



TOWN OF WILTON

Comprehensive Plan and

Generic Environmental Impact Statement



Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York

Date of Plan Adoption: November 5, 2015



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TOWN OF WILTON

Comprehensive Plan

Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York

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Date of Plan Adoption: November 5, 2015

TOWN OF WILTON

Comprehensive Plan

Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION & PLAN SUMMARY

The Town of Wilton is a community that truly has it all– from a wide mix of housing, small hamlets and commercial retail options to public recreation and active farmland. Wilton provides a high quality of life for its residents while maintaining its fiscal responsibility. Since the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has continued to grow in a managed and deliberate manner. This is due in large part to the Town’s continued commitment to maintaining its quality of life through implementation of plans and initiatives such as the Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan and the Exit 16 Ballard Road Corridor Study as well as partnerships with residents, businesses, developers and civic organizations. The Town and its residents are also committed to making the community a desirable place to live and do business. This is exemplified through a strong sense of volunteerism supporting community organizations and activities. Volunteer members often serve multiple terms and there is over 60 years of combined experience from the chairs on the Planning and Zoning Boards. This continuity and consistency is evidenced by the managed growth of the Town.

The 2015 Plan Update maintains the sound direction set forth in the previous Plan and addresses potential new or emerging issues in a proactive, balanced manner. This Plan Update will help identify the needs of the community and present an action program to effectively address these needs in a manner that benefits the Town and its residents over the long term.

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A comprehensive plan or master plan as defined by Town Law (§272-a.2(a)), is the

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

Comprehensive planning provides a community with the opportunity to guide land use/development to meet the current and future needs, goals, and objectives of its residents with respect to public health, safety fiscal management and general welfare. A comprehensive plan is the framework for land use regulation, providing a blueprint of what the Town is and what it wants to become in the future. The implementation of this plan, starting with the adoption of subdivision regulations, related supporting town ordinances and proceeding with recommendations such as amendments to the zoning ordinance, will provide the legal authority to guide and control development in a prescribed manner.

“I am exceedingly pleased with this delightful mountain air. The atmosphere here enables me to live in comparative comfort while I am being treated.”

-Ulysses S. Grant, at his cottage on Mount McGregor where he spent his last days with his family

A. Legislative Authority

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

B. Community Vision Goals and Objectives

Comprehensive Planning begins with a shared vision of a community's future. The Town of Wilton has established a collective vision of a vibrant community:

The Town of Wilton aspires to be a safe, welcoming community for families and residents of all ages. The community shares a sense of responsibility for the Town's natural, agricultural, open space, and scenic resources. The Town enjoys a high quality of life and a healthy tax base resulting from a conscious balance of commercial development, residential growth and natural areas. Civic involvement and community engagement are fostered by a mutual respect for all stakeholders.



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The Town recognizes the impact of growth and development on the quality of life of its citizens and commits itself to planning town growth in a way which encourages the preservation of the existing community character, protects environmental quality, and balances land uses. In working toward this vision, the Town is committed to providing quality services and diverse economic opportunities. At the same time, the Town will exercise fiscal prudence and accountability while ensuring an aesthetically pleasing commercial design. Wilton actively encourages civic involvement and open government based upon a shared respect for all stakeholders.

Goals and objectives for the Town of Wilton were developed in the areas of growth management, natural resources and open space, transportation and mobility, housing, recreation, historical and cultural resources, utilities, community facilities and services, fiscal concerns and economic development, town character, open government, and implementation.

C. Inventory & Analysis

As part of the determination of the vision for the Town, a review of the 2004 inventory of the Town's physical (natural and built) and cultural resources was completed to identify opportunities and constraints in regards to future land use.

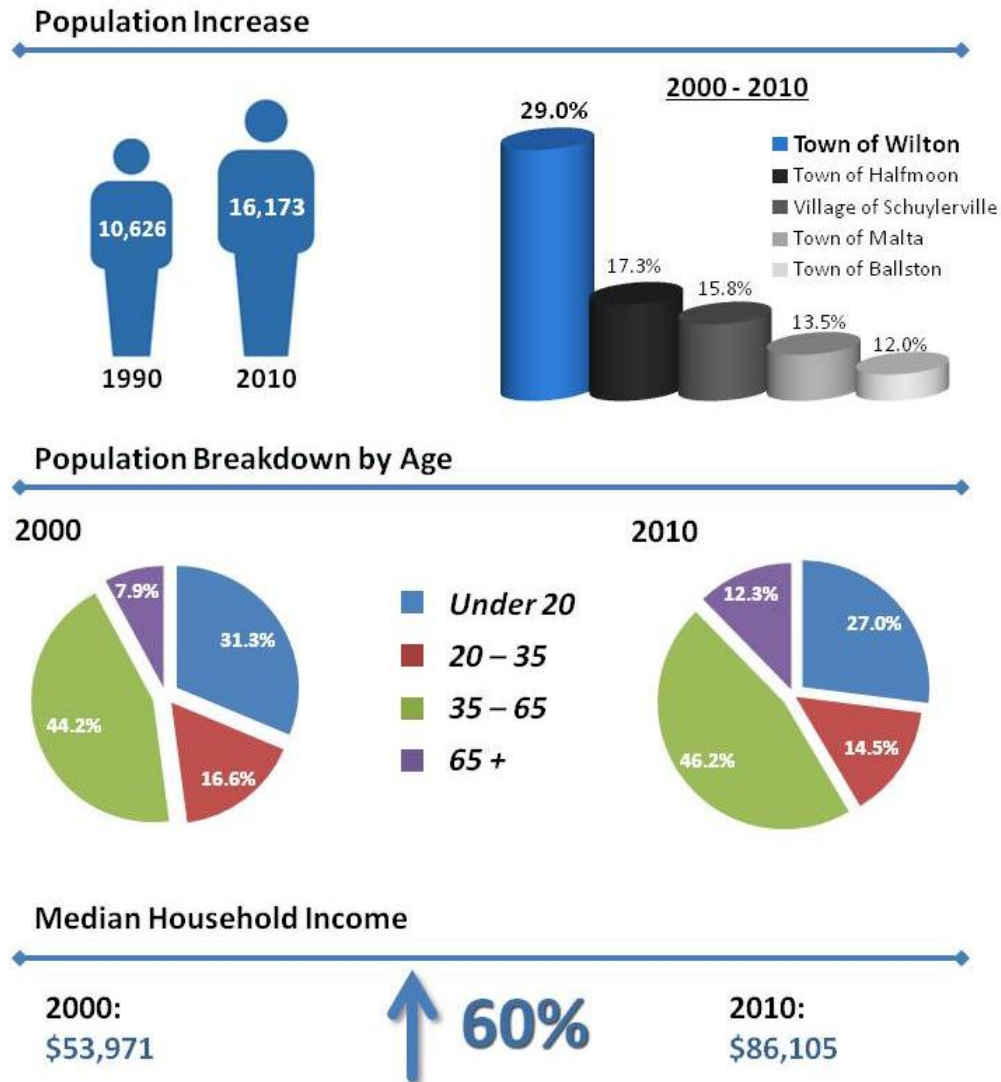
The resources evaluated include:

- physiology & topography
- geology & soils
- water resources
- flood plains & drainage
- ecology
- land use & zoning
- agricultural resources
- recreational resources
- municipal/community services
- utilities
- transportation & mobility
- socioeconomic resources
- cultural resources
- open space

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Where changes have occurred, an update was conducted and is included in the plan appendices. The Committee reviewed current demographics including population, age and median household income data. Additionally, educational sessions were held during regular Committee meetings to further inform Committee members about key topics including transportation, open space and natural areas. Specifically, the Committee learned about the 2015 Update to the Traffic Planning Study and Saratoga PLAN's Landscape Analysis of Saratoga County.



Data Sources:
 Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC)
 US Census Bureau (www.census.gov)

D. Summary of Plan Recommendations

The Comprehensive Plan is divided into Plan recommendations based on both broad, Town-wide applications as well as seven more specifically focused planning areas as follows:

- Planning Area 1 – Parkhurst Road
- Planning Area 2 – Jones/Northern Pines
- Planning Area 3 – Wilton-Gansevoort Road
- Planning Area 4 – Dimmick Road
- Planning Area 5 – Edie Road
- Planning Area 6 – Exit 15
- Planning Area 7 – Exit 16 - Ballard Road Corridor

These recommendations consider existing development patterns, physical features, and potential land use in each area.

An Action Plan was developed to transform the plan recommendations into specific tasks and prioritize those tasks. It also provides guidance on how and when recommendations could be implemented.

Town Wide Recommendations

Growth Management

There are many growth management tools that may be employed to guide land use in the Town. It is recommended that the Town focus on the following:

- Revise zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to address changes in land use and density, in response to identified goals and objectives.
- Consider incentive zoning as a means of encouraging open space conservation and the provision of other community specified amenities.
- Update and revise the existing Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan (2007) as needed to protect farmlands, important natural resources/features, recreational resources (including trails), and scenic areas.
- Evaluate potential land preservation mechanisms such as term easements, land acquisition, purchase of development rights, and the use of incentive zoning to achieve the transfer of development rights.
- Protect and enhance historic/cultural resources, utilizing the resources/knowledge of the Wilton Heritage Society.
- Encourage the Wilton Water & Sewer Authority to revise its Comprehensive Plan for Water and Wastewater Management to be consistent with the recommendations for benefit areas in the Town

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of Wilton Comprehensive Plan. Density should be determined by the Town's land use goals, protection of the environment and the desire to encourage preservation of the natural character that currently exists east of the Northway.

- Consider residential development guidelines.
- Consider Commercial Development and Architectural standards or guidelines.

Several areas of the Town have been identified for residential uses that reflect environmental constraints and a need for control on growth. There are many growth management tools that can be used to maintain natural character, such as the use of incentive zoning and the purchase of development rights. The recommended growth management program for Wilton includes incentive-based tools coupled with regulatory measures implemented through zoning, development guidelines, and a conservation development subdivision review process.

The regulatory approach includes the establishment of a required minimum amount of land to be dedicated as open space for each project as well as setting maximum densities of development. The flexibility to allow variable lot sizes, through incentive zoning or subdivision regulations, will facilitate clustering and maximize open space. Maximum density can be established by setting minimum lot sizes or alternatively established as part of a flexible site plan review procedure whereby lot sizes vary based on site conditions and opportunities to protect resources. Incentive zoning has also been identified as an important component in encouraging clustering by relaxing minimum lot size requirements in exchange for more open space.

It is the Town's expectation that revisions to its zoning regulations will encourage a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria in residential areas. In commercial and industrial areas, a minimum of 25% enhanced quality open space is encouraged. Enhanced quality open space should be well-maintained, visible from the roadway, have public benefit (e.g. benches) and include larger areas of usable space where feasible.

Quality open space is defined as natural areas or agricultural lands that are interconnected, not fragmented; accessible, not tied up in back lots; and that contribute to the aesthetic quality of the area. Accessibility means that the open space must be adjacent to the main road (not the internal subdivision road) and/or adjacent to trail corridors. Steep slopes, stream corridors, wetlands, floodplains, forested land, and even open fields (either natural or in agricultural use) are all quality open space providing they meet the criteria above.

Quality open space would be identified through the conservation subdivision/development process that begins with collaboration between the applicant and the planning board to identify important natural, cultural and

aesthetic resources, as well as the most appropriate area(s) for development. The planning board would receive guidance in the process from development guidelines incorporated into zoning. Final decisions on the density and design of a project would be partly based on the carrying capacity with respect to the maximum buildable density of the land, the protection of important resources, and the goal of maintaining existing community character.

Fiscal Management & Economic Development

- Consider preparing a fiscal impact model.
- Identify and prepare selected sites for economic development (i.e. shovel-ready status).
- Reinvest in and redevelop older commercial areas to increase both their viability and value.
- Develop public-private partnerships to implement redevelopment and reinvestment programs/plans.

Neighborhoods

- Reinvest in existing neighborhoods.
- Foster community pride.
- Identify housing needs.
- Protect residential neighborhoods, both old and new, from incompatible land uses.
- Prepare neighborhood/hamlet master plans to address the Wilton Hamlet and Maple Avenue Hamlet.

Transportation

Traffic congestion is a growing concern for residents of the Town. Development increases the number of vehicles on the roadways, as well as the number of conflicts (curb cuts, intersections) along arterial and collector roads that result in congestion. This is exacerbated by limited route choices in certain areas (e.g. Exit 15). Another important issue of concern is pedestrian and bicycle movement. The Town's focus on transportation is primarily vehicle oriented. This is a common issue in most suburban communities, resulting in increased traffic, noise, air pollution, water pollution, and health problems. The following provides some Town-wide solutions to reduce the impacts of travel.

- Conduct corridor studies for Routes 50, 9 and Ballard Road.
- Consider setback and access management requirements for the Town's collector roads.
- Link new neighborhoods via subdivision road systems when possible.

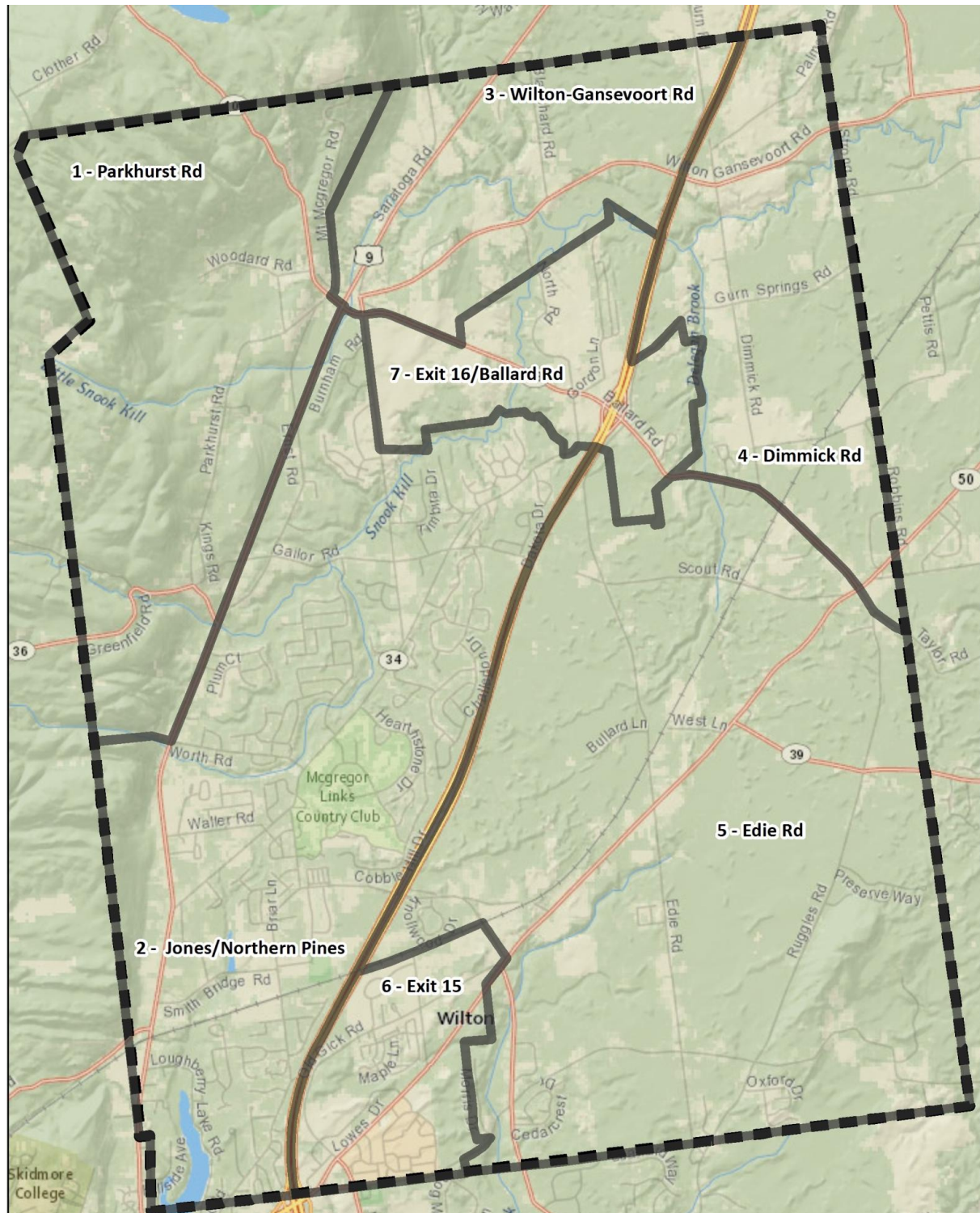
Resource Conservation

The Town-wide recommendations for resource conservation seek to recognize and conserve the Town's unique natural features. Specific recommendations include the following:

- Require stormwater management plans to comply with the NYSDEC State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit guidelines.
- Continue to coordinate with the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park (WWPP) regarding proposed projects in the vicinity of the park.
- Preserve stream corridors and wetlands to maintain and improve water quality and habitat and to preserve natural buffers between incompatible land uses.
- Recognize that wetlands, whether regulated or unregulated, are important ecological resources and shall be protected to the greatest extent practicable. Increase local coordination with agencies responsible for the protection of natural resources, including the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Coordinate with NYSDEC to avoid or mitigate effects to the Karner blue butterfly, Blanding's turtle and frosted elfin habitats and their buffers.
- Give strong consideration to habitat value for all new development and where opportunity exists to reclaim habitat in developed areas. Encourage the use of native species of plants for landscaping.
- Size culverts for road crossings of stream and wetland corridors to allow wildlife passage, as practical.
- The Wilton Town Historian and the Wilton Heritage Society should identify important historic resources and advise the Town Board and the Planning Board regarding proposals that may impact historic sites or resources on the State or National Historic Registers of local historical significance.
- Create an incentive program to encourage owners of historic structures and sites to maintain/improve their properties.
- Explore and encourage sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels such as solar photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal hot water, wind energy, and geothermal heating and cooling.
- Look into updating the zoning ordinance to allow and provide guidance for construction and use of alternative energy sources.

Planning Areas

The Town was evaluated by dividing it into seven Planning Areas as shown on the next page. For a full description of the boundaries of these Planning Areas, please refer to Chapter III.



Planning Area 1 - Parkhurst Road

This Planning Area is located in the steep, somewhat mountainous northwest portion of the Town. Due to the physical constraints that contribute to the natural beauty of Parkhurst Road, the area is and should continue to remain rural.

The following recommendations are intended to achieve that goal:

- Continue to maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. Other methods to preserve the natural character and natural resources should be utilized through the existing conservation subdivision regulations.
- Utilize a conservation overlay district to protect important resources.
- Review and revise, as necessary, the Timber, Soil and Stream regulations in accordance with NYSDEC and Best Management Practices to ensure proper erosion and sediment control as well as protection of steep slopes and scenic views.

Planning Area 2 – Jones/Northern Pines

This centrally located area is also the most intensely developed area in the Town. As a result of the many subdivisions, a high percentage of the Town’s population resides in this area. Recommendations include the following:

- Continue residential development at densities similar to existing subdivisions with a focus on maintaining the quality and desirability of existing neighborhoods.
- Encourage innovative design for new development by providing residential development guidelines and other flexible design options such as conservation subdivisions (clustering).
- Support the Maple Avenue Hamlet at the Northern Pines/Route 9 intersection.
- Implement access management techniques including the use of shared driveways, and shared parking in commercial areas.
- Encourage linkages between existing and new neighborhoods through sidewalks and pathways.
- Protect stream systems, wetlands and hydric soils to provide habitat, wildlife highways and open space links.
- Consider the development of Exit 15A as a way to reduce pressure on Exit 15, adjacent roadways and residential areas.
- Conduct a Route 9 Corridor Study.

Planning Area 3 -Wilton-Gansevoort Road

This Planning Area is bounded to the north by the Town of Moreau, to the east by I-87 and the Snook Kill, to the south by Ballard Road, and to the west by the foot of the Palmerton Range. The area is generally rural in nature. The remnants of the historic hamlet of Wilton are located in this neighborhood.

Recommendations for the Planning Area include:

- Design a neighborhood redevelopment plan for the historic hamlet of Wilton located at the intersection of Ballard Road and Route 9. The purpose of this plan would be to improve the condition and viability of the hamlet to encourage redevelopment and infill.
- Develop a neighborhood center that would encourage/allow mixed uses (small scale retail combined with housing and neighborhood service oriented businesses).
- Maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. Protect residential land uses from the existing commercial use on Wilton-Gansevoort Road and the commercial/industrial land uses identified in Area 7.

Planning Area 4 - Dimmick Road

This Planning Area is located in the northeast corner of the Town and is dominated by rural residences, interspersed by agricultural lands. The only Agricultural District in Wilton is located in the northeast corner of this Planning Area.

The northern half of this area possesses some high-quality scenic resources, including the Snook Kill valley and the approach to Palmer Ridge.

In order to protect the natural character and important physical features of the planning area, development that occurs should be implemented in concert with the goal of protecting and enhancing these resources.

- Maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria.
- Identify and protect high-quality scenic resources in this Planning Area.
- Limit the location, spacing of access and the type and scale of development that can be seen from roadways through techniques such as increased lot frontage requirements, vegetative screening, and “no-cut areas.”
- Continue to support the Town wide Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan as a means to maintain and protect stream systems, wetland areas, and wildlife corridors.

- Preserve and support farming operations.

Planning Area 5 – Edie Road

This Planning Area is generally east of Route I-87 in the southeast quadrant of the Town. This area is largely undeveloped, with housing generally consisting of single residential lots along existing roadways. The area includes much of the 2,400 protected acres and 15 miles of trails of the WWPP.

To protect the important resources in this Planning Area the following recommendations are made:

- Create a conservation overlay district which protects critical resources both in and out of the WWPP.
- Maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria.
- Implement incentive zoning to protect open space or critical resources.
- Continue compliance with NYSDEC and other state and federal standards, regulations and requirements for projects located within the WWPP to ensure protection of critical habitats and resources.
- Support the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan in connecting areas within the WWPP.
- Identify and protect stream systems and wetland areas
- Preserve and support farming operations.
- Continue to coordinate with the WWPP regarding proposed projects in the vicinity of the park.

In order to address/avoid current and future land use conflicts on Route 50, a Corridor Study should be completed extending from Exit 15 (Planning Area 6) east to the Town boundary. At a minimum, the study should consider the following:

- Review commercial and residential zoning for appropriateness.
- Encourage access management techniques.
- Review Jones Road, Ingersoll Road, Gick Road, and Route 50 intersection and coordinate with NYSDOT to identify alternative intersection treatments such as roundabouts.
- Develop standards that reduce land use conflicts.
- Create and update landscaping and site plan requirements.
- Support a potential Exit 15A at Jones Road.

Planning Area 6 – Exit 15

This Planning Area includes a vast majority of the Town’s retail development. The Exit 15 commercial area is an automobile oriented commercial area with malls, fast-food franchises and big box stores. There are a few houses of varying age on Old Gick Road and a large mobile home park.

When considering the future of this area, a plan should be developed that addresses the complexities and challenges of this area to establish more sustainable development and a balance between the pedestrian and vehicular environments. Connections for pedestrians should also be considered where appropriate and feasible. The area is currently commercially viable with large, regional commercial facilities, including the Wilton Mall. Development, infill, and redevelopment may all come into play over a period of time. Planning for this area should begin now, setting the stage for future opportunities.

Recommendations for this area are as follows:

- Prepare a strategic master plan for future development of the Exit 15 area. This plan should include goals, objectives and recommendations or “guiding principles” for future master plans dealing with specific areas. Some important components could include mixed development, pedestrian improvements, shared access and parking, and infill development. The plan should also establish an action plan that would include specific studies and initiatives.
- Conduct a Corridor Study for Route 50 that addresses function, character and viability.
- Continue to focus commercial growth in this area to take advantage of its location and services. This will help to protect other areas from undesirable development and continue to support the tax base.
- Consider adopting architectural and development standards or guidelines and reconsider the types of uses for this area to eliminate the future development of undesirable uses.
- Stress quality as well as quantity of green space and reduce the required size of parking areas.
- Work towards developing safer pedestrian improvements and facilities, as appropriate, such as a crosswalk on Route 50 closer to exit 15 and connections to existing and future trail systems.
- Encourage mixed uses, particularly for infill development.
- Consider preparing a master plan for mixed-use development in the area of Old Gick and Perry Roads.
- Evaluate existing signage regulations and work with potential developers to allow for proper signage design and placement.

Access management is critical to the success of this area. The following actions are recommended to address mobility issues:

- Complete the Route 50 Corridor Study.
- Provide shared entrances and access roads to improve access and traffic movement on Route 50.
- Examine ways to alleviate traffic impacts
 - ❖ Consider creating connector roads with pedestrian accommodations as development occurs. Locations could include Lowes Drive /Old Gick Road and Perry/Jones Roads.
 - ❖ Deter through traffic to reduce impacts on neighborhoods.
 - ❖ Explore the feasibility of connector roads to reduce congestion, especially as new developments are proposed.

Planning Area 7 – Exit 16 – Ballard Road Corridor

This Planning Area consists generally of the parcels along Ballard Road between Northern Pines Road and the commercially zoned parcels east of the Northway and the Exit 16 interchange. The uses in this area are predominantly commercial, along with governmental and residential uses. The Exit 16 area is particularly active with trucks accessing several distribution centers in the vicinity. Additionally, Exit 16 is a key truck stop between Canada and Albany and experiences significant international truck traffic.

It is anticipated that future land use will continue to be varied. The focus will be on mixed use development and light industrial/commercial uses while protecting the surrounding residential and rural development patterns. The following actions should be taken in regard to this neighborhood:

- Review zoning to address existing and potential land use conflicts.
- Advance recommendations of the Exit 16/Ballard Road Linkage Study to address land use, access management, buffers between land uses, and specific site plan requirements.

E. Summary of Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts

The Plan recommendations and specific actions outlined in the Action Plan clearly establish a new course for the management of growth in the Town. The Town has generally relied on zoning and subdivision regulations as their primary means of addressing growth and protecting the health, safety and welfare of the community. The Town continues utilizing proactive ways of managing and directing land use with tools such as the Conservation Overlay District, and the

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establishment of the WWPP. Increased development both within and adjacent to the Town of Wilton has continued to impact the community. Once primarily rural in character, the Town is growing and changed in many ways and can no longer be defined as simply rural.

The recommendations of this Plan intend to provide the community with additional planning tools and a different approach to growth management, which is necessary to deal with the complexities of a growing community. The Town has no intent to shut its doors to development and tax base growth; however, it wishes to be more proactive in controlling the location, type and form of development and in retaining open spaces to maintain and improve the quality of life in the Town. Recommendations to help the community achieve its vision have been recognized as beneficial impacts to the Town and are as follows:

- Support a conservation subdivision/development process which provides flexibility in design and conserves important community resources, particularly open space.
- Consider the creation of development and architectural guidelines to assist in the above process and to address community aesthetics.
- Continue to recognize the significance of community resources (such as ecology, visual resources, and history) and encourage measures to protect them.
- Conserve important open space.
- Consider the reduction in the allowable density of development in currently rural areas and the promotion of land conservation design through denser development styles such as hamlets. A focus of higher density in specific areas can translate into a reduction of air, water, noise and light pollution, less traffic, and a general improvement in the quality of life in other areas. It should be noted that some areas, when properly designed, can accommodate high densities and high quality of life. Concentration of development in combination with land preservation is both environmentally beneficial and energy efficient.
- Reinvest and redevelop older commercial and residential neighborhoods to provide amenities necessary to retain residents, improve aesthetics and economic viability, and maintain if not increase property value.
- Concentrate development within certain planning areas such as Exit 15 and the Jones/Northern Pines neighborhood. Additionally, encourage the development or redevelopment of “hamlets” which promote mixed uses with a strong pedestrian component.
- Make available housing stock that meets the needs of all residents at various stages of life.
- Provide adequate recreational uses.
- Improve the pedestrian environment and the transportation network.

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- Reinforce the sense of community and pride.

Beneficial impacts bring about change, and along with change may come more impacts to the environment and individual landowners. Although the idea of a comprehensive plan is to achieve consensus with the majority of residents, it is important not to ignore some of the potential implications. The following potential adverse impacts are recognized:

- The potential decrease in the allowable density of development in some areas of town (Parkhurst Road, Edie Road, Wilton-Gansevoort Road, and Dimmick Road Neighborhoods) may be perceived by some landowners as a loss of development potential and therefore a loss of property value.
- An increase in development potential within the Exit 15 area may result in a potential significant adverse impact if the issues of traffic congestion, pedestrian facilities, and incompatible uses are not addressed. The Plan provides mitigation for this impact by recommending a Corridor Study for this area to address land use, access, mobility and other related issues.
- Since the plan does not preclude future development, there will continue to be a loss of wildlife habitat, an increase in runoff and pollutants, and potential impact to important resources such as scenic views, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, historic features, aesthetics, and other community resources. To mitigate these potential impacts, the plan calls for continued recognition and conservation of these resources during site plan review. This would be accomplished through the conservation subdivision/development process and the establishment of community derived development and architectural guidelines.

Some of the potential impacts previously stated will be unavoidable. This will include the following:

- Potential individual impacts as a result of density and other land use changes.
- Loss of natural and cultural resources but at a lesser extent than under current conditions and perhaps much less impact to significant resources.
- Potential for increased density and activity in Exit 15, Exit 16 and the Hamlet areas, but partially, if not fully mitigated by the provision of adequate services, amenities, and infrastructure.

F. SEQRA Compliance

In accordance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and Town Law (§272-a), adoption of the Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board is a Type 1 action subject to review under 6 NYCRR 617. Pursuant to Town Law § 272-a.8, the Plan serves as a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS).

The components of a GEIS as outlined in 6 NYCRR 617.10 are included in this Plan as follows:

- Executive Summary – Chapter I, Introduction and Plan Summary
- Project Description – Chapter I, Introduction and Plan Summary, Chapter II Community Vision, Chapter III, Plan Recommendations, and Chapter V Action Plan
- Environmental Setting – Appendix B, Inventory & Analysis
- Environmental Impacts – Chapter III
- Mitigation – Chapter III
- Unavoidable Adverse Impacts – Chapter III
- Alternatives – Chapter IV Alternatives
- Recommendations/Thresholds – Chapter III and Chapter V
- Growth Inducing Aspects – Chapter III



Upon evaluation of the GEIS contained within the Comprehensive Plan, the Town Board on November 5, 2015, acting as Lead Agency, issued a written Statement of Findings in accordance with SEQRA regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617) and certified that adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable.

CHAPTER II: COMMUNITY VISION

Comprehensive Planning begins with a shared vision of a community's future. A town's comprehensive plan reveals the community's collective values and shapes how it functions as a community. The Comprehensive Plan is a roadmap by which the Town can realize its Vision.

The Town of Wilton has established a collective vision of a vibrant community:

The Town of Wilton aspires to be a safe, welcoming community for families and residents of all ages. The community shares a sense of responsibility for the Town's natural, agricultural, open space, and scenic resources. The Town enjoys a high quality of life and a healthy tax base resulting from a conscious balance of commercial development, residential growth and natural areas. Civic involvement and community engagement are fostered by a mutual respect for all stakeholders.

The Town recognizes the impact of growth and development on the quality of life of its citizens and commits itself to planning town growth in a way which encourages preservation of the remaining natural character, protects environmental quality, and balances land uses. In working toward this vision, the town is committed to providing quality services and diverse economic opportunities while exercising fiscal prudence and accountability and ensuring aesthetically pleasing commercial design. Wilton actively encourages civic involvement and open government based upon a shared respect for all stakeholders.

A. Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives are essential to the comprehensive plan process. In order for a community to guide land use and development, it must have measurable goals or milestones to implement. A goal is a desired condition or a physical state we ultimately desire to achieve. An objective is the means by which the goal is achieved. An objective is usually more specific and provides an outline for developing the plan recommendations in areas such as land use, transportation, community facilities, services, recreation and open space. These goals and objectives are translated to policies, activities, projects and programs for implementation within the context of land use regulations and policies.

Growth Management

GOAL - Create a land use management system that protects and enhances the Town's environmental quality, natural and suburban character, unique resources and features and that directs growth in ways that benefit the residents and community overall.

Objectives:

1. Update the Comprehensive Plan, including the future land use component, to provide a balance between open space, conservation and development. Future land use should promote ongoing fiscal health without compromising the Town's diverse neighborhoods or environmental quality.
2. Protect existing residential areas from encroaching non-residential development (e.g. encourage distinct, development areas and discourage leapfrog development)
3. Identify areas within the Town for development as well as open space conservation to achieve a desired balance. Implement through the use of both regulatory and incentive-based growth management tools such as those listed in item 4 below, to properly manage both the pace and impacts of desirable growth.
4. Develop regulations and incentives to guide future land use in conformance with the future land use plan. Revise zoning, site plan, and subdivision provisions to address innovative clustering, average density zoning, conservation easements, and other open space protection provisions. Identify the tools, financing and administrative structure to implement an ongoing growth management program.
5. Ensure consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and the policies of the Wilton Water & Sewer Authority (WWSA).
6. Recognize the link between transportation and land use and utilize both local and regional planning to address current and future land use and quality of life impacts.

Natural Resources & Open Space

GOAL - To conserve, improve, and protect our Town's natural resources, viewsheds and open space including wildlife habitat, that contribute to the diversity, character, aesthetics, environmental quality, economy, and general health, safety and welfare of the community. Resources such as the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park (WWPP), Pine Barrens, the Snook Kill and other stream systems and wetlands, viable farmland, mineral resources, aquifers, McGregor Fault, Palmerton Range, and viewsheds are all recognized for their role in drainage, water quality and quantity, wildlife habitat, recreation and aesthetics.

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Objectives:

1. Limit impacts to these sensitive resources through site plan, subdivision, zoning, and other applicable regulations such as the conservation subdivision process.
2. Thoroughly review and update existing Town regulations (i.e. zoning, site plan, subdivision) as necessary to achieve a balance between adequate protection of resources and the fiscal and social needs of the Town and its residents.
3. Protect open spaces/environmental quality via the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan. Explore such protection options as easements, tax abatements, transfer of development rights, and purchase of development rights programs, incentive programs, outright purchase and other funding mechanisms to implement these. Comply with the most recent State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Construction Permit requirements for stormwater management and pollution prevention. Compliance with this program, the continued use of Best Management Practices, and improving standards and their application, including on-site inspections, will help to minimize the potential impacts of erosion and sedimentation.
4. Review the Stream Corridor Overlay District requirements and update as necessary to work toward protecting the integrity of natural stream systems to the maximum extent possible. Incorporate these protections as necessary into site plan and subdivision regulations.
5. Explore the feasibility of an improved application protocol for road salt and sand as well as alternatives.
6. Encourage Best Management Practices for fertilizers and pesticides and waste removal associated with all types of property maintenance.
7. Protect scenic vistas identified and mapped on the Town's resources map through zoning and site plan, and design provisions. The use of a visual overlay districts for highly sensitive areas, e.g., the Palmerton Range should be considered to address to road setbacks, cut and fill, lighting, reflective glass, height, structures that could be considered intrusive such as billboards or cellular towers, and site layout/design.
8. Recognize and support the WWPP and its mission and ensure that actions relating to land use at the local and regional levels are consistent with the program's identified goals. Continue to coordinate with the WWPP regarding proposed projects in the vicinity of the park.
9. Protect the integrity of the WWPP through the establishment of an Overlay District or other methods of protection. Evaluate and identify methods of protecting the Town's watersheds and well fields through an overlay district or performance standards.
10. Evaluate potential methods to identify and protect unregulated wetlands (including vernal pools).

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11. Review and adopt standards in the site plan review process to reduce light pollution, especially in areas in or adjacent to residential development. Excessive or poorly designed lighting can detract from the natural character and quality of life in areas outside the commercial areas.
12. Cultivate public awareness and appreciation of the Town's natural resources and open spaces; specifically, their value and importance to the community's quality of life.

Transportation & Mobility

GOAL - To provide safe and efficient transportation options that minimize the impacts of traffic on the Town's character and quality of life.

Objectives:

1. Maintain the integrity and capacity of state, county, and local roads through coordination with the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Saratoga County Department of Public Works, and the Saratoga County Planning Board through growth management and land use controls, and through access and corridor management.
2. Support planning efforts and coordinate transportation improvements with adjoining municipalities and regional partners such as: Saratoga County, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), NYSDOT and school districts in the Town. This should include planning and designing for truck traffic, particularly in the Exit 16 area.
3. Identify and initiate engineering studies to aid in the safe and efficient operation of high-use intersections and streets. Consider safety improvements at key intersections throughout the Town. Continue to support Town wide Traffic Planning Study updates.
4. Conduct a traffic impact analysis of various future land use scenarios to make informed planning decisions.
5. Develop an Official Map to enable the Town to acquire critical rights-of-way as opportunities arise.
6. Consider working with the State to study the feasibility of constructing an "Exit 15A" on Jones Rd to relieve traffic.
7. Review effectiveness of traffic laws in Town (e.g., speed limits, traffic control devices).
8. Consider the adoption of design standards for certain thematic roadway types. (e.g., "Rural Road standard"; "Neighborhood Center standard"; etc). Maintain the character of rural roadways by evaluating maintenance and improvement programs as they relate to the goal of maintaining the natural character of the roadway.

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9. Limit land uses which rely on intensive truck traffic to the immediate vicinities of the Interstate interchanges to minimize wear and tear on Town owned roadways. Development should not exceed the capacity of existing services (roads, utilities) and in such cases should be limited until these services "catch up".
10. Conduct Transportation Corridor studies for Routes 9 and 50. Corridor studies should address issues such as access management, shared parking and driveways, road setbacks, land uses and landscaping and the visual appearance of development along these roadways. Explore funding options through CDTC's Transportation Linkage Program.
11. Create a multi-use trail system linking community centers, shopping and employment areas, recreation areas, and neighborhoods. Where practical, encourage new development to incorporate non-motorized multi-use trails into their development plans.
12. Develop pedestrian and bicycle-friendly standards for residential streets and commercial areas and incorporate these into site plan requirements and subdivision standards.
13. Identify and require methods for pedestrian safety such as appropriate traffic calming and safety measures, crosswalks, widening or adding shoulders, sidewalks, landscaped medians and shared driveways, particularly along developed portions of busy roads.

Housing

GOAL - Provide a balanced blend of quality housing opportunities, including price ranges that are affordable for all income levels and housing types and that consider the needs of a diverse population including older residents, young families and first time homeowners. Properly plan for and locate housing based on density and purpose to take full advantage of existing and future community services, alternative transportation opportunities, and recreational facilities.

Objectives:

1. Develop policies and programs that help maintain and strengthen the character, value and enjoyment of existing housing in the established neighborhoods of Wilton.
2. Create incentives and appropriate regulations that guide the location, pattern and design of new housing in a manner that protects the character and resources of the community.
3. Ensure that the Town's zoning accommodates the need for housing diversity.
4. Encourage housing opportunities for the elderly, those on limited incomes and those with disabilities, that allow residents to remain in the Town as their housing needs change.

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5. Identify appropriate sites and incentives for the creation of housing options needed but not adequately provided by the marketplace.
6. Protect existing and future residential developments from the impacts of incompatible uses.

Recreation

GOAL - To provide sufficient opportunities and facilities for both active and passive recreation activities.

Objectives:

1. Continually evaluate the Town's recreational facilities and programs to ensure responsiveness to the Town's changing recreational needs.
2. Provide for different types and different locations of recreational resources such as the addition of parks throughout the Town. These may take the form of neighborhood parks, pocket parks or town wide parks both passive and active, depending on need and location and would be developed based on specific data collected in a recreational needs survey.
3. In conjunction with the Town Comptroller, provide a structure to evaluate and identify revenue streams for the continued expansion and maintenance of both active and passive recreational resources to meet current and future demands.
4. Review and update the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan to assess the overall plan of trail locations throughout the Town. Continue to use this plan to establish a useful network of multi-purpose trails connecting different areas of the Town and surrounding towns, to be used for recreation and by those who prefer to be less dependent on their vehicles.

Historical & Cultural Resources

GOAL - Recognize and protect historical and other cultural resources as a priority in the Town of Wilton.

Objectives:

1. Request the Heritage Society, Historic Preservation Board and the Town Historian to update and prioritize the list and map of historical sites that should be protected and preserved on a regular basis.
2. Request the Heritage Society, Historic Preservation Board and the Town Historian to create a historical resource evaluation checklist or other criteria to be used by the Planning Board and potential developers to identify potential impacts to historic or cultural resources during project

review. The Heritage Society and Planning Board should work together to identify mitigation measures as necessary (i.e. buffers, historic markers, modifications to site plans).

3. Develop land use regulations and incentives to protect historic and archaeologically sensitive areas and/or resources through techniques such as overlay districts or incentive zoning. Develop a master inventory and map of existing site specific archeological and cultural surveys and resources.
4. Enhance the opportunities for residents and visitors to experience the Town's historic and cultural sites. Cultivate public awareness of the Town's historical and cultural resources through the schools and local youth programs. Create strategies for the sustained financial support of the Town's historical and cultural sites and programs.
5. Encourage the rehabilitation of historically significant privately owned structures through community recognition, historic walks or tours featuring restored structures, and assistance with the identification of potential funding sources.
6. Protect and maintain all cemeteries, large and small, in the Town of Wilton, which are not under the direct supervision of a particular church or other organization. Evaluate the adequacy of existing facilities to support programs for youth, adult and senior populations, small-scale performances, recitals, concerts and other public events.

Utilities

GOAL - Evaluate the utility infrastructure system to ensure that it meets the needs of the Town while protecting both surface and groundwater.

Objectives:

Water

1. Seek an adequate supply, treatment, distribution, and fire-fighting capacity of potable water to meet current and planned future needs.
2. Continue to review land use and proposed development in accordance with established Town policies for water service as outlined in the Wilton Water and Sewer Authority (WWSA) Comprehensive Plan for Water & Wastewater Management and this Comprehensive Plan to ensure the continued protection of surface and groundwater resources, including wellhead protection.
3. Continue to require developers to identify water needs of proposed projects that are located outside the Municipal Water Benefit Area and provide the hydrologic data required by the Town or other reviewing agency to clearly identify if adequate water capacity exists to serve the proposed project.

Storm Water Management

1. Develop storm water management requirements that protect upstream and downstream areas both within and outside the community. Continue to review and update the Town's storm water management plan.
2. Protect all streams and their drainage basins throughout the Town by limiting the effects of sedimentation and erosion through site plan and subdivision regulations.
3. Comply, at a minimum, with current State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Construction Permit requirements for stormwater management and pollution prevention.

Sewer

1. Work with the WWSA and the Saratoga County Sewer District, to strive to provide adequate collection and treatment capacity of wastewater to meet current and planned future needs and to accommodate future growth to ensure that development and capacity, conveyance, and treatment keep pace.
2. Continue to review land use and proposed development in accordance with established Town policies for sewer service as outlined in the Town of Wilton WWSA Comprehensive Plan for Water & Wastewater Management and this Comprehensive Plan to ensure the protection of surface and groundwater resources.
3. Meet the requirements of Saratoga County Sewer District #1 proposed Rules and Regulations governing the construction and connection of new sewer facilities discharging into the District's sewer system and the dedication of sewer systems to the district.

Communications and Energy

1. Support coordinated infrastructure development with public and private utility providers to serve existing developed areas and adjacent areas as practical as well as expand service to areas identified for future development.
2. Identify appropriate circumstances and criteria for the locations of communication towers within the Town in accordance with federal requirements. The criteria should be incorporated as part of the zoning or other Town regulations and address such issues as scenic vistas, historical and cultural resources.
3. Work with public and private utility providers to identify the location and timing of various power supplies.
4. Develop new standards regarding energy efficiency for Town facilities and new developments.

5. Consider alternative, green energy sources when feasible.
6. Implement Town-wide broadband access to encourage economic development.

Community Facilities & Services

GOAL - Continue to support adequate community facilities and services including fire protection, police protection, emergency services, solid waste collection, education facilities, healthcare services, libraries and social services for a variety of age groups. Continually improve and expand community services as needed.

Objectives:

1. Determine a preferred level of service for existing and future community facilities and services.
2. Formalize a dialogue and process with service providers to ensure preferred levels of service.
3. Support, encourage, and provide incentives to continue and enhance volunteer services.
4. Continue to support adequate fire and emergency services to meet the needs of the current and future Town population and monitor these services to prepare for the potential need for paid professionals to supplement volunteers.
5. Work with community leaders and service providers to ensure that community services keep pace with planned levels of development.
6. Create a process by which the Town and the schools share information and coordinate planning efforts to ensure that schools can adequately serve the needs of existing and potential new students.
7. Work with the school districts to support continuing educational opportunities for all town residents.
8. Continue to work to establish a post office and separate zip code for the Town.
9. Coordinate with County and State health and emergency agencies to be prepared in the event of major disasters. Continue to update the Town's disaster preparedness plan regularly.
10. Establish a means by which the town government can communicate regularly with its citizens through the use of the Town website and/or town newsletter as well as local publications such as the Wilton Reporter.

Fiscal Concerns & Economic Development

GOAL - Promote diverse economic development that provides goods and services, quality employment opportunities and tax revenues in properly located commercial, office and industrial districts that support the Town's goals of

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balancing economic development with the preservation of open space and community character. Continue to promote fiscal responsibility of the Town.

Objectives:

1. Actively manage the pace of growth as fiscal policy, particularly as it relates to the protection of open space and resources and the integrity of Town services. Utilize various land use regulatory techniques to minimize the fiscal and quality of life impacts of future development.
2. Consider conducting a fiscal impact analysis of various future land use scenarios as part of the Town's ongoing planning process.
3. Continue a mix and scale of businesses in the commercial districts in a manner that recognizes, and is sensitive to the neighborhood setting, historic significance and desired character of the Town.
4. Identify existing and potential centers for economic and community development, and establish mechanisms and partnerships to encourage appropriate development in these locations.
5. Address infrastructure constraints to encourage economic development in the Exit 16 area. Consider conducting a study of Exits 15 and 16 that identifies development and redevelopment opportunities in this area to determine the appropriate levels/types of land uses for these areas and ensures that these areas have the required utilities to accommodate anticipated levels of development.
6. Seek to diversify the tax base to reduce dependence on increasing sales tax revenue by encouraging light industry, professional office, and other non-retail commercial uses in planned centers for economic and community development.
7. Focus marketing efforts, investments in infrastructure and transportation systems, and economic development incentives, on the areas identified as centers for economic and community development.
8. Encourage locally and regionally owned businesses. Promote infill in existing developed areas and parcels.
9. Work with Saratoga County Capital Resource Corporation, Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) and the Chamber of Commerce to develop a local business incubator.
10. Work with regional economic development entities such as Saratoga County Capital Resource Corporation, SEDC, Empire State Development Corporation, Saratoga County, Saratoga Chamber of Commerce, Adirondack Community College, and Hudson Valley Community College to develop training and educational opportunities and promote economic growth in the Town.
11. Support the continuation and profitability of agriculture in the Town.
12. Support home based businesses and "neighborhood" scale businesses through zoning, incentives and other methods without compromising the character of existing neighborhoods.

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13. Consider the preservation of undeveloped land in residentially zoned areas as a long-term cost avoidance strategy (municipal/school costs of servicing vacant land versus residentially developed land).
14. Evaluate and prioritize potential open space including parcel-specific cost-benefit analyses of fiscal impacts of preservation compared to development. This should be done in concert with the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan or other open space protection methods.

Town Character

GOAL - Preserve and enhance Wilton's identity, image, quality of life and remaining natural character in accordance with the vision for the future.

Objectives:

1. Enhance community identity through the placement of appropriate signs and landscaping at key entry points to the Town.
2. Establish guidelines to ensure that future residential and commercial development is of a scale and design that is appropriate from both a neighborhood and Town wide perspective.
3. Provide incentives for infill development first and discourage “leapfrog” development into previously undeveloped areas or areas identified for less intensive uses.
4. Periodically review the appropriateness and scale of development centers or hamlets for both residential and commercial/office/industrial development to avoid impacts to community character and to provide more efficient use of infrastructure and energy.
5. Ensure that new development does not result in adverse impacts by encouraging context sensitive site design that protects key open space, farmland and scenic vistas. Protect and enhance natural buffers with native species wherever possible throughout the Town in order help maintain the Town’s aesthetic character and minimize land use conflicts.
6. Encourage street tree planting and other aesthetic improvements in all developed areas of the Town (residential, commercial, and industrial). Native species should be used wherever possible. Identify potential public and private partnerships to implement needed improvements.

Open Government

GOAL - Encourage and promote citizen awareness and involvement in Town affairs.

Objectives:

1. Continue to communicate regularly with Town citizens through the use of the Town website and/or Town newsletter as well as local publications such as the Wilton Report.
2. Maintain the application process for consideration of appointees to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and WWSA.
3. Ensure that material available to board members is also available in adequate supply and format to the public to foster informed meaningful public participation (e.g. agendas, budget information, site plans, etc.)
4. Promote an atmosphere of open government by exceeding the minimum requirements of the NYS Open Meetings Law in terms of notice of agenda items, as well as full and open discussion of issues by board members during public meetings.

Implementation

GOAL - Develop a viable action plan to implement the efforts of the community, which have culminated in a vision and plan for the future of the Town of Wilton.

Objectives:

1. Identify and support specific actions, financial and administrative requirements, and follow-up planning work that will be necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan. The Town Board should initiate and support implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Prioritize proposed actions, set general time frames and assign responsibility to appropriate entities so that the community can focus attention and energy toward completing a manageable number of tasks at one time. Qualified volunteers should be encouraged to participate in this task.
3. Review and update the adopted Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis.
4. Encourage the pursuit of various grants and/or funding offered by public and private sectors.
5. Provide sufficient resources and professional staffing support, internal or external, to assist in the implementation of this plan.

CHAPTER III: PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to develop Plan Recommendations that reflect the Town’s vision for the future, the Town of Wilton’s Comprehensive Plan Update Committee evaluated and studied numerous planning tools and concepts in the area of Growth Management, Economic Development and Neighborhoods. Many of the Plan recommendations have broad, Town-wide applications. These are discussed below under **Town Wide Recommendations**.

In order to address issues that are specific to geographic areas, the Town has been divided into seven planning areas based on common land uses and/or physical features. With the Town’s vision and goals in mind, each planning area was evaluated and specific recommendations for each were developed. These recommendations consider existing development patterns, physical features, and potential land use in each area. This discussion follows the **Town Wide Recommendations** and is titled **Planning Areas**. Future land use is illustrated on Figure III-1.

It is important to note a number of actions listed below are already in place or underway. The Committee felt that it was important to identify these actions as they are necessary components of the overall recommendations and success of this plan.

A. Town Wide Recommendations

Growth Management

Land Management

There are a great many land management tools that may be employed to control and direct growth in an area. It is recommended that the Town focus on continuing or addressing the following:

- Revise the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to address recommendations in this Plan. Recommendations have been made for each planning area. Also, there are a number of other revisions that have town-wide implications, including residential and commercial development standards and guidelines.
- Continue utilizing incentive zoning as a means of preserving quality open space which provides a legitimate public purpose and providing other community amenities such as a Town park or a trail connection. For example, a 10% density bonus could be granted to a developer for establishment of trails that provide public benefit. Incentive zoning is defined in the Glossary of Planning Terms (Appendix A).

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- Continue to support open space as a component of the adopted Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan. The purpose of the open space component of the plan is to protect farmlands, important physical features, significant natural resources, and scenic areas as part of a larger effort to preserve natural character in portions of the Town. The open space component identifies appropriate, long-term land protection strategies that manage future growth in rural areas of the Town. The plan establishes a goal for open space protection in terms of both acres of protected land and the types of open space resources that the Town seeks to protect. The plan also establishes the principles and techniques for how these lands should be protected (for example: incentive based techniques such as tax incentives, acquisition or conservation easements).
- Consider the use of term easements as an initial means for voluntary land preservation. Term easements involve tax incentives for the protection of open space. The incentives increase as the term of the easement increases. The term easement can be general, covering all undeveloped parcels of a specified acreage or more specific, such as farmland only. Once the term is up, the easement is lifted and the tax incentive ceases. The landowner could then seek to enter a new agreement, if desired.
- Take advantage of the resources/knowledge of the Wilton Heritage Society to protect historic/cultural resources. Once important resources are identified, programs such as recognitions and tax incentives can be established to protect these sites. Preservation easement programs which provide significant tax incentives (up to 50%) if individuals agree to preserve a designated property, have been established in other communities within the Capital District.
- Continue to ensure that land use policies outlined in the WWSA Comprehensive Plan for Water and Wastewater Management, the Town's Comprehensive Plan and the Town code are in conformance with one another. The clear policy outlined in the Comprehensive Plan for Water and Wastewater Management and supported by this comprehensive plan are important components to how future development occurs.
- Consider creating development and architectural standards or guidelines for all commercial zones, including the hamlet areas. This could support a type of form based code approach. These design standards/guidelines will enhance the quality of proposed projects as well as help protect the existing commercial development. Design standards/guidelines will serve to protect adjacent structures and land uses particularly in transition areas where land use conflicts are more likely to occur.

Several areas of the Town have been identified for rural residential uses, reflective of environmental resources and a need for control on growth. There are many growth management tools that can be used to maintain natural character, such as the use of the purchase of development rights, and fee

acquisition. The recommended growth management program for Wilton includes incentive-based tools coupled with regulatory measures implemented through zoning, development guidelines, and a conservation development site plan review process.

The regulatory approach includes the establishment of a required minimum amount of land to be dedicated as open space for each project as well as setting maximum densities of development. The flexibility to allow variable lot sizes, through incentive zoning or subdivision regulations, will facilitate clustering and maximize open space. Maximum density can be established by setting minimum lot sizes or alternatively established as part of a flexible site plan review procedure whereby lot sizes vary based on site conditions and opportunities to protect resources. Incentive zoning has also been identified as an important component to encourage clustering by relaxing minimum lot size requirements in exchange for more open space.

Quality open space is defined as natural areas or agricultural lands that are interconnected, not fragmented; accessible, not tied up in back lots; and that contribute to the aesthetic quality of the area. Accessibility means that the open space must be adjacent to the main road (not the internal subdivision road) and/or adjacent to trail corridors. Steep slopes, stream corridors, wetlands, floodplains, forested land, and open fields (either natural or in agricultural use) are all quality open space providing they meet the criteria above.

Quality open space would be identified through the conservation subdivision/development process that begins with collaboration between the applicant and the planning board to identify important natural, cultural and aesthetic resources, as well as the most appropriate area(s) for development. The planning board would receive guidance in the process from development guidelines incorporated into zoning. Final decisions on the density and design of a project would be based on the carrying capacity of the land, the protection of important resources, and the goal of maintaining natural character, among other factors.

Fiscal Management & Economic Development

The Town's practice of good fiscal responsibility, which is balanced with growth management, is what enables the Town to support a high quality of life to residents and visitors. It is recommended that the Town focus on continuing or addressing the following:

- Consider developing a fiscal impact model to address the impact of land use decisions on the tax base. The model can be used to assist the Town in the identification of the costs and benefits of various types of development versus maintaining certain lands as open space. Once Town officials and residents understand the costs associated with both scenarios (open space

preservation, versus development of an area), they can balance open space preservation and fiscal responsibility. The model is also useful in comparing the impact of a variety of land use scenarios and programs. For instance, it would be valuable to know how much residential development the Town can support in light of the current amount of land designated for commercial and industrial uses, or what types of additional/extended amenities the community could support. Fiscal impact is not the sole factor in decision-making. Neighborhood needs are changing and in order to maintain or improve the quality of residential and commercial areas, communities must invest in them. As previously noted, the long-term effects on the tax base from reinvestment and enhancement of developed areas, such as infrastructure improvements and pedestrian amenities, are likely to be beneficial.

- Identify and prepare selected sites for economic development (i.e. shovel-ready status). The Town has a large area of well-located industrially zoned land such as the former Developmental Center. Having sites identified as shovel-ready will allow the Town to proactively direct the location and type of development. Development guidelines are critical to ensuring high quality development on these sites and supporting implementation of key recommendations of the Exit 16 Linkage Study. Contact should be made with the SEDC, Saratoga County Capital Resource Corporation and the Wilton Global Job Development Corporation to begin to develop such a program.
- Reinvest in and redevelop older commercial areas. In order to strengthen established commercial areas, the Town should conduct an inventory of conditions in these areas. Based on this information, a plan should be created for each area to improve deteriorated conditions and apply new principles to promote economic development. Areas of improvement might include aesthetics (structures, layout, landscaping), access (vehicular and pedestrian), infrastructure and parking.
- Encourage public-private partnerships where possible to implement redevelopment and reinvestment programs/plans. This type of relationship can be successful as both groups have a stake in the outcome of a particular project. This "ownership" usually results in high quality projects that will benefit a broad cross section of the community.
- Provide support and incentives to local businesses to strengthen the business community and attract additional like-minded businesses.

Neighborhoods

- Reinvest in existing neighborhoods to provide the pedestrian amenities and infrastructure maintenance necessary to strengthen and preserve these areas. The primary goal should be to retain residents and maintain or increase property values. The Town should identify these older

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neighborhoods, survey existing conditions and use this information to create an action plan.

- Foster community pride through the active engagement of business, professional, neighborhood and service associations. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Garden Clubs, the Elks, Lions, Rotary, Wilton Food Pantry, etc., are all excellent sources of volunteers and community pride.
- Identify housing needs in the community. The Town should undertake a review of existing housing stock to identify price ranges and housing types. This will assist the Town in determining whether it has a strong mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents.
- Residential neighborhoods, both old and new, should be protected from incompatible land uses, particularly those that rely heavily on vehicular transportation. Existing land use conflicts should be addressed to the maximum extent possible through the use of buffers and other safeguards. Potential future land use conflicts should be addressed by updating the Town's zoning, subdivision regulations and site plan regulations.
- Prepare neighborhood/hamlet master plan to address the Wilton Hamlet and Maple Avenue/Route 9 Hamlet.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

The recommendations outlined above and the corresponding action plan tasks would generally result in beneficial impacts to the community and environment. The Town's existing land use regulations are effective in managing growth and focusing growth in specific areas of the Town. Still, growth remains an important issue. The concerns include the pace and quality of development and the preservation of a high quality of life within existing subdivisions. Recommendations for reinvestment, provision of amenities, open space conservation, development guidelines, and architectural standards for commercial areas will provide further controls on growth, yet support those projects that add value to the community.

The pattern of development that is and will continue to occur under current zoning will not preserve the natural character of the area and will contribute to environmental impacts such as increased runoff, degraded water quality, erosion and sedimentation, and air and noise pollution. To address these impacts, the Plan calls for review and implementation of the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan and tools to implement the plan, such as incentive zoning. Other measures such as a conservation subdivision review procedure and minimum open space requirements would help to highlight the important environmental and cultural features of a parcel and promote their conservation.

Regulatory growth management tools, such as zoning, may have economic implications (adverse and beneficial) on existing landowners. Potential decreases

in allowable density for residential development are proposed for some planning areas where it is desirable to preserve natural character and where environmental issues are more significant. Should these recommendations be carried forward through zoning, the maximum number of units in some potential subdivisions could decrease. However, the value of the development is dependent upon many other factors. The provision of quality open space within a development along with other amenities can add significant value to a development and may far outweigh the loss of developable area. Additionally, the location of a given parcel and ease of access are also critical to determining its value.

Some growth management programs, such as the purchase of development rights (PDR), transfer of development rights (TDR) and community reinvestment including the provision of amenities such as sidewalks, trails, and recreational facilities, will require Town-wide investment. At least initially, taxpayers will spend more to have these programs in place. The use of a fiscal model is an important tool to predict what the impact might be over a period of time. In some communities, the model has shown that over time, the cost savings on school taxes as a result of preserving land rather than developing it with residences are greater than the costs of purchasing the land; a beneficial fiscal impact. In general, residential uses place a greater burden on community services which is typically not offset by the tax revenue these uses generate.

Transportation

Traffic congestion is a growing concern for residents of the Town. Although pass-thru traffic constitutes some of the concern, the overriding problem is development in the Town itself. Development increases the number of conflicts (curb cuts, intersections) along arterial and collector roads that result in congestion. Another important issue of concern is pedestrian movement. The Town's focus on transportation is primarily vehicle oriented. This is a common issue in most suburban communities, resulting in increased traffic, noise, air pollution, and water pollution. There is also a large amount of truck traffic in the Exit 16 area, with a large truck stop and various warehouses in the vicinity. The following provides some Town wide solutions to reduce the impacts of travel.

- Conduct corridor studies for Route 50, Route 9, and support key concepts from the Exit 16/Ballard Road Linkage Study. A corridor study addresses the road and adjacent land uses along a given corridor to provide solutions for traffic congestion, pedestrian access, aesthetics (streetscape), public transportation, economic development and related land use issues. Details of this recommendation include the following:
 - ❖ Prepare an access management plan for each corridor. The plan should include the evaluation of existing access and related problems and the

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- development of specific solutions to provide shared access, shared parking, new access roads, and possibly parallel service roads. This analysis will require parcel level planning.
- ❖ Prepare a streetscape beautification plan, including traffic calming techniques, for each corridor. The plan will identify the character of the area through discussions with residents and businesses and will provide design guidelines for façade treatments, lighting, signage, landscaping, street furniture, and other amenities that will make the corridor a desirable place to visit and patronize.
 - ❖ Provide a continuous sidewalk system, where practical and necessary, in the developed portions of the Town.
 - ❖ Ensure a natural progression from intensively developed commercial areas to medium density mixed-use areas to low density residential areas. These areas should be buffered from incompatible land uses such as light industry.
 - ❖ Provide pedestrian linkages, as safe and appropriate, to integrate the corridor with adjoining neighborhoods. These linkages will complement the streetscape beautification plan and provision of sidewalks. Continue discussions with the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) and NYSDOT on the potential for extended bus service and, if applicable, to determine the appropriate locations for an Exit 16 park and ride, bus stops, shelters and other amenities that will promote ridership.
- Consider setback and access management requirements for the Town’s collector roads. The purpose of these requirements will be to preserve the integrity of the collector and its primary function of safely and efficiently accommodating traffic. The following actions should be considered:
 - ❖ Require common access drives for minor residential subdivisions. Subdivision regulations should be amended to require a flag lot subdivision for up to four lots (minor subdivision). A single access drive would serve all four lots. Sufficient right-of-way (ROW) should also be required along the access road corridor so as to allow the drive to be widened to serve as a Town road, should the interior of the subject parcel be developed.
 - ❖ Consider appropriate locations for Post Office cluster mailboxes during subdivision review.
 - ❖ Encourage all lots in future major subdivisions to front onto internal road systems. If, as a result of the layout, side or back yards are adjacent to existing roads, the home should be set back a minimum of 100 feet from the existing road ROW. This will provide ample land area to account for potential future road improvements (e.g., upgrade from a rural road to a collector) and future trail development. Depending on the size of the development, a new internal collector road should be considered and the same standards applied to it as for existing collector roads.

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- ❖ Require the dedication of lands for ROW where future road widening is anticipated.
- ❖ Develop trails and sidewalks in accordance with the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan and provide sufficient ROW.
- Review existing zoning and subdivision regulations related to roadway access and amend to reflect access management best practices.
- Link neighborhoods via subdivision road systems when possible, without encouraging through traffic. This will relieve some of the traffic volume on the collector roads. Many subdivisions have stub roads that are intended to link with future development off site. These stubs should be incorporated into project plans for future development and should be clearly disclosed to buyers. Such linkages may serve as collector roads. If so, development of frontage along these roads should be limited.
- Review, update and implement the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan. Coordinate implementation of trail projects with State, County, and local improvement projects.
- Maintain and improve function of the roadway system:
 - ❖ Limit both the number and location of driveways and other access.
 - ❖ Review frontage requirements.
 - ❖ Improve the aesthetics of road frontage where feasible through techniques such as limiting clearing and considering plantings.
 - ❖ Review safety, capacity, repair, and geometry issues on rural roadways before taking action.
 - ❖ Wildlife concerns should be incorporated into planning and design of new roads.
- Include traffic calming techniques, where appropriate, as part of proposed projects. These techniques, which have been proven to lower speeds, could include but are not limited to sidewalks, landscaped medians and trees.
- Encourage land uses that promote pedestrian scale, allowing residents to make some trips on foot or by bicycle instead of by car, thereby reducing traffic volume.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

The measures identified to address traffic in the Town can be considered beneficial impacts or mitigation techniques for the current traffic impact. In most cases, the implications of the recommendations are beneficial to businesses, residents, and the general health, safety and welfare of the community. Opportunities to improve traffic flow along major corridors and increase pedestrian movement and safety should have a beneficial impact on businesses and provide additional opportunity for increased economic development that may not be achievable under current development patterns.

Similar to the impacts identified for the growth management tools, the corridor studies and other roadway improvements will cost the Town money to both study and implement, which may have a short term fiscal impact. Funding is available from the State for corridor studies and improvements, but often requires matching funds. In the long run, the economic benefits of improving the streetscape and addressing pedestrian and vehicular movement may benefit the Town through increased property value and sales tax.

Resource Conservation

Natural Resources

As noted in the Inventory and Analysis (Appendix B), the Town contains important environmental resources including the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park (WWPP), numerous stream corridors, some with steep ravines; wetlands; threatened and endangered species; and significant views. Additionally, some agricultural resources remain.

The following recommendations address several of the available methods of conserving the community's natural resources and limiting environmental impacts.

- Require all projects to comply with the NYSDEC State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit requirements. This should include the provision of a stormwater management plan and pollution prevention plan.
- Require all projects proposed within the WWPP to be subject to the requirements of a conservation overlay district and expand the use of overlay districts to other areas of Town that warrant specific protection.
- Preserve stream corridors and associated wetlands to maintain and improve water quality and habitat and to preserve natural buffers between incompatible land uses through the continued implementation and update the Timber, Soil and Stream Regulations as necessary, in accordance with NYS DEC guidelines and Best Management Practices. Consideration should be given to the quality of the stream corridor, steepness of slopes, erodibility, habitat, and other factors to determine appropriate setbacks. Other streams may warrant such protection to preserve existing quality or to re-establish lost functions and values.
- Recognize that wetlands, whether regulated or unregulated, are important ecological resources and shall be protected to the greatest extent practicable. All wetlands shall be treated as development constraints during site plan review and shall be identified as such in the Development Guidelines proposed to be created in conjunction with the Conservation Subdivision/Development process.

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- Require project sponsors to limit wetland and stream impacts to less significant portions of the resource and avoid fragmentation (splitting wetland into parts, isolating the parts through impervious areas and other barriers). This is consistent with the requirements of federal and State regulations to avoid and minimize impacts.
- Increase local coordination with agencies responsible for the protection of natural resources, including the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the US Fish & Wildlife Service.
- Coordinate with the NYSDEC to avoid or mitigate effects to the Karner blue butterfly, Blanding's turtle and frosted elfin habitats and their buffers.
- Give strong consideration to habitat value for all new development and opportunities to reclaim habitat in developed areas. All projects should provide open space that is interconnected within and outside of the project boundaries. To maintain a healthy environment, wildlife should be able to pass unencumbered from habitat to habitat. Stream corridors provide excellent opportunities to provide linkages.
- Size culverts for road crossings of stream and wetland corridors to allow wildlife passage, as practical. The same consideration should be given whenever existing culverts require replacement. In general, the culvert should support natural streambed and banks. If the existing streambed is gravel, then the gravel bottom should be carried through the culvert. If the stream is silt and it is necessary to protect the culvert from erosion, then washed stone/gravel should be used for the bed and banks. Riprap should not be used since it is unnatural and tends to create barriers to some species.

Historical/Cultural

- The Wilton Heritage Society, Town Historic Preservation Board and the Town Historian could be a resource to advise the Town Board and Planning Board regarding proposals that may impact historic sites or resources both those on the National Historic Register and those of local significance.
- Create an incentive program to encourage owners of historic structures and sites to maintain/improve their properties.
- Continue to engage a conservation review approach for site planning that would allow the Planning Board to proactively work with developers to identify constrained and buildable portions of a project site.
- Develop a master inventory and map of existing site specific archeological and cultural surveys and resources.

Alternative/Renewable Energy

With the growing community and increasing demands put on natural resources, alternative and renewable energy sources should be explored and encouraged in the Town. The Capital Region Sustainability Plan (2012) explains that 88 percent of all emissions for the Capital Region are greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from energy, both stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources include the residential, commercial and industrial sectors with residential energy consumption being the largest source of GHG emissions at 24%. Transportation emissions are also a large source of emissions (36% of the Capital Region's total emissions and 44% of the region's energy emissions). Striving for a sustainable future, the following actions are recommended:

- Explore and encourage sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels such as solar photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal hot water, wind energy, and geothermal heating and cooling.
- Consider Best Practices in energy consumption such as green leases and smart grids. Green leases coordinate the financial and energy needs of building owners and tenants to work together to conserve resources, operate buildings efficiently and save money. Smart grids are a class of technology used to modernize utility electricity delivery systems bringing many benefits to utilities and consumers. Large improvements can be realized in energy efficiency on the electricity grid and in homes and offices.
- Promote and provide facilities for bicycling, walking, and other non-motorized means of transportation as non-polluting and energy conserving forms of transportation, recreation and physical fitness.
- Consider establishing a framework for future community efforts, sustainability initiatives, investments, policy decisions and management within the Town.
- Look into updating the zoning ordinance to allow and provide guidance for construction and use of alternative energy sources.
- Become a NYS Climate Smart Community, which is a community engaged in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving climate resilience.
- Partner with NYSERDA and utility companies in the region to participate in energy efficiency incentive programs.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

The provisions outlined in this section will benefit ecological communities if properly implemented. Many of the provisions simply strengthen existing regulations and encourage cooperation between federal, State and local agencies.

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Benefits to the environment also benefit Town residents. Healthy, diverse natural systems make our environment healthy. Natural systems are important in the production of oxygen, recycling of nutrients, purification of air, cleansing of groundwater and surface water, and the reduction of nuisance species. As an example, wetlands that are periodically or permanently flooded provide breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Yet the same healthy, diverse wetland system also harbors many species of birds, mammals, and insects that feed on mosquitoes and their larvae.

Cultural resources will benefit from increased awareness and concern for historic structures in the Town. Additionally, incentives to repair and maintain historic structures will likely lead to further preservation of the Town's history.

B. Planning Areas

Planning Area 1-Parkhurst Road

Existing Conditions

This planning area, located in the northwest portion of Town, is generally bounded on the west by the Greenfield Town Boundary, on the south by the property line extending from Worth Road, on the east by Route 9 and Mt. McGregor Road, and on the north by the Town of Corinth (Figure III-1).

Route 9 serves as the principal north-south artery for this area, comprised of a mix of restaurants, light industrial uses, and single-family residences. Route 9 is roughly paralleled by Parkhurst Road to the west and east. This road still retains much of its original natural character, including farmhouses from the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition, a wide range of more recent housing types, from mobile homes to large contemporaries, and from raised ranches to massive steel buildings, have also been constructed in this area.

Terrain varies from rolling to mountainous. Other significant natural features in this area include several deer wintering areas, and the gorge associated with the Snook Kill which bisects the McGregor Fault. Adirondack plants are present in this unique ecosystem. The combination of natural constraints and limited sewer and water service (with the exception of Route 9) has resulted in limited development pressure compared to other areas in the Town.

Two county roads serve as Wilton's gateway from our neighbors to the west, Wilton-Greenfield Road (Gailor Road east of Route 9) from Greenfield and Corinth Mountain Road (Ballard Road east of Route 9) from Corinth. Corinth Mountain Road is also noteworthy for having a high accident rate in town, principally due to drivers regularly exceeding the speed limit on this steep, winding roadway despite numerous warning signs and lights.

The remnants of the hamlet of Wilton, discussed further in Planning Area 3, can be found just outside the northeast corner of this Planning Area. The bulk of the former Mount McGregor Correctional Facility is immediately to the north in the Towns of Moreau and Corinth, although there are several outbuildings on the entrance road located in Wilton. The New York State Department of Corrections owns 170 acres along the entrance road in Wilton, as well as an additional 62 acres on the southwest side of Corinth Mountain Road.

Civic buildings within this Planning Area include a church located on Route 9. The Orra Phelps Nature Preserve is an 18-acre parcel of open space on Parkhurst Road.

Plan Recommendations

The Parkhurst Road area is and should continue to remain rural due the physical constraints that contribute to its natural beauty. Lot sizes in this area are currently 2 to 5 acres. The Town should consider the following options to protect the natural character and the resources in this area:

- Continue to maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. Other methods to preserve the natural character and natural resources should be utilized through the existing conservation subdivision regulations. Development should be managed with land conservation measures, such as term easements and purchase of development rights.
- Utilize a conservation overlay district to protect important features identified by the Town such as deer wintering areas, steep slopes and stream systems from the impacts of development.
- Support subdivision and design standards which address clearing limits, screening requirements, and setback requirements to maintain the rural feel of low density neighborhoods.
- Review and revise, as necessary, the Timber, Soil and Stream regulations to ensure proper erosion and sediment control as well as protection of steep slopes and scenic views.

The road system in this neighborhood should be carefully considered when reviewing potential development. Narrow roads with limited capacity contribute to the natural character but if pressured with too many vehicles will result in safety issues. Widening or repairing these roadways will increase capacity but may increase development pressure. The key is to provide a balance between safety considerations and the rural atmosphere.

Corinth Mountain Road is one example where safety issues have become an overriding concern due to the steep, winding nature of this roadway and high traffic volumes. The Town should request that this road should be taken into the county highway system connecting Ballard Road (County Road 33) with County Road 34 in the Town of Corinth.

In addition to traffic mobility, consideration should be given to non-vehicular mobility by creating trail connections to other open space/trails in the Town. Route 9 isolates this Planning Area. Therefore, several locations should be identified to provide safe crossings, including the hamlet area.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

The recommendations of this section will help to preserve important environmental features within this Planning Area and to maintain the natural character and scenic views.

Planning Area 2-Jones/Northern Pines

Existing Conditions

This centrally located area is also the most intensely developed area in the Town. The Planning Area boundaries are roughly Route 9 to the west; the City of Saratoga Springs to the south; I-87 to the east, and Ballard Road on the north (Figure III-1). As a result of the many subdivisions, a high percentage of the Town's population resides in this area. As the name implies, the primary transportation routes in this neighborhood are Jones Road, Northern Pines Road and the southern portion of Route 9. This area has been extensively developed and is characterized predominantly by single-family residential subdivisions. Other uses include mobile home communities, multi-family housing developments, the Dorothy Nolan Elementary School, the McGregor Golf Course, Gavin Park, and a few agricultural operations. Uses along the Route 9 corridor are predominantly commercial, including various small to moderately sized retail, restaurant, professional office operations as well as the Saratoga Springs Middle School. The Route 9 corridor is transitioning from a residential to commercial area.

The terrain consists primarily of a slightly rolling sandy plain. A significant portion of the Snook Kill stream system is contained in this area, as well as the northern portion of Loughberry Lake, and the stream system that feeds it.

Plan Recommendations

It is envisioned that this Planning Area will continue as the most intensely developed area in Town due to its central location and the availability of sewer and water. Residential development in this neighborhood should continue at densities similar to existing subdivisions that are outside of the hamlet area. There are a limited number of large, undeveloped parcels in this area; therefore emphasis should be placed on providing both existing and new development with adequate services (roads, utilities, recreation, schools). The town should focus on maintaining the quality and desirability of existing neighborhoods and business areas.

Support should continue for the mixed use neighborhood known as the Maple Avenue Hamlet at the Northern Pines/Route 9 intersection as means of providing a focus and identity to this area of Town where many people reside.

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The hamlet area is intended as a place to focus higher density and encourage pedestrian-oriented development. The extension of utilities into this area to realize these goals would be appropriate. To accomplish this goal, a hamlet master plan should be completed for this area to address the following:

- Support and clarify, as necessary, redevelopment and architectural guidelines to encourage land use compliance and attractive designs.
- Encourage traffic calming techniques such as sidewalks, landscaped medians, trees and other landscaping to provide a safe streetscape for pedestrian movement throughout the hamlet.
- Provide an attractive streetscape that includes sidewalks, landscaping and period lighting that is inviting to pedestrians.
- Provisions for the safe movement of pedestrians across Northern Pines Road.
- Encourage commercial buildings built out to the sidewalk to create a continuous pedestrian environment with parking to the rear or interior of the site. The incorporation of green space is important; however, the emphasis should be on quality and the relationship to the pedestrian environment.
- Encourage uses and structures that combine ground floor retail with second floor residential or small office/service uses.
- Implement access management techniques including the use of shared driveways, and shared parking.
- Establish public/private partnerships to facilitate project review, development and scale.

Review and implementation of the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan should evaluate linkages between new and existing neighborhoods through a series of pathways. Consideration should be given to linking new and existing subdivisions to each other as well as to destinations such as recreation facilities and business areas. The potential for new parklands should also be studied and included as part of this plan.

The stream systems in this area should continue to be afforded protection through the Timber, Soil and Stream Regulations (Stream Resource Management District) and/or the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan. The Snook Kill and its tributaries as well as Loughberry Lake are high quality water resources. Additionally, there are wetlands and hydric soils associated with many of these streams. The protection of important stream corridors will protect not only the quality of the streams themselves but can provide wildlife critical “highways” between larger habitats. In some cases these areas may also serve as open space links for residents.

Transportation/Mobility Planning

Roadway function and traffic movement in the entire neighborhood are critical. Consideration should be given to the potential of an Exit 15A in the area of Jones Road. At a minimum, this new entrance should be designed to allow southbound traffic on to the Northway. The neighborhood surrounding the potential Exit 15A should remain residential. An additional entrance would reduce pressure on Exit 15 and roadways to the south of potential Exit 15A and be more convenient for residents in the central part of Town. It is the intent of the Town to maintain this potential entrance for continued residential use.

In addition to the above, a review of the entire Route 9 Corridor should be considered. The land use changes identified above as well as a potential new interchange will impact traffic patterns. Route 9 could be addressed through a Corridor Study, which would evaluate land use, zoning, site design elements and roadway function (traffic congestion, access management, shared driveways and parking) and appearance.

The connection of subdivisions to one another and to destinations such as parks, businesses etc. is an important part of the mobility planning for this area. The Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan discussed above should effectively be utilized to accomplish this goal. Additionally, the Town should work with CDTA to potentially extend transit service throughout the community including the hamlet area and Jones Road to Gavin Park.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

This portion of Town has access to water and sewer in many locations. It is reasonable to assume that development within this area could continue under current densities and land use patterns. The focus of the land use recommendations is to adjust growth patterns to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment, reduce the dependence on motor vehicles through pedestrian linkages, strengthen neighborhoods both in character and quality, and to provide for a variety of housing opportunities.

Since this planning area contains the majority of the Town's population, it is important for the plan to recognize the current issues and devise the methods and means to maintain a high level of service and quality of life. This is an essential tool to curb the pressure for sprawl development. If families are provided with quality neighborhoods that are well maintained and protected from land use conflicts and other impacts, then they are more likely to remain in those neighborhoods. Otherwise, the primary amenity to be sought is open space and people will continue to move towards and into rural areas. Open space, recreation, and pedestrian mobility are key amenities that are addressed in this plan. Efforts to reduce sprawl can have very significant beneficial environmental impacts.

Planning Area 3 -Wilton-Gansevoort Road

Existing Conditions

This Planning Area is bounded to the north by the Town of Moreau, to the east by I-87 and the Snook Kill, to the south by Ballard Road, and to the west by the foot of the Palmerton Range (Figure III-1).

The Wilton Hamlet in the southwest corner of the area was the historic beginning of the Town also once known as “Palmertown.” Several historic structures still exist in the Wilton Hamlet near the intersection of Route 9, Ballard Road and Corinth Mountain Road. The scale and functionality of the hamlet was adversely impacted by the construction of Route 9 and Ballard Road.

This area is predominantly zoned for 2 acre minimum lot size and includes single family residential housing along Blanchard Road, Washburn Road and Wilton Gansevoort Road. The existing Wilton hamlet area is comprised of mixed use buildings. Large lots dominate this area with some agricultural activity taking place. A private waste transfer station, Hiram Hollow, is on Washburn Road.

This area in general has severe soil limitations due to wetness and poor filtering. The Little Snook Kill and its tributaries wind through this area converging with the Snook Kill in a designated wetland area. Steep slopes exist along the banks of the Snook Kill.

Plan Recommendations

The remnants of the historic hamlet of Wilton are located in Planning Area 3. This hamlet provides the opportunity for the development and redevelopment of hamlet style land uses at this location roughly defined by Route 9, Parkhurst Road, and Ballard Road. To protect these historic resources and encourage sound land use decisions, consideration could be given to creating a new “Hamlet District”. Specifics regarding this area can be determined through the preparation of a hamlet master plan for this area. The development of this concept is predicated on the extension of sewer and water infrastructure into this area. Goals for the hamlet include:

- Create a neighborhood center (hamlet) that would encourage redevelopment and infill and allow mixed uses such as small scale retail combined with housing and neighborhood service oriented businesses.
- Protect and enhance existing historic structures and resources.
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment to include sidewalks, attractive streetscapes, quality landscaping, adequate parking and non-motorized connections to adjacent land uses.
- Develop design guidelines to encourage/require architectural consistency.

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With the exception of Ballard Road, land use in this area is generally rural residential and includes several parcels in agricultural use and a number of undeveloped parcels. Based on physical constraints and the lack of services in this area (with the exception of the hamlet and surrounding area), the area should remain rural for the foreseeable future. In order to maintain the rural land use component, the following should be considered:

- Maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. Other recommendations to preserve the natural character and natural resources should be identified in the residential development guidelines. Consideration could be given to increasing the minimum lot size to reduce density; however, it should also be recognized that this type of zoning does not typically preserve natural character and may actually promote sprawl development if not combined with other land conservation measures, such as term easements and purchase of development rights.
- Protect residential land uses from the existing commercial use on Wilton-Gansevoort Road and the commercial/industrial land uses identified in Area 7. These protections should include but not be limited to setback and screening requirements, limits on hours of operation, and access control.
- Continue to implement appropriate buffers between the private waste transfer facility and adjacent residentially zoned land.
- Maintain and improve function of the roadway system:
 - ❖ Limit the number and location of driveways and other access,
 - ❖ Review frontage requirements,
 - ❖ Address clearing and vegetation adjacent to the roadway,
 - ❖ Carefully review safety, capacity, repair, and geometry issues on rural roadways before taking action.

In order to promote appropriate scale and design, the following changes are proposed for land use surrounding the Route 9/Wilton Gansevoort Road intersection:

- Rezone the existing H-1 Hamlet area to a new H-2 Hamlet area. This H-2 area would differ from H-1 by encouraging slightly less dense and smaller scale development than that of the H-1 area to complement the character of the adjacent R-2 Residential areas.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

Recommendations for a Wilton hamlet would increase the intensity of development within a relatively small area but would do so in a manner that would improve traffic patterns and provide for a pedestrian-scale environment. Hamlets have historically served as focal points for growth while rural areas have historically been primarily farm lands and forest. The hamlet can be used today

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as a community focal point, providing diverse housing opportunities and economic development and relieving pressure on rural areas for development. It could become an important component of the existing Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan since it could serve as a receiving zone for the transfer of development rights.

The remaining recommendations focus on controlling density and design to maintain rural and historic character and conserve natural resources.

Planning Area 4 - Dimmick Road

Existing Conditions

This Planning Area is bounded by the Northway to the west, the Town of Moreau to the north, the Town of Northumberland to the east, and Ballard Road to the south (Figure III-1).

Rural residences, interspersed by agricultural lands, dominate the area primarily along its principal roads. The only Agricultural District in Wilton is located in the northeast corner of this Planning Area. Other agricultural lands not included in this district are located in the southern portion of this area. Suburban style subdivisions are virtually non-existent. Commercial enterprises are scattered throughout the area. There is a mobile home park on Ballard Road and a campground off Gurn Spring Road.

Dimmick Road is the main north-south roadway in this area, with Ballard Road and Wilton-Gansevoort Road comprising the main east-west roads. Gurn Spring Road has been impacted by increased traffic in recent years, providing a link between Gansevoort and Exit 16.

The northern half of this area possesses some high-quality scenic resources, including the Snook Kill valley and the approach to Palmer Ridge. Soils in this area tend to be more clay-laden than the sandy areas of the Town to the south.

There are no public water or sewer facilities in this area. Additionally there are no civic buildings in this area.

Plan Recommendations

Dimmick Road is a rural area containing a number of important physical features and resources described above. In order to protect these resources the area should remain rural. Development that occurs should be implemented in concert with the goal of protecting and enhancing these resources.

Maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. Other

recommendations to preserve the natural character and natural resources should be identified in the residential development guidelines. Consideration could be given to increasing the minimum lot size to reduce density; however, it should also be recognized that this type of zoning does not typically preserve natural character and may actually promote sprawl development if not combined with other land conservation measures, such as term easements and purchase of development rights.

High-quality scenic resources in this Planning Area should be identified and protected. This will assist in protecting both the scenic and natural character of the area. Proposed development should be evaluated as it relates to views to and from these areas. The identified scenic resources should be afforded the same protection as the other resources discussed above.

Another important method of protecting the rural atmosphere of an area is to limit the location and spacing of access and the type and scale of development that can be seen from the roadway. Increasing lot frontage requirements, requiring vegetative screening or identifying “no-cut areas” are all techniques that can be implemented to protect the rural feel of a roadway. Additionally potential improvements to these roadways should be evaluated with the goals of safety, capacity and desired land use in mind.

This area, with its stream systems and wetland areas provides a number of important wildlife corridors linking to other habitat areas. The Town wide Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan should continue to be supported as a means to maintain and protect these areas.

Farming operations should be preserved and supported in this area. Protecting remaining farming operations as discussed in the Town wide recommendations section is important, not only to farmers trying to make a living, but as a critical component of protecting the rural atmosphere in this planning area. The implementation of incentives, protections and tax breaks should be considered for both existing and potential agricultural operations.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

This Planning Area is rural in character and contains agricultural lands and important views. The Plan recommendations recognize the importance of these resources and offer tools to ensure they are identified and evaluated appropriately during plan development and site plan review. These recommendations will benefit the natural environment and character of the area.

Planning Area 5 – Edie Road

Existing Conditions

This planning area includes the area bounded by I-87 to the west, Ballard Road on the north, the Town of Northumberland on the east and Loudon Road and the City of Saratoga Springs on the south (Figure III-1).

The terrain generally consists of sand plain with numerous wetlands and vernal pools. Miller Swamp, Bog Meadow Brook and Deegan Brook are the most notable surface water features. Kendrick Hill located on the northeast corner of Ruggles and Loudon Road is the second highest landform in the Town.

This area is largely undeveloped, with housing generally consisting of single residential lots along existing roadways. There are eight existing subdivisions (a ninth under construction as of this writing) and two mobile home parks. A small commercial and industrial area on Edie Road hosts Bakemark, and a portion of the Route 50 corridor has commercial and industrial businesses. Another commercial site exists on Ballard Road. Water and sewer service does not extend to this area. Most residents rely on wells, and private septic systems. State and County owned lands are also present in this area.

Approximately 2,400 acres of protected lands and 15 miles of trails comprise the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park (WWPP). The WWPP along with the Town of Wilton, New York State, Saratoga County, and The Nature Conservancy all own the protected lands of the Preserve & Park. Numerous areas of important flora and fauna native to the Saratoga Sand Plains exist in this area. The federally and State protected Karner blue butterfly and frosted elfin inhabit the area as well as the State protected Blanding's turtle and several Species of Special Concern including the eastern hognose snake and spadefoot toad. Deer yards are prevalent in the Miller Swamp area and east of the Kendrick Hill area. Some agricultural use is seen on active farms, and several parcels are being used as hay fields and wood lots.

Plan Recommendations

Due to its location and sandy soils, this area has and will continue to feel development pressure. Zoning should be adjusted to protect the WWPP and its resources. This protection can be provided in several ways that warrants consideration:

- Create a conservation overlay district which protects critical resources both in and out of the WWPP. Resources should be protected through avoidance of critical habitats and resources, adequate buffers and effective mitigation. Requirements such as cluster, landscaping guidelines, conservation

subdivisions or simple resource avoidance can be included in the overlay requirements.

- Maintain the natural character of this area by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. Other recommendations to preserve the natural character and natural resources should be identified in the residential development guidelines. It may also be desirable to allow for larger lot sizes as an alternative to the quality open space provision to reduce density. This alternative should be carefully monitored. Implement incentive zoning to provide a potential opportunity to protect open space or critical resources through the land development process. The Town would need to establish both the type and magnitude of community benefits and the type and magnitude of the potential incentives to be offered in exchange.
- Continue compliance with NYSDEC and other state and federal standards, regulations and requirements for any projects that occur within the WWPP to ensure protection of critical habitats and resources.
- Support the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan in connecting areas within the WWPP.

The WWPP presents a unique opportunity to develop a trail system that connects not only to areas within this area but also to other destinations in the Town. Connections should be made between the various publicly and privately owned and controlled lands, in partnership with NYS DEC.

The variety of land uses and zoning districts along Route 50 can present challenges. Zoning and land use needs to be reviewed in light of existing and anticipated trends as they relate to the goals of this area. To properly address these land use conflicts, simplify land use issues and provide more consistency, the consolidation of some zoning districts may be necessary. The Corridor Study discussed below would assist in the identification of the appropriate zoning for this area.

Transportation/Mobility Planning

Land uses and traffic patterns on Route 50 can result in a number of challenges in this area. In order to address these conflicts, a Corridor Study should be completed extending from Exit 15 (Planning Area 6) east to the Town boundary. The following issues should be addressed in the Corridor Study:

- Review commercial zoning on the Route 50 corridor to determine if it is appropriate (both intensity of uses and boundaries). Emphasis should be placed on the intersections at Route 50/Old Gick/Ingersoll Road and Route 50/Edie Road.

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- Encourage access management techniques such as shared driveways, limited access, and service roads.
- Review Jones Road, Ingersoll Road, Old Gick Road, and Route 50 intersection for design, function, capacity and land use, and coordinate with NYSDOT.
- Develop standards that may require the use of buffers between various development types to include vegetation, topography, and setbacks.
- Create and update landscaping and site plan requirements to ensure attractive development that presents a uniform theme.
- Consider the potential for Exit 15A at Jones Road.
- Examine the feasibility of a roundabout or other appropriate traffic calming measures to handle traffic flow.
- Implement adequate and consistent signage in this area.

Collector roads such as Edie Road, Ingersoll Road and Ruggles Road should be protected from multiple curb cuts. Driveways should be shared whenever possible. Entrances to subdivisions should be carefully located so as not to impact the function of the roadway and to include attractive landscaping and signage.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

Recommendations focusing on the WWPP will benefit the ecology and significant habitat of this area. The recommendation to develop trails offers opportunities for recreation and education. Development of the trails may result in site specific impacts that will require evaluation during development of layout alternatives and plans.

The Route 50 corridor study will help to identify the appropriate uses along this roadway. The potential for a new exit 15A at Jones Road may also present some impacts to this planning area that cannot be identified at this time.

Planning Area 6 – Exit 15

Existing Conditions

This Planning Area is bounded on the west by the Northway, on the north by the CP Rail railroad tracks, on the east by Route 50 and state and county forest lands, and on the south by Loudon Road and the City of Saratoga Springs (Figure III-1).

Historically, this area was farmland on the outskirts of the City of Saratoga Springs. Some farmland still exists, primarily along the railroad tracks. Following the construction of the Northway, the area around Exit 15 has experienced strong development pressure. Within easy access of both Saratoga and Warren Counties, successive waves of retail development have occurred. The existing

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Exit 15 commercial area exhibits a pattern of automobile oriented commercial development that is typical across America, with its mall, fast-food franchises, and big box stores. This area does provide a substantial tax base for both the Town and the Saratoga Springs School District. Transit access is provided to this area by CDTA.

Old Gick Road contains homes of varying style and age including a large townhouse development and a large mobile home park off Old Gick Road. State and County forest lands provide a buffer between the mall and the single-family houses beyond.

Civic uses are limited to a church on Perry Road and a “Veterans Park”. Saratoga Hospital runs Wilton Medical Arts which includes urgent care, the Pain Management Center, Saratoga Family Physicians, Saratoga Surgery Center, the Saratoga Center for Endocrinology and Diabetes and the Women’s Imaging Center all located on Route 50. Sewer service is provided by Saratoga Sewer district #1, and public water is provided.

Plan Recommendations

When considering the future of this area, a plan should be developed that addresses the complexities and challenges of this area to establish more sustainable development and a balance between the pedestrian and vehicular environments. The area is currently commercially viable with large, regional commercial facilities. Development, infill, and redevelopment may all come into play over a period of time. Planning for this area should begin now, setting the stage for future opportunities.

Recommendations for this area are as follows:

- Prepare a strategic master plan for future development of the Exit 15 area. This plan should include goals and objectives and recommendations or “guiding principles” for future master plans dealing with specific areas. Some important components could include mixed development, pedestrian improvements, shared access and parking, and infill development. The strategic plan should also establish an action plan that would include specific studies and initiatives.
- Conduct a Corridor Study for Route 50 that addresses function, character and viability (as detailed in Planning Area 5).
- Continue to focus commercial growth in this area to take advantage of its location and services. This will help to protect other areas from inappropriate development and continue to support the tax base.
- Consider adopting architectural and development standards or guidelines and reconsider the types of uses for this area to eliminate the future development of undesirable uses.

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- Stress quality in addition to quantity of green space and reduce the required size of parking areas for some functions.
- Work toward developing safer pedestrian improvements and facilities, as appropriate, such as a crosswalk on Route 50 closer to exit 15 and connections to existing and future trail systems.
- Encourage mixed uses, particularly for infill development.
- Consider preparing a master plan for mixed-use development in the area of Old Gick and Perry Roads.
- Evaluate existing signage regulations within the zoning ordinance and work with potential developers to allow for proper signage design and placement.

Transportation/Mobility Planning

Access management is critical to the success of this area. The following actions are recommended to address mobility issues:

- Complete the Route 50 Corridor Study discussed in Planning Area 5.
- Provide shared entrances and access roads to improve access and traffic movement on Route 50.
- Continue to work with CDTA to provide transit access to this area.
- Examine ways to alleviate traffic impacts
 - ❖ Consider creating connector roads with pedestrian accommodations as development occurs. Locations could include Lowes Drive /Old Gick Road and Perry/Jones Roads.
 - ❖ Deter through traffic to reduce impacts on neighborhoods.
 - ❖ Explore the feasibility of connector roads to reduce congestion, especially as new developments are proposed.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

This portion of Town is recognized for its potential to develop with business uses, taking advantage of the growth potential and success of this area. However, it is also recognized that the current pattern of growth cannot continue without significant impact to the character of the Town. The plan recommendations will benefit the area by providing more in-depth information on the Route 50 corridor and how to accommodate future development as well as to facilitate access and circulation within and adjacent to existing development. Future land use recommendations are also anticipated and will require further SEQRA evaluation at that time.

Planning Area 7 -Exit 16 - Ballard Road Corridor

Existing Conditions

This planning area consists generally of the parcels along Ballard Road between Northern Pines Road and the commercially zoned parcels just east of the Northway. It contains the Exit 16 Northway interchange, the I-1 industrial zone along North Road, and the northernmost leg of Traver Road between Town Hall and Ballard Road (Figure III-1).

The uses in this area are predominantly commercial, but there are governmental and residential uses as well. The major uses in this area are warehouses, gas stations, the truck stop, small retail, a mobile home park, and several single-family residences. Civic uses include Town Hall, State Police barracks, Camp Wilton, and the Ballard Road Firehouse. The warehouses, which are in excess of one million square feet combined, and truck stop draw significant truck traffic along Ballard Road (County Road 33), and the Exit 16 overpass. Additionally, the Exit 16 truck stop is a key stop between Canada and Albany and experiences significant international truck traffic. The challenge in this area is enhancing the transportation system to support existing and allow growth of these uses in a managed. The section of Ballard Road west of the Northway is served by public water and sewer.

Much of the terrain along the Ballard Road corridor is rolling with sandy soils. However, steep slopes and wet soils are associated with the Snook Kill. Soils north of Ballard Road are variable.

Plan Recommendations

This area includes a diversity of uses and will continue as such. This area has been identified by the Town for its economic growth potential and the focus will be on mixed use development and light industrial/commercial uses while protecting the surrounding residential and rural development patterns. Strip development is not part of the plan for Ballard Road. Key aspects of the existing Wilton Exit 16 Linkage Study should be supported, implemented, and evaluated:

- Review the various land uses and zoning districts in this corridor to identify land use conflicts and potential future opportunities/changes in land use. This could include developing standards to ensure attractive development and adequate buffers between various land uses.
Encourage access management techniques such as shared driveways, limited access, and service roads should be implemented along Ballard Road to allow traffic to flow efficiently through the area and protect roadways in the Planning Area.
- Explore the need for a Town park.

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- Explore options for the development of a formal “Park & Ride” off of Exit 16, in the event that the existing park and ride lot is developed.
- Implement transportation improvements such as upgrades to the Exit 16 interchange and construction of a new bridge, the need for turn lanes at various locations, alleviating capacity issues and the need for roundabouts.
- Improve pedestrian facilities by installing ADA compliant crossings, creating new sidewalks and multi-use trails and connecting to existing trail systems

Any planning for this corridor must be done in light of the potential for improvements/redesign of the Exit 16 Bridge over I-87. The Town should work with the NYSDOT in regards to any future design in order to ensure it reflects recommendations from the Exit 16 Linkage Study.

Intensity of uses should be carefully considered, along with site design (layout, lighting, landscaping, hours of operation, scale, setbacks) that protects the adjacent uses. An overlay district should be considered that would protect the WWPP as well as other sensitive areas town-wide.

Aspects of the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways plan relating to this planning area should be implemented. This includes promoting existing trails and trail development, especially between open space areas, residential areas, points of interest, service providers and commercial areas.

Potential Adverse & Beneficial Impacts of Recommendations

The plan recommendations call for additional study of the Ballard Road corridor to identify appropriate land uses for these areas and to adopt measures to ensure safe and efficient traffic flow balanced with respect to the pedestrian environment. These recommendations will be beneficial to the Town since they will provide more detailed information and planning to correct problems and encourage appropriate land use mixes. Further SEQRA evaluation may be necessary in order to adopt/implement future recommendations for this area. Particular attention should be paid to existing residential uses and the WWPP.

Chapter IV: ALTERNATIVES

The development of a comprehensive plan begins with community discussions and an inventory and analysis of existing conditions. Through this process, a vision for the community is developed. A vision provides focus for the plan and this vision is supported by plan recommendations. The plan concept is further refined by evaluating alternatives.

A number of growth and land use alternatives were reviewed during this Plan Update. The first growth alternative typically considered during the planning process is the “no-action” alternative. The “no-action” alternative represents the impacts, both beneficial and adverse, of allowing growth and development to continue under current land use and zoning regulations. Alternative land uses that were explored during the development of plan concepts included the location and density of both residential and nonresidential development. Other alternatives addressed infrastructure, natural resources, cultural resources, and quality of life. The following provides a summary of some of the various alternatives discussed during the process of updating this Plan.

A. No-Action Alternative

The “no-action” alternative represents the growth potential of the Town of Wilton under existing zoning and land use regulations. Under the “no-action” alternative, the Town would continue to progress in much the same way it has progressed since the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and subsequent zoning and subdivision revisions. While direction of this progress is largely on target with the updated community Vision, opportunities exist for the Town to be more proactive with regard to guiding plan concepts such as preserving a diversity of neighborhood character, encouraging multi-modal transportation and supporting tax base growth. The “no-action” alternative, therefore, does not effectively assist the Town in achieving its vision and meeting both current and future needs of the community as a whole.

B. Growth Alternatives

The following alternatives address potential growth scenarios the Town could adopt as land use/development policies. Both beneficial and adverse impacts are associated with each of the alternatives.

No Growth Alternative

This growth scenario would require the Town to adopt a “no growth” policy. A “no growth” policy essentially closes the door to any future new development. Assuming “no growth” as a permanent policy, the Town would consider itself “built-out”. This decision may have significant repercussions from landowners that are anticipating future development and may prevent the Town from developing important amenities such as recreational and community facilities. A “no growth” policy may prevent the development of projects that achieve the vision of this Plan may also limit the Town’s ability to attract both local businesses as well as responsible corporations (sustainable businesses).

A “no growth” policy could have a beneficial impact on the natural environment by preventing further loss of habitat. However, whether impacts are beneficial is dependent on how landowners, both public and private, utilize their property.

This “no growth” option does not allow for redevelopment and reinvestment in older areas, thus limiting potential beneficial impacts on property value and community character.

Managed Growth Alternative

The Plan Recommendations included in Chapter III represent a “managed growth” alternative. This alternative allows future growth, but encourages and sets parameters with relation to location and the amount of growth. It also coordinates appropriate land use with the direction set forth in the community Vision.

Level of Service Alternative

The basis of this alternative is to allow growth in a prescribed manner only when sufficient infrastructure and services are in place. Most developed and developing communities have the basic services to protect the health, safety and welfare of their residents. The issue with growth is related to the ability to provide adequate levels of services. Most communities have limited services and limited budgets. During periods of high growth, the service limits are easily exceeded, and often with little warning. This is primarily due to a lack of coordinated review of an entire area or a series of projects to identify cumulative impacts. The impacts to a community that exceeds its capacity can be significant. There can be major, unexpected infrastructure improvements that may affect budgets and taxes. System failures can result in impacts to the natural environment. Continued communication with school districts in the Town regarding school enrollment will be important for future planning purposes.

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As the primary policy in the Town, this alternative would require the use of moratoriums on development and a more equitable means of distributing the costs of development. State legislation presents limitations on what tools communities can use to address equitable cost distribution. Some communities have utilized the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQRA) Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) process to address potential cumulative impacts over a given time period and identify the costs of mitigation, which are then distributed to all who develop within the study area. However, there are limitations on the types of impacts that can be quantified. As a result, many services are not addressed such as recreational needs, open space, social services, and education.

The managed growth alternative detailed under Plan recommendations in Chapter 3 provides opportunities to address level of service issues through proactive planning and the use of SEQRA. It does not provide a program and criteria for the use of moratoriums as a tool for growth management nor does it specifically recommend that growth be based on level of service. Such policy might be considered in the future as the Town conducts further study of its resources and services and establishes greater coordination with other service suppliers, such as the school districts and the County.

High Growth Alternative

This alternative would involve a fast build-out of residential and commercial development town-wide. It has been determined that this scenario is unacceptable because it would lead to growth patterns and trends that have previously resulted in adverse impacts to the community. Town officials are equally concerned about the current fast rate of growth and the Town's ability to keep pace with adequate levels of municipal service. This alternative may also impact school districts and their ability to provide necessary services. The Town also desires to become more proactive in regards to land use decisions, which requires additional growth management tools.

Major concerns in the Town include traffic along major roadways, strip and "big box" commercial development along Route 50 and Route 9, lack of pedestrian facilities and connectivity to open space, loss of open space and natural character, air quality, water quality, and impacts on natural resources. These issues may not be effectively addressed if the pace of growth occurs too quickly. Therefore it is anticipated that the high growth alternative would lead to further adverse impacts on the community resources that are contrary to community goals.

C. Land Use Alternatives

The following alternatives address various land use scenarios that have been considered during the development of the plan recommendations.

Residential Development

Residential development scenarios were reviewed including changes in density. After further discussion it was determined that the overall goal for this plan is the protection of neighborhood character and maintaining a wide variety of residential types throughout the town. Actions and tools such as increasing road frontage, maintaining natural or “no-cut” zones, increasing side yard and front yard setbacks, or the existing conservation subdivision approach can be helpful in achieving such a goal while protecting the environment. As a result, several planning areas include incentives to allow lots to be developed at existing densities if certain criteria are met (i.e. performance standards) which protect important resources and natural character.

Exit 15 Planning Area

The Exit 15 area is recognized as a highly developed area critical to the Town tax base. The uses in this area are primarily established, however, the next generation of commercial development in this area may occur soon. Redevelopment of existing buildings and commercial areas may benefit from design guidelines and enhanced opportunities for safer, multi-modal connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Discussions for this neighborhood centered on traffic movement, infrastructure maintenance and the visual environment as well as development and redevelopment. Alternatives ranged from removing traditional zoning and subdivision constraints and creating design criteria (performance standards) which would allow development meeting these criteria, to creating a mandatory main street or traditional neighborhood design for the entire neighborhood. The idea of removing all zoning requirements and relying solely on design criteria would place a large burden on the Planning Board or other agency charged with the review and/or approval of projects in this area. It was determined that the combination of the initiation and implementation of a master plan for Route 50 commercial area, the development of commercial design standards and regulations encouraging mixed use, along with necessary changes in zoning would be more effective and easier to administer for the Town.

It was also determined that although a mandatory main street may be impractical for the entire neighborhood many of these principles should be applied. Providing safe non-vehicle crossings, limiting driveways, creating parallel

access and providing multi-modal connections in this area (and adjacent areas) will increase mobility and safety. Development that occurs along the parallel access roads could be well suited for Main Street style development.

The existing zoning does seem to address the transition between land uses on Route 50 particularly moving east to the residential areas. It was determined that a broader view of development patterns and land use along Route 50 is necessary to identify positive changes for development and redevelopment that promotes quality land uses and reinvests and improves existing development. As a result, the Plan Recommendations recommend a Corridor Study for Route 50 to determine if additional zoning changes may be necessary.

Exit 16 / Ballard Road Area

The Exit 16/Ballard Road area has been targeted within the Town as an alternative commercial growth area, in addition to the Exit 15 area. The Ballard Road area at Exit 16 is not only commercial and industrial land uses which support the tax base, but it is also an area that experiences significant truck traffic. A number of alternatives have been discussed for this area through previous studies and several implementation items are specifically discussed in Chapter III – Plan Recommendations. The continued growth of this area is important to the tax base. However, the transportation infrastructure will be a limiting factor until upgrades can occur.

Commercial and Industrial Development

There are many alternatives for commercial and industrial development in the Town. The Plan Recommendations attempt to organize commercial development. It is recognized that existing non-residential zoning at times results in conflicting land uses being sited in close proximity. It is recommended that the commercial zones particularly along Route 9, Route 50 and Ballard Road be reviewed to ensure that they meet the intent of the Town in providing appropriate opportunities, while protecting and enhancing both residential and non-residential development.

There were also discussions regarding creating new commercial zones and rezoning certain areas to address the varying impacts, and the size and scale of commercial development on surrounding land uses and to ensure appropriate transitions of land use from most intense to least intense (commercial to residential). It was determined that particularly along Routes 50 and 9, and Ballard Road that Corridor Studies should be conducted first and which may result in part, in zoning changes that address land use compatibility.

Chapter V: ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is an essential component of the Comprehensive Plan. It transforms the plan recommendations into specific tasks and prioritizes those tasks based on issues such as need, availability of community resources, and interdependencies. It is intended to aid the Town in identifying the next steps to be taken upon Plan adoption. The Action Plan provides guidance on how and when recommendations may be implemented. Time frames are general and represent what might reasonably be accomplished over the next 10 years.

An action plan also carefully balances focus, organization, and flexibility to adjust to the dynamics of the community and new opportunities. Some tasks may logically come before others, such as when the initiation of one task is dependent upon the outcome of another. Many of the tasks are interrelated on some level and an individual action's effect on other tasks should always be considered. However, in many instances, community interest, budget, and outside or regional influences may elevate one task over another.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to provide the community with a path towards achieving its vision. Public consensus on the order and timing of these tasks is critical to achieving the support and leadership of elected officials.

Tasks are grouped into immediate, short-term, on-going, and long-term time frames. Immediate tasks should be the priority after adoption of the plan. These tasks address the issues of highest and most immediate importance, as identified through this planning process. Short-term tasks should be completed very soon after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. These tasks are also of high importance, but may require more time to initiate than the immediate tasks. Long term tasks are those that are expected to occur in excess of 5 years out. These tasks are typically dependent on the outcome of short term tasks, or are simply not of high priority at this time.

While working towards implementing the action plan, the Town will continue to exercise the careful fiscal responsibility that has made it successful thus far. Fiscal responsibility balanced with growth management will allow for actions to be implemented in a manner which continues to support a high quality of life for residents and visitors.

A. Implementation Priorities

The implementation table to follow prioritizes and summarizes the action plan tasks. For more detailed descriptions of the Actions, refer to the recommendations discussed in Chapter III.

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITY TABLE

Immediate Actions				
Action	Description	Lead	Partners	Procedure
Amend zoning ordinance	<p>Revise the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, including both Town wide and Planning Area specific recommendations. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subdivision Regulations - Site Plan Regulations - Clearing Limits and Buffers - Development Guidelines - Conservation Overlay - Renewable Energy Regulations - Site development and architectural standards or guidelines to enhance quality of proposed projects 	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Town Board directs Town staff or committee to draft the zoning revisions - Draft zoning available for public review - Town Board holds public hearing - Town adopts amendments - SEQRA
Create a Mobility Master Plan	<p>The mobility plan will utilize recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan supplemented by more detailed evaluation of the road network, traffic congestion, pedestrian linkages, safety improvements, access management, multi-use paths, public transportation, potential future roads, regional traffic planning and streetscape beautification.</p> <p>Specific components of the Master Plan could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corridor Studies of Route 9 and Route 50 - Area Master Plans for Exit 15 and the Hamlet areas - Developing pedestrian improvements <p>Examples of areas that may be included in the overall Plan are Jones Road, Ingersoll Road, Old Gick Road, and Route 50 intersection for design, function, capacity and land use.</p>	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement. - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept. - Parks and Recreation - Saratoga County - NYS DOT - CDTA - CDTC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Town directs departments to conduct Plan <p>The Plan process may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a committee and appointment of members - Public outreach/ workshops - Stakeholder outreach - Final Master Plan adopted by Town Board

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Short Term Actions			
Action	Description	Lead	Partners
Hold Economic Development Summits	The focus of these summits is to strengthen existing and form new partnerships while discussing economic development opportunities. The outcome may include marketing efforts, shovel-ready projects, and incentives for sustainable development and local businesses. Input should also be gathered on real and perceived barriers to development so improvement strategies can be made. The Town should partner with Saratoga County Capital Resource Corporation and Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) and other similar entities.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Engineering Dept. - Capital Resource Corporation - SEDC - Saratoga County
Implement the Exit 16 (Ballard Road) Linkage Study	Key recommendations of the Study should be implemented, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Realignment of the Exit 16 interchange - Rehabilitation or replacement of the Exit 16 bridge - Additional turning lanes to accommodate traffic flow - Formalize a park and ride - Extend trail network 	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept. - Parks and Recreation - CDTC
Create new Town Park	Explore the need and opportunity for a Town Park in the northern area of Town	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Engineering Dept. - Parks and Recreation
Preserve Quality Open Space	Continue utilizing incentive zoning as a means of preserving quality open space, which provides a legitimate public purpose and providing other community amenities such as a community center or a trail connection. Incentive zoning is defined in the Glossary of Planning Terms.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement - Engineering Dept. - Parks and Recreation - Saratoga PLAN

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On-Going Actions			
Action	Description	Lead	Partners
Foster public-private partnerships to aid in redevelopment	Encourage public-private partnerships where possible to implement redevelopment and reinvestment programs/plans of high quality projects that will benefit a broad cross section of the community.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Code Enforcement - Engineering Dept. - Parks and Recreation - Saratoga County - Capital Resource Corporation - SEDC
Provide support and incentives to businesses	Provide support and incentives to locally owned businesses and businesses with a track record of being strong community partners to strengthen the business community and attract additional like-minded businesses.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Capital Resource Corporation - SEDC
Create action plans for existing neighborhoods	Reinvest in existing neighborhoods to provide the amenities and maintenance necessary to strengthen and rejuvenate these areas. The primary goal should be to retain residents and maintain or increase property values. The Town should identify these older neighborhoods, survey existing conditions and use this information to create an action plan.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept.
Support the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan	Support the implementation and updating of the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan. Maintain and protect stream systems, wetland areas and wildlife corridors. Give strong consideration to habitat value for all new development and where opportunity exists to reclaim habitat in developed areas. All projects should provide open space that is interconnected within and outside of the project boundaries. The implementation of trail projects should also be coordinated with State, County and local trail projects.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept. - Parks and Recreation - Saratoga County - Saratoga PLAN

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On-Going Actions (Continued)			
Action	Description	Lead	Partners
Explore opportunities to support the preservation of historic and cultural resources	Take advantage of the resources and knowledge of the Wilton Heritage Society, Historic Preservation Board and Town Historian to maintain and enhance historic and cultural resources. Additional opportunities at the local, state and federal level should also be examined. Outcomes may include incentives, materials and guidance for historic site and structure owners. Participation by owners would be voluntary.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wilton Heritage Society - NYS OPRHP - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement. - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept. - Parks and Recreation
Continue to utilize conservation review for site planning	Continue to engage a conservation review approach for site planning that would allow the Planning Board to proactively work with developers to identify constrained and buildable portions of a project site.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement. - Engineering Dept.
Maintain and protect natural character and scenic resources	Continue to maintain natural character in the Town by requiring a minimum of 35 percent quality open space where practical and dependent upon suitable criteria. High-quality scenic resources should also be identified and protected by evaluating proposed development relating to views to and from these areas. Existing conservation subdivision regulations should be utilized to preserve natural character and natural and scenic resources. Examples of these areas are Parkhurst Road and Dimmick Road (Planning Areas 1 and 4, respectively).	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement. - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept. - Parks and Recreation - Saratoga County

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On-Going Actions (Continued)			
Action	Description	Lead	Partners
Support farming operations	Preserve and support farming operations in this area through the consideration of incentives, protections and tax breaks for both existing and potential agricultural operations. This may include areas such as Dimmick Road (Planning Area 4).	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Code Enforcement - Engineering Dept. - Saratoga County - USDA - Saratoga PLAN
Encourage land use board training	Support training for land use board members as means of continuing education and earning training hours as required by the NYS Department of State Local Government Services. Training will allow members to follow trends and enhance their abilities and knowledge.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Planning Dept. - Zoning Board - Code Enforcement.

Long Term Actions			
Action	Description	Lead	Partners
Review and Update of Comprehensive Plan	It is important to revisit the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan on a 5 year basis to determine if there have been any major shifts in direction that could impact the vision or require additional planning effort.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Code Enforcement. - Engineering Dept. - Parks and Recreation
Consider feasibility of an Exit 15A	Explore the feasibility for an Exit 15A at Jones Road as a means to alleviate traffic congestion and improve traffic flow.	Town Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Dept. - Code Enforcement. - Engineering Dept. - Highway Dept. - Saratoga County - NYS DOT - CDTA - CDTC

B. Action Plan Discussion

The Action Plan tasks identified in the preceding tables are important to the community. It is important to note that priorities change for any number of reasons and that the Action Plan is meant to be flexible. The following discussion of tasks provides the regulatory framework and procedural logistics that will support future planning efforts.

Although desirable, it may be difficult for the Town to complete all of the tasks on the short-term list. It is reasonable to assume that the first year of implementation will be devoted to code revisions and development guidelines. It is quite possible, assuming adequate funding is available, that other short-term items can be completed, or at least initiated.

Short-Term Actions

Zoning Code Amendments

The Comprehensive Plan provides the Town with a future land use map. This is intended to be used as a guide for zoning in the Town. Land use is not zoning; it is much more general. The zoning process will take the proposed land uses and develop appropriate zoning districts to meet the intent of the land use decisions. It is possible that more than one zoning district may evolve from the process, reflective of a single land use decision. Therefore, the land use plan is a guide for zoning. Since Town Law requires that a community's zoning ordinance be consistent with its land use plan, this task should be one of the first items addressed.

In order to proceed, the Town should direct either the Town Attorney or Town staff (perhaps with a committee) to draft the zoning revisions. Alternatively, the Town may wish to retain professional services to perform the task, typically in concert with the Town Attorney, staff and a committee. Once the draft zoning is available for public review, the Town Board would hold a public hearing. After sufficient opportunity for public input has been provided and any necessary revisions incorporated, the Town Board would adopt the zoning amendments. Adoption of the zoning amendments is a Type 1 action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regulations (6 NYCRR 617). However, rezoning and other major code amendments are addressed in the SEQRA documentation for the Comprehensive Plan.

Therefore, it may not be necessary to conduct SEQRA, unless the proposed zoning amendments are significantly different than envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan. There are also areas of Town where the Plan calls for further study to better define appropriate land use, such as the major road

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corridors. In these instances, the potential impacts of future land use have not been sufficiently addressed and further SEQRA action would be necessary to address proposed land uses and rezoning.

The components of this task include the preparation of a zoning map (draft and final) and the necessary written amendments. The extent of the amendments will depend on other code revisions that might be wrapped into this task. In general, the amendments may include new and revised zoning designations and uses, revised site plan review procedures (consistent with the conservation subdivision process), revised special uses, and revised definitions. Other portions of the zoning code may require review and possible amendment to be consistent with the major changes.

Subdivision Amendments

The primary objective will be to continue to implement the conservation subdivision process into the Town's subdivision regulations. This task is dependent upon the preparation and adoption of residential and commercial development guidelines and therefore should be undertaken during, or shortly after, the zoning code revisions.

In order to proceed, the Town should direct the Town Attorney and staff (perhaps with a committee) to draft the subdivision revisions. Alternatively, the Town may wish to retain professional services to perform the task, typically in concert with the Town Attorney, staff and committee. Once the draft is available for public review, the Town Board would hold a public hearing. After sufficient opportunity for public input has been provided and any necessary revisions incorporated, the Town Board would adopt the subdivision amendments. Adoption of the subdivision amendments is subject to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regulations (6 NYCRR 617). However, the environmental impacts of the subdivision amendments are addressed in SEQRA documentation for the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, it may not be necessary to conduct SEQRA unless the proposed amendments are significantly different than envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan. This would be decided by the Town Board.

Residential and Commercial Development Guidelines

This task will involve the creation of illustrated guidelines for development of both residential subdivisions and commercial projects. Illustrations should be incorporated into the guidelines to visually express the Town's intent. This is also an essential element of the revised site plan review and therefore should be undertaken in the short term.

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Plan recommendations that address the conservation of environmental and community resources should also be incorporated into the guidelines as policy statements and required procedures. An example of this is the coordination process with federal and state agencies for the delineation and confirmation of wetland boundaries. Although flexibility is important, the Town can incorporate any portion of the guidelines as requirements to reduce uncertainties, as necessary.

Additionally, the guidelines should include guidance on landscaping and the preservation of existing trees and other important vegetation. During the initial stages of the conservation subdivision process, a tree survey should be required and made available for review for all projects. A maintenance plan is needed to ensure that landscaping and other elements designed for aesthetic improvement and public benefit are kept in good condition and replaced as necessary throughout the life of the project.

Evaluate Incentive Zoning

Incentive zoning is permitted under Town Law § 261-b. This is the last important component of the legislative group of growth management tools recommended for controlling future development and has therefore been designated a short term action. As envisioned, the Town will adopt zoning in accordance with the land use plan. The zoning will specify permitted uses and densities. The development process will be dictated by the conservation subdivision/review process, which provides much more flexibility in design. Site layout will be guided by illustrated residential and commercial design guidelines. Incentive zoning, in exchange for bonuses that benefit the developer, allows for the provision of additional public benefit and amenities.

The latter component, incentive zoning, is important to the process because of its increased flexibility. Incentive zoning allows the Planning Board to focus their efforts on working with developers to protect and enhance the unique characteristics of the project. Incentive zoning allows the Planning Board to offer a developer a bonus in exchange for some desirable community benefit. An example might be that the Town agrees to allow the developer to increase the number of units if he/she is willing to purchase the development rights of a parcel of land that has been identified by the community as important farmland or open space. The incentive based approach to achieving community goals complements what will become a very interactive and open process for future development projects.

Incentive zoning is not intended to be an avenue for increased density with marginal benefits. It will be critical for the Town to identify which incentives will be offered and what is expected as a corresponding community benefit.

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The Town must identify a maximum density for any given area so as not to jeopardize the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

It will be necessary for the Town to designate which zoning districts or overlay zones will carry the incentive zoning provisions.

The following procedures are recommended to establish the incentive zoning legislation.

- Based on information collected for the Comprehensive Plan, the Town should derive a draft list of incentives and community benefits. The list should be made available for public review and opportunity provided for public input.
- While conducting community outreach for the above, the Town should prepare the draft zoning.
- Depending on the extent of benefits and incentives, it may be necessary to engage the SEQRA process.
- A public hearing would be required and the process for adoption would follow the same procedures as any zoning amendment.

It should be noted that this task could be combined with the other code amendments.

Planning Education

The purpose of this task is to encourage ongoing training for the planning and zoning board members on new procedures for site plan and subdivision review, as well as current trends and legal requirements associated with their roles. If implemented, several new procedures and tools will be available to the boards. Members should be knowledgeable of these tools in order to be effective and efficient with the process.

The Town should also consider budgeting for conferences and planning schools to keep board members and staff current on planning tools, decisions, and court cases.

Historic & Architectural Review Guidelines

The purposes of the historic and architectural review guidelines are to create standards for quality and uniformity of commercial, office and industrial design. These guidelines should be coordinated with the community's concept or vision for a given area and to provide protection for historic structures throughout the Town.

The Town Board should consider establishing an advisory commission charged with reviewing projects referred to them by the Town Board or

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Planning Board. Their first task would be to serve as a committee for the development of the guidelines. This task may be linked to plans for the hamlets, commercial road corridors, or redevelopment areas. The advisory commission could provide input to these other planning efforts and revise their own architectural guidelines to reflect the new visions for areas of the Town as they develop.

Architectural review guidelines would address the visual aspects of the structure as it relates to the surroundings and the vision for the area. Historic review guidelines would address the potential impact of a project on the historic character of a structure. They would also provide guidelines for the maintenance of the structure itself, usually in conjunction with owner incentives (tax abatement program).

Comprehensive Plan Update

Although a comprehensive plan typically adopts a 20-year planning period, communities that are undergoing development pressure cannot afford to wait that long to revisit the plan recommendations. The Town of Wilton should continue to monitor any changes in the community. Even if all is “going according to plan,” the character and composition of the community may shift significantly resulting in changes to the Town’s visions and goals. The Town should conduct a review of the plan recommendations in 5-year intervals to determine if a comprehensive plan update is warranted.