



TOWN OF STAFFORD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

February 2007
Revised July 2009

~Town Of Stafford Comprehensive Plan~

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And the Citizens of the Town of Stafford

Project Consultant



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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The Town of Stafford is in Genesee County, New York. It is located between the Towns of Batavia and Le Roy, two major population centers in the County. The Town of Stafford itself is a very rural community, with a population of approximately 2,400 persons in 2000. The predominate land use is agriculture, and the Town is a very attractive community.

The earliest pioneer settlers to the Town of Stafford arrived over two hundred years ago, and the Town has been an incorporated municipality since 1820. However, the Town of Stafford has never prepared a Comprehensive Plan, and this document represents the first comprehensive effort to address land use issues in Stafford. The purpose of this document is to guide growth and development in the Town in order to protect the quality of life and ensure that the Town of Stafford remains a desirable place to live.

According to New York State Law,

“Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens.”

~New York State Town Law § 272-a.

New York State does not dictate what form a comprehensive plan must take, but suggests that it consist of written and graphic materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles and standards that the Town wishes to set forth for its immediate and long-term protection, enhancement, growth and development.

There are many reasons for having an adopted Town Comprehensive Plan. A municipality's Comprehensive Plan is the legal foundation for all zoning and land use regulation decisions made in the Town. While municipalities are given the power to regulate land uses within the community, it is understood that these decisions should be based on sound planning principles, and not be arbitrary or capricious. A municipal Comprehensive Plan, developed with public support and input, helps ensure that the Town's land use regulations are built on a solid foundation and represent a consensus on the part of the Town's residents.

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Modern comprehensive plans go beyond zoning issues. A Comprehensive Plan provides guidance toward the priorities and concepts of local residents regarding what they consider important to their quality of life. It establishes goals and objectives that reflect those priorities, and provides a set of recommendations and actions to help Town achieve those goals. Many of the recommendations pertain to land use and zoning, but other actions and priorities are also articulated.

Another important purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to put the community's vision for its future on the record. Any development proposal or action, whether private or public, should take into consideration the Town's vision as articulated in the Plan, and attempt to be consistent with these stated priorities. An adopted Comprehensive Plan provides an accessible and clear guide for entities seeking to undertake a project in the community. It provides them with a better understanding of what the Town is likely to approve and the types of actions that are preferred. It also provides the Town with greater leverage to have an effect on planning activities and programs instituted by other governmental authorities, such as the County or New York State agencies, who are required to take local plans into consideration.

An adopted Comprehensive Plan shows a commitment on the part of the community toward a shared vision for its future. This commitment can be helpful in seeking governmental assistance for projects that help move the community toward that vision through the forms of grants.

Finally, a Comprehensive Plan helps the community recognize what is important about your Town. It identifies what is important to protect, support and encourage, and what elements of your Town you would like to see improved. It provides a clear assessment of where you are now, vision on where you would like to be, and concrete recommendations and strategies to help you get there. Not all elements included in the plan will be achieved, but the Plan contains a source of potential solutions to problems or issues that may arise in the future.

One of the most consistent findings in the course of this effort was that people of the Town of Stafford like the Town the way it is, and do not seek major changes. However, in today's world, where the pace of change is constantly accelerating, staying "just as you are" requires a conscious recognition of what it is that you value, and appropriate responses to changing circumstances. This document attempts to help the Town of Stafford achieve that goal.

The Town of Stafford Comprehensive Plan will serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development, and public and private investment in the Town. It will provide a

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basis for the preparation of any future plans or studies that may examine or address issues raised in the Plan. It is the intent of this document that it will help guide decision making in the Town of Stafford into the future in a manner that helps maintain those features that the community values so highly, while mitigating any impacts of future change.



*Stafford Town Hall**

** Picture of Town Hall courtesy of the Western New York Regional Information Network,
<http://wnyrin.com>*

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SECTION II: INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Existing Land Use

Agricultural Uses

The Town of Stafford is predominately rural. The most prominent land use in the Town is agricultural. An estimated 73 percent of the land area in the Town is agricultural in nature, either as farmed fields or agricultural related uses, such as pastures, barns and storage buildings. Additional land categorized as “vacant” is fallow fields, meadows, woodlots or other rural open space that adds to the rural character of the Town. State agricultural districts cover a large portion of the Town, which provides incentives for owners of these lands to keep them in agricultural use.



Farm on Route 5



Sweetland Road



Griswold Road

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Residential Uses

Residential development is scattered throughout the Town, primarily along the major roadways. Much of the residential development in Town is rural residential in nature, and many home lots are on larger parcels. Outside of the hamlet areas, homes are typically on parcels of one-acre or more in size. More dense residential development can be found in the traditional hamlets in Town, Stafford and Morganville, and to a lesser degree, Roanoke. There are also pockets of denser residential development in other locations, such as the Seven Springs Road area, along Route 5 and extending down crossroads south of Route 5 (Fargo, Clipnock and Roanoke). The Horseshoe Lake area, Godfrey's Pond area and other recreational areas in the northern part of Town are also densely developed with cottages and homes, many of which are seasonal dwellings.



Newer residential home



Horseshoe Lake

Hamlet Areas

There is no incorporated Village in the Town of Stafford, but the center of the Town is known as Stafford Village, or the Four Corners, at the intersection of Route 5 and Route 237 (Morganville Road/Transit Road). The Town Hall, the Fire Hall, Emery and Ilette parks are all located in the Four Corners area, which is a picturesque neighborhood of older homes and commercial buildings. A mix of commercial, retail, public and residential uses characterize the hamlet area, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Two smaller hamlet areas are Morganville, located north of the Four Corners area on Morganville Road at the intersection with Byron-Stafford Road, and Roanoke, located in

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the southeastern corner of the Town at Roanoke Road and East Bethany-Le Roy Road. These hamlets are primarily residential in nature.



"Four Corners" area of Stafford hamlet



Stafford hamlet



Hamlet of Morganville

Commercial Uses

There are a limited number of commercial land uses in the Town. Scattered commercial businesses are located along Route 5, particularly in the western part of Town, nearing the Town of Batavia. Prominent businesses in the Town include the Red Osier Landmark Restaurant, the Batavia Party House, and the Trading Post. A small commercial area is located near the intersection of Town Line Road and Route 33. Development in this crossroads area is concentrated primarily in the Town of Batavia, but some commercial uses are in the Town of Stafford. Genesee Community College is located north of this intersection in the Town of Batavia. Additional commercial development in the Town of Stafford includes two restaurants located at the intersection of Route 33 (Clinton Street

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Road) and Byron-Stafford Road. The other primary commercial-related use is golf. There are three golf courses in the Town. The Stafford Country Club, on Route 237 north of Town Hall, is an 18-hole private club. The Batavia Country Club, in the northwest corner of Town, is an 18-hole golf course that is open to the public, and Sweetland Pines is a par 3 golf course that is geared for beginning golfers. Sweetland Pines is on Sweetland Road east of Fargo Road in the southern portion of Town.



Red Osier restaurant



Batavia Country Club

Public Uses

Public uses in the Town of Stafford include Town Hall, the Fire Hall, the Town Highway Garage and a New York State Highway garage facility on Route 5. The Town owns two parks. Emery Park, which is slightly over 5 acres in size, has picnic facilities, a playground, and tennis and basketball courts. Illette Park is a small landscaped area next to Town Hall with an attractive gazebo. The Town also owns a large parcel (109 acres) adjacent to the Thruway on Mullen Road that is undeveloped open space.



Illette Park



Emery Park

Pictures of parks courtesy of the Western New York Regional Information Network

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Industrial Uses

The predominate industrial land use in the Town of Stafford is the stone quarry on Route 5 west of the Stafford hamlet. A gravel pit and some agricultural-related industries (storehouse and feed sales) are the only other industrial uses in the Town.

Vacant Land/Undeveloped/Parks

The Town of Stafford has areas of vacant undeveloped land, as well as some publicly owned parks and open space. As noted above, some of these areas include fallow fields or woodlots that are not categorized as agricultural, but which contribute to the rural character of the Town. The Town of Stafford also owns an open space parcel adjacent to the New York State Thruway.

Other Land Uses

Other land uses in the Town of Stafford include Utilities and infrastructure (such as utility easements for transmission lines or pipes), and Government or public lands, which includes Town Hall and other public facilities.

Land Use by Category, Stafford, New York

Category	Acres	Percent Total
Agricultural	12,960.8	73.2%
Residential	2,398.7	13.5%
Commercial	462.0	2.6%
Industrial	310.2	1.8%
Government/Public	75.0	0.4%
Utilities/Infrastructure	46.9	0.3%
Vacant/Undeveloped/Parks	757.4	4.3%
Missing/Unknown	693.8	3.9%

Source: GIS files from Land Use Map, Wendel Duchscherer

Map 1: Aerial Photography, provides an aerial overview of the Town of Stafford.

Map 2: Existing Land Use is a visual depiction of land uses throughout the Town.

All maps are included in the appendix at the end of this document.

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B. Land Use Regulations

The Town of Stafford has several ordinances that govern land use activities, including Zoning, subdivision regulations and land separation regulations.

Zoning Code

The Town's current zoning law was adopted in 1987, with amendments in 1995 and 1998. The zoning code establishes four zoning districts: Residential (R); Agricultural-Residential (A-R); Commercial (C); and Industrial (I). In addition, the code sets forth regulations for Planned Unit Development (PUD), which is a "floating zone". A PUD may be proposed in any location, provided it meets the requirements set forth in the code, and is rezoned by the Town Board to this designation. A minimum of 5 contiguous acres is required in order to apply for designation as a PUD, which is intended to accommodate greater flexibility and more creative site design for mixed-use developments. As the code notes, the intent of the PUD district is to provide more efficient use of land, buildings, circulation and utilities, and to offer a higher level of amenities or preserve natural and scenic qualities of the site. The Town's official zoning map, available at the Town Clerk's office, also shows a Flood Plain Overlay Zone (FP). This category is not a zoning district, but indicates where flood plains are located in the Town. The Town participates in the National Flood Insurance program.

The majority of the Town is zoned Agriculture-Residential (A-R). This district is intended to preserve agricultural uses, and maintain the rural nature of the Town. The Residential district (R) applies to selected locations in Town where residential development has traditionally been slightly denser. These areas are the intersection of Routes 5 and 237 (hamlet of Stafford); the hamlet of Morganville; and the area along Route 33 near the Town of Batavia border. Commercial zoning (C) is concentrated along Route 5 and in two locations on Route 33. Industrial zoning (I) is confined to one area on Route 5 that includes the commercial stone quarry in Town. Map 3 in the appendix at the end of this document is a copy of the Town's zoning map.

Permitted uses, accessory uses, and uses allowed with a special use permit are specified for each district. Any uses not specifically allowed are prohibited. A table describing the uses that are allowed in each of the zoning districts in the Town of Stafford is provided at the end of the document (page 73).

The zoning regulations also include bulk standards, or regulations that control the size, location and dimensions of buildings and improvements on a parcel of land. In general, a minimum lot of 40,000 square feet is required for residential uses. Non-residential uses require larger lots, while single-family homes in the Residential (R) district may be on lots

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of 30,000 square feet to encourage greater density in the hamlet areas. A minimum of 30,000 square feet is required due to the lack of sewers in the Town. Typically, the lot frontage requirements are 200 feet, except in the hamlets, where it is 150 feet, or for industrial uses, which must have 300 feet of frontage. These bulk standards may be found in Zoning Schedule A in the Town Zoning Code.

Sections of the zoning code provide regulations to guide use of Mobile Homes and Mobile Home Parks; off-street parking; signs; Stabling of farm animals; Adult Uses; Junkyards; Commercial Excavations; Animal Waste Storage Facilities; Contractor's Yards; and Commercial Communication Towers.

The code also specifies administrative authorities and procedures for site plan review and approval, zoning amendments and procedures for appeals. Procedures for obtaining special use permits are also described. The authority for issuing special use permits remains with the Town Board for certain uses (mobile home park, commercial recreation, dumps and dumping, adult uses and junk yards.) The Planning Board holds the responsibility to approve other special permit uses. Allowable uses, by-right and by special permit, are shown in the Table on page 73

The responsibilities and organization of the Planning Board are outlined in Section 707. The Planning Board has jurisdiction over site plan review and the granting of special use permits for uses not specifically reserved by the Town Board, as noted above. The Planning Board has jurisdiction to assist with the review of use variances referred by the zoning board of appeals and provide recommendations to the zoning board of appeals, in writing, prior to the hearing. The Planning Board is also authorized to review and act on requests for emergency housing permits as set forth in the mobile home law (Section 501); and grant permits for temporary uses or structures.

Site Plan review is regulated under Section 401. Site plan review and approval is required for all new development except for single-family and two-family homes and any related accessory structures, or buildings intended for agricultural uses. The Planning Board has the authority to review and approve site plans in the Town of Stafford.

Subdivision Regulations

The Town of Stafford's Subdivision Regulations were adopted in 1971. These regulations outline the application and approval process for major and minor subdivisions, as well as the general requirements and design standards for street layout and design; lots; drainage improvements; and parks and open space. The regulations require the preservation of natural features wherever possible, with Planning Board approval required prior to the removal of any large trees.

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Subdivision regulations apply whenever any subdivision of land under 10 acres in size is proposed. Stafford's subdivision law distinguishes between major and minor subdivisions. Minor subdivisions are defined as the subdivision of not more than three lots fronting on an existing street, not requiring any new roads or the extension of municipal facilities, and not adversely affecting the development of the remainder of the parcel. Major subdivisions are defined as subdivision of a parcel of land into four or more lots, or subdivisions of any size that require the extension of a new street or municipal facilities. The Planning Board issues final approval of subdivisions, although Town Board approval is required prior to dedication of any street or public recreation area shown on any subdivision plat.

Submissions for major subdivision approval include sketch plan, preliminary plat and final plat. Minor subdivisions may omit the preliminary plat submission. The code sets forth all required information to be included in the application on the plat.

Land Separation

The Town of Stafford adopted land separation regulations in 1999. These regulations provide the Town with a greater level of control over parcels created by land splits that do not meet the threshold to be categorized as subdivisions. In order to qualify as a land separation, rather than a subdivision, all created parcels must front on a public street, and must not require the extension of roads or municipal facilities. All lots must conform to zoning regulations. Division of agricultural land for the purpose of continued agricultural use is considered a land separation under this regulation, as is the division of land to allow transfer of ownership between adjacent parcels.

Applicants must provide a sketch plan showing the parcel being divided, proposed lot lines, and list any easements, deed restrictions or covenants affecting the property. The property owner must attend a meeting of the Planning Board to discuss whether the application qualifies as a land separation, or must be processed as a subdivision. The Planning Board has the authority to require a land separation to undergo the same review process as a subdivision if it determines that it is necessary for the protection of public health, safety and welfare. If a land separation is classified as a subdivision, all subsequent lots divided from the original tract are subject to the level of review required as a subdivision. This requirement may be waived if the proposed lot is more than one-half mile from the boundary of any lots created by previous subdivisions, or involve divisions in order to allow the transfer of property between adjacent parcels, provided no nonconforming lots are created.

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State Agricultural Districts

As noted in the Land Use discussion, a majority of the land in the Town of Stafford falls within State designated Agricultural Districts. Portions of six separate agricultural districts may be found within the Town of Stafford. Lands within the Agricultural Districts, as well as other agricultural lands, are shown on Map 4: Agricultural Information, included in the appendix at the end of this document. While valuable agricultural lands are found outside official agricultural districts, the agricultural districts provide a legal status not afforded to lands outside the district.

Lands within State designated Agricultural Districts are subject to certain land use protections, as specified in Article 25-AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law. The program is designed to encourage continued agricultural use of lands within the State Agricultural Districts through a combination of incentives and controls. The district is created through a process of county and state review and certification. Lands must meet certain criteria to be eligible for inclusion in a district, and certification confirms that these criteria are met. Recertification occurs on a periodic basis, as specified in the creation of the district. A landowner may petition to be added to a district at any time, subject to the same review process required during recertification.

There are a number of benefits for agricultural landowners in a designated Agricultural District. Agricultural land within a district is assessed on its value as farmland, not on its potential development value. Since the value of land used for agricultural purposes is lower than its value as subdivided into developable parcels, an agricultural assessment reduces the property tax burden on agricultural lands, particularly in areas that are experiencing growth pressures. Land outside the Agricultural District boundaries may also receive an agricultural assessment if it meets certain conditions. The owner of any agricultural lands, whether in an Agricultural District or not, must apply annually for the reduced agricultural assessment. Lands receiving agricultural assessments that are converted to development parcels are subject to penalties and back taxes. Certain special district taxes, such as improvement districts for sewer, water or lighting, may be charged only to the portion of the parcel that surrounds the homestead or non-agricultural structures directly benefiting from the service. Lands used primarily for agricultural production are exempt from special district charges, unless the special district predates the formation of the agricultural district.

The Agricultural Districts Law requires that local laws may not unreasonably restrict farm operations within the district. Existing and proposed laws are subject to review by the State Department of Agriculture and Markets to ensure that they are not overly restrictive.

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Staff will also assist localities in modifying laws to make them more compatible with farming operations. Any application for a special use permit, site plan approval, use variance or subdivision approval that would occur on lands in the agricultural district containing a farm operation or within 500 feet of a farm operation must submit an agricultural data statement. The reviewing authority must take the information on the data statement into consideration in assessing potential impacts of the proposed project on agricultural operations.

The Agricultural Districts Law mandates that governmental entities must avoid or minimize potential adverse impacts to farming operations when they undertake any projects within an agricultural district that involves acquisition of land or use of public funds for construction purposes. This would include highway projects, water or sewer line extensions, natural gas or electric transmission lines, or similar projects. Any municipality, state agency or public authority must file a Notice of Intent with the State prior to beginning any such project. The State has developed standards to help mitigate impacts, such as recommendations to save topsoil or avoid certain prime croplands. The State may recommend modifications to a project in order to minimize potential negative effects.

The State enabling legislation also establishes a Right to Farm law, which presumes that sound farming practices are valid activities, and do not constitute private nuisances. This includes activities such as the operation of farm equipment, proper use of agricultural chemicals, and construction and use of farm structures. If a complaint is received about a particular activity, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets is authorized to review the practice and determine its appropriateness. If found to be a sound agricultural practice, the practice is an allowable action and neighboring landowners do not have grounds for nuisance suits. The Commissioner is also authorized to determine whether a particular land use is agricultural in nature.

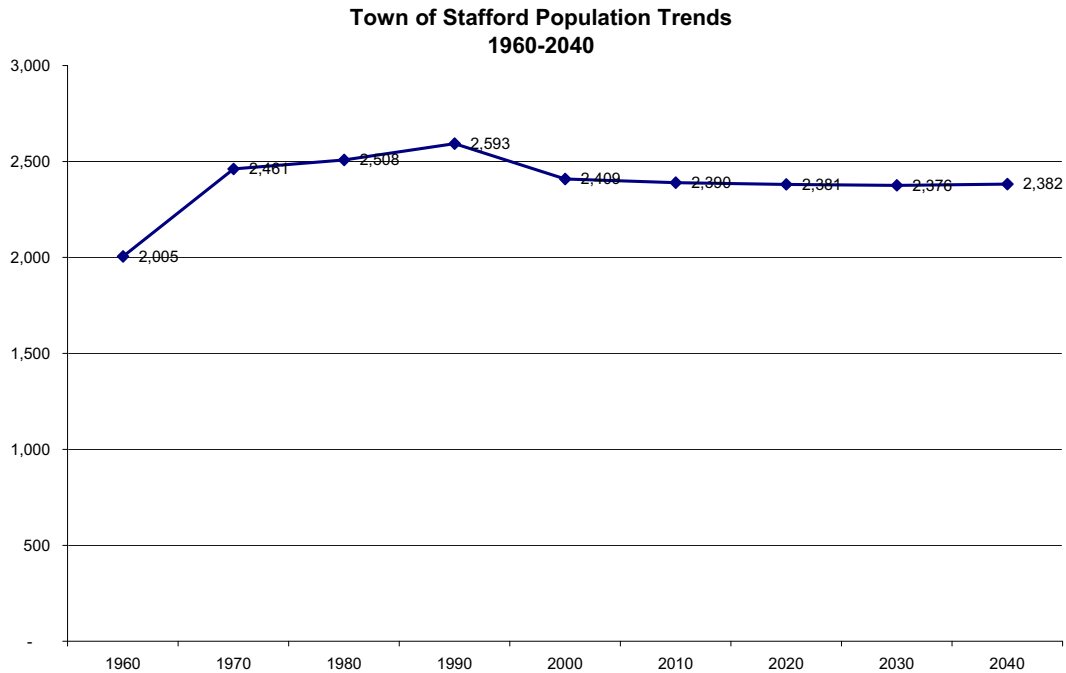
C. Demographics

Population Trends

The Town of Stafford has a population of 2,409, according to the 2000 Census. This figure represents a slight decline from 1990 figures, when the Town had 2,593 residents. Despite the loss, the Town's population has remained relatively stable over the past three decades.

Population projections prepared by the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (GFLRPC) suggest that this trend is expected to continue. According to GFLRPC, the Town's population will remain essentially unchanged through 2040.

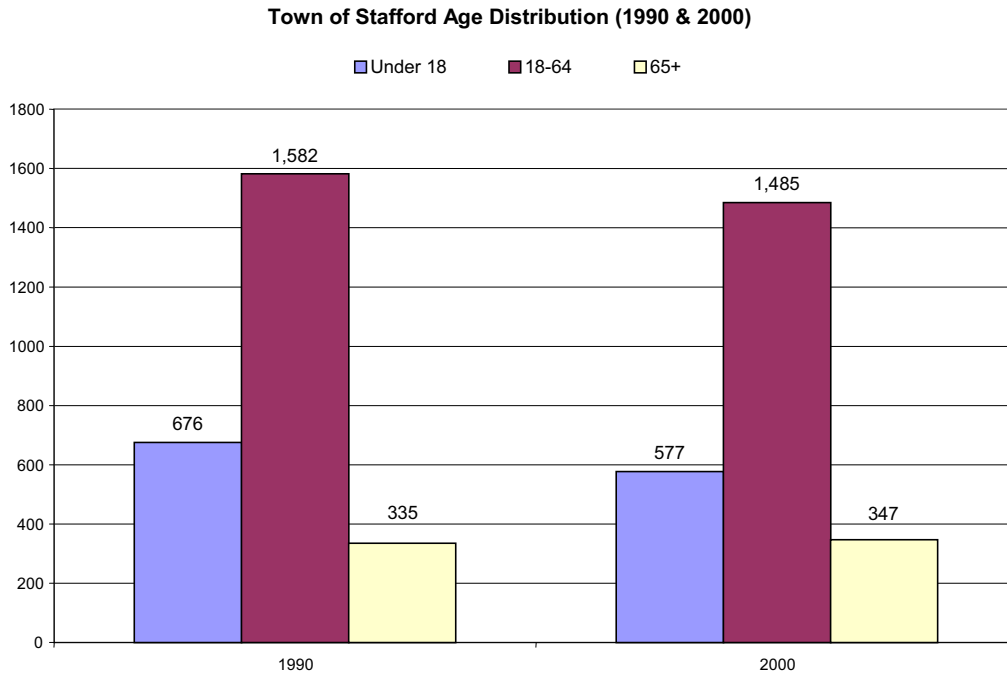
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Age Composition

The age composition for the Town of Stafford has remained relatively steady as well. The number of persons over the age of 65 increased slightly between 1990 and 2000, despite overall population losses. The elderly made up 12.9% of the population in 1990, and 14.4% in 2000. The number of children under the age of 18 decreased during this time period. Minors made up 26% of the Town's population in 1990, and 24% in 2000. The proportion of the population in the 18 to 64 age-range remained constant from 1990 to 2000, at approximately 61%. In 2000, the median age for the Town of Stafford was 40.1, compared to the County median age of 37.4. The Town of Stafford's median age is higher than that of any of the Towns bordering Stafford, where median age ranges from as low as 35.6 in Byron, to 39.4 in the Town of Batavia.

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Household Trends

Following national trends, households in the Town of Stafford have been getting smaller on average. However, households in Stafford still tend to be larger than households in Genesee County. According to the 2000 Census, the average household size in Stafford was 2.65 persons per household, compared to 2.84 persons per household in 1990. In Genesee County, average household size dropped to 2.59 in 2000, from 2.72 in 1990. Average household size in Stafford is larger than that of the Town of Batavia and the Town of Le Roy (including the Village), but smaller than that of the other Towns it borders (Bethany, Pavilion, Byron and Elba).

As a result of smaller household size, the number of occupied housing units in Stafford has remained steady, despite a loss in population. There are currently 909 households in the Town, a loss of only 13 households between 1990 and 2000.

Household Composition

The majority of households in Stafford are family households (related persons living together), which make up 76.5% of all households. Another 18.7% of households are

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single person households (an individual living alone). The remaining 4.8% of households are “non-traditional” family types (unrelated persons living in the same household).

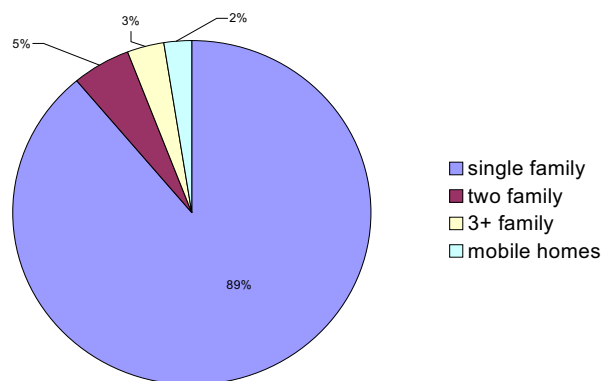
Although most households are family households, only 26.2% of households are the “traditional” family consisting of a married couple with children under 18 living at home. The most common family type is the “empty-nester”; married couples with no minor children make up 40% of all households, and over half of all family households. Married couples, with or without children, comprise approximately two-thirds of households (66.3%) in the Town. Approximately one-third of all households and about 41% of all families have minor children living at home. Slightly over one-quarter (26.4%) of all households have an individual who is aged 65 or older.

Housing Stock

The housing stock in Stafford consists primarily of single family housing. Traditional single-family housing units are 89% of all dwellings within the Town. Mobile homes make up an additional 2.4% of the housing stock. Approximately 5.3% of all units in Stafford are in two-family homes, and the remainder of the housing stock (3.6%) consists of multiple unit dwellings (three to twelve units per structure).

Stafford’s housing stock is relatively old. Over 60% of the housing stock was built prior to 1960, with the largest proportion built prior to 1939 (39.4%). According to Census data, 48 housing units were built during the 1990’s.

Stafford Housing Units by Type, 2000



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Housing Vacancy

Stafford appears to have a high vacancy rate. In 2000, 8.8% of housing units in the Town were considered vacant. Excluding Stafford, Towns in Genesee County have vacancy rates that range from 3.5% to 6.7%. However, in Stafford, the vacancy rate is inflated due to the number of seasonal cottages in the Town. Nearly half of the vacant units are second homes, not considered the primary residence of the owner, but kept for occasional use. When these homes are removed from the inventory of vacant units, vacancy in Stafford drops to 4.9%. While this is still higher than many other Towns in Genesee County, it is within the range considered to be a “normal” vacancy rate. A vacancy rate in the range of 5% is considered normal, to account for properties in transition due to real estate sales and rental turnover.

Income

The Town of Stafford compares favorably to the adjacent communities in terms of median income. Median household income in Stafford was approximately \$49,500 in 2000, according to the U.S. Census. Of adjacent communities (Towns of Batavia, Bethany, Byron, Elba, Le Roy and Pavilion), only the Town of Byron has a higher median household income. Per capita income, or the average amount of income per person in the Town, is \$19,775, which is 7% higher than the County-wide per capita income figure (\$18,498). According to 2000 Census data, 3.7% of residents in Stafford are living below the poverty line, compared to 7.6% of all residents of Genesee County.

D. Environmental Resources

Creeks and Floodplains

Three creeks and their tributaries flow through the Town of Stafford. Black Creek and Bigelow Creek run northerly through the Town, flowing toward the Genesee River. Black Creek is a major creek in the central part of Town. It flows through both the hamlet of Stafford and the hamlet of Morganville. The northern portion of Black Creek is a floodplain. Bigelow Creek, near the western border of Town, is a smaller waterway that feeds Horseshoe Lake and Godfrey's Pond. Bigelow Creek has significant areas of wetlands along its length. The southeastern corner of Town, near the hamlet of Roanoke, is traversed by Oatka Creek. A tributary of Oatka Creek, White Creek, flows into Oatka Creek near the hamlet of Roanoke.

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There are two areas in the Town of Stafford that are designated as floodplains by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These areas are located along Oatka Creek in the southeast corner of Town, and along the northern portion of Black Creek in the Town. These areas are depicted on the Town's Zoning Map as the Flood Protection Overlay area.

Watersheds

Town of Stafford falls within three separate watersheds. The majority of the Town drains into the Black Creek watershed. This watershed incorporates the northwestern and central parts of Stafford, and includes lands surrounding both Black Creek and Bigelow Creek. The southwestern corner of the Town is in the Upper Tonawanda Creek watershed. The area along most of the eastern border of Town lies within the Oatka Creek watershed. These lands drain easterly into the Oatka Creek in Le Roy.

Wetlands

There are scattered areas of both federal and state wetlands throughout the Town of Stafford. Wetlands are low-lying areas where water is retained, and groundwater can be found at or near the surface of the soil for extended periods of time. Wetlands are either federal, and under the jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers, or state-designated, and regulated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The definition of what is classified as a wetland differs between these two entities.

Federal wetlands are primarily identified by the presence of hydric soils, or soils that tend to be wet. The US Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory classifies lands along many of the creeks in Town as federal wetlands. Areas of federal wetlands in Stafford are concentrated in the southern portion of Town, particularly the southeastern corner, and along Black Creek and Bigelow Creek. There are also other scattered areas of federal wetlands, as shown on Map 5 (see appendix). Federal policy is evolving in regard to federal wetlands, particularly smaller isolated areas not associated with navigable water. In general, however, persons seeking to develop within a federal wetland need to obtain a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers.

New York State identifies wetlands by a number of factors, primarily by the types of vegetation that are found in the area. Plants found in State wetlands prefer wet soils or flooding conditions. State delineated wetlands are typically 12.4 acres in size or larger. In the Town of Stafford, there is a significant overlap between areas of federal and state wetlands, and areas that are designated as State wetlands are frequently found in the

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same areas as federal wetlands. A permit from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation is required prior to development of any State-designated wetland, or within one hundred feet of a State-designated wetland.

Map 5: Environmental Features, depicts creeks, floodplains, wetlands and watersheds in the Town of Stafford. Maps are located in the appendix at the end of this document.

Prime Farmlands

The Town of Stafford has large areas of prime farmland. Prime farmlands are soils that have the physical and chemical characteristics that are well suited to support agricultural uses. Prime soils are fertile, with sufficient water supply and other traits needed to produce food, feed, and other crops. As defined by the US Department of Agriculture, prime farmlands have the following characteristics:

. . . an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. They are permeable to water and air. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.

There are other areas in Stafford that are prime farmlands when drained. These areas tend to be somewhat wet, with a high water table, or areas of wetlands, but are good soils to support crops or other agricultural uses if properly drained.

The most concentrated bands of prime farmland run through the center of the Town, and along the eastern border with the Town of Le Roy. Other scattered areas of prime farmlands are located throughout the Town. Map 6: Prime Farmland Soils indicates areas of prime farmland throughout the Town (see appendix).

E. Utilities

Public Water

Public waterlines were installed in the Town of Stafford in 2003. This work was part of Phase I of Genesee County's countywide water system. Water mains run along Route 5 and along Route 237 north to Morganville, ending at Horseshoe Lake Road. Lines also extend off Route 5 along portions of Seven Springs Road, Fargo Road, Prole Road and Roanoke Road. The location of water lines in the Town are shown on Map 7:

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Transportation and Utilities (in appendix). The Town is exploring options to extend additional waterlines through Town, including cooperative ventures with adjacent Towns. Water main extensions have included Route 237 from Morganville to the northern Town Line, Sweetland Road and Roanoke Road. Others are currently being pursued.

Sanitary Waste Systems

There is no public sewerage system in the Town of Stafford. All households are serviced with privately maintained sanitary waste systems (septic systems).

F. Transportation

Roadways

Route 5 is the major road through the Town of Stafford. The Town of Stafford grew from a settlement located along this roadway, which was one of the earliest east-west thoroughfares across New York State. Currently, Route 5 remains a major arterial through Genesee County, and the primary route between the population centers of Batavia and Le Roy. Three other State highways run through Stafford: State Route 33, also known as Clinton Street Road, runs northeast from Batavia through the Town of Stafford, and provides access to Interstate Route 490 at the exit in the Town of Bergen. State Route 237 runs north from its terminus at Route 5 in the hamlet of Stafford, eventually ending at the Lake Ontario State Parkway in Orleans County. State Route 63 cuts across the southwest corner of the Town.

The New York State Thruway (I-90) runs through the Town of Stafford and is a prominent land feature, effectively dividing the northern portion of the Town from the remainder of the community. Only three roads in the Town cross over or under the Thruway: Byron Road, Route 33 and Route 237. There is no access to the Thruway directly from the Town of Stafford. Access to the Thruway is either via Exit 48 in Batavia to the west, or Exit 47 in Le Roy to the east. Transportation routes in the Town of Stafford are shown on Map 7: Transportation and Utilities (in appendix).

Traffic Counts

Traffic counts have been taken along the State Highways in Stafford, which show the average number of vehicles on a particular segment of road, as averaged out on an annual basis. Known as Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), this statistic evens out any seasonal differences to give an overall picture of traffic volumes. In Stafford, traffic counts (AADT) range from as high as 8,000 vehicles per day, on Route 5 between the four corners in Stafford and Le Roy, to as low as 1,500 vehicles per day on Route 237. Other

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roads in the Town of Stafford are local roadways, which serve primarily to provide access to homes, farms and other uses in the Town.

The following table summarizes Traffic Counts on the State routes in the Town of Stafford.

Traffic Volumes, Stafford New York

Route	Segment	AADT	Year
Route 5 (Main Street)	Fargo Road to Route 237	7,242	1999
	Route 237 to Le Roy Village line	8,179	1999
Route 33 (Clinton Street Road)	Town of Batavia to Prole Road	6,137	2000
	Prole Road to Route 237	5,986	1999
	Route 237 to Route 19	6,352	2000
Route 237	Route 5 to Route 33	1,497	2000
	Route 33 to Route 262 (Byron)	1,953	2001

Source: NYS Department of Transportation

Public Transportation

In contrast to most rural communities, the Town of Stafford does have public transit service. The Batavia Bus Service, a division of Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA), operates the B-Line bus route between the City of Batavia and the Village of Le Roy. The bus runs Monday through Friday, with four scheduled departures from Batavia (8:15 a.m., 2:15 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.) eastbound, and four departures from Le Roy westbound (9:15 a.m., 2:45 p.m., 4:30 p.m., and 5:30 p.m.). Riders are requested to provide 24 hour notice that they will require bus service, and actual times may vary, depending on passenger demand. Park-and-Ride service from Stafford to the City of Rochester is also available, with one inbound and one outbound trip Monday through Friday.

There is also paratransit (dial-a-ride) service available for qualifying residents with disabilities within Genesee County. Dial-a-Ride provides curb-to-curb on-call transportation to locations within the County for eligible residents. In general, residents must be unable to use standard transit in order to be certified as eligible. A minimum 24-hour advance notice is required. There is no set fee for the service, although a voluntary donation is requested.

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Railroad Service

One active rail line runs through the Town of Stafford. A Conrail line runs northeast from Batavia, crossing through the northwest portion of the Town. There are no access points or stops on the rail line within the Town of Stafford. Rights-of-way for three additional rail lines run through Stafford, but these lines are inactive. In some cases, adjacent property owners have taken over former rail lands, while in other cases, the right of way remains vacant.

Pedestrian and Bicycling Routes

There are no off-road bicycle paths in the Town of Stafford. Bicyclists generally make use of the shoulder of the roadways, but there are no official designated bike routes through the Town. According to information from the Genesee Transportation Council, there are no multi-use (bike/hike) trails, either existing or proposed, in the Town of Stafford, although the proposed Groveland Secondary Trail runs through the northern part of the Town of Pavilion, near the border with Stafford.

There are no sidewalks in the Town of Stafford. Gravel pathways that ran along Route 5 for a short distance were removed due to the waterline construction.

G. Community Facilities and Cultural Resources

Municipal Buildings

The Town of Stafford has a relatively new Town Hall facility, which was built in 1997. The Town owns the adjacent Post Office building, and leases it to the United States Postal Services. The Town also has a new Highway facility, located at the corner of Route 5 and Sanders Road.

Schools

The Town of Stafford is served by five separate school districts. Most residents living in northern portion of Town are in the Byron-Bergen school district. The east-central portion of the Town falls in the Le Roy School District. The Pavilion School District extends across the southernmost area of the Town. Residents at the western portion of Stafford are in the Batavia City School District. A few parcels in the extreme northwest corner of the Town fall within the Elba Central School District. Residents may also choose to send their children to a number of parochial schools in the area, including the St. Paul Lutheran School, the

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Genesee Christian Academy, St. Joseph's School, and Notre Dame High School in Batavia; the Holy Family School in Le Roy; and the Pavilion Baptist School in Pavilion.

Genesee Community College is located in the Town of Batavia, and is very accessible to Stafford residents. Other area colleges are located in the Rochester and Buffalo metropolitan areas.

Parks and Recreation

The Town owns two parks: Emery and Ilette Parks. Ilette Park is a small landscaped area next to Town Hall with an attractive gazebo. The Town also owns a large parcel (109 acres) adjacent to the Thruway on Mullen Road known as the "Greenspan" that is "Forever Wild" undeveloped open space. Purchased by the Town as undeveloped open space, the site is wooded, and will remain undeveloped. In addition, the Stafford Fire Department has athletic fields north of Emery Park.

Emery Park is the primary location for most recreational activities in the Town. Emery Park is located in the western end of the Stafford hamlet on the north side of Route 5. It is slightly over 5 acres in size, and has picnic facilities, a playground, and tennis and basketball courts. The playground was built three years ago with assistance from the Stafford Fire Department, and has an area designed for 5 to 12 year-olds, and a separate play structure for younger children.

The Town operates a six-week Summer Recreational program for youth at Emery Park, which offers morning and afternoon activities. Offerings include field trips, crafts, games, physical games and activities, such as tag, contests, music, and presentations from organizations such as DARE. The Town has offered a swim program in the past, under a lease to use Call's Pond in the Morganville area. However, Call's Pond is no longer suitable for public swimming unless significant investments are made to improve water quality. The Town has explored alternatives, such as using the City of Batavia YMCA facility, but scheduling and transportation are problems.

There are a number of snowmobile trails through the Town of Stafford, and snowmobiling is a popular activity in the Town. These trails are privately owned, and maintained by snowmobile clubs during the season.

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Historic and Architectural Resources

The Town of Stafford has a rich history. According to Genesee County Tourism Promotion, the hamlet of Stafford, also known as Stafford Village or the Four Corners, was the first settlement on lands of the Holland Land Purchase. Early settlers arrived in 1798, the first year the area was opened to settlement. Route 5, the Main Road, was the primary route across Western New York and the crossroads of Stafford became a center of trade and business for the area. Businesses included a stage coach stop, taverns, inns, blacksmiths, wagon shops, general stores, a cider mill and doctor's offices.

There are several historically significant buildings in Stafford. The oldest structure in Town is the stone portion of the Stafford Fire Hall, which was built in 1827 as a store. The former Town Hall building was also built as a store, in 1850. Stafford Trading Post was built in 1890, and was once the local International Order of OddFellows (IOOF) Hall. There are numerous historic private homes lining Route 5 in the Stafford hamlet area. The historic significance of the hamlet area is nationally-recognized: the Stafford Village Four Corners Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 as a historic district.

Emergency Services

Emergency services are provided by the Stafford Fire Department. Located on Main Street in the hamlet area, the Fire Hall provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the entire Town. Police protection is provided by the Genesee County sheriff and the New York State Police. Emergency medical services transport is provided by the City of Batavia Fire Department. [Note: Mercy Flight is now the EMS transport provider]

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SECTION III: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This section presents the goals and objectives for the Town of Stafford. These goals were initially based on the major issues and concerns articulated by the Town. These issues were developed and refined throughout the planning process, with the assistance of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and the general public.

A. Public Input

Effective public input is an important component of a planning effort, in order to ensure the validity of the effort and to build support and consensus around its findings. This Plan incorporated public input from a number of avenues, including public information meetings, written comments, a public opinion survey, a visual preferences survey, and a focus meeting with government officials which was attended by members of the Town Board, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Throughout the process, the Advisory Committee, representing a range of interests and groups in the Town, provided input and oversight to the planning process.

B. Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of a community are its vision of its future. They establish the priorities of the Town, in order to provide guidance and direction in the consideration of future land use and planning decisions. These goals are general in nature, so that they can be utilized to guide decision-making in the Town across a broad range of issues. The recommendations that follow in Section 5 include more specific actions that the Town can implement to achieve the intent of these goals and objectives.

Maintain and enhance community character in the Town of Stafford

The Town of Stafford is a rural community with a strong sense of history. Elements of the community that contribute to its unique character include open spaces, farmlands, and the historic hamlet developments, particularly the historic four corners area that is known as the “Village” of Stafford. It shall be a priority of the Town to ensure that new development patterns are supportive of the character of the Town. The emphasis is on rural lands throughout most of the Town, with denser development allowed in the hamlet areas. To this end, the following objectives are supported:

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- Maintain the unique rural character and small-town atmosphere in the Town of Stafford through proper planning and development.
- Promote and enhance a sense of community in the Town.
- Manage growth in the Town to ensure development occurs at an appropriate scale, style and pace, and in locations that are suitable for the type of development being proposed.
- Ensure new development is compatible with neighboring uses.
- Preserve viewsheds, mature vegetation, open space and other natural resources that contribute to the rural character of the Town.
- Preserve the historic character of the “village” area.
- Encourage architectural development styles that are consistent with the historic and rural character of existing development in and around the Town.
- Promote improvements that enhance the aesthetics and support pedestrian activity in the hamlet areas.

Support and protect agricultural lands

Agriculture is an integral part of the character of the Town of Stafford. It provides jobs, preserves open space and contributes to the visual landscape of the Town. It shall be a priority of the Town of Stafford to support agricultural uses, and devise land use regulations and policies that help ensure its continued viability. In this regard, the Town supports the following objectives:

- Recognize the importance of farming to the character, economy and spirit of the Town.
- Promote the protection of farms and farming-related activities.
- Support farming and agriculture activities to provide jobs and economic activity for residents in the Town.
- Protect and promote farming activity as a priority to preserve open space and scenic vistas that help shape the rural character of the Town.
- Encourage and allow farm-related businesses as support service to farming.

Protect the environmental features and resources of the Town of Stafford

The Town contains a variety of environmental features, including prime agricultural soils, wetlands, woodlands and attractive streams and ponds. These elements provide environmental benefits, serve as important habitats, and contribute to the character of the community. Since most of the Town is dependent upon groundwater for potable water supply, water quality is also an important environmental issue. It shall be a priority of the

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Town of Stafford to protect the quality of its environmental resources, and preserve important environmental features where feasible.

- Protect and preserve natural resources in the Town.
- Protect groundwater sources as a high priority to maintain the viability of private wells.
- Promote public education to promote septic system maintenance.
- Promote sound farming techniques that reduce non-point source pollution.
- Promote the protection of natural stream corridors and watersheds.

Protect important historic, cultural and recreational community features

The Town of Stafford was one of the first settlements in the Genesee County area. The Stafford hamlet area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Historic buildings and homes throughout the Town contribute to the character, history and attractiveness of the community. The Town also owns parkland and public facilities that contribute to the local quality of life. It shall be a priority of the Town of Stafford to protect its important historic, cultural and recreational assets.

- Preserve significant historic structures, particularly within the National Historic District.
- Maintain and promote the Town Parks and their facilities.
- Where features are privately owned, support efforts of private property owners to maintain and improve local historic, cultural or recreational resources

Encourage a well-maintained stock of housing that meets community needs

The housing stock in Stafford is generally in good condition. However, household patterns are changing, and there are fewer traditional families of two parents with young children at home. These changing demographics suggest there may be a need for a greater variety of housing types to accommodate smaller households, older homeowners, and other non-traditional family types. It shall be a priority of the Town of Stafford to encourage continued upkeep and maintenance of the existing housing stock, and to encourage a greater variety of housing styles and types, where appropriate.

- Encourage investment in the existing housing stock to maintain its quality.
- Encourage the provision of a greater variety of housing styles and types to accommodate a wider range of housing preferences, income levels and household types
- Maintain and protect residential property values.
- Encourage the development of housing in a manner that discourages sprawl and enables residents to use existing services and infrastructure efficiently.

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Ensure potable water is available to residents of the Town

Potable water is a public health necessity. Most residents of the Town of Stafford are served by private wells that sometimes do not provide sufficient quality or quantity of water. The Town supports providing public water to appropriate areas of the Town where feasible, in order to address the needs of its residents.

- Work with Genesee County to further outline and identify what areas of the Town should receive public water.
- Provide public water to areas where the quality or quantity of potable water resources threatens public health.
- Protect areas from unwanted growth, particularly in areas where the quality or quantity of water is poor and where public water cannot be provided.
- Provide public water in areas of denser development and where additional growth is appropriate to help guide where development occurs.
- Protect groundwater and surface water resources from contamination from failing septic systems and other sources of pollution.
- Promote the provision of assistance for improving farming practices to protect the quality of groundwater and the environment.

Encourage appropriate economic development activities in the Town

Commercial and light industrial growth and other economic development activities help provide jobs, services and a stronger tax base for the community. The Town of Stafford will encourage economic development that provides beneficial impacts for the community.

- Protect and support the existing economic base of the Town and viability of existing businesses.
- Target new commercial and industrial growth in areas with adequate infrastructure.
- Encourage development of new businesses that are compatible with neighboring uses, and are in character with the surrounding community.
- Encourage a diversity of retail and commercial uses in the Four Corners business district.
- Support the maintenance of the historic character of the Town, particularly at the Four Corners area, in support of tourism and economic development efforts.

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SECTION IV: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the findings that have been derived from an assessment of the Inventory, as well as results of the survey and input received from public meetings and the Advisory Committee. The first section summarizes the survey results. The second section provides the findings, which constitute an issues analysis, organized around the inventory. The zoning analysis, which cuts across a range of issues, includes specific recommendations pertaining to local zoning. The final section provides specific recommendations for the Town of Stafford, which have been organized around the community's goals and objectives.

A. Survey Results

The Town of Stafford distributed a survey to a random sample of households in the Town in order to obtain public input about issues relating to land use and development in the Town.

A total of 487 surveys were either mailed or picked up by residents at Town Hall. This represents approximately 54% of all households in the Town. A total of 250 surveys, or over half of those distributed, were returned and tallied. The response rate represented 51.3% of surveys, and 27.5% of all households in the Town of Stafford.

- Over half of respondents (52.0%) have lived in the Town for over 20 years.
- Approximately 32% of respondents are retired or do not work. One-quarter (24%) work in Batavia, and 15.6% work in Monroe County.
- One-third of the people who responded have public water.
- Water quality is somewhat of an issue. Of those who do not have public water, over half (51.6%) have frequent or occasional problems with water quality, while 48% report that they never have a problem with the quality of their water.
- Water quantity is not as great a problem. Nearly three-quarter (72.3%) of respondents without public water never have a problem with water shortages. Just under 20% have occasional problems, and only 8% report frequent problems with water shortages.
- Most respondents support extensions of public water. Approximately half (51.2%) of the survey respondents who do not have public water are interested in receiving public

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water. Twenty-eight percent are not interested. The remaining respondents were unsure.

- Residents believe the cost of water should be affordable. Over 44% indicate that the most they would pay for public water was \$300 a year or less. Another 40% note that they do not want to pay any additional cost for public water.
- Most respondents (50.8%) indicate that public water should be available town-wide. Seventeen percent feel it should be along major roads, while 10% feel it should be limited to current areas of service only.
- Residents support some commercial development in the Town, with 53.2% agreeing with the statement that Stafford needs new commercial growth. Thirty-nine percent oppose new commercial growth, while the remainder are uncertain or did not respond.
- Route 5 is the preferred location for new commercial enterprises, with 43.6% of the responses. Route 33 is second, with 34.8%.
- Opinions in regard to industrial development are more split, with 49.6% opposed, and 45.2% in favor of additional industrial development. Five percent are undecided.
- Residents also appear to be divided on new residential growth, with 40% in favor, and 38% opposed. A large number (22%) did not respond to this question.
- One question addressed housing types: 46% of respondents favor traditional single-family homes, and a similar percentage oppose mobile homes. Respondents also generally oppose apartments, with 42% against two- or three-family homes, and 40% against apartments. The exception is apartments targeted to seniors, which are supported by about 33% of respondents, and opposed by 25%. The remaining respondents did not indicate a preference.
- When asked if the Town needs additional recreational facilities, about half (49.6%) of the respondents said no, while 42% said yes. The remainder were undecided or did not respond.
- Another question addressed preferences for different types of recreational facilities. Many respondents did not indicate a preference, particularly those who did not see a need for additional recreational facilities.

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- The results were divided for those that did answer. The most common response (40%) was in opposition to an indoor swimming pool. This was also the response with the clearest split, with only 14% in favor. The second most common response (36%) was in favor of hiking and biking trails.
- A more definitive answer was received to the question of additional costs associated with recreational facilities, with 71% opposed, and only 26% willing to incur additional costs for recreation in the Town.
- Respondents support the summer youth program, which is approved by 60% of respondents. At the same time, survey respondents do not see a need for the Town to provide additional youth programming during the school year, with 59% opposed.
- Survey responses are split on the question of senior services. Nearly 51% are in favor of more Town-sponsored programs for seniors, and 46% opposed.
- A community center is not supported. Seventy-two percent saw no need for a community center building. Several respondents wrote in that the existing Town Hall and Fire Hall were serving the function of a community center for the Town.
- It was asked if the Town should allow apartments in business properties (for example, over a storefront). About 65% of respondents said yes; 31% said no, and the remaining 4% were undecided.
- A series of questions were designed to determine support for agricultural and open space issues. In general, the responses indicate strong support for these issues.
- Residents recognize the importance of farming to the local economy. Thirty-six percent of respondents agree that farming is an important business in the Town, and another 57% strongly agree, for a total of 93%. Only 2% disagreed with the statement, with the remaining survey respondents withholding opinion on the question.
- The statement that agriculture is important to the Town of Stafford received similar responses. (56% strongly agree; 37% agree; 2% disagree).
- Respondents see farmlands and actively farmed fields as an important element of the Town. Forty-two percent of respondents agree that actively farmed fields are important to the character of the Town, with an additional 51% feeling strongly about this issue (total 92% in favor). Again, only 2% of respondents disagreed with this statement.

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- Survey responses suggest that open space (fields and scenery, but not necessarily farmlands) are slightly less important to the character of the Town. Responses were still overwhelmingly positive, with 37% in agreement, and an additional 52% in strong agreement (total 89% in favor). A slightly larger percentage (4%) disagreed that open space is important to the character of the Town.
- While recognizing the importance of these issues to the character of the Town, respondents were slightly less protective of prime agricultural soils. Thirty-six percent agreed, and 51% strongly agreed prime soils should be reserved for agricultural uses (total 87%), while 4.4% disagreed with that statement.
- The final three questions related to communication in the Town. About 41% of respondents feel that they are adequately informed about news and events in the Town, while a larger percentage (58%) disagree. The majority of respondents (82%) are interested in a Town newsletter. Respondents were evenly split on the question of a Town website, with 47.2% interested and 47.6% not interested.

B. Findings

The findings represent what we found out from our research, combined with public input.

Population Trends and Development Pressures:

- Population, households and building trends all indicate that the Town of Stafford is a stable community.
- Population and households figures declined slightly over the past 10 years (1990-2000). Population projections by the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council predict total population in Stafford will remain essential unchanged for the next thirty-five years.
- There have not been a lot of growth pressures in Stafford. According to data from the Town Building Inspector, a total of five building permits were issued for new housing units over the past four years.
- It is anticipated that the Town will remain stable from a demographic standpoint.

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Land Use Issues: Agriculture

- Agriculture is the predominant land use, and is very important to the character of the community. It is also an important feature of the local economy
- Agricultural as a land use is highly valued by residents
- Agriculture in Stafford is in transition, with a trend toward concentrating farming activities into fewer farms, and larger farms. This parallels national trends. The threat to agricultural land use is based more on the economics of farming than on growth pressures.
- In Stafford, many of the lands being farmed are leased lands. As such, property taxes and land rents have a significant impact on their continued use as agricultural lands.
- Much of the farming activity in Stafford is cash crops. There are relatively few dairy farms.
- As the economics of farming continue to be under pressure, there is a trend to focus farming activities on the prime soils, and discontinue farming on more marginal lands. Marginal farming lands are concentrated primarily in the north western portion of the Town.
- Much of the land in the Town of Stafford falls within one of the six State designated Agricultural Districts located in the Town
- Some of the land not within Agricultural Districts is unlikely to face development pressures. Large parcels not in Agricultural Districts include the quarry, the golf courses, and Town owned land, including the open space parcel adjoining the Thruway.
- Remaining lands outside of Agricultural Districts are concentrated in the central western portion of Town. This area is characterized by poorer soils, wetlands and the ponds with their surrounding residential development (Horseshoe Lake, Seven Springs Pond and Godfrey's Pond). These areas exhibit poor conditions for farming.
- State Agricultural Districts Number 1, 3, 6 and 8 were recently reviewed for modifications to the boundaries. During this review, more land was added to the protected areas in the Town of Stafford than was removed. According to figures by Genesee County Department of Planning, 23 parcels, totaling slightly over 638 acres

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were added to Agricultural Districts, while 4 parcels, totaling 76.4 acres opted out of the program.

- Survey responses indicate strong support for agriculture, as a business, as a land use and as an element of the character of the Town of Stafford. In response to questions regarding the importance of agriculture to the Town, positive responses ranged from 87 to 92 percent.

Land Use Issues: Hamlets and Residential Development

- The Town has three historical settlements, or hamlets, which are more densely developed than the remainder of the Town. The Stafford hamlet, also known as the Four Corners, is the most densely developed area of the Town. As the historic center of the community, it has the greatest diversity of land uses, with commercial and public uses in addition to residential housing. It is the “town center” geographically, historically and symbolically. It also is designated as a National Historic District.
- The other two hamlets, Morganville and Roanoke, are residential in nature.
- Concentrations of residential uses are also found at the communities surrounding the ponds, and along Fargo, Clipnock and Roanoke Roads south of Route 5. A small concentration of housing is near the Batavia Country Club.
- Residential development elsewhere in the Town is largely along major roadways, and at a rural scale.

Land Use Issues: Other Land Uses

- Commercial development in the Town is concentrated along the two major highways. Development along Route 5 is concentrated at major intersections, with scattered independent businesses elsewhere along the route. There are commercial uses along Route 33 near the Town of Batavia border, and at the intersection of Route 237.
- Survey responses indicated support for some additional commercial development.
- The three golf courses in the Town are also considered commercial development.

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- Pressure for new commercial development is most likely to occur along the two major transportation corridors in the Town: Route 33 and Route 5. Route 33 provides access to Batavia and Genesee Community College on the west, and the Rochester metropolitan area (via its link to Route 490) on the east. Route 5 connects Batavia to Le Roy.
- It is possible that Genesee Community College, although not located in the Town, may have indirect impacts on Stafford if it grows (convenience services for students, faculty)
- There is very little industrial activity in the Town of Stafford. The large stone quarry and a smaller gravel quarry are the largest industrial land users. The other two industries are agriculturally-related businesses (agricultural warehouse and feed sales).

Natural Environment

- The Town is divided between three separate watersheds. Studies have been conducted on these watersheds, indicating potential issues pertaining to flooding and water quality.
- The Town of Stafford has 788.7 acres of land designated as flood zone, according to the Genesee-Wyoming Counties Joint Flood Mitigation study, which looked at the Oatka and Tonawanda Creek watersheds. However, the Town has never been fully mapped by FEMA to identify all potential floodplains. The Flood Mitigation study indicates that additional, unmapped land could be categorized as floodplains in the Town.
- Most identified lands within flood plains in the Town of Stafford are in agricultural use, although the Flood Mitigation Study indicates that 35% of lands within the identified flood plain are residential.
- There is little information about water quality in the surface waters in Stafford, or in Genesee County in general. The Black Creek watershed, which encompasses the central portion of the Town of Stafford is currently being studied to document water quality.
- There is a relatively good match between where prime agricultural soils are located and development patterns, with most areas of prime soils dedicated to agricultural

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uses, and developed areas concentrated on soils that are not as good for agricultural production.

- Most areas of wetlands appear to be in agricultural use.
- Based on survey responses, groundwater supply is not a large issue. About 72 percent of respondents with private water supplies never had water shortages.
- Water quality is more of an issue. Slightly more than half (52 percent) of survey respondents who do not have public water indicated that they had some problems with water quality, with an even split between those who had occasional problems and those with frequent problems. Written responses suggested problems with bacteria and other contaminants (possibly failing septic systems or poor farm management practices).

Utilities

- Public water lines serve the center of Town, serving most areas of densest development: along Route 5 and up Route 237 to Morganville, and for short distances off Main Street along intersecting roadways (Seven Springs, Fargo, Prole, and Roanoke).
- There is public support for additional water lines. Over half of survey respondents stated that public water should be available “town-wide”, while only 10 percent wanted no additional expansion of public water lines. Over half (51.2 percent) of respondents who did not currently have public water indicated that they are interested in receiving public water.
- Town leaders are supportive of extending public water where it is feasible.
- There are no sewers in the Town of Stafford. Given topography and population densities, it is unlikely that public sewers could be provided in a cost-effective manner in the near future.

Transportation

- Major roadways in the Town of Stafford include Route 5, Route 33 and I-90. Route 237, although it is a State road, does not receive high traffic volumes.

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- Route 5 is a major state road, with traffic volumes in the range of 8000 vehicles per day, on average. The Level of Service (LOS) appears to be acceptable. It links Stafford to Batavia to the west and Le Roy to the east.
- Route 33 is also a major state highway. East of Stafford, it connects to I-490, which provides interstate access to the Rochester metropolitan area.
- The New York State Thruway (I-90) cuts across the Town, but there is no local exit. Access is either in Le Roy to the east or Batavia to the west.
- Only three roads in Stafford cross over or under the Thruway (Byron Road, Routes 33 and Route 237). Other north-south roads in the Town dead-end at the Thruway.
- Due to its location between the population centers in Batavia and Le Roy, Stafford has better public transportation access than most rural communities.
- There are several abandoned rail lines through the Town of Stafford. These lines could be used as potential trailways for bike or walking trails. In some areas, however, adjacent property owners have taken over parts of the right-of-way, which would complicate efforts to establish paths along these routes.
- There are no sidewalks in the Town. Pedestrians must walk along the side of the roadway, which creates hazardous conditions in some locations. In particular, Route 5 in the hamlet area would benefit from some type of accommodation for pedestrians, particularly between Ilette Park and Emery Park. This could be a path or other type of walkway.
- There are also no bike trails in the Town. Survey responses indicate some local support for better walking and biking accommodations.

Community Facilities

- Public facilities in the Town are generally in good condition. The Town Hall, Post Office and Highway Garage are relatively new buildings. Ilette Park is attractively landscaped. Improvements to Emery Park may be warranted.
- The survey suggests new recreation facilities are not a high priority, although there is interest in trails and sports fields. There is not support for facilities that will increase public costs, and a large majority was opposed to higher fees for recreation opportunities.

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- The buildings on the four corners (Route 5 and Route 237) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and merit special protection from incompatible development.
- The Town is split into five separate school districts. Maintaining the hamlet as the core of the Town is important because the separate school systems tend to divide the Town, particularly its youth.
- There is strong support for the youth program during the summer, with 60 percent of respondents in favor of the program. Residents do not see a strong need for programs during the school year, most likely because the schools run sufficient activities for youth.
- There is very little support for a community center. Over 72 percent of survey respondents opposed such a facility. Written comments on some surveys noted that the Town Hall and the Fire Hall function as centers for community life, and another facility is unnecessary.

C. Zoning Analysis/ Zoning Recommendations

- Much of the Town's zoning code is very well written, and addresses issues that are not always considered.
- The priority issue in regard to zoning is the creation of a hamlet overlay to provide better guidance and protection in the historic hamlet area. This is discussed more fully in the section on Community Character, in Part D, below.
- The Town prohibits uses that are not expressly allowed, which is a good method to control undesirable uses. However, the code does not specify any procedure to allow a desirable use that is not listed. It is recommended that the Code be revised to include somewhat greater flexibility to assess the appropriateness of a use not explicitly listed, and allow uses that are judged to be similar to allowable uses in terms of intensity of use and expected impacts. To ensure adequate control, this provision should require a special use permit.
- The Town's zoning allows (by special use permit) uses typically not allowed in the "first level" of residential zoning, such as multi-family housing and mobile home parks. There are relatively few lands zoned R. The Town should consider adding a second residential district with stricter controls for the more densely developed areas (hamlet

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of Stafford, and possibly the hamlet of Morganville). This stricter district would not allow the larger or more intensive uses allowed in the R district.

- Consideration should be given to removing mobile home parks from the R district completely. A Mobile Home Park zone could be established and attached to specific geographic areas in town, affording a greater level of control over the placement of mobile homes. This would not prohibit the construction of modular housing that meets standard building code standards.
- The Town allows too many uses, particularly in the A-R and the C districts. Although a special permit is required, many of the allowed uses are not appropriate.
- In the A-R district, many of the uses that are allowed by special use permit could potentially create conflicts with agricultural uses (e.g. Adult Day Care). Other uses, such as Recyclables Handling, merit greater care in siting. Under the current zoning, they could be allowed at any location within the A-R zoning, with a special use permit. Since the vast majority of lands in the Town are in this zoning classification, the number of allowed uses limits the Town's ability to control uses. Although the special use permit provides the Town with some control, they could not deny the application simply because they did not like the location. There would need to be a substantive problem with the site that could not be mitigated. The Town should amend the zoning to not include uses that are not desirable, particularly in the A-R district.
- The Town should also consider being more selective in the types of uses allowed in the C district. The amount of land zoned for this use is very limited, so uses that are allowed should be appropriate for the location.
- In the C district, many of the uses are also very intensive, and should not be allowed in certain locations. At a minimum, the zoning overlay for the Stafford hamlet area should limit the number of uses allowed in the C zone within the hamlet to exclude uses not in character with the historic hamlet (e.g. truck stop, car wash).
- Alternatively, the Town should consider establishing separate C districts to better control commercial development. A new commercial district could be written with stricter controls, to encourage smaller, lighter intensity retail and commercial uses in areas such as the hamlet. Although this approach is more difficult in the short run than the overlay, it provides the Town with a more controlled commercial district that could be easily applied elsewhere in Town, if additional lands are to be zoned for Commercial use.

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- Clearer guidance could be provided in the Commercial intent section. The Town should rewrite the intent section for this zone.
- The intent section for the A-R district is very good, in that it clearly gives priority to agricultural over residential uses, particularly in regard to what are perceived of as nuisance issues.
- There is very little difference in the bulk standards between the A-R and R districts. Ironically, non-residential uses are allowed on smaller lots in the agricultural district than in the residential district.
- The Town should consider expanding the area zoned for commercial uses, particularly along Route 33 at the intersection of Route 237 and in the area near Genesee Community College and its adjacent commercial development. Route 33 is a major transportation route for traffic between Batavia and the Rochester metropolitan area. Most of the soils are not prime, particularly south of Route 33, and the presence of the Thruway breaks up the area and makes it undesirable for residential uses.
- The Industrial district encompasses the quarry, and some limited adjacent areas. Not all of the industrial zoned lands appear to have road frontage. Other than the existing industrial uses, this zoning will not easily accommodate new industrial development. If the Town would like to encourage some limited light industrial development, it should consider zoning designated areas where it would be allowed. This would allow the Town greater control over where this type of activity would occur.
- In terms of bulk standards, the 30,000 square foot minimum lot size is the smallest appropriate lot size, given the need to accommodate septic systems.
- The 100,000 square foot requirement for non-residential uses in the R district effectively limits any non-residential uses from occurring. It is not necessary to allow non-residential uses in the R zone, particularly since the areas that have this designation are limited.
- There are no provisions for mixed-uses. Given the limited amount of commercial activity in the Town, it is appropriate in most areas to encourage full usage of the existing commercial properties for commercial activity. Within the Stafford hamlet, where encouraging a diversity of uses is appropriate given existing land use patterns, the minimum lot size for commercial uses is out of scale. This could be addressed in the hamlet overlay.

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- Where commercial uses are allowed in the R zones, there should be stricter controls over landscaping, parking, etc. These controls could be written into the hamlet overlay that is being recommended. In particular, some of the older, historic buildings may support small retail uses in addition to their primary use as a residence.
- The setback requirements are probably excessive, particularly in the hamlet areas, where typical setbacks are significantly shorter than the 75 foot minimum. The proposed hamlet overlay could be used to adjust required setbacks in the hamlet area without rewriting the provisions for all residential areas.
- There are some procedural issues that need to be addressed. These include the discretion given to the Planning Board as to whether to hold a public hearing regarding site plan review. Also, SEQR could be written into procedures more explicitly.
- Site plan review is required for all development except one- or two-family homes, buildings intended for agricultural purposes and their accessory buildings and uses. This provision allows the Town control over development plans, and provides the opportunity to assess the layout, impacts and suitability of proposed actions.
- The specific regulations for more intensive uses (mobile home parks, multi-family housing, etc.) is a good way to provide additional controls over these types of uses.
- The sign ordinance is very simple. While it is felt that the provisions provide adequate protection at this point, the Town should continue to evaluate its effectiveness, and consider stronger guidance if needed in the future.
- The Cell Tower (telecommunications) law could be updated to incorporate some newer standards.
- The procedures for issuing special use permits could use improvement. As written, the applicant could argue that as long as he goes through appropriate procedures and meets the standards outlined in the law, the use is allowable and the Town needs to provide clear justification for not permitting the use. The code should be reworded to make it clear that the special uses are not allowed unless they prove that they are appropriate. In other words, the law should be written to place the burden of proof on the applicant to show that the proposed use meets the standards, rather than on the Town to show that it does not.
- There is no time limit on special use permits in the law, although the law does require annual review to confirm compliance with any conditions attached to the permit.

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Although annual renewals are probably not necessary, the Town should consider requiring renewal upon transfer of property ownership. This will ensure that the new property owner is aware of any conditions and requirements attached to the permit.

- The Town should consider instituting a recreation fee. Currently, all residential development is required to set aside lands appropriate for parks or playgrounds, if needed. However, given the nature of development in Town, which is generally single-lot splits, this provision is never exercised. A more effective method would be to require a recreation fee, assessed on each new home lot, which would be placed in an account for recreational purposes. Recreation in the Town of Stafford is less a question of park lands than programming, and the fee could be used to support recreational activities through the purchase of materials, although the fee cannot be used for programs. However, this is not likely to be a large source of funds, given the pace of development in the Town

D. Additional Recommendations

These recommendations for the Town of Stafford are organized around the Goals and Objectives that have been articulated for the community. They are derived from an assessment of the findings analysis and the survey responses, as well as public input from the public meetings and written comments. These recommendations provide a series of action steps that the Town can undertake to help achieve its stated goals. The list is inclusive and comprehensive; not all actions or recommendations that are listed are intended for immediate attention. Rather, this discussion is intended as a “tool box” of actions that the Town can turn to whenever circumstances warrant.

Maintain and enhance community character in the Town of Stafford

The Town of Stafford is a rural community, with an economy and land pattern based strongly in agriculture. Open space, farm fields and rural landscape contribute strongly to the community character. Residential development in the outlying areas is typically road frontage development, frequently in traditional farmsteads.

As a rural community, the Town also has several areas of denser community that serve as residential and community centers of activity. These rural hamlets, which include the Stafford hamlet, Morganville and Roanoke, as well as the residential neighborhoods at Horseshoe Lake, Godfrey's Pond and Seven Springs area, also contribute to the character of the Town.

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Recommendations:

- Recognize the distinction between the denser hamlets and the rural outlying areas, and seek to encourage it. Development in the hamlet areas should be allowed to be denser, as long as it is in a style and character that is consistent with surrounding uses. In the hamlet areas, techniques include:
 - ✓ Encourage in-fill residential development where appropriate
 - ✓ Promote hamlet development guidelines, which emphasize setbacks, styles and lot configurations that match surrounding uses

- Development in the rural areas should focus on rural development guidelines, and respect the natural setting. Techniques that should be encouraged include
 - ✓ *cluster development*: where units are allowed to be placed closer together in order to preserve significant open space or natural resources. The overall density of the development must conform to Town standards, and the undeveloped open space must remain undeveloped in order to maintain that overall average density. Rural cluster development guidelines would be best suited to the Town.
 - ✓ *Planned unit development*: where an area is developed according to a specific area-wide plan.
 - ✓ *Rural development guidelines*: which encourage a style of development that preserves important views and natural resources and avoids typical suburban style lay-outs of identical lots.

- The Stafford hamlet at the four corners merits special protection. It is listed on the National Trust for Historic Places. It serves as the center of the Town, literally and symbolically, with the Town Hall, the Post Office, the Town's recreational areas, the Fire Hall, and other community gathering places. It is strongly recommended that the Town write a zoning overlay to protect the traditional neighborhood design of the hamlet. The overlay district adds an additional layer of controls over the existing zoning regulations. Standards should address setbacks, architectural standards, appropriate size and scale of buildings, and uses. There are uses that are allowed in the R district that applies to the hamlet that would not be appropriate in the core of this area.

- The boundaries for the zoning overlay for the Four Corners area should extend along Route 5 from Emery Park on the west to the change in the speed limit at the eastern end, and along Route 237 north to the north edge of the Town Hall parcel.

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- It is recommended that the Town provide stronger guidance regarding the styles that are preferred in the hamlet area. Preferred styles include architectural detailing, avoid blank walls, and encourage high quality design.
- The Town should encourage pedestrian ties at the four corners to connect the many community assets in this vicinity. These include the two parks, Town Hall, the Post Office, the Fire Hall, the retail uses which generate traffic.
- Other hamlet areas should be maintained as denser areas, but primarily residential in nature.
- While the Town has no direct control over speed limits on Route 5, the Town should make it an official policy that they support the lowering of the speed limit in the identified hamlet area, particularly at the western end of the hamlet. There is significant pedestrian activity between the four corners and Emery Park, particularly in the summer when the summer youth recreation program is held in the park, and the higher speed limit in front of the park is a hazard.
- For the rural areas of Town, where feasible, important views and natural features should be preserved. The Town should consider conducting a natural resources inventory to identify and catalog important natural resources. The maps from the Comprehensive Plan can be used as the basis for this effort, with the major features supplemented with more specific, local resources. The zoning and subdivision regulations can be rewritten to require that these features are shown on all site plans, and preserve where feasible.
- There will be increasing interest in renewable energy sources, including water and solar in addition to wind. It is important to ensure that any such facilities do not present negative impacts to the character and use of the land where they may be situated and the entire town. Careful assessment of potential impacts from any power generating facility, with full public input, should be undertaken prior to its development. An assessment by a citizens committee collecting unbiased relevant information found commercial wind turbines not suitable for the Town of Stafford. The summary report and research of this committee serves as an addendum to this comprehensive plan on this complex subject. Zoning should be updated to reflect this conclusion.

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Support and protect agricultural lands

It is clear that agricultural uses are extremely important to Stafford. As noted above, it is the predominate land use; it is an important element of the local economy; and residents clearly value its contribution to the character of the area. The Town is also blessed with large areas of prime farmland soils, which are an irreplaceable natural resource. This Comprehensive Plan strongly supports the protection of agriculture, agricultural lands and prime soils.

Recommendations:

- Consider adopting a local “right to farm” law. While much of the community is covered under right to farm provisions included in the State Agricultural Districts, it is possible to adopt a local law that would offer more protection. The advantage of a local law is that it is under the Town’s jurisdiction. It puts new residents on notice that agriculture is a valued part of the community. It provides farmers with an additional avenue of protection against nuisance suits, and it shows a commitment on the part of the town on this issue.
- The Town should revise A-R zone to be more protective of farming activities. It is appropriate that the district allow a wide range of uses, because this allows land owners to convert less productive lands to other uses and provides a potential source of income to farm owners. However, certain allowed uses (with special use permit) may conflict with adjoining agricultural activities. The Town should assess the allowed uses in this district, and either be more restrictive, or add guidelines to minimize potential conflicts. For example, if Adult Group Homes remains an allowable use with a special use permit, there should be standards for requiring buffers between the use and any adjoining farm fields.
- The town should work with the County in regard to agricultural protection issues. While development pressures are currently not strong, the fact that the Town has public water now may increase demand for new development. The County has an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan that can form the initial basis for the Town’s efforts.
- The Town should consider conducting an inventory of prime agricultural lands, and prioritize areas where agricultural protection may be warranted. If development pressures increase to the point where it is desired, the Town would then have a method of assessing where programs such as conservation easements may make sense.

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- Subdivision of land should be assessed in regard to its impact on farm lands. Increasingly, smaller, isolated farm lots are no longer economically feasible to farm. Subdivisions should avoid creating these conditions where feasible.
- To the extent feasible, new, non-agricultural development should be encouraged to occur on lands that are not prime soils, and/or in areas that are already developed (e.g. adjacent to hamlet areas).
- Limited extension of water to existing properties should be considered. Provision of public water can protect adjacent agricultural land owners from suits arising from contaminated water supply. Often, private wells are contaminated by failing septic systems or other causes, but the neighboring farm is blamed. In other cases, a miscalculation in CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) management results in a temporary contamination. In either case, the availability of public water solves this potential problem. As long as restrictions against new laterals (water lines to serve new development) are in place, providing water to existing homes can be a benefit to agricultural uses.
- There are many levels of agricultural protection available. The Town's agricultural lands are very productive and development pressures are not strong. As a result, the more modest measures noted above (zoning revisions, right-to-farm law, cooperation with County, inventory of lands, etc.) are adequate at this time. If circumstances change in the future, the Town could consider more aggressive measures. These include:
 - ✓ Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE): the purchase of an easement that requires the land remain as farmland or undeveloped open space. The land owner is compensated for the development value of the land, and the land is protected from unwanted development. The length of the term of the easement can be limited, or it can be permanent.
 - ✓ Purchase of Development Rights (PDR): a more aggressive method, used where development pressures are strong, the purchase of development rights compensates a landowner for the difference between the value of the land for agricultural use and what he could realize from subdividing the land for development purposes.
 - ✓ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): under a TDR program, the right to develop a particular parcel of land can be "sold" or transferred to another parcel. The "sending" parcel is protected with a permanent conservation

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easement. This program enables owners of agricultural lands to realize the added value of their lands without actually developing it. TDR programs can be technically complicated. They tend to be more successful in areas with strong development pressures.

- ✓ Purchase of lands: the most aggressive technique is for the public sector to buy lands outright in order to ensure that they are not developed. The Town of Clarence in Erie County has taken this approach, which is not necessary in Stafford at this time.

Protect the environmental features and resources of the Town of Stafford

The Town of Stafford has many important environmental resources that merit protection. These include wetlands, prime agricultural soils, the stream corridors, the ponds, water quality (surface and groundwater). These assets provide environmental benefits, serve as important habitats, and contribute to the quality of life and community character.

Recommendations:

- For areas of the Town which are dependent upon private wells, groundwater quality must be protected. Efforts should be made to ensure that private sanitary waste disposal systems are properly maintained, and that failing systems are detected and properly mitigated. The Town should work with the local Soil and Water Conservation District, the County and other involved agencies to address this problem through means such as public education about septic tank maintenance, and technical assistance programs.
- The Town should consider revising the subdivision regulations to require soil testing in areas where there is not public water. Such testing would identify poor or problematic soils. The Town could require stricter standards or larger lot sizes in areas where soil types are known to be problematic for sanitary purposes (e.g. slow perc rates).
- As noted previously, the Town could undertake a natural resources inventory to identify important wetlands, floodplains, prime farm soils and other environmental resources. With the inventory as a reference document, subdivision and site plan regulations could be rewritten to encourage the avoidance of these assets in new development proposals. Ideally, the natural resources inventory can be prioritized, and used to identify areas suited for potential conservation easements or more aggressive measures for resource protection.

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- The Greenspan is a local resource owned by the Town as open space. The site is intended to be “forever wild”, and it should remain as protected open space. Depending upon the specifics of the agreement under which the Town purchased the land, some limited, non-invasive public use, such as nature trails, may be feasible.
- The Town should consider mapping the entire Town for flood plains. The Flood Plain study prepared for the Genesee County Emergency Management Office indicated that there are areas of the Town that have not been mapped, and possibly areas where the base flood levels are not determined. The majority of mapped lands in flood plains in the Town are in agricultural usage (65%), but 35% were identified as residential in use, where measures to ensure elevation of structures above the base flood plain level would help reduce loss to flooding.
- A floodplain overlay or more intense floodplain development law should be created.
- The Town should consider instituting environmental overlays along the major streams to limit development and agricultural use along the edge of the stream banks in order to protect the integrity of the streams and their water quality.
- The Town should continue to cooperate with county-wide and regional watershed and flood mitigation efforts. Many of the recommendations (culvert cleaning, dam maintenance, etc.) from the Flood Mitigation study will help minimize flooding and impacts from flooding.
- Prime agricultural soils are also irreplaceable environmental resources. Recommendations under the agricultural preservation goal address this issue.
- Promoting sound farming techniques can help reduce non-point source pollution. New York State offers grant programs to help minimize non-point source pollution from agricultural sources.
- To protect important environmental features, proposed development actions should avoid identified wetlands, floodplains and prime farm soils.
- Recommendations from the Black Creek watershed study should be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

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Protect important historic, cultural and recreational community features

The Town of Stafford has a number of historic, cultural and recreational community features that are important to community character and quality of life.

Recommendations:

- Consider writing a zoning overlay for the historic four corners hamlet area to promote compatible development. The zoning overlay would address setbacks, architectural standards, appropriate size and scale of buildings, and uses. Additional discussion of this issue is addressed in the section on community character, above.
- Encourage preservation of key historical buildings, particularly those within the National Historic District. The Town should encourage efforts to repair and reuse historic buildings, and discourage demolitions. New development adjacent to historic structures should be compatible in scale and scale. It is not recommended that specific styles be identified, but high quality of design is encouraged.
- The Town should consider creating an inventory of priority historic structures, which are particularly important to the character of the community. This would include, for example, the Old Town Hall and the stone portion of the Fire Hall.
- The Town has significant historic character, and is strategically located between Batavia and Le Roy. There is potential for building upon the historic nature of the Town for tourism development.
- Continue to make reasonable investments in improvements to Town facilities, including the Town parks.
- Investigate appropriate passive, non-intrusive uses for the Greenspan, such as trails.
- The Town should consider using the newsletter to keep residents informed on Town government activities, available programs, and other governmental-related activities.

Encourage a well-maintained stock of housing that meets community needs

The Town has a housing stock that is in generally good condition. There is also interest on the part of the Town's residents for a greater variety of housing choices. High quality development on rural, wooded lots, homes suitable for empty-nesters, senior housing and affordable starter homes for young families are types of housing that residents have indicated interest in. Options for housing should be available to accommodate changing lifestyles, incomes, household size and type.

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Recommendations:

- Encourage proper maintenance and upkeep of existing homes. Monitor any problem properties to ensure their compliance with building and health codes.
- Most homes built in Stafford are individual homes built by the owner, and there is very little homebuilding on the part of developers. With the provision of water, this may change. New developers should be encouraged to consider the provision of greater variety of housing styles and types.
- The lack of sewers limits the types of construction that can take place in the town.
- Promote alternative housing types to satisfy the needs of single individuals and senior households that are affordable in nature, such as multi-family units (apartments), in-law (accessory) apartments, and attached single-family dwellings. These areas should be near the hamlet, have public water and ideally be located near a transit route.

Ensure potable water is available to residents of the Town

New water lines provide public water to some of the residents of the Town, but many others still are reliant on private wells for potable water. Our findings indicate that some residents are experiencing problems with water quality and/or quantity. Given the topography and density of the Town, it will not be feasible to provide water to all residents. However, the Town supports providing water to existing homes, as long as lateral restrictions limit potential growth inducing impacts of waterlines.

Recommendations:

- Work cooperatively with the adjoining communities, particularly Byron and Pavilion, regarding potential new water line extensions. Cooperative action is required to establish efficiencies and ensure looping of lines, which provides better hydraulics.
- In compliance with Genesee County's Smart Growth Plan, institute lateral restrictions to control growth and protect agricultural lands from development pressures. If necessary, zoning overlays could be creating along the routes of water lines to further control and prevent new tap-ins.
- Prioritize water extensions based on need (health and safety issues) and feasibility.
- Ensure adequate monitoring and enforcement regarding failing septic systems to protect groundwater quality.

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- Promote educational programs for new homeowners regarding septic system maintenance;
- Work with the Soil and Water Conservation District for continued outreach and education, and provision of technical assistance on water and wastewater issues
- Investigate State assistance programs to address non-point source pollution

Encourage appropriate economic development activities in the Town

The expansion of industrial and commercial growth, and other economic development activities, helps provide jobs and a stronger tax base for the community.

Recommendations:

- Support and promote the retention and expansion of existing commercial and light industrial uses through zoning and capital improvements.
- Support farming as the primary industry in the Town. Discourage non-agricultural uses on prime soils. Non-agricultural uses are most appropriately located on marginal soils or smaller lots that are difficult to farm efficiently due to their configuration.
- There may be potential for agri-tourism.
- In areas of prime soils, reviews of land splits and subdivisions of land should include an assessment of whether the split results in economically marginal farming lots. Where feasible, landowners should be encouraged to maintain larger, contiguous parcels in areas of prime agricultural soils.
- Target areas along Route 33 and possibly Route 5 for commercial and industrial development. Selective rezonings to Commercial in the appropriate areas will help encourage economic development in the identified locations.
- The Town already has a base of recreation-oriented businesses, with the golf courses. The cottage communities also contribute to the Town's economic base, as tax base and as potential customers, as do activities such as the Zen Center. Additional low-impact recreational-based businesses should be considered.
- The Town is strategically located between Batavia and Le Roy. Both of these adjacent Towns are beginning to develop some tourism-related activity, with the Holland Land

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Company Museum and the Jell-O Museum. Stafford has a quaint historic character, and some retail activity (antiques, restaurants) and other assets that could build off of this emerging tourism economy. The Town should work cooperatively with the County in regard to tourism promotion.

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SECTION V: IMPLEMENTATION

Planning is an on-going effort, and the preparation of the Town's Comprehensive Plan is a first step, not a final one. The next step is to begin to implement the recommendations in this plan. This section of the document outlines specific action steps that will help the Town of Stafford undertake this effort and achieve its goals.

Each item contained in the Implementation Section has an assigned priority, ranked as high, moderate or long-term action. High priority items are typically scheduled for action in the near term (1 to 2 years), although there is not a perfect correlation between the priority and the scheduling. It is up to the Town to decide which implementation measures to undertake at any given time. It is possible that there may be circumstances where items with lower priority may be implemented prior to other items. If, for example, a funding source becomes available, the Town may choose to move forward with a particular project. Other items with a higher priority may take longer to actually achieve.

Equally important, one of the implementation steps is to monitor circumstances in the Town, and reprioritize activities as conditions change. The broad goals and objectives set forth the general vision and provide guidance as to what citizens value. The recommendations and implementation steps are designed to help achieve these goals, based on current circumstances and priorities. The Town needs to periodically revisit these recommendations and reassess the continued applicability and/or timing of these actions. Therefore, one of the key implementation steps is to establish a local group, or Implementation Committee, that will take responsibility for overseeing this effort. The Committee would be responsible to make recommendations to the Town Board regarding the need for any specific implementation items, and address any updates, corrections or revisions to the Plan that are required, including revisions to listed priorities. The Town Board would make the final decision on whether to undertake any of these actions. An example of a yearly Implementation Report will be provided to the Town.

This section of the report provides a beginning list of possible actions that the Town can address. It first outlines the immediate actions required to adopt and begin implementation of the plan. These recommendations are largely procedural in nature. More action-oriented recommendations, such as recommended rezonings, are then listed in priority order, starting with higher priority items, followed by medium and longer-term issues.

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A. Priority: Immediate

- **Comprehensive Plan Adoption:** the Town Board, after holding the appropriate public hearing and completing the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process, should adopt the comprehensive plan.
- **Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee:** the Town Board should form a comprehensive plan implementation committee by resolution. The composition of the Committee is at the discretion of the Town Board, but it is recommended that a member of the Town Board or the Planning Board chair the Committee. A good model is the Comprehensive Plan Advisory committee, with membership from the Town Board, the Planning Board and other Town committees and interests. The Implementation Committee would meet at scheduled times, as needed, to assess implementation activities and progress. Several meetings may be necessary in the first year or two after adoption. Annual meetings should be sufficient thereafter. The committee would be responsible to help ensure that the plan is being implemented, evaluate the results of actions, re-prioritize implementation actions as necessary, and suggest modifications to the plan as required.
- **Distribute Copies of the plan:** The Town should provide copies of the plan to the Town's boards, departments and committees.
- **Implementation Budget:** Each year at budget time, the Implementation Committee will provide the Town Board with an approximate budget needed for the coming year's implementation actions. The committee will also provide assistance to the Town Board in identifying and seeking grants for these actions. The Town Board will then budget for these actions and/or apply for grants.

B. Priority: High (One to two year time frame)

- **Hamlet Overlay District:** create a zoning overlay district to protect the historic hamlet area. The boundaries for the zoning overlay would extend along Route 5 from Emery Park on the west to the change in the speed limit at the eastern end, and along Route 237 to the north edge of the Town Hall parcel. The overlay adds an additional layer of controls over the existing zoning regulations. Elements that the overlay should address include aesthetics, architectural guidelines, setbacks, and allowable uses. See the discussion in the Recommendations section for more specific guidance.
- **Commercially zoned lands:** Expand the area zoned for commercial uses along Route 33 at Route 237, increasing the zone west and east from that intersection.

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- **Agricultural zoning:** Reduce number of uses allowed, especially under special use permit, to include only uses that are appropriate and compatible with agricultural activities. Uses to consider removing include multi-family dwellings, dumps, adult care facility, child day care center, and disposal transfer station.
- **Agricultural zoning:** review A-R provisions to add more creative site planning (Rural Development Guidelines; Rural Cluster Development regulations) and possibly strengthen provisions to protect farming.
- **Agricultural Protection:** Support farming as the primary industry in the Town. Discourage non-agricultural uses on prime soils. Non-agricultural uses are most appropriately located on marginal soils or smaller lots that are difficult to farm efficiently due to their configuration.
- **Local “right to farm” law:** Consider adopting a local right to farm law to provide greater local protection of farming activities.
- **Impacts of Land Separations:** In areas of prime soils, reviews of land separations and subdivisions of land should include an assessment of whether the split results in economically marginal farming lots. Where feasible, landowners should be encouraged to maintain larger, contiguous parcels in areas of prime agricultural soils.
- **Special Use Permits:** revise criteria for granting special use permits to strengthen provisions and enforcement.
- **Water Line Extensions:** Continue to cooperate with adjoining communities regarding potential new water line extensions. Prioritize water extensions based on need (health and safety issues) and feasibility. Initial priority areas for water are the hamlet areas (Route 237 Morganville north to Town line; and Roanoke area).
- **Lateral Restrictions:** In compliance with Genesee County’s Smart Growth Plan, institute lateral restrictions to control growth and protect agricultural lands from development pressures. If necessary, zoning overlays could be created along the routes of water lines to further control and prevent new tap-ins, allowing water connections to existing structures only.
- **Natural Resources Inventory:** Inventory and map important views and natural features. This inventory would catalog important natural resources, raising public awareness, and providing a tool for use in reviewing development proposals. It is also

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the first step in any long-term plans to seek grants to preserve important natural resources.

- **Update/revise the site plan and subdivision regulations:** Consider revising subdivision and site plan regulations to require that important natural resources are shown on site plans, and encourage site layouts to minimize impacts on these features, if feasible.

C. Priority: Medium (two to five year time frame)

- **Residential Districts:** revise to exclude larger and more intensive uses, such as mobile home parks in standard R zone; consider creating new residential district that would accommodate larger uses, and attach to specific areas of Town where this type of use would not conflict with adjoining uses.
- **Commercial Districts:** establish a second, stricter commercial zoning district for use in areas, such as the hamlet, where greater control over uses is desired. Rewrite the intent section for the Commercial zone(s), to provide better guidance. The intent for the stricter district would be neighborhood-based business and smaller-scale businesses and offices. Automotive-related businesses (drive-throughs, truck stops, etc.) would be allowed in standard C district (along Route 33), but not in more restrictive district (Route 5). Attach stricter design standards to the stricter commercial zone (landscaping, basic architectural standards, access management considerations, etc.)
- **Modified “Performance Zoning”:** revise language in commercial and industrial districts to allow (with special use permit) uses not specifically listed, but which are similar in terms of intensity of use and expected impacts. It will be necessary to create a list of criteria to assess expected impacts and appropriateness of use. Use would not be allowed unless shown to meet criteria.
- **Recreation Fee:** Consider instituting a recreation fee on each new home lot in lieu of dedicated recreational lands.
- **Light Industrial District:** Consider establishing a light industrial district to enable limited, controlled light industrial development in the Town. One possible location for this district would be the frontage property of the existing industrial zone. This would prevent heavier industrial uses from being located along the frontage of Route 5.

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- **Additional Commercial Zoning:** Alternatively, consider rezoning the industrial land that fronts Route 5 for commercial use. The rear of the site would remain as industrial use, but the new, commercial zoning at the frontage would require stronger design standards.
- **Historic Preservation:** Inventory important historic structures to prioritize assets. Encourage preservation of key historical buildings, particularly those within the National Historic District. Investigate available grant programs to assist with this effort. Consider revising site plan regulations to require development adjacent to historic structures minimize visual impacts.
- **Pedestrian Improvements:** improve pedestrian access in the Stafford hamlet by developing walkways or trails along Route 5 in the hamlet area. First priority should be given to the stretch between the intersection with Route 237 and Emery Park, and along Route 237 to the Post Office, but accommodations for pedestrians are supported along Route 5 from Clipnock Road on the west to the railroad tracks on the east..

D. Priority: Low (instituted as needed)

- **Lighting and Streetscaping:** pursue improvements to lighting and streetscaping in the hamlet area.
- **Rural Cluster Developments.** Revise site plan guidelines to encourage applicants to cluster home sites closer together in order to preserve significant features or open space. (Overall density must conform to existing standards). These type of “rural” cluster regulations do not require the construction of roads.
- **Hamlet development guidelines:** provide information to applicants on hamlet development guidelines, which emphasize setbacks, styles and lot configurations that match surrounding uses
- **Speed Limits:** Work with NYS DOT to try to lower the speed limit in the identified hamlet area, particularly at the western end of the hamlet.
- **Buffers:** Establish standards for allowing special uses in A-R zones that set forth requirements for buffering and other means of minimizing impacts to adjoining farmlands.

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- **Farmland Protection:** Cooperate with Genesee County to promote agricultural protection issues and participate in any County farmland protection programs.
- **Inventory of Prime Soils:** Consider conducting an inventory of prime agricultural lands to prioritize areas for agricultural protection (best soils).
- **Water Quality Issues:** Ensure adequate monitoring and enforcement regarding failing septic systems to protect groundwater quality. Promote educational programs for new homeowners regarding septic system maintenance.
- **Public Education- Groundwater issues:** Cooperate with the local Soil and Water Conservation District, the County and other involved agencies to promote public education and technical assistance regarding septic tank maintenance and other groundwater protection measures.
- **Poor Soils Standards:** Consider revising the subdivision regulations to require stricter standards or larger lot sizes in areas with poor soils (slow perc rates or other poor conditions).
- **Public Facilities:** Continue to make reasonable investments in improvements to Town facilities.
- **Parks:** Continue to maintain the Town's Park facilities, and make reasonable investments in improvements. Consider applying for State grants to develop parks facilities, and work cooperatively with other groups in Town, such as the Fire Department, in the provision of recreational facilities and activities for residents.
- **Greenspan Usage:** Consider allowing limited public use of the Greenspan for picnicking, hiking and other non-intrusive recreational uses.
- **Stream Corridor Protection:** Institute environmental overlays along the major streams to limit development and agricultural use along the edge of the stream banks to protect water quality.
- **Watershed Planning:** Cooperate with county-wide and regional watershed and flood mitigation efforts (culvert cleaning, dam maintenance, etc.)
- **Non-point source Pollution:** Consider applying for grants from New York State to minimize non-point source pollution from agricultural sources.

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- **Tourism Development:** Continue to cooperate with Genesee County tourism efforts to capture some tourism activity from visitors to the region. Focus efforts on heritage tourism, and consider designating a scenic/heritage route that highlights local history (hamlets, pottery, historic cemeteries, etc.). Explore potential for agri-tourism. Consider adding language to the AR district to explicitly allow agri-tourism uses.
- **Communication:** Use the Town newsletter to keep residents informed on Town government activities, available programs, and other governmental-related activities.
- **Property Maintenance Law:** Consider a property maintenance ordinance to encourage proper maintenance and upkeep of existing homes. Monitor known problem properties to ensure their compliance with building and health codes.
- **Housing Diversity:** Encourage development of alternative housing types to address changing housing needs of local residents, particularly seniors.
- **SEQR:** Consider writing SEQR requirements into Town approval procedures more explicitly.
- **Conservation Easements:** Consider using conservation easements to protect high priority open space if development pressures increase to where such lands are under threat.

E. Responsibility/Methodology

For most of the implementation activities, the Town Board, either directly or with the assistance of the Planning Board and/or the Implementation Committee, would oversee activities. Changes to the zoning code will have to comply with New York State Law (Town Law Section 265) regarding public hearings and official notice. The changes are also subject to SEQR regulations.

To assist with drafting of changes, copies of sample legislation will be provided to the Town. Additional samples are available through the New York Planning Federation, American Planning Association, Code Publishers and from other municipalities.

Similar procedures will be required for changes to other Town regulations (site plan, subdivision, floodplain management, etc.)

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For non-regulatory actions, the Town Board should establish citizen committees or working groups to address priority issues. These committees should be organized by substantive area of concern (e.g. water quality; farmland and agricultural issues)

It is also recommended that the Town solicit assistance from County and State representatives. These agencies are a source of technical assistance, and sometimes have grant money available for certain programs. For example, the local Soil and Water Conservation District can provide technical assistance in regard to issues of water quality, flooding and agricultural lands. They also sometimes have grant monies available for particular purposes. Genesee County is also a source of technical assistance.

The following listing provides information on the type of assistance available from various State and Federal Agencies. It also notes if there is any funding (grants) assistance available through the agency.

Agency	Issues
Agriculture and Markets	Agriculture, farmland protection. Some grants programs (periodic)
Council on the Arts	Cultural and heritage Annual funding programs.
State Office of Emergency Management (SEMO)	Flooding, emergency management. Some grants programs (periodic)
Department of Environmental Conservation	All environmental issues. Funding: municipal waste reduction; household hazardous waste collection; other programs.
Governor's Office for Small Cities	Facilities (e.g. water), social service programs (e.g. housing, elderly, youth services) economic development. Must meet certain criteria. Annual funding program.
Environmental Facilities Corp.	Water, wastewater, watersheds. State Revolving Loan Funds.
Housing Finance Agency	Funding for affordable housing.
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation	Parks, recreation, historic preservation. Funding available on annual basis.
Department of Transportation	Transportation issues, including planning, access management, enhancements (landscaping, etc.) management. Some funding available.
Rural Development (UDAG)	Water, wastewater, septic, economic development, community facilities. Funding available.

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State Agency	Issues
Natural Resources Conservation Service (UDAG)	Conservation, natural resources and environmental issues.
National Center for Small Communities	Conservation, neighborhood revitalization, small town issues. See natat.org
Landmark Society of Western New York	Historic preservation, land conservation.
Community and Rural Development Institute (CARDI)	Land use, Main Street revitalization, local government issues, health and safety and economic development.

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SECTION VI: ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Typically, the potential environmental impacts of a Comprehensive Plan are evaluated through a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). To meet this requirement, the Comprehensive Plan itself can be set up to represent the GEIS (see §272-a.8 of Town Law). This format enables the reviewers, the Lead Agency, involved and interested agencies, and the public to review one comprehensive document that outlines plans for the future and the potential environmental implications of these plans. This section of the Comprehensive Plan has been provided to assist with the environmental review for this document.

A GEIS, like an Environmental Impact Statement, includes a section on environmental setting. Section 3 of this Comprehensive Plan provides a review and analysis of the environmental setting of the Town of Stafford as it exists now, including the natural environment and the cultural environment.

A. Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Impacts

The underlying purpose and a major goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote appropriate land use and avoid significant adverse environment impacts in the Town that it covers. However, it is important here to acknowledge and discuss potential adverse impacts.

Short term/long term and cumulative impacts

Based on the environmental setting of the Town of Stafford, the following potentially significant adverse environmental impacts could occur if the Town does not plan adequately and provide the proper tools for the management of growth and development. The comprehensive plan is designed to properly guide growth in the Town in order to lessen the potential negative impacts of land use and development decisions.

Impacts on Land

- The Town of Stafford remains largely rural in nature, which is a characteristic that is valued by area residents. Inappropriate planning and development actions could impact the character of the Town, and be a detriment to the rural character of the community.
- The Town of Stafford contains areas of hydric soils, wetlands, floodplains and creek corridors. These areas have been identified on maps in this report (see appendix).

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Improper development of these areas could result in drainage, flooding and/or erosion problems within the Town and in outlying areas.

- Some locations in the Town contain significant areas of mature woodland that should be protected, to the greatest extent practicable, to maintain the rural character of the Town and preserve areas of open space.
- There are large areas in Stafford where the soils are categorized as prime farmland or prime farmland when drained. Development of these areas could result in the loss of irreplaceable resources.

Impacts on Water

- Black Creek, Oatka Creek, Bigelow Creek and tributaries of these waterways run through the Town of Stafford. These creeks are important for open space preservation, drainage, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.
- There are mapped areas of flood plains associated with the Black Creek and Oatka Creek. Other areas of floodplains that have not been mapped may also exist. Inappropriate development in these floodplain areas could lead to flooding or drainage problems, and/or hazards to public safety.
- The Town has concentrated areas of wetlands, with mapped wetlands along waterways and in other scattered locations throughout the Town. Inappropriate development of these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems.
- The Town of Stafford falls within three watersheds. Inappropriate development in these watersheds could have adverse impacts on water quality, groundwater resources and habitats in the Town, and in downstream communities.
- While the Town has recently extended waterlines in certain areas, there are large areas of the Town that do not have public water supply and are dependent upon groundwater resources. Inappropriate development could have an adverse effect on groundwater supply and/or quality.
- There are no sewers in the Town, and on-site septic systems are used to treat sanitary waste. Inappropriate development could lead to stresses on the groundwater supply or quality.

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- The Town of Stafford has areas of poorly drained soils throughout the Town. The environmental constraints associated with these soils should be considered when making planning and development decisions so as to reduce environmental impacts.

Impacts on Flora and Fauna

- The Town has large areas of open meadows, hedgerows, active and abandoned farm fields and woodlands, as well as wetlands and creek corridors. These environments support many non-threatened and non-endangered plant, avian and animal species. These areas provide important habitat for many resident and migrating species, and contribute to the rural character of the Town. Over development and poor site planning decisions could adversely impact these resources.

Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

- Agriculture is a significant land use throughout the Town of Stafford. Agriculture is an important part of the local landscape and a significant element of the local economy. Large areas of prime farmland soils exist throughout the Town.
- Large portions of the Town fall within a State designated agricultural district. Scattered farms are located elsewhere in Town.
- Agricultural lands are considered an important part of the character of the Town of Stafford. Development pressures could have a negative impact on these resources.

Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

- There are many aesthetic resources in the Town of Stafford, including the creek corridors, areas of open space, woodlots, farmlands, the hamlets, historic structures, and parks.
- Ill-planned patterns of development could have a negative effect on these resources.

Impacts on Historic and Cultural Resources

- The Town has a nationally designated historic district covering the hamlet of Stafford at the intersection of Route 237 and Route 5. Inappropriate development would be detrimental to the historic character of this area. Other locally significant buildings, particularly in the hamlets, contribute to the character of the Town. Proper planning that establishes guidelines and restrictions on the redevelopment of these structures can help preserve these resources.

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Impacts on Parks and Recreation

- The two parks in the Town are located in the Stafford hamlet area, on Route 5.
- Inappropriate development may have an adverse impact on these resources.

Impacts on Critical Environmental Areas

- There are no designated critical environmental areas in the Town of Stafford.

Impacts on Transportation

- The two major routes through the Town of Stafford are Route 5 and Route 33 (Clinton Street Road). The New York State Thruway (I-90) also cuts across the Town of Stafford, but there is no exit in the Town.
- The transportation system is heavily based upon roadways and automobiles, although there is limited public transit available along Route 5 which provides access to Batavia and Le Roy.
- There is one active rail line through the Town, which is utilized for commercial and freight purposes. No passenger rail is available.
- There are no formal provisions for pedestrian and bicyclists in Stafford. There are no designated bicycle routes, and no sidewalks or paths. The conflict between automobiles and pedestrians or bicyclists is greatest in the four corners area around the intersection of Routes 5 and 237. Land uses in this area are compact enough to support pedestrian activity.
- Additional development has the potential to increase demands on the transportation system, or increase potential conflicts between automotive and non-automotive traffic.
- The Stafford Comprehensive Plan does not recommend any development patterns that would significantly alter transportation patterns in the Town.

Impacts on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- Stafford is a stable community, with no significant increases in population projected.
- The rate of residential construction has been modest.

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- The Comprehensive Plan identifies areas that are the most suitable for future growth at an appropriate pace and scale.

B. Adverse Environmental Impacts that Cannot be Avoided

With or without the adoption and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Stafford will continue to have limited new development that will have impacts on the environment. There will be continuing pressure to subdivide agricultural lands for new building lots, particularly along street frontages. There will continue to be concerns about water quality and demand for public water.

The adoption of this plan and implementation of the suggested actions will allow the Town to better manage growth and development, reduce potential environmental impacts, and ensure better consideration of the environment in municipal decision-making. All development actions taking place after the adoption of this plan will be subject to the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process on a site-specific basis. Nothing contained in this document supplants the necessity of adequate review of future actions. However, this comprehensive plan will be a resource that can be used to facilitate the review of proposed development actions.

C. Growth Inducing Aspects of the Plan

Most of the implementation actions outlined in this plan will help to control growth within the Town of Stafford. Certain actions will act to encourage development in specific areas of the Town and redevelopment in targeted areas. These areas have been deemed to be the most appropriate areas for development. The plan also discourages development in certain areas that are identified as more suitable for agricultural and low intensity uses.

D. Mitigation Measures

A main purpose of any Comprehensive Plan is to help to reduce the potential impacts that could be caused by future development in the Town. This can be accomplished by providing techniques for guiding development that may occur, such as revised zoning or other development regulations. Alternatively, the plan can provide tools to help mitigate the potential impacts of development, through means such as planning investments in infrastructure, increased or improved design standards for development, or other methods. This Comprehensive Plan suggests a number of techniques for guiding the direction and

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nature of growth in the Town of Stafford, and tools for minimizing potential impacts of development on the environment.

The following section addresses the recommendations contained in the Town of Stafford Comprehensive Plan, and discusses why and how the recommendations help mitigate potential impacts of future growth and development.

Impacts on Land

- The Plan contains a number of provisions designed to protect the rural character of the Town and its environmental resources. These include revisions to existing zoning, aesthetic regulations, recommendations regarding placement of infrastructure, and protection of important features.
- A number of recommendations are designed to encourage continued agricultural land uses.
- Town has certain existing regulations, and new regulations are proposed that are aimed at directing development away from problematic areas in the Town. The plan proposes some changes to existing regulations to more properly guide development to areas where impacts to the environment will be reduced.
- Recommendations include changes to zoning and other land use regulations, creative zoning techniques (rural design guidelines, rural clusters, overlays), and other techniques.
- In general, the Plan supports new growth being focused in the hamlet areas and in areas where water has been extended. It supports the preservation of prime agricultural lands for agricultural purposes, and directs growth away from these areas.

Impacts on Water

- The creeks and streams within the Town have been identified. Recommendations have been made for improving their protection.
- A goal of the Plan is the protection of these stream corridors, and better control of flood plain areas.
- Several recommendations address the issue of groundwater quality. The plan supports protection of groundwater resources, and suggests methods for addressing threats to water quality, including septic system management.

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Impacts on Plants and Animals

- Open areas, such as stream corridors and woodlots, which are recommended as important resource areas for the Town are also areas which serve as important habitats for wildlife. By targeting these areas for protection, the Town is minimizing impacts to flora and fauna in these areas, and providing for habitats.
- The plan recommends that environmental features be incorporated into site plan designs, and preserved where feasible.

Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

- The plan contains a number of recommendations designed to preserve and protect existing agricultural land resources in Stafford. Zoning changes, possible agricultural overlays, encouragement of State Agricultural Districts and other programs will help encourage agricultural land uses.
- The plan also supports avoiding development in prime agricultural lands.

Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

- The aesthetic resources of the Town of Stafford include rural atmosphere, scenic views, farmlands, the historic hamlet areas, areas of woodlands and creek corridors. This Plan makes a number of recommendations to protect and preserve these resources, and contemplates the adoption of guidelines and/or standards to control the design and character of new development to protect and enhance the aesthetic quality of development in the Town.

Impacts on Historic and Archaeological Resources

- The Stafford hamlet is listed on the National Register as a historic district, and contains several architecturally significant buildings. A number of recommendations, including a zoning overlay for the hamlet area, are designed to protect these important resources.
- Future development will need to assess impacts on other historic or archeological resources on a site-specific basis.

Impacts on Parks and Recreation

- This plan includes recommendations to improve recreational facilities in the Town of Stafford, including the possibility of low-impact recreational use of the greenspan property.

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Impacts on Critical Environmental Areas

- There are no designated critical environmental areas in the Town of Stafford.

Impacts on Transportation

- Transportation in the Town of Stafford is highly dependent upon roadways and automobiles. There are no significant roadway deficiencies in the Town.
- The plan does not recommend any development patterns that would significantly alter transportation patterns in the Town. It does make some recommendations that would mitigate impacts from transportation, including streetscape improvements along Route 5, and improved pedestrian access in Town, (trails or walkways), in the hamlet area.

Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- The Town of Stafford is not experiencing strong growth pressures. Although there may be more development as a result of the new water lines, it is expected that growth rates will remain modest.
- Recommendations in the plan will help manage growth, and target it to appropriate areas, thereby minimizing negative impacts to the character of the Town.

E. Evaluation of Alternatives

Throughout the Planning process, alternatives for helping the Town achieve its Goals and Objectives were evaluated. These recommendations and implementation alternatives were evaluated for not only their desired results, but also for their impact to the environment, the needs of local residents, private property rights, quality of life, and the vitality of the community.

It must be noted that long-term recommendations have not been thoroughly evaluated in this section. These actions are optional, designed to be considered only when circumstances within the Town indicate a need for more creative or aggressive techniques. For example, if the Town is seeing greater levels of growth pressure or where short term recommendations are not achieving the desired results.

The "No Action" alternative was considered. Under the "No Action" scenario, the Town would not have a Comprehensive Plan document to guide growth and development, properly plan for the Town's chosen future, and protect important community features.

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The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan will enable the Town to address issues of community character, environmental features, open space, farmlands, economic development and transportation issues in a more effective manner. It forms the basis for zoning and other changes to the Town's regulations, and helps guide future decisions regarding important issues, such as infrastructure and public spending.

The proposed plan more effectively allows the Town to achieve its goals and vision, and provide greater protection to the environment than the continuance of present trends under the No-Action alternative.

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SECTION VII: BI-ANNUAL REVIEW

The Town of Stafford Town Board should establish a Committee to conduct an bi-annual review of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the plan remains a dynamic and useful document, and judge the accomplishments of the Town in implementing and enforcing the goals and objectives of the plan. This Committee will most likely consist of members of the Town Planning Board, assisted by representatives from the local community, as designated by the Town Board. The annual review shall include the following.

- All Site plan and subdivision approvals issued during the previous two years will be reviewed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to determine where this activity has occurred, if it has occurred consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the overall impact of these planning approvals on general land use trends in the Town.
- Any major rezoning decisions approved during the previous two years will be reviewed in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan to determine if these actions were consistent with the recommendations of the plan and the overall impact of the rezoning decisions on the general land use trends in the Town.
- The priority listing of zoning amendments specified in the Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished and which ones should be undertaken in the coming years. The overall impact of these rezoning decisions should be evaluated with respect to general land use trends in the Town. The Planning Board should also determine if there are any new zoning actions that should be added to this list.
- The list of other priority items, as contained in the implementation section of the Comprehensive Plan, will be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished during the previous two years. It should also be determined if there is a need to update or amend this list.
- Comments from Town Board, departments and committees and public input gathered during the previous two years will be evaluated in conjunction with the information ascertained from the reviews outlined above, and an action plan for Comprehensive Plan implementation activity in the coming two years will be developed.
- The Committee will prepare a statement outlining the accomplishments of the past two years, including a listing of all site plan, subdivision and rezoning approvals, and a list of accomplishments in terms of zoning code amendments and other implementation

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achievements, as specified in the Comprehensive Plan. This information, along with the action plan for the continuing implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, should be presented to the Town Board for their review and approval.

By following this procedure, the Town will be able to continually monitor the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan in achieving the vision it articulates. It is anticipated that the Committee will need to meet several times during the first year in order to establish procedures and review the priority actions. As items are implemented and the procedure becomes more established, annual meetings are likely to be sufficient. The adjustments, amendments and changes recommended by the Committee and approved by the Town Board will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by acceptance by the Town Board, and provided as an annual update document.

Approximately every five years, as circumstances indicate the need, the Comprehensive Plan should be more thoroughly reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect current priorities, needs and goals, using the annual update reports to assist in this effort. At the end of this more extensive review and update, the Town should incorporate all changes into an updated plan, and undergo formal adoption procedures (including public hearings and SEQR review) to accept the updated plan. Unless there are major changes to circumstances or conditions in the Town, it is anticipated that these reviews and re-adoption procedures will be simple. They are important, however, in order to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a relevant and useful document to guide growth and development in the Town, and help the citizens of Stafford build a Town that meets their goals for its future.

**Town of Stafford- Zoning
Allowed Uses**

Zoning District	Allowable Uses	
	By Right	With Special Use Permit
<p>Residential District (R)</p> <p>Intent: encourage residential growth in areas with existing concentrations of residential uses.</p>	<p>One-family dwelling; Two-family dwelling; Religious Institution (church); Home occupation; Farms and all usual agricultural operations, except storage of manure and stabling of animals; Accessory Uses (garage, pool, customary farm building for storage, signs, parking)</p>	<p>Multi-family dwellings; Mobile home park *; Public Utility; Education, cultural facilities (e.g. day care, museums); Adult Care Facility; Child day care center; Bed and Breakfast; Boarding House</p>
<p>Agricultural-Residential (A-R)</p> <p>Intent: preserve the Town's agricultural base and maintain its rural character. Agricultural uses are primary. Residential uses are permitted, but secondary to agriculture.</p>	<p>Farms and related activities One-family dwelling Two-family dwelling Religious Institution Home occupation Buildings owned by the Town Accessory Uses (garage, pool, etc.)</p>	<p>Multi-family dwellings; Mobile home park *; Public Utility; Education, cultural facilities; Farm water supply, ponds, lakes; Farm equipment sales, repair; Aviation landing field; Animal Shelter; Commercial recreational uses *; Wind Energy Conversion System; Agricultural based business; Commercial Excavation; Dumps *; Enclosed light manufacturing assembly; Enclosed warehouse or wholesale; Adult Care Facility; Child day care center; Animal Waste Storage Facility; Self Service Storage Facility; Bed and Breakfast; Contractor's Yard – Residential; Recyclables Handling Facility *; Disposal Transfer Station *; Commercial Communication Tower</p>
<p>Commercial Zone (C)</p> <p>Intent: accommodate commercial and selected light industrial uses.</p>	<p>Retail Use and service; Personal service; Restaurant; Business and Professional office; Bank and Financial institution; Motel, Hotel; Wholesale, warehouse, distribution; Club; Community Center; Accessory Uses; Replacement/ alteration of existing Residential Structures; Self Service Storage facility; Home Occupation</p>	<p>Light manufacturing (enclosed); Drive-in service; Gasoline station; Car wash; Farm equipment/ motor vehicle sales; Truck stop, terminal; Public utility; Mobile home sales; Adult Care Facility; Child Day Care Center; Bed and Breakfast; Boarding House; Contractor's Yard; Recyclables Handling Facility *; Disposal Transfer Station *; Commercial Communication Tower</p>
<p>Industrial Zone (I)</p> <p>Intent: accommodate both light and heavy industrial uses.</p>	<p>Enclosed manufacturing industry; Enclosed warehouse or wholesale use; Public utility; Enclosed service and repair; Machinery, transportation equipment, sales, service and repair; Enclosed industrial processes, service; Freight or trucking terminal; Home Occupation; Public garage; Accessory building and use</p>	<p>Gasoline station; Commercial excavation; Other industrial uses, if approved; Adult uses *; Junkyards *; Commercial Communication Tower</p>

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2009 Update

Future Land Use Map

The following land use descriptions provide a written narrative into the areas identified on the Future Land Use Map. The future land use section of a comprehensive plan is primarily designed to provide general guidance for future development patterns over the next 20 years. This section does not constitute an enforceable law, such as a zoning ordinance. The map and the following narrative does outline the vision for future land use and should be considered a foundation for future zoning revisions, but it is not necessarily a specific parcel template for future zoning district boundaries.

The Future Land Use Map delineates the following categories of land use:

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Industrial Park
- Mixed Use
- Open Space/ Recreational
- Residential

Agricultural

As identified in previous sections of this Comprehensive Plan, the Town's agricultural industry and rural character are two of its most important assets. In order to support agriculture, the rural open space character it provides, and in turn to utilize existing infrastructure in the spirit of Smart Growth, the Town has designated the majority portion of the map as rural agriculture area on its future land use map. The primary use on these lands will be agriculture, agriculture support, and open space. Residential and limited commercial development is suitable in these areas provided that it is designed to minimize potential conflicts with agricultural uses.

Commercial

The Town envisions the continued growth of its primary commercial area to the west of the Hamlet of Stafford along NYS Rt. 5 given the existing highway and utility infrastructure in the corridor. This area and the area around the intersection of Clinton Street Rd. (NYS Rt. 33) and Seven Springs/Batavia Stafford Townline Road are also within the Smart Growth Development Area boundaries; therefore, new non-agricultural uses would be eligible for automatic hookups to the County Water System. The current commercial district at Peaviner Corner (NYS Rts. 33 and 237) is envisioned to expand westward along NYS Rt. 33 on the south side of the road. Currently, this commercial district is not within a Smart Growth Development Area boundary and therefore any new non-agricultural use is not subject to automatic water hookups. Given the long-range nature of this plan (20 years), and the short-term horizon (3 year review process) for the County's Smart Growth Plan, the Town should look into the possibility of requesting the creation of a new Smart Growth Development Area in a subsequent review of the Genesee County Smart Growth Plan.

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Industrial

The Town of Stafford has designated the area around the current Hanson quarry (with the exception of the road frontage) as industrial. The Town supports existing and desires additional industrial uses. Industry provides jobs for local and regional employees and functions as an important component of the Stafford's economy often balancing the high costs of residential uses. Future industry is expected to primarily locate in the Industrial Park area.

Industrial Park

The area designated as Industrial Park is in the immediate vicinity of Genesee Community College and the proposed Medical Technology Business Park in the Town of Batavia. The area is located on the Westside of the Main CSX rail line, south of the NYS Thruway, in close proximity to NYS Rt. 33. It also has NYS Thruway visibility, and is within a Smart Growth Development Area. The area designated Industrial Park is appropriate for commercial, industrial, office and other business uses and may be able to accommodate a mixed use development.

Mixed Use

The Hamlet of Stafford is a unique place in the Town where a variety of land uses are located in close proximity to one another, including residential development, retail, public resources and private services. The Hamlet's assortment of mixed uses should be maintained and enhanced by future development. The presence of public water makes the Hamlet a natural location for retail, consumer oriented services and office uses. In addition, the mixed use area is characterized by smaller residential lot sizes, which respect the area's scale and style, maximize existing and future public infrastructure and encourage pedestrian activity. Although the land uses found in this area will vary, their scale, style and density should remain consistent. In addition, development in this area will need to be pedestrian friendly and designed in a way that respects the history and rural character of the Town.

Open Space/Recreational

Areas designated Open Space/Recreational are intended for leisure activities and environmental conservation.

These areas include:

- Stafford Country Club
- Batavia Country Club
- Godfrey's Pond
- Sweetland Pines Country Club
- The Greenspan (between Mullen Rd. and the NYS Thruway)

~Town of Stafford Comprehensive Plan~ 2009 Update

Residential

The Town of Stafford desires a diverse selection of housing options. Designated residential areas include existing residential Hamlets of Morganville and Roanoke as well as the neighborhoods east of the Hamlet of Stafford along NYS Rt. 5 and Roanoke Rd., on Fargo Rd. south of NYS Rt. 5 and on Seven Spring Rd. Future residential development should be encouraged within the Mixed Use hamlet area and in the designated area around Seven Springs Rd, Horseshoe Lake and NYS Rts. 5 and 33. New development in existing residential areas should respect the character and scale of the hamlet or neighborhood as well as capitalize on the public resources that are in the area (i.e. public water). Higher development density complements the Hamlet's current density and maximizes available public infrastructure resources, but precautions must be taken to ensure proper wastewater disposal systems given the lack of public sewer service.

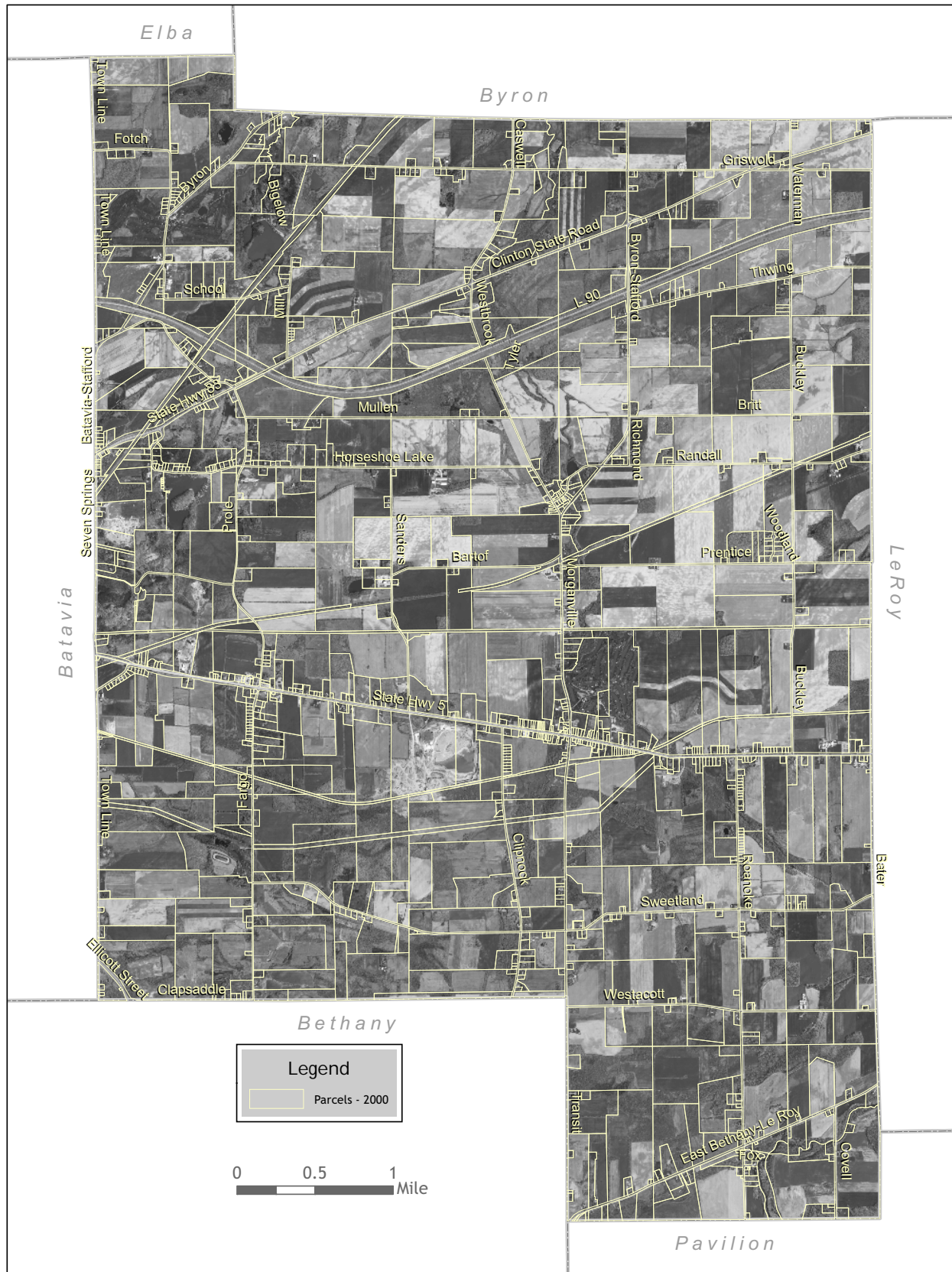
APPENDIX: MAPS

- Map 1: Aerial Photography
- Map 2: Existing Land Use
- Map 3: Zoning
- Map 4: Agricultural Information
- Map 5: Environmental Features
- Map 6: Prime Farmland Soils
- Map 7: Transportation and Utilities
- Map 8: Future Land Use (2009 Update)

Town Of Stafford

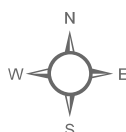
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Map 1
Aerial Photography
(2002)



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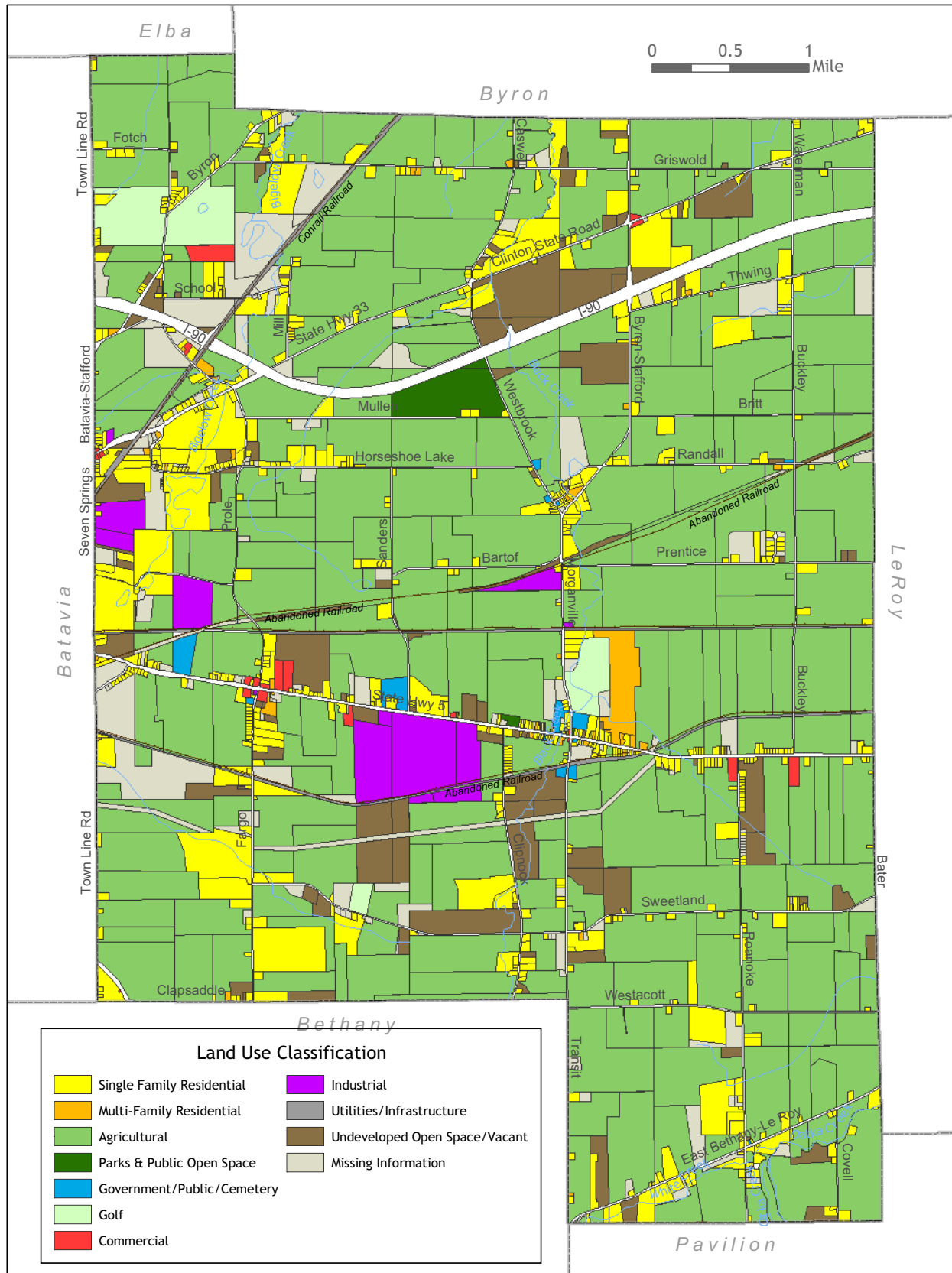
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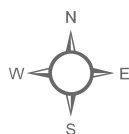
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Map 2
Existing Land Use



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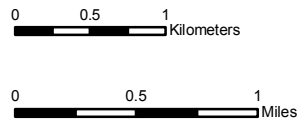


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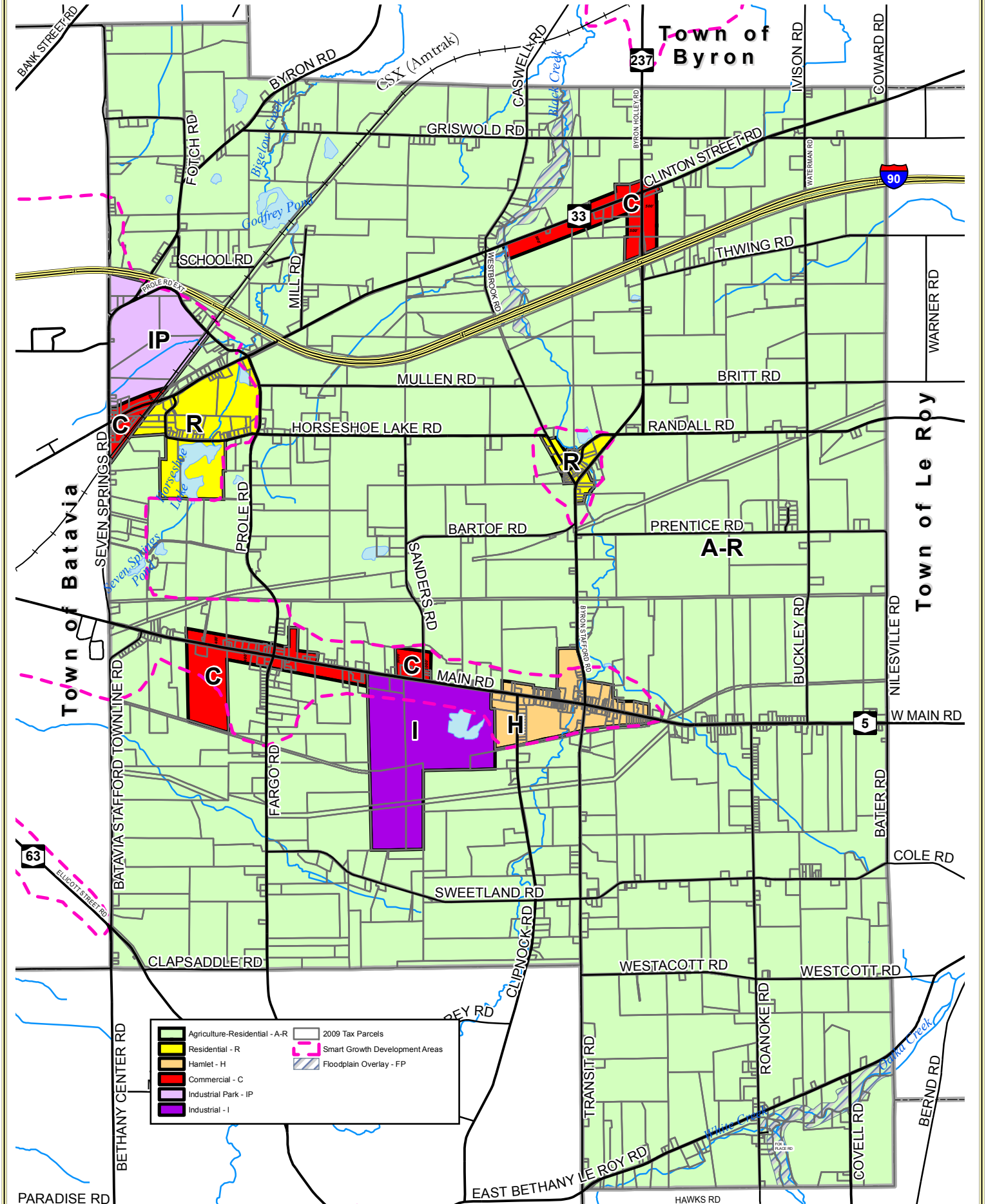
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Comprehensive Plan - 2009 Update



Map 3

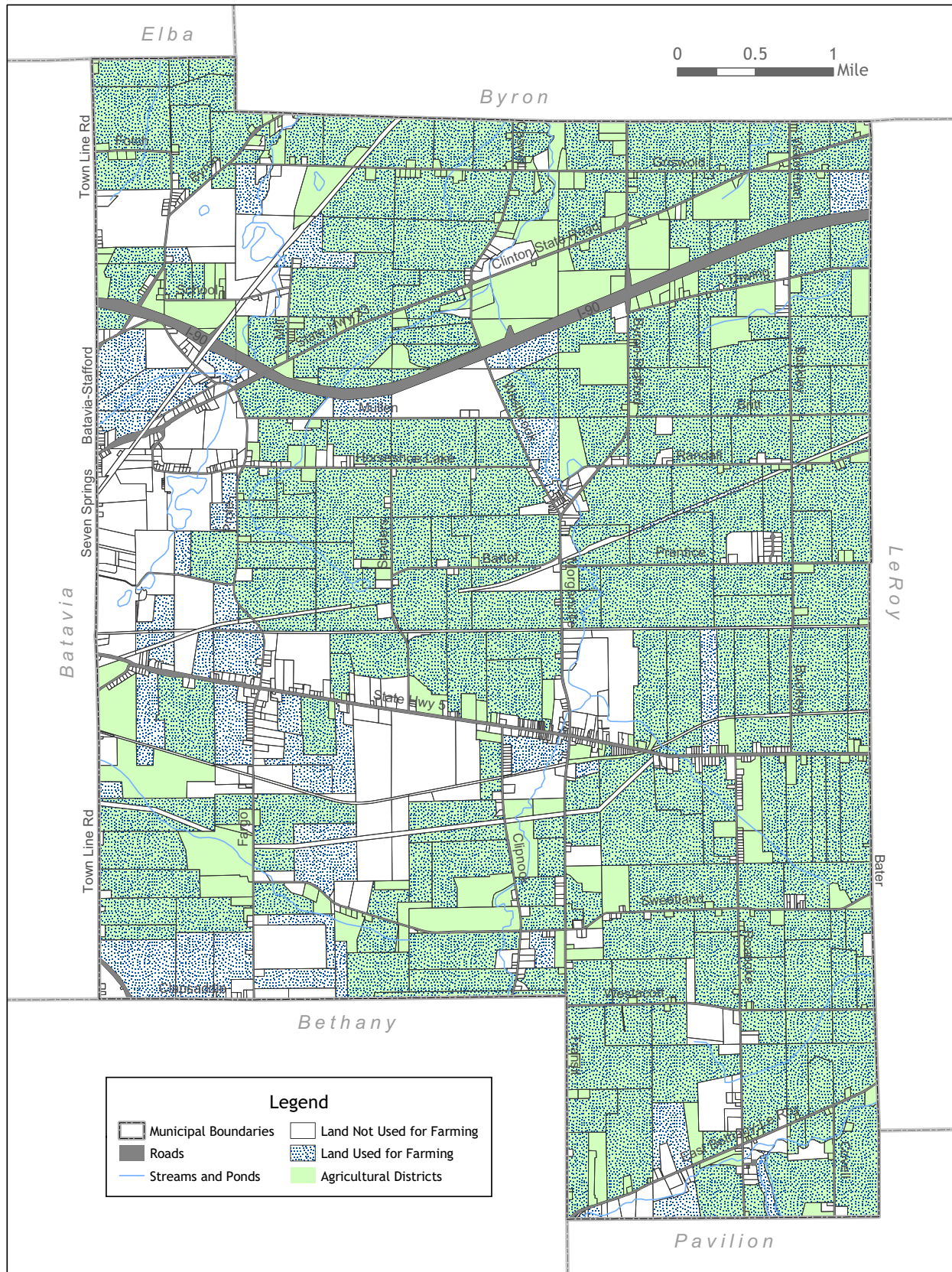
Zoning Districts



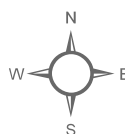
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Map 4
Agricultural Information



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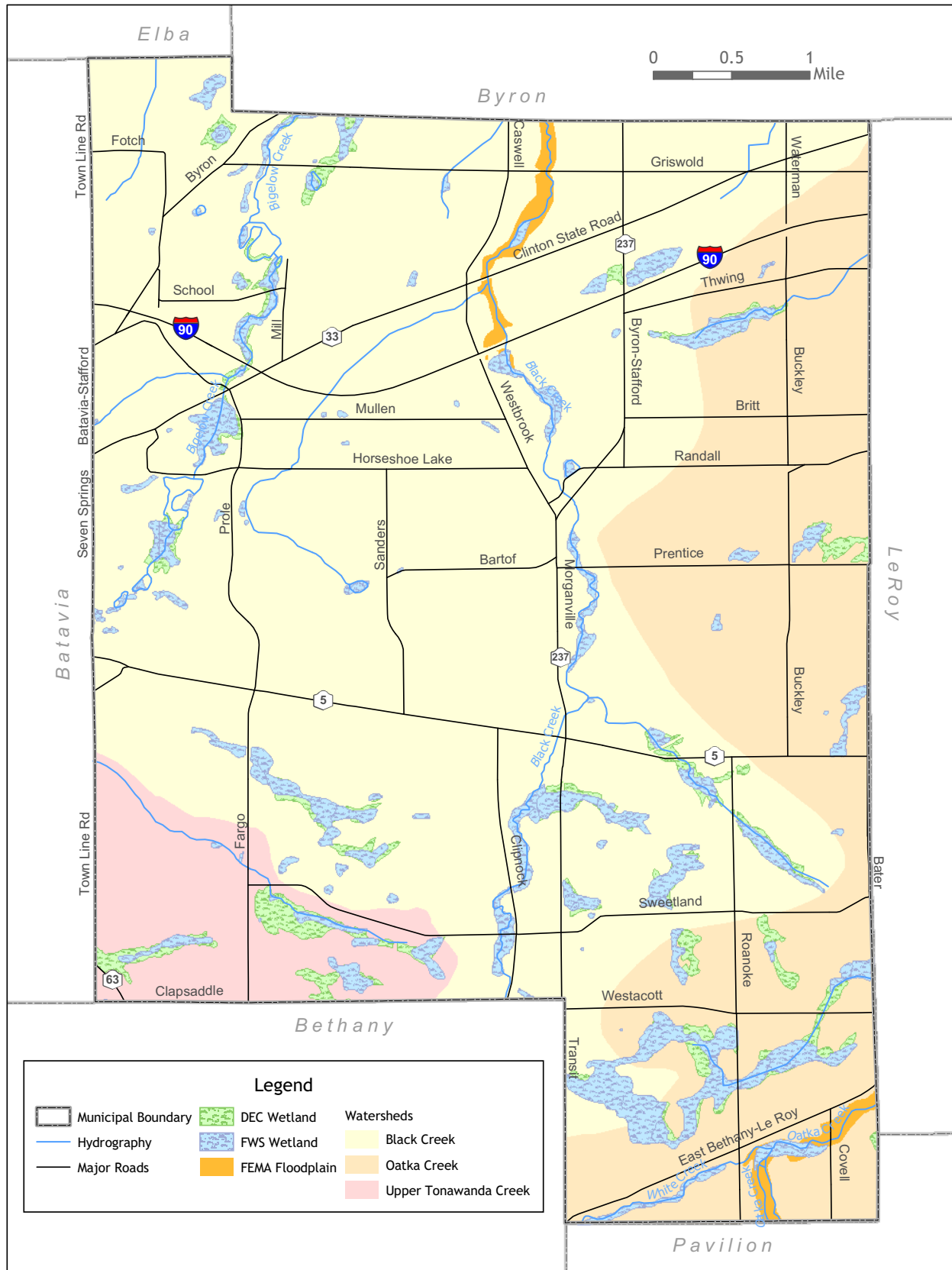
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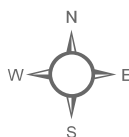
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Map 5
Environmental Features



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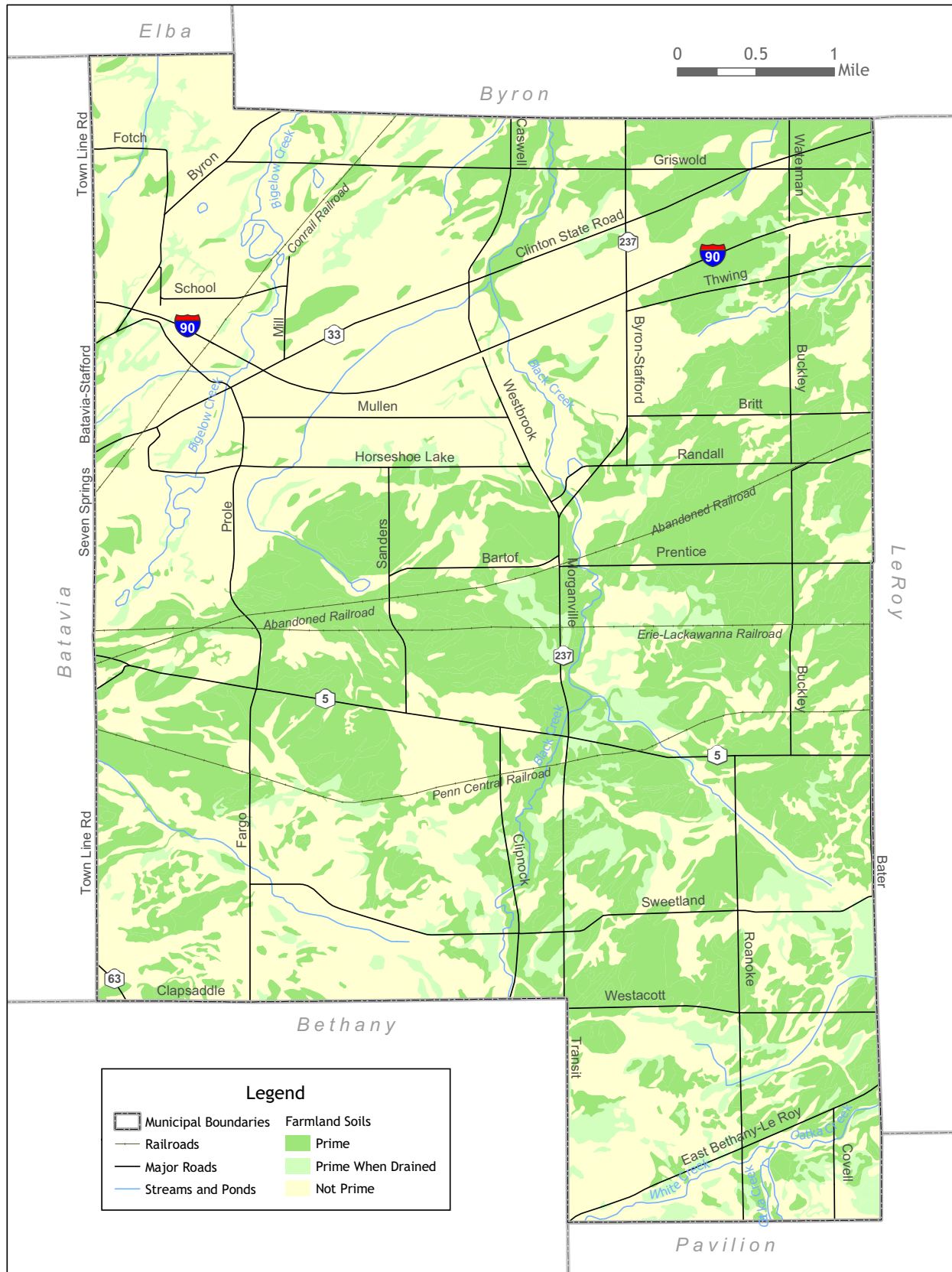
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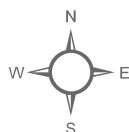
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Map 6
Prime Farmland Soils



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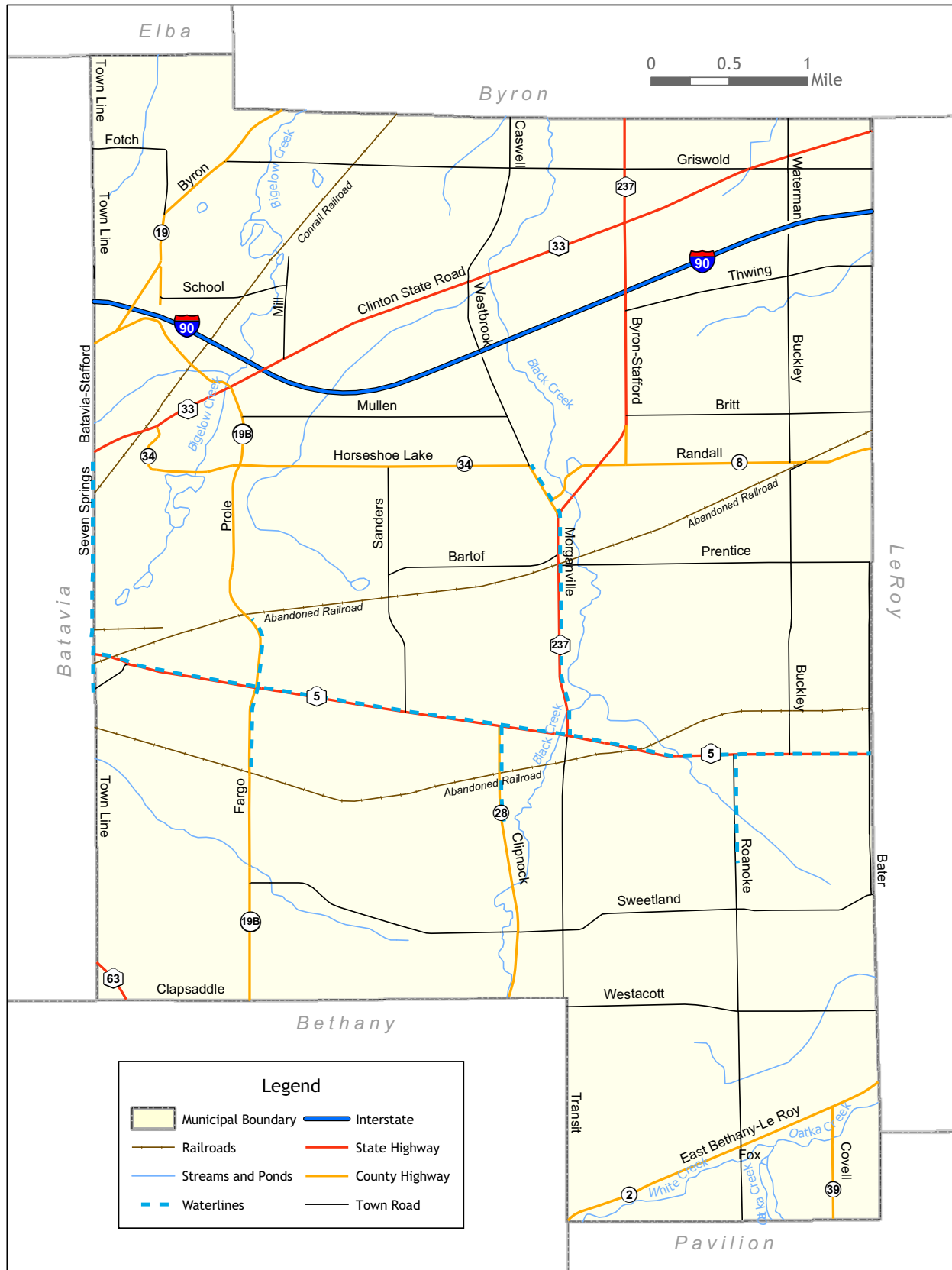
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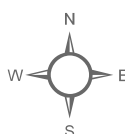
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Map 7
Transportation & Utilities



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