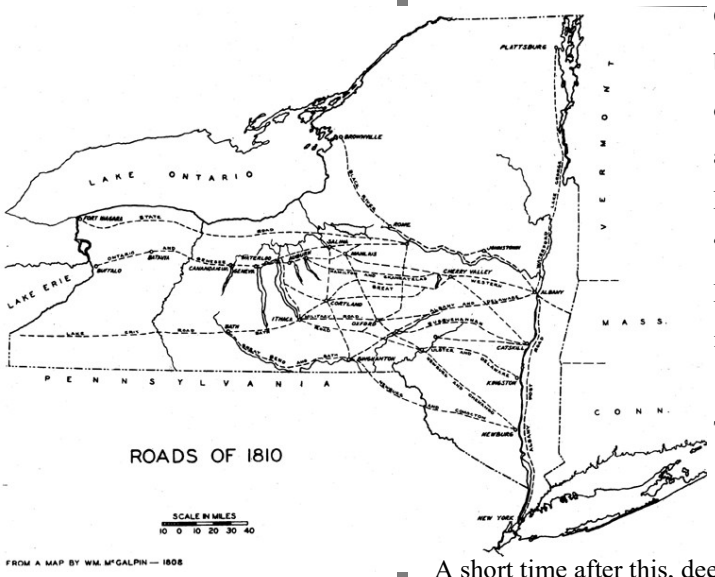
The Seneca River and Camp Brook, now Dead Creek, played an important role in providing a corridor of easy passage into the area along with the newly established roads. As new pioneers arrived they established farms further and further away from the roads and the river and creek.

The place that John McHarrie choose to locate was along the banks of the Seneca River near some rifts. The spot was rich in fish and game. McHarrie realized an economic opportunity. He helped boats through the rifts on their up trips. The place became a well-known locality, was a stopping place for river traffic, and became known as "McHarrie's Rifts."

In August of 1798, the Seneca River was declared a public highway by the act of the State Legislature. River traffic increased with immigrants traveling from New York City to the West along the waterway system including the Seneca River. Goods entered the region from the Mohawk. Pioneers built homes along the banks just as John McHarrie did in 1792.

Development of the Onondaga region was further stimulated by the improvement of natural waterways by the Western Inland Lock and Navigation Company. Canal facilities were constructed from Oneida Lake on Oneida, Oswego, and Seneca Rivers; running north to Oswego and further west to the central part of the State. Work was completed in 1800; many of the first settlers in Onondaga Country carried their families over this route.

Road Building.--The systematic laying out of regular roads began early in the century in accordance with settlement advances. In the year 1804, the State ordered the survey of the road from the Onondaga Court House to Oswego. The road was laid out fairly straight between the two points and hastened the development of the eastern part of Van Buren, and was an important factor in the growth of the McHarrie-Baldwin settlement. The road crossed through "Belle Isle", Amboy, Van Buren Cor- ners, and Baldwinsville. In the war of 1812 it assumed an important role in the movement of troops. After 1817, and possibly before that, it was a post-route. This is present day Van Buren Road.



A short time after this, deed records make reference to other roads, and

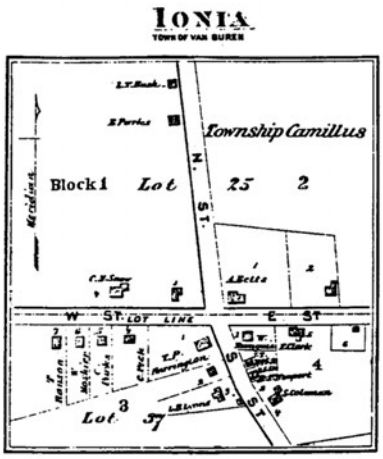
also show that the southern part of the Town had become fairly well covered by regular roads. The next State Road to be built ran north from Canton (Memphis), through Ionia to Baldwinsville. This Route appears to follow old Dead Creek Road, now Route 31 in part.

Rapid development in the central and western regions made it necessary for the State to carry out road development. An early road built outside the present Town had an important impact on local growth. In 1809 a road was established as a "public road", running from present day Chittenango through Gaston Rift and Sodus Bay to the Genesee River. This was present day Route 370, and in 1818 it was established as the Westmoreland and Sodus Bay Turnpike.

An act of legislature in 1807, directed a bridge to be built across McHarrie's rifts, and to take toll for thirty years. By another act of legislature in 1809, Jonas Baldwin was authorized to build a dam, canal and locks, and did so building the locks on the north side of his property. The first dam was swept away several months after its completion, but with the help of settlers around who saw a good future in local improvements, it was rebuilt.

Mills were then put up on the north side where a village was already started. The south side during this time showed little change, with the ex- ception of the addition of a few more settlers. On the north side of the river, the Baldwin settlement grew slowly. At the same time, the south side began to be called Macksville, in allusion to the name McHarrie. Consider- able travel converged at the Baldwin Bridge and as early as 1814 traveled the old Dead Creek Road, presently Route 31, leading to the settlement at Ionia.

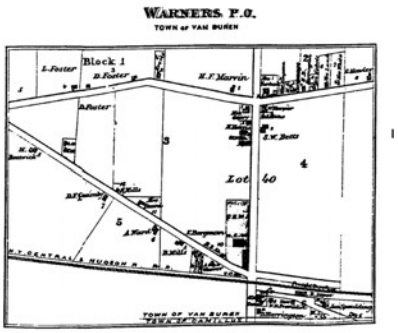
In 1811, the State ordered the laying out of a road from Snow's bridge, to Sodus Bay in the west. The effect of this road was in part to bring travelers through the Town from Lysander and other Towns further to the west. It was in part responsible for the centers of settlement at Ionia, Warners, and Van Buren Corners. Additionally, it built up the southwest part of the town.



Ionia Settlement.--The first place in the Town to become a population center was Ionia. Its existence as a settlement dates from about 1813; it was at this point when the state road toward Sodus Bay was laid out. This southwest portion of the Town was the oldest settled and generally the most advanced. The first buildings in the section were log cabins, but in 1808 the first frame house appeared, built by Joseph Wilson. By 1829 frame houses were being built to replace the cabin residences.

The early populations of the Town were small and scattered through the area so few schools were needed. The first one room school was estab- lished at Ionia in 1813. At this same school in 1816, the first library was founded. About this time, John Tappen gave land to the west of the corners for the first cemetery in the Town.

When the State road, present day Route 173, was located through Ionia in 1813, the route became well traveled and a bridge was constructed cross- ing the Seneca River. This caused a change at "Barns Corners" as the lo- cality had been called. A post-route was extended over the new highway and Charles H. Toll built the first tavern for passers by. A justice court with Toll as justice was established in 1814. The place was now a growing settlement with great prospects for the future.



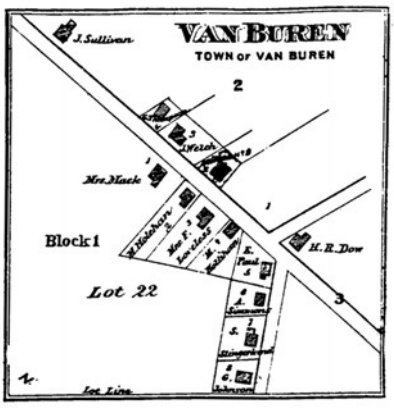
Warners Settlement.--Warners settlement was located around the junction of the Old State Road and the newer State Highway at a later date in the center of Lot 40. In the year 1807, the members of the Warner family that settled in the area were numerous enough to give the village its name. In 1813, the first schoolhouse was built, becoming a community center. This was also the location of the first Baptist Society in the settlement.

In 1818, a tavern was started just south of the crossroads on the State Highway. A moderate amount of travel passed along the road passing from Ionia Corners through Warners to the Van Buren settlement, connecting the two State Highways.

After establishment of the tavern, other permanent services began to follow. A county store was located in the settlement as early as 1821. A blacksmiths shop was established in 1829. A post office was established in 1837, it was called Van Buren Center, using that name for many years with great trouble to the postmaster. The name was changed back to Warners in 1870.

The building of the railroad, a little south of the old settlement, changed the center of the locality to its present location. However, once the railroad was built to Oswego in 1848, the corners lapsed into a quiet that never re- ceded.

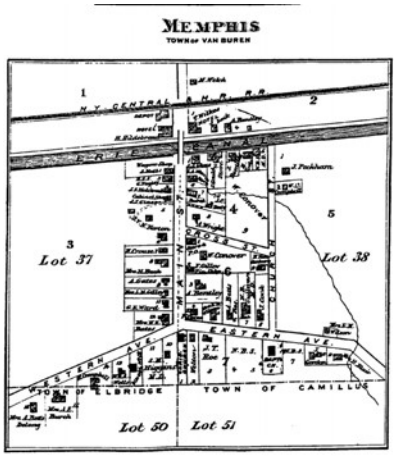
Industries.--Industries applicable to the requirements of the people flourished in and around the region in the 1800's. Sawmills were necessary from the beginning to provide the raw materials for building, and gristmills were soon to follow. These were built at strategic locations on streams and rivers for waterpower purposes. One of the first sawmills was built at Jack's Reef in 1808, another in Whiskey Hollow in 1815. The first grist- mill in the Town was built a little north of Bangall on lot number 19 in 1817. The Clark and Mercer Mill was built in 1828, and is still intact.



In 1820, the growth of the salt-boiling industry at Syracuse brought a demand for wood that gave a ready market to the timber owners along the Seneca River. Regular highways were then existent leading down to numerous boat landings where the timber was stocked, awaiting shipment.

Canal Building.-- The value of water transport had been realized since the first explorers ventured into the region in early Colonial times. It had the advantage of being both faster and cheaper than overland travel, but be- cause of the limited capacity of the existing natural waterways its use was restricted to small bulk high value items, such as furs. The natural water- ways of the region were realized to be an attractive but inadequate option to overland travel.

Early attempts at canal building were directed at improving natural waterways by dredging, constructing levees, and building short canals to avoid



rapids. The demands that traffic made combined with natural factors caused these to be abandoned soon afterward.

In 1817 construction began on the Erie Canal that extended from Albany to Lake Erie, creating a direct connection from the east coast the to mid-west. This revolution in transportation of goods and people crossed the southern boundary of the present Town of Van Buren, of what was then the five County Region. The Erie Canal was completed in 1825, and the development of new feeder canals in conjunction with those existing such as the Oswego, Seneca, Cayuga, and Baldwinsville Canals virtually made the whole region accessible by water transportation.

The settlement of Memphis dates to the year 1821, when surveyor George W. Robinson was employed to lay out a village along the bank of the Erie Canal, to be named Canton. The name Canton was already used by a village in St. Lawrence County, so the name of Memphis was used to avoid confusion.

These developments occurred at the full tide of prosperity for the village of Ionia. With the construction of the Erie Canal, and the accompanying Village of Canton laid out less than a mile away on the new highway of commerce, the post-route over the state road was abandoned. Any new development in the area was now done close to the new Erie Canal in Canton. The future growth of Ionia became a dream of the past.

The Pioneer Period Ends.-- Nearly forty years after opening of the Military Tract for Revolutionary War soldiers in 1790, the Town of Van Buren was established in 1829. Never have so few done so much in such a short time in Van Buren. Areas of the Town were cleared and put into agricultural cultivation. Roads, economic activities, and settlements were established. The 1807 State Census identified only forty names of individuals in the Van Buren area who owned or occupied freeholds and were entitled to vote under the laws of the day. By 1829, the base was established for nearly a century of prosperity.

1829-1919 The Town Established, the Railroad Era and the Industrial Revolution

A great change in transportation occurred in the early 1800's as advances in technology led to the introduction of the railroad. By 1839, railroads were being constructed from Syracuse east to Utica and west to Auburn. These early rail lines were considered adjuncts to the canal system. The first railroad built through Van Buren was the Oswego & Syracuse, which skirted the northern edge of the Town in 1848.

In the year 1851, the south side of Baldwinsville began to rival Canton. At this point, the railroad was built through the Town, starting the building up of railroad terminal cities at the cost of the surrounding canal villages. Memphis was one of these areas whose future of growth was ended.

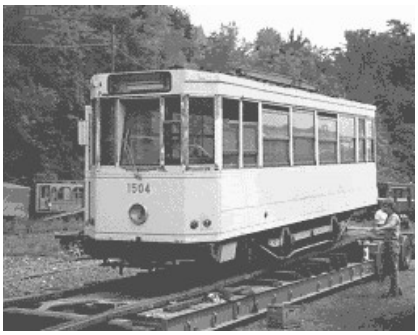
A successor route was built by the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad that ran five passenger trains in each direction each day. By 1853 the independent railroads became the New York Central System that ran through the southern tier of Van Buren, following very closely the line of the early canal. During these years, an endless number of trains were operating on the New York Central's four tracks running through the southern part of the Town.

During the 1850's agriculture began to expand as a result of transportation and facilities increasing the possibilities for trade and development. By 1854, the Town of Van Buren had 5,216 acres plowed, with an additional 4,557 in pasturelands totaling 9,773 acres used for agricultural purposes. This is roughly the amount of acreage still used to date. The early years of agriculture within the Town were comprised of smaller self-sufficient farms producing fruits, vegetables, and livestock for the purpose of com- merce and personal use.

Cheap water transportation in addition to the railroad increased eastward shipment of grain from fields farther west. This caused the farmers of central New York to turn their attention to general farming, dairying, tobacco and fruit growing. Many grain fields were turned over to pasture and

meadow for livestock. Large barns were built for livestock, hay and tobacco storage.

In 1883, the New York West Shore & Buffalo Railroad completed a steam line running parallel to the New York Central lines. In 1885, a short line was built by private capital from Baldwinsville to Amboy Station on the West Shore. The development of the railroad as a fast and efficient trans- portation compared to freight and passenger carriers started to overshadow the Canal System.



Example of 1910 trolley

The first trolleys were in operation in the Town of Van Buren starting in 1899. The first line connected Baldwinsville to Syracuse, passing through the northern part of Van Buren. Several years later a second track was added, and service was extended to Oswego. An interurban trolley fran- chise ran east and west passing through Warners and Memphis, on the way towards Auburn and Rochester in 1909. The development of the motor car during the next development period doomed the trolleys. The Syracuse & Oswego Trolley line and the east-west line both ceased around the year of 1932.

The development of these transportation systems helped join the counties of the region together into one economic unit, providing the foundation for future growth. The physical development of the region during the 19th Century involved both settlement of the countryside and the growth of urban places. Agriculture began to go through a period of expansion, utilizing all suitable lands as a result of improvements in transportation, allowing products to be shipped to distant markets.

Example of a local brick home

Improvements in transportation also aided in the growth of central places within the region. The canals and railroads were being maximized, causing many small towns to grow and take on characteristics that come with a more urbanized setting. By the 1840's, the housing stock within the Town began to reflect the phase of growth and prosperity at hand. Many houses were now being constructed of brick, the first being built by Thomas Marvin in Warners who used brick from his newly established brickyard in

the Town.

By the years just preceding the Civil war, and for years to follow, better-designed wood frame homes were also being built. These were often a modified form of Greek revival architecture. Hamlets within Van Buren along the canals and railroads grew due to their strategic locations in relation to these major routes of transportation. The new transportation net- work established the region as a gateway to the interior; the ever- increasing volume of trade with the newly settled west demonstrated this.

The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, stretching along two miles in the southern part of the Town and had great influence on the development and demise of several Hamlets within the Town in the early years. The "Great Ditch" as it was called was now facing its own fate due to increases in technology and transportation methods. The Erie Canal was closed for good in the year 1920, but option for water transportation was not totally eradicated. At the time the Erie was being phased out, the state opened the larger Barge Canal System in 1918, reverting back to the Seneca River Route. This is still in use at present day Lock #24, and bisecting Baldwinsville.

Lock #24 in Baldwinsville

At one time, the cheapest way to ship goods from Philadelphia to Pitts- burgh was by way of Albany, the Erie Canal, and Lake Erie. This domi- nance began to diminish just prior to the Civil War, when the railroads be- gan to move westward from coastal cities.

During the period before, during and after the Civil War, the region including Van Buren, as a characteristic of the North continued to develop industrial and transportation facilities. The Northern economies were bolstered by war efforts' demands, expanding every aspect of productive effort. The Civil War gave the regional economy a boost that lasted long after the War; these changes in the region were also a parallel to larger national de- velopments.

The railroad era and the industrial revolution brought lasting changes to Van Buren. Farms and farm families changed. Fewer children died in

childhood with the beginnings of modern medicine. Fewer children were needed on the farms with the beginnings of mechanized agriculture.
The number of farms declined, but the size of the remaining farms increased. Many children were attracted to factory jobs in the city.

The railroads allowed families to visit one another over long distances. Frequent travel for business, education, or pleasure into Syracuse was possible. With the invention of the telephone, in 1876, and the widespread use of electricity that followed development, everyday life for residents in Van Buren began to change. Between the Civil War and World War I the economy experienced several booms and busts, but overall Van Buren prospered.

1919-2001--The Automobile,Highways, and Suburbanization

In 1910, fifty-four percent of the population of the United States lived in rural areas; in 1920, fifty-one percent of the population lived in cities. The internal combustion engine was invented in 1885. In 1900, 8,000 automo- biles existed in the United States. In 1909, a nineteen-year production run began for the Ford Model T; 11,000 were produced that year and sold for as little as $850. By 1917, 80,000 automobiles and 45,000 miles of railroad tracks coexisted.

An example of a Ford Model T

With World War I came prosperity. The roaring twenties were not very prosperous to agriculture which faced over production and falling prices. Consolidation of family farms continued. Automobiles began to impact road construction with demands for concrete highways. Nearby Route 5 was paved during the 1920's. Limited suburbanization began to occur in parts of the country. Not much of this affected the Town of Van Buren.

The 1929 crash and subsequent depression did little to enhance the agricultural base of Van Buren. A new federal program of home mortgage insurance was established in the 1930's that would eventually enable most middle class families to own a home. World War II and the post war period brought on a wave of economic prosperity, increased automobile ownership, interstate road construction, improved accessibility at the edges of

central cities, and large-scale suburbanization. These factors had a large impact on Van Buren.

The population of Van Buren remained relatively stable at about 3,000 until after 1950. In 1960, the population doubled to nearly 6,500 and in- creased by another 3,000 in 1970 and again in 1980. Thus, suburbanization impacted Van Buren. Most of the additional families represented by the population increases moved into the eastern edge of the Town near the Se- neca River.

About 1954, the New York Thruway was the first major interstate level highway built in Upstate New York. In Van Buren the Thruway ran along the southern part of the Town roughly paralleling the east-west railroad tracks and the Old Erie Canal. The Thruway provided an intersection with Van Buren Road.

The road that provided immediate access to new development was Van Buren Road. The road was laid out in 1804 as a relatively straight and flat road between Onondaga Hill (site of the County Court House in 1804) and Oswego (an important shipping port in 1804). The road's connection to the New York Thruway improved accessibility to the areas adjacent to Van Buren Road.

Most of the residential development during the period of rapid growth occurred between Van Buren Road and State Fair Boulevard (Route 48). In addition to good highway accessibility, relatively flat land and provision of utilities provided additional inducements to build large residential projects in the area. The major developments are Seneca Knolls (1957-1962), Village Green (1961-1999), and Harbor Heights (1965-1976).

The construction of Interstate 690, approximately parallel to State Fair Blvd., provided additional access to the large residential developments. It also provided better access for non-residential uses to locate on relatively flat parcels serviced by utilities and near the interchanges.

Not all the residential development in Van Buren occurred in the suburbanized eastern edge of the Town. Scattered residential homes often on relative large parcels (many over ten acres) have occurred in the rural part of the Town. These scattered homes have an accumulative impact on the vis- ual character of the rural landscape and on the ability of the old "farm to market" roads to safely move increased traffic volumes. They may also try to interfere with farming activities and may inhibit future large-scale developments by land-locking large parcels. The scattered home sites do provide an opportunity for land owners to realize some gains on their land investment.

The Future

Throughout the state, many canal-side Villages, Hamlets, and Towns that the Erie Canal crosses have begun to realize the historical significance and tourism potential of this state landmark. Other municipalities along the Erie Canal have, with funding assistance started the restoration process to facilitate tourism and preservation of this historically significant transportation route.

The Hamlet of Memphis still has many of the original canal buildings from the 1800's standing, but gradually deteriorating. The two-mile section of the old Erie Canal that passes through Van Buren also has recreation po- tential. This has already been realized by the citizens on the east side of Syracuse, and through private effort and state recreational development the Canal trail has been extended from Dewitt to Rome. The Town of Camillus has initiated recreational development from Geddes to the Town of Van Buren line. This has also been placarded as part of the Erie Canal Park.

The rich history of Town of Van Buren as a crossroad of rail, water and highway in relation to manufacturing and agriculture remains a valuable resource for the community today. Many historic buildings, including those relating to the Erie Canal remain intact; some are well preserved, while others are in need of repair. Besides its economic potential, the Town's history can provide residents with a shared past and sense of place. In the past, Van Buren was vitally connected with the Syracuse region, and

went through changes in relation to what was happening to the region as a whole. These historic regional ties are a potential economic development tool for the Town in the future.

Change has been a persistent ingredient in Van Buren history. Agriculture, industry, business, population, problems, and prospects all have gone through changes from one generation to the next. These changes need not mean only more complicated problems for the Town in the future though. With an awareness and understanding of the forces leading to these changes, the citizenry, businesses, and government can plan to take advantage of the opportunities they offer.

Sources

Scisco, Louis Dow. Reprinted 1995. *Early History of the Town of Van Buren.* Beauchamp Historical Club.

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. 1969. *Central New York Regional Historical Background.* Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. Syracuse, NY.

III. Town of Van Buren Photo Survey

Fifteen members of the Land Use Committee participated in a photo- graphic survey of the Town. The purpose was to identify the potential vis- ual preferences and values of residents, to identify significant natural, cul- tural, and visual resources, and to identify the attributes that contributed to or distracted from the desirable qualities of the Town. Photographs were taken in response to a nineteen question survey. Written responses were supplied for each photograph.

Nearly 350 photographs were taken by members of the Land Use Commit- tee. The photographs and accompanying explanations were organized by question and mounted on display boards. The responses to the questions in the survey were then summarized by question and included on the display boards. The following pages provide a short summary of the resulting im- ages and comments.

1. Take a photograph that you feel best represents the image of the Town.

- Combination of elements: such as open space, interstate highway, small to medium scale commercial development, residential pockets, expansive views; more realistic and pragmatic image of the Town.
- Farmland and open space.
- Van Buren is a farming community turning into more residential – open country is desirable.
- Shows agricultural land use – the largest percentage of the Town.

2. Photograph your favorite two scenic views in the Town. Explain what you like about them.

- Scenic Views of rolling farmland.
- Overlook of cornfields and country homes.
- Van Buren is a rural area with attractive residential housing .
- Nice view of farms and rolling hills.
- Enjoy views of the farmland and surrounding country.
- Open farmland and farm buildings.
- On a clear day you can see very far across the woods, and fields.

3. Think of one thing you feel should be changed in the town. Take a photograph and comment on what you would like to see done.

River behind DPW building

Tri-County Mall

- I would like to see the Town acquire direct access to the Seneca River behind the DPW facility for a public boat launch & fishing access and possibly to develop a natural resource education facility.
- As the Town becomes more commercially developed, there is a need to require new structures to fit in. If not, Certain areas will begin to succumb to “Dewittisis” (or look like Erie Boulevard).
- It is sad that Tri-County Mall has been left to die. There is almost nothing left there, what is left is not maintained or attractive to shoppers. Much of it is like an indoor flea-market.
- I would like to see the Erie Canal area in Memphis cleaned up and turned into parkland.
- Meadow Street along the Seneca River should be developed for a Town and Village Park cooperation.

4. What would you never want to see changed in the Town.

- The Van Buren Town Park, this is the biggest civic possession within the Town that can be unequivocally utilized by all Town residents.
- Middle class homes, that are well kept and inviting to others; they are conducive to responsible living. Hard to put into a photograph, I like the feel of the country and the space here but I also like being twenty minutes at the most from the city and activities there.
- People come from all around to get water at Whiskey Hollow, don't ever prevent that access.
- I don't ever want to see the site on Turner Road become a landfill.

Whiskey Hollow

Town Park

5. Photograph your favorite view of the riverfront and canal area.

- It is fun to see different boats and activity along the village river trail.
- The new park and amphitheater are a great improvement, likely to bring people into the area.
- The new park and good use of the riverfront to draw new people into town, and a gathering place.

Tri-County Mall

Cell Tower

6. Photograph a structure that you feel detracts from the Town.

- Basic intrusion upon landscape, need to explore ways to integrate into the existing landscape while exploiting market demands for more transmission / relay facilities.
- Trailer-homes are not desirable in the Town of Van Buren.
- The Tri-County Mall facility is becoming unkempt, and an eyesore.
- Residential property with unattractive grounds, too many vehicles, sloppy parking, no designated parking area, and vehicles for sale.

7. Photograph two residential buildings that you feel are valuable to the Town.

- This represents stock of well built, reasonably priced homes for first time and moderate- income buyers that are likely to remain occupants for a long time.
- A farm home over 100 years old, well designed and needs to be re-spected.
- A good depiction of a country setting.
- A well maintained historical farm property with natural areas adjacent.
- This is such a beautiful old home, well maintained with large trees. I love driving by it all times of year.
- Gives historical perspective, represents richness and timelessness of attention to simplicity and detailing, the iconography of the American spirit.

8. Photograph two non-residential (commercial, civic, etc.) buildings that you feel are valuable to the Town.

- The Van Buren Town Hall, an important symbol of civic pride, the location of interaction between community members and potential members (Developers/Businessmen etc.).
- Companies like Sysco create jobs and tax base for the Town.
- The Syracuse Home is an asset to local residents and the peaked structures fit well with the location. It also has good screening from the road and adjacent residential areas.
- The Sunoco gas station is very convenient because there is generally enough parking if you are stopping for something other than gas.
- The Town Building, has a professional look but, needs to be larger.
- The Family Sports Center, this brings a lot of people into the Town.

Van Buren Town Hall

Syracuse Home

9. Photograph a structure that is not maintained, but could be an important asset to the Town.

- A potential commercial property on the main road that is poorly maintained, elicits sense of residents apathy toward the Town's character and personal pride.
- The former roller-skating rink and cabinet shop, this is a solid structure out in the country that could be adaptively reused and is a possible asset to the Town.
- It would be great to see some decent stores move into the Tri-County Mall.
- Mercers Mill is a historic structure that could be used as a museum or other public use, becoming an asset to the Town.

Mercer's Mill

Tri-County Mall

A variety of satellite dishes

10. Photograph a well-maintained structure that you feel does not fit in with the Town.

- All well maintained structures fit within the Town with the exception of radio and communication towers.
- 84 Lumber has no landscaping, and poor architectural qualities; there aren't any visual amenities at all.

P&C Warehouse

McHarrie Towne

11. What do you feel has changed for the better in the Town in the past ten years? If you have lived in the town for less than ten years, what has changed for the better since your arrival?

- P&C Warehouse, an example of commercial development and attractive location that is an efficient use of Town land.
- The Town is providing more activities for families and children in the winter at the Town Park.

- Syracuse Home, McHarrie Towne is an attractive plan for senior housing, which fills a need for that segment of the population.

12. Photograph an outdoor gathering place important to you.

- Lock #24 Seafood and Deli has a good comfortable atmosphere, with a convenient location and unique surroundings.
- The Van Buren Town Park has activities for families like pool, tennis, basketball, and animals are welcome.
- The Van Buren Town Park will continue to become more attractive to Van Buren residents.
- The willingness of the Town to open the park to sledding in the winter and fishing during the season is a very important utilization of Town assets.
- The Van Buren Town Park is a very popular recreation area all year long.

Lock 24 Seafood and Deli

The Town Park

13. Photograph an indoor gathering place important to you.

- The Family Sports Center, good place for year-round activity for children / adults / families.
- The Van Buren Town building is the only indoor gathering place that I even know of in the Town.
- The Warners Methodist Church is an important indoor gathering place.
- The Lock #24 Seafood Restaurant, A good place to eat that is growing with the Town.
- The "T"-Bird Bowling Lanes.

Thunderbird Lanes

Family Sports Complex

14. Photograph an attractive street / road in the Town.

- Crandon Terrace in Village Green, non-linear street pattern creates continuously variable perspectives and visual interest. Utilities are hidden, street lamps fit the character of the area, the roads and properties are well maintained (Sense of community).
- Buccaneer Bend in Harbor Heights, I like the winding streets that Harbor Heights is full of. It is one of the nicest residential areas in Van Buren.

Memphis Post Office

Syracuse Home

15. Photograph what you feel is an example of attractive commercial landscaping.

- Syracuse Home, natural and man-made elements that integrate the building into its surroundings.
- The River Mall Rite-Aid is tastefully done and well maintained
- The McHarrie Towne entrance is very well done.
- The M&T Bank itself is attractive and different, being on an angle. The grounds of the bank are also always well maintained.
- The Memphis Post Office, while very simply done has perennials that come up from March to November so it is almost always colorful.

16. Photograph what you feel is an example of less attractive commercial landscaping.

- The Microtel, it's not that it is unattractive, but there is nothing around it. They built a parking lot and put grass in front of the building, very unimaginative.
- Nobles Plaza has run-down partially occupied buildings, there are weeds in the black top, no shrubs or flowers.
- Absolutely no concession made for landscaping by a large commercial enterprise, which can afford it. Total disregard for pride of place and ownership beyond profit generation.

Microtel

Nobles Plaza

17. Photograph a commercial parking area you feel is attractive.

- A building is separated from the roadway with the adjacent property screened. The sign utilizes natural materials, individual craftsmanship, and subdued lighting.
- There is no such thing as an attractive parking area.
- The River Mall Rite-Aid is well designed, neatly kept with good traf- fic flow.
- The Syracuse Home has nice trees on the grounds and is well maintained.
- The M&T bank is easy to use, attractive and the grounds are kept up well.

M&T Bank

Rite-Aid

Mobil

River Mall

18. Photograph a commercial parking area that you feel needs additional work to improve its appearance .

- Seneca Knolls has exposed dumpsters with no separation from the roadway, asphalt in disrepair. It is directly adjacent to residential properties with no transition between uses.
- The Mobil gas station on State Fair Blvd. is crowded and remains unsightly.
- P&C Warehouse minimal landscaping that isn't always maintained, lots of wasted space.
- Tri-County Mall (rear) is poorly maintained. Often, one can find litter scattered around the parking lot.

690 Corridor

Gypsum Trucking

19. Photograph something that you feel is important to the planning of the Town.

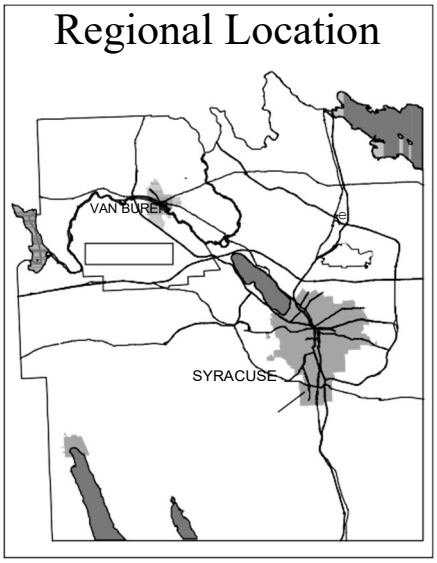
- The Rte. 690 corridor has the greatest potential for economic development and tax revenue that the Town can exert some control over.

- Planning must offset the detriment to the Town with the landfill.
- Development of businesses in the area around the Baldwinsville exit
- The Town should not give in to short sighted demands of technologies and other economic resources, which can spoil the Town's natural attractiveness that encourages residential settlement.

IV. REGIONAL CONTEXT, Population, and Economy

LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Town of Van Buren is located in Onondaga County northwest of the City of Syracuse in Central New York (See Map 4.1). The southeastern portion of the Town is about six and a half miles from Downtown Syra- cuse.



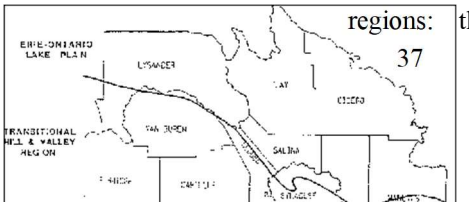
Syracuse and Van Buren are well served by the major transportation sys- tems of New York State. Exit #39 on the New York State Thruway (Interstate Route 90) is located in the southeastern corner of the Town. In- terstate Route 690 with two exits in Van Buren is a limited access highway that links the Town to Syracuse and Interstate 81. Van Buren is well located near two of the State's major Interstate Routes, north-south I 81 and east-west I 90. Syracuse's Hancock International Airport is easily accessible from Van Buren. Rail facilities are also available in the Town.

RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLAR SYSTEMS

The Town of Van Buren recognizes that solar energy is a clean, readily available and renewable energy source. Development of solar energy systems offer an energy source that can prevent fossil fuel emissions, reduce the Town's energy demands, and attract and promote green business development within the Town. The Town of Van Buren has determined that comprehensive regulations regarding the development of solar energy system are necessary to protect the interest of the Town, Its' residents, and businesses. The Town desires to promote the effective and efficient use of solar energy systems; establish provisions for the placement, design, construction, operation and removal of such systems in order to uphold the public health, safety and welfare; and to ensure that such systems will not have a significant adverse impact on the aesthetic qualities and character of the Town.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

General characteristics of the terrain vary in Onondaga County, which is divided into two quite different physiographic regions: the low,



rolling Erie-Ontario Lake Plain to the north, and the hillly, more rugged Alle- gheny Plateau to the south (see Map 4.2). The Town of Van Buren is situ- ated at the boundary between these two regions, a transitional area of hills and valleys. Elevations vary from 360 feet at the Seneca River in the south-east edge of the Town to 678 feet on Sorrel Hill.

Map 4.1

POPULATION

Population change in Van Buren occurs in the context of regional and county population trends. Past changes in the population suggests how the region and county may change in the future. The regional and county patterns of change will suggest opportunities and constraints for the Town.

Map 4.2

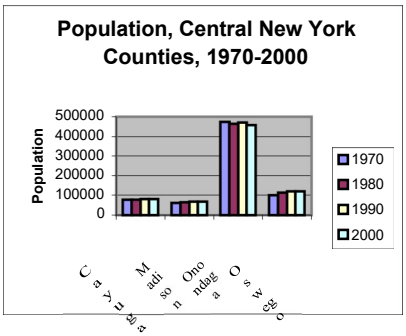


Figure 4.1

The total population in Central New York is essentially unchanged over the past thirty years-it grew by a little more than 18,000 from 1970 to 2000. The four counties in Central New York grew 4.5% in the 1970's and 4.28% in the 1980's, and then declined by 1.36% in the 1990's. Changes in individual counties in Central New York are modest over the same period. Cayuga, Madison, and Oswego Counties experienced small increases in population from 1970 to 2000. However, Cayuga and Oswego Counties lost population during the past ten years. The population in Onondaga County is nearly 15,000 smaller than in 1970. For the 1990's, see Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1.

The estimated net out-migration for the Central New York Region from 1990-1998 is nearly 41,000 (See Table 4.2) with nearly 33,000 of the out-migration from Onondaga County. Absent the net out-migration, the Region's population would have grown by nearly 33,000, or 4.5%, and Onondaga County's population would have grown by over 22,000, 4.7%.

Table 4.1 Population, Central New York Counties
and Percent of Change, 1970-2000

County	*1970*	*1980*	*1990*	*2000*
Cayuga	77,439	79,894	82,313	81,963
Madison	62,864	65,150	69,166	69,441
Onondaga	472,835	463,920	468,973	458,377
Oswego	100,897	113,901	121,785	122,377
Total	714,035	722,865	742,237	732,117

Population

County	*1970-1980*	*1980-1990*	*1990-2000*
Cayuga	3.20	3.00	-0.004
Madison	3.60	6.10	0.40
Onondaga	-1.90	1.10	-2.27
Oswego	12.90	6.90	-0.49
Total	4.45	4.28	-1.36

Percent of Change

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Compiled by the Empire State Development.

Table 4.2 Estimated Net Migration,
Central New York Counties, 1990-1998

Counties	*Net Migration*
Cayuga	-3,221
Madison	-999
Onondaga	-32,892
Oswego	-3,841
Total	-40,953

Source: Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board,
Web Page: http://www.cnyrpdb.org

The regional trends are more understandable in a State context. The population of New York has stabilized at about 18.0 million (1970, 18.2; 1980, 17.6; 1990, 18.0; 2000, 18.9). During this period, births outnumbered deaths by about two to one. The total population remained stable because of net out-migrations every year since 1960 except 1962-1965 and 1983. The peak year for out-migration was 1973 with a net out-migration of 221,000. Net out-migration exceed 100,000 per year except for the years 1972-1987, 1990, 1997, and 1998. The estimated out-migration for 1999 is 101,234.[1]

The long-term statewide trends impact Upstate New York, Central New York, Onondaga County and ultimately the Town of Van Buren. Based on population data only, the prospects for large amounts of population growth are limited. Many communities are seeking to attract new residents. The successful community will present a comprehensive package to prospective residents that includes employment opportunities, model residential communities, and amenities that contribute to both the quality of life and the image of the Town.

Table 4.3 Population and Percent Change, Onondaga County Towns, Villages, and Syracuse, 1930-2000 and Estimated for Onondaga County, 2010

Population

Year	*City of Syracuse*	*Towns & Villages*	*Onondaga County*
1930	209,326	82,280	291,606
1940	205,967	89,141	295,108
1950	220,583	121,136	341,719
1960	216,038	206,990	423,028
1970	197,297	275,538	472,835
1980	170,105	293,815	463,920
1990	163,680	305,113	468,973
2000	147,306	311,530	458,336
2010			464,800

Percent Change

Year	*City of Syracuse*	*Towns & Villages*	*Onondaga County*
1930-1940	1.60	8.30	1.20
1940-1950	7.10	35.90	15.80
1950-1960	-2.10	70.90	23.80
1960-1970	-8.70	33.10	11.80
1970-1980	-13.70	6.60	-1.80
1980-1990	-3.80	3.80	1.10
1990-2000	-10.00	2.10	-2.27
2000-2010			1.40

Source: New York State Department of Economic Development, 1989 and Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency, **Framework for Growth in Onondaga County**, June 1998, page 4.

Like New York State, Onondaga County's births exceed deaths leaving out-migration as a significant factor affecting population (See Table 4.2). Out-migration is estimated at 35,000 in the 1970s, 25,000 in the 1980s, and nearly 33,000 from 1990-1998. From 1970 to 1990, the Onondaga County population would have grown by 56,000 instead of declining by 4,000 if in-migration had equaled out- migration.[2]

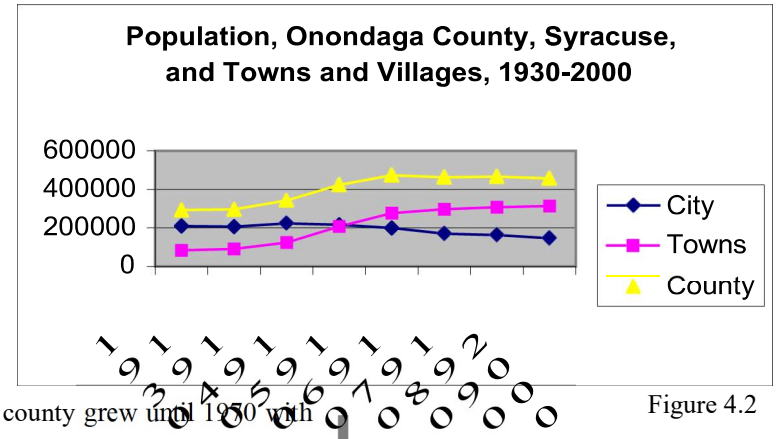


Figure 4.2

A long-term perspective on population change in Onondaga County is shown in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2. The population of the county grew until 1950 with the largest growth occurring in the post-World War II baby boom decades of 1950 and 1960. From 1970 to 1990 the population remained stable; from 1990-2000, the population declined by 10,000.

The City of Syracuse's population remained stable from the 1930's through 1960's; however, since the 1960's the population has been declin- ing. The population in the towns and villages , surrounding Syracuse, grew by nearly 87,000 in the twenty year period after 1960. This population has remained relatively stable since 1980, growing less then 18,000.

The age distribution of an area's population influences economic development, the demand for various housing types and public services. The 45-64 age group is projected to increase by nearly twenty-five percent by 2010, the over sixty-five age group by about six percent, and the over eighty-five by nearly fifty percent. The twenty to thirty-four age group will stop its rapid decline and remain stable between now and 2010. Note an absence of projected growth in the new job seeking age groups. The data is shown in Table 4.4 and Figure 4.3.

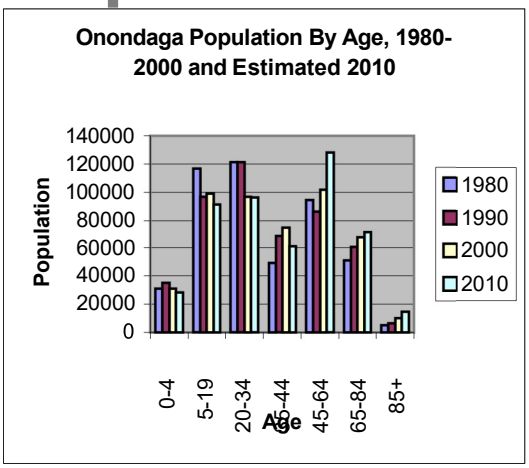


Figure 4.3

Table 4.4 Existing Population by Age 1980 and 1990
& Projected Population by Age 2000 and 2010
& Projected Changes by Age, 1990-2000 and 2000-2010

Existing and Projected Population

Age	*1980*	*1990*	*2000*	*2010*
0-4	30,973	35,006	31,030	28,414
5-19	116,954	96,605	99,017	91,017
20-34	121,205	121,160	96,895	96,246
35-44	49,462	69,087	74,948	61,207
45-64	94,478	86,275	101,678	128,003
65-84	50,848	60,840	67,715	71,728
85+	4,971	6,485	10,257	14,757
Total	463,920	468,973	473,283	476,615

Projected Change by Age Group

Age	*1990-2000*	*Percent Change*	*2000-2010*	*Percent Change*
0-4	-3,976	-11%	-2,616	-8%
5-19	2,412	2%	-8,000	-8%
20-34	-24,265	-20%	-649	-1%
35-44	5,861	8%	-13,741	-18%
45-64	15,403	18%	26,325	26%
65-84	6,875	11%	4,013	6%
85+	3,772	58%	4,500	44%

Source: New York State Department of Economic Development & U.S. Census Bureau as seen in **Framework for Growth in Onondaga County**, Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (June 1998), page 4.

The population changes in the towns and villages vary by geographic area. The population changes by municipality reflect the long-term growth stemming generally north and northwest and easterly. The northward expansion is attributed to the combination of access, flat land, and available utilities. It is no accident development generally occurs outward from a core of jobs and workers combined with good accessibility. While development occasionally leapfrogs over undeveloped areas, in the long run the undeveloped areas will be filled in by development.

Classification of the Towns in the County into inner suburbs, outer sub- urbs, and rural areas provides a useful framework for describing population changes in the area outside of the City.

Four of the inner suburban Towns, Salina, Camillus, Geddes, and DeWitt, lost population (5,534 persons) in the 1980s while experiencing an increase in the number of housing units. The explanation is a decrease in average household size. These trends are likely to continue[3].

Sixty-five percent of the County's Town and Village growth in the 1980's occurred in the northern outer suburbs of Clay, Cicero, Lysander, and another thirteen percent in the eastern outer suburb of Manlius. Growth in these areas since the 1970s is attributable to accessibility to jobs (i.e., high- way access), availability of easily developed land, and availability of water and sewer services. The County anticipates Cicero and Lysander will con- tinue steady rates of growth while Clay and Manlius will experience lower rates of growth[4].

In the more rural areas of the County, Towns experienced either small amounts of growth or small amounts of population loss. Poor relative accessibility or inherent land development problems probably account for the modest changes in population. Towns closest to the outer suburbs can expect to experience some increases in population.

The major population growth in the Town of Van Buren occurred in the 1940s to 1980 (See Table 4.5). In the 1950's, the population grew by about fifty percent, and in the 1960s again by fifty percent, and in the twenty years from 1960 to 1980 the Town's population nearly doubled. In the 1980s and 1990s, the total population of the Town has remained approxi- mately unchanged.

Population growth in the Town has, in effect, divided the Town into two halves—a developed half and a largely undeveloped half. A large portion of the Town's population resides in the eastern developed portion of the Town. In one sense, the eastern portion of the Town might be character- ized as an inner suburb and the western portion of the Town an outer sub-

urb or even a rural area of the County. The eastern portion of the Town is included in the "urbanized area" of the County by the U. S. Census Bu- reau.

Some of the factors affecting population change in the State and Region also affect the Town. Although births probably outnumber deaths by a wide margin, smaller household size and net out migration keep the popu- lation size in a steady state even with modest amounts of new construction. The most highway accessible and easily developed land located in the east- ern portion of the Town was developed first.

Table 4.5 Population, Town of Van Buren & Village of Baldwinsville (portion), 1900-1998

Year	*Town*	*Village (Portion)*
1900	2,107	1,190
1910	1,966	1,234
1920	1,977	1,448
1930	2,259	1,555
1940	2,094	1,597
1950	3,117	1,783
1960	6,465	2,289
1970	11,859	2,355
1980	12,585	2,514
1990	13,367	2,457
2000	12,667	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Censuses of Population; Central New York Re- gional Planning and Development Board, Web Page.

Regional Economy

Decisions about plans for the Town require an understanding of Onondaga County's economy. The economy is interrelated with population trends. A strong economy compared to other parts of the country helps retain residents and encourage in-migration. Conversely, the reverse is also true. The economy is also affected by changes in the population characteristics of the County. Differential changes in age groups impact positively or negatively on different sectors of the economy and needed services.

Table 4.6 shows the number of persons aged sixteen and over working or looking for work. The labor force is larger today than twenty years ago, although the total population is relatively unchanged since 1970. A large increase in the "baby boomer" generation age groups and increased participation by women account for the increase in labor force relative to the static total population. Labor force decline in Syracuse reflects the loss of population and larger numbers of retired persons in the City. The relatively constant size of the new entrants available offsets the out-migration to ar- eas with a stronger economic base.

The industry profile in the County parallels national trends with a large service oriented focus. Retail trade employed nearly 45,000 workers in 1995. Manufacturing employment was nearly 37,000, followed by miscel- laneous services, 31,000, health services 25,000, transportation and public utilities 18,000, finance, insurance, and real estate 17,000, wholesale trade 16,000, business services 14,000, and education 11,000.

The County's location close to northeastern markets and excellent transportation routes to those markets is a major plus for the area. Abundant water supplies, availability of suitable land for development, and a low cost of living, excellent health services, and good educational programs are additional selling points for the area.

Table 4.6 Labor Force (1960-1980), Projected Labor Force (2000-2010 and New Labor Force Entrants (1980-1995, and Projected New Labor Force Entrants (2000-2010), Syracuse and Towns, Onondaga County

Year	*Syracuse*	*Towns*	*County*	*New Entrants (Age 15-24) County*
1960	156,522	130,160	286,682	
1970	145,676	178,344	324,020	
1980	135,569	197,870	353,440	92,956
1985				89,018
1990	130,128	235,342	365,470	73,576
1995				64,254
2000			374,960	64,447
2005				70,413
2010			390,865	70,709

Percent of Change from Start of Data

Year	*Syracuse*	*Towns*	*County*	*New Entrants (Ages 15-24) County.*
1960	100	100	100	
1970	93	137	113	
1980	87	152	123	100
1985				96
1990	83	181	127	79
1995				69
2000			131	69
2005				76
2010			136	76

Source: New York State Department of Economic Development, U.S. Bureau of the Census as seen in **Framework for Growth in Onondaga County**, Syracuse-Onondaga County Plan- ning Agency (June 1998), page 8.

The County ascertained the status of the Onondaga County's economy in a publication released in June 1998. The report's findings are reproduced below.

Economic Development Potential in Onondaga County

1. Economic growth is essential to decrease out-migration of population and preserve the vitality of the community.

2. Trends in restructuring and downsizing businesses, increased productivity through capital investments, and a switch away from manufacturing to a service and information economy, will continue to provide challenges for the local labor force to adapt to this changing environment.

3. Economic development efforts should be targeted at the attraction, retention and expansion of small and medium sized firms.

4. The County's economy for the next twenty years will increasingly rely upon the creation, formation, and marketing of ideas, knowledge, and information.

5. A diversified transportation system, a range of housing and lifestyle options, an excellent water supply and an educated labor force are positive development assets for Onondaga County.

6. The County's role as a regional distribution center will continue due to excellent interstate highway, air, and rail access.

7. Onondaga County's importance as a regional center of medicine, education, government, and cultural institutions will continue to enhance economic vitality.

8. Tourism as an economic growth generator can be greatly expanded with an increased emphasis on special events, promotion of existing tourist attractions such as the Burnet Park Zoo, creation of new tourism opportunities such as the Inner Harbor and Canalway improvements, and other innovative activities.

9. Manufacturing will be dependent on productivity gains, high value added products, and retention of existing firms; total employment in manufacturing will continue to lag behind retail and service sectors.

10. Training workers for a changing workplace and to meet the challenge of the 21st century is vital. Welfare reform with its emphasis on job training and placement has reinforced the need for ongoing training. The Applied Technology Center at Onondaga Community College is an example of the many training opportunities available in this community.

Source: Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency. **Framework for Growth in Onondaga County**, June 1998, page 15.

Housing and Land Development

Housing and land development trends respond to changes in the characteristics of the population and to changes in the status of the economy. Anticipating changes in population and the economy is important in understanding future changes in housing and land development. Housing and land development trends derive from the sum total of individual buying decisions.

Physical factors also play a role in housing and land development trends. Topography has been the most important physical factor affecting development patterns in the County. The relatively flat northern lowland areas have presented the fewest barriers to construction of buildings and devel- opment of water, sewer and transportation systems. The southernmost up- land portion of the County has been developed only sparsely due to severe limitations posed by steep slopes and shallow bedrock. Although the transitional area of hills and valleys within which most of Van Buren is situ- ated present certain limitations to development, areas in Syracuse and the inner suburbs have been built-up rather intensively.

Accessibility is the third leg of factors affecting housing and land development. At a regional scale, land use patterns are generally predictable based on transportation system. Employment centers stay close to highways and to a lesser extent rail lines; major retail centers locate near major highways.

Airports attract economic activity. Housing locates in areas with accessibility to employment centers.

Average persons per household relates to both population and housing. The average size of a household has decreased since 1950 (See Table 4.7). Fewer children per family, more single person households, increasing age at which people first marry, and an increase in the elderly population have contributed to the declining persons per household. In suburban areas, the new housing construction has kept pace with the demand for new housing resulting from smaller family sizes.

Table 4.7 Average Persons Per Household, Onondaga County, 1950-1990 and Projected Persons Per Household, Onondaga County, 1990-2000

Year	*Size*
1950	3.51
1960	3.41
1970	3.25
1980	2.80
1990	2.64
2000	2.52
2010	2.45

The number of units of single-family and multiple-family units in Onondaga County has increased since 1960. But most of the growth has oc- curred in the Towns; while Syracuse has remained relatively stagnant (See Table 4.8)

Table 4.8 Number of Single-Family and Multiple-Family Housing Units, Municipalities, Onondaga County, 1960-1990

Housing Units

	Syracuse			Towns			Total		
Year	*SF*	*MF*	*Total*	*SF*	*MF*	*Total*	*SF*	*MF*	*Total*
1960	29,002	41,440	70,442	54,130	6,463	60,599	83,132	47,903	131,035
1970	26,637	45,099	71,736	65,149	15,132	80,281	91,786	60,231	152,017
1980	28,044	45,110	73,114	79,654	22,724	102,738	107,698	67,834	175,532
1990	27,991	43,511	71,502	95,060	24,316	119,376	123,054	67,827	190,878

Amount of Change, 1960 Equals One-Hundred

	Syracuse			Towns			Total		
Year	*SF*	*MF*	*Total*	*SF*	*MF*	*Total*	*SF*	*MF*	*Total*
1960	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1970	92	109	102	120	234	132	110	128	116
1980	97	109	104	147	332	169	130	142	134
1990	97	105	102	176	373	197	148	142	146

Nearly 30,000 residential building permits were issued from 1980 to 1999 for single-family and multi-family homes (See Table 4.9 on page 52). Two-thirds of the permits were issued in the 1980s. The Town of Van Bu- ren issued 1,154 permits from 1980 to 1999, eighty-two percent were is- sued during the 1980s and eighteen percent in the 1990s (See Table 4.10 on page 55). During the 1980s, Van Buren issued 5.2% of all residential permits issued in the County; during the 1990s, Van Buren issued 1.9% of all residential permits issued in the County. The changing patterns of building permits is shown graphically in Figures 4.4 and 4.5.

The northern towns (Cicero, Clay, Lysander, and Van Buren) issued over half the building permits over the entire twenty year period. The eastern and western parts of the County are secondary growth areas.

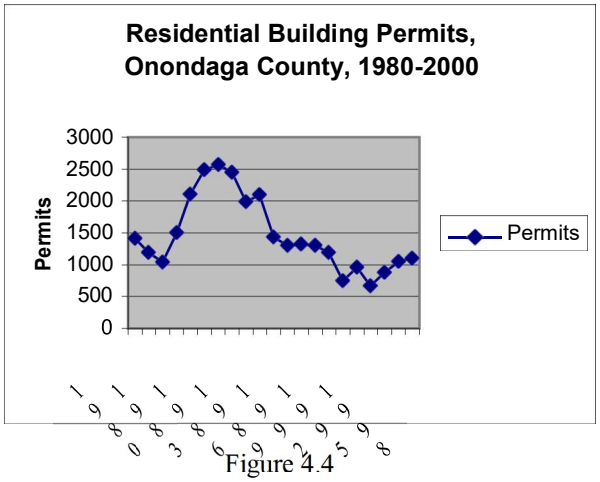


Figure 4.4

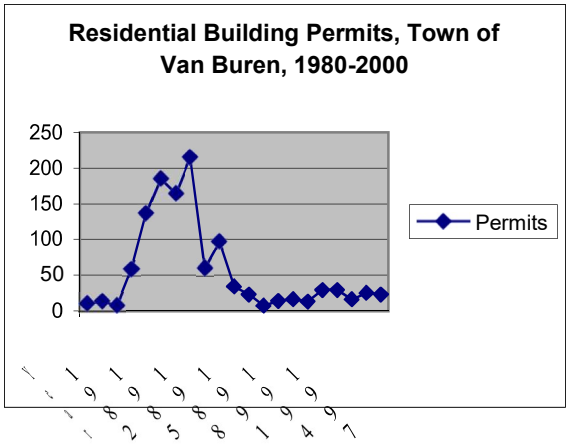


Figure 4.5

A substantial number of homes are available on the housing market in the County. The average home sale value has remained relatively constant through the 1990s (See Table 4.11 on page 55). The pattern of average sale prices of homes and the number sold are shown on Figure 4.6.

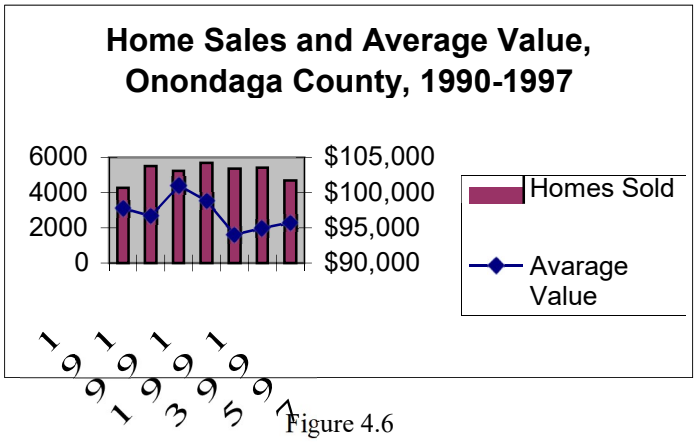


Figure 4.6

In September 2000 the multiple-listing service listed seventy homes for sale in Van Buren. Thirty-two were condos in the Village Green area that ranged in price from $20,000 to $95,000. The average price was $43,000. Ten single-family homes were listed in the Village Green area that ranged in price from $65,000 to $165,000. The Seneca Knolls area showed eight homes listed that ranged in price from $40,000 to $70,000.

Table 4.9 Permits, Municipalities, Onondaga County, 1980-1984 and 1990-1999 (By Volume)

Municipalities	*1980-1989*	*Municipalities*	*1990-1999*
Clay	4,247	**Cicero**	1,671
Manilus	2,289	**Clay**	1,538
Cicero	1,909	**Lysander**	1,287
Syracuse	1,783	**Manilus**	1,012
Lysander	1,595	**Syracuse**	881
Salina	1,112	**Onondaga**	859
Camillus	1000	**Salina**	553
Van Buren	948	**Camillus**	526
Onondaga	845	**De Witt**	482
De Witt	560	**Pompey**	333
Pompey	494	**Geddes**	320
Geddes	493	**Van Buren**	206
La Fayette	323	**Skaneateles**	189
Skaneateles	278	**Otisco**	184
Elbridge	260	**Elbridge**	164
Marcellus	254	**Tully**	146
Tully	170	**Marcellus**	136
Spafford	154	**La Fayette**	135
Fabius	68	**Spafford**	111
Otisco	No Data	**Fabius**	92
Total	18,787	**Total**	10,829

Table 4.10 Residential Building Permits,
Town of Van Buren, 1980-2000

Year	*Permits*	*Year*	*Permits*
1980	10	**1990**	34
1981	13	**1991**	23
1982	7	**1992**	7
1983	59	**1993**	14
1984	137	**1994**	16
1985	185	**1995**	13
1986	165	**1996**	29
1987	215	**1997**	29
1988	60	**1998**	16
1989	97	**1999**	25
Total	948	**Total**	206

Table 4.11 Number of Home Sales and Average Home Sale Value,
Onondaga County, 1990-1997

Year	*Number of Homes Sold*	*Average Home Sale Value*
1990	4,606	$94,500
1991	4,272	$97,700
1992	5,489	$96,600
1993	5,221	$101,000
1994	5,682	$98,800
1995	5,348	$94,000
1996	5,427	$94,900
1997	4,689	$95,700

Conclusions

As one of thirty-five municipalities in Onondaga County, the Town of Van Buren is inextricably linked to the Region and the County both socially and economically.

Changes that occur in the County will undoubtedly impact the character of the Town in the future. By maintaining an accurate and realistic regional perspective on population growth, housing, and the economy as the Town plans for the future, it will be better prepared to respond to the various pressures and trends of the Region and determine for itself the manner in which these trends will influence the development of Van Buren.

Notes

[1] Empire State Development, New York State Data Center, Web Page

[2] Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency. Framework for Growth in Onondaga County, June 1998, page 3.

[3] Ibid, page 4.

[4] Ibid, page 5.

V. Environmental Factors

Geology and Groundwater Hydrology

Bedrock Geology

The bedrock lying closest to the surface in Van Buren is that of the Vernon Formation. The Vernon Formation is a geological unit approxi- mately 500 feet thick consisting of layers of shale and dolostone alternat- ing with layers of halite (rock salt). The shale consists of fine-grained clay minerals, while the dolostone consists chiefly of an organic carbonate of calcium and magnesium. The salt and sediments which were the sources of material in the rocks were deposited in the shallow waters of a very salty sea that covered the area of Van Buren during the Late Silurian Period (408 to 421 million years ago). Deformation and uplifting of the rock oc- curred late in its development and left the rock beds dipping slightly to the south.

Surficial Geology

Most of the unconsolidated sediments lying above the bedrock and below the soil in Van Buren are products of the fourth and final glacial advance which reached its climax approximately 22,000 years ago. Vast sheets of ice scoured the bedrock, moved soils great distances, and ground rocks into smaller pieces. Mixed, unlayered sediment was deposited in elongated, streamlined hills as the mile-thick glacier moved forward. These hills, or drumlins, are generally steeper on one side (the side upstream of the direc- tion of glacier movement), and are the most obvious topographic features in Van Buren.

Approximately 14,000 years ago the ice began to melt. Meltwater formed an expansive, shallow lake and deposited silt, sand, gravel and clay be- tween and around islands of drumlins. Glacial erratics, or large boulders were also deposited in upland areas by the melting ice.

The drumlins, kettle holes (depressions made by the melting of detached pieces of glacier ice), scattered wetlands, long narrow valleys and flat areas in Van Buren are all evidence of glacial erosion and deposition.

The Map 5.1 titled "Surficial Geology" shows the distribution of various types of surficial geological deposits in Van Buren including glacial deposits and other more recent deposits of streams and rivers. The different types of deposits are listed and described below in order from greatest amount to least amount found in Van Buren.

Thick till over bedrock (thr)

Unsorted glacial deposits of silt, sand, clay, cobbles, gravel, and boulders; generally averages about 30 feet thick, but may be up to 200 feet thick in some places; low to moderate permeability

Lake silt and/or clay (lsc)

Thin bedded to massive offshore deposits of sediments accumulated in lakes formed during or after glaciation.

Ice contact sand and gravel (ic)

Gravel or sand deposited in conical hills, short irregular ridges, or terraces along valleys; poorly to moderately well sorted and stratified; high permeability

Outwash sand and gravel (osg)

Stratified and well sorted glacial meltwater deposits; high permeability

Peat, marl, muck, and clay (pm)

Fine-grained sediments often high in content of calcite, dolomite or organic matter; low permeability

Alluvial silt and sand (als)

Floodplain deposits of postglacial to recent age; low permeability

Delta sand and gravel (dsg)

Mostly fine to coarse sand; deposited when streams entered lakes formed during or after glaciation; high permeability

Alluvial sand and gravel (alg)

Floodplain deposits of postglacial to recent age; high permeability

Aquifers

An aquifer is any stratum or zone below the surface of the earth capable of producing water, as for a well. Any of the geological material underlying Van Buren may produce water, but the quality and the quantity of the water available will vary depending on the location and depth of the well.

Water yields from wells drilled into the shale bedrock of the Vernon Formation range from between 1 to 245 gallons per minute. The water from this source, however, often contains large amounts of dissolved minerals including sodium chloride and calcium sulfate. This mineralization can produce unpleasant taste, odor, color, or other undesirable chemical properties.

Glacial till may also produce water, but only in quantities of a few hundred gallons per day to individual wells. A dug well is usually the only type of well that can supply usable quantities of water from till. Since dug wells are simply holes in the ground extending below the water table, they are highly susceptible to contamination.

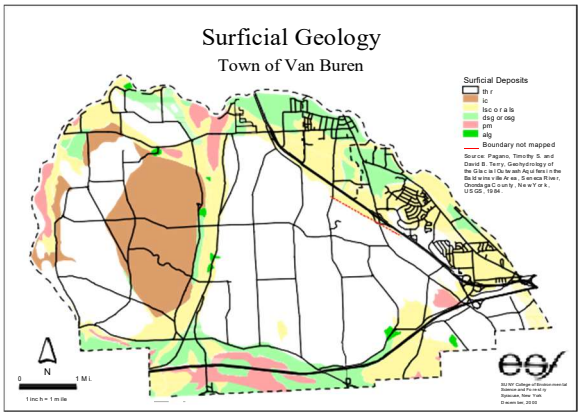
Sand and gravel deposits are the best sources of groundwater. The Map 5.2 titled "Major Aquifers" shows the location of major sand and gravel aquifers in Van Buren. Some of these aquifers are located very near the sur- face. Others lie at varying depths beneath less permeable material. The Canton Street Well in the Village of Baldwinsville, for example, taps a 14- foot deep layer of coarse sand and gravel beneath finer-grained silty sand. The well is 16 feet deep. Its peak withdrawal rate is approximately 700,000 gallons per day.

The Map 5.3 titled "Well Yield" indicates the estimated potential well yields in various parts of the major aquifers. The map also shows where the aquifers are believed to be overlain by less permeable sediments.

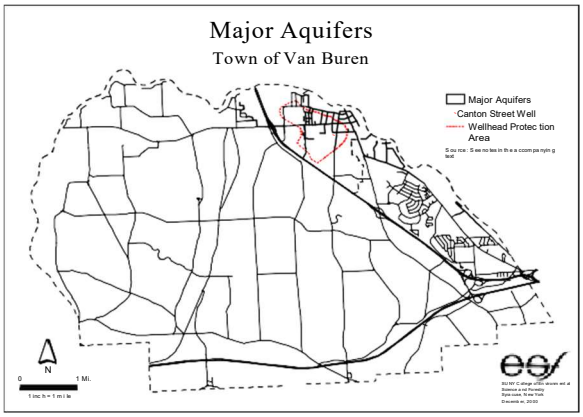
Wellhead Protection Area

A Wellhead Protection Area is the surface and subsurface area surrounding

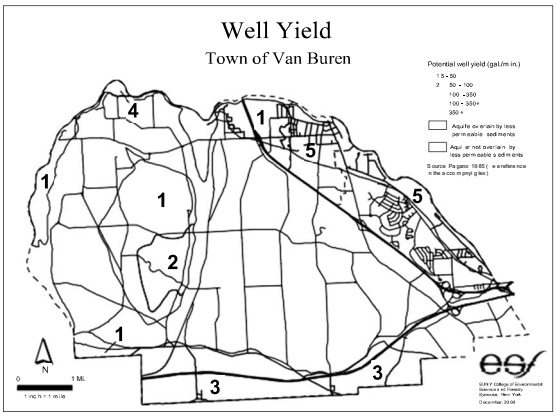
a well through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach the well. The New York Rural Water Association (NYRWA) has delineated the Wellhead Protection Area for the Canton Street Well. This area is shown on the Map 5.2 titled "Major Aquifers". It is the com- bined area of the zones defined by the NYRWA as the Zone of Influence, the Zone of Contribution, and the Tributary Watershed Zone. The Zone of Influence is the area around the well where pumping has lowered water levels in the aquifer. The Zone of Contribution is the area outside the Zone of Influence where groundwater flows toward the well. The Tributary Wa- tershed zone is the additional area which supplies surface water runoff to the Zone of Contribution and the Zone of Influence.



Map 5.1



Map 5.2



Map 5.3

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Soils

Background

The soils in Van Buren are derived primarily from deposits left behind by the glacier of the last ice age. Some soils in the valleys of the major streams are derived from more recent sediments deposited by water. Weathering of these materials has taken place over thousands of years. Or- ganic matter has been added, and chemical reactions have occurred. These processes have yielded a wide variety of soil types.

Soil Texture

The mineral portion of a soil is made up of particles which vary in size from large sand grains to medium-sized silt particles and very small clay particles. The relative proportions of the different sized particles determine a soil's texture. Soils which contain relatively balanced mixtures of sand, silt, and clay particles are known as loams.

Texture affects the movement of water and air through the soil and root penetration into the soil. It also determines the looseness and workability of the soil.

Hydrologic Soil Groups

Hydrologic groups are groups of soils having the same runoff potential under similar storm and cover conditions. Soil properties that influence run- off potential are those that influence the minimum rate of infiltration, or the rate at which water seeps into the soil. Chief among these is the soil texture. The soils of the U.S. are placed into four hydrologic groups: A, B, C, and D. Definitions of the classes are as follows:

A. Soils with low runoff potential. Soils having high infiltration rates and consisting chiefly of deep, well drained to excessively well-drained sands or gravels.

B. Soils having moderate infiltration rates and consisting chiefly of moderately deep to deep, moderately well drained to well drained soils with moderately fine to moderately course textures.

C. Soils having slow infiltration rates and consisting chiefly of soils with a layer that impedes downward movement of water, or soils with moderately fine to fine textures.

D. Soils with high runoff potential. Soils having very slow infiltration rates and consisting chiefly of clay soils with high swelling potential, soils with a permanently high water table, soils with a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and shallow soils over nearly impervious material.[1]

Characteristics of General Soil Units in Van Buren

The Map 5.4 titled, "Soil Texture and Hydrologic Group" delineates general soil units in Van Buren and depicts the surface textures and hydrologic groups of the dominant soils in each general mapping unit. The mapping units are those of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's States Geographic (STASTGO) soils data base. Less suited for use in Town scale analyses than regional scale studies, the STATSGO data provide a broad overview of predominant soil characteristics.

According to the STATSGO data, lower elevations in the western areas of the Town are generally dominated by well drained gravelly loam soils in Hydrologic Group A. Higher elevations in the western and central areas of the Town are generally dominated by moderately well to well drained loam soils in Hydrologic Group B.

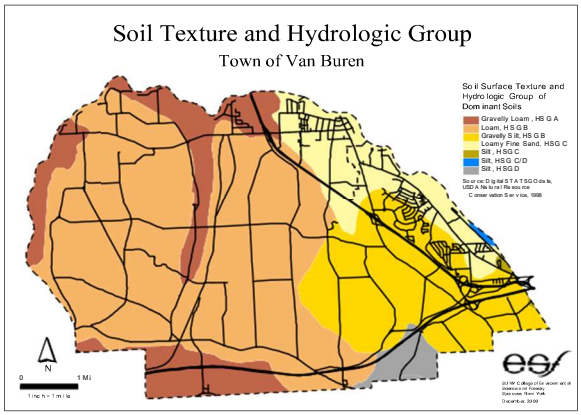
Lower elevations in the eastern areas of the Town are generally dominated by less well drained loamy fine sand soils and poorly drained silt soils in Hydrologic groups C and D. Higher elevations in the eastern areas of the Town are generally dominated by moderately well to well drained gravelly silt soils in Hydrologic Group B.

Characteristics of Soil Series

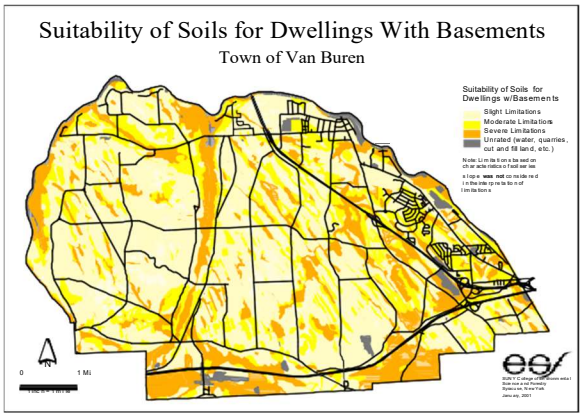
The U.S. Department of Agriculture has mapped the boundaries of forty-five soil series in the Town of Van Buren. Soil series are groups of soils having horizons similar in characteristics and arrangement in the soil profile and developed from a particular type of parent material. They are more detailed units of classification than those defined in the STATSGO data-

base mentioned above. It is beyond the scope of this report to describe the characteristics of the soil series in detail. The USDA's maps and descriptions are contained in its *Soil Survey of Onondaga County, New York,* available for inspection at the Town Hall.[2]

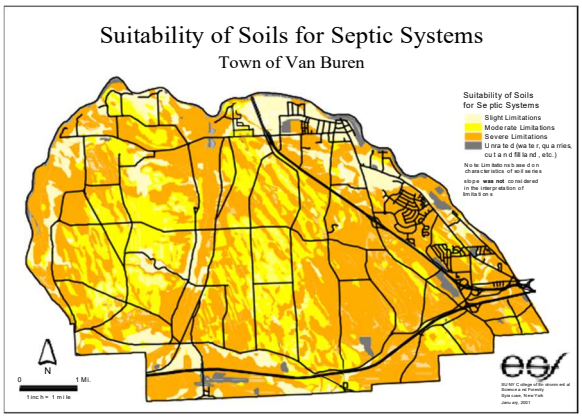
The suitabilities of soil series for two particularly important uses are indicated in the Maps 5.5 and 5.6 titled "Suitability of Soils for Dwellings with Basements" and "Suitability of Soils for Septic Systems". The term *slight limitations* on these maps indicates that few or no limitations exist, or that limitations are easily overcome. *Moderate limitations* indicates that limitations need to be recognized, but can be overcome under good management. *Severe limitations* indicates that limitations exist that are serious enough to make use questionable. Limitations are based on wetness, flooding hazard, permeability, depth to bedrock, surface rockiness, and soil texture. For the purposes of producing the soil suitability maps, slope *was not* considered in the interpretation of limitations.



Map 5.4



Map 5.5



Map 5.6

NOTES

[1] *New York Guidelines for Urban Erosion and Sediment Control*, New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, 1991.

[2] *Soil Survey of Onondaga County,* New York, United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, 1977.

Topography and Surface Hydrology

General Topography

The land in the Town of Van Buren consists of gently rolling ter- rain. Valleys varying in steepness and width run along the align- ments of the Seneca River, Dead Creek, Crooked Brook, and the New York State Thruway. The local landscape features were formed from the deposition of geologic materials carried by gla- ciers, and more recently by deposits of streams and rivers. The sec- tion of this survey titled "Geology and Groundwater Hydrology" contains a description of the glacial activity which played a major role in sculpting the landscape.

Elevation

The Map 5.7 titled "Elevation" shows how land in various ranges of heights above sea level is distributed across Van Buren. The highest point in the Van Buren lies 670 feet above sea level on Sorrell Hill west of Canton Street in the central area of the Town. The lowest point lies 360 feet above sea level on the shore of the Seneca River east of Van Ness Road in the eastern area of the Town.

Slope

The Map 5.8 titled "Percent Slope" shows how terrain of various steepness is distributed across Van Buren. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the land area in the Town slopes at a rate of 0% to 6%. Eighteen percent (18%) of the land slopes at a rate of 6% to 10%. Nine percent (9%) of the land slopes at a rate of 10% to 15%. Six percent (6%) of the land slopes at a rate of 15% to 25%. One percent (1%) of the land slopes at a rate of greater than 25%. The steepest slopes are oriented along the valleys of streams and the longer sides (the northeastern and southwestern sides) of drumlins. Drumlins are smooth, streamlined hills formed by glacial activity.

Surface Water and Drainage

There are approximately 48 linear miles of streams and creeks in Van Buren. The entire Town is located within the Eastern Oswego River Basin which drains into Lake Ontario at Oswego. The Map 5.9 titled "Surface

Water" shows the locations of surface watercourses and major drainage divides.

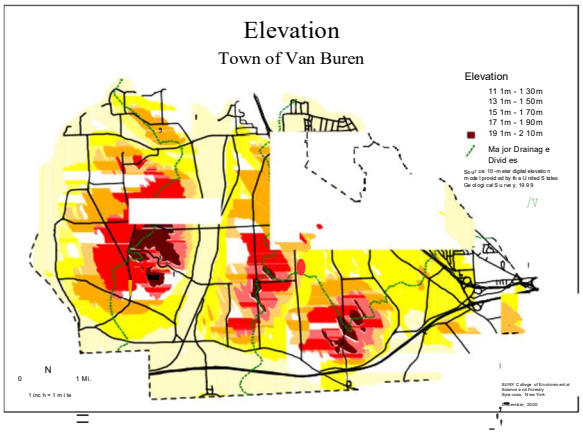
Streams and creeks on the western side of the upland area in the western portion of the Town flow northwestward into the Seneca River. Streams on the western side of the Valley of Dead Creek flow eastward into the Creek, while streams on the eastern side flow westward into it. Dead creek flows north into the Seneca River. Land in the southern area of the Town drains into the old Erie Canal which flows westward into Dead Creek. The northeastern portion of the Town drains into the Seneca River via the northerly flowing Crooked Brook. The remaining land in the southeastern section drain into the Seneca River either directly or via Nine Mile Creek in Camillus.

Water Quality and Regulation

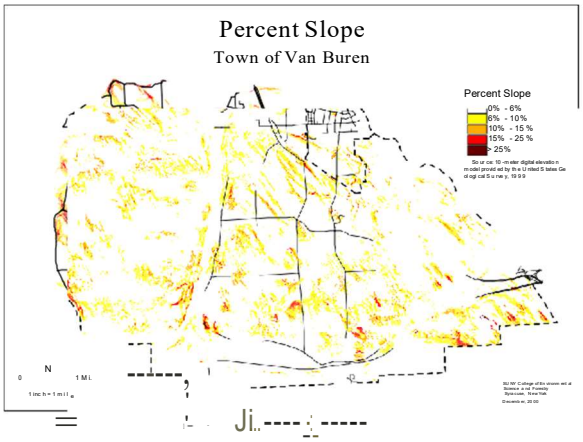
The New York State Department of Health has classified surface waters according to their "highest and best use". Water classified in Classes A and AA are of the highest quality and are suitable for drinking and food processing. Class B waters are suitable for swimming and other water related recreation where bodily contact is involved. Class C streams and lakes are suitable for fishing and recreational boating. The additional classification letters of (t) or (ts) are used to indicate that there is sufficient dissolved oxygen to support trout or trout spawning in Class A, B, or C waters. Class D waters are of the poorest quality and are suitable only for agricultural irrigation and most industrial processes.

A Protection of Waters Permit is required from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for the following activities:

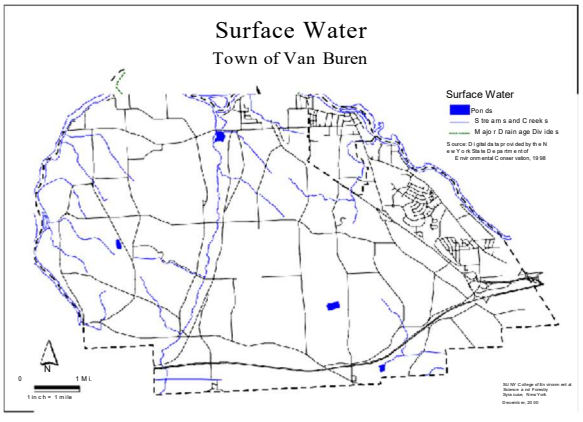
- Modification or disturbance of the bed or banks of streams that are classified C(t) and above, including removal of sand or gravel
- Filling or dredging in navigable waters
- Construction, reconstruction, or repair of certain dams
- Construction, reconstruction, or modification of certain docks, mooring areas or other structures in navigable waters



Map 5.7



Map 5.8



Map 5.9

Special Flood Hazard Areas

Background

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines a flood as:

> …a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from one of the following four sources:
>
> - The overflow of inland or tidal waters.
>
> - The unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source.
>
> - Mudslides (i.e., mudflows) which are proximately caused by floods, as defined above, and are akin to a river of liquid and flowing mud on the surface of normally dry land area, as when earth is carried by a current of water and deposited along the path of the current.
>
> - The collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or other body of water as a result of erosion or undermining caused by waves or currents of water exceeding the cyclical levels which result in flood, as defined above.[1]

FEMA has produced maps outlining the degree and extent of flood risks in communities across the United States. These maps include delineation of high-risk flood zones, or Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA's).

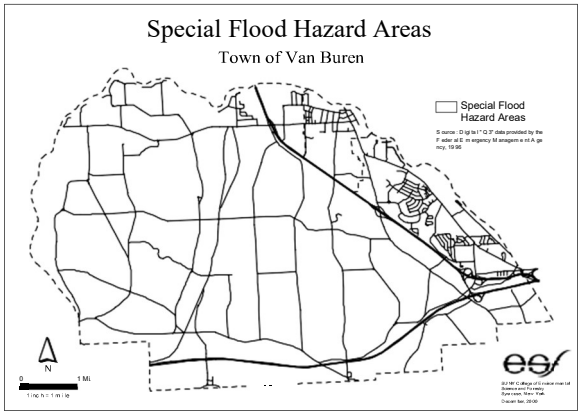
The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) provides coverage against flood damage to property owners in communities like Van Buren that have adopted and enforce regulations designed to ensure safe construction of buildings in high-risk flood zones. The maps produced by FEMA serve as guiding documents for local officials in the regulation of floodplain construction. The Town is required, as a condition of its participation in the NFIP, to ensure that the lowest floor elevations of new structures built in Special Flood Hazard Areas are at or above the base flood elevations shown on the FEMA maps.

The FEMA maps also guide lenders in enforcing the mandatory flood insurance purchasing requirements that apply to owners of property in Special Flood Hazard Areas.

Distribution and Extent of Special Flood Hazard Areas in the Town of Van Buren

The Map 5.10 titled "Special Flood Hazard Areas" shows flood zones delineated by FEMA in the Town of Van Buren. The areas delineated have been determined by FEMA to be located in the 100-year floodplain, areas where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any given year.

Special Flood Hazard areas in Van Buren are limited to lands adjacent to the Seneca River, Dead Creek, and the portion of the old Erie Canal west of Bennetts Corners Road.



Map 5.10

NOTES

[1] Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Internet web page at http://www.fema.gov/nfip/readmap.htm.

Wetlands

Definitions

Several federal and state agencies provide definitions of wetlands through various laws, regulations, administrative guidelines, and programs. All of these definitions include consideration of hydrology, vegetation, and soils.

Federal Definitions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers define wetlands as:

> …those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal conditions do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. [1]

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service, now the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has defined wetlands similarly, adding that wetlands include "areas that have a predominance of hydric soils" [2]. Hydric soil is soil that is wet enough to periodically pro- duce anaerobic (oxygen-free) conditions.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has developed the following definition of wetlands:

> …lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. Wetlands must have one or more of the following three attributes: 1) at least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes (water dependent vegetation), and 2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil, and 3) the substrate is nonsoil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year. [3]

State Definition

The New York State Freshwater Wetlands Act defines wetlands as:

> (a) lands and submerged lands… supporting aquatic or semi-aquatic vegetation…; (b) lands and submerged lands containing remnants of any vegetation that is not aquatic or semi-aquatic that has died because of wet con- ditions over a sufficiently long period, provided that such wet conditions do not exceed a maximum seasonal water depth of six feet and that such conditions can be ex- pected to persist indefinitely, barring human interven- tion; (c) lands and waters substantially enclosed by aquatic or semi-aquatic vegetation…or by dead vegeta- tion as set forth in paragraph (b), the regulation of which is necessary to protect and preserve the aquatic and semi- aquatic vegetation; and (d) the waters overlying the areas set forth in (a) and (b) and the lands underlying (c). [4]

Values and Benefits

Wetlands in their natural state have tremendously significant ecological value. They filter pollutants, nutrients, and sediments, thus protecting the quality of surface water and ground water resources. By collecting, and then slowly releasing runoff from heavy rains and snow melts, wetlands reduce the risk of flood damage. Wetlands adjacent to watercourses pro- vide a buffer against streambank erosion.

Wetlands export nutrients supporting the food chain on which wildlife and fisheries depend, and provide critical habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other animals. The hunting and fishing industries are enhanced by systems of wetlands providing fish and wildlife habitat.

The strikingly beautiful open spaces and other areas for active and passive recreation that wetlands provide add to our quality of life, enhance private property values, and promote tourism.

Wetland Regulation

Activities in wetlands are regulated by state and federal laws. Pursuant to the New York State Freshwater Wetlands Act, a permit is required for

draining, dredging, grading, filling, excavating, placing of obstructions, or conducting any other activity that might substantially impair wetland benefits in or within 100 feet of a freshwater wetland.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has mapped the approximate boundaries of all freshwater wetlands of 12.4 acres or more. In some cases, these maps include smaller wetlands of unusual local importance. The DEC maps are used to determine the presence of State regulatory freshwater wetlands on particular properties. When the locations or boundaries must be determined more precisely, property owners may request a delineation by the Corps of Engineers, the DEC or a consultant. Boundaries delineated by consultants are subject to DEC and Corps verification.

Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act regulates discharges to waters of the United States, including filling, soil movement, and the placement of certain pilings in wetlands regardless of size. The Army Corps of Engineers administers a permit program to ensure that regulated activities comply with environmental requirements. A joint DEC/Corps application procedure is in place for wetland permits.

State Wetland Classification

A classification system is used to objectively rank New York State regulatory wetlands according to criteria derived from DEC regulations. Under this system, Class I wetlands are considered the most valuable, while Class II, III, IV, and V wetlands are considered progressively less valuable. Federal regulations do not distinguish between wetlands on the basis of potential wetland values.

The Distribution and Extent of Wetlands in Van Buren

The DEC wetlands maps show 1693.7 acres of regulatory wetlands in Van Buren, 7.6% of the total Town area (see Map 5.11 titled "NYS Regu- latory Wetlands").

The wetland adjacent to Dead Creek has been identified by the Onondaga County Environmental management Council as one of the most important wetlands in the County. It is a favorite stopping place of migratory waterfowl. It also serves as a critical stormwater and meltwater retention basin.

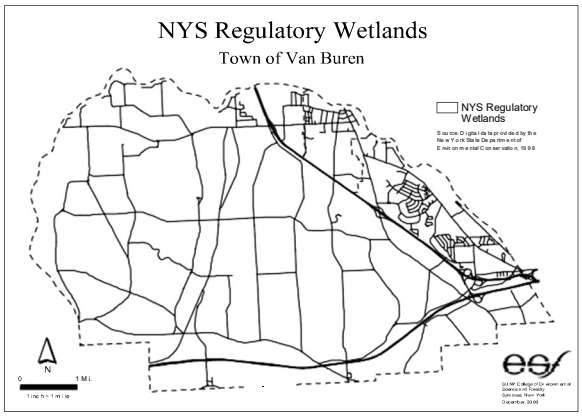
The portion of this wetland north of Conners Road and northeast of Gunbarrel Road is classified as a Class I wetland.

Another Class I wetland lies south of the New York State Thruway and adjacent to the old Erie Canal. The other wetlands in the Town are classified as either Class II or Class III.

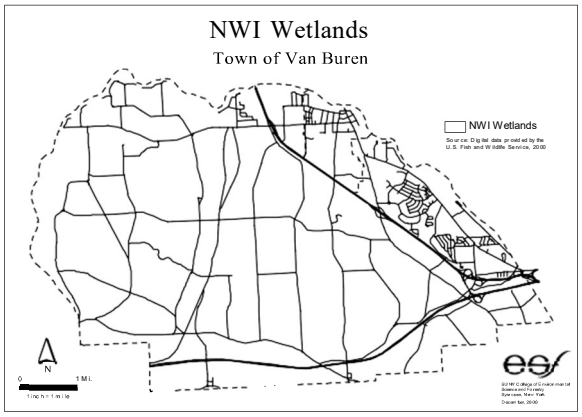
Two wetlands function as recharge areas for large, significant groundwater aquifers. One extends along the Seneca River from Baldwinsville to the eastern Town boundary. The other extends east from the area of Jack's Reef along the southern boundary of the Town and includes the wetland adjacent to the old Erie Canal.

Another wetland of special interest is one which is located at the northwest corner of Van Buren and Brickyard Roads. This lies in a depression believed to have been formed by the melting of a detached mass of ice buried or partially buried in other material deposited by the most recent glacier.

The Federal Emergency Wetland Resources Act of 1986 directed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to map the wetlands of the United States as part of a National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). The FWS's definition of wetland differs from the definitions used by the DEC and the Army Corps of Engineers, and the NWI wetlands have not been field-verified. Still, the NWI maps are a useful resource in determining where certain wetlands not mapped and regulated by the DEC might exist. The NWI maps show an additional 685.5 acres of wetlands not delineated on the DEC maps (see the Map 5.12 titled "NWI Wetlands").



Map 5.11



Map 5.12

NOTES

[1] EPA, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 230.3 and Army Corps of Engineers, 33 CFR 328.3.

[2] USDA Soil Conservation Service, *National Flood Security Act Manual*, 1988.

[3] U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*. 1979.

[4] New York State Environmental Conservation Law, Article 24, Title 1, Section 24-0107.

Land Cover

Background - The National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD)

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, has produced a land cover dataset for the conterminous United States on the basis of data collected in 1992 and 1993 by the Landsat 5 earth observing satellite. The data contains 21 categories of land cover information suitable for a variety of regional applications, including landscape analysis, land management, and modeling nutrient and pesticide runoff.

The land cover categories used in the National Land Cover Dataset are listed below:

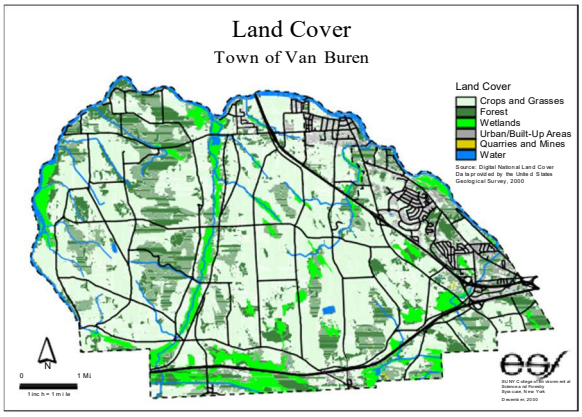
- Open Water
- Perennial Ice/Snow
- Low-Intensity Residential
- High-Intensity Residential
- Commercial/Industrial/Transportation
- Bare Rock/Sand/Clay
- Quarries/Strip Mines/Gravel Pits
- Transitional
- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Shrubland
- Orchards/Vineyards/Other
- Grasslands/Herbaceous
- Pasture/Hay
- Row Crops
- Small Grains
- Fallow
- Urban/Recreational Grasses
- Woody Wetlands
- Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands

Distribution of Land Cover in Van Buren

For the purposes of this survey, data covering the area of the Town of Van Buren were extracted from the National Land Cover Dataset. The 13 categories of land cover present in the Town are generalized into 6 categories and displayed on the Map 5.13 titled "Land Cover". The map is enhanced with the more detailed surface water and wetlands data which was col- lected in other tasks associated with this survey.

The percent of land in the Town under each category is as follows:

Crops and Grasses	60.8%
Forest	27.9%
Wetlands	3.3%
Urban/Built-Up Areas	6.1%
Quarries and Mines	<.1%
Water	1.9%



Map 5.13

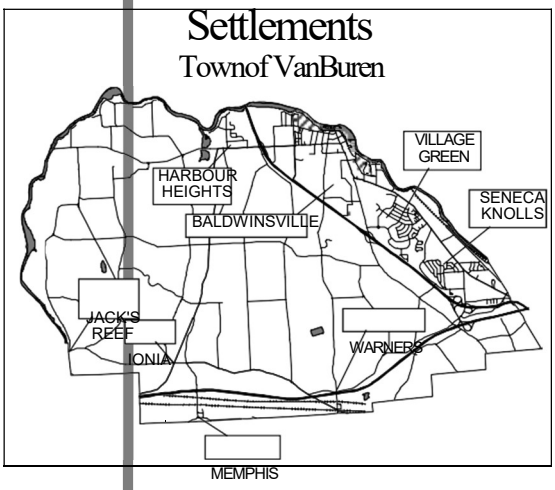
VI. Land Use and Transportation

A. Existing Land Use

A division of the Town into two parts is clearly noted in a survey of existing land use in Van Buren. A suburban part is to the east of Interstate 690 where higher concentrations of residences (Village Green and Seneca Knolls), private and public facilities, commercial uses, and industrial uses are located. West of Interstate 690 is the more rural part of the Town, composed of mostly agricultural land, larger residence parcels, and a scattering of other uses. The Hamlets (Memphis and Warners) are also found in the rural portion of the Town.

The suburban portion of the Town is approximately one-sixth the acreage of the rural side of the Town. The suburban side contains a greater variety of uses. The suburban portion is contains about fifty-five percent "built-up land." The rural portion of Van Buren contains about fifteen percent "built-up land." Built-up land consists of land uses such as residential, community facilities, parks and recreation, commercial, industrial, and utilities. The suburban portion is twenty-eight percent residential. The rural side is fifty-six percent agricultural land, and eleven percent residen- tial. The suburban portion is (percentage wise) more residential than the rural side, consisting of smaller, more numerous parcels, but the rural side has more overall residential acreage.

Map 6.1 (Page 79), Land Use, shows existing land uses in the Town of Van Buren for the year 2001. The suburban and rural parts are clearly illustrated. Map 6.2, Settlements, identifies the hamlets, and major housing developments within the Town. Table 6.1 shows the breakdown of land uses by acreage and as- sessed value. Table 6.2 shows the breakdown of land uses in the suburban and rural portions of the Town.



Map 6.2

Land use is often influenced by transportation. Historically, different forms of transportation influenced the development of the Town. The Indian trails and waterways throughout New York were the first forms of travel in the area. The trails evolved into roads, rail lines, and trolley lines..

The system of roads within Van Buren today, for instance, is key for trucking routes and ways for people to get to and from different areas of the region efficiently, whether for work, or for other purposes. The Village of Baldwinsville is located on the Seneca River and includes Lock 24 of the New York State Canal system. Railroad also helped with the physical development of Town. They run along the eastern and southern portions of Van Buren.

Table 6.1 Land Use

Town of Van Buren, New York, 2001

Land Use	Acres	Percentage	Assessed Value	Percentage
Agricultural	10610	46	19015900.00	4
Residential	2975	13	291976300.00	68
Community Facilities	191	0.7	33979300.00	8
Parks & Recreation	795	3.4	2307700.00	0.5
Commercial	199	0.8	24882400.00	6
Employment Centers	398	1.7	33418000.00	8
Utilities & RR	421	1.8	6715935.00	1.6
Open Lots	5789	25	15201025.00	3.5
Water	508	2.2	2248900.00	0.5
Roads & Highways	1366	5.8	N/A	N/A
Total	23252	100	429745460.00	100

Land Use Map available at the Town Building

Land Use Map available at the Town Building

Table 6.2 Land Use by Suburban and Rural Areas, Town of Van Buren, New York, 2001

Land Use	Acres (Suburban	Acres (Rural Side)
Agricultural	296	10314
Residential	994	1981
Community Facilities	187	13
Parks & Recreation	399	387
Commercial	148	52
Employment Centers	185	212
Utilities & RR	65	323
Open Lots	1132	4691
Water	193	315
Total	3599	18288

Agriculture

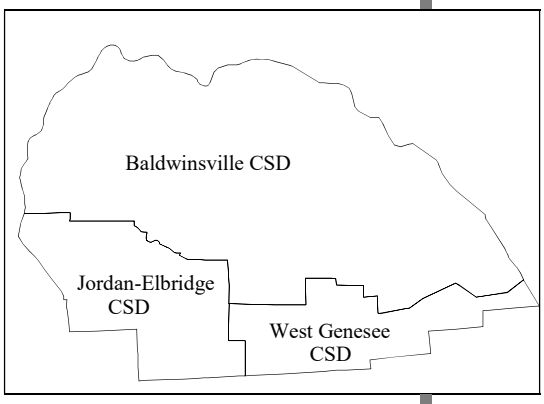
Just less than fifty percent of the land in Van Buren is classified as agricultural. The agricultural lands account for more acreage than any other land use in Van Buren. The major agricultural land use is field crops, which account for 2429 acres. Other major agricultural land uses, which consist of 100 to 200 acres of land each, are dairy farms, horse farms, orchards (mostly apples), and livestock. Some of the minor agricultural uses are nurseries and green houses, poultry, and sheep.

Residential Uses

Approximately thirteen percent of the Town is classified as residential. The classification of residential includes single-family units, two-family units, and apartments. Less than three percent of all the residential proper- ties are apartments, and are mostly in the eastern part of the Town.

Most of the smaller residential lots are to the east, on the suburbanized side of Van Buren. The Village of Baldwinsville and the larger developments

are located on the suburban side. Numerous residential parcels are located to the west of Interstate 690. These residential parcels are larger and more dispersed than those on the eastern side of the Town. Some of the houses in the rural part of the Town are located on parcels over ten and fifteen acres in size.



Map 6.3

Community Facilities and Services

Slightly less than one percent of the total Town area is comprised of community facilities. Community facilities include schools, churches, public buildings, and police and fire stations.

Van Buren is divided into three school districts; Baldwinsville Central School District is the largest. The two other school districts in Van Buren are West Genesee Central School at the southern edge, and Jordan-Elbridge Central School to the western side of the Town (See Map 6.3).

The Baldwinsville Central School District includes Baker High, Ray Middle, and Durgee Junior High, and five elementary schools. Ray Middle School and McNamara, Reynolds, and Van Buren Elementary are located in the Town outside the Village. Total enrollment in the district is nearly 6,000 students.

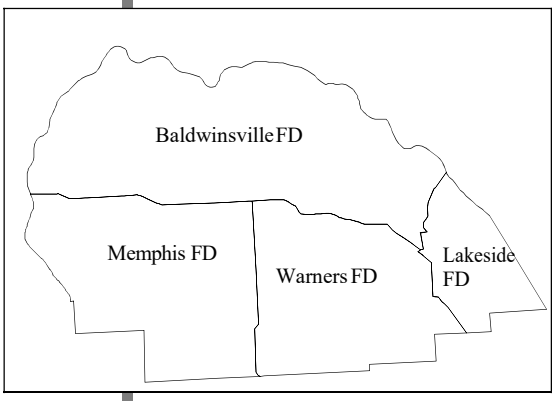
The Town is host to a rich variety of churches (see list in the margin).

Churches:
Baldwinsville Alliance
Baldwinsville Congregational
Beacon Gospel
Christ Community
Community Wesleyan Church
Faith Baptist Church
First Baptist Church
Full Gospel Church of God
Hillview Community Baptist
Hindu Mandir of CNY
Memphis Baptist Church
New Beginnings Christian
St. Augustines Church
St. Mary's Catholic Church
Temple Baptist Church
Warners Methodist Church

The Town Hall is located on Van Buren Road a short distance from the Village. The Town Hall was recently enlarged to increase the courtroom size and improve the usage of the existing space. Incorporated in the addi- tion is an Onondaga County Sheriff Substation for an added law enforce- ment presence in the Town and quicker response time to calls.

Four fire districts provide fire protection to the Town (See Map 6.4). The Baldwinsville Fire Department has the largest active membership with 104 and is located in the Village of Baldwinsville. The Lakeside Volunteer Fire Department, located in Lakeland, has forty-eight active members. About half of its calls are in Van Buren. The Memphis Fire Department has an

active membership of twenty-three. Most calls are for emergency service reflecting the aging population in its service area. Three-fourths of its calls are in Van Buren. Warners Fire Department has about thirty-two active members. About sixty percent of its calls are in Van Buren and eighty-five percent of its calls are for emergency services.



Map 6.4

Of the four fire districts, only two stations are located in the Town: Baldwinsville and Memphis. The Warners fire station is located south of the Town in Camillus and the Lakeside fire stations is east of the Town in Geddes. For some years, consideration has been given to locating a substation in the Town south of Baldwinsville near the Village Green area. It could provide good response time to nearby housing as well as attracting more volunteers from nearby housing.

Parks and Recreation

Approximately 695 acres are occupied by park and recreation facilities including town parks, golf courses, and private recreation facilities. The Town Parks are Van Buren Central Park, Memphis Community Park, Snowdale Park, and the old Erie Canal. Central New York Sports is a forty-six acre privately owned sports facility. Three golf courses are Se- neca, Ironwood, and Foxfire. Recreation facilities are also found at public school sites. Private facilities also provide recreational opportunities such as tennis courts at Village Green, target range at the Rod and Gun Club, bowling at Thunderbird Lanes, and hunting with permission on private property.

Van Buren Central Park is a little over a hundred acres and includes a pool, tennis courts, ball diamond, open areas, a small lake, a large hill, trails, and picnic tables. Memphis Community Park is about four acres devoted to softball and picnic tables. Snowdale Park is provides informal areas for hiking and ball playing. Forty-one acres of the old Erie Canal between Camillus and Jordan was transferred to the Town in 2001 for development into park. The park will provide recreational and educational opportunities for the Town residents. It will connect to the Camillus Erie Canal Park.

Recreation & Parks:

Town Parks

Van Buren Central Park

Memphis Community Park

Snowdale Park

Old Erie Canal Park

CNY Sports

Lions' Park

Golf Courses

Seneca

Ironwood

Foxfire

Cemeteries:
Burial Ground
Iona Cemetery
Kingdom Cemetery
Rural Cemetery
Riverview Cemetery
Sorrell Hill Cemetery
St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery
Van Buren Cemetery
Warners Cemetery

Commercial Facilities:
Nobles Plaza
River Mall
Seneca Knolls Shopping Center
Tri-County Mall

Employment Centers:
Fed Ex/RPS
J.B. Hunt
Interstate Island
P & C Perishables Warehousing
Ragonese Park
Sysco Food Services/Syracuse
SYROCO

Cemeteries

Nine cemeteries account for sixty-two acres of land. Cemeteries provide advantages with few disadvantages. They don't generate a lot of traffic and make demands for public services. They do provide a permanent and stable amount of attractive open space. They should be viewed as a positive asset since they provide permanent open space around which to build other development.

Commercial

Commercial and office uses account for 199 acres of land in the Town. These uses make up approximately three percent of the developed lands in Van Buren and less than one percent of the total Town area. As shown in Map 6.1, the commercial and office uses are mainly located in the northeast (suburbanized) portion of the Town. Other commercial and office uses are located on the eastern side of Van Buren, mostly along Route 48.

Employment Centers

Employment centers are lands, or structures used for uses such as warehousing, or distributing and account for 398 acres of the Town. Employment centers make up almost two percent of the developed land in the Town. Most of the lands in this land use category are located in the south- east portion of the Town, along the New York State Thruway and Inter- state 690. Most of the others are located along the rail lines that pass through Van Buren. (See Map 6.1)

Utility Services and Railroads

Property owned by utility services and railroads add up to 421 acres, which is approximately two percent of the total Town area. Utility services in- clude sewer and water districts, as well as gas and electric companies. There are two railroad lines in Van Buren, one runs parallel to the New York State Thruway, along the south edge of the Town, the other runs par- allel to Interstate 690, on the eastern border. The railroads account for

twenty percent of this category. The utility services in Van Buren include a sixty-acre reservoir.

Open Fields and Lots

Open fields and lots account for 5,789 acres, or twenty-five percent of the Town area. A large percentage of this land is probably unsuitable for intensive development because of environmental limitations associated with steep slopes or poor drainage. Map 6.1 shows the locations of the open fields and lots.

The map also shows the area designated for a proposed County landfill site, County Site #31, in the Town. The 341 acre site is owned by the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency. The Agency has assured the Town on more than one occasion that it has no short or long-term plans to develop the site as a landfill. It cannot visualize a situation in which the site would be used as a land fill. It is retained in order to provide leverage in contract negotiations with large landfill operators outside the County. This large publicly owned site presents the Town with several alternatives for the future use of the site and the surrounding area. These alternatives are discussed in the Plan.

Water

Water is an important element to a community. Water is used for many purposes including irrigation, transportation, drinking water, and recreation. The Seneca River is part of the New York State Barge Canal and runs tion. The Seneca River is part of the New York State Barge Canal and runs up the west side of the Town, along the north and then down the east side of Van Buren.

This gives Van Buren a great natural resource and natural border along three sides of the Town. In the early years, the Seneca River was Van Bu- ren's connection to other parts of the State. The river first brought people and businesses to the area. Water makes up slightly more than two percent of the total Town area.

Roads

Roads and highways cover approximately six percent of the total Town area. Just like water, roads and highways play an important role in how land uses come about in an area. Employment centers rely on roads and highways in order to run a business, therefore employment centers like to be as close to a highway and an on ramp as possible. The relationship between roads and the other land uses can be seen in Map 6.1.

B. Transportation

An access to regionally important highways and safe and efficient ways to travel from place to place within the community are essential to the residents of the Town. In suburban towns such as Van Buren, the automobile is one of the essentials for residents. As a mostly residential and agricultural area, the roads in Van Buren connect places of employment, recreation, and community facilities for its residents.

From 1970 to 1990, the total miles traveled by County residents increased by approximately thirty percent while at the same time the County's population declined by two percent[1]. The most popular form of transportation for Onondaga County and Van Buren remains the automobile.

Note:

[1]Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency. 2010 Development Guide: County Growth & Infrastructure, June 1990. The location of re- gional population growth and economic development in Central New York is closely connected to the availability of facilities and services. At the same time, population growth and economic development have fol- lowed generally the area's highway system. Most growth and develop- ment in the future is expected to locate close to the regional highway sys- tem.

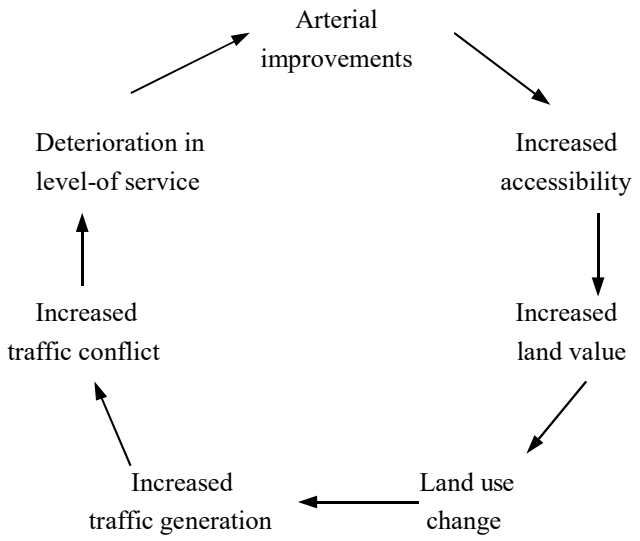
The Transportation and Land Use Cycle

Accessibility to an area is influential in the developmental process of towns. At the same time development leads to more traffic in the area. More traffic creates a need for the improvements of current roads and the development of new ones. As roads change and new roads are added, an increase in accessibility and attractiveness occurs. This cycle is known as the transportation—land use cycle (See Figure 6.1).

Here is how the cycle works. A two-lane road becomes congested over time as strip developments with numerous driveways provide access to businesses. Traffic to and from the businesses impedes the flow of traffic. Because of congested conditions, additional lanes are built that increase the capacity of the road and provides relief from the congestion. The accessibility is now enhanced, raising land values. The increased accessibility attracts development. Additional development causes additional traffic and soon congestion has exceeded previous levels. Demands repeat themselves for additional road improvements. The cycle continues.

Reconstruction to improve the level of service is costly and in most cases only provides temporary relief unless access is controlled. Roads become wider, neighborhoods are divided, pedestrian accessibility is reduced, and street trees are lost. Carefully controlling access is seldom possible because of shallow property depths, nearness of buildings to the road, and multiple ownership of adjacent parcels.

Figure 6.1 Transportation—Land Use Cycle



Source: Stover, Vergil G. and Frank J. Koepke. Transportation and Land Development (Englewood Cliffs, J.J.: Prentice Hall), 1988.

Changing market forces that drive the transportation-land use cycle is beyond the influence of town government. However, the use of practical planning, zoning, and subdivision regulations can make a difference. Appropriate intensities of land use relative to the road network are established in the Comprehensive Plan. Subdivisions with rear yards boarding on through street (reverse frontage subdivisions), increased setbacks and lot widths, and increase right-of-way widths along major roads are also used in zoning to aid traffic flow. The reverse frontage subdivision incorporates lots that back-up to an arterial road with access to the lots restricted to a minor road at the front of the lot. Traffic related design standards are incorporated into the subdivision regulations and implemented through the review process. Traffic studies should also help.

Modern Development of Town Roads

Development in the area around the Village of Baldwinsville has led to congestion on the streets in the Village. To minimize the congestion the Town is currently discussing a couple of plans. One plan is to reroute NYS Route 31 so that instead of going through the center of Baldwins-

ville, Route 31 will go around the west side of the Village. The second plan involves the Town of Lysander, which is to the north of Van Buren. The plan is to build another bridge that will cross the Seneca River and will serve as another route in the north of the Town.

Existing Roads and Highways

Road and highway responsibilities within the Town are divided between State, County, and Town transportation or highway departments. The bulk of the system in terms of linear length of roads is the responsibility of the Town's Highway Department and is funded primarily through local tax revenues.

The Town of Van Buren is served by a regional system. The New York State Thruway runs east-west along the southern part of the Town. Inter- state 690 runs diagonally from the southeast to the center of the north end of the Town. The Town is also served by State Routes 31, 48, and 173, and numerous county and town roads.

NYS 31 (Downer Street west of I 690 and south to Elbridge) runs west from Cicero and Clay to Baldwinsville. In Baldwinsville, NYS 31 turns briefly northwest to join I 690 in Lysander, where it crosses the Seneca River and enters the Town of Van Buren. In Van Buren, NYS 31 quickly leavesleaves I 690 onto Downer Street for a short distance and then turns south. It continues to just north of Memphis when it turns west and enters the Town of Elbridge. In Elbridge, Route 31 again takes a westerly direc- tion through the Village of Jordan and onto Cayuga County and the Vil- lages of Weedsport and Port Byron.

NYS 48 (State Fair Boulevard) begins as Oswego Street at I690 in Lysan- der. NYS 48 turns and continues onto Syracuse Street in Baldwinsville, and becomes State Fair Boulevard in Van Buren, ending at I 690.

NYS 173 (Warners Road) runs northwest from Onondaga Hill southwest of Syracuse, through Camillus and Van Buren to NYS 31 in Van Buren.

Table 6.3 shows traffic counts for selected roads in the Town. They illustrate how traffic counts on apparently minor roads can add-up. Table 6.4 provides a national standard for accepted volumes of traffic on different classes of road. trate how traffic counts on apparently minor roads can add-up. Table 6.4 provides a national standard for accepted volumes of traffic on different classes of road.

Table 6.3 Traffic Counts, Selected State and County Roads,
Town of Van Buren, Various Years

Road	Road Segment	Year	Peak Hour	24 Hour
Brickyard Road	Peck Road-Van	1998	406	3,423
Connors Road	River Road-	1998	17	91
Kingdom Road	Perry Road-West Dead Creek Road	1998	52	503
River Road	Old Route 31-	1998	59	213
Walters Road	Van Buren Road-Winchell Road	1999	140	1,106
West Dead Creek	Kingdom Road-	1998	198	2,261
Connors Road	W.Sorrell Hill &E. Sorrell Hill Roads	1998	33	321

Source: Onondaga County Department of Transportation

Table 6.4 Nationally Accepted Volumes for Different Classes of Roads:

Limited Access	20,000 plus average daily traffic
Arterial	5,000 to 20,000 average daily
Major Collector	up to 5,000 average daily traffic
Rural or Residential Collector	up to 3,500 average daily traffic
Minor Rural or Residential	up to 1,500 average daily traffic

Maintenance and Improvements of Town Roads

The Town of Van Buren has been improving its highway department facilities bit by bit over the past few years, and plans to continue improving. The Town is in the process of making the current town barn presentable, and upgrading the equipment. Van Buren has recently received four to five new trucks, and in 1999, the Town built a salt shed.

Roads are paved with an inch to an inch and one-half overlay of material once every ten years. Because of variations in ground conditions, the base conditions of older roads, and the quality of road construction in the 1960's, some roads are resurfaced more frequently. This resurfacing frequently involves a six to seven inch cold mix of materials that is used to build up the road.

The Town of Van Buren currently has forty-one miles of paved town roads. Van Buren does not have a long-term paving program, but the Town does pave approximately ten miles of roads each year. Van Buren also paves a mile or so in the Village Green area.

In 1998, Van Buren received two grants from New York State for the reconstruction of roads at $125,000 each. The roads chosen in 1998 were Idlewood Boulevard and Crego Road. In 2000, the Town received

$20,000 for work to be done in the Hamlet of Memphis. For 2001, Van Buren is planning for a total rebuilding of both Seneca Boulevard and Morgan Road for $75,000.

In Village Green, the original design for the drainage system was faulty. Easements do exist along the front and back yards. At the same time Seneca Knolls uses almost all open ditches for drainage. The Town will lay the pipes if the homeowner is willing to buy the pipes.

Other Transportation Facilities

Access to Hancock International Airport located just north of the City of Syracuse is simple and efficient from the Town of Van Buren. A rail runs east to west along the southern edge of the Town with connections throughout Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse, and other parts of the State. Another rail line runs along the eastern side of Van Buren.

Bus service is also available to the Town. Centro includes service from Memphis-Warners to places such as Downtown Syracuse, Carousel Cen- ter, Fairmount Fair and to neighboring Villages such as Jordan and Skaneateles.

VII. Public Utilities

Provision of public facilities, services, and utilities is vital to growth in the Town. Planning for future development must relate the demand for these services to existing needs. Sound judgments regarding the provision of these services requires an understanding of the relationship between development and public facilities, services, and utilities.

Zoning and subdivision regulations can contribute to economies in public utility development by effecting a more complimentary balance between utilities and the intensity of land use development. Planned and coordi- nated growth and the provision of public facilities, services, and utilities mean less costly services.

A. Water

Water is a very important resource and its availability or lack thereof can shape the development of an area. Water, sewers and good roads are necessary for development at urban and suburban densities and public water more than any other service can lead to demands for additional infrastruc- ture extensions. It is relatively inexpensive to extend this service, but the impact that it has on development can be enormous. Development often occurs more quickly, where public water service is available and sanitary sewers and improved roads soon follow. The availability of water shapes the location of residential, commercial, and industrial developments and the ultimate density of an area.

Onsite wells supply water to a large part of the Town. Water service in Van Buren covers most of the land east of Interstate Route 690, as well as Harbour Heights west of I-690. The Van Buren Water and Sewer Department administers Town water districts. The Districts obtain water from the Village of Baldwinsville, and the Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) from the Metropolitan Water Board's (MWB) Western Reservoir.

MWB's Western Reservoir is located on Butcher Ridge off Canton Street. It is a regional reservoir with a hundred million-gallon capacity to store water from Lake Ontario. The water is wholesaled to OCWA for distribution to retail customers. A sixty-inch water transmission line from the MWB's terminal reservoir in Clay feeds the Western Reservoir. The transmission line crosses the Seneca River into the Town near Seneca Beach Road and Route 48. A this location, a meter pit monitors water metered to a sixteen inch OCWA transmission line which flows south into Geddes and connects at another meter pit to the distribution line services Interstate Island customers in Van Buren. A meter pit on Connors Road diverts water to the Van Buren Town Park on Connors Road and the Connors Road Water District.

The Baldwinsville and OCWA water systems interconnect and provide backup for one another. OCWA has the capacity in an emergency to expand distribution or replace the Village wells with water from Otisco Lake or Lake Ontario.

Extension of public water service is accomplished through creation of water districts, which are based on feasible cost estimates per customer for construction of new water lines. Contaminated groundwater or substantial growth usually generates the demand for new water services. Pumping costs related to changes in elevation and feet of water lines per customer are the most significant costs factors.

Over a half-dozen water districts serve the Town. The water system is basically fifty years old. It includes thirty-five miles of pipe. Most are transite, eight miles are ductile iron and some plastic, and none are lead. A one-inch line is located on Tappan Street. Other sizes vary from six to sixteen inches in diameter.

The largest water districts are Seneca (about 1800 customers), Harbour Heights and Harbour Heights Extension (together about 265 customers). The Harbour Heights Districts receive water from Baldwinsville through a ten-inch main. A standpipe to the South of Route 31 would improve fire protection and facilitate development in the area. The Seneca Water District extends from Village Green east to the Geddes Town line. An eight-inch

main carries water from the County source in addition to the ten-inch main from Baldwinsville. Water can be drawn from either source by regulation of valves. Seneca Water District also has a million gallon water tank to maintain a reserve supply and constant pressure.

The Jack's Reef Water District is a newly formed district in response to problems in Jack's Reef. The water line from near Warners to Jack's Reef is the result of a cooperative effort between the Towns of Elbridge, Lysan- der, and Van Buren. The District would supply water to the Jack's Reef area and in the process to the residents along Route 173 and Bennetts Cor- ners Road south to the State Thruway. The Towns signed an inter- municipal agreement for the project and the OCWA has offered to con- struct the necessary infrastructure to construct, operate, and maintain the new water system.

B. Sewage

Sewage treatment systems are of utmost importance since they are essen- tial for a healthy environment and a safe water supply. The two most com- mon methods for treating wastewater or sewage are using a septic system or connecting into a public sewer system which transports the waste to a treatment facility.

Septic systems are most common in rural areas where hookup to a public sewer system is unlikely. Homes served by septic systems often require large lots since these systems tend to have a life span of less than twenty- five years before the system has to been moved. Furthermore, a large lot is often desirable for rural lots that are dependent on well water, so that the well and the septic system leach field can be located far apart from each other to reduce the likelihood of contamination of the drinking water sup- ply.

The County Department of Health's Regulations require a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet where no public water or sewer are available and a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet where public water is available, but public sewer is not. Site specific conditions may vary the minimum

requirements.

Sewers are necessary to accommodate the densities associated with suburban development. They make it feasible for lots to be smaller since large leach fields do not need to be constructed. In addition, smaller lots keep the cost of sewers down since the sewer lines will not have to be as long. Sewer service is a very important public service and often follows the con- struction of water lines in an area.

Sewer Districts:
Harbour Heights
Floral Park/Stiles Road
Interstate Island
River Mall
Seneca
Interstate Island Exit 1
Morgan Road
Interstate Island Exit 2

Most of the areas in the Town use onsite wastewater treatment systems.

The eastern half of the Town is in the Onondaga County Sanitary District. Eight Town sewer districts transport wastewater to the County trunk sewers and to a sewage treatment plant for the Harbour Heights District. The Village Green Sewer District is owned by Seneca Sewerage and serves most of Village Green, it also sends its sewage to the County trunk line.

The Harbour Heights treatment plant is scheduled for replacement by 2003 with a pump station and interceptor that will feed into the County's trunk sewer line. The line will provide sewage collection on Downer Street, which should encourage development in the area.

Part II. Comprehensive Plan

I. Summary of the Comprehensive Plan

MAJOR TOWN GOAL:

- Conservation of existing residential neighborhoods and existing farming activities; promotion of business, commercial, and light industrial uses; and promotion of a network of natural open space through implementation of planning policies that maintain a suitable balance of uses and densities while allowing for appropriate future growth.

GENERAL LAND USE GOALS:

- A land use pattern that provides options for a variety of residential environments, opportunities for recreation and culture, and desirable locations for business and industry.

- A land use pattern that is consistent with the capabilities of the road and street systems, sewage disposal systems, water distribution systems, drainage facilities, public open space facilities, and natural environmental systems.

- A land use pattern that separates incompatible uses and densities and ensures non-encroachment.

BASIC PREMISES AND ASSUMPTIONS

The basic premises and assumptions that have had the most obvious and direct influence on the Plan are summarized below. Many of the premises and assumptions are based on the goals and objectives established to guide the development of the Plan or on various demographic or eco- nomic projections.

Demand for Housing

- During the 1980's, Van Buren accounted for 5% of the residential building permits in Onondaga County. During the 1990's, the number was 1.9%. Residential permits in the County declined from nearly nineteen thousand in the 1980's to nearly eleven thousand in the 1990's. An ample supply of housing exists in the Syracuse Metro- politan area. A significant part of the future demand is for housing to accommodate baby boomers. The housing will range from active adult communities and independent living facilities to skilled nursing facilities. The Plan proposes to accommodate the limited amount of anticipated demand for these future residential uses, while protecting existing residential neighborhoods.

Employment Growth

- Relative location in the Metropolitan area, highway access, a water supply, an educated labor force, a choice of housing, and an excellent school system are positive development assets. Overall Metropolitan job growth declined from 10.4% in the 1980's to 3.8% in the 1990's through July 1998. Job growth in New York State was not much bet- ter—13.9% growth in the 1980's and 3% growth in the 1990's through July 1998. National job growth in the 1980's was 21% and 21.3% in the 1990's through July 1998. Identifying and zoning for a few highly suitable sites for light industrial uses is of greater importance than zoning vast areas for industrial uses. A proactive program in coopera- tion with Village and Metropolitan groups and focused on suitable economic development sites is a prerequisite for Van Buren to capture its share of employment growth and related economic benefits.

Land Use

- Residential development will continue to consume the most acreage in Van Buren. Future development will not consume the majority of land within the Sanitary District during the next twenty years. Agricultural activity and scattered residential lots are predominant in most areas not covered by the Sanitary District. The Plan proposes policies to en- courage the location of major developments in areas that are serviced by public utilities. Scattered lot residential development in areas domi- nated by agricultural activity will continue although policies to limit the negative impacts on future development and on agricultural land uses is anticipated.

Roads and Highways

- The existing road and highway system with few exceptions is the ba- sic network Van Buren will have for the near future. Few State or Federal funds will be available for new roads or extensive improve- ments. Traffic generated by strip commercial development and strip lot residential developments is a major factor in increasing road and highway congestion and increasing accident rates. The responsibility of the Town is to maintain land use patterns that will ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the network.

Environmental Considerations

- All types of development alter the natural environment to some extent. Often the adverse environmental impacts are minimized. On the other hand, the cumulative impacts of individual projects with seemingly minimal impact on the environment go unassessed, although the col- lective impact can be significant. The Planning Reference Guide pro- vides maps of environmentally sensitive features (See Maps 5.1 to 5.13). Identification of important environmentally sensitive areas prior to development will help both the Town and the developer understand what areas need protection. The same maps help identify areas suitable for development.

Metropolitan Opportunities

- The Plan proposes that Van Buren help develop a cooperative ap- proach to development within the Syracuse Metropolitan Area in order to make a wide range of jobs and cultural opportunities accessible to Van Buren residents and in turn enable Van Buren business and em- ployment centers to draw upon and be accessible to Syracuse area resi- dents. This includes recognition that Van Buren must plan to accom- modate its fair share of population and employment growth. It also means Van Buren should take the lead in influencing the activities of county and state agencies that affect development within the borders of Van Buren. Van Buren must convey the perception the Town is on- top of planning issues and knows what it wants. Issues related to utili- ties, transportation, economic growth, solid waste, and environmental protection are of particular importance.

A "Special" Character for Van Buren

- The Plan proposes that Van Buren emphasize its existing residential, agricultural, commercial, and employment center uses; its rural character; and its proximity to Baldwinsville, while considering development. Although difficult to define, this policy is of fundamental importance to the Plan and is the basis for the most important proposals of the Plan. Van Buren needs to strive to make the case that it is a "special" community in Onondaga County. Van Buren has a special character that can be appreciated and strengthened while providing for necessary and desirable growth. The Plan provides a cautious and positive approach intended to be used as an intelligent tool for guiding the future development of Van Buren.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DIAGRAM

The Plan Diagram gives geographic reference and a broad spatial context to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and its most significant physical design proposals. The Plan Diagram shows the relationships between the different elements of the Plan and emphasizes the unity of the Town-wide physical design proposals.

Nine different types of areas are designated on the Plan Diagram: 1) Neighborhood Conservation Areas, 2) Hamlets, 3) Development Areas, 4) Special Industrial Opportunity Areas, 5) Water Development, 6) Commercial Areas, 7) Rural Reserves, 8) Greenway System and 9) Baldwinsville.

1) Neighborhood Conservation Areas

- These existing neighborhoods exhibit conditions for a livable and healthy environment. These areas can serve as models for future housing developments in the Town. Implementation of the Plan will focus on the protection of the existing neighborhoods from incompatible land uses and excessive traffic. Development projects in these areas will follow design guidelines that will result in the compatible integra- tion of the projects with the existing neighborhoods.

2) Hamlets

- Hamlets provide much of the existing village/country character of Van Buren. The unique character of each hamlet should be promoted and encouraged to expand. Mixed uses including locally owned small businesses should be encouraged. Pedestrian amenities, the street-scape, and historic qualities should be upgraded. Flexibility of use should be encouraged, but with greater attention to design.

3) Development Areas

- Development areas favor the highest level of development activity for the next twenty years. The areas are characterized by a combination of factors including availability of land; proximity to public facilities and accessibility of services
- Envisioned within the Plan are developments with mixed residential and commercial uses. Even office or a small light industrial use might locate in these areas. Implementation of planning policies and design guidelines will ensure that the private development sector is provided with the flexibility necessary to realize development goals while mini-mizing adverse community and environmental impacts.
- Industrial uses near hamlets need special care to avoid adverse impact to the hamlets.

4) Special Industrial Opportunity Areas (SIOA)

- The concept behind SIOAs goes beyond narrowly defined industrial uses. The concept includes multiple-use development, which mix three or more uses that are organized to make a viable project. They may include office, research, manufacturing, or warehousing in addition to a variety of housing types. SIOAs are like PUDs, but are designed as more self-contained and economic viable developments.
- Four general locations for SIOAs are identified on the Comprehensive Plan Diagram: 1) Walters Road Area, 2) Northwest of Dead Creek Road/Old Route 31 Area, 3) County Site #31 (owned by Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency - OCRRA). It is approxi-mately 400 acres and is mostly agricultural leased land to local farmers.
- Given their closeness and accessibility to Downtown Syracuse and Destiny USA, SIOAs three and four offer an opportunity to make a difference in the development of the northwestern part of Onondaga County and the Town of Van Buren. County Site #31 (which has no plans by OCRRA for a DEC permitted landfill for ash) is ideal for a

countywide recreational/golf/open space facility or for a multiple-use development. The area is large enough, the opportunities broad enough, and the planning climate strong enough to attract major private investments. County leadership can help in the development of the area's resources by planning for appropriate infrastructure investments.

5) Waterfront Development

- The riverfront has potential to attract development to the Town be- yond the immediate river area. A trail system along the river, small tourist-oriented commercial developments, and a marina would en- hance the image of the Town. It would amplify and extend the Bald- winsville image to Van Buren. In addition, where feasible, residential developments could be built to take advantage of riverfront locations.

6) Commercial Areas

- Commercial areas are areas where proposals to expand commercial development will be encouraged. A significant effort is needed to rebuild existing commercial structures that have outlived their usefulness. Some of these structures detract from the character of the Town. The focus of planning and development in these areas is on revitalizing commercial development and promoting beautification and enhancement of existing commercial buildings and grounds. These efforts will go a long way in extending a positive image from Baldwinsville to Van Buren.

7) Agricultural Reserve

- The remaining area of the Town is designated as agricultural reserve on the Plan Diagram. Due to the impracticality of extending services such as public sewer to this area, it is considered unsuitable for planned developments, but suitable for scattered lot developments and agricultural uses. Agricultural uses might be encouraged through a purchase of development rights program. Additional policies might discourage residential strip lot development that would compromise the rural character, lead to inefficiencies in the delivery of essential services, and prevent valuable road frontage from being used more efficiently in the future. Protection of these areas is important because they represent future expansion areas for development.

8) Greenway System

- The greenway system is an interconnected corridor of greenways and open space that will safeguard the visual and rural qualities of Van Buren and provide recreation opportunities. For the most part, the areas designated are undevelopable for other uses. Flood hazard areas, wetlands and surface streams, and steep slopes are the particularly sensitive features that form the core of the greenway system depicted on the Plan Diagram. The greenway system is a concept that will be achieved beyond the time horizon of this Plan. Nevertheless, the areas depicted in general terms should help identify opportunities for future generations. Inappropriate intrusions into these areas should be avoided.

9) Baldwinsville

- The Village of Baldwinsville is the "Old Town Center" for the Town of Van Buren. It is and will remain an important cultural center for all residents of the Town. The Village provides much of the identity that is associated with this part of the Syracuse Metropolitan Area. Developments near the Village are encouraged. The Town of Van Buren should work with the Village to develop the southern area of Village.

II. Agricultural and Open Space

GOAL

Goal.—Conservation of agricultural, natural resources, open space, and historic resources for the Town's long term recreational, environmental, cultural and economic benefit.

BACKGROUND

The quality of the natural environment greatly influences the general health of the Town. The agricultural and open space element of the Comprehensive plan is based on the premise that maintenance of high quality living and agricultural environments requires the adoption and implementation of a series of policies. These include promoting conservation of agricultural, natural resources and open space, the linking of environmentally sensitive areas into a continuous open space system, and the conservation of prime agricultural lands.

Agricultural

Agriculture is a mainstay of Upstate New York and important in Onondaga County and the Town of Van Buren. The Town relies on agriculture for more than a tax base requiring few services. Agricultural fields form the basis of the character and sense of place of the Town. In fact, the allure of the Town results in continued pressure to convert farmland resources.

Some families in Van Buren have been stewards of the soil for many generations. Their contributions to the community go well beyond the value of the products they produce. Over 10,000 acres of land, or nearly half the land in Van Buren, are classified in agricultural use in the land use survey. About a fourth of the agricultural uses are field crops. Other major uses are dairy farms, orchards, and livestock. Minor uses are nurseries and poultry. Horse farms are also using agricultural lands. Many of the farmlands are in an agricultural district.

Preservation of farmland and open space is highly cost effective for local governments in terms of the ratio of revenue versus the cost of community services. Recent studies completed by the American Farmland Trust for counties in New York indicate that the median ratios of revenue versus the cost of community services was 1:1.23 for residential, 1:0.27 for commercial/industrial and 1:0.29 for farm/forest/open land.

Thus, farmland and open space, which provides a net tax benefit to the municipal budget, can help to stabilize mounting costs of services. It may be less expensive for the community to purchase development rights than to pay the cost of services to residential developments.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Prime farm lands, flood prone areas, steep slopes, areas critical to the conservation of water supplies and streams, and areas valued for wildlife and recreational opportunities are the important environmentally sensitive areas.

Currently the Town of Van Buren enjoys the benefits of many wetlands, streams, floodplains, and mature woodlands that are relatively unaltered. These natural resources play highly critical roles in maintaining and controlling important natural processes. Development pressures can threaten these important resources. Incorporating particularly sensitive areas into a continuous open space system would promote natural resource conservation.

Environmental overlay zoning and resource protection standards can help to insure that only development that is environmentally sound occurs in or near sensitive areas. If suitable care is taken, development can occur while natural processes continue to function at a desired level.

Open Space System

A continuous open space system incorporating particularly sensitive areas

would help natural resource conservation in Van Burn. Benefits from an open space system include protection against erosion and flooding, conservation of natural filters for pollution, separation of development areas with a natural buffer, added value to adjacent properties, lower service costs, and conservation of habitat for vegetation and wildlife.

The Seneca River waterfront areas represent a special opportunity for open space. A mix of residential, recreational, and service uses can enhance the Seneca River open space corridor. The Town has an opportunity to pro- mote desirable public and private uses along the corridor. The areas adja- cent to Baldwinsville provide a natural starting point for developing the system.

Open space lands not sensitive from an ecological standpoint are also important. All developed sites should contain land that is free from structures, paving, and similar features. In some cases, these lands can form a system of spaces that buffer incompatible uses and provide an aesthetically pleasing landscape of trees, grass, and other vegetation.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Agricultural Lands

- Objective.—Conservation of agricultural lands and prime agricultural soils.
- Policy.—Adopt zoning controls and other provisions that promote conservation of land for agricultural use while not inhibiting appropriate non-agricultural uses.
- Policy.—Pursue opportunities for the development of a purchase of development rights for agricultural lands.
- Policy.—Encourage participation in the County's agricultural district program.

Environmental Protection

- Objective.—Conservation of natural areas which preserve or protect environmental quality or the ecological balance. Such areas include wetlands, streams, creeks and other drainage channels, floodplains, mature woodlands, steep slopes and unique landforms.

- Policy.—Adopt environmental overlay zoning that protects environmentally sensitive area.

- Policy.—Maintain an environmental inventory of the Town to be used as a beginning reference in implementing environmental overlay zoning and in reviewing environmental impact assessments.

Open Space System

- Objective.—An open space conservation system linking environmentally sensitive areas, parkland, drainage easements and other areas to serve the recreational, environmental, and health and safety needs of the present and future population.

- Policy.—Encourage developers to save usable open space within development projects and promote the establishment of a town-wide open space system by arranging buildings or building plots in groups interspersed within open spaces that connect with open space net- works of other development projects.

- Policy.—Provide access and essential utilities and improvement, where appropriate, to open space lands.

- Policy.—Adopt design standards and criteria to insure that improvements such as roads traversing the open space system are compatible with the special nature of these lands.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Environmental Overlay Zones

Environmental overlay zoning involves zoning districts that provide an added layer of standards. Thus, properties are located in two districts.

Regulations determined by the conventional zoning district still apply, but for projects within an overlay zone, compliance with additional resource protection standards is mandated. In Van Buren, floodplains, steep slopes, and stream corridors might lend themselves to the development of an overlay zone.

Purchase of Development Rights

Participate with Onondaga County in a purchase of development rights program (PDR). In order to achieve maximum benefit from a PDR program, town, county, state, and non-profit efforts must be coordinated to achieve the maximum integration of protected farm parcels. The Town Board should pursue an aggressive program to acquire agricultural lands and open space.

Environmental Inventory

A compilation of environmental data is the basis for planning and land-use decisions relating to environmental concerns. The Planning Reference Guide prepared for the Comprehensive Plan will become the environ- mental inventory for the Town when the plan is adopted.

DESIGN CONCEPTS AND CRITERIA

Natural resource conservation in Van Buren is enhanced by incorporating environmentally sensitive areas into a continuous open space system. These areas would include the least intrusive and most environmentally sound development. Particularly sensitive features such as flood hazard areas, wetlands and surface streams are the most logical choices to form the interlined spine of the open space system. Unique landforms and ma- ture woodlands are other features that may be connected to the system.

Design Criteria for Open Space Areas

In order to encourage appropriate use of areas within the open space systems, certain facilities may be provided. Care must be taken to insure that the design of parking lots, roads, and other such facilities are in keeping with the desired character of these areas. Hiking or biking trails should be planned in the open space system.

III. RESIDENTIAL AREAS

GOALS

- Goal.—A high quality living environment that accommodates residential needs with respect to housing type, cost, and location.

- Goal.—Protection and improvement of the desirable character and identity of existing residential neighborhoods.

- Goal.—New residential development appropriately located, offering quality design, and providing adequate usable open space.

BACKGROUND

High quality living environments are dependent on wise planning. Consistent goals, objectives, and policies implemented over time are required.

The Plan is based on the following assumptions:

- The number of households will continue to increase modestly,
- Suburban development will expand from the existing suburban areas,
- Rural residential lot development will continue in small numbers on large lots in the rural portion of the Town,
- Environmental reviews will be of increasing importance in the developable residential areas, and
- Pressures on agricultural and natural resources will increase.

Neighborhood Character

The character of neighborhoods is a vital concern of the people who live in them. Protection of residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible uses is important in maintaining the variety, identity, and desirable character of neighborhoods. The use of design guidelines can help protect neighborhoods from the negative impact of commercial or industrial development and the effects of high traffic volumes.

Locating New Development

Many areas suitable for development also have environmentally related problems such as steep slopes, flood prone areas, aquifer recharge areas, streams, and poor septic suitability. Scattered development is probably one of the greatest threats to the best long-term use of land. Strip lot or piano key subdivisions also can have negative impact on the use of land. The Town through land use policies such as density averaging can encourage development to locate in the best areas.

The Demand for Housing

The total population in Central New York and in Onondaga County has remained stable over the past thirty years. However, the number of households is increasing slightly because of a decline in the size of households. The age distribution of the population throughout the Region is aging. The percent of young people, age 20-34, is declining while the age groups over 45 years of age are increasing. These demographic factors directly influence the amount and the variety of housing types in Van Buren.

Housing built in the future may not always reflect the kinds of housing built in the past. Single-family starter homes may always be part of the mix, but may no longer dominate the market. The Town has a good mix of housing types between single-family detached homes, to town homes, and to apartments. The increasing demands from baby boomers and seniors will influence the mix in the future.

The location, quality, and type of new residential development will exert a significant influence on the future character of Van Buren. Careful planning of new residential development will take into account housing market demand, provision of adequate public services and facilities, and protection of environmentally sensitive areas, open spaces, prime agricultural and other characteristics that make Van Buren an enjoyable place to live.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- Objective.—Protection of existing residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible uses that may have a negative impact on the residential living environment.

- Objective.—New residential development appropriately located with respect to the natural environment, community facilities and services, transportation systems, and the image and character of its surroundings.

- Objective.—Safe, secure, aesthetically appealing residential development projects in which important natural areas are conserved and adequate usable open areas are provided in either private yards or com- mon areas.

- Policy.—Strengthen zoning standards and site design guidelines to provide for adequate buffering of residential areas from commercial or industrial development and from the effects of high traffic volumes.

- Policy.—Encourage new residential development in areas where community services and facilities are available.

- Policy.—Amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage flexibility in neighborhood layout. Include clear and concise standards to be applied by the Planning Board in reviewing site plans.

- Policy.—Prepare illustrated design guidelines that clarify the objectives of the Town's development policies and standards.

- Policy.—Give favorable consideration to residential development proposals that incorporate building forms that relate to the size, shape, and character of the surrounding development.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Large Lot Subdivisions

Consumer preference for low-density living as well as a perception of an adequate supply of developable land contributes to the demand for large lot subdivisions. Sometimes Onondaga County government officials and policy-makers believe development of large lots help to keep service needs to a minimum and provide a more stable tax base than higher density developments. Accordingly, many land use regulations favor large lot development.

Large lot subdivisions result in public utilities traversing substantial distances without being used to full capacity. The resulting high construction and maintenance costs place an undue financial burden on local government and homebuyers alike. Incremental additions of dispersed large lot subdivisions in the community can produce other problems over the long run including storm water runoff impacts on natural drainage ways, ero- sions of rural character, and inhibiting more productive longer term development.

Residential Strip Lot Developments

Subdivisions of parcels resulting in lots fronting on rural roads are found in Van Buren. These “strip lot” or “piano key” subdivisions over time create negative impacts on the transportation system, rural character, demand for public services, and future land developability.

Strip development produces numerous, close-together points of traffic interruption on roads. Traffic safety is compromised, speed limits are lowered, and the functional capacity of the road is reduced. Homebuyers who were originally attracted by the rural character find themselves living on a road that has assumed a semi-suburban character.

Strip lot subdivisions prevent efficient use of land and development resources by preempting road frontage and restricting access to areas beyond the roadside development. Large areas of open space are blocked from view, further compromising rural character. When water and sewer lines

are extended in response to demands created by strip lot development, even more strip development is encouraged, resulting in even greater haz- ards and inefficiencies.

Cluster Development

Cluster development is a project design technique that calls for modification of lot size standards specified in the zoning ordinance to concentrate dwellings in specific areas of a tract and leave the land "saved" as usable open space. Although lots smaller than those specified in the zoning regulations are developed, clustering respects a zoning district's permitted gross density (number of dwellings per acre relative to the entire develop- ment site.

By minimizing the amount of land that is disturbed in grading and clearing, clustering permits the retention of landforms and vegetation that distin- guish the site and increases the amenity of the project. Minimization of land disturbance also helps to prevent sedimentation and erosion that is costly to control. In addition, flexibility in siting dwellings in a cluster de- velopment provides opportunities to reduce energy demand by taking ad- vantage of development designs that minimize exposure to winter winds while providing maximum exposure to the sun.

A clustering plan can result in reduced per unit site preparation costs and lower per unit land prices. Development of smaller lots with shorter linear front footages requires shorter distances to be traversed by sewer and water lines. Street and sidewalk lengths are also reduced. Per unit charges for the installation and maintenance of public services can therefore by expected to be lower for clustered dwellings than for homes in a standard large-lot subdivision.

Developers are required to reserve undeveloped land within the development as common open space in exchange for modification of the requirements relating to the configuration of the conventional subdivision. Clustering of housing units and the saving of open space are means by which Plan objectives can be met concerning conservation of rural character, resource conservation, and the prevention of strip development of road front-

age.

Cluster development including a variety of housing types is currently possible in the Town under the enabling authority of Section 278 of the Town Law. However, the Town has not defined criteria for evaluating cluster proposals, which compromises the ability of the Town to encourage desirable cluster development.

Planned Unit Development

Planned Unit Development (PUD) is a land planning and project design approach that calls for a site review and negotiation process that allows flexibility in the siting of buildings, the mixture of house types and land uses, useable open space, and the preservation of significant natural fea- tures.

Like cluster development, planned unit development can be useful in assuring that open space and recreation areas will be incorporated into site plans. Per unit cost advantages arising from either net or gross density increases and per unit reductions in road length and paved areas also can translate into per unit savings in raw land costs and savings in the installation of roads, sewer lines and storm water management systems.

Housing Types

Standard single-family detached homes

A single-family detached house is a freestanding structure that occupies its own parcel. Conventional developments follow prescribed setbacks for front, side, and rear yards. It is built in a wide range of densities, models, and site plan arrangements.

The relationships between houses and sites and to the provision of privacy and orientation for each house are important to the development of good neighborhoods. Lots and placement of houses should respond to the site's natural features to avoid a uniform and monotonous pattern of development. Garage doors should be located or designed to minimize their street presence. Blocks on linear streets should be short to minimize long view of driveways and the fronts of houses. Setbacks should be deeper on collector streets and shallower on minor residential streets like cul-de-sacs to reinforce the hierarchy of the street system. Consideration should be given to varying the size of lots within a development by twenty-five percent to accommodate a site's natural features.

Town homes

Townhomes have long been a popular housing option. They are usually more affordable than detached units. They are single-family attached units with a common wall. Lot widths generally range from twenty-two to thirty-two feet. Usually each house is a complete entity with its own utility connections, front and rear yards, and a front door opening to the street. The land is owned by the resident or through a condominium.

The gross densities in suburban townhome projects vary with natural site conditions, size of the units, and with the requirements for parking. Eight to twelve units per acre are typical, but higher density projects do exist in some areas.

Apartment homes

Garden apartments are a particular type of multifamily units, usually within a two or three story building, and with about ten units per building. Garden apartments appeal to singles, young couples, empty nesters, and elderly residents. Sometimes they appeal to families who cannot afford to purchase or rent a single-family house.

Buildings in garden apartment developments are located around the site to permit ample areas for landscaping and parking. Densities are generally ten

to twenty units per acre. Modern garden apartment developments place greater emphasis on amenities such as swimming pools, exercise rooms, and general landscaping.

Design Review Process

The active participation of the Town and the developer working together creates a process that leads to good design solutions. Developers have an interest in delivering a well-designed product. The Town's concern for the long-term impacts of development is equally legitimate.

The legal authority to impose design guidelines and review site plans is in New York State Town Law, Section 274-a, which authorizes site plan review when development of a single parcel of land is proposed, and in state enabling legislation authorizing subdivision review.

Subdivision regulations allow towns through their planning board to re- view how newly created lots will be laid out. Town Law Section 274-a authorizes towns to approve site plans "showing the arrangement, layout and design of the proposed use of the land…[and the] elements may include… those relating to parking, means of access, screening, signs, landscaping, architectural features, location and dimensions of buildings, impact of the proposed use on adjacent land uses, and such other elements as may reasonably be related to the ...general welfare of the community."

The design review process provides an opportunity for a town and a developer to work together to ensure that a project meets both the design goals of the town and the requirements of the developer. Design considerations relating to security, aesthetics and safety are incorporated in the review process using design guidelines.

Design guidelines consist of text and illustrations that clarify and define design objectives of the Town's development standards. Thus, they pro- vide criteria by which various aspects of development design is evaluated. Guidelines help Town decision-makers, area residents and developers broaden their understanding of the issues involved in achieving quality de- signs in development projects. They also expedite the review process by putting both the developer and the Town on the same level playing field by making clear in advance what the Town expects of the developer.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Cluster Development

New York State Town Law Section 278 authorizes towns in approving subdivisions to "…modify applicable provisions of the zoning ordinance… to enable and encourage flexibility of design and development of land in such a manner as to promote the most appropriate use of land, to facilitate the adequate and economical provision of streets and utilities, and to pre- serve the natural and scenic qualities of open lands." Several limitations are imposed; the most important being the number of dwelling units ap- proved may not exceed the number permitted for the tract by the existing zoning regulations.

A great deal of flexibility in locating dwelling units is indeed possible un- der this provision. The statute provides the bare framework for allowing cluster development.

Standards should be adopted that specify criteria that cluster development must meet. The review of cluster proposals that might include the following conditions:

- The minimum required area of land in a cluster development.
- The method used to determine the allowable number of dwelling units. Minimum lot sizes specified in the zoning ordinance do not translate readily into a dwelling-units-per-acre equivalent, since tract shape and topography often require that some lots exceed the minimum size, and some land may be consumed by street rights-of-way.
- The maximum percentages by which lot area and road frontage requirements of the zoning may be reduced, and absolute lot area and road frontage minimums.
- The minimum percentage of dwellings that must be single-family detached residences, or the maximum percentage that may consist of attached units.
- Lot boundary setback and screening requirements where the subdivided tract abuts land that is not part of the subdivision.
- The method used to determine the total area of common land that must be set aside for recreation or conservation, or agriculture.
- Accessibility, ownership and maintenance of the common land.
- Structure and buildings accessory to non-commercial recreational or conservation uses that may be erected on the common land.
- Access to the shorelines of water bodies that the development might abut and the portion of shorelines that must be a part of the common land.
- Requirements for connection to a common water supply and distribution system, if available, or to a central collection and treatment sys- tem following other applicable standards.
- Requirements for addressing orientation of buildings with respect to scenic vistas, natural landscape features, topography, and natural drainage areas in an overall plan of site development.

Planned Unit Development

The review of PUD's include the conditions for cluster developments plus the following:

- A maximum percentage of the total tract area that may be developed for higher density residential uses and for commercial uses.
- The location of uses relative to the periphery of the tract. For example, it is often desirable to require that multifamily development be located more toward the interior rather than the periphery of the tract so that only single-family detached residences border adjacent properties.
- The timing of the occupancy of nonresidential portions of the development. It is often desirable to prohibit occupancy of nonresidential portions until all or some minimum percentage of the residential portions are completed or their completion is assured.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are a written and illustrative means of describing the characteristics that the people of Van Buren would like to see in the future development of the Town. The purpose of these guidelines is to educate and effectively communicate the Town's desire to promote growth and development without sacrificing the character and quality of life that make Van Buren a pleasant place to live.

The design guidelines are developed to assist residents, developers, and the Planning Board during site plan review. The plans of residents and developers are facilitated by knowing in advance what the community wants with respect to design standards. They provide a visual description of what the Town wants from future development. They illustrate strategies and alternatives that result in development that are consistent with the community's goals and objectives. Design guidelines facilitate the expeditious review of development projects, which benefits the developer, the Town, and the future residents of the project.

A report, **Town of Van Buren Design Guidelines**, describes in detail design guidelines for the Town. Included below are examples of design guidelines for residential developments.

Design guidelines for the Town of Van Buren

These design guidelines will apply as required to residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural working and vacant, open-space as well as the river-front area.

RESIDENTIAL LOT SIZE AND LAYOUT

There are several conflicting factors to consider when deciding on an appropriate size for rural residential lots. These factors include density, character, natural constraints and the need for septic systems.

Currently the density, the number of people or homes per square mile, particularly in the western part of Van Buren is low. Unlike the pattern in the eastern part of the Town including Baldwinsville, homes are spread further apart on larger lots. This low density is one element that defines the rural character of the land outside Baldwinsville and the hamlets.

The question raised is should future residential development match the density and lot size of existing homes. One reason for doing so would be to match the existing pattern so that new development would blend into its surroundings. A row of houses along the road on small lots looks right in a hamlet or the village but may not visually fit into rural surroundings.

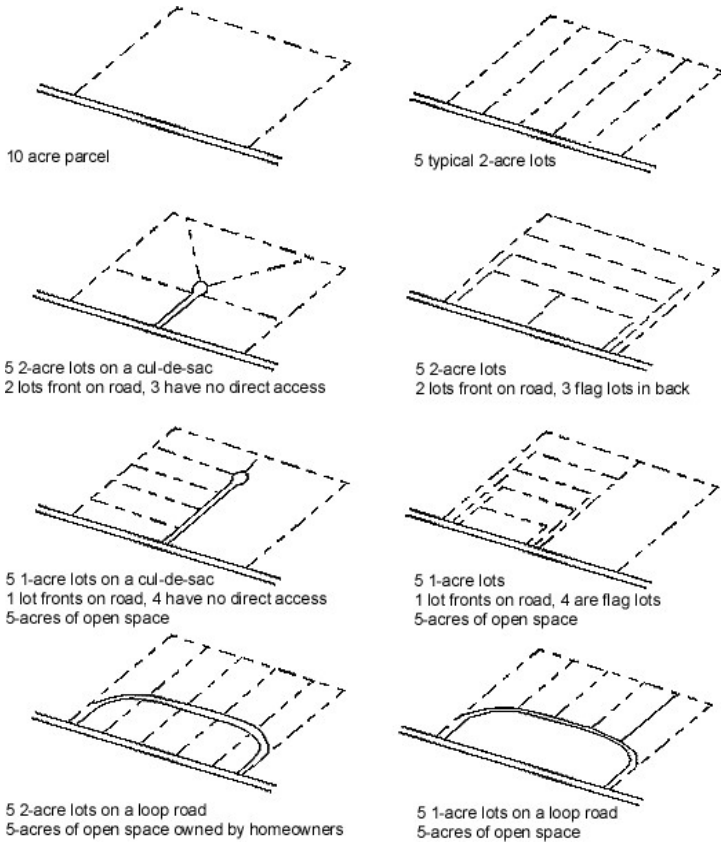
The downside to the large-lot approach is that it consumes large quantities of land and in rural areas often removes it from agricultural use. Large-lot requirements often cause residential development along road frontages to land locked or render inner parcels virtually useless. When lot sizes be- come larger, homeowners are often unable to use or even maintain the en- tire parcel. Another problem associated with encouraging low density over a large area is the expense of providing services like road maintenance, school bus pick-up and emergency services to far-flung residents.

Land Subdivision

If the alternative method of subdividing land were followed, the first step would be a site analysis to locate the best building locations and means of access. The number of appropriate building locations would influence the number of lots to be subdivided. This process would likely lead to less traditional lot shapes.

Currently the Town of Van Buren has a two-acre minimum lot size. As seen in the illustration on the opposite page, there is a variety of possible lot configurations, even while requiring the two-acre minimum lot size. Moving away from the conventional road frontage lots raises some issues, especially regarding access and open space.

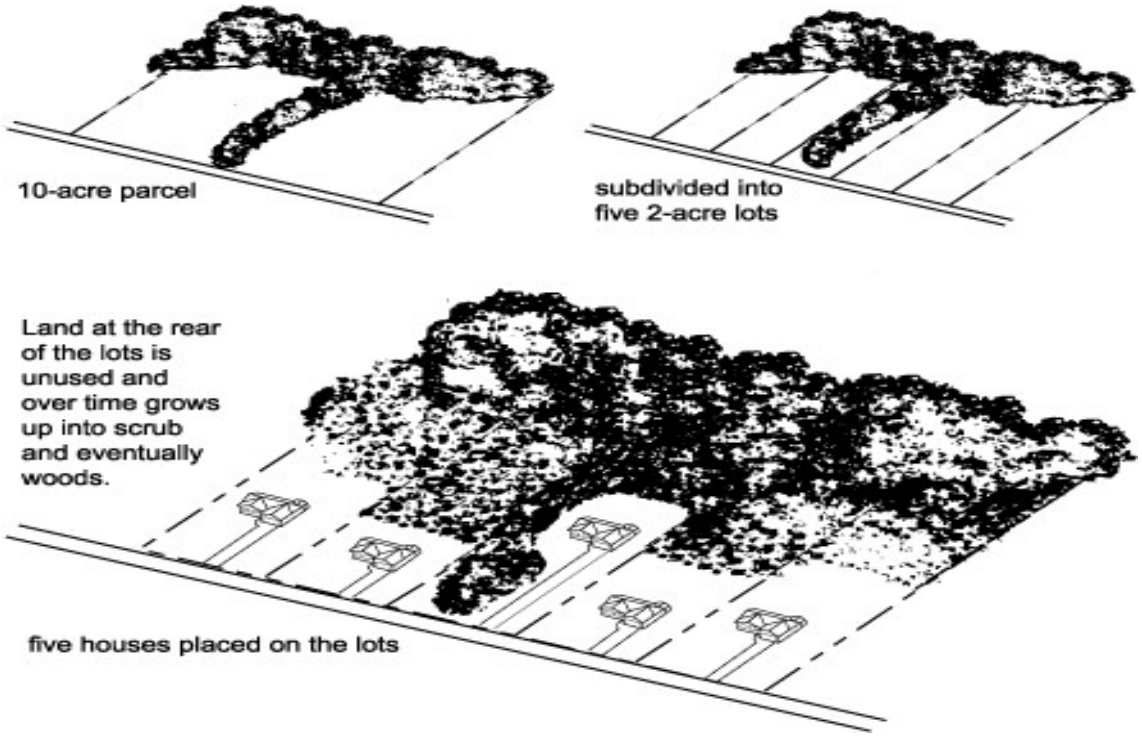
Lot Subdivision Examples



The Traditional Approach to Land Subdivision

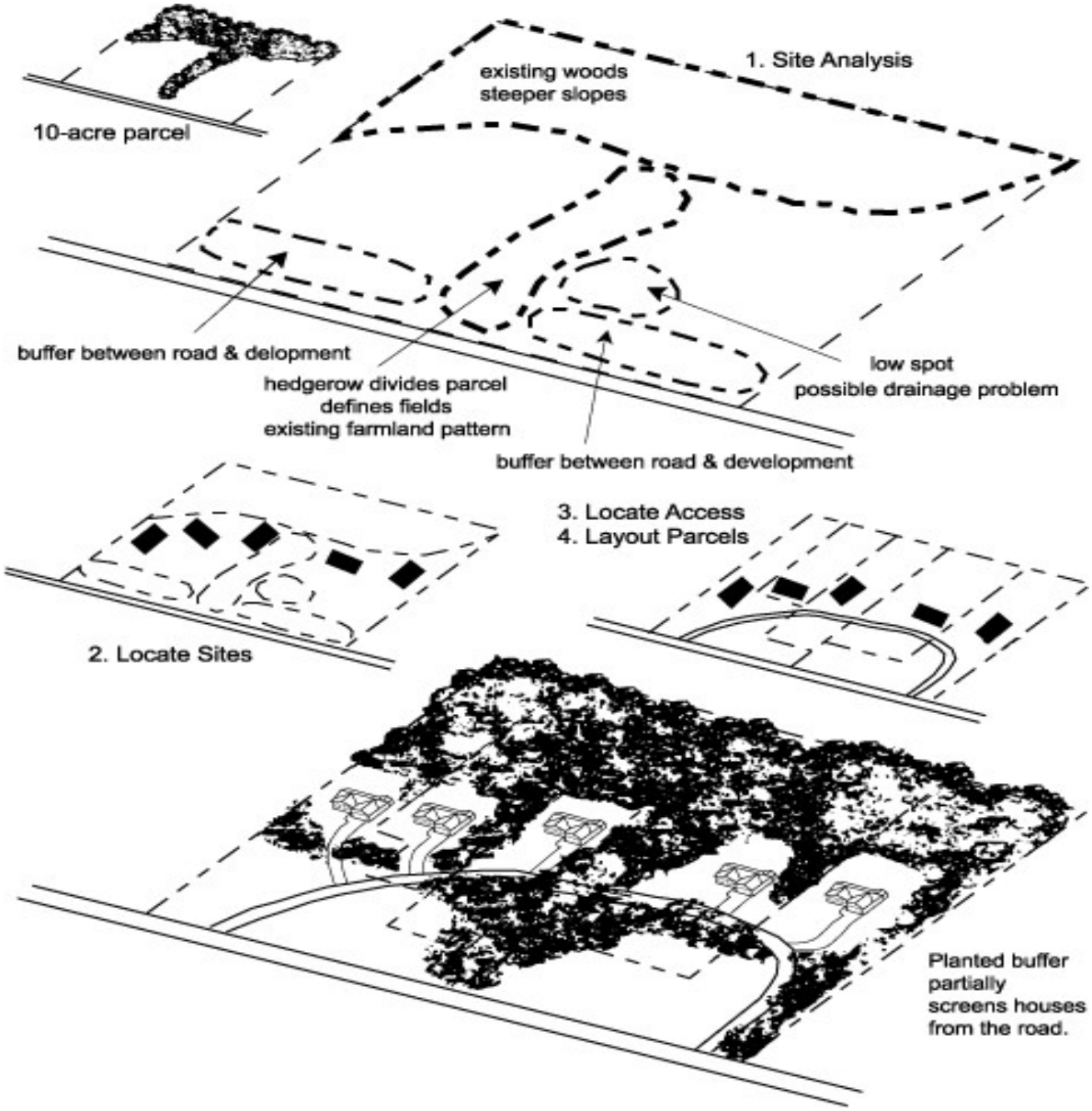
Currently most of Van Buren's land outside of Baldwinsville and the hamlets is divided into agricultural parcels of over 10 acres, which could be easily subdivided into smaller lots. There has been development pressure in certain areas of the Town for this land to be shifted from agricultural use to residential use.

The traditional approach to subdivision and development has been to take the parcel, do a basic site analysis and decide on the number and size of the lots to be created from it. The lots are laid out primarily based on how they will be accessed from the driveways and/or new roadways. It is then that the buildings are sited on the lots.



Alternative Subdivision and Development Approach

This illustration below is one alternate method for subdivision and development that would start with a thorough site analysis or understanding of the site's natural systems. Next, the best areas for the buildings would be identified and mapped. Then the most appropriate means of access could be determined and the lot lines drawn. The benefit of this approach is that it allows for more flexibility in responding both to the features of the site as well as to the patterns found in the surrounding landscape.



CLUSTER HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Cluster housing development has become increasingly more popular for residential areas because of the urgency to solve overcrowding in urban areas. A cluster-oriented design is a plan that groups the uses found in the development rather than spreading them evenly throughout the site. To accomplish this the method calls for the modification of lot size standards to concentrate the dwellings in specific areas, which in turn creates open space. By minimizing the amount of land disturbed by development the value of the land increases, existing vegetation and landforms are preserved, rural character is kept and an overall distinction of the site is noticed. The cluster housing style works best in environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, wetlands and/or woodlands, because it conserves/preserves a certain percentage of desirable land. The plan utilizes various different preferences and income levels. Attached (i.e. multifamily units) and detached (i.e. single family units) are often both permitted throughout the same project, but usually have restrictions on the amount of each style used. The cluster housing development, compared to a conventional method, is a more cost-effective way to build because of the reduction in the amount of materials needed. Other advantages of clustering are described in the following:

ADVANTAGES OF CLUSTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- reduction in development costs
- reduction in housing costs
- decrease in environmental impacts
- conservation of open space
- shared amenities (i.e. recreation)
- safety
- accessibility and efficiency

CLUSTER vs. CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

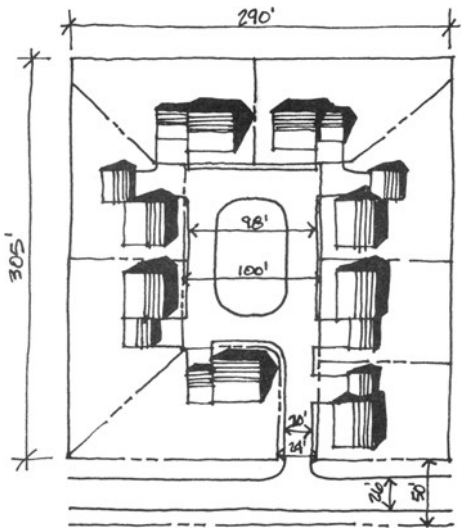
Density is equally distributed throughout a conventional plan whereas in a cluster plan densities are higher in some areas and lower in others and dif-

ferent income levels are thereby accommodated. A wide variety of housing types are found in a cluster development which, unlike the conventional method, may have a broader appeal in the marketplace. Because of reduced development standards the cluster subdivision is a much more cost- effective approach. In a cluster housing design, existing natural amenities can be preserved without losing lots, and the creation of open space is the most obvious advantage over the conventional method.

With the increased amount of open space in a cluster housing development, recreational activities are more possible and natural drainage systems can be implemented. Such amenities are often lacking in a conventional hous- ing development.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLUSTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- a reduction of street and right-of-way standards;
- a reduction of minimum lot size to 4,000 square feet;
- the use of a more natural storm water management approach;
- a greater mix of unit types and income levels;
- a minimum of 20% of the site reserved for open space
- a high compatibility with residential development.



A TYPICAL CLUSTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
BASED ON THE "COMMONS" PLAN
8 UNITS ON 2.17 ACRES
AVERAGE LOT SIZE 9,114 S.F.

SITE ANALYSIS

The easiest and most logical areas to build housing on would be the level or slightly sloping land, but because the most suitable place for construction might not be the best aesthetically, other factors must be considered:

- Water
- Existing vegetation
- Views
- Severe climatic exposure
- Utilities
- Adjoining land uses
- Unstable soils / danger of slippage
- Existing roads / potential access
- Existing physical features (depressions, outcrops, hills, etc.)

Although features such as steep slopes, rock outcroppings, natural habitat areas, places with wildlife potential, and other landscape qualities should be avoided as they are essential in determining the actual site selection.

NECESSARY ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

Open Space

Open space is the most obvious benefit to a cluster design. It is all the land on the site not occupied by the buildings. Open space enhances the development as a whole and supports socialization within the community. Other benefits are that it considers environmental issues of conserving / preserving the natural amenities in the area and also supporting aesthetic and ecological concerns. An additional advantage is that natural drainage systems can be designed within open spaces thereby avoiding the cost of extensive underground infrastructure. Ideally, the open space should be made accessible to as many units as possible by having several, if not all of them, abut the open land.

Views

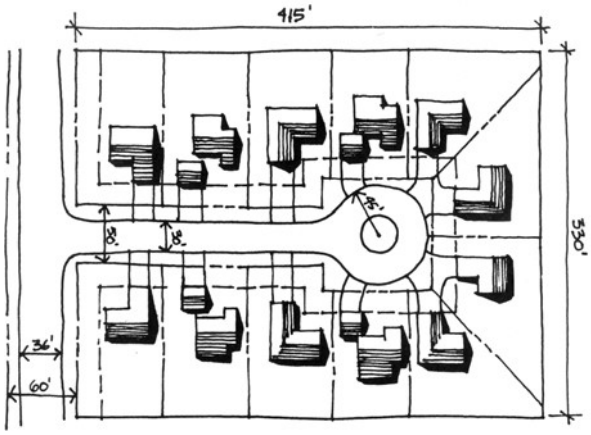
Desirable views should be taken advantage of in development. A cluster development should be designed so that as many as possible share one view. Undesirable views, such as parking lots and major roads, should be screened and buffered with design elements such as vegetation, berms, or fences so they are not as noticeable when seen from the units.

Privacy

Privacy is maintained among each unit without sacrificing safety. Because the units are close to each other it creates a social atmosphere, and neighbors are placed in a situation where it is easy to get to know one another. This helps to promote an almost “neighborhood watch” system. On the other hand, because they are placed near to one another the situation also creates a greater need for privacy. This definition of personal space can be accomplished through the use of vegetation and architectural elements such as walls and fences.

Identity

The need to maintain individual identity for the housing units can be fulfilled by applying architectural decoration to both the façade and the interior of the building. In addition, through outdoor landscape design in front or around the structure, originality can be achieved.



A TYPICAL CUL-DE-SAC LOT LAYOUT
INCLUDING 12 UNITS ON 3.37 ACRES
AVERAGE LOT SIZE 9,675 S.F.

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

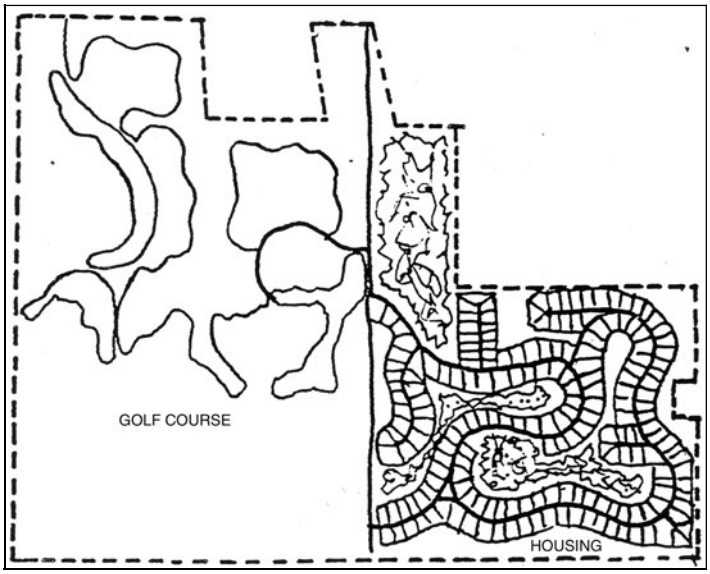
INTRODUCTION

Planned Unit Development (PUD) refers to a type of planning method and review, rather than a physical product. PUDs can be any size or shape. They can range from one acre to thousands of acres. PUDs may have a sin- gle land use or multiple land uses. Planned unit developments have one thing in common, they are planned as a whole rather than lot by lot. Most planned unit developments are reviewed as a unit outside traditional lot-by- lot zoning.

As a whole our country always leaned toward the traditions of preceding generations. Our traditions were that every man or woman should own their own home. Today that is impossible for a great number of people because single-family homes are very expensive. This is one of the reasons for the planned unit development. It is a much more economical method of development.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

Planned unit developments have the following characteristics: (1) dwelling units are grouped into clusters, allowing large amounts of land to be devoted to open space; (2) much of the housing is in the form of town houses, cluster housing, or apartments; (3) higher densities than single family projects of the same acreage; (4) often part of the land is set aside for non-residential purpose such as institutional, commercial, recreational, and industrial uses. These areas are usually close enough to walk or bike to.

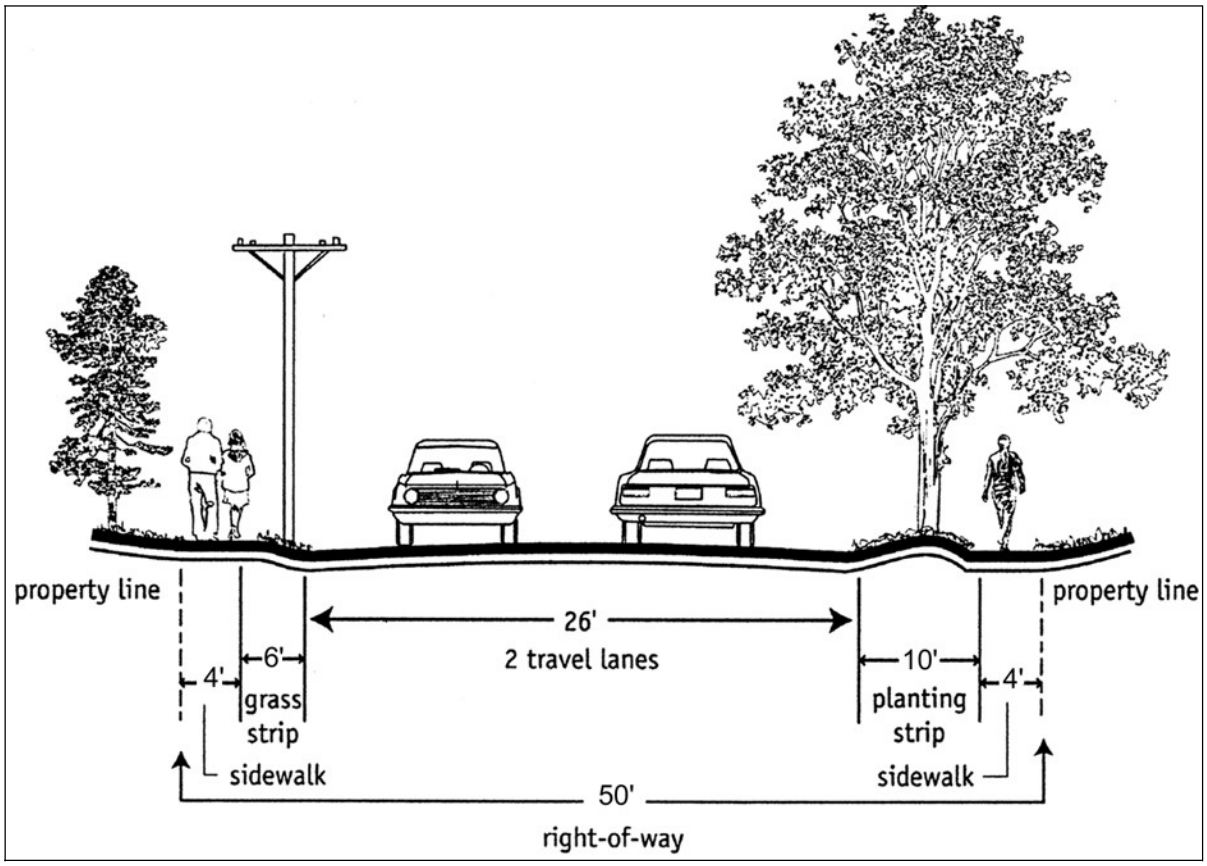


A TYPICAL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

RESIDENTIAL STREET WIDTH

Just as maintaining a traditional street pattern is important to preserving hamlet, village and rural Town character, so too is the design of those streets. Traditionally, the side streets in hamlets and villages are narrow and tree lined. This is in contrast with new streets being built in suburban-style subdivisions on rural land where space allows pavement widths to reach up to 40-feet.

The section below illustrates that a much narrower street still allows plenty of room for two-way traffic and in many cases parking on one shoulder. In more populated areas such as hamlets, to accommodate vehicular and pedestrian traffic, the right-of-way should not be more than 60 feet wide. While electric service runs along most of Van Buren's existing roads, where feasible new lines could be buried or run along back lots. Certain areas of the Town have utilities located in this manner already. Sidewalks are one of the distinguishing features of the hamlets and village, these may be built along new residential streets.



IV. COMMERCIAL AREAS

GOAL

Goal.—Appropriately designed commercial development that is located to maximize accessibility to a variety of outlets and services and minimize degradation of the scenic quality and the character of surrounding development.

BACKGROUND

Retail and service areas can serve as centers of commerce and as social gathering places important to the cultural life of the community. Commercial areas attract more people per unit of area than any other land use. Visibility and accessibility are important for developers of commercial properties. Commercial developments can cause many problems.

Population growth drives commercial activities. The commercial element of the Plan assumes the number of commercial establishments in Van Bu- ren and Baldwinsville will increase as suburban development expands. With limited suburban development anticipated, limited new commercial is expected. However, many commercial opportunities exist for the redevelopment of existing commercial uses. Accordingly, this element of the Plan addresses issues related to how new development is integrated into an evolving pattern of land use and how older commercial uses and area are redeveloped.

Van Buren residents are committed to avoiding the negative impacts on surrounding development that unplanned commercial expansion could bring. They are concerned about the impacts that the development of scattered individual businesses could have on residential neighborhoods. They are also concerned with the visual unattractiveness and traffic congestion that is sometimes associated with commercial strip development.

The Character, Vitality, and Pattern of Commercial Development

The character and economic vitality of commercial areas is a concern of business owners and community residents. As commercial areas become

older, it is necessary to encourage their revitalization. Changes in uses may be appropriate. Revitalization of older commercial areas should be supported. One way of supporting older commercial areas, is preventing spot development of isolated commercial uses and the development of commercial strips in new areas.

The Plan proposes new commercial development take place in planned shopping centers or in planned communities. Unplanned expansion of commercial strips or the creation of new commercial strips will complicate traffic problems and detract from the character of the Town.

Design and Site Considerations

Addressing design and site consideration in commercial development projects will create coordinated development, a sense of unity and identity in an area, and reduce visual blight. It will also make an area attractive for additional commercial developments. An attractive commercial area will feed on itself in terms maintaining economic viability and attracting new stores and services. Conversely, an unattractive commercial area will spiral downhill by discouraging new uses from entering the area.

Design and site considerations include building height and bulk, place- ment of signs, and parking. The amount of parking is a common practical concern, but the design of the space and its location on the site plan is also important in determining the visual impact that results. Landscaping con- siderations are also important and include the use of screens, buffers, and berms.

Through private initiative, improvement of design quality is possible even when new development is not involved. Beautification programs promoting high quality design organized by business groups will enhance existing commercial areas.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- Policy.--Concentration of new commercial development in existing commercial areas, in planned communities, or in planned commercial shopping centers.

- Policy.—Commercial development that is aesthetically attractive and relates compatibly with the character of surrounding development.

- Policy.--Encourage revitalization of existing commercial strips and shopping centers.

- Policy.—Discourage proposals to locate or expand commercial development within established residential neighborhoods when such development will have a negative impact on the character and livability of the surrounding residential community.

- Policy.--Consider proposals to convert residential properties along major roads to office or retail use only when there is a substantial non-residential character to the area, where satisfactory parking and site design can be demonstrated, and where it can be demonstrated that adverse traffic impacts will be minimized.

- Policy.--Encourage commercial developers to locate parking lots at the rear and/or partially on the side of commercial structures.

- Policy.—Require the use of landscaping, screening, and berms where appropriate._____
  Policy -- Review standars for the height and placement of signs.

- Policy.—Encourage local business interests to establish programs promoting beautification and enhancement of commercial buildings and grounds.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Commercial Strips

A commercial strip is a ribbon of commercial uses that are developed independently on lots along a major road. Commercial strips are common in suburban areas, where they grow gradually along with the population and in tune with the pattern of individual land ownership.

It is not difficult to understand how or why land along the highway corridor is so often reserved for commercial expansion. Such land is usually both undesirable and too expensive for residential use.

To the commercial developer the strip offers high traffic volume and good accessibility as well as good visibility and advertising display space along a considerable length of road frontage. Space for future expansion is also usually available. To the consumer the strip offers direct access to any of a wide variety of commercial outlets.

Local governments are less anxious to acquire it for use as a landscaped buffer than to generate tax revenues from it, so strips of land along both side of the highway are designated for commercial use. Very often the amount of land designated for commercial use far exceeds the commercial needs of the community, which leads to marginal commercial uses, vacant properties, and unsightly conditions. A downward spiral of strip develop- ment occurs.

The major problems with commercial strips as they are traditionally developed are that they are visually chaotic and result in the creation of serious traffic hazards. The large number of parking entrances and exits generate turning movements that disrupt traffic. Traffic congestion worsens as development of new business continues until the strip's advantage of easy accessibility is destroyed.

In their efforts to gain competitive advantage and make maximum use of the visibility offered by the strip, businesses often erect oversize signs and garish displays. But this eventually defeats the commercial goals of the businessperson. Not only does it result in a streetscape that many consider ugly, but the overabundance of signs and displays make the recognition by consumers of any one business difficult.

Shopping Centers

A shopping center is a cluster of commercial establishments built on a site that is planned as a single, integrated unit. Individual shops or offices are tenants in the center that is owned and organized by an entrepreneur. Shopping centers are commonly divided into four types: convenience centers, neighborhood centers, community centers, and regional centers. General characteristics of these four types are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Major Types and Characteristics of Shopping Centers

Center Type	Center Type	Typical General Range of Leasable Area in Square Feet	Usual Minimum Site Area in Acres	Minimum Population Support Required
Convenience	Grocery store	5,000-30,000	1-3	1,000-3,000
Neighborhood	Supermarket	30,000-100,000	3-10	3,000-40,000
Community	Large variety, Discount, or Department store	100,000-300,000+	10—30	40,000-150,000
Regional	One or more Full-line Department stores	300,000+	30+	150,000 or more

Shopping centers exist in a wide variety of forms, but in the Northeast two general forms are most common: strip centers and indoor malls. In strip centers (not to be confused with "commercial strips"), uses are arranged in a row parallel to the street but set back from it to allow parking between the street and the building. The row also may be bent into an U or L shape. In an indoor mall, stores are arranged facing inward toward an enclosed courtyard or pedestrian street. While outside, parking areas completely surround the complex.

Across the county older malls are being redeveloped into what amounts to village center with individual buildings, internal streets, street trees, sidewalks, and a mix of land uses. The redeveloped projects are attempting to "fit" the development into the community by remodeling the architecture and incorporating village-like amenities into the project. The closest example of a redeveloped mall of this type is the Fayetteville Mall redevelopment.

Locational Criteria

Analysis of the market and the accessibility of the location are the principal reasons developers choose sites for commercial projects. Factors considered in a market analysis include the distribution of the population, its spending habits, and the locations of competing businesses. Accessibility is analyzed by evaluating the various means of traveling to the site, the time distances involved, the customary routes of travel for other purposes, and the capacity of the site.

Commercial areas draw on populations from the surrounding area to support the business area. The larger the commercial area, the larger the population base that is needed. This concept is explained in Table 4.1, Major Types and Characteristics of Shopping Centers. The market forces described in the table are important considerations when setting policies for the location of commercial establishments. Maintaining opportunities for commercial profit and the attractiveness of Van Buren as a desirable place to shop is important. Important, too, is maintaining the attractiveness of Van Buren as a place to live and work.

A business may desire to locate in a less populated area or on the fringe of a population center if accessibility to the site is particularly good or if the site lies along the route to a popular destination such as a large shopping center. However, permitting isolated businesses in low-density residential areas could result in undesirable neighborhood impacts and a decline in the attractiveness of a significant amount of land for other low-intensity uses.

Thirty years ago many commercial uses were developed in conjunction with a residential building boom in the area. The larger of the commercial uses served a large part of the Syracuse Metropolitan Area. Some of these uses are still viable. Others are nearing the end of their useful life of about thirty years. The problems and the opportunity are to reinvent marginal commercial uses. Public policy should be proactive in encouraging appropriate reinventing efforts. In order to maintain an attractive commercial image, Van Buren must avoid blighted commercial areas.

The commercial element of the comprehensive plan supports the idea that new commercial development should be located within existing commercial areas or concentrated in new planned shopping centers. New centers should be located where they can serve adjacent residential districts with minimum negative impact, or where they can be planned as integrated parts of new residential communities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The Commercial Strip

Accommodating strip commercial development along roads often generates problems. These include inhibiting growth on parcels behind the strips, traffic congestion, and uncoordinated and unsightly development. Undeveloped commercially zoned parcels exist and existing parcels are redeveloped from time to time. The major issue for strip commercial development is the manner in which development or redevelopment activities are carried out along existing commercial strips. Existing commercial zoning regulations relating to aspects of site design including building set- backs should be reviewed to facilitate the application of design guidelines described below.

Shopping Centers

The site plan approval provision in the zoning ordinance establishes the legal authority for site plan review and approval in general terms. This regulation is drafted appropriately for the purposes of the Town Code. Design guidelines are proposed for use in the review of site plans by the Planning Board.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design guidelines were taken from **Town of Van Buren Design Guidelines.**

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In their heyday, the streets of Memphis, Warners, Ionia, and Van Buren were lined with a variety of commercial establishments. Currently, com- mercial use has almost disappeared entirely from the hamlets. In the future, however, it is more likely that if there were any new commercial develop- ment in the hamlets that it would most likely be the chain or franchise type like a new gas station/convenience store.

Some of the design issues associated with commercial development are similar to those with residential development. In order to maintain a small-town character within the village and hamlets, any new development – commercial or residential – should try to fit into surroundings and follow existing patterns. However, with commercial development there are further concerns regarding appropriate lighting, signage, parking and the relation-ship between the building, street and in many areas of Van Buren, the sur-rounding rural land.

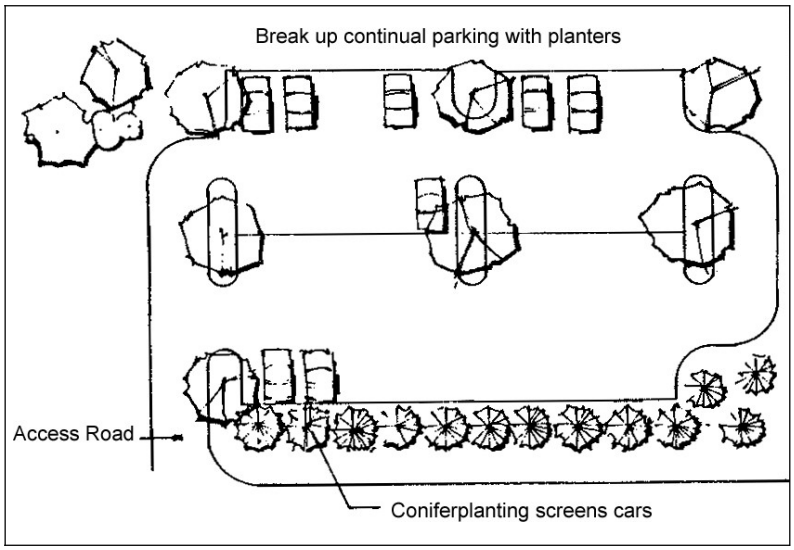
Many commercial structures typically do not fit in with their surroundings, residential or rural, due to their bright lighting, architecture and in many cases large signage. However, with alternate lighting, smaller signs and a greater use of plants, these structures can be more harmonious with their surroundings.

A) PARKING

Commercial buildings generally require parking. The typical parking solu-tion is the large paved lot between the building and the street. The view of these structures from the road is often a sea of parked cars. This view can be improved by moving the parking to the side or the rear of the building.

Parking lots also benefit from trees planted in parking islands. This helps to control and guide traffic, provides shade for parked vehicles and visu-ally screens the parked cars from passersby.

Small businesses with light vehicle traffic could consider planning for on-street parking or gravel lots. Locations of events that may park many cars but only several times a year could consider a grass lot instead of an expensive paved or gravel lot.



B) ARCHITECTURE

New commercial buildings can better fit into their surroundings if their architecture is similar to that of neighboring buildings. Just as with new residential development, the size, orientation, materials, roofline and details of new buildings is important to maintaining character. Obviously commercial buildings have different use requirements than the surrounding residences, but the exteriors can be designed to blend in.

C) LIGHTING

Commercial buildings often require lighting for safe access and security. However, lighting can be located so as to provide adequate light without projecting harsh glare on the street or adjacent properties. Avoid large overhead lights and think about using lower or more directed lights where needed.

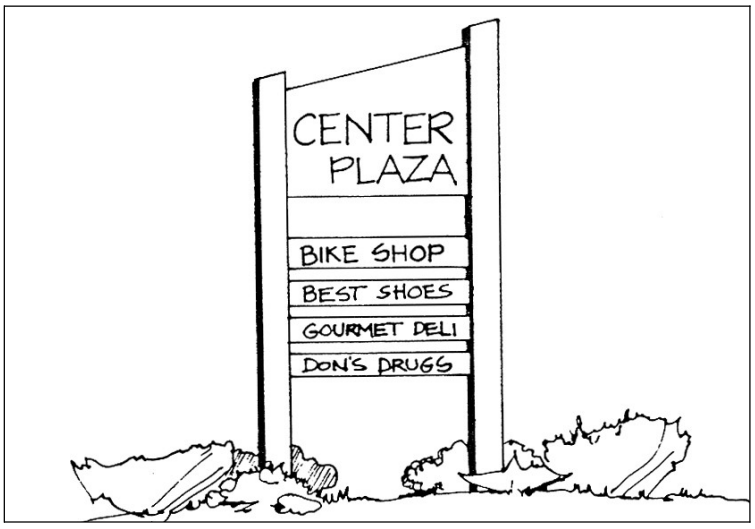
D) SIGNAGE

Signs are important elements in creating character in communities. Within the village or hamlets, inappropriate signs could have an extremely noticeable impact. A sign also creates a public image for the business it advertises. That can be carefully and deliberately controlled through design.

There are three considerations to deciding what type of sign is inappropriate: (1) who will be seeing the sign – will they be on foot or in a vehicle, (2) any neighboring signs – will the new sign fit in or dominate and, (3) the building – what kind of sign would look right given the architecture type of the building.

GENERAL STANDARDS FOR SIGNS IN VILLAGE AND HAMLET AREAS

- Sign should be no larger than 20 square feet per side.
- Signs should not cover any architectural details or features.
- No more than two lettering styles should be used.
- No more than 60% of the sign should be filled with lettering.
- The colors in the sign should compliment the colors of the building.
- Sign materials should compliment the colors of the building.



Example of Commercial Sign

COMMERCIAL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Commercial cluster developments are groups of buildings used for commercial uses such as stores and restaurants. The commercial cluster is an alternative to the conventional plaza or strip mall development.

The buildings and other elements in a cluster development are designed as a single architectural entity. The various elements are sited to form closed or semi-closed spaces that best accommodate their function, best reveal the features of the surrounding structures, and best relate the group as a whole to the surrounding landscape.

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Parking and Landscaping

- Buildings and vegetative screens can be used to enclose and conceal a parking area.
- Planters can help divide and separate a parking area as well as enhance and conceal it.
- The use of commonly found or native plant species in the area to integrate the new cluster development into the existing landscape.
- The accommodation of service and emergency vehicles with adequacy.
- The creation of a main access road large enough to accommodate the amount of traffic, which will be produced by the new com- mercial cluster development.

Architecture

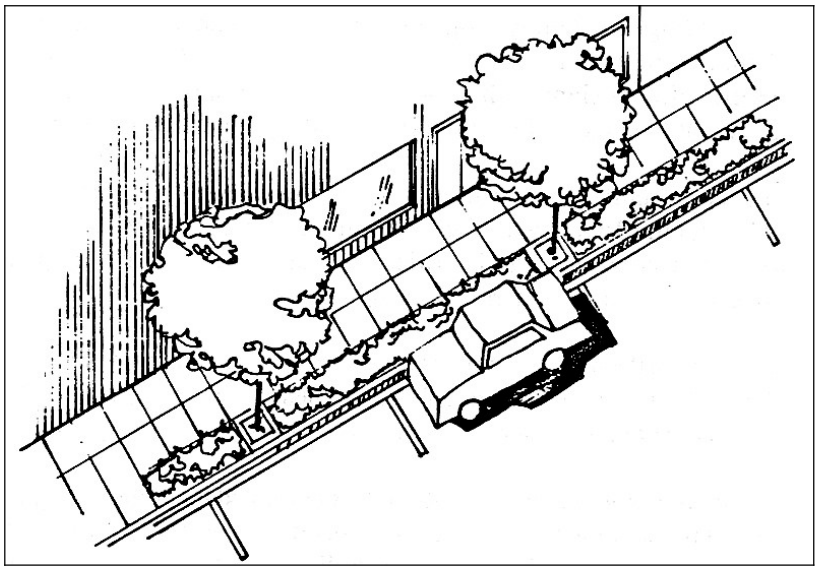
- It is important that cluster developments harmonize with the surrounding landscape.
- New developments should relate to the surroundings by integrating regional architecture into the structures.
- New commercial structures should enhance the traditional architectural character of the area.
- New architecture should harmonize with the surrounding architecture through the uses of similar materials, color, symmetry, form and scale.

- The architecture is varied through spacing, which helps to separate the stores and breaks the scale down into smaller structures.

COMMERCIAL PARKING

A) ON STREET PARKING

The three options for providing on-street parking include parking on one side of the street, parking on both sides of the street and parking bays. Parking lanes require an 8-foot paved width. An equally wide retained-gravel shoulder can be used instead of paved parking lanes and may have the advantage of reducing stormwater runoff. Such shoulders may also help create a natural or rural appearance, but displaced gravel can be a nuisance on the paved area. Roadside shoulders are dependant upon sensitive landscaping to fulfill function and appearance objectives. In addition, they require careful design and construction to ensure permanence and to avoid excessive maintenance.



On Street Parking With Planting Buffer

B) OFF STREET PARKING

Off-street parking minimizes the need for parking lanes on the street. In addition, a vehicle parked in an off-street location is less likely to be hit by a moving vehicle. Off street parking also keeps the streets clear for snow removal. For these reasons sufficient off street parking should be provided as an alternative to curb parking. All residential occupant parking should be off-street parking, ac- commodated by driveways, carports, and garages, or, in higher- density developments, parking lots. Only visitor parking should overflow onto the street. In a well-planned community, parking should not occur on arterial or collector streets. Adequate off-street parking must be provided for schools, shopping centers, employ- ment complexes and other similar uses. While parking may occur on sub-collector and other minor residential streets, the relative safety on these streets can be enhanced by increased visibility. Chil- dren darting between parked cars and cars backing out of driveways between parked cars are factors most affected by reduced sight dis- tance.

V. INDUSTRIAL/EMPLOYMENT CENTER USES

GOAL

Goal.--New industrial development to meet the economic needs of present and future citizens that is suitably located and compatible with the existing activities and character of the Town.

BACKGROUND

Industrial development provides employment centers of business activities that provides marketable products and services needed to maintain desirable standards of living. From the Town's perspective, the value and importance of industrial/employment center uses goes beyond the basic role of industry to process materials and manufacture goods. Properly located, adequately serviced, and carefully designed industrial/employment center uses can assist the community by attracting new employment opportuni- ties, and expanding the fiscal capacity of local government by adding new investment to the property tax base.

Expansions of industrial/employment center uses do have risks. Air and water pollution, hazardous waste generation, commuter and truck traffic, special demands on public services, storage of large quantities of materials, around-the-clock operations, the size and design of buildings, and overall impacts on the image of Van Buren.

This element of the Comprehensive Plan assumes growth in industrial/ employment center uses in Van Buren is necessary and desirable to bal- ance growth in residential uses. How industrial/employment center uses can meet objectives and policies of the Plan and be integrated into the evolving pattern of land use is the purpose of this element of the Plan.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- Objective.—Attract appropriate research, office, warehousing, and manufacturing activities that are located in open and park-like settings and accessible to the transportation network and public utilities.

- Objective.—Evolve a proactive effort for industrial development that focuses Town activities in an Industrial Committee and that is de- signed to expand the economic base of Van Buren and improve em- ployment opportunities.

- Policy.—Provide sufficient vacant prime industrial land zoned for industry to meet anticipated demand.

- Policy.—Evaluate the extent of existing vacant industrial sites, and review industrial location standards relating to accessibility, utilities, site size, and natural environmental factors when considering the designation of additional industrial sites.

- Policy.—Expand provisions for site plan review of industrial use proposals by the Planning Board and adopt design review guidelines clarifying the design objectives of the Town as they pertain to industrial development projects.

- Policy.—Protect industrial developments from incompatible land uses by allowing only appropriate research, office, manufacturing and other associated activities in industrial areas.

- Policy.—Update industrial performance standards in the zoning ordinance relating to impacts from odor, noise, dust and smoke, gases, radiation levels, glare, waste, water contamination, electrical interference and other measurable effects of industrial operations.

- Policy.—Encourage cooperation between the various public and private agencies to promote industrial development within the Town including the Greater Baldwinsville Economic Development Agency and the Baldwinsville Chamber of Commerce.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Early Industrial Development

In pre-1920's America, industrialists largely determined the pattern of industrial development. The availability of natural resources, competition, and the demand for products were the factors influencing their locational decisions. Industrial uses were commonly established on the most desir- able sites in a region. Sites near rivers that could supply water and provide for waste disposal were prime sites. Later, industrial development spread along railroad lines that often ran parallel to rivers.

The results of unplanned industrial expansion during this era are visible in many older communities where high levels of site coverage, crowded streets, and lack of parking and truck loading areas characterize industrial areas. Often the factories, warehouses, and storage yards in these areas are found either intermixed, or in dangerous proximity to commercial, service, and residential uses.

Industrial Use Districts

With the emergence of land use planning, the practice of zoning attempted to prevent the mixing of uses. Frequently, however, the areas designated as industrial zoning districts consisted of land that was "leftover" after allocating to other uses the areas in the community that had potential for residential or commercial development. To make matters worse, industries locating in the industrial districts were not protected from the encroachment of other uses.

Within the last forty years many communities including Van Buren, have protected industrial/employment center areas by not allowing residences in these areas. Some communities also prohibit commercial uses from some industrial/employment center areas.

Industrial/Employment Center Parks

An industrial/employment center park is a tract of land subdivided and promoted for industrial/employment center use by a sponsoring managerial organization. In many cases, the sponsoring organization either develops the entire tract itself, or it offers development assistance such as financial aid or engineering and construction services to prospective tenants. The Town of Dewitt has several parks including Pioneer Business Park, Butter- nut Creek Business Park, and Widewater Office Park. The park develop- ment idea contrasts with the uncoordinated development of industrial par- cels along an existing road.

Industrial/employment center parks grew out of the desire of corporations of moderate size, by clustering together, in order to take advantage of economics that accrue when services and facilities are shared. Corporations are also motivated to locate within industrial/employment center parks by the desire to obtain suitable sites and avoid complaints and to take advan- tage of the protection and prestige an organized district can provide. Local and state governments in the name of economic growth often assist development of industrial/employment center parks. The New York State "Empire Zone" program is an example.

Uses found in industrial/employment center parks vary from low technology to high technology companies. The low end includes manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution uses. The high technology end includes research and development activities ranging from product development and testing to assembly and distribution. The parks also use a variety of names: research parks, research and development parks, and office parks.

Concentration of industrial/employment center uses in industrial/ employment center parks makes planning-related problems traditionally associated with these uses easier to address. The managerial organization controlling and administering a park has a self-interest in maintaining compatibility of uses and activities within the park and ensuring that necessary infrastructure is made available to tenants.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

Entrepreneurs seeking development sites first evaluate regional or state characteristics and then evaluate the attributes of particular sites. In making a choice between two nearly identical sites, quality of life characteristics also influence an entrepreneur's decision.

Regional characteristics are largely beyond the community's power to influence. They include:

- weather,
- taxes, insurance and interest rates,
- permit and approval processes,
- cost of energy,
- the cost of labor,
- the quality and skill levels of the labor force,
- accessibility to markets,
- proximity to supplies and resources including energy, and
- location with respect to other existing and proposed facilities of the company, and proximity to residential living areas of the kind preferred by engineers and managers.

Site characteristics include:

- highway access,
- cost of utilities in sufficient and reliable quantities (gas, sewerage, water, internet),
- site topography, compatibility of adjacent uses, prestige of the location,
- location with respect to rural, suburban, and urban areas (most industries prefer rural or suburban locations within a metropolitan area),
- availability of land parcels or buildings,
- proximity to airports, and
- availability of railroad, truck, or other required ground transportation services.

Infrastructure needs are generally more important to industrial/employment centers than local tax rates or financial assistance programs offered by local governments and economic development agencies. Good access for truck and cars is the single most important locational consideration. Direct highway frontage is usually desired for its advertising value. Railroad access is much less important than it once was, but proximity to a rail line provides a district with flexibility in attracting tenants.

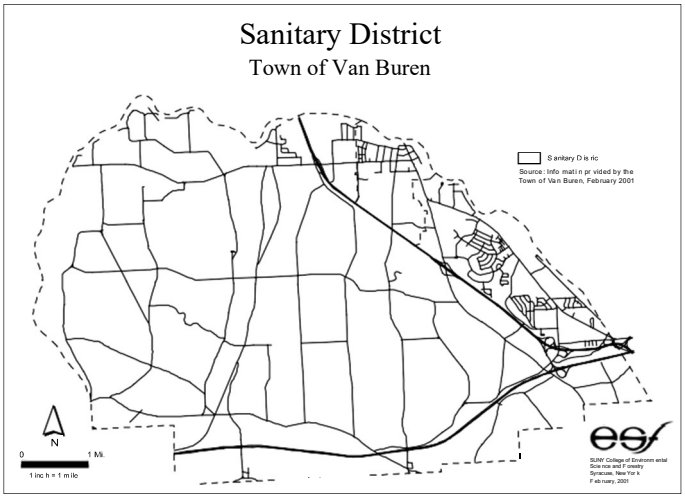
High-tech industries are somewhat less concerned with infrastructure characteristics than manufacturing industries, but they still require a location accessible to skilled workers and roads suitable for shipping work in process between plants. Availability of high-quality air service including air-freight is also particularly important to high-tech industries.

Quality of life considerations include regional factors such as climate and natural features (mountains, lakes, etc.), that are beyond the community's control. Other quality of life factors are local in scope. They include the quality of local schools, health care facilities, and local social and recreational amenities as well as the current and long-range availability of housing in a variety of price ranges, styles, and neighborhoods to meet the needs of both labor and management.

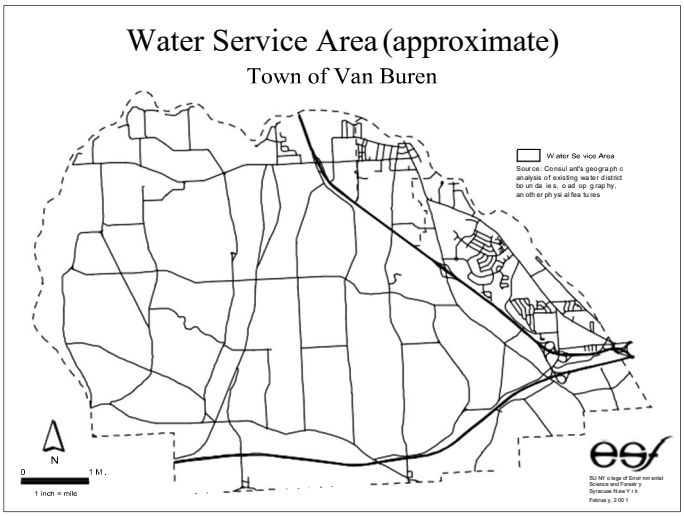
The quality of life for industrial/employment center entrepreneurs is also affected by local attitudes toward employment center development. Adequate regulations to protect the industrial/employment center are impor- tant. The reasonableness of regulatory restrictions, the development review processes, and the willingness of local officials to help solve problems are all-important.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

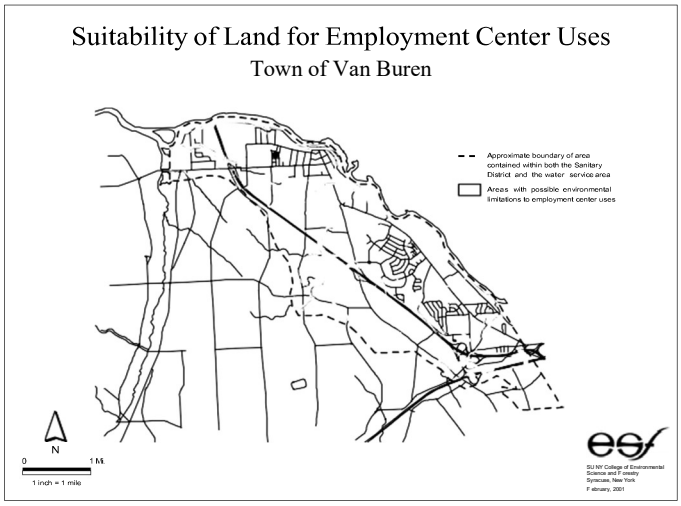
In Van Buren, the sanitary district boundary (Map 5.1) and the water service area (Map 5.2) serve to outline areas that might contain sites suitable for industrial/employment center uses. Map 5.3 , Suitability of Land for Employment Center Uses combines the maps 5.1 and 5.2, and also identifies areas with possible environmental limitations for industrial/ employment center uses.



Map 5.1



Map 5.2



Map 5.3

Basic Strategies

To attract industrial/employment center development, a community needs to know "what they want and where they want it." Zoning needs to match up with the desired land uses, and the regulations need to be suitable for modern situations. Streamline approval processes for efficiency and re- duced approval time. Identify and promote lots with minimal limitations to the approval and development process. A lot of sites are not important. You just need a few excellent sites.

Information about the community needs to be available to site selection and real estate brokers. The Planning Reference Guide provides a wealth of information in one place. The Guide and the Comprehensive Plan show's the community is thinking about industrial/employment center development and has an idea about what it wants.

Market the town. Be proactive, not merely reactive. Take into account regional plans and activities. Utilize local and regional resources that promote a community's assets, including the Metropolitan Development Board, Chamber of Commerce, and the Empire Economic Development Corporation.

[Note: The Basic Strategies outlined above are from a presentation made to the Van Buren Land Use Committee by David Mankiewicz, Deputy Director, Metropolitan Development Association.]

Performance Standards

The concept behind industrial performance standards is that industrial enterprises are free to locate and operate within an industrial zone in the Town so long as the enterprise avoids the creation of enumerated nui- sances. The nuisances are related to sound, odor, dust, smoke, gases, vibra- tions, glare, and fire, explosion or safety hazards. The Van Buren Zoning Ordinance includes provisions related to these nuisances. A review and updating of the provisions is part of the review of the zoning ordinance.

Industrial/Employment Center Park Zoning

Present industrial/employment center zoning in Van Buren includes a general office district and three industrial districts. The four districts are conventional zoning districts in that they assume an area will be zoned and individual lots subdivided and sold to individual businesses. Generally basic industrial/employment center uses are permitted after the Planning Board approves a site plan. Additional uses are permitted after a special permit is obtained from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Site plan approval for additional uses permitted by special permit is at the discretion of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

An industrial/employment zoning district is designed to accommodate uses in new planned developments. The district would be designed to accommodate planned office or employment center uses as a single entity and may accommodate a variety of industrial, office, and supporting commercial uses intended to primarily service persons working at or patronizing the planned development. The district is proposed as a "floating zone" that is requested by a developer and approved by the Town Board after a recommendation from the Planning Board. The "floating zone" sets forth locational criteria and performance guidelines not unlike the planned unit development district in the Van Buren Zoning Ordinance.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design guidelines were taken from **Town of Van Buren Design Guidelines.**

INDUSTRIAL LOT LAYOUT

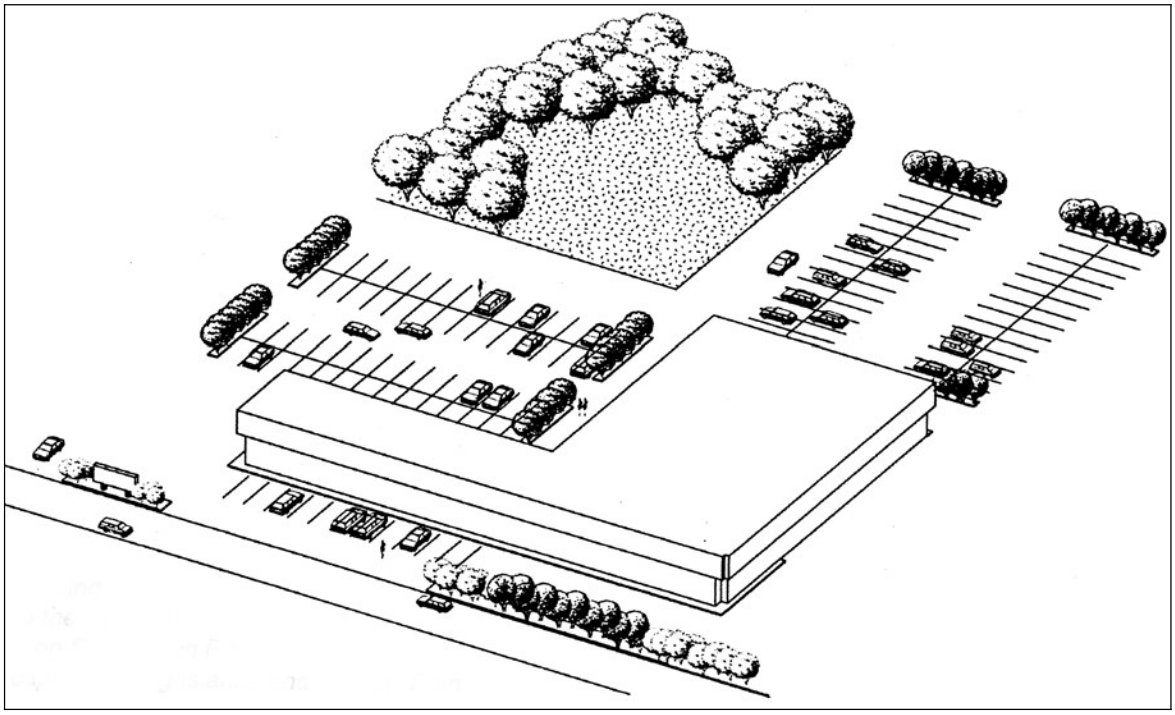
In the layout of industrial structures, the integration of these developments into the surrounding landscape is just as critical as the integration of residential projects to their surroundings.

Individual lots should be laid out to take advantage of the sites natural amenities including distinctive landforms and scenic views. Lots should also be arranged to minimize the potential for conflict between dissimilar uses.

Buildings should be arranged with usable open spaces designated around all buildings. The open space, which can include retention ponds, stands of trees, recreation areas and preserved agricultural lands should be planned to enhance the visual quality of the development.

A) CIRCULATION AND PARKING

Adequate access for trucks, visitors, and peak employee traffic volumes should be provided, and the overall pattern of circulation should be designed so as to minimize the impact on adjacent areas. Roads should be designed to reflect a hierarchy of uses, from secon- dary roads to service roads and loading areas. A network of secon- dary roads that permits quick dispersion of the peak traffic volumes is preferred. To reduce traffic congestion, sharing of curb cuts be- tween buildings is encouraged.



A Commercial Layout With Parking on the Side and in Rear, Closed Circulation and Landscaped Parking Islands

Truck circulation should be physically separated from the general circulation of passenger cars as much as possible. Loading areas should be located behind buildings so turning areas and loading / unloading activities will not interfere with employee and visitor traffic.

B) SCREENING AND GENERAL LANDSCAPING

Loading areas, outdoor refuse containers, transformers and other mechanical and technological equipment should be screened so as not to be visible from adjacent lots or sites, neighboring properties or streets. Residential areas adjacent to industrial developments should be substantially screened from views of parking lots, interior roads or railroad tracks, and lights.

Plantings and berms are usually most appropriate for use as screens. Walls or fences are generally discouraged, especially between buildings and fronting streets. Where walls or fences are necessary , they should be designed as integral parts of the overall architecture and site design.

A minimum of 15% of the area within the property lines of a development site should be devoted to landscaping. A 10-foot minimum planting strip should be provided continuously along and adjacent to all interior property lines. Interior streets should be planted with rows of trees that will provide a distinctive appearance.

Wooded areas should be preserved as much as possible in order to maintain a sense of natural amenity. Mass plantings of trees and other vegetation in areas between setbacks and property lines should be suggestive of the natural “woodland” landscape. Parking lots should be planted with a low overhead canopy of non-evergreen shade trees.

VI. TRANSPORTATION

GOAL

Goal.—The planning of a safe, efficient and reliable transportation system to meet the needs of the present and future population and consisting of facilities that are compatible with adjacent land uses.

BACKGROUND

The safety, economy, efficiency of a transportation system to move people and goods influences the desirability of a community as a place to live, work, and play. The roadways in Van Buren serve as the primary means for access and circulation in and through the Town. The roadways also provide space for water, electric, gas and telecommunication utilities and for storm drainage facilities. Roads also provide a visual setting for homes and other buildings. The design of roadways helps create an image of the community and defines the character of neighborhoods.

At times the widening of roads and improvement of intersections to meet increased demand, has resulted in the intrusion of automobiles into almost every area. The effects of traffic can become so severe that any potential increase in traffic is seen as a threat to peaceful, safe, and pleasant living.

The transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan is based on the premise that the planning of roads in Van Buren can serve many purposes, which are responsive to the social, environmental, and aesthetic concerns of residents. Through guidance of the most favorable relationships be- tween the land uses in the community and the trafficways that are intended to serve them, traffic impacts of new development are mitigated while the transportation system in Van Buren continues to serve as one of the Town's most important assets.

Historical Development of the Transportation System

The Van Buren transportation system changed over time in response to changes in transportation technologies. The development of the Erie Canal (1825-1923) caused many commercial and industrial changes in land use along its corridor along with residential development in several hamlets. The importance of the Erie Canal began to decline, however, when the Barge Canal opened in 1918. Intercity railroads and the suburban street railways also made an impact on the Town. Today, land use changes are influenced by the intersections of two limited access highways: I-690 and the New York State Thruway.

The network of farm-to-market roads in Van Buren was established by the end of the 18th Century. The roads from the major outline of the transportation network in the Town. While developments may include new roads to serve abutting lots, new roads must tie into the existing network.

The Existing Road Network

Responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of the existing road network is shared between the State, the County, and the Town. The bulk of the system in terms of roadway mileage is the responsibility of the Town's Highway Department.

The Town of Van Buren is served by a regional system (Map 6.2 in Part I). The New York State Thruway runs east-west along the southern part of the Town. Interstate 690 runs diagonally from the southeast to the center of the north end of the Town. The Town is also served by State Routes 31, 48, and 173, and numerous county and town roads (Map 6.4 in Part I).

- NYS 31 (Downer Street west of I-690 and south to Elbridge) runs west from Cicero and Clay to Baldwinsville. In Baldwinsville, NYS 31 turns briefly northwest to join I-690 in Lysander, where it crosses the Seneca River and enters the Town of Van Buren. In Van Buren, NYS 31 quickly leaves I-690 onto Downer Street for a short distance and then turns south. It continues to just north of Memphis when it turns west and enters the Town of Elbridge. In Elbridge, Route 31 again takes a westerly direction through the Village of Jordan and onto Cayuga County and the Villages of Weedsport and Port Byron.

- NYS 48 runs between Oswego and Baldwinsville, as Syracuse St. in the Village of Baldwinsville and continues onto Maple Rd. and then State Fair Blvd. in the Town of Van Buren, ending at Route 690.

- NYS 173 (Warners Road) runs northwest from Onondaga Hill south- west of Syracuse, through Camillus and Van Buren to NYS 31 in Van Buren.

Trends in Highway Travel

In Onondaga County, traffic is increasing faster than population. Low density suburban and rural sprawl, increase in suburban jobs, and decline in public transportation are contributing factors. Roads become crowded and infrastructure costs increase. At the same time, public funding for transportation projects is declining at the federal and state levels. The era of major limited access road building is over. The transportation needs for the future depends on the present framework of roads. Management of the street system including the intensities and patterns of land uses are critical to the long-term safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Transportation and Land Use

The relationship between transportation and land use is significant. In the short run, land use shapes the demand for transportation. As the accessibility of an area improves, changes in land values lead to further changes in land use intensity. Transportation planning and land-use planning should go hand-in-hand. It is not enough to attempt simply to meet demand. Plan- ning efforts should be aimed at influencing the pattern of land use so that the impact of development on the transportation system is accommodated efficiently and safely.

Hierarchy of Movement

The quality of service that a circulation system provides depends on how well each element in the system performs in relation to its primary purpose and in relation to operational characteristics and design. Conflicts, congestion, loss of efficiency, and safety hazards result when transitions between various kinds of public streets or private drives are functionally inappropriate.

Movement through a network of roadways serving both regional and local needs is involved in almost all travel. Thus, the different stages involved in making a trip are reflected in a functionally designed circulation system that integrates different types of streets and highways performing a variety of traffic mobility and property access functions.

Specific streets and highways are planned and designed to perform a particular function within a hierarchy of roadways. The system serves to establish a network integrating commercial and industrial development, community facilities, and residential areas. Also reflected in the system are existing traffic volumes, access needs of adjacent land development, street patterns, and proposed land uses.

Trips flow through elements designed specifically for each stage of a trip. Likewise, each element of a functional hierarchy serves as a collecting or a distributing facility for the next higher (or lower) element of the system. Thus, ideally, residential streets should connect only with other residential streets or with collector streets. The preservation of neighborhoods also should be a basic objective of the classification system.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Objective.—Provision and maintenance of transportation facilities providing both intra-county service and service to all areas of the Town at desired levels of efficiency.

Objective.—Compatibility of transportation facilities with the character of adjacent land uses.
Policy.—Improve intersections, including adding turn lanes, channelization, and revise signalization where needed.

Policy.—Encourage State and County participation in funding transportation projects intended to alleviate traffic congestion.

Policy.—Encourage the State and County to participate in funding transportation projects intended to reduce hazards in areas where accidents occur most frequently.

Policy.—Develop and apply street design criteria to insure vehicular and pedestrian safety.

Policy.—Minimize the number of intersections and curb cuts and encourage development of service roads to reduce the number of individual ac- cess points necessary in new development. Seek State and County support and cooperation in these efforts.

Policy.—Prevent interference with sight distances along transportation routes.

Policy.—Consider the potential for truck traffic through residential areas when evaluating industrial and commercial development proposals.

Policy.—Develop beautification and buffering performance standards for all parking facilities.

Policy.—Require that any freight loading and unloading at new or rehabilitated industrial and commercial developments occur off public streets.

Policy.—Require buffer zones and noise mitigation, where appropriate, to minimize negative impacts of transportation facilities on adjacent areas.

Policy.—Require traffic impact analysis for major development proposals.

Policy.—Encourage developers to participate in financing new capital and facility needs that development generates.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Functional Classification of Roads

Transportation engineers classify existing and proposed roads according to the volume of traffic they are expected to carry, the number of access points that exist, and their role in the overall transportation system. The system of classification allows the assignment of appropriate roles to specific roads and increases the ability to control traffic flows within and around communities. The classes of streets and the average daily traffic (ADT) flows corresponding to them are as follows:

- Limited Access roads accommodate a large volume of traffic between communities at high rates of speed (ADT 20,000+). In order to ensure smooth traffic flow, no direct access is permitted to abutting properties.

- Arterial streets move a large volume of traffic through and around a town and to neighboring communities (ADTs are typically 5,000 to 20,000). Access is a secondary function. The degree to which access is controlled depends on the importance of the street to regional traffic flow.

- Collector streets move a smaller volume of traffic between the various connecting residential, commercial, and rural roads to each other, to community facilities, and to arterial or primary highways (ADT 1,500 to 5,000 with peak-hour traf- fic over ten percent of ADT). Service to abutting land uses is a secondary function.

- Local streets provide direct access to adjacent properties (ADT 100 to 1,500 with peak-hour traffic about ten percent of ADT). They also provide intra-neighborhood traffic. Local roads should not carry through traffic. Moving traffic is a sec- ondary function. Local streets include cul-de-sacs, marginal access streets, and reverse frontage streets.

The relationships between these various classes of streets are illustrated in Figure 6.1. The average daily traffic (ADT) generated by a single-family detached dwelling ranges from eight to ten trips per day. Town houses and apartments usually generate fewer trips.

Roads in Van Buren are classified according to the above system in order that planning guidelines and design standards corresponding to the different classes of roadways are effectively applied. The streets and roads in Van Buren are classified as follows:

Limited Access

New York State Thruway
I-690

Arterial

Route 31 (Downer Street)
Route 48
Van Buren Road

Collector

Brickyard Road
O'Brien Road
Jones Road
Warners Road
Old Route 31
Canton Street

Local

All other roads including:
West Dead Creek Road
East Sorrell Hill Road
West Sorrell Hill Road
Kingdom Road
Perry Road

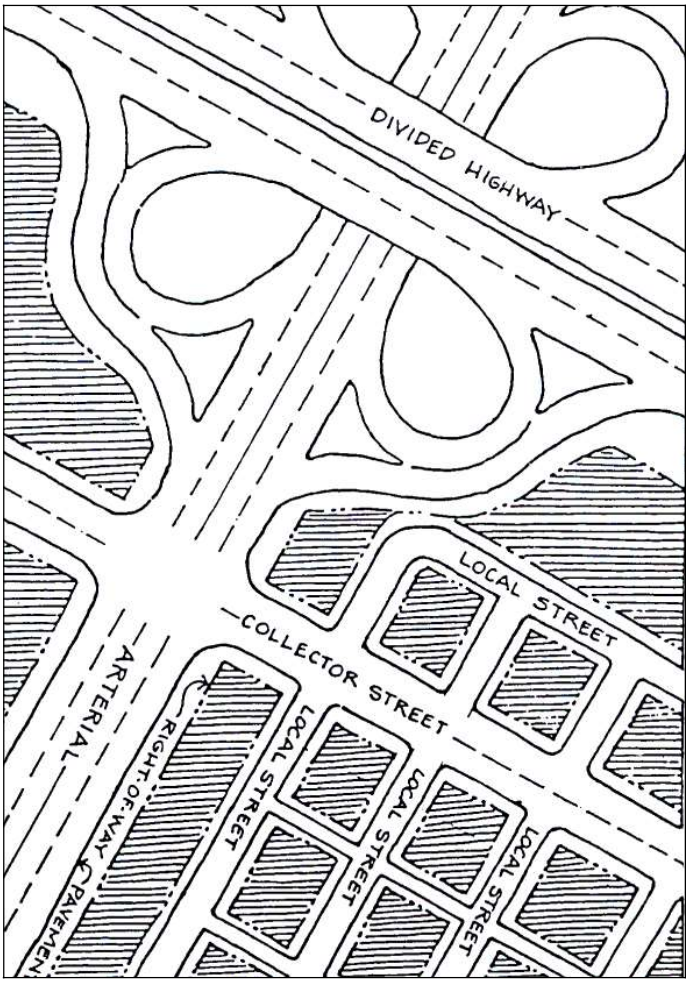


Figure 6.1

PLANNING GUIDELINES

A community's transportation system is designed to promote safety for vehicular and pedestrian traffic, efficiency of service for all users, and economical land use, construction and maintenance. The system also is designed to promote the maintenance or enhancement of features or elements that make the locale an agreeable, pleasing and satisfying place in which to live, work, or recreate. Adoption of the following guidelines and standards will help to establish a circulation system design process in which those considerations and principles are taken into account.

Service to Abutting Properties

Roadway widths, sidewalk placement, and the overall pattern of local streets and intersections should serve to provide adequate vehicular and pedestrian access to all parcels.

Location of New Streets Relative to Existing Collectors or Arterials

Local residential streets should be located only where an adequate amount of space is available to buffer the lots that will front on them from collectors or arterials. Provision also should be made to link new collectors with other connectors serving adjacent developments.

Through Traffic and Excessive Vehicular Travel

The placement of residential streets should allow for quick access to collectors. Travel to and from residences should not involve driving over a series of minor residential streets. Subdivision road layouts and access points to major traffic streets should consider the expected directional dis- tribution of peak-hour volumes.

Comprehensibility of the Street Pattern

The pattern of local streets should be logical and understandable in order to serve the needs of visitors as well as local residents. Avoid laying out streets that wander directionally or turn back on themselves, except in small cluster developments.

Maintaining Efficiency of Major Streets

Control access to local circulation systems, intersection placement, and driveway placement so that when property is subdivided, as few parcels as possible require direct access to any collector or arterial street. When necessary, require developers whose projects abut existing collectors or arterials to grant the additional rights-of-way needed for such streets to meet minimum standards.

Scale and Character of Residential Streets

The perceived scale of a local street should be in keeping with its residential character and the intensity of use it is intended to receive. Overhanging trees, roadside business, and adequate sight distances at crossroads and

driveways can help to reduce the scale and speed of residential streets.

Traffic Generators within Residential Neighborhoods

Uses that have the potential to generate high volumes of traffic in residential areas (schools, shopping facilities, churches, etc.) should be planned to serve as focal points for circulation within and between neighborhoods. Through traffic should be avoided.

Topography, Drainage, and Soils

Create more attractive and economical streets by carefully relating their layout to topography, and by planning alignments to avoid excessive storm runoff and the need for storm sewers.

Road may be oriented perpendicular to a slope as long as the route created is not too steep and conditions allow for water collected in the road's drainage swales to be returned to natural drainage patterns. Road may be oriented parallel or nearly parallel to contours as long as conditions allow for water intercepted from the hill above to be returned to the natural drain- age pattern downhill. Slopes immediately adjacent to the road should not be so extreme that overly steep driveways would need to be constructed in order for lots abutting the road to gain access to it.

Street should be located only in areas where the stability and load-carrying capability of the roadway will not be compromised by the nature of the subgrade soils. Soils subject to slippage should especially be avoided.

Natural Resources

Streets should be located to minimize the effects on natural resources. Alignments should be chosen that stay clear of streams, rivers, wetlands, and important wooded areas.

Street Widths

Requirements for pavement widths, otherwise known as "carway" widths, should be based on the volume and type of expected traffic, on-street parking needs, probable vehicle speeds, and limitations posed by sight distances, climate, terrain, and maintenance requirements. Construction and

maintenance costs are saved by selecting the minimum suitable width.

Many communities specify wider than necessary widths for residential streets in the belief that wider streets are safer and more efficient. Over designed streets create hazards by encouraging higher-speed driving. They also have a negative effect on the image and character of residential areas.

DESIGN REVIEW AND IMPACT ANALYSIS

Traffic impact analysis is a specialized study that estimates the volume of traffic a development is expected to generate and provides quantitative evaluation of the impact of traffic on the surrounding transportation system and development. It also identifies off-site improvements that are needed as a result of the development.

The Transportation Planners Council of the Institute of Transportation Engineers has stated that a complete traffic impact analysis should be conducted whenever a proposed development will generate 100 or more additional trips in the peak hour of the adjacent roadway or the generating development. The Council has also indicated that due to the following reasons, localized safety or capacity deficiencies may necessitate a study even if the 100 trips threshold is not met:

- Current traffic problems exist in the local area (high accident rates, confusing intersection, lack of signalization, etc.).
- Levels of service of the roadway system adjacent to the development may be significantly affected.
- Areas or neighborhoods potentially impacted are especially sensitive.
- Proposed site drives are particularly close to other drives or intersections.
- The ability of the adjacent existing or planned roadway system to handle increased traffic is in doubt, or the feasibility of improving the roadway system to handle increased traffic is in doubt.

- Other specific problems or deficiencies exist that may be affected by the proposed development or affect the ability of the development to be satisfactorily accommodated.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design guidelines were taken from **Town of Van Buren Design Guidelines.**

CIRCULATION

A) PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The complete separation of vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems is usually desirable. In order to achieve reasonable pedestrian access for each residence, three different types of sidewalks or paths can be utilized.

1. Walkways within the residential properties to provide access to parking and refuse disposal areas.
2. Local paths or sidewalks connecting dwelling units and serving intermediate common services such as mailbox clusters.
3. Walkways connecting residences with commercial and community facilities, schools and recreation areas.

Sidewalks along some residential streets are necessary and desirable. The basic test should be expected use and sidewalk relationship as an element of a functional pedestrian system. Sidewalks within a street right-of-way normally should be four feet wide. Common area paths or walks should be wide enough to provide two pedestrian lanes or one pedestrian and one bicycle lane.

Sidewalk street crossings should be located where there is good

sight distance along the road, curb cuts should be provided for wheelchair users as required by ADA standards. Pedestrian crossing signals should be integrated with vehicular traffic signals to take advantage of stopped vehicular traffic on major streets.

B) BICYCLE CIRCULATION

Paths shared by bicycles and pedestrians are appropriate for low-speed or low-volume use, particularly if the path loops through a subdivision but is not used by through traffic. For a shared path, an 8 foot paved area is desirable. Pavement striping can assist in separating bicyclists and pedestrians.

TRAFFIC CALMING TECHNIQUES

Traffic Calming is the utilization of a variety of physical features within the design of streets to slow vehicular traffic. Originally developed as a traffic control technique in Europe, traffic calming has become widely accepted in the United States over the past 5 to 10 years (including use by NYSDOT). Traffic calming works by creating a vehicular environment that is physically and/or perceptually comfortable at reduced speeds, generally less than 30 miles per hour, or even slower through intersections. Benefits of traffic calm- ing include:

- Encouragement of slower, safer motor vehicle speeds.
- Reduction of collision frequency and severity.
- An improvement in actual and perceived safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- A reduction in the need for police enforcement of speed limits.

At present there are no specific recommendations for immediate im-

plementation of traffic calming elements in Van Buren. However, as future plans for development in the more populated areas of the Town are proposed, traffic calming techniques may need to be considered for certain areas. In particular, these may include minor streets and locations of major pedestrian crossings such as school cross walks.

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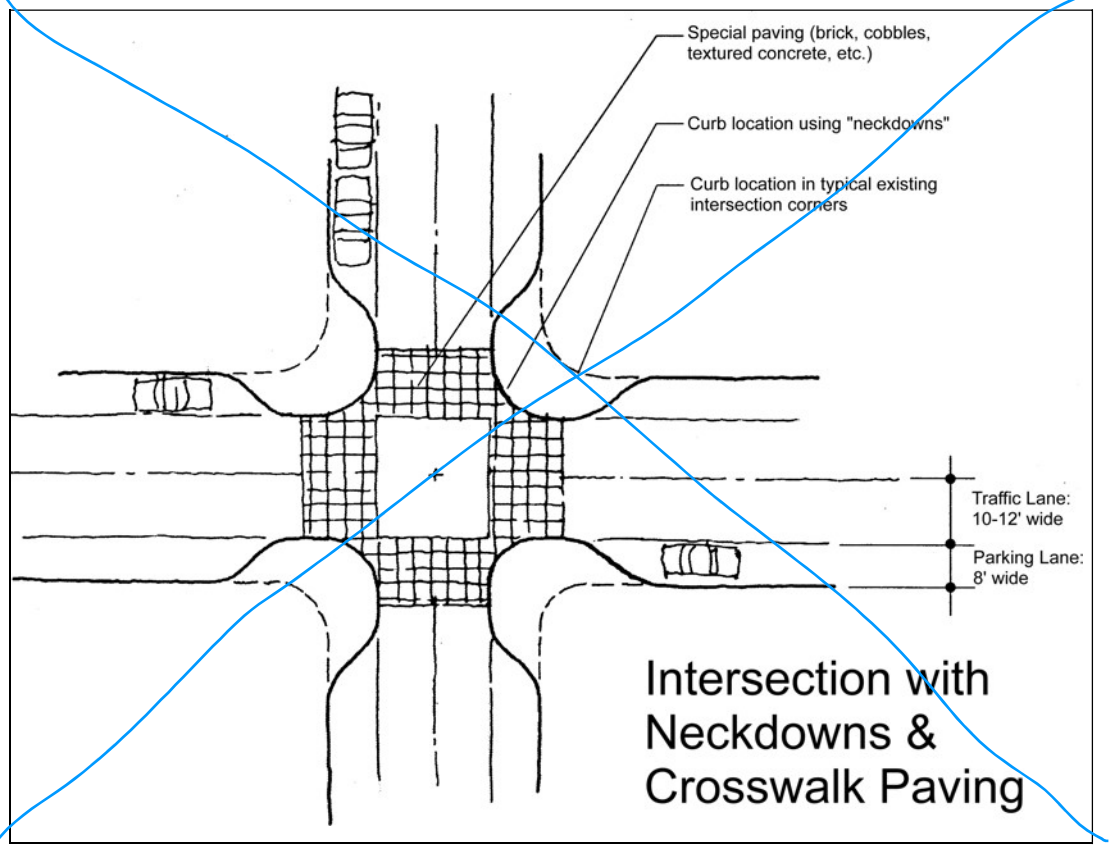

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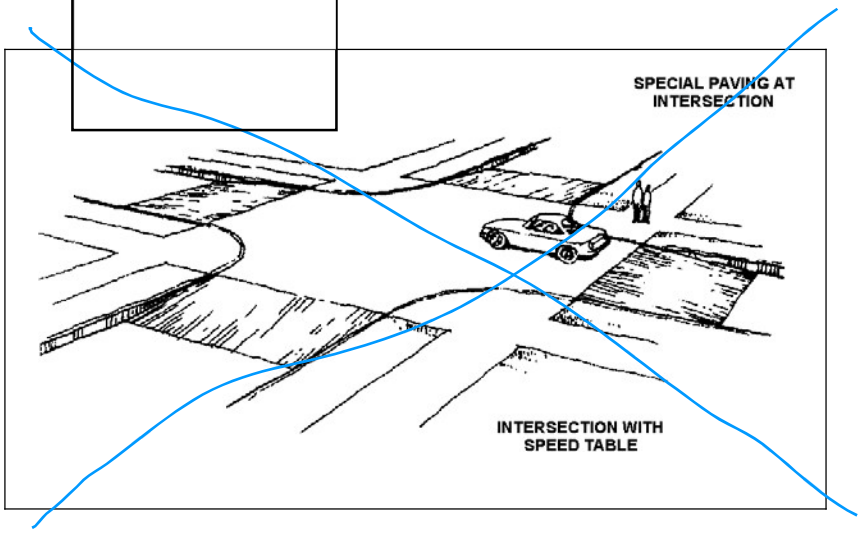
SPECIAL PAVING AT INTERSECTION
INTERSECTION WITH SPEED TABLE

VII. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DIAGRAM

The Comprehensive Plan Diagram for the Town of Van Buren provides geographic reference and a broad spatial context to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and its most significant physical design proposals. The Plan Diagram shows the relationships between the different elements of the Plan and emphasizes the unity of the Town-wide physical design proposals.

For a complete description about the Comprehensive Plan Diagram refer to page 102.

Insert Comprehensive Plan Diagram (Front)

Back of Comprehensive Plan Diagram