

# TOWN AND VILLAGE OF PARISH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



ADOPTED \_\_\_\_\_



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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **The Comprehensive Planning Committee**

The Parish Joint Planning Board, acting as a comprehensive plan committee, began work in 2008 to develop an updated joint comprehensive plan for the Town and Village of Parish. The board was charged with studying the community and reporting to the Town and Village Boards their recommendations in a comprehensive plan.

The last comprehensive plan for the community was adopted in 2001. Previous to that document, a plan for the Town was prepared in the early 1980s. This was a multi-town plan prepared by the Salmon Rivers Cooperative Planning Board and Conservation Council, and included the Town and Village of Parish as well as the Towns of Albion, Amboy, and Orwell and the Villages of Altmar and Parish.

### **Purpose Of The Plan**

The purpose of the plan is to provide a guide for the physical development of the town/village area for the future. It prepares for the new waves of residential, commercial and industrial development that Parish may face as the growth of the Syracuse Metropolitan Area continues to expand into the region. The plan will provide a framework for the existing zoning and land subdivision controls. It will also help assure that the growth of the area will be in concert with existing plans for future water, sewer and road development. Finally, it is hoped that other governments (state, county, and other local governments) will find the plan useful in shaping their future development activities. It is the purpose of this plan to help others to plan and develop in accord with the desires of the citizens of the community. The authority to undertake such a plan is outlined in NYS Town Law Section 272-A and Village Law Section 7-722.

### **Community Surveys**

There have been two general community opinion surveys conducted in the town/village over the years. The first in about 1978, and another in 1992. A brief questionnaire was conducted in 2009 along with a community visioning session. This session examined community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

### **Periodic Review And Update Of The Plan**

It is the recommendation of the Planning Committee that this plan be periodically reviewed and updated by the Town and Village Boards every five years. A five year review will refresh the Town and Village Boards' perspectives on the longer range issues affecting

Parish, and help to reinforce the link between day-to-day development decisions and longer range Town and Village policies. In addition, a periodic update will keep the plan current with the ever-changing conditions of the town and village without the need for large-scale planning efforts.

## **The Organization Of This Document**

This document is organized into the following parts:

### *Part I. Community Profile*

This section presents a compilation of relevant facts about the physical make-up of the town/village, along with other facts and trends that bear a direct relationship on its future physical development. This is the basic set of underlying facts by which the plan was prepared.

### *Part II. Goals and Strategies*

This section presents the community goals which reflect the general desires for the direction in which the citizens of the Town/Village wish to go, based upon public meetings and a community visioning session.

### *Part III. Development Plan*

This appendix is composed of a blueprint for the physical development of the town/village based upon implementing the goals of Part II. This includes a description of how the town/village should develop for the next few decades, as well as a map detailing several identified development character areas.

## **PART I. COMMUNITY PROFILE**

### **General Background**

The Town of Parish is presently defined by New York State law as a second class town (population under 10,000). It was established on March 20, 1828, being formerly a part of the Town of Mexico. The Town is named after David Parish, a land proprietor and early landowner.

The town is located in central Oswego County, in Central New York State. It is approximately eight miles southeast of Lake Ontario, 24 miles north of City of Syracuse, 15 miles east of Oswego, 30 miles northwest of Rome, and 50 miles west of the Adirondack Mountains. The Town is approximately 25,000 acres. Parish is bordered on the north by the Town of Albion; on the east by the Town of Amboy; on the west by the Town of Mexico; and on the south by the Towns of Hastings and West Monroe.

The Village of Parish, incorporated in 1883, is in the southwestern part of the town.

The intersection of Main St. and Railroad St. in the Village - 1913



## **HISTORY**

### ***Early Settlement***

Although no permanent Native American settlements were located within the Town of Parish, the area was part of the hunting grounds of the Oneida Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy. Permanent settlement in Parish began with the arrival of families from New England in search of arable land. Rev. Gamaliel Barnes and his son-in-law Stephen D. Morse settled on lot 60 in the extreme southwest corner of the Town in 1803. Barnes, a Baptist minister who lived to be 96, built the first log cabin, the first barn, and the first frame dwelling in Parish. David Parish, after whom the town was named, acquired most of the Town's land (then known as Survey Township #23 of the Scriba Patent) from George Scriba in 1822. Previously in 1805, Scriba sold lesser tracts in the northeast corner of the Town to Richard Stockton and Joseph Bloomfield. The community grew steadily with the exception of the period between 1810 and 1820 due to the War of 1812 and the climatic hardships of 1816, known as the "the year without a summer." Ephraim E. Ford opened the first store in 1829, and, in the same year, Isam Simons built the first tavern.

### ***Economy***

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, lumbering provided most of the settlers' income. By 1867 eleven saw mills and four shingle mills were located on the North and South Branches of the Little Salmon River. Barrel manufacturing for the Syracuse salt trade was an important sideline of the lumber industry. Prominent local businesses established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that remain today are the Harter Funeral Home and the F.E. Miller & Sons Lumber Company. About 1865, dairying superseded the lumber industry in importance. Farmers built large barns and a multitude of outbuildings. Several cheese factories also were established. By 1917, Parish contained more than 200 farms.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, natural resource based industry has been primarily replaced by the service industry sector of restaurants, convenience stores, auto repair operations and small retail shops. Fewer than 25 farms remain today. Most farmland has reverted to woodland or has been subdivided into residential building lots.

### ***Transportation***

In 1793, George Scriba hired Benjamin Wright to survey a road from Constantia on Oneida Lake to Mexico Point on Lake Ontario. The road followed an already existing Native American trail and cut through the southwest corner of Parish to intersect the main north-south trail at what is today Colosse. Parts of this road are still used today in Parish, as Ward Drive, Dean Drive, Perry Drive and Harrington Drive. Parish's major east west road, State Route 69, also follows a former trail from Rome to Mexico and was



completed around 1800. In 1870-71, the Syracuse Northern Railroad was built through Town. Today the tracks are operated by CSX. In 1961, Interstate 81 was opened providing for rapid transit to Syracuse, Watertown and points beyond, allowing many metropolitan commuters to settle in Parish.

### ***Institutions***

Parish has always supported several churches. The Methodists established a congregation in 1869 and today's church dates from 1900. The Presbyterian Church was built in 1893. The Faith Church of the Nazarene dates from 1980. St. Anne's Catholic Church, formerly an Odd Fellows Hall and a movie theater, served the community from 1952 until 2006.

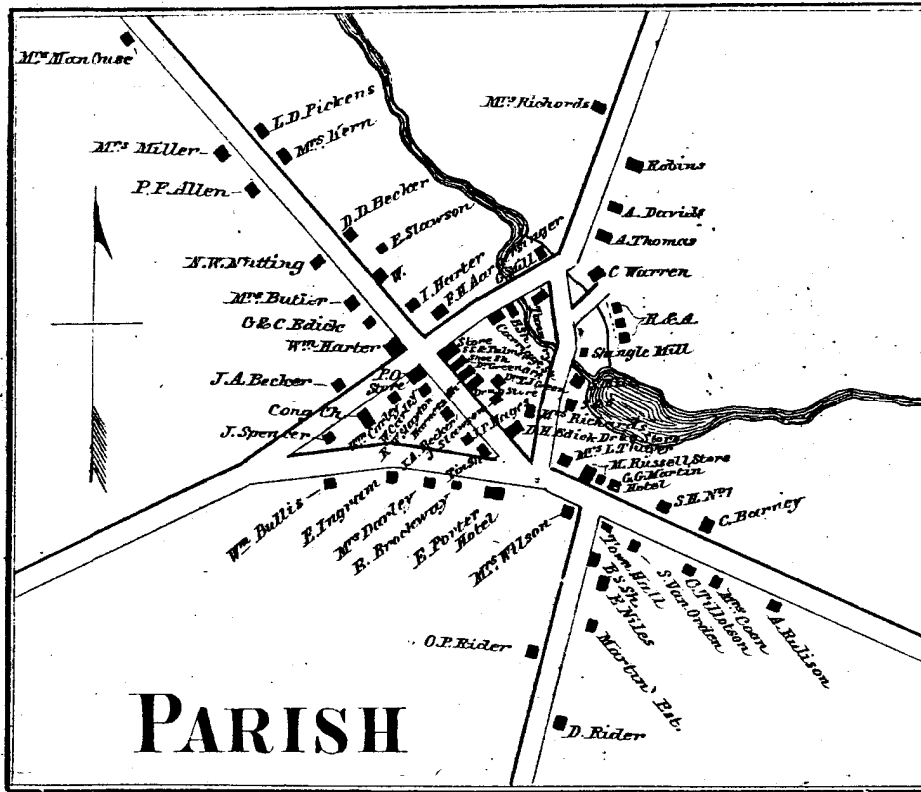
The first frame school was built on small lot 60 in 1814. In 1882 the Parish Union Free School and Academy was organized. By 1895, the town contained thirteen "one room" school districts. Parish High School consolidated with those of Altmar and Williamstown in the early 1950s to form Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central (APW). The town currently contains three schools, Parish Elementary on Union Street in the Village, and the APW Middle and High Schools on County Route 22, just south of the Albion town line.

Several commercial and public areas provide recreational activities in the Town. These include the William E. Merrill Community Park, an Oswego County Reforestation Area, the Happy Valley State Wildlife Management Area (shared with Albion, Amboy and Williamstown), the East Coast Resorts Campground, and the Harmony Riders Association Campground. These sites provide hunting, fishing, camping and playground opportunities among others. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, two generous benefactors, Samuel E. Mills and Nathan A. Petrie donated several public structures to the Village, including the Village Park in 1911, the chapel at Pleasant Lawn Cemetery in 1917, the public library in 1923, the village clock in 1923 and the public gymnasium in 1925.

### ***Present and Future Settlement***

Today Parish is characterized as a bedroom community with many commuters traveling to Syracuse, Watertown, Oswego or Rome. While the population of the Town has grown during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Village has lost population. Parish must strive to integrate new development, historic preservation and the provision of public services with the preservation of natural and cultural resources as it enters the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Downtown Parish in the late 1860s



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Population

There has been growth in the combined Town and Village of Parish over the 1990-2000 period. This growth occurred inside and outside of the village. The town-outside-village area population increased 11.8% while the Village population increased 8.2%, combining for an overall 11.1% population increase to the area.

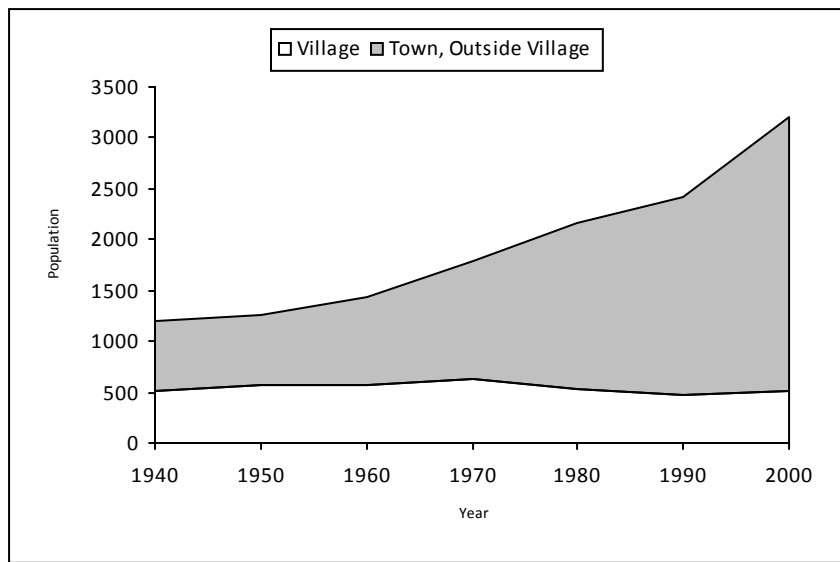
Since 1940, the town's population has increased substantially (see Figure 2). Between 1940 and 2000 the population in the Town, excluding the Village, increased from 678 to 2,182 (222%). During the same period, the population of the Village decreased slightly from 521 to 512 (down 2%). The village tends to exhibit a pattern of alternating population growth and decline by decade.

Table 1. Distribution of Population

	1990	2000	# Change	% Change
Town of Parish including Village	2,425	2,694	269	11.1
Town of Parish Outside of Village	1,952	2,182	230	11.8
Parish Village	473	512	39	8.2

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 1

Figure 2. Town and Village Population Ratio

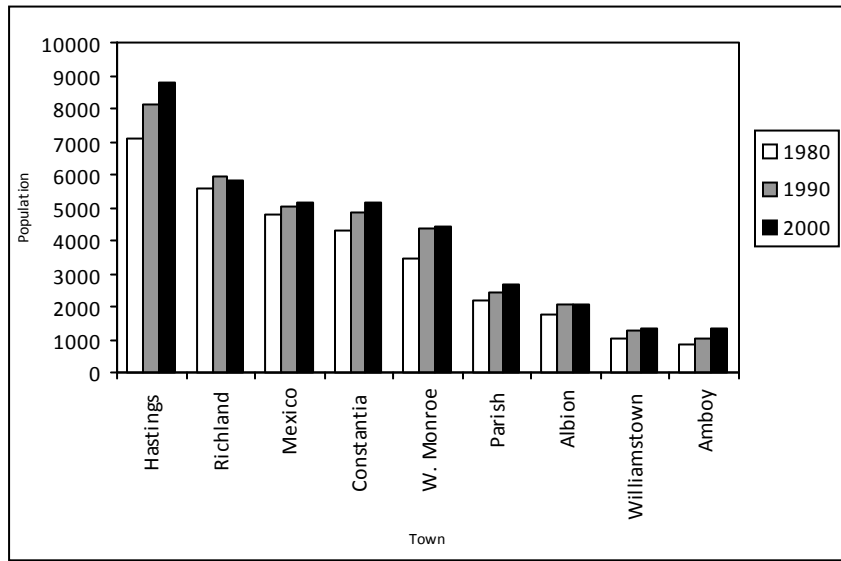


Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 1

## Regional Population Changes

Parish is in the middle range in terms of regional population growth during the 1980-2000 time period. Most of the towns to the south, in the Syracuse metropolitan area, grew at significantly faster rates, while towns to the north tended to grow more slowly. As can be seen from Figure 3, Parish is one of the less populated towns in the immediate region.

Figure 3. Population Changes in Near and Adjacent Towns



Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 1

## Household Size

Table 4 shows the number of households in the town and the village in 1990 and 2000. The number of households grew while the average household size shrank. This is a national trend driven by decreasing family size. Average household size is smaller in the village than in the town and both are slightly larger than Oswego County's average household size.

Table 4. Household Size

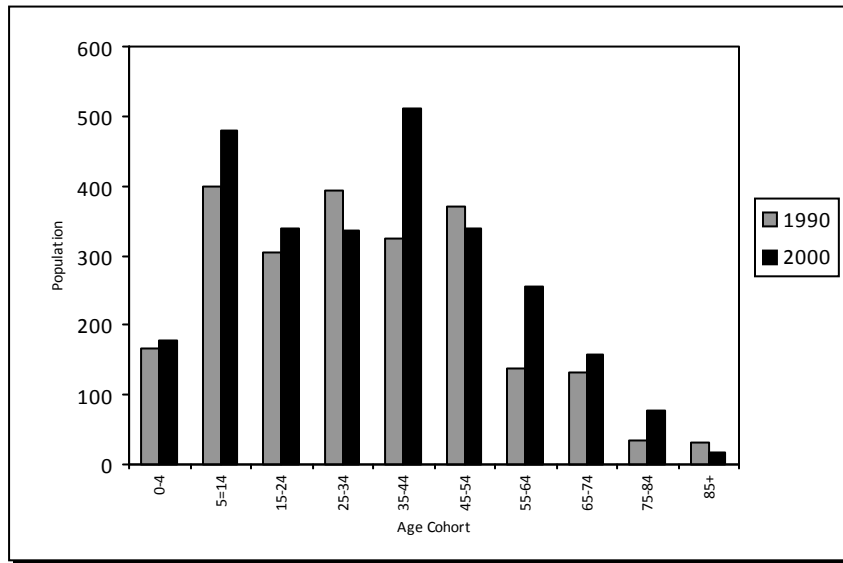
	# Households 1990	Average Household Size	# Households 2000	Average Household Size
Parish Town (outside Village)	639	3.05	764	2.86
Parish Village	168	2.82	191	2.68
Oswego County	42,434	2.76	45,522	2.60

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 1

## Age

The age distribution in the town, including the village showed some interesting changes between 1990 and 2000. The bar chart below (see Figure 5) illustrates that there were significant increases in people in the 35-44 and 55-64 age categories. The only cohorts that saw decreases were the 25-34, 45-54 and 85+ categories.

Figure 5. Age Distribution



Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 1

## Income

Table 6 illustrates the change in the number of persons living below the poverty level in the Town of Parish, including the village. The percentage of persons living below the poverty level almost doubled between 1990 and 2000, but is now more in line with the figures for Oswego County and New York State.

Table 7 illustrates median household income (MHI) of the Town and Village compared to Oswego County and NYS. The 1990 figures are adjusted for inflation by the Consumer Price Index. Census figures show median household income for the town and the village decreasing during the 1990s. However, the 1990 figure reported by the census has been thought to be questionably high. MHI also dropped for the County and the State during this time period.

Table 6. Percent of Population Below the Poverty Level

	1990	2000	Percentage change
Parish (T&V)	6.7	12.7	+88.1
Oswego County	11.2	13.5	+20.5
NYS	12.7	14.2	+11.8

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

Table 7. Median Household Income

	1990	2000
Parish T&V	51907	37802
Oswego County	38317	36598
NYS	43431	43393

*Note: 1990 figures are adjusted for inflation.*

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

### Educational Attainment

According to the 2000 Census, the percentage of Parish residents (25 years or older) with a high school diploma is lower than that of the County and the State. The percentage of residents with bachelors and masters degrees is more in line with the County, but less than that of the State.

Table 8. Educational Attainment

	% H.S. Diploma	% Bachelors Degree	% Masters Degree
Parish T&V	58	9	2
Oswego County	80	8	3
NYS	79	27	12

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

### Employment

Table 9 illustrates the employment of town and village residents based on the industry in which they work. The top three industries in 2000 were: 1) manufacturing, 2) education, and 3) retail. The top three industries in 1990 were: 1) retail trade, 2) construction, and 3) durable goods manufacturing.

Table 10 illustrates the employment of town and village residents based on employment class. The top three classes in 2000 were: 1) private for profit, 2) local government, and 3) state government.

Table 9. Parish Employment by Industry - 2000

Industry	Total	Percentage
Manufacturing, nondurable goods	261	22
Education/health/social services	257	21
Retail	153	13
Construction	81	7
Transportation/warehousing/utilities	85	7
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	80	7
Professional	60	5
Public administration	59	5
Information	47	4
Finance, insurance, and real estate	48	4
Other professional and related services	33	3
Wholesale	26	2
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	12	1

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

Table 10. Employment by Class of Worker

Class of Worker	Total	Percentage
Private for profit wage and salary workers	796	66
Local government workers	145	12
State government workers	82	7
Self-employed workers	61	5
Private not-for-profit wage and salary workers	52	4
Federal government workers	44	4
Unpaid family workers	10	1
Agriculture	12	1

*Note: Unpaid family workers includes people who worked 15 hours or more without pay in a business or on a farm operated by a relative.*

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

## Transportation To Work

Table 11 illustrates the place of work of town and village residents. Approximately 78% of workers in the town and village reported working outside the town limits, confirming Parish's status as a bedroom community. These figures were very similar in 1990.

Table 12 illustrates the means of transportation to work of town and village residents. 86% of all workers reported driving alone to work in 2000. These figures were very similar in 1990.

Table 11. Place of Work

Place of Work	All Town/Village Residents
Work in Town/Village	250
Work outside Town/Village	927

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

Table 12. Means of Transportation to Work

Means of Travel to Work	All Town/Village Residents	Percentage
Drove Alone	979	86
Carpooled	127	11
Public Transportation	8	1
Walked	28	2

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

## SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town of Parish is served by three school districts: Altmar-Parish-Williamstown (approx. 70% of the Town), Central Square (approx. 20%) and Mexico (approx. 5%).

Altmar - Parish - Williamstown Central School District operates two elementary schools (Altmar and Parish) and one middle/high school (Altmar - Parish – Williamstown). The district plans to close the Altmar and Parish elementary schools after the 2011/2012 school year and create a new elementary school at the middle/high school campus. Total district enrollment was 1,402 in 2008/09. This was a 25% decrease from 1,869 in 1994/95.

Central Square School District operates five elementary schools (Brewerton, Central Square, Cleveland, Aura A. Cole (Constantia) and Hastings-Mallory); one middle school (Millard W. Hawk Jr. High School (Central Square)) and one high school (Paul V. Moore High School (Central Square)). Total district enrollment was 4,599 in 2008/09. This was a 4% decrease from 4,801 in 1994/95.

Mexico Schools operates three elementary schools (Mexico, New Haven and Palermo); one middle school (Mexico) and one high school (Mexico Academy) Total district enrollment was 2,349 in 2008/09. This was a 17% decrease from 2,815 in 1994/95.

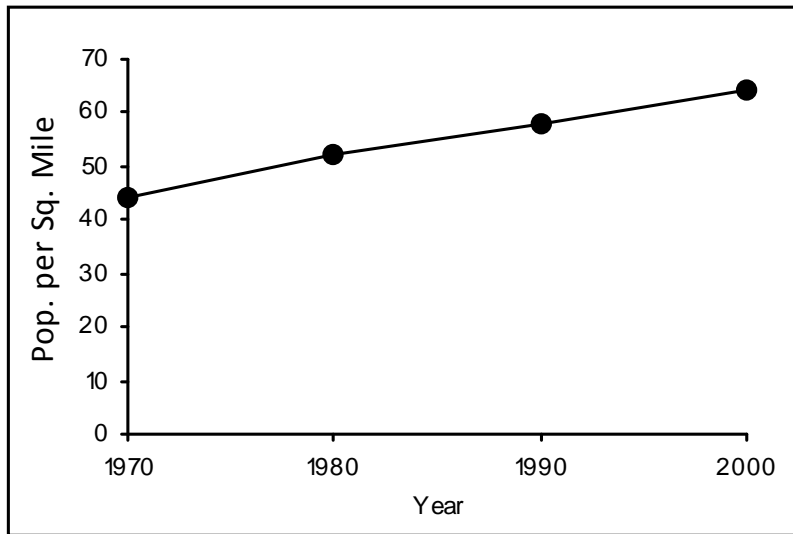


## LAND USE

### Population Density

The Town of Parish (including the Village) is a rural town, based on a generally accepted rural population density standard of 150 persons or less per square mile. Population density has increased from 44 persons per square mile in 1970 to 64 in 2000. Population density in the Village dropped during that time period, from 453 persons per square mile in 1970 to 366 in 2000.

Figure 13. Population Density – 1970 - 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

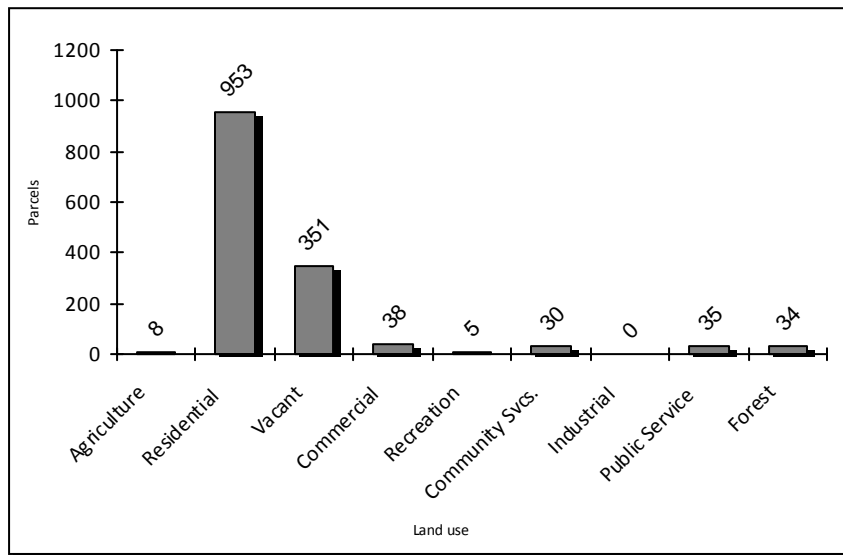
### Property Taxes

Full taxable value (tax base) of real property in Parish (town including village) was \$88,977,545 in 2007. In 2007, village property owners paid \$40.53 per \$1000 assessed value in property taxes (this includes village, town, county, and school taxes). Town property owners paid \$34.07 to 37.25 per \$1,000 assessed value depending on which school district their property was located in.

### Land Use Distribution

The majority (66%) of tax parcels in the town as a whole were assessed as residential in 2007. The next largest categories were vacant land (24%), and commercial land (3%).

Figure 14. Parcels by Land Use Code 2007



Source: NYS Dept. of Real Property Services

*Note: Definition are as follows:*

*Agricultural - Property used for the production of crops or livestock.*

*Residential - Property used for human habitation. Living accommodations such as hotels, motels, and apartments are in the Commercial category.*

*Vacant Land - Property that is not in use, is in temporary use, or lacks permanent improvement.*

*Commercial - Property used for the sale of goods and/or services.*

*Recreation & Entertainment - Property used by groups for recreation, amusement, or entertainment.*

*Community Services - Property used for the well being of the community.*

*Industrial - Property used for the production and fabrication of durable and nondurable man-made goods.*

*Public Services - Property used to provide services to the general public.*

*Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks - Reforested lands, preserves, and private hunting and fishing clubs.*

## PART II – GOALS AND STRATEGIES

This section of the comprehensive plan presents issues, goals, and strategies that address ten topical areas – village revitalization, transportation, housing, parks and recreation, historic preservation, rural character, natural resources, economic development, infrastructure, and community facilities. It is intended that responsibility for pursuing these strategies will be that of various town and village groups, including the town and village boards, the planning board, the CAC, ad hoc committees and community volunteers. ***It is highly recommended that the community prioritize each strategy, decide how each strategy will be implemented, and determine which element of government will be responsible.***

### VILLAGE REVITALIZATION

The Village of Parish, like most communities in New York State, has a downtown that is in need of improvement. Some of the reasons for the decline of these areas include: excessive costs of maintenance, the need for off-street parking in an auto-oriented culture, property tax assessment that penalizes building maintenance and the trend toward big box and chain retail shopping.

According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, “the need to revitalize downtown commercial districts is clear. A healthy, viable downtown is crucial to the heritage, economic health and civic pride of the entire community for several reasons. A healthy downtown retains and creates jobs. A healthy downtown also means a stronger tax base; long-term revitalization establishes capable businesses that use public services and provide tax revenues for the community. A revitalized downtown increases the community’s options for goods and services, whether for basic staples like clothing, food and professional services or for less traditional functions such as housing or entertainment. Finally, revitalized downtowns are symbols of community caring and a high quality of life, factors that influence corporate decisions to locate to a community.”

#### Main Street Landscape Project

A downtown improvement plan was completed for Parish in 2001. The plan included streetscape and parking improvements and façade renovation plans for a number of buildings in the downtown core. Some of the recommended improvements will be completed by NYS DOT in a major resurfacing project for Main Street (NYS Route 69) scheduled for 2011. The project will include new sidewalks and curbing. The intersection of Church Street and Main Street will also be realigned based on the recommendation of the downtown plan study.

These improvements, along with updated zoning standards will go a long way in improving and preserving the physical appearance and function of the village.

### Village Events

The Chamber of Commerce holds a number of special events in Parish throughout the year. These include Parish Irish Days, a Community Garage Sale, a weekly Farmers Market, an Olde Home Days, a Fall Festival, a Community Banquet, and a Holiday Tree Lighting. These events create a sense of community in Parish and bring in visitors from outlying areas as well.

### **GOAL A: REVITALIZE AND ENHANCE THE VILLAGE.**

#### **STRATEGIES:**

**Encourage context sensitive development (building size, massing, placement) through design standards in village zoning law.**

**Preserve the established edges/development boundaries of the village.**

**Allow higher housing density in the village and restrict overall housing density in the town.**

**Implement the downtown improvement plan addressing street trees, signage, sidewalks, parking, façades, commercial infill potential, and walkability.**

**Restrict development to appropriate uses of appropriate scale.**

**Concentrate town and village services and facilities in the village core.**

**Restrict development near Interstate 81 to appropriate land uses (those that require easy access to 81 and those that would be incompatible in the village core) and establish design guidelines for these uses.**

## TRANSPORTATION

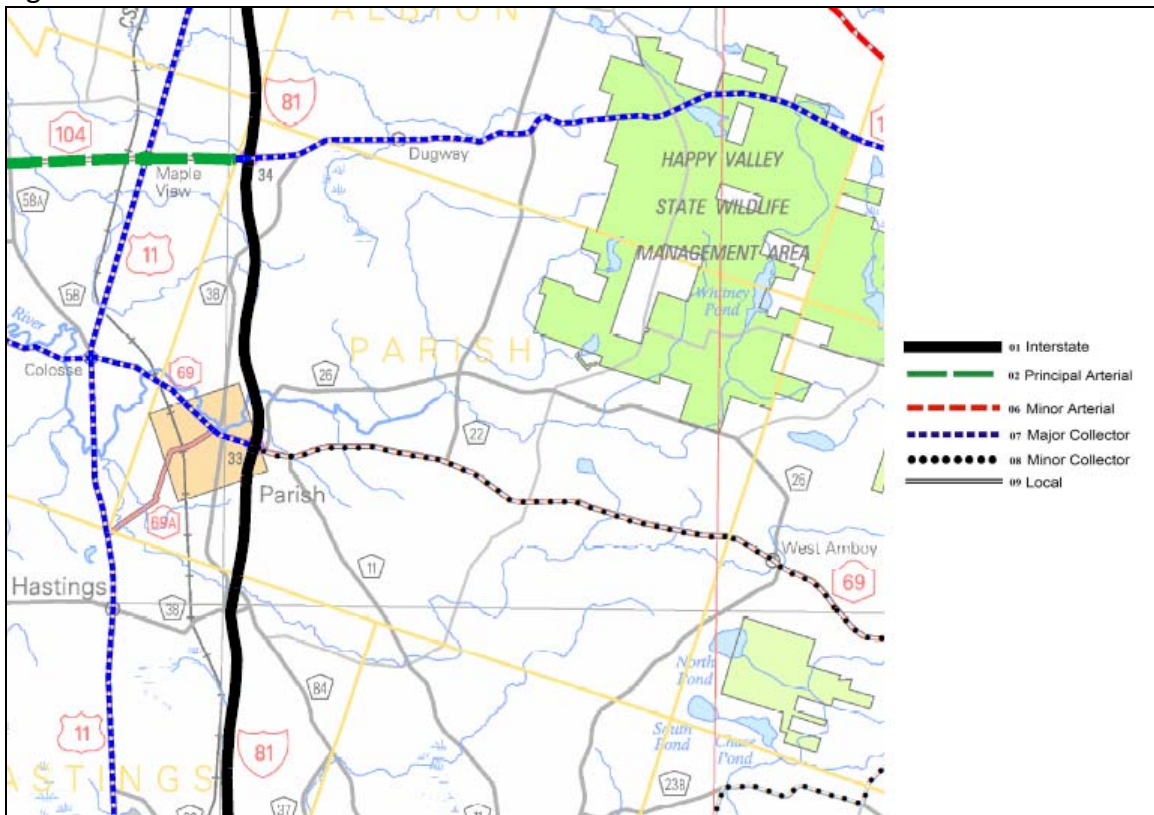
A safe and efficient transportation network is one of the most important services a government can provide. The system should accommodate not only motor vehicles, but pedestrians and bikes as well.

### Roads

Parish is serviced by approximately 82.6 miles of public roads. Of this total, approximately 17 miles (21%) are under state jurisdiction, approx. 20.1 miles (24%) are under county jurisdiction and approx. 45.5 miles (55%) are under local jurisdiction. Interstate 81 runs north and south through the western portion of the town and includes two exits – one at Rt. 69 and one at Rt. 104. Other major roads include Route 104, which runs from Niagara Falls to Williamstown, and Route 69, which connects Mexico to Utica. The map below illustrates the functional classification of roads in Parish and the surrounding towns.

The most travelled segment of road in Parish (with the exception of Rt. 81) is Route 69, or Main Street, between County Rt. 69A and Route 81. Average daily traffic there was measured at 4,950 in 2008.

Figure 16. Functional Classification of Roads In the Parish Area



Source: NYS Department of Transportation

Table 17. Average Annual Daily Traffic for Selected Roads

Road	From	To	AADT	Year
Bangall Rd	Red Mill Rd	CR 38	200	2006
Crim Rd	Rt 69	CR 26	100	1999
Cheese Factory Rd	SR 69	CR 26	600	2001
Mill St	North Railroad St	East Main St	300	1999
County Rt. 26	Smokey Hollow Rd	SR 69	700	2002
County Rt. 26	Cheese Factory Rd	Smokey Hollow Rd	900	1999
County Rt. 26	Amboy TL	Cheese Factory Rd	400	2002
County Rt. 26	Parish TL	SR 104	500	1999
Railroad St	SR 69	Parish TL	1100	2001
State Route 69	Mexico TL	Rt 69A	2310	2008
State Route 69	Rt 69A	Rt 81	4960	2008
State Route 69	RT 81	Amboy TL	3010	2008
State Route 104	RT 81	Albion TL	2360	2008

Note: TL = Town Line

Source: NYS Department of Transportation

### CSX Line

A freight railroad line, the Montreal Secondary, operated by CSX runs north-south through western Parish between Rt. 81 and Rt. 11. The line connects the CSX Chicago Main Line in Syracuse to the Canadian National Railway north of Massena.

### Sidewalks

Sidewalks are present along many street in the village. These are in varying states of disrepair, however. A quality network of sidewalks is extremely important for pedestrian safety and general quality of life for village residents. An inventory of sidewalk conditions should be undertaken and a plan for improvement and replacement developed.

## **GOAL B: PROVIDE AND ENHANCE MULTIPLE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.**

### **STRATEGIES**

**Require reduced access points and properly spaced curb cuts in new development, especially along State Routes 69 and 104.**

**Work to lessen the impact of truck traffic, especially at the Main Street/Rider Street intersection.**

**Coordinate improved parallel parking with NYSDOT Route 69 highway improvements in the village.**

**Develop low-volume and minimum maintenance road designation.**

**Undertake a sidewalk inventory for the village.**

**Prohibit cul-de-sac road construction in new subdivisions (unless necessary to protect natural features).**

## HOUSING

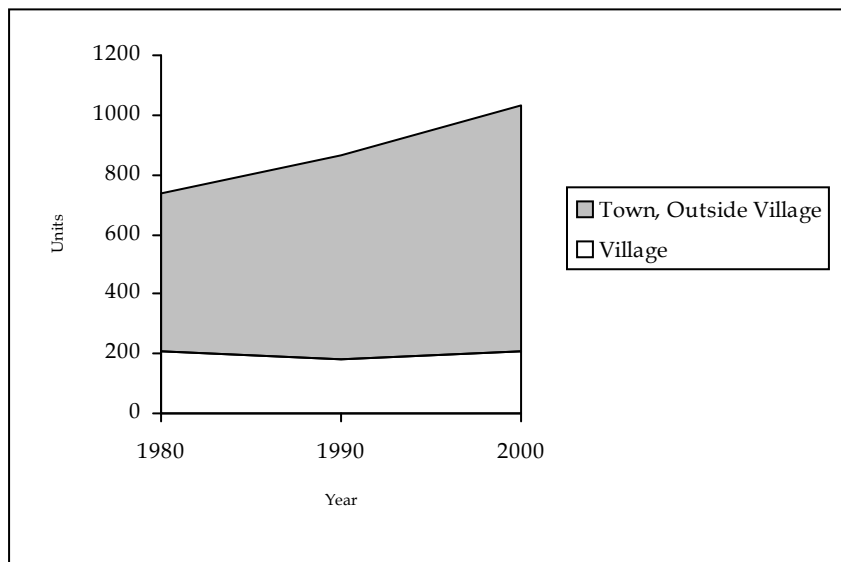
The availability of safe, affordable housing is of utmost importance to Parish's future. Decent housing is not only a key contributor to the quality of life of current residents, but is also necessary if the town and village are to attract new business and industry. The condition of a community's housing stock is an accurate indicator of its overall health.

### Housing Distribution and Age

Figure 18 illustrates the distribution of housing in the town and village as it changed over the 1980-2000 period. While the housing count grew for the Town as a whole, the count in the village dropped and then recovered during that time period. The Town, including the Village, had 1,034 total housing units in 2000.

The median year of construction for homes built in the Town of Parish including the village was 1975. A large portion of the housing stock (77%) was built after 1939. The median value of a home in the Town of Parish was \$69,800 in 2000. The median value was \$74,200 in Oswego County in 2000.

Figure 18. Distribution of Housing



Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 1



## Manufactured Housing

Table 19 illustrates the increase in the number of mobile homes over the 1980-2000 period. Manufactured housing made up 37% of the total housing stock in 2000.

Table 19. Manufactured Housing 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000	Increase from 1990 to 2000	2000 % of housing stock
Town Outside Village	112	196	306	+110	37%
Village	0	3	2	-1	1%
Total	112	199	308	+109	30%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Summary File 3

Mobile homes are a popular local affordable housing opportunity. They can create problems, however, when a preponderance of them in an area begins to discourage other higher valued housing types from locating in that area. The experience of many communities is that large numbers of unregulated mobile homes may have the effect of eroding the local tax base due to rapid depreciation and aesthetic deterioration. Mobile home design standards can help make mobile homes better neighbors to conventional housing. Design standards can make a significant difference to mobile home appearance. The most effective design considerations include providing 1) a pitched roof, 2) the exterior siding of traditional site-built homes, and 3) horizontal dimensions more approximating site-built homes. Proper site location along with accessory buildings and screening can significantly change the appearance of horizontal dimensions. These design improvements can make mobile homes fit much better into neighborhoods of conventional housing, protecting housing values and the community tax base.

### **GOAL C: PROVIDE FOR AND ENHANCE A VARIETY OF HOUSING OPORTUNITIES.**

#### **Strategies**

**Determine housing deficiencies through a housing needs assessment.**

**Investigate opportunities for grant and loan monies available for affordable housing development and repair.**

**Work with the Oswego County Housing Development Council to increase access to housing for village and town residents.**

**Pursue the development of rental housing in the village.**

**Aggressively pursue the development of senior citizen housing in the village.**

**Encourage the development of accessory apartments town-wide.**

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

Parks and trails are an essential component for quality of life for village and town residents. They provide a place for healthy active and passive recreation as well as contributing to the attractiveness of the landscape. A quality recreation system can contribute to economic development luring residents of adjacent communities and outlying areas to visit Parish.

### Merrill Park

Merrill Park is a 27 acre park operated by the town located south of the village on County Route 38. This park was initially developed by the Jaycees in 1967. Named after local doctor William Merrill, the park features basketball and tennis courts as well as baseball fields and great potential for the development of a nature trail.

### Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area

Happy Valley is an approximately 14 square mile Wildlife Management Area overseen by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation that lies in the northeastern portion of the town. The area includes Mosher Pond, St. Mary's Pond and Whitney Pond. Canoeing, kayaking and fishing are popular activities here as are hiking, snowshoeing, bird watching, hunting, and fishing.

### Snowmobile Trails

Several snowmobile trails are located in Parish, including a major State Funded Class A trails which connects the north shore of Oneida Lake with the Tug Hill plateau.

### Little Salmon River Paddling

A kayak/canoe launch is soon to be developed in the village along the Little Salmon River. The access should be heavily promoted by the village and town.

## **GOAL D: PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

**Study potential for greater recreational use of State and County lands.**

**Explore the development of other public active recreation areas within reach of the village, including a canoe/kayak launch along West Main Street.**

**Maintain and enhance recreation programs, especially for summer and off-school times.**

**Explore opportunities to expand the County greenway trail system in the Little Salmon River area.**

**Publicize the snowmobile trail spur and parking, without encouraging snowmobile traffic on village streets.**

**Develop hiking and cross country ski trails.**

**Encourage establishment and use of bicycle trails.**

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

A community's historic sites and structures provide a visible link to its past. Historic resources contribute greatly to Parish's sense of place and identity and provide clues as to how early residents lived and worked. As these resources are demolished, abandoned or allowed to deteriorate, this identity is slowly chipped away. Historic preservation makes sense economically as it boosts tourism in communities.

### Important Sites and Structures

An inventory of important sites and structures in Parish has been undertaken by the Heritage Foundation of Oswego. The inventory includes houses, commercial, public, and agricultural sites, churches and cemeteries, and engineering structures and is included as Appendix D. While the burden of protecting these properties lies primarily with individual building owners and landowners, several tools are available to help the community accomplish its preservation goal.

While no properties in the town or village are presently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is thought that the Mills and Petrie buildings may be eligible for inclusion as a scattered site district.

### Tax Incentives and Grants

One of the tools available to NYS communities is the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. Administered by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the program gives local governments access to grants, as well as technical assistance. Admission to the program requires the community to adopt a landmark preservation law, which regulates changes to historic properties.

Also available to communities with landmark preservation laws is section 444-a of the Real Property Tax Law, which authorizes a partial exemption from real property taxation resulting from increased assessed valuation for the alteration or rehabilitation of historic property.

Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are eligible for certain tax credits when restored. These are detailed at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## **GOAL E: RETAIN AND IMPROVE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE COMMUNITY.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

**Maintain a comprehensive, up-to-date list of important historic sites and structures.**

**Encourage the rehabilitation of historic sites and structures through property tax incentives.**

**Protect sites and structures through zoning site plan review and SEQR.**

**Pursue a multiple site nomination to the state and federal register for key sites and structures, especially Mills and Petrie donations.**

**Create a walking tour of historic properties.**

## **RURAL CHARACTER**

### The Importance of Agriculture and Forestry to Parish and Oswego County

Agriculture is important to the economy of the Oswego County and Tug Hill region. It is important not just for the farm jobs that are created, but also for the agri-business which supports farm operations. This natural resource is an important and valuable economic asset, which must be managed wisely.

Agriculture is important for non-economic reasons as well. The culture of the region is somewhat agriculturally oriented. Agriculture is responsible for the rural atmosphere that residents feel is important. This atmosphere is largely defined by rural landscapes composed of open space, farm fields and pastures, farm buildings and outbuildings, and rural lifestyles.

Challenges to agriculture in the region are the intrusion of nonfarm uses into traditional agricultural areas and the parcelization of the farms into smaller lots. Nonfarm uses mixed into agricultural areas can be a problem, particularly when they are residential in nature. Agriculture is an industry. It involves many activities which may impact residential living such as irregular hours of operation, the use of heavy machinery, the spraying of chemicals, the spreading of manure, and unpleasant noise, lights, and smells. Urban and suburban residents often move to rural areas and may not be aware of these aspects of rural life. Fortunately, NYS Farmland Protection laws are in place to provide farmers some protection against these complaints.

The reversion of farmland to forest, the regrowth of earlier logged forests and higher prices for logs and firewood over the past 30 years have resulted in an increase in logging and firewood enterprises which have provided employment for those so engaged as well as providing supplemental and/or emergency income to many owners of forested property.

### **GOAL F: MAINTAIN THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN.**

#### **STRATEGIES:**

**Restrict land uses in rural areas to those that are compatible with farming, forestry, and other open space uses.**

**Restrict building densities in rural areas with cluster or other density averaging zoning and subdivision techniques.**

**Protect significant rural landscape features (stone walls, tree lines) through zoning site plan review and subdivision review.**

**Protect scenic views from windmills and telecommunication towers.**

**Educate owners of forested land on appropriate management of such so that their values are perpetuated rather than denigrated over time.**

**Increase awareness of forest landowners on how to protect themselves from timber theft and on their rights and procedures for recovery of values when such occurs.**



## **WATER RESOURCES**

### Surface Waters (Flood Plains, Wetlands, Stream Corridors)

Floodplains have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These include only flood hazard areas which have a probability of flooding at least once in 100 years. These flood hazard areas are scattered through the town. The Little Salmon River stream corridor is also considered a flood hazard area throughout most of its length.

Certain major wetlands have been mapped by the Department of Conservation (DEC). These include only wetlands of greater than 12.4 acres. Wetland areas are extensive in Parish. Development projects located within 100 feet of these areas requires a DEC permit.

The DEC has classified stream corridors based on water quality. Streams are ranked AA, A, B, C, or D (AA being highest) based on existing or expected best usage. Disturbance of any streambed requires a DEC permit. Certain streams are utilized for outdoor recreational activities.

The DEC's Environmental Mapper website ([www.dec.ny.gov/imsmaps/ERM/index.htm](http://www.dec.ny.gov/imsmaps/ERM/index.htm)) is a great resource for determining wetland and stream classifications.

### Groundwater

Groundwater is water that has accumulated, over a period of time, beneath the surface of the ground and is the source of springs, wells, and aquifers. As growth continues in rural areas, there is an ever-increasing demand on groundwater resources to fulfill continuing needs of residents, farmers, and industries. Land use decisions can have significant and unanticipated impacts on groundwater and surface water resources. Adequate water supplies of high quality are necessary both for community use and local ecosystems. Lowering the water table can lead to the introduction of deeper water of poorer quality to shallower depths. In addition, in order to protect the source water's quality and quantity, a town must keep the region's "recharge" areas free from overdevelopment. Examining groundwater quantity issues to evaluate whether sufficient water is available for future development and generations is becoming a growing concern. The challenge is acting while things are in relatively good shape, not just for human use but for wildlife and ecological balance.

A development constraints map has been prepared as part of this study (see Appendix A). This map depicts areas deemed suitable for development by excluding lands which have flood hazards, major wetlands, are submerged, are publicly owned, or are further than 500 feet from a public highway. This map indicates that there are large areas of the town that are unsuitable for development and agriculture due to wetlands and public State and

County lands. There is, however, still a very significant amount of land well within close proximity to public highways that is suitable for further development.

**GOAL G: PRESERVE AND PROTECT WATER RESOURCES.**

**STRATEGIES:**

**Use zoning site plan review, subdivision review and SEQR to ensure that new development is sited to have the least possible impact on water quality and quantity.**

**Use on-site septic system capacity of soils as a determinant of minimum lot size in zoning laws.\***

**Consider groundwater withdrawal and recharge when establishing minimum lot size in zoning laws.**

**Require a buffer, through zoning laws, prohibiting new development within 50 feet of any stream or waterbody.**

**Require, through zoning laws, that new development in areas delineated by FEMA as Special Flood Hazard Areas conform to town and village flood hazard regulations.**

**Require, through zoning laws, that development activities conform to erosion and sedimentation control standards developed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the NYSDEC.**

\*a 2006 study completed for Dutchess County recommended a minimum lot size of 1.2 acres for the highest quality soils.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The town should seek to improve economic opportunities for its residents. The expansion of job opportunities would allow residents to work closer to their homes and reduce their need to commute long distances. A brighter economic future would also create an incentive for young people to remain in the community. A diverse economic base should be sought as it is more likely to survive the fluctuations in the national economy, such as rising gas prices or falling prices for agricultural products, that can wreak havoc on non-diverse local economies. Table 20 lists the businesses that were reported in the 2007 Economic Census for the Parish Zip Code (13131).

Table 20. Business Establishments in the Parish Zip Code 2007

NAICS Code	Description	Number
23	Construction	13
31	Manufacturing	1
42	Wholesale Trade	3
44	Retail Trade	3
48	Transportation & Warehousing	2
52	Finance & Insurance	5
53	Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	2
54	Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	3
56	Admin., Support, Waste Mgt., Remediation Services	2
61	Educational Services	1
62	Health Care & Social Assistance	2
71	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	1
72	Accommodation & Food Services	5
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	8

Source: US Economic Census

### Industrial Park

Operation Oswego County is attempting to develop an industrial park in the Village of Parish near the intersection of Routes 69 and 26. A conceptual site plan has been drawn for the 100 acre site. The lack of public water has hindered this plan however. It is thought this would be an ideal location for distribution operations with its location along Interstate 81. This project is considered a high priority in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy For Central New York, written by the Central NY Regional Planning and Development Board.

### Home Based Businesses

Home based businesses are becoming increasingly popular in the region. It is important to the health of the local economy to accommodate such business start-ups where the use can be demonstrated to be in harmony with the neighborhood, and will not detract from

or compete with the existing village center commercial area. Controls on the intensity of the use---site lighting, signs, parking, aesthetics, traffic generation, noise, and other such characteristics are important. The allowed use of the site must be clearly defined so that subsequent owners and changes in use do not alter the site so as to detract from the neighborhood.

**GOAL H: IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT.**

**STRATEGIES:**

**Conduct and maintain, through the Economic Development Task Force, an inventory of existing industrial and commercial sites (in use and vacant).**

**Complete a market analysis to determine potential opportunities for commercial development.**

**Advertise vacant commercial and industrial space through Operation Oswego County's website.**

**Work with Operation Oswego County to seek and encourage industrial development in Parish.**

**Encourage home based businesses that are compatible with adjacent residential uses.**

**Seek businesses that add value to agriculture and forestry products (example: maple syrup packaging, ag-tourism).**

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Community infrastructure such as sewer and water allows residents of densely developed areas such as villages to have affordable, abundant, and safe access to water and wastewater disposal. Utilities and communications infrastructure further improve quality of life and economic development potential. These services are essential to attract business and residents to the village. Care must be taken to manage infrastructure to keep it affordable and maintained.

### Public Sewer

The Village of Parish is served by a public sewer system established in the 1970s. The system serves all streets in the village and treats sewage at a plant near the Little Salmon River accessed by Cook Rd. The system, as of 2009, serves a total of 202 connections. Of these, 164 are residential, 24 commercial, and one industrial. Additionally, nine institutional and four government connections exist. To date no single user exists that is considered a “significant/industrial user”\* requiring a special permit. The village treatment plan is rated for/permitted for a maximum average daily flow of 140,000 gallons per day. The average daily flow for the period 2007 and 2008 was 68,000 gallons per day. In general the used capacity of the system stands at 53%. The village has been in the process of upgrading the facility and is seeking to continue improving/renovating the existing infrastructure to accommodate new users as they may seek to access the facility in the existing open areas where service is available.

### Public Water

At the present time, all properties in the village and town are served by private wells. Several attempts have been made over the years to develop a public water supply for the village. These have all failed due to lack of funding. A survey of village and town residents was recently undertaken to gauge current interest in the continued pursuit of public water. Development of public water is a high priority for Parish, as it is essential for residents’ safety as well as economic development.

**\*Significant Industrial User** - An industrial user who is:

- Subject to National Categorical Pretreatment Standards promulgated by the EPA,
- Having substantial impact, either singly or in combination with other industries, on the operation of the treatment works,
- Using, on an annual basis, more than 10,000 lbs or 1,000 gallons of raw material containing priority pollutants and/or substances of concern and discharging a measurable quantity of these pollutants to the sewer system,
- Discharging more than five percent (5%) of the flow or load of conventional pollutants received by the treatment plant.

**GOAL I: IMPROVE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES.**

**STRATEGIES:**

**Pursue the development of a public water supply system in and adjacent to the village.**

**Pursue sewer system improvements in the village.**

**Pursue connection of the village to the regional natural gas grid.**

**Seek and accommodate improved telecommunications facilities and networks, including high speed internet access.**

## **COMMUNITY BUILDINGS**

The Village of Parish is home to essential government and community buildings (sometimes referred to as “vertical” infrastructure). These include government buildings such as the village hall, the library, the schools, the post office, and the fire department. It is important that these facilities remain in the village as they strengthen its function as a community center and bolster traffic at neighboring retail establishments as well.

### Municipal Building/Gymnasium

The community has long identified with this building as a recreation and gathering place. The 8,500 square foot structure was completed in 1925 and donated to the village as a gift to the community by philanthropists Samuel Franklin Mills and Nathan Albert Petrie. The building originally served as a gym, but is now also the home of the town and village offices. A new roof was recently completed. The community has debated whether or not to build a new single function building which would serve as the center for town and village government.

### Library

The Mills and Petrie Memorial Library on Main Street in the village is another Mills and Petrie donation. Designed by Merton Granger, the one story brick building was built in 1922 and features the village’s landmark clock in its front yard.

### Elementary School

The Parish Elementary School, built in the 1980s on the site of the former Parish High School, is closing its doors to students after the 2011/12 school year. Students from Parish will attend elementary school in new facilities at the main Altmar Parish Williamstown school campus on County Route 22. The village is currently studying the potential for the building’s reuse.

## **GOAL J: EXPAND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **STRATEGIES:**

**Continue to investigate the development of a new joint town/village municipal building.**

**Evaluate potential uses and upgrades to the Gymnasium building.**

**Evaluate potential uses for the Elementary School building.**





## **PART III – DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **DISTRICT: CORE**

#### **Location/General Description**

The Core District is located in the center of the Village along Main St. The district is approximately 1000 feet in length and extends one lot deep (in most places) between just west of Railroad Street (NYS 69A) and just east of Rider St. The district is made up of mixed land uses on small lots. The Core District is home to institutional uses, such as the library, post office, gymnasium/municipal building as well as the majority of the commercial uses in the Town and Village. Residences are also present in the form of single family dwellings and multi-family dwellings. Most buildings are two stories and are sited relatively close to the street right-of-way creating a strong building edge. The district is served by public sewer.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The district's length along Main Street is appropriate in that 1000' is a comfortable distance for pedestrians\*. Commercial uses, especially retail, should be highly encouraged here. It is important that this district's boundaries not be expanded until it is built out. Accomplishing this would create more traffic for existing businesses in the core (due to concentration), preserve the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods and create a strong sense of entry into the core. Institutional uses should also be encouraged here. Residential uses are appropriate, but should be encouraged more as second floor apartments above commercial storefronts. New construction should respect the existing building (setback) line as well the architectural character of neighboring buildings. Buildings should have a maximum footprint size of 5,000 square feet and range from 20 to 35 feet in height.

\*see Nelessen, [Visions for a New American Dream](#) for more detail

### **DISTRICT: VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL**

#### **Location/General Description**

The Village Residential District lies generally within 1500 feet of the village core. It is bounded to the north by the Little Salmon River and a band of woodland, to the east by the Highway Commercial District near Edgewood Drive, to the south by Montgomery Street and to the west by the Industrial District along the CSX tracks. The area is largely residential with a sprinkling of other uses, including the Parish Elementary School. Lot

sizes average around 20,000 s.f. with lot frontages ranging from about 50 to 150 feet. Hydric soils are present north of East Main St. (east of the Rider Street intersection) and to the north of Montgomery Street east of S. Railroad St. Buildings are mostly two story. The district is served by public sewer.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Village Residential District is an ideal place for residential development. The majority of the District lies within a 5 minute walk from the village core. The northern boundary (along the Little Salmon River) and the southern boundary along Montgomery Street are formed by woods which create a well defined edge. Infill residential development should be encouraged here as well as new development (where soil conditions permit). Lots should be kept in the 7500 to 24,000 s.f. range so that efficient use of existing infrastructure (sewer system, sidewalks) is made. Future streets should be laid out in a block pattern that respects the current street pattern. Cul de sacs should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary to preserve environmental features. Existing Commercial uses should be allowed, but only if they remain similar in size and setback as neighboring residences and must not alter the residential character of the district. Multi-family dwellings should also be in character with single family dwellings. These are more appropriate in the areas immediately surrounding the village core. Buildings should have a maximum footprint size of 5,000 square feet and range up to 35 feet in height.

## **DISTRICT: INDUSTRIAL**

### **Location/General Description**

The Industrial District lies along the CSX railroad tracks in the western portion of the village. This area has traditionally been the home of industry throughout Parish's history and is presently built-out. The district is served by public sewer. A potential new industrial district lies along the eastern side of I-81 (fronting on County Route 26). This area is presently undeveloped but may be the home of an industrial park.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This district is strategically located to take advantage of transportation access and helps to form an edge to the residential portion of the Village. This area should be preserved for uses that need railroad and interstate highway access and that would be inappropriate in the other districts, especially the Core and Village Residential Districts. Heavy industrial uses, slaughter houses, rendering operations, waste incinerators and

uses that utilize or create hazardous materials should be expressly prohibited in these districts. Residential development should also be prohibited here.

## **DISTRICT: HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL**

### **Location/General Description**

The Village and Town contain two Highway Commercial Districts. One includes the area of East Main St. between Edgewood Dr. and C.R. 26, encompassing the I-81 interchange. This district is approx. 1800 feet long and 1 lot (240') deep. Located here are Parish's two gas station/convenience stores, a medical center/drug store, an antique shop along with a few residences. Buildings are generally one story. The other Highway Commercial District is located along Route 104, east of I-81. This area is currently home to a large truck stop.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Highway Commercial Districts are an ideal place to locate automobile oriented land uses that service I-81 travelers as well as local residents. Commercial uses which require parking areas and building footprints that would be harmful to the Core District should be encouraged here. However, as these areas are the entrance gateway to the Village and Town for many, the land should be developed and maintained in an aesthetically pleasing way. New buildings should be in character with those of the rest of the Village and respect a build-to (maximum setback) line. Buildings should have a maximum footprint of 40,000 square feet. Parking should be located behind or at the side of buildings and access should be carefully planned.

## **DISTRICT: RURAL**

### **Location/General Description**

The Rural District includes all of the Town and parts of the Village. This area consists of woodlands, some farms (active and abandoned) and low density residential development. Scattered commercial uses are also present. The district includes large acreages of state and county owned land, as well as DEC regulated wetlands and hydric soils. The district is interspersed by town and county roads as well as NYS Routes 69 and 104.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The open space, low density pattern of the Rural District should be preserved not only to retain its rural character, but also to preserve and encourage a working landscape of farming and forestry. A wide variety of uses should be encouraged, but only those that do not interfere with natural resource dependent uses. An analysis of hydrologic conditions in the district reveals that minimum lots sizes should be set in the range of 1.5 to 2 acres (depending on soil type) to prevent groundwater contamination by on-site septic systems. Residential subdivision size should be limited by various techniques, such as clustering, and occur where possible on existing roads. Stretches of undeveloped road frontages should also be preserved through the zoning and subdivision processes. Commercial development that generates significant traffic (such as retail and restaurants) should be channeled to areas around major intersections. Maximum building footprint size should be set at 40,000 square feet. Special care should be taken to specify proper spacing of driveways, especially along NYS Routes 69 and 104 to preserve highway safety and function. A minimum lot frontage requirement of 220' could help accomplish this.

## **DISTRICT: RURAL-SEWER OVERLAY**

### **Location/General Description**

The Rural-Sewer Overlay District consists of the parts of the Rural District that front on the outer portions of North Railroad, S. Railroad and West Main Streets in the Village (between the Village Residential District and the Village boundary. These areas are unique in that they are served by public sewer, but are not part of the dense inner area of the Village. These frontages occur where the Village meets the rural Town and have characteristics of both.

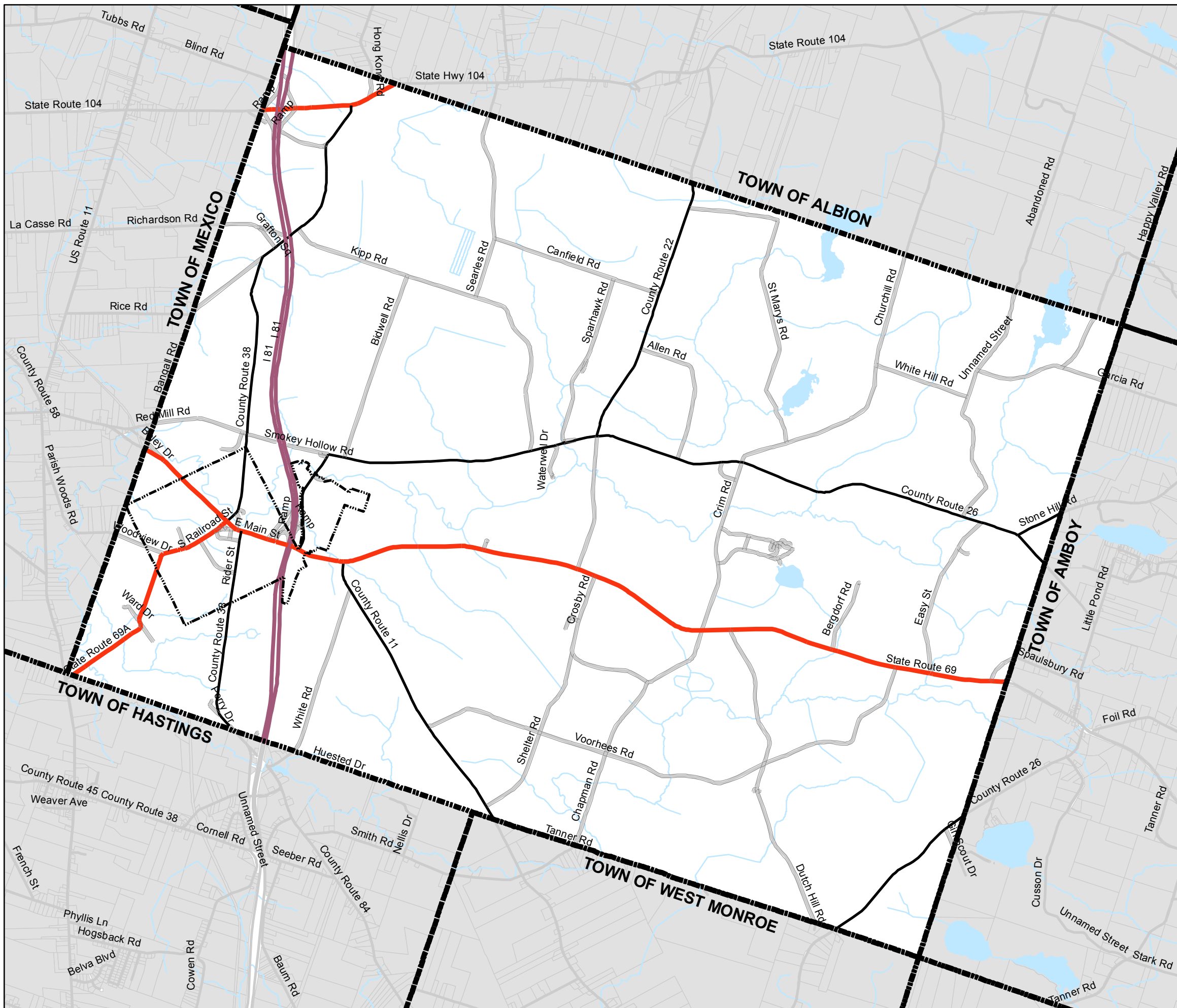
## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

These areas should be developed with the same principles as the Rural District, but with some key differences. The presence of public sewer allows a minimum lot size of 7,500 s.f. Lot sizes larger than 24,000 square feet (the maximum recommended for the Village Residential District) are permissible here, however as this area serves as the transition between the “urban” and rural parts of Parish. Buildings should respect a build-to line here as they do in the Village Residential District.

## APPENDIX A – MAPS













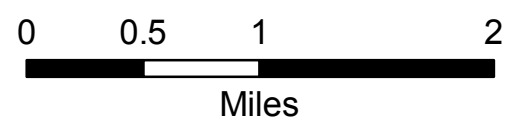
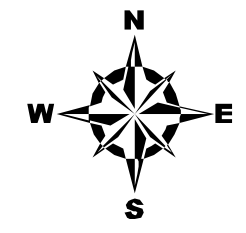
# Town and Village of Parish BASE MAP

## KEY

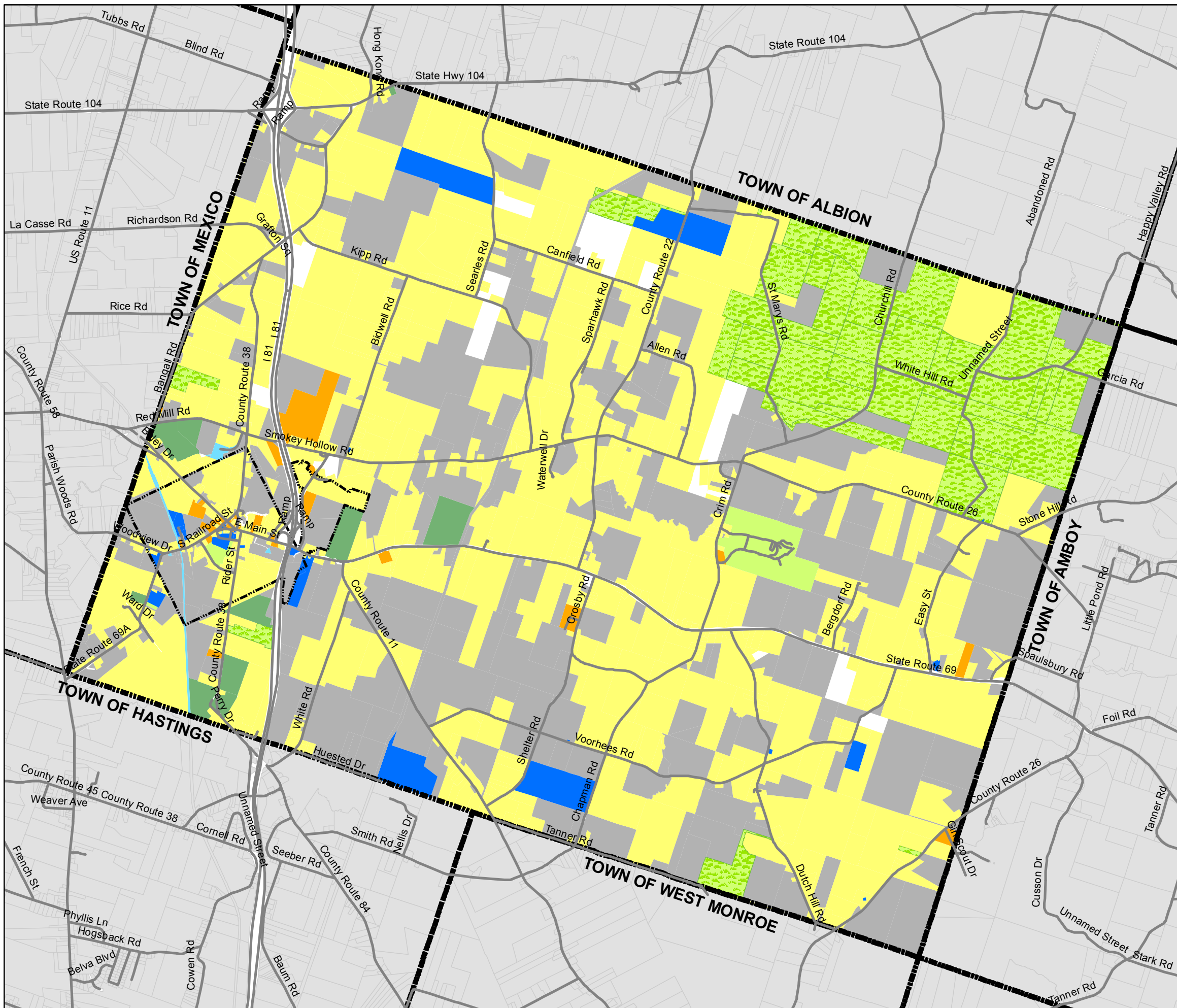
-  Village Boundary
-  Town Boundary

### Road Jurisdiction

-  Local
-  County
-  State
-  Interstate



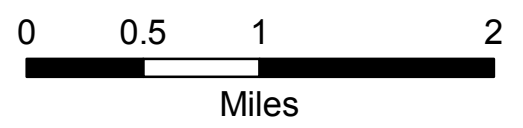
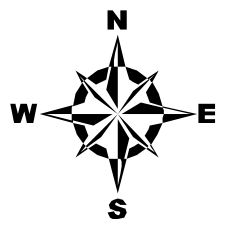
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# Town and Village of Parish CURRENT LAND USE

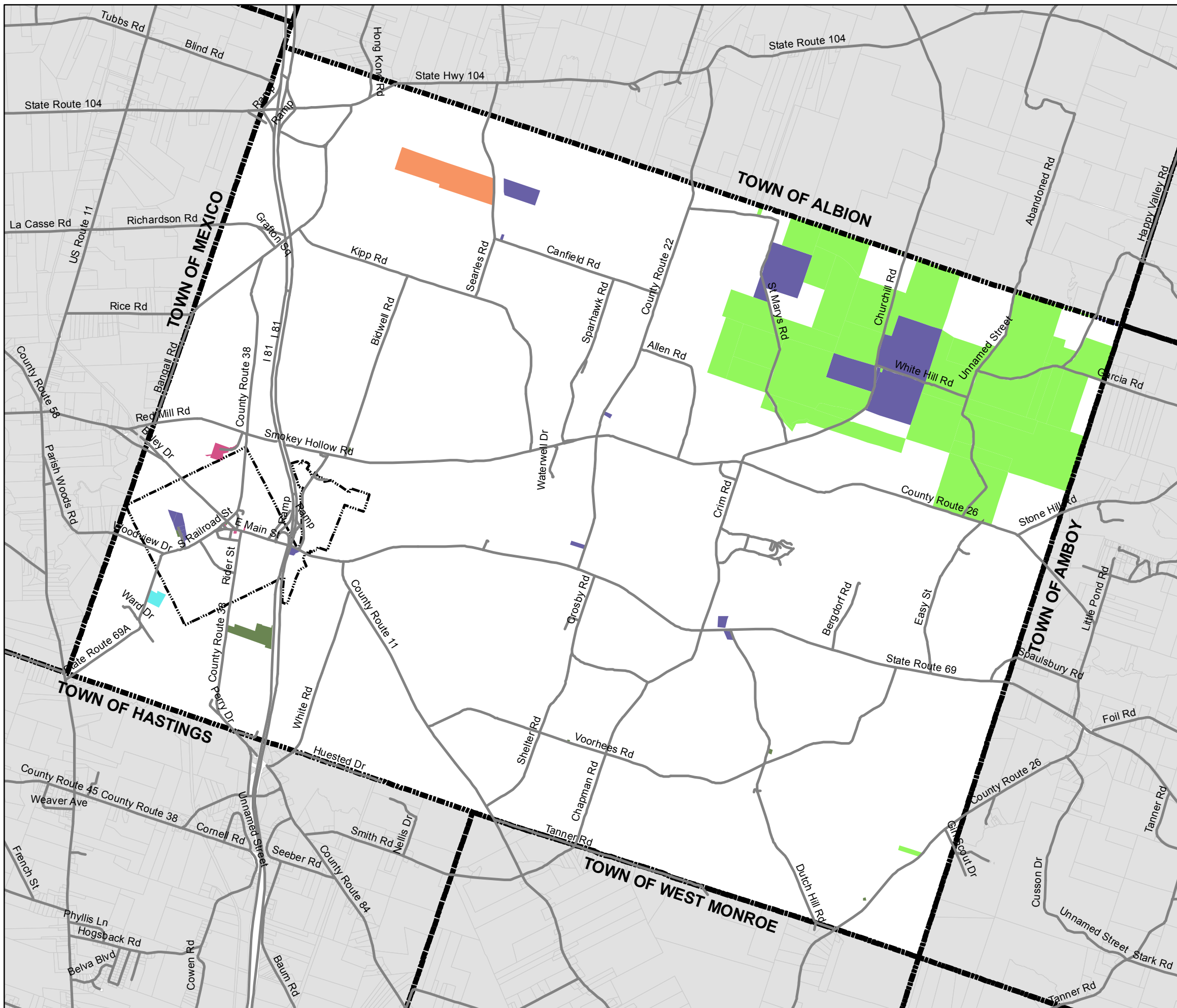
## KEY

- Roads
- Village Boundary
- Town Boundary
- Agriculture
- Residential
- Vacant
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Community Services
- Public Service
- Forest












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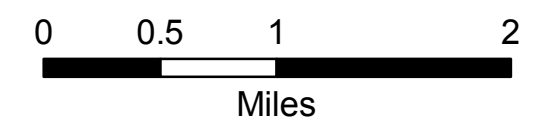
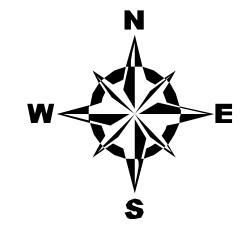




# Town and Village of Parish PUBLIC LANDS

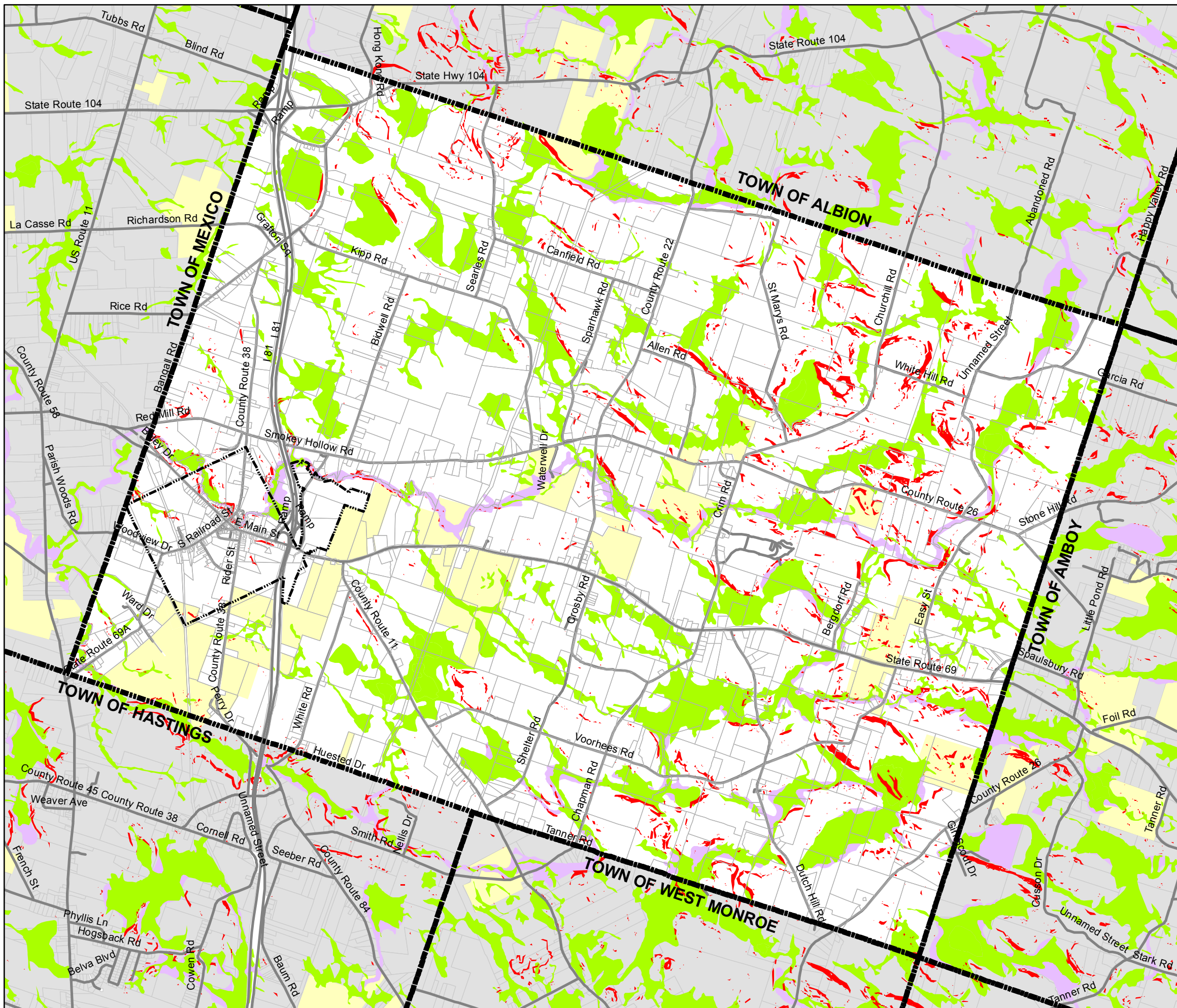
## KEY

-  Roads
-  Village Boundary
-  Town Boundary
- Public Lands**
-  Oswego County
-  New York State
-  Town of Albion
-  Town of Mexico
-  Town of Parish
-  Village of Parish










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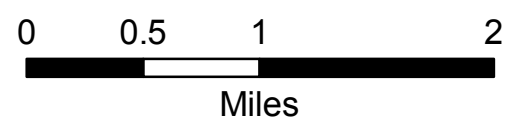
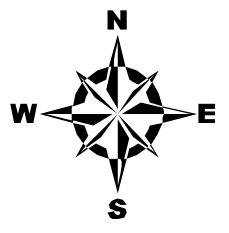




# Town and Village of Parish DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

## KEY

-  Village Boundary
-  Town Boundary
-  Roads
-  Steep Slopes
-  DEC Regulated Wetlands
-  Flood Hazard Areas
-  Agricultural Districts



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## APPENDIX B – QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

As part of the process of revising the Parish Comprehensive Plan, a questionnaire form was made available to town and village residents in March 2009 to determine their current perceptions and concerns and their desires for the future. Twenty completed questionnaires were returned. **As this is a very small sample of town and village residents, the following synopsis is not intended to form the basis of community policy.**

### CHARACTERISTICS THAT DEFINE THE COMMUNITY

On the more positive side, Parish was described by a majority of respondents as a small, rural, bedroom community with good schools that is a great place to raise children. The citizenry is described as caring and friendly. Parish is characterized by snowy winters and a Tug Hill environment. The community is thought to have several desirable services- three service stations, a hardware store, three churches, a library, and a bank. On a less positive note, the following descriptors were used by a majority of respondents- outdated, run down, shabby, stagnant (no growth), going downhill, and lacking in businesses, stores and community events. Town and village boards were characterized as being slow to move; lacking vision and resisting change; self-centered, self-serving and engaging in squabbling power struggles.

### COMMUNITY ASSETS, STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The most frequently mentioned asset was the proximity to I-81 and the accessibility to Syracuse, Watertown, and Oswego. In descending order of frequency, mentioned were facilities such as the library, Grist Mill, hardware store, gym, fire department, churches, school system, Merrill Park, recreation program, highway department, Chamber of Commerce, Farmers Market, and outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling). Other comments included: the vacant Elementary School and other vacant buildings along with inexpensive land are opportunities for expansion and growth; there is good potential for small, home-based businesses; people in need of work represent a potential labor force; the people are friendly, love Parish, and are able to work together; there are some great citizens- Mary Lou Guindon, Bridget and Fred Swartz, Leon Heagle; quality of life is superior for those who appreciate a small-town atmosphere; housing developments are lacking.

### WEAKNESSES, THREATS, ISSUES

Topping the list of weaknesses were lack of public water, lack of high speed internet, lack of business, and problems with the Town, Village and Planning Boards. The boards were characterized as: having too many older members with old ideas who don't welcome new ideas; stuck in a comfort zone; unwilling to listen or compromise; changing laws and regulations arbitrarily; dogmatic and non-responsive to the

electorate; having no plans for improvement; and failing to "market" the area. Intermediate among the responses was poor appearance of property (houses, buildings in disrepair, cluttered yards). Also mentioned were the lack of: activities for children and adults, grocery, pharmacy and police. High taxes without commensurate services was also listed. More singular responses included lack of job opportunity for youth and adults, weak enforcement of speeding and zoning laws, lack of sewers outside the village, lack of parking for the gym, lack of senior citizen housing and lack of natural gas. Other concerns were that sewer taxes are too high, roads are not repaired, there are no "real" sidewalks, and the school system is weak.

#### MISSING BUSINESSES AND SERVICES IN THE VILLAGE

Topping the list by a large margin were a grocery store and pharmacy. Stores (in general), a restaurant, a gym w/ a workout center, beauty and barber shops, and a community center each received a few votes. A long list of other stores received singular votes, including: a movie rental store, florist, dollar general, fast food shop, dry goods, dry cleaners, auto parts, outdoor sporting goods, feed store and bowling alley. Missing services or other entities included: a drive-thru bank, larger fire department, dentist, police, historical museum, a second bank, retirement home, nursing home, recreation facilities for adults and children, youth/teen center, information site for tourists and pedestrian crossings at the library and the gym. Also needed is a Plan with goals, strategies, responsibilities and motivated people to get the job done. An image, slogan or motto which bonds the community would be helpful.

#### MISSING BUSINESSES AND SERVICES OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE

Grocery and drug stores and a shopping center were most mentioned. Public water, high speed internet and sewers ranked next. Other entities thought to be missing were a hospital, urgent care, retirement home, nursing home, larger fire department, optometrist, pizza delivery, bed-breakfast for fishermen, small hotel for snowmobilers, farm stands, and development of tourist opportunities (tram for leaf-viewing in Fall).

#### CHANGES DESIRED IN NEXT FIVE YEARS

The most desired change was to improve the image of the village and town by maintenance of houses and buildings and cleanup of yards and reducing the number of vacant buildings and enforcing appropriate ordinances. Public water in the village and town, high speed internet, more stores (grocery and pharmacy), a community center and combining the town and village were the next most desired changes. Other desired changes were- senior citizen housing, better roads, improving Rt. 69 through the town and village, lower taxes, an adult workout gym, better sidewalks and more trees in the village, more activities for teens, sewers outside the village, continuing the recreation program, additional apartments/town houses, a park in center of town, better parks for children, availability of natural gas, "green" electricity, family-child counseling center,

ATV trail system, drive-thru bank, bowling alley, swimming pool, skate park, movie rental store, retaining elementary school, attracting more people to live in the area (growth), noise reduction from town barn and lumber yard, and a grant to buy uniforms for the APW band. More generally, a bipartisan effort is thought to be needed to move forward with a Plan with goals, strategies, responsibilities to "get it done".

#### SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ASKED ON SURVEY

Distance you drive to work? 30-36mi(5) 20-25mi(1) 10-15mi(3) <2mi(3) 0mi(6) NA(2)

Average for those who drive- 18.9 mi

Distance you drive to shop? 20-30mi(11) 10-18mi(8) NA(1) Average- 18.9mi

Would you like area to get High Speed Internet? Yes-16 No- 0 Have it-1 NA-3

Would you support public water to attract business? Yes-13 No-4 Village Only-2 NA-2

## **APPENDIX C – SWOT EXERCISE SUMMARY**

The Town and Village of Parish have been working with the NYS Tug Hill Commission to update their Joint Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated and adopted in 2001. This Visioning Exercise is a variation on a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), designed to answer Town and Village specific questions, while keeping the process broad enough to apply information gathered to a number of potential program areas.

To augment this process, the Joint Planning Board also distributed a questionnaire prior to the forum. Respondents were asked to address five open ended questions/statements about the area. The Visioning Session process was also organized around these five questions and participants were asked to discuss them at the meeting. They are as follows:

- 1) What characteristics define the community as it is today?
- 2) List community assets/strengths/opportunities.
- 3) List weaknesses, threats, and issues affecting the community.
- 4) What businesses and/or services are missing in Parish?
- 5) What changes would you like to see in the next five years?

This Summary Report also includes results of a similar session that was conducted with the Town and Village of Parish Economic Development Task Force, its membership consisting of 25 community leaders who are appointed by the Town and Village for the purpose of fostering economic growth in the community. This strategy session was held on January 7, 2008. The agenda for that exercise follows:

- 1) List community assets & strengths
- 2) List key issues & challenges
- 3) Identify top priority issues & challenges
- 4) Spend time on priority issues
  - a. Identify potential partners
  - b. Identify initial actions to start moving forward

The process and questions posed at each session were very similar. Combining the results of both meetings strengthens the process.

### **1) What characteristics define the community as it is today?**

- ❖ Semi-rural feeling
- ❖ Low population density (> 5,000)
- ❖ Commuting (Bedroom) community- Rome, Watertown, Syracuse, Oswego
- ❖ Family Oriented
- ❖ Affordable Housing & Land within commuting distance

- ❖ Quiet and Peaceful
- ❖ Minimal Light Pollution
- ❖ Many Recreational Opportunities- Snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, camping

## 2) List community assets/strengths/opportunities

### Location Advantages:

- Highway Access
  - Interstate 81
  - Route 11
  - Route 69 (park and ride access to I81)
  - Route 104
- Centrally located between Syracuse, Watertown, Oswego, & Rome
- Snowbelt – heavy snows draw snowmobilers & skiers to the region’s trails
- Access to nearby outdoor recreation opportunities
  - Regions: Tug Hill, Lake Ontario, Oneida Lake
  - Activities: Hunting, fishing, recreational trails, camping
- CSX Freight Rail line through Town
- Commercial/industrial sites available

### Infrastructure & Physical Assets:

- Public sewers in village capable of handling additional demand
- Available & affordable land for development
- High speed internet access (but limited to village and Route 69 corridor)
- Near Tug Hill Aquifer (water available)
- Upcoming Rte 69/Main St. DOT reconstruction
- Elementary school (only for two more years), possible reuse of building
- Many buildings with historic significance

### Nearby Attractions:

- East Coast Resorts (Bass Lake)
- Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area (hunting, fishing, recreational trails)
- Oneida Lake, Salmon River

### Public Amenities

- Library
- Good school system, not overcrowded
- Village Gymnasium
- Merrill Park
- Post Office downtown



- Fire Company

### **Business/Private Amenities**

- Hardware Store
- Four (4) gas stations
- STP with capacity to grow
- Two (2) Insurance Companies
- Two (2) auto repair services
- Two (2) Car washes
- Antique shop
- Three (3) Diners
- Lumber mill
- Medical center
- Tavern

### **Social Capital**

- Close-knit community
- Capable labor force
- Variety of churches
- Cooperation b/w town, village & school district
- Great Quality of Life
- Existing community website a good source of information
- Task force dedicated to economic growth

### **3) List weaknesses, threats and issues affecting the community.**

- Need town-wide broadband access for business & student use
- No public water
  - Area on private wells
  - Village has been investigating the issue with an engineer
- No natural gas
- Village Center Revitalization
  - More walkable community
  - Run down vacant properties
  - Need to recruit/encourage more services, including:
    - Grocery/ drug store
    - Larger pharmacy
    - Mini department/variety store
    - Dry cleaners
    - Pet store
  - Create a Park & Ride lot for commuters



- Village health & vitality is also an asset to the town in terms of tax base and community image
- Housing (primarily rental) Needs for:
  - seniors, singles, & young couples
  - infilling vacant lots
  - finding occupants for vacant properties
  - providing housing for young professionals & teachers
  - increasing users of underutilized sewer system
- Higher education opportunities/college satellite campus
  - Could utilize distance learning facility at APW
- Lack of child care (workforce issue)
- 30% of Town not taxable (Happy Valley WMA)
- Major Train/vehicle accidents
- Cost associated with snow removal
- No mass transit (trains, buses) stop in Parish
- Lack of parking for snowmobile trailers (park and ride)
- Not a walkable community (no sidewalks)
- Elementary school closing in two (2) years
- Loss of open space
- Lack of forest management, woodlots not managed sustainably
- No local police force

#### **4) What businesses and/or services are missing in Parish?**

- ❖ Grocery
- ❖ Town-wide internet
- ❖ Florist
- ❖ Mass Transit
- ❖ Retail clothing
- ❖ Print/copy
- ❖ Recreational (ice rink, bowling, gym, skateboard park)
- ❖ Civic Center, meeting area
- ❖ Day care
- ❖ Fast food
- ❖ Local police force
- ❖ Park and ride for snowmobilers
- ❖ College satellite campus
- ❖ Larger pharmacy/ drug store
- ❖ Variety Store/ mini-department store
- ❖ Dry cleaner
- ❖ Pet store

**5) What changes would you like to see in the next five (5) years?**

- Public water
- Rte. 69/ Main St. reconstruction/ park and ride
- Natural gas access
- Town-wide broadband (affordable)
- Drug store
- Mass transit-bus service
- More vibrant/ additional downtown businesses and incentives
- Municipal building
- Updated/stronger zoning-planning that protects existing residential character
- Increase opportunities for local entrepreneurs/ local employment
- Forest management education
- Hotel (express) and other accommodations
- Open space protection
- Need premium housing (\$300,000 + market)
- Appropriate zoning/ subdivision
- Improved community attitude
- Opportunities for employment in green technologies, vendors, and services
- Woodlot management education program

## APPENDIX D – HISTORIC AND SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, AND SITES

### HOUSES

HOUSE	DATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Brooks House	c1850	W. Main St. (Village)	Greek Revival upright and wing
Carver House	c1875	Intersection of S. Railroad St. and Montgomery St. (Village)	Brick Italianate house
Davey-Backity-Lutz House	c1890	E. Main St. (Village)	Queen Anne house with tower and dormer
Henderson-Perry House	1930	W. Main St. (Village)	Elizabethan (Tudor Revival) style house
Kilmer House	c1840	Canfield Rd.	Small settlement type house
Manguse-Fuller House	c1850	Main St. (Village)	Greek Revival house with hipped roof and pedimented entrance
Merrill-Perry House	1945	W. Main St. (Village)	Three bay brick Cape Cod cottage
Miller-Holmes House	1930	W. Main St. (Village)	Three bay Colonial Revival house
Mills House	1888	Rider St. (Village)	Gable ended Queen Anne Eastlake house
Mosher-Church-Meany House	c1885	W. Main St. (Village)	Elaborate High Victorian Italianate house
Petrie House	c1860	C.R. 26	Homestead style; upright and wing
Queen Anne House	c1890	S. Railroad St. (Village)	Queen Anne house exhibiting a basic homestead house
Rider House	c1880	E. Main St. (Village)	Five bay Italianate house
Swartz House	c1830	W. Main St. (Village)	Settlement type house with a carpenter gingerbread addition

### COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SITES

BUILDING OR SITE	DATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Dam and Mill Site	c1850	N. Branch, Little Salmon River, Edick Pond Dr.	-
Dam and Mill Site	c1850	S. Branch, Little Salmon River	Site of David Fritts Shingle Mill
Dam and Sawmill Site	c1860	St. Mary's Creek, Sparhawk Rd.	Stone walls, parts of dam and mill; ruins

Former Cheese Factory	c1880	E. Main St. (Village)	Rectangular wooden building
Gas Station	1919	Intersection of NYS 69A and Dill Pickle Alley (Village)	Formerly part of pickle factory complex
Key Bank	1924	W. Main St. (Village)	Classical Revival style; designed by Max Umbrecht
Masonic Temple	1909	Main St. (Village)	Two story brick building with round-topped fan-shaped window above entrance
Mills and Petrie Gymnasium	1925	Main St. (Village)	Brick building with Indiana limestone trimming and a pedimented gable roof; designed by Merton E. Granger
Mills and Petrie Memorial Library	1922	Intersection of Main and Church Streets (Village)	One-story brick building; designed by Merton E. Granger
Mills and Petrie Town Clock	1923	Intersection of Main and Church Streets (Village)	Four dial structure, mounted on a bronze base, capped by a bronze ornamental ball
Mills-Petrie Chapel	1917	Pleasant Lawn Cemetery, NYS 69A	Tudor Gothic style brick chapel
Parish Laundromat	c1885	W. Main St. (Village)	Reminiscent of a Homestead style house; formerly a shoe store
Former Talk of the Town Cafe	C1940	E. Main St.	Rectangular one-story structure; formerly a gas station, church
Typewriter Factory	1886	Intersection of N. Railroad St. and Mill St. (Village)	Brick industrial building with a fieldstone foundation
Village Park	1911	Bounded by S. Railroad St. and Church St. (Village)	Features Soldiers and Sailors' monument and busts of Washington and Lincoln

#### CHURCHES AND CEMETERIES

BUILDING OR SITE	DATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Bidwell Cemetery	c1830	Intersection of Bidwell Rd. and C.R. 26	Approximately 215'x125' in dimension, has active cemetery association
Dutch Hill Cemetery	c1850	Dutch Hill Rd., south of	Approx. 225'x165', ancient

		NYS 69	maple trees on site
Faith Church of the Nazarene	c1980	NYS 69, east of I-81	Contemporary rectangular building
Getman Cemetery	c1870	Intersection of C.R. 26 between Happy Valley Rd. and Stone Hill Rd.	Adjacent to Getman Family Farm
Merritt Corners Cemetery	c1830	Voorhees Rd., east of Shelter Rd.	Approx. 125'x90', most headstones fixed in the ground with no inscriptions
Mills & Petrie Mausoleum	1899	Pleasant Lawn Cemetery, NYS 69A	Gray marble structure with marble doors
Mitchell Cemetery	1850?	C.R. 26 between Dutch Hill Rd. and the Amboy town line	Approx. 149'x218', at site of Mitchell family farm
Parish Center Cemetery	C1850	C.R. 22 between NYS 69 and C.R. 26	Smallest cemetery in town with approx. five interments
Parish Methodist Church	1900	Railroad St. (Village)	Rectangular building with bell tower; elements of Shingle Style and Colonial Revival
Pleasant Lawn Cemetery	C1806	S. Railroad St. between Woodview Dr. and village line	Approx. 11 acres, largest cemetery in town, has active cemetery association
Presbyterian Church	c1890	Rider St. (Village)	Rectangular wooden building; Queen Anne style
Former St. Anne's Catholic Church	c1920	W. Main St.	Square brick building; formerly the Odd Fellows Hall
Wrightson Cemetery	C1850	NYS 69 between Ellis Carr Dr. and C.R. 22	Situated on a prominent hill

#### ENGINEERING STRUCTURES

STRUCTURE OR SITE	MAP #	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Burgdorf Rd. (abandoned)		Between NYS 69 and C.R. 26	-
Burgdorf Rd. Bridge		Burgdorf Rd. between NYS 69 and C.R. 26	Steel and wood; spans N. Branch, Little Salmon River
Covered Bridge		Off C.R. 26	Steel and wood; spans N. Branch, Little Salmon River
George Phillips Bridge		South of C.R. 26	Iron trusses and wood plank deck; spans tributary of N. Branch,

			Little Salmon River
Happy Valley Rd. Bridge		Happy Valley Rd.	Concrete abutments and base; pipe railing; Spans N. Branch, Little Salmon River downstream from Whitney Pond Dam
Kipp Rd. Bridge		Off Kipp Rd.	Spans N. Branch, St. Mary's Creek
Phillips-Maunder Bridge		Off C.R. 26	Spans St. Mary's Creek
Scriba Road (abandoned)		Between Dean Dr. and Perry Drive	Segment of road between Constantia and Mexico Point
St. Mary's Bridge		St. Mary's Rd.	Stone (obscured); spans St. Mary's Creek downstream from St. Mary's Pond
Stone arched culvert		East end of Dean Drive	Part of "Scriba Road"

#### AGRICULTURAL SITES

STRUCTURE OR SITE	DATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Bluebird Haven Tree Farm	c1890	NYS 69A, south of Pleasant Lawn Cemetery	Italianate farmhouse; barn and silo
House Farm	c1840	Rider St. (Village)	Greek Revival house with barns and outbuildings
Karboski Farm	1850	NYS 69, west of C.R. 26	Federal style house; one of a few active farms in Parish
Lutz Farm	1832	Rider St. (Village)	Greek Revival farmhouse with dairy barn
Sperling Farm*		NY 69, east of Carr. Dr.	Federal style house, barn and equipment building
Stelmashuck Farm	1837	NYS 69, east of Dutch Hill Rd.	Federal style farmhouse with a variety of agricultural outbuildings
Stone Farm Wall	c1820	East boundary of Stelmashuck Farm, NYS 69 opposite Voorhees Rd. intersection	Constructed of rounded field stone and flat Medina sandstone
Yager Farm*		NY 69, west of Carr Dr.	Federal style house and barn

\*added to list by Planning Board

## APPENDIX E

### EXCERPTED FROM WHY SAVE FARMLAND?, from THE AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

Saving farmland is an investment in community infrastructure and economic development. It supports local government budgets and the ability to create wealth locally. In addition, distinctive agricultural landscapes are often magnets for tourism.

People vacation in the state of Vermont or Steamboat Springs, Colo., because they enjoy the scenery created by rural meadows and grazing livestock. In Lancaster, Pa., agriculture is still the leading industry, but with the Amish and Mennonites working in the fields, tourism is not far behind. Napa Valley, Calif., is another place known as a destination for “agro tourism.” Tourists have become such a large part of most Napa Valley wineries that many vintners have hired hospitality staff. Both the valley and the wines have gained name recognition, and the economy is thriving.

Agriculture contributes to local economies directly through sales, job creation, support services and businesses, and also by supplying lucrative secondary markets such as food processing. Planning for agriculture and protecting farmland provide flexibility for growth and development, offering a hedge against fragmented suburban development while supporting a diversified economic base.

Development imposes direct costs to communities, as well as indirect costs associated with the loss of rural lands and open space. Privately owned and managed agricultural land generates more in local tax revenues than it costs in services. Carefully examining local budgets in Cost of Community Services (COCS) studies shows that nationwide farm, forest and open lands more than pay for the municipal services they require, while taxes on residential uses consistently fail to cover costs.<sup>9</sup> (See COCS fact sheet.) Related studies measuring the effect of all types of development on municipal tax bills find that tax bills generally go up as communities become more developed. Even those communities with the most taxable commercial and industrial properties have higher-than-average taxes.

Local governments are discovering that they cannot afford to pay the price of unplanned development. Converting productive agricultural land to developed uses creates negative economic and environmental impacts. For example, from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, the population of Atlanta, Ga., grew at about the same rate as that of Portland, Ore. Due to its strong growth management law, Portland increased in size by only 2 percent while Atlanta doubled in size. To accommodate its sprawling growth, Atlanta raised property taxes 22 percent while Portland lowered property taxes by 29 percent. Vehicle miles traveled (and related impacts) increased 17 percent in Atlanta but only 2 percent in Portland.