

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Comprehensive planning is the process by which data and opinion are synthesized into a vision for the future of a community, laying the framework for a series of recommendations based on good planning principals that will map a procedure for achieving the vision. In other words, a vision leads to recommendations that lead to an implementation program. Success is ultimately measured by the ability to implement the recommendations, therefore, it is important that the Comprehensive Plan identifies achievable projects/tasks. Since it is the residents and business owners of the community that will pay for or undertake projects/tasks their support is necessary. There is no better way to gain this support than to involve as many people as possible in the formulation of the plan. This can be a tremendous effort and the Town of Guilderland was equal to the task.

A. Community Outreach

The basic vision and guiding principle for the Town's Comprehensive Plan was to create a community-based plan that would provide the public with the greatest opportunity to assist in its preparation. This was accomplished through a Community Outreach Program. Different forums were established to provide different opportunities for input. At the grassroots level was Study Circles. This program provided residents to chat about their Town and how it should look in 20 years. Although facilitated (by trained residents) the process was much more relaxed. Other components of the process included a written survey sent to 12,000 homes (approximately 3,000 returned), a phone survey (sample group of 100 people), Focus Group Workshops, Neighborhood Meetings, Community Work Sessions, Advisory Board Meetings, and Fact-Finding Outreach. Focus Group Workshops concentrated on specific issues that included economic development and housing; natural resources, open space and agricultural land preservation; transportation and infrastructure; and recreation and cultural resources. Community Work Sessions were conducted as an opportunity for the public to review and comment on each step in the planning process. Neighborhood Meetings were conducted to get the planning process out of the central location and into the various communities in the Town. Fact-finding Outreach was also an attempt to actively seek information from the public outside of a public forum. This program involved conducting interviews with key organizations, agencies and individuals that can have a significant impact on the community and may provide unique insight. Most all the meetings occurring at the Town Hall were broadcast through cable. A web site was created and the media was used to the greatest extent practicable.

B. Inventory & Analysis

An Inventory & Analysis of the Town's resources was conducted concurrently with the Community Outreach Program. Both are information gathering process that are essential to develop the framework for the Plan Recommendations. Much of the basic information for the inventory was obtained from the Town's database, prepared by the Planning Department. This information was supplemented by further data collection and analysis.

As a component of the Comprehensive Plan, the Inventory & Analysis is an information resource for the Town, providing valuable data on historic and cultural resources, population and housing, land use and zoning, agricultural resources, physiography and topography, water resources, ecology, community services, transportation, utilities, recreational resources, economics, and fiscal resources.

C. Community Vision, Goals and Objectives

The Community Outreach Program, supplemented by an Inventory & Analysis of the Town's resources, provided the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board and its consultants with the information and direction necessary to create a vision statement and prepare goals and objectives that would guide the preparation of the Plan. The Town's vision of the future is perhaps the single most important guiding principle used throughout the planning process. The vision states:

The Town of Guilderland envisions itself as a distinctive suburban and rural community within the Capital District. It is a desirable and attainable place for families and individuals of all ages to live and work - with a large assortment of local and regional opportunities for high-quality employment, education, recreation, and cultural activity. These opportunities are easily accessed within the town and throughout the region by a varied and efficient transportation system that emphasizes mobility and safety for all residents. Guilderland's settlement patterns are focused around attractive and vibrant neighborhoods, and are based on a recognition of, and shared sense of responsibility for the town's natural, agricultural, open space, and scenic resources and the value of these resources to the current and future health, culture, and economy of the community. It is a community that looks to the future in the belief that through continued community dialogue and action it can manage and shape change for the better.

The associated goals and objectives include the following topics: growth management; transportation and mobility; public utilities; business, employment, and fiscal resources; housing; town character; agriculture, natural resources, and open space; cultural resources; recreation; governance; and implementation.

D. Plan Recommendations

The Town of Guilderland is both a suburban and rural community whose development issues are a function of its proximity to the City of Albany, excellent access to interstate highways, and its residential qualities. The purpose of the following recommendations are to provide potential solutions to resolve the issues of current and future development based on the Town's vision for the future. Some issues are so complex that several steps may be required to ultimately solve the problem, the first of which may be to identify the problem in greater detail through additional study. In order to focus discussion, recommendations are grouped into three general topics or "new plan elements" that include Land Use, Natural Resources, and Transportation. The section "Growth Management Tools" is provided as an introduction to planning concepts and terms used elsewhere in the document. The final section of this chapter summarizes the Plan Recommendations on a geographic basis defined as planning areas.

D.1 Growth Management Tools

Growth management is a process by which a community develops the methods and means (tools) to control the type, location and amount of land development (growth) in the community. The most common growth management tool is zoning. This is a regulatory tool. Regulatory tools are essential to ensure orderly growth, however, other measures that rely on incentives and voluntary involvement by landowners are also available and can be very effective. Some of these tools include term easements and tax abatements, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, and development guidelines in conjunction with community supported plans. In some instances the Plan Recommendations identify specific growth management tools but the purpose of this section is to provide the Town with a comprehensive list of growth management tools for consideration in implementing future plans, such as the Rural Guilderland Plan recommended under Rural Guilderland.

D.2 Land Use

Residential Neighborhoods - The Town is comprised of numerous residential neighborhoods with many attributes that make the Town of Guilderland a desirable place to live. Growth in the Town and in neighboring communities has resulted in traffic impacts and a growing lack of neighborhood identity as neighborhoods expand outward. Primary recommendations include:

- Reinvestment in older neighborhoods.
- Use of buffers to reduce land use conflicts.
- Improvement of the pedestrian environment and traffic calming measures.
- Access management along Route 20.
- Neighborhood meetings to discuss the need for the Neighborhood Master Plan.

Concentration of higher density development within densely populated areas such as the Westmere/McKownville area, McCormack Corners and Fort Hunter.

Provision of neighborhood parks.

Cultural Resources – Numerous historic structures and locally important buildings have been identified in the Town. Preservation of these structures is important not only for their architectural significance but also to preserve our understanding and connection with the past. Primary recommendations include:

Institute an historic preservation policy to prevent the loss of historic structures and sites deemed important by the Town.

Consider coordination with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) for all projects on or in the vicinity of historic structures or sites and prehistoric resources. The need for such coordination typically occurs when there is State or federal involvement in a project. To protect the potential impact to cultural resources by projects that do not have federal or State involvement, the Town might consider making NYSOPRHP coordination a requirement of local approval for projects subject to site plan review.

Establish an historic resources education program in the Town. Conduct tours of historic properties and highlight their importance.

Economic Development – Current commercial development in the Town is concentrated along Route 20, primarily in the Westmere and McKownville areas. This development is very successful and is a significant contributor to the Town's tax revenue. Industrial development is primarily located in the Northeast Industrial Park that has significant room for future development. With improvements to traffic flow and the pedestrian environment, further development and redevelopment is suitable within the existing commercial areas of the Town and would benefit these areas. Suitable areas for industrial development and business parks are limited by access to the interstates. Prime areas have been consumed by commercial, office and residential uses. Continued development of the Northeast Industrial Park appears appropriate but not without an environmental analysis to address major issues such as truck traffic. Primary recommendations include:

Identify potential sites for industrial/business park development and consider the preparation of a GEIS for the sites to identify development potential and cumulative impacts in an effort to attract development but at the same time protecting the environment and community character.

Consider the use of incentive zoning (bonuses) and financial incentives to help facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment of vacant/underutilized frontage properties along Route 20.

Conduct a design charrette for the Westmere Commercial Area. Please refer to the Glossary for a more detailed description of the term charrette.

Prepare an access management plan for Route 20 to develop guidelines for shared access, shared parking, and the development of access roads.

Buffer residential areas from non-residential development but provide linkages that would improve the pedestrian environment.

Prepare a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the Northeast Industrial Park that will address buildout and associated impacts.

Create development guidelines that would apply to both business parks and other industrial development.

Recreation – The Town contains numerous recreational opportunities including ball fields, soccer fields, an outdoor swimming pool, golf courses, trails, picnic areas, and unique natural areas. Public open space appears to be sufficient in the Town for the current population. There does appear to be a deficiency in small neighborhood parks to serve densely developed residential areas such as Westmere and McKownville. Primary recommendations include the following:

Undertake a recreational needs study.

Provide additional neighborhood and mini parks.

Establish a recreation and open space acquisition fund.

Identify growth management tools that will assist in the preservation of open space for recreational purposes.

Tower Management - With the growing popularity of cellular phones and other wireless communication options the number of towers placed on the landscape has increased significantly. The Town of Guilderland has and will continue to face pressure for the development of various types of communications facilities. Some facility locations are/will be tolerable but others, such as along the Helderberg Escarpment, may cause significant impacts on the Town's visual resources. A proactive approach to the siting of communication facilities is recommended. Steps to achieve this include the following:

Prepare an inventory of potential suitable sites for the location of wireless communication facilities.

Review the current case law regarding the location of communications facilities and the rights of municipalities as dictated by judicial review.

Potential Impacts of the Plan – The Plan recommendations focus on controlling growth to control the impacts on the environment, utilities, community services and the tax base. Infill development and redevelopment are the most environmentally sound and energy efficient means of growth. Recommendations for future economic development in undeveloped areas of Town are based on the assumption that further study is necessary to evaluate the issues associated with providing utilities and the impact on existing neighborhoods.

D.3 Natural Resources

Guidance for the development of the Natural Resources plan component came from the basic premise that we are an integral part of the environment, therefore a healthy environment means a healthy community. The

Comprehensive Plan provides the opportunity to recognize major resources of importance; the Town has several and are discussed in the sections to follow:

Watervliet Reservoir Watershed & Groundwater Supply – The Watervliet Reservoir is an important municipal water supply source for the Town. The reservoir is owned by the City of Watervliet so the only water supply controlled by the Town is the groundwater beneath. Primary recommendations include the following:

- Preserve critical lands adjacent to the reservoir.
- Develop a partnership with the City of Watervliet for the future use and development of the reservoir and its watershed.
- Identify and protect potential groundwater sources.

Drainage Corridors – Natural drainage corridors are an essential component of the Town. They convey stormwater, providing natural detention/storage through floodplains that prevent impacts to property and lives. They contain important wetland ecology and provide essential linkages between different habitat that promotes species diversity. Primary recommendations include the following:

- Buffer all stream corridors from development.
- Require stormwater management and erosion control plans for all new development.
- Explore opportunities for recreational uses along certain stream corridors.
- Prevent encroachment into the 100-year floodplain.
- Preserve wetland areas.
- Support federal and State regulations for the preservation of wetlands.

Pine Bush – This ecological community is unique in New York and contains many rare species of plants and animals, including the federally listed endangered Karner blue butterfly. Plans for the creation and management of an ecologically sustainable Pine Bush have been developed by the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission. Primary recommendations include the following:

- Cooperate with the Pine Bush Preserve Commission.
- Consider the use of Growth Management techniques such as the Transfer of Development Rights, as a method of preserving important Pine Bush habitat or open space.
- The Town should continue to invest in the voluntary acquisition of the few remaining parcels located within the Pine Bush Primary Protection Area.
- Encourage continued agricultural operations within the Pine Bush.

Helderberg Escarpment – The escarpment is a result of uplift and subsequent erosion of the coastal plain of an ancient sea that has resulted in high cliffs capped by hard, less erodible limestone. It is a geological and paleontological haven. It is also an important and impressive visual feature. Primary recommendations include the following:

Prevent the development of the Escarpment slopes and ridgeline.
Protect the views both to and from the Escarpment by identifying the areas of visual importance and requiring visual impact analysis.

Potential Impacts of the Plan – In most cases the preservation of open space and significant environmental features are beneficial impacts. The Plan calls for recognition and preservation of the Pine Bush, Helderberg Escarpment, stream corridors and associated features, the Town's water supply sources, and open space in general.

D.4 Transportation

Transportation corridors in the Town are both an amenity and a source of continued anxiety. Few communities have the access to both north-south and east-west interstates. It is apparent that the designation of Guilderland as a desirable place to live is as much a function of access as it is the residential character. However, increased development in the Town has created significant traffic congestion in selected segments of the highway system.

Highways & Thruway – Since the Thruway limits access, traffic must utilize specific routes in order to gain access, creating congestion and limiting solutions. There are no easy, long-term solutions to the traffic problems along Route 20, Route 155 and Route 146. Widening and the development of new roads are always an option, but a costly one. Additionally, such measures typically only have short-term impacts, especially if development is not controlled. Primary recommendations include the following:

Establish a coordinated signal system along Route 20.

Conduct access management studies for developed and developing portions of highway corridors.

Improve the pedestrian environment by providing sidewalks, safe means of crossing busy roads and linkages between neighborhoods and points of destination.

Become an active partner with CDTC to begin planning for local and regional traffic solutions.

Emphasize public transportation by making access to bus stops more convenient to the pedestrian.

Prepare a streetscape beautification plan for the various corridor segments identified in the Route 20 Corridor Study that includes a continuous sidewalk system on both sides of Route 20.

Major Town and County Collector Roads – Collector roads are a critical feature of the Town's transportation network. Since their primary function is to convey traffic, development along these roads is generally inconsistent with this function. Unfortunately, development has occurred along the collectors within the developed portions of the Town to the extent that they are perceived as residential streets. Primary recommendations include the following:

The function of collector roads in the Town should be preserved by limiting development along these roads.

Prepare a benefit-cost analysis to determine the feasibility of reconnecting roads through bridge reconstruction. These bridges are not owned by the Town and any such analysis should involve the owner.

Consider the construction of sidewalks and/or trails along roads developed with residences.

Continue to consider potential bypass options that include new road segments that would bypass portions of West Lydius Street, Veeder Road, and Schoolhouse Road.

Identify proposed through roads on the project plans for new development and clearly disclose this information to those who will be impacted by the future roadway extension.

Rail Corridors – The Town contains two rail corridors: CSX (formerly Conrail) and the old D&H line through Altamont. Rail provides the Town with opportunities. Even abandoned rail corridors are valuable for their recreation potential. Primary recommendations include the following:

Implement an incentive program for rail based business.

Work with region to develop a regional passenger rail transportation system.

Guilderland Pathways – Consideration should be given to the development of a trail system that provides linkages to important destinations in the Town. Trails are a welcomed recreational resource for a community. The most successful trails are those that are appropriately located to promote frequent use and high volume. The primary recommendation for trail development in the Town is to develop a detailed “Guilderland Pathways” Master Plan that includes primary and secondary corridors, design standards, and a financing program.

Potential Impacts of the Plan – The Plan recommends addressing traffic issues through land use measures, growth management, access management, pedestrian linkages, and promotion of public transportation. These are typically beneficial impacts or mitigation measures. Access management may involve the introduction of new parallel access roads and alleys that will need to be designed so as not to significantly impact residential neighborhoods.

D.5 Plan Recommendations By Planning Area

To facilitate discussion on a geographic basis, the Plan Recommendations are summarized by planning area in Chapter IV.E. Planning areas are conceptual geographic boundaries placed on areas of the Town with distinct or unique characteristics. They include the various residential neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, the Hunger Kill/Pine Bush area, the Village of Altamont, and the less developed area of the Town referred to a Rural Guilderland.

Neighborhoods – The residential neighborhoods and their associated business, service and governmental components were divided into three Planning Areas: McKownville, Westmere, and Fort Hunter/McCormack Corners. The recommendations for each of these areas are similar but with some important distinctions.

McKownville is the oldest of the neighborhoods and is different in character than the other areas. Primary recommendations include:

Reinvestment in this area is recommended to renew infrastructure and deal with drainage issues.

Buffer existing residential areas from commercial and other intensive non-residential uses but provide pedestrian linkages to the commercial areas and improve the pedestrian environment along major roads.

Conduct neighborhood meetings in anticipation of a future neighborhood master plan.

Westmere is a much larger neighborhood or planning area and is highly influenced by Crossgates Mall and other commercial development along Route 20. Primary recommendation for this area include:

Dialogue with residents, mall owners and other businesses in this area, and regional planning agencies is recommended to identify potential solutions to issues of traffic, pedestrian environment, and land use. This should occur in anticipation of preparing a future neighborhood master plan. A design charrette should also be considered as a means of beginning to address land use, pedestrian and traffic issues in the Crossgates Mall area.

Prepare access management and streetscape plans for the Route 20 corridor.

Investigate opportunity for a park.

The Fort Hunter/McCormack Corners area has several important influences including the Pine Bush and the Route 20 and Route 146 corridors. Development patterns have blurred the once distinct boundaries between these two areas. Connectivity between neighborhoods, particularly for pedestrians is an important issue. Primary recommendations for this area include:

Provide pedestrian linkages to the commercial areas.

Conduct neighborhood meetings in anticipation of a future neighborhood master plan.

Neighborhood Master Plans are recommended for each of the neighborhoods in the long term. However, to begin the process, dialogue should occur between the Town and the neighborhoods to define opportunities, issues and potential solutions. A more grass roots approach to this might occur through the example provided Study Circles in the Community Outreach component of the Comprehensive Plan.

Neighborhood Centers – Guilderland and Guilderland Center are two areas of the Town that exhibit characteristics and issues that are unique to their neighborhoods. Guilderland is a developing area with community service facilities that serve both neighborhood and Town-wide needs. Primary recommendations for this area include:

Create a Neighborhood Master Plan.

Preserve major natural features including the Pine Bush and the Hunger Kill corridor.

Create a pedestrian friendly environment.

Guilderland Center is an older Neighborhood Center whose character has been impacted by surrounding development and increased traffic, especially truck traffic. Despite the impacts, it retains its sense of place. Primary recommendations include:

Create a Neighborhood Master Plan.

Divert truck traffic away from the main street and use traffic calming methods to reduce vehicle speeds.

Significantly improve the pedestrian environment.

Village of Altamont – No recommendations have been made for land use within the Village since it is its own municipal entity. However, land use decisions within the Town may impact the character of the Village. To address these concerns, the following recommendations are made:

Cooperatively develop land use policies for lands adjacent to the Village.

Reinforce the Village as the residential and commercial anchor of Rural Guilderland.

Hunger Kill Planning Area - This area contains the Hunger Kill and a large portion of its watershed; the Pine Bush, a unique ecosystem with State-wide importance; and various residential and commercial developments. The Pine Bush offers a significant open space/passive recreational component to the Town but also induces controversy over efforts to protect it from further development. The planning area is designated on Figure 17 and is the same area designated on the Comprehensive Plan map (Figure 16). Primary recommendations for this area include:

coordinate project review procedures with the Pine Bush Preserve Commission, of which the Town is a member.

Provide voluntary incentives to protect the few remaining parcels in the Pine Bush Primary Protection Area.

Buffer all stream corridors from development to protect the integrity of the stream corridor to maintain water quality, promote wildlife corridors, provide potential recreational opportunity, and protect the health, safety and welfare of the community from slope failure potential.

Direct impacts to stream corridors, wetlands, floodplains and other water resources should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable.

Require the preparation of an erosion control plan for new projects.

Explore potential access opportunities to stream corridors at appropriate locations for recreational uses.

Encourage preservation of wetland areas through conservation easements and other methods of protection.

Require wetland delineations pursuant to State and federal regulations, as appropriate.

Require any conditions of permits issued by COE or NYSDEC, including conditions of Nationwide Permits, as applicable, prior to site plan or subdivision approval.

Rural Guilderland – The Town of Guilderland's rural community consists of agricultural uses, large residential lots, vacant lands, the Watervliet Reservoir, and significant environmental resources. Agriculture is a decreasing but still important land use in the Town from both a fiscal and Town character perspective. Primary recommendations include:

Prepare a plan for Rural Guilderland (referred to as the Rural Guilderland Plan) that addresses suitable locations for potential future concentrated development. This should include a farmland & open space conservation plan, dialogue with the City of Watervliet regarding the protection of the Watervliet Reservoir and an eventual plan for the reservoir watershed, an economic development initiative that addresses key issues to properly locate businesses, and an analysis of the feasibility of providing water and sewer either from Town extensions or from adjacent communities.

Modify zoning and subdivision regulations and review procedures to increase the consideration of open space, natural resources, and agricultural operations in the development review process by including a conservation development process.

- Conduct a study to identify areas of Rural Guilderland where there is a demonstrated need for water due to the lack of water or health related impacts of poor groundwater quality. Potential solutions should be identified.

Consideration for the future extension of water and/or sewer service beyond the current service boundaries to address water quality issues or to provide for planned development should only occur following a study of the appropriate land uses for Rural Guilderland, as recommended in the Rural Guilderland Plan.

If opportunities to receive municipal water or sewer service from other municipalities become available in the future, the Town should pursue the option in accordance with the Rural Guilderland Plan or independently through a GEIS or other planning study.

Opportunities for emergency intermunicipal connections with the towns of Rotterdam and Princetown and the village of Altamont should be explored. The Town should also consider the use of Wastewater Management Districts for new development. The purpose of the Wastewater

Management District is to provide local control over septic systems to ensure their proper function through periodic inspections and required improvements as necessary.

Identify the type and character of small business enterprises that would contribute to the tax base yet maintain the rural character. Examples of such businesses include: country inns, rural retreats and conference centers, home business, and similar facilities that would utilize existing structures or possibly construct structures similar to traditional farm houses and barns.

Establish performance standards and design guidelines for rural businesses that maintain the character of the area.

Adopt a local Right-to-Farm Law.

Promote and celebrate the agricultural community through fairs, educational opportunities, and advertising.

Provide flexibility in zoning regulations to allow for certain processing operations at the farms to achieve "value added" products.

Encourage farmers to consider "agritainment" options to their normal operations. Typically, this means adding a dimension to the farm, such as a petting zoo, providing hay rides, holding craft fairs, and similar activities that are consistent with the rural experience and which attract people.

Begin dialogue with the City of Watervliet to cooperatively develop measures to protect the water quality of the Watervliet Reservoir. This will be an important component of the Rural Guilderland Plan.

E. Other Plan Components

The Plan also addresses alternatives and an action plan. The alternatives were developed based on different land use scenarios evaluated or considered during the comprehensive planning process. The No Action alternative is also considered which would continue development in the Town under the current land use guidance and regulations.

The Action Plan identifies the key tasks that lay ahead of the Town in order to implement the Plan recommendations. These tasks are then prioritized based on the urgency of the issue and the feasibility of carrying the task out.

Chapter I: Introduction

Since its pioneer days in the 1700s and its formal beginning in 1803, the Town of Guilderland has been an historic and unique locale. Mohican and Mohawk Indians used the clear waters of the Normanskill to fish and to barter downstream at the Dutch Trading Post near Fort Orange. By 1740, early Palatine and Dutch pioneers traveled the Schoharie Plank Road by stage coach and wagons on their westward journey and settled at the foot of the magnificent Helderberg Escarpment to build their homes because of the rich soil, abundance of timber and water power from the numerous streams.

Eighteenth Century Guilderland was a rural community. As the nineteenth Century turned, agriculture replaced forests, the Great Western Turnpike and railroads cut through the countryside bringing growth in small hamlets with post offices, stores, churches and schools as the Town flourished with the increased population.

Today, the western end of Guilderland is still mostly rural and residential with many houses of architectural significance remaining. The eastern end of Town has developed into a densely residential and commercial suburb with shopping mass, apartment complexes, business centers and a State University. Each century has wrought changes in the character of the community.

The diversity of today's land use in the Town is a great change from the earlier days of the stagecoach and wagon. Agricultural uses have diminished in favor of residential development. The proximity of the Town to Albany, Schenectady, and Troy and the advent of the automobile and associated highway construction have increased the popularity of the Town as a "good place to live." As a result, land values have risen and pressure increases to suburbanize the community; impacts on existing neighborhoods increase as surrounding lands develop, bringing more traffic, runoff, noise, and pollutants; infrastructure is having a difficult time keeping pace with demands; and finally and perhaps most importantly, the costs of providing community services, including public education, utilities, road maintenance and other infrastructure cannot be easily absorbed by the current tax rates and fees.

Fortunately, the past and current land use trends have not irreversibly impacted the Town's history, resources and character. A large portion of rural Guilderland remains. It is a high valued residential community. Most of the major stream corridors are still intact. Parklands have been designated and developed. Although threatened by development from all its surrounding communities, the Pine Bush remains an important and unique ecological feature. Many of the Town's historic structures remain and the views from the Helderberg Escarpment are still spectacular. But, most importantly, people still

care about their community and have been willing to devote their time and resources to identify the issues and develop a vision for the future.

The process by which a community establishes the programs and actions that lead to their desired vision is called comprehensive planning. As defined by Town Law (§ 272-a.2(a)), a comprehensive plan is the:

...materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town located outside the limits of any incorporated village or city.

Comprehensive planning is the first step in an on-going process. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to inventory the Town's resources based on existing data and to identify what additional data might be required to implement certain aspects of the plan; develop the framework to address future land use and other community issues through community outreach and formulation of a vision and goals and objectives; development of a series of recommendations and policies consistent with the goals and objectives; and to identify the steps necessary to implement the plan recommendations. Quite simply, the comprehensive plan is the information organizer. Although specific recommendations are provided that can be immediately translated into action, other means of achieving certain goals will require further detailed study.

A. Legislative Authority

The authority to conduct comprehensive planning and to adopt a comprehensive plan is granted to towns by the State Legislature. Adoption of a comprehensive plan by a town board requires that all town land use be in accordance with the plan. Furthermore, other governmental agencies must take the plan into consideration whenever their capital projects occur on land included in the town comprehensive plan. This provides a town with the appropriate guidance to review future projects and provides the essential background information and justification for amending or creating a zoning ordinance. The plan also provides developers/project sponsors with up-front guidance on where and how their projects can be developed, facilitating the site plan review process and providing early detection of potential land use conflicts.

B. SEQRA Compliance

In accordance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and Town Law (§ 272-a), adoption of the Town of Guilderland Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board is a Type 1 action subject to review under 6 NYCRR 617. Pursuant to Town Law § 272-a.8, this Plan also serves as a generic environmental impact statement.

The components of a generic environmental impact statement (GEIS), as outlined in 6 NYCRR 617.10 are included in this Plan as follows:

- Executive Summary= *Executive Summary* (following Acknowledgements)
- Project Description = *Introduction, Community Vision, Plan Recommendations*
- Environmental Setting = *Inventory & Analysis*
- Environmental Impact = *Plan Recommendations* (Potential Adverse & Beneficial Future Growth Impacts)
- Mitigation = *Plan Recommendations*
- Unavoidable Adverse Impacts = *Plan Recommendations*
- Alternatives = *alternatives*
- Recommendations/Thresholds = *Plan Recommendations*
- Growth-Inducing Aspects = *Plan Recommendations*

The evaluation of impacts and mitigation of a comprehensive plan is somewhat different than the typical environmental impact statement. This is because the plan and implementation recommendations of a comprehensive plan are typically beneficial or mitigative actions in response to the problems identified through the inventory and analysis and community outreach programs. This was very much the case for the Town of Guilderland. The primary issue facing Guilderland is the fact that the Town is zoned for significant growth and development in a manner that would promote sprawl and would have a detrimental impact on the character of the community, including the character and uniqueness of residential neighborhoods and the character and success of commercial development and other business enterprises. Uncontrolled growth would significantly impact the health of the natural environment, the ability to provide sufficient infrastructure, and the ability to pay for it all without creating a significant tax burden.

Fortunately, none of these impacts are unavoidable. Mitigation in the form of growth management and good planning, including the many programs and studies recommended in the Action Plan, will help the Town to direct growth in a beneficial manner that promotes the health, safety and welfare of the community and retains the qualities that residents have identified as important. Growth will occur in the Town that will result in unavoidable impacts to the environment. This can be better evaluated on a site specific level or as part of an area-wide GEIS. However, from a planning perspective, the recommendations presented herein and those resulting from further study are, in actuality, mitigation for the impacts caused by past and anticipated future development patterns. It should be noted that the Town's zoning, subdivision regulations, site plan review process, and dedicated staff and volunteers form a great base to work from and modify. Without these existing tools, the Town would have many more problems and would not be considered a desirable place to live and work as it is currently referred to by residents and the business community.

Much of the Plan Recommendations and the Action Plan tasks deal with the issue of growth inducing aspects. A significant example is the potential to provide municipal water and sewer to areas without utilities. Many people in Rural Guilderland have identified a need for water based on poor groundwater conditions. Supply of this service has many implications relative to growth and cost, requiring documentation and appropriate planning.

In an effort to respond to the many excellent comments received during the Draft GEIS comment period, a Final GEIS was prepared. The structure of the Final GEIS was not conducive for incorporation directly into the Comprehensive Plan; therefore, a separate document was prepared (*Town of Guilderland Comprehensive Plan 2000 Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement*, July 17, 2001, Clough Harbour & Associates LLP). Many comments were addressed by highlighting the changes to the text made in response to comments. All changes are reflected in this Final Comprehensive Plan.

Each of the comments made during the SEQR comment period were discussed during two televised meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee (appointed by the Town Board to complete revisions to the Plan). All written correspondence received during the comment period as well as the public hearing record were provided for the Committee's review and discussion. This included comments on the Draft Plan made by members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board and the Revision Task Force during a televised joint meeting. A table was created that identifies the Draft Plan recommendations for the major issues, comments raised during the joint meeting, and the recommended approach for addressing the comments. This table is provided in Appendix C of the Final GEIS.

A Statement of SEQR Findings has also been issued by the Guilderland Town Board and is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

Since the Comprehensive Plan is a programmatic document, site specific actions are not evaluated in the Draft and Final GEIS nor are there any significant changes in land use recommended at this time. However, the Plan/GEIS does evaluate the types of programs and studies necessary to provide key information.

The Town will need to evaluate each action relative to its significance. Many of the recommended future actions may involve significant land use changes that were not specifically addressed in the GEIS for the Comprehensive Plan. This, in itself would warrant further SEQR action in the form of a full Environmental Assessment Form and, if necessary, an EIS. The adoption of a Rural Guilderland Plan and all its associated components recommended in Chapter IV is an example of an action that would likely warrant further SEQR review.

Not all of the recommendations and action plan tasks are subject to SEQR. For example, initiation of dialogue with other municipalities and agencies, the study of water quality issues in Rural Guilderland, and other similar planning or

engineering studies that do not require formal action (i.e., adoption) by a board are specifically exempt from SEQR.

To clarify the process of identifying those actions that may require further SEQR review it is recommended that all actions by the Town Board, Planning Board, or Zoning Board relative to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan that would involve the adoption of land use plans and policies or modifications of zoning and subdivision regulations and local laws should be reviewed pursuant to SEQR through the preparation of a full Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). If, upon review of the EAF, it is determined that the action will have no significant impact, a Negative Declaration can be issued, thus ending the SEQR process. If it appears that significant impact may occur and the impact and associated mitigation cannot be sufficiently addressed in parts 2 and 3 of the EAF, an EIS should be prepared. The EIS should take full advantage of the documentation already provided in the GEIS for this Comprehensive Plan.

Evaluation of the significance of any action relative to SEQR should include a thorough evaluation by the Lead Agency (in most cases the Town Board for the adoption of plans and other local regulatory amendments) of the consistency of the proposed land use plan or legislation with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter II: Inventory and Analysis

The Town of Guilderland has many resources that should be utilized, enjoyed and protected to ensure their health and availability to future generations. For each of the topic areas that follow there is a description of the resource and discussion of that resource's opportunities and constraints relative to land use.

This section of the Plan also serves as the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) discussion of the environmental setting in accordance with SEQR regulations (6 NYCRR 617.9 (b)(5)(ii)).

A. Historic and Cultural Resources

The Town of Guilderland was once the primary pathway to Schoharie, the path was known as The Old Schoharie Road. The first settlers arriving in the Guilderland area were of Dutch descent who migrated from Albany. These settlers leased lands along the Normans Kill from the Van Rensselaer's in about the year 1700. Circa 1740, German settlers established their homes at the foot of the Helderbergs. Palantine refugees from Germany settled in the region after a three-year journey from the Rhine Valley.

The Town of Guilderland was formed in 1803, and was named for the Province of Gelderland in Holland. In 1959 Guilderland adopted the coat of arms of the Province. It is the only town in the United States bearing the name of Guilderland.

Roads were constructed in the Town of Guilderland and in 1799 the Great Western Turnpike was constructed. This toll road brought increased prosperity and population to Guilderland. After the construction of the Turnpike, Guilderland became the recipient of many plank toll roads.

Early industry found the Town of Guilderland to be an excellent geographic location within Albany County. A glass works industry, founded about 1785, was one of the first businesses in the hamlet of Guilderland. Located in the area of Western Avenue, Foundry and Willow, the factory produced the prized commodity of window glass, snuff bottles, and pocket bottles. The site was laid out into streets and building lots where 56 houses were erected for the workers. The new business encouraged the establishment of a church and a schoolhouse. Later, around 1795, a hat factory and foundry were established in Guilderland in French's Hollow and flourished.

There are many historic sties, such as the Revolutionary Battle of the Normanskill as well as numerous structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They include:

- Albany Glassworks Site
- Altamont Historic District
- Apple Tavern
- Aumic House
- Chapel House
- Coppola House
- Crouse, Federick, House
- Crouse, Jacob, Inn
- Crouse, John and Henry, Farm Complex
- Freeman House
- Fuller's Tavern
- Gardner House
- Gillespie House
- Guilderland Cemetery Vault
- Hamilton Union Church Rectory
- Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church
- Helderberg Reformed Dutch Church
- Hilton, Adam, House
- Houck Farmhouse
- Knower House
- McNiven Farm Complex
- Mynderse-Frederick House
- Pangburn, Stephen, House
- Parker, Charles, House
- Prospect Hill Cemetery Building
- Rose Hill
- Schoolcraft, John, House
- Schoolhouse #6
- Sharp Brothers House
- Sharp Farmhouse
- St. Mark's Lutheran Church
- Van Patten Barn Complex
- Vanderpool Farm Complex
- Veeder Farmhouse #1
- Veeder Farmhouse #2

Long before the Dutch and Germans came to Guilderland, native peoples lived here, taking advantage of the fertile land, wealth of game, and numerous streams providing food, water, and travel corridors. Remnants of their activities can be found by archaeologists who specialize in prehistoric resources. These remnants or artifacts provide important information on the human prehistory.

Land in proximity to vital resources such as streams, lakes, ponds, high grounds, and cliffs are generally considered to have a high potential for producing

prehistoric cultural resources. Since the Town has so many of these resources within its boundaries, it is likely that prehistoric cultural resources are present.

Opportunities

Understanding the Town's linkages to the past can help build community identity and cohesiveness. Many communities take great pride in their past, which tends to emerge as community spirit, manifesting as celebrations, dedications, and community and government participation. The Town currently owns two of the previously listed historic buildings: the Mynderse-Frederick House built in 1802 and the Schoolcraft House built in 1840. The Schoolcraft House has been featured in national architectural magazines as an outstanding example of early gothic architecture and presents an opportunity for its use as a small cultural center.

Constraints

The State and federal governments have recognized the importance of historic and prehistoric cultural resources. To that end, they have enacted laws that require State and federal agencies to evaluate the potential presence and the impact on cultural resources for projects that they are directly undertaking, approving, permitting, or funding. Therefore, all projects that involve State and federal agencies should coordinate with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Furthermore, any project requiring review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act, regardless of State or federal agency involvement, must consider the impact to cultural resources. The presence of these resources on a site does not necessarily preclude the project; however, costs are incurred to evaluate the resource, determine the impact, and provide a mitigative solution.

B. Population and Housing

B.1 Population

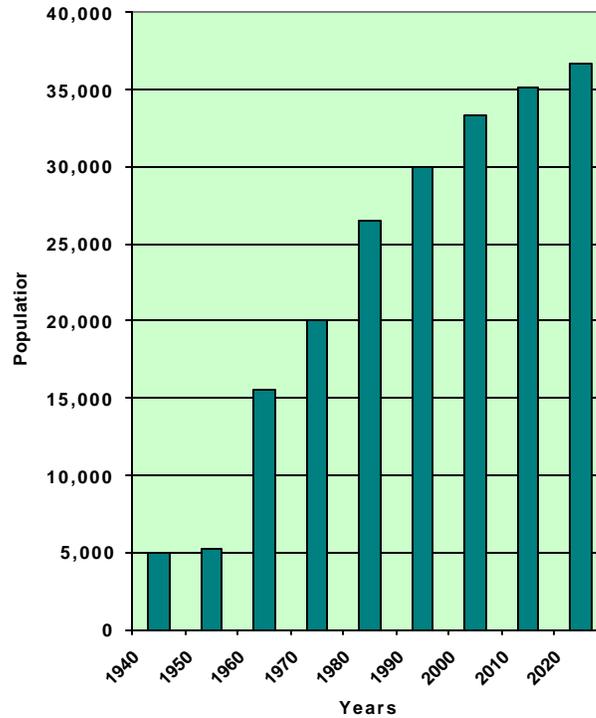
Following WWII, as the automobile became the primary means of transportation, construction of the Northway (I-87) and the Thruway (I-90) opened the Town of Guilderland and much of the Capital District to new development. The New York State (NYS) Thruway, the Northway, and U.S. Route 20 intersect in or adjacent to the Town of Guilderland.

The population of the Town of Guilderland has increased steadily, beginning in the 1950's. According to the 1990 census, the total population of the Town grew from 5,000 residents in 1940 to 30,011 residents in 1990. Historic and projected population trends for the Town are provided in Figure 1.

Based on information compiled by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, the population of the Town of Guilderland will be 36,702 in the year 2020.

The Village of Altamont had 1,519 residents, or about 5% of the total town population, according to the 1990 census. This number is projected to be 1,775 in the year 2020.

FIGURE 1
Town of Guilderland Population 1940 - 2020*



Source:

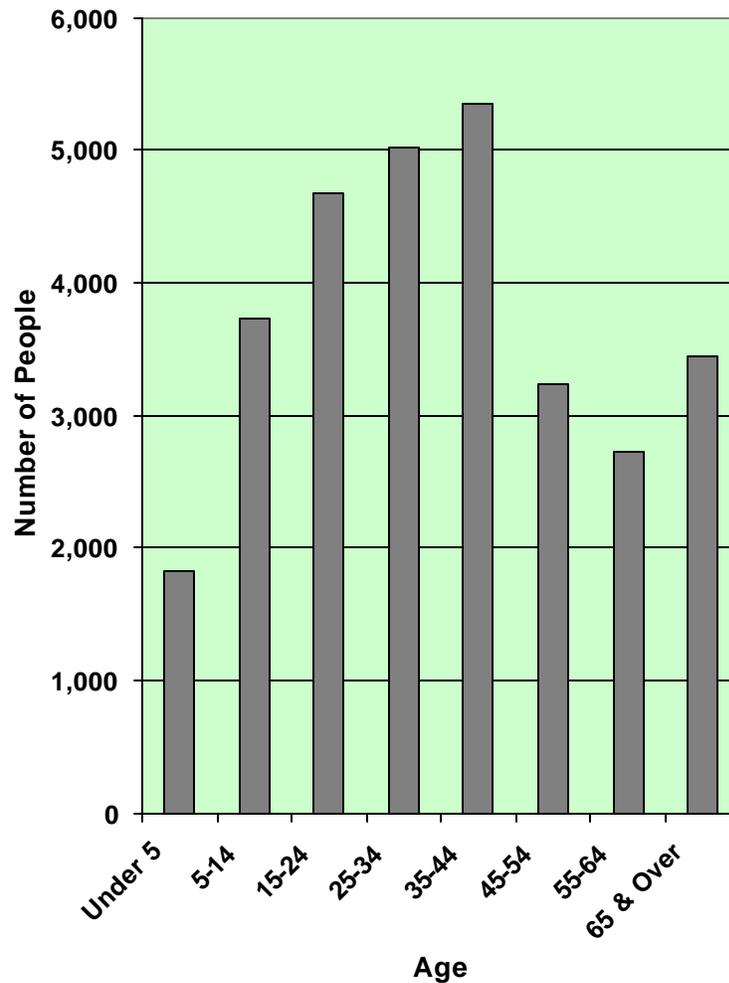
Based on information from Capital District Regional Planning Commission Revised 1998

There will be an updated projection in April 2000

**Including the Village of Altamont*

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, the age characteristics of the Town were as follows:

Figure 2
Age Characteristics for the Town of Guilderland



*Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing
Summary Population and Housing Characteristics
Including the Village of Altamont

According to the 1990 Labor Force Census Data, there were 23,603 persons 16 years and over in the labor force in Guilderland, including Altamont. The median age within the Town is 35.7, slightly older than the County median age of 33.9. Due to the location of Guilderland, there is availability of well paying jobs within reasonable commuting distance. According to the 1990 Demographic Profile prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau, the average travel time to work for Town of Guilderland residents is 20 minutes.

Based on the 1990 census, 27,629 residents (95 percent of the total population) are white. The minority population includes Blacks (603 residents); American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut (28 residents); Asian or Pacific Islander (416 residents); and others. These figures do not include the Village of Altamont. In Altamont, almost 100% of the 1,511 residents are white. Only eight persons are of another race.

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, residents are generally considered well educated (see Table 1). In 1990, a significant group of people over 25 years of age, 39.3 percent, had attained a bachelor's degree or higher. This is an important factor in measuring the quality of the Town's labor force. In general, higher educational attainment should result in higher paying jobs, which should have a beneficial impact on the economic health of the Town.

Table 1
***Educational Attainment**
Town Of Guilderland

Level of Education	No. People	Percent of Total Population		
		Town of Guilderland	Albany County	NY State
High School Diploma	5,262	18	19	22
College				
Some College	2,930	10	9.7	13.7
Associates Degree	1,754	6.1	5.5	5
Bachelors Degree	4,188	14.6	10	9.8
Graduate/Professional Degree	3,594	12.5	8.5	6.6

Source: 1990 U.S. Census

**Excluding the Village of Altamont*

Opportunities

The Town of Guilderland's location and easy transportation access has and will continue to contribute significantly to population increases. The generally well educated population can contribute significantly to the economic base of the community and become active members in the vision for the future.

Constraints

Growth in the Town's population also results in a burden on the Town's infrastructure. In general, the tax revenues generated from residential development rarely offset the costs for capital improvements and maintenance. Therefore, high value non-residential development is required to provide a balanced tax base. However, some communities embrace their residential

character and are willing to pay the extra costs (increased taxes) to maintain this character.

B.2 Housing

Due to the population growth, pressure for construction of new housing has also been strong. The Town's housing stock is dominated by single family residences. According to the 1990 census, housing stock in the Town of Guilderland can be divided into categories, as provided in Table 2.

Table 2
***Distribution by Housing Type**

<i>Dwelling Type</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>
Single family, detached	7124
Single family, attached	744
2-4 units	451
5-9 units	1325
10-19 units	1104
20-49 units	414
mobile home/trailer/other	<u>306</u>
TOTAL	11,468

Source : 1990 Census

**Excluding the Village of Altamont*

Statistics from the Town of Guilderland Building Department indicate that 1,015 building permits for single family homes were issued from 1992 through 1998, with an average of 145 building permits annually. The total number of permits issued for both single family homes and multi-family dwellings from 1992 through 1998 were 1,141. During 1999 a total of 153 building permits were issued - 139 for single-family homes and 14 for multi-family dwellings.

The growth of the residential community in the Town occurred in three geographic areas:

- McKownville/Westmere Area – This was one of the first areas to develop in the Town due to its proximity to the City Albany and quick access via Route 20. The typical post-war housing can be found on interconnecting streets adjacent to banks, retail establishments and community services.
- Suburban Ring – Residential growth in Albany County spread outwardly from the urban center (City of Albany) during the early to mid 1970's in what is known as the suburban ring. Within the Town of Guilderland, new housing concentrated along the Route 155 and Route 146 corridors. These highway corridors bisect the ecologically sensitive area known as the Pine Bush.
- Rural – Within the rural areas of Guilderland many of the older homes were once associated with agricultural land uses. Recent residential construction

due to the lack of sewer and water are not typical of the subdivisions found along routes 155 and 146. Rather, they are located on single large lots with a permitted density of 2 acres per home. The actual density is much less due to the number of larger lots and agricultural activity. Homes dot the area. These homes are not connected to housing sub-divisions, no major roads or shopping areas. The homes in the rural isolated area are predominately older homes interspersed with newer homes.

Both the mean and median selling price of housing in the Town of Guilderland ranks among the highest in the Capital District. The median selling price is the value at which there are an equal number of homes selling at above and below that point. The mean is simply the average selling price. The median may be different than the mean because there may be some very low or very high priced homes which skew the average in one direction. According to the Capital Region MLS Sales, in 1991 the Town of Guilderland compared with the Capital District Selling Price as follows:

Table 3
Selling Price of Homes in Selected Capital District Areas

	1991 Mean Selling Price	1991 Median Selling Price
Town of Guilderland	\$150,426	\$132,250
City of Albany	\$109,349	\$103,000
Albany County	\$129,947	\$110,482
Schenectady County	\$113,740	\$92,876
Capital District	\$122,869	\$107,603

The Town Assessor has studied property values by neighborhood since 1983. The number of neighborhoods has grown from 21 in 1983 to 35 in 1998. According to the Assessor's records, newly constructed homes have a higher selling price than older homes, in general. Of the 21 original neighborhoods, most have at least doubled in average selling price from 1983 to 1998. The table below presents the raw data for these neighborhoods and does not take inflation into account. The total average represents neighborhood averages and not a true average for all the housing stock.

Table 4
Selling Prices of Single Family Houses in Guilderland
In Older Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods	Average Selling Price		
	1983	1998	
1	37,000	90,500	
2	52,100	110,700	
3	62,800	107,000	
4	52,100	104,300	
5	117,100	226,700	
6	61,300	119,200	
7	55,200	97,400	
8	42,900	89,200	
9	83,100	167,000	
10	50,100	107,400	
11	47,800	144,200	
12	71,000	163,900	
13	71,600	131,800	
14	68,900	134,200	
15	51,000	98,700	
16	49,900	132,300	
17	51,500	123,500	
18	61,100	120,000	<i>estimated</i>
19	46,300	82,500	
20	48,400	110,300	
21	41,200	95,000	<i>estimated</i>
5.1 (renumbered 200,000 31)		453,100	
Total Average	64,655	136,768	
By Neighborhood			

Source: Guilderland Assessors Office, March 2000

Opportunities

Housing in the Town of Guilderland is valued significantly higher when compared to the Capital District. Property values within the Town have experienced a steady increase with most property owners receiving a rate of return at least commensurate with their investment. The Town has the opportunity to encourage construction of new housing in a variety of styles and values that will provide a full range of housing opportunities for existing and

new residents. Throughout the planning process the Town of Guilderland has the opportunity to work with developers to ensure a variety of well planned, high quality residential developments.

Constraints

Growth in residential development will continue to constrain the Town's resources. It will be important for the Town to implement a Growth Management strategy to ensure that the proper balance, both environmentally and economically, is achieved in accordance with the Town's goals and objectives.

C. Land Use and Zoning

The predominant land use in the Town of Guilderland is suburban residential. The most intensely developed areas within the Town occur along the Route 20, Route 155, and Route 146 corridors. This is illustrated on Figure 3, *Existing Land Use*.

The Route 20 corridor has been the primary conduit for both residential and commercial development in the Town. Strip commercial development has occurred along Route 20 while medium density residential subdivisions have been constructed immediately adjacent to the commercial development, off of collector roads. This is particularly evident in the McKnownville/Westmere area where homes developed first along Route 20 and then converted to office and commercial uses. The pattern of growth in these areas was influenced by good access and the availability of municipal sewer and water service, the majority of which is provided east of the CSX (Conrail) tracks. Municipal water and sewer is also provided west of the tracks along Route 146, serving Guilderland Center and the Guilderland High School .

The most intense concentration of commercial development occurs along Route 20, west of Fuller Road. This area includes a mix of commercial/retail development with the dominant land uses being Crossgates Mall and Stuyvesant Plaza. Less intense commercial development continues westward along Route 20 from Johnston Road to Route 146. The dominant commercial land uses in this area include the 20 Mall and Hannaford Plaza. Commercial strip development has also occurred north along the Route 155 and Route 146 corridors. Industrial development is concentrated in the Northeast Industrial Park located off of Depot Road, immediately southeast of Guilderland Center.

Agricultural lands are primarily located west of the Conrail tracks. Many of these parcels are within the Agricultural District. Further west are rural residential uses, both north and south of the Village of Altamont.

To illustrate land use within the Town, the Existing Land Use Map was prepared from Geographic Information System (GIS) data. Eleven land use categories were identified. They include:

- Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public Service
- Community Services
- Agriculture
- Wild and Forest Land
- Vacant Land
- Recreation and Entertainment

Figure 4, *Zoning Map*, is provided to compare land use with the existing zoning.

Table 5 summarizes land use in the Town by land area.

**Table 5
 Existing Land Use**

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Residential	12,416	32
Single-family	6,894	
High Density	240	
Rural Residential	5,282	
Commercial	627	2
Industrial	663	2
Public Services	1,749	5
Community Services	1,598	4
Agriculture	6,544	17
Rec. & Entertainment	1,759	5
Vacant	8,227	22
Wild & Forested Land	2,047	6
Roads	1,854	5
Total	37,484	100

As identified in Table 5, residential uses dominate the land use within the Town while agricultural uses are a close second. The following sections describe the land use categories in greater detail.

C.1 Residential

Land developed for residential use represents the largest active land use in the Town. Residential development patterns in the Town are typical of suburban sprawl. Route 20, I-90, Washington Avenue Extension and the NYS Thruway have provided excellent access to allow outward population migration from the more densely populated areas within the Capital District. The intensity of development in general has been a function of the availability of municipal sewer and water service. Rural residential development and farmland is located in the western half of the Town. Inactive agricultural land in the Town is under continual pressure for development of single-family housing.

Single-Family Residential – The predominant land use in the Town is single family residential in suburban or cluster subdivisions with lot sizes of one-half acre or less. The zoning designations R-40 thru R-7.5 represent the minimum lot size within that district. R-40 zoning requires a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet while the R-7.5 district requires a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet. Permitted uses within each of these zones are the same and primarily restricted to single family homes and public facilities such as schools and parks.

Multi-Family Residential – This category of land use includes multi-family residences consisting of 2 or more units per building. This would include townhouses, condominiums, and apartments; as well as mobile home parks. The majority of these uses are contained within the Multiple Residence (MR) zoning district and are located along Route 155 near the Route 20 intersection, as well as in the Westmere area west of the Northway (I-87). Mobile home courts, of which there are three, are located within various zoning districts. The Town has created a Mobile Dwellings (MD) District within the Zoning Law but no districts have been established to date. The majority of multi-family uses are located in the eastern portion of the Town.

Rural Residential – This residential use has been identified as single-family residential with acreage. Generally, this would include lots with greater than 2 acres of land, the majority of which is located in the Agricultural District (A) in the western half of the Town. The Agricultural District permits both agricultural and residential uses. The minimum lot size is 2 acres.

C.2 Agriculture

Agricultural Districts were created in 1971 to manage and protect farmland in New York State. A more detailed discussion of the extent and type of agriculture in the Town is provided in the Inventory & Analysis under the topic "Agricultural Resources."

Agricultural land use in the Town of Guilderland consists of approximately 6,598 acres. Much of this land is in active agriculture. Albany County Agricultural District No. 3 comprises a large portion of the agricultural lands within the western portion of the Town. However, parcels within the

Agricultural District also occur east of the CSX (Conrail) tracks along Route 20 in the vicinity of the Hunger Kill, along Route 20 at the Conrail tracks, on the north and south sides of Route 146 at the Conrail tracks, south of East Lydius Street adjacent to the Pine Bush, and in the southeast portion of the Town, straddling the Town of Guilderland/Town of New Scotland border.

C.3 Commercial

Commercial land use and other non-retail and professional uses are located primarily along Route 20 and the portions of Route 146 and Route 155 north of Route 20. Most of the retail development serves the local community with the exception of Crossgates Mall which has a regional market base. Stuyvesant Plaza, located east of Crossgates on Western Avenue (Rt 20) can also be considered a regional market since it has high quality specialty shops that attracts shoppers from all locations in the Capital Region.

Since 1970, all three corridors have experienced a significant transition in land use. Once primarily consisting of residential uses with minor neighborhood commercial components, the corridors are now dominated by strip commercial and office development. The growth in non-residential uses was influenced by good access and the availability of municipal sewer and water.

The conversion of residential structures on small lots to office/retail uses is evident along Route 20 in the McKnownville and Westmere areas. The rapid growth in commercial/office development has also resulted in significant constraints on traffic and pedestrian infrastructure within the Route 20, Route 146 and Route 155 corridors.

Zoning for business uses in the Town has been divided into three districts: Business Non-Retail Professional (BN-RP), Local Business (LB) and General Business (GB). The purpose of these districts is to separate business uses by type and density. The BN-RP district is essentially restricted to non-retail professional office uses such as medical offices, insurance offices, architects, engineers, etc. The two retail districts are separated by intensity of use. The LB district is meant to provide small neighborhood business such as convenience stores, bakeries and hardware stores. The GB district provides for large and small retail establishments.

C.4 Industrial

The Northeastern Industrial Park located south of Guilderland Center has the largest concentration of industrial development in the Town. The park contains approximately 2.5 million gross square feet (gsf) of industrial uses, primarily consisting of warehousing, distribution and pipe manufacturing. The park has room to develop another 2 million gsf. Industrially zoned land incorporates the industrial park as well as lands to the east and north. Permitted uses include manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, and related uses that do not emit odor, smoke, toxic or noxious fumes, radiation, gas, noise, vibration, or excessive light. Another area of industrial development occurs

along Railroad Avenue in the northeastern portion of the Town. This narrow strip of land is dominated by trucking and warehouse uses.

C.5 Public and Community Services

Public Service uses in the Town include electric and communications utilities (transmission lines, substations, cell towers) but not municipal utilities. These uses are considered community services and include municipal utilities (sewer and water), municipal facilities (other than recreation), fire and emergency service stations, police stations, schools and school district offices, and community centers. Both public service and community service facilities are permitted in most zoning districts and are located as needed to serve the public. Community services are discussed in greater detail in the "Community Services" section of this Inventory & Analysis. Figure 12 identifies the locations of many of the Town's community service facilities.

C.6 Recreation & Entertainment

Recreational opportunities in the Town include both public and private facilities. Town facilities include Fred Abele Park located east of I87, Nott Road Park, Tawasentha Town Park, Keenholts Park, Dr. Shaw Road Park, Fort Hunter Park, Volunteer Fireman's Park, Fusco Park, and the Guilderland Conservation Area. Other public lands include portions of the Pine Bush and Black Creek Marsh State Wildlife Management Area. There are five golf courses in the Town, all operated by private entities. Recreational uses are discussed in greater detail in the "Recreational Resources" section of this Inventory & Analysis. Figure 14 identifies the locations of the Town parks and golf courses.

C.7 Vacant Land and Natural Areas

The Existing Land Use Map identifies vacant (undeveloped) lands. Vacant lands include parcels that may have significant development constraints, such as wetlands, critical habitat, stream courses, and steep slopes; as well as inactive farmland, and developable properties. One of the goals of the Inventory & Analysis is not only to identify the environmentally sensitive areas that may warrant protection from development, but also to guide future growth to those areas that are more suitable for development.

Some of the Town's important open spaces, such as Tawasentha Park and Nott Road Park have been identified and essentially protected under the Open Space (OS) zoning district.

Opportunities

The existing land uses in the Town of Guilderland provide a wide variety of housing, employment, recreation, and shopping opportunities for residents in the Town as well as the Capital District. Crossgates Mall attracts regional shoppers due to its accessibility, size and variety of stores. Stuyvesant Plaza

provides boutique shopping, also attracting shoppers from the regional market. The approximately 2,000 acre Pine Bush Preserve (partially within the Town of Guilderland) provides an opportunity for people from all over the State to visit a highly unique ecosystem.

Locally, there are urban, suburban, and rural residential housing opportunities at a wide range of values. The McKnownville and Westmere areas provide a more urban environment characterized by older homes (post World War II) located in close proximity to shopping and major transportation corridors. As some of the first subdivisions developed in the Town, they have a long history of neighborhood cohesion. Guilderland Center also provides older homes in a neighborhood setting, although much less intensely developed than the McKnownville/Westmere area. Sewer and water service is provided in these areas.

Areas of more recent suburbanization (1970's to present) are located along the southern portions of Route 155, along Dr. Shaw Road and Veeder Road; and west of Route 155 and north of Route 20, along Route 146, East and West Lydius Street, and East and West Old State Road. Most of these areas have both municipal sewer and water service. The rural areas of the Town, primarily located west of the CSX (Conrail) tracks, provide opportunities for homes with large lots, as well as agriculture. Sewer and water is not available in this part of the Town. Those that live here generally do so to have more land and escape the urban and suburban environments. Although rural, residents in the western portion of the Town can still quickly get to commercial, recreational, cultural, and employment centers by the good road system. Agriculture is active in the Town, providing locally grown fruits and vegetables. Housing statistics are presented in the Population and Housing Section, page 10.

The Town parks, private golf courses, and State managed wildlife areas provide a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities for all Town residents. Tawasentha Town Park provides active and passive recreational opportunities, including an outdoor pool.

Constraints

Zoning is a growth management tool that is essential for communities with diverse land uses to prevent land use conflicts. The current zoning is based on past planning efforts that require review and update to meet current trends in planning and the economy. The Northeast Industrial Park is zoned for industrial uses, even though it lies in the Black Creek watershed. New industries should be screened for noxious impacts on the watershed.

Zoning is also a constraint on growth. It places restrictions and special requirements on development and uses within the established zoning districts. This does not always meet the needs of the project sponsor who is driven by the market place. Other constraints on development include the availability of water and sewer, accessibility to employment centers, and the desire to preserve agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas. Constraints on preservation efforts include market demands, available funding for preservation,

specific local legislation, and preservation programs. Agricultural lands, in particular, are most vulnerable to conversion to non-agricultural uses, especially residential.

D. Agricultural Resources

The agricultural industry is comprised of three elements: individual farms, agricultural support businesses, and agricultural manufacturing industries. Production of agricultural goods occur on farms and in the manufacturing industries that process and package farm products. Agribusinesses provide the necessary support structure and products for farms and manufacturing industries to operate.

Agriculture is still an important component of the Town of Guilderland's landscape and economy. Figure 5 identifies the agricultural properties within the Town. Much of the land is used for hay and beef cattle but there are numerous other uses such as vegetable farms; nurseries; a successful vineyard and wine-making operation; dairy farms; raising of other livestock such as hogs, sheep and horses; crop production (primarily corn) in support of beef and dairy operations; apple orchards; Christmas tree operations; a feed store; and farm equipment sales.

It is widely known in the Town that the majority of agriculture occurs in the western half of the Town. However, some agriculture still occurs east of the CSX (Conrail) tracks. These properties include dairy and beef operations, a hog farm, vegetable crops, hay production, greenhouses along Route 20 and farm stands along Route 146 north of Route 20.

Agriculture was once the primary industry in the Town of Guilderland. The Town was known as the "breadbasket of the Revolution." Today, residential, commercial, office and industrial uses have displaced some of the agriculture. In general, the agricultural industry has experienced a variety of economic pressures that have had a significant impact on their ability to maintain operations. Since the late 1960's the smaller family owned and operated farms in the Town and throughout New York State have struggled to remain competitive with the larger commercial farm operations. In addition, children of farmers are seeking other professions for numerous reasons, none the least is economic.

Many of the agricultural properties that were once considered to be located in rural areas are now prime locations for residential development due to improved accessibility and extension of municipal sewer and water. These conditions have also influenced the value of farmland which has significantly increased and will continue to increase as prime developable land close to business and population centers becomes less available.

On a positive note, the number of farms and total acreage has remained stable in Albany County over the past 10 years; despite the fact that almost three

quarters of the dairy operations have been converted to other uses, such as hay and beef operations, out-competed by larger dairies (Albany County 1999).

D.1 Agricultural Districts

In recognition that market demands have had a significant influence on the loss of active agricultural lands to non agricultural uses, federal, State and local legislation has been enacted to provide a vehicle for maintaining operations as well as preserving non-active agricultural lands.

In 1971, Article 25AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law established Agricultural Districts and introduced taxation of farmland based on its production capability rather than its development potential. In 1992, the Agricultural Protection Act amended the Agricultural Districts Law by strengthening notice of intent requirements, right-to-farm protection, real estate transfer disclosures, and the creation of agricultural and farmland protection programs. This act established county agricultural and farmland protection boards that are responsible for the establishment or modification of agricultural districts, review of notices of intent, and development of county agricultural and farmland protection plans.

Agricultural Districts are created when an owner or owners of farmland submits a proposal to the county. The area proposed for district formation is reviewed based on the viability of active and non-active farmlands, the extent of non-agricultural uses and development patterns. Upon adoption by the county, the district must be certified by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets. Farmlands within an Agricultural District may receive an agricultural exemption, decreasing the tax burden.

D.2 Notice of Intent

Public actions (state or local) that affect lands within an Agricultural District must avoid or minimize adverse farm impacts. This is documented through the Notice of Intent. This document includes a Preliminary notice describing the project and its impacts and a Final notice that includes a detailed agricultural impact statement. The notice is reviewed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets and may be reviewed by the County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board.

D.3 Private Actions

Private applications for municipal review or approvals for projects located within or adjacent to agricultural land, within an Agricultural District, require the preparation of Agricultural Data Statements. The reviewing board is required to evaluate the project relative to potential agricultural impacts. The municipality must also notify farm owners within the Agricultural District and within 500 feet of the project site of the proposed project. Local regulations must be consistent with the Agricultural Districts Law.

Section 308 of the Agricultural Protection Act provides protection against private nuisance lawsuits. Upon a determination from the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets that the agricultural activities in question are "sound agricultural practices," the activities cannot be determined a nuisance.

Section 310 of the Agricultural Protection Act requires that the sale or transfer of property in an Agricultural District include a statement that agricultural practices occur within the district which may result in noise, dust and odors, among other residuals of sound agricultural practices.

D.4 Agricultural Land Preservation

Land parcels within the Agricultural District in the Town of Guilderland are shown on Figure 5. Albany County, who oversees issues relating to the Agricultural District, is preparing an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.

Some communities have implemented more permanent and effective measures to preserve agricultural lands through the purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, conservation easements, agricultural zoning, sliding-scale zoning, and the establishment of growth boundaries. Through either the purchase or transfer of development rights, the farmer is paid for the development value of the land in turn for a permanent easement on the property that precludes development for other than agricultural use. Agricultural zoning precludes non-agricultural uses while sliding scale zoning rewards higher density development of small parcels and penalizes the development of large parcels. Ultimately, development pressure and the associated rise in land values are controlled by a growth boundary, beyond which non-agricultural uses are discouraged.

Opportunities

Although the farming industry in Guilderland is not what it once was prior to suburbanization and the advent of large commercial or corporate farms, the loss of farmland has stabilized over the past 10 years. Some of the dairy operations have converted to other uses to remain profitable. Vegetable and fruit farms serve the local residents. Large areas are used for hay to support beef, dairy, and horse operations. As long as the land remains, there will be opportunities for future farming in the Town. This will be supported by the County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and innovations in the business of farming such as efforts to increase the value of products before they leave the farm (referred to as "value-added" products), production of high value crops, and the incorporation of entertainment opportunities to attract people (e.g., petting zoos, tractor rides, festivals, etc.).

New York State still ranks first in the nation for the production of corn for silage, creamed corn, and low-fat cottage cheeses; and second in apple production. In addition, the State ranks within the top five states for the production of sweet and tart cherries, pears, grapes, cauliflower, celery,

strawberries, sweet corn, green peas and beans, milk and cheese (American Farmland Trust 1993).

The County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board has received a grant from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to prepare an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan for the County. The purpose of the Plan is to identify and coordinate all the various interrelated issues that impact farming and provide management tools that can be implemented by local governments. The plan will contain issues facing the agricultural community, a vision for the future, goals and objectives, a GIS based inventory and analysis, community participation, and agricultural development and protection strategies.

Constraints

Constraints on maintaining active agricultural operations are numerous and related to both social and economic issues including good management, market demands, and competition from large commercial farms. Competition from other occupations that are more financially rewarding will continue to impede efforts to attract young people into careers in farming.

Farming is also endangered by suburban sprawl. Farms along the urban fringe face development pressure and nuisance law suits from adjacent residential development. Land values are driven up which increase the tax burden on the farmer. Fortunately, this is less of a problem for the Town due to protections afforded by the Agricultural Districts Law. Yet, the monetary incentive to sell agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes can be very enticing; and for some, the answer to financial hardship and retirement.

E. Physiography & Topography

The Town of Guilderland is located in the north-central portion of Albany County. It is bounded by the Towns of Princetown, Duanesburg, and Rotterdam, to the north; the Town of Colonie and City of Albany to the east; the towns of Bethlehem and New Scotland to the South; and the Town of Knox to the West. Also located at the western boundary of the Town is the Village of Altamont.

The Town is almost entirely within the Hudson-Mohawk Lowlands Physiographic Province. The southwestern boundary of the Town is formed by the Helderberg escarpment, which also marks the boundary between the Hudson-Mohawk Lowlands and the Helderberg Mountains section of the Appalachian Uplands.

The Hudson-Mohawk Lowlands stretch north and east from the Helderberg escarpment to the Taconic Mountains on the east and the Adirondacks on the north. Elevations rise gently westward from approximately 200 feet at Albany to 300 to 400 feet in the western portion of the Town of Guilderland.

E.1 Helderberg Mountains

The Helderberg Mountains are actually a plateau with distinct cliffs marking the northern and eastern margins. These cliffs are comprised of massive limestone (Manlius and Coeymans). The greatest development of the escarpment occurs within and adjacent to the Town of Guilderland.

Millions of years ago, the entire State of New York was part of a shallow inland sea. Deposits from the erosion of the adjacent uplands now constitute the geologic formations that comprise the Helderberg and Catskill mountains. As these deposits were consolidated and uplifted, the sea receded and a coastal plain was formed. Erosion of the coastal plain led to the formation of the Helderberg escarpment. This escarpment moved southwest away from the Adirondacks and grew in height and is referred to as a cuesta or upland plain with a steep face toward the inner lowland and gentle slopes in the opposite direction. Elevations at the top of the escarpment range from 1,200 to 1,300 feet. The lowland formed by the erosion of the coastal plain today comprises the Hudson-Mohawk lowlands.

The Helderbergs were the site for some of the earliest studies of North American geology and the names given to formations are now known world wide. Some of the pioneer geologists include Louis Agassiz, Ferdinand Roemer, Sir William Logan, Amos Easton, James Hall, W.W. Mather, Sir Charles Lyell, Larnder Vanuxem, Ebenezer Emmons, and Charles S. Prosser (*source: New York, A Guide to the Empire State, Oxford University Press, 1940. P 445*). It is widely held that the Helderberg area is the birthplace of American paleontology.

Elevations above mean sea level in the Town of Guilderland increase significantly from east to west. In general, the topography can be described as flat to rolling but deeply cut by large stream systems that form steep ravines. With the exception of the steep ravines caused by erosion of the stream channels, the major topographic features are a result of the Wisconsin Glaciation, the last to cover the area, moving southwesterly across Albany County. During its advance, it plowed materials left by previous glaciations and during its retreat, deposited glacial tills and stratified sediments. Most of the Town is deeply covered by these materials, as are the slopes of the escarpment. Very little material was deposited on the plateau.

The great divergence in topography created by the Helderberg escarpment and the rural landscape in the western portion of the Town results in a number of scenic areas. Guilderland could easily be called the "keeper of the Helderberg viewshed" since it constitutes the foreground of one of the most impressive views in the State, the view from Thacher State Park and other areas along the escarpment. This view is enjoyed by 250,000 tourists and other visitors to Thatcher Park each year. The western half of the Town of Guilderland reflects the historic landscape that earned the Town the name "bread basket of the Revolution." Farming continues in this portion of the Town, preserving the rural landscape. Significant changes in land use in the eastern portion of the

Town, as well as other developed areas of the Capital District, affect views; but at such a distance the effect is minimal and the views remain spectacular.

Views of the Helderberg escarpment from the Hudson-Mohawk plain, which comprises the majority of land within the Town of Guilderland, are equally as important and enjoyable. As a major east-west highway, U.S. Route 20 provides some exceptional views of the escarpment between the intersection of Route 397 (Dunnsville) and the Conrail tracks. Other areas with views of the escarpment include the Route 146 corridor between Guilderland Center and the Village of Altamont. Portions of Route 397 and Settles Hill Road, Lainhart Road, Route 156, Gardner Road, Indian Ladder Drive, County Route 202, and other local roads within the western portion of the Town. Many residents have views of the escarpment from their homes and it is an important component of the character of their community.

E.2 Steep Slopes

Soil survey mapping was used to identify steep slopes through an alphabetized classification system. Soil symbols appearing on the soil survey mapping are followed by a letter A-F that indicates a slope range. The letter "A" indicates slopes in the range of 0-3 percent. Soils labeled as "D" exceed 15 percent slope and were considered a potential site constraint for development. These slopes were mapped and are shown on Figure 6.

Opportunities

The steep ravines have provided the Town with the opportunity to develop a municipal water source. By damming the Normans Kill in the central portion of the Town, a sizeable reservoir was created, providing water to the Town and the City of Watervliet. With the exception of the western boundary of the Town and the ravines, topography does not present significant limitations to building. Projects designed in harmony with existing topography (limited grading) will result in potentially unique and attractive development while limiting impacts on the visual environment. Preserving areas of steep slopes will help preserve open space and water quality.

Views to and from the Helderberg Escarpment are magnificent and are very much a part of the character of the Town. The rural landscape as viewed from the escarpment and the massive cliffs as viewed from the plain are interrelated and equally important. These views are an important factor in the Town's reputation as a desirable place to live.

Constraints

The ravines and other steep slopes present significant constraints to development when it becomes necessary to cross them with new roads and utilities. Although technically feasible, such projects are costly and can result in significant environmental impacts. Development of steep slopes should be

avoided. To properly protect these areas however, the Town should establish a policy regarding slopes and development constraints associated with them. This will also benefit project sponsors through early understanding of site constraints.

Development of the western portion of the Town could begin to change the landscape to the extent that the historic pastoral landscape is replaced by the suburban landscape. Given the importance of views from the escarpment, consideration should be given to the impacts of development and mitigation that can be employed to preserve the view. Views of the escarpment have been impacted by the placement of towers. Some or all of these towers may be removed as technology progresses, however, in the short term, efforts are needed to limit new sites and fully utilize existing towers through co-location.

F. Water Resources

F.1 Groundwater and Surface Water

The Town of Guilderland uses groundwater for a portion of its drinking water supply. In recognition of the value of groundwater resources for existing and future water supply, the Town has initiated a wellhead protection study. Phase I of the study has been completed and is documented in *Town of Guilderland Albany County, New York Well Head Protection Plan Aquifer Study Phase I* (Laberger, April 21, 1999). This section of the Inventory & Analysis summarizes the report.

Groundwater resources within the Town are located within unconsolidated glacial material associated with buried pre-glacial valleys. Two types of aquifers are contained within this glacial material: confined and unconfined (surficial). Confined aquifers have an impeding layer of material that prevents contact between the groundwater in the aquifer and surface waters, except at recharge points. Surficial aquifers have direct contact with surface waters and may recharge or discharge through surface water features such as lakes, ponds and streams, or simply through the soil surface. Surficial aquifers within the Town have been identified as the Guilderland Kame Aquifer and the Pine Bush Aquifer.

The Guilderland Kame Aquifer is located north of Guilderland Center and southwest of the Watervliet Reservoir. This aquifer can yield up to 250 gallons per minute (gpm). However, the southeastern corner of the aquifer is overlain by the Town landfill. The Pine Bush aquifer is located in the northeastern portion of the Town and can yield up to 100 gpm but typical yields are in the range of 5 to 10 gpm.

Confined sand and gravel aquifers are located within the pre-glacial Mohawk and Ballston Channels. Recharge areas are located north of the Normans Kill. The aquifer presently supplying water to the Town is a confined sand and gravel formation located at depths ranging from 58 feet to 90 feet below the ground surface. The extent of the aquifer has been estimated at 3,000 feet in width (east-west) and 4,500 feet in length (north-south).

Recharge for the confined aquifer is primarily from the Pine Bush area, where the buried sands and gravel extend up the sides of the buried channels until they come in contact with the surficial sands within the Pine Bush. Some recharge may also come from the surficial sands in what is referred to as the Voorheesville Delta, located south of the Normans Kill.

The Helderberg Escarpment Planning Guide, April 29, 1999 points out that the limestone composition of most of the Heldebergs poses potential contamination problems for the Guilderland water supply. In limestone terrain riddled with caves, surface water is not filtered or purified by soil. Any contaminant above or near a cave will degrade the water that filters down into private wells and into the watersheds feeding the Watervliet Reservoir and the Altamont water district. Chemical contamination of the water is particularly dangerous, since the chemicals not only can enter the wells and watershed readily, they are absorbed by the limestone and thus can continue to contaminate for years. Intermunicipal cooperation is needed to establish zoning regulations to protect the limestone terrain from pollution from hazardous waste sites, junked car storage or crushing, landfills, salt piles, and failed septic tanks.

Numerous surface water features are located within the Town. The dominant features are the Normans Kill, the Bozen Kill, the Hunger Kill, the Kaikout Kill, the Krum Kill, Black Creek, Blockhouse Creek, and the Watervliet Reservoir. Surface water features, including many of the known subtributaries of the major streams, are identified on Figure 7.

Surface water features in New York are designated with a water quality classification for the purposes of regulating discharges into these water bodies in accordance with the State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES). These classifications refer to the suitability of a given water feature (lake, pond, river, stream) for human use. The higher the classification (A) the better the water quality and the more suitable for human use. For example, Class A water suitable for "primary contact" (swimming) and for a water supply.

Classifications include water supply designations (AA-S, A-S, AA) and normal designations ranging from A (suitable for most uses) to D (unsuitable for primary contact). Each water quality classification carries with it a set of discharge limitations designed to protect or improve the water quality. A "T" modifier is used for those streams that have a breeding trout population. Effluent limitations on the demand for oxygen are more stringent, since high oxygen content is essential for trout survival. In addition, the ecology and geomorphology of streams with a classification of C(T) or higher are protected/regulated pursuant to Article 15 of the NYS Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR 608).

Regulated streams are identified on Figure 7. The Watervliet Reservoir and the portion of the Normans Kill north of the reservoir are Class A waters. The portion of the Krum Kill from Route 20 to its source within the Crossgates Mall property is also designated Class A. The Normans Kill is designated Class B from the reservoir outlet to the Town boundary. Other regulated streams and ponds include the Hunger Kill and some of its tributaries [Class C, Standard

C(T)], Blockhouse Creek [Class C, Standard C(T)] and the portion of the Krum Kill from Route 20 south to the southeast corner of the Town [Class C, Standard C(T)] [6 NYCRR 863 (1983) and 6 NYCRR 863 (revised 1991)].

In addition to State and local regulations, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regulates all waters of the U.S. Therefore, all the streams, ponds, and lakes fall under federal jurisdiction. The extent of regulatory involvement depends on the position of the water body in the watershed (above or below headwaters or isolated) and its navigability. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act regulates the discharge of dredged or fill materials into all waters of the U.S. Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (federal program granted to the State) regulates the quality of the discharge regulated under Section 404.

Opportunities

Surface water resources provide excellent opportunities for recreation/open space and provide essential wildlife habitat. Streams provide wildlife corridors that allow movement from habitat to habitat without conflicting with the built human environment.

The Watervliet Reservoir is an important water supply resource and an essential component of current and future development within the Town. At present, groundwater resources provide an important supplemental source of water to manage peak demand. Further investigations of groundwater resources may reveal additional suitable municipal sources.

Constraints

The protection and regulation of surface and ground water resources often result in constraints on development and time-consuming permit processes. For example, a road crossing over the Normans Kill would require authorization from the Corps of Engineers and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. This Inventory contains as complete as possible a listing of sensitive areas and related maps which developers should consult before planning their projects. Project sponsors should take advantage of this information to design around protected resources or properly plan for the cost and time associated with regulatory actions.

Land use is of great concern relative to the protection of surface and groundwater resources as municipal water sources. Certain types of developments pose high risks to water quality. Uses that are permitted in specific zones, but potentially carry adverse impacts should be carefully monitored on a case by case basis to insure that the environment is protected. The location of the Northeast Industrial Park in the Black Creek Watershed is a good example. Likewise, the proximity of Route 20 and Route 158 to the Watervliet Reservoir raise concerns over accidents and spills that could directly enter the Town's primary water supply. Safeguards should be explored to ensure such a catastrophe never occurs.

F.2 Floodplains & Storm Drainage

Drainage channels in the east and northeast portions of the Town include the Krum Kill, Hunger Kill, Kaikout Kill, and Blackhouse Creek. These streams flow southward toward the Normans Kill. The Normans Kill is the primary drainage course that divides the Town in half, flowing southeasterly. In the south-central and southwestern portions of the Town, streams beginning in the Helderbergs flow north east into Black Creek, then north to the Bozen Kill. The Bozen Kill and its tributaries drain the northwestern portion of the Town, flowing east to the confluence with the Watervliet Reservoir.

Although much of today's topography is a result of the last glaciation, thousands of years of erosion has also changed the landscape, creating steep ravines and floodplains associated with streams. Drainage is a function of the topography and soils. Flat areas in the central portion of the Town result in poor drainage conditions, promoting the development of wetland characteristics. Similar conditions in the developed eastern portion of the Town have resulted in local flooding. Stuyvesant Plaza is one area that experiences flooding during large storm events.

Floodplain areas, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and illustrated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), are associated with the major drainage courses in the Town. Floodplain boundaries are identified on Figure 8.

Opportunities

Floodplains provide natural storage and flood flow attenuation functions that protect adjacent lands and communities, both upstream and downstream, from flood damage. Floodplains also provide the necessary room for a stream to meander: the natural dynamic shifting of a stream.

Constraints

Development without the use of appropriate stormwater management practices may disturb natural drainage conditions, including peak flow, to the extent that flooding and associated property damage/loss could occur. Development in the 100-year floodplain should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. These areas should be less desirable for development, since most of the larger floodplain areas within the Town contain wetland or are in public use as parkland.

G. Ecology

The ecology of the Town of Guilderland has been significantly influenced by the built environment, agriculture, and other human interactions. Although a larger percentage of the Town has undergone development or agricultural activity,

there remains large areas of undeveloped land, some of which is constrained for development by wetlands and steep slopes. The largest areas of undeveloped land are located along the Helderberg escarpment and Watervliet reservoir, and within the Pine Bush and Settles Hill areas. Significant undeveloped land also occurs along the major stream corridors, linking each of the larger undeveloped areas.

Abandoned or fallow agricultural fields are undergoing secondary succession, the process by which nature reclaims the land to eventually return to a mature forest or other dominant community that existed prior to disturbance. The result is the return of wildlife habitat that changes as the vegetative communities change. Nature also adapts to human occupation. Some species (plant and animal) prefer these disturbed conditions. However, the very same species that benefit from human occupation are often deemed a nuisance by their hosts.

This discussion of ecology is divided into vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands. The latter is included as a separate subject based on its general acceptance as an important ecological component, its ability to be identified, classified, and delineated, and the regulatory framework that fosters its protection. Also discussed as a separate topic is the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. This ecosystem is unique to New York State and contains many significant fire-dependent vegetative communities, as well as wetlands and the endangered Karner blue butterfly.

G.1 Vegetation

Vegetative communities within the Town can be generally divided into forested, meadow, scrub/shrub, wetland, agriculture, and landscaped. The Pine Bush is a unique component of the natural landscape that contains rare natural communities.

Forested portions of the town are dominated by northern hardwoods, primarily beech-maple-oak forests. However, these communities differ from place to place depending on the successional stage of the community

Meadows and scrub/shrub communities are associated with fallow farm fields and abandoned farmland. These vegetative communities provide a variety of wildlife habitats. Agriculture limits the availability of land for nesting and denning, with the exception of fallow fields, but agriculture does provide a food source for many animals.

Wetland areas provide a variety of vegetative communities, often in a small area. The frequency and duration of flooding/soil saturation dictates the type of vegetative community that will occur. As topography/drainage conditions change, so do the communities. Frequently or permanently flooded areas will support emergent wetland vegetation, such as cattail, bulrush, buttonbush, and pondweed. Adjacent to this area and perhaps slightly upslope, less water tolerant wetland species (hydrophytes) can survive, such as speckled alder, silky dogwood, and a variety of sedges, rushes and wetland grasses. If shrubs

dominate, this would be a scrub-shrub community. The next community upslope (better drainage) might be a forest community consisting of red maple, green ash, and American elm. This community can tolerate flooding for a shorter period of time.

Many wetland communities, such as that described above, occur within the Town. Wetlands are discussed in greater detail, further in this section.

G.2 Pine Bush Preserve

A portion of the Albany Pine Bush Preserve is located in the northeastern portion of the Town. The Pine Bush is a pitch pine-scrub oak community that is adapted to the dry conditions (glacial sand deposits) and periodic fires that occur in this area. The ecosystem once occupied a 40 square mile area (25,600 acres) between Albany and Schenectady. For years it was considered a "wasteland" and generally avoided, but large areas have recently succumbed to development pressures. Today, there are less than 5,000 acres of the Pine Bush left. In an effort to preserve the ecosystem, NYSDEC purchased 450 acres in 1973. Additional land was acquired by the City of Albany, the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland, and The Nature Conservancy (Environmental Design & Research, P.C. 1993). The Pine Bush Preserve is currently recognized for its ecological, educational and recreational value for the entire Capital Region.

Communities within the Albany Pine Bush have been mapped and described by several different sources. Communities within the Preserve area were mapped by the New York Natural Heritage Program, prior to preparation of the 1993 Preserve Management Plan (Schneider et. al., 1991). Communities were mapped again during preparation of the 1996 Implementation Guidelines within the proposed Pine Bush Protection Area (APBPC Tech. Comm., 1996). Land within the Pine Bush was characterized as pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, pine barrens vernal ponds, appalachian oak-pine forest, northern hardwood forest, red maple hardwood swamp, shallow emergent marsh, successional northern hardwoods, and successional southern hardwoods.

During the mid 1980s, a series of development proposals in the Albany Pine Bush, including the proposed expansion of the Albany Landfill, led to the preparation of several environmental impact statements and associated studies. The seminal study by Givnish, et al. (1988) dictated that a minimum of 2,000 fire-manageable acres must be protected and managed to assure the long-term survival of the Albany Pine Bush ecosystem and the endangered Karner blue butterfly (Givnish et al., 1988). Protection of this minimum area became a condition of permit approval for the landfill expansion.

In December of 1988 the New York State Legislature established the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission. The legislation described the Albany Pine Bush as a "...landscape of rare and endangered natural communities and species...especially valuable as an open space resource and, if properly managed, as a passive recreational area and educational laboratory" and declared it to be in

the public interest to "...protect and manage the Albany Pine Bush... for purposes of its protection and controlled and appropriate recreation and education purposes". Since establishment of the Commission, approximately 2,700 acres of public and private land have been protected and dedicated to the Preserve.

The NYS Legislature established that the Commission, prepare a Management Plan.

The Management Plan was prepared in 1993 and updated in 2001. The plan identifies several problems facing the Pine Bush ecosystem due to development and the exclusion of natural fire. Fire has been significantly suppressed which has allowed the invasion of more aggressive plant species. This has led to a shrinking of the Karner blue butterfly habitat, which requires open areas and the blue lupine to survive.

In 1996, the "Albany Pine Bush Preserve: Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines and Final Environmental Impact Statement" were prepared, a supplement to the Management Plan. The guidelines established four goals for the Pine Bush:

1. Protect pitch pine-scrub oak barrens - Acquire remaining property to achieve 2,000 acres of pitch pine-scrub oak barrens that can be managed by fire. Currently, there is approximately 2,220 acres in public domain. Of this total, 590 acres cannot or should not be managed as pitch pine-scrub oak barrens. Of the 1,630 acres of fire manageable land, approximately 1,020 acres support existing pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, while the remainder (610 acres) will require extensive restoration. Approximately 370 acres of existing and restorable pitch pine-scrub oak barrens should be obtained and protected to achieve the 2,000 acre goal.
2. Protect linkages - These include lands that do not necessarily contain significant habitat but provide connection between significant areas. This is particularly important for Karner blue butterfly habitat to allow linkage between existing and potential habitat.
3. Protect buffers - These areas help to prevent significant impact, such as water pollution, to significant environmental areas from encroaching development. They also provided the necessary separation between fire management areas and development to prevent inadvertent smoke or fire damage.
4. Protect Significant Environmental and Historic Resources - These areas include Karner blue butterfly habitat, wetlands and streams, historic and archaeological sites.

Based on previous recommendations for the acquisition of land, the 1996 Guidelines provide a "Vision for the Albany Pine Bush Preserve." Properties were evaluated and rated based on their ability to meet the Pine Bush goals. Existing and restorable pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, linkages, and Karner blue

butterfly habitat received the highest score based on rarity and importance. The term Primary Protection Area, used in the Management Plan is replaced with Full Protection Areas and Open Space. These areas received the highest scores during site evaluation and generally incorporate significant environmental areas, including existing and restorable pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, wetlands, and important linkages. Partial Protection Areas are identified as lands that may have some significant resources that are important to the Preserve but probably should not be protected in their entirety.

If full protection goals are met, approximately 4,520 acres of land could be included as preserve lands or otherwise protected through easements, dedications, or other voluntary preservation. Of this total, approximately 2,390 acres of existing and restorable pitch pine-scrub oak barrens are recommended for full protection, preservation and management, including fire management.

An inventory of rare plants, animals and ecological communities in the Albany Pine Bush was prepared by the NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program for the Albany Pine Bush Commission in 1991. The Albany Pine Bush area contains a variety of vegetative communities, some of which occur due to human intervention and fire suppression. Wetlands, northern hardwood forest and pine barrens are all present and discussed in further detail, as follows.

Pitch pine-scrub oak barrens - This area is located primarily within the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. This is a shrub-savanna community comprised of pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*), ranging in cover from 20 to 60 percent; a tall shrub layer dominated by oaks (*Quercus ilicifolia* and *Q. prinoides*), black huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), and blueberries (*Vaccinium anustifolium*, *V. pallidum*), forming dense thickets covering 60 to 80 percent of the community. Small patches of grassland occur within the thickets and generally include big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*). Other vegetation that can be found in this community include: bush-clovers (*Lespedeza capitata*, *L. hirta*), goat's-rue (*Tephrosia virginiana*), and wild lupine (*Lupinus perennis*). Several rare plant species are found in this vegetative community including Yellow Giant-Hyssop, Side-Oats Grama, Schweinitz's Flatsedge, Bayard's Malaxis, and Virginia False Gromwell.

Pitch pine-oak forest - This is a mixed forest type that includes pitch pine mixed with white oak (*Q. alba*), red oak (*Q. rubra*) chestnut oak (*Q. prinus*), and quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). The shrub layer is composed of scattered clumps of scrub oak (*Q. ilicifolia*) and a continuous cover of low heath shrubs such as blueberries and black huckleberry. The herbaceous layer is sparse and includes bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), and Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*). Several rare plant species are found in this vegetative community including Yellow Giant-Hyssop, Side-Oats Grama, Schweinitz's Flatsedge, Bayard's Malaxis, and Virginia False Gromwell.

Pine barrens vernal pond - Vernal ponds are seasonally fluctuating wetlands that occur in low areas and between dunes. Herbaceous vegetation generally dominates but are mixed with low shrubs in some locations. Dominant

species include uptight sedge (*Carex stricta*), woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), blunt spikerush (*Eleocharis obtusa* var. *obtusa*), and broad-leaf meadow-sweet (*Spiraea latifolia*); with three-way sedge (*Dulichium arundinaceum*), cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), and moss (*Sphagnum* sp.). Stunted trees may be present on hummocks in the wetland. Characteristic species include: red maple (*Acer rubrum*), gray birch (*Betula populifolia*), pitch pine, and quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). State listed rare species include red-root flatsedge (*Cyperus erythrorhizos*) and capitate spikerush (*Eleocharis caribaea*). There are no known rare vegetative species in this community.

Pine-northern hardwood forest - This is a mixed forest type that occurs primarily in ravines and as patches in areas that have not burned recently. Dominant trees include white pine (*Pinus strobus*) mixed with yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and big-tooth aspen (*Populus grandidentata*). Characteristic shrubs include blueberries, dogwood (*Cornus amomum*, *C. foemina*) and witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*). Dominant herbaceous vegetation include: woodfern (*Dryopteris intermedia*) and thorough-wort (*Eupatorium rugosum*). There is one State listed endangered plant species within this community type: bog bluegrass (*Poa paludigena*). This species is also a category 2 candidate for federal listing. Those species listed in category 2 are considered appropriate for listing as threatened or endangered but more data is needed.

Appalachian oak-pine forest - This community is a mixture of pines and oaks, including: pitch pine, white oak and black oak, located primarily in ravines in association with pine-northern hardwood forest, generally on south- and west-facing slopes. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and red maple are also present. Dominant shrubs include black huckleberry and lowbush blueberry. The ground layer is sparse. There are no known rare vegetative species in this community.

Red maple-hardwood swamp - This is a forested wetland community type that occurs in poorly drained depressions. Red maple often dominates the tree canopy. Other associated species include gray birch, eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), northern red oak, and American elm (*Ulmus americana*). The shrub layer is generally dense. Characteristic shrubs include: winterberry, red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), arrowwood (*Viburnum recognitum*), and highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). The herbaceous layer is dominated by melic manna grass (*Glyceria melicaria*), spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*), and royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*). There are no known rare vegetative species in this community.

Shallow emergent marsh - This wetland community occurs in organic and inorganic soils that are permanently saturated and seasonally flooded. These wetlands are generally very small within the study area and are associated with streams. Dominant species include: cattail (*Typha latifolia*), skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), and uptight sedge. There are no known rare vegetative species in this community.

Successional hardwoods - This is a successional community on sites that were cleared or disturbed. Within the Pine Bush, this community occurs in patches throughout the dunes where fires have been suppressed. Dominant

northern hardwoods include big-tooth aspen (*Populus grandidentata*) and quaking aspen. Black huckleberry and lowbush blueberry are the dominant shrubs. Successional southern hardwoods are more common in the Pine Bush. This community is dominated by black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Both the shrub and ground layers may include species characteristic of old fields or of site conditions prior to the disturbance. There are no known rare vegetative species in this community.

Unpaved road/path - This community includes sparse vegetation along unpaved roads and paths. Tree species include honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), fire cherry (*Prunus pensylvanica*), red maple, white oak, and black locust. Many species of herbaceous plants occur in these disturbed areas, including three State listed rare species of flatsedge: *Cyperus houghtonii*, *C. odoratus*, and *C. schweinitzii*.

Sand mine - This is another disturbed community. Big-tooth aspen, quaking aspen, boxelder (*Acer negundo*), hawthorn (*Crataegus sp.*), black locust, and seedlings of pitch pine and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) occur in these areas. Characteristic shrubs include: scrub oaks, sumac (*Rhus glabra*), northern dewberry (*Rubus flagellaris*), and river-bank grape (*Vitis riparia*). There several species of sedge and grasses, including the State listed rare flatsedge (*Cyperus schweinitzii*).

Protection for rare species identified above depends on their federal and state status. Federally listed plants are protected from import, export, and interstate commerce or sale. The New York State Protected Plant Law (1974) protects listed plants from collection or destruction without prior consent from the landowner. Currently, there is no comprehensive legislation for the protection of significant ecological communities such as the Pine Bush.

G.3 Wildlife

The diversity of vegetation and ecological communities results in a healthy diversity of wildlife.

New York State and the Audubon Society list Black Creek marsh and the Helderberg Escarpment, as two of the state's most important bird areas requiring long-term conservation. The Department of Environmental Conservation has established Black Creek Marsh as a 360-acre wildlife management area in its Natural Heritage Program. There are several hundred more acres of wetland in the Black Creek Marsh that have yet to be identified.

Rare and endangered species within the Town are discussed under their associated community type, as follows:

Pitch pine-scrub oak barrens and Pitch pine-oak forest - Rare species of amphibians and reptiles include the following State listed special concern species the eastern spadefoot (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*), the spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*), the jefferson salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*) and the eastern hognose snake (*Heterodon platyrhinos*). State listed bird species of special concern include sharp-shinned hawk, (*Accipiter striatus*), cooper's hawk, (*Accipiter cooperii*), red-

shouldered hawk (Buteo lineatus), golden-winged warbler (Vermivora chrysoptera), and yellow-breasted chat (Icteria virens).

Several rare and endangered moths and butterflies utilize the Pine Bush. The Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*) is a federally listed endangered species. Rare species include: bird-dropping moth (*Cerma cora*), a noctuid moth (*Chaetagnathae cerata*, *Zanclagnathae martha*, *Apharetra purpurea*, and *Chytonix sensilis*), a geometrid moth (*Itame* sp.1), dusted skipper (*Atrytonopsis hianna*), and Edwards' hairstreak (*Satyrium edwardsii*).

The Karner blue butterfly and Persius duskywing (*Erynnis persius*) are State listed endangered species which require the wild lupine plant to survive. Wild lupine is the butterfly larvae's sole food source. Elimination of this habitat has severely reduced Karner blue butterfly populations. Several locations of Karner blue butterfly habitat have been identified by the State. One of the objectives of the Pine Bush Management Plan is to preserve these locations and create linkages to other unutilized concentrations of wild lupine in cooperation with State and Federal guidelines. The frosted elfin (*Incisalia irus*) is a state listed threatened species and also requires lupine in the Pine Bush.

The Henry's elfin (*Incisalia henrici*), inland barrens buckmoth (*Hemileuca maia* ssp.3) and mottled duskywing are State listed special concern species that occur within the Pine Bush. The Albarufan dagger moth (*Acronicta albarufa*) is globally rare and is a candidate for federal listing pending collection of additional information. A specimen of this species was taken in 1983. The Karner blue butterfly also occurs within the Pine Bush and in other dry, sandy areas, but its habitat is limited to areas containing wild lupine.

Pine barrens vernal pond - Vernal ponds provide essential breeding habitat for rare species of amphibians and reptiles including the following state listed special concern species: the eastern spadefoot (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*), the spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*), and the Jefferson salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*). Although birds and mammals use the vernal ponds for food and water, they are not dependent on this community type for survival. However, there are a number of amphibians that do depend on this community type. They include the American toad, Fowler's toad (*Bufo woodhousii*), spring peeper (*Hyla crucifera*), and wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*). These and other amphibians constitute the diet of the State listed special concern species, the eastern hognose snake (*Heterodon platyrhinos*).

Red maple-hardwood swamp - The State listed special concern species, Jefferson salamander and spotted turtle are found in this habitat. A noctuid moth (*Macrochilo bivittata*) is known to occur in wetlands but little is known of its foodplant or its biology.

G.4 Wetlands

Wetlands are defined differently by different regulatory agencies, environmental groups, and the scientific community. Most agree, however, that wetlands are

areas of land that experience flooding or soil saturation during some portion of the growing season (around mid-April to mid-November). The presence of other parameters and how they are identified varies widely. For the purposes of comprehensive town planning, discussion is limited to the primary agencies that regulate wetlands in New York State. They include the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).

The State defines wetlands based primarily on vegetation typically adapted to wet conditions (hydrophytes). Some species can be excellent indicators of wetlands since they seldom grow in any other condition. These species are referred to as obligate wetland plants and include such species as cattail, skunk-cabbage, and a variety of sedges, rushes and grasses, to name only a few.

The State also requires a minimum size of 5 hectare (12.4 acres) to be mapped and regulated. State regulated wetlands are classified based on variations in cover type, ecological associations, special features, hydrological and pollution control features, and distribution and location (6 NYCRR 664.5). The highest classification is I and is afforded the highest level of protection; the lowest classification is IV. A 100 foot buffer zone is extended upland from the wetland boundary to protect the wetland from encroaching development and related impacts. Any work occurring within the wetland or its buffer zone requires a permit from NYSDEC pursuant to Article 24 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

Several State regulated wetlands occur within the Town and are identified on Figure 9, *State Wetlands*.

By virtue of their administrative role in implementing and enforcing Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the 1899 Rivers and Harbors Act, the Corps has jurisdiction over all water of the U.S., including wetlands. For most of the Town, Corps jurisdiction is limited to the discharge of dredged or fill material into federal wetlands and other waters described under *Water Resources*.

Federally regulated wetlands are defined by the Corps as:

Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas (33CFR 328.3).

Federal jurisdiction is determined by the identification of three criteria: vegetation adapted to wet conditions (hydrophytes), flooding (hydrology), and hydric soils. Field investigation is the only reliable method of identifying these three criteria or parameters. However, this level of detail is neither necessary nor feasible for comprehensive town planning. The use of available data/mapping is sufficient to identify potential federal wetlands. Further investigation would be necessary for site specific projects. Available mapping includes the NYSDEC Freshwater Wetlands Maps and the Albany County Soil Survey.

The Albany County Soil Survey was used to identify hydric soils in the Town. Hydric soils primarily include poorly drained soils. Hydric soils are defined by the National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils (NTCHS) as "...a soil that is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part" (Soil Conservation Service 1989). Anaerobic conditions (without oxygen) reduces metals in the soil (iron, manganese) such that the color of the soil becomes gray or black.

From an ecological perspective, the presence of hydric soils is one of the best indicators of the presence of federal wetland. If the soil is hydric then the hydrology is present during the growing season. Furthermore, the anaerobic conditions associated with hydric soils will preclude vegetation that is not adapted to wet conditions. For planning purposes, therefore, soils mapping provides an indication of the potential presence of federal wetland. It is not accurate for parcel based mapping (site specific) and it does not address the other two parameters of a federal wetland. Only field inspection by a qualified wetland biologist can define wetland boundaries.

Figure 10 identifies potential federal wetlands based on hydric soil mapping. It is important to note that federal jurisdiction extends to State regulated wetlands, providing these wetlands exhibit the required three wetland criteria.

Opportunities

The ecology of the Town provides numerous opportunities for recreation and the preservation of visual quality and rural character. Forested areas and wetlands provide opportunities for trail development and nature facilities. Ecological communities provide many functions that protect other resources. For example, trees and other vegetation filter the air and provide noise abatement and visual buffers. Diverse wildlife reduces populations of nuisance animals, such as rats and mice, and minimize the occurrence of disease. Many species of birds, bats, amphibians and insects keep harmful insects in check. Wetland communities filter pollutants from water and provide habitat, among many other functions and values.

Constraints

The presence of wetlands and other important habitat on a given piece of property can conflict with development plans. Sometimes the extent of important habitat is so great as to preclude development on a given parcel. However, many times these resources can be preserved and protected through innovative site design. The concept of designing with nature is widely accepted practice and very desirable to potential new homeowners. Currently, wetlands are regulated by the NYSDEC and the Corps.

H. Community Services

H.1 Education

The Guilderland Central School District was established in 1953 and included: a junior and senior high school. Today, public education in the Town of Guilderland is provided by five elementary schools, a middle school, and one high school. There are two private grammar schools located within the Town, they are Christ The King School and St. Madeline Sophie School.

The Guilderland Central School District does not encompass the entire Town. Figure 11, *Community Facilities*, illustrates the school district boundaries. A small percentage of students who live in the Town of Guilderland attend Voorheesville Central Schools, Schalmont Central Schools or Mohonasen Central Schools. None of these school districts have school facilities located in the Town of Guilderland.

Students who reside in the Voorheesville Central School District attend the Voorheesville Elementary School (grades K-6) and the Clayton A. Bouton Jr.-Sr. High School. In September of 1999 there were 649 elementary school students and 671 Jr.-Sr. High School Students enrolled in these schools. The Voorheesville School District is in the process of developing a building plan to accommodate its student population. The district hopes to be ready to present the plan to the public in time for a vote in the spring of the year 2000.

Students within the Schalmont School District attend Pine Grove Elementary School for grades K-1, and Jefferson Elementary School for grades 2-5. Approximately 200 students residing in the Town of Guilderland attend Schalmont Schools. The total September 1999 enrollment in Pine Grove Elementary School was 200 students. The enrollment in Jefferson Elementary School was 500 students. These schools are at capacity. Plans for expanding school facilities were rejected by voters during the most recent budget vote.

Students from Guilderland who attend Mohonasen Schools attend Bradt Elementary School in grades K-2 and Pinewood Elementary School in grades 3-5. There are 747 students attending Bradt Elementary School and 782 students attending Pinewood Elementary School. The district is in the process of implementing its building plan. Additional space has been, or will be added to all buildings in this district.

The largest elementary school in the Town of Guilderland (Guilderland Central School District) is the Westmere Elementary School, located in the most densely populated area in the Town. The Westmere School has a 1999 school year enrollment of 651 students, an increase of 45 students since 1995. A small percentage (approximately 5%) of these students are from the Town of Bethlehem. The middle school which draws students from all of the elementary schools grew by 22 students since 1995.

The smallest elementary school is the Altamont Elementary School, located in a primarily rural area, this school lost 38 students since 1995. A small percentage of students from the Town of Knox attend the Altamont School. The Lynnwood Elementary School lost 4 students since 1995. These were the only two schools in the Guilderland School District which experienced a decreased enrollment with a combined total of -27 students; the enrollment at other schools in the District grew significantly. Although the Pinebush school indicated a total growth of +23 students, they anticipate that this number will increase rapidly over the next few years. Demographics indicate that several new families with young children (not school age) have moved to the Pine Bush area.

Enrollment of the grammar and middle schools has grown by 170 students since 1995. The Guilderland School District anticipates an increase of 36 students for the upcoming fall 1999 school year. There appears to be sufficient capacity in the school to accommodate growth. Additional capacity was added to the high school to address the increasing enrollment. At the present time (fall 1999), the high school completed an expansion program adding 20+ classrooms, a new cafeteria, new library, updated science labs, and expanded the gym which now boasts as being the largest gym in New York State. The expansion and renovation project was supported by a \$24 million bond issue.

Each of the elementary schools reported that they are capable of handling additional population. Each of these schools rent out a minimum of 3 classrooms for special programs within the community.

Table 6
Guilderland Central School District Enrollment Update

School	1995 Enrollment	1998 Enrollment	1999	Diff. 1995-1999
Altamont Elementary	423	400	385	-38
Guilderland Element.	541	570	629	+88
Lynnwood Elementary	442	438	450	+8
Pine Bush Elementary	483	503	506	+23
Westmere Elementary	606	627	651	+45
Farnsworth Middle School	1264	1364	1396	+22
Guilderland High Sch.	Unavailable	Unavailable	1702	

Note: Although Guilderland Elementary School has a +88 student population, 30 students are special education students under the B.O.C.E.S. program.

Table 7
Private School Enrollment Update

School	1999 Enrollment
Christ The King	195
St. Madeline Sophie	150

Note: Christ The King School and St. Madeline Sophie Elementary have reported increased enrollment over the past five years, neither school have enrollment numbers for the 1995 school year.

The annual report card indicated 5,648 children in Guilderland attend public elementary, junior and senior high schools within the Town. Table 6 provides a comparison of enrollment at each school between 1995 and 1999. The school district profile demonstrates a very favorable report card for the school and their demographics.

According to the School District Profile from March 1999, only 1% of the total school population had limited English proficiency; the New York State percentage is 7.7%. Only 3.9% of the total school population is eligible for the state free lunch program; statewide 38% of school age children are eligible for this program.

Most of the school districts within the Town are undergoing demographic studies to determine future needs. A contributing factor to additional space requirements is the increasing role of the computers in education. New residential developments in the Town, most likely will result in a significant impact on the School District.

H.2 Police Services

The Town of Guilderland Police Department currently has a 48 member police force consisting of 31 sworn police officers, 11 telecommunicators, 3 office personnel, and 3 animal control officers. In addition to the Guilderland Police Department, the New York State Police, Albany County Sheriff, and SUNY Police Department all operate within the Town. By agreement with these agencies, the closest car, regardless of agency, will respond to an emergency 911 call. A written agreement exists with the New York State Police to serve as back-up for the town. It was reported that the Town has not experienced any violent crimes and most police issues are property crimes.

At present, staffing and equipment are not at the level anticipated by the Chief of Police. Deficiencies are determined through workshops with the department to discuss call volume, age of equipment and related issues. From these workshops, needs are translated into budget requests.

H.3 Fire Protection Services

Fire protection and suppression in the Town is provided by volunteer firefighters. The Village of Altamont and seven fire districts (Elmwood Park, Fort Hunter, Guilderland, Guilderland Center, McKownville, Pine Grove and Westmere) have the legal responsibility for this activity. In addition, the Town contracts with two other fire districts to protect small areas within the Town that are not covered by fire district boundaries.

A fire district is a municipal government under State law. There are five commissioners elected by the registered voters residing within the geographic boundaries of each of the fire districts. Each district is required to adopt an annual budget subject to the Town laws. The tax rate is established based on the budget and the value of the property in the district. The tax revenue provides funds for firefighting, fire apparatus, equipment, insurance, physical examinations, service awards, and construction and maintenance of the fire station.

The actual firefighting is accomplished by individuals who are members of the fire department or company, which generally has the same name as the district or village. Mutual aid agreements are in place which establish cooperation between fire fighting organizations to provide assistance to each other when required. Fire fighter availability is dependent on the day of week, time of day, type of call, weather, and family commitments. In many cases there are automatic day time or target hazard mutual aid agreements in effect to insure adequate number of personnel. Additionally, mutual aid is requested immediately when it is determined that the initial response is inadequate for the call.

The fire chiefs from each of the fire districts and the Village of Altamont were contacted to identify their current conditions (volunteers, facilities, equipment) and deficiencies/issues. The most important issue is the recruitment and

retention of the volunteer fire fighters. Albany County, the fire districts, and the department/companies sponsor a continual drive to recruit new members. A service awards program has been authorized by State lawmakers to encourage the retention of fire fighters. Other issues include the following:

- Controlling a fire is more easily achieved when buildings have complete sprinkler systems.
- Access should be a primary consideration for new development to facilitate movement of equipment around buildings and sufficient highway/road access.
- Providing adequate water supply.
- Due to issues of daytime fire fighter availability, high occupancy uses should be carefully designed and reviewed. The location of high occupancy uses is also important especially as it relates to the availability of municipal water service.

Volunteer fire departments serve the Town's fire fighting needs. The Town has been divided into nine fire districts. The fire districts and their stations are shown on Figure 11 and include: McKownville Fire Department, Guilderland F.P. 1, Guilderland F.P. 2, Westmere Fire Department, Guilderland Fire Department, Guilderland Center, Fort Hunter, Pine Grove, and Altamont. The fire chiefs from each of the fire districts were contacted to identify their current conditions (volunteers, facilities, equipment) and deficiencies/issues.

The Guilderland Center Fire District has approximately 38 active volunteer members. Through their recruitment program, the District has been able to keep a sufficient number of active members to meet the needs of their service area. Their equipment is maintained to meet all current federal and State requirements as well as to meet the changing needs of the industrial park and the residential neighborhoods. Mutual aid is received from the neighboring fire departments that include: Altamont, Fort Hunter, Guilderland, Pine Grove, Westmere, Voorheesville, and New Salem.

The Guilderland Fire Department is located at 2303 Western Avenue and is part of the Albany County Mutual Aid Plan which establishes cooperation between fire departments and districts to provide assistance to neighboring districts when required. The seven other fire districts within the Town provide back-up service to the Guilderland Fire Department. At present, the Fire Department has 30 active firefighters. Their availability is dependent on the day of the week, time of day, type of call, weather, and family commitments. Mutual aid is requested immediately upon a determination that the response from the Fire Department will be inadequate for the call.

H.4 Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical services (EMS) are provided by the Guilderland EMS, Western Turnpike Rescue Squad, and the Altamont Rescue Squad. The Town has an EMS Coordinator who oversees the operations of the three squads.

Through contact with the EMS Coordinator, considerable information was provided regarding the current status of EMS in the Town.

The Western Turnpike Rescue Squad serves an area of the Town bounded by the Albany city line to the east, Route 158 to the west, the Normans Kill to the south and the towns of Colonie and Rotterdam to the north. There are two stations within this service area, one located at 1853 Western Avenue (Westmere area) and the second at 3686 Carman Road in the Fort Hunter area. The Western Turnpike Rescue Squad provides basic life support through their volunteer ambulance service. Staffing is generally sufficient during the evening hours. During the day, staffing is adequate to support one ambulance. No crews are available for approximately 20 percent of the daytime hours. The Western Turnpike Rescue Squad responds to approximately 2,300 emergencies annually.

Based on contact with the Western Turnpike Rescue Squad, new facilities are needed. They are currently pursuing a capital facilities improvement campaign that would result in the replacement of Route 20 station and renovations to the Carman Road station.

The Altamont Rescue Squad serves an area south of the Normans Kill, that includes Guilderland Center and the Village of Altamont, west to the Schoharie County line, north to the Town of Knox, and east to the Village of Voorheesville. They have one station located north of the Village on Route 146 and provide basic life support. This rescue squad also depends on volunteers and has a much larger problem providing crews during daytime hours. No crews are available for approximately 45-55 percent of the daytime hours. Daytime call volumes dictate that two ambulances should be available. Each call takes approximately 1.5 hours and a second call is received within one hour of the first call approximately 61 percent of the time.

The Guilderland EMS provides advanced life support and serves the entire Town. Their offices and garage are located at Town Hall. Staff include paid full time and part time paramedics, employed by the Town. Staffing is adequate to respond to the volume of calls, approximately 3,000 annually.

Several other agencies can be called upon for back-up as needed. They include: Voorheesville Ambulance, Rotterdam (White Eagle) Ambulance, Colonie EMS, and Five Quad (SUNY) Ambulance.

With the exception of the Guilderland EMS, staffing is a problem during the daytime hours. Each station should be staffed 24 hours a day. Equipment used by each station is adequate and up to date. Response times are based on the national standard of 8 minutes. Since Guilderland EMS serves the entire Town from one facility, certain areas of the Town cannot be reached in 8 minutes. Providing another staff position would help to address the response time issue and to handle the increased volume of calls expected over the next 10 years. Another consideration would be to construct a more centrally located station, perhaps in the Tawasentha Park area.

Concern has been raised by the Guilderland EMS over the sufficiency of space within Town Hall to support EMS operations. To address this issue, Guilderland EMS has proposed a new facility that could be shared with Senior Services. As stated previously, this facility would have to be centrally located. Guilderland EMS would like the facility to include office space, a "day room" for crews and space for conducting EMT classes of approximately 30 students and other community service classes, a garage large enough to house 3-4 vehicles and an ambulance, and parking space.

Likewise, the Western Turnpike Rescue Squad Station 1 on Western Avenue was built in the 1960's and no longer provides sufficient space to meet OSHA requirements. They are considering the purchase of adjacent lands to expand and, as an alternative, property for a new station. They also anticipate the need for a sub-station on Route 155 or in the Veeder Road/Dr. Shaw Road area as the southeastern portion of Guilderland develops.

Opportunities

In general, the school districts in the Town have been able to accommodate growth through expansion of existing facilities. The school report card indicates that the students enrolled in the Guilderland School District are above the New York State minimum level for General Education standards. They have expanded facilities in the Science and Technology laboratories, and have provided updated computer equipment to keep pace with new learning tools. It is a progressive school system, which supports programs to provide appropriate educational opportunities. The other school districts in the Town are also preparing for the future. They face similar concerns as the Guilderland District and are providing additional space to accommodate new students.

Police, fire and emergency services are generally adequate to serve the community and planning by the respective departments/district is underway to address current deficiencies and future growth.

Constraints

Educational needs are continually changing. As a result, facility space requirements per student is increasing. The potential for future overcrowding exists at the elementary schools located near high population growth. Also, changes in school curriculums and space requirements for new technology and State-mandated remedial programs will continue to impose new constraints on school facilities. Schools within the Schalmont School District that are attended by Guilderland children are currently at capacity. Although expansion plans are in place, they have not been approved. Future growth within the district needs to be addressed to insure the highest quality of education is provided.

The availability of volunteers to serve in the fire departments or emergency medical squads may have a significant impact on the ability of these services to meet the needs of a growing community. Volunteers are hard to come by and those who do volunteer are often unavailable during the day. This is a national

issue and is forcing communities to plan for paid fire fighting and emergency service positions.

Access to structures has become an issue for emergency services. Open space requirements, small parking lots, and construction on steep slopes all create problems with reaching structures with ladder equipment.

I. Transportation System

The transportation system within the Town is closely linked to the development patterns of the Capital District. Historically, the cities of Albany, Schenectady, and Troy were the major employment centers. With the growth of suburban towns such as Guilderland, the alignment of the transportation systems was influenced by accessibility to the employment hubs. While Route 20 was once the only route into downtown Albany, other roads such as the NYS Thruway, Wolf Road and Washington Avenue Extension, have been developed that have significantly changed traffic patterns. This has led to development along other routes such as route 155 and 146.

The transportation network within the Town accommodates through traffic from adjoining municipalities, connects neighborhoods within the Town, provides corridors for utilities, and has a significant influence on where development will occur. Supporting the transportation system in the Town are the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) bus routes and freight rail provided by CSX (formerly Conrail).

The local road system in the Town is well established. It is one of the few towns in the State to have two major interstate highways within its borders – I-90 and I-87, hence the slogan “Crossgates of the Capital Region.” The major east-west road in the Town is U.S. Route 20, a federal highway. State routes 146, 155 and 158 comprise the major north-south routes. State roads include Routes 146, 155, 156, 158, and 397. County roads within the Town include Routes 201, 202, 203, 204, 208, 253, 60 and 99.

Roads within the Town can be classified as principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local roads. The primary function of principal arterials is mobility. They serve longer trips of statewide or interstate nature with little land access. Within the Town of Guilderland, the NYS Thruway and the Northway (I-87) are classified as principal arterials.

Mobility is still an important function of minor arterials but they also have a land access component. Typically, these roads facilitate travel between towns and villages and other major attractions. Minor arterials within the Town of Guilderland include State Routes 20, 146, 155, 156, 158, and 397; as well as some of the County routes including: 201, 203, 208, and 253.

Collector roads provide a balance between land access and mobility. Collectors provide linkages between arterials and between major land uses such as

residential, commercial and industrial areas. Collector roads within the Town include both county and local roads. County route collectors include: 202, 204, 60 and 99. Local collectors include: Fuller Station Road, Lydius and E. Lydius, Old State Road, Lone Pine Road, Wormer Road, Church Road, Gardner Road, Settles Hill Road, Becker Road, Grant Hill Road, Nott Road, Doctor Shaw/Veeder Road, Fuller Road, Rapp Road and Kings Road.

The remaining roads in the Town are classified as local roads. The primary function of local roads is to provide access to various land uses. They serve short trips and typically do not carry large volumes of traffic.

The existing road network in the Town of Guilderland is illustrated on Figure 12. The traffic volumes for segments of the State routes were taken from the 1997 Highway Sufficiency Ratings manual (NYS Department of Transportation). These volumes were graphically translated into segment band widths that are directly proportional to the volumes. The wider the band, the higher the traffic volume. Figure 12 clearly illustrates that the section of Route 20 between New Karner Road (Route 155) and the City line has the highest volume of traffic. Volumes drop off dramatically west of Route 20.

The ability of a roadway segment to accommodate increasing traffic volumes is limited by its design capacity. A volume/capacity ratio of 1 or higher generally indicates that the roadway segment is at or near capacity levels and will no longer operate at a Level of Service E or better. Based on the 1997 NYS Highway Sufficiency Ratings manual a few road segments are at or approaching functional capacity. These areas are identified on Figure 12.

Identifying the source of traffic that impacts Route 20, Route 155 and Route 146, as well as other local roads, is an important step in determining what measures are needed to reduce traffic congestion and how much control the Town will have over the implementation of these measures. As shown on Figure 12, much of the traffic along Route 20 is occurring in the Crossgates/Westmere area. There are a number of businesses and offices in this area, as well as medium density residential neighborhoods. From Route 155 to Route 146, the traffic declines to a level commensurate with the road capacity. This is attributed to less development, dictated by less intensive competing uses such as Prospect Hill Cemetery, Guilderland Elementary School, and the Western Turnpike Golf Course. West of the Route 20/146 overlap traffic volumes drop off significantly.

The westward decline in traffic along Route 20 indicates that much of the traffic is generated by the intense development in the eastern portion of the Town. Route 20 is affected by pass through traffic generated to the north from Route 146. Some of this traffic is heading for major destinations within the Town (e.g., Crossgates Mall) while the rest is passing through to the City of Albany.

Congestion along Route 146 south of Route 20 is related to the industrial park and the high school. Some of the traffic along Route 155 is pass through traffic from both the north and the south. Growth outside the Town boundary will continue to have an impact on State and local roads in the Town. Four growth

areas have been identified. They include: the Route 85, Blessing Road and Krum Kill Road area within the Town of Bethlehem; the Route 155, County Route 203 and Krum Kill Road area in the Town of New Scotland; the Route 20 area just across the border in the Town of Princetown; and the Kings Road area in the Town of Colonie.

Development in Princetown will have a direct impact on Route 20, resulting in greater traffic than currently experienced in the western portion of the Town of Guilderland. Development in the Kings Road area will impact Old State Road, having direct impact on residential areas. Route 155 and County Route 203 will experience additional traffic due to development in New Scotland. Likewise, County Route 204 will bring traffic from new development along the Route 85 corridor. Out-of-town traffic from New Scotland and Bethlehem along the County routes will be further confounded by the anticipated development of the southeastern portion of the Town of Guilderland. Sewer and water can be easily extended to this area, resulting in the potential for a significant number of new single family homes.

In 1995, The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) produced a time delay analysis for all major roads (collector streets or higher) in the Capital District. (CDTC: The Metropolitan Congestion Management System, 1995) For the year 2000, four corridors were identified as having "Critical Congestion" which is defined as a corridor having more than 60 excess aggregate person-hours of delay in the PM peak hour. These corridors are New Karner Road/Vly Road, I-87, Washington Avenue/Fuller Road and US 20. By omission, Johnston Road, a minor arterial, and School House Road, a county collector, are not listed as being critically congested.

Projections to the year 2015 indicate that the intersections of Route 20 and Rt. 146, Rt. 155, Johnston Road, I-87 and Fuller Road will have excess delays even if improvements are made according to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The intersection of Rt. 146 and Lydius, will also have excess delays. These intersections are noted on Figure 13.

The transportation improvements identified for the Town of Guilderland in the NYSDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) list include the following:

- NY 397 Bridge over Bozen Kill
- Karner Road Bridge over Thruway
- Old State Road Bridge over Thruway
- New Karner Rd. (NY 155 US 20 NY 5) multi-county 3 mile improvement
- NY 155 from NY85A to NY20 multi-county improvement

Congestion conditions for local streets are not readily available. In order to make an analysis, the ratio of traffic volume to street capacity would have to be done for every local street in Guilderland. A Local Street Congestion Study could be undertaken by the Town as the next step in determining local conditions.

One set of data on local traffic patterns was gathered by the Census Bureau - a work trip count, 1990. An analysis based on Census data shows that more workers commute from Guilderland to other destinations than outside workers coming into Guilderland. The table below presents a synopsis of the table 1990 Census - Workers in the Capital District. Of all Guilderland workers, 10,759 commute to other areas, while 1,890 stay in Guilderland. Conversely 7,314 workers from outside areas commute to Guilderland. The average occupancy of the commuter car is 1.07 for Guilderland (1.08 coming in and 1.06 going out.)

Table 8
Work Trips by Origin & Destination

Origins	Destination		TOTAL
	Guilderland	All other areas Capital Region	
Guilderland	1,890	10,759	12,649
All other Capital Region incl. Albany Co, Rensselaer Co., Schenectady Co., Saratoga Co.	7,314	332,190	339,504
TOTAL	9,204	342,949	352,153

Although most people utilize private automobiles to reach their destinations, there is bus service in and around the Guilderland area. The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) provides regional bus service with local stops in the Town of Guilderland. The County routes include three fixed route lines with service limited to major shopping areas and along Route 20. The CDTA shuttle buses provide service to Crossgates Mall and the 20 Mall. Service is also provided to the Northeastern Industrial Park.

The 1990 Census shows that 428 journey-to-work bus trips are taken to Guilderland each day, while 354 trips are taken by Guilderland residents going elsewhere in the Capital Region to work. Only 25 work trips originate and end inside Guilderland.

Based on communication with the CDTA, the use of bus service is hindered by the lack of contiguous sidewalks along Route 20. As new development occurs, portions of sidewalks are being constructed and may one day provide pedestrians with a safe haven along Route 20. However, the current situation requires people to walk along busy streets to get to designated bus stops. Pedestrian linkages between residential areas, local shopping, and bus stops should increase the use of public transportation and help to decrease traffic congestion. The CDTA has also unveiled plans to provide bike racks on buses. This will enable people in suburban areas to ride their bikes to bus stops, particularly when stops are limited.

There is no direct link to passenger rail service in the Town. The high speed rail line (Amtrak) runs on the east side of the Hudson River between New York City and Albany and west to Buffalo or Montreal. The closest Amtrak stops to Guilderland residents are located in Schenectady and Rensselaer counties. The CDTA bus service provides transportation to rail service in and around the region.

Albany International Airport is located in close proximity to the Town of Guilderland and limited public transportation links the community to the airport.

Opportunities

Access is a key element for future development. Fortunately, the Town has very good access through its road network consisting of State, County and local roads. Direct access from the Northway and the Thruway promotes intrastate, interstate, and international connections that are crucial for many types of businesses.

Constraints

Several segments of the State road network have been identified as at or near functional capacity. The result is a poor level of service that can frustrate drivers, increase the chance of accidents, and create noise and air quality impacts on the adjacent residential neighborhoods. A transportation corridor management plan needs to be implemented to ensure safe and efficient travel and protect the quality of life.

Significant increases in development may result in the need to improve the capacity of existing roads as well as construct new roads. This necessity can conflict with other important goals such as the protection of open space and agricultural land preservation. These types of "improvements" often effect the quality of life of an area through decreased traffic safety, increased runoff, decreased water quality, decreased air quality, and increased noise. They can also have a significant effect on the aesthetics of an area. A more recent example of the impact of traffic on residential areas is occurring along Route 146 in Guilderland Center. Traffic associated with the industrial park and the high school has decreased the ability of neighbors to interact by hindering pedestrian access and creating pedestrian safety concerns, either real or perceived.

The Town has no control over development occurring outside its boundaries. Four developing areas have been identified that will likely result in increased traffic within the Town. In order to overcome these traffic concerns, the Town will need to work closely with regional planning agencies, such as the Capital District Transportation Committee, the NYS Department of Transportation, and the adjacent municipalities.

J. Utilities

J.1 Water Supply

Water supply in the Town of Guilderland is provided by the Town from the following sources (Figure 13): the Watervliet Reservoir via the Water Treatment Plant located in the Northeast Industrial Park, three municipal wells located off of Nott Road and Route 155, and emergency interconnects with the City of Albany and the Town of Bethlehem. A permanent Albany Interconnect, located at Gipp Road, will be on line in 2000. By contract with the City of Albany, this interconnect will provide 2 million gallons per day (mgd) of treated water to the Town of Guilderland. The Emergency Albany Interconnect will remain but will only be used as back-up, when needed, to supplement the other sources.

The Watervliet Reservoir serves both the City of Watervliet and the Town of Guilderland. Its capacity is approximately 1.8 billion gallons (Van Buskirk Associates 1984) and has a safe yield of 12 mgd. By contract with the City of Watervliet, the Town of Guilderland may take up to 4 mgd and up to 5 mgd for peak demand.

The Town wells have a combined yield of approximately 2.0 mgd peak production and serve only the Town. By permit with the NYSDEC, the total average draw from the wells is 0.5 mgd. Each of the wells are treated on-site. Wells 1 and 2 are located near the intersection of Route 155 and Nott Road. In 1998, Well #1 had an average daily production of 7,100 gallons per day (gpd) and a peak production of approximately 0.8 mgd. Due to high iron concentrations, this well is used sparingly. Well #2 had an average daily production of approximately 94,500 gpd and a peak production of 0.5 mgd. Well #3 is located south of wells 1 and 2, off of Route 155. In 1998, this well had an average daily production of 0.2 mgd and a peak production of approximately 0.8 mgd. The wells serve as supplements to the other water sources during periods of peak demand due to water quality issues and some problems blending different water sources (surface water with groundwater).

The Emergency Albany Interconnect is currently used by the Town. Based on contract with the City of Albany, approximately 1.0 mgd is available to the Town. Average daily production is approximately 0.4 mgd. The Bethlehem Emergency Interconnect is not used on a regular basis but is available and will continue to be available for emergency use.

J.2 Water Treatment

Water from the Watervliet Reservoir is conveyed to the Water Treatment Plant via a 16-inch raw water line. The capacity of the pump station at the reservoir is 6 mgd, however, the 16-inch water line can only convey 4.5 mgd. The Water Treatment Plant is capable of producing 5.0 mgd but is restricted to 4.5 mgd by the capacity of the raw water line.

Water from the 3 wells is treated with chlorine at each well site. The Town is also responsible for the chlorination and fluorination of water from the City of Albany at the new permanent Albany interconnect.

J.3 Distribution

The availability of water to meet current peak demand and future development is limited by the treatment capacity of the Water Treatment Plant and storage capacity within the water distribution system. Water systems are typically designed to meet peak demand. In Guilderland, peak demand occurs around the third week in July, in conjunction with the typical hot and dry conditions of mid-summer. Based on approximately 27,000 people within the existing Guilderland Water District, the peak demand is estimated to be 6.5 mgd. In 1998, the peak demand based on the Guilderland Water District Production Records was 6.03 mgd, with an average daily demand of 3.43 mgd. In 1999, the peak demand exceeded 7 mgd. The current available peak production from all of the water sources is about 7.5 mgd. This would meet the current demand except for limitations imposed by the distribution system and a lack of storage. If it were not for restrictions on the use of sprinklers, the demand would exceed the ability to distribute the water.

Efforts are underway to address the distribution problem and to provide additional source water. Figure 13 shows the existing water lines, planned improvements, water tanks, water sources, and the emergency interconnects with Albany and the Town of Bethlehem. Guilderland is currently implementing their water system improvement plan. Phase 1 of this plan involved the location and design of the permanent Albany interconnect and Phase 2 involved the expansion of the water treatment plant. Phase 3 involves improvements to the storage and distribution system, which will result in looped distribution systems and a greater storage. These improvements are identified on Figure 13.

Water line improvements along Depot Road up to the railroad tracks are under construction. The remaining portion of this loop (Phase 3) along Depot Road, Grant Hill Road, Relyea Road and Wormer Road are in the design phase. This loop will include a 2.0 mgd storage tank on Relyea Road. Other improvements in the design phase include a parallel water line along Route 146 and Vosburgh Road, between the Water Treatment Plant and the Normans Kill; and a parallel raw water line from the Watervliet Reservoir to the Water Treatment Plant. Provision of the second raw water line will convey enough water to allow the Water Treatment Plant to operate at full capacity (5 mgd).

The permanent Albany Interconnect (2.0 mgd) will increase the available peak production to 9.0 mgd. This additional capacity coupled with an improved water distribution system will enable the Town to meet current peak demand and the forecasted demand of 8.0 mgd projected to the year 2015, a 19 percent increase.

Since the planning horizon for this Comprehensive Plan is 20 years, water use should be projected out to 2020. This was accomplished by applying the same growth rate (approximately 1.3 percent per year) used for the 2015 projection

over the next 5 years. This resulted in an additional 0.52 mgd by 2020, exceeding the capacity of the water system and requiring further improvements. Table 9 provides a summary comparison of water supply and current peak demand (1999) and that projected to 2020.

**Table 9
 Current and Projected Water Supply and Demand**

	Water Sources			Total
	Reservoir & Treatment Plant	*Wells	City of Albany	
Current Peak Supply	4.5 mgd	2.0 mgd	1.0 mgd	7.5 mgd
Supply After Planned Improvements	5.0 mgd	2.0 mgd	2.0 mgd	9.0 mgd
1999 Peak Demand				7.0 mgd
2020 Forecasted Demand				8.5 mgd

**Wells used sparingly due to water quality issues, therefore, actual current and future reliable supply is less than that shown.*

It is also anticipated that pressure will continue from potential out-of-district users to be served by the Town. The potential to serve these users would depend on the ability to collect sufficient revenues to offset capital and operational costs.

Each request for water service beyond that which the system can supply after the current planned improvements are implemented should be evaluated for economic feasibility. The planned improvements are designed to meet current peak demand and that anticipated from future development within the water district to the year 2015. Limited capital improvement funds have been established to address the cost of these improvements to reduce the potential for significant rate increases. Development outside of the water district, either within or outside of the Town, that desires water service must meet the economic feasibility test to avoid the need for in-district users to pay for new water system improvements.

J.4 Wastewater

Areas served by sanitary sewers are shown on Figure 14. In the far eastern corner of the Town, a network of sanitary sewers conveys wastewater through both City of Albany sewers and District sewers to be treated at the Albany County Sewer District Wastewater Treatment plant located in Menands. The remaining sewer areas in the eastern portion of the Town convey flows to the Nott Road wastewater treatment plant. The Guilderland Center wastewater treatment plant serves the Northeastern Industrial Park and Guilderland Center.

By contract with Albany County, the Town can convey up to 1.1 mgd to the Albany County Sewer District via the East Dillenbeck pump station. The

current flow (1999) is approximately 0.9 mgd. The Nott Road facility has a design capacity of 2.6 mgd and is currently averaging inflows of approximately 1.9 mgd. The design capacity of the Guilderland Center facility is 0.38 mgd and currently receives 0.15 mgd.

Based on the above information, it would appear that there is excess capacity of approximately 0.7 mgd at the Nott Road facility, 0.23 mgd at the Guilderland Center facility, and 0.3 mgd in the Albany County system. However, each system is experiencing infiltration and inflow (I & I) problems. Infiltration results from cracked pipes in older systems that allow water in the ground to enter the system. Inflow results from direct input of stormwater to the system from the direct connection of gutter and basement drains to the sanitary sewer. Therefore, when accounting for I & I, only the Albany County and Guilderland Center systems currently provide some excess capacity.

Heavy rainfall and the I & I problems associated with the conveyance system for the Nott Road facility resulted in a violation of the wastewater discharge permit in 1998. This prompted a consent order from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to investigate and address the issue. The Town is implementing an I & I reduction program for the major trunk lines to gain lost capacity as a short-term solution. As part of the consent order, the NYSDEC has requested that future expansion of the facility be addressed.

Despite the potential available treatment capacity of 0.7 mgd, I & I problems continue to diminish this excess capacity.

J.5 Other Utilities

Contact was made with utility companies such as Niagara Mohawk, Bell Atlantic and the various cellular companies. In general, the Town is well served by gas, electric, telephone, and fiber optics. Cellular service is generally good along major routes in the Town. Bell Atlantic and CellurlarOne indicate that they have complete digital coverage in the Town. Sprint, Omnipoint and Nextel have less coverage.

Opportunities

Sewer and water service are two very significant factors in the ability of a community to grow. Based on planned improvements to the water distribution and storage system and the establishment of the Permanent Albany Interconnect, the Town should be capable of meeting current (6.5 mgd) and future (8.0 mgd) peak demand up to the year 2015. However, the ability to expand the distribution system beyond what is currently planned will require an expansion of water supply. A significant amount of water is available from the Watervliet Reservoir but would require expansion of the water treatment plant. A wellhead protection plan is underway in the Town that will identify and protect potential future groundwater sources. This is discussed in greater detail in this section under the topic "Water Resources." The full extent of

groundwater resources that could be used to reduce the Town's dependency on other municipalities is being investigated.

The ability to expand sewer service in the Town is highly limited at present. Addressing I & I issues will gain some lost capacity but, ultimately, expansion of the Nott Road wastewater treatment plant will be necessary. The Guilderland Center facility appears to be capable of handling growth within the sewer district. If expansion of the Guilderland Center service district is considered, expansion of the wastewater treatment plant may be necessary. Capacity also exists within the Albany County sewer district. Sufficient capacity appears to be available to serve the remaining vacant lands within the portion of the Albany County Sewer District located in the eastern portion of the Town.

A goal of providing sewer and water to the entire Town may be unreasonable and undesirable. In addition to the cost of the distribution and collection systems, including pump stations and storage tanks necessary to overcome the higher elevations in the western portion of the Town, the preservation of agricultural lands and other open space are equally important goals that tend to conflict with the provision of utilities.

Other utilities appear to be available or capable of expansion to service new development. Fiber optic and cellular services have also become important factors in attracting new business.

Constraints

Expansion of the water treatment and wastewater treatment plants, the exploration of well sites, and the provision of distribution and collection systems are expensive capital improvements. Therefore, the ability to expand sewer and water service will be a function of the Town finances and the willingness of the community to pay for these services. An alternative to the typical capital improvement program and financing is to conduct a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the portion of the Town determined to be acceptable for future growth. By identifying future impacts to sewer and water services, as well as roads and other environmental resources, through the SEQR process, the Town can identify and require "mitigation fees" for future development. This results in less impact on the tax base and a more equitable means of paying for improvements.

The presence of poorly drained hydric soils throughout the Town limit the location of septic tanks and wells. See Figure 10, *Hydric Soils Map*, for the location and extent of poorly drained hydric soils that are an indication of the presence of federal wetlands. If septic systems are inadvertently placed in these soils, system failure is a likely result if not properly designed and maintained.

The presence of an Agricultural District in the Town is an opportunity for the agricultural community but a potential constraint on the development community since provision of municipal sewer and water in a Agricultural

District promotes development which ultimately results in the loss of agricultural land. This would be contrary to the Agricultural Preservation Act.

K. Recreational Resources

The Town has numerous recreational resources that are available for public and private use. Recreation is typically divided into active and passive. Active recreation includes organized play areas such as ball fields, playgrounds, and indoor facilities. Passive recreation includes all those activities that do not require organized grounds or facilities. Examples of passive recreation include hiking, biking, fishing, bird watching, and picnics.

Figure 15 shows the location of each of the Town parks. Both active and passive recreational opportunity is provided at Tawasentha Park. This is the largest Town-owned park, offering field sports, tennis, a swimming pool, a performing arts center, and passive uses. The Town owns eight other parks: Nott Road Park, Keenholts Park, Fred Abele Park, Dr. Shaw Road Park, Fort Hunter Park, Volunteer Fireman's Park, Fusco Park, and the Guilderland Conservation Area. Table 10 shows the facilities and size of some of these parks.

The Albany Pine Bush Preserve offers additional opportunities for passive recreation. The preserve contains hiking trails through a unique ecosystem. Other State lands include the Black Creek Marsh State Wildlife Management Area and a portion of Thatcher State Park.

Six privately operated golf courses are located in the Town. Hiawatha Trails is located on Route 155, south of Route 20. The Albany Country Club is located in the southern portion of the Town along Wormer Road. Western Turnpike Golf Course is located south of the intersection of Route 20 and Route 146. Pinehaven Country Club is located on Siver Road. Frenchs Hollow Fairways is located south of the Watervliet reservoir on the north side of Hurst Road. Finally, Orchard Creek Golf Course is located on Dunnsville Road near the Village of Altamont.

Table 10
Town of Guilderland Parks Inventory

Name of Park	Acreage	Facilities
Tawasentha	192	Babe Ruth baseball field Swimming pool, Baby pool Guilderland Performing Arts Center 4 Tennis courts 1 Basketball court Walking trails Aboretum 2 Pavilions Playground Volley ball court Fishing access Informal ball fields/open spaces Picnic sites Bathroom facility Maintenance facility Community gardens Rock climbing wall Winter recreation area
Keenholts	54	4 Youth softball fields 7 Youth baseball fields 2 Tee ball fields 1 Future Babe Ruth field
Fort Hunter	5	1 Youth baseball field Playground
Abele	7	1 Softball field Playground
Volunteer Firefighters Memorial Park	8	Playground 1 Soccer field 1 Softball field
Nott Road	36	5 Adult softball fields 4 Soccer fields Lighting on 1 soccer & 1 softball field
Fusco	28	Open Space
Dr. Shaw Road	20	Open Space

Opportunities

The Town of Guilderland is blessed with many opportunities for recreational activity. The Town parks, State lands, golf courses, and other open space provide both active and passive recreation. As future development occurs, opportunities exist for the creation of neighborhood parks and trails. Utility and transportation corridors provide opportunities for the development of trails linking recreational resources with developed areas.

Constraints

The primary constraint to park/trail development is the cost. This cost includes purchase of land, development of facilities, insurance, and loss of tax revenue from the affected parcel.

The development of a parcel or trail with recreational facilities is subject to the same environmental constraints as other types of development.

L. Economics

The relatively high level of education within the Town is reflected in the relatively high household income levels. The 1989 median household income for Guilderland was \$42,419 as compared to \$33,358 for Albany County and \$32,965 for New York State. Of all households in the Town of Guilderland, 60.4% have an income between \$25,000 and \$74,999, as compared to 52% for Albany County and 48% for New York State. A breakdown of 1990 income levels are provided in Table 11.

**Table 11
 Household Income Levels**

Income Levels	Guilderland	Percent of total	Albany Co.	Percent of total	NY State	Percent of total
\$0-14,999	1,105	9.69%	23,510	20.28%	1,526,285	23.01%
15,000-24,999	1,304	11.44%	19,051	16.44%	999,183	15.06%
25,000-34,999	1,908	16.75%	18,084	15.60%	950,695	14.33%
35,000-49,000	2,475	21.73%	22,820	19.69%	1,145,247	17.26%
50,000-74,999	2,500	21.95%	20,024	17.28%	1,108,921	16.71%
75,000-99,999	1,172	10.29%	7,062	6.09%	454,648	6.85%
100,000-149,000	658	5.78%	3,725	3.21%	285,138	4.30%
150,000+	270	2.37%	1,625	1.40%	164,317	2.48%
No of households	11,392	100.00%	115,901	100%	6,634,434	100.00%

Source: 1989:1990 Income & Poverty Status Tables, US Census

Table 11 shows a comparison of payroll statistics for Guilderland and Albany County. These represent the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries as defined by the Census bureau as the taxable portion of the Services Sectors. The 1997 Economic Census uses the NAICS as a more flexible system for classifying individual business locations, replacing the Standard Industrial Classification System that began 60 years ago.

Jobs in health care and social assistance account for 30% of the total annual NAICS payroll for Guilderland as compared to 14% for the State. The 102 health care and social assistance establishments listed in the Table are probably located on Western Avenue in the corridor closest to Albany. These businesses should be encouraged to stay in the area and continue to provide jobs in health care services. The health care industry is growing and likely to play an even more important part in the general economy in Guilderland as well as nationally. The next two tables present jobs that Guilderland generates in the town itself and jobs that Guilderland residents hold. The table presented below shows projections for employment generated by businesses in the Town of Guilderland. The Village of Altamont generates 259 of these jobs. People who live outside the Town of Guilderland may also hold some of these jobs. Wholesale and retail trade are the biggest sectors, followed by services, and public administration.

Table 12
Employment Projections by Place of Work

Industry	1990	2000	2010	2020
Agricultural, Forestry, Fisheries, & Mining	104	117	128	131
Construction	598	736	743	716
Manufacturing	272	225	202	178
Transportation, Comm & Public Utilities	165	152	156	161
Wholesale & Retail Trade	3,998	4,907	5,052	5,037
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,208	1,535	1,595	1,535
Services	2,605	2,924	3,094	2,965
Public Administration	1,931	1,914	1,922	1,921
Total	10,881	12,510	12,892	12,644

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission: 1998

In addition to retail and commerce, the Town of Guilderland continues to support agriculture. Farms in general are businesses. The value of agricultural products in the Town are estimated at \$25 million. A study of economic multipliers by the New York State Department and Cornell University revealed that dollar-for-dollar agricultural income has a larger impact on the economy than non-agricultural industries. This is primarily due to the fact that the

agricultural industry expends more money locally than other industries. From a fiscal perspective, farms have far less impact on community services (e.g., schools, emergency services, recreation, etc.) than residential uses, therefore having less impact on local expenses.

The Table below shows 1990 employment figures for Guilderland residents. These figures show the number of Guilderland residents employed in the various industries, which may or may not be located in the Town of Guilderland. Of the total number of jobs, residents in Altamont hold 796 of them.

Table 13
1990 Employment by Industry & Place of Residence

Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, & Mining	156
Construction	850
Manufacturing	1,181
Transportation, Communications & Public Utilities	879
Wholesale Trade	567
Retail Trade	2,411
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,469
Services	6,291
Public Administration	2,360
TOTAL	16,164

Source: Capital District Regional Planning Commission: 1998

It can be inferred from comparing this table to the last one that some Guilderland residents leave the Town to work elsewhere, especially in the Services Sector which employs 6,291 of Guilderland's residents. Guilderland itself generates only 2,605 jobs in the Service Sector. This analysis for commuter out-migration is supported by the 1990 Census commuter trip counts which show more workers leaving Guilderland to work than coming in – 10, 759 leaving for work elsewhere, 7,759 coming in from other areas, and 1,890 commuting within Guilderland (see the Transportation Section for complete figures).

Guilderland generates wholesale and retail jobs that are partially filled by non-Guilderland residents, since only 2,978 wholesale and retail jobs region-wide are held by residents of Guilderland compared to the 3,998 wholesale and retail jobs that are generated by Guilderland businesses.

Opportunities

The Town has potential for economic development on several fronts. However, the most significant may be good access and the potential for sewer and water service, particularly in the eastern portion of the Town. Finally, the Town's agricultural industry can be preserved and marketed. Assistance to farmers and potential farmers in the form of education, loans and flexible zoning may

encourage new generations to consider farming as a career. With a healthy economic base, new businesses are encouraged to locate in the Town. This is supported by County-wide marketing efforts.

Constraints

Unplanned and poor quality development that consumes important community resources will damage the long range economic health of the Town. The attributes that make Guilderland a desirable place to live and work may result in an increase in development pressure on open spaces and important environmental areas (e.g., Pine Bush). Thus the establishment of a land use plan and development guidelines and regulations is critical to the Town's future.

Chapter III: Community Vision

The foundation of a good comprehensive plan is public input, early and often throughout the planning process

Visualizing the future of the Town of Guilderland is an intensive and very important component of the Comprehensive Plan. It requires the input of Town leaders and residents and the knowledge of Town resources that provide opportunities and constraints on land use and services. Individual visions are biased by personal goals and preferences. To limit these biases, good comprehensive planning seeks public input early in the process. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the first step of the comprehensive planning process is the initiation of a community survey. Survey results provide a clearer picture of community opinion on town-wide services and the quality of life. Recognizing the importance of public involvement, the Town of Guilderland sought methods of community outreach beyond the traditional survey. A Community Outreach Program was initiated with the intent of continuing public involvement throughout the planning process. Combined with the results of the inventory and analysis (opportunities and constraints), the various components of the Community Outreach Program allowed the future picture of the Town to materialize. This was further refined into a vision statement that dictated the goals and objectives and the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is easy to see why "visioning" is such an important component of the Comprehensive Plan. Without it there is no guidance for composing the goals and objectives that ultimately formulate the Plan. The Plan to follow is deep-rooted in community involvement, guided by a well-conceived Community Outreach Program, a Vision Statement that captures the essence of the Town's future form and function, and concise goals and objectives that frame the Plan.

A. Community Outreach

The Community Outreach Program was spearheaded by the Public Participation Subcommittee. Several opportunities for community outreach were identified along with the means by which the outreach programs would be implemented. They included: community surveys, study circles, focus group workshops, neighborhood meetings, Advisory Board/community work sessions, public hearings, and fact-finding outreach. Each are described and discussed below:

A.1 Community Survey

A community survey was distributed to every household in the Town (12,007 mailings). The purpose of the broad distribution was to afford the majority of people in the Town the opportunity to participate in the planning process. It was also a means of informing everyone about the comprehensive plan process, a process that relies on input from the community in order to be successful. In addition to the mailed surveys, a random sample of 100 phone surveys was conducted.

Approximately 3,000 written surveys were returned to the Town, resulting in a return rate of 25 percent. The minimum return for statistical validity is 5 percent. Responses were tabulated and presented in a "Report of Findings" (Fact Finders Nov. 18, 1999).

The telephone survey of 100 residents was structured so that the number of telephone interviews conducted within each of the Town's zip codes was reflective of the approximate proportional differences in population.

The methodology and results of the mail and phone surveys are provided in greater detail in the "Report of Findings." The following provides the highlights of the mail survey.

The overall quality of life in the Town was rated high. When asked how the quality of life rated in comparison with other communities, 59 percent of the respondents rated Guilderland higher. The majority of people (55%) believe that they get good value for their tax dollar. Likewise, the majority of residents (61%) approve of the services provided by the Town, which is probably why the former response is positive.

The survey questioned residents' attitudes towards growth. Interestingly, there appears to be a split in how residents perceive the past and current rate of growth with 52% considering the growth rate acceptable and 43% feeling growth is occurring too quickly. Of those people who feel growth is too fast, the majority identified the growth in residential and commercial development and the associated increases in traffic as the primary issues.

A series of questions were asked to identify the importance of a Town Center. A Town Center is similar to a Hamlet defined by municipal facilities such as the Town Hall, a library, post office, parks or other open spaces as well as limited service oriented commercial uses. The majority of respondents (74%) do not believe that a Town Center currently exists. The majority of those who do feel that there is a Town Center, identified Town Hall/McCormack Corners area as the Town Center. When asked if a new Town Center should be developed, the majority of respondents (62%) said no.

Attitudes towards business development were sought based on the general types of business: retail, commercial office space, and industrial. In each case, respondents indicated that there was currently enough or too much development. Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents (57%) want the Town to discourage future business development in undeveloped areas of the Town. However, the margin of difference is closer to a split than an overwhelming majority. This may suggest that many residents are impacted by business development, whether by land use conflicts or secondarily by noise, odors, or traffic. For those impacted by development, locating new development elsewhere in the Town might be perceived as a benefit. Nevertheless, the type and location of new business development in the Town is clearly an issue.

The survey also indicates that the current pattern of residential development involving the development of single-family homes in standard subdivisions and the development of apartments, condominiums and townhouses in general is unfavorable. Approximately 64-67% of the respondents indicated that there is enough of this type of development with another 18-25% indicating there is too much. However, the idea of creating village or hamlet style neighborhoods appears to be more appealing. Although the majority of respondents (53%) feel there is enough village or hamlet style development, 42% feel there is not enough. There also appears to be a perceived deficiency in senior housing with almost 60% of the respondents indicating there is not enough.

When asked if the Town should encourage or discourage residential development in undeveloped areas, the majority of respondents (60%) indicated that the Town should discourage development. This relates well to the previous results. It is likely that a portion of the respondents who would like to encourage residential development are those who responded favorably to the development of village/hamlet neighborhoods and senior housing.

Recreational resources are valued amenities in most communities, especially those that are residentially based. The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents (51%) believe there are enough outdoor recreational opportunities related to ball fields, swimming and picnic areas. However, almost 47% indicated that there are not enough of these facilities. Very few (2%) indicated that there are too many facilities. The majority shifts slightly when asked the same question regarding neighborhood parks and playgrounds with 56% indicating that there are not enough of these facilities. Combined, the results suggest a need for additional recreational facilities with a priority on neighborhood parks and playgrounds. Given that in both questions only 2% of the respondents indicated that there are too many of these resources suggests that there will be a perceived deficiency in recreational resources as the community grows over the next 20 years, providing that no new facilities are constructed.

The survey was also designed to identify resident's perception of the future of Guilderland in terms of some key issues that effect land use and transportation. Based on the survey results, residents overwhelmingly (80%) support efforts to protect the Town's drinking water supply. They also afford a high priority to the preservation of open space (64%). However, a later question regarding the willingness of residents to pay an increase in taxes to protect open space resulted in a split between those willing to pay and those not willing. A slight majority (43%) identifies the expansion of town water and sewer distribution lines as a moderate priority with another 40% identifying this issue as a high priority.

Residents appear to be divided on transportation issues. The majority of respondents (41%) identified the expansion of mass transit as a high priority with 21% identifying this issue as a low priority. Likewise,

increasing road capacity is afforded a slight majority (38%) as a high priority but those identifying this issue as a low priority climbed to 26%. The provision of sidewalks is evenly distributed among high, moderate and low priority. The provision of bike paths is also evenly distributed with a slight majority identifying this as a moderate priority. Few (18%) identified the addition of park and ride lots as a high priority.

Demographic information gathered by the survey provides some insight to the character and composition of the Town's resident population. In general, respondents are predominantly married with a slightly higher percentage without children. The majority of respondents have attained a bachelor's degree or graduate level study. Most respondents are at least 40 years of age and have a household income of \$50,000 or more. Few respondents (8%) make less than \$25,000 per year while 23% make in excess of \$100,000. Gender is essentially split with slightly more men than women.

The demographic information indicates that the population is aging (consistent with State and national trends), which is important when considering the types of services and amenities offered to residents, it is also well educated and generally financially sound. When considering what types of jobs would be supported by the local work force, it appears that well-paying, professional or high-tech positions would be most suitable.

A.2 Study Circles

Study Circles were also formed as an alternative model for providing input to the comprehensive planning process. This is a grassroots organization sponsored by the Town of Guilderland and the national Study Circles Resource Center, which provided the structure for many ongoing small group discussions. Each group consisted of 8-12 participants led by trained facilitators and recorders. All residents who volunteered to participate in this process were included in a Study Circle. A total of 96 residents met in three sessions of two hours each. From these sessions, three major concerns emerged: traffic, environment, and the way government policies affect growth and development.

Beginning with the issue of traffic, residents identified numerous impacts of increased traffic volume, primarily safety and quality of life. They also recognized some of the problems that cause traffic congestion, such as multiple driveways in close proximity along portions of Route 20, a single arterial serving the community, and truck traffic through residential neighborhoods. Despite the concern over traffic congestion, the residents did not recommend popular short-term traffic solutions, such as road widening and constructing new roads. They believe that there may be more creative methods of decreasing congestion while improving the pedestrian environment and public transportation.

Participating residents commented that suburban sprawl has had significant impacts on the environment, such as the loss of open space, farmland,

wildlife corridors, and significant ecosystems (Pine Bush). In their opinions, the short-term administrations make it very difficult to conduct long-term and meaningful planning. They note that small impacts from individual developments result in cumulative, significant impacts. Therefore, as a solution, they propose allowing the Town's natural limits on water supply to limit future growth. They point to the recent permanent Albany interconnect as an artificial means of providing water to allow residents to water their lawns during dry periods.

The final major issue discussed in Study Circles was that of the impact government policies have on growth. An obvious example has been the construction of roads and highways which has ultimately led to the suburban phenomena. Local land use regulations intended to prevent certain types of growth have resulted in greater land use impacts. Participating residents cite the use of 1-acre zoning as a means of eliminating denser development. However, the result has been the development of much larger areas of land, limiting open space and other land uses, such as recreation and farming. The residents also believe that there is a lack of long-range planning for growth and that the average resident has been left out of the process. Most planning appears to be reactive vs. proactive.

This short synopsis of the results of Study Circles does not do their work justice. Their efforts have been reviewed and incorporated into the planning process and recommendations. Full minutes/meeting notes were taken for each of the sessions. This work is available for public review. The results of their discussions has provided greater insight into the issues touched on more briefly in the community survey and other community outreach meetings. The issues discussed and the potential solutions proposed show a sophisticated understanding of land use, environmental and social issues.

A.3 Focus Group Workshops

The Focus Group Workshops were public forums where information was presented on specific topics and the public was afforded the opportunity to discuss opportunities, issues and the desired state or condition. The first workshop focused on economic development and housing. After a facilitated process of defining problems, issues and solutions, statements regarding the current and desired state of the economy and housing were formulated. Beginning with the current state, residents in attendance identified a need to diversify the employment and tax base through various incentives. At the same time, residents recognize a need to protect the Town from business that result in adverse impacts to the environment and community character.

Under the desired state, residents in attendance envision Guilderland as a place with suitable and appropriate development, which contributes to the tax base and aesthetics of the community.

Concepts for the current state of housing in the Town focused on providing village or hamlet scale housing, improving and reuse of existing homes before allowing new development, and protecting the rural areas of Town. Under the desired state, residents in attendance took a broader view of housing, recommending a range of housing options, including rental and home owner, which provide affordable housing opportunities for all income levels. Growth should be well planned. Decisions should be made in a manner that considers the cost of growth and staging growth over time. Residential neighborhoods should be focused around neighborhoods where services are easily accessible by sidewalk or bike path.

The second focus group workshop reviewed natural resources, open space and agricultural preservation. Major natural resources in the Town were identified: Pine Bush, Helderberg Escarpment, Watervliet Reservoir and watershed, and stream channels and their associated features, including wetlands. The Town Environmental Resources Committee also identifies parks and recreation areas as another priority issue.

Residents in attendance recommended that important environmental areas be preserved while other less critical but nonetheless important features be protected from development impacts. In like manner, farmland should be preserved though incentives. Preservation techniques for both natural resources and farmland should consider property rights and focus on incentive based measures.

The third Focus Group Workshop topic was transportation and infrastructure. Due to the input from Town officials and other public entities and the issues surrounding both transportation and infrastructure, statements regarding the desired state and solutions to issues could not be worked out in the time allotted. However, several issues were identified including whether or not to serve the entire Town with water and sewer, water source and wastewater treatment limitations, traffic congestion on local roads due to congestion on arterials, the availability of public transportation, truck traffic associated with the Northeast Industrial Park, and cooperation with the NYS Department of Transportation in planning for road improvements.

The fourth and final Focus Group Workshop occurred on October 18, 1999 and addressed recreation and cultural resources. Deficiencies were identified for each issue. Recreational deficiencies include funding, limited field space for soccer, lack of trail systems, and lack of winter activities. Residents in attendance identified fields and indoor facilities as the recommended top priorities.

Cultural resource deficiencies include a lack of youth activities, lack of gathering places/activities for seniors, limited facilities for small performances, lack of protection for historic sites. The recommended top priorities included protecting the Town's history, trail development

(providing connections), and the development of a multi-use, multi-generation facility.

A.4 Neighborhood Meetings

Four neighborhood meetings were conducted to provide residents throughout the Town the opportunity to voice their opinions and suggestions in their own neighborhoods. It gave them an opportunity to discuss issues with fellow neighbors that are specific to their location. Meetings were held at the Fort Hunter Fire House on September 28, 1999, the McKownville Fire House on September 30, O'Connor's Antiques & Auctions on October 19, and Guilderland Center Fire House on October 21. At each of these meetings, residents in attendance were asked what they liked about where they live, what they dislike, what they would like to change, how they see the Town in 20 years, and their primary issues of concern. Although similar issues were raised at each meeting, there were some important differences that reflected location. The following primary issues are provided for each meeting:

Fort Hunter

- Traffic plan coordinated with the State
- Water distribution plan
- Growth management tools/plan
- Maintaining residential community character
- Protection of unique resources and the preservation of open space
- Agricultural land preservation
- Balancing the tax base
- Recognition and preservation of historic/cultural resources
- Increased cooperation/communication at a regional level.

McKownville

- Decrease traffic on Route 20 and Fuller Road and improve the pedestrian environment
- Improve the aesthetics of the area by reducing the visual impact of utilities
- Growth management that focuses on controlling commercial growth, strengthening community centers, and allowing a diversity of housing in a planned manner
- Diversification of the tax base
- Provide job opportunities in other areas of Town to reverse the traffic pattern
- Provide stormwater management to deal with the quantity and quality
- Watershed management
- Intermunicipal cooperation
- Preserve open space

O'Connor's

- Extension of water and sewer to western portion of Town
- Manage commercial growth along Route 20
- Manage growth rather than prevent it
- Maintain rural character and historic land use patterns and aesthetics
- Enforce land use regulations
- Intermunicipal cooperation to prevent land use conflicts
- Protect Watervliet Reservoir and groundwater resources
- Develop a Town-wide vision or theme
- Promote equitable application of rules and regulations
- Provide a pedestrian friendly environment
- Maintain high quality police and fire protection
- Provide recreational opportunities for children

Guilderland Center

- Volume and speed of traffic through Guilderland Center
- Improved pedestrian environment and mass transit opportunities
- Managed growth
- Preservation of open space
- Protect water quality
- Intermunicipal cooperation in planning
- Inventory resources
- Implement the Comprehensive Plan and establish time frames for each implementation item
- Institute a moratorium on development until plan is completed

Several issues were repeated in each neighborhood such as traffic, preservation of the Town's water supply, intermunicipal cooperation in planning efforts, and growth management. These issues are generally consistent with the results of the survey. Issues that differed appear to be a result of locational differences, further supporting the allocation of resources to conduct these neighborhood meetings. Folks in Fort Hunter focused on community character, the preservation of open space and unique habitat, presumably influenced by their neighbor the Pine Bush. Folks in McKownville are concerned about the aesthetics of their neighborhoods and the impacts associated with commercial development along Route 20. They are highly influenced by traffic congestion and changes within the Route 20 and Fuller Road corridors.

Folks in the rural areas of Guilderland would like to have some, if not all, of the same services provided in the eastern portion of Town. Traffic is less of an issue, while the extension of municipal sewer and water is important. They are looking to develop a unified Guilderland and recommended a Town-wide theme or vision to begin to address the apparent distinctions between east and west.

Guilderland Center is a hamlet area that is highly impacted by truck traffic as well as buses and cars accessing the high school. Many of the Town's services are located in this area and folks here believe they have a disproportionate burden to endure the impacts associated with such facilities. They feel that they have lost their identity as a hamlet, primarily due to traffic.

A.5 Community Work Sessions

Six Community Work Sessions were conducted to present and comment on each step of the comprehensive planning process. The first Work Session kicked off the planning process and introduced the plan components to the public. The second Work Session presented the results of the Study Circles, Focus Group Workshops and Neighborhood Meetings. Visioning and associated goals and objectives were introduced at the third Work Session., Plan concepts were developed and discussed at the fourth Work Session based on the framework completed for the plan and the community survey results. The Corridor Study and growth management strategies were presented at the fifth Work Session. The sixth and final Work Session involved the presentation of the Draft Plan.

A.6 Advisory Board Meetings

Several Advisory Board meetings were conducted throughout the planning process. The purpose of these meetings were to review work prepared by the consultants, and to develop the vision, goals and objectives, plan concepts, and action plan through the recommendations of the consultant and facilitated discussions. Most of the Advisory Board meetings and all of the Community Work Sessions were televised through cable access in an effort to bring the issues into the homes of individuals who could not attend the meetings in person.

A.7 Public Hearings

Two Public Hearings will be held in accordance with Town Law. The first hearing is conducted by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board prior to their recommendation to the Town Board. Once recommended for their consideration, the Town Board will hold a Public Hearing that will also include a SEQR Hearing prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

A.8 Fact-Finding Outreach

This is an information gathering effort that involves meetings, telephone conversations and correspondence with key organizations, agencies and individuals that can provide unique insight or have a significant impact on the community. State and local agencies and adjoining municipalities were contacted. Also contacted were major businesses such as the Northeast Industrial Park, and local advocacy groups. Many of these organizations

refrain from participating in public forums for various reasons. Yet, their impact on the community and land use is often significant. Therefore, it is very important to listen to these organizations as a step in the all-important effort to gain community consensus on plan concepts and recommendations.

In conclusion, Community Outreach is essential to reach consensus. Not only is consensus important for the adoption of the Plan, it is crucial for the future implementation of the Plan recommendations. A common cord struck throughout the Community Outreach effort is that the talk needs to be put into action or it is a waste of time and resources. To do this, Town officials must feel confident that the majority of residents and businesspeople support the recommendations.

B. Community Vision Statement

The Town of Guilderland envisions itself as a distinctive suburban and rural community within the Capital District. It is a desirable and attainable place for families and individuals of all ages to live and work - with a large assortment of local and regional opportunities for high-quality employment, education, recreation, and cultural activity. These opportunities are easily accessed within the town and throughout the region by a varied and efficient transportation system that emphasizes mobility and safety for all residents. Guilderland's settlement patterns are focused around attractive and vibrant neighborhoods, and are based on a recognition of, and shared sense of responsibility for the town's natural, agricultural, open space, and scenic resources and the value of these resources to the current and future health, culture, and economy of the community. It is a community that looks to the future in the belief that through continued community dialogue and action it can manage and shape change for the better.

From this vision and the results of the Inventory & Analysis, the Town prepared a list of goals and objectives that would be used to frame the plan recommendations. They are provided as follows:

B.1 Growth Management

Goal:

Create a land use pattern and management system, which remediates the adverse impacts of sprawl, discourages further sprawl, responds to community needs, and protects and enhances Guilderland's resources, unique features and quality of life.

Objectives:

1. Adopt a future land use plan which identifies a balance between preservation and development - one which promotes ongoing fiscal health without compromising the Town's character

2. Develop regulations and incentives to guide future development in conformance with the future land use plan
3. Consider the link between infrastructure investment and development patterns, and plan capital investments to support the future land use plan
4. Identify the tools, financing and administrative structure to implement an ongoing growth management program
5. Acknowledge the link between transportation and land use, and promote farsighted, regional transportation planning and investment that seeks to resolve Guilderland's traffic concerns and which promotes Guilderland's desired future land use pattern and quality of life
6. Recognize the investment and stewardship of land by landowners, respect property rights, and provide support for the responsible use of land by private landowners
7. Identify specific areas and sites for protection as well as specific areas and sites that are appropriate for development,
8. Establish a process by which the future land use plan can be refined and updated as necessary.

B.2 Transportation and Mobility

Goal:

Provide safe, convenient, and efficient transportation options for people and goods within, through and around the Town of Guilderland, which are supportive of the Town's future land use plan and which minimize the impact of traffic on the Town's character and quality of life.

Objectives:

1. Promote an attractive and efficient transportation network that integrates pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles and public transit
2. Promote interconnected street networks and reestablish connections between parts of Town
3. Maintain the integrity and capacity of state, county, and local roads through access and corridor management
4. Support planning efforts with adjoining municipalities and regional entities such as: Albany County, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the New York State Thruway Authority.
5. Enhance the pedestrian environment in all areas of Town
6. Create a multi-use trail system linking community centers, shopping and employment areas, recreation areas, and neighborhoods
7. Identify programs and incentives for reducing traffic and, in particular, single-occupancy vehicle use (for example, park-and-ride lots, ride-sharing programs, etc.)

8. Reduce the impact of truck traffic on the community through careful siting of any future truck generating enterprises, promoting enhanced rail options, and seeking solutions to existing conflicts
9. Carefully locate any future large traffic generators (neighborhood, community and regional destinations) to reduce trip lengths through Guilderland
10. Explore ideas for traffic calming and pedestrian safety

B.3 Public Utilities

Goal:

Provide a utility infrastructure system that meets the demands of current residents, maintains the Town's existing investments, and supports the future land use plan.

Objectives:

Water

1. Assure an adequate supply, treatment, distribution, and fire-fighting capacity, of potable water to meet current and planned future needs
2. Establish Town policies for any proposed service area extensions that consider and address cost, revenue, and potential impacts on the future land use plan

Storm Water Management

3. Develop a plan to address storm water management issues (retention and detention basins, sump pumps, flooding of roads)

Sewer

4. Assure adequate collection and treatment capacity of sewer to meet current and planned future needs
5. Establish Town policies for any proposed service area extensions that consider and address cost, revenue, and potential impacts on the future land use plan

Communications, Electricity, and Natural Gas

6. Support coordinated facility development with public utilities to meet community desires, advance the future land use plan, maintain community character and support economic development objectives

B.4 Business, Employment, and Fiscal Resources

Goal:

Promote a diverse economic base that provides income, employment and fiscal resources to the community in a manner that is compatible with the future land use plan and character of Guilderland.

Objectives:

1. Consider the fiscal impact of various town growth scenarios as part of the Town's ongoing planning process
2. Identify partnerships and incentives available through federal, state, county and local organizations that support both the existing and future business community, and promote Guilderland's economic future
3. Identify the desired mix and scale of businesses in the commercial districts in a manner that recognizes, and is sensitive to, the neighborhood setting and desired character of the Town
4. Support home-based businesses to help residents expand their economic opportunities, while protecting the character of Guilderland's neighborhoods
5. Identify existing and potential centers for economic and community development, and establish mechanisms and partnerships to encourage appropriate development in these locations
6. Focus marketing efforts, investments in infrastructure and transportation systems, and economic development incentives, on the areas identified as centers for economic and community development
7. Simplify the project review process for those projects that: meet the Town's identified economic development objectives, which are located in planned centers for economic and community development (according to the future land use plan), and which meet carefully crafted design and impact criteria
8. Attract well-paying, job-creating employers who will be able to provide employment opportunities for Guilderland's residents
9. Support the efforts of local businesses to thrive in Guilderland
10. Support the continuation of agriculture as an economic activity in Guilderland and, working with farmers who wish to continue farming, identify ways in which the Town can help make this possible
11. Encourage partnerships with the University at Albany to promote economic development opportunities in the Town

B.5 Housing

Goal:

Provide a balanced blend of quality housing opportunities, including a desirable range of housing types and price ranges, which are affordable and accessible for residents.

Objectives:

1. Develop policies and programs that help maintain and strengthen the character, value and enjoyment of existing housing resources in the established neighborhoods of Guilderland
2. Create incentives and appropriate regulations that guide the location and pattern of new housing in a manner that protects the character and resources of the community
3. Ensure that the Town's zoning accommodates the need for housing diversity
4. Encourage housing opportunities for the elderly, and those with disabilities, that will allow residents to remain in the Town despite their changing housing and care requirements
5. Allow for a range of housing types in order to meet the diverse needs of residents.
6. Identify appropriate sites and incentives for the creation of housing options that are needed but not adequately provided by the marketplace

B.6 Town Character

Goal:

Preserve and enhance Guilderland's identity, image, and quality of life; and maintain and strengthen the distinction between the Town's developed and rural/natural areas

Objectives:

1. Establish guidelines to ensure that future residential and commercial development is of a scale and design that is appropriate from both a neighborhood and townwide perspective
2. Identify boundaries of existing, or locations for potential, mixed-use community centers or hamlets (similar to the Village of Altamont)
3. Work with residents in the Town's traditional, small community centers to generate strategies for enhancing their existing environments
4. Identify necessary transportation improvements for each traditional community center which will address traffic calming and other pedestrian safety issues
5. Support continued use of viable agricultural lands; preserve open spaces, and natural resources
6. Improve the quality of site design, including harmonious signage, lighting, planting, and building facade design in commercial districts
7. Ensure that new development does not result in adverse impacts such as noise, odor, and vibrations
8. Encourage street tree planting and other aesthetic improvements in residential neighborhoods
9. Identify potential public and private partnerships to implement needed improvements

B.7 Agricultural, Natural Resources and Open Spaces

Goal:

Protect important agricultural, natural, and open space resources, which contribute to the diversity, character, aesthetics, economy, and general health and welfare of the Town. Resources such as the Watervliet reservoir and watershed, viable farmland, ravines, woodlots, streams, aquifers, wetlands, floodplains, the escarpment, viewsheds and the pinebush are recognized for their role in drainage, water supply, agriculture, aesthetics, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and improve water quality
2. Create incentives for property owners to protect important agricultural, natural and open space resources including financial, regulatory, and other tools available for this purpose
3. Encourage community participation in a county-based agricultural and farmland protection program
4. Identify incentives and actions by the community to support farming as an economic activity in Guilderland
5. Discourage impact to sensitive resources such as steep slopes, stream corridors, wetlands, and significant habitat/open space and viewsheds
6. Identify ways to help protect and improve the water quality in the reservoir such as encouraging cooperative efforts with the City of Watervliet (reservoir owner), and neighboring communities located in the watershed of the Watervliet Reservoir
7. Identify new potential groundwater sources for municipal water supply and protect these areas from incompatible, potentially polluting land uses through a well-head protection plan
8. Create an action plan for the identification, voluntary acquisition and management of properties that comprise a comprehensive open space and natural resource preservation system

B.8 Cultural Resources

Goal:

Recognize Guilderland's historic resources and preserve and enhance cultural opportunities in the community.

Objectives:

1. Support the work of interested community residents and organizations who are already working on protecting and enhancing the Town's historic and cultural resources
2. Develop land use regulations and incentives to protect historic/archaeologically sensitive areas
3. Enhance the opportunities for residents and visitors to experience the Town's historic and cultural sites

4. Cultivate public awareness of the Town's historical and cultural resources through the schools
5. Develop closer ties with the University at Albany and increasing community access and awareness of its diverse array of programs and facilities
6. Promote educational opportunities, festivals, and other community observances
7. Evaluate the adequacy of existing facilities to support programs for youth, seniors, small-scale performances, recitals, concerts and other public events
8. Create strategies for the sustained financial support of the Town's historical and cultural sites and programs

B.9 Recreation

Goal:

Provide sufficient, well-located, and affordable, active and passive recreational opportunities for all Guilderland residents.

Objectives:

1. Formalize a community dialogue to continually evaluate the Town's recreational facilities and programs to ensure responsiveness to the Town's changing recreational desires
2. Work with other municipalities, the school districts, the YMCA, the University at Albany, and private recreation providers to maximize year-round recreational opportunities for Town residents, especially youth.
3. Maintain and upgrade the Town's existing recreational programs and facilities
4. Identify a network of multi-use trails that link neighborhoods with schools, commercial and entertainment centers, Town service facilities, the public transit system, and open spaces
5. Identify potentially underutilized resources and explore the creation of new recreational opportunities for Town residents

B.10 Governance

Goal:

Nurture and support the civic environment so that input from Town residents is considered a customary and integral component of the Town's ongoing planning and implementation process, and promote inter-municipal and interagency cooperation.

Objectives:

1. Establish a community involvement component to the Action Plan(s) that will involve broad based participation and a "grass roots" approach to all future planning efforts

2. Evaluate the resources, level of expertise, and Town government structure to determine which review boards are best suited to efficiently and effectively implement various planning goals and objectives
3. Encourage, and in some cases require, members of the Town's review boards to take advantage of opportunities to update their knowledge of planning and zoning techniques and laws on a continuing basis. Provide access to continuing education and professional development opportunities for Town employees
4. Consider the use of mitigation fees, established through the State Environmental Quality Review process, that would assist the Town in mitigating adverse environmental impacts by, for example, recouping the cost of new infrastructure, improvements, and maintenance of community-provided utilities and services related to new development
5. Establish an ongoing dialogue with adjacent municipalities and regional governmental agencies, send official representatives to appropriate meetings and forums to keep abreast of intermunicipal planning issues that may impact the Town of Guilderland, share the Town's plans with these municipalities and agencies, and promote a regional approach to solving land use, water, transportation, infrastructure and economic development issues
6. Encourage the pursuit of various grants and/or funding offered by the State of New York and the federal government
7. Improve communications with Town residents
8. Pursue partnerships with the City of Watervliet regarding operation of the Watervliet Reservoir.

B.11 Implementation

Goal:

Ensure that the efforts of the community, in crafting this vision for Guilderland's future, result in tangible actions to achieve the community's goals.

Objectives:

1. Identify and support specific actions, financial and administrative requirements, and follow-up planning work that will be necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan
2. Prioritize proposed actions, and set general time frames for them, so that the community can focus attention, and direct energy toward completing a manageable number of tasks at one time
3. Assign responsibility for advancing particular actions described in this plan to appropriate entities within the Town's government (for example, departments, committees, etc.) and the community
4. Review and update the adopted comprehensive plan on a regular basis

Chapter IV: Plan Recommendations

This section of the comprehensive plan identifies the recommendations and policy statements that, when implemented, will guide development in the Town over the next 20 years. The recommendations provided in this section may be implemented through existing or new growth management techniques such as zoning and subdivision regulations, use of fiscal impact analysis, preparation of Town sector Generic Environmental Impact Statements, use of incentive zoning, and transfer or purchase of development rights, to name a few; or may require further study to define the issue in greater detail. The new plan elements have been categorized as Land Use, Transportation, and Natural Resources. A summary section is also provided that combines all the recommendations that are applicable to each geographic area of the Town, such as the various neighborhoods and land features (eg., Pine Bush, Watervliet Reservoir). These areas are referred to as Planning Areas within the summary section.

...comprehensive plans are designed to serve a community for 20 years. However, to meet the needs of a growing community they must be continually monitored and updated...

Typically, comprehensive plans are designed to serve a community for 20 years. However, to serve the needs of a growing community they must be continually monitored and updated, usually at 5 to 10-year intervals. Some rural communities have operated under the same plan for 20 years (or no plan at all) and never experienced any significant land use changes or conflicts. Today, however, even rural areas are affected by technology. With the use of the Internet and fiber optics, wireless and satellite communications, some industries do not have to locate in or near populated areas. They are free to locate where the land is less expensive. This results in a barrage of land use and community service impacts: influx of professional/technical personnel looking for a variety of housing, increased traffic on rural roads, the need for expanded sewer and water or potential groundwater impacts from septic systems and wells, increased demand for utilities and communications, and a myriad of other issues associated with development in rural areas.

The Town of Guilderland is both a suburban and rural community; but unlike the rural community example above, Guilderland's land use issues have been a function of its proximity to the City of Albany, excellent access to interstate highways, and its popularity as a residential community. The Town is experiencing suburban sprawl and business development pressure, placing a burden on infrastructure and community services and creating land use conflicts. Based on the quality of the residential neighborhoods and proximity to interstates and employment centers, the Town will continue to grow well into the future, requiring diligent planning.

Figure 16, *Comprehensive Plan*, illustrates the Town's vision, goals and objectives and is a compilation of the three new plan elements. Discussions to follow provide both specific and broad-base recommendations/policies to achieve the

Town's goals and address the impacts and mitigation associated with land use policy changes.

A. GROWTH MANAGEMENT TOOLS

The basic premise of the plan recommendations is that the Town should continue to exercise control over development so that it occurs in a manner that is consistent with the Town's vision for a quality community; a place that is desirable to live, work, and play for an entire lifetime.

Growth Management is a process by which a community develops the methods and means (tools) to control the type, location and amount of land development (growth) in the community. The most common growth management tool is zoning. Zoning identifies distinct districts within which land use parameters are established for the type or use, density, and layout (setbacks) of development. Zoning can be an effective growth management tool when based on a community's comprehensive plan. However, zoning is just one of the tools available to local municipalities. Other tools falling into the regulatory category include subdivision regulations and various ordinances dealing with signs, landscaping, open space, noise, odors, and others depending on the needs of a particular community.

Regulatory tools are essential to ensure orderly growth in a community. However, other Growth Management tools, that rely on incentives and voluntary involvement by landowners, are also available to assist communities who understand the importance of managing their growth. Some of these tools include easements, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, voluntary land acquisition, and development guidelines in conjunction with community supported plans.

Current growth management tools have been effective to a point, however, it is clear that if development is allowed to continue only under the guidance and regulatory framework of current zoning, the pattern of development will be similar to other highly suburbanized areas of the State and country.

The following pages provide a brief description of some of the growth management tools and techniques that might be appropriate for Guilderland based upon the dialogue that has occurred during this comprehensive planning process. These tools are not direct recommendations. It is anticipated that future land use and open space studies will determine the appropriate growth management tools for the Town. The following information will provide some understanding and definition of these potential tools.

A.1 Clustering

The general concept behind clustering is that density is separated from lot size. In this way, the same number of homes are allowed but there is more flexibility in where the homes are located. Currently the town regulates density by having a minimum lot size for each zoning district. The minimum lot size in a particular zoning district, for example, might be 1 acre. Under this regulation, each home must be placed in the middle of a one acre "box". Another way to express this density is that a person can build 1 dwelling unit (du) per acre - so on 10 acres the person can build 10 homes. However, by expressing the density in this way, the person is no longer confined to dividing the land into one acre lots. Smaller lots, as the capacity of the land can support, could be clustered on a portion of the site while the remainder remains open. In this way, the entire site is not divided into building lots and the homes can be sited in the most suitable locations. The example on the following page compares conventional and clustered subdivision options for the same piece of land.

There are many options for the remaining open lands derived from clustering. In all cases the open land should be restricted from any further development in some way. One method is through a conservation easement, held by the town, a land trust, or both. There are several options in terms of ownership of the open land under easement. For example, if the original parcel was owned by a farmer, the farmer could retain ownership of the remaining lands. In this case the farmer would continue to farm the land and would retain all the rights of ownership (including the right to transfer title) except the property's development rights which would already have been used. Or the large remaining open parcel could be sold for a large "estate" farm (as one of the housing units allowed based on the original lot count). In both cases, the open space would be managed by a private land owner.



Hamlet with appropriately scaled development (same number of units)
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Clustering can be included in the town's land use regulations as an option or as a requirement. As an option, it is often ignored by developers who are unfamiliar with the concept and therefore are reluctant to try it. This is true even though they can often save money due to shorter road and infrastructure lengths. As a mandate, the town could simply regulate density in terms of dwelling units per acre, as described above, and require some minimum percentage of open space for any subdivision. The minimum percentage of open space should be significant - at least 50% to make a real impact in terms of protecting resources and rural character. It is important to reiterate that the overall allowed density with clustering would not exceed what is possible with a conventional subdivision.

A.2 Conservation Development

The conservation development is a resource-based process for subdivision design. The Town should consider the design of conservation developments

instead of conventional subdivisions. The conservation design approach is quite simple and involves collaboration between the planning board and the applicant at the earliest stage of design - the concept or sketch plan phase. To determine the yield, or possible lot count for a site, subtract the lands which contain severe constraints to development (defined in the subdivision regulations - wetlands, floodplains, very steep slopes, etc.). The maximum number of housing units would then be based on the number of acres remaining and the maximum allowable density in the zoning district (for example, 1du/acre).

Once the number of housing units is established, the design process can begin. Start by identifying the resources present on the site (agricultural land, historic or scenic views, significant tree stands, etc.). Illustrated residential design guidelines, described below, could assist in this process. Once the analysis of resources is done, it is possible to identify lands where development is most appropriate. Locate the homes in these development areas, design road alignments to connect these homes, and then draw the lot lines. Because the area and bulk regulations used for conventional subdivisions are not applicable, the process is creative and not driven strictly by regulations. Randall G. Arendt, in his book *Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks* (1996), provides excellent guidance in the use of this approach to subdivision design.

The important aspect of the conservation development is that it is an opportunity for a planning board to become involved very early on in the site development process. Under standard subdivision and site plan review procedures, a planning board or zoning board is in a reactionary mode and must wait for a concept plan to be presented. Under a conservation development procedure, the planning board is involved in the process of identifying developable and undevelopable land before sketches and concept plans are laid out. The process works well for standard subdivisions as well as cluster developments.

A.3 Incentive Zoning

An incentive zoning program establishes a framework that derives community benefits from development activity. The incentive program would generally function as follows: in return for the provision of specified (in advance by legislation) public benefits, the town could permit some increase in allowed density (also specified by legislation). An example of a public benefit that the town might desire would be public access through open lands set aside as part of a conservation development. This access might be used for the development of walking, bicycle, or horse riding trail systems linking different parts of the community. Examples of other public benefits might be the donation of public open space for a park, the donation of public lake access, or the provision of low and moderate income housing. The amenities are given to the town at no financial cost in exchange for the density bonus incentive. The town would ensure that the amenities gained are "worth" the incentives provided as part of

the incentive zoning review process.

A specific example of the potential use of incentive zoning in the Town would apply to the protection of important viewsheds and environmental features. Incentive zoning would permit waiving of formal dimensional requirements provided that a conservation design is employed. This would allow flexibility in site design in pursuance of the goals of the incentive program. This growth management tool could be effective to protect the Pine Bush, Helderberg Escarpment, stream corridors, ravines, viewsheds and viewpoints, and other ecologically sensitive areas.

A.4 Conservation Easements

One way for the Town of Guilderland to protect scenic resources, open farmlands, and other resources of value to the community would be to encourage the use of conservation easements to protect open land. A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between the landowner and the town, or a third party such as a land trust, to protect land from development by permanently restricting the use and development of the property, thereby preserving its natural or manmade features. The legally binding agreement is filed in the Office of the Albany County Clerk in the same manner as a deed. The landowner retains ownership of the land, and all of the rights of ownership except the ability to develop the land. The specific restrictions are detailed in the easement agreement.

A land owner can choose to donate a conservation easement on all or part of his/her land. There are often income and estate tax benefits for the landowner associated with the donation of a conservation easement. As part of land development proposals, conservation easements can also be used to permanently protect open space set aside as part of a conservation (clustered) subdivision.

There are additional uses of conservation easements that can be promoted by the town. The town could consider taking a more pro-active approach to keeping specific parcels of land undeveloped. These are further described in the following three sections.

A.5 Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program

The community can take an active role in protecting open space and farmland using conservation easements. The development value of specific parcels of land can be purchased by the town or a land trust. Conservation easements are the legally binding document that ensures that once the development rights are purchased, the land remains undeveloped in perpetuity. If the development rights are purchased, the process is called Purchase of Development Rights. The cost of PDR depends on the specific parcel. It is calculated by determining the

current appraised value of the property and its appraised value as open or agricultural land without development potential. The difference between these two numbers is the value of the development rights.

Generally speaking, PDR programs are regarded as being fair to landowners because the landowners are compensated directly for their contribution to something the public desires. In other words the community must "put its money where its mouth is." The land remains on the tax rolls and is taxed at an assessed value that reflects its restricted use. These programs are also popular with residents because they achieve permanent land protection.

In order to implement a PDR program, the town would need to make a commitment to funding this activity. Initially this may seem to be a very large expense - and it is. However, through careful analysis, some communities like Guilderland have found that their investment will actually cost less in the long term than it would cost to provide services for new residences that might instead be built on that land. Communities have paid for these programs in various ways including bonding for the money to spread the cost over a period of years. There are also sources of state and federal grant funding available to assist communities in permanently protecting farmland and open space in this manner.

There are several important steps to establishing an effective PDR program that will be strongly supported by the community. They are:

1. Establish protection goals for the community. It could be recommended that Guilderland start by determining an acreage goal (x # of acres) of permanently protected farmland.
2. Identify and prioritize specific parcels for protection and develop protection strategies for each. Typically, there are a few key parcels of farmland that have the potential to significantly alter the town's character and fiscal condition in the future. The owners of these large, priority parcels should be included in the process at the earliest stages.
3. Use the town's fiscal model to determine the cost of protecting significant parcels through the purchase of development rights as compared to the cost of not protecting these lands in terms of the provision of community services to residences in the future. Residents and their elected officials will want a clear idea of the costs and benefits of a PDR approach. A detailed analysis helps build support from members of the community who will ultimately be paying the bills.

In Pittsford, New York, a PDR program was created to protect approximately 1,200 acres on seven farms. The average cost to a homeowner is estimated to be about \$50 per year. A fiscal model of the town developed prior to implementing the program estimated that the average cost to a homeowner would be \$250 per year if the PDR program was not implemented. Tax increases would be needed to pay for additional

services for new residents in that fast growing community. The savings from avoiding these tax costs total \$5,000 for the average homeowner over the life of the town's 20 year PDR bond.

4. Establish a funding mechanism to implement the program including the identification of outside funding sources. Sources of state grant funding exist from the Environmental Protection Fund and the Clean Water/Clean Air Environmental Bond Act, and from the federal government through the Farm Bill and other sources.

A Purchase of Development Rights program requires up-front planning to implement. Communities with well defined programs have a higher likelihood of receiving grants due to their competitive nature. The return on this investment in planning can be substantial in terms of both the community's fiscal situation and community character.

A.6 Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program

Transfer of Development Rights programs use real estate market activity to focus development in suitable locations while protecting open spaces. To establish such a program, the town designates specific areas as "sending zones". Sending zones are places that the community seeks to preserve. The town also establishes "receiving zones". These are areas that are suitable for fairly high density development. Through the TDR program, development rights are sent from the sending zone to the receiving zone. Land in the sending zone will therefore be protected while land in the receiving zone will be densely developed.

Development in the sending zones is tightly regulated for natural resource and open space protection. However, landowners in the sending zones are allowed to sell a certain number of "development rights" to land developers at a price that they negotiate with the developer. Land developers who seek to build in the "receiving zones" can purchase those development rights in order to develop their land more densely. When the landowner in the sending zone sells development rights to the developer, the landowner is required to place his/her land under a permanent conservation easement. (Note: TDR can also be accomplished through incentive zoning.)

A TDR program also requires up-front planning. Sending and receiving zones must be carefully designated. In some cases it may be necessary to consider the development of public water and sewer infrastructure to accommodate the higher density development. In addition, the town must set up the administrative mechanisms to make the program work efficiently. Still, in Guilderland, it might be possible to make a TDR program work for portions of the town.

A.7 Term Easements and Tax Abatement Program

This type of program, used by several communities in New York State, provides tax abatements for term easements on particular parcels of open space or farmland. As the name implies, a term easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and the town which is written to last for a period of years, most commonly for 5 to 20 years. Tax abatements are usually calculated on a sliding scale with a larger tax abatement for a longer term easement. If these protected lands are converted to development prior to the expiration of the term, the tax benefit must be returned and a penalty paid. While these programs are effective in addressing the loss of open space and farmland in the short term, they simply place these lands on hold. Long term solutions must still be developed for the future of these spaces.

A.8 Residential Development Design Guidelines

The town could consider creating illustrated design guidelines for new development. Illustrated design guidelines complement the increased design flexibility allowed by conservation (clustered) subdivisions. No longer restricted to maximizing the number of X-acre boxes allowed by zoning's minimum lot size requirements, the designer of a subdivision can be more conscious of the natural features of the parcel(s) and the surrounding landscape. It is best for the community to provide guidance in this regard by describing what it values and what it seeks to protect. Illustrations make these guidelines more easily understood by developers, review boards, and the public. All types of items can be incorporated into a community's design guidelines depending upon what the community values. Design guidelines could include specific requirements that:

- Development along and/or projecting above ridge lines be prohibited, and that development at other visually prominent locations be discouraged.
- Homes be located adjacent to or within wooded areas instead of in the middle of open fields whenever possible.
- The builder maintain existing trees to the maximum extent possible during the construction of homes (as opposed to clearing the entire site).
- Homes be located away from rural highways and collectors, or that they be visually buffered from these roads in order to maintain their rural character. Frontage lots should be discouraged.
- Low volume local roads (including subdivision streets) be designed to an alternative rural road standard more in context with their setting. Examples of rural road standards are available from several sources including the Cornell Local Roads Program and the Dutchess County Department of Planning.
- Natural drainage ways, wildlife habitat areas, contours and land forms be respected and disturbance to these areas minimized.
- Cut and fill activity be minimized and that all disturbed areas be restored with vegetation.

A pre-application conference or sketch plan workshop between the applicant and the Planning Board becomes extremely important in order to creatively deal with design issues early in the process.

Design guidelines are generally informational and collaborative in nature. That is, the applicant has an opportunity to review the guidelines prior to designing a project in order to understand what the community and the Planning Board desires. The sketch plan workshop with the Planning Board is another opportunity to discuss initial design options before the more thorough and expensive design work begins. The workshop should focus on creativity and not confrontation. It will always be in the applicant's best interest to work cooperatively with the Planning Board because the board must ultimately decide whether to approve the final plans. Achieving consensus at the start can significantly reduce the time and cost of the review process for the applicant.

A.9 Generic Environmental Impact Statement

The Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) is an important growth management tool. A GEIS is a component of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR). It is used to evaluate non-site specific actions and programs or site specific actions that encompass a broad area and cannot be reasonably studied in great detail. Adoption of this Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board is a Type I Action under SEQR and requires the preparation of a GEIS, as described in Chapter I. The purpose of that GEIS is to evaluate the general impact of the Plan on community growth and character and to address future actions (e.g., Guilderland Neighborhood Master Plan). Providing these actions are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan GEIS and Findings, further SEQR analysis will probably not be required.

A GEIS can also be used to evaluate the cumulative impacts of a future growth scenario for a given area of Town. This is referred to as an "area specific" GEIS for the purposes of this discussion. The purpose of this type of GEIS is to create potentially "shovel-ready" sites for future development. The term "shovel-ready" refers to the completion of environmental review pursuant to SEQR. This term does not suggest that site specific concerns such as wetland delineation and permitting are complete. Those tasks would remain for the potential developer and therefore the site would not be truly "shovel ready" until those site-specific concerns are evaluated. However, there is great value in completing the SEQR process for an area since the process itself is time-consuming and expensive.

Another purpose of preparing an area specific GEIS is to create an equitable means of allocating the costs of mitigating impacts. For example, studies conducted for the GEIS may conclude that additional turning lanes and a new pump station will be necessary once development reaches a certain threshold. The cost can be identified for these improvements and distributed to all future

development within the GEIS study area through a mitigation fee. This approach has been used by the Town of Colonie and Town of Clifton Park for many years and has proven successful. There are a number of improvements that can be included in the mitigation fee, such as roads, water and sewer, and the cost of preparing the GEIS. The process allows the Town to be proactive towards future growth and to control when and how the improvements are made to ensure consistency and quality. The use of a GEIS for this purpose is most valuable in areas of Town where development pressure is high. In other areas that may not develop for many years, the cost of preparing the GEIS might not be justified.

The third way a GEIS is referenced in the recommendations is as a means of evaluating alternatives. For example, options for providing water to the western portion of Guilderland could be evaluated through a GEIS. Several sites may prove to be in need of municipal water. The GEIS would identify these sites and weigh their need against the feasibility of providing water and the environmental/land use consequences. The end result would be a plan for water resources and rural conservation that could be adopted by the Town. The scope of issues would be more focused than that of the development-oriented GEIS described above.

The GEIS is a versatile tool that can provide many benefits to a community. It is also a public process that encourages public input through scoping in the early stages and review and comment of the draft GEIS after the studies/analysis is completed. When used appropriately, the GEIS combines both planning and SEQR requirements into a single process, saving time and money and providing a vehicle for thorough review of environmental, land use, and social/cultural issues.

A.10 Fiscal Model

A fiscal model has been constructed for the Town to compare the relative impact of land use decisions on the tax base. A full discussion of the model is provided in Appendix A. A fiscal model is a planning tool that can be used to identify the implications of current zoning and other future land use planning scenarios. The fiscal model prepared for the Town does not predict what the actual taxes in the Town will be over a period of time and should not be used for that purpose. It is intended as a means of comparing land uses, such as residential and commercial, to determine how increased growth rates would impact the fiscal budget of the Town and school districts.

The model includes a series variables that are model input. For example, a scenario might compare the impact of increased economic development against the current growth rates. The Town might also like to investigate the impact of land preservation, perhaps through a purchase of development rights program. There are many useful implications of such a model. Another benefit is that the model is open-ended, which means it is capable of expansion into a much more

detailed program without the need to rewrite the model. The Town of Guilderland is the first to have such a model in the Capital District.

The Town's fiscal model was used to compare several land use scenarios. The results of these comparisons show that increased residential growth rates, such that would result in a completely suburbanized community without growth management and open space provisions, would have a significant adverse impact on the taxes, despite some rather aggressive economic development incentives. The inputs to the model, as presented in this Plan, have come under considerable scrutiny and will be revised to reflect the most current available information. However, the design of the model will allow the Town to manipulate the inputs to evaluate the impact of any number of development scenarios. The scenarios presented in the Plan are only a few of the possible uses and are meant to show how the model works and the nature of the output.

B. LAND USE

Land use in the Town is composed of suburban residential neighborhoods in the eastern third, rural residential and agricultural uses in western Guilderland, mixed commercial and office along the Route 20 corridor from the City of Albany west to Route 146 (Carman Road), industrial uses with the Northeast Industrial Park, village and hamlet development (Guilderland Center and Village of Altamont), and significant environmental features/resources (Pine Bush, Helderberg Escarpment, Watervliet Reservoir, stream corridors including floodplain and wetlands, parks and other recreational facilities). Despite the rather simple categorization of land use, the interrelationships and issues are complex. The Town of Guilderland is at an important juncture as an evolving community. A large portion (22%) of the Town is vacant land that may provide opportunity for future development. Another 28% of the total land area is comprised of agriculture, the Pine Bush, and recreational facilities. The other half of the Town's total land area is dominated by residential uses (32%). Bearing this in mind, the Town's policy decisions regarding the type and extent of growth will likely have broad reaching effects on the environment, visual and community character, traffic, and the quality of community services.

B.1 Plan Premises

There are many factors to consider when developing the land use plan. The community outreach program provided tremendous insight into the concerns of residents as well as their expectations, hopes and dreams of the future. The Inventory & Analysis provided a necessary understanding of the Town's resources, opportunities, and constraints but also identified issues that may require further study to fully understand the complexities. All this information was then synthesized in the context of good planning practice to develop guiding principles by which the Plan would take form. Land use principles include the following:

- There were once distinct neighborhoods within the Town. Some of these neighborhoods have been impacted by sprawling development, both residential and commercial, which has blurred the boundaries and had a negative influence on neighborhood cohesion and character. Therefore, a basic premise of the land use plan is to restore and strengthen neighborhood distinction.
- The Town is primarily a residential community with quality homes located in close proximity to the major employment centers. It is a desirable place to live. Based on these facts, both existing and developing residential neighborhoods must be buffered from conflicting adjacent land uses, recognizing that not all non-residential uses are conflicting and that it is

appropriate to consider mixed uses in a hamlet or village scale setting that promotes the pedestrian environment.

- There are significant natural resources within the Town that are important on both a local and statewide level. Once developed, these resources could be permanently lost. Therefore, the Pine Bush, the Helderberg Escarpment and its foreground viewshed, the Watervliet Reservoir and watershed, and the numerous stream corridors should be protected and/or managed to avoid significant impacts.
- Agricultural uses are diminishing in the Town, partly due to rising land value but also related to other economic factors and diminished interest in farming as a career. Agricultural uses provide value to the Town. Although tax breaks are provided to qualifying farmers, their operations require few community services. Therefore, the basic premise for agricultural land use is to preserve and protect farms to preserve rural character, preserve the Helderberg viewshed, prevent significant tax increases, and support those who want to continue to be farmers.
- The ability to meet current water demand in the water district, especially during peak periods, is limited by treatment capacity and distribution. Likewise, there is very little capacity left within the sewer system to treat additional flows. Providing future capacity in either of the services will be costly. A significant increase in residential development will result in a significant increase in taxes, regardless of ambitious efforts to increase industrial/office/commercial uses. The provision of sewer and water to areas without these services typically leads to increased residential development. In fact, due to the cost of providing infrastructure, the provision of sewer and water services dictates the need for dense development.

The rural landscape provides value to the community at little cost. The loss of the Town's rural component would have many social and environmental implications that would impact residents and visitors alike. However, these concerns also need to be balanced by the apparent need for water in certain areas of the Town due to a lack of suitable groundwater.

- The Town contains numerous historic structures and includes the site of the Battle of Normanskill, an important event in our Nation's struggle for independence. The agricultural landscape in the western part of Guilderland is an important historic land use pattern. A guiding principle for historic resources is that these resources provide the necessary ties to the past, creating community character and pride.
- Commercial and office development in the Town is primarily located along Route 20 from the City of Albany to Route 146 (Carman Road). The size

and success of some of these uses have resulted in land use conflicts with adjoining neighborhoods. The corridor is dynamic, with areas of converting uses, areas of dense development and heavy traffic congestion, and areas that are developing and redeveloping. Route 20 is the primary arterial in the Town with the highest traffic volume, best access to interstates, and available sewer and water. Past and current development patterns have proven that this is a logical location for commercial and other mixed business uses. Therefore, most commercial and office development should be located within the Route 20 corridor, east of the CSX tracks. Vacant lands with access to Route 20 and the immediate corners of major State and County roads intersecting Route 20 provide opportunity for carefully planned commercial, office, municipal, and some low-impact light industrial uses that do not generate significant truck traffic. Management of the Route 20 corridor to address traffic, the pedestrian environment, and parcel access should be considered prior to permitting major new development along the corridor. This is especially important in the McKownville and Westmere areas where land availability, especially frontage, is limited.

- Light industrial development, warehousing, and business/hi-tech uses are currently concentrated within the Northeast Industrial Park. This facility has land area to support another potential 2.0 million gross square feet of development. However, the facility is not well located relative to truck traffic, which has resulted in impact on surrounding neighborhoods. A priority should be placed on the analysis of impact by the Northeast Industrial Park on the community to determine the reasonable magnitude of future development. The provision of industrial/business parks may prove to be an important land use component for the Town's economy and fiscal health. This can be analyzed by the Town's fiscal model. Locations for the provision of new business parks are limited by access, environmental constraints, and the availability of municipal sewer and water. However, the identification of areas that meet the criteria of good highway access, limited land use conflicts, and available sewer and water is important to be able to respond to opportunities when they arise. Once identified, preparation for future economic development and encouragement to locate at the appropriate sites can be facilitated through the preparation of an area specific Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), taking into consideration land suitability, preservation of rural character and the viewshed, and the economic feasibility of providing municipal water and sewer service. The benefits of this approach include environmental clearance for many issues, provision of infrastructure under a scenario of equitable distribution of cost, and the ability to weigh the suitability of multiple sites, if desired. It also establishes important thresholds to prevent significant environmental impact and to achieve the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

Clearly, it is impossible to identify guiding principles for land use without incorporating transportation and natural resources issues. However, repetition

only emphasizes the fact that the elements of the Comprehensive Plan are interrelated with cause and effect relationships.

Based on the land use plan premises, the following land use recommendations were developed:

B.2 Residential Neighborhoods

Residential neighborhoods in the Town are defined as both old and new residential subdivisions. They are characterized by medium to high density development and the availability of sewer and water. Some neighborhoods are old and well-established, such as McKownville and Westmere and portions of Fort Hunter. Others are new and developing and may be as small as a cul-de-sac. Land use issues facing residential neighborhoods differ based on their age and surrounding uses. McKownville is the oldest neighborhood in the Town which means it has the oldest roads and oldest infrastructure. For many, old implies character. The older homes and older landscaping (mature trees and shrubs) creates neighborhood atmosphere unique to McKownville. However, once primarily residential, even along Route 20, McKownville has experienced considerable commercial and office growth that has changed the character of the neighborhood. Development of the Northway and the Thruway have imposed significant visual and noise impacts, as well as effectively isolating this neighborhood from the remainder of the Town.

Heading west, Westmere was the next area to develop. This area has been less constrained by physical barriers and the rather dense, compact neighborhood has expanded considerably. Like McKownville, Westmere has experienced significant impact from commercial development both along and adjacent to Route 20. Crossgates and Route 155/20 Mall define the eastern and western boundaries of this neighborhood, contributing to the high traffic volume and associated congestion.

McCormack Corners and Fort Hunter are less defined residential neighborhoods. Fort Hunter is the older and better defined of the two areas, however, the boundary between these areas is not well defined. Developments are spread out and appear to lack any unifying character or theme. As the primary route to the Thruway and I-890, Route 146 (Carman Road) is congested with traffic, including truck traffic to and from the Northeast Industrial Park. The attractiveness of these neighborhoods is highlighted by new homes, available municipal sewer and water, proximity to the Thruway, I-890, and Route 20, and the proximity to the Pine Bush.

Recommendations

Recognizing that the Town of Guilderland is a residential community and a desirable place to live, it is important to focus the recommendations on preserving and enhancing the residential character, addressing land use conflicts, and providing a means for neighborhoods to continue planning efforts at a neighborhood level.

- Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of vacant/underutilized buildings and sites, especially in the McKownville and Westmere neighborhoods. This recommendation should be accompanied by repairs and upgrades to the existing infrastructure.
- Buffer residential uses from commercial, office and other conflicting uses that rely on vehicular transportation. Commercial development in neighborhoods should be limited to a corner store that is linked to a sidewalk or trail system. In existing neighborhoods, this can be accomplished through dialog with the business establishments and during the local review process for changes in use.
- Connect residential neighborhoods to shopping and recreational opportunities by providing sidewalks and/or trails. These connections should be carefully made in conjunction with landowners to prevent any unintended conflicts and nuisances.
- Improve the pedestrian environment, particularly along Route 20.
- Develop an access management plan (discussed in further detail under Transportation) as a tool to decrease traffic congestion.
- Encourage continued public meetings at the neighborhood level with the intent of developing a neighborhood master plan. This next level of analysis is necessary to better define neighborhood boundaries, identify residents' goals for their neighborhood, determine desirable pedestrian linkages, and to identify the theme that will direct design guidelines for future development and redevelopment.
- Concentrate higher density development within densely populated areas such as the Westmere/McKownville area, McCormack Corners and Fort Hunter. The higher density development is most suitable where public transportation is available, where both essential and non-essential services/products are available, and where pedestrian linkages to shopping, recreation, and cultural resources are well developed. Westmere and McKownville provide the most services and the best access to public transportation but are lacking in recreational facilities and a pedestrian environment.
- Pursue opportunities for the development of neighborhood parks. Based on the results of the Community Outreach program, there appears to be a deficiency in neighborhood-scale parks to serve developed areas.

B.3 Planning Areas

To facilitate discussion on a geographic basis, the Plan Recommendations are summarized by planning area in Chapter IV.E (**Plan Recommendations by Planning Area**). Planning areas are conceptual geographic boundaries placed on areas of the Town with distinct or unique characteristics. They include the various neighborhoods, the Hunger Kill area, the Watervliet Reservoir and adjacent lands, the Village of Altamont, and the less developed area of the Town referred to a Rural Guilderland. Relative to the discussion of land use, specific discussion and recommendations for the Guilderland and Guilderland Center neighborhoods, the Village of Altamont, and Rural Guilderland are contained within Chapter IV.E.

B.4 Cultural Resources

A listing of structures that have been identified on the National Register of Historic Places as well as other locally important buildings are provided in the *Inventory & Analysis*. Not only are many of these buildings well built and architecturally significant, they are the physical remnants of the past. History is important. It very often provides clues to the future.

In addition to the historic past, there is a prehistoric past that is equally important to understand. Prehistory includes the activities of early native Americans. Camps were typically constructed near food and water sources. Therefore, high points next to streams are potential sites for prehistoric cultural resources. Why are these resources important? Quite simply, they provide information on the evolution of the human species. The more we learn about our ancestors, the more we learn about ourselves and our potential to adapt.

Recommendations

- Institute an historic preservation policy to prevent the loss of historic structures and sites deemed important by the Town.
- Consider coordination with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) for all projects on or in the vicinity of historic structures or sites and prehistoric resources. The need for such coordination typically occurs when there is State or federal involvement in a project. To protect the potential impact to cultural resources by projects that do not have federal or State involvement, the Town might consider making NYSOPRHP coordination a requirement of local approval for projects subject to site plan review.
- Establish an historic resources education program in the Town. Conduct tours of historic properties and highlight their importance.

B.5 Economic Development

Economic development within the Town is primarily concentrated along Route 20 (Western Avenue) with the exception of the Northeast Industrial Park, which is located near Guilderland Center. Route 20 is the primary arterial in the Town and provides the most direct access to the Northway and the Thruway. It is also the most direct route to downtown Albany. The Town has large retail centers which include Crossgates Mall, Stuyvesant Plaza, and the 20 Mall. Each of these retail centers has become very successful, drawing shoppers from the regional market. Office development consists of several large facilities, including 1450 Western Avenue, Executive Park, and Great Oaks. There are also a number of smaller professional medical offices located along Route 20. Most of these offices are former single family homes which have been converted. Lands along the CSX railroad (formerly Conrail) were once developed by the Army, favoring the remote location based on rail access. The choice of this area for the current use as an industrial park was probably based on the compatibility of use and the ability to reuse structures. The industrial park still benefits from good rail access, but its remote location is more of a hindrance given the current dependence on trucking.

The Town's transportation network enhances its competitive position and its tax base. The transportation network should be maintained and developed as an important component of the Town's attractiveness and quality of life. Maintaining the Town's transportation network as well as connections to the regional transportation system is important.

The following are general recommendations for economic development. More specific recommendations are provided for the various types of development.

- The Town should be proactive towards new economic development opportunities, supplemented by preserving the rural character of the western portion of Town and preserving open space in the eastern portion through growth management.
- A special committee of the Town, perhaps the Town's existing Economic Development Advisory Council, should be charged with a detailed study of possible sites for office or light industrial use. Such a study should consider infrastructure and transportation issues and impact on residential neighborhoods and community character. The goal should be to identify and subsequently market suitable sites for desirable business uses. The committee should also collaborate with economic development agencies within the County and State to aid in promoting the selected areas for economic development and to identify potential funding sources.
- Upon the identification of suitable light industrial/business use sites, the Town should conduct a GEIS to evaluate the development potential of these sites. For Rural Guilderland sites, this assumes, however, that the issue of water and sewer service to the desired economic development sites

has been resolved in the larger context of the Rural Guilderland Plan that addresses water and sewer service policy, land use, open space conservation, watershed protection, and visual impact. It is possible to evaluate one or several sites within the same GEIS. The purpose of the GEIS should be to evaluate the cumulative impacts of development within a specific area which, when completed, provides "shovel ready" sites satisfying SEQR requirements. The GEIS would evaluate both the type and amount of development suitable for the selected sites. The costs of providing mitigation for development should also be identified and allocated in an equitable manner. This approach will allow the Town to provide/pay for necessary improvements (e.g., road and utility infrastructure) as the need arises. Developers should be required to demonstrate compliance with the GEIS and to identify site-specific impacts (e.g., wetlands). The scope of the GEIS should be determined through a Public Scoping Session as encouraged in the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) regulations.

Mixed Use Commercial Development

The Town is experiencing continued pressure for new strip development, as well as redevelopment, along Route 20. As a primary transportation arterial in the Capital District, the Route 20 corridor is an attraction for retail/commercial uses. However, strip development results in a continuous and cluttered streetscape that lacks character. Multiple driveways contribute to poor traffic circulation and pedestrian conflicts. These driveways interrupt pedestrian linkages, resulting in an unsafe and undesirable pedestrian environment. This is most evident from the City of Albany west to Route 155. However, Route 20 east of the CSX tracks and the immediate vicinity is the most appropriate and logical location to consider further commercial and office development based on the availability of municipal sewer and water service and the generally good access to the Northway and Thruway, despite existing traffic and access management issues.

If traffic flow on Route 155 north of Route 20 is improved through the planned highway reconstruction project, pressure for development near the Route 20/Route 155 intersection will continue. Carefully planned commercial expansion, or redevelopment of existing commercial sites, may be appropriate in this area, as well as other areas along the Route 20 corridor east of the CSX tracks.

Mixed use development may include commercial and office uses and the possible inclusion of certain high-tech or research and development operations that have less impact on traffic and other environmental concerns of the community. A suitable balance of commercial and residential development will have a beneficial impact on the Town's tax base.

The Town currently has successful large shopping facilities that include Crossgates Mall, 20 Mall, and Stuyvesant Plaza. Additional large retail development and other high traffic generating commercial uses would exacerbate

the existing traffic conditions and land use conflicts and should be discouraged. Smaller scale retail development as well as other non-retail uses, should be subject to a plan for access management, pedestrian improvements, and streetscape beautification.

Recommendations

- Consider the use of incentive zoning (bonuses) and financial incentives to help facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment of vacant/underutilized frontage properties along Route 20. Any policies to facilitate redevelopment should focus on the following goals:
 - ♦ minimize frictional traffic congestion on Route 20,
 - ♦ preserve the general scale and character of existing structures, and
 - ♦ adequately buffer the use from adjoining residential properties.
- Prepare an access management study/plan to develop guidelines for shared access, shared parking, and the development of access roads. Guidelines should be developed within the existing regulatory and policy framework and utilized in conjunction with existing land use and zoning control mechanisms, such as site plan review, overlay districts, and subdivision regulations. Guidelines that evolve must be flexible enough to deal with the particular needs of various neighborhoods and the specific land use patterns surrounding them. The incentives and guidelines should be carefully developed so as not to promote consolidation of properties as the only solution to access management. Priority should be given to more creative solutions that provide common parking and shared access for multiple owners. Consolidation of parcels may result in a barrier of entry to small business owners which could ultimately reduce the diversity of the Town's commercial mix.
- Develop a pedestrian access plan for the Route 20 corridor that provides for continuous sidewalks and the development of appropriately located linkages to adjoining neighborhoods. New development should conform to these plans. Therefore, it is important to develop such plans prior to permitting new development so that right-of-ways can be incorporated into site design for future implementation.
- During site plan review for new development and applications for change of use, land use conflicts should be addressed through adequate buffering.

Westmere Commercial Area

The Westmere Commercial area encompasses the Route 20 corridor between Fuller Road and Johnston Road. This area has the potential to realize significant land use changes.

The availability of undeveloped parcels that are adjacent to the corridor and the trend for continued commercial infill/redevelopment require creation of a long-term plan to address the type, location and density of growth. Quality of the

development, supporting infrastructure, design guidelines and traffic management are all inter-related program issues that must be considered to realize an effective plan.

All of the stakeholders in this area should be actively engaged in this cooperative planning effort. The study could be conducted as part of the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan (as described under the *Action Plan*) or as a separate undertaking.

The suitability of future development in the Westmere Commercial Area will be a function of good access and traffic circulation. To achieve this, the Town should consider utilization of some existing road infrastructure as well as new linkages. The Crossgates Mall Ring Road provides direct access to the Northway and, therefore, an excellent opportunity for a bypass to Route 20 and access management for new development. The Ring Road was developed as a bypass but does not appear to function as intended.

Crossgates Mall and Stuyvesant Plaza are major retail centers that are essentially bisected by I-87 (Northway). Currently, Rt. 20 provides the only convenient link between these two economic centers. Redefining the Ring Road as an alternative connector and physically linking it with Stuyvesant Plaza would have a significant beneficial impact to this area of the town by reducing the traffic pressure along the Route 20 corridor from Fuller Road to Rapp Road. Both Crossgates Mall and Stuyvesant Plaza would have direct access to the Northway and I-90/Thruway via the Northway. If any future commercial infill occurs along the north side of Rt. 20, the Ring Road should be used as an alternate means of access, thus enhancing the ability to implement corridor management techniques such as reducing curb cuts.

The following observations and recommendations are proposed to guide the Town until the further study has been conducted for the Route 20 corridor:

- A design charrette might be considered as a planning tool for this area. A charrette involves interactive sessions where individuals having a stake in the future of the area (residents, business owners, Town officials, and other government and special interest representatives) meet and discuss planning and design options. Issues that impact design are discussed and debated, usually resulting in several alternatives. The purpose of the charrette is to discuss and sketch out land use and design options for lands in the vicinity of Crossgates Mall. This would include Route 20 and other development in the immediate vicinity. A study area would have to be defined prior to the charrette. Many ideas can be expressed in terms of appropriate land use, vehicular access and circulation solutions, improvements to the pedestrian environment, and architectural standards or guidelines. It may be used as a precursor to a corridor plan for the Westmere Commercial Corridor of Route 20 or a neighborhood master plan for Westmere. A well planned charrette would involve the services of a landscape architect, a civil engineer,

and a planner to facilitate the process. This can be accomplished by retaining the professional services of these individuals or by soliciting volunteers from the professional community in the Town. It is important for participants to understand the major issues associated with the area prior to the charrette so that the process can focus on potential solutions. . Examples of potential solutions that could be addressed during the design charrette are provided in the recommendations to follow.

- The poorly functioning southbound access ramp to the Crossgates Mall from the Northway is a traffic issue of regional and local concern and should be addressed prior to further development that would utilize this point of access.
- Evaluate the Crossgates Mall Ring Road and require improvements as necessary to improve circulation and to achieve its originally intended function as a bypass, prior to future development of this area. Opportunities for access management and future linkages to Stuyvesant Plaza should also be evaluated.
- Enter into dialogue with the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) to investigate potential solutions for improving the function of the road network serving the Westmere Commercial Area, including regional solutions. An example of a potential solution that might benefit the area is the Crossgates-Stuyvesant linkage discussed previously.
- Immediately south of Rt. 20, a service road or alley could be developed parallel to Rt. 20 east and west of Johnston Road to provide alternative access opportunities for future uses such as senior housing and business non-retail uses adjacent to Route 20. The service road would provide access to current and future development thereby eliminating numerous curb cuts along Route 20. This should translate into better traffic flow along Route 20 within this very congested segment. Any future development in this area should also include provisions for a pocket/neighborhood park to serve the Westmere neighborhoods.
- Initiate dialogue with the City of Albany, Village of Colonie, and relevant Albany County and State agencies regarding development issues associated with the Westmere Commercial Area.
- Zoning changes that would permit additional large-scale retail development in the area should be avoided.
- Future commercial development in the area must take into consideration traffic impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Any proposed commercial development in the Gabriel Terrace residential neighborhood should be supported only with the consensus of the residents.
- To preserve the aesthetic quality and arterial function of Western Avenue, the open space set aside as part of the Crossgates Mall approval should be maintained.
- The Town should develop and maintain regular interaction with the City of Albany, CDTC, CDRPC, CDTA, SUNY Albany and other public or municipal agencies concerning issues related to the Crossgates Mall area and development along Washington Avenue Extension. Actions by the City of

Albany or NYSDOT in this area, such as zoning changes or highway improvements, have impacts on the Town, just as action by the Town can impact the City and the regional transportation network. Regional dialogue and cooperation are in the best interest of all parties.

Northeast Industrial Park

The Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP) is a NYS Economic Development Zone, providing tax, energy and employment incentives. It is zoned industrial and is located adjacent to an active railroad. It is currently developed with 2.5 million gross square feet (gsf) and has a potential to be developed with an additional 2.0 million gsf. Although successful and an important component of the Town of Guilderland, the industrial park is truck oriented which has resulted in unintended significant impacts on the residents of Guilderland Center. The industrial park is also located adjacent to Black Creek, a tributary of the Watervliet Reservoir. This area was also part of the Black Creek floodplain until it was modified by the Army to create a depot.

Recommendations

- Require the preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) that addresses full build-out of the property and the associated impacts to determine the reasonable amount of development of the property that can be properly mitigated.
- Begin dialogue with the NEIP to determine alternative truck routes and funding options that would bypass the heart of Guilderland Center and the residential areas. The NYSDOT should also be engaged in this discussion that would include a broader bypass solution, redirecting most pass-thru traffic (both trucks and automobiles) around Guilderland Center.
- Cooperatively market desired tenants especially those that rely on rail rather than truck transport.
- Encourage the NEIP to have dialogue with the former Schenectady Army Depot Restoration Advisory Commission on the relocation of Black Creek and the protection of the creek until relocation occurs.

B.6 Recreation

The Town contains numerous recreational opportunities including ball fields, soccer fields, a swimming pool, golf courses, trails, picnic areas, etc. The *Inventory & Analysis* provides a listing of all the Town-owned parks, their acreage, and recreational opportunities. In addition to the Town parks, there are six privately owned golf courses. There are also some large areas of State-owned/protected ecological areas including the Pine Bush, the Black Creek Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and a portion of John Boyd Thacher State Park. Active recreation facilities are also provided at the Town's public schools within each of the school districts.

The amount and type of recreation should be projected based on the community's needs rather than a generalized standard.

Recreational resources are generally divided into two categories, *active* and *passive*. Active recreation includes those activities requiring constructed facilities and fields, such as basketball courts, baseball diamonds, and soccer fields. Passive uses provide no formal facilities and generally include those activities that do not require organization. They do, however, require usable open space.

There are several types of parks that a community can develop to meet its needs. The National Recreation and Park Association has classified parks based on size, area served, and uses (NRPA 1995). The Town can use the following park classifications as a guide:

- *mini-Park* - used for very limited areas and unique recreational needs.
- *Neighborhood Park* - Typically 5-10 acres in size and serving a population concentration within a ¼-½ mile radius.
- *School-Park* - School parks can serve as substitutes for neighborhood or even community parks if large enough and available for the general public. The optimum size is dependent upon intended use.
- *Community Park* - The community park serves two or more neighborhoods within a ½-3 mile radius. Optimum size is between 30 and 50 acres.
- *Large Urban Park or Town Park* - This park typically serves the entire municipality, with an optimum size of 75 acres.
- *Natural Resource Areas* - This designation includes areas with significant community resources, such as important landscapes, open space, and visual buffers or viewsheds.
- *Greenways* - provide linkages between parks and other open space. They differ from natural resource areas in that human use is emphasized.
- *Sports Complex* - Several programmed active uses are combined in one facility. This would include athletic fields and associated facilities. Such facilities should be properly located to serve the greatest population. Optimum size is 40 to 85 acres.
- *Private Park/Recreation Facility* - Privately owned parks and facilities that contribute to the public recreation system.
- *Pathways* - These include trails developed for a number of uses such as bikeways and nature trails.

A comprehensive study of community recreational needs should be conducted to determine the type, size and number of parks and other recreation space, as well as the need for purchase of additional open space. However, some generalizations can be made to help plan for immediate and future population over the next 10-20 years.

Neighborhood or mini parks should incorporate several active uses, located within the population centers. Playgrounds and similar facilities in walking distance from neighborhoods reduce traffic and subsequent pollution and help

to provide neighborhood identity. Project sponsors should be encouraged to incorporate parks or land for parks in their development proposals.

Stream corridors provide potential linkages between open space. The result is a network of open space providing important wildlife habitat, clean air, clean water, and the potential for trail development.

Recreation and Open Space recommendations include the following:

- Undertake a recreational needs study to determine the current and desired level of service for passive and active recreation within the Westmere and McKownville communities. This study should be conducted cooperatively with the school districts, potentially providing opportunities for shared facilities and greater opportunities for residents.
- Provide neighborhood and mini parks with active and passive recreational uses within population clusters, especially within Westmere and McKownville. A national standard of 1.7 acres per 1000 population can be used as a guideline, however, the information provided by the recreation needs study will better serve the community. The neighborhood park should be sited to allow pedestrian access to the greatest extent practicable and in conjunction with Guilderland Pathways, a recommended pathway study discussed under the *Transportation* section of this Plan.
- Investigate areas for future ball/soccer fields.
- Require new development to incorporate neighborhood and/or mini parks in their design, as appropriate for the area and the size of development. When park development is inappropriate, require new development to contribute to a parkland acquisition fund.
- Establish a recreation and open space acquisition fund to assist in the purchase of lands and their development for recreational purposes.
- Promote clustering and other innovative design measures that preserve open space.
- Investigate potential recreational access to stream corridors.
- Identify appropriate growth management tools that will assist in the preservation of open space for recreational purposes. Suitable growth management tools are identified in the *Growth Management* section of this Plan.

B.7 Tower Management

With the growing popularity of cellular phones and other wireless communication options the number of towers placed on the landscape has increased significantly. Initially, the wireless communications networks were developed within the large metropolitan areas. The corridors that link the cities followed. Such corridors as the Thruway and I-84 were some of the first to have networks completed, linking the major metropolitan areas. A network consists of a series of communications facilities, many times consisting of towers and

their associated antennas and radio equipment. The goal of the network is to create uninterrupted service throughout the network (e.g., the Thruway corridor from Buffalo to NYC). Coverage within a particular "cell" is dependent on topography, vegetation and other structures, all of which can cause "holes" or "dead spots" in the coverage. The number of towers and the proper location to complete the network is modeled by radio frequency engineers. Through their recommendations, site acquisition specialists identify appropriate sites to locate the towers.

Wireless service demand is increasing to the extent that additional carriers are expanding into already covered markets. New and emerging technologies, such as wireless data transmission, are and will continue to create demand for tower space. Wireless service is also beginning to expand into more rural areas, mainly along the major corridors like the Northway.

Network providers purchase the right to provide wireless communication service for a given region. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) grants a license to the network provider and mandates that provider to establish the network to provide good service to the region. This mandate is legally supported by the Federal Communications Act which prevents local governments from excluding the communications facilities providing the facilities will not cause significant environmental impact. It is this protection that, at least initially, has caused many communities to accept tower locations even though they believed the tower would compromise desired land use and visual resources.

Over the years, communities began to become more familiar with the Federal Communications Act and the rights of a community not to preclude communications facilities but to site such facilities in a manner that does not significantly impact land use. The Federal Communications Act does not preclude the network provider from undergoing local approvals as well as State and federal environmental review processes. It does not preclude a community from requiring the co-location of facilities on a single tower when such opportunities reasonably exist and are consistent with the network requirements. It also does not preclude the community from requiring an evaluation of other options such as the use of existing structures (e.g., water towers) or alternative tower design (i.e., "stealth towers"). Many communities have become proactive by incorporating communications facilities in their land use planning process, identifying appropriate zoning districts and specific sites that would be considered suitable for tower construction.

The network providers in conjunction with a community can work together to properly locate suitable facility sites. Presently, the wireless communications industry has turned to tower developers to develop shared tower facilities. These tower developers are working with communities to identify mutually beneficial tower sites.

The Town of Guilderland has and will continue to face pressure for the development of various types of communications facilities. Some facility locations are/will be tolerable but others, such as along the Helderberg Escarpment, may cause significant impacts on the Town's visual resources. A proactive approach to the siting of communication facilities is recommended. Steps to achieve this include the following:

- Prepare an inventory of potential suitable sites for the location of wireless communication facilities. Such siting should take into consideration visual resources, height thresholds, topography, land use, and opportunities for co-location and the use of other suitable existing structures.
- Review the current case law regarding the location of communications facilities and the rights of municipalities as dictated by judicial review.

B.8 Potential Adverse & Beneficial Future Growth Impacts

Pursuant to the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), this section identifies the potential adverse and beneficial impacts associated with adoption of the Plan Recommendations.

The Plan recommendations focus on managing growth to minimize the impacts on the environment, utilities, community services and the tax base. Infill development and redevelopment are the most environmentally sound and energy efficient means of growth. Despite this, future development, especially within the Route 20 corridor between the City of Albany and Route 146 (Carman Road), may result in significant increases in traffic volume that could significantly increase delay and degrade intersection function. To mitigate this potential impact, the Plan recommends addressing traffic and the pedestrian environment first. Mitigation measures would include access management, signal coordination, and the possible reconfiguration of the Westmere Commercial Area to provide alternate routes to Route 20. From a land use perspective, open space buffers should be provided between the residential areas and the existing and emerging non-residential uses. In addition, future non-residential uses in the Route 20 corridor should include office, commercial non-retail, and possibly very low impact light industrial uses. Large retail uses should be discouraged since the existing malls/plazas provide ample shopping opportunity at a regional level. Small retail uses (neighborhood shops) may be appropriate, especially as a means of supporting a pedestrian friendly corridor.

Continued industrial development in the Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP) may have a significant impact on Guilderland Center. Past and current industrial activity has already created truck traffic impacts within this neighborhood. The plan recommendations call for a GEIS to evaluate the impacts of buildout of the NEIP on the natural environment and the community.

There are significant land use issues associated with extending sewer and water into Rural Guilderland. Subsequent residential development could change the character of Rural Guilderland. At this planning level, the Plan recommendations (identified in detail in Chapter IV, Section E.10) call for the preparation of a plan for Rural Guilderland that would address how development might occur taking into consideration the character of this area, the need to protect the water supply for the Town, and the potential ramifications (both adverse and beneficial) of providing utilities. If the Town plans for rural guilderland in this manner, the potential for significant impact on land use, community resources, and community character can be avoided or appropriately mitigated.

Through implementation of the Plan Recommendations, some potential impact will be unavoidable as a result of new development. Some resources will be lost (open space, habitat) and traffic will increase along with runoff. However, the extent of these impacts are mitigated through Plan Recommendations for the preservation of open space, protection of natural resources such as stream corridors and wetlands, and control of suburban sprawl through the use of growth management tools.

C. NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are seldom viewed as a land use unless there is a recognizable level of protection for the resources or if the resources are being utilized, as in the case of mining. The Town's natural resources are diverse and unique. They offer residents recreational opportunity, provide the open space necessary to identify rural character, and promote a healthy ecology. The latter is less tangible, but is a quality of life asset.

The Town has not lost its resources or the opportunity to preserve or conserve them. Open space preservation does not mean no growth. However, it does mean that a community must develop the incentives, guidelines and when appropriate the regulations to design around and preserve important resources. Some resources have been identified at a State or federal level as important and worthy of protection. For example, wetlands are important ecological communities that can have both federal and State protection. Due to the complexity of identifying some of these resources, it is not appropriate to attempt to map them. On the other hand, general policy statements can be used along with development guidelines to assist local decision-makers as they review site specific projects.

C.1 Plan Premises

Guidance for the development of the Natural Resources Plan came from the basic premise that efforts to remove ourselves from the environment leads to stresses that eventually force us to seek what has been lost. In other words, we are an integral part of the environment, therefore a healthy environment means a healthy community. From this, the following guiding principles were developed:

- The Town contains some unique and important natural features, namely the Pine Bush and the Helderberg Escarpment. Efforts to achieve a sustainable, fire manageable ecosystem within the remaining portions of the Pine Bush are on-going. Many lands remain in private ownership in areas of continuing development. Although it is unlikely that the slopes of the Helderberg Escarpment would be developed, towers are being developed along the ridge line and views to and from the Escarpment may be compromised by future development. Therefore, the guiding principle for these unique resources is that the Town should support their protection through policies, development guidelines, cooperation with federal and State agencies, and local protection measures.
- Water resources are important to the Town. The Town relies on surface water and groundwater sources for its water supply. Ravines, floodplains,

and wetlands provide open space that promotes rural character but offer more important physical benefits such as water purification, stormwater management, and the diversification and connection of habitat. Impacts from the various land uses within and outside the Town have resulted in siltation and eutrophication (increase in nutrients that result in aquatic and emergent vegetation and algal blooms) of the Watervliet Reservoir. Although sufficient water resources exist in the Town, it is expensive to treat and distribute these resources. Therefore, the guiding principles for water resources are to protect streams, steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands to preserve water quality and to take advantage of natural flood storage; and to recognize that potable water supply is not an unlimited resource and that the greater the consumption, the more infrastructure and treatment capacity will be required at a higher cost.

The Comprehensive Plan does provide the opportunity to recognize major resources of importance; the Town has several and are discussed in the sections to follow.

C.2 Watervliet Reservoir Watershed & Groundwater Supply

Interestingly, this is a natural resource that has become important through human manipulation and use. The Watervliet Reservoir was once the Normanskill until it was dammed for the purpose of creating a water supply. However, its status as a drinking water supply for the City of Watervliet and the Town of Guilderland require that it be protected from exploitation and misuse. A pleasant consequence was the creation of aquatic habitat and wetland accompanied by preserved adjacent upland, providing habitat to many wildlife species.

The Watervliet Reservoir watershed is approximately 115 square miles and includes three counties and eight Towns. Approximately 35 square miles of the watershed is located in the Town. A watershed is defined as an area of land that drains to a single point; in this case, the reservoir dam. From the very definition of watershed comes an important realization that the activities occurring on any given parcel in the watershed can have an important impact on water quality. For example, the use of fertilizers on a lawn multiplied by thousands of homes within the watershed results in a profound nutrient loading potential.

In addition to the Watervliet Reservoir and distributions from the City of Albany, the Town operates three wells in the Nott Road/Route 155 area. Although capable of producing up to 2.0 million gallons per day (mgd), these wells are primarily used for back-up during peak demand due to water quality issues. A well head protection plan is being prepared to protect the aquifers associated with the Town's wells. Given that groundwater is the only water source directly controlled by the Town, it is important for the Town to protect

its resources in case future conditions in other municipalities limit or preclude the provision of water to the Town.

Recommendations

- Begin dialogue with the City of Watervliet to create a partnership for the long-term management, use and possible expansion of the reservoir and to protect the quality of this water supply. This should also include discussion of the appropriate land use measures to protect water quality within the Watervliet Reservoir watershed and the mechanism by which these measures would be enforced.
- Preservation of critical lands adjacent to the reservoir can be accomplished through a number of open space preservation techniques discussed in *Growth Management*. However, for the best control, the Town should consider purchase of these lands.
- Dialogue should be established with the other municipalities containing a portion of the watershed to encourage them to support the Town's efforts.
- A draft Well-Head Protection Plan (Phase II of the Well Head Protection Study) has been developed for the Town to protect the aquifers that the Town currently utilizes for groundwater supply and other areas that may provide groundwater supply in the future. The Plan recommends the following to protect the Town's groundwater supply:
 - The Town should formulate a general Town-wide policy regarding the use, disposal and storage of hazardous materials. This should include local notification of any spills or releases which are reported to the NYSDEC.
 - Policies for the secondary well field management zones, consisting of the Pine Bush recharge areas, the Fullers recharge area, and the area immediately north and down-gradient of the Voorheesville delta complex, should include the collection of information regarding all storage of reportable quantities of petroleum and/or potentially hazardous materials. Notification should be provided to all occupants within this area, including potential concerns. Floor drains and other subsurface discharges should be eliminated with the exception of sanitary septic discharges.
 - Within the primary management area, defined as a radius of 4,500 feet from each well, gasoline retailers, industry and any activities relating to the use, storage or disposal of potentially hazardous materials should be restricted. Subsurface discharges from floor drains should be eliminated.

C.3 Drainage Corridors (Streams, Ravines, Floodplain & Wetland)

There are numerous stream corridors in the Town of Guilderland. The drainage network is shown in the *Inventory & Analysis*, as well as appearing on the base map for the Comprehensive Plan. Each segment of stream is formed by the

physical characteristics of its own subwatershed. These natural drainage corridors carve the landscape and create the variations in topography that promote rural character. Streams provide habitat for many wildlife species, both aquatic and terrestrial. When permitted to develop naturally, streams form their own stormwater management storage through floodplains and other storage basins. Streams provide linkages between habitat and between human destinations. They can be used as wildlife corridors and hiking trails. They can also provide open space in developed areas. Perhaps most importantly for the Town of Guilderland, streams can provide a source of potable water if properly cared for and protected.

Recommendations (Streams and Floodplains)

- Buffer all stream corridors from development to protect the integrity of the stream corridor to maintain water quality, promote wildlife corridors, provide potential recreational opportunity, and protect the health, safety and welfare of the community from slope failure potential. The width of the buffer should not be less than 100 feet from the stream edge to prevent potential impacts of erosion and sedimentation. In the case of stream corridors with associated steep banks (ravines), the angle of repose should be used to define top of bank. The current 30 foot setback from the angle of repose (top of bank) as provided in the subdivision regulations should continue to be used. The 12 degree angle of repose is used to protect steep slopes and stream corridors from development.
- Direct impacts to stream corridors, wetlands, floodplains and other water resources should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. New development should be required to design with the topography and other natural resources to minimize impact.
- Require the preparation of an erosion control plan for new projects. Erosion control measures may include:
 - Installing silt fence or silt fence in combination with staked hay bales, at the toe of slopes around the construction area.
 - Utilizing temporary drainage swales with hay bale check dams to direct water away from the construction area.
 - Upon completion of final grading, seeding all areas with a quick-germinating grass or other similar cover species.
 - Staging site development to minimize disturbed areas.
- Special consideration should be given to the streams that are tributary to the Watervliet Reservoir. Setbacks for specific uses identified in the document: *Rules and Regulation for Protection from Contamination of the Public Water Supply of the Watervliet Reservoir*¹ have been adopted by the Town. Other regulations, such as the new federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Water Pollution Control Program (Phase II) may prove to be useful in protecting the watershed from stormwater runoff from new development.

¹ Promulgated by the New York State Commissioner of Health under Section 1100 of the Public Health Law.

- Explore potential access opportunities to stream corridors at appropriate locations for recreational uses (primarily trails and fishing access). Emphasis should be placed on voluntary easements to achieve appropriate connections.
- Prevent encroachment into the 100-year floodplain. These areas have been generally mapped from the Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and are provided in the *Inventory & Analysis*.
- Revise existing flood control regulations and guidelines in accordance with State policies.

Recommendations (Wetlands)

- Encourage preservation of wetland areas through conservation easements and other methods of protection (see *Growth Management*). This would be aided by State and federal regulations, however, easements, deed restrictions and other local controls would compensate for the uncertain future of the regulatory environment.
- If wetland impacts are permitted, encourage project sponsors to limit impacts to less significant portions of the wetland and to avoid fragmentation.
- Require wetland delineations pursuant to State and federal regulations, as appropriate. State wetland boundaries are generally confirmed by NYSDEC. Federal boundaries are confirmed by COE upon request of the project sponsor.
- Wetlands should be protected from erosion and sedimentation through the use of silt fences, staked hay bales, diversion swales and check dams, and other erosion control measures as determined appropriate for the site.
- Require any conditions of permits issued by COE or NYSDEC, including conditions of Nationwide Permits, as applicable, prior to site plan or subdivision approval.

C.4 Pine Bush

The Pine Bush was created thousands of years ago following the last glaciation of the area. As the glaciers receded, glacial meltwater formed lakes that covered large areas of the State. Glacial Lake Albany dominated the Capital District. The lake created beaches that would later become sand dunes. Interestingly, what was once an area dominated by water became a kind of northern desert, limiting vegetative species to those tolerating dry conditions, with the exception of an occasional wetland oasis. The pitch pine-scrub oak community became the climax (end of natural succession) forest type due to repeated fires. Many interesting and unique species inhabited this environment that comprised over 25,000 acres.

Today, development has consumed large portions of the Pine Bush resulting in a remnant ecology threatened by total extirpation. However, through the efforts of ecologists and other interested and concerned individuals, the State established the Pine Bush Preserve and the Pine Bush Preserve Commission, in which the Town is a member. Through greater understanding of ecology, the Pine Bush can exist as a sustainable community if at least 2,000 fire manageable acres of pitch pine-scrub oak barrens can be preserved. Efforts are underway to achieve this goal through the purchase of private lands. Presently, approximately 950 acres recommended for full or partial protection by the Commission have been preserved within the Town. There are only a few remaining parcels in the Town recommended for full or partial protection. These parcels are being actively pursued by the Commission.

The Town of Guilderland is fortunate to have the Pine Bush resource in the community. It is a significant piece of preserved open space, providing numerous passive recreation and educational opportunities. It is a suburban park that will increase in its importance to the community as the Town and region continue to grow in population and as increased development reduces the availability of open space. Given the uniqueness of the ecology, the open space value provided to the Town, and the high priority given to its protection on a State level, it is in the Town's best interest to support the efforts of the Pine Bush Preserve Commission, in its role as a member of the Commission, to continue preservation and management of the Pine Bush.

Recommendations

- Assist and cooperate with the Pine Bush Preserve Commission in implementing its *Management Plan* and *Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines*. This should occur by including a requirement in the site plan and subdivision review processes that new development occurring within the Project Review Area, as defined and illustrated in the *Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines*, undergo consultation with the Town and Pine Bush Preserve Commission in the early planning stages (sketch plan) of plan development. The purpose of this consultation is to provide the Commission an opportunity to comment on the site and proposal in the early planning stages to make suggestions that are consistent with efforts for management of the Pine Bush ecosystem. This will benefit both the Town's review process and the individual developer by providing early input.
- Promote the Pine Bush Interpretative Center as a local educational resource.
- Consider the use of Growth Management techniques, such as the Transfer of Development Rights, as a method of preserving important Pine Bush habitat or open space.
- The Town should continue to invest in the voluntary acquisition of the few remaining parcels located within the Pine Bush Primary Protection Area.
- Encourage continued agricultural operations within the Pine Bush.

C.5 Helderberg Escarpment

Albany County's most unique and equally important geologic feature is the Helderberg Escarpment. The uplift and subsequent erosion of the coastal plain of an ancient sea resulted in this landform of high cliffs capped by hard, less erodible limestone. It is a geological and paleontological haven. It is also an important and impressive visual feature, forming the signature landform of the Capital Region and attracting visitors from areas throughout the State. The Town of Guilderland benefits from its presence which has provided spectacular views. It is one important reason that the Town is such an attractive place to live.

Recommendations

- Prevent the development or other use of the Escarpment slopes for other than open space and passive recreational use.
- Protect the ridge line from the visual impact of development. The ridge line could be specifically identified as an important piece of open space and effort employed to protect it through conservation easements, expansion of the State park, or other growth management measures.
- Protect the views both to and from the escarpment, recognizing the State-wide/regional importance of the viewshed and the local value which has contributed to the attractiveness of the Town. Recommendations for viewshed protection include the following:
 - Identify areas of the Town deemed visually important. These areas might include sections of road with views of the escarpment and areas of the foreground view from the Escarpment that would significantly detract from the enjoyment of the view if developed.
 - Require visual impact analysis for all developments requiring zoning or planning approvals that are located within designated viewsheds.
 - All projects within viewsheds that are subject to SEQR should be required to prepare a Visual EAF Addendum.
 - The need for visual impact analysis for projects located outside the designated viewsheds should be addressed on a case by case basis. Criteria for establishing the need for a visual impact analysis should include the extent of potential impact on rural character, the extent of clearing and grading, site topography, proximity to other important community resources, and the aesthetic character of the proposed structure or use.
 - Utilize growth management tools such as conservation easements, purchase or transfer of development rights, and, as necessary, specific height regulations, to protect visual resources.

C.6 Potential Adverse & Beneficial Future Growth Impacts

Pursuant to the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), this section identifies the potential adverse and beneficial impacts associated with adoption of the Plan Recommendations.

In most cases the preservation of open space and significant environmental features are beneficial impacts. The Plan calls for recognition and preservation of the Pine Bush, Helderberg Escarpment, stream corridors and associated features, the Town's water supply sources, and open space in general. Since the Plan is an attempt to achieve controlled growth, not "no growth," impact to the environment is inevitable. There will be a loss of open space, natural habitat, wetland area, and agricultural lands. Runoff will increase as will the potential for water quality impacts and erosion and sedimentation. Suburban sprawl may continue, especially if water and sewer service is provided to undeveloped areas. The ability to identify appropriate measures to protect significant natural resources through the implementation process is crucial to prevent permanent impacts.

D. TRANSPORTATION

Streets in livable communities serve all users – vehicles and pedestrians. Planted medians, well-defined crosswalks, and sidewalks ensure that the pedestrian realm is both pleasant and safe.

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Transportation corridors in the Town of Guilderland are both an amenity and a source of continued anxiety. Few communities have the access to both north-south and east-west interstates. Residents can access the Thruway directly at Exit 25 and again at Exit 24 via the Northway. Northway access is available from Route 20 and from the Crossgates Mall. State Route 155 links two of the Capital District's major arterials, Route 20 and Route 5. Route 155 also provides access to the Albany International Airport and links the communities of Voorheesville, Guilderland, and Colonie. There are numerous County roads serving as collectors that link communities to major arterials. Throughout the Community Outreach process, people recognized that the Town's road system, which includes the interstates, provides them with quick access to destinations all over the Capital District and Saratoga region. It is apparent that the designation of Guilderland as a desirable place to live is as much a function of access as it is the residential character.

It stands to reason that an impact such as excessive delay would have a major effect on the quality of life in the Town. Traffic is the Town's number one concern and, like most communities, the solution is not simple. This section of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the major traffic issues facing the Town and provides recommendations that may have some beneficial impact on traffic flow as well as improve the "streetscape" and pedestrian environment. However, before specific recommendations are made, it is important to understand the basic premises or guiding principles that were used to formulate this plan.

D.1 Plan Premises

- Traffic volume and congestion issues in Guilderland, particularly in the eastern part of Town are primarily a function of development within the Town and some pass-thru traffic from adjoining communities. Therefore, traffic solutions should focus on controlling development and preserving transportation corridors, as well as seeking regional solutions.
- The Census tells us that the Town of Guilderland is a "bedroom community," meaning that the majority of people who live in the Town work elsewhere in the Capital District. Since the City of Albany and other primary destinations are located east of the Town, the majority of traffic is heading east in the morning and west in the evening during a peak hour period. Measures that would help reverse a portion of this traffic during the peak periods would be beneficial.
- The County road system was designed and intended primarily as a collector system. The Town has numerous collector roads that connect communities. Some of these same roads have been developed with residential uses, giving

the perception of a residential street and probably precluding future consideration as a collector.

- Public transportation is an important tool in relieving traffic congestion both at the origin and the destination. However, public transportation is not designed for rural or even suburbanized areas. It is most effective where populations are concentrated and there is a good pedestrian system. Therefore, it can only be reasonably assumed that future improvements in the public transportation system will benefit the developed areas of McKownville, Westmere and the McCormack Corners/Fort Hunter area.

The transportation issues and recommendations to follow are discussed in the hierarchy of use and capacity. It is also true in the Town that many of the traffic issues occurring on county and local roads are a result of bottlenecks at the arterials. Presumably, if capacity can be gained and/or traffic flow improved, many of the impacts occurring on the local streets would resolve themselves.

D.2 New York State Highways & Thruway

The NYS Thruway (I-90) crosses the northern portion of the Town, providing an exit near NYS Route 146 and another major interchange just outside of the Town in the City of Albany (Exit 24). The Thruway continues southward through the Town, becoming I87. The intent of the Thruway system is to provide interstate travel with limited access. It is not intended as a means of relieving local traffic and may actually have the opposite effect of encouraging development around the exit.

Route 20 (Western Avenue) is the primary east-west route through the Town and the most heavily congested. However, heading west to east, Route 20 congestion is not significant until Carman Road (Route 146). This is further testament to the impact development has on traffic. Congestion significantly increases from Route 155 eastward. Like many of the collector roads, portions of Route 20 were initially developed with single family homes, each with their own driveway. As commercial development grew in response to the construction of the Thruway and Northway and in response to the growing residential population, commercial development began to dominate the road frontage but without addressing access. The combination of numerous driveways and increased traffic volume leads to congestion and delay.

There are no easy, long term solutions to the traffic problem along Route 20, Route 155 and Route 146. A southern bypass linking Route 155 with Schoolhouse Road and eventually with the Northway on-ramp was proposed several years ago but was voted down by the residents of the Town. Due to the extent of residential development in this area, it is unlikely that the bypass would receive a warm welcome if it were proposed today.

The Town faces two major traffic issues: local traffic and regional traffic. Local traffic is a function of land use and appears to be the largest cause of congestion in the Town. Solutions for this problem require good planning, access management, and the encouragement of public transportation and non-vehicular travel. Regional traffic issues are generally out of the direct control of the Town and must be dealt with at a regional level. Growth is likely to continue to occur in New Scotland and Bethlehem that may have impacts in Guilderland. Therefore, it will be extremely important for the Town to take an active role in the planning process with CDTC, NYSDOT, Albany County, and neighboring municipalities.

The recommendations to follow are designed to work in harmony and are not stand-alone solutions. Although each recommendation will have an impact on traffic management, it will require the combination of solutions to result in a significant reduction in congestion.

Recommendations

- Work with the NYSDOT and CDTC to achieve coordinated signalization along Route 20. A coordinated signal system adjusts signal timing to adjust to traffic volume to keep traffic flowing smoothly. In an ideal situation, vehicles traveling at a set speed that is coordinated with traffic signals would not have to stop for many of these signals.
- Prepare an access management plan for the entire Route 20, Route 155, and Route 146 corridors. Access management involves the evaluation of current access to major highways and provides solutions for minimizing access in an effort to reduce conflicts between turning vehicles and through traffic. Access management can result in combined driveways, shared parking, and new service roads. In some areas it may be suitable to consider a parallel service road thereby limiting access to the highway at intersections. Access management can be conducted in segments. If so, focus should be given first to the McKownville and Westmere sections of Route 20. An access management plan is also important to have in place for areas expected to undergo future development. This will prevent future traffic conflicts associated with land use that will certainly arise as development expands.
- Initiate dialogue with the Thruway Authority concerning the potential of providing additional access to the New York State Thruway. This will be a long term project. Discussions should also include the potential for toll-free access between Exits 23 and 25A. The Town should work with adjoining municipalities in promoting this effort.
- Improve the pedestrian environment along Route 20. A continuous sidewalk system along Route 20 should be provided from Carman Road to the City line. Additionally, sidewalks and/or trails should be provided to link the adjoining residential neighborhoods with the Route 20 sidewalk system. By improving the pedestrian environment, people may be more

- inclined to walk to shops, doctors offices, services, the library, etc., especially if they are living close by.
- In coordination with the pedestrian system, means of safely crossing major highways must be devised. Specific areas for crossings are identified in the *Route 20 Corridor Study* to follow. Crosswalks with pedestrian signals, medians used for pedestrian havens to shorten the length of crossing, or possibly the consideration of a pedestrian bridge are all methods to allow safe pedestrian crossings.
 - Provide additional park-n-ride lots, car pooling incentives and assistance, bus shelters, bike lanes and bike lockers at bus shelters. Emphasis should be placed on increasing the opportunity for public transportation and easy access to pick-up and drop-off points. This is also an important component of the pedestrian environment.
 - Become an active partner with CDTC to begin planning for local and regional traffic solutions.

D.3 Western Avenue (Route 20) Corridor Study

Route 20 or the Western Turnpike was the primary east-west arterial serving New York State prior to the construction of the Thruway. Route 20 has served as the primary conduit for residential development in the Town of Guilderland. Commercial development followed, especially after the construction of the Thruway and Northway. As traffic and land values increased along the Route 20 corridor, residential development has given way to commercial and office uses. As a result, vehicles dominate the corridor but with some strategic planning the corridor can be transformed to accommodate traffic while providing an active and safe pedestrian environment bolstered by an active marketplace. A corridor study was initiated to identify issues along the corridor and provide possible solutions or recommendations for further study.

The purpose of a corridor study is to evaluate both the traffic and land use issues associated with a given roadway. As discussed previously, traffic and land use in the Town of Guilderland are inseparable issues. The Route 20 corridor is defined as the length of Route 20 in the Town of Guilderland from the City of Albany to the Town of Princetown. The width of the corridor is variable and includes the Route 20 right-of-way, those parcels of land fronting on Route 20, and adjacent lands that are primarily residential neighborhoods. Finally, the length of the corridor is broken down into segments based on the predominant land use. This facilitates the process of identifying issues of concern and solutions that are applicable to most uses in the segment. Each segment of the corridor is identified on the *Comprehensive Plan* map. The boundaries are meant to be general, representative of the study area. Access management studies will become more detailed (parcel by parcel) and will better define the study area.

The Western Avenue/Route 20 Corridor can be generally described as having a highly developed commercial and office component that extends from McKownville to Route 155. This area is heavily impacted by traffic due to the extent of development and the opportunity for access to the interstates. From the 20 Mall at Route 155 west to Hunger Kill, land use is less intense. Development in this area is hindered by the Pine Bush, a cemetery and stream corridors. However, this area is developing as a community center with a school, library and the YMCA. From the Hunger Kill to Town Hall and a bit beyond, the corridor is dominated by commercial uses, that are less intensive than Westmere and McKownville. Route 146 intersects the corridor at two locations, each representing separate traffic issues. The section of Route 20 from the Town Hall area to the CSX tracks is much less developed than the eastern segments but due to the provision of sewer and water, has potential for more intense development. West of the CSX tracks are rural features and significant resources that require separate consideration. The western end of the corridor may lend itself to future non-residential (economic) development.

Certain issues and solutions are applicable to most of the corridor and are identified as follows to avoid repetition.

General issues include the following:

- Lack of identity along any given corridor segment. This refers to the blurring of land use created by strip development and inconsistent landscaping and architecture. As identified during the Community Outreach Program, there are distinct areas of the Town but the boundaries and distinctions have become less obvious.
- Traffic volume on Route 20 from Carman Road (Route 146) to the City line is at or nearing the functional capacity of the road based on information provided in the NYSDOT *Highway Sufficiency Ratings* manual. West of Carman Road, there is less development and therefore less traffic volume.
- Land use conflicts occur in most of the developed portions of the corridor as a result of the proximity of commercial and office uses in close proximity to residential neighborhoods. Insufficient buffers and impacts associated with traffic congestion and the specific use create quality of life issues for residents in the adjacent neighborhoods. In the western portion of Town, there are few traffic issues but potential land use conflicts, such as the preservation of the rural character and the water quality within the Watervliet Reservoir, are important land use issues associated with the Route 20 corridor.
- Finally, pedestrian access is lacking in the entire corridor. The provision of sidewalks are very desirable in developed areas. Sidewalks in the western portion of Town would not be appropriate at this time.

General solutions to address the issues include the following:

- Investigate the opportunity for coordinated signalization to control and improve traffic flow.

The NYS Department of Transportation recently completed this road reconstruction project on NYS Route 9 in Saratoga Springs. The project included the installation of planted medians, new sidewalks and crosswalks, streetlights, and benches at this important gateway to downtown.



- Prepare an access management plan for each corridor segment. The plan should include the evaluation of existing access and related problems and the development of specific solutions to provide shared access, shared parking, new access roads, and possibly parallel service roads. This analysis will require parcel level planning.
- Prepare a streetscape beautification plan for each segment of the corridor. The plan will identify the character of the area through discussions with residents and businesses and will provide design guidelines for facade treatments, lighting, signage, landscaping, street furniture, and other decorations that will make the corridor a desirable place to visit and patronize.
- Integral to the beautification plan is the provision of a continuous sidewalk system in the developed portions of the Town. The sidewalks should extend from Carman Road to the City line. Sidewalks should also be provided on Carman Road, Route 155 (both north and south of Route 20), and along Fuller Road. Additionally, sidewalk easements should be incorporated along portions of the corridor from the CSX tracks to Carman Road to accommodate potential future development.
- Provide buffers to reduce land use conflicts between business uses and the residential neighborhoods. This does not mean that the neighborhoods should be completely isolated from the corridor.
- Provide pedestrian linkages to integrate the corridor with adjoining neighborhoods. These linkages will complement the streetscape beautification plan and provision of sidewalks along Route 20. Begin discussions with the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) and NYSDOT to determine the appropriate locations for bus stops, shelters and other amenities that will promote ridership.
- Consider gateways to help distinguish corridor segments.
- Consider future corridor studies for other major roadways. Route 146 (Carman Road) is one road segment that warrants further consideration. Small problematic corridors might be more easily addressed as part of a neighborhood master plan. For example, Fuller Road could be incorporated into the McKownville neighborhood master plan.

The general solutions identified above are the most significant recommendations of the corridor study because they will have the greatest effect on traffic and the pedestrian environment. The information to follow is a discussion of the characteristics of each corridor segment and any specific solutions that have not been previously identified.

McKownville Professional Office Corridor

This corridor segment extends eastward from the City line/SUNY campus entrance to Fuller Road. The predominant land use in this corridor segment is the professional office converted from residential uses. Commercial business also occurs within the corridor, however, the recommendations are applicable to

all uses. Resource values within the corridor segment include an urban environment (many uses in close proximity), the opportunity for linkages, readily available public utilities, and some opportunity for office and commercial infill development.

Major issues include a high volume, congested segment of road; potential for significant land use conflicts; and the lack of pedestrian access.

Specific solutions for this corridor segment include:

- Use streetscaping, medians and other traffic calming methods to design a gateway to the community. Use of the Northway overpass may also be considered to develop the gateway.
- Provide an efficient and safe crossing of Route 20 at the entrance to the SUNY campus. At a minimum this should include a pedestrian controlled signal and crosswalk. Consideration should be given to the use of a pedestrian median to shorten the distance of travel that would encourage use of this area. The appropriate method of crossing should be identified as part of the future Route 20 Redevelopment Plan (discussed in detail in Section C.3).
- Provide sidewalks and safe crossing points on Fuller Road to support the heavy pedestrian traffic from residential neighborhoods and the University to Stuyvesant Plaza.
- Add a sidewalk along McKown Road and a safe crossing of Western Avenue at McKown Road and Norwood Street to facilitate access between residential areas of McKownville and Abele Park off Schoolhouse Road.
- Provide safe pedestrian access to the CDTA bus stops on Western Avenue.
- Investigate upgrading the recreation potential of the McKownville Reservoir by adding pedestrian access.
- Upgrade storm drainage in the areas, both along the Krum Kill downstream from the Reservoir, and within the residential neighborhoods north of Western Avenue.

Westmere Commercial Corridor

This corridor segment extends from Stuyvesant Plaza to the western entrance of Crossgates/Johnston Road. This is a major commercial corridor with extremely high valued property and numerous traffic and land use conflicts. Despite the developed condition of the area there is opportunity for significant infill, especially if the remaining residential uses convert to commercial or office. A major attraction of the area for economic development is quick access to the Northway.

Specific solutions for this corridor segment include the following:

- Create a Town-wide gateway at the end of the Northway at Route 20. Design of this gateway/"Welcome to Guilderland" should be conducted cooperatively with the Chamber of Commerce.

- Prepare an access management plan as part of the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan for this segment of Route 20.
- Evaluate the function of the Crossgates Mall Ring Road for more efficient use as a bypass for Route 20 and to provide access management for future development on the north side of Route 20, adjacent to the Mall property. The ring road is owned by the Town and provides two widely separated access points to Route 20 as well as direct access to the Northway. It was originally intended to provide access to the Mall and to function as a bypass. Its function as both a bypass and mall access/service road is questionable and should be evaluated prior to further development within the Westmere Commercial Corridor. Currently, the road is inadequate to serve shoppers, especially during holidays seasons, resulting in a significant amount of traffic using Western Avenue.
- Immediately south of Rt. 20, a service road or alley could be developed parallel to Rt. 20 east and west of Johnston Road to provide alternative access opportunities for future uses such as senior housing and business non-retail uses. The service road would provide access to current and future development thereby eliminating numerous curb cuts along Route 20. This should translate into better traffic flow along Route 20 within this very congested segment. Any future development in this area should also include provisions for a pocket/neighborhood park to serve the Westmere neighborhoods.
- Provide an efficient and safe crossing of Route 20 at Johnston Road and Fuller Road. These crossings will likely require the use of a pedestrian median and other designations to ensure safety. In addition to the crossing, pedestrian access to both facilities should be improved.
- Work with the NYS Department of Transportation to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of Route 20 and the end of the Northway.
- Work with CDTA to provide bus shelters, benches and other related infrastructure to facilitate bus use (applicable to all corridor segments east of the railroad tracks).

Westmere Professional Office Corridor

This corridor segment extends from Johnston Road (County Route 203) to Venezio Avenue and is predominantly comprised of professional offices with a commercial component. The issues associated with the western half of the corridor are similar to those of the McKownville segment in that residences have converted to other uses and these uses require individual driveways for access. Opportunities for access management are limited by the abutting residences. The other major challenge for this area is the identification of suitable uses along the frontage that will not result in land use conflicts with the residential neighborhood. The eastern half of the corridor appears to have sufficient room/lot depth to provide some access management solutions without impacting very many residences. In general, the larger lots provide an

opportunity for a variety of business uses and sufficient room to buffer adjoining incompatible uses.

Specific solutions for this corridor segment include the following:

- Prepare an access management plan as part of the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan for this segment of Route 20.
- Promote the continued use/redevelopment of small frontage lots as professional offices.
- Prepare access management plan to determine opportunities for combined driveways and a rear service road (alley). A right-of-way currently exists behind the small frontage lots on the north side of Route 20 (eastern half of corridor). This should be investigated for a potential service road.
- Protect adjoining residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses through sufficient buffers except when employing well-designed, pedestrian friendly new urbanism/mixed use concepts.

Route 155 Commercial Corridor

This corridor segment extends from Venezio Avenue to the 20 Mall located west of Route 155. This segment is highly commercialized, anchored by the 20 Mall and adjacent development. Like much of the corridor, there is a proliferation of individual driveways, high traffic volume, lack of architectural and streetscape cohesion, and a poor pedestrian environment. The solutions, therefore, are also similar to the other commercial segments. Given the large residential population located north of the corridor, pedestrian assistance crossing Route 20 and Route 155 appears to be appropriate. Pedestrian amenities may include crosswalks with pedestrian controlled lights and medians to reduce the crossing distance. Specific solutions for this corridor segment include the following:

- Pedestrian access along route 20 and 155 should be improved through the installation of sidewalks, as well as the provision of safe crossing opportunities, especially in the vicinity of 20 Mall and the Middle School.
- Prepare access management plan.

Guilderland Emerging Center Corridor

This segment of the corridor extends from the 20 Mall/Route 155 to the Hunger Kill and includes lands that are constrained from development by the Pine Bush, cemetery and a school on the north side, and lands currently under development on the south side. This area contains the Town Library and the YMCA and is becoming a Town-wide destination. Currently there is no suitable pedestrian environment and traffic speed and volume are significant. As a developing area, the primary issues associated with access management and streetscape planning can be more easily incorporated into development plans. The following solutions should be considered for this corridor segment:

- Create greenways using the Kaikout Kill and the Hunger Kill to preserve the integrity of these stream corridors consistent with the *Natural Resources* plan element.
- Create access management and streetscape plans that can be incorporated into plans for new development.
- Develop a pedestrian access plan to safely cross Route 20 in the vicinity of the Town Library. Similar safe crossings should be created at Route 155 and at Willow. There may be opportunities to work with the topography and new development in the area to allow the development of a pedestrian bridge.
- Coordinate streetscape, pedestrian, and access management plans with the Neighborhood Master Plan as recommended in the *Land Use* plan element.

Route 146/McCormack Corners Corridor

This segment of the corridor extends from the Hunger Kill to Park View Drive. The corridor is dominated by commercial uses but less intensely developed than those in the eastern portion of Town. This segment is unique as it incorporates two sections of Route 146 that overlap on Route 20. Route 146 West brings traffic from Altamont and trucks from the Northeast Industrial Park. Route 146 East provides access to the Thruway in this portion of Town. Therefore, this segment experiences significant traffic congestion confounded by truck traffic. Road frontage is less developed and less intense than other corridor segments. Larger lot frontage provides the opportunity to successfully implement an access management plan. There appears to be significant opportunity for more growth and infill in this segment. There are examples of well designed development within this segment that pay tribute to the success of the Town's development guidelines and site plan review process. This is not surprising since this area was developed later than the eastern portion of Town. The following solutions should be considered for this corridor segment:

- Create access management and streetscape plans that can be incorporated into plans for new development.
- Develop a pedestrian access plan to safely cross routes 20 and 146 and to access the Pine Bush.
- Evaluate the potential for future development/infill within this segment of the Route 20 corridor.

Growth Area Corridor

This segment of the corridor is the last segment that provides municipal sewer and water service. The corridor extends from Park View Drive to the CSX tracks and contains significant opportunity for future growth, perhaps limited by the current termination point of sewer at the approximate mid-point of the segment. Major developments are currently being proposed for this corridor, primarily residential uses. There are a number of issues to be addressed in the

corridor before future opportunities are lost. Residential structures are built too close to the Route 20 right-of-way, thereby limiting opportunities for access management and the creation of a pedestrian environment. Subdivision of the remaining frontage will create future access issues. For these reasons, it is important to develop an access management plan. Solutions specific to this corridor segment include:

- Preserve views of the Helderberg Escarpment by limiting building height on the south side of the corridor.
- Provide signage that identifies the area as within the Watervliet Reservoir watershed.

Reservoir Corridor

This section of the corridor extends from the CSX railroad to an area just past the Normanskill. This is a very sensitive area of the Town since it is adjacent to the Town's water supply and includes lands that directly drain into the reservoir. Development in this area should be significantly limited. Specific solutions include the following:

- Measures should be developed to prevent impact to the Reservoir from spills along Route 20. This might include some type of containment system.
- Implement watershed protection regulations in accordance with an overall watershed management plan.
- Consider the use of the railroad overpass as an opportunity to create a rural gateway, celebrating the community's agricultural component.

Rural Guilderland Corridor

The Rural Guilderland Corridor segment is dominated by agricultural uses. The boundary between the Reservoir segment and this one is somewhat arbitrary since all lands in the western part of Guilderland are in the Reservoir watershed. However, the area defined as the Reservoir corridor is very close to the reservoir and certain land uses in that area could have direct and significant impacts on the water supply.

Resource values of this area include views of the Escarpment, active agriculture, and few traffic issues. Limiting issues include lack of municipal water or sewer service, some residential subdivision of corridor frontage, high speed roadway used by slow moving farm implements, and a major electric transmission line through Dunnsville.

Solutions/recommendations for this corridor include the following:

- Preserve the rural character and viewshed
- Develop a sign ordinance that promotes agricultural uses without detracting from the character of the area.

- Discourage subdivision along Route 20 frontage, especially for residential uses.

D.4 Major Town & County Collector Roads

Collector roads are a critical feature of the Town's transportation network. They collect traffic from residential and non-residential development alike and convey that traffic to the arterials. Since their primary function is to convey traffic, development along these roads is generally inconsistent with this function. Unfortunately, development has occurred along the collectors within the developed portions of the Town to the extent that they are perceived as residential streets. High traffic volume and congestion impact the quality of life for residents along these roads resulting in complaints and strong opposition to enhanced use of the collectors to improve the overall traffic system.

Due to traffic volume and congestion on the major State routes, some local roads like East Lydius Street and Old State Road have become collectors, bringing congestion and, at times, excessive speed closer to densely populated residential areas. Based on the amount of residential development along these roads, it is unlikely that they could be improved and maintained to function solely as collectors.

Recommendations

- Because of residential development that has occurred along Johnston, East Lydius, and Old State roads it is unlikely that these roads could be dedicated to function solely as collector roads. However, there are opportunities to preserve the integrity and purpose of other collectors in less developed areas of the Town. As development occurs, strong consideration should be given to preventing the subdivision of land along the frontage of collector roads except when access is limited and sufficient setbacks from the right-of-way are provided. Developers should be required to clearly inform the buyer that the purpose of the main road is to be a collector and that traffic volumes will increase over time followed by the potential need for improvements. Portions of West Lydius frontage are undeveloped but could be developed in the future. This is a specific example where access control will be crucial to allow this road to continue functioning as a collector.
- In the past the Town has considered bypass roads but they have never been constructed. Generally, the introduction of a new road to a community presents many issues including impacts to the environment, land use and growth issues, and other social issues. The focus of the transportation recommendations is to reduce congestion along Route 20 and the other major roadways through access management, growth management, and the development of a trail system that would link residential areas to desirable destinations. However, as the Town and surrounding communities continue

to grow, the need for one or more bypasses may outweigh the issues that have previously prevented their construction. Furthermore, there may be an opportunity to incorporate a bypass in the plans of future development projects. The effectiveness of each bypass should be studied in greater detail before moving forward with plans. The following bypasses have potential to provide traffic benefits:

- West Lydius bypass – linking West Lydius/Old State Road at the Old State Road bridge with Carman Road at Fuller Station Road.
- Veeder Road bypass - This would involve an extension of Dr. Shaw Road through to Johnson Road, thus bypasses Veeder Road which is of 19th century design and lined with residences.
- Schoolhouse Road bypass – This would link Schoolhouse Road at McKown Road West/Trillum Lane with Krumkill Road in the Town of New Scotland.
- Sidewalks or paths should be considered along roads that are receiving considerable pedestrian use. This is an issue along both Town and County roads where development has occurred along the road frontage and where developments are isolated from activity centers in close proximity.
- An evaluation of the road system for a given area and the measures to ensure road function should be prepared for designated growth areas.
- Improve safety by adding sidewalks as they approach major arterials within Town.
- Prepare a benefit-cost analysis to determine the feasibility of reconnecting roads through bridge reconstruction. These bridges are not owned by the Town and any such analysis should involve the owner.
- If possible, new neighborhoods should be linked via subdivision road systems. This will relieve some of the traffic volume on the collector roads. Many subdivisions have stub roads that are intended to link with future development off site. These stubs should be incorporated into project plans for future development and should be clearly disclosed to buyers.

D.5 Rail Corridors

Rail corridors can be important assets to a community. The Town contains two corridors: CSX (formerly Conrail) and the old D&H line. The CSX corridor is an active rail line serving primarily freight. The D&H corridor was inactive but has once again become an active freight line, now owned by CP Rail. As active lines, rail corridors provide opportunities for passenger service as well as possibilities for attracting rail based business. As abandoned corridors, they provide opportunities for regional trail systems.

Recommendations

- Implement an incentive program for rail based business. This could be coordinated with a marketing effort for the Northeast Industrial Park.

- Continue to monitor the status of rail lines in the Town for the potential use of a corridor for light rail.
- The integrity of all rail corridors within the Town should be maintained now and in the future regardless of the use since they may continue to serve as rail or they may become available for other uses such as light rail and pathways. Continuous corridors are an important resource/opportunity for the Town.
- Work with the region (CDTC) to develop a regional passenger rail transportation system that includes Guilderland, Altamont, and connections to Amtrak, and the possible bus rapid transit along Route 5 with potential linkage to commuter rail systems.
- Investigate the potential for bus rapid transit or possibly light rail along Route 20.

D.6 Guilderland Pathways

In connection with the recommendations for the improvement of the pedestrian environment along Route 20, consideration should also be given to the development of a trail system that provides linkages to important destinations in the Town. Such linkages might include neighborhoods to schools to recreational areas. As discussed in the *Route 20 Corridor Study*, linkages from neighborhoods to commercial centers may be appropriate. Trails are a welcomed recreational resource for a community. They have proven their worth in other communities and will likely be embraced by the Guilderland community. However, the introduction of trails in a community without a trail system can also be a challenge. The concerns over trail proposals are the same from town to town, county to county, and state to state: crime, vandalism, unauthorized use, dumping, safety, and conflict of use, to name a few. The answers to these issues is also universal: frequency of use, stewardship, and good local control. The latter might suggest a burden on the police department but the reality is that the frequency of use and stewardship by adjacent landowners and other "friends of the trail" result in self policing that limits the number of police department calls.

The most successful trails are those that are appropriately located to promote frequent use and high volume. These are trails that link with population centers and key destinations such as parks. In most cases, stewardship programs can be instituted that get landowners involved to watch over the trail and help police identify problems. There are numerous studies and success stories available to the public that provide guidance on trail development, including how to address the common issues. This information should be collected and summarized as part of an overall plan for trails in the Town.

Recreational resources can add tremendous value to a community. Multi-use trails and on-street bicycle systems, as envisioned by the Guilderland Pathways recommendation, provide for an alternate means of transportation and opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy outdoor recreation.



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Recommendations

- Develop a detailed "Guilderland Pathways" Master Plan that includes primary and secondary corridors, design standards, and a financing program.
- Coordinate implementation of trail projects with State, County, and local improvement projects.

D.7 Potential Adverse & Beneficial Future Growth Impacts

Pursuant to the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), this section identifies the potential adverse and beneficial impacts associated with adoption of the Plan Recommendations.

The Plan recommends addressing traffic issues through land use measures, growth management, access management, pedestrian linkages, and promotion of public transportation. These are typically beneficial impacts or mitigation measures. Access management may involve the introduction of new parallel access roads or alleys that will need to be designed so as not to significantly impact residential neighborhoods.

Since the plan envisions future growth, infill, and redevelopment, it is important to recognize the linkage between growth and traffic and provide sufficient means of mitigating traffic issues. To achieve this, the Plan provides recommendations for traffic improvements as the focal point of new development, especially in the Route 20 corridor between the City of Albany and Route 146 (Carman Road). Any plans for development must be preceded or accompanied by plans for improving existing and future conditions.

Guilderland Pathways may result in some environmental and social impacts. As envisioned, the Pathways would include a network of paths and sidewalks and would support multi-uses and connect points of interest, providing a recreational resource as well as a means of lessening the dependence on motor vehicles. Although many linkages could utilize existing roadways, the ideal situation would involve a separated system that would provide safe recreational opportunity requiring the need for voluntary easements across properties.

E. PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS BY PLANNING AREA

The following sections identify the plan recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan on a geographic basis. In accordance with the Land Use portion of this plan, the Town has been divided into Planning Areas. These areas are generally distinguished on Figure 17. The boundaries of each planning area shown on Figure 17 and the subsequent language describing each planning area is not intended to reflect the actual boundaries that would be identified as part of future planning studies for these areas. The boundaries shown and described are conceptual and are provided as guidance. After further discussion and additional data collection for each of these areas, there may be good reason to modify the boundaries from what is currently shown.

Each planning area includes a discussion of the characteristics that make the area unique. This includes the history, general housing characteristics, community facilities/services located in the area, and the area's economic components (commercial/office/industrial uses). Some recommendations span large areas, incorporating more than one planning area. An example of this is the recommendations for protection of the Town's water supply. Such recommendations are highlighted in the discussions with reference to the appropriate subsection containing details. All of the details and justification for the recommendations are not necessarily provided in the subsections below. When this occurs, reference is made to the appropriate section of the Plan where further information is provided.

E.1 General Recommendations

Several recommendations within the Plan are applicable to activities in most planning areas. These recommendations have been thoroughly discussed under their respective topic areas and summarized in Chapter 1. Most relate to the conservation of community resources as future development occurs (eg., setbacks from wetlands and streams, identification and protection of important viewsheds, etc.). The following is a list of cross references for each topic area:

- Streams, Ravines, Floodplain, and Wetland (drainage features) – See **IV.C.3 Drainage Corridors**.
- Groundwater Supply – See **IV.C.2 Watervliet Reservoir Watershed & Groundwater Supply**.
- Viewsheds – See **IV.C.5 Helderberg Escarpment**.
- Highways and Town and County Roads (general recommendations) – See **IV.D.2 and D.4**.
- Public Transportation – See **IV.D.2, D.4, & D.5**.
- Pedestrian/Multi-Use Trails – See **IV.D.6**.
- Historic/Cultural Resources – See **IV.B.4**.

- General Economic Development Initiatives – See **IV.B.5.**
- Recreation – See **IV.B.6.**
- Wireless Communication Facilities (Towers) – See **IV.B.7.**

E.2 McKownville

McKownville developed as part of the City of Albany's first suburban growth ring, dating back to the early 1920's. It is distinguished by its mature, tree-lined streets, single-family homes, and well-established neighborhoods consisting of long-time residents. Due to its proximity to the City, McKownville was developed with an urban atmosphere, very similar to that of other residential areas within the City of Albany. The general extent of this planning area is shown on Figure 17.

The residential character of McKownville has changed significantly over the years due to commercial and office development along the Route 20 corridor. Today this development consumes most of the frontage along Route 20 and is beginning to encroach on adjacent neighborhoods (first streets in from Route 20) through the development of larger buildings, more parking area, and traffic. Some homes remain along Route 20 but are expected to become commercial or professional office in the future. Increased traffic on Route 20 and associated road widening has created a pedestrian unfriendly environment, forcing neighborhood residents to use their vehicles for trips to nearby stores and services.

McKownville is serviced by aging water and sewer infrastructure. It contains a small park with a playground and softball field. Other community services within this planning area include three religious institutions, a fire station, a post office, and a portion of the SUNY Albany campus. Therefore, despite the limitations/impacts that have resulted from development over the years, McKownville offers an urban-like atmosphere with shopping, services, recreation, education, and community gathering places, all in close proximity. Efforts to improve pedestrian access and control land use conflicts will increase the quality and desirability of this area. Land use recommendations to achieve this include the following:

- Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of vacant/underutilized buildings and sites.
- Repair and upgrade existing infrastructure.
- Buffer residential uses from commercial, office and other conflicting uses that rely on vehicular transportation, except when employing well-designed, pedestrian friendly new urbanism/mixed use concepts.
- Connect residential neighborhoods to shopping and recreational opportunities by providing sidewalks and/or trails. These connections

- should be carefully made in conjunction with landowners to prevent any unintended conflicts and nuisances.
- Encourage continued public meetings at the neighborhood level with the intent of developing a neighborhood master plan. This next level of analysis is necessary to better define neighborhood boundaries, identify residents' goals for their neighborhood, determine desirable pedestrian linkages, and to identify the theme that will direct design guidelines for future development and redevelopment.
 - Where appropriate and only after continued discussions with residents of McKownville, encourage higher density development here and in other developed neighborhoods to take advantage of public transportation, the availability of both essential and non-essential services/products and a pedestrian environment that provides linkages to shopping, recreation, and cultural resources.

Transportation recommendations specific to this planning area include the following:

- Use streetscaping, medians and other traffic calming methods to design a gateway to the community.
- Provide an efficient and safe crossing of Route 20 at the entrance to the SUNY campus. At a minimum this should include a pedestrian controlled signal and crosswalk. Consideration should be given to the use of a pedestrian median to shorten the distance of travel that would encourage use of this area. The appropriate method of crossing should be identified as part of the corridor beautification/pedestrian plan.
- Provide sidewalks and safe crossing points on Fuller Road to support the heavy pedestrian traffic from residential neighborhoods and the University to Stuyvesant Plaza.
- Add a sidewalk along McKown Road and a safe crossing of Western Avenue at McKown Road and Norwood Street to facilitate access between residential areas of McKownville and Abele Park off Schoolhouse Road.
- Provide safe pedestrian access to the CDTA bus stops on Western Avenue.
- Investigate upgrading the recreation potential of the McKownville Reservoir by adding pedestrian access.
- Upgrade storm drainage in the areas, both along the Krum Kill downstream from the Reservoir, and within the residential neighborhoods north of Western Avenue.

E.3 Westmere

As the suburban ring moved outward, Westmere was the next neighborhood to evolve. Similar to McKownville's pattern of development, homes first built up along the Route 20 frontage and larger lots were later subdivided to create the neighborhood. Housing stock at the core of this planning area is 40+ years old with more recent housing radiating outward. As shown on Figure 17, the grid

pattern of streets demarcates the older neighborhoods while the cul-de-sac and loop roads identify the more recent neighborhoods.

Westmere and McKownville have been highly influenced by traffic and retail development. The Northway and Crossgates Mall mark the eastern limits of Westmere. Crossgates Mall and other retail development in the Route 20 corridor have been discussed by topic in other sections of this plan (IV.A.7, **Westmere Commercial Area**); however, both retail and non-retail commercial development within this planning area have a large impact on neighborhood character such that the interaction between residential and non-residential uses merits discussion. Large-scale retail development (20 Mall) also anchors the western portion of Westmere, encompassing the Town's most active commercial corridor.

Community resources within Westmere include Westmere Elementary School, Farnsworth Middle School, Christ The King school, a police station, Westmere fire station, Western Turnpike Rescue Squad, and three churches. Residents of Westmere find shopping, professional and medical services, and convenience stores in close proximity although access has been primarily limited to vehicles.

There are numerous recommendations for this planning area relative to land use, traffic, and economic development. Constraints include traffic generated by a concentration of residential and commercial development, as well as access to interstates; lack of road bypass options; poor pedestrian environment; and land use conflicts, primarily between large commercial uses and existing residential uses and significant environmental features. Conversely, good highway access, location along a major arterial, and a concentration of development create opportunities for very livable, vibrant neighborhoods where the use of personal vehicles can be reduced by encouraging public transportation and pedestrian access, where both essential and non-essential goods and services can be easily accessed yet buffered from residential neighborhoods, and where opportunities for future growth can contribute to the quality and distinctiveness of the area.

Recommendations include the following:

- Buffer residential uses from commercial, office and other conflicting uses that rely on vehicular transportation.
- Connect residential neighborhoods to shopping and recreational opportunities by providing sidewalks and/or trails. These connections should be carefully made in conjunction with landowners to prevent any unintended conflicts and nuisances.
- Encourage continued public meetings at the neighborhood level with the intent of developing a neighborhood master plan. This next level of analysis is necessary to better define neighborhood boundaries, identify residents' goals for their neighborhood, determine desirable pedestrian linkages, and to identify the theme that will direct design guidelines for future development and redevelopment.

- A design charrette might be considered as a planning tool for this area. A charrette involves interactive sessions where individuals having a stake in the future of the area (residents, business owners, Town officials, and other government and special interest representatives) meet and discuss planning and design options. Issues that impact design are discussed and debated, usually resulting in several alternatives. The purpose of the charrette is to discuss and sketch out land use and design options for lands owned by and adjacent to Crossgates Mall. This would include Route 20 and other development in the immediate vicinity. A study area would have to be defined prior to the charrette. Many ideas can be expressed in terms of appropriate land use, vehicular access and circulation solutions, improvements to the pedestrian environment, and architectural standards or guidelines. It may be used as a precursor to a corridor plan or a neighborhood master plan. A well planned charrette would involve the services of a landscape architect, a civil engineer, and a planner to facilitate the process. This can be accomplished by retaining the professional services of these individuals or by soliciting volunteers from the professional community in the Town. It is important for participants to understand the major issues associated with the area prior to the charrette so that the process can focus on potential solutions. . Examples of potential solutions that could be addressed during the design charrette are provided in the recommendations to follow.
- The poorly functioning southbound access ramp to the Crossgates Mall from the Northway is a traffic issue of regional and local concern and should be addressed prior to further development that would utilize this point of access.
- Evaluate the Crossgates Mall Ring Road and require improvements as necessary to improve circulation and to achieve its originally intended function as a bypass, prior to future development of this area. Opportunities for access management and future linkages to Stuyvesant Plaza should also be evaluated.
- Enter into dialogue with the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) to investigate potential solutions for improving the function of the road network serving the Westmere Commercial Area, including regional solutions. An example of a potential solution that might benefit the area is the Crossgates-Stuyvesant linkage discussed previously.
- Immediately south of Rt. 20, a service road or alley could be developed parallel to Rt. 20 east and west of Johnston Road to provide alternative access opportunities for future uses such as senior housing and business non-retail uses adjacent to Route 20. The service road would provide access to current and future development thereby eliminating numerous curb cuts along Route 20. This should translate into better traffic flow along Route 20 within this very congested segment. Any future development in this area should also include provisions for a pocket/neighborhood park to serve the Westmere neighborhoods.

- Initiate dialogue with the City of Albany, Village of Colonie, and relevant Albany County and State agencies regarding development issues associated with the Westmere Commercial Area.
- Zoning changes that would permit additional large-scale retail development in the area should be avoided.
- Future commercial development in the area must take into consideration traffic impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Any proposed commercial development in the Gabriel Terrace residential neighborhood should be supported only with the consensus of the residents.
- To preserve the aesthetic quality and arterial function of Western Avenue, the open space set aside as part of the Crossgates Mall approval should be maintained.
- The Town should develop and maintain regular interaction with the City of Albany, CDTC, CDRPC, CDTA, SUNY Albany and other public or municipal agencies concerning issues related to the Crossgates Mall area and development along Washington Avenue Extension. Actions by the City of Albany or NYSDOT in this area, such as zoning changes or highway improvements, have impacts on the Town, just as action by the Town can impact the City and the regional transportation network. Regional dialogue and cooperation are in the best interest of all parties.

Transportation recommendations from the Route 20 Corridor Study that are specific to this planning area include the following:

Westmere Commercial Corridor

- Create a Town-wide gateway at the end of the Northway at Route 20. Design of this gateway ("Welcome to Guilderland") should be conducted cooperatively with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Prepare an access management plan as part of the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan for this segment of Route 20.
- Evaluate the function of the Crossgates Mall Ring Road for more efficient use as a bypass for Route 20 and to provide access management for future development on the north side of Route 20, adjacent to the Mall property. The ring road is owned by the Town and provides two widely separated access points to Route 20 as well as direct access to the Northway. It was originally intended to provide access to the Mall and to function as a bypass. This function is questionable and should be evaluated prior to further development within the Westmere Commercial Corridor.
- Provide an efficient and safe crossing of Route 20 at Johnston Road and Fuller Road. These crossings will likely require the use of a pedestrian median and other designations to ensure safety. In addition to the crossing, pedestrian access to both facilities should be improved.
- Work with the NYS Department of Transportation to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of Route 20 and the end of the Northway.

- Work with CDTA to provide bus shelters, benches and other related infrastructure to facilitate bus use (applicable to all corridor segments east of the railroad tracks).

Westmere Professional Office Corridor

- Prepare an access management plan as part of the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan for this segment of Route 20.
- Promote the continued use/redevelopment of small frontage lots as professional offices.
- Prepare access management plan to determine opportunities for combined driveways and a rear service road (alley). A right-of-way currently exists behind the small frontage lots on the north side of Route 20 (eastern half of corridor). This should be investigated for a potential service road.
- Protect adjoining residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses through sufficient buffers except when employing well-designed, pedestrian friendly new urbanism/mixed use concepts.

Route 155 Commercial Corridor

- Pedestrian access along route 20 and 155 should be improved through the installation of sidewalks, as well as the provision of safe crossing opportunities, especially in the vicinity of 20 Mall and the Middle School.
- Prepare access management plan.

E.4 Guilderland

Guilderland was an early hamlet in the Town, founded by a glass works industry in 1785. The glass works produced window glass, snuff bottles, and pocket bottles. This industry encouraged the establishment of homes for workers, a church, and a school house. Today, the focus of Guilderland has shifted eastward from the Foundry Road/Willow Street/Route 20 intersection to developing lands east of Winding Brook Drive. Town-wide community resources include the Town Library, Guilderland Elementary School, the Guilderland YMCA, Nott Road wastewater treatment plant and park, and the 20 Mall. Further development of this area is anticipated. Residential development in this area is sparse but new residential development is pushing northward from Nott Road and Route 155. The development of this area as a community focal point has created traffic safety issues as well as land use issues relative to the appropriate land use mix and the conservation/protection of environmental resources. To the north Guilderland is bound by the Pine Bush and to the east and south by the Hunger Kill stream corridor.

Land use recommendations for this area include the following:

- Create a Neighborhood Master Plan that addresses access management, pedestrian facilities, "streetscape" improvements, natural/scenic topographical features, environmental features, architectural/site design and mixed uses. The appropriate uses for this area of Town would be

determined by the Neighborhood Master Plan process, however several uses appear to be suitable and desirable based on current land use trends and Town-wide needs. They include: outdoor recreation, cultural and educational facilities, residential neighborhoods, senior housing, neighborhood-scale commercial services, offices, and a municipal/cultural/recreational center that would provide meeting space, a community center, and facilities for emergency services, to name a few of the possibilities.

- Depending on the outcome of the Neighborhood Master Plan, it may be appropriate to prepare an area specific GEIS.
- The extent of development should be limited by the Pine Bush to the North and the Hunger Kill corridor to the South. A minimum 100 foot buffer should accompany the Hunger Kill to prevent impacts related to erosion and pollutant-laden runoff.
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment. Sidewalk or trail linkages from the east and west will provide populated areas with access to current and future Town resources. Many YMCA members will desire to run outside. Current options are limited and somewhat dangerous. Trail and sidewalk linkages will provide safe havens for exercise. Pedestrian linkages to Farnsworth Middle School, Nott Road Park and the Pine Bush should be considered.

Transportation recommendations from the Route 20 Corridor Study that are specific to this planning area include the following:

- Create greenways using the Kaikout Kill and the Hunger Kill to preserve the integrity of these stream corridors consistent with the *Natural Resources* plan element.
- Create access management and streetscape plans that can be incorporated into plans for new development.
- Develop a pedestrian access plan to safely cross Route 20 in the vicinity of the Town Library. Similar safe crossings should be created at Route 155 and at Willow. There may be opportunities to work with the topography and new development in the area to allow the development of a pedestrian bridge.
- Coordinate streetscape, pedestrian, and access management plans with the Neighborhood Master Plan as recommended in the *Land Use* plan element.

E.5 Fort Hunter/McCormack Corners

The Fort Hunter area developed as a residential neighborhood in the 1960's and 70's spurred by interstate access. It has continued to grow, seemingly limited only by utilities and State-wide preservation of the Pine Bush. Expansion has been primarily southward, blurring any distinctions from the McCormack Corners area. Community resources within the Fort Hunter area include the Fort Hunter Fire Station, a Western Turnpike Rescue Squad station, Pine Bush

and Lynnwood elementary schools, Fort Hunter Park, Volunteer Fireman's Park, Fusco Park, five churches, and the Town Hall and police station.

Commercial activity is centered around McCormack Corners which is the intersection of Carman Road (Route 146) and Route 20. From a land use perspective, commercial development has not infringed significantly on the Fort Hunter residential community. Most of the development in the McCormack Corners area is newer and underwent a more thorough site plan review process. However, the Fort Hunter/McCormack Corners community is significantly impacted by both commuter and commercial traffic due to the Thruway/I-890 interchange in the northern portion of the planning area. Truck traffic is of particular concern since much of the traffic from the Northeast Industrial Park utilizes Route 146 to and from the Thruway. This has created bottlenecks that impact local roads and influence residential character and safety.

The Pine Bush creates a unique and desirable rural residential atmosphere in a suburbanized community. This is a resource that should be enjoyed and conserved.

Recommendations for this planning area include the following:

- Connect residential neighborhoods to shopping and recreational opportunities by providing sidewalks and/or trails. These connections should be carefully made in conjunction with landowners to prevent any unintended conflicts and nuisances.
- Encourage continued public meetings at the neighborhood level with the intent of developing a neighborhood master plan. This next level of analysis is necessary to better define neighborhood boundaries, identify residents' goals for their neighborhood, determine desirable pedestrian linkages, and to identify the theme that will direct design guidelines for future development and redevelopment.

Transportation recommendations from the Route 20 Corridor Study that are specific to this planning area include the following:

- Create access management and streetscape plans that can be incorporated into plans for new development.
- Develop a pedestrian access plan to safely cross routes 20 and 146 and to access the Pine Bush.
- Evaluate the potential for future development/infill within this segment of the Route 20 corridor.

E.6 Hunger Kill

The Hunger Kill planning area contains some very significant environmental resources, the Hunger Kill and the Pine Bush, as well as residential and commercial development. The Pine Bush provides the community with a large piece of unique open space, available for the enjoyment of the public. Unlike a town park, the Pine Bush preserve is not owned by the Town of Guilderland, yet the Town is a member of the Pine Bush Preserve Commission who oversees the management of the Pine Bush. All of the remaining Pine Bush ecology does not occur within the preserve and there is a concerted effort on the part of the Commission to see to it that all or most of this land will become preserve in the future. To accomplish this, the Commission is in the process of acquiring pine bush and important buffers. To ensure that these lands are not destroyed by other types of land use prior to being acquired, the Pine Bush Preserve Commission prepared a Master Plan and later implementation guidelines in hopes that communities (Commission members) would adhere to the recommendations.

Although there are arguments regarding property rights, the Town recognizes the importance of the Pine Bush and supports cooperation with the Pine Bush Preserve Commission staff, especially when incentive-based measures are taken to preserve lands. Existing development, including major transportation corridors have presented obstacles to the preservation of the ecosystem. Continued development pressure and the need to expand infrastructure will continue to impede the goals of the Commission. In an effort to support the preserve and in recognition of its importance to the community, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Assist and cooperate with the Pine Bush Preserve Commission in implementing its *Management Plan* and *Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines*. This should occur by including a requirement in the site plan and subdivision review processes that new development occurring within the Project Review Area, as defined and illustrated in the *Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines*, undergo consultation with the Town and Pine Bush Preserve Commission in the early planning stages (sketch plan) of plan development. The purpose of this consultation is to provide the Commission an opportunity to comment on the site and proposal in the early planning stages to make suggestions that are consistent with efforts for management of the Pine Bush ecosystem. This will benefit both the Town's review process and the individual developer by providing early input.
- Promote the Pine Bush Interpretative Center as a local educational resource.
- Consider the use of Growth Management techniques such as the Transfer of Development Rights, as a method of preserving important Pine Bush habitat or open space.

- The Town should continue to invest in the voluntary acquisition of the few remaining parcels located within the Pine Bush Primary Protection Area.
- Encourage continued agricultural operations within the Pine Bush.

The Hunger Kill is a fine example of some of the Town's stream corridor resources. It is also an example of a watershed that has developed significantly over the years that has changed some of its characteristics. Recommendations for this planning area and other stream corridors and adjacent wetland areas include the following:

- Buffer all stream corridors from development to protect the integrity of the stream corridor to maintain water quality, promote wildlife corridors, provide potential recreational opportunity, and protect the health, safety and welfare of the community from slope failure potential. The width of the buffer should not be less than 100 feet from the stream edge to prevent potential impacts of erosion and sedimentation. In the case of stream corridors with associated steep banks (ravines), the angle of repose should be used to define top of bank. The current 30 foot setback from the angle of repose (top of bank) as provided in the subdivision regulations should continue to be used. The 12 degree angle of repose is used to protect steep slopes and stream corridors from development.
- Direct impacts to stream corridors, wetlands, floodplains and other water resources should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. New development should be required to design with the topography and other natural resources to minimize impact.
- Require the preparation of an erosion control plan for new projects. Erosion control measures may include:
 - Installing silt fence or silt fence in combination with staked hay bales, at the toe of slopes around the construction area.
 - Utilizing temporary drainage swales with hay bale check dams to direct water away from the construction area.
 - Upon completion of final grading, seeding all areas with a quick-germinating grass or other similar cover species.
 - Staging site development to minimize disturbed areas.
- Explore potential access opportunities to stream corridors at appropriate locations for recreational uses (primarily trails and fishing access). Emphasis should be placed on voluntary easements to achieve appropriate connections.
- Encourage preservation of wetland areas through conservation easements and other methods of protection (see *Growth Management*). This would be aided by State and federal regulations, however, easements, deed restrictions and other local controls would compensate for the uncertain future of the regulatory environment.
- If wetland impacts are permitted, encourage project sponsors to limit impacts to less significant portions of the wetland and to avoid fragmentation.

- Require wetland delineations pursuant to State and federal regulations, as appropriate. State wetland boundaries are generally confirmed by NYSDEC. Federal boundaries are confirmed by COE upon request of the project sponsor.
- Wetlands should be protected from erosion and sedimentation through the use of silt fences, staked hay bales, diversion swales and check dams, and other erosion control measures as determined appropriate for the site.
- Require any conditions of permits issued by COE or NYSDEC, including conditions of Nationwide Permits, as applicable, prior to site plan or subdivision approval.

E.7 Guilderland Center

Guilderland Center was a center of activity in the Town when agriculture played a much more important role in the community. It's proximity to the Village of Altamont provided Guilderland Center with close amenities that were not available within the hamlet. Homes were concentrated along Route 146 between the railroad tracks to the east and Depot Road to the west. Although a state route, Route 146 did not have the amount of traffic experienced along this road today. Residents in the neighborhood were able to interact with each other without traffic safety concerns.

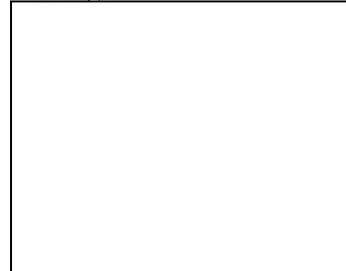
The area has changed significantly as a result of redevelopment of the Army Depot by the Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP), the construction of the Guilderland High School, the location of Town highway facilities, and other development south of Guilderland Center. Each of these uses have resulted in impacts to Guilderland Center, the most significant of which is traffic.

Despite these changes, residents have remained. The area includes many resources such as a Post Office, fire station, three churches, and Keenholts Park. Additionally, Tawasentha Park is in close proximity and, as previously mentioned, the Village of Altamont provides many goods and services within an easy commute.

Recommendations for this planning area include the following:

- Create a Neighborhood Master Plan that identifies neighborhood boundaries, opportunities to buffer residential areas from conflicting uses, access management along Route 146, pedestrian facilities, "streetscape" improvements, and architectural/site design issues. In order to accomplish this task, the neighborhood will need to continue discussions regarding their wants, needs and desires to determine a common theme for the area.
- Promote a mix of uses consistent with a hamlet setting. Commercial uses should compliment the residential neighborhood and be pedestrian oriented.

Community or neighborhood centers contain a moderate to high density of mixed-use buildings.



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- Require the preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP) that addresses full build-out of the property and the associated impacts to determine the reasonable amount of development of the property that can be properly mitigated. This should be an open process involving public scoping and other input opportunities from the residents of Guilderland Center and the School District.
- Cooperatively market desired tenants especially those that rely on rail rather than truck transport.
- Explore options for protecting Black Creek.

Transportation recommendations for this planning area include the following:

- Reduce the impact of traffic through Guilderland Center by reducing the speed limit, providing crosswalks and medians (pedestrian havens) where feasible, and other traffic calming methods.
- Address alternative truck routes that would preclude the need to travel through the heart of Guilderland Center. This should include the evaluation of a bypass that would encourage both truck and other vehicular traffic use, thus diverting traffic around Guilderland Center. This should be accomplished through dialogue with the Northeast Industrial Park, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Guilderland Center residents, and the Guilderland Central School District. Funding may be available for a bypass through the NEIP Economic Development Zone.
- Provide a continuous sidewalk system including crosswalks and other necessary means to allow pedestrians to cross busy roads safely and to access facilities.

E.8 Village of Altamont

The Village of Altamont sprung from early agricultural times and particularly from commercial and passenger rail traffic passing through the heart of the Village. The Village is a self-contained community within the Town boundaries that is incorporated and thus functioning under its own local government system. For that reason, specific recommendations for lands within the Village were not made in this Plan since they would have no legal standing. Nevertheless, Altamont is a very important component of the Town and is the center of development and commerce within rural Guilderland. In addition to providing its residents with municipal services and utilities and goods and services, the Altamont Fairgrounds attract visitors county-wide and from adjacent communities in Schenectady County. Interaction between the Town and Village is significant, especially in terms of land use and issues over the conservation/protection of rural character.

Recommendations for this planning area include the following:

- Continue to support the Village of Altamont as the major anchor of residential and commercial development in Rural Guilderland.
- Cooperatively develop land use policies for land adjacent to the Village. These might include guidelines for the form and character of any Village expansion, under what circumstances the extension of Village utilities would be considered, and the general impact on Village supplied community services.

E.9 Rural Guilderland

Rural Guilderland is made up of farmlands, wood lots, and open space. The farms are the surviving remnants of the agricultural community that once dominated the entire Town. Agriculture is still an important land use but agricultural uses are diminishing. Large parcels of vacant land (some former farmland) remain idle. As shown on the *Existing Land Use Map* provided in the *Inventory and Analysis*, most of the parcels are within the Agricultural District, but only a few of the parcels presently receive an agricultural assessment for tax purposes.

There are only eight full-time active farms left in Guilderland, four located in rural Guilderland. The economics of farming nationwide has driven out most medium sized farmers, leaving mainly large farms (none in Guilderland) and an increasing number of small, family operated farms producing “niche” crops and whose income is supplemented by work outside of agriculture. The farm land of Rural Guilderland is made up a of vineyard and winery, apple orchards, hay fields, a dairy farm, vegetable and small fruit production, and cut your own Christmas tree operations.

Much of the land in Rural Guilderland is owned by families who have been stewards of their land for generations. Many of these landowners are now retired or semi-retired, but continue to farm the land as a way of life and to supplement their income or pay taxes. A number of these landowners, although in the Agricultural District, do not qualify for the agricultural assessment for tax purposes, since they cannot raise the quantity of crops needed to meet the income level necessary (\$10,000 on 10 acres or more, or \$50,000 on less than 10 acres) for inclusion in this program. The reasons for this are as follows:

- With very little prime farmland in Rural Guilderland, it is difficult to produce the types and quantity of crops needed to be profitable in today’s agricultural economy.
- The limited number of acres available to most landowners for farming results in difficulties reaching the required income level at present commodity prices. The landowners who do qualify for the assessment either

have larger parcels available for farming or are fortunate enough to rent land from a farmer who does qualify. However, renting land is becoming more difficult as the number of commercial active farms in the area is declining.

Despite the difficulties mentioned above, agriculture in the Town of Guilderland is not lost and should not be abandoned as a viable land use. It forms the pastoral landscape that creates the foreground view from the Helderberg Escarpment, a view that has changed little since the development of the Indian Ladder Trail in the 19th century. Agriculture provides a cultural link to the Town's historical roots. Agricultural land supports the tax base of the Town since it generates tax revenue but requires few community services, in contrast to the spreading residential development that threatens to replace agricultural uses. Agriculture provides fresh, locally produced commodities to the community. To remain viable in difficult economic times, the farmers of Guilderland have added many new experiences for the residents to enjoy, from pick-your-own crops and horse drawn wagon rides to harvest festivals, which has created what is now known as "agritainment." All these activities contribute to the quality of life in the community.

Rural Guilderland is also the home of the Town's primary water supply, the Watervliet Reservoir. Even though only a third of the watershed is located within the Town, it is significant since it is the closest portion of the watershed to the reservoir. Therefore, pollutants and sediments have less time and space to filter out of the water before it enters the reservoir. Opportunities for future development in Rural Guilderland should be carefully examined to conserve the character of the community, allow farming to continue by those who wish to farm, and to concentrate development to slow the current pattern of land consumption by primarily residential uses.

Recommendations for this planning area include the following:

- Prepare a Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan for the entire Town that would support the preservation of appropriate parcels for open space or agricultural use. As envisioned, the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan would result in a program for land conservation that would be voluntary in nature, providing compensation to landowners in exchange for an agreement not to develop the land. The most successful approaches to land preservation are voluntary and incentive based, whereby the landowner is compensated for the lost development potential of the property while retaining the right to own and work the land. Farmers and other large land owners would have the opportunity to apply for these incentives. Consideration for judging applications to this program could be based on the following criteria which stem from the State's funding criteria:
 - ♦ Viability of farmland (soil type, productivity)
 - ♦ Development pressure

- ♦ Buffer for significant natural public resource containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics. Examples include: the Pine Bush Preserve, the Watervliet Reservoir and its tributaries, the Helderberg Escarpment and its viewshed, Town parks and other public recreation facilities and open space including a potential future townwide trail system, and important habitat such as wetlands
- ♦ Size of parcel
- ♦ Percentage of total farm acreage available for agricultural production
- ♦ Proximity to other farms which are already protected by a conservation easement or which might reasonably be expected to enter into a farmland preservation agreement in the future.
- ♦ Level of farm management demonstrated by current landowner, and
- ♦ Likelihood of property's succession as a farm if ownership changes.

Of these criteria, the State gives priority to parcels that preserve viable agricultural land, are located in areas facing significant development pressure, and serve as buffers for natural public resources.

The Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan may also result in recommendations for modifying zoning and subdivision regulations to address new development. These would be categorized as regulatory tools designed to guide development, not to impact current uses. An example of such a regulatory tool is the conservation development (defined in Chapter IV.A.1) which is one of the recommendations to follow.

The distinction between regulatory and non-regulatory (voluntary, incentive-based) planning tools is important to understand. Programs that provide compensation for preserving lands for use as farms or open space are voluntary. The incentive for a landowner to participate would be the level of compensation for their loss of development potential. A landowner only participates if he or she wants to participate. Likewise, the Town does not have to accept into the program all who apply. The Town would evaluate parcels based on the criteria above in an effort to identify suitable parcels for funding. Other voluntary, incentive-based programs might include incentive zoning. This is actually a hybrid of regulation and voluntary program. It is regulatory only from the perspective that it must be established through a legislative action that would define the criteria necessary to define when the program is applicable. Otherwise, all who participate do so voluntarily.

Regulatory measures include the incentive zoning hybrid above as well as some non-voluntary measures that are directed toward the developer. The purpose of these tools, such as the conservation development process, is to guide development in a manner that is consistent with the vision for the Town and more specifically to the land use and policy decisions derived from plans for specific areas of Town. Rural Guilderland, for example, should undergo a planning process similar to the neighborhood master plans for other areas. This has been defined as the Rural Guilderland Hamlets

plan or study. The Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan would be a part of the plan for Rural Guilderland.

Several growth management options are discussed later in this section.

- Modify zoning and subdivision regulations and review procedures to increase the consideration of open space, natural resources, and agricultural operations in the development review process by including a conservation development process.
- Conduct a study to identify areas of Rural Guilderland where there is a demonstrated need for water due to the lack of water or health related impacts of poor groundwater quality. Potential solutions should be identified.
- Consideration for the future extension of water and/or sewer service beyond the current service boundaries to address water quality issues or to provide for planned development should only occur following a study or studies of the appropriate land uses for Rural Guilderland that would culminate in a land use plan for Rural Guilderland (referred to as the Rural Guilderland Plan in Chapter VI and discussed further in this section under *Rural Guilderland Hamlets*). This would address economic development, farmland and open space conservation and residential growth patterns. One of the most crucial factors is the current lack of sewer treatment capacity and limitations on water supply and distribution to serve new areas of the Town. Equally important is the expense of extending services. As with any capital improvement plan, the implications of extending utilities must be examined.
- If opportunities to receive municipal water or sewer service from other municipalities become available in the future, the Town should pursue the option through a GEIS or other planning study in the same level of detail discussed in the previous recommendation. Since the availability of such services will increase the development potential of lands within the Town, the Town should maintain its control over land use and the rate of growth through the growth management techniques previously mentioned (eg., Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan and GEIS). Consideration of site specific extensions of utilities should not be entertained by the Town until the cumulative impacts and land use issues associated with such extensions have been thoroughly addressed within the context of Rural Guilderland.
- Opportunities for emergency intermunicipal water connections with the towns of Rotterdam and Princetown and the village of Altamont should be explored.
- The Town should also consider the use of Wastewater Management Districts for new development. The purpose of the Wastewater Management District is to provide local control over septic systems to ensure their proper function through periodic inspections and required improvements as necessary.

- Identify the type and character of small business enterprises that would contribute to the tax base yet maintain the rural character. Examples of such businesses include: country inns, rural retreats and conference centers, home business, and similar facilities that would utilize existing structures or possibly construct structures similar to traditional farm houses and barns.
- Establish performance standards and design guidelines for rural businesses that maintain the character of the area.
- Adopt a local Right-to-Farm Law.
- Promote and celebrate the agricultural community through fairs, educational opportunities, and advertising.
- Provide flexibility in zoning regulations to allow for certain processing operations at the farms to achieve "value added" products.
- Encourage farmers to consider "agritainment" options to their normal operations. Typically, this means adding a dimension to the farm, such as a petting zoo, providing hay rides, holding craft fairs, and similar activities that are consistent with the rural experience and which attract people.

Transportation recommendations from the Route 20 Corridor Study that are specific to this planning area include the following:

- Preserve the rural character and viewshed
- Develop a sign ordinance that promotes agricultural uses without detracting from the character of the area.
- Discourage subdivision along Route 20 frontage, especially for residential uses.

Rural Guilderland Hamlets

Once all of the planning and engineering work for Rural Guilderland is complete, the end result may be a determination that water and sewer service should be extended to specific areas of Rural Guilderland. Should this occur, development potential will increase significantly. It is recommended that the Town concentrate this development potential to discrete areas consistent with the future recommendations of the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan to preserve rural character. The type of development envisioned for Rural Guilderland is hamlet style, where dense development (can be both residential and commercial) is permitted in a small area. Guilderland Center is an example of an existing hamlet in the Town, although land use and community character have been disrupted by surrounding development.

Dunnsville is a small area within Rural Guilderland, located at the intersection of Route 20 with Dunnsville Road (Route 397), that has developed lightly and was a small agricultural hamlet at one time. There are no significant community services in this area. Potential resources include land and high capacity road access. Currently, there is no significant pressure to develop this area, primarily due to the lack of development in the surrounding area and the lack of utilities.

However, Dunnsville is a logical focal point for future hamlet development due to the availability of land and access to Route 20. It has fewer development constraints than other areas of Rural Guilderland and is not within the Helderberg Escarpment viewshed.

A plan for Rural Guilderland is warranted to proactively plan for the future and to address potential development scenarios. Such planning also has the value of identifying critical community resources that the community wishes to preserve. This gives the Town an opportunity to identify means of preserving the resource, which will likely be through a program to compensate a landowner who is willing to participate. The Town can seek funding and/or raise funds specifically for purchasing land. By knowing where development is suitable, the Town can also establish other incentive programs that are regulatory in nature, such as incentive zoning, a completely voluntary program that allows the transfer of development rights from an important piece of agricultural land or open space to land suitable for development. Although this program is voluntary, it must be established through local legislation to be valid.

Recommendations

- Prepare a plan for Rural Guilderland that addresses suitable locations for potential future concentrated development. This should be conducted in conjunction with the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, the Watervliet Reservoir Dialogue and Study, an economic development initiative that addresses key issues to properly located businesses, and an analysis of the feasibility of providing water and sewer either from Town extensions or from adjacent communities. The latter study is intended to identify the current major issues. Some of this work for water service will be addressed as part of the study to document water problems in Rural Guilderland. A detailed feasibility study for utilities would not be appropriate at this time since the major issue is sewage treatment capacity and water supply (hindered primarily by water treatment capacity and pipe sizes). However, it is important to establish a policy or policies for the provision of utilities to be consistent with the vision, goals and objectives, and plan recommendations established in the Comprehensive Plan. Clear utility policy will be critical to managing growth in a positive, smart growth approach that is exemplary of the State's Quality Communities initiative. As part of the plan for Rural Guilderland, it may be beneficial to divide the area into smaller planning areas or districts. Like other areas of the Town, Rural Guilderland has distinct areas that may be defined by natural features, transportation routes, rural land uses, among others.
- The critical consideration for the future land use plan for Rural Guilderland should be the preservation of the overall rural character of this area. As envisioned and stated elsewhere in this plan, the preservation of rural character can be achieved through a combined effort of land conservation through voluntary and incentive-based means, clear policy on the provision of utilities, and concentration of development patterns instead of the sprawl

development pattern encouraged/required by current zoning and subdivision regulations.

- The Town should not actively promote economic development within Rural Guilderland until the aforementioned plan is complete and the larger issue of the availability of utilities is addressed. Such efforts are more cost effectively applied to areas of current development activity and available utilities.

Watervliet Reservoir

This planning area is not a center of current or future development in the Town. It does not contain any significant community services but for one major resource, water. This is the heart of the community and the vehicle by which future development can be expected to proceed. With the exception of some wells, the reservoir is the only water source within the Town.

As emphasized by the name, the reservoir is not owned by the Town. It was created by the City of Watervliet who owns the reservoir and some of the adjacent lands. It is crossed by Route 20 and Route 158 in the northern portion creating potential contamination issues. It has experienced significant siltation from land use activities within the watershed that stretches over 115 square miles, 35 square miles of which is located within the Town.

Recommendations for this planning area include the following:

- Begin dialogue with the City of Watervliet to create a partnership for the long-term management, use and possible expansion of the reservoir and to protect the quality of this water supply. This should also include discussion of the appropriate land use measures to protect water quality within the Watervliet Reservoir watershed and the mechanism by which these measures would be enforced.
- Preservation of critical lands adjacent to the reservoir can be accomplished through a number of open space preservation techniques discussed in *Growth Management*. However, for the best control, the Town should consider purchase of these lands.
- Dialogue should be established with the other municipalities containing a portion of the watershed to encourage them to support the Town's efforts.
- A draft Well-Head Protection Plan (Phase II of the Well Head Protection Study) has been developed for the Town to protect the aquifers that the Town currently utilizes for groundwater supply and other areas that may provide groundwater supply in the future. The Plan recommends the following to protect the Town's groundwater supply:
 - The Town should formulate a general Town-wide policy regarding the use, disposal and storage of hazardous materials. This should include local notification of any spills or releases which are reported to the NYSDEC.

- Policies for the secondary well field management zones, consisting of the Pine Bush recharge areas, the Fullers recharge area, and the area immediately north and down-gradient of the Voorheesville delta complex, should include the collection of information regarding all storage of reportable quantities of petroleum and/or potentially hazardous materials. Notification should be provided to all occupants within this area, including potential concerns. Floor drains and other subsurface discharges should be eliminated with the exception of sanitary septic discharges.
- Within the primary management area, defined as a radius of 4,500 feet from each well, gasoline retailers, industry and any activities relating to the use, storage or disposal of potentially hazardous materials should be restricted. Subsurface discharges from floor drains should be eliminated.

Transportation recommendations from the Route 20 Corridor Study that are specific to this planning area include the following:

- Measures should be developed to prevent impact to the Reservoir from spills along Route 20. This might include some type of containment system.
- Implement watershed protection regulations in accordance with an overall watershed management plan.
- Consider the use of the railroad overpass as an opportunity to create a rural gateway, celebrating the community's agricultural component.

Chapter V: Alternatives

The development of a comprehensive plan involves a process of evaluating alternatives. A plan begins community discussions and an inventory and analysis. It is given focus with a vision and a set of goals and objectives, and refined through the evaluation of alternative land uses and development scenarios.

The first alternative encountered during the process of plan development is the "no-action" alternative. The "no-action" alternative represents the impact (beneficial and adverse) of permitting development to continue under current land use and zoning regulations. Through the development of goals and objectives and the evaluation of the "no-action" alternative, alternative development scenarios were considered including the location and density of residential development, the location and density of non-residential development, alternative land uses and the preservation of open space.

A. No-Action Alternative

The "no-action" alternative represents the growth potential of the Town of Guilderland under existing zoning and land use regulations and identifies potential impacts related to this growth. Under existing regulations a variety of potentially adverse impacts related to land use will remain unchanged. Traffic movement will be severely impacted in a number of areas. The continued development of strip malls along Route 20 with numerous curb cuts and no access management will limit traffic accessibility and impact the safe movement of traffic and pedestrians through the area. Traffic issues related to truck traffic to and from the Northeast Industrial Park, particularly as it impacts Guilderland Center, will continue unchecked.

Existing problems regarding the ability of utilities to keep pace with demand will continue. The quality of service to existing customers may decline. Critical decisions regarding the location and timing of utility extensions would not be made. Land use patterns would continue to follow the locations of utilities and development pressure will grow in these areas.

The continued development of 1-5 acre lots throughout rural Guilderland will result in suburban sprawl and little protection of open space. Lots with limited frontage and their associated driveways will impact the rural character of existing roadways. The distinction between neighborhoods will continue to blur.

The "no-action" alternative affords limited protection to the Watervliet Reservoir. In order to protect this critical water supply additional growth management and environmental protection guidelines are necessary.

There is currently no plan for non-residential growth in the western part of Guilderland. Existing land use regulations do not address the issue of non-residential growth in this area. Build-out of this area under existing regulations would result in large numbers of residential units. Based on the result of the fiscal impact model, residential development could have a significant impact on the tax base, which in turn could impact community services.

B. Alternative Non-Residential Uses

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan process a number of alternative non-residential land uses were considered. Initially a Technology Park was considered for lands near Exit 23 of the Thruway due to its accessibility and perceived lack of development constraints. Based on further review of development trends, physical characteristics and the goals and objectives of the Plan, this recommendation was revised. The proximity of the Pine Bush to this area was a major factor on determining that this type of development would not be appropriate for this area. In addition the Town wishes to promote business development within the Guilderland School District. As this property is not within the Guilderland School District, the Town shifted its focus to other areas of the Town for the location of a business park.

Other potential locations identified for economic development included the Dunnsville area and locations along Route 158. Development of a technology park along Route 158 will require access from the Thruway and I-88 through the Town of Rotterdam. Both of these locations are within the Guilderland School District and would provide tax revenues to both the School District and the Town with fewer service demands than residential uses. Through much discussion, however, the disposition of these areas was determined to be best identified through further study of Rural Guilderland relative to the provision of water and sewer and the implications of development, including the identification of suitable sites for economic development.

C. Alternative Residential Land Uses

Originally, land use discussions for the Dunnsville area were considered in the style of a hamlet, comprised of a mix of commercial and residential uses. Commercial uses would be oriented to provide services to those people living in or near the hamlet. The potential for economic development in the Dunnsville area in the form of a business park was also considered. None of these development scenarios have been rejected, however, given the current lack of sewer and water and the need for dialogue with the adjoining municipalities regarding future development, it was determined that an evaluation of potential suitable sites for hamlet development for Rural Guilderland should be conducted if the provision of water and perhaps sewer is considered beyond current boundaries in the future.

Original recommendations for Rural Guilderland included limiting sewer and water to current service areas. Continued discussions resulted in the recommendation that a GEIS be completed in order to identify and evaluate the feasibility of sewer and water extensions in rural Guilderland. The GEIS will compile information to allow determinations to be made regarding resources, economics and land use goals as they relate to the potential extension of sewer and water. Currently, however, the recommendations are more reflective of the initial recommendations but strongly suggest that areas of poor groundwater quality and quantity in Rural Guilderland should be identified along with the potential solutions, which may include water line extensions. The outcome of this analysis will dictate the need for further work, such as a utility GEIS.

Chapter VI: Implementation (The Action Plan)

Now that the Town's vision, goals and objectives have been researched, compiled, and formulated into a plan, it is necessary to look at how the plan recommendations can become reality. This is achieved through an Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies the tasks and strategies that will implement the Comprehensive Plan.

The comprehensive plan is not intended to be an end in itself. Instead, the plan seeks to establish a clear course of action - a blueprint for action - to implement the community's vision. Without implementation, the effort of all those that participated in this planning process would be in vain.

A. Major Themes

The Action Plan has been organized around the three major themes that have evolved from the planning process. They include Resource Conservation, Livable Neighborhoods, and Growth Management.

Resource conservation includes the protection of open space, farmland, and other significant natural resources such as the Pine Bush, the Watervliet Reservoir, and the Helderberg Escarpment. Accomplishing this agenda will require a multi-faceted approach which emphasizes voluntary rather than regulatory means.

Livable neighborhoods is a theme that recognizes a need to strengthen the sense of community – both in individual neighborhoods and in the Town as a whole.

Growth management recognizes that development should place the least possible burden on public resources. Growth must be coordinated with the public expenditures needed to upgrade or expand the infrastructure required to support the growth. Economic development and the strengthening of the business environment along the Route 20 corridor fit within a balanced growth management approach.

A theme-based approach focuses the plan toward the basic concerns shared by the community.

B. Implementation Schedule

The implementation schedule (table) to follow is a summary of the action plan tasks along with a description of the interrelationships between tasks and the necessary legislation/approvals to carry out these tasks. Full descriptions of the Action Plan tasks are provided following this section.

As noted previously, the implementation schedule is organized by major themes. The tasks are further prioritized by short term, medium term and long term. Time frames are provided as goals for the Town to consider. They are not meant to be rigid nor any type of measure of success. The times frames chosen for the Action Plan are a reflection of the concerns of the community to begin to address some of the issues quickly. By providing general completion dates, the Plan addresses the fact that some issues must be resolved prior to study beginning on others. With this in mind, short term tasks should be completed within the next 1-2 years. Medium term tasks should be completed in the next 3-5 years. Long term tasks are those that are expected to occur in excess of 5 years out and are typically dependent on the outcome of short and medium term tasks, or are simply not of high priority at this time.

The prioritization of action tasks is provided as a means of “getting organized” and as a starting point for the Town. As time goes by, the priorities may shift, bringing some medium or even long term tasks forward and pushing other tasks back. This is certainly reasonable and consistent with the flexibility of the Plan. However, as identified in the table and further discussed in the section to follow, some tasks are dependent on the results of others, so there is some logical order to the tasks. This should be considered when and if the implementation schedule is reorganized in the future.

Table 14 Implementation Schedule

RESOURCE CONSERVATION		
Action	Linkages/ Dependencies	Legislative Agenda—Short and Medium Term
Short Term—next 1-2 years		
Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan	May be independent but better if linked to the Rural Guilderland Plan that would also include an Economic Development Initiative, Watershed Management, and a utilities study.	Authorize professional services and appropriate funds, establish committee, review and adopt strategy, implement recommendations via local laws (e.g. incentive zoning code, conservation-based development design guidelines, etc.), funding initiatives (reference Town of Pittsford Greenprint Initiative for example), etc.
Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study	Linked to the Rural Guilderland Plan that includes a Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, Utilities study, and an Economic Development Initiative.	The Town Board would authorize discussions with the City of Watervliet.
Pine Bush Initiative	Independent—links to open space strategy.	As a member of the Pine Bush Preserve Commission, the Town should participate in updating and implementing management plans through.
Medium Term—next 3-5 years		
Term Easement/Tax Abatement Program	Dependent upon outcome of Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan	Draft local law for conservation easements (reference Town of Perinton for example), review, and adopt.
Recreation Plan	Independent—links to neighborhood master plans	Authorize professional services, appropriate funds, adopt plan, implement through grant programs

		and local action.
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LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS		
Action	Linkages/ Dependencies	Legislative Agenda--Short and Medium Term
Short Term		
McKownville Streetscape & Access Management Plan	Independent but linked to the recommendations of the Route 20 Corridor Study	Identify grant money, appropriate matching funds, authorize professional services, establish committee to oversee study or utilize Planning Board, review and adopt plan, and implement through local zoning.
Master Plan for Guilderland Neighborhood	Independent	Authorize professional services, appropriate funds, establish committee, review and adopt plan, implement through local zoning code amendment (update code for neighborhood area—permitted uses and development design guidelines) and funding through state and federal transportation improvement programs, etc.
Guilderland Center Neighborhood Master Plan	Linked to the GEIS for the NEIP.	Authorize professional services, appropriate funds, establish committee, review and adopt plan, implement through local zoning code amendment (update code for neighborhood area—permitted uses and development design guidelines) and funding through state and federal transportation improvement programs, etc.
Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette	Initiates design concepts/land use policy options that can be carried forward in future Route 20 Redevelopment Plan.	The Town Board should authorize professional services and funding to complete this task. As an alternative to funding this task, the Town might seek professional volunteer assistance to run the charrette from local residents.
Rural Guilderland Hamlet Study	Linked to and partially dependent upon Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study, utilities study, and Economic Development Initiative.	Authorize professional planning services to conduct land use study. Draft zoning code (hamlet development land use and design guidelines, etc.) and infrastructure management policy to implement plan.
Develop Guilderland Pathways Plan	Links to neighborhood master plans at a detailed level.	Continue to support this early implementation activity. Engage consultant as necessary. Develop town-wide pathways plan. Adopt as part of official map per NYS law. Authorize grant applications and inclusion of pathways into public works projects.
Medium Term		
Route 20 Redevelopment Plan	Benefit from design/land use options derived from Charrette	Authorize grant application to Capital District Transportation Committee/NYS DOT, commit to local share, secure professional services, complete and adopt plan. Implement through partnerships with transportation agencies and local property owners and amendment to town zoning code (updated code addressing access management, signage, design guidelines, and incentives for appropriate economic improvements and

		revitalization.)
Planning Coordination with V. of Altamont and School Districts.	Independent but also linked to future utility policy and future growth in and adjacent to Village.	Appoint/designate existing committee or board to serve as coordinating entity (e.g., planning board).
Neighborhood Outreach/Organization Program	Sets stage for other neighborhood studies (McKownville, Westmere, Fort Hunter)	Solicit interest and appoint/recognize neighborhood representative committee. Work with existing organizations and Guilderland Study Circles.
Long Term		
Carman Road (NYS Route 146) Corridor Study	Linked to Fort Hunter Neighborhood Master Plan but could be conducted independently.	Authorize grant application to Capital District Transportation Committee/NYS DOT, commit to local share, secure professional services, complete and adopt plan. Implement through partnerships with transportation agencies and local property owners and amendment to town zoning code (updated code addressing access management, signage, design guidelines, and incentives for appropriate economic improvements and revitalization.)
Neighborhood Master Plan for McKownville	Linked to the recommendations of the McKownville Streetscape & Access Management Plan, neighborhood dialogue, and potentially the Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette	Authorize professional services, appropriate funds, establish committee, review and adopt plan, implement through local zoning code amendment (update code for neighborhood area—permitted uses and development design guidelines) and funding through state and federal transportation improvement programs, etc.
Neighborhood Master Plan for Westmere	Linked to the recommendations of the Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette, Route 20 Corridor Study and future plan, and neighborhood dialogue.	Authorize professional services, appropriate funds, establish committee, review and adopt plan, implement through local zoning code amendment (update code for neighborhood area—permitted uses and development design guidelines) and funding through state and federal transportation improvement programs, etc.
Neighborhood Master Plan(s) for Fort Hunter and McCormack Corners	Linked to the recommendations of the Route 20 Corridor Study and future plan and the Carman Road Corridor Study.	Authorize professional services, appropriate funds, establish committee, review and adopt plan, implement through local zoning code amendment (update code for neighborhood area—permitted uses and development design guidelines) and funding through state and federal transportation improvement programs, etc.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT		
Action	Linkages/Dependencies	Legislative Agenda—Short and Medium Term
Short Term		
Document water problems in Rural Guilderland, identify full range of possible solutions, and initiate appropriate actions.	Linked to policy for any potential future water extensions.	Authorize analysis of water quality problems.
Economic Development Initiative	May begin independently but would benefit from the results of the Westmere Design Charrette, the water study, and the Farmland & Open Space plan.	Charge Economic Development Advisory Board with advancing this initiative.
Rural Guilderland Plan	Comprised of the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, utilities study, Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study, and Economic Development Initiative.	Authorize professional planning services to conduct land use study. Draft zoning code (hamlet development land use and design guidelines, etc.) and infrastructure management policy to implement plan.
Stuyvesant Plaza/McKownville Area Drainage Study	Independent but a likely component of the McKownville Streetscape and Access Management Study/Plan	Authorize grant applications for stormwater management improvement through NYS DOT and/or NYS DEC. Investigate feasibility of establishing a draining improvement district.
Medium Term		
Intermunicipal Water Agreements	May be important for future discussions of water extensions.	Develop intermunicipal memoranda of understanding outlining potential expanded relationship and terms of future joint activities.
GENERAL AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS		
Short Term		
Adopt Comprehensive Plan	First order of business. Provides justification for future actions.	Prepare and accept SEQR findings and draft and approve local law adopting comprehensive plan.
Grant Administrator	Linked to successful funding applications.	Appoint new position/modify responsibility of existing position.
Long Term		
Review & Update Comprehensive Plan	Growth dependent	Consider establishing a long range planning committee
On-Going		
Transportation Planning	Some aspects are independent but others may become important in the process of determining traffic solutions for other actions.	Designate representative to Capital District Transportation Committee.
Review and Update Zoning & Subdivision Regulations	Partly dependent upon land use decisions derived from future neighborhood plans and other land use studies.	Review and adopt updated zoning code and subdivision regulations. (See other legislative agenda items for additional detail.)
Technology Improvements	Independent	Budget necessary and appropriate.
Fiscal Model Update and Refinement	Linked to most future land use decisions	Establish a committee that will periodically review and update the model as well as run development scenarios in support of other planning projects.
Continuing Education	Independent	Adopt local law/draft town policy regarding

		continuing education for planning, zoning and other board members.
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C. Action Plan Discussion

The Action Plan is perhaps the most important component of the Comprehensive Plan. This is the chapter of the Comprehensive Plan in which the Plan Recommendations culminate into a specific list of actions that are prioritized to meet the most pressing needs identified during the planning process. The Town of Guilderland has undertaken a very thorough and open comprehensive planning process. Recommendations have been provided for most, if not all, of the important issues. It is now time to organize the recommendations into a plan of action – a blueprint for the future.

Other important considerations in laying out the Action Plan are the number of recommendations and the likelihood of completing them in a timely manner. Related to this are the limited resources available to the Town. This is primarily a funding issue but also includes the availability and dedication of volunteers and staff. The planning process to date has shown that residents of Guilderland are concerned about the future of their Town and have been more than willing to donate their time and expertise. This is highly evident by the number of folks involved directly on the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board and indirectly as members of subcommittees, Guilderland Study Circles, and other groups involved in getting the process out to the people of the Town. Also worthy of recognition are the members of the Comprehensive Plan Revision Task Force who have helped to take a good plan and make it even better and. Both the organization and clarity of this Action Plan is one of the several achievements of the Revision Task Force. If this level of commitment continues, the likelihood of completing the Action Plan tasks will be high.

The organization of the Action Plan by major themes provides greater opportunity to discuss the interrelationship between tasks and why they were prioritized as short, medium and long term. Recommendations have been pared down into to manageable tasks. Undertaking and completing the short term tasks will be important for the future of other tasks and issues. Many of these projects can be accomplished quickly given appropriate levels of participation and funding. The first task will be the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board.

C.1 Resource Conservation

This major theme relates to the desire of the community to protect natural resources for a number of reasons. Some desire to maintain a rural character in at least a portion of the Town and, therefore, they desire the protection of open space resources, such as the Pine Bush and the Helderberg Escarpment, and the potential opportunity to keep farming viable. Others desire to preserve the resources necessary to maintain the basic requirements of life, not the least of

which is a safe, quality water supply. To achieve resource conservation in accordance with the Plan Recommendations, the following tasks are elaborated.

Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan (Short Term Action)

The Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan would identify appropriate, long-term land protection strategies that manage future growth in rural areas of Guilderland. Although much of the undeveloped land and farmland is located in the portion of Town referred to as Rural Guilderland, the plan would be applicable to all areas of Town. As identified in the Inventory & Analysis (Chapter II – Figure 5) there are several agricultural parcels located east of the CSX tracks. The types of tools and techniques that might be considered are described in some detail under the *Growth Management* section of this comprehensive plan. The plan should be developed with active participation from farmers, other landowners, and interested Town residents.

The plan should establish a goal for open space protection in terms of both acres of protected land and the types of open space resources that the Town seeks to protect. The plan should also establish the principles and techniques for how these lands should be protected (for example: incentive based techniques such as acquisition or Purchase of Development Rights). The fiscal model, developed during the comprehensive plan process, explored land use scenarios that included an open space protection program. The fiscal model could be employed again to determine the potential fiscal implications (i.e. impact on taxes) of this program once the Town's protection goals and techniques are refined.

A primary focus of this work should be the identification and preservation of appropriate parcels in the Town for open space or agricultural use. The plan would establish a completely voluntary program for land conservation. The most successful approaches to land conservation are incentive based, whereby the landowner is compensated for the lost development potential of the property while retaining the right to own and work the land. Farmers and other large landowners would have the opportunity to apply for these incentives. Consideration for judging applications to this program could be based on the following criteria which stem from the State's funding criteria:

- ♦ Viability of farmland (soil type, productivity)
- ♦ Development pressure
- ♦ Buffer for significant natural public resource containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics. Examples include: the Pine Bush Preserve, the Watervliet Reservoir and its tributaries, the Helderberg Escarpment and its watershed, Town parks and other public recreation facilities and open space including a potential future townwide trail system, and important habitat such as wetlands
- ♦ Size of parcel
- ♦ Percentage of total farm acreage available for agricultural production

The *Pittsford Greenprint*, like a blueprint for a house, is a detailed, parcel-by-parcel analysis of the town's open space, agricultural, natural, and recreational resources. plan.



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- ♦ Proximity to other farms which are already protected by a conservation easement or which might reasonably be expected to enter into a farmland preservation agreement in the future.
- ♦ Level of farm management demonstrated by current landowner, and
- ♦ Likelihood of property's succession as a farm if ownership changes.

Of these criteria, the State gives priority to parcels that preserve viable agricultural land, are located in areas facing significant development pressure, and serve as buffers for natural public resources.

Linkages: This plan can occur independently of other plans and programs identified in the Action Plan. However, it is intended that the plan/study occur concurrently or as a component of the Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, that would also be combined with the Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study, an Economic Development Initiative for Rural Guilderland, and a utilities study. The Farmland & Open Space Conservation plan will have beneficial implications to management of the Watervliet reservoir watershed, protection of the Helderberg Escarpment watershed, preservation/protection of the Pine Bush, and growth management relative to the future potential extension of water to Rural Guilderland.

Legislative Agenda: The Town would fund the plan. Implementation of the plan could be funded by several sources. The Town is encouraged to reference the Town of Pittsford's Greenprint Initiative as an example for the study.

Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study (Short Term Action)

The Town of Guilderland should seek to establish a formal dialogue with the City of Watervliet (owner of the reservoir) regarding the future of the reservoir and the watershed. The dialogue should focus around the long-term management of this resource, and opportunities for partnership in the management, use and possible expansion of the reservoir, with an initial emphasis on land use within the watershed and efforts to identify issues and solutions to activities that may impact water quality. These discussions may identify additional actions the Town can undertake to further protect this water resource.

Because the watershed for the Watervliet Reservoir extends beyond Guilderland's borders, the Town and the City of Watervliet may wish to promote an intermunicipal study of the watershed area. This study would engage the local municipalities that encompass portions of the watershed, and Albany and Schenectady counties, in a detailed look at measures that would protect this public water resource for the future. The study should address issues such as: current environmental conditions and land use activities, existing land use management techniques in the communities, measures for reducing non-point source pollution (through both regulation and the identification of Best Management Practices), measures for preventing accidents and spills where Route 20 and Route 158 come in close proximity to the reservoir itself, and incentives and methods for investing landowners in the watershed with a sense

of the value of this resource to their quality of life (for example, potential passive recreational uses of lands around the reservoir). In recognition of the local nature of land use planning and zoning, the study should also provide recommendations specific to each municipality within the watershed.

There are several potential sources of funding and coordination for such a study. The Town could start by reaching out to the Albany County Water Quality Coordinating Committee and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC). CDRPC has performed similar studies in Rensselaer and Saratoga Counties. In those cases, the projects were funded by grants from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) which utilized funding originating from federal allocations from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Section 604(b) of the National Water Quality Act. Another potential source of funding for this study would be the New York State Department of State's new Quality Communities Demonstration Program. A priority of this grant program is to encourage collaboration among municipalities, and one of the principles that the program seeks to advance is the protection of critical environmental resources.

Linkages: This dialogue with the City of Watervliet is linked to the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, Economic Development Initiative, and utilities study.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board would authorize discussions with the City of Watervliet.

Pine Bush Initiative (Short Term)

The Town of Guilderland is fortunate to have the Pine Bush resource in the community. It is a significant piece of preserved open space, providing numerous passive recreation and educational opportunities. It is a suburban park that will increase in its importance to the community as the Town and region continue to grow in population and as increased development reduces the availability of open space. Given the uniqueness of the ecology, the open space value provided to the Town, and the high priority given to its protection on a State level, it is in the Town's best interest to support the efforts of the Pine Bush Preserve Commission to continue preservation and management of the Pine Bush. To accomplish this goal, the Town should consider the following:

- Assist and cooperate with the Pine Bush Preserve Commission in implementing the *Management Plan* and *Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines*. This should occur by including a requirement in the site plan and subdivision review processes that new development occurring within the Project Review Area, as defined and illustrated in the *Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines*, undergo consultation with the Town and Pine Bush Preserve Commission in the early planning stages (sketch plan) of plan development. The purpose of this consultation is to provide Commission staff an opportunity to comment on the site and

proposal in the early planning stages to make suggestions that are consistent with efforts for management of the Pine Bush ecosystem. This will benefit both the Town's review process and the individual developer by providing early input. Currently, input from Commission staff typically occurs during the public hearing/meeting on the project, once plans have been advanced, at times resulting in the need to significantly revise the layout at a direct cost to the developer/project sponsor.

- As a legislatively established member of the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, the Town should support the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Protection and Project Review Implementation Guidelines and Final Environmental Impact Statement (1996) and the Commission's 1993 management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement. Furthermore, the Town should cooperatively develop and implement an updated Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission Management Plan for 2001.
- Promote the Pine Bush Interpretative Center as an "Ecotourism" opportunity.
- Consider the use of Growth Management techniques such as the Transfer of Development Rights, as a method of preserving important Pine Bush habitat or open space.
- The Town should continue to invest in the voluntary acquisition of the few remaining parcels located within the Pine Bush Primary Protection Area.
- Encourage continued agricultural operations within the Pine Bush.

Linkages: The recommendation to utilize growth management tools to protect important Pine Bush habitat and open space would benefit from the completion of the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan (short term action). Otherwise, the remaining recommendations could occur independently of other actions.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should draft and adopt amendments to the site plan review procedures and the subdivision regulations to reflect the coordination recommendations provided above.

Term Easement/Tax Abatement Program (Medium Term Action)

The Town could consider developing a term easement/tax abatement program as described under the Growth Management section of this document. This program would provide immediate tax incentives for landowners who agree to keep their land undeveloped for a period of years. This is a temporary solution for farmland and open space protection and should be considered in light of the Town's goals for farmland and open space protection and the success of other programs that provide permanent easements. Term easement programs are particularly attractive to a community when important parcels (a community derived evaluation) have immediate potential to be developed. Term easements can also serve as intermediate programs until permanent easement programs can be established. Like most growth management programs discussed in the Comprehensive Plan, term easements are completely voluntary. A willing landowner can approach the Town (or vice versa) to discuss the potential of

establishing an easement. Conversely, the Town must establish the criteria for defining important open space or farmland or specifically identify suitable parcels.

Linkages: A term easement program is one of many possible growth management tools that may result from the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan. Although it is possible to establish this program without the Farmland and Open Space Conservation Plan, it would be difficult to establish the criteria for determining the value (importance) of the land.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board would draft and adopt a local law for term easements. The Town could reference the programs established in the towns of Perinton and Clifton Park as examples.

Recreation Plan (Medium Term)

A detailed assessment of recreational needs and opportunities should be developed. Active and passive recreational opportunities, programs, and recommendations should be generated and funding sources identified. In addition to larger centralized facilities, the plan should seek to build on the organizing principle of neighborhoods which has been articulated in this plan. The availability of accessible neighborhood recreational opportunities has been identified as a desire of many of the Town's residents.

Linkages: The Recreation Plan should be linked to plans conducted for the various neighborhoods. However, it is not anticipated that all of the neighborhood plans/outreach programs will be completed at the same time. The Recreation Plan is envisioned as a town-wide plan or master document from which future neighborhood recreation needs can be addressed.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board will need to authorize professional services and associated funding to prepare the plan. Once complete, the Town Board should adopt the plan and implement in accordance with the plan recommendations, funded through grants and local action.

C.2 Livable Neighborhoods

This is a common theme throughout the Comprehensive Plan that relates to the definition and redefinition of residential neighborhoods and other interacting land uses, such as commercial areas. Residential areas were once very distinct but the forces of suburban sprawl have blurred neighborhood boundaries and, in some instances, significantly changed the character of the neighborhood. The purpose of the action items associated with this theme is to begin to redefine the neighborhood, taking into consideration all the forces that impact residential areas and to provide linkages to community resources. Examples of livable neighborhoods are provided in Appendix F.

McKownville Streetscape & Access Management Plan (Short Term Action)

In accordance with the Plan recommendations that evolved from the Route 20 Corridor Study provided in Chapter IV.C.3, the Town has pursued funding from the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) and has been awarded a grant to evaluate the McKownville section of Route 20 from the City line to the NYS Thruway. The scope of the project will include streetscape/pedestrian improvements, access management to reduce multiple driveways, and a drainage study to relieve current stormwater drainage problems.

McKenzie Towne, in Calgary, Canada, is a great example of human-scaled community design. Inverness, pictured below, is the first completed "village" in this large, mixed-use project.



Photo by World Idea Networks

Linkages: This study/plan is directly related to the recommendations of the Route 20 Corridor Study. The recommendations for the McKownville segment of the corridor resulting from this action will become a component of the overall plan for the corridor for managing traffic and improving the pedestrian and neighborhood environment. The results of this study should be incorporated into the future neighborhood master plan for this area.

Legislative Agenda: Authorize matching funds and retain professional services.

Guilderland Neighborhood Master Plan (Short Term Action)

This neighborhood, which includes the older Guilderland hamlet around the intersections of Route 20 with Foundry Road and Schoolcraft Street, and the newer development around the Library, YMCA, and elementary school, should receive the more detailed attention of a neighborhood master plan. A Neighborhood Master Plan Advisory Board should be established by the Town Board to initiate this process.

The Neighborhood Master Planning Process should seek the active participation of neighborhood residents, business owners, Town officials, and interested/concerned Town residents. The master planning process should start by defining the extent of the neighborhood center and should address the land use, transportation (including all modes), architectural and urban design, and economic development opportunities for Guilderland at a detailed level. The importance of Route 20, as both a transportation resource and community barrier, will be central to the development of this plan. A definition of a neighborhood master plan is provided in the Glossary and an example of the contents of a neighborhood master plan is provided in Appendix C.

Linkages: The Neighborhood Master Plan must be linked to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Significant guidance is provided in this document for the development of future plans and studies that will help the

Town more clearly identify future land use. Specific attention should be paid to the recommendations for the Pine Bush (IV.B.4), the Route 20 Corridor Study (IV.C.3), Drainage Corridors (IV.B.3), Cultural Resources (IV.A.6), and Neighborhood Centers (IV.A.3). It is intended that this plan be intimately linked to access management plans and other roadway/pedestrian safety recommendations for Route 20. Although the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan is a medium term action item, the Guilderland Neighborhood Master Plan can address many of the issues associated with the segment of Route 20 within the neighborhood boundaries. These recommendations or improvements would become part of the overall Route 20 Plan.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds, and appoint a Neighborhood Master Plan Committee. To implement the plan, the Town Board will need to review and adopt the plan, amend zoning as necessary to reflect land use recommendations and development design guidelines, and seek funding for other projects such as roadway improvements.

Guilderland Center Neighborhood Master Plan (Short Term)

A Neighborhood Master Plan Advisory Board should be established by the Town Board to initiate a neighborhood master plan for Guilderland Center.

The neighborhood master planning process should seek the active participation of neighborhood residents, business owners, Town officials, Guilderland school district, NEIP, and interested/concerned Town residents. The master planning process should start by defining the extent of this neighborhood center and should address the land use, transportation (including all modes), architectural and urban design, and economic development opportunities for Guilderland Center at a detailed level. A definition of a neighborhood master plan is provided in the Glossary and an example of the contents of a neighborhood master plan is provided in Appendix C.

Linkages: Since the current and future activities of the Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP) have a significant impact on Guilderland Center, the Generic Environmental Impact Statement being prepared by NEIP should reflect neighborhood concerns, particularly as they relate to truck traffic along Route 146. These recommendations/concerns for Guilderland Center are expressed in Chapter IV. A.3 of this Comprehensive Plan.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds and appoint a Neighborhood Master Plan Committee. To implement the plan, the Town Board will need to review and adopt the plan, amend zoning as necessary to reflect land use recommendations and development design guidelines, and seek funding for other projects such as roadway improvements.

Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette (Short Term Action)

Mashpee Commons, at the western end of Cape Cod (Massachusetts), was constructed on the site of a defunct shopping mall. This project, completed over the last decade, has succeeded by creating an attractive pedestrian realm with a variety of activities including shops, offices, a movie theater, restaurants and cafes, and a post office. Although not yet a "real" community, planned future phases will create several human-scaled, and fully linked residential neighborhoods around this community center.



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The Westmere Commercial area encompasses the Route 20 corridor between Fuller Road and Johnston Road. It is an area congested by traffic, committed to the automobile for mobility and access, significantly bisected by the Northway, controversial in terms of land use conflicts with residential neighborhoods, and yet, very successful from a commercial and fiscal perspective. It is a vibrant area in need of a fresh approach and, perhaps, a change in character. A design charrette should be conducted for this area. A charrette involves interactive sessions where individuals having a stake in the future of the area (residents, business owners, Town officials, and other government and special interest representatives) meet and discuss planning and design options. Issues that impact design are discussed and debated, usually resulting in several alternatives.

The purpose of the charrette is to discuss and sketch out land use and design options for lands within the Westmere Commercial Area including Crossgates Mall. A study area would have to be defined prior to the charrette. Many ideas can be expressed in terms of appropriate land use, vehicular access and circulation solutions, improvements to the pedestrian environment, and architectural standards or guidelines. It may be used as a precursor to a corridor plan or a neighborhood master plan. A well planned charrette would involve the services of a landscape architect, a civil engineer, and a planner to facilitate the process. This can be accomplished by retaining the professional services of these individuals or by soliciting volunteers from the professional community in the Town. It is important for participants to understand the major issues associated with the area prior to the charrette so that the process can focus on potential solutions.

Linkages: The recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan for the Westmere Commercial Area (IV.A.7) and the Western Avenue (Route 20) Corridor Study (IV.C.3) should be used to establish the parameters of the charrette.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should authorize professional services and funding to complete this task. As an alternative to funding this task, the Town might seek professional volunteer assistance to run the charrette from local residents. Professional planners, landscape architects, and civil engineers are the most logical choices to lead the charrette. This has been a successful approach for an older suburban area north of Buffalo. A design charrette was conducted by a landscape architect and an engineer who were neighbors and concerned with the future of the commercial environment and the effects this had on the older residential neighborhoods.

Rural Guilderland Hamlet Study (Short Term Action)

The intent of the Rural Guilderland Hamlet Study is to identify areas in Rural Guilderland where concentrated or hamlet style development might occur. Although current information collected during the Inventory & Analysis phase of the comprehensive planning process clearly identifies a lack of water and sewer treatment capability to serve out-of-district users at this time and

discussions with Schenectady County Planning also indicate that it is unlikely that sewer service would be available from Rotterdam or Princetown in the near future, it is still appropriate to have a study in place for Rural Guilderland to proactively address potential development and to prevent unnecessary land use impacts that are contrary to the vision for the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

As a separate action plan task, the Rural Guilderland Hamlet Study would focus on land use and attempt to identify suitable areas for concentrated development that would prevent significant impact to rural character and other important environmental and visually significant areas. However, this effort is much more effective when conducted in concert with the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, a study of utilities (feasibility of extending services), a study of areas suitable for economic development (Economic Development Initiative), and the results of discussions with the City of Watervliet relative to efforts for protecting water quality. Therefore, the recommended approach is to prepare the Rural Guilderland Plan (**C.3 Growth Management**) that would combine all of the above studies into one project.

Research and discussions that occurred during the comprehensive planning process suggested that Dunnsville might be an appropriate area to create a hamlet. Initially, efforts focused on just this area but it is clear that Rural Guilderland as a whole planning area should be reviewed to determine if other areas might also prove suitable. Dunnsville provides a good starting point in defining the criteria for identifying hamlet areas.

Linkages: In addition to the direct linkage to the studies mentioned above, there are also possible linkages to the Route 20 Corridor Study recommendations in Chapter IV.C.3 and direct linkage to the recommendations for Rural Guilderland in Chapter IV.A.5.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds and appoint a Rural Guilderland Hamlet Committee.

Guilderland Pathways Plan (Short Term Action)

The Town should establish a Guilderland Pathways committee to begin to formulate a strategy for the development of a comprehensive pathways plan. Initial work by this committee should be to identify sources of funding and technical assistance for the development of this plan. Albany County, the Capital District Transportation Committee, and the Hudson River Valley Greenway should be approached as possible partners in this effort. The committee could also begin to refine the pathways concept as presented in this plan. The nodes of activity that the Town would like to connect, and more specific opportunities for connecting them (such as the Normanskill Stream Corridor below the reservoir) could be identified.

Linkages: This plan should be linked to neighborhood master plans, although the detail in terms of pedestrian movement within the neighborhood is less

important to the Pathways plan. The key elements of the plan are major linkages between neighborhoods and other community resources such as shopping centers, government centers, and parks.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should continue to support ongoing implementation activities and authorize professional services as necessary to develop the town-wide Pathways Plan for Town Board adoption.

Route 20 Redevelopment Plan (Medium Term Action)

This study is envisioned as a cooperative planning effort. A Western Avenue Corridor Advisory Board should be established to spearhead the planning process. With active participation from the Guilderland Economic Development Advisory Council, business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, and residents, the Town should initiate a coordinated study of redevelopment options for NYS Route 20. The redevelopment plan would build on the general recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan - in particular the Route 20 corridor management component and the suggestions for the Westmere Commercial Area - to address specific land use, transportation (all modes), economic redevelopment, and architectural and urban design opportunities/criteria for the built portion of the Town's main economic corridor. The focus of this work should be from the Town's border with Albany through the Guilderland neighborhood.

A goal of the study would be to generate a vision for commercial redevelopment in the corridor, and to identify ways that this development can interface with adjoining residential neighborhoods. Additionally, opportunities for neotraditional housing (e.g., apartments above store fronts), senior housing and other higher density residential development/infill that is complimentary to the commercial and office activity along Route 20 and which would benefit from the proximity of goods and services and public transportation should be considered. By working out the details in advance of future proposals, and stating clearly what constitutes "a desirable project" (in terms of scale, design, impact, etc.), a more predictable, "shovel-ready" economic development environment can be created.

The identity and character of the neighborhoods of Westmere and McKownville should be used as organizing principles for the study. A primary issue that must be addressed by the study is the function of Route 20 as the Town's main east-west transportation artery. Any redevelopment/intensification of commercial activity in this corridor is dependent upon maintaining this transportation function through the identification of specific access management solutions. Therefore, it is suggested that the Capital District Transportation Committee be engaged in this process. Funding and technical expertise through CDTC may be available.

Linkages: The Route 20 Corridor Study provided in Chapter IV.C.3 of the Plan Recommendations divides the Route 20 corridor into segments based on their predominate land use and other unifying characteristics. There have been

four segments identified between the Albany City line and Route 155: McKownville Professional Office Corridor, Westmere Commercial Corridor, Westmere Professional Office Corridor, and Route 155 Commercial Corridor. The results of the Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette would benefit the development of this plan.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should authorize the preparation of a grant application to CDTC/NYS DOT, commit to the local share of the grant, authorize professional services, and review and adopt the plan. Once adopted, the Town Board should implement the plan recommendations through partnerships with transportation agencies and local property owners. Amendments to the zoning ordinance may also be required to address access management, signage, design guidelines, and incentives for appropriate economic improvements and revitalization.

Planning Coordination with Village of Altamont and School Districts (Medium Term Action)

The Town should work with the village and the school districts to formalize an ongoing dialogue about issues of mutual concern. This may become very important depending on the outcome of water supply issues in Rural Guilderland. The Town of Guilderland and Village of Altamont should come to agreement on the types of uses and intensity of development that should be allowed along the borders between these two municipalities. Likewise, as the community grows there will be an impact on school facilities and staffing, which can result in significant impacts on the quality of education. Coordinated planning efforts between the school districts and the Town should help the school districts maintain their current excellent level of service.

Linkages: This effort is linked to the recommendations provided for Rural Guilderland in Chapter IV.A.5 and future growth management initiatives.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should designate committees or a board (e.g., Planning Board) as the coordinating entities.

Neighborhood Outreach/Organization Program (Medium Term Action)

Based on the dialogue that has occurred within this planning effort, and perhaps building on the exemplary model of public participation that the Study Circles has provided, ongoing neighborhood-based outreach and organization should be encouraged by the Town. These localized forums could become important vehicles for bringing neighborhood concerns to the Town in the future and could serve as the first step in preparing neighborhood plans for other areas of the Town as emphasized in the Plan Recommendations (McKownville, Westmere, Fort Hunter/McCormack Corners).

Linkages: The procedures and results of the community outreach program conducted for the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed to provide some

guidance for this task. Neighborhood outreach is an essential step in laying the groundwork for the preparation of other neighborhood plans.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should solicit interest and appoint/recognize representatives for neighborhood committees. The committees and the Planning Board could work with existing organizations and Guilderland Study Circles to complete this task.

Carman Road (NYS Route 146) Corridor Study (Long Term Action)

The identity and character of the neighborhoods of McCormack Corners and Fort Hunter should be used as organizing principles for the study. A primary issue that must be addressed by the study is the function of Route 146 as a major route to the Thruway. It is also the major truck route from the Northeast Industrial Park (NEIP) to the Thruway. Therefore, it is suggested that the Capital District Transportation Committee be engaged in this process. Funding and technical expertise through CDTC may be available.

Linkages: Similar to the Guilderland Center Neighborhood Master Plan recommendation, Route 146 could be addressed as a major component of the Fort Hunter/McCormack Corners Neighborhood Master Plan.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should authorize the preparation of a grant application to CDTC/NYS DOT, commit to the local share of the grant, authorize professional services, and review and adopt the plan. Once adopted, the Town Board should implement the plan recommendations through partnerships with transportation agencies and local property owners. Amendments to the zoning ordinance may also be required to address access management, signage, design guidelines, and incentives for appropriate economic improvements and revitalization.

McKownville Neighborhood Master Plan (Long Term Action)

It is intended to eventually address each of the major neighborhood areas within the Town. The medium term recommendations for neighborhood outreach and discussions will set the stage for these additional master plans. A Neighborhood Master Plan Advisory Board should be established by the Town Board to initiate this process.

The Neighborhood Master Planning Process should seek the active participation of neighborhood residents, business owners, Town officials, and interested/concerned Town residents. The master planning process should start by defining the extent of the neighborhood center and should address the land use, transportation (including all modes), architectural and urban design, and economic development opportunities at a detailed level. The importance of Route 20 as both a transportation resource and community barrier will be central to the development of this plan. A definition of a neighborhood master

plan is provided in the Glossary and an example of the contents of a neighborhood master plan is provided in Appendix C.

Linkages: The Neighborhood Master Plan must be linked to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Significant guidance is provided in this document for the development of future plans and studies that will help the Town more clearly identify future land use. Specific attention should be paid to the recommendations for the Route 20 Corridor Study (IV.C.3), Cultural Resources (IV.A.6), and Neighborhood Centers (IV.A.3). If completed as suggested in this Action Plan, the McKownville Streetscape & Access Management Plan will be complete and should be a component of the Neighborhood Master Plan. Likewise, the Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette may result in recommendations that impact the McKownville neighborhood.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds, and appoint a Neighborhood Master Plan Committee. To implement the plan, the Town Board will need to review and adopt the plan, amend zoning as necessary to reflect land use recommendations and development design guidelines, and seek funding for other projects such as roadway improvements.

Westmere Neighborhood Master Plan (Long Term Action)

It is recommended that community dialogue occur in this neighborhood as a precursor to the Neighborhood Master Plan. Initial consideration should also be given to the establishment of sub-areas since the Westmere Planning Area is so large and is realistically composed of several neighborhoods. Separate Neighborhood Master Plans for each sub-area is not recommended since the entire Westmere area has many commonalities that permit all the neighborhoods to be comfortably synthesized into a single plan.

The Neighborhood Master Planning Process should seek the active participation of neighborhood residents, business owners, Town officials, and interested/concerned Town residents. The master planning process should start by defining the extent of the neighborhood center and should address the land use, transportation (including all modes), architectural and urban design, and economic development opportunities at a detailed level. The importance of Route 20 and Route 146, as both a transportation resource and community barrier, will be central to the development of this plan. A definition of a neighborhood master plan is provided in the Glossary and an example of the contents of a neighborhood master plan is provided in Appendix C.

Linkages: The Neighborhood Master Plan must be linked to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Significant guidance is provided in this document for the development of future plans and studies that will help the Town more clearly identify future land use. Specific attention should be paid to the recommendations for the Route 20 Corridor Study (IV.C.3), Drainage Corridors (IV.B.3), Cultural Resources (IV.A.6), and Neighborhood Centers

(IV.A.3). The Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette, recommended as a short term action, may provide some significant alternatives/potential design and land use solutions for the heart of this Planning Area. These results should be considered in the formulation of the Neighborhood Master Plan.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds, and appoint a Neighborhood Master Plan Committee. To implement the plan, the Town Board will need to review and adopt the plan, amend zoning as necessary to reflect land use recommendations and development design guidelines, and seek funding for other projects such as roadway improvements.

***Fort Hunter and McCormack Corners Neighborhood Master Plan(s)
(Long Term Action)***

Like Westmere, this is a large planning area and consideration should be given to dividing this area into sub-areas or neighborhoods. It is really composed of the older Fort Hunter area and the newer McCormack Corners area. Neighborhood boundaries are no longer apparent. Neighborhood Master Plans for each sub-area are not recommended, although there may be sufficient reason to separate Fort Hunter from McCormack Corners. This should be determined through neighborhood dialogue.

The Neighborhood Master Planning Process should seek the active participation of neighborhood residents, business owners, Town officials, and interested/concerned Town residents. The master planning process should start by defining the extent of the neighborhood center and should address the land use, transportation (including all modes), architectural and urban design, and economic development opportunities at a detailed level. The importance of Route 20 and Route 146, as both transportation resources and community barriers, will be central to the development of this plan. A definition of a neighborhood master plan is provided in the Glossary and an example of the contents of a neighborhood master plan is provided in Appendix C.

Linkages: The Neighborhood Master Plan must be linked to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Significant guidance is provided in this document for the development of future plans and studies that will help the Town more clearly identify future land use. Specific attention should be paid to the recommendations for the Pine Bush (IV.B.4), the Route 20 Corridor Study (IV.C.3), Drainage Corridors (IV.B.3), Cultural Resources (IV.A.6), and Neighborhood Centers (IV.A.3). The Carman Road Corridor Study should be incorporated into the Neighborhood Master Plan.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds, and appoint a Neighborhood Master Plan Committee. To implement the plan, the Town Board will need to review and adopt the plan, amend zoning as necessary to reflect land use recommendations and development design guidelines, and seek funding for other projects such as roadway improvements.

C.3 Growth Management

Growth management components of the Action Plan include those tasks that deal directly with the type, amount, and rate of growth within the Town. Growth management is an essential component of plans for most developing communities. The need for growth management stems from undesirable growth patterns (e.g., suburban sprawl) that stray from traditional development in growth centers such as hamlets, town centers, villages and cities, consuming large areas of land and impacting community resources, as well as other important rural land uses such as farming. Growth management is also important in developed portions of the Town where opportunities existing for economic development and redevelopment, where the scale and design of development requires revisiting in the broader context of a neighborhood. This component of the Action Plan was addressed in C.2 Livable Neighborhoods.

Document Water Problems in Rural Guilderland (Short Term Action)

The Town of Guilderland should evaluate areas of the Town where water quality/quantity is an issue for residents who are not served by municipal water. The extent and nature of any water quality/quantity problems should be clearly documented and a variety of possible solutions presented for consideration by the Town. In this initial stage, the study should include a comparison of potential costs and benefits of each of the possible alternatives in terms of cost effectiveness and of resolving the health and safety issue.

Linkages: This is the first step in the consideration of future water extensions and related policy for growth. This study is linked to the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, Economic Development Initiative, and Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should authorize professional services and appropriate funds to complete this work.

Economic Development Initiative (Short Term Action)

The Town's Economic Development Advisory Council should be charged with a detailed study of possible sites for business development. There are two aspects (tasks) to this initiative. One is to identify areas in the Town where utilities are available and infill or redevelopment might be considered. An example is the recommended design charrette for the Westmere Commercial Area and the potential for redevelopment and infill in this area. The second aspect or task is the process of identify potential sites for office and industrial parks. The site selection process for this task should consider infrastructure and transportation issues and impact on residential neighborhoods and community character.

The ultimate goal for both tasks of the economic development initiative should be to identify the Town's market niches and identify and subsequently market suitable sites for desirable business uses. The committee should also collaborate with economic development agencies within the County and State to aid in promoting the selected areas for economic development and to identify potential funding sources.

The second task (identifying industrial/business park sites) should be conducted concurrent or as part of the Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study, and utilities study (collectively referred to as the Rural Guilderland Plan). The intent of the economic component of planning for Rural Guilderland is to help identify areas where economic development might reasonably occur in relation to utilities and traffic patterns. When reviewed as a whole (considering land use, open space, utilities, and environmental and watershed protection), planning for Rural Guilderland will provide greater benefits. It is not intended to implement the full scope of the economic development initiative in the short term. Current known limitations in water supply and sewage treatment will take some time to be resolved. However, should an opportunity arise that can overcome the utility limitations without significantly impacting ratepayers, then at least a plan will be in place that will help to direct development.

For the Rural Guilderland task of this Economic Development Initiative, the Economic Development Advisory Council should focus on potential economic development sites in light of transportation and utility issues. Their recommendations may be contrary to other aspects of the Rural Guilderland Plan but this can be addressed when all information becomes available. The Economic Development Advisory Council should not be required to deal with all of the possible factors that impact the siting of appropriate sites. This would overwhelm their process.

Once a plan is in place for Rural Guilderland and opportunities for water and sewer become available, the SEQR process should be used to evaluate the impacts of new development and redevelopment. If any undeveloped sites (greenfields) are identified as potentially developable, the Town should conduct a GEIS to evaluate the development potential of these sites. It is possible to evaluate one or several sites within the same GEIS. The purpose of the GEIS should be to evaluate the cumulative impacts of development within a specific area which when completed provides "shovel ready" sites satisfying SEQR requirements. The GEIS would evaluate both the type and amount of development suitable for the selected sites. The costs of providing mitigation for development should also be identified and allocated in an equitable manner. This approach will allow the Town to provide/pay for necessary improvements (e.g., road and utility infrastructure) as the need arises.

Linkages: This task is partly linked to the results of the Westmere Commercial Area Design Charrette and the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan from which recommendations may emerge for economic development and redevelopment. It is also an important component for future planning in Rural Guilderland and

is linked to the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, Rural Guilderland Hamlets Study, Watervliet Reservoir Watershed Dialogue and Study, and utilities study.

The Inventory & Analysis (Chapter II) provides significant documentation on community resources (natural and built environment). This information can be used to begin the process of searching for possibly suitable sites (both developed and undeveloped areas). This effort should take into consideration the issues at NEIP, particularly access, and all of the recommendations for land use, transportation and natural resources provided in the Comprehensive Plan. Since much of the undeveloped land in the Town is residentially zoned, the siting of a business or technology park could have broad reaching impacts on residential character and the goals of redefining residential neighborhoods. Guilderland Center is a good example of how outside uses (not just NEIP) have significantly changed the character of the neighborhood.

Legislative Authority: The Town Board should authorize the Economic Development Advisory Council to begin this task.

Rural Guilderland Plan (Short Term Action)

The recommended approach for developing a land use plan for Rural Guilderland is to prepare a Rural Guilderland Plan. The Rural Guilderland Plan would combine the Rural Guilderland Hamlet Study, Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan, a study of utilities (feasibility of extending services), a study of areas suitable for economic development (Economic Development Initiative), and the results of discussions with the City of Watervliet relative to efforts for protecting water quality. It is envisioned as a single planning study that would undergo an adoption process by the Town Board for incorporation in the Comprehensive Plan (an addendum). Therefore, like the neighborhood master plans, the Rural Guilderland Plan would be guided by the principles established for the Comprehensive Plan. It is recommended that Rural Guilderland be subdivided into planning areas, identified in similar manner to the Planning Areas shown on Figure 17. This will illustrate general areas based on topographic, land use, and other factors that suggest a reasonable cohesiveness. Within the planning areas, further information should be collected to identify appropriate land use.

Linkages: The Rural Guilderland Plan is linked to the Route 20 Corridor Study recommendations in Chapter IV.C.3 and the recommendations for Rural Guilderland in Chapter IV.A.5.

Legislative Agenda: To engage this action, the Town Board should authorize professional services and the appropriate funds and appoint a Rural Guilderland Committee. To implement the plan recommendations for Rural Guilderland, the Town Board will need to review and adopt the plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan, amend zoning as necessary to reflect land use recommendations and development design guidelines, and seek funding for other projects.

Stuyvesant Plaza/McKownville Area Drainage Study (Short Term Action)

The Town should complete a stormwater drainage study of the Stuyvesant Plaza/McKownville Area to analyze and correct drainage problems found in the area.

Linkages: Depending on the complexity of the problem and available budget, it is anticipated that this task can be incorporated into the McKownville Streetscape and Access Management Plan (a short term action under Livable Neighborhoods).

Legislative Agenda: If conducted independently, the Town Board should authorize the preparation of grant applications for stormwater management improvement through NYSDOT and/or NYSDEC.

Intermunicipal Water Agreements (Medium Term Action)

The Town should initiate dialogue on developing additional intermunicipal agreements with adjoining municipalities to supplement the emergency water supply.

Linkages: The importance of this task is dependent on the outcome of the short term water quality/quantity documentation and future considerations to provide municipal water to the western portions of Town. This effort should be consistent with the recommendations for Rural Guilderland (Chapter IV.A.5) and the outcome of the Farmland & Open Space Conservation Plan (Short term action under Resource Conservation).

Legislative Agenda: Dependent upon the linkages identified above, the Town Board should authorize the Superintendent of Public Works to initiate discussion with adjoining municipalities.

C.4 General Considerations

This category of Action Plan tasks include items that have bearing on the entire town or are on-going in nature (e.g., staff education).

Adopt Comprehensive Plan (Short Term Action)

This may be the most important action of all, since without an official plan, the Town will have no clear guidance to address the issues facing the future of the Town. This would certainly be inconsistent with the Town's motto: *Prospice Gelria* – Look Forward.

Linkages: Links to all recommendations and Action Plan tasks.

Legislative Agenda: Initiate SEQR process and associated public comment period, initiate county referral (§ 239-m), prepare Final GEIS/Plan, prepare SEQR Findings and adopt plan.

Grant Administrator (Short Term Action)

There are a variety of regional, state, and federal grant programs that could provide funding for implementing various components of the Plan. These programs are highly competitive with numerous communities competing for limited sources of funding. Therefore, to put the Town of Guilderland in a position to be highly competitive and take full advantage of all funding opportunities, the Town may consider establishing a full time position for a Grant Administrator. As an alternative, the Town might consider utilizing the services of firms that specialize in grant administration on an as-needed basis.

Linkages: This position may be crucial to the successful implementation of several Action Plan tasks.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should budget for and authorize the establishment of a Grant Administrator position or authorize funding for professional services on an as-needed basis.

Review and Update Comprehensive Plan (Long Term Action)

Although the Comprehensive Plan attempts to take a long-term view of growth and development issues, no one cannot anticipate all of the possibilities that the future holds for Guilderland. The Town should review the Comprehensive Plan as growth and the results of further studies dictate.

Linkages: The action is linked to the results of other short and medium term actions as well as changing growth conditions.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should appoint a committee to review the Comprehensive Plan and to recommend whether revisions are necessary.

Transportation Planning (On-going Action)

The Town should continue having dialogue with the NYS Department of Transportation regarding the proposed Route 155 project. Additional opportunities for public input should be strongly encouraged, and issues raised by residents during this process should be addressed. The Town should also seek greater participation in the activities of the Capital District Transportation Committee to address Town concerns/priorities such as the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan (described above), the possible development of

transportation alternatives in this portion of the Capital District and the region's long-range mass transportation plans.

Linkages: Building relationships with CDTC, CDTA, and NYSDOT will be important steps towards meeting the recommendations of the Route 20 Corridor Study (Chapter IV.C.3) and the Route 20 Redevelopment Plan (action plan item under Livable Neighborhoods). This action task is also linked to most of the transportation recommendations identified in Chapter IV.C of the Comprehensive Plan.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should designate a liaison with CDTC, CDTA, and NYSDOT.

Review and Update Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (On-Going Action)

The Town Board should establish a committee to review and update the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations. There are a number of zoning and subdivision regulation recommendations identified within this plan. These include the use of techniques such as conservation development, incentive zoning, residential development design guidelines, and performance standards. These recommendations should be considered and, where appropriate, language developed for amendment to the Town's existing code. Furthermore, based on the outcome of the programs identified in this Action Plan, additional changes to the Town's land use regulations, at a very specific level, will likely emerge.

Linkages: Linked to adoption of the Plan and the outcome of future Action Plan tasks.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board would review and update the zoning code and subdivision regulations and create new Local Laws as necessary.

Technology Improvements (On-Going Action)

In order to facilitate the continued dialogue between town officials, residents and adjoining municipalities required for the successful implementation of the Plan, it is recommend that the Town take advantage of the latest technological improvements.

This effort should include regular updating of the Town of Guilderland Internet Web Site to allow for ongoing community input on the implementation of the Plan. Furthermore, the Town should invest in personal computers for Town employees. The Town currently has Internet Email and a voice mail system.

Linkages: This task is linked to the effectiveness of community outreach efforts.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should budget to technological improvements.

Fiscal Model Update and Refinement (On-Going Action)

The fiscal model can become a very informative and useful tool for the Town. It possesses the capability of evaluating and comparing a number of land use scenarios to identify the relative tax impacts of each. When used as one component of the numerous factors related to decision-making, the model will provide valuable information. As designed, the inputs can be manipulated to reflect current trends and better information as it becomes available. The model is also open ended in that it can be expanded (refined) to become much more powerful.

To truly benefit from the model, the Town should establish a committee that would be responsible for understanding how to use the model and how to update inputs. The Town should seek professional assistance when attempting to expand the purpose or function of the model beyond its current state.

Linkages: The model should prove to be very useful in evaluating land use scenarios and should be incorporated in the process of establishing land use plans as identified in this chapter.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should establish a Fiscal Model Committee and further authorize the use of the model as applicable for the various planning studies.

Continuing Education (On-Going Action)

Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Town Board members, Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council, and Town staff should be encouraged to pursue educational programs to update their knowledge of planning and zoning techniques and laws on a continuing basis. This is of particular importance as the Town continues to grow and change and as it considers the use of new planning tools in response to this change. New members of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals could even be required to attend nearby workshops on fundamental principles of planning and zoning at the Town's expense. Several organizations offer such educational programs either by coming to local communities or at workshops/conferences held for this purpose. These organizations include, but are not limited to: the Albany County Department of Economic Development, Conservation and Planning, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, the Capital District Transportation Committee, the New York Planning Federation, Albany Law School's Government Law Center, the NYS Department of State Division of Local Government, the Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Hudson River Valley Greenway, and the American Farmland Trust.

Linkages: This is linked to the success of implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and the forthcoming recommendations and solutions of the various Action Plan tasks.

Legislative Agenda: The Town Board should budget for continuing education and define priorities.

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Section I

Introduction

The following is a Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) for the Town of Guilderland Comprehensive Plan 2000, pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR). The purpose of this FGEIS is to respond to comments provided by the public during the SEQR comment period on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) that is contained within the Draft Comprehensive Plan 2000.

A. Project Background

The Town of Guilderland is a suburban community located to the west of the City of Albany. The Town has many different land uses and is influenced by many regional entities. Its popularity as a residential community is directly linked to its proximity to Albany and regional/state-wide crossroads that provide quick and easy access to the Capital District and beyond. Regional access has encouraged the development of regional shopping centers that help to provide a strong tax base but also inject traffic into the local road network. Guilderland contains portions of the Albany Pine Bush Preserve and the Helderberg Escarpment, both very important ecological and geological features of statewide significance. The Town also contains the Watervliet Reservoir that serves the Town and the City of Watervliet. These are only some of the major features that influence and are influenced by land use in the Town. As the steward of all these resources comes

the responsibility to plan for their use and conservation to ensure Guilderland remains a desirable community to live, work and play. This is not a simple task. Fortunately, the Town is comprised of many individuals who are willing to dedicate their time and expertise for the betterment of the community.

The Town has managed its resources and growth for years using practical planning tools such as zoning, subdivision regulations, site plan review, and many other local laws and policies. These are effective and essential tools. However, they must be continually monitored and amended to meet current needs and to reflect new opportunities. To begin this process, communities often conduct comprehensive planning. This is the process by which a community establishes the programs and actions that lead to a desired vision for the future. As defined by Town Law (§ 272-a.2(a)), a comprehensive plan is the:

...materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town located outside the limits of any incorporated village or city.

Comprehensive planning is the first step in an on-going process. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to inventory the Town's resources based on existing data and to identify what additional data might be required to implement certain aspects of the plan; develop the framework to address future land use and other community issues through community outreach and formulation of a vision and goals and objectives; development of a series of recommendations and policies consistent with the goals and objectives; and to identify the steps necessary to implement the plan recommendations. Quite simply, the comprehensive plan is the information organizer. Although specific recommendations are provided that

can be immediately translated into action, other means of achieving certain goals will require further detailed study.

The Town of Guilderland began the comprehensive planning process in June of 1999. It was the Town's desire to make this planning process as open as possible to allow public input each step of the way. Looking back over the past two years, the Town certainly achieved their goal. It may very well be that the Town set a precedent for public outreach during a comprehensive planning process. The Town took advantage of every media possible to get the word out to the community. They utilized public cable access to broadcast meetings. They conducted a town-wide survey. They held neighborhood meetings. They also used a new, grass-roots approach to community dialogue called "Study Circles," a highly organized yet low keyed process of discussing community issues. The Town completed the first draft of the Comprehensive Plan in May of 2000. However, as the public commented further on the document, it became clear that some additional revisions would be necessary before the Town Board could declare the draft officially complete. The plan was revised through additional public review and comment and was determined complete as a draft plan and draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement in March 2001. At this same time, the Town issued a Positive Declaration and declared itself Lead Agency for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. This began the SEQR comment period. A SEQR public hearing was held over three evenings during April and May 2001 (April 3, April 17, and May 15). The comment period closed May 28, 2001.

Document Organization and Summary

The FGEIS is divided into three major sections, an introduction, responses to substantive comments raised during the comment period and Appendices that include written comments, the record public hearing, and revised chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. The Introduction is provided to summarize the actions which have led to the preparation of the FGEIS, describe the general organization of the document, and discuss future actions that may occur following the filing of the is FGEIS. Section II, Response to Public Comment provides a summary of similar questions or concerns followed by the response. Pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.14(l) this FGEIS includes the DGEIS by reference (Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP, March 2001).

The response to comments on a DGEIS contained within a comprehensive plan is somewhat more complex than that provided in a final EIS for a site specific project. Many comments received during the comment period were not environmental or SEQR related. However, many comments on the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan have environmental implications. It becomes difficult to distinguish that which is only SEQR related.

In an effort to respond to the many excellent comments received during the comment period, this FGEIS has been structured to first identify and address those comments that are specifically SEQR related. The remaining planning comments are addressed by highlighting the changes to plan recommendations. Since this planning process has been an evolution of ideas captured in numerous revisions to the text of the Comprehensive Plan, the appropriate way of addressing planning comments raised during the SEQR comment period is to highlight the revisions that have been made to the draft Plan as a result of these comments. Therefore, all the revisions made to the Plan have been incorporated into Appendix D of the FGEIS.

Each of the comments made during the SEQR comment period were discussed during two televised meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee (appointed by the Town Board to complete revisions to the Plan). All written correspondence received during the comment period as well as the public

hearing record were provided for the Committee's review and discussion. This included comments on the Draft Plan made by members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board and the Revision Task Force during a televised joint meeting. A table was created that identifies the Draft Plan recommendations for the major issues, comments raised during the joint meeting, and the recommended approach for addressing the comments. This table is provided in Appendix C.

Upon completion of the Plan revisions, the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee held a public hearing. Based on this hearing, some additional text revisions were made that did not impact the meaning and intent of the recommendations. These revisions are included in the Chapters provided in Appendix D.

Comments were presented on numerous issues during the public hearings and in written form. The only specific SEQR comment was related to the suitability of the GEIS to address future actions. It is agreed that most future actions will require further SEQR action since many of these actions will involve specific land use decisions that were not addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. An example is the adoption of a neighborhood master plan.

The Draft Comprehensive Plan was a thoroughly reviewed and refined document by the time it was determined complete for SEQR purposes. It has undergone further revision as identified in Appendix D, but the majority of the revisions were made to clarify the major ideas and actions. Prioritization of the Action Plan was also very important. None of the revisions substantially impacts environmental concerns. This is primarily due to the fact that the recommendations and action plan items call for additional study to address potential future land use. Land use policy is yet to be developed for certain areas, such as Rural Guilderland, and cannot be done so until the additional studies are complete. The implications of the policy that develops from the additional study/planning may have environmental impacts. This would be addressed at the time the plans are considered for adoption by the Town. The revised recommendations and action

items (Appendix D) remain consistent with the Town's vision and the goals and objectives developed from that vision.

On some issues the Town remains polarized. The provision of water and sewer may be the single most important issue that can have significant impacts on land use, community character, and the natural environment. The March 2001 Draft Plan called for a study of the need for water in Rural Guilderland and recommended that sewer not be extended beyond current boundaries, not precluding sewer in the distant future but emphasizing current treatment capacity issues. Based on further comment, it was determined that policy for the extension of utilities should be established in the Town in the short term and to do so would also require more detailed land use planning in Rural Guilderland to consider all the uses and issues of this sparsely developed area. This action will likely benefit the community by identify where future development is suitable and what areas should be protected. Early planning for Rural Guilderland will also help the Town to prepare for opportunities to purchase development rights and preserve large tracks of land through voluntary, incentive-based means. This is also an example of how the Plan revisions have taken action plan components from the March 2001 Draft Plan and repackaged them to clarify the intent of the action and to clearly identify a path for the Town to proceed.

In summary, the Comprehensive Plan (both the March 2001 and the current revised version) is a mitigation document for the many issues that have arisen in the Town since the last comprehensive planning and zoning work was completed. The recommendations and action items will help the Town to refocus on a common vision, begin to address current issues that trouble the community, and prepare for anticipated future development and associated impacts.

Future Actions

Following the filing of this FGEIS, there will be a ten-day period provided for agencies and the public to consider the FGEIS. Comments on the FGEIS may be submitted by agencies and the general public, however, this not an official comment period. Such comments may be considered by the Town during preparation of the Findings Statement but the Town is not obligated to respond to these comments.

Pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.15(c)(1), no further SEQR compliance is required if subsequent proposed actions will be carried out in conformance with the conditions and thresholds established for such actions in the GEIS or Findings Statement. An amended findings must be prepared if a subsequent proposed action was adequately addressed in the GEIS but was not addressed or was not adequately addressed in the Findings Statement for the GEIS.

A Negative Declaration must be prepared if a subsequent proposed action was not adequately addressed in the GEIS and the subsequent action will not result in any significant environmental impacts. A supplement to the FGEIS must be prepared if the subsequent proposed action was not addressed or was not adequately addressed in the GEIS and the subsequent action may have one or more significant adverse environmental impacts.

The Town will need to evaluate each action relative to its significance. Many of the recommended actions may involve significant land use changes that were not specifically addressed in the GEIS for the Comprehensive Plan. This, in itself would warrant further SEQR action in the form of a full Environmental Assessment Form and, if necessary, an EIS. The adoption of a Rural Guilderland Plan and all its associated components recommended in Chapter IV is an example of an action that would likely warrant further SEQR review.

Not all of the recommendations and action plan tasks are subject to SEQR. For example, initiation of dialogue with other municipalities and agencies, the study of water quality issues in Rural Guilderland, and other similar planning or engineering studies that do not require formal action (i.e., adoption) by a board are specifically exempt from SEQR.

To clarify the process of identifying those actions that may require further SEQR review it is recommended that all actions by the Town Board, Planning Board, or Zoning Board relative to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan that would involve the adoption of land use plans and policies or modifications of zoning and subdivision regulations and local laws should be reviewed pursuant to SEQR through the preparation of a full Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). If, upon review of the EAF, it is determined that the action will have no significant impact, a Negative Declaration can be issued, thus ending the SEQR process. If it appears that significant impact may occur and the impact and associated mitigation cannot be sufficiently addressed in parts 2 and 3 of the EAF, an EIS should be prepared. The EIS should take full advantage of the documentation already provided in the GEIS for this Comprehensive Plan. Evaluation of the significance of any action relative to SEQR should include a thorough evaluation by the Lead Agency (in most cases the Town Board for the adoption of plans and other local regulatory amendments) of the consistency of the proposed land use plan or legislation with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.

Section II

Response to Public

Comment

A. SEQR Comments

Comment: The draft GEIS does not establish the thresholds necessary to allow future actions to be undertaken without engaging the SEQR process.

Response: There are limited land use policy decisions that can be made directly from the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan has identified the major issues, opportunities, and constraints facing the Town. A vision and associated goals and objectives have been established. However, the Plan recommendations and the list of future actions do not, for the most part, call for land use changes and related policy. The information/documentation necessary to support land use recommendations is not available and must be extracted from further study. Recognizing this, the Comprehensive Plan was developed as a strategic document that identifies all the actions necessary to provide the missing information and to adopt future land use plans. In the absence of this information,

it was not possible to analyze the potential environmental impacts of future land use plans within the DGEIS. Therefore, it is fully anticipated that most, if not all, of the future plans will be subject to further SEQR action. This point was not clearly discussed in the Draft Plan and has been expanded upon in the revisions to Chapter I provided in Appendix D.

Comment: The Draft Plan does not address future growth in Rural Guilderland.

Response: The potential for significant growth in Rural Guilderland in the near future is limited by the availability of water and the lack of sewer treatment capacity. Based on these limitations, comprehensive land use planning in Rural Guilderland was de-emphasized. However, some of the comments on the Draft Plan pointed out that the Plan is a long term document (20 years) and even though it should be reviewed and updated in shorter intervals, it should also consider the potential for growth 20 years from now. Rural Guilderland contains a significant amount of potentially developable land. It also contains some very important community, regional and statewide resources. Uncontrolled growth in this area would be disastrous to the environment and community character. Such growth is very unlikely to occur without the necessary infrastructure. Nevertheless, the Town should be proactive in establishing growth policy for this area. Actions leading to this policy are identified in the Draft Plan; however, their interaction and timing were not clearly defined. The Plan revisions provided in Appendix D recommend a clear plan for Rural Guilderland and will incorporate several tasks/studies to achieve a vision for this area, one of protection of natural resources, viewsheds, and rural character while allowing carefully planned residential and economic development.

B. Comments on Draft Comprehensive Plan

Few comments were made on the DGEIS component of the Draft Comprehensive Plan. There were, however, many comments on the plan recommendations and action plan made during the SEQR comment period. Some, as they relate to land use policy, have environmental implications; the most significant of which may be the comment on land use planning for Rural Guilderland. Since Rural Guilderland includes most of the undeveloped land within the Town and contains many significant environmental resources, actions within the area will potentially have a significant impact on any number of environmental issues, including community character. Therefore, this issue was identified and discussed separately in Section II.A. above.

Many other comments were received that resulted in changes in the Draft Plan. Each of the letters and comments made during the public hearing were discussed publicly during televised meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee (a combination of some members from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board and the Revision Task Force). Revisions to the Plan as a result of these comments were determined at the committee meetings. The revisions are highlighted in Appendix D of this FGEIS. This represents response to the comments.

The comments did not result in changes to the intent or basic theme of the Comprehensive Plan. More importantly, they did not establish new land use policy that could impact environmental resources and community character and services. Mostly, the revisions refine and clarify the recommendations for future plans and studies that will be necessary to address land use policy.

Supplemental SEQR analysis will be necessary when the plans move forward and new policies are adopted.

GLOSSARY OF PLANNING TERMS

Active Recreational Resources: Parcels of publicly owned land and institutional / non-profit land holdings that are, or may be, accessible to the public for active recreational use. These parcels include: existing or planned hiking, biking, and canoe routes; public local and community recreational facilities, including ball fields and swimming pools; and waterfront activities such as boating and fishing.

Agricultural District: Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law is intended to conserve and protect agricultural land for agricultural production and as a valued natural and ecological resource. Under this statute, territory can be designated as an agricultural district. To be eligible for designation, an agricultural district must be certified by the county for participation in the state program. Once a district is designated, participating farmers and farmland owners within it can receive reduced property assessments and relief from local nuisance claims and certain forms of local regulation. Farm operations within agricultural districts also enjoy a measure of protection from proposals by municipalities to construct infrastructure such as water and sewer systems, which are intended to serve non-farm structures.

Buffer Strips: Buffers separate different land uses by incorporating natural features such as woodlands, stone wall, and hedgerows wherever feasible, or require the creation of a substantial planted buffer where no natural features exists.

Charrette: A charrette is a planning and design process that involves interactive sessions where individuals having a stake in the future of an area (residents, business owners, Town officials, and other government and special interest representatives) meet and discuss planning and design options. Issues that impact design are discussed and debated, usually resulting in several alternatives. The issues and alternatives are illustrated graphically. As used in the context of this Comprehensive Plan, many ideas would be expressed in terms of appropriate land use, vehicular access and circulation solutions, improvements to the pedestrian environment, and architectural standards or guidelines.

Clustering: a technique that allows the modification of the arrangement of lots, buildings, and infrastructure permitted by the zoning law to be placed on a parcel of land to be subdivided. The design flexibility created by this modification results in the placement of buildings and improvements on a part of the land to be subdivided in order to preserve the natural and scenic quality of the remainder of the land. The use of clustering provisions helps a municipality to achieve planning goals that may call for protection of open space, protection of scenic views, protection of agricultural lands, protection of woodlands and other open landscapes, by placing development away from these resources.

Conservation Development - a form of site development that places the unique resources of conservation value, on an individual site to be subdivided, at the heart of the subdivision or site plan review process. The process begins by identifying the natural, agricultural, scenic, and/or cultural resources on the site that should be protected. Development areas are identified next, and are selected to avoid the areas identified for their conservation value in the first step. Conservation development design usually achieves a higher quantity and a better quality of open space protection through the development process than does clustering

alone. In the case of residential development, this process is often used in conjunction with a cluster design or planned development and few, if any, requirements for frontage and setbacks. However, it is equally applicable to the development of standard lots under current zoning. The important aspect is the process that brings the reviewing agency (typically a planning board) in the early stages of site design to assist in identifying important resources to be preserved.

Conservation Easement: A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between the landowner and the municipality, and/or a third party such as a land trust, to protect land from development by permanently restricting the use and development of the property, thereby preserving its natural or manmade features. The legally binding agreement is filed in the office of the county clerk in the same manner as a deed. The landowner retains ownership of the land, and all of the rights of ownership except the ability to develop the land. The specific restrictions are detailed in the easement agreement.

Cultural Resources: The cultural features of a community which reflect the ways in which the people who have lived there have used their natural environment to suit their economic needs and social patterns.

Comprehensive Plan: (also known as Master Plan) A comprehensive plan is a written document that identifies the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, and strategies for the growth and development of the community.

Density Bonus: A density bonus allows a developer, who take advantage of incentive zoning provisions, to increase the amount of development (e.g., number of dwelling units) on a certain property beyond what the underlying zoning would allow in exchange for open space or some other community amenity.

Design Guidelines: Design guidelines are usually illustrated and describe the preferred farmland, site and architecture patterns that a community values and what it seeks to protect. Design guidelines complement the increased design flexibility allowed by conservation (clustered) subdivisions and traditional neighborhood developments. Design guidelines are generally informational and collaborative in nature, creating an opportunity for people to review the guidelines prior to designing a project with the advantage of understanding the goals of the community and the planning board.

Ecological Resources: water influenced space, aquifer or potable water source, water bodies, rivers and streams, wetlands, undeveloped land, upland open space, steep slopes, forest and significant wildlife habitat.

Gateways: Entranceway areas along roadways to the town/village which determine the visitor's first response to the community. Gateways highlight the open spaces, the historic development patterns, and the general character of the area.

Growth Management: the process by which a community controls the location, form, timing and amount of land development (growth) in the community. The community can utilize a variety of methods (tools) to achieve its growth management objectives.

Incentive Zoning: Incentive zoning allows developers to exceed the dimensional, density, or other limitations of zoning regulations in return for providing certain benefits or amenities to the municipality. An example of incentive zoning would be an authorization to develop a parcel more intensively (by a specified amount) in exchange for the provision of public open space.

Master Plan: see comprehensive plan. Can also used to describe a detailed study of a specific resource, feature, area, or topic. For example, a neighborhood master plan, a bicycle facilities master plan, etc.

Neighborhood Master Plan: The basic intent of the neighborhood master plan is to identify appropriate land use and other related recommendations to address issues specific to the given area and to become an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan. Like the Comprehensive Plan, the Town Board should adopt neighborhood master plans as the Town's official land use policy for the designated neighborhoods. As an extension or refinement of the Comprehensive Plan, the vision, goals and objectives and the plan recommendations are intended as the guiding principles for development of the neighborhood master plan. The neighborhood master plan should be prepared by the Town with professional assistance. Careful attention should be paid to the needs of the residents and business owners of the neighborhood, however, this feedback should also be weighed against the results of the extensive community outreach program for the Comprehensive Plan, as reflected in the plan recommendations.

Open Space: Open space consists of farmland, woodland, and other ecological, recreational, and scenic land which helps to define the character of a community, and buffers residential and other land uses. Open space may be public or privately owned. Some open space is permanently protected from development such as parks, nature preserves, and wetlands while other parcels are subject to development. What land is defined as open space depends upon the surrounding area. Even a narrow pathway or a cemetery surrounded by development can constitute an open space resource in a community.

Open Space Plan: An open space plan is a comprehensive municipal, county, or regional plan which specifically identifies open space resources such as farmland, scenic vistas, parks cemeteries, etc., and develops a strategy for the preservation of these resources.

Passive Recreational Resources: Areas such as nature preserves, community gardens, and other outdoor areas for quiet public enjoyment.

Purchase of Development Rights: The development value of specific parcels of land can be *purchased* by the town or a land trust. When development rights are purchased, the process is called Purchase of Development Rights (PDR). The cost of PDR depends on the specific parcel. It is calculated by determining the current appraised value of the property and its appraised value as open or agricultural land without development potential. The difference between these two numbers is the value (the cost) of the development rights that will be purchased. Conservation easements are the legally binding document that ensures that once the development rights are purchased, the land remains undeveloped in perpetuity.

Shovel - ready - a phrase which is usually used to describe a location that is designated for, and ready for future economic development. Environmental review and infrastructure (water, sewer, energy, communication) needs for the site are studied in advance of development to ensure that it is nearly pre-

approved for certain types of economic activity. The goal is to have these sites ready for development as an incentive for luring companies to the locations. The term shovel ready, as used in the context of the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), does not necessarily mean that site specific issues (such as a wetland delineation and a cultural resources survey) have been addressed. The proper term for this situation is “SEQR compliant.”

Tax Abatement: Tax abatement is a reduction in taxes often associated with term conservation easements.

Term Conservation Easement: A term conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement to keep a particular parcel of land undeveloped. This agreement between a landowner and the municipality is written to last for a period of years, most commonly for 5 to 25 years.

Right-to-farm: a term which has gained widespread recognition in the State's rural areas over the past several decades. Section 308 of the Agriculture and Markets Law grants protection from nuisance lawsuits to farm operators within agricultural districts or on land outside a district which is subject to an agricultural assessment under section 306 of the Law. The protection is granted to the operator for any farm activity which the Commissioner has determined to be a sound agricultural practice. At a local level, many rural municipalities have used their home rule power to adopt local right-to-farm laws. These local laws are statements of policy that indicate the municipality's support for continued agricultural activity. They commonly include provisions to notify *buyers* of land near farms that agricultural activities, which sometimes cause noise, odor, dust, etc., occur in the area in which they are purchasing land. The intent is to inform the purchaser about these agricultural activities in advance of their purchase so that they cannot claim later that they were unaware and argue that the agricultural activity is a nuisance. Notification is either made at the time of closing or, ideally, at the time of contract. Some right to farm laws also include provisions encouraging mediation strategies as an alternative to litigation, which can be helpful due to the high cost of litigation.

State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR): The State Environmental Quality Review Act requires local legislatures and land use agencies (planning boards, zoning boards of appeal) to consider, avoid, and mitigate significant environmental impacts of the projects that they approve, the plans or regulations they adopt, and the projects they undertake directly.

Sprawl: a development pattern that is characterized by expanding metropolitan areas, the conversion of farmland and natural areas to development, disinvestment in existing developed areas such as cities, villages, and older suburbs, the segregation of all land uses, and heavy dependence on the automobile for mobility. Under this pattern of development it becomes very expensive to provide roads, sewers, water, and services like police and fire protection to low-density urban development, a consequence felt by the taxpayers.

Utility Master Plan: A utility master plan is a town wide plan for the extension of services like, water and sewer which shape and drive development patterns and densities.

Wetland Protection: Wetlands are areas which are washed or submerged much of the time by either fresh or salt water. In state regulations, they are defined chiefly by the forms of vegetation present. Wetlands provide a number of benefits to a community. Besides providing wildlife habitat, wetlands also provide habitat protection, recreational opportunities, water supply protection, and provide open space and scenic beauty that can enhance local property values. Wetlands also serve as storage for storm water runoff, thus reducing flood damage and filtering pollutants. In coastal communities, they also serve as a buffer against shoreline erosion. The preservation of wetlands can go a long way toward protecting water quality; increasing flood protection; supporting hunting, fishing and shell fishing; providing opportunities for recreation, tourism and education; and enhancing scenic beauty, open space and property values.

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~ Fiscal Analysis~

Town of Guilderland

"Fiscal impact analysis compares the public cost and revenues associated with residential and commercial growth, and predicts the relative impact on future property taxes between different future land use scenarios."

1. Model Description and Methodology

This fiscal analysis is designed to predict the relative impact of future land use scenarios on the taxes paid by Guilderland residents. The model's primary input is designed around 'acres of land,' and determines the future population¹ by year from the proposed levels of growth in acres, using different land use categories. The expense side of the model uses a per capita method to translate the population growth into the projected expenses to the town and the school district. The per capita cost is the average cost per person to the town, and per pupil for the school district. The average cost for each is then multiplied by the increased population caused by the proposed land use scenario. The per capita costs² are then adjusted by the municipal service area to account for fixed costs and existing excess capacity, or existing inadequate capacity. The model also incorporates large capital expenditures that are triggered by population growth like sewer, water, and school expansions.

The revenue side of the model³ is based on the increased property taxes that are generated by the proposed land use scenario. When the amount of acres for each land use type are changed each year, they either increase or decrease the assessed value from which the town generates its revenue.

¹The population comes from the quantity of new housing (Housing Units x Multiplier=People). The school age population also comes from new housing (Housing Units x Multiplier=Pupils).

²Per Capita costs are determined by dividing the existing town expenditures by the existing number of people, and dividing the existing school expenditures by the existing number of pupils.

³Increased property assessment is based on the newly added market value per year x assessment factor = new assessed value. Total new assessed value x property tax rate=property tax revenue. The school revenue operates in the same manner.

Each of the different housing types generates a different number of housing units per acre.⁴ The number of housing units for each housing type is then multiplied by an estimate of the median value for that respective type of new housing⁵ in Guilderland. The resulting sum is then equalized and added to the total assessed value.

The change in assessed value for commercial property is generated by multiplying the new acres for each of the four commercial types used by the average value for each. The model also incorporates a percentage adjustment that allows the user to increase the value of existing commercial areas without adding acreage. This adjustment was built in for two reasons. The first reason is to account for the fact that the existing industrial park is all considered industrial acreage, although it is not built out. The value adjustment allows the user to increase the value of those acres as the park is built-out, without increasing acreage. The second reason is to account for increased value of other existing property as the density of these commercial areas increase, again without adding additional acres.

In addition to the increased assessment, other local and school revenues are generated using the per capita method described above in the expense side of the model. Other revenues include local fees and charges such as interest, rents, licenses, permits and service charges, fines, and inter-governmental aid, perhaps most relevant to the school district. The costs and revenues are compared over several years. The results are then displayed in the residential tax rates when you compare the same year in the future under different land use scenarios.

There are several assumptions built into this model which may cause the results to be an inaccurate representation of the actual future tax rates.

However, as long as those assumptions remain the same for each evaluated scenario, the results of a comparison of the different scenarios will provide valuable information to the community as it decides which direction to proceed.

⁴The housing units per acre are derived from the average existing number of units per acre for that type of housing.

⁵These figures are found in the Multipliers Table.

2. Assumptions

Primary sources of data for this model are the official town and school district budgets⁶, and census data. Information from the budgets was then augmented with information collected through interviews with representatives from Guilderland's government and school district. The assumptions described below are made based on the best available information at the time.

The base year for this analysis is 2000, the latest year in which complete data sets were available at the beginning of the project. The table below shows the base year figures.

Table 1: Base Year Figures

Town of Guilderland (2000)		Guilderland Central School (2000-01)	
Current Population (WT)	32,688	Student Population	5,668
Current Population (PT)	30,951	Total Budget	\$58,933,454
Altamont Village	1,737	Operating Cost per Student	\$8,728
Housing Units	\$13,928	New Construction Cost per Student	\$8,800
Town Taxable Assessed Value (WT)	\$1,914,330,970	Share Attending Private Schools	7.70%
Town Taxable Assessed Value (PT)	\$1,845,878,789	School Tax Rate (per \$1000 assessed value)	\$19.94
Town Tax Rate (per \$1000 AV)	\$ 0.346	School Tax Levy	\$38,173,705
Town Tax Levy	\$ 662,990	State Aid Revenue	\$18,001,915
Highway, Water & Sewer Tax Property Levy	\$7,881,518	State Aid Per Student	\$2,931

The per capita method of fiscal analysis is based on the built-in assumption that for each new person introduced into the population there will be a corresponding increase in expenses. The revenue and expense work sheets shown below contain an assumption that refines the lock-step increase in revenues and expenses with increases in population. Under each category the model allows for a percentage of those revenues and expenses to be fixed. The percentage that is fixed is then removed preventing the unrealistic increase in revenues and expenses. The percentages shown below are best guess estimates based on the interviews and discussions with members of the various departments of the Town of Guilderland.

⁶For the purposes of this model only the Guilderland school district was used.

Table 2: Expense Work Sheet

FUND A WT Sewer Fund	Gen Gov	Pub Safety	Transp		Sewer			TOTAL
Expend	\$2,566,663	\$3,578,099	\$162,428		\$4,196,364			\$10,503,554
% of Total	24.44%	34.07%	1.55%		39.96%			100%
Res Per Capital Exp.	\$78.52	\$109.46	\$4.97		\$128.38			\$321.33
% of Exp. Fixed	50.00%	30.00%	30.00%		75.00%			
Non Fixed Exp. Per Cap	\$39.26	\$76.62	\$3.48		\$32.09			\$151.46
FUND B PT, Highway & Water Funds	Gen Gov	Pub Safety	Transp	Home & Com. Serv	Highway	Recreation	Water	Total
Expend	\$1,880,756	\$531,133	\$100,000	\$692,199	\$3,172,641	\$1,060,429	\$4,089,793	\$11,526,951
% of Total	16.32%	4.61%	0.87%	6.01%	27.52%	9.20%	35.48%	100%
Res. Per Capital Exp	\$60.77	\$17.16	\$3.23	\$22.36	\$102.51	\$34.26	\$125.12	\$365.40
% of Exp Fixed	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	25.00%	60.00%	30.00%	35.00%	
Non fixed Exp. Per Cap	\$42.54	\$12.01	\$2.26	\$16.77	\$41.00	\$23.98	\$81.33	\$219.89

Table 3: Non Tax Revenue Worksheet

FUND A WT	Gen Gov - Non Tax				Total
Revenues	\$1,500,877				\$1,500,877
Per Capita Revenue	\$45.92				
% Rev. Fixed	80.00%				
Adj. Rev. Per Cap	\$9.18				\$9.18

FUND B PT	Gen Gov -Non Tax	Highway- Non Tax	Water -Non Tax	Sewer -Non Tax	Total
Revenues	\$823,400	\$505,100	\$1,467,750	\$217,881	\$3,014,131
Per Capita Revenue	\$26.60	\$16.32	\$47.42	\$7.04	
% Rev. Fixed	80.00%	80.00%	80.00%	80.00%	
Adj. Rev. Per Cap	\$5.32	\$3.26	\$9.48	\$1.41	\$19.48

There are several other critical multipliers used in addition to fixing a percentage of the revenue and expenses. These multipliers are shown in the chart below. The first multiplier deals with population assumptions - that is the number of new residents per housing unit, and the number of new school age children per housing unit. The number of residents per new housing unit is set at 2.4 - a number derived from the census. Census figures had the Town of Guilderland at 2.5 new residents per housing unit, however for this model the number was reduced to 2.4. This reduction is based on a Capital District Regional Planning Commission projection that shows the figure declining to 2.3 persons per housing unit by 2020.

The assumption for the school age children per new housing unit is 0.84 new students per housing unit. This assumption is initially based on a 1992 Guilderland School District study. The study determined that each new housing unit added 1.89 students per housing unit in a couple of new typical developments at the time. The 1.89 number was reduced and separated into seven different numbers, allowing one for each of the seven different housing types in Guilderland. The seven numbers are reduced from 1.89 based on comparisons with national and regional census data, along with a ten year history of new students entering the school district, and new housing units in Guilderland. The seven numbers are then combined using a weighted average based on the percentage for each type of housing in Guilderland (Each housing type multiplier is an individually adjustable assumption). The resulting number that the weighted average yields is 1.12. This number is then reduced to 0.84 by the school age multiplier adjustment described below.

To further increase the accuracy of the new school age children per housing unit number, and to account for background population decrease, the model has a school age children multiplier adjustment input and a school enrollment adjustment. These two inputs can be used to account for background population fade, commonly referred to as "empty nester" syndrome. Each of these adjustments can reduce or increase the population entering the Guilderland school district by any percentage deemed appropriate.

The next set of assumptions are the high and low housing growth rates that are used in the six scenarios below. These rates are based, as noted on the chart, on the past five and ten-year trends. The five-year trend is used in the slow growth scenario and equals 140 new housing units each year. The ten-year trend is used in the high growth

scenario and equals 210 new housing units each year. The next assumption is the interest rate used for all of the debt service calculations. This percentage rate comes from the current rate used for the 2000 sewer and water debt. The new construction market values for the seven different types of housing units are based on 1998 home sales in Guilderland and are consistent with current trends. The market rates are reduced by 10% for the value of land already on the tax roles and then equalized.

Table 4: Multipliers

Population	
Population (WT)	32,688
Population (PT)	30,951
Village of Altamont	1,737
Multipliers	
Population Increase per Housing Unit	2.4
School Age Person Per Housing Unit	0.84
SAC Multiplier Adjustment	75%
Average School Age Children (SAC) New Housing Units	1.12
Residential Growth Rate (Housing Units) Ten year average housing unit growth rate	1.53%
Residential Growth Rate (Housing Units) Five year average housing unit growth rate.	1.03%
Interest Rate on Bonds	5.00%
Median Housing Unit Market Value (1998)	\$ 120,000
New Construction Market Value (Reduced for property on tax roles and equalized)	
Single Family Residential	\$182,180
Rural Residential	\$341,588
Two Family Residential	\$91,090
Three Family Residential	\$81,981
Multiple Res. Units One Lot	\$136,635
Apartments	\$81,981
Mobile Homes (in parks)	\$45,545

% Change in Sales Tax Revenue	0.00%
Per Acre Cost of Open Space Protection	\$4,000
Cost P& I over 20 years (4.5%)	\$321
Commercial Average Assessed Dollars Per Acre	
Industrial (outside park)	\$327,924
Rec. Enter	\$11,291
Comm. Retail (STD)	\$298,526
Comm. Office	\$423,152
MALL RETAIL	\$1303,632
Reduction for Existing Land	10%

The change in the town's share of sales tax revenue is set at zero percent (0%), and is explained in the note section below. The per acre cost of open space protection is set at \$4,000 and is based on the cost of purchasing development rights, not the cost of an outright purchase of land. The school capacity without construction assumption is based on an interview with the school district administrator, as is the per student cost of new construction. The assumptions for average assessed dollars per acres for each type of commercial development are based on analysis of Guilderland's assessment roles, and several discussions with the town assessor. They were adjusted further after discussions with the economic development sub-committee. Finally, the total values for new construction were reduced by 10% to account for the value of land already on the tax roles.

In addition to these structural assumptions, the following six scenarios represent the future land use options that result from the model's analysis. These six scenarios are designed to represent plausible future land use scenarios. The model allows an infinite number of test scenarios and unlimited flexibility in the level of detail into which a scenario can be defined.

3. Fiscal Model Scenario Definitions

The following six scenarios use consistent growth rates for the changing acres of land use over the next twenty years. The inputs may be customized by year, if desired. The growth rates are based on trends derived from Guilderland's historical growth rates and then adjusted for the purpose of exploring different future land use patterns.

Table 5: Scenario 1

This scenario assumes a steady state growth rate (historic trend) for both housing and industrial/commercial.

	Increase in Acres/Units Per Year	Total Increase Over 20 Years
Housing (all types)	114 acres / 140 units	2287 acres / 2800 units
Industrial	1.2	24
Retail & Rec. Retail	2.9	57
Office	1.73	34.6

Table 6: Scenario 2

This scenario assumes a steady state growth rate for both housing and commercial/industrial, with a land conservation program and spending for paths, parks and public facilities.

	Increase in Acres/Units Per Year	Total Increase Over 20 Years
Housing (all types)	114 acres / 140 units	2287 acres / 2800 units
Industrial	1.2	24
Retail & Rec. Retail	2.9	57
Office	1.73	34.6
Protected Open Space	100	2000

Spending for paths, parks, and public facilities is set at \$750,000 per year.

Table 7: Scenario 3

This scenario assumes a steady state residential growth rate, a complete build out of the Guilderland school district’s portion of the industrial park, along with steady state increases in other commercial growth (retail/office/recreational). In addition, this scenario includes a land conservation program and spending for paths, parks, and public facilities.

	Increase in Acres/Units Per Year	Total Increase Over 20 Years
--	----------------------------------	------------------------------

Housing (all types)	114 acres / 140 units	2287 acres / 2800 units
Industrial	4.7	94
Retail & Rec Retail	2.9	57
Office	1.73	34.6
Protected Open Space	100	2,000
<p>Spending for paths, parks, and public facilities is set at \$750,000 per year.</p>		

Table 8: Scenario 3a

This scenario assumes a steady state residential growth rate, and a complete build out of the Guilderland school district’s portion of the industrial park, development of additional industrial acreage outside of the park, a significant increase in office acreage, and real value increases in existing retail/office/recreational areas. This scenario also includes a water/sewer expansion beyond what is already planned, in addition to a land conservation program, and spending for paths, parks and public facilities.

	Increase in Acres/Units Per Year	Total Increase Over 20 Years
Housing (all types)	114 acres / 140 units	2287 acres / 2800 units
Industrial	11.5	230
Retail & Rec. Retail	2.9	57
Office	3.5	70
Protected Open Space	100	2000

Spending for paths, parks, and public facilities are set at \$750,000 per year. Sewer/water expansion goes in as 1.1 million a year in the fourteenth year. The real value increase is .5% per year.

Table 9: Scenario 4

This scenario assumes significant additional residential growth beyond the steady state, along with steady state growth in industrial /commercial. This scenario also includes a water/sewer expansion beyond what is already planned, in addition to a land conservation program, and spending for paths, parks and public facilities.

	Increase in Acres/Units Per Year	Total Increase Over 20 Years
Housing (all types)	152 acres / 210 units	3034 acres / 4206 units
Industrial	1.2	24
Retail & Rec. Retail	2.9	57
Office	1.73	34.6
Protected Open Space	100	2000

Spending for paths, parks and public facilities are set at \$750,000 per year. Sewer/water expansion goes in as

1.1 million a year in the fourteenth year.

Table 10: Scenario 5

This scenario assumes significant residential growth beyond the steady state, and a complete build out of the Guilderland school district’s portion of the industrial park, along with development of additional industrial acreage outside of the park, a significant increase in office acreage, and real value increases in existing retail/office/recreational areas. This scenario also includes a water/sewer expansion beyond what is already planned, in addition to a land conservation program, and spending for paths, parks and public facilities.

	Increase in Acres/Units Per Year	Total Increase Over 20 Years
Housing (all types)	152 acres / 210 units	3034 acres / 4206 units
Industrial	11.5	230
Retail & Rec. Retail	2.9	57
Office	3.5	70
Protected Open Space	100	2000

Spending for paths, parks, and public facilities are set at \$750,000 per year. Sewer/water expansion goes in at 1.6 million a year in the fourteenth year. The real value increase is .5% per year.

4. Findings

The findings of this fiscal analysis are summarized in the following tables and graph.

Table 11: FIFTH YEAR 2005

	Average Home Value	Equalized Value	Town	Highway	School	Total per Thousand	Total Taxes
Scenario 1	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.03	\$4.46	\$19.71	\$25.21	\$3,057.76
Scenario 2	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.41	\$4.46	\$19.71	\$25.59	\$3,104.44
Scenario 3	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.41	\$4.45	\$19.66	\$25.52	\$3,095.70
Scenario 3a	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.40	\$4.40	\$19.45	\$25.25	\$3,063.11

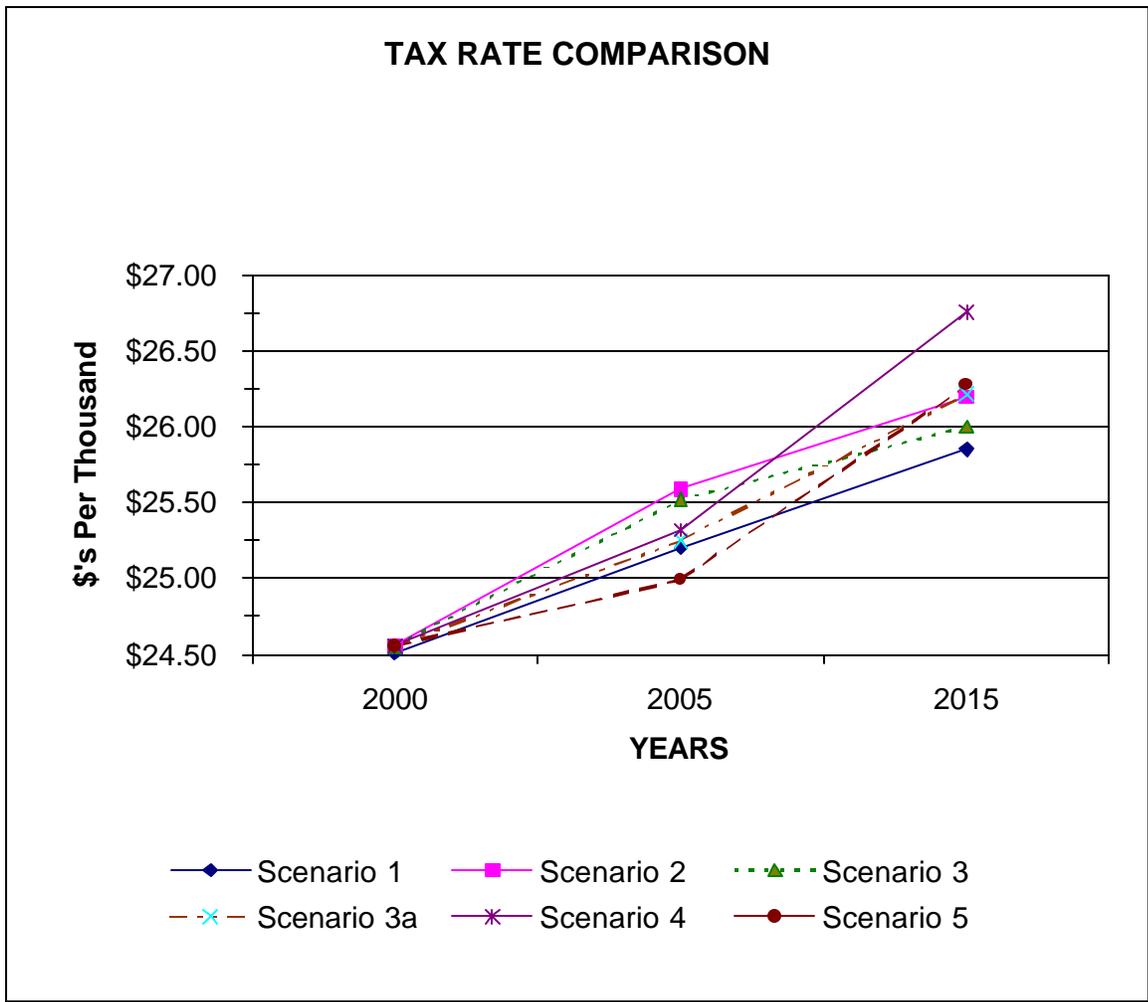
Scenario 4	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.51	\$4.41	\$19.40	\$25.32	\$3,071.21
Scenario 5	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.49	\$4.35	\$19.15	\$24.99	\$3,031.56

Table 12: FIFTEENTH YEAR 2015

	Average Home Value	Equalized Value	Town	Highway	School	Total per Thousand	Total Taxes
Scenario 1	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.66	\$4.53	\$19.66	\$25.85	\$3,136.21
Scenario 2	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$2.01	\$4.53	\$19.66	\$26.20	\$3,178.02
Scenario 3	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$1.99	\$4.50	\$19.51	\$26.00	\$3,154.09
Scenario 3a	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$2.41	\$4.84	\$18.96	\$26.22	\$3,180.19
Scenario 4	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$2.65	\$4.83	\$19.27	\$26.76	\$3,246.07
Scenario 5	\$120,000	\$121,308	\$2.76	\$4.87	\$18.64	\$26.28	\$3,187.60

Table 13: PERCENT CHANGE FROM BASE YEAR (2000)

	2005	2015
Scenario 1	3%	5%
Scenario 2	4%	7%
Scenario 3	4%	6%
Scenario 3a	3%	7%
Scenario 4	3%	9%
Scenario 5	2%	7%



The town, highway/water, and school figures showing dollars of assessed value per thousand in the preceding chart are generated by the model. On a separate spreadsheet (not shown here), the model determines these figures for each of the twenty years of the model run. The figures depicted are calculated by dividing the total tax levy for each category for the year shown by the town assessed value for that year.

Guilderland is fortunate in that it has the opportunity to plan the future use of the land within its boundaries before future growth and development closes off its choices. This fiscal analysis is one tool that helps shape the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan and will be a useful tool in the implementing those

recommendations.

The six scenarios tested above demonstrate several lessons, as well as making it obvious that Guilderland can still exercise a great deal of control over its future growth. The model supports, in what has become common knowledge in recent years, that residential growth (with school age children) due to the disproportionate impact of the school budget typically does not completely pay for itself. In addition to the school cost impacts, Guilderland faces significant sewer and water capital expenses. The model also shows that a resource protection program (through compensation for conservation easements from willing sellers) and investment in public amenities does not dramatically increase the tax burden as many believe. In fact, it is likely that a tax increase would occur even without the benefits of open space protection. If balanced properly, Guilderland can grow in all areas while protecting valuable natural and recreational resources.

The tax rate summary chart and tax comparison graph demonstrates the disproportionate impact of residential growth on Guilderland taxes. The analysis predicts that scenario 4, with the higher residential growth rate, has a 2%-6% increase in taxes by the fifteenth year, over scenarios 1, 2, 3, and 3a, all with the lower residential growth rate. These increases occur despite significant growth in the amount of industrial and commercial development. Guilderland has developed as a bedroom community with comparatively small amounts of industrial development. Even when the percentage of industrial development is raised to nearly unrealistic levels, it is unable to fully counteract the tax burden shared by the community for the school system. In order to have high residential growth and to keep the impact on future taxes the same, the town will need to raise the assessed value of the existing commercial uses by half a percent each year, which is highly unlikely, and do a complete build out of the industrial park. In other words, to bring scenario 5 in line with scenario 4, it will be necessary to increase commercial assessments by 5 ½ million dollars more than in scenario 4 each year, and to develop 18 acres of commercial/industrial land per year.

Of these initial six scenarios, scenario 3 seems to have the most desirable outcome. With steady state growth rates in all areas (lower housing growth rate), and the complete build out of Guilderland's portion of the industrial park, scenario 3 allows for spending on resource protection and amenities with the smallest tax impact of the various scenarios observed.

Resource protection and amenities spending has a relatively minor impact on Guilderland's budget. Comparing scenarios 1 and 2, both with steady state growth rates for the major land use categories, scenario 2 adds spending of \$750,000 a year for public amenities, and the cost of protecting 100 acres a year of open space. This translate into a tax increase of only .35 cents per thousand of assessed value over fifteen years, or a two percent difference (For the median home valued at \$120,000, this translates into about \$4.00 per month). In addition to the relatively minor increase in costs, the numbers do not speak to the positive values generated in a town that provides open

spaces and pathway systems for its residents.

Nonetheless, a reasonable amount of well-planned commercial and industrial development that would occur without adding to existing water, sewer, and transportation systems costs should be a financial benefit to the community.

With this model in hand, the town can change and test the various scenarios used in the model, and arrive at the desired future direction the town decides to pursue.

5. Additional Notes

Property taxes shown on the summary sheet are not predictions of actual tax rates in the future. They are intended for comparison purposes only. There is no inflation in this model, therefore all numbers over time are comparable as if they were discounted. The actual numbers would be significantly higher due to inflation.

Sales tax revenue is included in the model. The model assumes the town's share of the county-collected tax remains the same, because there is no way to predict future sales tax revenue. Albany County distributes sales taxes on a per capita basis. However, even if Guilderland's population goes up, the Town could easily see a drop in its sales taxes revenue because the per capita distribution is relative to the population changes in every other municipality in the county. Increased retail sales within Guilderland's borders has the same impact on sales tax as equivalent growth in any other municipality in Albany County. Therefore, comparisons based on different land use scenarios will not be impacted by sales tax in a manner that can be reasonably predicted. The Crossgates assessment is not contemplated in this model.

APPENDIX B

Potential Scoping Issues

- Land use
- Agricultural properties and activities
- Soil conditions, erosion potential, and steep slopes
- Water features including streams tributary or subtributary to the Watervliet Reservoir
- Habitat/Ecology
- Wetlands
- Noise, air, and light pollution
- Hazardous wastes and other hazards to the community associated with the use
- Cultural resources (historic and prehistoric)
- Visual impact, architecture, and buffering
- Provision of community services and utilities
- Traffic

Appendix C

Sample Scope of a Neighborhood Master Plan

Neighborhood Master Plans

A neighborhood master plan is a detailed study of the specific planning issues related to a residential neighborhood and its commercial component. Several neighborhood master plans are recommended as implementation actions for the comprehensive plan. The Guilderland and Guilderland Center neighborhoods are identified as short-term actions. Other neighborhoods, such as McKownville, Westmere, McCormack Corners and Fort Hunter would also benefit from this approach. The plan recommends that the town help to facilitate neighborhood organization and dialogue in these places as an interim measure to determine the extent of neighborhood identity, interest, and concern. These preliminary efforts, which could be organized around a successful public participation model such as the Guilderland Study Circles, could lead to the initiation of neighborhood master plans for these areas as well.

Each neighborhood master plan will be unique. However, there are several common elements that should be included in the process of developing all the neighborhood master plans:

- The town should establish a small (perhaps 5 to 7 member) Neighborhood Master Plan Committee consisting of neighborhood residents, business owners, and other neighborhood stakeholders. The Committee would work with the town's professional planning consultant and town staff in the development of the neighborhood master plan.
- The process of developing the neighborhood master plan should include a series of public workshops in which neighborhood residents, neighborhood business owners, town officials, additional neighborhood stakeholders (for example, the school district) and any other interested/concerned town residents are invited, and encouraged to participate.
- Early in the process, the geographic extent of the neighborhood should be determined. A neighborhood should have an identifiable center and an edge and should be fairly compact. Ideally, the distance between center and edge would be between 1/4 and 1/2 mile -- the distance that someone can comfortably walk in 10 to 15 minutes. For some larger neighborhoods or planning areas, smaller sub-areas might be identified to meet the general criteria of a neighborhood.
- The neighborhood master plan should identify opportunities and constraints for the neighborhood, define a vision, and produce goals and objectives that establish policy for achieving the vision. This component of the plan should be developed in concert with the vision, goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that the details of the neighborhood master plan will fit well into the more general ideas of the Comprehensive Plan since many of the same residents that participated at some level in the creation of the Comprehensive Plan will be involved in the neighborhood master plan.
- The neighborhood master plan should consider: the appropriate mix of land uses, architectural and urban design characteristics, transportation (including all modes), economic development opportunities, natural resource conservation, recreation, and other areas of concern.
- The neighborhood master plan should make specific zoning code recommendations, should identify sites for appropriate residential and commercial development, should provide suggestions for pedestrian circulation, trails, traffic calming, automobiles and public transportation, and should locate areas for recreation and for open space conservation.
- The master plan should include an implementation section. This section would detail public and private sector activities that would advance the recommendations in the plan, would identify methods of funding neighborhood improvements, and would prioritize actions.

The process for developing a Neighborhood Master Plan should include the following:

- Creation of the Master Plan Advisory Board by the Town Board, including appointment of members.
- Conduct neighborhood meetings to identify issues in greater detail.
- Interview all stakeholders in the area including Town departments, schools, business, and civic groups.
- Identify opportunities and constraints.
- Develop a vision and goals and objectives.
- Develop plan recommendations and the means of implementation.

When the Neighborhood Master Plan is completed, the Committee should submit it to the Town Board for adoption as an addendum or amendment to the comprehensive plan.

APPENDIX D

Development Guidelines Example

- *Development Density & Type*
 - Require developers to prepare a site master plan identifying maximum development and use mixture. This will be particularly important in determining whether the proposal meets the criteria and thresholds established in the GEIS.
 - Development density should be dictated by opportunities for clustering and open space offerings.
 - Industrial development limited to those uses that will not result in the emission of toxic materials to the air or water or result in excessive noise, odors or vibration.
 - Commercial uses permitted within a business park should be limited to small retail and commercial services that will support the business park. Such uses could include a copy store, drug store, stationery store, health spa, dry-cleaning services, beauty salon, restaurant, and other similar uses.
- *Structures*
 - Architecture - Require project sponsor's to incorporate a common theme that dictates form and facade treatments.
 - Height - Establish a maximum height based on site topography and visual concerns.
 - Set Backs - Require a minim setback from existing road right-of-way and residential uses. This would be determined through the GEIS and would be dictated by the type and use and visual issues.
- *Minimum Open Space*

Open space requirements should be dictated through incentive zoning, TDR opportunities, and clustering.
- *Drainage and Erosion Control*
 - Require compliance with Town drainage guidelines and NYSDEC standards and guidelines for compliance with the General Construction Permit.
 - Require the preparation of a comprehensive stormwater management and erosion control plan for site plan review.
 - Vegetative erosion control measures should be used in place of rip rap or other structural controls, wherever practicable.
- *Landscaping*
 - Require the use of native plantings and preservation of existing vegetation wherever possible.
 - All disturbed areas that will not be developed should be landscaped.
 - parking areas should include landscaped parking islands to break up large pavement areas and decrease heat sinks.

- *Circulation and Parking*
 - Require shared access and parking where appropriate.
 - Require incorporation of stub roads, as appropriate, to link future development.

- *Environmental Issues*
 - Limit industrial uses to those that do not emit smoke, toxic substances, excessive noise, odors, or vibrations that would be contrary to the health, safety and welfare of the community.
 - Preserve natural habitat to the greatest extent possible, recognizing the need for linkages between natural areas and the avoidance of habitat segmentation.
 - Require, at a minimum, on-site investigation for the presence of federal and State regulated wetlands. If necessary, require a wetland delineation and all necessary permitting prior to granting final site plan approval or a building permit.

- *Traffic Improvements*
 - Prepare a traffic study to determine necessary improvements of existing roadways.

APPENDIX E

Stormwater Management Guidelines

- At a minimum, the guidelines should include the following:
- Peak flow attenuation shall be accomplished by control of peak runoff rates for 2, 10 and 100 year frequency events so as not to exceed pre-development conditions.
- Runoff conveyance systems should be designed to convey 10-year frequency event flows and priority should be given to maintaining natural drainage systems wherever possible.
- Provide for stormwater management facilities to control the "first flush" runoff (first one-half inch of runoff from all lands for which development would change natural or existing conditions).
- Stormwater management systems to be used to control the first flush runoff, in order of priority, are: infiltration, retention, and extended detention, with various adjunct practices.
- Provide landscape plan that includes Best Management Practices for proper application of pesticides and fertilizers or, if possible, the elimination of the use of pesticides and fertilizers.
- As appropriate, provide special measures to prevent impact to sensitive environmental resources; and
- Require proper containment for contaminants associated with any new development during pre- and post-construction periods, e.g., containment for above ground tanks and proper design for underground tanks in accordance with NYSDEC standards.

"State of the Art" for Livable Communities

- examples

Streets in livable communities serve all users – vehicles and pedestrians. Planted medians, well-defined crosswalks, and sidewalks ensure that the pedestrian realm is both pleasant and safe.



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The NYS Department of Transportation recently completed this road reconstruction project on NYS Route 9 in Saratoga Springs. The project included the installation of planted medians, new sidewalks and crosswalks, streetlights, and benches at this important gateway to downtown.



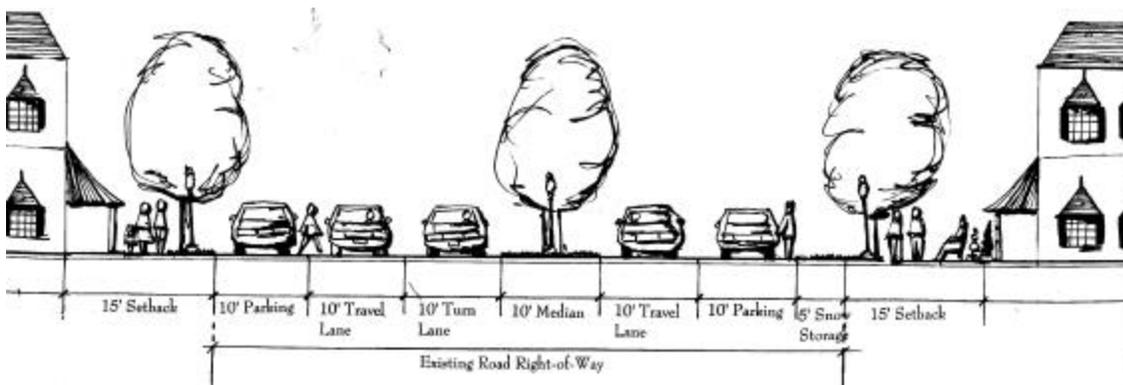
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Community or neighborhood centers contain a moderate to high density of mixed-use buildings. Active uses, such as stores and restaurants, are located at street level, while offices and residences are located on the floors above. Buildings are placed close to the sidewalk creating the feel of an outdoor room, while car storage (parking) is moved to the rear. Automobiles, pedestrians, and public transportation are all well accommodated.



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This section illustrates an appropriate design for a street in a community or neighborhood center. Note the relationship of building to street, the attractive and safe pedestrian realm, and the adequate provisions for thru-traffic, turning traffic, and on-street parking.



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Mashpee Commons, at the western end of Cape Cod (Massachusetts), was constructed on the site of a defunct shopping mall. This project, completed over the last decade, has succeeded by creating an attractive pedestrian realm with a variety of activities including shops, offices, a movie theater, restaurants and cafes, and a post office. Although not yet a “real” community, planned future phases will create several human-scaled, and fully linked residential neighborhoods around this community center.



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The design of Mashpee Commons accommodates vehicles and pedestrians. The streetscape, the location, orientation, and design of buildings, and on-street parking all contribute to this excellent pedestrian space.



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McKenzie Towne, in Calgary, Canada, is a great example of human-scaled community design. Inverness, pictured below, is the first completed “village” in this large, mixed-use project. Several more interconnected villages will be constructed around a higher density, mixed commercial / residential town center. In addition to the town center, which is now under construction, each village will have its own small center with a public space, and a small amount of neighborhood retail and office space as shown below.



Photo by World Idea Networks



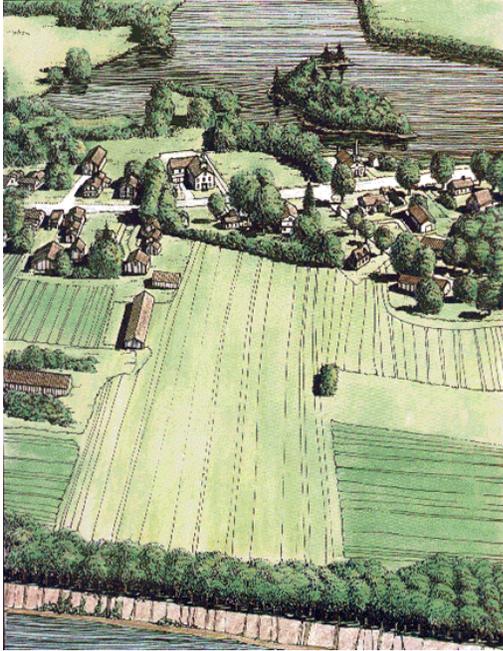
Existing hamlet

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Hamlet after conventional, suburban-style development

© Copyright 1995 - 1996 Center for Rural Massachusetts, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.



Hamlet with appropriately scaled development (same number of units)

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Recreational resources can add tremendous value to a community. Multi-use trails and on-street bicycle systems, as envisioned by the Guilderland Pathways recommendation, provide for an alternate means of transportation and opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy outdoor recreation.



Copyright © 2000 Environmental Design & Research

This struggling shopping mall outside of Chattanooga, Tennessee will be incrementally retrofitted to create a human-scaled town center in its place.



Used with permission from Dover, Kohl & Partners

As it is currently designed, the shopping mall is typical of suburban commercial development in recent decades. The large, box-like buildings surrounded by parking are oriented for automobile access only.



Used with permission from Dover, Kohl & Partners

The series of three (3) sketches below illustrate the incremental redevelopment of this area from an automobile-oriented shopping center to a mixed-use, human-scaled neighborhood center. The new center will be structured around walkable blocks and will be woven together with the surrounding neighborhoods. Smaller scaled buildings oriented to the street and the pedestrian, pocket parks, and an attractive pedestrian realm will help to transform this eyesore into a community asset. The vision for this redevelopment project was arrived at through an open, participatory process that included property owners, business leaders, neighborhood residents, community officials and all other interested parties. This participatory process - a week-long public charrette - resulted in a redevelopment master plan that is now being implemented. Completion of this project will probably take several decades, but initial projects have already been started.

Phase 1



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Phase 2



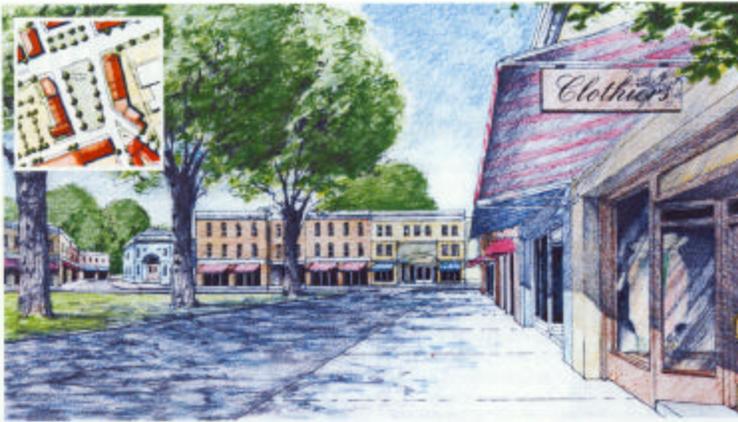
Used with permission from Dover, Kohl & Partners

Phase 3



Used with permission from Dover, Kohl & Partners

The sketch below illustrates the intended character of the new neighborhood center once redevelopment of the former shopping mall is complete.



Brainerd Town Square

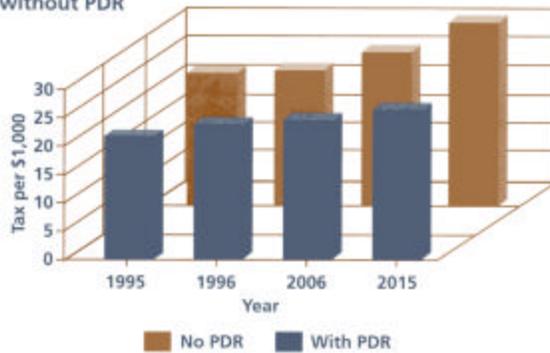
Design for Change Over Time

- A network of interconnected streets and blocks
- Buildings front streets & public spaces, with parking in the rear
- Special sites for civic buildings
- Special public spaces
- Mixed-use buildings
- Pedestrian-friendly connections to adjacent neighborhood areas
- Greenway extends to major trail
- Adaptable to future transit opportunities

Used with permission from Dover, Kohl & Partners

It is well established that, in general, new residential development does not pay for itself in terms of a community's revenues and expenditures. That is, most new homes require more in services than they contribute in taxes. Open spaces, and most commercial development are revenue positive for a community's finances. In Pittsford, New York, a fiscal model determined that a program by the town to Purchase Development Rights (PDR) from several farms would actually cost the average taxpayer less in the long-term than doing nothing and allowing that farmland to be built-out as housing. This information was instrumental in passing a local bond for \$10 million to fund the PDR program.

Tax Rate Projections
with and without PDR



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The *Pittsford Greenprint*, like a blueprint for a house, is a detailed, parcel-by-parcel analysis of the town's open space, agricultural, natural, and recreational resources. Specific strategies for each identified parcel, ranging from zoning and subdivision recommendations to Purchase or Transfer of Development Rights, are provided in this implementation item from the town's comprehensive plan. A similar implementation project for Western Guilderland could be initiated following the completion of Guilderland's comprehensive plan.



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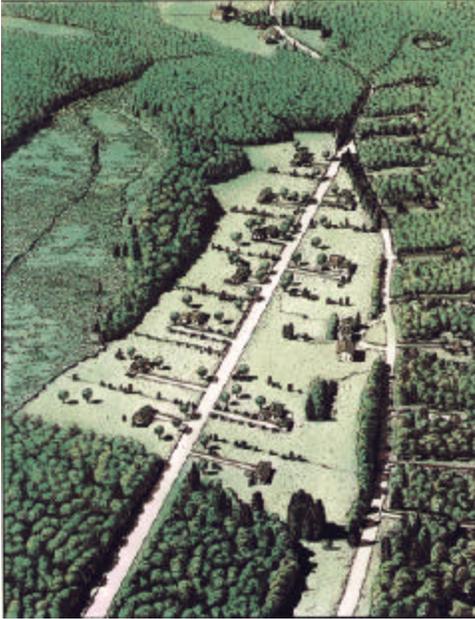
The three sketches below illustrate how creative subdivision design can protect important natural resources and/or features of the landscape that give a community its unique character. The first shows an existing rural area before development.



Existing farm on a town road.

© Copyright 1995 - 1996 Center for Rural Massachusetts, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

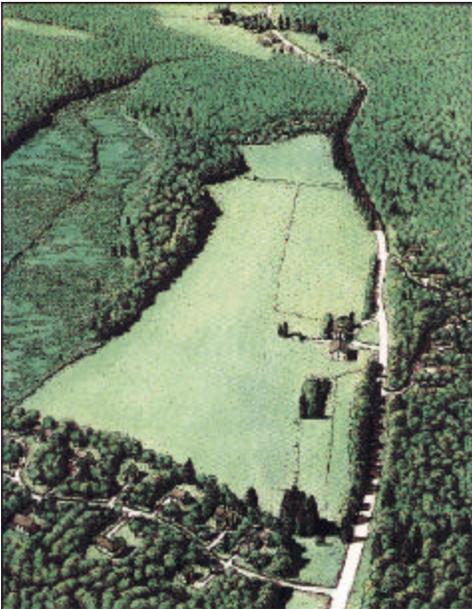
The second image shows how this area might look after development under typical "rural-residential" (large lot) zoning. Almost all of the land is divided into residential lots.



After conventional development.

© Copyright 1995 - 1996 Center for Rural Massachusetts, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

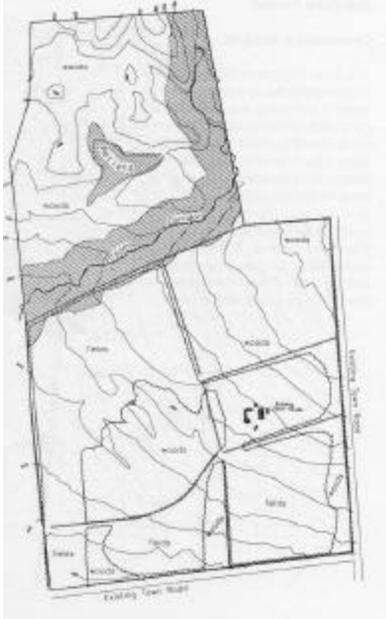
The last image shows how the same number of new residential units could be developed in a manner sensitive to the landscape. Open spaces in this subdivision are permanently protected using a conservation easement. To accomplish this type of creative development, a "conservation subdivision" approach must be incorporated into the town's land use regulations.



After creative development (same number of units).

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The three images below illustrate how creative subdivision design might be used to protect open space resources and lead to development that is consistent with a traditional rural settlement pattern. The first image shows a large farm parcel before development.



Existing 200 acre farm parcel.

From *Rural Development Guidelines* (October 1994), published by the New York Planning Federation.

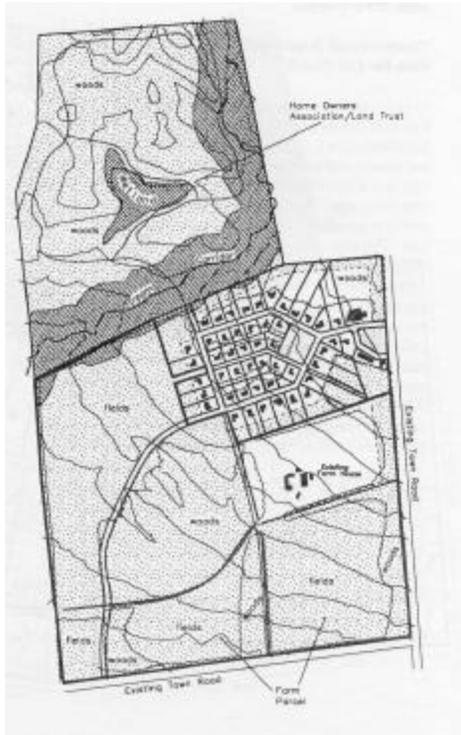
The second image shows how this parcel might be subdivided under conventional large-lot zoning.



Conventional 3-acre subdivision.

From *Rural Development Guidelines* (October 1994), published by the New York Planning Federation.

The final illustration shows how the same number of residential units could be designed into a pedestrian-scaled hamlet while protecting a significant portion of the working farm and important natural resources. The compact hamlet surrounded by agricultural and other open lands is consistent with traditional development patterns in rural areas.



Flexible - lot subdivision to create a rural hamlet and maintain the farm.

From *Rural Development Guidelines* (October 1994), published by the New York Planning Federation.

RESEARCH PURPOSE

This research has been designed, conducted and analyzed by Fact Finders, Inc. for the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee for the Town of Guilderland. This study was executed to obtain representative and reliable measurements of attitudes of town residents about growth and development in the town.

This research consisted of two phases. The initial phase consisted of a representative random probability sample of 100 households interviewed by telephone. For the second phase of the research, survey questionnaires were mailed to all households in the town of Guilderland.

The findings presented in this report are from the completed telephone survey conducted with town residents, and the findings from 3000 returned mail surveys.

RATING ON OVERALL QUALITY
OF LIFE IN GUILDERLAND

RATING ON OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN GUILDERLAND	1999 Town Of Guilderland	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Excellent	37.0%	31.7%
Good	55.0%	61.9%
Fair	8.0%	6.1%
Poor	0.0%	0.3%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(100)	(2,958)

How would you rate the overall quality of life in the town of Guilderland? Excellent, good, fair or poor? (Question 3)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.5$ $p=.4822$ (Not Significant)

LEVEL OF OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN GUILDERLAND
COMPARED TO OTHER COMMUNITIES

LEVEL OF OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN GUILDERLAND COMPARED TO OTHER COMMUNITIES	1999 Town Of Guilderland	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Better	66.0%	59.8%
The Same	34.0%	37.2%
Worse	0.0%	3.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(97)	(2,902)

Thinking about other communities in the Capital Region, would you say the overall quality of life in the town of Guilderland is better, the same or worse compared to these other communities? (Question 4)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=3.8$ $p=.1491$ (Not Significant)

RATING ON
VALUE FOR TAX DOLLARS

RATING ON VALUE FOR TAX DOLLARS	1999 Town Of Guilderland	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Excellent	14.3%	14.2%
Good	63.3%	54.1%
Fair	20.4%	25.8%
Poor	2.0%	5.9%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,906)

How would you rate the value you get for the tax dollars you pay to the town

of Guilderland? Excellent, good, fair or poor? (Question 36)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=5.0$ $p=.1714$ (Not Significant)

RATING ON
PROVIDING SERVICES TO RESIDENTS

RATING ON PROVIDING SERVICES TO RESIDENTS	1999 Town Of Guilderland	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Excellent	23.7%	24.1%
Good	59.8%	59.5%
Fair	13.4%	14.1%
Poor	3.1%	2.2%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(97)	(2,932)

Next, thinking about the services provided by the town of Guilderland,

How would you rate the town of Guilderland at providing services to residents?

Excellent, good, fair or poor? (Question 35)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.4$ $p=.9479$ (Not Significant)

HOUSEHOLD WATER

HOUSEHOLD WATER	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Town Water	71.1%	72.7%
Your Own Well	17.5%	12.7%
Both	11.3%	14.5%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(97)	(2,960)

Does your household use town water, your own well or both? (Question 37)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.4$ $p=.3064$ (Not Significant)

HOUSEHOLD SEWAGE

HOUSEHOLD SEWAGE	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Town Sewer	76.0%	84.2%
Your Own Septic System	24.0%	15.8%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(96)	(2,957)

Does your household use the town sewer or your own septic system? (Question 38)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=4.6$ $p=.0311$ (Significant)

YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN
THE TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN THE TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Five Years or Less	20.0%	18.5%
6 - 15	29.0%	29.2%
16 - 30	27.0%	26.4%
Over 30	24.0%	25.9%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(100)	(2,978)
Number Of Years Of Residence In Guilderland		
Mean:	20	21
Median:	17	17
Range:	Less Than 1 to 77	Less Than 1 to 91

For how many years have you lived in the town of Guilderland? (Question 1)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.3$ $p=.9667$ (Not Significant)

HOME OWNERSHIP

HOME OWNERSHIP	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Own	79.0%	92.1%
Rent	21.0%	7.9%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(100)	(2,965)
Average Years Of Residence In Guilderland:		
Own:		
Rent:	22 Years	21 Years
	12 Years	10 Years

Do you own or rent your home? (Question 2)

HOME OWNERSHIP:

Significance Test: $\chi^2=22.0$ $p=.0000$ (*Significant*)

OVERALL RATE OF GROWTH

OVERALL RATE OF GROWTH	1999 Town Of Guilderland	
	PHONE SURVEY	Mail Survey
Too Fast	49.0%	45.4%
Acceptable	50.0%	50.4%
Too Slow	1.0%	4.3%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,917)

In your opinion, has the overall rate of growth in the town of Guilderland been too fast, acceptable or too slow? (Question 5)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.66$ $p=.2648$ (Not Significant)

WAYS RATE OF GROWTH HAS BEEN TOO FAST
(Subsample: Residents Who Think Guilderland Has Grown Too Fast)

WAYS RATE OF GROWTH HAS BEEN TOO FAST	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Residential Development	47.9%	37.8%
Traffic/Roadways	35.4%	35.7%
Commercial Development	47.9%	31.6%
Crossgates Mall Area	18.8%	13.6%
Environmental Issues/Open Spaces	6.3%	11.1%
Schools/Children	14.6%	6.4%
Planning/Master Plan	8.3%	5.9%
Taxes/Economics	2.1%	3.9%
Pine Bush Area	2.1%	3.3%
Water/Sewer	2.1%	2.8%
Crime	2.1%	1.8%
Sidewalks/Bike Paths	4.2%	0.0%
Other	8.4%	6.2%
(N)	(48)	(389)

In what way has the growth in Guilderland been too fast? (Question 6)

Note: Columns do not sum to 100% due to multiple responses.

WAYS RATE OF GROWTH HAS BEEN TOO SLOW
(Subsample: Residents Who Think Guilderland Has Grown Too Slow)

WAYS RATE OF GROWTH HAS BEEN TOO SLOW	1999 Town Of Guilderland Mail Survey
Commercial Development	69.0%
Residential Development	23.8%
Taxes/Economics	16.7%
Crossgates Mall Area	11.9%
Leadership/Government	7.1%
Recreational Areas/YMCA	9.5%
Traffic/Roadways	7.1%
Other	12.0%
(N)	(42)

In what way has the growth in Guilderland been too slow? (Question 6)

Note: Column does not sum to 100% due to multiple responses. **Note:** The data from the phone survey is not presented, as only one respondent felt the rate of growth has been too slow.

PERCEPTION OF A CURRENT
TOWN CENTER IN GUILDERLAND

PERCEPTION OF A CURRENT TOWN CENTER IN GUILDERLAND	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Guilderland Has a Town Center	32.6%	23.9%
Guilderland Does Not Have a Town Center	67.4%	76.1%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(92)	(2,837)

In your opinion, do you think Guilderland has a town center? (Question 7)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=3.72$ $p=.0537$ (Not Significant)

PERCEIVED LOCATION OF CURRENT TOWN CENTER
(Subsample: Residents Who Believe Guilderland Has a Town Center)

LOCATION OF TOWN CENTER	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	Mail Survey
Town Hall/McCormack's Corners Area	36.7%	34.3%
Crossgates Mall Area	16.7%	16.5%
Route 20 (Not Specific)	0.0%	13.6%
20 Mall Area	23.3%	12.8%
Guilderland Center Area (Near High School or Industrial Park)	20.0%	7.0%
Westmere/Stuyvesant Plaza/McKownville Area	3.3%	6.2%
Other	0.0%	4.8%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	*
(N)	(30)	(242)

Where is the town center of Guilderland? (Question 8)

*Note: For mail survey, column does not sum to 100% due to multiple responses.

DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TOWN CENTER

DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TOWN CENTER	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	Mail Survey
Town Should Develop (An/Another) Area Which Would Serve as a Town Center	56.0%	39.3%
Town Should Not Develop (An/Another) Area Which Would Serve as a Town Center	44.0%	60.7%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(91)	(2,648)

*Do you think the town of Guilderland should develop (an / another) area
which would serve as a town center? (Question 9)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=10.3$ $p=.0013$ (Significant)

ATTITUDES TOWARD DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TOWN CENTER
BY PERCEIVED EXISTENCE OF A CURRENT TOWN CENTER IN GUILDERLAND

DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TOWN CENTER	Perceived Existence Of Town Center			
	Phone		Mail	
	Has A Town Center	Does Not Have A Town Center	Has A Town Center	Does Not Have A Town Center
Town Should Develop (An/Another) Area Which Would Serve as a Town Center	26.9%	69.0%	24.9%	43.5%
Town Should Not Develop (An/Another) Area Which Would Serve as a Town Center	73.1%	31.0%	75.1%	56.5%
TOTAL % :	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(26)	(58)	(590)	(2,021)

PREFERRED LOCATION OF NEW TOWN CENTER
(Subsample: Residents Who Believe The Town
Should Develop a New Town Center)

PREFERRED LOCATION OF NEW TOWN CENTER	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Town Hall/McCormack's Corners Area	18.0%	22.1%
20 Mall Area	12.0%	17.0%
YMCA/Library Area	8.0%	12.7%
Route 20 (Not Specific)	0.0%	10.9%
Guilderland Center Area (Near High School or Industrial Park)	10.0%	3.0%
Crossgates Mall Area	6.0%	2.4%
Middle School/South on Route 155, Past Route 20	4.0%	0.0%
Other	4.0%	12.7%
No Opinion	42.0%	28.2%
(N)	(50)	(330)

Where should this new town center be located? (Question 10)

Note: Columns do not sum to 100% due to multiple responses.

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR
RETAIL SHOPPING

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 Town Of Guilderland	
	PHONE SURVEY	Mail Survey
Too Much	33.0%	35.7%
Enough	58.0%	55.7%
Not Enough	9.0%	8.6%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(100)	(2,894)

*Thinking about various types of development for businesses in the town of Guilderland,
In your opinion, is there too much, enough or not enough retail shopping in the town? (Question 12)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.3$ $p=.8613$ (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Much	16.5%	15.0%
Enough	72.5%	64.3%
Not Enough	11.0%	20.7%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(91)	(2,847)

*Thinking about various types of development for businesses in the town of Guilderland,
In your opinion, is there too much, enough or not enough commercial office space in the town? (Question 13)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=5.1$ $p=.0772$ (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Much	12.2%	11.6%
Enough	65.3%	61.7%
Not Enough	22.4%	26.7%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,859)

*Thinking about various types of development for businesses in the town of Guilderland,
In your opinion, is there too much, enough or not enough industrial development in the town? (Question 11)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.9$ **p=.6418** (*Not Significant*)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS
SUMMARY TABLE: PHONE SURVEY

Amount Of Development For Business				
Type Of Development	Too Much	Enough	Not Enough	(N)
Retail Shopping	33.0%	58.0%	9.0%	(100)
Commercial Office Space	16.5%	72.5%	11.0%	(91)
Industrial Development	12.2%	65.3%	22.4%	(98)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS
SUMMARY TABLE

MAIL SURVEY				
Type Of Development	Too Much	Enough	Not Enough	(N)
Retail Shopping	35.7%	55.7%	8.6%	(2,894)
Commercial Office Space	15.0%	64.3%	20.7%	(2,847)
Industrial Development	11.6%	61.7%	26.7%	(2,859)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS
IN UNDEVELOPED AREAS OF TOWN

ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Encourage	41.6%	41.3%
Discourage	58.4%	58.7%
TOTAL %: (N)	100.0% (89)	100.0% (2,850)

Would you like to see the town of Guilderland encourage or discourage development for business in the undeveloped areas of the town? (Question 14)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.0$ $p=.9639$ (Not Significant)

Note: Comments for question 15, "Where should this development be encouraged/discouraged?" begin on page 80.

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT
FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	16.7%	18.2%
Enough	70.8%	65.7%
Not Enough	12.5%	16.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(96)	(2,832)

Next, thinking about various types of development for housing in the town of Guilderland,

In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough single family housing developments in the town? (Question 16)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.2$ **p=.5447** (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT
FOR APARTMENTS

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	17.8%	23.7%
Enough	75.6%	66.9%
Not Enough	6.7%	9.4%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(90)	(2,833)

Next, thinking about various types of development for housing in the town of Guilderland,

In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough apartments in the town? (Question 19)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=3.0$ **p=.2228** (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT
FOR CONDOS AND TOWNHOUSES

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	17.0%	21.0%
Enough	69.3%	63.9%
Not Enough	13.6%	15.1%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(88)	(2,840)

Next, thinking about various types of development for housing in the town of Guilderland,

In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough condos and townhouses in the town? (Question 18)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.1$ **p=.5635** (*Not Significant*)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT
FOR VILLAGE OR HAMLET STYLE HOUSES

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	2.4%	5.4%
Enough	54.8%	54.0%
Not Enough	42.9%	40.6%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(84)	(2,744)

Next, thinking about various types of development for housing in the town of Guilderland,

In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough village or hamlet style housing in the town? (Question 20)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.5$ $p=.4705$ (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT
FOR SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	0.0%	3.2%
Enough	39.2%	38.8%
Not Enough	60.8%	58.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(74)	(2,785)

Next, thinking about various types of development for housing in the town of Guilderland,

In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough senior citizen housing developments in the town? (Question 17)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.5$ $p=.2917$ (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR HOUSING
SUMMARY TABLE: PHONE SURVEY

Type Of Development	Amount Of Development For Housing			(N)
	Too Many	Enough	Not Enough	
Single Family Housing Developments	16.7%	70.8%	12.5%	(96)
Apartments	17.8%	75.6%	6.7%	(90)
Condos & Townhouses	17.0%	69.3%	13.6%	(88)
Village or Hamlet Style Neighborhoods	2.4%	54.8%	42.9%	(84)
Senior Citizen Housing Developments	0.0%	39.2%	60.8%	(74)

Note: Rows sum to 100.0%.

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR HOUSING
SUMMARY TABLE: MAIL SURVEY

Type Of Development	Amount Of Development For Housing			(N)
	Too Many	Enough	Not Enough	
Single Family Housing Developments	18.2%	65.7%	16.0%	(2,832)
Apartments	23.7%	66.9%	9.4%	(2,833)
Condos & Townhouses	21.0%	63.9%	15.1%	(2,840)
Village or Hamlet	5.4%	54.0%	40.6%	(2,744)
Style Neighborhoods				
Senior Citizen Housing Developments	3.2%	38.8%	58.0%	(2,785)

Note: Rows sum to 100.0%.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING
IN UNDEVELOPED AREAS OF TOWN

ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Encourage	39.8%	39.8%
Discourage	60.2%	60.2%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(93)	(2,771)

Would you like to see the town of Guilderland encourage or discourage more residential housing in the undeveloped areas of the town? (Question 21)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.0$ p=.9913 (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR OUTDOOR
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	0.0%	1.8%
Enough	51.0%	51.8%
Not Enough	49.0%	46.4%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(96)	(2,904)

Now, thinking about various types of development for recreation in the town of Guilderland,

In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough outdoor recreational facilities for ball fields, swimming and picnic areas in the town? (Question 23)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.9$ p=.3941 (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	Phone Survey	Mail Survey
Too Many	0.0%	1.7%
Enough	39.8%	43.3%
Not Enough	60.2%	55.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(93)	(2,888)

*Now, thinking about various types of development for recreation in the town of Guilderland,
In your opinion, are there too many, enough or not enough neighborhood parks and playgrounds in the town? (Question 24)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.3$ **p=.3191** (Not Significant)

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR RECREATION
SUMMARY TABLE: PHONE SURVEY

Type Of Development	Amount Of Development For Recreation			(N)
	Too Many	Enough	Not Enough	
Outdoor Recreational Facilities (for Ball Fields, Swimming and Picnic Areas)	0.0%	51.0%	49.0%	(96)
Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds	0.0%	39.8%	60.2%	(93)

Note: Rows sum to 100.0%.

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR RECREATION
SUMMARY TABLE: MAIL SURVEY

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR RECREATION			(N)
	TOO MANY	ENOUGH	NOT ENOUGH	
Outdoor Recreational Facilities (for Ball Fields, Swimming and Picnic Areas)	1.8%	51.8%	46.4%	(2,904)
Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds	1.7%	43.3%	55.0%	(2,888)

Note: Rows sum to 100.0%.

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
DEVELOPING A PLAN TO PROTECT TOWN DRINKING WATER

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	88.8%	80.6%
Moderate Priority	8.2%	17.2%
Low Priority	3.1%	2.2%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,920)

Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future, Do you think developing a plan to protect town drinking water in the town should be a high priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 28)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=5.6$ **p=.0602** (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
PRESERVING OPEN SPACES

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	53.5%	64.3%
Moderate Priority	35.4%	28.8%
Low Priority	11.1%	7.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(99)	(2,949)

Do you think preserving open spaces in the town should be a high priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 32)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=5.5$ **p=.0644** (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
EXPANDING TOWN WATER AND SEWER LINES

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	52.3%	40.1%
Moderate Priority	35.2%	41.7%
Low Priority	12.5%	18.2%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(88)	(2,855)

Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future, Do you think expanding town water and sewer lines in the town should be a high priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 29)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=5.55$ **p=.0622** (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
EXPANDING MASS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	46.3%	41.0%
Moderate Priority	36.8%	38.2%
Low Priority	16.8%	20.8%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(95)	(2,901)

Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future, Do you think expanding mass transportation services in the town should be a high priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 31)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.4$ **p=.5081** (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
INCREASING ROAD CAPACITY

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	44.1%	36.3%
Moderate Priority	32.3%	36.5%
Low Priority	23.7%	27.2%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(93)	(2,877)

Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future, Do you think increasing road capacity for cars and trucks in the town should be a high priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 30)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.4$ **p=.3065** (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
PUTTING IN MORE SIDEWALKS

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	37.9%	32.1%
Moderate Priority	33.7%	35.7%
Low Priority	28.4%	32.2%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(95)	(2,892)

Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future, Do you think putting in more sidewalks in the town should be a high priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 25)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.5$ **p=.4782** (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
PUTTING IN MORE BIKE PATHS

LEVEL OF PRIORITY	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	31.6%	29.3%
Moderate Priority	49.0%	39.3%
Low Priority	19.4%	31.4%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,880)

*Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future,
Do you think putting in more bike paths in the town should be a high
priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 26)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=6.8$ $p=.0335$ (Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE:
PUTTING IN MORE PARK AND RIDE LOTS

Level Of Priority	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High Priority	20.8%	18.4%
Moderate Priority	35.4%	37.7%
Low Priority	43.8%	44.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(96)	(2,871)

*Considering various priorities facing the town of Guilderland for the future,
Do you think putting in more park and ride lots in the town should be a high
priority, a moderate priority or a low priority? (Question 27)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.4$ $p=.8035$ (Not Significant)

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE
SUMMARY TABLE: PHONE SURVEY

PRIORITIES	LEVEL OF PRIORITY			(N)
	HIGH PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY	
Developing a Plan to Protect Town Drinking Water	88.8%	8.2%	3.1%	(98)
Preserving Open Spaces	53.5%	35.4%	11.1%	(99)
Expanding Town Water and Sewer Lines	52.3%	35.2%	12.5%	(88)
Expanding Mass Transportation Services	46.3%	36.8%	16.8%	(95)
Increasing Road Capacity for Cars and Trucks	44.1%	32.3%	23.7%	(93)
Putting in More Sidewalks	37.9%	33.7%	28.4%	(95)
Putting in More Bike Paths	31.6%	49.0%	19.4%	(98)
Putting in More Park and Ride Lots	20.8%	35.4%	43.8%	(96)

Note: Rows sum to 100.0%.

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE
SUMMARY TABLE: MAIL SURVEY
PRIORITY RATING SCORE

PRIORITIES	PRIORITY RATING SCORE	(N)
Developing a Plan to Protect Town Drinking Water	89	(2,920)
Preserving Open Spaces	79	(2,949)
Expanding Town Water and Sewer Lines	61	(2,855)
Expanding Mass Transportation Services	60	(2,901)
Increasing Road Capacity for Cars and Trucks	55	(2,877)
Putting in More Sidewalks	50	(2,892)
Putting in More Bike Paths	49	(2,880)
Putting in More Park and Ride Lots	37	(2,871)

Note: Calculation of Priority Rating Score was as follows: The categorical responses were first transformed into numerical values on a scale of 0-100. The numerical values assigned to the categorical responses are: High Priority=100, Moderate Priority=50 and Low Priority=0. Shown is the average, or mean, for each priority factor.

WILLINGNESS TO PAY AN INCREASE IN TAXES
TO PROTECT OPEN SPACES

WILLINGNESS TO PAY AN INCREASE IN TAXES	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Willing	54.8%	51.7%
Not Willing	45.2%	48.3%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(93)	(2,863)

Would you be willing or not willing to pay a moderate increase in taxes to permanently protect open spaces in the town of Guilderland? (Question 33)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=0.4$ $p=.5459$ (Not Significant)

WILLINGNESS TO PAY AN INCREASE IN TAXES
BY LEVEL OF PRIORITY OF PRESERVING OPEN SPACES

WILLINGNESS TO PAY AN INCREASE IN TAXES	LEVEL OF PRIORITY OF PRESERVING OPEN SPACES					
	PHONE SURVEY			MAIL SURVEY		
	HIGH PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY
Willing	68.0%	48.5%	10.0%	68.6%	25.8%	7.5%
Not Willing	32.0%	51.5%	90.0%	31.4%	74.2%	92.5%
Total %:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(50)	(33)	(10)*	(1,817)	(823)	(200)

**Note: Subsample size is too small from which to draw reliable inferences.*

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Household Composition	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Married/No Children	37.1%	39.0%
Not Married/No Children	25.8%	22.0%
Married with Children	27.8%	34.0%
Not Married/Children	9.3%	5.0%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(97)	(2,855)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=5.1$ $p=.1657$ (Not Significant)

MARITAL STATUS

MARITAL STATUS	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Married	63.6%	72.7%
Not Married	36.4%	27.3%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(99)	(2,932)

Are you currently married or not married? (Question 39)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=4.0$ $p=.0459$ (Significant)

NUMBER OF ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD

Number Of Adults In Household	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
One	24.5%	22.6%
Two	46.9%	63.3%
Three or More	28.6%	14.1%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,945)

Including yourself, how many adults, 18 years old or older currently live in your household? (Question 40)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=17.8$ $p=.0001$ (Significant)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
None	63.3%	61.0%
One	9.2%	15.2%
Two	20.4%	17.0%
Three or More	7.1%	6.8%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,881)

How many children under 18 years old currently live in your household? (Question 41)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=3.0$ **p=.3859** (Not Significant)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING
GUILDERLAND SCHOOLS

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING GUILDERLAND SCHOOLS	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
None	69.4%	70.3%
One	11.2%	14.2%
Two	14.3%	11.7%
Three or More	5.1%	3.7%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(98)	(2,832)

How many of your children attend Guilderland public schools? (Question 42)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=1.6$ **p=.6608** (Not Significant)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING GUILDERLAND SCHOOLS
(Subsample: Households With Children)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING GUILDERLAND SCHOOLS	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
None	16.7%	21.8%
One	30.6%	37.4%
Two	38.9%	30.9%
Three or More	13.9%	9.9%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(36)	(1,074)

How many of your children attend Guilderland public schools? (Question 42)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=2.1$ **p=.5442** (Not Significant)

LEVEL OF EDUCATION

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
High School Graduate or Less	26.3%	14.0%
Some College or Associates Degree	26.3%	25.6%
Bachelors Degree	22.2%	21.7%
Graduate Study or Degree	25.3%	38.6%
TOTAL %:	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(99)	(2,916)

What is the highest level of education you have completed? High school graduate or less, some college or associates degree, bachelors degree or graduate study or degree? (Question 43)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=14.5$ $p=.0023$ (*Significant*)

AGE OF RESPONDENT

AGE OF RESPONDENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
18 - 29	12.0%	3.3%
30 - 39	13.0%	17.7%
40 - 49	32.0%	27.8%
50 - 64	21.0%	29.6%
65 or Over	22.0%	21.6%
TOTAL % :	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(100)	(2,854)
MEAN:	48	52
MEDIAN:	45	50
RANGE:	18 to 89	20 to 98

*What is your age? (Question 44) -- (If Refused/No Opinion, ask Question 45)
In which of the following age groups do you belong? Are you 18-29 years old, 30-39, 40-49, 50-64 or 65 or over? (Question 45)*

Significance Test: $\chi^2=24.3$ p=.0000 (Significant)

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Under \$25,000	3.6%	8.2%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	41.0%	24.8%
\$50,000 - \$75,000	18.1%	25.4%
\$75,000 - \$100,000	21.7%	18.9%
Over \$100,000	15.7%	22.6%
TOTAL % :	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(83)	(2,718)

Which category best describes the total annual household income for all persons living in your household? Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$50,000, \$50,000-\$75,000, \$75,000-\$100,000, or over \$100,000? (Question 46)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=14.1$ p=.0069 (Significant)

GENDER OF RESPONDENT

GENDER OF RESPONDENT	1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
	PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
Men	42.0%	50.2%
Women	58.0%	47.4%
Both Filled Out	N/A	2.4%
TOTAL % :	100.0%	100.0%
(N)	(100)	(2,906)

Significance Test: $\chi^2=6.0$ p=.0499 (Significant)

ZIP CODE

		1999 TOWN OF GUILDERLAND	
ZIP CODE		PHONE SURVEY	MAIL SURVEY
12009	- Altamont	23.0%	13.4%
12084	- Guilderland	18.0%	6.9%
12085	- Guilderland Center	3.0%	0.9%
12159	- Slingerlands	4.0%	7.5%
12186	- Voorheesville	0.0%	2.9%
12203	- Albany	27.0%	34.2%
12206	- Albany	0.0%	0.1%
12208	- Albany	0.0%	0.1%
12209	- Albany	1.0%	0.0%
12303	- Schenectady	23.0%	31.9%
12306	- Schenectady	1.0%	2.2%
TOTAL %:		100.0%	100.0%
(N)		(100)	(2,926)

Finally, what is your zip code? (Question 47)?

Significance Test: $\chi^2=50.2$ $p=.0000$ (Significant)

**PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE
BY ZIP CODE**

(Source: Mail Survey)

		PRIORITY RATING SCORE* (SCALE OF 0 TO 100)			
ZIP CODE		PLAN TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER	PRESERVING OPEN SPACES	EXPANDING WATER & SEWER LINES	EXPANDING MASS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
TOTAL TOWN RESIDENTS		89	79	61	60
12203	- Albany	91	79	60	63
12303	- Schenectady	89	79	62	57
12009	- Altamont	86	79	62	64
12159	- Slingerlands	86	77	61	52
12084	- Guilderland	91	80	60	61
12186	- Voorheesville	89	79	64	57
12306	- Schenectady	93	73	66	50
Are differences statistically significant?		Yes	No	No	Yes
F		3.1	0.6	0.5	5.3
p		.0050	.7037	.7945	.0000

*Note: Score is based on a scale of 0 to 100 where very important=100, somewhat important=50, and not important=0.

PRIORITIES FOR GUILDERLAND'S FUTURE BY ZIP CODE

(Source: Mail Survey)

(continued)

PRIORITY RATING SCORE (SCALE OF 0 TO 100)

ZIP CODE	INCREASING ROAD CAPACITY	PUTTING IN MORE SIDEWALKS	PUTTING IN MORE BIKE PATHS	PUTTING IN MORE PARK AND RIDE LOTS
TOTAL TOWN RESIDENTS	55	50	49	37
12203 - Albany	55	54	49	40
12303 - Schenectady	54	46	49	34
12009 - Altamont	53	47	48	39
12159 - Slingerlands	58	55	56	36
12084 - Guilderland	53	54	47	39
12186 - Voorheesville	58	40	48	38
12306 - Schenectady	49	38	47	29
Are differences statistically significant?	No	Yes	No	Yes
F	0.7	6.6	1.5	2.9
p	.6508	.0000	.1725	.0078

*Note: Score is based on a scale of 0 to 100 where very important=100, somewhat important=50, and not important=0.

WILLING TO PAY AN INCREASE IN TAXES TO PRESERVE OPEN SPACES BY ZIP CODE

(Source: Mail Survey)

WILLING TO PAY AN INCREASE IN TAXES

ZIP CODE	WILLING	NOT WILLING	(N)
12009 - Altamont	57.2%	42.8%	(374)
12084 - Guilderland	62.7%	37.3%	(185)
12159 - Slingerlands	45.2%	54.8%	(210)
12186 - Voorheesville	44.7%	55.3%	(85)
12203 - Albany	51.0%	49.0%	(953)
12303 - Schenectady	51.7%	48.3%	(894)
12306 - Schenectady	42.0%	57.4%	(61)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

Significance Test: $\chi^2=20.8$ $p=.0020$ (Significant)

ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS

IN UNDEVELOPED AREAS OF TOWN BY ZIP CODE

(Source: Mail Survey)

DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS

ZIP CODE	ENCOURAGE	DISCOURAGE	(N)
12009 - Altamont	34.5%	65.5%	(371)
12084 - Guilderland	36.6%	63.4%	(191)
12159 - Slingerlands	53.8%	46.2%	(210)
12186 - Voorheesville	41.3%	58.8%	(80)
12203 - Albany	37.5%	62.5%	(945)
12303 - Schenectady	45.8%	54.2%	(891)
12306 - Schenectady	52.5%	47.5%	(61)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

Significance Test: $\chi^2=38.6$ p=.0000 (Significant)

**ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING
IN UNDEVELOPED AREAS OF TOWN**

(Source: Mail Survey)

		DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING		
ZIP CODE		ENCOURAGE	DISCOURAGE	(N)
12009	- Altamont	34.3%	65.7%	(367)
12084	- Guilderland	38.6%	61.4%	(184)
12159	- Slingerlands	40.3%	59.7%	(206)
12186	- Voorheesville	41.6%	58.4%	(77)
12203	- Albany	44.5%	55.5%	(919)
12303	- Schenectady	37.5%	62.5%	(863)
12306	- Schenectady	41.7%	58.3%	(60)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

Significance Test: $\chi^2=15.2$ p=.0190 (Significant)

SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD WATER BY ZIP CODE

(Source: Mail Survey)

		SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD WATER			
ZIP CODE		TOWN WATER	OWN WELL	BOTH	(N)
12009	- Altamont	48.0%	47.5%	4.5%	(381)
12084	- Guilderland	85.1%	8.9%	5.9%	(202)
12159	- Slingerlands	98.6%	0.5%	0.9%	(218)
12186	- Voorheesville	83.5%	14.1%	2.4%	(85)
12203	- Albany	90.8%	0.9%	8.2%	(994)
12303	- Schenectady	56.2%	12.7%	31.1%	(932)
12306	- Schenectady	39.7%	39.7%	20.6%	(63)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

Significance Test: $\chi^2=963.2$ p=.0000 (Significant)

HOUSEHOLD SEWAGE BY ZIP CODE

(Source: Mail Survey)

		HOUSEHOLD SEWAGE		
ZIP CODE		TOWN SEWER	OWN SEPTIC	(N)
12009	- Altamont	37.8%	62.2%	(381)
12084	- Guilderland	91.5%	8.5%	(201)
12159	- Slingerlands	82.6%	17.4%	(218)
12186	- Voorheesville	80.0%	20.0%	(85)
12203	- Albany	98.4%	1.6%	(994)
12303	- Schenectady	89.0%	11.0%	(930)
12306	- Schenectady	60.3%	39.7%	(63)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

Significance Test: $\chi^2=822.8$ $p=.0000$ (*Significant*)

HOME OWNERSHIP
BY ZIP CODE
(Source: Mail Survey)

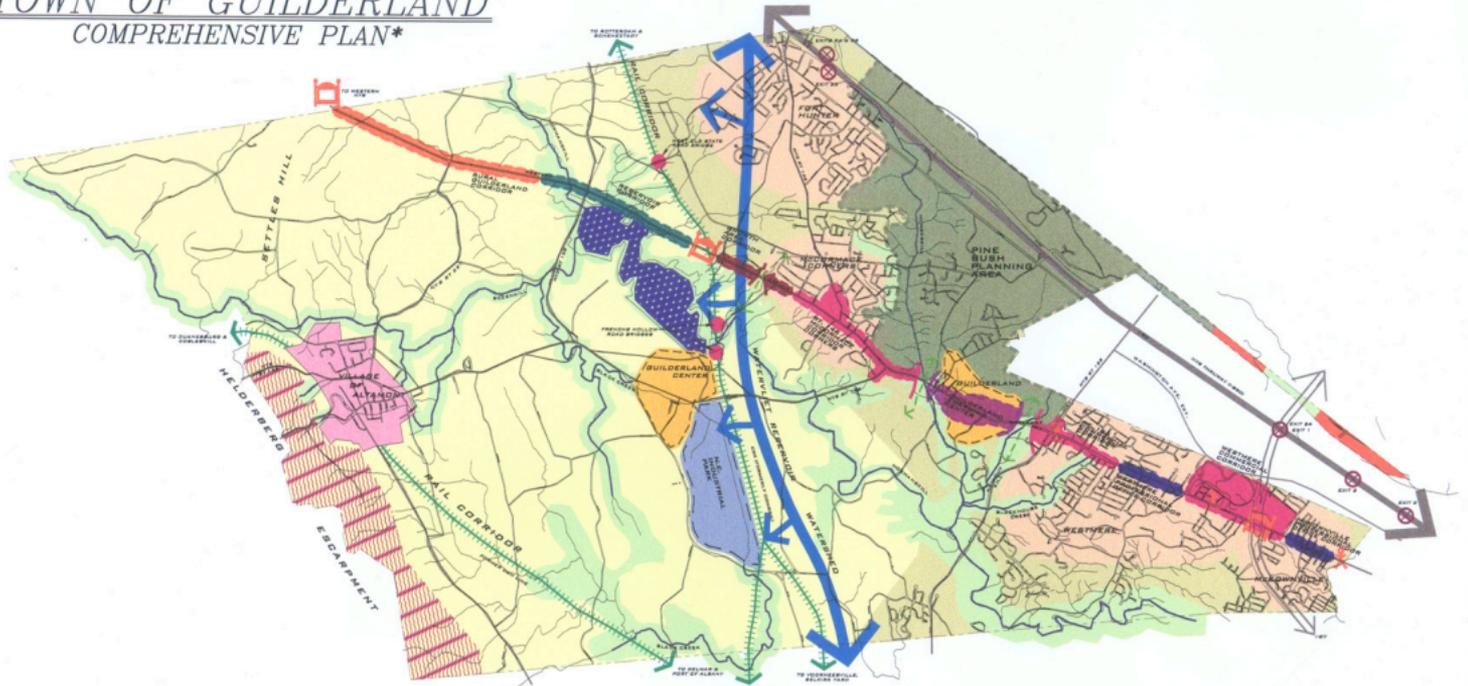
ZIP CODE	HOME OWNERSHIP		
	OWN	RENT	(N)
12009 - Altamont	96.9%	3.1%	(386)
12084 - Guilderland	78.6%	21.4%	(201)
12159 - Slingerlands	93.2%	6.8%	(219)
12186 - Voorheesville	98.8%	1.2%	(85)
12203 - Albany	86.7%	13.3%	(991)
12303 - Schenectady	98.6%	1.4%	(919)
12306 - Schenectady	96.7%	3.3%	(60)

Note: Rows sum to 100%.

Significance Test: $\chi^2=168.1$ p=.0000 (Significant)

TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN*



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| RURAL GUILDERLAND | PINE BUSH PLANNING AREA | PROFESSIONAL OFFICE CORRIDOR |
| SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL | HELDERBERG ESCARPMENT | COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR |
| NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS | RESERVOIR WATERSHED | COMMUNITY SERVICE CORRIDOR |
| GUILDERLAND EMERGING CENTER | RAILROAD | PRESERVATION CORRIDOR |
| GUILDERLAND CENTER | STREAMS | AGRICULTURAL CORRIDOR |
| VILLAGE OF ALTAMONT | CLOSED ROAD BRIDGES | GROWTH CORRIDOR |
| N.E. INDUSTRIAL PARK | ROADS | GATEWAY |
| CONSERVATION AREAS | | PEDESTRIAN CROSSING |
| COMMERCIAL LAND USE | | GREENWAY |

ROUTE 20 CORRIDOR

*THIS PLAN IS A GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF CURRENT AND FUTURE LAND USES IN THE TOWN. ALL BOUNDARIES AND OTHER DEMARCATIONS ARE CONCEPTUAL AND DO NOT REFLECT THE ACTUAL LOCATION OF LOT LINES, ZONING DISTRICTS, NATURAL RESOURCES, OR OTHER JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES.

FIGURE NO.16



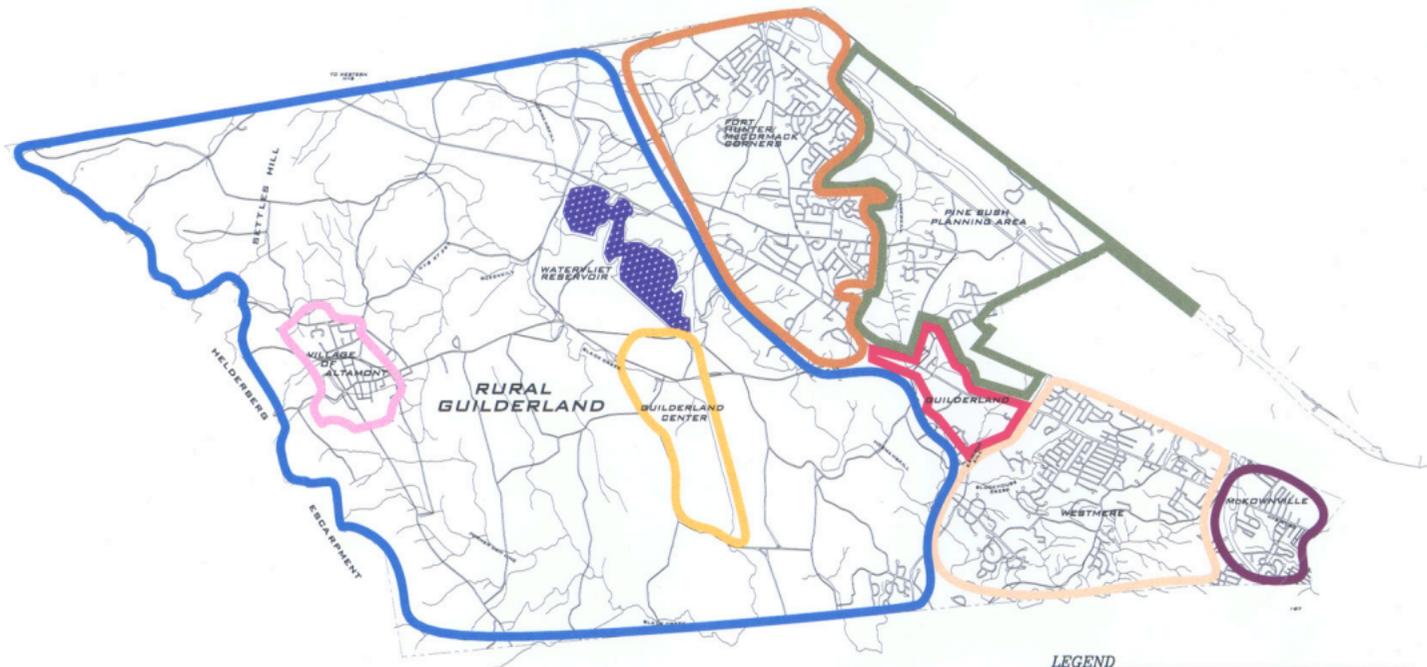
CHA CLOUGH HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LLP
 SCENIC, LANDSCAPE PLANNING & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
 100 WOODSIDE CIRCLE - ALBANY, NEW YORK - 12205
 P.O. BOX 5289 518-483-1000

Behan Planning Associates
 Planning Community Partners

Doc Project No. 08178

TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

PLANNING AREAS



LEGEND

PLANNING AREAS	
—	VILLAGE OF ALTAMONT
—	RURAL GUILDERLAND
—	GUILDERLAND CENTER
—	FORT HUNTER MCQUINNACK CORNERS
—	PINE BUSH PLANNING AREA
—	WESTMERE
—	MCKOYVILLE
—	GUILDERLAND



CHA CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LLP
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 P.O. BOX 5399

099 Project No. 08713

Bchan Planning Associates
 Planning Community Futures

"THIS PLAN IS A GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION.
 ALL BOUNDARIES AND OTHER DEMARICATIONS ARE CONCEPTUAL
 AND DO NOT REFLECT THE ACTUAL LOCATION OF LOT LINES,
 ZONING DISTRICTS, NATURAL RESOURCES, OR OTHER
 JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES."

FIGURE NO. 17