

Acknowledgements

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1.0 The Plan

1.1 Introduction

The Town of Seneca, located in the southeastern portion of Ontario County, is 48.5 square miles with an abundance of prime agricultural land that has allowed the area to establish itself as an agrarian community. The open space and rural character of the Town add to a high quality of life for Town residents.

While the Town has not experienced a significant increase in population over the past several decades there is the possibility of development pressures at the Geneva Town Line. The proposed sewer line extension within the current C2 district could entice commercial entities to displace current agricultural land. The loss of agricultural land and open space can have a negative impact rural character that makes the Town of Seneca a desirable place to live. However, the necessity of increasing the total assessable property in preparation for the eventual loss of landfill revenue justifies leveraging the existing zoning plan.

By revising and updating the 2002 Comprehensive Plan the Town is taking a proactive approach to controlling development and ensuring that the rural character of the Town is preserved.

1.2 Historical Summary

The Town of Seneca obtains its name from the Seneca Indians that were the largest tribe of the Iroquois Confederacy that was formed around 1400 A.D. The Senecas were aware of the fertile soils of the area and grew productive crops of beans, corn, squash and fruits. The Iroquois had been allies of the British who provided the Seneca Indians with weapons to fight against the white settlers in the area. In 1779, General George Washington sent General John Sullivan and an army of 2,000 men to the area to immobilize the Seneca's.

After the Revolutionary War, the British left the Iroquois Indians to tend to their own matters. The governments of the United States and New York State wished to make peace with the Indians and negotiated several treaties that acknowledged that the Indians had pre-emptive rights to the lands they had surrendered and establish reservation boundaries.

In 1787, Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham came to the area from New England to negotiate purchasing land from the Seneca Indians. The Senecas would only sell a third of the area, which was approximately 2 million acres west of Seneca Lake. On January 27, 1789 the Town of Seneca was established.

Several hamlets were established in the Town of Seneca. The hamlet of Seneca Castle that was originally called Castleton was established in 1790 and served as an area for storage of locally grown fruits and vegetables. Hall's corner was established in 1803 when Edward Hall built a tavern to service travelers between Penn Yan and Geneva. Today Hall's Corner is known as the hamlet of Hall. The hamlet of Flint developed around Flint Creek and at the junction of the Albany-Niagara trade route. The hamlet of Stanley contained three railroads and served as a wheat-shipping center. In 1908, the original Seneca Town Hall was built in Stanley and is now used as the Town Court as the new Town Hall was completed in 2002 outside the hamlet of Flint.



1.3 The Comprehensive Plan Defined

New York State, under Town Law Section 272-1, provides guidelines for communities to prepare and adopt, by local law or ordinance, a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is defined as:

“...the material, written and or/graphic, including, but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principals, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town...The town comprehensive plan...shall...serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development, public and private investment and any plans which may detail one or more topics of a town comprehensive plan.”

Town Law identifies two important effects of adopting a comprehensive plan:

- ① All town land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to town law.
- ① All plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the town comprehensive plan...shall take such plan into consideration.

The Comprehensive Plan will be useful for:

- ① Local officials as they decide how best to utilize financial resources;
- ① Zoning and Planning Board members as they measure the desirability of new development;
- ① Municipal employees as they enforce development-related codes; and
- ① Local residents as they become aware of the direction their communities will take in the future.

These directives clearly portray the comprehensive plan as the central document on which all land use decisions should be based. The plan therefore sets the stage for the future development of the Town of Seneca.

1.4 The Process in Developing the Plan

In developing the plan, a comprehensive and coordinated approach was used to ensure all aspects of the community were considered. This section outlines the various tasks that were completed for the Comprehensive Plan.

Steering Committee Meetings – meetings were held with the Comprehensive Plan Committee. The Committee offered guidance and direction for the Plan. The Committee reviewed mapping and documentation and provided contacts.

Goals, Policies and Actions – Goals, policies and actions for the study were developed based upon meetings with Comprehensive Plan Committee and information obtained from the Hamlet Subcommittee, Agricultural Subcommittee, Infrastructure Subcommittee, Cultural Subcommittee, 5 & 20 Subcommittee and the Community Survey. Goals, policies and actions have been developed for each section of the Plan: regional, community character, land use, economic development, environmental & natural resources and infrastructure.

Data Collection & Analysis – An extensive data collection process was completed for the Comprehensive Plan. With the aid of numerous local officials and local staff members, information was obtained regarding population, housing, community services, local land uses, environmental considerations, local laws and ordinances, economic development and employment, and municipal services. The data set is presented in the Comprehensive Plan.

Telephone and Personal Interviews – A series of telephone and personal interviews were conducted to obtain additional information. Discussions with several public, not-for-profit and private organizations provided valuable insight into the issues being addressed in the Plan and topics that had not yet come to light.

Community Survey – In March 1999 the Comprehensive Plan Committee for the Town of Seneca sent out a survey to 1,130 residents and business owners. The revision committee sent an abbreviated survey to 950 residents in July 2010. (see pages 99–100). The surveys were intended to measure public opinion with request to various issues and conditions that exist within the Town. From the results of the survey, goals were established that addressed issues stated by Town residents.

Recommendations – Based upon the inventory and data analyses, policy statements and implementation strategies were developed regarding residents and community services, land and the environment and economy and growth. The implementation strategy provides a framework for executing the plan with specific actions, delegations of responsibility and time frames.

Plan Update 2012 A committee was formed to review the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically reviewed were the action items identified in 2002. Several action items were completed and have been removed from the current document while new items have been added. Also reviewed were the results of the 1999 survey. The committee determined the original survey results were still pertinent today.

2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

During the process of preparing the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Seneca has identified goals they wish to achieve over the next 10-20 years. These goals will guide the type and scale of growth that occurs in the future and enable Seneca to maintain a high quality-of-life for its residents. Below each goal are policy statements, which further define the goal, the policies are then accompanied by actions that identify specific ways in which the Town can achieve the stated goal.

Agriculture

Goal 1: Maintain and enhance productive agricultural and associated businesses.

Policy 1.1: The maintenance and growth of viable agricultural businesses is the primary way to insure the retention of the viable agricultural land and rural character in the Town.

Action 1.1.1:

Continue to foster the development of new food and agricultural industry businesses. These businesses can include value added enterprises that represent an expansion of present agricultural operations or new enterprises entering the Town.

Action 1.1.2:

Continue to develop plans, policies and objectives in the Town of Seneca that will attract and retain agribusiness enterprises such as fertilizer, seed and machinery dealers, grain, hay and other brokers and dealers, etc.

Policy 1.2: Create an agricultural preservation strategy to maintain the viability of local farming operations in the Town of Seneca.

Action 1.2.1:

The Town should consider future farmland protection for prime agricultural lands. The Town adopted land use regulations in 2008 to protect prime agricultural lands. The Town should continue to review its policies to ensure they meet current conditions.

Policy 1.3: Encourage the preservation of farmland in Seneca.

Action 1.3.1:

Town of Seneca officials should support the “Right to Farm” law that was adopted in May, 2002. This law provides a formal statement of local support for the agricultural community and reinforces the rights of farmers to conduct normal agricultural operations on their land.

Action 1.3.2:

Town of Seneca officials should support the Agricultural Districts law. District #6 of which Seneca is a part is currently under review.

Community Character

Goal 2: Strengthen local historic preservation activities in the Town of Seneca.

Policy 2.1: Participate in State programs that allow greater community involvement in historic preservation efforts.

Action 2.1.1:

The Historians Office should determine if any local historic sites are eligible for designation as National or State landmarks. The designation should be pursued, as it would generate interest in the Town and its history and provide protection for the sites.

Action 2.1.2:

The Town should consider utilizing programs offered by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation such as the Certified Local Government Program and the Rural New York Grant Program. The Certified Local Government Program would allow Seneca to receive technical assistance, legal advice, training and financial assistance for historic preservation projects. In addition, the Rural New York Grant Program provides assistance to municipalities involved in rural preservation projects; these projects can include historic resource surveys, public education, planning and design standards.

Action 2.1.3:

Incorporate the findings of the Routes 5 & 20 Reconnaissance Survey of Historic Resources Study for Seneca into the Town's zoning and planning process revisions.

Goal 3: Increase the public awareness of the historic resources in the Town of Seneca.

Policy 3.1: Incorporate historic information about Seneca in marketing efforts.

Action 3.1.1:

The Town should compile information on all historic resources and prepare a brochure outlining the various significant structures and the important roles they have played in Seneca's past. The 5 & 20 Historical Resources Survey can be used to obtain some of this data. This information can then be used for marketing purposes for future residents and businesses.

Goal 4: Maintain and enhance the Town's rural and agricultural heritage and hamlet life.

Policy 4.1: Review and modify Town policies to protect and enhance the agriculturally productive land in Seneca.

Action 4.1.1:

Continue to focus residential development within the growth development boundaries established around the hamlets.

Policy 4.2: Ensure that existing housing units are safe and adequately maintained.

Action 4.2.1:

The Town should continue enforce the property maintenance codes adopted in 2004 as part of the NYS Codes..

Action 4.2.2:

The Town should continue to seek government funds for housing rehabilitation for residents. Funds that can be used for this purpose include the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant. Agencies that distribute funds for housing rehabilitation include the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and the Rural Revitalization Corporation.

Policy 4.3: Ensure that new structures are built in a style that maintains the character of the hamlets and the Town.

Action 4.3.1:

The Town should develop building design codes for the hamlets and for the Routes 5 and 20 Corridor. The Town should consider a mandatory site plan approval for these areas.

Community Facilities

Goal 5: Increase recreational opportunities for all age groups in Seneca.

Policy 5.1: Maintain existing park space for Town residents.

Action 5.1.1:

The Town should work with the Park & Recreation Committee to provide a maintenance plan for the park in the hamlet of Seneca Castle.

The Town should continue to maintain and enhance the newly constructed park at the Town Hall complex too.

Goal 6: Promote high quality fire protection and emergency rescue services for Town residents.

Policy 6.1: Promote the Stanley, Hall, and Seneca Castle Fire Companies and support their staffing requirements.

Action 6.1.1:

The fire and ambulance companies of many rural communities are staffed on a voluntary basis. It is imperative these services are sufficiently staffed to provide quick response times. The Town of Seneca should provide continuing assistance to these agencies by publicizing the need for volunteers.

Land Use

Goal 8: Provide sufficient regulatory controls in the Town of Seneca to ensure appropriate land uses.

Policy 8.1: Promote attractive development in the Town of Seneca.

Action 8.1.1:

The Town should continue to encourage new development in areas near the hamlets that are currently serviced by existing infrastructure (water, electric & gas service). The town should seek to enhance infrastructure with the intent of channelizing development in zoned areas other than agriculturally zoned areas. This would help maintain the rural and agricultural uses in the Town as new development occurs.

Policy 8.2: Periodically update the Town Zoning Ordinances to ensure they remain effective.

Action 8.2.1:

The Town of Seneca should continue to update its regulations to assist in maintaining the rural character and protect viewsheds.

Goal 9: To maintain and enhance the rural character of the Town of Seneca.

Policy 9.1: Ensure future development in the Town is in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan.

Action 9.1.1:

The Town should pursue grant funding for recommendations in this plan. Grants could contribute to economic initiatives, parks/open space improvements, etc.

Action 9.1.2:

The Town should develop gateways into the hamlet areas. These gateways should include attractive signage, landscaping, special pavement etc. to welcome visitors into the Town.

Economic Development

Goal 10: To develop an alternative economic future diverging from a perpetual landfill town.

Policy 10.1: The town should consider alternative economic development options not reliant on landfill revenue, while formalizing operational and strategic level plans.

Action 10.1.1: The town's capital improvement plan should make best use of the landfill revenue stream. Populating reserves and ensuring timely lasting improvements will help transition to an alternative fiscal path if required.

Action 10.1.2: The town's economic planning should address both a near term loss of landfill revenue and an alternative fiscal path for the town. A tax stabilization reserve fund, created in FY2010, should have the following objectives;

- Be of sufficient balance to meet budgetary expenditures in the event of an immediate and prolonged cessation of landfill operations and revenue.
- Accumulate over successive budget years to accommodate an alternate fiscal path and easing the town's likely transition to a tax levy.

Policy 10.2: The Town of Seneca should remain disciplined in resisting the ascension of municipal services or personnel.

Action 10.2.1: Any addition/enhancement of services should include an analysis of future appropriations in the event landfill revenue ceases.

Goal 11: To become an integral participant of the regional economy while maintaining our agrarian culture and protecting our agricultural assets.

Policy 11.1: F a c i l i t a t e a vibrant business environment while pursuing a tax base ascension in accordance with the town's zoning law.

Action 11.1.1:

The Town of Seneca should encourage appropriate business development for various types of industrial and commercial activity; this could include neighborhood retail and agri-businesses in the hamlets or within a centralized industrial park. The Town should leverage the municipal assets of; state highways, accessibility to utilities (water, natural gas, electricity generation, sanitary sewer, fiber data ring), no town tax levy, low county tax levy and recently enhanced fire protection services.

Action 11.1.2:

The Town of Seneca should examine the feasibility of creating a revolving loan fund to aid the ascension of the tax base in accordance with current zoning law.

Goal 12: To provide new economic opportunities for the Town of Seneca.

Policy 12.1: Consider reviewing and amending current regulations to offer new economic possibilities for the Town.

Action 12.1.1:

The Town should consider a referendum to amend the regulations that restrict the consumption of alcohol on the premises of commercial establishments. Allowing commercial businesses to serve alcohol on site can provide new opportunities to draw in restaurants that are currently lacking in Seneca. This in turn can provide additional economic benefits to the Town.

Goal 13: To support the agricultural industry as an important component of the Town of Seneca economy.

Policy 13.1: Utilize the educational programs such as Cooperative Extension that increase awareness of the importance of agriculture.

Action 13.1.1:

The Town of Seneca should work with Ontario County to determine businesses that would be mutually beneficial for the Town and businesses. This could include tourism related businesses and ag-tourism industries as well as spin-off business from the Ag & Tech Park in Geneva. Once appropriate businesses are identified, the Town could work with associations that represent these industries such as the Farm Bureau and the Bed-And Breakfast Association.

Environmental & Natural Resources

Goal 14: To ensure new development is compatible with environmental constraints.

Policy 14.1: Incorporate all available environmental data into land use decisions.

Action 14.1.1:

The provisions of the State Environment Quality Review Act (SEQRA) should continue to be fully utilized by the Town of Seneca in its review of development proposals. Under SEQRA regulations the Town may request the developer to conduct specific studies to adequately review the project, such as soil suitability or traffic studies. The SEQRA law can ensure maximum environmental quality.

Infrastructure

Goal 15: To ensure appropriate infrastructure and transportation systems for the Town of Seneca residents.

Policy 15.1: The Town should consider a comprehensive improvement of Hamlet municipal services, sidewalk convenience and economic development

Action 15.1.1:

The town should align future municipal service installations and improvements of the hamlets to maximize efficiencies and minimize costs. For example; Sidewalk installation should be aligned with water system repair or possible sanitary sewer installations.

Policy 15.2: Promote a safe and efficient transportation system.

Action 15.2.1

The Town Highway Superintendent should maintain a five-year Highway Repair Program to assess current road conditions along with existing and future needs. This would allow for the Town to plan for funding road repairs and improvements.

Action 15.2.2:

Work with Ontario County and NYS DOT to make accommodations for slow moving farm equipment when they upgrade / renovate county or state roads.

Policy 15.3: Pursue enhanced video, data, and voice service access to town residents.

Action 15.3.1:

Stay engaged with cable service providers to improve capabilities and customer service.

Action 15.3.2:

Pursue the recent installment of fiber optic cable throughout Ontario County and its potential to attract new industries and businesses to the Town.

Action 15.3.3:

Work with County and NYS DOT and telecommunication providers to install “dark” telecommunication lines when roadways are “opened” for paving or installing water/sewer lines.

Goal 16: Ensure the safe operation of water and sewer systems in addition to individual wells.

Action 16.1.1:

The Town should consider a feasibility study to determine if municipal sewage treatment facilities are appropriate for any of the hamlets.

Policy 16.2: Implement efficient distribution of natural gas service that improves the quality of life for Town residents.

Action 16.2.1:

In 2012 the town is working with New York State Electric and Gas to ascertain the possibility of connecting to natural gas for the hamlet of Hall. An existing valve in the Empire Pipeline exists on County Road 5 to allow utility connection.

Regional

Goal 17: Continue to work with County and regional governments to address planning issues.

Policy 17.1: Continue ongoing communication with neighboring communities to keep apprised of local planning strategies.

Action 17.1.1:

As a courtesy the Town of Seneca should continue to notify neighboring towns of proposed action near the town borders. This would allow additional input from other municipalities in the region and encourage the Town of Seneca to consider the potential impacts to neighboring communities.

Policy 17.2 Utilize the resources of County and regional agencies in local planning decisions.

Action 17.2.1:

The Ontario County Department of Planning and Research, Ontario County Planning Board, Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Soil & Water Conservation District along with other local agencies should continue to be utilized when reviewing local development proposals. This will assist the Town in making informed decisions taking into account the impact that development will have on soils, traffic and natural resources.

Policy 17.3: The County Landfill has a tremendous impact on the Town of Seneca. Strict compliance of existing contractual obligations should be enforced.

Action 17.3.1: The Town Board and Planning Board should remain engaged with landfill operations. Provide continuous oversight to ensure contract obligations are met and the interests and safety of the town residents remain paramount.

3.0 The People

3.1 Population Characteristics

The following section examines the demographic characteristics for the Town of Seneca. This information is important in understanding the future direction of the community and how best to allocate the Town's resources to provide services to residents.

The population for the Town of Seneca in 2000 was 2,731 with a loss of 10 residents over the past decade for a total of 2,721 in 2010. Population change for the Town is outlined in the following table:

Table 3-1 2000-2010 Change in Population

Town of Seneca, Ontario county and New York State

Municipality	2000 Population	2010 Population	Numeric Change	Percent change
Town of Seneca	2,731	2,721	-10	.36%
Ontario County	100,224	107,931	7,707	7.7%
New York State	18,976,457	19,378,102	401,645	2.1%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 2010

From 1970 to 1980 there was a 2.1% decrease, 1980 to 1990 a 0.1% decrease, from 1990 to 2000 a 0.6% decrease, and from 2000 to 2010 a 0.36% decrease in population for the Town. This is a negative trend as compared to the population in Ontario County and New York State. It is also different than projected trends from the 2000 data as outlined in the table below. From 2000 to 2010 population totals show that there was a 7.7% increase in Ontario County and a 2.1% increase in New York State.

3.1.1 Population Projections

Table 3-2 2005-2025 Population Projections

Town of Seneca, Ontario County and New York State

Municipality	2005	2015	2025
Town of Seneca	2,832	2,841	2,849
Ontario County	101,562	103,507	105,132
New York State	18,250,279	18,916,292	19,829,840

Source: Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, 2000

3.1.2 Age

A breakdown of the age characteristics for the Town of Seneca is described on the following table:

Table 3-3 2000 - 2010 Population by Age

	Town of Seneca				Percent Change
	2000		2010		
	Population Number	%	Population Number	%	
Total Population	2,731	100.0%	2721	100.0%	-0.36%
Male	1,376	50.4%	1426	50.4%	-1.1%
Female	1,355	49.6%	1295	49.6%	-0.1%
0 to 24 years	911	33.4%	789	28.9%	-13.3%
25 to 64 years	1477	53.6%	1532	56.3%	3.7%
65 years and over	343	12%	400	14.8%	16.7%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 2000
& 2010

The population for the Town of Seneca has remained relatively stable over the past decade with only a loss of 10 residents between 2000 and 2010.

A significant fact to consider when reviewing the age characteristics for the Town of Seneca is that in 2000 the segment of the population from 65 years and over has increased by 16.7% and the 24 year old and under age group has decreased by 13.3% since 2000. This demonstrates an aging population that may require special programs and services for seniors.

3.1.3 Race

The Town of Seneca is predominately white with Black and Asian ethnicities comprising less than one percent of the population. The ethnic breakdown for the Town of Seneca is outlined in the following table:

Table 3-4 Ethnic Profile – 2010

Town of Seneca

Race	Population	%
White	2,606	95.8%
Black or African American	13	0.5%
American Indian & Alaska Native	4	0.1%
Asian	6	0.3%
Some other race	58	2.1%
Two or more races	34	1.2%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 2010

The population characteristics for the Town of Seneca are very similar to that of Ontario County. The 2010 Census reveals that the population for the Town of Seneca is 95.8% white, 93.6% white for Ontario County and New York State at 65.7% white. Residents of Hispanic origin are not separated out in the above table but are included in one race, some other race or two or more races.

Census data for 2000 revealed only 41 residents in the Town of Seneca as being of Hispanic origin of any race. In contrast, 2010 census data shows an increase in the Hispanic population with 118 residents of the Town of Seneca being of Hispanic origin of any race. Hispanic origin is defined as Mexican-American, Chicano, Mexican, Mexicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Hispanic.

3.1.4 Education

The levels of education for the Town of Seneca and Ontario County are specified in the following table:

Table 3-6 Educational Attainment – 1990

Town of Seneca and Ontario County

Education	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Population	%	Population	%
Person 25 years and over	1,774		61,394	
Less than 9 th grade	115	6.5%	3,854	6.3%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	211	11.9%	7,812	12.7%
High school graduate	700	39.5%	20,753	33.8%
Some college, no degree	294	16.6%	10,754	17.5%
Associate degree	216	12.2%	6,242	10.2%
Bachelor degree	149	8.4%	7,389	12.0%
Graduate or professional degree	89	5.0%	4,590	7.5%
Percent high school graduate or higher	81.6		81.0%	
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	13.4		19.5%	

Source: Bureau of the Census – 1990

Educational statistics for the Town and County are similar in that 81.6% of residents for the Town and 81.0% of residents for the County are high school graduates, in addition 6.5% of residents in the Town of Seneca have less than a 9th grade education compared to 6.3% of Ontario County residents.

A Review of estimates from 2000 - 2010 from the US Census Bureau shows no major changes in percentages to the above table.

3.1.5 Income

A comparison of 1989 household income figures for the Town of Seneca and Ontario County are listed in the following table:

Table 3-7 Household Income Characteristics – 1989

Town of Seneca and Ontario County

1989 Income	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Income	%	Income	%
Households	944	100.0%	34,930	
Less than \$5,000	16	1.7%	935	2.7%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	54	5.7%	2,734	7.8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	60	6.4%	2,719	7.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	164	17.4%	5,965	17.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	181	19.2%	6,094	17.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	233	24.7%	7,701	22.0%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	174	18.4%	6,039	17.3%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	38	4.0%	1,664	4.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	20	2.1%	790	2.3%
\$150,000 or more	4	0.42%	289	0.82%
Median household income (dollars)	34,840		33,133	

Source: Bureau of the Census – 1990

The 1989 household income statistics reveal that the median household income is similar for both the Town and County at \$34,840 for Seneca and \$33,133 for Ontario County. The largest percentage of households in both the Town and County earn between \$35,000 to \$49,999 with the lowest percentage of household income for both at \$150,000 or more.

A review of estimates from the 2010 census shows the median household income has increased slightly from \$34,840 in 1990 to \$36,860. Estimates of the above percentages of each level of income show slight variations around the median income levels. The percentages of low and high incomes remain similar.

3.1.6 Poverty Level

The following table illustrates the poverty status for all persons in the Town of Seneca, Ontario County and New York State. A low poverty level indicates good opportunities for employment and education that results in a higher standard of living for residents.

Table 3-8 Poverty Status – 1990

Town of Seneca, Ontario County and New York State

Municipality	Number Below Poverty Level	Percent Below Poverty Level
Town of Seneca	109	4.0%
Ontario County	6,784	7.4%
New York State	2,277,296	13.0%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 2000

The U.S. Census Bureau uses an established income threshold that varies according to family size and structure to determine who is poor. If a family's total income is less than their threshold, then that family and every individual of that family is considered poor. An example of this would be a family of four that includes two related children under 18 would have a weighted average threshold of \$13,254 and if that family's total income is below this they are considered poor.

The Town of Seneca at 4.0% has a small percent of its population below poverty level in comparison to Ontario County at 7.4% and New York State at 13.0%. Broken down further, the poverty level for all families in the Town with related children below 18 years of age is 5.3%, for the County 9.1% and the State at 3.2% while the poverty levels for person 65 and over is 5.2% for the Town, 7.6% for the County and 11.9% for the State.

No additional data was observed for the 2010 census.

3.1.7 Employment

The following section looks at occupations in the Town of Seneca and Ontario County. In the Town and County, the occupations are broken down as follows:

Table 3-9 Occupation – 1990
Town of Seneca and Ontario County

Occupation	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Number	%	Number	%
Employed persons 16 years and over	1,437		47,221	
Executive, administrative and managerial occupations	147	10.2%	5,317	11.3%
Professional specialty occupations	194	13.5%	7,204	15.3%
Technicians and related support occupations	60	4.2%	1,779	3.8%
Sales occupations	133	9.3%	5,296	11.2%
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	191	13.3%	6,845	14.5%
Private household occupations	6	0.4%	194	0.4%
Protective service occupations	27	1.9%	576	1.2%
Service occupations, except protective and household	131	9.1%	5,566	11.8%
Farming, forestry and fishing occupations	109	7.6%	1,206	2.6%
Precision production, craft and repair occupations	216	15.0%	5,874	12.4%
Machine operators, assemblers and inspectors	91	6.3%	3,639	7.7%
Transportation and material moving occupations	80	5.6%	1,926	4.1%
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers and laborers	52	3.6%	1,799	3.8%

Source: Bureau of the Census –1990

In the Town of Seneca the largest segment of the employment sector is precision production, craft and repair occupations at 15.0% with professional specialty occupations at 15.3% for the County. Farming, forestry and fishing occupations are at 7.6% in the Town of Seneca in contrast to 2.6% for Ontario County.

2010 census estimates indicate similar percentages to the table above. Self-employment is one area where an increase has been noted.

Table 3-10 Industry – 1990

Town of Seneca and Ontario County

Industry	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Number	%	Number	%
Employed persons 16 years and over	1,437		47,221	
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries	151	10.5%	1,463	3.1%
Mining	0	0.0%	89	0.2%
Construction	118	8.2%	3,149	6.7%
Manufacturing, nondurable goods	89	6.2%	3,650	7.7%
Manufacturing, durable goods	129	9.0%	6,724	14.2%
Transportation	56	3.9%	1,372	2.9%
Communication & other public utilities	35	2.4%	1,006	2.1%
Wholesale trades	53	3.7%	1,727	3.7%
Retail trade	231	16.1%	8,312	17.6%
Finance, insurance & real estate	38	2.6%	2,232	4.7%
Business & repair services	59	4.1%	1,612	3.4%
Personal services	25	1.7%	1,361	2.9%
Entertainment & recreation services	10	0.7%	637	1.3%
Health services	152	10.6%	4,348	9.2%
Educational services	139	9.7%	5,134	10.9%
Other professional & related services	84	5.8%	2,774	5.9%
Public administration	68	4.7%	1,631	3.5%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 1990

The Town at 16.1% and the County at 17.6% have a high percentage of retail trade. Health services account for 10.6% of the total industry in Seneca with agriculture, forestry and fisheries following closely behind at 10.5%; this is in contrast to 3.1% for Ontario County in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries field.

It is also important to note that the tourism industry plays an important role in the economy of the area. The Ontario County Tourism Bureau estimates that there are 4,900 County residents that have employment related to the tourism industry that generates more than \$49 million in payroll for these positions.

2010 census estimates indicate similar percentages. One notable change in the 2010 estimates indicated that while the population has remained similar the number of employed individuals over 16 years old has decreased by 110.

3.2 Housing

The following section assesses the housing conditions in the Town of Seneca by evaluating total housing units, units in structure, year structure built, selected monthly costs as a percentage of household income, housing value and housing occupancy and tenure. By examining the housing stock of the community appropriate measures can be taken to ensure that all residents are provided with decent, safe and affordable housing.

3.2.1 General Characteristics

3.2.1.1 Total Housing Units

The total housing units in the Town of Seneca in 1990 was 992 with an increase of 40 units in 2000 for a total of 1,032 housing units; this is in contrast to a decline in the population of the Town of 0.6% from 1990 to 2000. In 1990 Ontario County had 38,947 total housing units and experienced an increase of 7,718 units for a total of 42,647 housing units in 2000.

3.2.1.2 Units in Structure

The following table illustrates the number of units in each structure in the Town and County.

Table 3-11 Units in Structure – 1990

Town of Seneca and Ontario County

Units in structure	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Number	%	Number	%
1-units, detached	853	86.0%	25,282	64.9%
1-units, attached	5	0.5%	1,340	3.4%
2 to 4 units	47	4.7%	4,323	11.1%
5 to 9 units	12	1.2%	1,704	4.4%
10 or more units	1	0.1%	1,824	4.7%
Mobile home, trailer, manufactured home	74	7.5%	4,474	11.5%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 1990

In the Town, 1-unit detached structures account for 86.0% of the housing stock in comparison to 64.9% for the County. This is followed by mobile homes and manufactured homes at 7.5% for the Town and 11.5% for the County. The table also demonstrates that the Town of Seneca has only one structure of 10 or more units.

3.2.1.3 Age of Housing

The following table illustrates an older housing stock for the Town of Seneca and Ontario County.

Table 3-12 Age of Housing – 1989

Town of Seneca and Ontario County

Year Structure Built	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Total	%	Total	%
Total Housing Units	992	100.0%	38,947	100.0%
1989 to March 1990	7	0.7%	857	2.2%
1985 to 1988	36	3.7%	3,699	9.5%
1980 to 1984	43	4.5%	2,797	7.2%
1970 to 1979	99	10.3%	7,535	19.3%
1960 to 1969	60	6.2%	4,464	11.5%
1950 to 1959	39	4.1%	3,037	7.8%
1940 to 1949	42	4.4%	1,473	3.8%
1939 or earlier	666	69.2%	15,085	38.7%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 1990

Both the Town and County contain a large number of homes built before the second half of the 20th century. In Seneca, 69.2% and in Ontario County, 38.7% of the housing stock was built before 1940. From 1940 to 1990, 33.9% of the total housing stock in Seneca was constructed.

3.2.1.4 Housing Expenses

The amount of income that residents spend on housing costs can indicate the affordability of a community. The following table compares the monthly housing expenses of the Town of Seneca to Ontario County.

Table 3-13 Selected Monthly Costs – 1989
Town of Seneca and Ontario County

	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Total	%	Total	%
Specified owner occupied housing units	543		17,647	
Less than 20% of household income	340	62.6%	9,845	55.8%
20% to 24% of household income	71	13.1%	2,802	15.9%
25% to 29% of household income	43	7.9%	1,740	9.9%
30% to 34% of household income	26	4.8%	1,144	6.5%
35% or more of household income	57	10.5%	2,064	11.7%
Not computed	6	1.1%	52	0.3%
Specified renter occupied housing units	147		8,953	
Less than 20% of household income	55	37.4%	2,811	31.4%
20% to 24% of household income	16	10.9%	1,250	14.0%
25% to 29% of household income	8	5.4%	1,022	11.4%
30% to 34% of household income	11	7.5%	725	8.1%
35% or more of household income	24	16.3%	2,627	29.3%
Not computed	33	22.4%	518	5.8%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 1990

In the Town of Seneca a majority of residents at 62.6% spend less than 20% of their household income on owner occupied housing compared to 55.8% for the County. In addition, the table demonstrates that rents in the Town are affordable as 37.4% of renters spend less than 20% of their household income on rent with this statistic slightly less for the County at 31.4%.

3.2.1.5 Occupancy

The occupancy of an area can communicate how affordable the housing of a community is. The table below compares these figures between the Town of Seneca and Ontario County.

Table 3-14 Housing Occupancy – 2000
Town of Seneca and Ontario County

	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Total	%	Total	%
Total housing units	1,032		42,647	
Occupied housing units	967	93.7%	38,370	90.0%
Vacant housing units	65	6.3%	4,277	10.0%
Seasonal, recreational or occasional use	13	1.3%	2,142	5.0%
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)		1.3%		1.7%
Rental vacancy rate (percent)		5.9%		8.1%
Owner occupied housing units	808	83.6%	28,225	73.6%
Renter occupied housing units	159	16.4%	10,145	26.4%
Average household size of owner occupied units		2.84%		2.67%
Average household size of renter occupied units		2.67%		2.15%

Source: Bureau of the Census – 2000

There is a large percent of occupied housing units in the Town of Seneca at 93.7% with slightly less for Ontario County at 90.0%. Owner occupied units account for 83.6% in the Town and 73.6% in the County. The homeowner vacancy rate for Seneca at 1.3% is less than that of the County at 1.7%. Renters account for 16.4% of the housing units in the Town and 26.4% in the County.

3.2.1.6 Housing Values

The table below reveals the housing values for the Town of Seneca in relation to Ontario County.

Table 3-15 Housing Value – 2010
Town of Seneca and Ontario County

	Town of Seneca		Ontario County	
	Total	%	Total	%
Specified owner-occupied housing units	869		34,608	
Less than \$50,000	24	2.8%	1,895	5.5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	337	38.8%	8,651	25%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	358	41.2%	10,479	30.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	102	11.7%	5,452	15.8%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	40	4.6%	4,715	13.5%
\$300,000 or more	8	.9%	3,416	9.9%
Median (dollars)	108,150		129,900	

Source: Town of Seneca Assessment
Roll – 2010

The table above demonstrates that the Town of Seneca is an affordable place to live. The majority of the homes in the Town at 80% range in value from \$50,000 to \$149,999. The median housing value in Seneca is \$108,150 compared to \$129,900 for Ontario County.

3.3 Building Permits

Over the past three years the Town of Seneca has issued approximately 100 building permits per year. The majority of the building permits at 95% are for existing residential improvements while the remaining 5% consist of new residential and commercial development, however there has been little or no commercial permits issued over the past few years.

4.0 Analysis of the Land

4.1 Land Use

Examining the current land use will allow Seneca to plan for the future character of the Town. The following section examines the existing land use, land use regulations and future land use projections for the Town of Seneca.

4.1.1 Existing Land Use

The following table describes the land use by acres and percent in the Town of Seneca followed by a description of each of the land uses.

Table 4-1 Existing Land Use - 2000

Town of Seneca, Ontario County

Land Use	Acres	Percentage
Agricultural	27,384.1	87.1%
Residential with Agriculture	617.9	2.0%
Residential	1,518.5	4.8%
Vacant	942.8	3.0%
Commercial	299.0	1.0%
Recreation & Entertainment	117.0	.36%%
Community Service	116.9	.37%
Industrial	22.7	.07%
Public Service	422.6	1.3%
Public Lands	0.0	0.0%
Total	31,441.5	100.0%

Source: Town of Seneca & peter j. smith & company, inc.

4.1.1.1 Agricultural

Agriculture plays an important role in the character and economy of the Town of Seneca. This is demonstrated by the majority of the land use at 87.1% that has been classified as agricultural. The agricultural land is dispersed throughout the Town with some commercial and residential land uses around the hamlets of Hall, Stanley, Flint and Seneca Castle and along Routes 5 & 20.

4.1.1.2 Residential with Agriculture

In the Town of Seneca 2.0% of the land is used for residential homes that are located on agriculturally productive land. These are generally large family farms that make their living from the land.

4.1.1.3 Residential

A total of 4.8% of the land in Seneca is currently being used for residential purposes. This land use classification includes residential development that does not contain agricultural land such as farms. Much of the residential development is concentrated in and around the four hamlets in the Town.



Additional residential land uses are scattered throughout Seneca with some residential clusters in the northeast portion of the Town at the County Road 4 and Johnson Road intersection, the eastern section of Town at State Route 245 and State Route 14A and the southwest corner at Kashong Switch and the old railroad right of way.

4.1.1.4 Vacant

Vacant land accounts for 3.0% of the land use in Seneca. Vacant land is land that is not being used for residential, commercial or agricultural uses. Vacant land is scattered through the Town of Seneca.

4.1.1.5 Commercial

Commercial uses account for 1.0% of the land in the Town. As would be expected, much of the commercial development is located in the hamlets. This includes agricultural related businesses such as fertilizer and agricultural equipment dealers in the hamlet of Hall as well as auto related services such as the Seneca Castle Auto Service in the hamlet of Seneca Castle. There is also commercial development along Routes 5 & 20 that runs east to west through the Town that includes a variety of commercial development including a diner, auto related, retail space, and professional offices

4.1.1.6 Recreation and Entertainment

The Ontario Pathways and the park in the hamlet of Seneca Castle make up the 0.36% of land used as recreation and entertainment. The Ontario Pathways is privately owned, however the public is allowed to use the trails that follow along the old railroad right of ways. The trail travels from the southeast corner of the Town at Kashong Switch northward up to the hamlet of Stanley where the trail splits. One section continues in a northwest direction to the Seneca/Gorham Town Line and the other section travels north through the hamlet of Flint up to the Seneca/Phelps Town Line in the north corner of Seneca.

4.1.1.7 Community Service

Community Service land uses that include BOCES on County Road 20 near Routes 5 & 20, the Highway Department on Flint Road, the Fire Departments of Seneca Castle, Hall and Stanley, the cemeteries and the numerous churches within the Town comprise 0.37% of the community service land use.



4.1.1.8 Industrial

A small percentage of land at 0.07% is currently used for industrial uses. These include the Ontario County Landfill located east of Flint on 5 & 20 and several industries in the hamlet of Hall along Railroad Place.

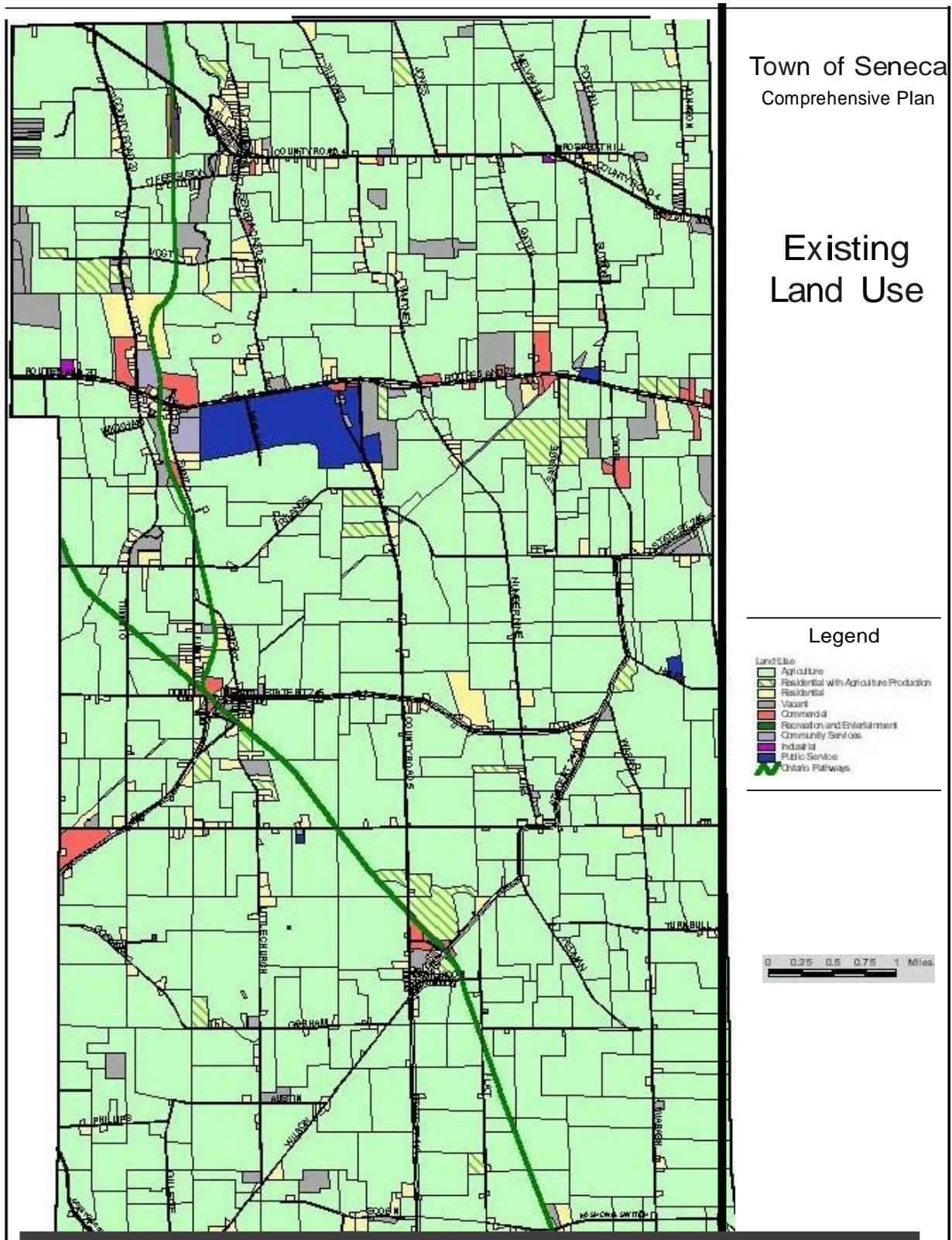
4.1.1.9 Public Service

Of the total land in Seneca, 1.3% is used as public service. The Ontario County Landfill on Routes 5 & 20 comprises the majority of this percentage. Time Warner Communications at the corner of Routes 5 & 20 and Sutton Road, the New York State Electric & Gas substation on Haley Road, the water towers and cell towers are all classified as public service land uses.

4.1.1.10 Public Lands

Currently there is not any land classified as public lands in the Town of Seneca.

Figure 4-1 Existing Land Use



4.2 Zoning

The Town of Seneca Zoning Districts include:

- ① Ag – Agriculture
- ① R-1 – Low Density Residential
- ① R-2 – Medium Density Residential
- ① C-1 – Mixed Use
- ① C-2 – General Business
- ① M-1 –Industrial

Agriculture

The Agriculture District provides for agricultural and related uses. Permitted uses and structures include uses such as farms and farm related activities, single-family dwellings, places of worship, convents, municipal buildings and cemeteries.

The minimum lot size for a farm in the Agriculture District is 7 acres with a minimum lot width ranging of 150 feet.

Minimum setbacks include a front setback of 100 feet, rear setbacks of 15 – 80 feet and side setbacks of 40 feet. The maximum lot coverage in the Agriculture District is 25 %. However, 1 acre lots are allowed for residential homes with no area variance, lots less than 1 acre require an area variance.



Permitted accessory uses include farm buildings and structures for the storage of farm products and farm equipment, attached or detached private garages, home occupations, signs, swimming pools and roadside stands. Special uses allowed in the agriculture districts include butcher shops, campgrounds, excavation operations, animal hospitals, stables or riding academies, wind energy conversion systems, portable sawmills, and public utility.

Low Density Residential

The R-1 District is intended for single-family residential uses. The permitted uses and structures are those Ag uses allowed in the Agricultural District single family residences, family and adult family daycare

The minimum lot size in the R-1 District ranges from 7 acres for farms to 25,000 square foot with a minimum lot width of 150 feet. Minimum setbacks include a front setback that of 50 feet, rear setbacks of 30 feet and side setbacks that range 30 feet. The maximum lot coverage in the District is 30%.

Permitted accessory uses and structures include those allowed in the Agricultural District and accessory uses routinely accompanying the permitted use and one accessory storage structure. Special uses include Essential Services, Site fill not associated with a specific project, and mixed use development.

Medium Density Residential

The R-2 Residential District is primarily for single-family and multi-family residential uses. Permitted uses and structures include single and two-family residences, multi-family residences, family and adult day care centers, and all from uses allowed in the Ag district.

The minimum lot size in the R-2 District ranges from 20,000 – 30,000 square feet with a minimum lot width ranging from 100 – 150 feet. Minimum setbacks include a front setback that ranges from 40 – 50 feet, rear setbacks that range from 15 – 30 feet and side setbacks that range from 15 – 20 feet. The maximum lot coverage in the District is 50%.

Permitted accessory uses and structures include those allowed in the Agricultural District and accessory uses routinely accompanying the permitted use and one accessory storage structure. Special uses include essential services and site fill not included in a specific project.

General Commercial

The C-2 District in the Town allows general highway retail and business uses. Permitted uses and structures include accessory apartments in a commercial building, adult and family daycare, and all farm uses allowed in the Ag district.

There are multiple commercial uses allowed with site plan approval or via special use permit.

The minimum lot size for the C-2 District is 30,000 square feet and the minimum lot width ranges from 100-150 feet. Minimum setbacks include the front setback of 20 feet, rear setback range from 15-30 feet and side setback of 20 feet. The maximum lot coverage in the C-2 District is 50%.

Permitted accessory uses in the C-2 District include uses routinely accompanying the permitted use or structure.

Industrial

The M-1 District in the Town allows for a mixture of certain commercial and industrial uses. Ag uses are permitted within the M-1 District. All other allowed uses are subject to Site Plan review

The minimum lot size for the M-1 District is 15,000 square feet and the minimum lot width is 100 feet. Minimum setbacks include the front setback of 40 feet, rear setback of 15 feet and side setback of 15 feet. The maximum lot coverage in the M-1 District is 75%.

Permitted accessory uses in the M-1 District include uses routinely accompanying the permitted use or structure.

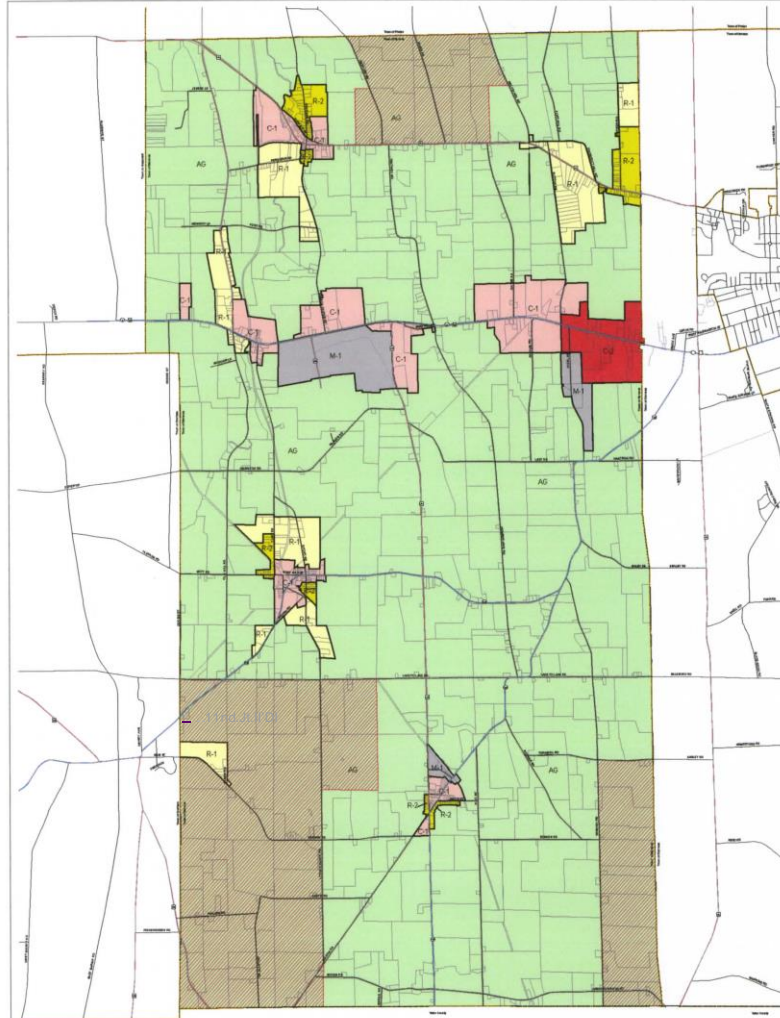
Mixed Use C-1

The Mixed Use District in the Town of Seneca allows for a mixture of residential and general retail/businesses.

The district allows for single family, two family and multi-family residences, retail stores, offices and retail service. In addition, mixed use within a single building, is also permitted in the district. The minimum lot size for the Mixed Use District ranges from 20,000-30,000 square feet (sf). Lot widths range from 100-150 feet.

The minimum setbacks for the front range from 40 – 50 feet and the rear yard ranges from 15 – 30 feet. The maximum lot coverage is 50% for businesses in the district.

Figure 4-2 Current Zoning- 2008



Current Zoning

1 inch equals 2,000 feet

Town of Seneca - Zoning Map

Ontario County, NY
 Produced by the Ontario County Planning Department
 Adopted: October 19, 2004 Last Amended: July 15, 2008

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

Key	
	Municipal Boundary
	State or US Route
	County Road
	Municipal Road
	Private Drive
	Common Wind Energy Facilities Overlay
	AG - Agricultural
	R-1 - Low Density Residential
	R-2 - Medium Density Residential
	C-1 - Mixed Use
	C-2 - General Business
	M-1 - Industrial

date	general description of revision	local law no.	town clerk certification
10/19/04	Adopted New Zoning Map and Text	Local Law No. 03 - 04	
7/15/08	Amended Zoning Map & Text for Commercial Wind Energy Facilities	Local Law No. 02 - 08	

4.3 Future Land Use Plan

The Town of Seneca is a rural community with most of the dense development located near the four hamlets. The land use pattern in Seneca will not only have an effect on how the land functions but also on the character of the Town. Although the future land use pattern for the Town of Seneca is not expected to change considerably from this general pattern over the next twenty-five years, locations for new developments should be identified.

4.3.1 Residential

To determine the number of housing units required in the Town of Seneca, the population in 2000 (2,731) and the population projection for the year 2025 (2,849) were used. This population was divided by the projected mean (average) household size; the mean household size for the Town in 2000 was 2.81 people and is assumed to remain at this approximate level during the next 25 years. The number of housing units required to meet the housing needs of the population is determined by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Projected Population}}{\text{Mean Household Size}} = \text{Projected Number of Housing Units Needed}$$

Mean Household Size

Population Projections for the Town of Seneca reveal that the total population could increase by up to 118 residents by the year 2025. Based on the formula, the Town currently had a surplus of 61 housing units in 2000 and will have a surplus of 19 housing units for 2025. However, some of these units may be in poor condition and new units may need to be developed.

It is also important to keep in mind that although the aforementioned formula is standard, the Town of Seneca shares a border with the Town of Geneva which has experienced an increase in population. The Town of Geneva has experienced a 10.9% increase in population from 1990 to 2000 and a 12.6% increase in housing units during the same time frame. Therefore the population in the Town of Seneca may significantly increase as a direct result of the population increase in the Town of Geneva necessitating the need for new housing development.

4.3.2 Commercial

The amount of commercial land that a municipality should provide varies from community to community; especially in rural areas such as Seneca. The American Planning Association's Planning Advisory Service (PAS) provides general guidelines for communities. The PAS recommends that 10% of the land in urban or suburban areas should be designated for commercial use; however there are no specific recommended guidelines for rural communities. The Small Town Planning Handbook states that rural communities frequently offer between 15% and 18% of their land for commercial uses.

In the Town of Seneca there are approximately 299 acres of land devoted to commercial uses. This accounts for approximately 1% of the Town's total area. The amount of commercial land in the Town falls well below that recommended in planning literature. Therefore the Town can provide additional land for commercial development.

When deciding on the location of future commercial development in Seneca, the location of existing commercial uses should be considered such as in the hamlets. This allows for the use of existing infrastructure and creates commercial nodes that are convenient for people utilizing these services.

4.3.3 Parks

The Town, in partnership with Casella Waste Systems created a centrally located park in 2008 in the Hamlet of Flint behind the existing town hall. The park includes an enclosed pavilion, athletic field, basketball court, volleyball courts, playground , and walking trails.

4.3.4 Industrial

Standard planning guidelines for rural communities recommend that 12 acres of industrial land per 1,000 residents should be set aside for current reserve, while an additional 12 acres per 1,000 residents should be allowed for future reserve.

Using the standard as a guide, the Town of Seneca currently requires approximately 33 acres of industrial land with 34 acres by the year 2025. At the present Seneca has roughly 23 acres of land used for industrial uses. The Town has stated that they wish to limit the amount of industrial development so as not to impact on the rural character of Seneca.

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4.3.5 Future Land Use Plan

The Town of Seneca has expressed an interest in retaining the rural character while allowing for limited growth in appropriate areas. The Future Land Use Plan therefore does not recommend significant changes to the current land use pattern. The Plan attempts to direct new development to areas where some density of development already exists to avoid incompatible uses from infringing on rural Seneca.

The Future Land Use Plan illustrates general areas for the major land use classifications that the Town may consider for future planning and zoning. These designations are generalized and are not intended to follow specific parcels. The following categories are depicted on the Plan:

- ☐ Agriculture: rural areas mostly characterized by farming with occasional residential uses on large lots
- ☐ Residential: areas designated for denser residential development located on the edges of the hamlets following the mixed use classification
- ☐ Industrial: designated areas adjacent to existing industrial uses with major road access such and the area along Yagel Road and adjacent to the Ontario County Landfill along Routes 5 & 20
- ☐ Mixed Use: located in the hamlets and along Routes 5 & 20 creating a mixture of land uses that generates a critical mass to serve area residents and may contain a historic overlay to protect significant historic sites

The Future Land Use Plan attempts to take the development goals of the community and apply them to a tangible land use scenario. The Plan was prepared through analyzing current data on the location of existing zoning districts, location of historic structures, location of existing and planned infrastructure and functional road classifications.

The Future Land Use Plan is designed to act as a guide to the Town as it revises its Zoning Regulations and to guide Town officials reviewing future development proposals.

4.3.6 Proposed Land Use Regulations

Through the Future Land Use Plan and additional recommendations made in the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Seneca can direct its revision of the current Zoning Regulations. Specific zoning provisions that the Town may wish to consider in its updated zoning are:

Cluster Provisions

This type of development method seeks to reduce the size of building lots and place buildings closer together in groups or clusters. The total development density cannot exceed the density allowed under standard zoning regulations. As the building sites are not evenly spread across the frontage of the property, cluster development results in numerous benefits including:

- ☐ Preservation of open space
- ☐ Preservation of environmental features
- ☐ Limits the number of curb cuts
- ☐ Lower development costs

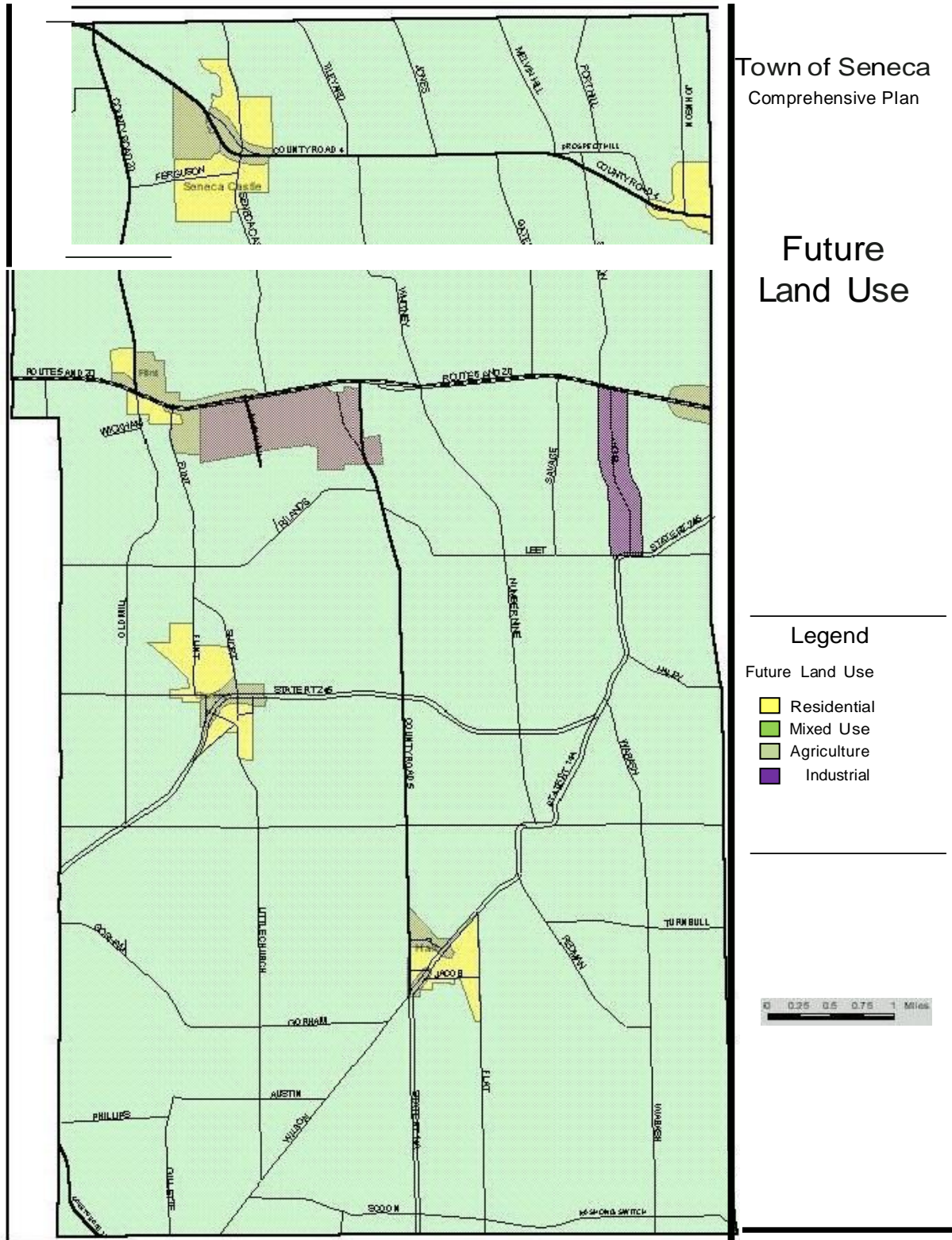
Mixed Use Development

The mixed use development in the C-1 and C-2 districts is a development type where the entire site is comprehensively planned. A mix of uses (residential, commercial, industrial) are clustered on a site to make the best use of the land.

Building/Property Maintenance Codes

These codes manage the maintenance of all property, buildings and structures within a community by providing standards necessary to ensure the health and safety of the occupants. Upon inspection by the designated Code Enforcement Officer, the owner of a property and of a building can be required to comply with all the provisions included in the code.

Figure 4-3 Future Land Use Plan



5.0 Environment

The condition of environmental assets in the Town of Seneca, known for having some of the best agricultural land in Ontario County and New York State, is very important. Growth and development that has occurred in the adjacent communities of Canandaigua and Geneva and the potential expansions for commercial development along Route 5 & 20 in the Town of Seneca has generated large



volumes of traffic, creating noise and pollution. This growth also threatens the availability of land that has supported the economic stronghold of the Town, namely farming. The adverse effects of traffic and sprawl threaten the rural integrity that provides

a quality of life that native Seneca residents have grown to know and love. Careful documentation of the existing environmental resources is necessary to ensure that environmental assets are protected.

This chapter documents the following components of the natural environment in the Town of Seneca: geology, soils, topography, hydrology, air-quality, noise and hazardous waste sites. While noise is not a biological attribute, it does directly affect the natural environment. All of the outlined features are important to the planning process because they determine the type, scale and intensity of development that is most appropriate for the land.

5.1 Geology

As a result of the glacial activity of the past, the towns in eastern Ontario County, including the Town of Seneca, were covered with glacial till and silty loam, compounds that contribute to very fertile soil. As a result, the Town of Seneca and surrounding communities in Ontario County contain the largest concentration of prime soils and have some of the most productive land in the State of New York.

Three alternating cooling and warming periods were definitive in the geology of the Town of Seneca. Beginning two thousand years ago, a colder period brought glaciers extending north, scraping away the earth gouging out valleys and filling in some former watercourses. As the climate warmed up, silt, sand and gravel was deposited in the general area as the streams receded. Again the climate cooled. When the last glacier left the area, roughly a foot of topsoil was what remained.

5.2 Soils

Soils are naturally occurring bodies at the surface of the earth that are the products of the earth's weather conditions and added processes that act on the unconsolidated organic and mineral materials. The properties of any soils are dependent upon a combination of factors including:

- ① the physical and chemical composition of the parent material
- ① the climate and topography
- ① animal and plant life
- ① time

Agriculture, drainage, water availability, recreation and sustainability of development are all dictated by the types of soil that an area has.

Information regarding the soils of Ontario County was obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service and was published in the 1958 Soil Survey of Ontario County, New York.

There are a large proportion of prime soils in Ontario County. Prime soils are described as soils that produce high yield crops through their quality, growing season and moisture.

According to the Ontario County Soil Survey, The Town of Seneca contains 75 soil types. Among the 75 soil classifications, Collamer, Honeoye, Lima, Ontario and Palmyra are frequent soil series.

- ① The Collamer series of soils are moderately high in organic matter making it easy for roots to penetrate the upper part of this type of soil. Productive crops for this type of soil include grain, wheat, oats, hay, field beans, sweet corn and vegetables.
- ① The Honeoye series of soils are among the most productive agricultural soils in New York State. They are well drained, medium textured and develop in very high lime glacial till.
- ① The Lima series of soils are moderately well drained, medium textured and high lime soils. These soils are well suited for inter-tilled crops.

- ① Ontario soils are well drained, medium textured and have clayey sub-soils. This highly productive soil is well suited to all crops grown in the area.
- ① The Palmyra series of soils are among the most productive in Ontario County. They are well-drained high lime soils that developed in glacial outwash gravel and sand.

5.3 Topography

Topography is the shape of land surfaces, indicated by measuring relative heights and positions of the land's natural and man made features. Topography influences the land use by affecting its wetness, accessibility and erosion. In general, lands with a slope of 15% or greater are deemed steep and considered to be unsuitable for most uses. Steep slopes often create constraints to development, as long-term structural integrity normally requires costly design and engineering work.

The topography of the land in the Town of Seneca is generally flat. However, there are variations in elevation from 600 feet to 1,050 feet (above sea level). For example, the land in the southwest portion of the Town is generally a higher elevation while the land in the northwest portion of the Town is a lower elevation. The change in elevation is very gradual and creates few restrictions for agricultural operations.

5.4 Hydrology

5.4.1 Watersheds

Watersheds are areas of land that catch precipitation, such as rain and snow, which then seeps or drains into groundwater, wetlands, streams, lakes or rivers. The Town of Seneca contains three watersheds. The Town is generally split from the southwest corner up to the northeast corner by the Flint Creek Watershed on the western side of the Town and the Seneca Lake Watershed on the eastern side of the Town. A small portion of the Marsh Creek Watershed is located in the northeastern section of the Town.

5.4.2 Creeks and Streams

The Town of Seneca has three creeks. Flint Creek runs in a south to north direction in the northwest section of Town, Burrell Creek runs east to west in the lower eastern section and Kashong Creek runs west to east in the southeast corner of the Town.

5.4.3 Wetlands

Both the Federal government and the State designate wetland areas. Federal wetlands can be areas of any size that are characterized by wetness; State designated wetlands are those areas measuring 12.4 acres or more in size or smaller wetlands of unusual local importance.

According to the Ontario County Environmental Management Council, there are 39 wetlands in the Town of Seneca. According to the Department of Environmental Conservation, these wetlands are classified as Class III Wetlands under the Freshwater Wetlands Act. A wetland shall be classified as a Class III Wetland if it has any of the following characteristics:

- ☐ Emergent marsh in where purple loosestrife and/or reed makes-up two-thirds or more of the cover type;
- ☐ Deciduous swamp;
- ☐ Shrub swamp;
- ☐ Consists of floating and/or submergent vegetation;
- ☐ Consists of wetland open water;
- ☐ Contains an island with an area above the wetland to provide benefits as listed in section 664.6 (b)(6);
- ☐ Has a total alkalinity of at least 50 parts per million;
- ☐ Adjacent to fertile upland;
- ☐ Resident of an animal species in the major region of the state in which it is found, or it is a traditional migration habitat of an animal species vulnerable in the state or in the major region of the state in which it is found;
- ☐ Contains plant species vulnerable in the major region where located;
- ☐ Part of a surface water system with permanent open water and it receives significant pollution of a type amenable to amelioration by wetlands;
- ☐ Visible from an interstate highway, parkway, designated scenic highway, or passenger railroad and serves a valuable aesthetic or open space function;

- ☐ One of the three largest wetlands of the same cover type within a town;
- ☐ Community where wetland acreage is less than one percent of the total acreage; or
- ☐ Located on publicly owned land that is open to the public.

The Freshwater Wetlands Act places regulations on activities that may occur in freshwater wetlands and for areas 100 feet from the wetland boundary. Most activities that can adversely impact the natural value of the wetland are regulated and a permit is required.

5.4.4 Floodplains

Floodplains are areas of land adjacent to rivers and streams that have or are expected to flood. Floodplains protect other areas from flooding by absorbing or holding the water. They can also be habitats for varied types of wildlife.

A floodplain runs along both sides of Flint Creek, Burrell Creek and Kashong Creek.

5.5 Air Quality

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation monitors air quality throughout the State using its Ambient Air Monitoring System. Data summaries of air pollutants have been established and are included in the reporting system for sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, total suspended particulates, inhalable particulates and lead.

The State does not maintain any air-monitoring stations in Ontario County, however residents of the Town of Seneca have indicated a concern with the air quality near the Ontario County Landfill.

5.6 Noise

Noise has been documented as adversely affecting residents' quality of life by causing sleep disturbance, communication interference and general annoyance. Noise levels also have an effect on property values. In the Town of Seneca, the quality of life and the value of property have been impacted by noise derived from traffic and as a result the ambiance of the community has suffered. Traffic has become a major issue along the Routes 5 & 20 Corridor.

5.7 Hazardous Waste

5.7.1 Superfund

Superfund is a program administered by the Environmental Protection Agency to locate, investigate and clean up the worst hazardous waste sites throughout the United States. Before Superfund, Americans were less aware of how dumping chemical waste might affect public health and the environment. Hazardous wastes were often left in the open where they seeped into the ground, flowed into rivers and lakes and contaminated soil and groundwater. Where these practices were intensive or continuous, there were uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites. According to the Comprehensive Environmental Response and Liability Information System (CERCLIS), there is one superfund location in the Town of Seneca. The Ontario County Landfill has been designated a superfund site, this allows for a detailed plan on how to eliminate health hazards to the community. However, this site is considered a low priority for the DEC as the threat of hazardous waste negatively impacting on the community is minimal.

5.7.2 RCRA

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) requires that generators, transporters, treaters, storers, and disposers of hazardous waste (as defined by the federally recognized hazardous waste codes) provide information concerning their activities to State environmental agencies. These agencies then provide the information to regional and national U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offices. Hazardous waste data is contained in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System (RCRIS).

There are four RCRIS sites that are located in Seneca.

Table 5-1 RCRIS Sites

Town of Seneca

Facility Name	Facility Location
Bob Equipment Company, Inc.	2524 Rt. 5 & 20, Stanley, NY
Town of Seneca Highway Department	3649 Flint Rd. Stanley, NY
Town of Seneca Water Tank	Kashong Switch Rd. Hall, NY
Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES	3501 County Rd. 20 Stanley, NY

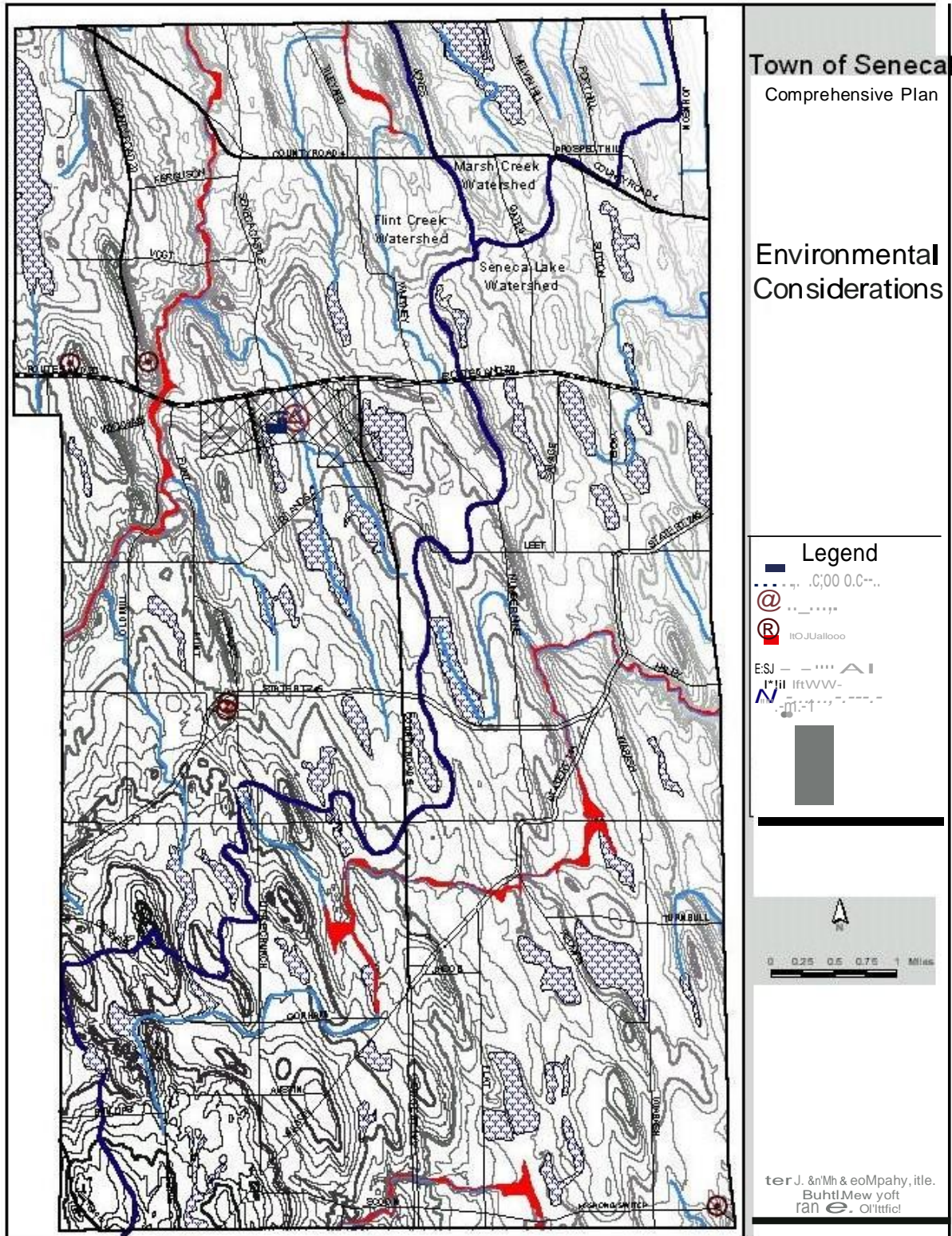
Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency

5.7.3 Brownfields

Brownfields are properties where contamination or the perception of contamination limits the development potential of the site. Neither Ontario County nor the New York State DEC maintains a catalogue of brownfield sites.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, there are no documented brownfield sites in the Town of Seneca.

Figure 5-1 Environmental Considerations



5.8 Agricultural Districts/Lands

In 1971, the New York State Agricultural Districts Law was enacted to protect farmland by granting incentives to property owners to preserve farmland through reductions in land assessment for special districts such as water and sewer. The assessments are restricted to the structures on the property as opposed to computations based solely on road frontage. This law also prohibits the extension of infrastructure and future development to safeguard farmland from uses other than farming. The Town of Seneca is part of Agricultural District #6 established in 1976. 29,512 acres of the Town are in the district in 2002.

In Ontario County 50% of the land has been categorized as prime agricultural with 56% of the County positioned within agricultural districts. Once farmland has been lost to non-agricultural uses it is nearly impossible to return it to its natural state. It has been estimated that since the 1940's 191,609 acres of agricultural land has been lost. As the agriculture industry is of great importance to the region many of the towns throughout have set aside land for agricultural districts.



Agriculture is an important component to the region as it contributes \$252 million to the Ontario County economy. Any loss of agricultural land for farming purposes can negatively affect the economic health of the County as a whole.

In the Town of Seneca, 86% was set-aside as an agricultural district in 1999. These percentages are high compared to 57% for the Town of Geneva and 75% for the Town of Hopewell that was set-aside as an agricultural district in 1999. The following table illustrates comparatively the amount of available land for farming in Ontario County.

Table 5-2 Agricultural Land Profiles

Ontario County

Town	Total Acreage	Agricultural Acreage 1992	Agricultural Acreage 1999	1992 Percentage	1999 Percentage	Percent Loss '92-'99
Geneva	12,361	7,492	7,076	61%	57%	- 6%
Hopewell	22,849	17,464	17,069	76%	75%	- 2%
Seneca	32,140	28,872	27,708	90%	86%	- 4%
Region Totals	101,165	76,281	73,317	75%	72%	- 4%

Source: N.Y. Real Property Tax & Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Plan

Upon review of the above table, we see that despite the dedication of acreage in the Town of Seneca to farming, as well as for other Ontario County Communities, there has been a loss in farmland from 1992 to 1999. This loss of farmland may be due to a rise in residential construction as there was an increase of 40 units from 1990 to 2000. Much of the new residential development uses 2-acre lots that front the roadway. This type of development does not utilize land to its best advantage and can have a negative effect on the landscape. It should be noted that Seneca is currently participating in a three Town agricultural planning project that will look at agriculture and land use issues and make Town specific recommendations.

5.8.1 NYS Agricultural Districts Program Benefits

In 1971, New York became the first state to create a comprehensive agricultural district program. The NYS Agricultural Districts Law supports agriculture through several provisions:

- ☐ Agricultural assessments for land in active agricultural production;
- ☐ Limits on the taxation of farmland for certain municipal improvements;
- ☐ Limits on public utility taxes to the ½ acre of farm which is devoted to housing
- ☐ Requirement that state agency policies support farming;
- ☐ State review of local ordinances which affect agriculture;
- ☐ Limitations on the exercise of eminent domain and other public acquisitions;
- ☐ Limits on public investment for non-farm development;

- ☐ Agricultural impact statement requirements for public projects;
- ☐ Right-to-farm protection for sound agricultural practices;
- ☐ Disclosure notices to real estate purchasers in agricultural areas; and
- ☐ Right to recover legal fees where farmer wins nuisance lawsuit.

An agricultural district is created by the county legislature upon petition by interested landowners. The owners must collectively own at least 500 acres (or 10%) of the land proposed for the district.

5.8.2 NYS Tax Relief

To reduce the tax burden on state farmers, the New York Legislature enacted the 1996 Farmers' Protection and Farm Preservation Act. The law created a refundable income tax credit for school taxes paid by farmers. The program is fully funded by the state.

In addition, farm buildings and structures are also exempt from several provisions of the Real Property Tax Law:

- ☐ Section 483 exempts new and rebuilt farm buildings for ten years;
- ☐ Section 483-a entirely exempts certain agricultural structures;
- ☐ Section 483-c exempts temporary greenhouses; and
- ☐ A limited exemption is offered for the rehabilitation of historic barns.

The amount of the building exemption is determined by the increase in assessed value of the land because of the new construction; it is not based on actual construction costs.

5.8.3 NYS Farmland Protection Plan Development

In 1994, the state began to provide funding for the development of County agricultural and farmland protection plans. Approval of such plans enables counties to apply for federal and state funding for the purchase of farmland development rights. Ontario County has an Agricultural Enhancement Board that is currently working on ways to preserve farms and farmland in Ontario County.

5.8.4 NYS Purchase of Development Rights Grants

In 1996, the legislature amended the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Programs, Article 25-AAA, to provide implementation grants for the purchase of development rights on farmland. Municipalities with approved agricultural and farmland protection plans were eligible for funding under the 75% state contribution 25% local contribution program.

Since 1996, the state has committed \$30 million to preserving thousands of acres of farmland in the state to keep viable farmland in production and protect it from development. In 2000, the state awarded \$12 million to 15 municipalities to help protect economically viable farmland from development. The award is the largest amount ever appropriated for farmland protection in New York and represents a 56% increase over 1999's funding.

Approximately 87% of the land in Seneca is utilized for agriculture. Due to this high percentage and the cost per acre of agricultural land the town determined that purchasing development rights, even with grants, may be economically infeasible. In 2009, utilizing results from surveys sent to all residents, committee meetings, and personal conversations with agricultural property owners, the Town amended its Zoning to protect the agricultural lands and minimize development in these lands rather than rely on purchase of development rights for this purpose.

5.9 Agricultural Agencies and Organizations

Considering the development that occurs in and around many communities in New York State, there has been an increased need for advocacy on behalf of the farmer, especially where agriculture has been the chief economic generator for that area. Agriculture and its appropriate promotion and preservation is of the utmost importance to the Town of Seneca. Below is a list of advocacy organizations that work with the Town of Seneca.

5.9.1 Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board

The Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board was developed for Ontario County and its Agricultural Enhancement Board with support from the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County and the Ontario County Planning Department. In September of 2000, this organization developed the Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Plan in an effort to:

- ☐ Inform Ontario County government and create general awareness for community leaders about the significance of agriculture, the pressures on farmers from the industry, public policies and the non-farm public and the economic potential to expand agricultural activity.
- ☐ Identify agricultural resources in need of protection and present appropriate farmland protection techniques.
- ☐ Present options to strengthen the economic vitality of agriculture and retain productive farmland.

5.9.2 Cornell Cooperative Extension

The goal of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) is to enable people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work. Cornell Cooperative extension services include advocacy, education and financial support. This is done by:

- ☐ Building partnerships and coalitions with individuals, communities, organizations, government agencies, and businesses around issues of mutual concern.

- ☐ Developing local leaders who use CCE knowledge to inform decisions.
- ☐ Promoting youth development and education.
- ☐ Striving to help participants make informed choices using the best knowledge available.
- ☐ Connecting learners with educational resources found in locations throughout the world.
- ☐ Consulting with individuals and groups on multiple topics.
- ☐ Provides resources via technologies such as the World Wide Web, satellite, and compressed video.

Specifically, the Cornell Cooperative Extension offers the Town of Seneca:

- ☐ Workshops
- ☐ Field Research
- ☐ One on one farm visits
- ☐ Agricultural information through newsletters
- ☐ Program access with specialists that focus on dairy, field crops, livestock, grapes, fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ Alternative agricultural enterprises
- ☐ Integrated pest management
- ☐ Language skills for those who speak English as a second language
- ☐ Assistance with odor issues
- ☐ Nutrient management planning

5.9.3 American Farmland Trust

American Farmland Trust (AFT) is a private, non-profit conservation organization founded in 1980 to protect the nation's agricultural resources. AFT works to stop the loss of productive farmland and to promote farming practices that contribute to a healthy environment. This is done by:

- ☐ Empowering communities by working and planning with communities to directly affect farmland conservation.
- ☐ Developing fair policies with the assistance of local, state and federal farmland representatives.
- ☐ Engaging the community via media outreach, publications, the world wide web and public meetings.
- ☐ Working with landowners to develop and sustain farming practices.

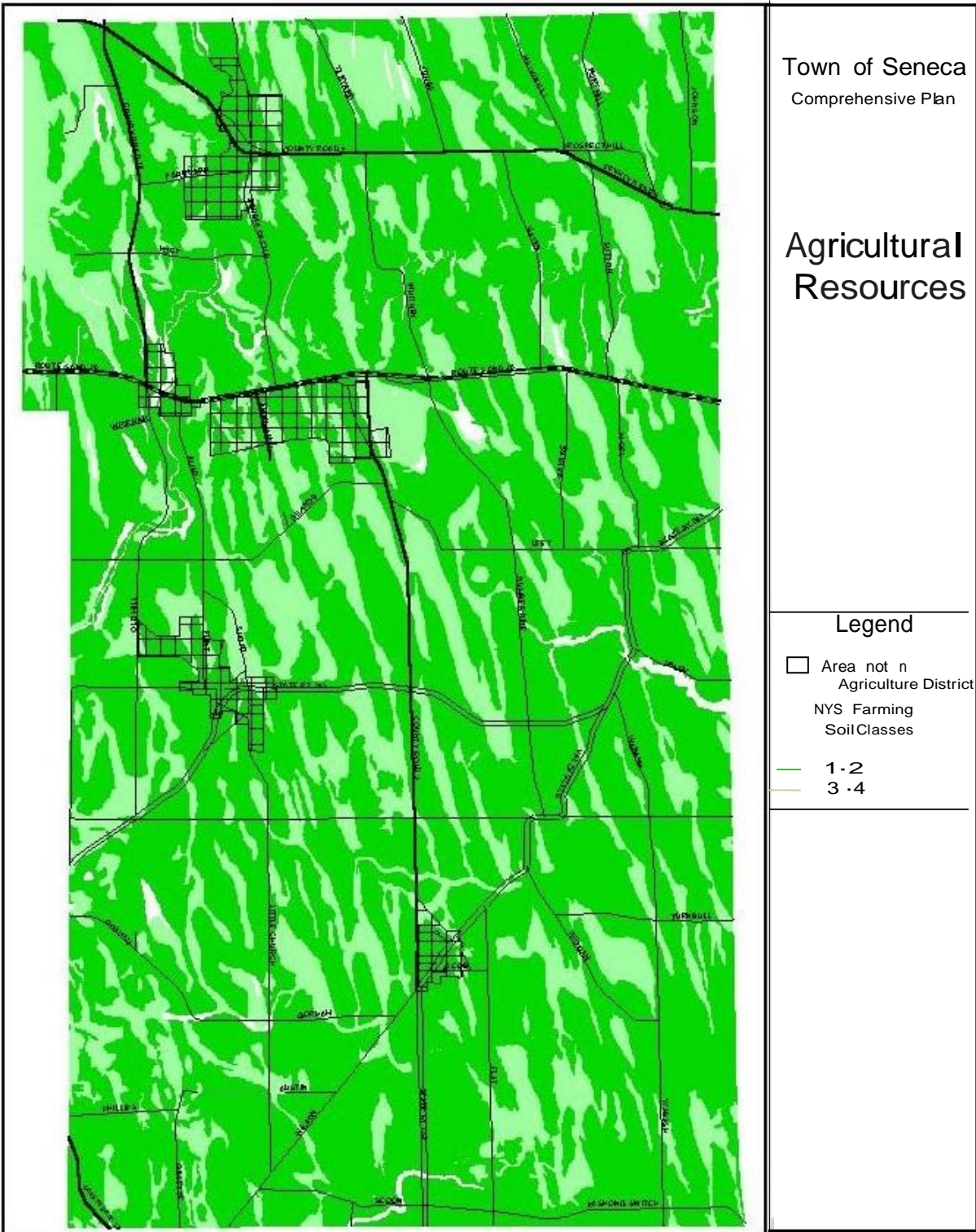
In addition to its programs of public education and technical assistance in policy development, AFT provides direct assistance to communities by managing conservation easements and other local farmland protection programs.

5.9.4 New York Farm Bureau

The Farm Bureau is a non-governmental, volunteer organization that receives it's financing and is run by families to solve economic and public policy issues facing the agricultural industry. There is currently a membership of over 31,000 member families. Policy development begins with problem identification at the county level and concludes at the New York Farm Bureau Annual Meeting with a resolution addressing the issues.¹

¹ www.nyfb.org

Figure 5-2 Agricultural Resources



6.0 Community Facilities and Services

The availability and variety of a community’s facilities and services are important to the quality of life that can be offered to its residents. The historic identity, quality of education and performance of emergency response teams are examples of qualities that shape a community and make it a desirable place to live. This chapter explores the amenities available to residents in the Town of Seneca, including educational facilities, libraries, emergency services, health services and social services.

6.1 Schools

Public education for Town of Seneca students is provided by four separate school districts. They are the Geneva City School District, Phelps-Clifton Springs School District, the Gorham-Middlesex Central School District (Marcus Whitman) and the Penn Yan School District. A brief overview of the school districts is given in the table below, with more detailed information following.

Table 6-1 School Districts

Town of Seneca

School District	K-12 Student Enrollment	Count of Teachers	Expense Per Pupil
Geneva City School District	2558	234	\$15,705
Phelps-Clifton Springs School District	1928	161	\$14,482
Marcus Whitman School District	1504	124	\$15,995
Penn Yan School District	1716	171	\$14,550

Source: Bureau of the Census – 2010

6.1.1 Teaching Staff

The Geneva School District employs approximately 234 teachers; 180 have permanent teaching certification for New York State. The district’s median teaching salary is \$45,000. Teachers have an average of 15 years of teaching experience, slightly lower than the State average of 16 years.

The Phelps-Clifton Springs School District employs approximately 161 teachers; the percentage of teachers with NYS permanent teaching certification was not available. The district’s median teaching salary is \$44,000. The average number of years of teaching experience was not available.

The Gorham-Middlesex Central School District employs approximately 129 teachers, 101 of which have permanent teaching certification for New York State. The district's median teaching salary is \$47,000. Teachers had an average of 15 years of teaching experience, slightly lower than the State average of 16 years.

The Penn Yan School District employs approximately 171 teachers, and 81% of that total have permanent teaching certification for New York State. The district's median teaching salary is \$46,000. Teachers had an average of 16 years of teaching experience, which is equivalent to the State average.

6.1.2 Facilities

The Geneva School District operates four educational facilities, the Phelps-Clifton Springs School District operates five facilities, the Gorham-Middlesex Central District operates four educational facilities and the Penn Yan School District operates three facilities.

6.1.3 Fiscal Information

Each of the four school districts that serve the students of the Town of Seneca are supported by independent budgets. The Geneva School District expends approximately \$15,705 per student, the Phelps-Clifton Springs School District expends approximately \$14,482 per student the Gorham-Middlesex Central School District expends approximately \$15,995 per student and the Penn Yan School District expends approximately \$14,550 per student.

For comparative purposes, the average New York State public school average expenditure is \$16,387 per student. This places all local school districts below the state average.

6.1.4 Average Class Size

- The average class size in the Geneva School District is approximately 17 in the elementary school and 19 in the high school.
- The average class size in the Phelps-Clifton Springs School District varies. For grades K-3rd the average is 21 students, for 4th-6th the average is 21 students, for 7th-12th the average is 22 students.
- The average class size in the Gorham-Middlesex Central School District is approximately 20 students.
- The average class size in the Penn Yan School District is approximately 18 students for K-6th, 20 for 7th-8th and 21 students for 7th-12th.

6.1.5 Student Performance

New York State Higher Education data states that in 2000, 52% of high school graduates of the Geneva City School District earned a regents diploma, 72% earned a regents diploma in the Phelps-Clifton Springs School District, 65% for the Gorham-Middlesex Central School District earned a regents diploma and 57% of Penn Yan School District earned a regents diploma.

6.1.6 Drop-Out Rates

In 1998-1999, 5.4% of Geneva City School District students, 1.2% of Phelps-Clifton Springs School District students, 2.5% of Gorham-Middlesex Central School District students and 3.6% of Penn Yan School District students dropped out of school. The Phelps-Clifton Springs, Gorham-Middlesex Central School and Penn Yan School District's drop out rates were below the New York State drop out rate for 1998-1999, which was 4.1%. However, the Geneva City School District drop out rate was slightly above the State drop out rate.

6.1.7 Wayne-Finger Lakes Technical and Career Center

Built in 1968, this educational facility located in Flint provides vocational training and special needs classes for students from 14 area public schools. In addition to serving students from Ontario County, students are also bussed in from Wayne, Seneca and Yates Counties.

Included on this campus is a technical center with a main office and classrooms, a childcare and early childhood education center, and an alternative high school. Services provided on this campus include G.E.D (General Education Diploma) preparation, adult technical/career education, alternative education course work and adult support services, skills training-transition to employment program (ST-TEP), childcare and literacy courses.

6.2 Colleges

New York State Higher Education data indicates that in 1997 the Geneva City School District had a 56% rate of graduates who went on to a 4-year college, 41% for the Phelps-Clifton Springs School District Central School District and 47% for the Gorham-Middlesex Central School District and 82.9% of Penn Yan School District students went on to a 4-year college.

Several highly respected colleges and universities are within a 90-mile radius of the Town of Seneca. Regional institutions include the University of Rochester, Syracuse University, Cornell University and Rochester Institute of Technology. Local higher educational institutions within Ontario County include Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Finger Lakes Community College and Cornell University's Agricultural Experiment Station.

6.3 Library Resources

There are currently no libraries in the Town of Seneca, however there are holdings available in close proximity to the Town including the following:

- ① Clifton Springs Public Library
- ① Phelps Community Library
- ① Gorham Free Library
- ① Geneva Free Library
- ① Finger Lakes Community Library
- ① City of Canandaigua Library

6.4 Emergency Services

6.4.1 Police

Police services are provided to the Town of Seneca by the Ontario County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Troopers. In 2000 the Ontario County Sheriff's Department reported 37 violent crimes and 907 property crimes throughout the County with the New York State Troopers reporting 1,640 violent crimes and 8,090 property crimes throughout the district.

6.4.2 Fire

Fire services are provided to the Town of Seneca by three fire companies. Historically, these companies have served the Town with the first Fire Company located in the hamlet of Stanley, which was established in 1910 followed by the Hall Fire Company, established in 1914. Finally, the Seneca Castle Fire Company was established in 1949.

6.4.3 Ambulance

Ambulance services are provided to the Town of Seneca on both a voluntary and a professionally paid basis. Stanley, Hall and Gorham Fire Companies provide voluntary services. Finger Lakes Ambulance and Mercy Flight provide professionally paid services to the Town of Seneca.

6.5 Health Services

Health care is provided to the Town residents through the following area health centers:

- ① Geneva General Hospital is roughly a 200-bed hospital that provides emergency room, obstetrics/gynecologic, lab, radiology, cardiology and general wellness services.
- ① Clifton Springs Hospital is a 264-bed community hospital located in Clifton Springs, New York. This health facility provides mental health, emergency room, radiology, internal medicine and elderly care services.
- ① F. F. Thompson Hospital is a 120-bed community hospital and is located in the Town of Canandaigua. The F. F. Thompson Hospital provides diagnostic, ambulatory, surgical, oncology and elder care services.

6.6 Cultural and Social Services

6.6.1 Churches

The churches in the Town of Seneca provide spiritual services to Town residents. The churches located in the Town are:

- ☐ Seneca Presbyterian Church, 4362 Number Nine Road, Stanley
- ☐ Seneca Castle United Methodist Church, Seneca Castle
- ☐ Flint Creek Church of God, 3584 Flint Road, Stanley
- ☐ Union Congregational United Church of Christ, 4823 Route 14A, Hall
- ☐ Wesleyan Church, County Road 245, Stanley
- ☐ Seventh Day Adventist Church, Number 9 Road, Seneca
- ☐ Grace Baptist Church, County Road 4, Seneca
- ☐ St. Theresa's, State Route 245, Stanley
- ☐ Hall Bible Fellowship, Route 14A, Hall
- ☐ Oak Lawn Mennonite Church, Lake to Lake Road, Hall

6.6.2 Ontario County Youth Bureau

The Ontario County Youth Bureau serves adolescents under the age of 21 in the Town of Seneca. The Youth Bureau serves 28,500 youth throughout Ontario County through funds received from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The Youth Bureau provides a countywide system of services for children and youth through planning and coordinating, funding, monitoring and evaluating and community development.

6.7 Historic Resources

The Town of Seneca Historical Society was established in 1989 following the Town/County Bi-Centennial and has a temporary charter under sanction of the New York State Board of Regents. The Historical Society identifies and researches historic properties for their inclusion on the State's Register of Historic Places along with researching grant possibilities for funding of these historic properties. The National Parks Service administers the Register of Historic Places through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The National Register serves to identify resources that are important to American culture. The National Register consists of all historic areas in National Parks, National Historic Landmarks that have been designated for their significance and properties significant to the nation, state or community that have been nominated by states, federal agencies and others and have been approved by the National Parks Service.

The following sites in the Town of Seneca are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- ① Seneca Presbyterian (Number Nine) Church, 4362 Number Nine Road
- ① Thomas Barron House, 1160 Routes 5 & 20
- ① Rippey Cobblestone House, 1227 Leet Road

The following sites are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, however they have local historical significance. Cobblestone homes in the Town of Seneca include:

- ① 2464 Gorham-Hall Road, built in 1840
- ① 2173 Lake to Lake Road, information regarding when the home was built was not available
- ① 1821 Route 245, built in 1846
- ① 2916 Johnson Road, built in 1862
- ① 3688 Number Nine Road, built in 1835
- ① 5300 Wabash Road, built in 1847

Churches in the Town of Seneca:

- ① Seneca Castle United Methodist, built in 1842
- ① Flint Church of God (formerly the Flint Methodist), built in 1884
- ① Hall Congregational Church, built in 1923
- ① Little Union Church, built in 1807
- ① St. Theresa' Roman Catholic Church, built in 1875
- ① Wesleyan Evangelical Church (formerly Stanley Methodist), built in 1893

Schools in the Town of Seneca:

- ① Stanley District #1, built in 1931, currently serves as the Stanley Fire Department
- ① Hall District #12, built in 1812, burned in 1867 and was rebuilt in 1868. The school closed in 1968 and is now a private home
- ① Sand Hill #7, was built in the early 1800's and closed in 1949. It serves as a workshop at its current location behind Spring Hill Farm

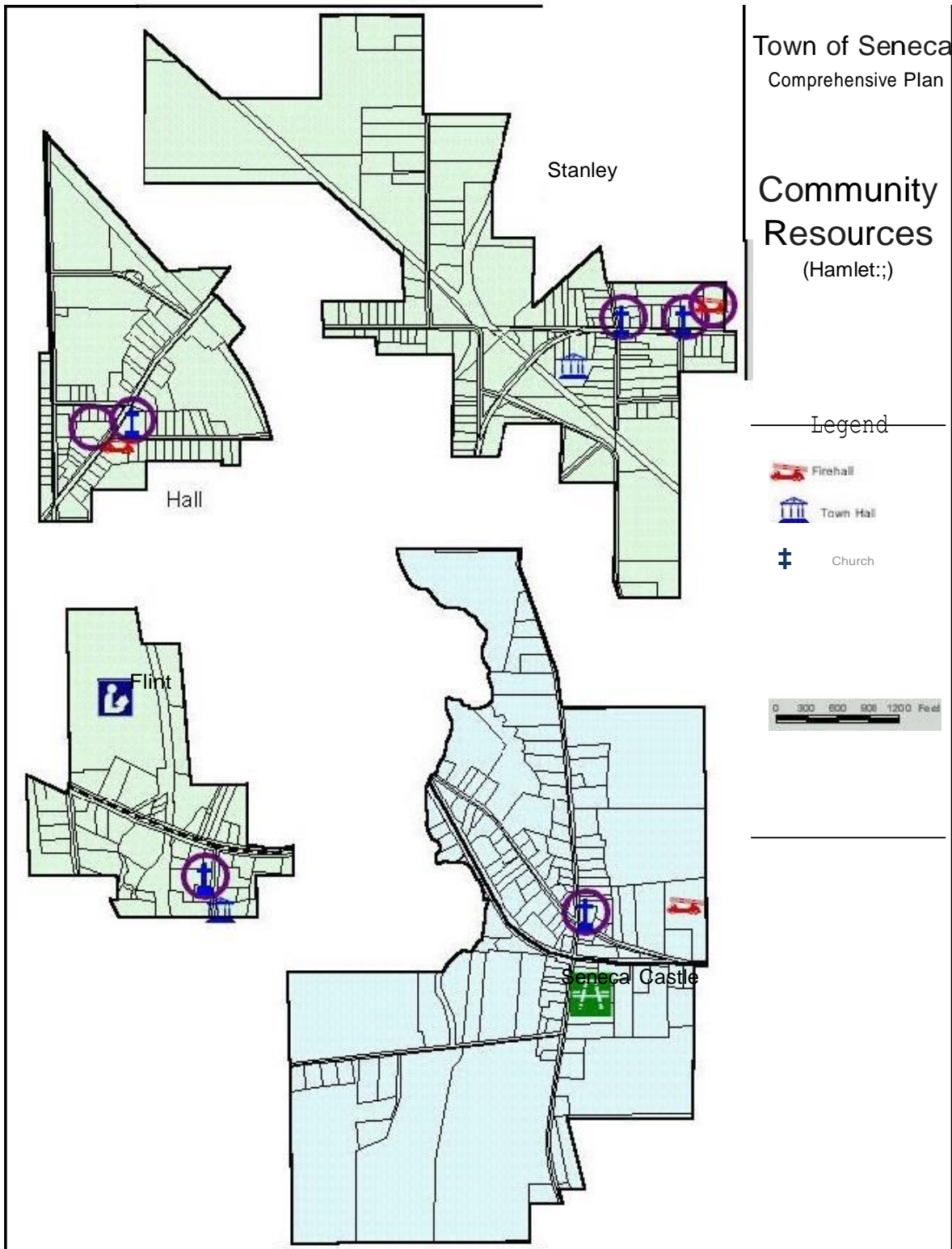
Additional places of historic interest include:

- Seneca Town Court (former Town Hall), built in 1907
- General John Sullivan's crossing of Flint Creek, which took place on September 9, 1779. A plaque gifted by the Daughters of American Colonists was installed to commemorate the location in the spring of 2002

Figure 6-1 Community Resources



Figure 6-2 Community Resources-Hamlets



7.0 Transportation and Infrastructure Inventory

The transportation and infrastructure system determines how easily people, goods and basic services can move within a community. The following chapter reviews the existing transportation and infrastructure network in the Town of Seneca. This section reviews the existing transportation system including roads, pedestrian access public transit, rail access and air access. An analysis of existing infrastructure, including water, sewer and utilities is also included. This analysis determines what public services residents are receiving and who is responsible for the delivery of these services.

7.1 Transportation

7.1.1 Roads

The Town of Seneca has 14 miles of County Roads and 17 miles of State Roads. There is a total of 77 miles of Town roads which are all blacktopped. There are nine bridges in the Town with any bridge in excess of 22 feet maintained by the County, these include the bridges on Ferguson Road and Vogt Road.

7.1.2 Trails

The Ontario Pathways Trail is a 23 miles rails-to-trails project owned by the non-profit Ontario Pathways, Inc. Ontario Pathways provides year-round recreational opportunities for hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and other non-motorized uses. In the Town of Seneca, the trail connects Stanley, Flint, and Seneca Castle with Canandaigua to the west and Phelps to the north. Future trail projects may provide connections to trail systems in Monroe and Wayne Counties.

7.1.3 Public Transit

Public Transportation in the Town of Seneca is provided by the Ontario County Area Transit System (CATS). The fixed route service travels hourly down Routes 5 & 20 between Geneva and Canandaigua. Town residents may flag the bus as it travels down this route. For those who live within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the fixed route on 5 & 20, a route deviation is available by calling CATS in advance. Demand response (aka, dial-a-ride) is available to residents who do not live within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of fixed route service, or whose destination is not within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the fixed route. Reservations must be made by 1pm the business day before your ride is needed. All vehicles are handicap accessible.

7.1.4 Rail

At one time, the Town of Seneca had several rail lines that ran through the Town to transport agricultural goods. The Auburn to Geneva Road rail line that opened in 1841 was one of the first rail lines in the United States. In 1851 the Northern Central opened running through the hamlets of Hall and Stanley and the Sodus Point and Southern Railroad built in the 1860's connected Sodus Point to Stanley. There is no rail service available in the Town of Seneca today as the railroad lines have been removed.

7.1.5 Air Transportation

Air service for Town of Seneca residents is accessible from several airports including:

- ❑ The Finger Lakes Regional Airport located at 2727 Martin Road in Seneca Falls, New York
- ❑ The Ontario County Airport located at 2450 Brickyard Road in Canandaigua, New York
- ❑ The Greater Rochester International Airport located at 1200 Brooks Avenue in Rochester, New York
- ❑ The Syracuse Hancock International Airport located on 2001 Airport Boulevard in Syracuse, New York
- ❑ The Penn Yan Airport located at 2521 Old Bath Road in Penn Yan, New York

7.2 Infrastructure

7.2.1 Water

This system was started in 1969 with approximately 55 miles of water main ranging in size from 4 inches to 12 inches.

Extension # 1 was added in 1991 and consisted of 5 miles of 8 inch and 12 inch Ductile Iron pipe to service customers around the Ontario County Landfill. Extension #2 was added in 1995 and consisted of 7 miles of 8 inch and 12 inch PVC pipe to service customers and provide increased ground water protection around the Ontario County Landfill. Extension # 3 was added around 1997. There was no main installation involved with this extension, as there were several areas in the town that weren't legally described in the original water district. Extension # 4 was added in 2000 to increase the service area around the landfill. This contract also included improvements to the original Water District #1. Extension # 5 was added in 1998 and consisted of 1,400 feet of 8 inch PVC pipe to provide water to three residences on Flat Street. In 2005, Extension # 6 was added. This extension was approved as an emergency connection with the Town of Hopewell on Routes 5 & 20. Extension #7 was added in 2004. This was installed by a developer along County Road 4 and Sutton Road to provide water to the Castle Heights subdivision.

In 2008, the Town Board approved a town wide water district to provide water and fire protection to the remaining residences in the Town. This was made possible by increased revenues received from Casella Waste Services who leases the Ontario County Landfill.

When completed in the next several years, the town will have approximately 130 miles of water main in sizes ranging from 4 inch to 12 inch and serve a customer base of over 1,100 connections.

7.2.2 Wastewater

The Town of Seneca does not have any public sanitary sewer service available. Wastewater removal is provided by private sewage disposal companies or individual septic tanks. However, many areas in the Town have soil conditions that do support private septic systems. The hamlet of Hall has soil conditions that limit individual leach bed septic systems.

7.2.3 Utilities

To ensure a positive quality of life for its residents, a community must deliver basic services that also allow for future development potential. These deliverables include sewage facilities, electric, gas, cable and telephone services.

Electric

Adequate electric service is provided to all areas of the Town through New York State Electric & Gas Corporation (NYSEG). However, NYSEG provides business assistance to businesses looking to expand or locate in their service area. Some of the programs provided are:

- ❑ Business Retention Incentive (BRI) - This program provides a reduction in electric rates to current businesses along with incentives offered by state and local development organizations.
- ❑ Small Business Growth Incentive (SBGI) – Provides a discount per kilowatt-hour for early stage companies that anticipate additional use through expansion.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is provided by NYSEG to three of the four hamlets with the hamlet of Hall currently not having access to natural gas. Most of the rural areas of the Town are not served by natural gas.

Cable

Cable television is provided to Seneca residents through Time Warner. Time Warner provides some additional services such as digital cable and In Demand movie channels. Cable service is provided to a limited area of Seneca

Fiber Optics

Ontario County IDA funded a county wide fiber optic ring to allow high speed connection access for government, school, and commercial entities throughout the entire county. The ring was completed in 2011 and to date has school and governments along with several commercial corporations utilizing the dark fiber technology to access high speed intra-corporate data transfer as well as internet access.

Telephone

Land line telephone services are provided to most of the Town of Seneca by Frontier Communications of Seneca Gorham, Inc. and Time Warner Cable. Verizon provides service to the northeast part of the Town. High speed internet is available in much of the town via Time Warner or through DSL service from Frontier Communications and Verizon.

8.0 Overview of the Economy

The Economy and Growth chapter provides an economic inventory and analysis of the Town of Seneca in comparison to Ontario County and New York State. The chapter provides a basis for future economic policy in the Town. The strengths and weaknesses of both the Town and surrounding area have been noted. Information used for this Chapter includes the 1990 US Census, 2001 NYS Department of Labor, and 1998 Regional Economic Information System of the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The 2000 U.S Census information that pertains to this chapter will not be released until late spring of 2002.

8.1 Regional Economic Trends

8.1.1 Ontario County and Finger Lakes Region Overview

An understanding of the broader perspective of the region's economy is important when looking at the Town of Seneca's economy. This Regional examination will provide a context of strengths and weaknesses on a macro level, which will in turn influence several local economies on a micro scale, with particular focus on the Town of Seneca.

Manufacturing is the largest source of employment in the region. Manufacturing accounts for 25% of non-farming jobs region wide. The region is a world center for advanced optics and imaging industries. There is also a significant employment of manufacturing of transportation equipment, biomedical instrumentation, and metal fabrication.

The Finger Lakes Region is rich in agricultural production. The region is best known for its dairy, vegetables, fruit, grapes and wine. The large amount of locally grown produce supports one of the state's largest food processing industries.

The Town of Seneca 2000 Agricultural Economic Activity Survey reveals that of the 13,373 acres of farmland owned in the Town, 11,273 are cropped. In addition, 20.6% of the farm owners whom responded to the survey stated that their gross annual farm income is over one million dollars with 33% having total farms assets of over one million dollars. Of the total average annual expenditures on goods, services, supplies, etc., 31% of respondents spend these expenditures in the Town of Seneca. 40% also expect their average annual investment to increase over the next three years. This survey assists in demonstrating the economic value of agriculture in the Town of Seneca.

8.1.2 Labor Force Characteristics

Table 8-1 Employment by Industry, 1998

Ontario County

Industry	Number of Positions	Percent	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)
Farming*	1,392	4.1%	14,359
Mining	115	0.3%	4,891
Utilities	175*	0.5%	NA
Construction	2,057	6.1%	82,169
Manufacturing	7,280	21.4%	263,545
Wholesale	1,198	3.5%	40,829
Retail	7,536	22.2%	115,728
Transportation	697	2.1%	19,747
Information	637	1.9%	18,004
Finance, Insurance	879	2.6%	27,375
Real Estate	264	0.8%	4,901
Professional, Scientific & technical	1,166	3.4%	42,421
Management of Companies & Enterprises	275*	0.8%	NA
Administrative Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services	1,488	4.4%	31,189
Educational Services	850	2.5%	22,041
Health Care, Social Assistance	5,735	16.9%	164,099
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	730	2.1%	12,654
Accommodations, Food Services	369	1.1%	35,915
Other Services	1,120	3.3%	16,922
Total	33,513		

*Suppressed Data, Average of Range

**Source: Regional Economic Information System 1998, Bureau of Economic Analysis

8.2 Unemployment Rates

Table 8-2 Unemployment Rates – 2012

Ontario County and New York State

Municipality	Percent Unemployed
Ontario County	7.2%
New York State	9.1%

Source: NYS Department of Labor

The Unemployment rate in Ontario County is generally lower than that of New York State. However, it should be noted that unemployment statistics for the State of New York are higher due to the presence of large cities.

8.3 Town of Seneca Business Climate

Major Employer Summaries

According to the Town of Seneca Comprehensive Planning Committee, the largest employer within the Town is the Finger Lakes Technical and Career Center.

Employer	Location	Industry Type	Employees
The Finger Lakes Technical and Career Center (BOCES)	3501 County Road 20, Flint	Education	110

Source: peter j. smith and company, inc.

The Finger Lakes Technical and Career Center

The Finger Lakes Technical and Career Center serves fourteen public schools located within four counties including Ontario, Wayne, Seneca and Yates. Centrally located for its service area at 3501 County Road 20 in Flint, the School has approximately 110 employees and serves roughly 1,000 students per year.

The Finger Lakes Technical and Career Center employs workers with a variety of different skills ranging from New York State Teachers Certification, college level coursework in order to be a teacher's assistant and specialized training in childcare. The Center does experience difficulties finding Science and Math teachers. When vacancies do exist, they generally advertise positions out of their personnel department in Newark, New York.

A few issues for the Center include the traffic on routes 5&20, which presents a safety concern due to students driving and busses going to and from the Center. Safety concerns are also an issue for County Road 20, especially in the winter because visibility is so poor. The visual impact of the Ontario County landfill is another negative impact and the truck transporting waste to the site also increase the safety concerns in the area. Finally, the Center experiences difficulty with their telephone service from Frontier and with sewage disposal. The rural location has several advantages but the challenges with infrastructure is a disadvantage.

8.3.1 Business Survey

In 2002 the Town of Seneca Historical Society conducted a survey of businesses in the Town. The survey had a response rate of 48% with 103 out of 213 business completing the survey. The percentages shown in this survey

reflect the number of establishments. The survey shows that nearly half of the establishments in the Town of Seneca are Agriculture related businesses, with more than half of them being farms. The survey describes the majority of these farms as being family operated for generations. Twenty-one (21%) percent of businesses deliver miscellaneous services. Auto, construction, and retail related businesses each account for 10% of the number of establishments in the Town of Seneca.

9.0 Implementation

This chapter discusses the methodology for adopting and implementing the Town of Seneca Comprehensive Plan. The first section describes the process required for the Town to adopt the Plan; the second section contains an Implementation Matrix that portrays each recommended Action included in the Plan, along with its suggested time frame and agency responsible for carrying it out.

9.1 Adopting the Comprehensive Plan

Regulations regarding the adoption of a comprehensive plan are found in Town Law Section 272-a. Specific steps to be followed for adoption are:

referral of the draft Comprehensive Plan to the Ontario County Department of Planning in accordance with General Municipal Law Section 239-I and;

- ① one or more public hearings held by the Town Planning Board;
- ① one or more public hearings held by the Town Board;
- ① adoption of the plan by resolution of the Town Board.

Town Law Section 272-a-10 provides for periodic review of the comprehensive plan, as follows:

“The Town Board shall provide, as a component of such proposed comprehensive plan, the maximum intervals at which the adopted plan shall be reviewed.”

It is recommended that the Town Comprehensive Plan be reviewed every five (5) years to make sure it reflects current conditions and the direction the community wishes to follow.

For amending the Comprehensive Plan, the procedures are the same as those required for initial adoption of the Plan.

10.0 Community Survey Summary

A community needs survey was sent out to all Town of Seneca residents, property owners and businesses in March of 1999. The survey was intended to measure public opinion with respect to various issues and conditions that exist within the community. In addition, the survey provided residents with the opportunity to state their visions and goals for the future of their community.

A second survey was distributed to 950 addresses in July 2010. The survey sought input from residents to determine if they believed the rural, agricultural atmosphere of the Town was still important, and is the method employed for keeping the rural character by the Town effective. Secondly, should the Town allow the purchase and consumption of alcohol on premises for a restaurant or similar venue, and thirdly with the construction of a centrally located park at the Town complex, should the Seneca Castle Park be maintained or eliminated.

255 responses were returned with the results posted below.

The major points of this survey indicate the following items:

- The rural character of the town is still important to residents.
- The current method of achieving this goal is acceptable.
- Sale and consumption of alcohol on premises should be considered.
- The Seneca Castle Park should continue to be maintained.

Town of Seneca Comprehensive Plan

Question:	Surveys returned	Total response	Yes	No
1 Should preserving Ag land remain a top priority for the town?	255	254	228	26
2 Do you believe the current zoning is sufficient to accomplish this?	255	244	202	42
3 Should the Town spend public money to purchase development rights?	255	215	58	157
4 Should the Seneca Castle Park be eliminated?	255	232	105	127
5 Should the Town pursue a referendum to allow alcohol in commercial establishments	255	249	190	59

