

Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew

Joint Comprehensive Plan

February 2018



Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This report is a Comprehensive Plan update for the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and the part of the Village of Depew located in the Town of Lancaster.¹ The project was funded by Erie County with funds from the Housing and Urban Development’s Community Block Development Grant program. The purpose of this plan is to develop a shared vision for the communities’ futures.

These three communities recognize the value in cooperation and have joined together to prepare this document. As an update, this plan builds upon the previous Comprehensive Plan completed for the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew, which was adopted in February 2000. This update reflects changes to the communities since the prior plan, and also is designed to be consistent with other regional planning documents including the *Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth* (2006); the REDC’s *A Strategy for Prosperity in Western New York* (2011, with annual Progress Report updates); the *Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan* (2012); and *One Region Forward: A New Way to Plan for Buffalo-Niagara* (2014).

1.1 Regional and Local Setting

The Town of Lancaster and the Villages of Lancaster and Depew are located in eastern Erie County, approximately 10 miles east of downtown Buffalo. In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau calculated the population of the Town of Lancaster at approximately 42,500 residents, including the residents of the Villages living in the Town of Lancaster.

Historically, the Village of Lancaster was the nucleus of the Town. The community grew from a small settlement around a grist mill to a market town for surrounding agricultural uses. The Town of Lancaster was established in 1833² and the Village of Lancaster was incorporated in 1849.

The growth of all three communities was greatly influenced by the decision of Chauncey Depew, President of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company, to locate his company’s headquarters in the area in 1892. The Village of Depew was incorporated shortly after, in 1894, and named for its largest landowner. The arrival of the rail lines allowed easy access to markets and direct connections to the City of Buffalo, and transformed the local economy. Over the years, growth increased, and it became a popular suburban community.

The two villages, along with the western portion of the Town near the Villages, are largely developed and are defined in the *Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth* as “Developed Areas,” which designates lands served by public sewer, water, and transportation infrastructure. The southeastern portion of the Town is designated as “Rural”, while the remainder of the Town is classified as “Developing,” which denotes transition areas experiencing development pressure and demand for extensions of public sewer, water, and transportation. It is a local decision to prioritize either growth or preservation for “Developing” areas.

¹ The portion of Depew west of Transit Road falls within the Town of Cheektowaga, and is not included.

² Originally, the Town included the Town of Elma, which became a separate municipality in 1857

Today, all three communities effectively serve as suburbs of the City of Buffalo. The Town is a center of residential growth, and the Villages function as important retail, commercial, and community centers.

1.2 Reasons for Preparing a Comprehensive Plan Update

The Town of Lancaster and the Villages of Lancaster and Depew last completed a Comprehensive Plan in 2000, more than 15 years ago. The plan, titled “A Comprehensive Plan... A Common Future,” identified a range of goals for the communities, and recommendations. However, there have been significant changes in the communities over the past 15 years. Since 2000, population in the Town (including the Villages) has grown by 9 percent, as has new housing construction, focused largely in the Town outside the Villages. At this time, it is important to take a fresh look at what the community wants for the future, and create a plan that reflects current conditions and goals. An up-to-date Comprehensive Plan is important for a number of reasons:

- Relevance – to make sure it is addressing the most important current issues
- Influence – to provide greater weight to its recommendations by demonstrating community support
- Effectiveness – to coordinate with regional planning, including New York State’s Smart Growth legislation, Erie County’s “One Region Forward” planning effort, and the Regional Economic Development Council’s economic development strategies
- Competitiveness – to improve local chances of receiving funding through State and federal grant programs.

There are many reasons for preparing a Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan serves as the legal foundation for all zoning and land use regulation decisions made in each municipality. New York State Law dictates that Town and Village planning, zoning, capital budgeting and other decisions should be based on a comprehensive plan that represents the community’s vision for its future. This Plan’s articulation of the shared vision for the three communities helps ensure that land use regulations are built on a solid foundation. By preparing a joint plan, these communities recognize that many issues cut across jurisdictional boundaries, and are best approached on an inter-municipal basis.

The Plan is an essential tool for the local communities to use in evaluating proposed projects and changes to local land use regulations. It is also a useful tool for outside entities. By clearly articulating local priorities, the Plan provides guidance to developers and others seeking to undertake a project. Any new development proposal or action, private or public, should take into consideration whether it helps further the communities’ vision as set forth in this document. The Plan gives developers and others a better understanding of which types of project would be viewed favorably, and how they can structure their projects to better meet community goals.

A current Comprehensive Plan also provides the communities with a better understanding of their resources, assets, and the issues they face. The Plan provides a factual assessment of the communities’ existing conditions (environmental, demographic, physical and other factors), and identifies residents’ priorities and goals for their future through public input. This knowledge place the communities in a much better position to recognize their important historic, cultural, economic and natural assets. It helps the communities recognize what is important, what they value, and what they want to protect. It highlights areas for improvement, and provides a strategy for how to get there.

While Comprehensive Plans are most often associated with zoning, the Plan also helps the three municipalities develop broader strategies for enhancing local quality of life and the character of the communities. The Plan provides a range of recommendations for future actions that the Town and Villages can undertake to help meet local goals, capitalizing on each community's unique assets.

The Plan also increases local over other levels of government. Under New York State regulations and policies, State agencies must take adopted local planning documents into consideration in planning their projects and activities. This provides local governments with greater leverage to influence these activities.

A Comprehensive Plan also helps improve local access to grants and technical assistance. The process of preparing the plan involves many months, meetings and public input. Formally adopting the Plan demonstrates local commitment and support for its recommendations. These actions are persuasive to potential funding sources as powerful evidence that the projects are supported and will be successfully completed.

The Comprehensive Plan helps the three communities recognize what is important about their municipalities. It will serve as a basis for land use regulation, capital planning, and public and private investment in the communities. Local leaders can use it to guide decision making, and help move the communities closer to their vision for the future.

1.3 How will the Plan be Utilized?

In accordance with Section 272-a of New York State Town Law and Section 7-722 of Village Law, Towns and Villages have the power to undertake comprehensive planning and to adopt a plan to help promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the municipality, and to give due consideration to the needs of the people of the region of which the Town or Village is a part.

By law, (Sections 272-a and 7-722) the adoption of a comprehensive plan has the following effect:

- a. All Town or Village land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to §272-a.11. (a) or 7-722.11. (a).
- b. All plans for capital projects of another government agency on land included in the Town or Village comprehensive plan, adopted pursuant to Section 272-a or 7-722, shall take such plan into consideration.

Once adopted, the Town or and Villages would begin to implement the plan by amending land use regulations to conform to the comprehensive plan, and consider the plan in all land use decisions (site plans, subdivisions, and re-zonings). Yearly, each community would utilize the plan in determining its capital project plan and in helping to determine what projects and other implementation actions should be undertaken in the following year. Copies of the adopted comprehensive plan must be filed with County and State agencies, and would be utilized by those agencies in planning projects and actions that could affect the planning community.

Section 284 of Town law and §7-741 of Village law allows communities to perform inter-municipal cooperation in comprehensive planning. Pursuant to these sections, the Town of Lancaster and the

Villages of Lancaster and Depew completed this comprehensive plan update. The joint completion of this plan update has promoted an intergovernmental partnership, resulting in increased cooperation and effectiveness of comprehensive planning and land use regulation, more efficient use of infrastructure and municipal revenues, as well as enhanced protection of community resources, especially where such resources spanned municipal boundaries.

The purpose of the intergovernmental agreement was to complete a joint comprehensive plan, but per §284-4(c) of Town law and §7-741-4-(c) of Village law, the plan will be adopted independently by each partnering community. There is no regional entity governing its adoption, and no individual community has any additional powers over any of the other communities. The agreement between the three communities ends at the completion of this comprehensive planning process. However, it is hoped that in implementing the comprehensive plan update, the communities will continue to work together, especially on those actions determined to have a cross-border influence or regional significance.

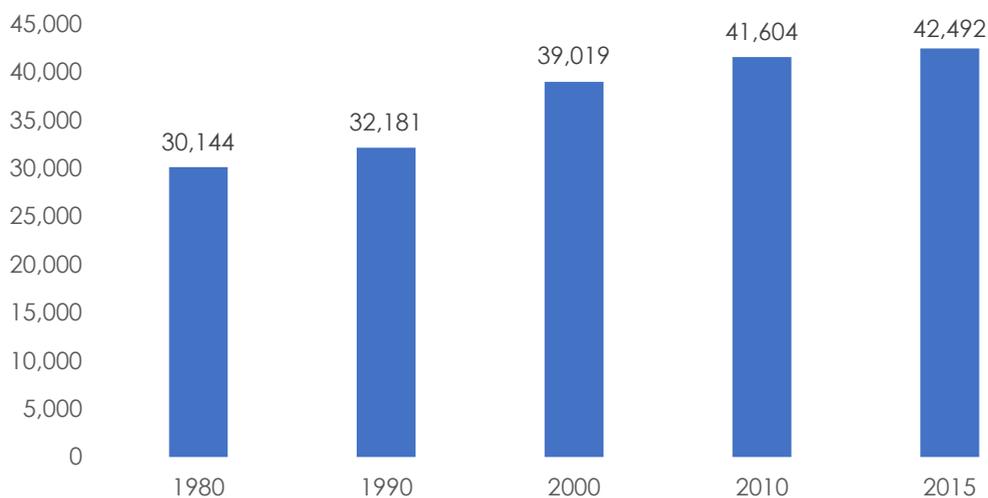
CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ANALYSES

2.1 Demographics – Town of Lancaster

2.1.1 SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The Town of Lancaster has grown in population over the last 35 years and faces many of the challenges associated with second-ring suburban communities. The Town of Lancaster is seeking to maintain harmony between those qualities that drew residents there in the first place (e.g. open space, award-winning schools, great neighborhoods, etc.) and the increased demands and pressures that a growing population brings with it (e.g. traffic congestion, adequate fire/emergency services coverage, demand for public recreational facilities, etc.) A clear understanding of the existing conditions in the Town allows for the identification of potential challenges and for the proper planning for the next steps that need to be taken in order to achieve and implement the goals and objectives prescribed by the community in this comprehensive plan update.

2.1.2 POPULATION TRENDS



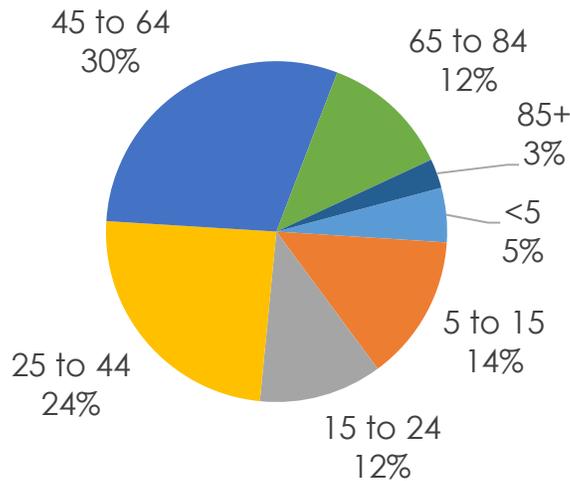
Source: US Census and American Community Survey (ACS)

The Town of Lancaster’s population, including the Village of Lancaster and the portion of the Village of Depew located in Lancaster, was 41,604 in 2010.¹ The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that the Town’s population continues to show signs of growth with an estimated population of 42,492. This represents an increase of approximately 888 residents from 2010 (a 2% growth). In comparison, the population of Erie County remained essentially the same over that time period.

Lancaster experienced strong growth over the past few decades. From 1980 to 2015 the population of the Town of Lancaster’s population grew by an estimated 12,348 residents, an increase of approximately 41% over a period when the County lost approximately 9% of its population.

¹ As noted in the introduction, all Town statistics include the Villages within the Town

2.1.3 AGE DISTRIBUTION



Source: Census Bureau ACS, 2015

Over half (54.1%) of residents in the Town of Lancaster are working-aged adults (ages 25 to 64). Children and college aged persons (ages 0 to 24) comprise nearly another third of the population (30.7%). The remaining 15% of the population are seniors aged 65 or older. The age distribution in Lancaster is similar to that of Erie County, although there are slightly fewer seniors (16.2%) and slightly more working aged adults (52.72%) in the County. The proportion of seniors in the Town of Lancaster has not drastically increased since the year 2000. In 2000, seniors aged 65 and older accounted for 14.4% of the Town's population, compared to the 15.1% in 2015.

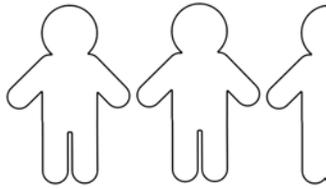
2.1.4 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median household income in the Town of Lancaster was estimated at \$67,223 in 2015, up from \$63,314 in 2010. This median household income level was significantly higher than Erie County as a whole, where it was estimated to be at \$51,247 and it was dramatically higher than the \$31,918 median household income found in the City of Buffalo.

2.1.5 POVERTY LEVELS

Poverty levels are estimated by the number of families and the number of people with incomes over the 12 months prior to survey that were below the poverty level. From 2010 to 2015 poverty levels in the Town of Lancaster decreased for both families (4.8% to 4.0%) and for people (7.2% to 5.8%). The poverty levels in the Town of Lancaster are significantly lower than those found in Erie County as a whole, where they are measured at approximately 10.9% for families and 10.1% for people.

2.1.6 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION



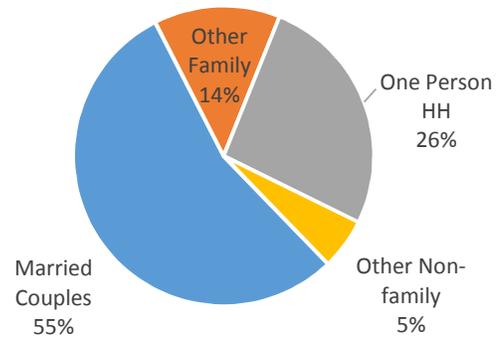
2.47 Persons

Average Household Size

The average household size in the Town of Lancaster is 2.47 persons. Family households tend to be slightly larger, with an average family size of 3.06 persons. The majority of households in the Town are classified as families (related persons living together): families account for over 68% of all households. Most families in Lancaster are married couples (55%), while other family types, such as single-parent families, make up 14%. Approximately one-third of family households (30%) have children under the age of 18 living in the household. Non-family households include persons living alone, which makes up a little over one-quarter (26.2%) of the Town’s households. Other types of non-family households (unrelated persons living together) make up the smallest share of households in the Town (5%).

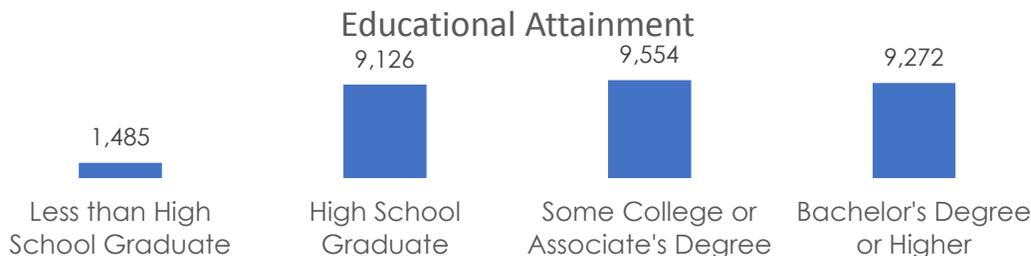
Household composition numbers are similar to those of Erie County, although there are some key differences. The Town of Lancaster had a higher average household size and slightly lower percentage of householders living alone. In Erie County the average household size was 2.32 persons, compared to 2.47 persons in the Town. Persons living alone accounted for approximately 33% of households countywide, compared to 26% in the Town. In general, Lancaster has a larger proportion of family households (68%) than the County, where 60% of households are families.

Lancaster Household Composition



2.1.7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

It is estimated that 95% of the Town of Lancaster’s residents ages 25 and over are at least high school graduates (or have earned their GED). Approximately 32% of residents over age 25 hold a bachelor’s degree. In general, the Town of Lancaster’s residents have higher levels of educational attainment than the residents of both the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew. In addition, Town residents had generally higher levels of educational attainment than the residents of Erie County as a whole (the countywide high school graduation rate for residents ages 25 and over was 90.3% and 31.5% of County residents in this age range held bachelor’s degrees).

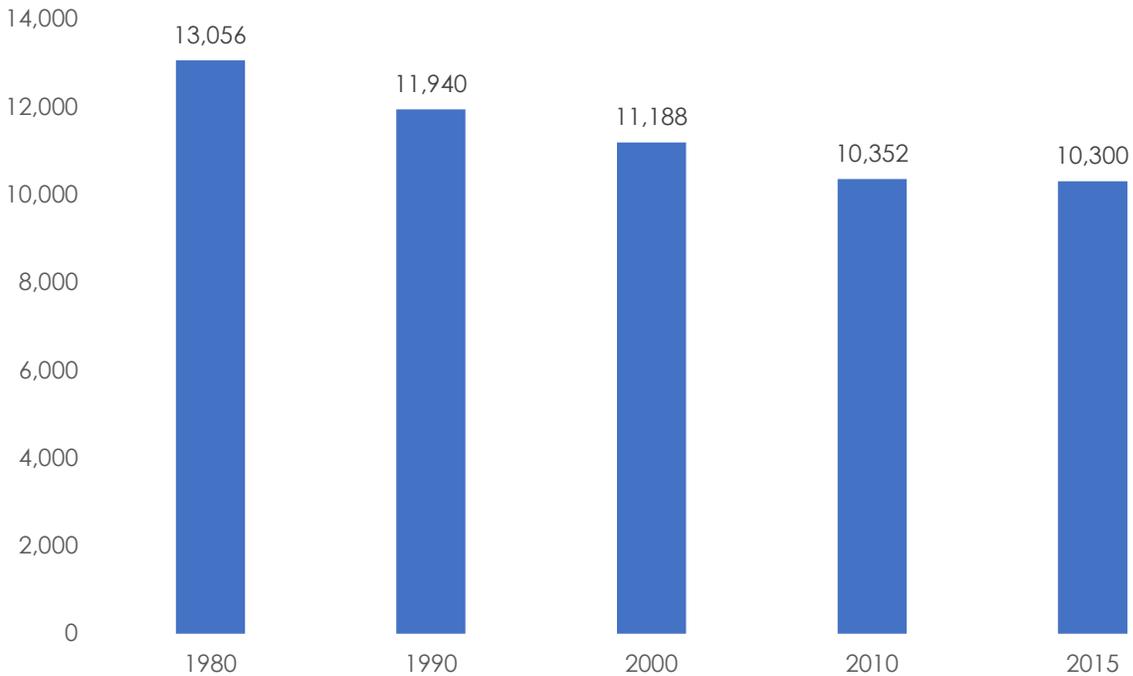


2.2 Demographics – Village of Lancaster

2.2.1 SETTING AND BACKGROUND

One Region Forward and the *Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth* have classified the Village in its entirety as a “Developed Area.” The Village of Lancaster has seen its population level-off over the course of the last 35-years and faces many of the same challenges experienced by Villages across the region.

2.2.2 POPULATION TRENDS



The population of the Village of Lancaster have been declining over the last 35 years, although that trend has appeared to level off over the last 5 years. Between 2000 and 2010, the population of the Village decreased by 836 residents (7.5%), but between 2010 and 2015, the population remained essentially the same. These population trends are fairly consistent with Erie County as a whole, which has seen a declining population figures in the villages as family sizes shrink and the population continues to age.

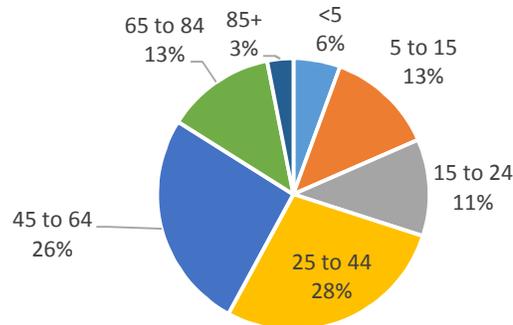
2.2.3 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median household income in the Village of Lancaster was estimated at \$49,991 in 2015, down from \$52,305 in 2010 (a decrease of approximately \$2,314). This median household income was very close to what was found in Erie County as a whole, where it was estimated to be at \$51,247 and it was significantly higher than the \$31,918 median household income found in the City of Buffalo.

2.2.4 POVERTY LEVELS

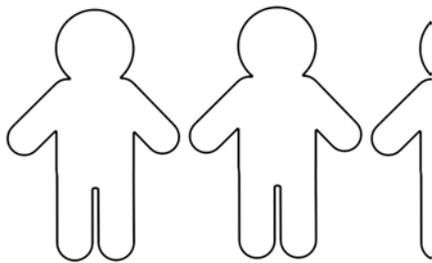
Poverty levels are estimated by the number of families and the number of people whose income in the 12 months prior to survey was below the poverty level. From 2010 to 2015, the proportion of families below the poverty line in the Village of Lancaster increased slightly (from 6.1% to 6.8%), while the percentage of persons under the poverty line decreased (from 8.4% to 7.4%). The poverty levels in the Village are lower than those found in Erie County as a whole, where they are measured at approximately 10.9% for families and 10.1% for people.

2.2.5 AGE DISTRIBUTION



In the Village of Lancaster seniors, ages 65 and over, accounted for 16.1% of the population, which was similar to the percentage of seniors (16.2%) of seniors found in Erie County’s population and the percentage of seniors in the Village of Lancaster’s population (16.1%). The number of seniors living in the Village of Lancaster has not drastically increased since the year 2000. In fact, in 2000, there were more seniors residing in the Village than in 2015, accounting for 17.8% of the Village’s population. In 2015, the percentage of residents under the age of 15 was 18.4%, which was 2.3% greater than the percentage of residents who were seniors (ages 65 and over). The largest share of the population is young adults aged 25 to 44, who make up 28% of the Village’s population.

2.2.6 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION



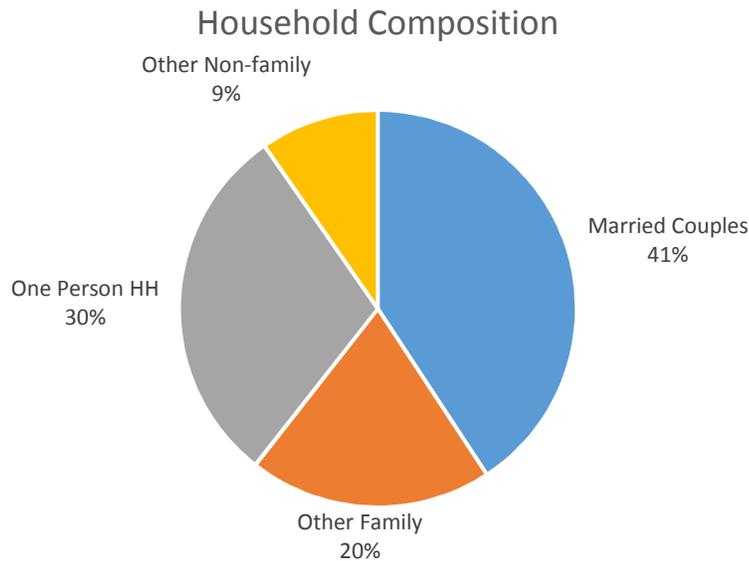
2.24 Persons

Average Household Size

The average household size in the Village of Lancaster was 2.24 persons, while the size of the average family in the Village was 2.91 persons. Persons living alone accounted for approximately one-third (30%) of the

Village’s households. Family households (related persons living together) accounted for 61% of the types

of households located in the Village of Lancaster, while non-family households represented 39%. Less than one-quarter of family households (24.9%) had children under the age of 18 living in the household.



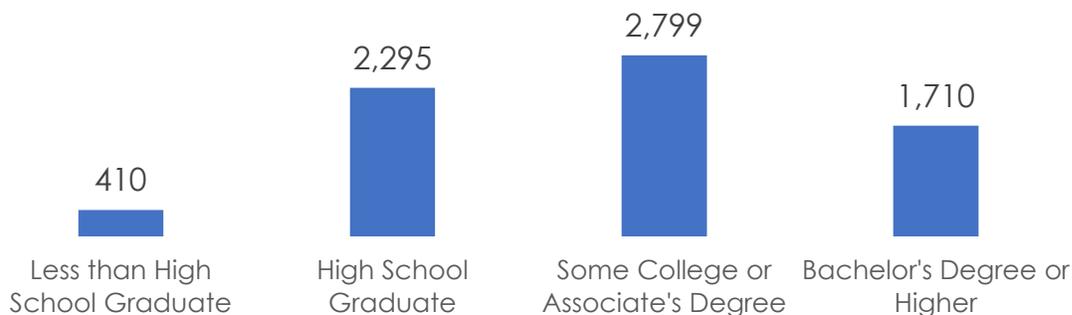
Source: Census Bureau ACS, 2015

These household composition numbers are similar to what was found in Erie County as a whole, although there were some key differences. The Village of Lancaster has a lower average household size. In Erie County the average household size was 2.32 persons, compared to 2.24 persons in the Village. The percentage of persons living alone (33% of households) countywide, compared to 30% in the Village.

The percentages of the family households and nonfamily households in the County, 60% and 40%, respectively, were virtually the same as what was found in the Village.

2.2.7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

It was estimated that 94.3% of the Village of Lancaster’s residents ages 25 and over were high school graduates (or have earned their GED) or higher and approximately 23.7% of that same group hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The countywide high school graduation rate for residents ages 25 and over was 90.3% and 31.5% of County residents ages 25 and over hold a bachelor’s degree or higher.

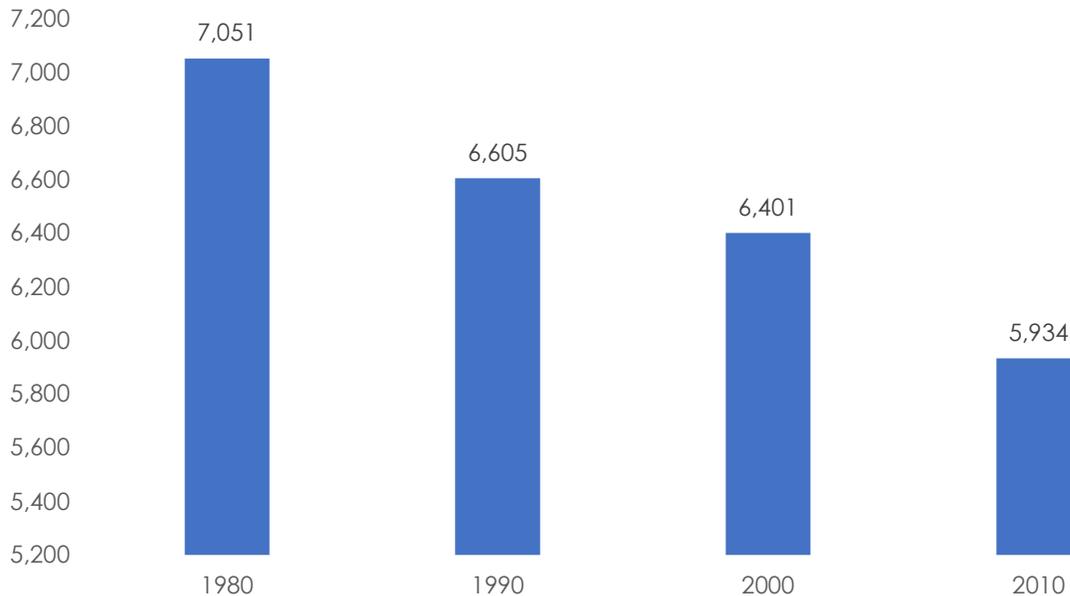


2.3 Demographics – Village of Depew

2.3.1 SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The Village of Depew is also classified as a “Developed Area.” Like the Village of Lancaster, the Village of Depew has seen its population decline over the course of the last 35 years and faces many of the same challenges experienced by Villages across the region.

2.3.2 POPULATION TRENDS *(FOR THE PORTION OF THE VILLAGE OF DEPEW LOCATED IN THE TOWN LANCASTER)*



The population of the entire Village of Depew was estimated to be approximately 15,300 in 2010. The Village’s population has been declining, from a peak of 22,158 in 1970 to an estimated 15,227 in 2015. This represents a decrease of approximately 31% since 1970. The declines have been moderating, and the Village’s population remained essentially the same between 2010 and 2015.²

The portion of the Village of Depew located within the Town of Lancaster had a population of 5,934 in 2010, representing approximately 39% of the Village’s total population. This portion of the Village has also been decreasing in population, losing approximately 1,100 persons, or 15.8% between 1980 and 2010. The population declines in Lancaster portion of the village have moderated: while 2015 population estimates are not available for this geography, in 2012, the population was estimated to be 5,937, or essentially the same as 2010.

2.3.3 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median household income for the entire Village of Depew was estimated at \$50,317 in 2015, up from \$48,558 in 2010 (an increase of approximately \$1,759). This median household income was very close to

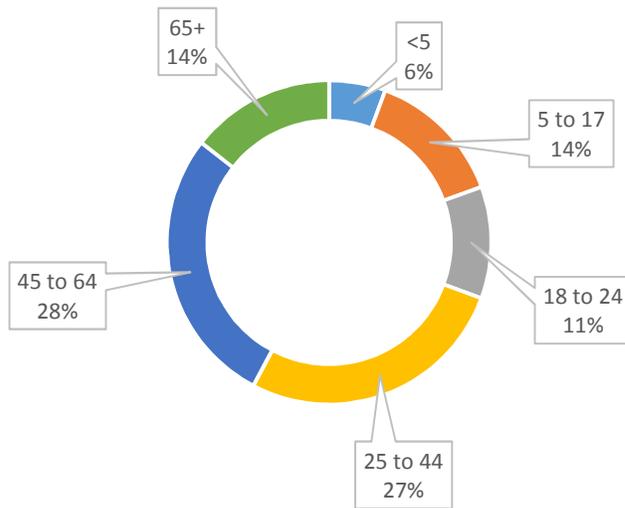
² The difference falls within the given margin of error.

what was found in Erie County as a whole, where it was estimated to be at \$51,247 and it was significantly higher than the \$31,918 median household income found in the City of Buffalo.

2.3.4 POVERTY LEVELS

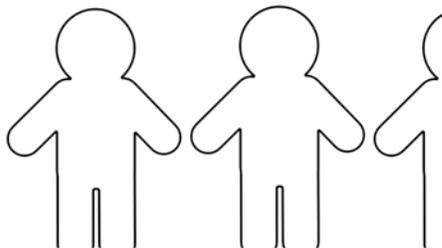
Poverty levels are estimated by the number of families and the number of people whose income the 12 months prior to survey was below the poverty level. From 2010 to 2015, poverty levels in the entire Village of Depew increased for families (from 5.0% to 7.1%) and increased for people (from 6.4% to 10.4%). The poverty levels in the Village are similar to those found in Erie County as a whole, where in 2015 they were measured at approximately 10.9% for families and 10.1% for people.

2.3.5 AGE DISTRIBUTION *ONLY THAT PORTION OF THE VILLAGE OF DEPEW LOCATED IN THE TOWN LANCASTER*



In the Lancaster portion of the Village of Depew, seniors ages 65 and over accounted for 14% of the population, which was lower than the percentage of seniors (16.2%) of seniors found in Erie County’s population and the percentage of seniors in the Village of Lancaster’s population (16.1%). In 2010, the percentage of residents aged 17 and under was 19.4%, which was 4.9% greater than the percentage who were seniors. A substantial number of these residents, 819 (13.8%), were between the ages of 5 and 17.

2.3.6 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION *ONLY THAT PORTION OF THE VILLAGE OF DEPEW LOCATED IN THE TOWN LANCASTER*

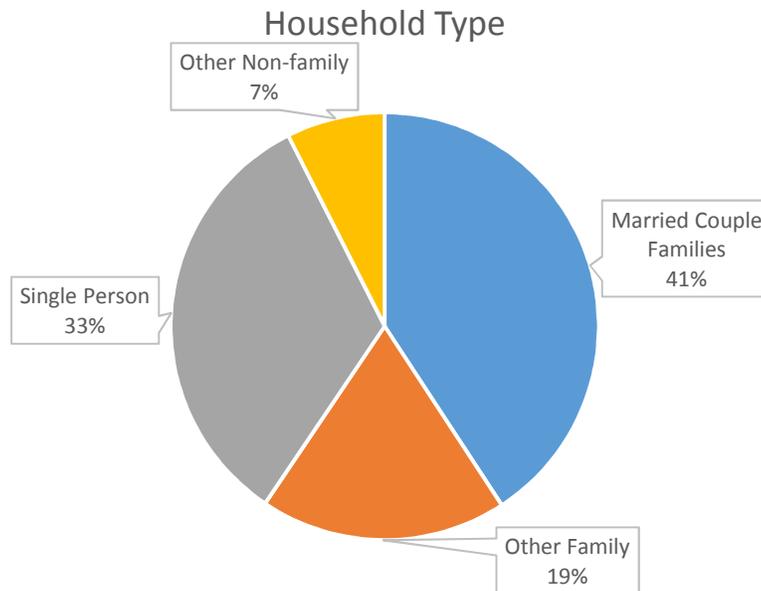


2.27 Persons

Average Household Size

The average household size in the Lancaster portion of the Village of Depew was 2.27 persons, while the size of the average family was 2.89 persons. The number of householders living alone (862) accounted for a little over one-third (33.1%) of the Village’s households.

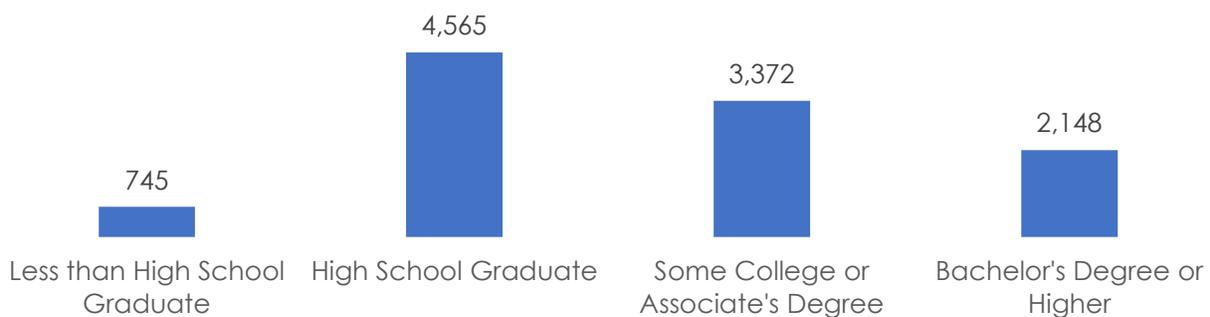
Family households (related persons living together) accounted for 59.4% of the types of households located in the Lancaster portion of the Village of Depew, including 41% that were married couples. Non-family households represented 40.5%. Nearly 40% of family households (619) had children under the age of 18 living in the household.



These household composition numbers are similar to what was found in Erie County as a whole. The Village of Depew had a lower average household size. In Erie County the average household size was 2.32 persons, compared to 2.27 persons in the Lancaster portion of the Village of Depew. The percentage of householders living alone in the Village was virtually identical to the County's percentage of householders living alone, at 33%, and the distribution between family and non-family households was also the same.

2.3.7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

It was estimated that 93.1% of the Village of Depew's residents ages 25 and over were high school graduates (or have earned their GED) or higher and approximately 19.8% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The countywide high school graduation rate for residents ages 25 and over was 90.3% and 31.5% of County residents ages 25 and over hold a bachelor's degree or higher. These differences in educational attainment could be one explanation, or contributing factor, for the lower median household income in the Village of Depew (\$50,317) when compared to the countywide average (\$51,247).



COMPARISONS: TOWN OF LANCASTER

**Median
Income**



\$67,233

Compared to
\$51,247
Countywide

**Families in
Poverty**



4.0%

Compared to
10.9%
Countwide

**Dominant
Land Use**



Residential

Single-Family
Detached
Homes

**College
Graduates**



40%

Associate's
Degree or
Higher

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

**Median
Income**



\$49,991

**Families in
Poverty**



6.8%

**Dominant
Land Use**



Residential

**College
Graduates**



39.4%

VILLAGE OF DEPEW (entire)

**Median
Income**



\$50,317

**Families in
Poverty**



7.1%

**Dominant
Land Uses**



Residential

**College
Graduates**



31.4%

2.4 Environment

The natural environment of the Town and the Villages consists of the physical characteristics of the land and ecology of the communities. This section of the plan considers the natural environment, focusing on the sensitive environmental features.

2.4.1 TOPOGRAPHY

Topography is one of the prime physical characteristics determining an area's development potential. Relief and grade levels often dictate the extent and character of land development. Land that is nearly flat or has gentle slopes (ranging from 0% to 8%), lends itself more advantageously to development than land characterized by greater slopes or variation in elevation. Land in the Town of Lancaster is generally located in the Erie Plain, between the Onondaga Escarpment to the north and the Portage Escarpment to the south, and has generally flat to gently rolling lands with slopes in the 0% to 8% range. Much of the land in the Town of Lancaster was formerly, or currently is, utilized for agriculture. There are some areas of steep slopes (slopes exceeding 15%), particularly in and around the stream corridors of Cayuga Creek, Ellicott Creek, Little Buffalo Creek, Plum Bottom Creek, and Slate Bottom Creek.

2.4.2 HYDRIC SOILS

Hydric Soils are defined by the USDA as "...a soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part." The wet conditions of hydric soils generally support certain types of vegetation. Hydric soils are likely to contain wetlands. The National Soil Information System has developed a list of soils that are categorized as hydric or potentially hydric. In Lancaster, hydric soils are found throughout the Town, although a preponderance of them are located to near the stream corridors of Cayuga Creek, Ellicott Creek, Little Buffalo Creek, Plum Bottom Creek, Scajaquada Creek and Slate Bottom Creek.

2.4.3 STREAM CORRIDORS AND WATERSHEDS

Major creeks in Lancaster include Cayuga Creek, Ellicott Creek, Little Buffalo Creek, Plum Bottom Creek, Scajaquada Creek and Slate Bottom Creek. Streams in the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew generally run from east to west and drain into either the Buffalo River, the Niagara River, or Scajaquada Creek.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines watersheds as the area of land, or drainage basin, that catches rain and snow melt and drains into a common outlet, such as a stream, river, lake or other body of water. In the Town of Lancaster, there are three major sub-watersheds of the Niagara River Watershed (as delineated in the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper's *Niagara River Watershed Management Plan*): Cayuga Creek, Ellicott Creek and Scajaquada Creek (Niagara River). In addition, a small portion of the north of the Town falls within the Lower Tonawanda Creek sub-watershed.

Cayuga Creek is located in the southern portion of the Town of Lancaster, running east through the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew, ultimately emptying into the Buffalo River in the Town of West Seneca to the west. Ellicott Creek is located in the northern portion of the Town of Lancaster, following a winding, westerly course prior to going through the Town of Cheektowaga to the west, the Towns of Amherst and Tonawanda to the northwest, and emptying into the Niagara River in the City of Tonawanda.

The Scajaquada Creek traverses the western portion of the Town through the northern portion of the Village of Depew, and just north of the Village of Lancaster, and empties into the Niagara River in the City of Buffalo. The northernmost portion of the Town drains northward into the Lower Tonawanda Creek in the Town of Clarence. Map 1: Watersheds illustrates the streams and watersheds in the Town and Villages.

2.4.4 FLOODPLAINS AND WETLANDS

The region contains flood zones that have been designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as areas subject to flooding. These areas are depicted on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). The flood zones are established based upon the degree to which an area is susceptible to flood damage. The flood hazard areas (100-year floodplains) are depicted in general form on the Map 2: Environmental Features.³ Flood hazard areas in these communities are primarily found along the banks of Cayuga Creek, Ellicott Creek, Little Buffalo Creek, Plum Bottom Creek, Scajaquada Creek, and Slate Bottom Creek.

There are both State and Federal wetlands located in the Town and the Villages. Wetlands are defined by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) as transition areas between uplands and aquatic habitats. They are identified by a variety of factors including the presence of standing water, vegetation, and soil type. The NYSDEC regulates any wetland area that meets their definition and is 12.4 acres or larger. Federal wetlands are under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers, who regulates development within federal wetlands if they are 0.1-acre or larger, and are associated with a navigable waterway. Typically, a 100-foot adjacent area buffers State wetlands from any proposed development or improvement. Federal wetlands do not have a similar adjacent area, but an application and permit (Nationwide Permit) is required prior to undertaking a development or improvement in a federal wetland. These permits are reviewed and administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). In some cases, an area may be classified as both a federal and a State wetland.

Wetlands are an extremely important environmental resource that perform numerous functions. The NYSDEC has listed some of these functions as flood and storm water control, surface and groundwater protection, erosion control, pollution treatment and nutrient cycling, and fish and wildlife habitat, as well as public enjoyment.

The Environmental Features Map depicts the mapped wetlands in the three communities. It is noted, however, that there may be additional unmapped wetlands. In the two villages, there are no mapped State wetlands, and limited areas of mapped federal wetlands. There are significant areas of both State and federal wetlands in the Town of Lancaster. A large area of State wetlands is located on the north side of Ellicott Creek, in the northern portion of the Town. This area also contains a significant area of federal wetlands. A second area of wetlands, associated with Little Buffalo Creek, is located on the southern portion of the Town, with some federal wetlands in the vicinity. Another notable collection of State wetlands are located on the north and south sides of Slate Bottom Creek. Additional areas of both state and federal mapped wetlands are located throughout the Town, as shown on Map 2.

³ Information on exact locations of the flood hazard boundary areas are available on official maps on file at the municipal office (Building Department for Town of Lancaster, Building Department/Code Enforcement for Village of Lancaster, and Building Inspection/Code Enforcement for Village of Depew).

This Comprehensive Plan sets basic Town policies for protecting the Town’s important drainage features: the creeks, the floodplains, and the wetlands. The policies, carried out through effective regulation, are intended to protect the public interest from the adverse effects of development that disregards the drainage system. There are many benefits associated with protecting drainage features. By acting as a natural sponge to trap stormwater, snowmelt, and other surface waters, they reduce the volume and speed of runoff. This protects areas from negative impacts associated with flooding and helps reduce risk of erosion. They add natural beauty to the Town, and provide important habitats for wildlife. Avoiding development in floodplains prevents risks associated with serious flood damage.

2.4.5 SCENIC RESOURCES

In general, there are many scenic resources in the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew. Particular views of scenic interest include the many stream corridors, Como Lake Park, and the rural character of the remaining working agricultural lands located in the southeastern portion of the Town of Lancaster.

2.5 Land Use and Zoning

The Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew all regulate land use through the use of comprehensive planning and zoning regulations. The draft land use plan delineated in the comprehensive plan, informs the zoning regulations of the Town and of the Villages, serving as the legal basis for the zoning districts that are established. Land use is also impacted by the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the requirements of the New York State Agricultural and Markets Law for those properties located within an agricultural district.

2.5.1 LAND USE

Lands in the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew are generally categorized into nine categories: Agricultural; Residential; Commercial; Industrial; Recreation and Entertainment; Community Service; Public Services; Wild, Forest, Conservation Lands and Parks; and Vacant Land.⁴ Map 3: Land Use shows a generalized depiction of the existing land use patterns in the communities. In general, the majority of lands in the Town and in the Villages fall under the Residential land use category. Most of the housing stock in both the Town and the Villages consists of single-family detached homes, but unlike many suburban communities, there are also multi-family housing opportunities available in the Town and both Villages.

There is a greater mix of land use categories along major thoroughfares, especially those corridors that cross multiple municipal jurisdictional boundaries, including, but not limited to Broadway, Genesee Street, and Transit Road. The two Villages have a significant concentration of commercial development, with retail centering on Broadway and Transit Road in the Village of Depew, and along Broadway and Central Avenue in the Village of Lancaster. Additional commercial development, including retail, offices and other business uses, are found in locations throughout the communities. Walden Avenue is characterized by a concentration of commercial uses in all three communities.

⁴ Land use categories are derived from assessment data.

The majority of Recreational and Entertainment uses are golf courses: there are three in the Town of Lancaster. Community services uses include schools and other public buildings, discussed below in the section on Community Facilities. There are also a number of cemeteries in the Town which are classified as community services on the Land Use Map.

Industrial lands are located along Walden Avenue in the Town of Lancaster, and along the rail corridor south of Walden in all three communities. The large area classified as industrial north of the Thruway in the Town is the Buffalo Crushed Stone quarry. Another quarry is located off Genesee Street east of Pavement Road.

While many areas once farmed have transitioned to residential uses, scattered areas of agricultural lands remain in the southeastern portion of the Town of Lancaster. There are still significant expanses of vacant land in the Town of Lancaster. Many of these areas correspond to the large wetland complexes, which limit the development potential of these lands.

2.5.2 ZONING - Town of Lancaster

The zoning laws in the Town of Lancaster (Chapter 50 of the Town of Lancaster Municipal Code) establish zoning districts to regulate development within the community. The current zoning map for the Town of Lancaster can be seen on Map 4. The Town of Lancaster’s zoning districts are depicted in the following table:

Town of Lancaster Zoning Districts		
Districts		Intent
Residential Districts		
Agricultural Residential	A-R	Low-density, semi-rural single-family detached residential development that also accommodates farm, farm-related and other non-intensive compatible activities.
Residential District One	R-1	Low-density single-family detached residential development. Minimum lot: 9,375 sf with sewers, ¼ acre if no sewers. Maximum density: approximately 3.5 units/gross acre with sewers; 1.25 units/gross acre if no sewers.
Residential District Two	R-2	Low-density, single-family and two-family detached residential development. Minimum lot: 7,500 sf with sewers. Maximum density: 4 units/ gross acre on average.
Multifamily Residential District Three	MFR-3	Development of attached and detached dwelling units, at a maximum density of approximately 8 units/gross acre where public sewers are available.
Multifamily Residential District Four	MFR-4	Medium-density, multifamily development. Design standards provided to assure adequate light and air to residents and protection to and from surrounding development. Maximum density: approximately 14 units/gross acre.
Mobile Home Residential District Five	MFR-5	Mobile home parks. Permits single family detached mobile dwelling units on individual lots at a maximum density of approximately 8 units/gross acre.

Town of Lancaster Zoning Districts (cont.)		
Business Districts		
Neighborhood Business	NB	Commercial services for day-to-day convenience shopping and personal service needs of a neighborhood area.
General Business	GB	Commercial services for general goods and services and comparison shopping (uses that need larger land areas, generate large volumes of traffic and may have evening activity.)
Commercial and Motor Services	CMS	Commercial uses meeting community-wide needs for specialized goods and services and transportation-oriented commercial uses to meet the needs of motorists.
Shopping District	SC	Business facilities designed and planned as a unified entity with common off-street parking to jointly serve all establishments.
Residential Commercial Office	RCO	Commercial and office uses not necessarily related to retail trade.
Industrial Districts		
Light Industrial	LI	Light manufacturing activities and related production activities, designed and located so as to not encroach on surrounding uses, Provide a balanced employment mix and improve the tax base.
General Industrial	GI	Medium manufacturing and processing facilities; office, research and service establishments, so as to insure the efficient development of the industrial use and compatibility with adjacent districts. Encourage development of a balanced employment mix within the Town and improve the tax base.
Sand, Gravel & Aggregates	SGA	Excavation and/or quarrying of stone, sand, gravel, topsoil and other nonmetallic minerals (except fuel), buffered from adjacent properties, while providing minimum standards for land reclamation.

The zoning establishes what uses are allowed within each district, whether by-right, or with a Special Use Permit. It also establishes the bulk regulations (i.e. dimensional requirements) that govern required lot size, street frontage, yard setbacks, height, and lot coverage. The bulk regulations vary depending on the zoning district. For example, buildings in the Multifamily Residential District Three (MFR-3) are permitted to have a maximum lot coverage of 45%, whereas in the Residential District Two (R-2) buildings are permitted to have a maximum lot coverage of 35%. The law also sets forth criteria for off-street parking, landscaping, fences, supplementary height restrictions, and subsurface rights.

The Town of Lancaster Zoning map was last amended in August, 2011. Most of the Town is zoned for residential use, with A-R (Agricultural Residential) covering most of the eastern and southern quadrants of the Town. The next largest zoning district is R-1 (Residential District One), which covers most areas adjacent to the Villages.

2.5.3 ZONING – Village of Lancaster

The zoning law in the Village of Lancaster (Chapter 350 of the Village of Lancaster Municipal Code) establishes zoning districts to regulate development within the community. The current zoning map for the Village can be seen on Map 5. The Village of Lancaster zoning districts include the following:

Village of Lancaster Zoning Districts	
Districts	Intent
Residential Districts	
R-1 Residence	Traditional residential district. Allows Dwelling Groups (two or more dwellings on same lot with a common yard) with Special Use Permit.
R-2A Residence	Mixed use residential district that allows certain commercial uses, such as offices, medical buildings and institutions. Conditions may apply. Allows uses from R-1 district.
Business Districts	
Central Business District (CBD)	Mixed use district for the Village downtown, separated into four subzones: Traditional CBD; New Development; Open Space and High Rise. (see discussion, below)
C-1 Business District	Commercial district allowing uses such as retail sales, personal services, offices, restaurants, and banks. All operations must be enclosed within buildings. Also allows residential uses.
C-2 General Commercial District	District for a range of more intensive commercial uses, such as gas stations, car washes, drive-throughs, hotels, warehousing. Allows uses from C-1.
Industrial Districts	
M-1 Manufacturing District	District for manufacturing and similar uses, such as public utilities and contractor’s yards. Offices are also allowed. Code sets forth performance standards to control impacts (dust, noise, glare etc.) and designs standards for screening, storage and signs.
M-IP Industrial Park District	Provide for planned industrial parks, promoting the “harmonious integration of industrial activities with the surrounding neighborhood.”

The CBD district is intended to strengthen downtown as a walkable, safe environment, with high quality ground floor retail and commercial uses; community gathering space for events, festivals and celebrations; and attractive open space that attracts residents and visitors and encourages private investment. Accordingly, the CBD regulations set forth extensive design and performance standards to control development, including but not limited to siting, materials, screening, pedestrian and bicyclist circulation, landscaping and signage. Each of the four CBD subareas are intended to complement each other. The Traditional Central Business District (CBDT) subzone is the core of the downtown, and district regulations are designed to protect character and economic viability of the historic downtown. The CBDT zoning regulations promote mixed-use development, and preserving and adaptively reusing the existing historic structures in the Village’s Central Business District (CBD). Example of the type of uses this zoning district was designed for include buildings with first-floor retail, and second-floor commercial, office and/or residential, and third-floor residential. The Central Business District New Development Zone (CBDNB) encompasses the property west of the core downtown that currently consists largely of a parking lot. Regulations for the CBDNB district are intended to promote redevelopment of this area as a mixed use development in a manner that supports and enhances the existing downtown businesses. The Central Business District Open Space Zone (CBDO) is a small area along Cayuga Creek that is designated for passive

recreation, while the Central Business District High Rise Zone (CBDHR) allows high-rise apartment buildings. Bulk regulations (i.e. dimensional requirements) are outlined in Article III of the Village’s zoning law (§§ 350.25–350.34). These regulations govern required lot area, lot width, area and width exceptions, front yards, side yards, rear yards, high requirements, location of open off-street parking, and location of accessory structures. The bulk regulations vary depending on the zoning district. In general, the bulk standards reflect Village character, with smaller lot sizes and required setbacks than seen in the Town. The Village of Lancaster’s zoning map was last amended in January, 2009. The most prominent zones in the Village are the R-1 (Residence) and the R-2 (Residence) zoning districts. Business, Commercial, and Manufacturing zoning districts are located on Broadway, Central Avenue, West Main Street, and Walden Avenue.

The Village of Lancaster’s zoning law also establishes which uses are permitted by Special Use Permit. Special Use Permits are required for certain uses that may require additional regulations and/or restrictions. The Village also has a sign ordinance (Article IV), and off-street parking regulations (Article V).

2.5.4 ZONING – Village of Depew

The zoning laws in the Village of Depew are found in Chapter 260 of the Village of Depew Municipal Code. The current zoning map for the Village of Depew can be seen on Map 6. The Village of Depew has eight unique zoning districts, as set forth in the following table:

Village of Depew Zoning Districts	
Districts	Intent
Residential Districts	
Single-family Residential (R-1)	Low-density single-family detached residential development on lots of 6,600 square feet or more.
Two-family & Multifamily Residential (R-2)	Medium density residential development.
Commercial Districts	
General Commercial (C-1)	Primarily pedestrian-oriented neighborhood commercial nodes providing shopping, offices and personal services. Intended to be compatible with surrounding residential development.
Shopping Center (C-2)	Commercial centers within mixed-use activity centers for commercial uses serving a larger market area than a neighborhood center, and providing general goods and services and comparison shopping. Such uses require larger land areas, generate large volumes of traffic and may generate large amounts of evening activity.
Motor Services (MS)	Transportation-oriented commercial uses for motorists, related vehicular needs.
Industrial Districts	
Light Industry (M-1)	Manufacturing and processing facilities, office, research and service establishments, in organized centers, compatible with adjacent uses and districts.
Heavy Industry (M-2)	For more intensive manufacturing and industrial processing facilities and land uses which require separation from less intensive uses.
Other	
Land Conservation (LS)	Overlay district to prohibit substantial development in areas where topography, drainage, floodplain or other natural conditions present constraints for buildings or structures.

Within each of the zoning district descriptions in the Village’s zoning code, allowed uses, uses allowed by special use permit and bulk regulations (i.e. dimensional requirements) are specified in detail. The bulk regulations govern things such as required lot area, lot width, lot depth, yard requirements, maximum height, maximum building coverage, etc.

The Village’s zoning map was last amended in September, 2012. In the part of the Village of Depew that falls within the Town of Lancaster, the most prominent zones are residential (R-1, Single-Family Residential and R-2, Two-Family and Multifamily Residential). Depew was largely founded as railroad-based community and a significant portion of the Village abutting the railroad is located in the M-1, Light Industry, zoning district. Shopping Center, C-2, zoning district properties are focused around the Village’s major roadways: Broadway and Transit Road. A small stretch of properties zoned General Commercial are located on the north and south sides of Main Street.

2.5.5 AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Agricultural lands are defined as those that are utilized for the production of crops or livestock. There are no agricultural lands located in the Village of Lancaster or in the Village of Depew. There are some agricultural lands found in the Town of Lancaster, primarily south of Walden Avenue and east of Bowen Road. According to the New York State RPS, fewer than thirty parcels of land in the Town of Lancaster are classified as agricultural, although agricultural activity is occurring on at least portions of some parcels classified as residential by assessment code. This pattern is consistent with the Planning Policy Areas in the *Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth*, which classifies all of both villages as Developed Areas and classifies most of the Town of Lancaster as Developed Area or Developing Area, with only small portions of the Town being a Rural Area.⁵

The Lancaster-Alden Agricultural District (Erie County Agricultural District #16) encompasses nearly all of the southeastern portion of the Town. Landowners voluntarily agree to have their lands placed into Agricultural Districts in exchange for a variety of protections and incentives designed to promote the continued agricultural use of the land. The County administers the program on behalf of New York State, officially reviewing the districts, and adopting them following state certification. The districts are re-certified every 8 years, and landowners can opt to either remain in the district or be removed. Agricultural districts allow landowners the opportunity to receive real property assessments based on the value of their land for agricultural production rather than on its development value. In addition, these landowners gain protection from local regulations that would unreasonably restrict farming operations, protection from nuisance suits, and they receive greater protection from development under the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process. As Map 7 illustrates, because it is a voluntary program, not all land being farmed falls within the protection of an Agricultural District. At the same time, not every parcel within an Agricultural District is currently in active agricultural use.

The decline of agricultural as a way of life in the Town of Lancaster is correlated with its increasing population and desired destination as a second-ring suburb of the City of Buffalo. The *Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan* notes that “the second ring towns of Lancaster...were once active farming towns but the lure of open space with tracts of developable land also made them appealing as residential communities.” Between 2000 and 2010, the increase in number of housing units (+10%)

⁵ *Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth*, page 34.

outpaced population change (6.6%) in the Town of Lancaster.⁶ As the population of the Town has increased, residential and commercial land uses have replaced parcels previously utilized for agricultural purposes.

As displayed on Map 7, most of the Town’s soils are classified as either prime farmland or prime farmland if drained by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Additional areas are classified as soils of statewide importance, which are soils not classified as prime farmland by the NRCS, but that are important at a state level.

Significant portions of the Town and both Villages have prime soils. Many of the best soils in the Town are located in and around the stream corridors of Ellicott Creek and Scajaquada Creek. The *Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan* notes that the Town of Lancaster still has areas of highly rated soils.⁷

2.6 Housing and Neighborhoods

2.6.1 HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS – Town of Lancaster

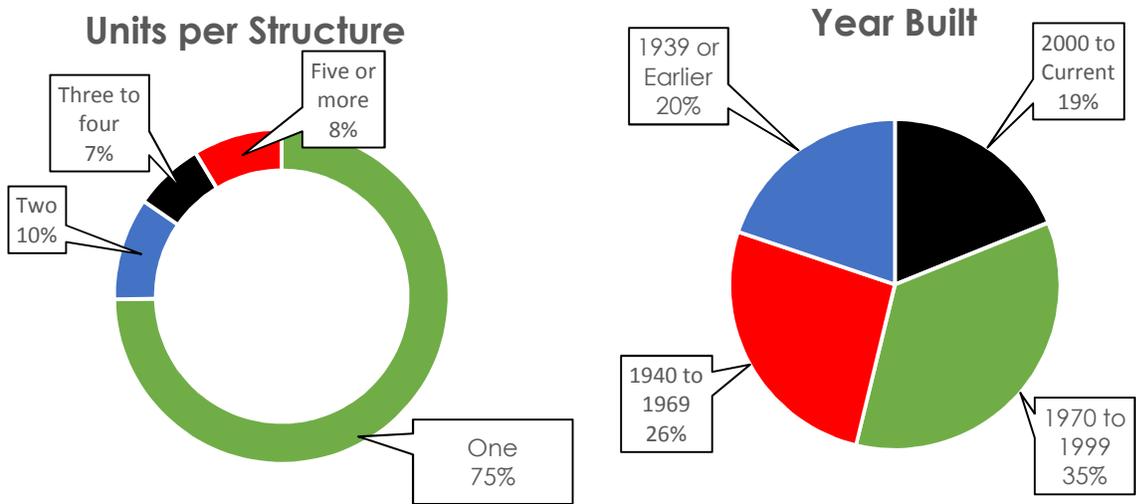
Housing and neighborhoods in the Town of Lancaster are reflective of its second-ring suburban setting, characterized by single-family detached homes set on small-sized to medium-sized lots. In 2015, the Town of Lancaster had an estimated 17,711 housing units. Approximately 4.2% of the housing units were vacant, which reflects a healthy housing market.⁸ In comparison, the vacancy rate for Erie County overall was 9%. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated that nearly 70% (12,340) of the housing units located in the Town were single-family detached homes, while an additional 5% were single-family attached units or mobile homes. Around 10% is two-family homes, and 7% in three- to four-unit structures. The remaining 9% consists of apartment buildings with 5 or more units.

The housing stock in Lancaster is significantly newer than typical in Erie County. Slightly more than half (51.5%) of all units were built after 1970, compared to 29.1% across Erie County. Approximately 20% of the housing units predated 1940, compared to 32% in the County.

⁶ Erie County, *Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan*, pages 11-12.

⁷ *Erie County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*, page 41.

⁸ This figure accounts for units available for lease or sale, or otherwise in transition. A 5% vacancy rate is considered normal.

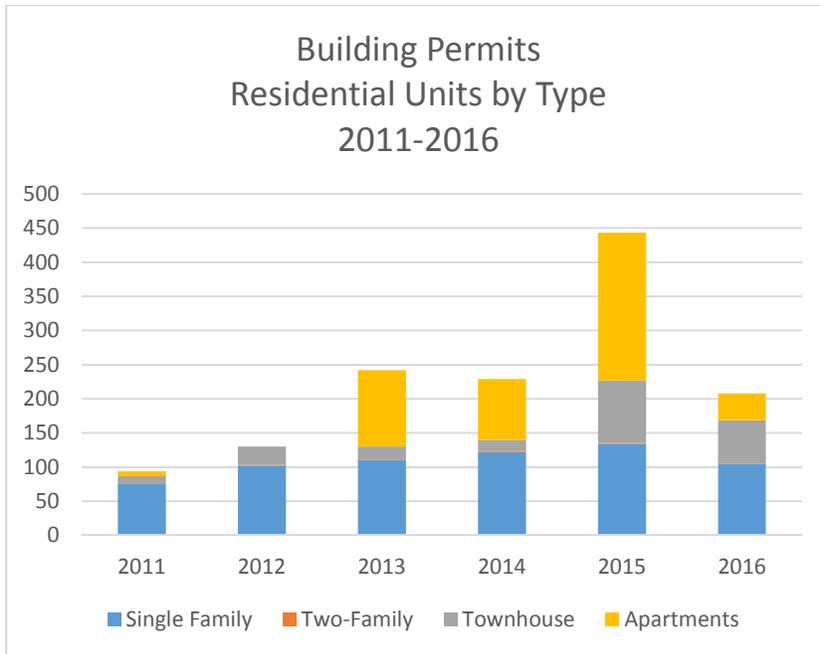


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 ACS

There has been strong growth in the Town of Lancaster, with an average of 225 new units built each year between 2011 and 2015. The number of total units permitted tended to increase between 2011 and 2015, driven primarily by an increase in the number of permits for apartment units. The largest number of permits issued was in 2015, with a total of 444. While single-family housing remains the most common type of new development, there is an increasing proportion of townhouses and apartments being built. In 2011, 80% of all units were single family homes; by 2016, the proportion had decreased to 48% of new units, with 34% of new units in apartment complexes, and 17% in townhouse developments. In October 2017, the Town of Lancaster Building Department reported that there were 300 available building lots in approved residential developments.

Town of Lancaster, Building Permits for New Units					
Type of Unit	Single Family	Two-Family	Townhouse	Apartments	Total
2011	78	0	12	7	95
2012	102	1	27	0	131
2013	110	1	19	112	243
2014	122	2	16	89	230
2015	134	1	92	216	444
2016	105	0	64	39	209
Total	648	5	230	463	1,350
Average (2011-15)	108	<1	38	77	225

Source: Town of Lancaster Building Department



Neighborhoods and communities within the Town of Lancaster include the historic hamlets of Bowmansville and Town Line. The hamlet of Bowmansville is located in the northwest corner of the Town, on Genesee Street, between Transit Road (NYS Route 78) to the west and Harris Hill Road to the east. Ellicott Creek crosses the hamlet, as is a portion of the former West Shore Railroad line that cuts diagonally across the hamlet.

It is believed that the first settlers arrived in the Bowmansville area of the Town of Lancaster around 1803, predating the incorporation of the Town, which was formally incorporated in 1833. Bowmansville is named for Benjamin Bowman, who operated sawmills on Ellicott Creek in the center of the hamlet in the early 1800's. The area retains its historic character.



Shrine at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church



Historic cobblestone home in Bowmansville

The Bowmansville hamlet hosts a concentration of commercial businesses along Genesee Street and at the intersection of Genesee Street and Harris Hill Road. The hamlet is known for its collection of historic homes and other buildings, including the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church and Shrine that was built in 1920. Many structures in the hamlet are over 100 years old, and merit recognition.

The hamlet of Town Line flanks both the north side and south side of Broadway in the easternmost part of the Town of Lancaster. Much of the hamlet lies within the Town of Alden, to the east of Lancaster. Town Line Road, which serves as the Town of Lancaster's eastern boundary with Alden, runs north/south through the hamlet and forms the hamlet's main intersection when it crosses Broadway. Cayuga Creek flows through the hamlet of Town of Line. The history of this area dates to the early 1800's. The four corners area in Town Line, at Broadway and Town Line Road, supports a small number of restaurants and small businesses that serve the surrounding hamlet area.

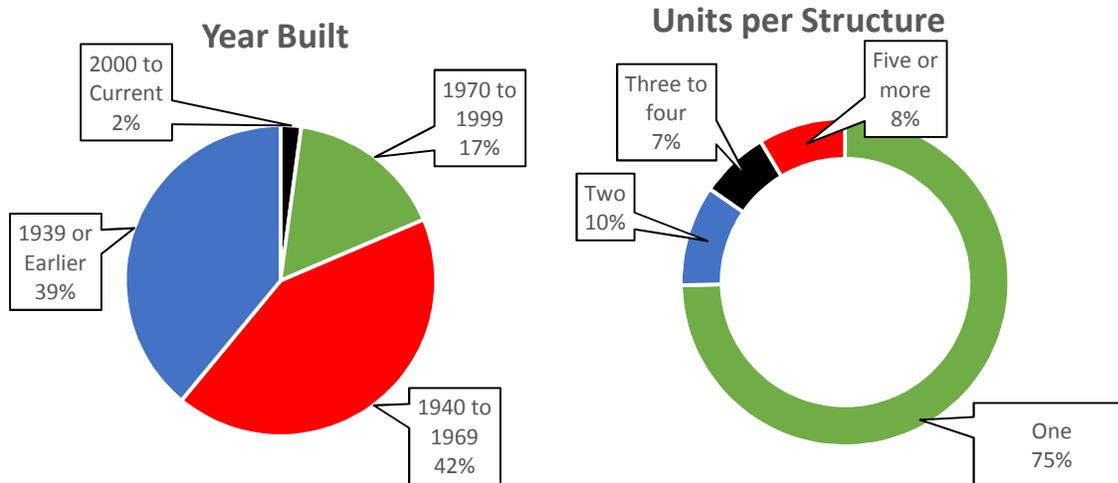
Although records no longer exist to support it, local lore holds that residents of Town Line met in the local school house at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 and voted to secede from the Union. This secession was largely symbolic, as it was not recognized by the government. The residents of the hamlet did not vote to rejoin the Union until 1946. The area continues to celebrate its conflicted heritage as the Confederacy's last holdout.

2.6.2 HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS – Village of Lancaster

The Village of Lancaster is approximately 2.7 square miles in size. The Village was incorporated in 1849 and is one of the oldest incorporated villages in Erie County. In 2015, the Village of Lancaster had an estimated 4,724 housing units. Single-family detached homes are counted as one unit, two-family homes are counted as two units, and each apartment within an apartment building is counted individually. Approximately 8% (375 units) were vacant.

The majority of those units, 3,122 (66%), were single-family detached homes. Another 4% were single-family attached homes (townhouses). A tenth of the housing stock is two-family homes, while 15% is in structures with three or more units.

Approximately 39% of the housing units in the Village had a construction date that predated 1940, and 42% were built between 1940 and 1969. Unlike the Town of Lancaster, where 19% of the housing stock was built since 2000, only 2% of Village units were built since 2000. Building permit data confirm this pattern: between 2011 and 2016, the Village of Lancaster issued permits for a total of seven new units. There were three new single-family units permits issued in 2012, and 4 new apartment unit permits issued in 2014.



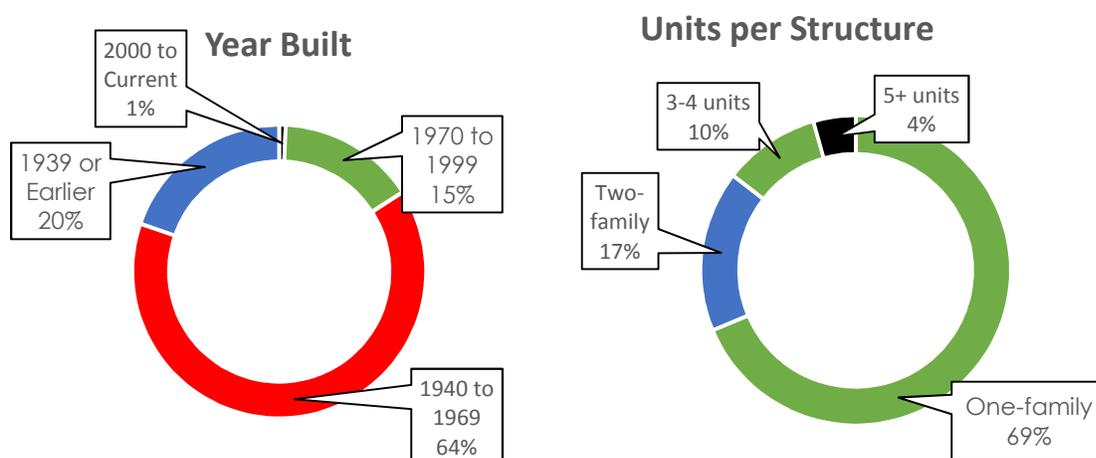
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 ACS

The Village of Lancaster is a distinctive neighborhood with noteworthy historic and cultural character. Over 80 buildings spanning two designated historic districts could qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places based on their distinctive architecture.

2.6.3 HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS – Village of Depew

Only a portion of the Village of Depew is located within the Town of Lancaster, the other portion being located in the Town of Cheektowaga. Both parts of the Village encompass approximately 5 square miles in size. Depew was incorporated in 1894. In 2015, the entire Village of Depew had an estimated 6,906 housing units. Approximately 40% of these units were located in the portion of the Village located in the Town of Lancaster. Vacancy in the Lancaster portion of the Village was 6.5%, while vacancy across the entire village was 5.9%.

The overwhelming majority of the housing stock in the Village of Depew (entire Village) are single-family detached homes. The vast majority of the housing stock was built in the post-World War 2 era, with 64% built between 1940 and 1960. Approximately 20% of the housing units in the Village had a construction date that predated 1940, while less than 1% were built since 2000.



Building permit data provided by the Village of Depew, largely confirms these patterns of construction: between 2013 and 2017, the Village issued building permits for four (4) new single-family units and three (3) new commercial buildings, although there were 53 residential additions and 15 commercial additions during this same time period, providing indication that Depew residents and business owners are actively investing in the existing building stock.

2.6.4 HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew all have significant amounts of housing stock built prior to 1940. Approximately 21% (3,682) of the housing units in the Town, 39% (1,843) of the housing units in the Village of Lancaster, and 20% (1,361) of the housing units in the Village of Depew were built prior to 1940, meaning over that there are nearly 7,000 buildings in these communities that are older than the 50-year-old threshold commonly utilized as a baseline for determining architectural or historical significance.⁹

There are two buildings in the Town of Lancaster outside the Villages that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the New York State Register of Historic Places. These are the Warren Hull House/Hull-Peterson House, which is located at 5976 Genesee Street, and the Lancaster District School No. 6 building, which is located at 3703 Bowen Road. The Warren Hull House is a two-story Federal style building (with attic). It is a five-bay, gabled-roof, masonry building with symmetrical patterns of fenestration (six-over-six, double-hung, sash windows), and two gable end chimneys. The Lancaster District School No. 6 building is a one-story, cross-gabled Italianate style building constructed circa 1868. Listed historic properties and districts are shown on Map 8: Community Facilities.

Proportionally, the Village of Lancaster has most of the designated historic resources among the three communities. Two districts and two individual buildings listed National and State Registers of Historic Places are located within the Village of Lancaster. The two historic districts are the Central Avenue Historic District and the Broadway Historic District. The Central Avenue Historic District contains seventeen contributing resources and two non-contributing resources. It is primarily centered on the intersections of Central Avenue (16-50 Central Avenue), West Main Street (1-5 West Main Street), and Clark Street (40 Clark Street), in the heart of the Village of Lancaster. The Queen Anne style Lancaster Town Hall and Opera House are contributing resources, as are several Italianate, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival style buildings. The period of significance of this historic district ranges from 1860 to 1940.

The Broadway Historic District is centered on the north and south sides of Broadway (5423-5658 Broadway), extending approximately 0.67-miles from the intersection of Central Avenue and Broadway in the east to just past Ivy Way in the west. The district is comprised of seventy contributing resources and forty-two non-contributing resources. Many of the individually designated buildings that were part of the November 1999 Multiple Property Documentation Form (Lancaster Municipal Building, Liebler-Rohl Gasoline Station, Miller-Mackey House, Dr. John J. Nowak House, John Richardson House, John P. Sommers House, Herman B. VanPeyma House, Zuidema-Idsardi House, etc.), were later encompassed within the boundaries of the Broadway Historic District, which was formed in 2015. The buildings range in use and include: civic/government commercial, religious, and residential uses. The styles of architecture

⁹ It should be noted that a building or a site can be less than 50-years-old and still be considered for architectural or historical significance. The 50-year-old threshold is simply a widely held demarcation line utilized by architectural historians and historians to help organize the process for identifying architecturally or historically significant buildings and/or sites.

on display are remarkable in variety, including Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, and Moderne. The period of significance of the Broadway Historic District covers a 109-year stretch, from 1831 to 1940.

The two individually-designated buildings listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places in the Village of Lancaster are the Lancaster Post Office and the John P. Sommers House. The Lancaster Post Office is located at 5406 Broadway and is a one-story, hipped roof with cupola, Colonial Revival style, masonry building with symmetrical patterns of fenestration. It was constructed circa 1938-1939. On the interior, it features a mural painted by artist Arthur Getz titled “Early Commerce in the Erie Canal Region.” The John P. Sommers House was constructed circa 1906. It is a two-and-one-half-story, hipped roof, Queen Anne style, wood frame building that was designated for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction and possessing high artistic values.

Only the portion of the Village of Depew east of Transit Road is located in the Town of Lancaster. Within this portion of the Village, there are two buildings that are on the National Register of Historic Places and New York State Register of Historic Places: the former Depew High School Building and the Depew Post Office. The former Depew High School Building is located at 591 Terrace Boulevard. It was constructed circa 1915 and had a significant expansion in 1927. The former Depew High School Building is a three-story, seven-bay, Classical Revival style building with symmetrical patterns of fenestration. The former high school has recently been adaptively reused, converted to a senior housing facility. The circa 1938-1939 Depew Post Office is a one-story, five-bay, Colonial Revival style building with symmetrical patterns of fenestration. It is located at 25 Delaware Avenue. A mural, located above the Postmaster’s office door, titled “Beginning the Day” was completed by artist Anne Poor.

In addition to historic buildings and structures, there are Archaeological Sensitive Areas (ASA) located throughout the Town of Lancaster and portions of the Village of Lancaster and Village of Depew. ASAs are areas that include both known archaeological sites and a wider buffer zone. Known archaeological sites are deliberately not mapped to protect their integrity from vandalism and/or theft, but the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYSORHP) should be consulted prior to conducting any site development activities in the Town or the Villages.

2.7 Multi-Modal Transportation Network

2.7.1 MAJOR ROADWAYS

There are four main thoroughfares for east/west automobile transit for the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster and Village of Depew: Interstate-90 (I-90), a Principal Arterial Interstate; NYS Route 33 (Genesee Street), a Minor Arterial (west of Ransom Road); NYS Route 952Q (Walden Avenue), a Minor Arterial; and U.S. Route 20 (Broadway), a Principal Arterial.

I-90 traverses the northern portion of the Town of Lancaster and provides access to the wider regional transportation network to residents and visitors via the Transit Road on/off ramps (exit 49) north of Lancaster in the Town of Amherst. There is no access to the Thruway within the Town. Genesee Street is also located in the northern portion of the Town of Lancaster. Walden Avenue cuts directly across roughly the middle of the Village of Depew and serves as the northern boundary line between the Village of Lancaster and the Town of Lancaster. Walden Avenue connects the communities to the Town of Cheektowaga in the west and the Town of Alden in the east. Broadway starts in the City of Buffalo in the

east and runs through the Town of Cheektowaga before entering the Village of Depew, Village of Lancaster, and the Town of Lancaster before going into the Town of Alden. Each of these east/west automobile transportation corridors can be seen on Map 9.

There are several main thoroughfares for north/south automobile transit for the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster and Village of Depew. Major north/south routes include Transit Road (NYS Route 78), a Principal Arterial; Harris Hill Road/Central Avenue, a Major Collector/Minor Arterial; Aurora Road and Bowen Roads, both Minor Arterials; and Ransom Road, a Major Collector.

Transit Road (NYS Route 78) is a regionally important north/south transportation corridor. Transit Road provides a direct connection to I-90 (at exit 49) and serves as the western dividing line between the Town of Lancaster and the Town of Cheektowaga to the west. Transit Road is also the route that splits the Village of Depew, with properties located east of Transit Road located in the Town of Lancaster and the portion located west of Transit Road in the Town of Cheektowaga. Excluding the Thruway, it is the most heavily trafficked road in the Town and Villages, with an estimated 29,900 vehicles per day.

Harris Hill Road becomes Central Avenue once it crosses over Pleasant Avenue to the south, and serves as the primary north/south route into the Village of Lancaster, where it ultimately terminates at its intersection with Broadway. Aurora Road in the Village of Lancaster provides access to points further south. Ransom Road is a continuous north/south route located in the eastern portion of the Town of Lancaster that runs the entire length of the Town, connecting it to the Town of Clarence in the north and to the Town of Elma in the south.

In 2015, the New York State Department of Transportation estimated the number of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for the following roads on as follows:¹⁰

Traffic Estimates		
Name	Segment	2015 AADT
East/West Routes		
Interstate-90	West of Transit Road (Cheektowaga) to County Line	39,750
NYS Route 33 (Genesee)	Harris Hill Road to Gunville Road	10,403
NYS Route 952Q (Walden)	Central Avenue to Cemetery Road	15,828
U.S. Route 20 (Broadway)	Central Avenue to Cemetery Road	15,637
North/South Routes		
Transit Road	Walden Avenue to Broadway	29,949
Harris Hill	Clarence Town Line to Genesee Street	12,915
Central Avenue	South of Walden Avenue to Broadway	15,065
Aurora Road	William Street to Elma Town Line	7,461
Bowen Road	Broadway to Como Lake Park	10,301

Source: New York State Department of Transportation

¹⁰ Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is the estimated average daily traffic volume on a route segment at a particular count station location. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines indicate that the methodology will enable the user to be 95% confident that the estimated AADT is within +/- 10% of the actual value.

2.7.2 NFTA METRO BUS ROUTES

All three of the communities are served by NFTA Metro Bus routes. Both the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew feature multiple NFTA Metro Bus routes.

NFTA Metro Bus Route 46 - Lancaster

In the Village of Lancaster/the Village of Depew, Bus Route 46 - Lancaster, travels from west to east on Broadway before turning north on Central Avenue, and turning back west on Walden Avenue.

NFTA Metro Bus Route 69 - Alden

Also, in the Village of Lancaster, Bus Route 69 - Alden, travels from west to east on Broadway, turning north on Aurora Street, turning east on Pleasant Avenue, turning south on Central Avenue, before turning back onto Broadway (east).

NFTA Metro Bus Route 103 - East-Suburban

In the Village of Depew, Bus Route 103 - East-Suburban, travels from west to east on Terrace Boulevard, turning north on Sanilac Street, turning west on Laverack Avenue, before turning south on Central Avenue, and, ultimately, west on Broadway.

2.7.3 BICYCLE ROUTES

The Lancaster Heritage Trail extends approximately 4-miles from Walter Winter Drive (the Village of Lancaster’s municipal boundary) in the west to Town Line Road (the Town of Lancaster’s municipal boundary) in the east. The trail is a rail-to-trail conversion project, built on the bed of the former Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad. The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council’s Online Bicycle Map notes that there is one marked bicycle lane within the communities, on Walden Avenue, between Transit Road and Central Avenue. Bicyclists also use roadways without marked bike lanes, however the Online Bicycle Map classifies Central Avenue, Transit Road, Walden Avenue, Como Park Boulevard, French Road, and the portion of Genesee Street (from Harris Hill Road west to Transit Road) as having “Caution Advised” levels of bicycle service. Genesee Street (from Harris Hill Road to the Town of Alden line) has a “Suitable” level of bicycle service.

2.7.4 WALK SCORES

The Walk Scores are a proxy measure for determining how pedestrian-friendly a given location is. The methodology applies an algorithmic formula that includes distance from nearly daily necessities and variety of destinations, among other factors. The measure is not perfect. For example, it does not factor in the presence of sidewalks, traffic volumes or other factors that tend to discourage or encourage pedestrian activity. However, it does provide a general sense of the ‘walkability’ of an area. Walk Score is specific to an address, and certain areas of a community are likely to have higher scores than other areas. The system uses the following scale:

Walk Score Scale	
0-24	Car Dependent (All)
25-49	Car Dependent (Most)
50-69	Somewhat Walkable
70-89	Very Walkable
90-100	Walker’s Paradise

Source: Walkscore.com

The Walk Score for the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew are both relatively high. The Walk Score for the Village of Lancaster is 71 (Very Walkable) and the Walk Score for the Village of Depew east of Transit Road (the portion located in the Town of Lancaster) is 64 (Somewhat Walkable). Most day-to-day errands can be accomplished on foot in the Village of Lancaster, while the eastern portion of Depew is slightly less convenient for pedestrians.

The Walk Scores for the addresses in the Town of Lancaster are significantly lower. For example, in the hamlet of Bowmansville, the Walk Score was 13 (Car Dependent), meaning that a car is needed to complete virtually all day-to-day errands. Similarly, the Walk Score for the hamlet of Town Line was 24 (Car Dependent).¹¹ The intersection of Pavement Road and Erie Street (the approximate geographic center of the Town of Lancaster), has a Walk Score of 9 (Car Dependent).

2.7.5 AIR TRAVEL

The Buffalo-Lancaster Regional Airport (Federal Aviation Administration Location Identifier – BQR) is located approximately 3-miles northeast of the center of the Village of Lancaster at 4343 Walden Avenue (Town of Lancaster). It spans approximately 100-acres and sits at an elevation of approximately 751.7 feet. The airport is a privately owned, publically-accessible airport and its main runway (asphalt) is 3,199 feet long and 75 feet wide. The airport provides a range of services including: re-fueling, parking, hangars, flight training, and maintenance. It conducts approximately 123 operations per day/44,895 operations per year (based on FY2015 daily averages).

2.7.6 RAIL SERVICE

Residents of the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew can access passenger rail service at the Buffalo-Depew Amtrak Station located at 55 Dick Road. Via its Lake Shore Limited line, Amtrak provides westbound service through downtown Buffalo to Erie, Pennsylvania, Cleveland, Ohio, and beyond and to eastbound destinations through Albany to New York City and Boston.

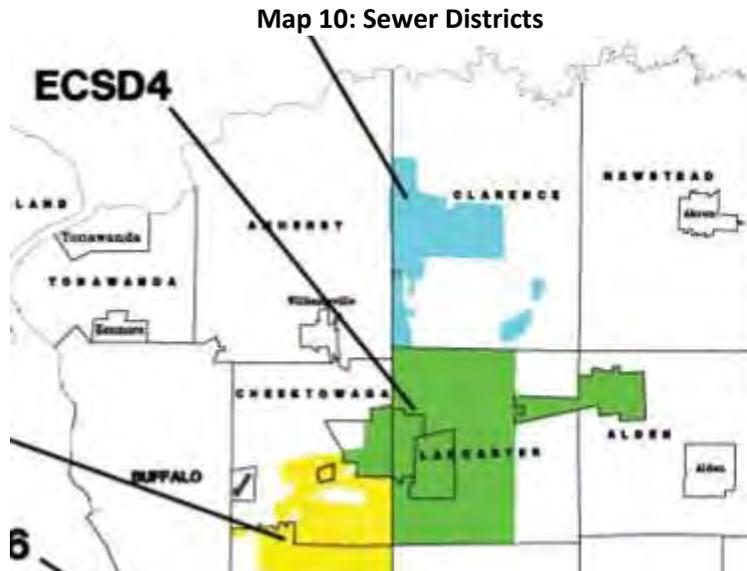
Commercial freight rail services are provided by three different companies. CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern Corporation, and Depew, Lancaster, and Western Railroad (owned by Genesee Valley Transportation) all operate within the communities.

¹¹ Walk Score's advisory board includes the Sightline Institute and the Brookings Institution. Funding for Walk Score's research has been provided by the Rockefeller Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Walk Score also has similar proprietary Bike Score and Transit Score systems of measuring bikeability and transit access.

2.8 Utilities

2.8.1 SANITARY SEWER

Erie County Sewer District No. 4 serves a large portion of the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster, and the portion of the Village of Depew located in the Town of Lancaster, providing conveyance services to all three communities. District infrastructure includes: pumping stations, flow management facility, and collector and interceptor sewers. The sanitary sewage is carried through the collector and interceptor sewers to the Buffalo Sewer Authority, where it is treated.¹²



Source: Erie County

There are properties in the Town of Lancaster that are not tied into Erie County Sewer District No. 4. These properties rely on individual septic systems or are part of Town of Lancaster-owned sewer lines. The Town-owned sewer lines are maintained under contract with Erie County Sewer District #4. The long-term goal is bring the Town-owned sewer lines into conformance with Erie County requirements and to integrate these lines into Erie County Sewer District No. 4. There are no properties in the Village of Lancaster that rely on individual septic systems for sewerage needs. , and less than a dozen properties in the Village of Depew

Individual property developers are financially responsible for any new sewer line connections needed to service new developments. Once constructed, new sewer lines fall under the jurisdiction of Erie County Sewer District #4.

Stormwater infiltration and inflow present challenges in the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew. In both villages, stormwater inflows into sanitary sewer lines during heavy rain events and/or during large snow melts. In addition, infiltration of the sanitary sewer lines (largely due to the system's age) occurs when the ground becomes overly saturated with groundwater. Both villages are currently working with

¹² Erie County, NY, Sewer District Information, <http://www2.erie.gov/dsm/index.php?q=sewer-district-information>

the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), under a consent order, to identify and fix those problems with their respective systems that allow sanitary sewer water to pour into storm drains during rain events and/or large snow melts.

2.8.2 WATER

Water in the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village Depew is supplied by the Erie County Water Authority. Every publically-owned road in the Town has access to the public water lines. The Town's water lines are not connected to the water lines in either the Village of Lancaster or the Village of Depew. The Erie County Water Authority obtains the water that is supplied to the Village from Lake Erie (Sturgeon Point Treatment Plant) and the Niagara River (Van De Water Treatment Plant).

The Town requires developers to construct water lines, at their own expense, to service new developments within the Town. Once the development is constructed, the Town takes ownership of the lines and responsibility for their operation and on-going maintenance.

The Village of Lancaster invested approximately \$5,000,000 in its municipal water system to bring it up to Erie County Water Authority standards prior to transferring control of the system to the Authority in 2003.

2.8.3 STORMWATER

All three of the communities have municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and are members of the 42-member Western New York Stormwater Coalition (WNYSC), which is an organization seeking "to share resources and work in partnership towards compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Phase II Stormwater requirements."¹³ The EPA's Phase II requirements include: Public Education and Outreach; Public Involvement/Participation; Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination; Construction Site Runoff Control; Post-Construction Stormwater Management; and Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations. In addition, the Phase II law requires owners of MS4s to develop a stormwater management plan, which the Town and both villages have completed.

The Town of Lancaster requires new developments to construct separate stormwater lines and to integrate on-site stormwater mitigation into their final design. Most of the Town has underground stormwater pipes. Those properties within the Town that do not have underground stormwater pipes are serviced by open-air culverts/drainage ditches. Both of the villages have dedicated stormwater pipes.

2.9 Community Facilities

2.9.1 PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES – Town of Lancaster

The Town of Lancaster operates four parks. Westwood Park is located on Pavement Road, north of Broadway and south of Walden Avenue. It is approximately 175-acres in size and has a paved path for running/walking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. In addition, Westwood Park has playgrounds, picnic shelters, a stocked fishing pond, soccer fields (on a multi-purpose athletic field), baseball diamonds, and softball diamonds. Meadow Lea Park is located on Broezel Avenue, just north of

¹³ Erie County, NY, Western New York Stormwater Coalition, <http://www2.erie.gov/environment/index.php?q=western-new-york-stormwater-coalition>

Scajaquada Creek. It has a wading pools, a playground, volleyball and basketball courts, a softball diamond and a picnic shelter. Walden Pond Park is a 56-acre park with ball diamonds and other sports fields, along with picnic shelters and a playground. The Town also operates Keysa Park, located in the Village (see below).

The Town of Lancaster has playground facilities at Hillview Elementary School, Keysa Town Park, Meadow Lea Park, and the Twin District Fire Company. The Lancaster Heritage Trail extends approximately 4-miles from Walter Winter Drive (the Village of Lancaster’s municipal boundary) in the west to Town Line Road (the Town of Lancaster’s municipal boundary) in the east. The trail is a rail-to-trail conversion project, built on the bed of the former Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad. During the summer months, users can utilize the trail for bicycling, roller skating, skateboarding, running, and walking and the during winter months, the trail offers users the opportunity to cross-country ski and snowshoe.

Erie County Office of Parks, Recreation and Forestry owns and operates Como Lake Park, which is in both the Town and Village of Lancaster. The park offers a range of active and passive recreational activities. Cayuga Creek runs through the park, which offers nature trails and opportunities to view wildlife. The 80-acres of land to create the park was originally donated from the Village of Lancaster to Erie County in 1926 and includes a 4.5-acre human made lake. Today, the park is approximately 534-acres in size and extends into the Town of Lancaster. Como Lake Park is open to visitors year-round, offering access to volleyball, basketball, and tennis courts, a soccer field, a disc golf course, a softball diamond, a baseball diamond, hiking/walking trails, and paved bike paths. Winter activities include cross-county skiing, snowshoeing, sledding, and ice skating. The park has 59 picnic shelters and multiple playgrounds.

2.9.2 PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES – Village of Lancaster

As noted above, a portion of Como Lake Park falls within the Village of Lancaster. Additional park facilities in the Village include Keysa Town Park, located at the intersection of Brady Avenue and Ransom Road. It is approximately 56-acres in size and has an Olympic-size outdoor pool and wading pool. The park also has playground equipment and large shelter. In addition, there are basketball courts, a street hockey rink, baseball diamonds, and a skate park. Playground facilities are also available at Como Park Elementary School.

2.9.3 PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES – Village of Depew

The Village of Depew offers a number of recreational activities at Fireman’s Park, which is located at 90 Goud Avenue. Fireman’s Park has a memorial to Depew Fire Fighters. It has an indoor ice pavilion, a full-size swimming pool, a gazebo, a picnic shelter, a playground, multiple baseball diamonds, and basketball and volleyball courts.

2.9.4 PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

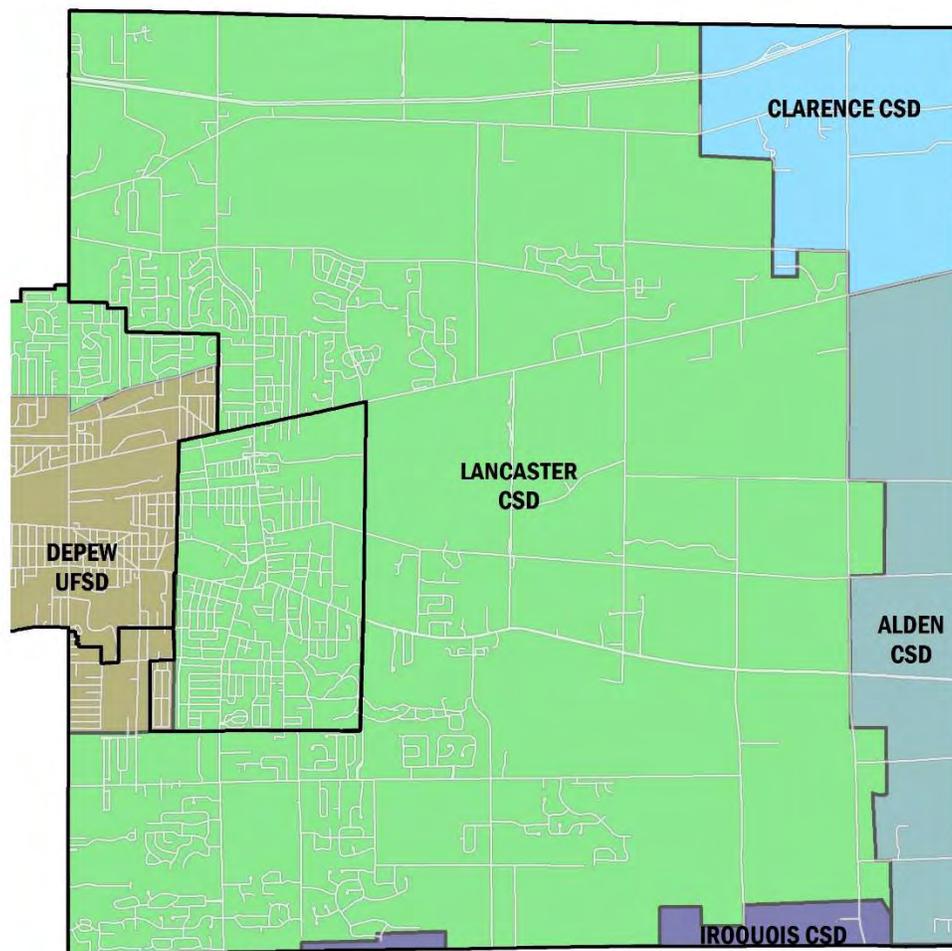
School age children in the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster, and the Village of Depew are served by several different school districts: the Alden Central School District, the Clarence Central School District, the Depew Union Free School District, the Iroquois Central School District, and the Lancaster Central School District. The vast majority of students attend school within either the Lancaster Central School District of the Depew Union Free School District.

Most students in the Town of Lancaster attend the Lancaster Central School District. Students living in the easternmost reaches of the Town either attend schools in the Clarence Central School District or the Alden Central School District. Two small areas of the southern part of the Town fall within the Iroquois Central School District.

Almost all of the Village of Lancaster sends their students to the Lancaster Central School District, although students in the southwestern corner of the Village attend school in the Depew Union Free School District.

Most of the part of the Village of Depew that is within the Town of Lancaster is serviced by the Depew Union Free School District, but students in the northernmost portion of the Village attend schools within the Lancaster Central School District. Map 11 depicts school district boundaries.

Map 11: School District Boundaries



The Lancaster Central School District has a total student enrollment of over 5,700. The district operates Lancaster High School, Lancaster Middle School, and five elementary schools: Como Park Elementary, Court Street Elementary, Hillview Elementary, John A. Sciole Elementary, and William Street School. The Depew Union Free School District has a total student enrollment of over 2,500. Its facilities include Depew High School, Depew Middle School, and Cayuga Heights Elementary School.

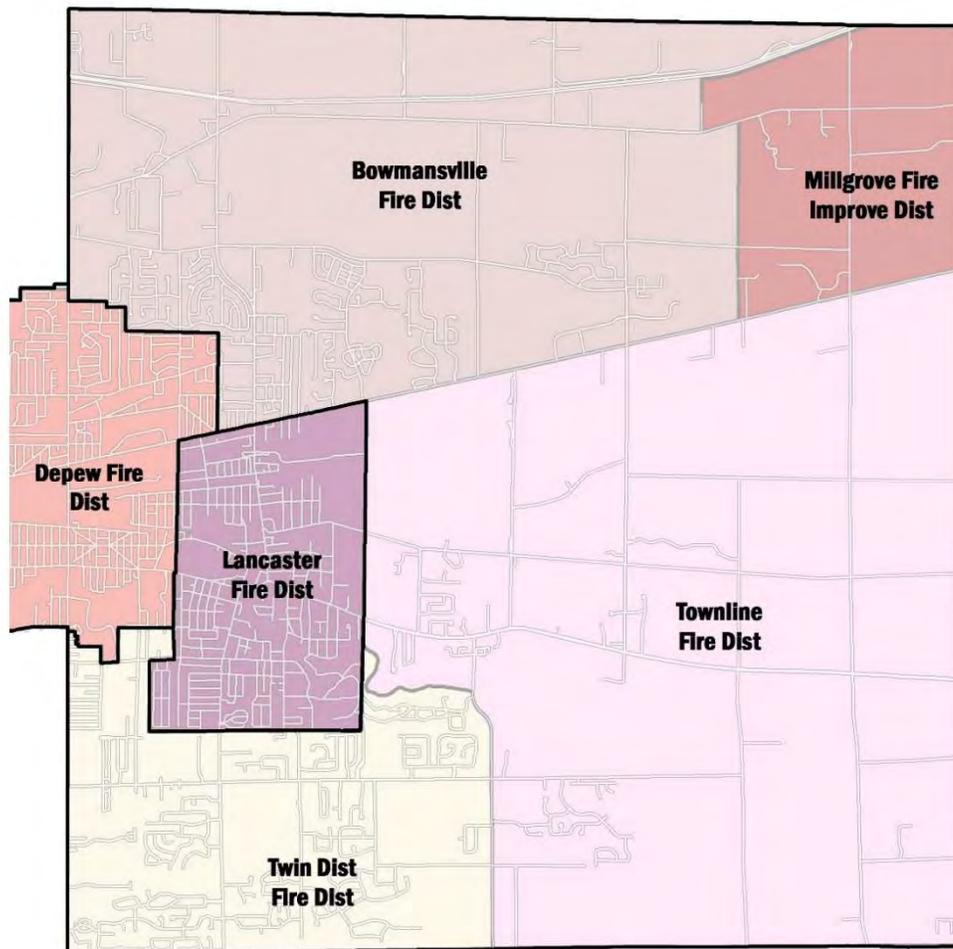
2.9.5 EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Town of Lancaster Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is located at the Town Center Complex (525 Pavement Road) and responds to both natural and human-made disasters. The OEM also provides disaster response training to local leaders and engages the public by making them aware of what resources are available during times of emergency. The OEM also facilitates ICS (Incident Command System) training modules/courses to first responders and emergency personnel.

Police services are provided by the Lancaster Police Department, which serves the Town and Village of Lancaster, and the Depew Police Department covers the Village of Depew. The Lancaster Police Department has 49 officers, based out of its headquarters at 525 Pavement Road. The Depew Police Department is headquartered at 85 Manitou Street.

Four volunteer fire companies within the Town of Lancaster provide fire protection services to its residents: the Bowmansville Volunteer Fire Association, the Millgrove Volunteer Fire Department, the Townline Volunteer Fire Department, and the Twin District Volunteer Fire Company.

Map 12: Fire District Boundaries



The Bowmansville Volunteer Fire Association has two stations, one at 36 Main Street and another at 58 Seitz Avenue. The Millgrove Volunteer Fire Department has a station at 11621 Genesee Street, in the Town of Alden, but provide service for the northeastern portion of the Town of Lancaster. The Townline Volunteer Fire Department's two stations are located at 6507 Broadway and 63 Cemetery Road. The Twin District Volunteer Fire Company has a station at 4999 William Street.

The Village of Lancaster is served by the Lancaster Volunteer Fire Department, which has two stations. Station #1 is located at 5423 Broadway and Station #2 is located at 24 West Drullard Avenue.

The Depew Fire Department serves the Village of Depew and operates three stations: the Northside Fire Station at 112 Brewster Street, the Southside Fire Station at 45 Meridian Street, and the West End Fire Station at 2325 George Urban Boulevard.

The Lancaster Volunteer Ambulance Corps (LVAC) is a not-for-profit Emergency Medical Services provider located at 40 Embury Place. LVAC serves the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster, and the Village of Depew. LVAC responds to over 3,000 requests per year and responds 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year.

2.9.6 PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library system operates one branch within the communities of the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew. The Lancaster Library is located at 5466 Broadway, east of Central Avenue, in the Village of Lancaster. The Lancaster Library provides publically-accessible computers, printers, copiers, a meeting room, and a working copper fireplace.

2.10 Economic Development

The regional economic development strategy, *A Strategy for Prosperity: 2017 Progress Report*, by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) notes that the local economy is continuing to grow, with growth in both jobs and wages. The Town of Lancaster and the Villages of Lancaster and Depew, located approximately 10 miles east of downtown Buffalo, are important contributors to the Buffalo-Niagara regional economy. The REDC attributes the region's growing economy to WNY's continued emphasis on "the need to create job opportunities and build a quality of life desired by young people - reversing WNY's historic population loss driven by a decline in residents in their 20s and 30s. Since 2010, the number of young adults . . . increased by 6.8% - the first time since 1980 we are beginning to see growth in our young population."¹⁴ This trend holds true in the Town of Lancaster, where population has been growing. Persons between the ages of 20 and 34 accounted for an estimated 16.7% of the Town's population in 2016, up from 15.9% in 2010.

The economic base of the Town of Lancaster has evolved over its history. Originally, Lancaster was a rural, agriculturally-focused town, with the Village of Lancaster serving as the Town's rural center, providing essential services to the Town's residents who were primarily engaged in agrarian-based subsistence. Depew's origin was directly related to economic development purposes, with the establishment of the Village as a railroad center. Over the latter half of the 20th century and into the 21st century, the economy of the Town and the region diversified, and the community became more integrated into the regional

¹⁴ Western New York Regional Economic Development Council, *A Strategy for Prosperity: 2017 Progress Report*, Page 3.

economy. The Town grew significantly in population, with people drawn to the larger lots, open spaces, award-winning schools, great neighborhoods, and numerous parks. Unlike many suburbs, however, Lancaster is not a “bedroom” suburb – the Town and its Villages have a significant base of local employment. As an example, in the summer of 2017, Amazon opened a 500,000 square foot distribution center on Walden Avenue that employs over 500 people. Increasing numbers of residents have the ability to both live and work within the community, rather than seeking employment in and around the City of Buffalo, which remains the region’s urban core.

2.10.1 LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

In 2016, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the Town’s labor force¹⁵ was comprised of 24,181 workers, representing approximately 70% of residents aged 16 years and older. This is a healthy labor force participation rate. In comparison, 59% of residents of the City of Buffalo, and 63% of Erie County residents are in the labor force. Employment rates are also high: Lancaster’s unemployment rate is estimated to be 4.7%, compared to 6.1% for the County, and 9.9% for the City of Buffalo.

Labor Force Participation 2016				
	Town of Lancaster		Erie County	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Population 16 Years+	34,589	100.0%	754,503	100.0%
In Labor Force	24,181	69.9%	473,702	62.8%
In Civilian Labor Force	24,181	69.9%	473,278	62.7%
Employed	23,050	66.6%	444,313	58.9%
Unemployment Rate	(X)	4.7%	(X)	6.1%

Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2016 Five-Year Estimates

2.10.2 OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY

The greatest share of the workforce living in Lancaster and its Villages are professionals: nearly 40% of employed residents are in management, business, science, and arts occupations. The second most common occupation is sales and office occupations, held by 26% of the local work force.

Occupation of Employed Persons, Town of Lancaster 2016		
	Estimate	Percent
Civilian Employed Population 16 Years+	23,050	100.0%
Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations	8,927	38.7%
Service Occupations	3,908	17.0%
Sales and Office Occupations	6,037	26.2%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	1,374	6.0%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	2,804	12.2%

Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2016 Five-Year Estimates

¹⁵ The Labor Force consists of residents aged 16 or older who are working or actively seeking employment. It excludes those not seeking employment, such as retirees, homemakers, or persons with disabilities that prevent them from working.

From the perspective of what types of industries employ Lancaster residents, Census estimates indicate that the majority of workers (24.4%) are working in the Educational Services, and Health Care, and Social Assistance industry, which would include professionals working at area schools, hospitals, and nursing homes. The next two highest industries were Manufacturing (12.4%) and Retail Trade (11.5%). Lancaster residents' distribution of industries was very similar to that of Erie County, although the Town's residents are somewhat more likely to be employed in manufacturing (12.4% vs. 10.6%).

Employed Persons by Industry 2016			
	Town of Lancaster		Erie County
	Estimate	Percent	Percent
Civilian Employed Population 16 Years+	23,050	100.0%	100.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Mining	78	0.3%	0.4%
Construction	1,011	4.4%	4.3%
Manufacturing	2,848	12.4%	10.6%
Wholesale Trade	819	3.6%	2.7%
Retail Trade	2,651	11.5%	11.6%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	1,107	4.8%	4.5%
Information	281	1.2%	1.6%
Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,047	8.9%	8.1%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, Waste Management Services	2,110	9.2%	9.8%
Educational Services, and Health Care, and Social Assistance	5,634	24.4%	27.8%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	2,288	9.9%	9.9%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	1,074	4.7%	4.2%
Public Administration	1,102	4.8%	4.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2016 Five-Year Estimates

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS

3.1 Demographics

Lancaster is one of the County's fastest growing communities, with strong housing growth. Most of the growth, however, has taken place outside the central Villages. The population is a mix of families and single persons. The socio-economics of the community are strong, with healthy income levels and low poverty rates.

3.1.1 Town of Lancaster

- The population of the Town of Lancaster (including the Villages) grew by 41% between 1980 and 2015, making it one of the County's fastest growing towns.
- Both the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew saw decreased population over the same time frame, although the rate of decline has slowed.
- Over the same time frame, the County also lost population (-9%).
- While growth continues, the strongest growth in the Town was between 1990 and 2000, and the pace of growth has slowed.
- Approximately 30% of the Town's population is aged 45 to 64; another 24% are 25 to 44, meaning over half of the Town's population is adults aged 25 to 64.
- Age distribution in the Villages is similar, although the population in the villages tends to be slightly older on average.
- Income levels are strong, and poverty rates are low.
- Most households (68%) are families, and approximately 30% of households are families with children under 18 living at home.
- Nearly as many households (26%) are one person households.
- Educational attainment is high, with 95% of residents have at least a high school education, compared to 90% countywide, and 32% with a bachelor's degree.

3.1.2 Village of Lancaster

- Income levels are lower than Town overall (just under \$50,000 in Village of Lancaster vs. \$67,200 for Town).
- Poverty rates are higher in the village than in the Town.
- There are more non-family households in the Village (39%) than the Town (34%) –30% of all Village of Lancaster households consist of one person.
- The majority of households are family households (61%).
- Approximately 25% of households are families with children.
- Educational levels are slightly lower than the Town: 94% HS graduates and 24% with a bachelor's degree.

3.1.3 Village of Depew

- Income levels are lower than Town overall (just over \$50,000 in Village of Depew compared to \$67,200 for Town)
- Poverty rates are higher in the Village than in the Town.
- There are more non-family households in the Village (40%) than the Town (34%) and 33% of all Village of Depew households consist of one person.
- The majority of households are family households (60%).
- Approximately 24% of households are families with children.
- Educational levels are slightly lower than the Town: 93% HS graduates and approximately 20% with a bachelor's degree.

3.2 Environment

There are many important environmental features throughout the three communities, and public input suggests strong support for environmental protection. Issues associated with environmental features include watershed protection, flooding, wetlands and protection of open space.

- Major environmental features in Lancaster/Depew include numerous streams, floodplains and wetlands.
- A large wetland complex is located north of Pleasantview Drive and east of Harris Hill.
- Additional wetlands are associated with creeks.
- Flooding is a concern, particularly along Cayuga Creek and Ellicott Creek.
- Remediation of former quarries is a concern.
- There is interest in having new development integrate environmental features and open space into the design.
- In the 2010 Priority Waterbodies List approximately 56% of the Niagara River Watershed's stream segments are classified as Impaired by the NYS DEC. The northern half of the Town of Lancaster has mainly impaired water bodies per the NYS DEC, which include: Ellicott Creek and Scajaquada Creek (this creek runs through the Village of Depew).
- Cayuga Creek, which runs through the Village of Lancaster, as well as the Town, is not classified as impaired.
- Ellicott Creek in the north of Lancaster is a Class B State protected stream. The majority of the other streams in the Town are Class C streams, except for Scajaquada Creek running through the Village of Depew and part of Cayuga Creek, which are also a Class B streams.
- The NYS DEC 2016 New York State Section 303(d) list of Impaired/Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) waters identifies those waters that do not support appropriate uses that may require development of a TMDL. Ellicott Creek and lower tributaries is listed on the 2016 NY State Section 303(d) impaired waterbodies list for having excess silt/ sediment and phosphorous. Scajaquada Creek and lower tributaries is listed on the 2016 303(d) list as containing floatables, high phosphorous, and low dissolved oxygen levels. The 303(d) Lists are the focus of remedial/ corrective and resource protection actions as well as priorities for funding resources. TMDLs are

a mechanism through which watershed managers can apply point and non-point source pollutant thresholds on stream segments.

- In the Niagara River Watershed, 12 out of 35 waterbodies were identified in 2010 on the 303(d) impaired waterbody list. The Phase 2 Watershed Plan analyzes the feasibility of implementing a TMDL for those waterbodies listed on the NY State List of Impaired Waterbodies.

3.3 Land Use and Zoning

The Town of Lancaster and its Villages are more diversified in terms of land uses than many suburban communities. Each of the three municipalities include some retail, commercial and light industrial uses in addition to residences. Both Villages and the western portion of the Town are older, denser, and more mixed in terms of uses.

- All three communities include a mix of land uses, although residential uses dominate, particularly in the Town outside the Villages.
- The Villages are largely built out, as is the portion of the Town nearest the Villages.
- Land uses east of Pavement Road and South of Broadway are less intensive, consisting of a more rural character.
- Retail uses are concentrated within the Villages, particularly along Central Avenue in Lancaster and Broadway in Depew, and along the length of Transit (Town and Village).
- Lancaster/Depew are not 'bedroom communities: there is a significant amount of businesses, such as warehouses, distribution centers, light manufacturing and similar uses.
- Business uses are located along Walden Avenue in all three communities, along with the Dresser Road area in the Village of Depew, Commerce Parkway in the Village of Lancaster, and Genesee Street in the Town.
- There are large quarries in the northern portion of the Town.
- The Town has a local airport for small craft.
- Key redevelopment sites in the Villages include the West Main Street in the Village of Lancaster, and the Dresser Road area in the Village of Depew.

3.4 Housing and Neighborhoods

The Town and its Villages have a greater mix of housing types, styles and prices than is typical, ranging from high-rise apartments to large single-family homes.

- The mix of housing types, styles and prices provide residents of Lancaster and the two Villages with greater choice, ranging from apartments, to condos, to single-family homes.
- There is a variety of options for seniors, from subsidized to market-rate apartments, patio homes and townhouses.
- Price ranges also make Lancaster and Depew an accessible choice, with current property listings ranging from less than \$60,000 to over \$600,000. Realtor.com estimates the median home price to be \$194,000.

- Rental properties range from modest apartments to luxury townhouses renting for \$1,500 per month or more.
- The densest development is in the Villages, which have been the historic core of the Town.
- Citizens appreciate the historic character of the Villages, and the housing stock that contributes to that character.
- Hamlets in the town include Bowmansville and Town Line.
- The Town issued an average of 224 building permits per year between 2011 and 2016.
- While there has been investment in existing buildings, few new housing units have been built in either Village in recent years.

3.5 Transportation and Circulation

Transportation is a major concern of local residents, with complaints about congestion along major routes. There is interest in a greater variety of options for transportation throughout the community, including biking and better facilities for pedestrians.

- There is significant congestion along major roadways in the Town and both Villages, including Broadway, William, Walden, and Central Avenues, among others.
- Roadway condition is also a concern.
- Additional facilities for walking and biking are needed, particularly linking parks, schools, and retail centers with residential neighborhoods.
- Residents support improved connectivity within the Villages.
- Many of the roads with the most congestion are County or State roads, not Town controlled, which means the Town or Villages do not have the authority to make desired improvements.

3.6 Utilities

The availability of utilities should be taken into consideration in developing future plans.

- There is water throughout the Town and Villages.
- The Village of Lancaster is fully sewerred.
- The Village of Depew is nearly fully sewerred, although approximately a dozen homes within the Village of Depew rely on individual septic systems. Due to pumping requirements and restrictive physical conditions, these homes will continue to be serviced by private septic systems.
- Sewers are available west of Pavement Road.
- The Town has made improvements to address sewer service problems, but the system has limited capacity to accommodate significant new growth.
- There are areas of the Town of Lancaster that fall within a Sewer District but have no sewer service. These areas should be considered for removal from the sewer district.

3.7 Community Facilities

Community facilities are an important part of the appeal of the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew to its residents.

- The Town has excellent community facilities.
- Parks are valued.
- Some interest in additional park in south portion of Town.
- There is interest in additional trail connections.

3.8 Economic Development

The three communities value their economic base.

- The Walden Avenue industrial corridor is an asset that provides jobs and tax base.
- More could be done to support entrepreneurship.
- There is public support for business development, including both retention of existing businesses, and development of new enterprises.
- There is strong interest in revitalizing the Village ‘downtowns’. Improvements could include:
 - Aesthetic improvements – gateways, streetscaping
 - Mixed use – restaurants, gathering space
 - Walkable/ bikable environments
 - Retention of historic character
- Assets include good transportation routes, some rail access, a local airport, utilities, and relatively ‘clean’ sites (not ‘brownfields’)
- Strategies for economic promoted by the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) focus on “Place-making,” “Workforce,” “Innovation,” and “Tradeable Sectors.”
- Place-making is extremely relevant to the Town and the Villages, as it emphasizes creating vibrant, attractive neighborhoods, where people want to live, in order to facilitate workforce retention and recruitment. From a regional perspective, the region strives to focus investment near existing infrastructure. Locally, place-making can enhance both Villages, as well as priority investment corridors, such as Walden Avenue, in the Town.
- The “Innovation” strategy is also relevant to Lancaster. The intent of this strategy is to develop an environment that encourages entrepreneurship and promotes a healthy and diverse business climate. The Town of Lancaster benefits from the efforts of the Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce, which is actively seeking to encourage continued economic development in the Town of Lancaster and the Villages of Lancaster and Depew, and is determined to foster a healthy operating climate for existing businesses.

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CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY VISION

This section of the Plan outlines the communities' vision for their future. It sets forth goals and objectives that should be used to evaluate future proposed projects and actions in each of the three municipalities. They build upon the principles in the prior Comprehensive Plan, as informed through public input, and reflect the principles and priorities of the community today.

The participation of citizens in an open, responsible and flexible planning process is essential to the designing of the optimum [town or village] comprehensive plan.

*New York State Town Law
New York State Village Law*

The Town and the two Villages established a Comprehensive Plan Committee with representation from each community, to oversee the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Committee met on a regular basis, and provided guidance and insight into the process.

There were also three public input meetings. The first public meeting was held on May 18, 2017 at the Lancaster Opera House. The Project Team explained the project, and solicited general input on priorities and issues facing the communities. Input from this meeting was used to refine the goals from the existing plan to better address current concerns. The second public meeting was held on September 14, 2017 at the Depew Senior Center. The Project Team presented the draft goals and objectives, and then assisted attendees with a mapping exercise to get their ideas about potential projects and priorities for each of the communities. The third public meeting was held on November 30, 2017 in the Lancaster Town Board Chambers. The Project Team reviewed the goals and objectives, and presented recommendations. At all three public meetings, there was opportunity to provide verbal or written comments. Comments were also received through an email account established for the project. Public meeting summaries are included in the appendix to this document.

The Vision Statement on the next page was developed as a result of the input from the Committee and the public. It outlines the three communities' vision for their shared future. A Vision Map is included in the Recommendations section to provide further guidance.

4.1 VISION STATEMENT

*The Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster and Village of Depew work **cooperatively** to enhance and promote an **excellent quality of life** for their citizens. Residents benefit from **high quality services, attractive parks, well-maintained infrastructure, and a diverse economic base.***

*The two **Villages serve as the vital center of the community**, offering a mix of businesses, housing and services, and a variety of events and other civic opportunities.*

*The Town outside the Villages transitions from **more densely neighborhoods near the Villages** to a more **rural setting in the eastern and southern** portions of the Town. Consistent with regional planning documents, the communities encourage growth and redevelopment in areas in and around the Villages, and in areas of the Town with utilities and public services capacity; and encourage the protection of natural resources and agricultural lands and rural character in areas without sewers.*

***Strong residential neighborhoods** accommodate a variety of housing types and densities in and around the Villages, and in areas designated for growth in the Town. The Town and Villages support a wider variety of **transportation options**, including sidewalks, bike lanes and improved transit. **Trails and sidewalks** provide access to the Village centers, and link parks and greenspace to residential neighborhoods.*

*There are a variety of **employment opportunities** in designated areas for light industrial, office, retail and other commercial development.*

This Vision is supported by the communities' goals, which articulate the values and priorities of the Town and two Villages. The goals serve as a yardstick each community can use to determine whether a future action is consistent with their vision for the future. The following section outlines the goals and objectives for the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew.

4.2 GOALS

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Protect the diverse community character of the three municipalities, and plan for growth and redevelopment in a manner consistent with regional plans.

- Encourage redevelopment in the Villages and in areas of the Town with infrastructure to support it.
- Encourage preservation of rural character in the eastern and southern portions of the Town and in areas of the Town without adequate infrastructure.
- Protect and enhance the unique historic and architectural character of the communities.
- Maintain agricultural lands and important open spaces consistent with the Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.
- Protect regionally significant environmental features.
- Promote projects and activities that improve the image and character of the communities.
- Support community activities and events that reinforce a sense of community and civic pride.



HOUSING

Provide a diverse, attractive, safe and affordable housing stock.

- Provide for a variety of residential housing types, including housing for seniors, persons with disabilities, rental opportunities and affordable housing.
- Allow for alternative housing opportunities, such as accessory dwelling units.
- Protect historic districts and historic homes.
- Encourage owners to maintain and upgrade their properties.



RECREATION AND PARKS

Create a linked system of open spaces and recreation opportunities for all residents.

- Encourage development of parks and recreational amenities in underserved areas.
- Build upon existing trails to develop a comprehensive trail system linking parks and other destinations.
- Promote high quality recreational programming.
- Encourage a diversity of parks and recreational services and amenities.
- Integrate regional open space and trails planning into the design of new residential subdivisions.
- Work with partners, such as schools and churches, to increase recreational opportunities.
- Consider creative ways to capitalize on natural resources as places for passive recreation and trails connections, in a manner that does not adversely affect the resources.



TRANSPORTATION

Promote a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system.

- Work with Erie County and Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) to address congestion along major highways and at problem intersections.
- Encourage improved public transportation services and opportunities in the community, particularly in the Villages.
- Create connectivity between the Villages and the surrounding neighborhoods and primary destinations in the community.
- Improve the safety of walking within the Villages and in denser neighborhoods in the Town.
- Improve the bicycle infrastructure, including bike lanes, bike parking, and off-road bicycle trails.
- Ensure that plans for new roadway improvements consider pedestrian and bicyclist access.
- Work with the County and State to properly post signage for truck routes along their roadways in an effort to discourage truck traffic from traveling off the designated routes.

ENVIRONMENT

Protect and preserve natural resources in the Town and Villages.

- Protect important open space areas that are critical to quality of life, visual character, and environmental resource protection.
- Protect the creeks and streams that flow through the Lancaster-Depew area.
- Encourage the protection of significant wooded areas in the Town and Villages.
- Consider the impacts to the watershed when planning new development.
- Discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Properly plan for, and incorporate drainage information in land use and development decisions.
- Provide additional areas for public enjoyment of and education on the natural environment.
- Promote environmental clean-up of former industrial sites and brownfields.
- Ensure that mined areas are required to implement acceptable reclamation plans.



AGRICULTURAL LAND

Protect and enhance the viability of agriculture as an economically viable land use and business activity.

- Promote the protection of farms and farming-related activities as economically viable uses to maintain a critical mass of farmland in the Town.
- Consider farming as the highest and best use for areas with prime farm soils or soils of state-wide importance.
- Maintain the existing Agricultural Districts.
- Work with Erie County to implement the County's Agricultural Protection Plan.
- Support the regional Farmers Market.
- Discourage extension of sanitary sewer infrastructure into the County-designated Agricultural District.
- Recognize the importance of agriculture to local food systems planning.



MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Provide high quality municipal services and infrastructure services

- Maintain and improve the water distribution system in the Villages and areas of the Town designated for continued growth.
- Maintain and improve the sanitary sewer system in the Villages and areas of the Town designated for continued growth.
- Work with Erie County to address issues that affect water quality and the capacity of public services.
- Build upon existing shared services among the Town and the Villages, and explore additional ways to improve efficiencies and cost savings for the municipalities.
- Cooperatively address the issues of storm water drainage and flooding in all three communities.
- Avoid expansion of utility services into areas not designated for continued growth.
- Work with area school districts to provide quality education cost effectively.
- Work with Erie County to maintain library services in the Town.
- Support local emergency services (fire and ambulance).



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Expand the economic base of the three communities and increase local employment opportunities for residents.

- Support the policies and priorities of the Regional Economic Development Council as they apply to the potential for economic development in the Town and Villages.
- Attract new industrial, commercial, and retail businesses to Lancaster.
- Encourage the continued location of corporate headquarters in the Town.
- Encourage continued dialogue between municipal leadership and the local business community to determine existing and future needs that would spur greater economic prosperity.
- Maintain a diversified industrial base.
- Foster business entrepreneurship within the three communities.
- Support the development of incubator/accelerator office space to provide affordable locations for new and growing businesses.

- Strengthen the existing retail core in the Village of Lancaster and along Broadway in the Village of Depew.
- Continue cooperation with and support for the Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Promote appropriate portions of the Walden Avenue corridor for light industrial development.
- Encourage further expansion of the existing Lancaster Industrial Park within the Village of Lancaster limits.
- Continue to cooperate with the Lancaster Industrial Development Agency to promote economic development within all three communities.
- Work with regional entities to provide job training to underemployed and unemployed residents within the three communities.
- Support area airports as a means of continuing economic development.



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CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the plan outlines recommended actions that the Town and Villages can undertake to make progress toward attaining their goals. The recommendations are organized around the goals and supported by a number of Technical Investigations into high priority issues. The Technical Investigations are followed by additional recommendations identified throughout the course of this planning effort.

5.1 Neighborhood Revitalization and Community Character

GOAL: Protect the diverse community character of the three municipalities, and plan for growth and redevelopment in a manner consistent with regional plans.

The Framework for Regional Growth has identified the two Villages and the adjoining western portion of the Town as “Developed Areas”, prioritized for reinvestment and continued growth (shown in white on the map, below), while the southern and eastern portions of the Town are categorized as either “Developing” (gold) or “Rural (green).” Rural areas are prioritized for the conservation of agricultural lands, and the protection of sensitive scenic and natural areas, wildlife habitats and open spaces. Developing areas are experiencing development pressures, which may or may not be appropriate for continued growth. Localities have great influence on whether Developing Areas should be prioritized for growth or rural preservation. Factors to be weighed include the presence of infrastructure, particularly sanitary sewers, the capacity of the roadway network, and nature of the surrounding area. In the case of Lancaster, based on public and official input, it has been determined that the area east of Pavement Road and south of William Street should be categorized as rural, and growth should be directed to the two Villages and the other areas of the Town. This is detailed on the Vision Map found in Section 5.10.



Recommendations in support of neighborhood revitalization include:

- Focus redevelopment and new investment in the two Villages, where services are available to accommodate additional growth and increased development density;
- Encourage infill development in the areas of the Town adjacent to the Villages, where services are available to accommodate growth; and
- Discourage new development in areas of the Town where there is no existing infrastructure to support it.

5.1.1 NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION – Village of Lancaster

A primary focus for the Village of Lancaster is the strengthening and enhancement of the downtown core. The Village is working on a downtown revitalization strategy with the intent of identifying and promoting catalytic redevelopment opportunities. Key recommendations from this strategy will be incorporated by reference into this comprehensive plan update.

Additional recommendations in support of revitalizing downtown Lancaster include:

- Streetscaping improvements to West Main Street;
- Infill development along North Aurora Street (in large parking lot);
- Undertake enhancements to the pocket park along Cayuga Creek to improve use and enjoyment;
- Promotion of historic character of the Village;
- Preparation of design standards to ensure that new development is attractive and in character with the historic qualities of the Village;
- Encourage mixed use development, with rental apartments above commercial uses;
- Enhance key gateways into the community to promote recognition of the Village;
- Sponsor new joint events (e.g. historic walking tours, community picnics, ethnic festivals, garden walks, and farmers market);
- Encourage community groups/organizations to participate in planning and improvement decisions at the neighborhood level to increase a local sense of pride and engagement.
- Use websites and social media to increase civic participation.

“The goals of the Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy project are to build community consensus on the vision of the future of the downtown, identify and promote catalytic redevelopment opportunities and develop market-driven strategies to implement key projects. Results of the project will also be used by the Village, investors and other agencies to obtain grants funding for strategic downtown redevelopment projects.”



Village of Lancaster

5.1.2 NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION – Village of Depew (east of Transit Road)

This plan focuses on the portion of the Village of Depew that is located within the Town of Lancaster (east of Transit Road). The primary recommendation is to prioritize ‘place-making’ for the Village. Broadway functions as the “Main Street” for this portion of the Village. Enhanced streetscaping and pedestrian improvements would help strengthen the character of this area, which tends to be automobile-oriented.

Located just a few blocks north of Broadway, Veteran’s Park is an under-appreciated asset for the Village that could serve as a civic center for the community. It is surrounded by a collection of civic uses, including the new senior apartments in the former school building, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Post Office. The Village’s municipal building with the Senior Center is nearby. Additional enhancements to the park, and streetscaping and wayfinding to strengthen the connection to Broadway could transform the park into a stronger community asset. The land use focus in this area should be on residential and civic uses, and not retail. Enhancements could include improvements to Terrace Boulevard as a link between the Municipal Building to the east and Transit Road corridor to the west. The Village of Depew should also consider getting Veteran’s Park and the adjacent street network listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places to raise its visibility an important historic asset in the community.

Recommendations in support of revitalizing the Village of Depew include:

- Undertake actions to enhance the “sense of place” along Broadway, including streetscape improvements, traffic calming techniques, and improved pedestrian amenities;
- Further enhance the gateway intersection of Transit Road and Broadway to better recognize the community;
- Consider design standards that focus on improving the aesthetics of development; and
- Capitalize on Veteran’s Park as a recreation and historic asset and as a civic center for the community with wayfinding improvements, local promotion, historic recognition and enhancement of amenities.



Veteran’s Park, Depew

5.1.3 NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION – Town of Lancaster outside the Villages

Outside of the Villages, neighborhood character varies, ranging from more densely developed areas adjoining the Villages, to rural areas at the eastern and southern reaches of the Town, and approaches must reflect what is appropriate in each area. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, areas without sewers are prioritized for rural character protection, while investment is encouraged in areas with existing infrastructure (see Section 5.8, below).

There are two historic hamlets in the Town with more concentrated, mixed development: Bowmansville and Town Line. The hamlet of Bowmansville is located on Genesee Street in the northwest corner of the Town, while Town Line is on Broadway at the Town’s eastern boundary with Alden.

Both hamlets experience a number of issues. Bowmansville, in particular, struggles with traffic congestion along Genesee Street and Harris Hill Road, as well as localized flooding associated with Ellicott Creek. Efforts towards neighborhood revitalization that would help local businesses and better promote these areas as recognizable hamlets should be considered.

Recommendations in support of revitalizing the hamlets and other areas of concentrated development in the Town, outside the Villages, include the following.

- The Town should consider having the Bowmansville hamlet designated as an historic district. As a first step, the Town should identify local structures and sites that would qualify for listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Many structures in this area warrant protection to help preserve their historic architecture and design.
- The Town should identify and recommend structures in the Town Line hamlet area that may warrant historic recognition and designation.
- Consider design standards for the Bowmansville area to protect the historic character of this area.
- Consider allowing mixed use development in Bowmansville to retain its historic hamlet character.
- Undertake enhancements for pedestrian safety and to increase pedestrian activity in Bowmansville and Town Line, including the installation of sidewalks and bike lanes. Pedestrian and bike ties from Bowmansville into the village of Lancaster are recommended.

In addition to the recommendations for the hamlets, the following recommendations apply to the Town of Lancaster:

- Preserve and promote the rural character of the eastern and southern portion of the Town.
- Allow a mix of convenience retail and community service uses at certain neighborhood nodes to help reduce vehicle trips and enhance quality of life. Proposed locations would include Broadway at Bowen Road, William Street at Aurora Road, Broadway at the west side of Pavement Road; Walden at Jupiter Boulevard; and Broadway and Town Line Road in the Town Line hamlet.
- Encourage community groups/organizations to participate in planning and improvement decisions at the neighborhood level to increase a local sense of pride and engagement and help achieve community improvements and revitalization.

5.2 Major Thoroughfares / Transportation

GOAL: Promote a safe, efficient multi-modal transportation system

Traffic and congestion are a major concern of Lancaster residents. Particularly during rush hour, major roadways are overloaded with vehicles, and navigating through the three communities can be frustrating. The streets experiencing the greatest problems are primarily County or State roadways, which are outside of the jurisdiction of the Town and Villages. The following strategies, which included techniques for complete streets, bicycling and pedestrian improvements are recommended to address issues related to major thoroughfares in the Town and Villages and improve public safety.

5.2.1 “COMPLETE STREETS”

A “Complete Streets” approach encourages communities to look beyond roadways for just accommodating motorized vehicles, and provide safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders. A Complete Streets roadway design takes into consideration comfort, safety and access as a means of calming traffic. How easy is it to cross the street? Are there protected bike lanes, crosswalks, sidewalks and/or accessible bus stops? Are busy roadways adequately lit at night? A Complete Streets approach recognizes that while automobiles will remain the dominant means for people to get around, not everyone can drive or wants to. Furthermore, depending solely on cars leads to greater roadway congestion. Roadway design improvements can go a long way to encourage people to take at least some of their trips by other means.



Shifting a portion of the traffic from cars to other modes of transportation can help alleviate congestion

When roadway improvements are planned and implemented, the feasibility for achieving a more Complete Streets approach should be evaluated. The following streets should be prioritized:

- Walden Avenue – State jurisdiction
- Broadway (through the Villages) – State jurisdiction
- Central Avenue – County jurisdiction
- Pleasant View – County jurisdiction
- Pavement Road – County jurisdiction
- Aurora Street/Road – County jurisdiction
- Lake Avenue – Town/ Village of Lancaster jurisdiction

- Erie Street – Town/ Village of Lancaster jurisdiction
- St. Mary’s – Village of Lancaster jurisdiction
- Terrace Boulevard – Village of Depew jurisdiction

The specific design of each street will vary based on context. For example, a wide shoulder for bikes may be sufficient in a more rural setting, while in the Villages, dedicated bike lanes are preferred. Similarly, roadways in the Villages should have more prominent features for pedestrians, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals and curb bump-outs. Roadway widths can be narrower where speeds are lower; in fact, narrower lanes calm traffic and reduce speeds.

Complete Street in a Village setting



Complete Street in a Rural setting



Images Source: National Complete Streets Coalition

5.2.2 BIKE ROUTES AND TRAILS IMPROVEMENTS

The Town and Villages should cooperate to establish a system of on- and off-road multi-use trails linking area parks, as shown on the Connectivity Map (Map 13). On low traffic streets, bikes can share the roadway with cars. New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) standards recommend shared lanes be a minimum of approximately 12 to 14 feet in width (3.6 to 4.2 meters). Adding “sharrow” markings on the pavement can alert motorists to the likely presence of bicyclists. Where feasible, dedicated bike lanes are preferred. The bike lane should be a minimum of 4 feet in width, and along busier roadways, clearly marked. In rural settings, a wide, unmarked shoulder may be sufficient.

https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/hdm/hdm-repository/chapt_17.pdf



Sharrows – for low traffic roads



Dedicated bike lanes offer more protection for bicyclists



Colored pavement highlights a separate bike lane



Wide shoulders work well for rural settings

5.2.3 WALKABILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Walkability Improvements include features that make it safer and more pleasant for residents to walk to around their community and to their destinations. While recognizing that most local trips will be made by car, by encouraging residents to walk or bike for at least some of their trips could help alleviate some of the congestion experienced by Lancaster and Depew residents. To assist in improving walkability, the Town and Villages should work together on a Walkability and Pedestrian Plan to identify where gaps and connectivity related issues exist and ways to address them.

Walkability improvements that should be considered include:

- Adequate signage or crossing signals at pedestrian crossings,
- Curb bump-outs to shorten crossing distances,
- Pavement changes that signal to drivers that pedestrians may be present,
- High-visibility crosswalks with paving changes, and
- Bike parking/storage, benches, and other amenities to encourage non-automotive uses.

Many of these improvements have already been implemented in the Village of Lancaster, particularly along Central Avenue, from Broadway to Pleasant Avenue. Local improvements include enhanced sidewalks, pedestrian crosswalks, curb bump outs, and amenities such as benches, banners, attractive light fixtures, street trees and landscaping. These improvements help calm traffic and encourage people to walk to destinations within the Village downtown. Enhanced crosswalks are also provided along Broadway, from St. John Street to the eastern Village line.



Streetscape improvements on Central Avenue include benches, landscaping, curb bump-outs, crosswalks, and prominent sidewalks to improve walkability

Walkability is based on more than just design. Programmatic factors that should be taken into consideration to promote increased pedestrian activity and biking include the following:

- Destinations: allowing and encouraging a mix of land uses, particularly in the Villages, helps to create an atmosphere of “park once and walk” between destinations;
- Site Design: keeping buildings close to the street, discouraging large parking lots between the sidewalks and people’s destinations, and encouraging a connected street grid;
- Safety and Access: traffic calming, speed enforcement, and education about appropriate behaviors (yielding to pedestrians, etc.) will help improve pedestrian safety and comfort; and
- Connectivity: Gaps in the existing sidewalk network should be filled and sidewalks should be well maintained. Sidewalks should also be provided to establish connections to major destinations, such as municipal buildings, schools and parks.

More information about walkability and how to create a walkable community can be found here:

http://www.gtcmppo.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2016/resolution_16-3_regional_walkability.pdf
<http://www.bikewalk.org/links.php>

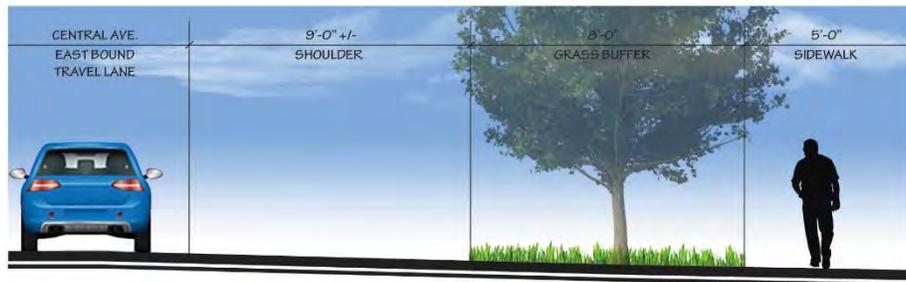
5.2.4 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

The “Safe Routes to Schools” program encourages municipalities and school districts to work together to create a safe and pleasant environment for children to walk or bike to schools. The program encompasses a comprehensive approach for addressing infrastructure needs, educational programs, safety, outreach and encouragement.

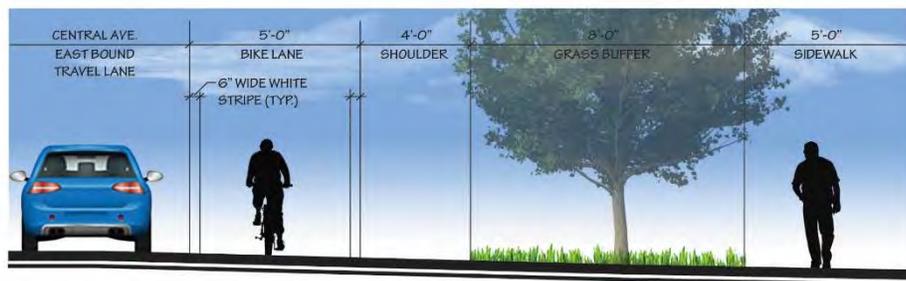
The Town and Villages should work with the school districts to investigate a comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools program. At a minimum, physical improvements should be considered along the local streets that provide improved access to schools, including:

- Lancaster High School (Central Avenue/Forton Drive)
- Lancaster Middle School (Aurora Street)
- Como Park Street Elementary School
- Aurora Street Elementary School
- William Street School
- Depew school campus (Transit Road/Como Park Boulevard)

In the past, there have been federal funds available through the NYSDOT for Safe Routes to Schools. At present, this program is a part of the general bike and pedestrian improvement programs, and the main potential sources of funding are the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ).



CENTRAL AVENUE: EXISTING CONDITIONS



CENTRAL AVENUE: POTENTIAL 5' DEDICATED BIKE LANE

NYS Safe Routes to School Program: <https://www.dot.ny.gov/safe-routes-to-school>

5.2.5 PUBLIC TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS

There is limited transit access in Town and Villages. There should be better transit service (improved routing and scheduling) to employment centers, particularly along Walden Avenue, and to retail services along Broadway to make it easier for residents to get to work or commercial destinations and to help get cars off the road. Furthermore, enhancements, such as benches and shelters at bus stops, should be provided to make the use of public transit more accommodating. The Town and Villages should work together with Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) and NFTA to expand and improve public transit service to the communities. As a part of this effort, ways to better coordinate transit service improvements with adjoining communities should be examined.

5.2.6 ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- As a long-term goal, the Town should investigate the feasibility of establishing a Lancaster exit off the New York State Thruway (I-90). In addition to improving access, the new exit could provide an alternative emergency route in the event of an accident or severe weather. At this time, it is anticipated that Gunville Road would be a logical location for a new thruway exit. However, a full evaluation of potential locations would be required, as well as coordination with the Town of Clarence. Should the establishment of a new exit location be determined feasible, it would likely result in additional pressure for growth on the Town. Therefore, the Town's zoning should be carefully evaluated to make sure it is protective of the rural character of the area east of Pavement Road.
- The Town needs to develop more formalized subdivision regulations. These regulations should discourage dead-end streets and turn-arounds in subdivision design. Ideally, the street network should be interconnected (grid pattern), promoting better connectivity.
- The Town and Villages should each review their site plan regulations to include a provision that the Planning Boards consider pedestrian, bicycle and transit access during their review of all projects (consistent with the guidance and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan).
- The Town and Villages should support alternative transportation infrastructure, such as vehicle charging stations, by improving zoning provisions. NYSERDA can provide suggested language for how to accomplish this recommendation in local regulations.
- The Town and Villages should coordinate transportation improvements on State and County roadways with adjoining communities.
- Coordinate with the County and State to ensure an effective and continued emphasis on roadway maintenance programs and improvements, including pavement rehabilitation, curbing (where appropriate) and stormwater management.

5.3 Environment and Watershed Protection

GOAL: Protect and preserve natural resources in the Town and Villages

Watershed management is a priority of the Town and the two Villages. The communities fall within the Niagara River watershed, which has three sub-watersheds: Cayuga Creek, Ellicott Creek and the Niagara River (Scajaquada Creek tributary). Phases 1 and 2 Watershed Management Plans have been completed by the Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper for the Niagara River watershed, and the Town and Villages should proactively work toward implementing the recommendations of these plans.

At the municipal level, local governments have a number of tools to regulate land development. Tools such as zoning, site plan review, subdivision regulation, erosion and sediment control laws and special use permit requirements can be used to address a wide variety of environmental issues, including water quality. While the Town and the two Villages already use these tools, additional enhancements to local laws could be implemented. The Town and Villages should review their regulations to ensure that they are sufficiently protective of the environment. Factors to consider include:

- How effective is the site plan review process in reducing development impacts to water quality and natural site features?
- Is zoning regulation language clear and specific enough to provide the reviewing body authority to modify site plans or place additional conditions on permits and approvals?
- Consider setback provisions that require new development in riparian areas to be set back from the creek banks to protect shoreline vegetation and habitat and reduce the potential for erosion.
- Work cooperatively, and with adjoining municipalities and local agencies, to develop consistent regulations across municipal boundaries.

An expanded discussion of watershed issues is included in the appendix.

5.3.1 OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Preservation of open space and conservation planning can be an effective way of protecting sensitive environmental resources and water quality by limiting development in certain areas, such as in riparian buffers, wetlands and floodplains. Options for resource protection include conservation easements or the purchase of development rights, as well as conservation subdivision designs that preserve natural features and open space on development sites.

Conservation Easements and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) initiatives are voluntary approaches for open space preservation. Under these programs, landowners are compensated for permanently protecting their land from development. Although owners are precluded from developing their property, they retain other ownership rights, and the property remains on the tax rolls. Owners typically receive tax benefits, as the taxable value of the protected land is based on its value as vacant open space, not as developable land.

A conservation easement constitutes a legally binding agreement that sets forth specific limits on what a landowner may do with their property. The terms of the easement can be tailored to local needs, and may selectively target specific conservation values, such as water quality or large woodlots. The conservation easement is legally binding and typically permanent. Conservation easements may be

voluntary (donated) or based on a specific payment (PDR). The agreement is between the land owner and an entity, typically a non-profit land conservation organization (e.g. Western New York Land Conservancy) that oversees enforcement of the terms of the agreement.

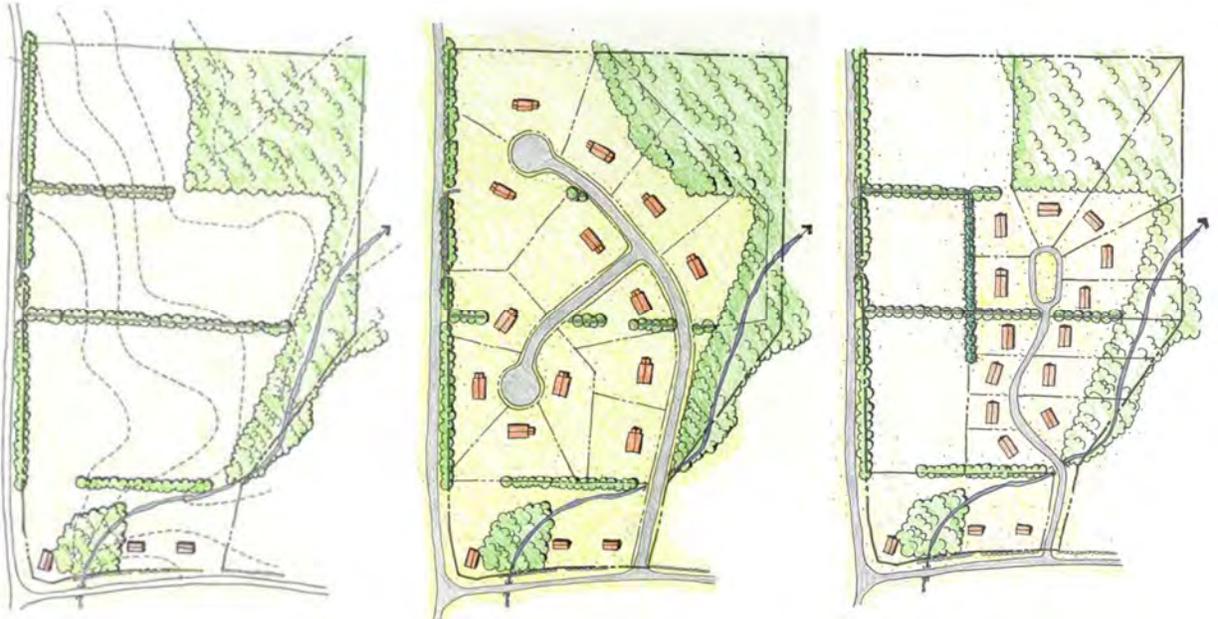
A PDR or Conservation Easement program can be an important “carrot” to counterbalance the “stick” of land use regulations. This is especially true in communities that are experiencing high pressure for development. These programs can allow communities to permanently protect significant blocks of land for open space and agricultural protection. The disadvantage of a conservation easement program is that they are dependent upon willing landowners to voluntarily cede their ownership rights for open space protection. PDR programs, where the development rights are purchased, can be expensive and have the added disadvantage of requiring a source of funding for the land purchases. Both programs take considerable time and require an enforcement entity. Municipalities that are considering a PDR program should, as a first step, establish criteria for determining which lands have the highest resource value as a means of identifying the lands to be protected under such a program.

As a more aggressive approach, the Town could consider a program akin to the Town of Clarence’s Greenprint program, where voters approved a \$12.5 million bond to purchase valuable open space. The Clarence Greenprint program has been effectively used to purchase over 1,300 acres of forests, wetlands, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas and working farms. The Western New York Land Conservancy works with the Town to implement and manage this program.

Additional information about the Clarence Greenprint program is available here:

<https://wnylc.org/land-protection/current-projects/clarence-greenprint/>

Conservation Subdivision, also known as clustered development or open space design development, encourages the concentration of new residential dwellings on a portion of a property, allowing the remainder of the site to remain undeveloped. This development technique is aimed at retaining areas of important farmland, sensitive resources and/or other important open space features, while accommodating development. Conservation subdivision can enable the protection of large areas of forested lands, freshwater wetlands and creek corridors or the location of housing on lesser productive soils, keeping more productive farmland available for continued use. Housing would be situated on smaller lots with smaller lot width, reducing the extent of infrastructure development and disturbance of areas that are to remain undeveloped. Adapting conservation subdivision design principles can result in the same number of homes on about half the available land, thereby preserving natural resources and open space, farmland and rural character. For example, the following graphic depicts two potential development scenarios for an existing property. In the traditional design (center), all areas of the parcel that contain significant resources or farmland that could be continued in production have been converted into residential lots. In the conservation subdivision example (right), in exchange for smaller lot size, a large area of the existing land is preserved, either for the protection of natural resources or to enable continued use for agriculture.



Source: Arendt, Randall G. (May 2009). "Visualizing the Options: Choosing Among our Alternative Futures – Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook".

5.3.2 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Green infrastructure is an approach that uses natural systems to control and treat stormwater, rather than relying solely on traditional "gray" infrastructure. Planting native plants that absorb and hold runoff helps alleviate problems with flooding, erosion and water quality. Green infrastructure uses vegetation, soils, and other practices to restore some of the natural processes for managing stormwater flows to create healthier urban and suburban environments. Types of green infrastructure to consider in the three communities include:

- Green roofs in the Villages;
- Rainwater harvesting using rain barrels and tanks to intercept rooftop runoff, where water can be reused to water landscape elements;
- Pervious pavement treatments in parking areas;
- Using bioswales, wetlands, and rain gardens to manage stormwater in small scale developments;
- Requiring green space in landscaping plans to capture runoff from impervious surfaces, reducing direct discharges of stormwater to local waterways and lessening the impacts of combined sewer overflows; and
- Utilizing living infrastructure, such as woodlands, meadows and riparian buffers, and living shorelines in agriculture or suburban areas with larger swaths of open land to intercept and manage stormwater and overland runoff.
- Expand efforts to "green" the Villages and more urbanized areas of the Town through the expansion of parkland, improved areas of public realm (additional plazas and public spaces) and the planting of more trees in appropriate locations.

5.3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL ZONING CHANGES

Recommendations include:

- Develop an inventory of important environmental features (stream corridors, wetlands, forested lands) and use it as a reference when reviewing development proposals.
- Create zoning overlay districts to protect sensitive environmental features, such as waterways, from the adverse impacts of land use and development. Environmental Protection Overlay Districts are designed to address environmental concerns. The overlay regulations overlap with the underlying zoning to provide additional protections that are consistent with the goals of the community. Typically, added restrictions are included, such as setbacks from creeks or freshwater wetlands.
- Develop zoning regulations that provide performance standards to limit impervious cover, implement green stormwater infrastructure, and protect and restore functional riparian buffers.
- Consider an open space protection easement law (see Town of Pittsford).
- Review and revise parking requirements in the zoning regulations to discourage the creation of extensive areas of impervious cover (reduce parking space requirements, require shared parking).

5.3.4 ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Host Community Work Days – this could include trash cleanup and invasive species removal in waterways, and/or community tree planting days along creek banks to improve stormwater management (trees can be obtained at no cost through the NYSDEC “Trees for Tribs” program).
- Develop and implement educational training programs or information for homeowners about lawn care techniques including how to appropriately dispose of yard waste and lawn debris, options for reducing or eliminating the use of fertilizers and pesticides to protect water quality and wildlife, and the advantages of planting native species.
- Develop and implement educational training programs or information about preventing non-point source pollution (e.g., cleaning up after your pets, properly disposing of hazardous materials, etc.)
- Increase watershed stewardship by installing markers and signage for storm drains.
- Conduct a flood resiliency study to evaluate where public facilities and important infrastructure are located in relation to flood zones and determine potential improvements to reduce risks to these resources. Such a study should address the levees in the Village of Lancaster.
- Support the Village of Lancaster’s Climate Smart Communities initiative; the Town and Depew should also consider becoming Climate Smart Communities. This program, offered through NYSERDA, has available funds to help implement environmentally-friendly programs.
- Consider daylighting enclosed portions of Plum Creek and integrating the restored waterway into the existing trail system through the Village of Lancaster.
- Undertake an invasive species management and control program to improve ecological sustainability (including for Canada geese).



Plum Creek, Village of Lancaster

5.4 Agriculture and Food Systems Planning

GOAL: Protect and enhance the viability of agriculture

Agricultural protection is a priority of the Town and Erie County. The Town should cooperate with the County to implement the provisions in the Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan that are relevant to Lancaster. The Town should also encourage landowners to continue to participate in the Agricultural Districts program, which provides protections and tax benefits to farm owners, as established by New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. Conservation Easements and PDR initiatives are also frequently used to help protect agricultural lands. The Town should evaluate these programs as feasible options for protecting agricultural activity in the community.

Fact Sheet on Purchase of Development Rights for farmland protection

http://www.smht.org/NYPDR_Factsheet_revised-1-.pdf

Recommendations include:

- Develop a town-wide Farmland Protection Plan to identify key agricultural lands for protection and appropriate means of accomplishing the protection of prime soils and important farmlands, and instituting programs that support local farmers. Once the Town has an adopted Farmland Protection Plan, it would be eligible to pursue farmland protection grants through the New York State Department of Agricultural and Markets.
- Conduct educational programs about the fiscal benefits of protecting agricultural lands.
- Work with the Village of Lancaster to move the Farmer's Market back to where it would have higher visibility.
- Work with land trusts to educate residents and farmers about farmland preservation programs.
- Promote the Town's 'Right to Farm' Law. In particular, work with local realtors to disseminate information about the Law and the Town's commitment to protecting its agricultural lands. If the Town adopts a Farmland Protection Plan, this document should be given to realtors, as well.
- Do not allow private sewage treatment plants in a State Agricultural Districts.
- Review the Town's AR zoning to make sure it provides sufficient protection for local agriculture. In particular, look at the required minimum lot size. If the Town adopts a Farmland Protection Plan, this would be done as a part of the development of that plan.



5.5 Housing

GOAL: Provide a diverse, attractive, safe and affordable housing stock.

The Town and Villages benefit from a high-quality, diverse housing stock, and should strive to maintain this asset, as a means of maintaining quality of life and regional competitiveness. Recommendations designed to enhance the communities' housing stock and character include the following:

- Consider adopting a local preservation law that locally designates historic structures for protection and discourages demolition of historic properties;
- Consider a recognition program for historic properties to instill pride and recognition (see Trumbull County program below);
- Create an inventory of historic places within each community and use this list when evaluating development and redevelopment proposals;
- Allow accessory housing units (with appropriate controls);
- Review zoning to allow a variety of housing types, including accessory units;
- Consider a revolving loan fund to encourage investment in private housing stock;
- Promote housing rehabilitation programs available through Erie County;
- Consider adopting property maintenance regulations with stricter provisions to enforce property upkeep, particularly within the Villages;
- Consider developing community-wide standards for housing quality, vacancies and Code enforcement that all residential properties should be held to;
- To address issues with problem properties, (i.e., foreclosures and “zombie” homes), work with the Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation to target investment in neighborhoods with a higher number of distressed homes, including efforts for acquisition, rehabilitation and resale;
- Revise site plan criteria to facilitate the Planning Boards' ability to evaluate new project proposals for their compatibility with surrounding uses, particularly within historic districts in the Village of Lancaster. Criteria should address site issues, such as:
 - Connected road network and discouragement of cul-de-sacs,
 - Blocks that are designed at village-scale; avoid “super-blocks” (large areas),
 - Building scale that is designed at an appropriate size and height,
 - Building setback standards that encourage buildings at the street line and parking in rear,
 - Landscaping that is designed to enhance development and provide screening where needed.



Historic Building Recognition Program from the Trumbull County Historical Society website:

<https://www.trumbullcountyhistory.org/programs-and-events/historic-building-recognition-program>

5.6 Parks and Trails

Goal: Create a linked system of open spaces and recreation opportunities for all residents

An issue of great concern to the public and community representatives was the need for a system of trails and pathways to improve connections between the Villages, neighborhoods and community resources and destinations. Create a connected system of trails and pathways between all three communities, with emphasis on establishing connections to Como Lake, Westwood Park, Walden Pond Park and the Heritage Trail from surrounding areas, as shown on the Connectivity Map.

Recommendations for increasing recreational opportunities include the following.

- Investigate the feasibility of a trail along Cayuga Creek that would link Como Lake Park with the downtown in the Village of Lancaster.
- Establish a bike lane/path system linking recreation, municipal, shopping and school facilities with residential areas. Priority routes for bike lanes would be Broadway through the Villages of Depew and Lancaster; Central Avenue in the Village of Lancaster; Lake Street (with links to Como Lake); and Aurora and Court Streets (with ties to schools).
- Investigate the feasibility of extending the Heritage Trail west to create a connection to Keysa Park, which may have to be designed as an on-road facility.
- Provide bicycle storage/parking facilities at parks, historic sites, in the central business districts, etc.
- Connect Town trails to the trail systems in the adjoining communities of Cheektowaga and Clarence.
- Work with Erie County to coordinate improvements to Como Lake Park that are consistent with the County's Parks Master Plan.
- Consider a Local Parks Master Plan to identify specific recreational and facility needs, identify potential sites for park expansion, monitor maintenance needs, etc., for all three communities.
- Investigate the feasibility of a new parks facilities in the northwestern and southern portions of the Town, which are areas where there is an apparent need for recreational opportunities.
- Work with the School Districts to widen recreational opportunities available to residents.



5.7 Economic Development

Goal: Expand the economic base of the three communities and increase local employment opportunities for residents

The major economic development priority for Lancaster is to implement the recommendations of the Village of Lancaster Downtown Revitalization Study, including strategies to address the site that is now owned by the Lancaster Community Development Corporation. Recommendations for improved economic development include the following.

- Engage the Lancaster Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and Erie County IDA to more actively promote sites in the Town and Villages to attract new businesses and industries to the communities.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce and ECIDA to target/recruit merchants and providers that offer a diverse mix of goods and services, with emphasis on things that are lacking in the Village centers and areas of high growth in the Town (e.g., books, clothing, music, etc.).
- Coordinate and promote entrepreneurial training programs and technical assistance for local businesses that is offered by Buffalo Niagara SCORE and the Small Business Development Center.
- Work with GBNRTC to improve transit connections and service, especially community hubs.
- Establish design standards for commercial development (including access management, parking, etc.) that are aimed at creating neighborhood-scale retail opportunities.
- Explore park and ride options at appropriate areas in the three communities.
- Institute Transit Road access management and traffic calming measures similar to efforts undertaken in the Town of Amherst and Clarence (see Amherst – Clarence Land Use Access Management Plan). http://www.amherst.ny.us/govt/govt_proj_detail.asp?code=pro&neworder=12
- Streamline development processes for designated industrial development areas (i.e., Walden Business Park, Commerce Parkway).
- Consider “pre-permitting” properties within established industrial parks. Under this program, a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) is prepared to evaluate appropriate levels of development and establish thresholds for site development. As long as a new business falls within the parameters set by the GEIS, no further review under SEQR would be required, and site plan review could be expedited.
- As a more aggressive approach, specific sites could be pre-permitted through the New York State Build Now/ Shovel Ready Program. Sites certified as “Shovel Ready” have addressed all major permitting issues in advance, significantly reducing the amount of time required to go through the permitting process.
- Designate areas for neighborhood retail, as shown on the Vision Map, to allow for the establishment of small-scale service retail nodes located closer to residential neighborhoods.
- The Lancaster airport is an important economic development asset, but additional expansion or growth of this facility is not encouraged. The Town should create/reestablish zoning limitations on the airport.

Link to Build Now/ Shovel Ready program information:

<https://esd.ny.gov/businessprograms/data/buildnow/>

5.8 Municipal Services and Infrastructure

Community facilities and infrastructure contribute to the overall quality of life in the Town and Villages, and provide needed services for the community. At the same time, these facilities require continued investment and maintenance to remain effective. An appropriate strategy for investing in municipal infrastructure is necessary for making the Town and Villages desirable locations to live, work and play, and can spur additional investment.

Intermunicipal and regional coordination and cooperation is becoming increasingly more important as an approach to infrastructure investment, and many infrastructure problems require an intermunicipal approach. Cooperation extends beyond the Town and two Villages: the municipalities influence, and are influenced by other communities and their actions and planning efforts, including the adjoining municipalities, the County, the school districts and other governmental agencies.

To effectively manage growth and development in the Town and Villages, the availability, capacity, need and suitability for public services must be considered. Public water service is available throughout the three communities, ensuring a source of safe potable water to all residents and businesses. Sewer service is available to nearly all Village residents, and to the portion of the Town adjoining the Villages.



Growth should be targeted to areas with existing infrastructure

Erie County Sewer District (ECSD) #4 encompasses the two Villages and the western portion of the Town (west of Pavement Road). In addition, sewer service extends along Walden Avenue, as a corridor intended for business development. Areas of the Town and Villages with public sewers and water can accommodate additional higher-density development, and are targeted for growth.

With the exception of the Walden Avenue corridor, the sewer district does not extend east of Pavement Road. There are also areas south of William that fall within the sewer district, but where there are no existing sewer lines. Extending sanitary sewers into unsewered areas is discouraged by regional planning doctrine, as well as the Town of Lancaster. Based on input from the public, the Steering Committee and Town representatives, it is recommended that the areas of the Town that lack sanitary sewer infrastructure to accommodate new development be prioritized for rural character protection. Growth is discouraged in these areas. This includes the lands located east of Pavement Road and south of William Street. In these areas, the Town discourages further extension of public sewer service to protect remaining rural character. In practical terms, the Town does not support the extension of new sanitary sewer lines beyond the areas where sewers are currently available. Consistent with regional planning documents and priorities, the focus should be on maintaining and improving existing infrastructure. This policy is driven by the reality that there is limited capacity for sanitary sewer extensions to support new development. Therefore, available capacity should be strategically targeted to areas where economic development and investment in commercial and industrial activity is prioritized.

Additionally, the Town should examine its zoning for the areas targeted for rural character protection to ensure it is consistent with this recommendation. In particular, the Town should evaluate the zoning for the area north of Peppermint Road. It had been rezoned from AR (Agricultural Residential District) to MF3, a multi-family residential district in the past. However, the development that was planned in this area was never built, in part due to the lack of sanitary sewer infrastructure. The Town should consider rezoning this area back to AR in support of the Town's desire to restrict high-density development east of Pavement Road to protect rural character.



Development should be restricted in the eastern and southern portions of the Town to maintain rural character

In general, the Town and Villages should take a comprehensive approach to evaluating existing infrastructure, and making appropriate investments to maintain high quality services. Intermunicipal cooperation and coordination are encouraged where feasible.

Recommendations and considerations for addressing and improving municipal services and infrastructure include:

- Lands north of Peppermint Road should be zoned AR.
- Ensure that the recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan are integrated into the Town and Villages' capital improvement programs, as appropriate.
- Improve coordination and planning between public service providers, Erie County, the Town and the Villages to ensure quality services, facilities and infrastructure.
- Work with the County and the NYSDEC to undertake a repair and replacement program for stormwater management infrastructure to improve water quality and improve the efficiency of the drainage system.
- Work with the County to undertake a continued inflow and infiltration (I&I) remediation program to the sanitary sewer system, where practical, to address capacity and water quality degradation issues.
- Explore opportunities for the utilization of solar and other alternative energy fixtures and facilities, where feasible, for municipal building and system upgrades to improve efficiency and save money.
- Maintain the high quality of municipal services, programs, parks and facilities to enhance opportunities for seniors, youth, community recreation and public safety.
- Address, coordinate and plan infrastructure projects undertaken by service providers holistically, rather than one project at any one time at any given location.
- Recognize and promote regional influence and participate in regional planning efforts to help achieve the Town and Villages' vision and goals for community and economic development.

5.9 Land Use and Zoning

Zoning is one of the primary tools the Town and Villages utilize to implement the Comprehensive Plan and better manage land use in the three communities. Each municipality should conduct a more detailed zoning audit to verify that their regulations are consistent with the goals and recommendations of this Plan. Specific recommendations pertaining to zoning include the following.

- Review the existing zoning district mapping layout for each community to ensure that lands are zoned in accordance with the guidance set forth on the Vision Map, which delineates areas where continued growth and higher density development is encouraged (Villages and western portion of the Town) and areas where higher density development should be avoided to protect rural character (east of Pavement Road and south of William Street).
- Ensure that the zoning classifications that allow higher density development are located in areas where sanitary sewer service is available (Villages and western portion of the Town).
- Facilitate redevelopment in areas where growth is desired (Villages and western portion of the Town) through streamlined zoning provisions and simplified procedures.
- Consider “Incentive Zoning” to achieve land use priorities (e.g. major infrastructure improvements, open space or historic preservation) in appropriate areas.
- Consider zoning changes to encourage multi-family housing along public transit corridors and near available services.
- Consider zoning revisions to the NB and GB districts or the creation of zoning overlay districts to allow traditional neighborhood style development at appropriate crossroads in the Town to create neighborhood service centers (e.g., Broadway and Bowen Road; Aurora Road and William Street).
- Create flexibility in zoning to encourage redevelopment of underutilized non-residential buildings for housing in the Village cores.
- Consider creating an agricultural zoning district (or revising the AR district) to discourage higher density development of agricultural lands and the loss of rural character lands.
- Recognize and distinguish the historic character of Bowmansville through the creation of a zoning overlay district to protect it.
- Consider an historic overlay district for Broadway in the Village of Lancaster to allow for mixed use and the conversion of houses to commercial use, while preserving the historic character of the area.
- Review local flood prevention ordinances and integrate them with zoning regulations and site plan review procedures to better protect existing development.
- Review zoning designations and consider targeted rezoning to address existing non-conformities.
- Rezone the two areas located east of Pavement Road and north of Peppermint Road, which are zoned MFR3, back to AR to match the adjoining district and support the protection of rural character in this area of the Town (where sanitary sewer infrastructure is lacking).
- Codify the Town of Lancaster subdivision regulations and incorporate them as a separate chapter in the Town Code (currently included only by reference).
- Adopt Conservation Subdivision regulations (see Town of Clarence regulations as an example).
- Clarify language on operational permits and their relationship to State law for Building Code enforcement, to facilitate enforcement of violations.
- Incorporate zoning measures to protect sensitive environmental features and encourage greater connectivity (connected street network preferred over dead-end streets).
- Introduce penalties for work conducted without appropriate building permits.
- Review and update the sign ordinances in the three communities.

5.10 VISION MAP

The Vision Map for the three communities is shown on Map 14. This map is intended to be used in conjunction with the recommendations in this section to guide decisions that affect the future development of the Town and Villages. The Vision Map provides sufficient guidance to direct the type of development that is envisioned for different areas of the communities while remaining flexible enough to accommodate changing circumstances. It is *not* a zoning map, and the focus is on the character of an area more than its use category. The Vision Map is intended to identify opportunities and priorities by geographic area so the character of those areas remains true to the communities' vision for them. The following discussion summarizes major elements of the Vision Map.

Civic Center/ CBD: Areas highlighted in [color] are community centers. In the case of the Village of Lancaster, it is the downtown central business district (also shown with an asterisk) which includes a mix of retail, residential, office and civic uses. In the case of the Village of Depew, it is the Veteran's Park area, which is a mix of residential, civic and institutional uses.

Resource Protection: Areas hashed in green are identified as areas of environmental resources, where protection is advised. These areas include large areas of wetlands and area floodplains. Development is discouraged, and these areas should be evaluated for the appropriateness of more formalized conservation protections, such as conservation easements.

Rural Protection: Areas shaded in solid green are identified as rural character protection. These areas should remain low density, and extension of new infrastructure (sewers, roads) is discouraged.

Economic Development: Areas shaded in light orange are priority economic development areas. Development of businesses are encouraged. This extends generally along Walden Avenue in all three communities, and the North Aurora area of the village of Lancaster.

Retail Corridor: Areas highlighted in red are proposed for retail development. This includes Transit Road, and Broadway through the Villages.

Neighborhood business: Blue asterisks depict areas where low-intensity, neighborhood-scale retail is encouraged to provide local shopping opportunities for adjacent neighborhoods.

Hamlet Areas: The two hamlets, Bowmansville and Town Line, are shown circled in red. These areas have their own unique character that should be supported.

CHAPTER 6: IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the Comprehensive Plan Update outlines an implementation strategy to help the Town and Villages put the Plan into action. The effectiveness of any Comprehensive Plan rests on how well the community implements the recommendations outlined in the Plan. A primary function of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide guidance and direction for future land use decisions and actions. The goals and recommendations outlined in Chapters 4 and 5 of this plan delineate where the Town and Villages intend to promote growth and reinvestment, and where growth is not encouraged. By using the Vision Statement in Chapter 4 as guidance, the Plan provides the leadership in the Town and Villages with direction for addressing major priorities and issues for the three municipalities. The recommendations also suggest a number of projects or activities for the communities to undertake to appropriately direct growth and redevelopment, preserve the character of the Town and improve the local quality of life.

6.1 Getting Started: First Steps

Implementation of the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster and Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan Update starts with the official adoption of the Plan, and its distribution to local decision-makers. The following discussion outlines an implementation framework for the Town and Villages over the next year and beyond.

Adoption:

Each municipal Board will pass a resolution to formally adopt the Comprehensive Plan Update for their respective community. This action gives the Comprehensive Plan the force of law and demonstrates commitment on the part of each community to achieve the vision set forth in the Plan.

Distribution:

Copies of the final Comprehensive Plan Update should be distributed to Town and Village Board members, Department Heads, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members, and members of other relevant Committees or organizations. This action ensures that all bodies that have approval and permitting authority in each community are aware of and have easy access to information about the community vision and goals.

Coordination:

The Town and the two Villages should continue to work together, and a number of the recommended actions involve cooperation among the three jurisdictions. Therefore, implementation actions undertaken by each individual community should be coordinated with the other partnering communities to ensure consistency. This is discussed in greater detail below.

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan Update will involve coordination with other governmental agencies, such as Erie County, and the adjoining Towns. It is also important to maintain open lines of communication with various State agencies, as they will be important partners, either organizationally and/or financially, for implementation. For example, recommendations for improvements along State or County highways will necessitate involvement of the NYSDOT or the Erie County Highway Department.

Strong communication and coordination with (and between) the local legislative bodies can be helpful in generating support for or successfully implementing specific projects. Furthermore, there are projects that will benefit more than one community, requiring coordinated planning, outreach and funding. Certain actions, such as trails projects, flood mitigation or park improvements, will likely require joint applications for funding. By applying jointly, the Town and Villages can increase their chances of securing the funding and assistance required to undertake proposed actions.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee

To manage the implementation process in each community, and to assist with the coordination of implementation efforts, it is recommended that the three communities establish a designated Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee. This can be a joint committee, or individual committees for each municipality.¹ The Implementation Committee, whether joint or individual, would be tasked with oversight of the implementation process to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a dynamic and useful document and that each community continually aims to achieve the overall vision and goals of the Plan. The membership should be selected to represent a range of perspectives and expertise to address issues and enable each community to tap the assistance and expertise of committed individuals.

Annual Action Plan

Each municipality has the responsibility for implementing the Plan within their jurisdiction, but as noted above, many actions will be enhanced through a coordinated effort between the Town and the Villages. To ensure progress, the first step toward implementation would involve each community developing an Action Plan that details their proposed implementation actions for the next year. These Actions Plans would be coordinated with the other municipalities to ensure consistent implementation efforts and to identify items that could be undertaken together. The Actions Plans would be provided to the legislative board in each community to confirm a targeted list of activities to be accomplished in the first year. As noted below, this plan would be reviewed and revised, as needed, annually.

It must be recognized that the Comprehensive Plan contains a broad range of recommendations, and not everything can be accomplished at once. Therefore, with the assistance of the legislative body, each Committee must establish implementation priorities that are based on a realistic assessment of community issues and available funding and personnel. The Action Plan should include the priority items that the Legislative body feels most strongly about, because these items are more likely to be achieved and supported by the community and can help build a sense of momentum, as well as a list of successes. The goal is to select a few issues where the community can make significant progress (easily achievable recommendations), while also identifying action items that would be achieved over a longer term and/or achieved together with the partnering communities.

Assignments

As a part of developing the Action Plan, and for each proposed action, the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee should identify a sponsor or “champion” who will take responsibility for keeping the action moving forward. This can be a Town or Village Board member, a department staff

¹ The Village of Depew will need to consider how to address the portion of the Village that falls within the Town of Cheektowaga.

person, a Planning Board member or a local citizen. Having an assigned “champion” greatly increases the likelihood of success.

6.2 Moving Forward: Next Steps

After adoption and distribution of the Update, and establishment of the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee(s), the next step is to ensure there are adequate resources available for the implementation of the plan.

Budgeting

The Town and Village Boards should establish a budget for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The budget should address funds for capital expenditures on specific projects, the funding of implementation activities such as studies, and administrative costs associated with implementation, such as legal assistance or match requirements for grant programs. Many recommended actions can be accomplished with little to no cash investment, but there needs to be a realistic assessment of actions that do require resources, particularly capital investments. Strategic phasing of certain projects may be required. Proactively budgeting for these activities helps ensure that progress is made.

Partnering

The Town and Village Boards should identify potential partners to help accomplish their goals. These can be private organizations or individuals who are championing a specific cause; partnering municipalities, such as adjoining Towns or Erie County; or State agencies, depending on the nature of the activity. For example, the local Historical Society would be a valuable partner for any activities associated with the Village of Lancaster and should be involved in activities related to historic preservation. The State or County could lend assistance or partner on economic development or environmental protection projects, and local farmers may be instrumental in assisting with issues related to agricultural preservation.

Ongoing Communication

As previously noted, the Town and Village Boards are the central clearinghouse for issues in the three communities. The Boards, in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, should seek out ideas and recommendations from residents and staff, and continue to actively coordinate with one another, as well as other organizations and groups to assist with implementation of the recommendations outlined in their Action Plans.

Tools

The Town and Villages should consider reviewing existing procedures and processes to ensure their consistency with the Comprehensive Plan Update. It may be beneficial to develop forms, checklists or other tools to help guide local decision making.

Monitoring and Review

Periodically throughout the year, the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee should monitor implementation efforts internally. If separate committees are established for each community, these

committees should coordinate with the other two communities, as needed, to ensure advancement of efforts and overall consistency.

At the end of each year, the Committee should review progress made toward achieving the implementation actions that were scheduled for that year. Based on the progress made, current trends and changing conditions and input from the legislative body, the Committee should update the Action Plan for the coming year, modifying the listing of targeted priorities and assignments, as needed. This monitoring helps the communities keep track of what is being accomplished – or not accomplished. The Committee should also reassess what issues and items are the most important for the coming year. It is likely that the Action Plan items for each community will need readjustment periodically to reflect available resources, legislative priorities, interests of active volunteers, available resources, etc.

As a part of the annual review, each community should evaluate the following to assess land use changes and potential trends and ensure that the Town and Villages are making land use decisions that are in conformance with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan Update:

- **All site plan and subdivision approvals**, that were issued during the previous year should be reviewed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Update to determine where development activity has occurred or is proposed, if it has been designed to be consistent with the vision and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the overall impact of the planning approvals on general land use trends in the community.
- **All rezoning decisions** approved during the previous year should be reviewed in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan Update to determine if these actions were undertaken in conformance with the vision and recommendations of the Plan and if the overall impact of the rezoning decisions are consistent with the general land use trends in the community.
- **Priority Zoning Code amendments and revisions** specified in the Comprehensive Plan (and any that were not) should be reviewed to determine which actions were accomplished and which ones should be undertaken in the coming year. Each municipality should also determine if there are any new zoning amendments that should be added to this list.

Milestones

It is important to recognize and celebrate successes on a regular basis. This recognition helps maintain momentum and enthusiasm for achieving the vision of the Comprehensive Plan and provides a sense of accomplishment. The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee should establish milestones to help maintain accountability. Large projects may need to be broken into achievable components or phases to help make them more manageable. These milestone targets help keep implementation of the Plan on track.

Advocacy

The Town and Village Boards have standing to advocate for the projects recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. Their advocacy of the Plan and its recommendations demonstrates commitment that can be helpful in applying for grants and other support, especially for projects that must meet specific Regional Economic Development Council criteria to qualify for funding. Continued advocacy with

County, regional and State representatives will keep them aware of the Town and Villages' priorities and vision and may lead to assistance toward achieving the goals.

Intergovernmental Relations

As stated in New York State Town and Village Laws, if any other governmental agency has plans for a capital project within the Town or Villages, that agency must take the vision, goals and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan into consideration in its planning. This provides the Town and Villages with greater leverage in seeking to guide actions undertaken by other agencies in a manner that best supports the communities' goals.

Comprehensive Plan Updates

Any Comprehensive Plan will need revisions over time. The Town and Villages should continuously evaluate the relevance of the recommendations in the Plan, and keep the document current and in keeping with the vision for the communities. Minor revisions can be incorporated on an annual basis, with a more comprehensive review as needed.

6.3 First Year Action Plan Priorities

Initial first year priority items are tentatively established:

6.3.1 Town of Lancaster

- **Zoning audit:** Complete a zoning audit to determine if properties are properly zoned, and that zoning code provides appropriate guidance regarding development patterns.
- **Economic Development:** Work with property owners, Lancaster IDA and Erie County to achieve "pre-permitted" status for priority economic development spots. (e.g. Eastport) This can be achieved through a Generic Environmental Impact Statement that establishes thresholds for appropriate development (e.g. amount of traffic generated, water requirements, etc.) As long as a prospective users falls within the established thresholds, no further review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) would be needed. Participation in the State's Shovel-Ready program is another alternative.
- **Connectivity Improvements:** Work with the other communities toward implementing the system of bike paths and connectivity improvements as shown on Map XX.

6.3.2 Village of Lancaster

- **Redevelopment of 11 West Main Street:** work with Lancaster Community Development Corporation, Lancaster IDA, Erie County and Empire State Development to identify and implement redevelopment opportunities for this property in a manner consistent with the downtown revitalization strategy prepared separately.

- **Green Infrastructure/Levees:** work with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and others to address sewer overflow issues that are subject of a DEC consent order. An engineering study will be required, but green infrastructure
- **Connectivity Improvements:** Work with the other communities toward implementing the system of bike paths and connectivity improvements as shown on Map XX.

6.3.3 Village of Depew (East of Transit Road)

- **Veterans Park:** pursue designating the park as a historic resource, at a minimum on the local level, and possibly at State and national levels. Pursue improvements to the park to establish it as a civic center for the community.
- **Connectivity Improvements:** Work with the other communities toward implementing the system of bike paths and connectivity improvements as shown on Map XX.

6.4 Potential Funding Resources

The Town and Villages will need to seek outside resources and assistance to accomplish many of the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, it is important to have an understanding of potential funding sources for implementation efforts. There are a number of federal and state programs that offer funding for planning, design and/or capital projects. Funding programs have different protocols and criteria, and proposed projects should be structured to target the grantors' priorities and requirements. Identifying and taking advantage of funding opportunities can be a very effective means of implementing the Comprehensive Plan and achieving the Town and Villages' vision and goals for the future. The following outlines some available funding resources.

Parks Development Program (Environmental Protections Fund)

This program offers matching grants through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for planning, designing or constructing parks and recreation projects. These grants are useful for achieving parks and trails design, renovation and development. Grants of this nature are offered through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process.

Recreational Trails

This program is funded through the Federal Highway Administration, with applications managed by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. It funds acquisition, development, rehabilitation, and/or maintenance of trails for recreational use. Projects must be consistent with the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), but a wide variety of trail projects are included in that document.

Historic Preservation Program

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation also offers a matching grant program to improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore historic properties. Properties must be listed on the National and/or State Registers of Historic Places. Applicants must be municipalities or not-

for-profits with an ownership interest in the property. Grants of this nature are offered through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process.

Parks Acquisition Grants

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation will provide funds for municipalities to acquire or obtain permanent easements for lands intended for parks, recreation or conservation uses.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The Town and Villages are eligible for CDBG funding through the Consortium led by Erie County. Grants are in support of affordable housing, improved living environments and expanded economic opportunities, particularly for residents with low- to moderate incomes. Eligible projects include actions to eliminate blight, public infrastructure improvements that benefit low- to moderate income households, or projects that address serious threats to public health or safety.

Local Government Efficiency Grants

These grants offer funding through the NYS Department of State to explore or accomplish shared services, cooperative agreements and other means of streamlining governmental services. They are designed to promote lowered costs through cooperation in providing services between two or more municipalities. This type of grant may prove beneficial for the Town and Villages to fund potential shared services efforts. Grants of this nature are offered through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process.

Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program

There have been several rounds of this federal grant program and future rounds are possible, depending on what occurs with federal budgets and policies. Should this program be continued, grants may be available for planning, designing or implementing surface transportation projects, such as streetscapes, bridge repair, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and highway reconstruction. These grants are extremely competitive; grants with the greatest chance of success show evidence of strong community support, promote sustainability and livable communities, and increase economic competitiveness.

Additional Consolidated Funding Application Grant Programs

- Empire State Development – grants funding for strategic planning and feasibility studies
- New York Main Street Program
- Department of Environmental Conservation/Environmental Facilities Corporation – funding for wastewater infrastructure engineering projects and planning studies
- Environmental Facilities Corporation – Green Innovation Grant Program to fund green infrastructure planning and projects
- Climate Smart Communities Grant Program
- State Council of the Arts – funding for arts and cultural initiatives

New York State Department of Transportation funding opportunities

- Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS)
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP)
- BRIDGE NY

Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) funding opportunities

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

This list of funding opportunities is not all inclusive and there are other programs that provide potential sources of funding for implementation efforts. The Town and Villages should also actively investigate member item grants through their New York State legislative representation, as well as private foundation funding for specific projects that fall within the interests of those sources.

CHAPTER 7: ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Although this is a joint plan, it must be adopted independently by each municipality. Under the New York State Environmental Quality Act (SEQR), the adoption of a municipality's Comprehensive Plan is automatically classified as a Type 1 action, which requires a more careful look at potential environmental impacts. As such, each municipality, as Lead Agency, is required to examine the potential environmental impacts of the plan. To facilitate this evaluation, this section of the comprehensive plan outlines potential impacts and mitigations. This format enables the reviewers, the Lead Agency, all involved and interested agencies, and the public to review one comprehensive document that outlines plans for the future and the potential environmental implications of these plans.

7.1 Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Impacts

The underlying purpose and a major goal of a Comprehensive Plan is to promote appropriate land use and avoid significant adverse environment impacts in the municipality that it covers. The Part 2 of the EAF does not identify any potentially moderate to large impacts and no significant environmental impacts. However, it is important here to acknowledge and discuss potential adverse impacts.

7.1.1 Short term/long term and cumulative impacts

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

Impacts on Land

- The Town and its Villages value their community character. Inappropriate planning and development actions could impact the character of the municipalities.
- There are areas of wetlands, floodplains and creek corridors. These areas have been identified on the Environmental Features map in this report. Improper development of these sensitive environmental areas could result in drainage, flooding and/or erosion problems.
- There are areas of mature woodland that should be protected, to the extent practicable, to preserve areas of open space.
- There are areas where the soils are categorized as prime farmland or prime farmland when drained (see Agriculture/Soils map). Improper development of these areas could result in the loss of irreplaceable resources.
- There are areas with steep slopes of greater than 15%, particularly along creek corridors. Improper development of these areas could result in drainage, flooding and/or erosion problems in downstream areas.

Impacts on Water

- Several streams run through the Town, including Cayuga, Ellicott, Little Buffalo, Plum Bottom, Scajaquada, and Slate Bottom Creeks. Plum Bottom Creek runs through the Village of Lancaster, and Cayuga Creek runs through both Villages (see Environmental Features map). These waterways are important for open space preservation, drainage, fish and wildlife habitat and

aesthetics. Other sensitive environmental features, such as wetlands and steep slopes, are frequently associated with the creeks in Lancaster and Depew. Improper development could affect these resources.

- Lancaster falls within the Niagara River watershed. Cayuga Creek and Ellicott Creek are sub-watersheds. Improper development in the watershed could have adverse impacts on water quality, groundwater resources, and habitats in the Town, the Villages and in downstream communities.
- There are significant areas of wetlands located in the Town, and some areas of wetlands in the Villages. Improper development of these areas could lead to flooding and drainage problems and loss of plant and animal habitats.
- There are areas of floodplains throughout the Town and the Villages, associated with the creeks. Improper development in these floodplain areas could lead to flooding or drainage problems, and/or hazards to public safety.
- Both Villages are fully served by sewers. The Town west of Pavement Road has sewers. The area west of Pavement Road in the Town, and portions of the area south of William Street depends upon on-site septic systems to treat sanitary waste. Improper development could lead to septic system failures and stresses on the groundwater supply or quality.
- There are areas of poorly drained soils. The environmental constraints associated with these soils should be considered when making planning and development decisions so as to reduce environmental impacts.

Impacts on Flora and Fauna

- The Town has areas of open meadows, hedgerows, farm fields and woodlands, particularly the eastern portion of the Town. Both the Town and Villages have areas of wetlands and creek corridors, and other features that support habitats. These environments support many non-threatened and non-endangered plant, avian and animal species. These areas provide important habitat for various resident and migrating species, and contribute to the character of the community. Improper planning and development could adversely impact these resources.

Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

- There are areas of the eastern portion of Town that are in agricultural usage, as shown on Map 5: Agriculture/Soils. These farmed areas are an important part of the local landscape and contribute to the local economy. Improper planning and development could result in a decrease in the viability of agriculture in the Town.
- There are areas within the Town that fall within a State-designated Agricultural District. Improper planning and development could have adverse impacts on these Agriculture areas.
- Agricultural lands are considered an important part of the character of the eastern portion of the Town of Lancaster. Development pressures could have a negative impact on these resources.

Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

- There are many aesthetic resources throughout the Town and its Villages associated with natural resources such as creek corridors, areas of open space, woodlots, farmlands, and parklands that contribute to the visual character of the communities.

- There are also many aesthetic resources in the Town and in both Villages associated with historic and architectural features, including the Historic District, numerous historic houses and properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The historic downtown area of the Village of Lancaster is an aesthetic resource, as is the Veteran’s Park area of the Village of Depew.
- These aesthetic resources contribute to the character of the communities and promote the local economy. Ill-planned patterns of development could have a negative effect on these resources.

Impacts on Historic and Cultural Resources

- There are many historic structures and sites in the three communities, including the Village of Lancaster Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Numerous other local structures are not officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but could qualify.
- All three communities include areas that are identified as having potential archeological significance, as designated by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
- Inappropriate development could have a detrimental effect on historic/cultural resources.

Impacts on Parks and Recreation

- Each of the three municipalities includes parks and playgrounds. Improper planning and development could negatively affect these resources.

Impacts on Critical Environmental Areas

- There are no designated critical environmental areas in Lancaster.

Impacts on Utilities

- The entire Town, including the Villages, have public water. All areas of the Villages, and the western portion of the Town have public sanitary sewer service. Improper planning and development can result in constraints placed upon the utility system.

Impacts on Transportation

- Major routes through the Town/Villages include State Route 33 (Genesee Street); State Route 78 (Transit Road); Route 20 (Broadway); Walden Avenue; and William Street. The New York State Thruway also crosses the Town, but has no interchanges within the Town. Other roads serve an important local function. Traffic is a major concern and improper planning and development can adversely impact transportation facilities in the Town by increasing demands on the transportation system.
- The transportation system is heavily based upon roadways and automobiles, although there is limited public transit available. Improper planning and development could adversely impact the viability of public transportation services.
- There are sidewalks and bicycle lanes within the three communities. Improper development can lead to inadequate and unsafe conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Impacts on Energy

- The improper planning and development of the Town and Villages can lead to unsustainable increases in the use of energy.

Noise and Odor Impacts

- The improper planning and development of the Town and Villages can lead to land uses that produce noise and/or odor impacts locating near sensitive land uses without proper buffering or mitigation.

Impacts on Public Health

- The improper planning and development of the Town and Villages can have a negative impact on the public health, safety, and welfare.

Impacts on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- The population of the Town of Lancaster has been increasing, while population in the Villages has remained relatively stable. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to manage growth in a manner consistent with the character of the communities, encouraging growth and redevelopment in and near the Villages, while discouraging growth in more rural areas of the Town.
- The Comprehensive Plan supports redevelopment in areas that are the most suitable for future growth at an appropriate pace and scale.
- With targeted, well-planned growth in appropriate locations and at an appropriate scale, the Town's character should not be adversely affected.

7.2 Adverse Environmental Impacts that Cannot be Avoided

With or without the adoption and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town and Villages will continue to have new development that may potentially result in impacts on the environment. There may be pressure for additional subdivision of lands, particularly in the eastern portions of the Town. There will continue to be concerns about water quality, floodplains and sensitive environmental areas.

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

7.3 Growth Inducing Aspects of the Plan

Many of the implementation actions outlined in this plan will help to control growth within the Town of Lancaster, and encourage redevelopment within the Villages of Lancaster and Depew. The plan also discourages development in certain areas that are identified as more suitable for low intensity uses or contain environmentally sensitive resources. The Plan supports high-quality development that will enhance the overall character of the Town.

7.4 Mitigation Measures

It is the objective of any comprehensive plan to help to reduce the potential impacts that could be caused by the present development trends in the planning community. This can be accomplished by providing techniques for changing the development trends of a community, such as amending zoning or other development regulations, or by providing tools to help mitigate the possible impacts of those development trends, such as providing for improved infrastructure, increased/improved standards for development, etc. A good comprehensive plan will supply techniques for modifying or clarifying the direction of the community, and the tools for reducing the impacts of development that themselves do not create other adverse environmental impacts. This Comprehensive Plan suggests a number of techniques for guiding the direction and nature of growth in the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew. The following section discusses the study's recommendations and the logic as to why and how they help mitigate the potential impacts of future growth and development.

Impacts on Land

- The Plan contains provisions designed to protect the character of the communities and their environmental resources. These include revisions to existing zoning, recommendations regarding infrastructure, and protection of important features.
- In general, the Plan supports new growth being focused in the areas with existing infrastructure (water and sewer). It supports the preservation of open space and agricultural lands in the eastern portion of the Town, and directs growth away from these areas.
- A number of recommendations specifically target protecting agricultural lands and uses.

Impacts on Water

- The creeks and streams within the three communities have been identified. The plan supports directing development away from stream corridors, and recommends an overlay district to protect them. Other techniques include green infrastructure and revised subdivision procedures.
- Investigating the feasibility of and public support for pursuing a program to purchase environmentally sensitive lands is also recommended. This action would require a public referendum.
- Future development will need to assess impacts on water resources on a site-specific basis and avoid or minimize any impacts to the maximum extent practicable.

Impacts on Plants and Animals

- There are no significant habitats in Lancaster or Depew. Other habitat areas, such as wetlands, grass fields and woodlots are important resources. By targeting these areas for protection, the Town and Villages are minimizing negative impacts and preserving habitats.

Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

- There are recommendations designed to encourage continued agricultural land uses, including revisions to Town regulations, and other activities the Town can undertake to discourage conversion of agricultural lands.
- The plan supports avoiding development in the eastern portion of the Town, where there are agricultural lands.

Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

- The aesthetic resources of the communities include historic structures, areas of woodlands, creek corridors and parklands. The Plan makes recommendations to protect and preserve these resources, and suggests the communities consider the adoption of guidelines and/or standards to control the design and character of new development to protect and enhance the aesthetic quality of development.

Impacts on Historic and Archaeological Resources

- The Plan includes recommendations designed to help protect culturally and historically sensitive areas in the Town and Villages.
- Future development will need to assess impacts on other archeological, cultural, and historic resources on a site-specific basis and avoid any impacts to the maximum extent practicable.

Impacts on Parks and Recreation

- The Plan includes recommendations to improve open space, parks, and recreational facilities in the communities by establishing opportunities for greenway trails to connect public parks. None of the recommendations would have an adverse impact on parks or recreational resources.

Impacts on Critical Environmental Areas

- There are no designated critical environmental areas in Lancaster or Depew.

Impacts on Utilities

- Future development will need to assess potential impacts on utilities on a site-specific basis and avoid adverse impacts to the maximum extent practicable.

Impacts on Transportation

- The plan includes recommendations designed to make roadways safer through means such as traffic calming, and a connected street grid.
- It also includes recommendations that encourage non-automotive traffic (walking, biking and transit) to help alleviate congestion and improve mobility.
- Recommendations are intended to improve safety.

Public Health

- The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- The Plan contains a number of provisions designed to protect the character of the separate municipalities, with a focus on redevelopment of the Villages and the area of the Town near the Villages, and rural preservation for the Town east of Pavement Road.
- Recommendations in this Plan will help manage growth and target it to appropriate areas, thereby minimizing negative impacts to the character of the communities.

7.5 Evaluation of Alternatives

Throughout the Planning process, alternatives for helping the municipalities achieve their goals and objectives were evaluated. The recommendations and implementation alternatives were designed not only to achieve desired results, but also to promote beneficial impacts to the environment, the needs of local residents, private property rights, quality of life and the vitality of the community.

The "No Action" alternative was considered. However, under the "No Action" scenario, the communities would not have a Comprehensive Plan document to guide growth and development, properly plan for their chosen future, and protect important community features, and therefore that alternative was deemed inappropriate.

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan will enable the municipalities to address issues of community character; aesthetic resources; environmental features; plant and animal habitats; archaeological, cultural, and historic resources; open space, parks, and recreation; agriculture; economic development; utilities; and transportation issues in a more effective manner. It forms the basis for zoning and other changes to the municipalities' regulations and helps guide future decisions regarding important issues such as infrastructure and public spending.

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



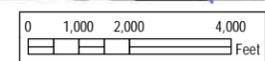
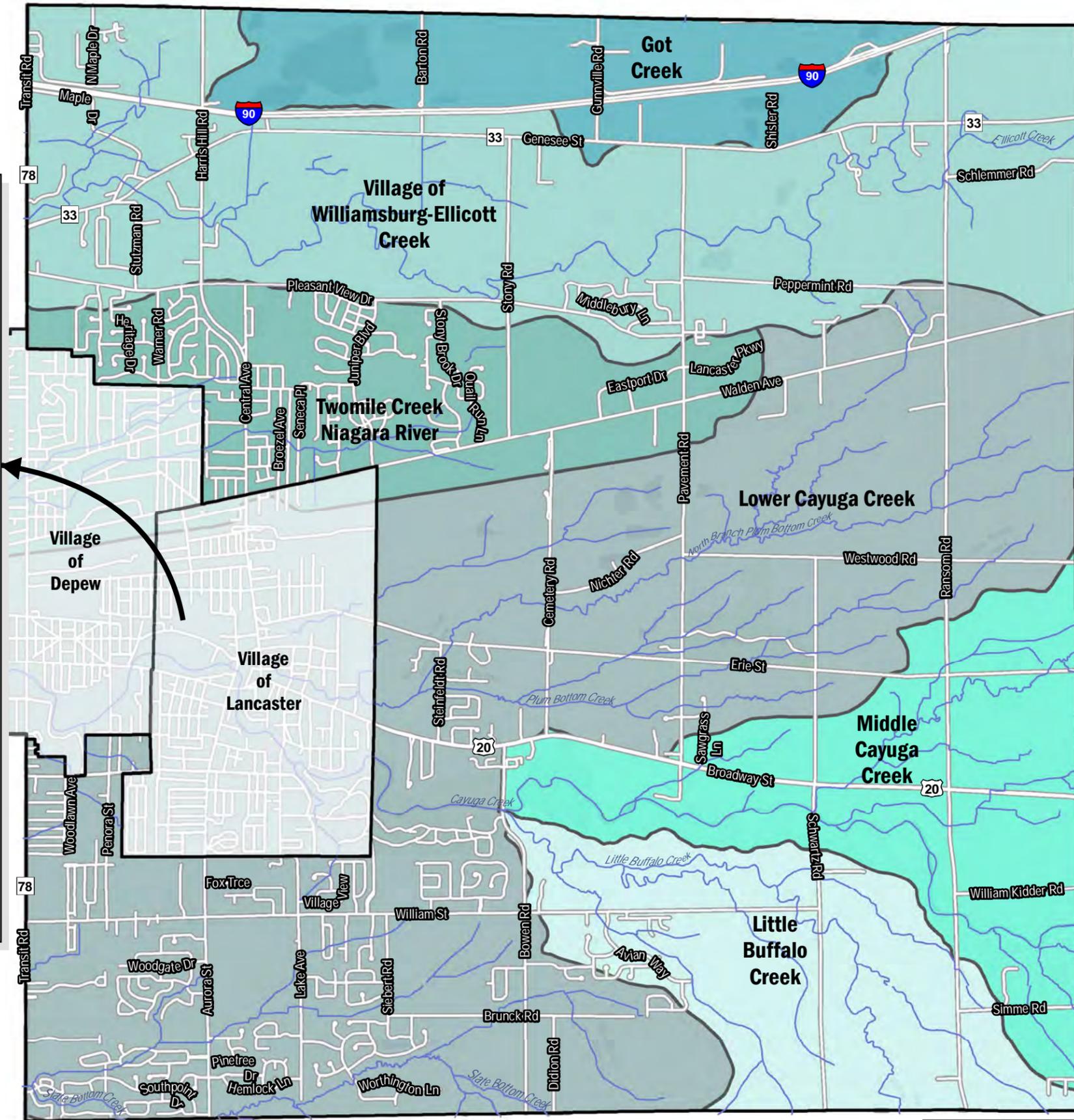
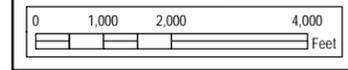
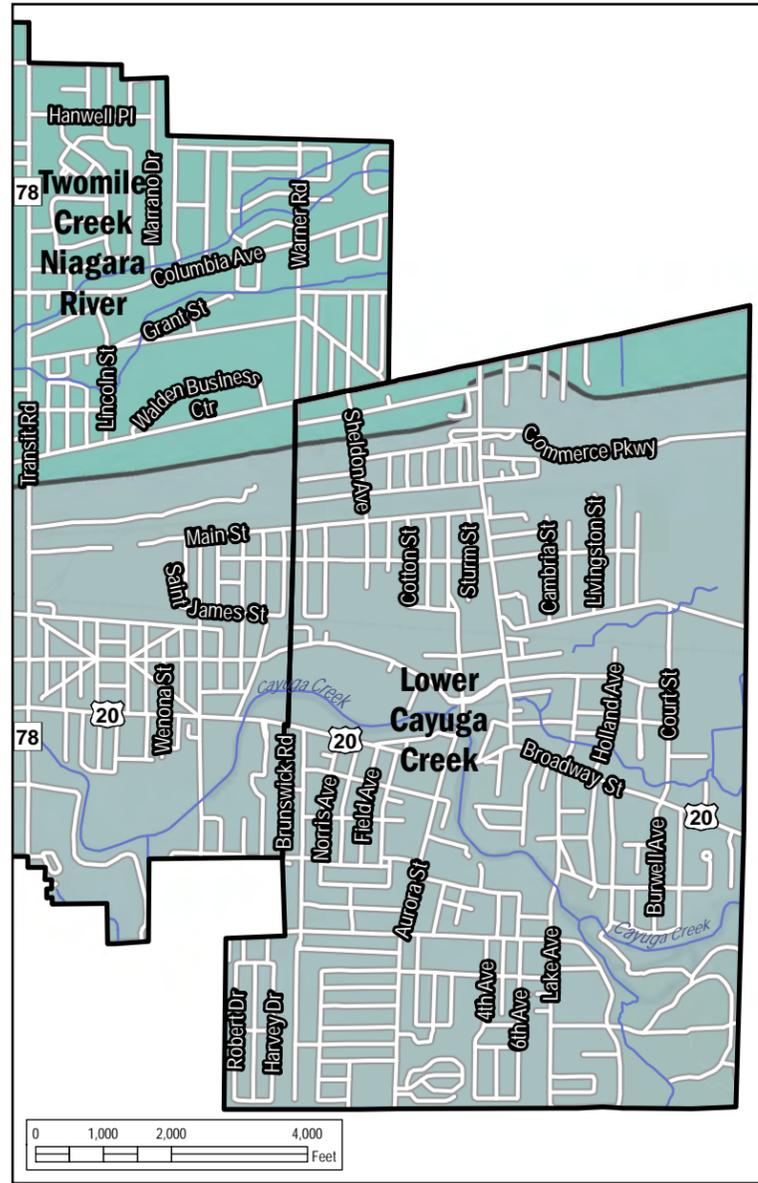
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 1 Watersheds



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Stream River
- Watershed Boundary
- Buffalo Creek
- Got Creek
- Headwaters Ransom Creek
- Little Buffalo Creek
- Lower Cayuga Creek
- Middle Cayuga Creek
- Twomile Creek-Niagara River
- Village of Williamsburg-Ellicott Creek



WD Project # 289215
Map Created: February, 2018

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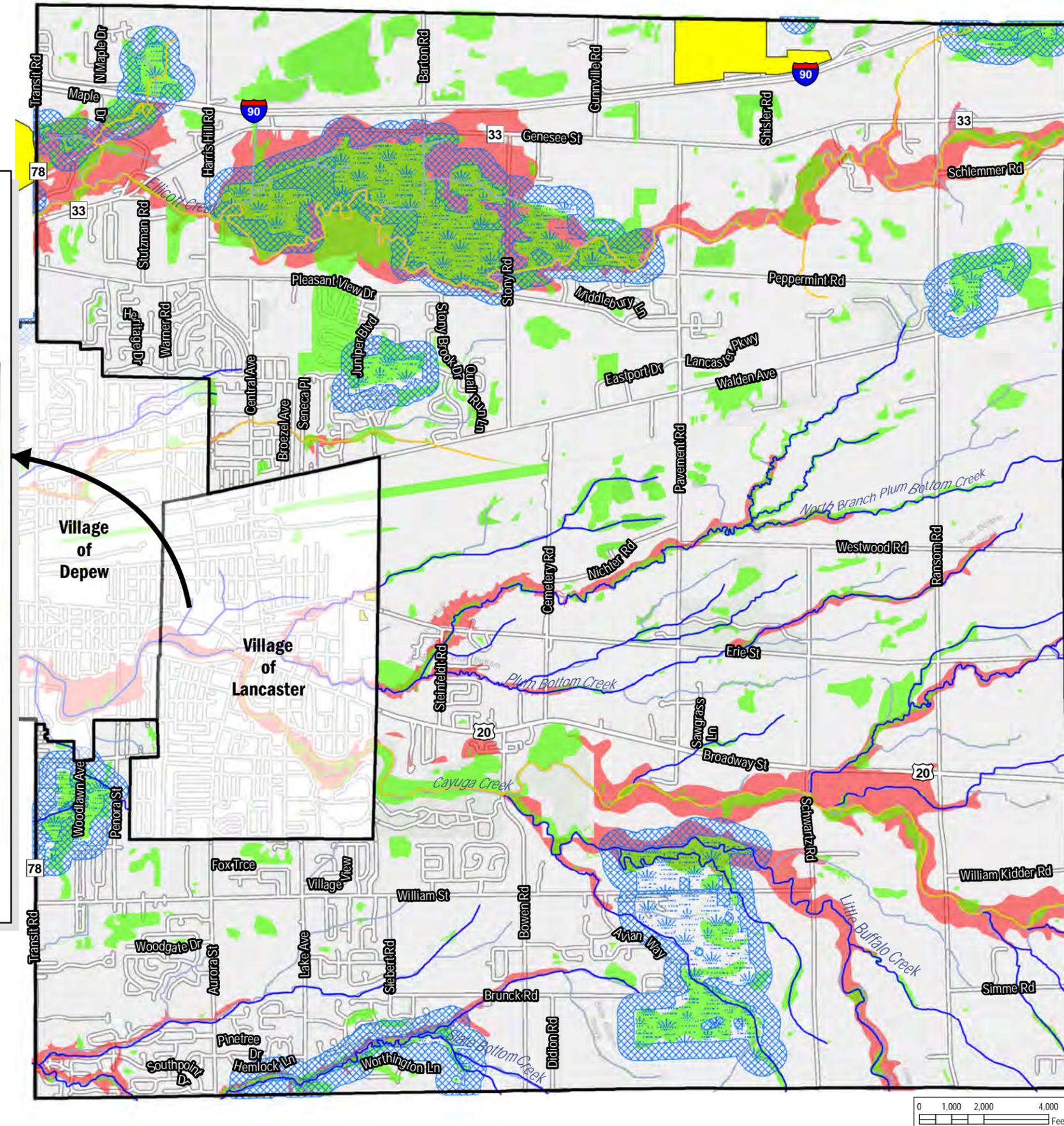
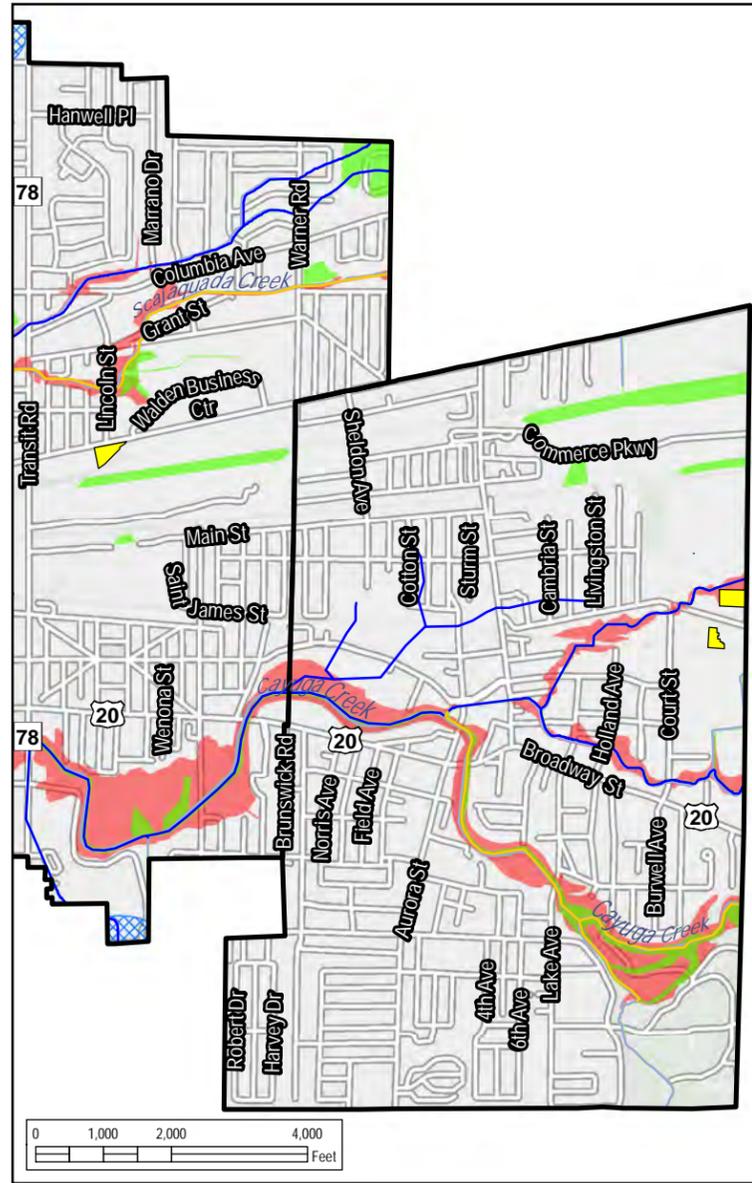
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 2 Environmental Features



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Stream River
- DEC Stream Classification
 - B
 - C
- NYS DEC Remediation Site
- 100 Year Floozone
- State Wetlands
- State Wetlands Checkzone
- Federal Wetlands



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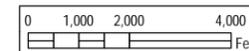
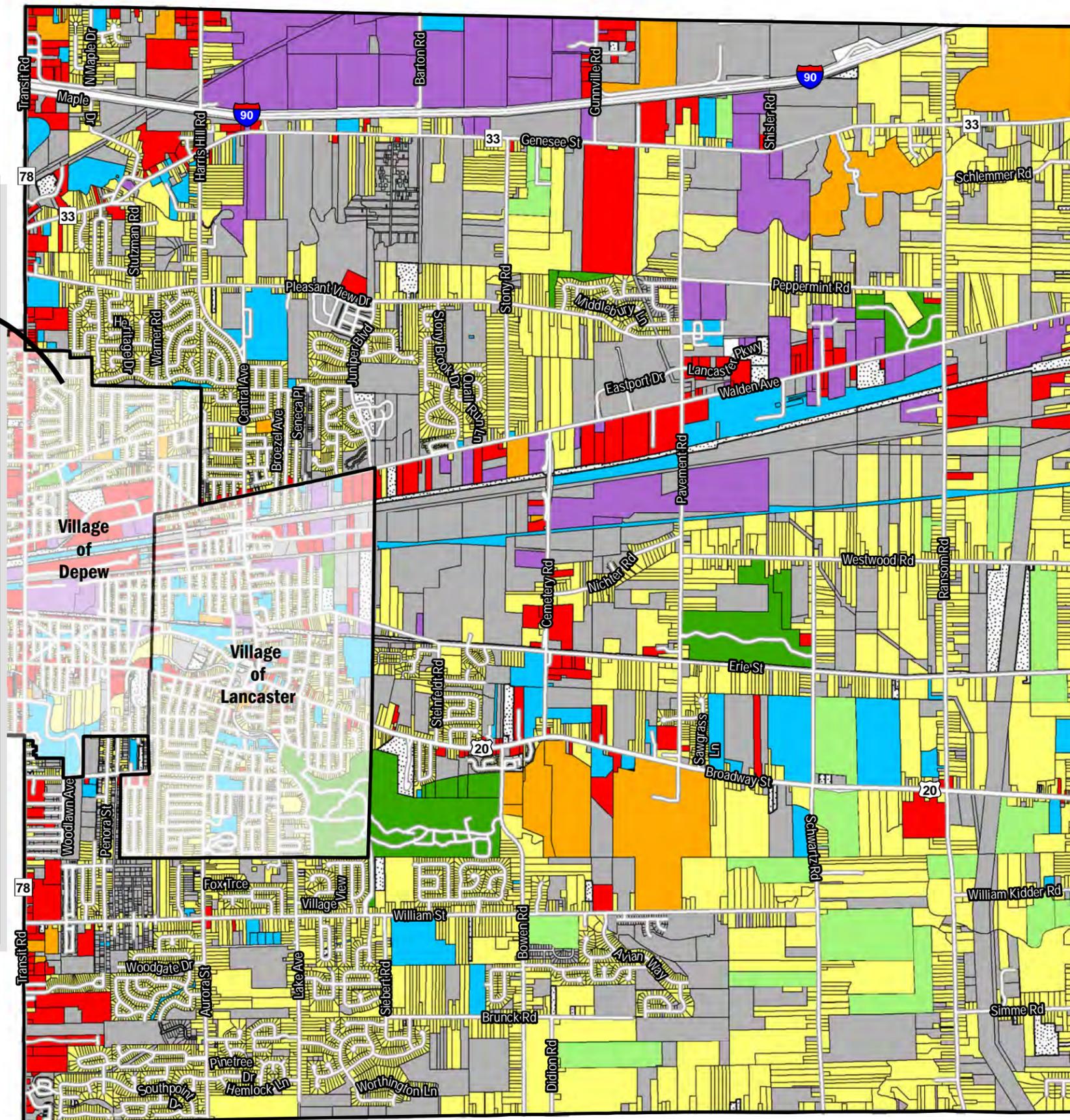
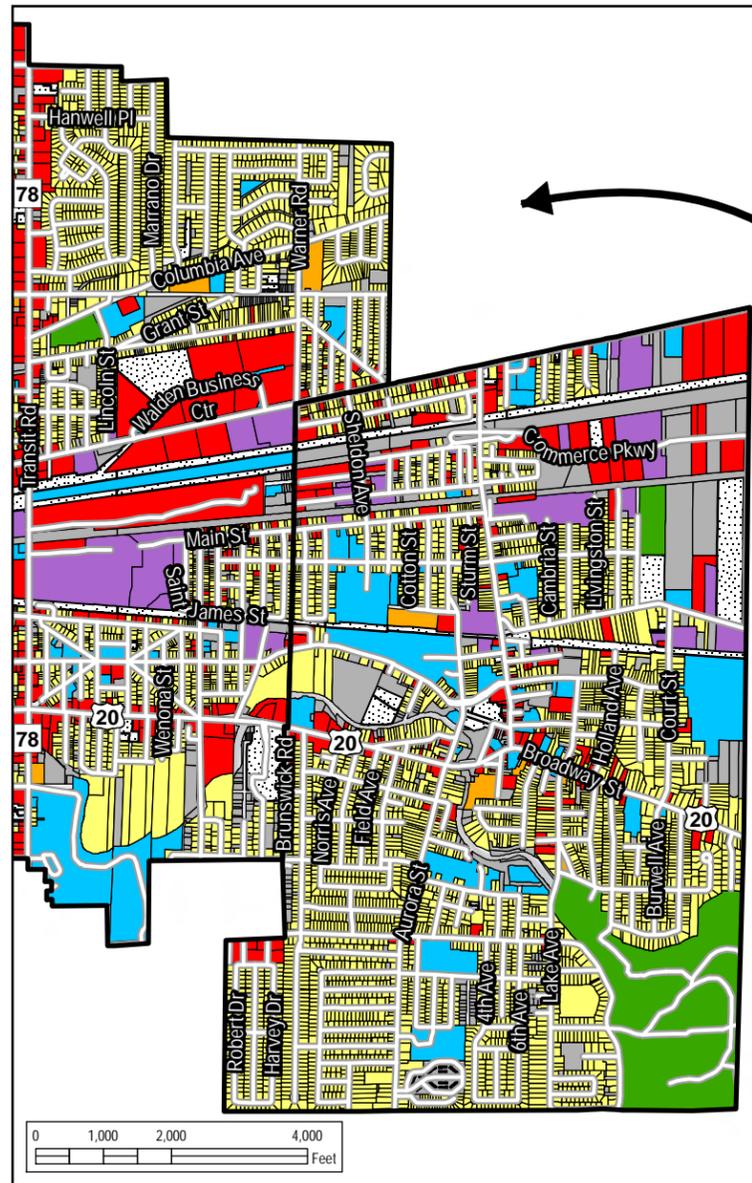
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 3
Land Use



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Existing Land Use
 - No Data
 - Agricultural
 - Residential
 - Vacant Land
 - Commercial
 - Recreation and Entertainment
 - Community/Public Services
 - Industrial
 - Wild, Forest, Conservation Lands and Parks



WD Project # 289215
Map Created: February, 2018

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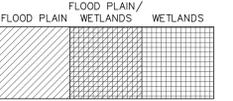
TOWN OF LANCASTER ZONING MAP

LEGEND

TOWNSHIP RANGE LINE
SECTION LINE
CITY OR VILLAGE LINE
FARM OR GREAT LOT LINE
PROPERTY LINE
RAILROADS

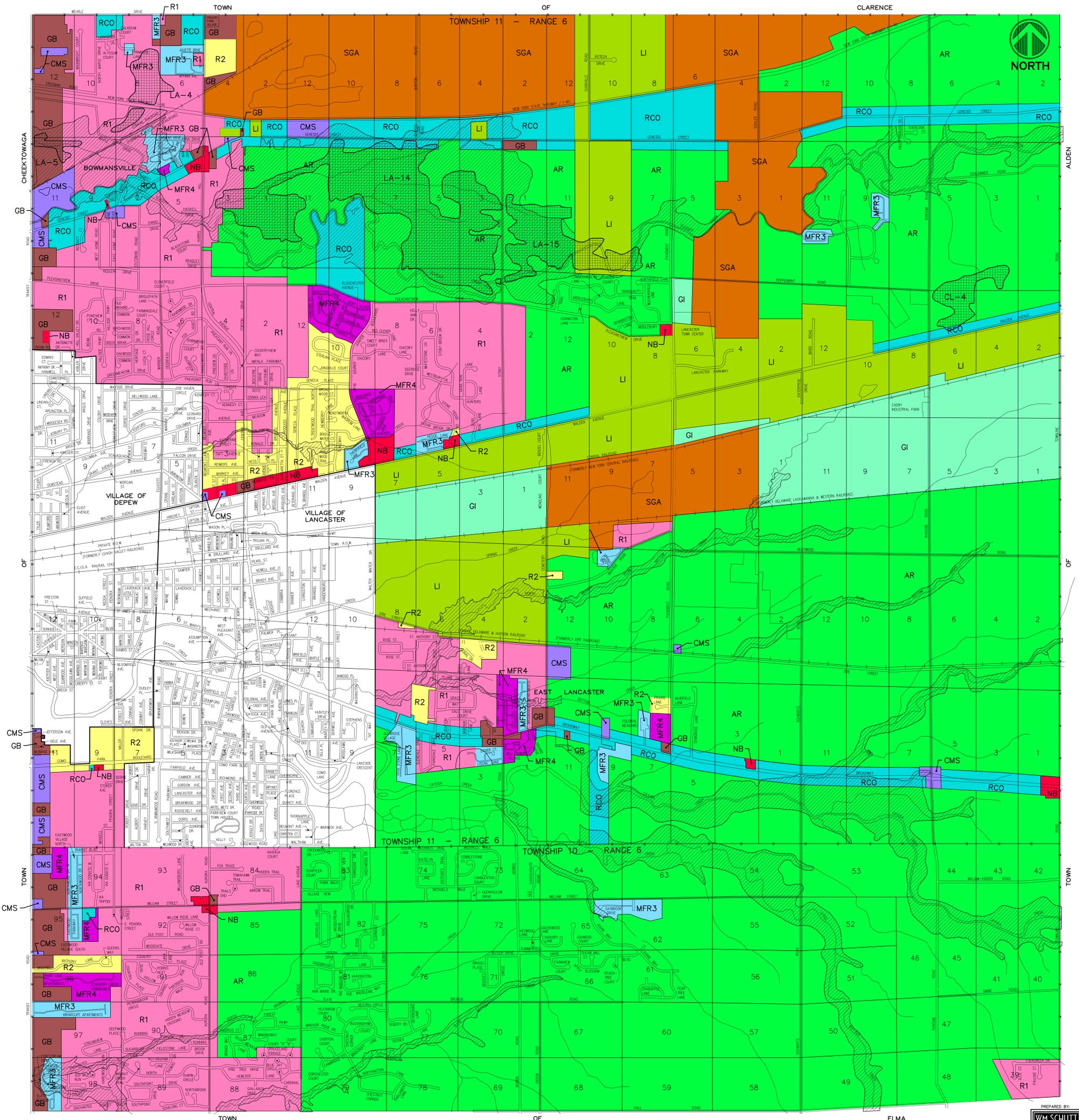
- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| ■ AR | AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT | ■ GB | GENERAL BUSINESS |
| ■ R1 | RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT 1 | ■ CMS | COMMERCIAL AND MOTOR SERVICE |
| ■ R2 | RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT 2 | ■ SC | SHOPPING CENTER |
| ■ MFR3 | MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT 3 | ■ SGA | SAND, GRAVEL, AGGREGATES |
| ■ MFR4 | MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT 4 | ■ LI | LIGHT INDUSTRIAL |
| ■ MFR5 | MOBILEHOME RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT 5 | ■ GI | GENERAL INDUSTRIAL |
| ■ NB | NEIGHBOR BUSINESS | ■ RCO | RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL OFFICE |

FLOOD PLAN / WETLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT



AS PER: DEC & FEMA MAPPING
CHECK FLOODPLAIN AND WETLAND MAPS FOR DETAILED LOCATION

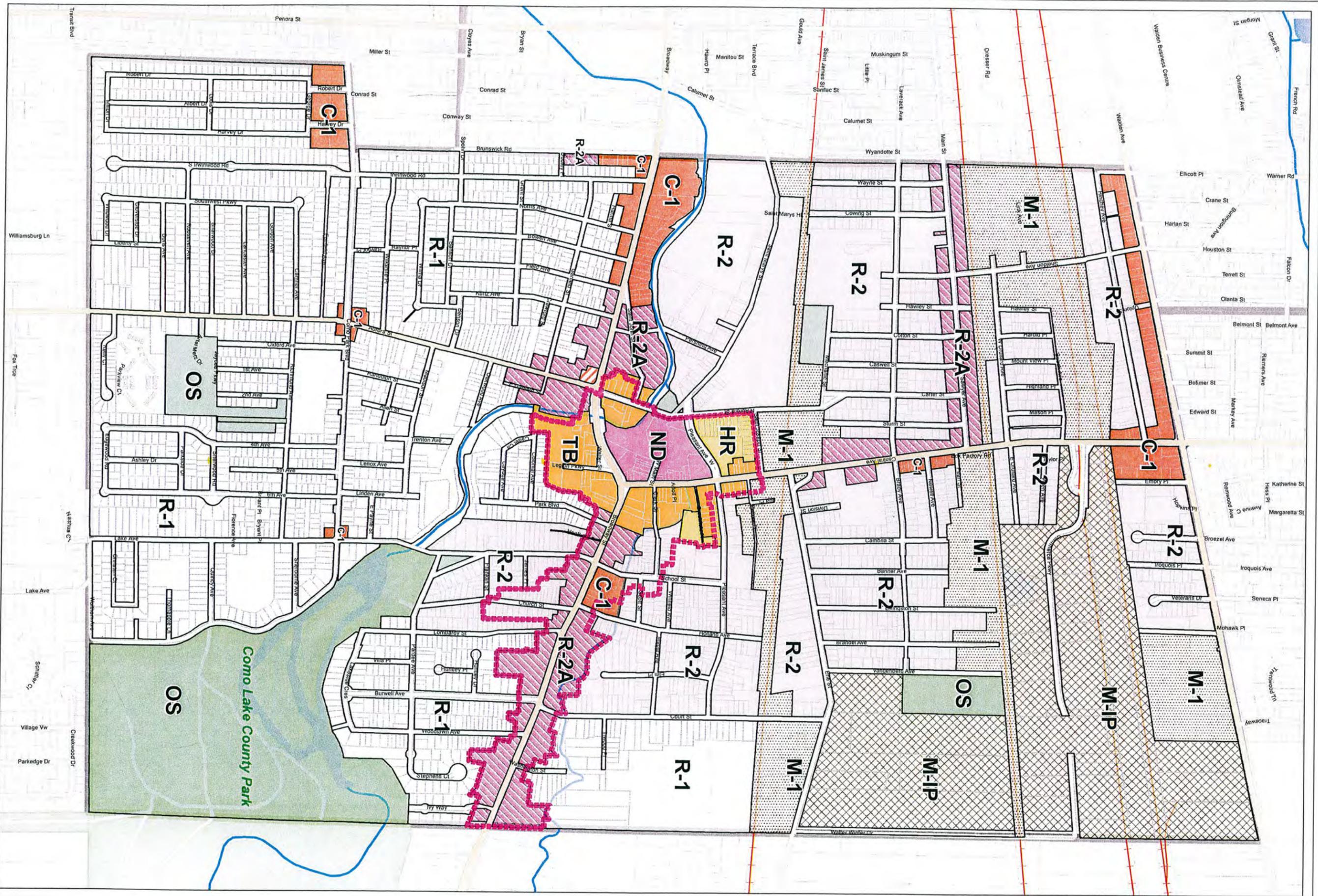
NOTE:
ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES FOLLOW PROPERTY LINES, ROAD CENTERLINES, STREAMS, OR RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY UNLESS NOTED BY DIMENSION.



0 1000 1500 2000 3000 4000
APPROXIMATE SCALE: 1"=1000'
GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET

PREPARED BY:
WM SCHUTT ASSOCIATES
37 CENTRAL AVE.
LANCASTER, NY 14068-2143
PH: 716-683-5961
FAX: 716-683-0199
WWW.WMSCHUTT.COM

AMENDED 2/15/17



- Historic District**
- HIGH RISE
 - M-1: MANUFACTURING
 - M-IP: INDUSTRIAL PARK
 - R-1: RESIDENCE
 - R-2: RESIDENCE
 - R-2A: RESIDENCE
- Zoning**
- C-1: BUSINESS
 - C-2: COMMERCIAL
 - TRADITIONAL BUSINESS
 - HR
 - ND
 - TB
 - OS
 - R-1
 - R-2
 - R-2A
 - M-1
 - M-IP
 - OPEN SPACE

Zoning District Map

Village of Lancaster, New York

As Amended: January 12, 2009

0 200 400 1,000 1,500 Feet

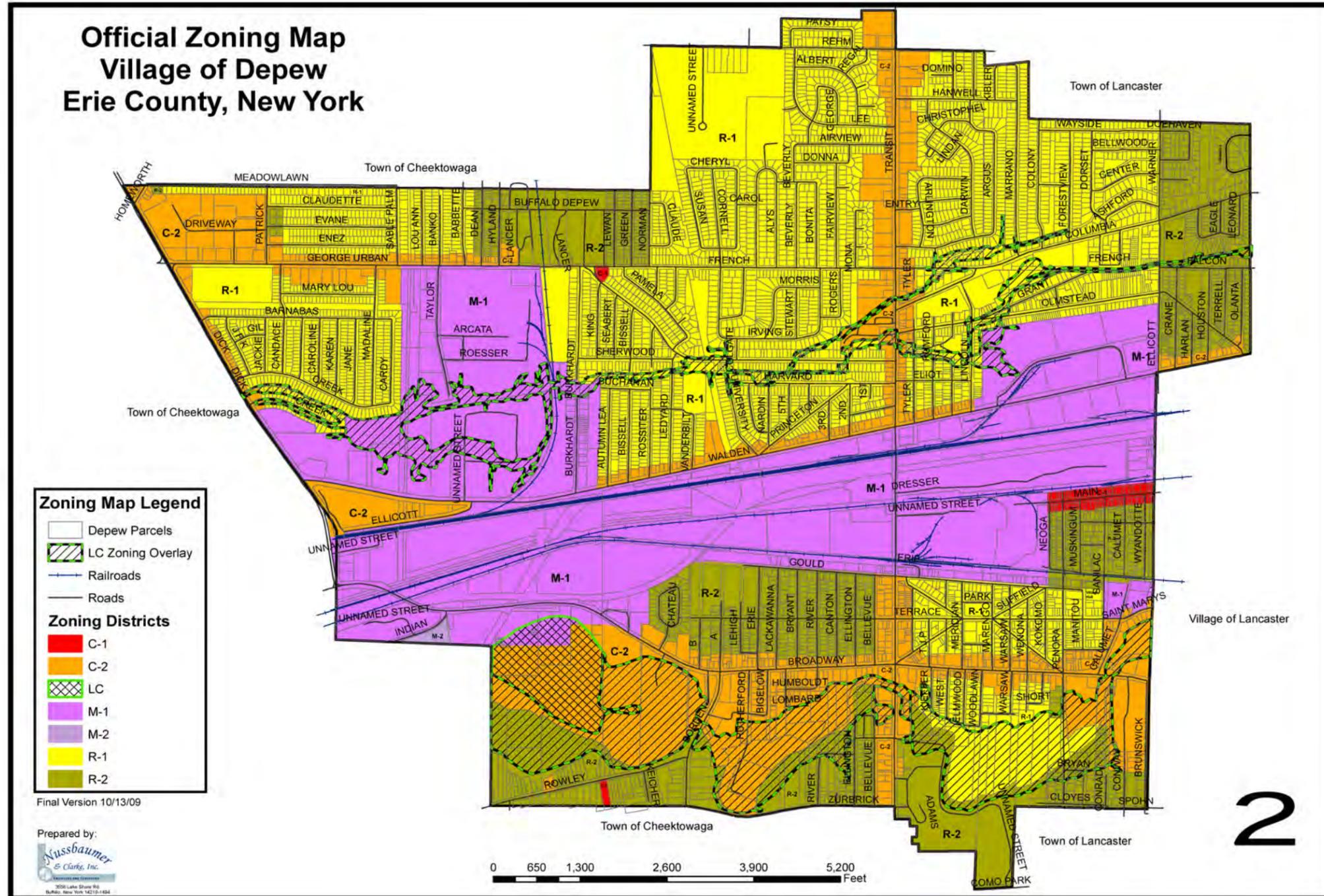
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 Miles

Prepared by the Village of Lancaster Office of Community Development
with assistance from the Erie County Office of Geographic Information Services

ZONING

260 Attachment 1

Village of Depew
Zoning Map





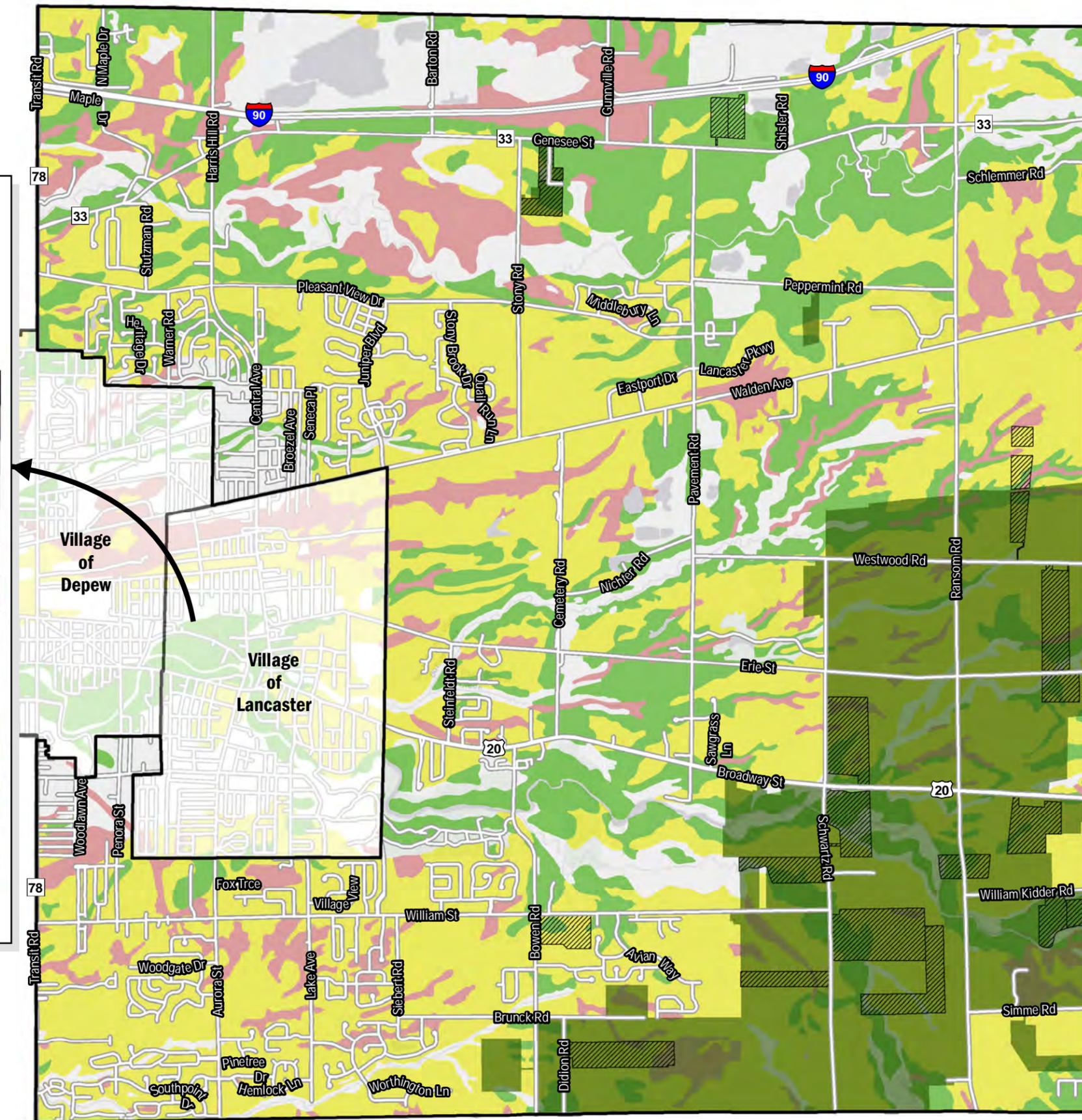
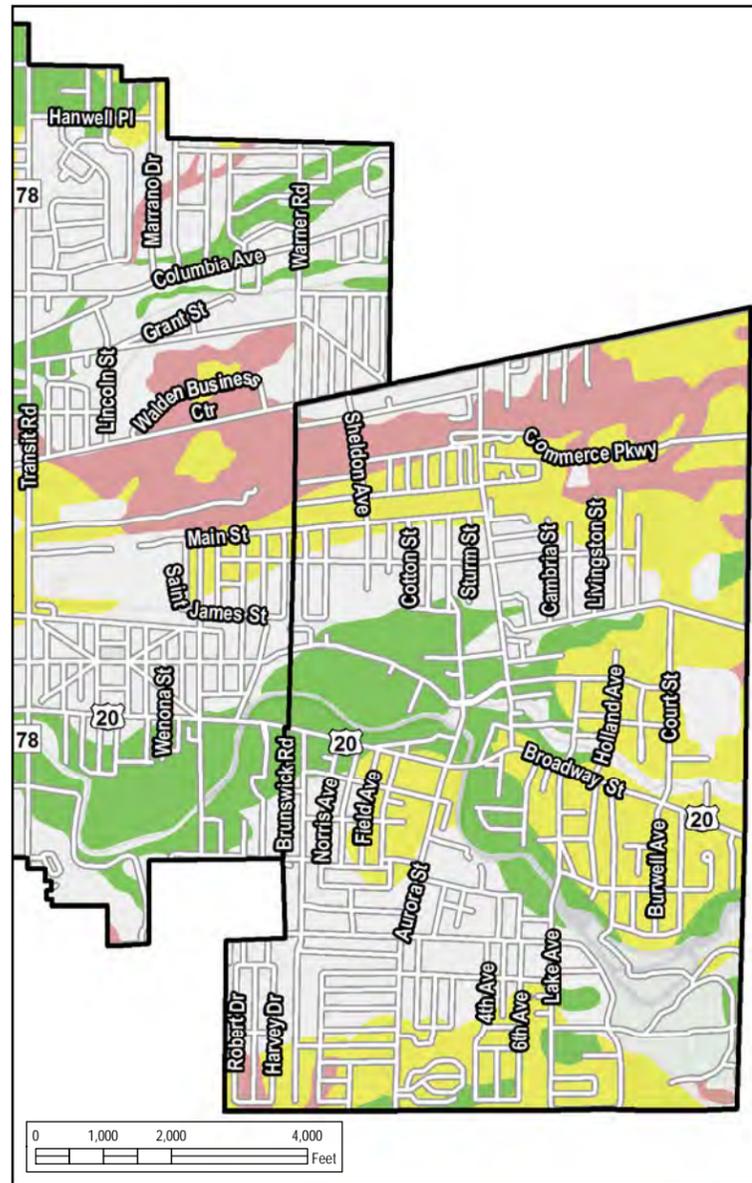
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 7 Agriculture/Soils



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Agricultural District 16
- Agricultural Classified Parcels
- Farmland Soil Classification**
 - All areas are prime farmland
 - Farmland of statewide importance
 - Prime farmland if drained



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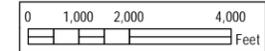
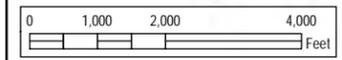
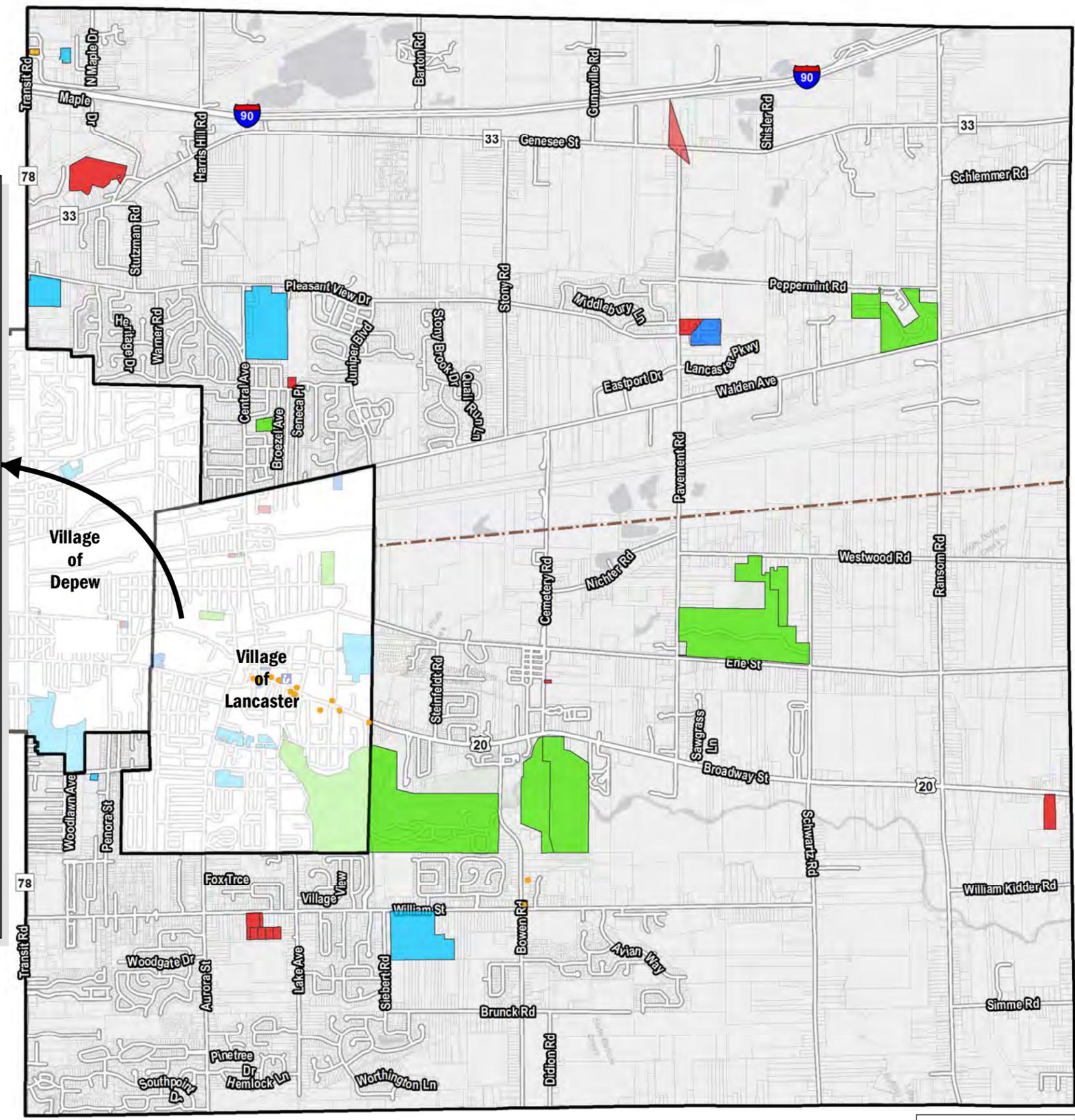
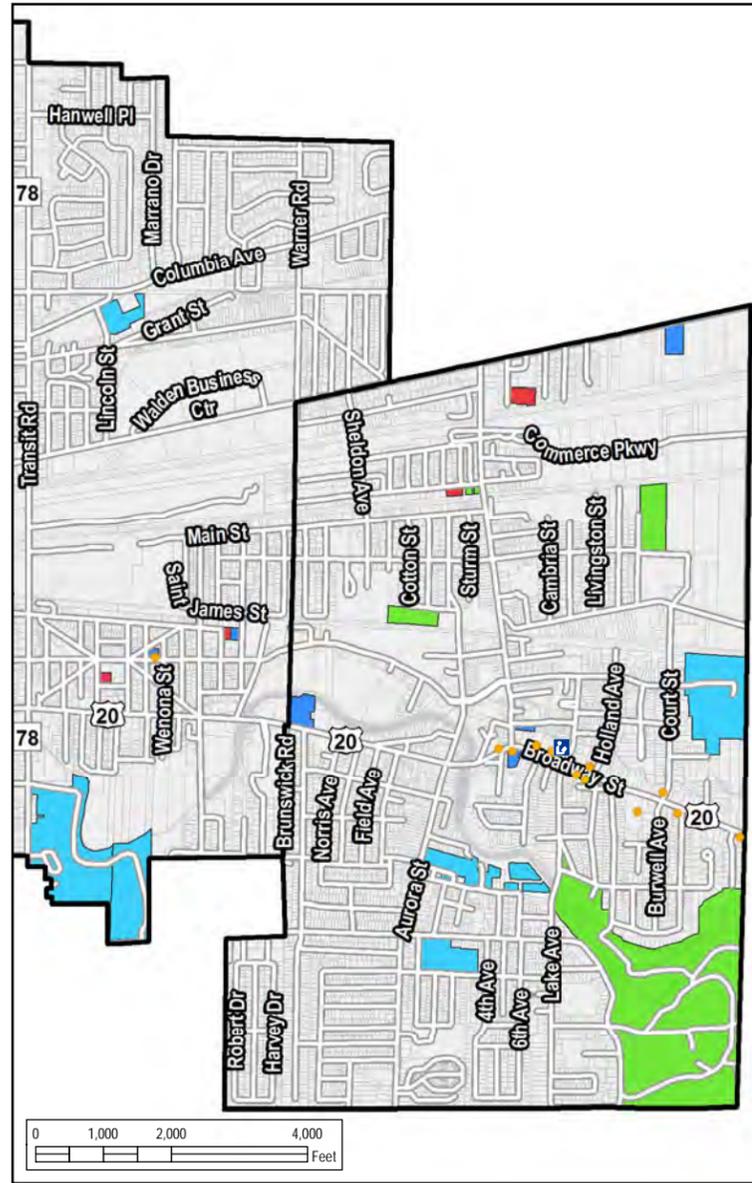
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 8 Community Facilities



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcels (2016)
- Heritage Trail
- National Register of Historic Places Points
- National Register of Historic Places Polygons
- Community Facilities**
- Cultural
- Educational Facility
- Emergency Services
- Government
- Library
- Park



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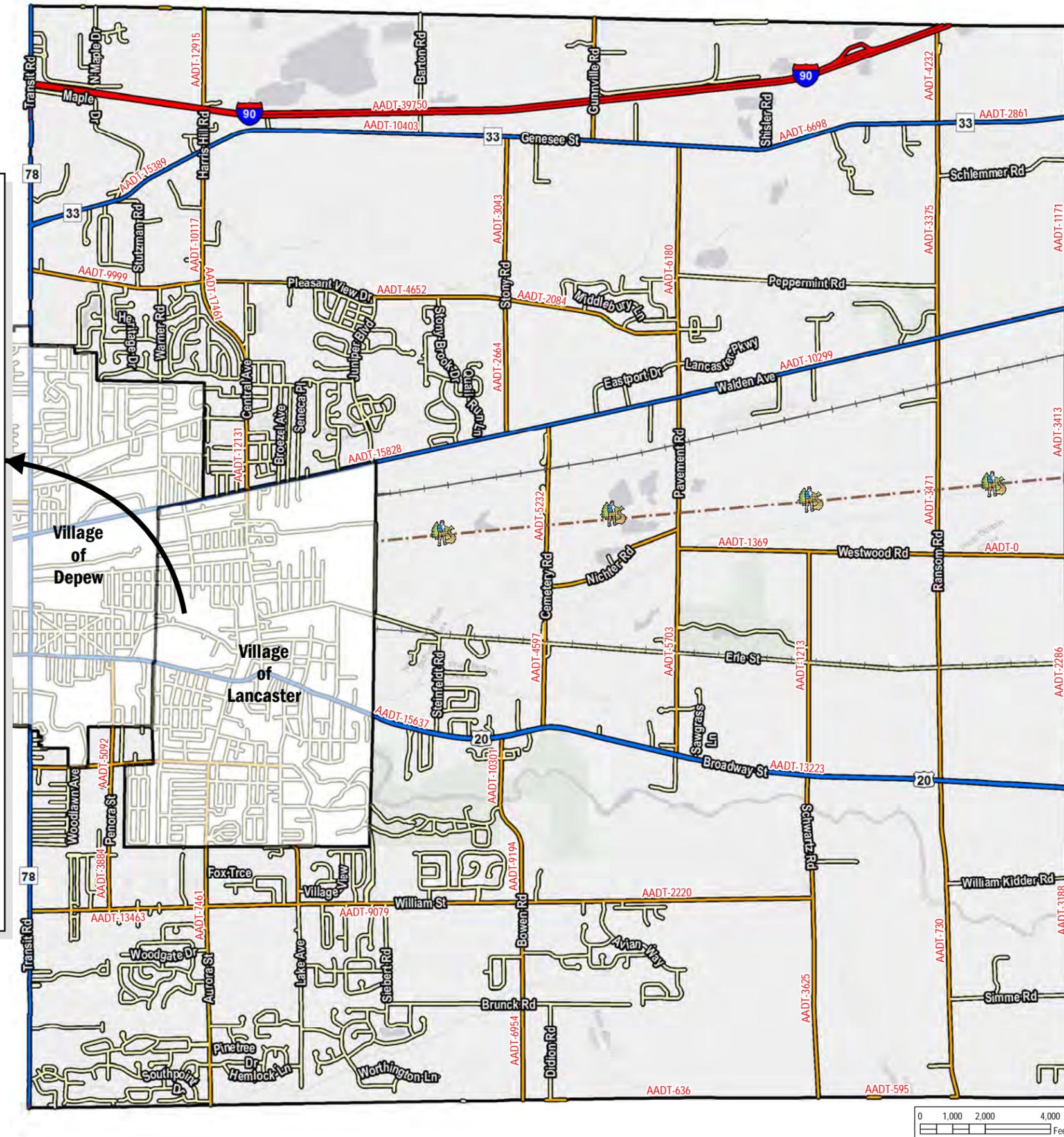
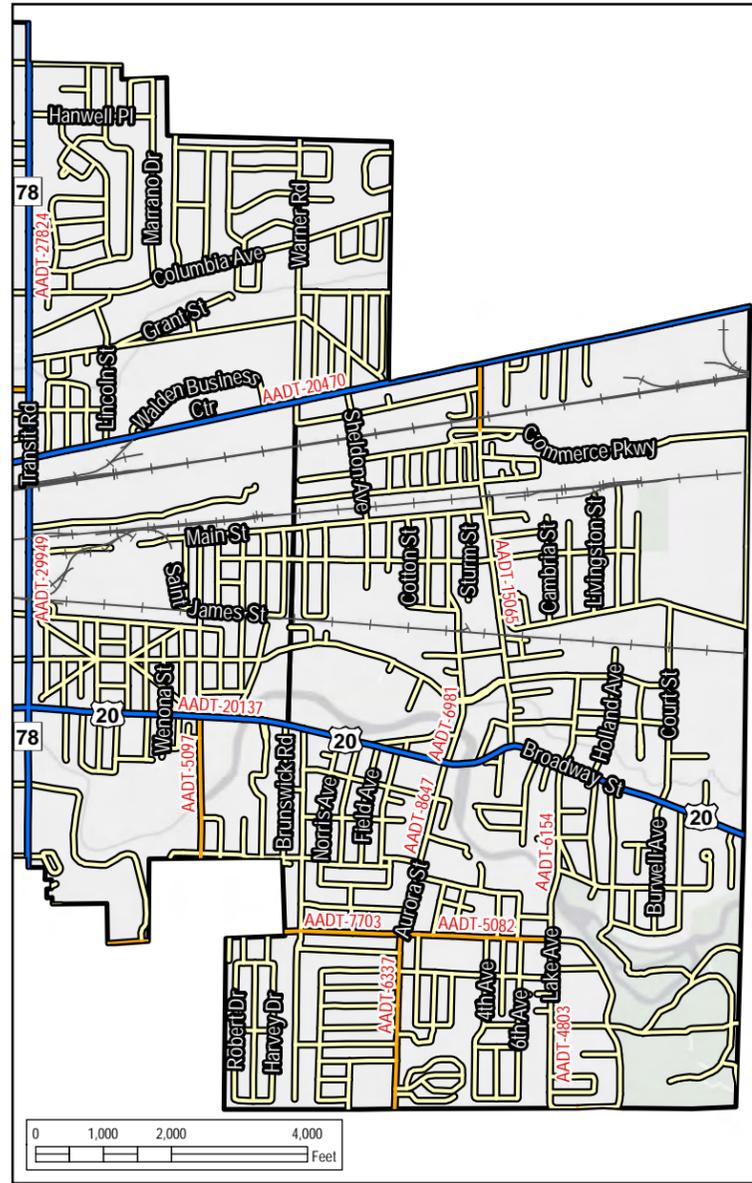
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 9 Transportation/Circulation



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- AADT 2015 Traffic Counts (Labeled)
- Heritage Trail
- Railroads
- Road Jurisdiction**
- Thruway & Berkshire Spur
- State Route
- County Road
- Local Road



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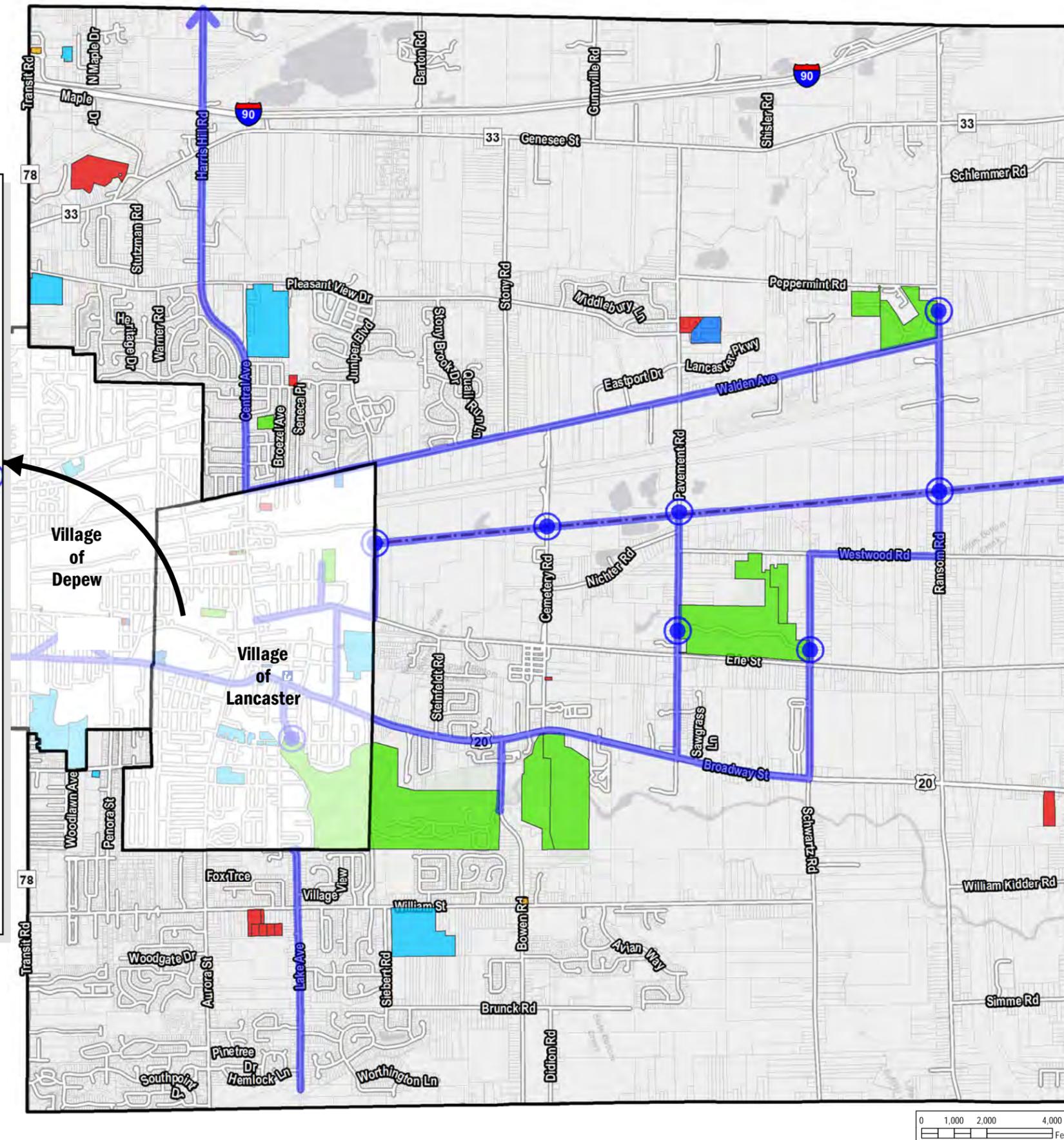
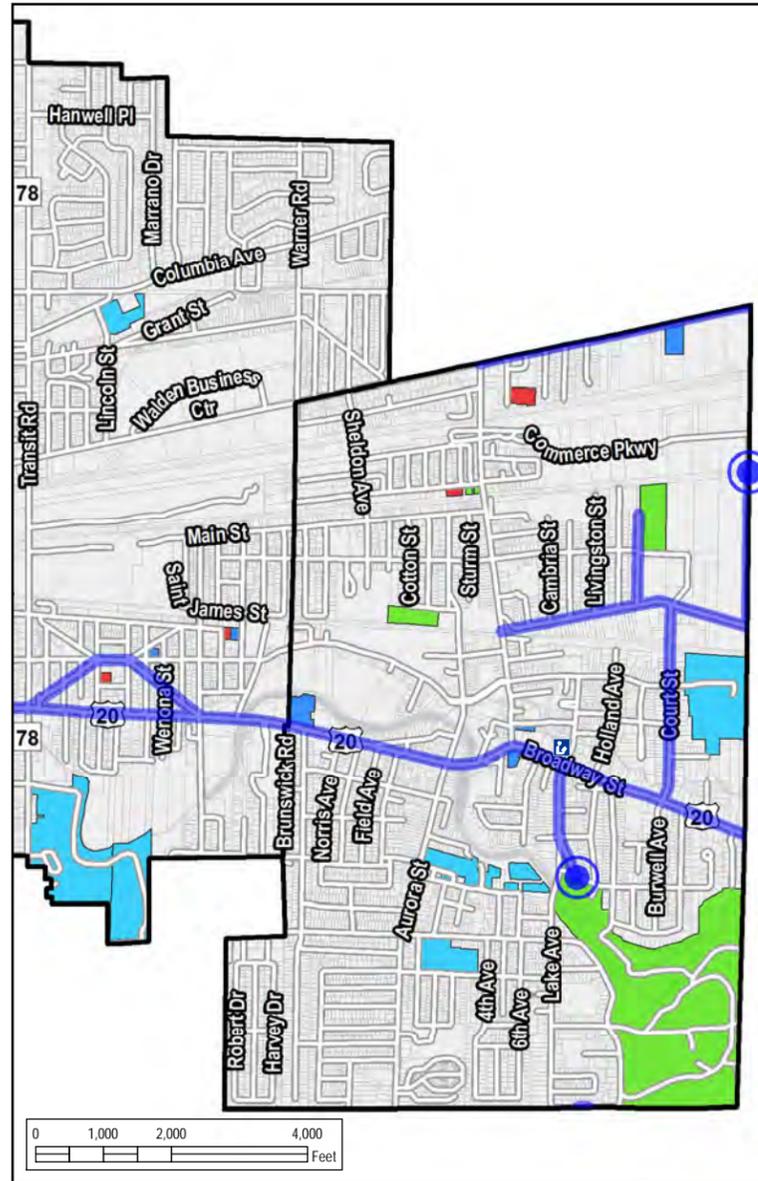
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 13 Proposed Connectivity Improvements



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcels (2016)
- Gateway
- Proposed Bike Path
- Heritage Trail
- Community Facilities**
- Cultural
- Educational Facility
- Emergency Services
- Government
- Library
- Park



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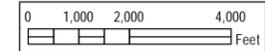
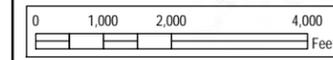
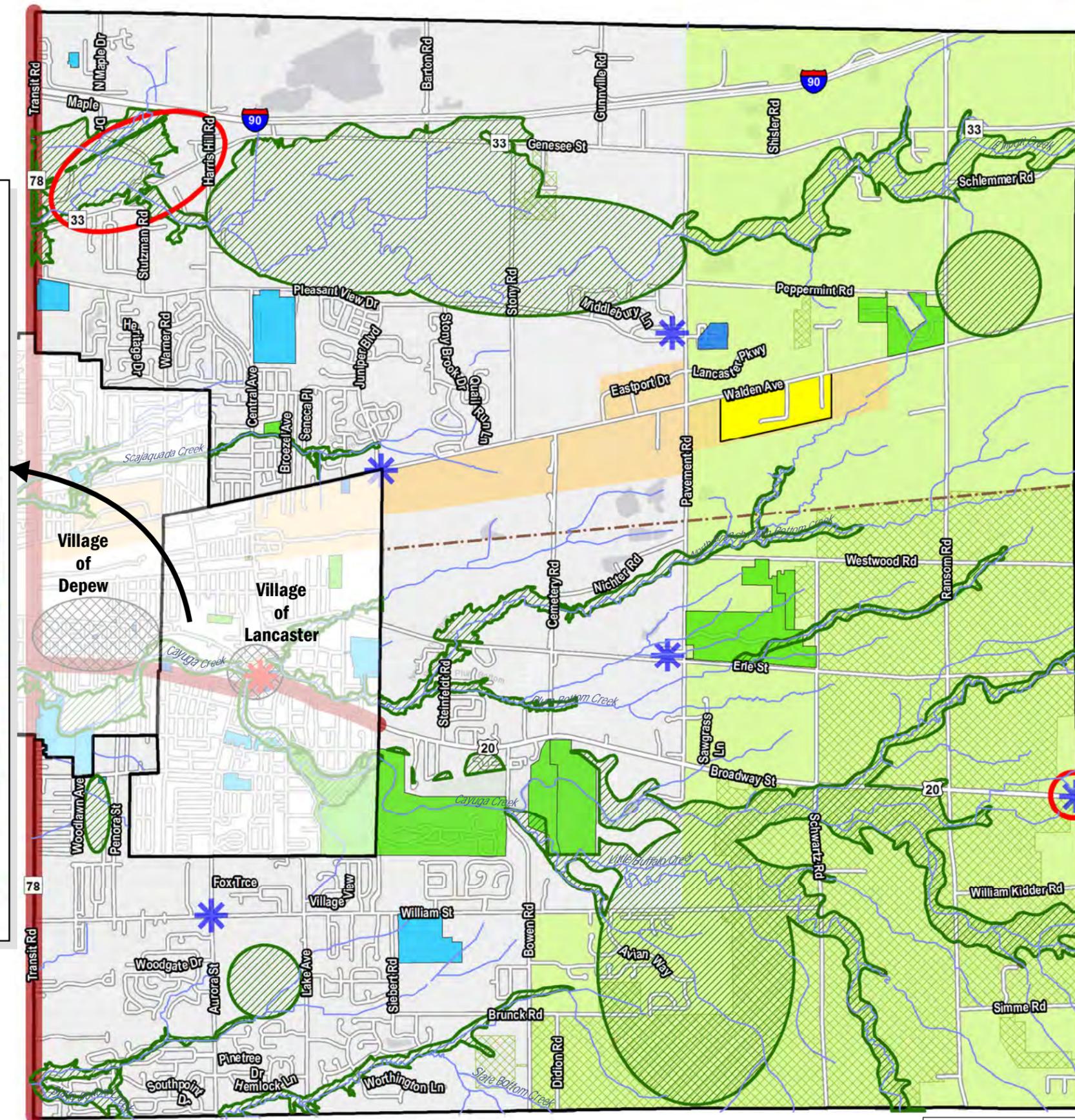
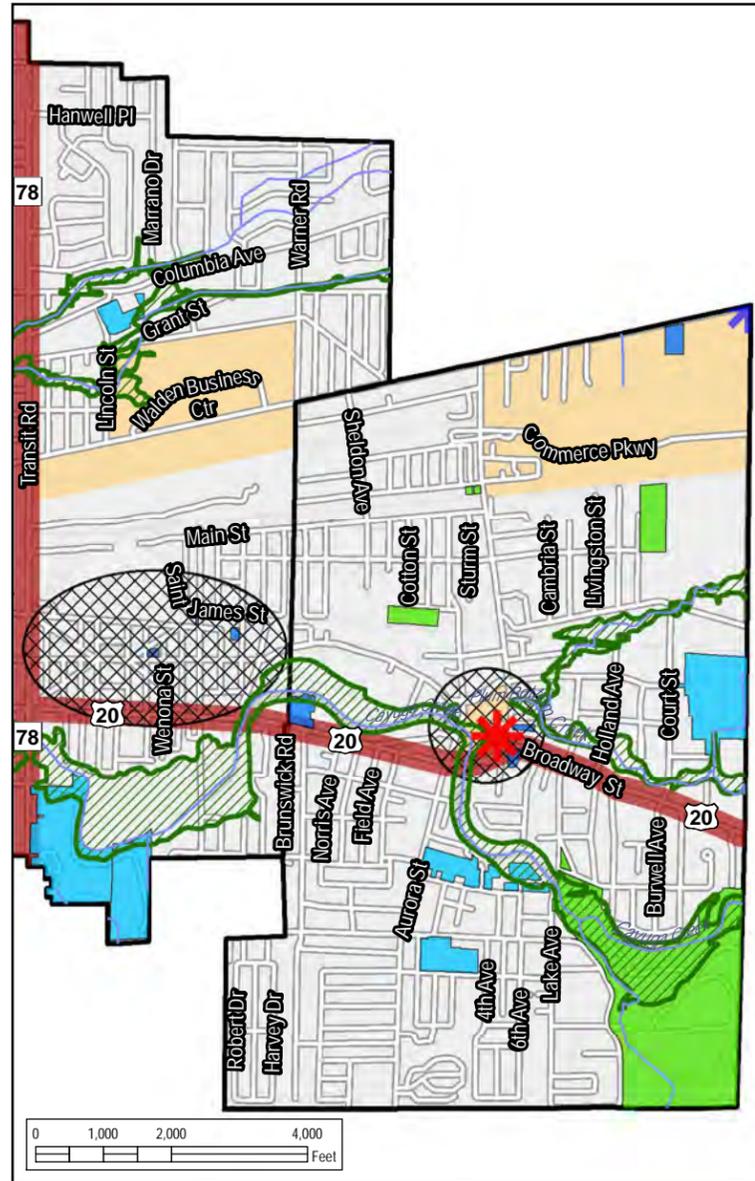
Town of Lancaster Village of Lancaster Village of Depew Comprehensive Plan

Map 14
Vision



LEGEND

- Hamlet
- Resource Protection
- Civic Center
- Airport
- Agricultural District 16
- Economic Development
- Rural Protection
- Central Business District
- Neighborhood Business
- Retail Corridor
- Stream
- Heritage Trail
- Educational Facility
- Government
- Park



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