

Appendix H
Visual Impact Assessment

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

May 2013

**FISHERS RIDGE
TOWN OF VICTOR, NY**

PREPARED FOR:

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1950 Brighton Henrietta Town Line Road
Rochester, NY 14623



I. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) for the proposed Fishers Ridge mixed use development (the Project).

This Visual Impact Assessment was prepared under the direct guidance of a registered Architect experienced in the preparation of visual impact assessments as part of the environmental review process for Fishers Ridge. The purpose of this VIA is to evaluate the impact of the Project, both positive and negative, on the visual resources of the project area. The process of the visual assessment consisted of the following:

- Obtain a recent planimetric aerial photograph (year 2010 or newer) with overlay of proposed site development plan(Figure 1).
- Perform an investigation of the project area to determine the physical/visual limits of the affected environment. Within the regional context of the project area, identify and document landscape districts or units representing distinct visual experiences (Figure 2). Define the visual character of each landscape unit and document pattern elements and pattern character.
- Determine the existing composite viewshed of the project area and map its limits to national standards, within a three (3) mile radius, based on topography alone (Figures 3) and on topography plus vegetation (Figure 4).
- Using existing and proposed topography develop a 3D visual model of the Project site to include building masses, existing and proposed landscape massing and roadway elements. This will be the basis for photo simulations and cross sections (Figure 5).
- Identify the major viewer groups associated with the project area to determine probable viewer exposure and general viewer sensitivity within the limits of the existing composite viewshed.
- Analyze existing visual resources as established in NYSDEC’s list of aesthetic resources within the project area and their qualities. Focus on significant visual issues identified in the scoping outline. In the context of the Project, develop graphical cross sections through the visual resource areas to the Project site. Analyze each section to determine the visual impact of the project upon the resources. (Figures 6, 7, 8 & 9).
- The Town of Victor and Environmental Design & Research, PC (EDR), the Town’s environmental impact consultant, have identified nine (9) locations from which photographic simulations of the project site shall be prepared that includes both summer and winter views. Assess the potential visual impacts of the proposed project. Prepare photo simulations and supporting graphics.
- Define what mitigation measures are being employed in the design of the project to eliminate or lessen any adverse visual impacts and enhance or create positive impacts to the visual resources of the project area. This includes the design and placement of buildings, use of landscape to screen views of structures, preservation of existing vegetation and use of lighting mitigation measures detailed in the NYS Route 96 Overlay District Design Guidelines,

II. Regional Landscape and Land Use

The project area lies within the Ontario Lowlands physiographic region of New York State, south of Lake Ontario. The region is distinguished by its flat lands along the lakeshore with gently rolling to hilly topography occurring well south of the lake. Regional water features include Irondequoit Creek, Irondequoit Bay and the Genesee River, along with their tributaries, scattered wetlands, small lakes and ponds. The mean elevation of the region is between 250 feet to 1,000 feet above sea level.

The general topography of the project area is mostly rolling to hilly. Wooded drumlins dominate the viewshed in all directions. Most of the woodlots in the project vicinity occur on the undeveloped steep slopes and hillsides. Vegetation is generally deciduous, interspersed with minor stands of coniferous vegetation.

The visual features of the natural environment include wooded hillsides and drumlins with curvilinear roads meandering through the undulating topography. Alternating views of the hollows and ridges are hidden and revealed as woodlots and open farmland unfold.

Along the southern boundary of the site is commercial land use which is generally concentrated along the Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) corridor, running northwest/ southeast of the site. To the west of the site is undeveloped land currently used for agriculture, with some residences located along Rowley Road. To the east of the site is undeveloped land with residences located along Lane Road. To the north of the site is the New York State Thruway with suburban residential land use immediately beyond it.

Along the Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) corridor, the land use consists predominantly of simple rectangular office and commercial buildings surrounded by landscaped lawn areas and parking lots. These buildings are built both into the low lands and across the hillsides to the northeast. Along the corridor to the northwest, the commercial land use consists primarily of large box retail (up to Eastview Mall) interspersed with smaller scale business, restaurant and retail buildings with parking areas built into the low lands. To the south and southeast along the corridor small office buildings, retail establishments and restaurants are built into the low lands and immediately adjacent to the Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96). This is typical for construction into the Village of Victor.

III. Landscape Districts

Within the landscape, areas of similar visual environments or experiences (landscape districts) can be categorized to provide a more specific framework within which to define and evaluate the visual resources (and potential impacts) of a study area. The landscape district represents a physiographic area of land that has common characteristics of landform, water resources, vegetation/ecosystems, land use, and land use intensity¹. Each landscape district represents a distinct visual experience.

In the three mile viewshed of the project area the following six (6) landscape districts were identified and are depicted in Figure 2.

Landscape District I: Suburban - Residential

Landscape District I encompass areas northwest and southeast of the proposed project, and are concentrated in areas toward the urbanized center of Rochester or toward the Village of Victor.

¹ From *Visual Resources Assessment Procedure For US Army Corps of Engineers*, 1988, p.17

This landscape district can be characterized as suburban residential neighborhood. The built environment typically consists of detached, regularly spaced one and two story residences, with deep lawn setbacks, constructed in the late 20th century. Green lawns, building size and consistent spacing between the individual homes lend a unified and ordered pattern to the district. Young to mature street trees, low foundation-style plantings, ornamental and shade trees, and evergreen trees throughout the district add a vegetative textural overlay to the district that can vary from sparse to a dominant visual feature. The curvilinear roadways, reinforced by concrete gutters with lawn beyond are the strongest visual line in the district.

Due to the relative absence, small size, or young age of much of the vegetation, there is a predominant sense of openness extending from the street to the structures. The dominant visual elements in this district are the roadway, adjacent lawns, and the residential facades. Background hills, when visible, provide a larger sense of scale with a uniform color and texture.

Landscape District II: Agricultural/Rural - Residential

Landscape District II encompasses the semi-rural and rural areas to the northeast of the NYS Thruway, south of the commercial corridor of NYS Route 96 and northwest of the NYS Route 490 and the NYS Thruway intersection and comprises a majority of the 3-mile project area viewshed.

This landscape district is characterized by its fallow and active farmland, scattered residential and agricultural structures, and naturalized woodlands. Residential structures in this district are generally one to two story wood frame and masonry construction with moderate levels of architectural detailing, and can range in age from the late 19th/early 20th century to more recently built. The residences are sometimes partially or fully obscured from the roadway due to topography or vegetation, and are irregularly spaced within the landscape with variable setbacks and massing, reducing their role in the visual environment. Other structures in the district support agricultural use such as barns or other storage facilities. These structures vary from one to three stories in height, typically of wood frame construction with masonry foundation walls. They are often found in close proximity to the roadway, providing one of the unique character-defining features of the district. Vegetation in this district varies from cultivated or fallow fields and meadows to woodlots. The deciduous vegetation creates a consistent medium to course texture with a uniform recurrence and ordered pattern, reminiscent of former agricultural practices. The dense woodlots and open fields create alternate areas of enclosure and openness, which is in distinct contrast to the uniformity of the other districts.

Roadways serving this district undulate in response to the natural glacial topography of the region. Views to the surrounding hills are variable in this district due to the topography and vegetation. The dominant lines are the undulating skyline of the hills, the occasional smooth horizontal line at the edge of the open fields, hedgerows, and the roadway running through the district. Traffic speed and intensity of traffic are less compared to NYS Route 96 or NYS Thruway corridor, allowing motorists to better observe the foreground and mid-ground visual environment. The dominant visual elements are the fallow or active agricultural landscape, the wooded hills with semi-mature to mature vegetation, and the roadway itself.

Landscape District III: Commercial/Industrial

Landscape District III encompasses the NYS Route 96 corridor in the project vicinity, along with properties on Rowley Road and NYS Route 251. A portion of the project site occurs adjacent to this district.

This landscape district can be characterized as a commercial arterial setting. The land uses flanking NYS Route 96, Rowley Road and NYS Route 251, are primarily commercial, including a few remaining residential structures. Buildings in this corridor are generally one to two stories in height, newer masonry and metal commercial construction set behind large asphalt parking lots, especially with lots adjacent to NYS Route 96. Signage on the facades of the buildings and along the roadway is highly visible and plays a strong role in defining the visual character of this landscape district. Landscaped buffers may or may not exist between NYS Route 96 and the commercial development and never fully screen the buildings or parking lots.

The multiple-lane roadway, its associated signage, lighting, traffic signals, and higher traffic volume are the predominant foreground visual elements in this district. The large scale commercial structures provide coarse textured visual elements to the midground views in the district and define the corridor’s large scale. Their consistently deep setbacks and relatively low building heights reduce the sense of enclosure, and results in weak edge definition of the corridor, since much of the street frontage is dominated by parking areas and a consistent street tree canopy is lacking. The dominant lines in the district are the bold geometric shapes which make up the large commercial buildings, and the roadway itself. Undeveloped, naturalized, and wooded land is visible in the midground and background on the surrounding hillsides, often immediately behind the commercial strip development adjacent to NYS Route 96, lending a greater visual context and a distant sense of enclosure.

Landscape District IV: Undeveloped

Landscape District IV occurs in roughly linear, north/south stretches of land, generally surrounding the flatter, commercial land use within the project area. The majority of the project site north of the NYS Route 96 commercial corridor occurs within this district.

Landscape District IV can be classified as large contiguous tracts of undeveloped or ‘wild’ forested land that can include vegetated steep slopes or hillsides, large wetlands, or large designated open space or parkland areas.

This landscape district is characterized by its existing vegetation, significant landforms, and its general wild, undeveloped nature, in contrast to the agricultural/rural district where, although also less developed, man’s control over the landscape is clearly evident.

If structures are present, they tend to be on a small scale and are usually utilitarian in nature. The material used to construct these structures are natural stone and wood and blend into the surrounding naturalistic sites.

Landscape District V: Village / Small Town

Landscape District V includes the small villages within the three mile viewshed limits. This landscape district includes the Village of Victor. Outside the limits of the viewshed study is the Village of Fairport, approximately seven miles from the site and the Village of Mendon, approximately four miles from the project site. The project site is not located within this district and is not visible from these areas.

This landscape district can be primarily characterized as a small village setting. The predominant land uses consist of commercial, business, municipal, and residential development. In the village center, the buildings are generally two stories in height, located directly behind the sidewalk with little or no setback. Parking is provided on the street or in small off-street lots adjacent to or behind the buildings. Residential areas are typically laid out on a grid system on compact lots, with front porches, sidewalk-lined streets (usually curbed), and well canopied street trees. Land uses (and architectural styles) change quickly within a relatively small area. Overall density is higher for all types of land uses.

The visual environment is dominated by the roadway and the adjacent buildings that occupy and define the space. The building heights and setbacks define the scale, and the architectural styles establish a pattern and rhythm for the streetscape. The strong vertical edges created by the buildings and street trees provide a sense of enclosure. Pattern and texture is provided by the regular spacing of street trees, and the varying roof lines and facades of the flanking structures. The dominant ground-plane surface is asphalt within the roadway, and brick and concrete sidewalks provide a color and texture contrast.

Landscape District VI: The New York State Thruway

Landscape District VI consists only of the New York State Thruway (Interstate 90) corridor. The project site is adjacent to this district and is visible from a portion of this district. This landscape district is a multi-lane divided highway with limited access. Due to high travel speeds and the visual homogeneity characteristic of highway environments, foreground details tend to recede, while background features tend to dominate the visual environment. The uniform color and texture of the background hills and forested areas provide a sense of continuity to the visual environment.

IV. Project Description

The DiMarco Group, on behalf of Rowley 96 LLC, intends to develop a mixed use project entitled "Fishers Ridge" on approximately 96 acres in the Town of Victor on Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96), located west of Lane Road and north of Victor Mendon Road (NYS Route 251). The site is bordered on the north by the NYS Thruway, on the east by the single family residences on the west side of Lane Rd, on the west by residences on Rowley Rd. and undeveloped property and on the south by NYS Route 96. Main topographic features include a 145 foot +/- elevation change from the north to the south, a wetland on the east of the property, a gravel drainage way through the center of the site emanating from the construction area for the Thruway southerly to a point where it spreads out to surface drainage area. Although a portion of the Project has been mined in the past for sand and gravel, it is generally undeveloped, and consists of a combination of wooded areas, brush covered areas and open land. The topography is variable across the site, with steep to near vertical

slopes observed. These steeper slopes are the result of previous mining operations at the site and are devoid of topsoil.

A small parcel (less than one acre) within the site has been developed and was once owned and operated by a contractor with a single building for offices and storage. The 96 ± acre parcel is zoned "commercial - light industrial" (C/LIND).

The Project is planned to be developed in stages and to ultimately include approximately 1,000,000 SF of building floor area, including approximately 550,000 SF of retail/entertainment space, a multi-story 200 room hotel, 110,000 SF of office space and 450 multi-family and townhouse residential units. (Appendix A - Drawing C-100)

The Project is designed as a "Lifestyle Center", with layout and features similar to a village. The "Lifestyle Center" provides residential and work opportunities as well as retail/entertainment amenities. It is planned and designed as an inviting atmosphere with both active and passive activities, occurring in outdoor and indoor spaces that create a positive experience for the users of the Center. For those not living within the project site, it will serve as a Destination attraction, a place to spend an extended period of time.

The overall "Center" is planned as a series of "neighborhoods", each different in use and design from others. The "neighborhoods" provide the transition from the highest topography at the north of the site adjacent to the NYS Thruway to the lower level adjacent to NYS Route 96 and are defined by topographic elements on the site. The placement of the buildings on the site is designed with respect to the topography. A main feature of the "Center" will be the stepping of the specialty shops and restaurants in the "Town Commons" neighborhood to follow the descending waterway in the center of the site. The project is designed to protect and preserve sensitive environmental areas such as the buffer adjacent to the residents on Lane Road, the existing wetlands, and the green corridor along NYS Route 96.

The Project will be accessed from two driveways on the north side of NYS Route 96 (Victor-Pittsford Road). The eastern driveway is proposed as a continuation of existing signalized intersection with NYS Route 251. The western entrance is located approximately 890 feet east of the NYS Route 96 and Rowley Road intersection, and is also proposed to be signalized.

The project site currently has minimal lighting at the existing building, so any development on site will have a lighting impact on surrounding properties. The design of the lighting package will be developed so as to minimize the negative impact of increased light levels, especially in relation to adjoining residential properties on the east and west sides of the site. The proposed lighting within the site will be divided into three (3) districts. Each district will use a similar themed architectural fixture, with different mounting heights and lamp wattages as deemed appropriate.

District one consists of the project entrances and main circulation roads. These fixtures will be mounted at an approximate height of 25 feet and will have the highest lamp wattages of the three districts to promote safe movement on/off and through the site. They will be designed to provide consistent and safe lighting levels, be equipped with cut-off shields to eliminate spill-over to adjoining residential properties and be dark sky compliant.

District two will consist of the parking lots and access routes to buildings. Fixture mounting heights for this district will be kept at approximately 20 feet. They will be designed to provide safe, well lit movement from parking areas to buildings. They will be dark sky compliant and shielded if necessary.

In addition to the pole mounted lighting, buildings will be highlighted with wall wash illumination. The wall wash lights will be building mounted fixtures designed to illuminate the building facade. Specialty lights will be chosen to compliment the architecture of the buildings and provide safe illumination, highlighting the entries at all structures.

District three consists of the pedestrian cores of the "neighborhoods". The sidewalk fixtures will be mounted at an approximate height of 15 feet. The light poles will have architectural detailing and with the fixture design, add to the pedestrian friendly environment. Light levels will be reduced as appropriate but maintain safe lighting levels. As the architecture of the neighborhoods is developed, light fixtures will be chosen to support the aesthetic character of the amenities.

V. Viewer Groups

In order to predict viewer responses to changes in the visual environment, it is important to identify the viewers who may be seeing a project. When assessing the viewer groups, four (4) factors become important: viewer exposure (the duration and frequency of view); viewer sensitivity (the receptivity of different viewer groups); viewer activity; and viewer awareness (what is seen is unconsciously conditioned by what is being looked for). Each of these factors influences how a viewer group will respond to changes².

Residents:

This group includes residents on Rowley and Lane Roads, Montgomery Lane and Ashford Way, and those in adjacent neighborhoods within the immediate viewshed. The viewer activity can include all aspects of day-to-day living. Local pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists are among this viewer group, and the nature of their activity and mobility increases their views of the Project. This group has an increased likelihood of longer exposure, detailed-focused views of the project area, and therefore, an increased sensitivity towards any change in the visual environment. Viewer exposure and viewer sensitivity is high.

Commuters/Shoppers:

The greatest number of people to potentially view the Project are those who use the local road system as a commuter/travel route, and those who are destination oriented for a specific location within or adjacent to the Project. This viewer group can be motorists, bus travelers, and, to a much lesser degree, bicycle commuters. Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) serves as a major center of commercial activity and an important regional transportation corridor from Rochester to Ithaca and points east. This road serves many destination oriented people because of the concentration of commercial activity within the area, and many others traveling through to reach other transportation corridors (I-90 and I-490) or village or town centers. The New York State Thruway (Interstate Route 90) is a major transportation corridor that is adjacent to the north side of the site. The high volumes and high speeds of traffic yields both low viewer exposure and sensitivity. Interstate Route 490 also serves as a major transportation corridor and passes within a mile of the project area. Due to the lack of visibility to the site and accompanying traffic speeds, Interstate Route 490 would have low viewer exposure and low viewer sensitivity.

² Federal Highway Administration, *Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects*

V. Viewshed and Selected Viewpoints

To identify the potential visibility of the Project, a viewshed map was created. A viewshed is defined as “the area(s) of land surface visible from a given viewpoint or viewpoints, or the area(s) of land from which an object may be seen³”.

Prior to initiating a viewshed analysis, a 3D visual model was created for the site using SiteOps cloud based software. The existing site topography was established from an on-site survey by Bergmann Associates in 2009. The proposed development plan was placed as an overlay on the site topography and building pad elevations established. The SiteOps software was used to establish final grading surfaces and building massing based on projected building heights. The resulting project site was inserted onto the 3 mile radius GIS topographic survey resulting in a detailed 3D model of the viewshed map area. The resulting data was uploaded into 3D Max visualization software for manipulation in developing cross sections depicting the visual access to the site from various points on the Viewshed Map. For this Project and its setting, a distance of three miles can be considered the maximum viewshed background (i.e., the distance in the landscape where elements lose detailed distinctions), and emphasis is on the outline or edge created by the project against its background.

The three mile radius Viewshed maps (Figures 3 and 4) were created both with tree cover present and without, using ESRI ArcGIS 8x (Arc/Info Workstation) and ARC/Info Grid modeling software⁴. Each concentric ring represents one mile beginning from the project site. The modeling of the three mile radius topography and tree cover was exported into the 3D Max software for accurate presentation of existing conditions. The GIS information obtained from Ontario County did not contain the building massing in the three mile radius area, so buildings, off site, are not indicated on the sections at this time.

With this completed, the computer will generate a 3 dimensional simulation of the site from any angle at any location up to the 3 mile radius of the viewshed map. The viewpoint can be set at three feet above ground to simulate the view from a moving vehicle; at five feet to simulate a person standing viewing the site; or from any height above to provide a “bird’s eye” view of the site and the surrounding areas.

As an overlay to the Viewshed Map, an inventory of aesthetic resources was performed as recommended by the NYSDEC Visual Policy DEP-00-2 within the three-mile radius around the Project to determine if any significant resources exist that may be impacted by the proposed development. Ten sites were identified and are detailed below. The sites were located on the Viewshed Map and are indicated in Figure 6.

The NYSDEC’s list of aesthetic resources of statewide significance is organized into the following 15 categories. Where a resource has been identified, it has been mapped using the applicable site ID numbers on Figure 6. Known local resources within these categories that lie within the 3-mile radius have been identified as follows:

- 1) A property on or eligible for inclusion in the National or State Register of Historic Places [16 U.S.C. § 470a et seq., Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law Section 14.07]; e.g. Trinity Church in Manhattan, Schuyler Mansion in Albany;

³ *Stephen R. J. Sheppard, Visual Simulation – A User’s Guide for Architects, Engineers and Planners*

⁴ *Ontario County GIS Data Year 2012.*

SITE ID	RESOURCE	DISTANCE FROM PROJECT SITE
1	275 High Street (potentially eligible)	+/- 1 ¼ miles
2	Valentown Hall	+/- 1 ¼ miles
3	Ichabod Town House, 267 High Street (potentially eligible)	+/- 1 ¼ miles
4	Osborne-Harris House (146 Maple Avenue) and outbuildings	+/- 1 ¼ miles
5	Cobblestone Schoolhouse, 263 High Street Extension (listing denied due to extensive exterior changes)	+/- 1 ¼ miles
6	Jeremiah Cronkite House (1095 Lynaugh Road)	+/- 1 ¾ miles
7	Bonesteele House (eligible)	+/- 2 miles
8	Cobblestone Railroad Pumphouse (County Road 42 in Fishers)	+/- 2 1/4 miles
9	Felt Cobblestone General Store (6452 Route 96)	+/- 3 miles

- 2) State Parks [Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law Section 3.09]; e.g. Grafton Lakes State Park, Rensselaer County;

SITE ID	RESOURCE	DISTANCE FROM PROJECT SITE
10	Ganondagan State Historic Site	2 – 3 miles

- 3) Urban Cultural Parks [Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law Section 35.15];
None
- 4) The State Forest Preserve (NYS Constitution Article XIV); Adirondack and Catskill Parks;
None
- 5) National Wildlife Refuges [16 U.S.C. 668dd], State Game Refuges and State Wildlife Management Areas [ECI 11-2105]; e.g. Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Perch River Wildlife Management Area, Jefferson County;
None
- 6) National Natural Landmarks [36 CFR Part 62]; e.g. Iona Island Marsh, Hudson River, Rockland County;
None
- 7) The National Park System, Recreation Areas, Seashores, Forests [16 U.S.C. 1c]; e.g. Gateway National Recreation Area, Staten Island; Finger Lakes National Forest, Schuyler County;
None

- 8) Rivers designated as National or State Wild, Scenic or Recreational [16 U.S.C. Chapter 28, ECL 15-2701 et seq.]; e.g. Cedar River (Wild), Ampersand Brook (Scenic); West Branch of the Ausable River (Recreational);

None
- 9) A site, area, lake, reservoir or highway designated or eligible for designation as scenic [ECL Article 49 or DOT equivalent and APA Designated State Highway Roadside]; e.g., Storm King Highway (Article 49 Scenic Road), Rockland County;

None
- 10) Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance [of Article 42 of Executive Law]; e.g., Catskill-Olana SASS;

None
- 11) A State or federally designated trail, or one proposed for designation [16 U.S.C. Chapter 27 or equivalent]; e.g. Appalachian Trail;

None
- 12) Adirondack Park Scenic Vistas; [Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Map];

None
- 13) State Nature and Historic Preserve Areas; [Section 4 of Article XIV of the State Constitution];

None
- 14) Palisades Park; [Palisades Interstate Park Commission]; e.g. Harriman State Park;

None
- 15) Bond Act Properties purchased under Exceptional Scenic Beauty or Open Space category; e.g., Star Hill, Oneida County.

None

Other identified resources not falling specifically under the DEC category listing include:

SITE ID	RESOURCE	DISTANCE FROM PROJECT SITE
11	Powder Mills Park (County Park)	+/- 3 ½ miles

With the sites located in the Viewshed Map it was determined that there are four major geographic locations to be analyzed for visual impact. The most effective way to graphically depict a potential visibility impact is through the use of cross sections initiating at the Project site and continuing through the visual resource. Four section locations were identified for development; northwest to resources 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 (Figure 7); west to resource number 8 (Figure 8); southeast to resource number 4

(Figure 9) and south to resource 10 (Figure 10). The sections were developed by using the 3D modeled Viewshed Map and locating the section cut lines.

Section 1 (Figure 7) shows the clustering of resources at 1.8 to 2.1 miles northwest of the Project Site.

Section 2 (Figure 8) shows the Cobblestone Pumphouse at 2.2 miles southwest of the Project Site.

Section 3 (Figure 9) shows the Osborne-Harris house at 1.8 miles southeast the Project Site.

Section 4 (Figure 10) shows Gonondagan State Historic Site at 2 to 3 miles southeast of the Project Site.

An analysis of the graphic sections indicates the only visual resource that will potentially have visibility of the Project Site is resource number 10, Gonondagan Historic (Figure 10).

As part of the scoping document for this Project, nine (9) "critical viewpoints" for photo simulations were identified by the Town of Victor and EDR, the Town's consultant.. These nine (9) critical viewpoints are as follows starting with Figure 11.

- * Viewpoint 1 – Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) at the western access drive looking north – Figures 11 through 14;
- * Viewpoint 2 – Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) at the eastern access drive (at Victor Mendon Road [NYS Route 251]) looking northeast - Figures 15 through 18;
- * Viewpoint 3 – Southern-end of Lane Road looking west - Figures 19 through 22;
- * Viewpoint 4 – Victor Mendon Road (NYS Route 251) looking north - Figures 23 through 26;
- * Viewpoint 5 – High Street looking south - Figures 27 through 30;
- * Viewpoint 6 – Rowley Road looking east - Figures 31 through 34;
- * Viewpoint 7 – Ganondagan Site-Figures 35 through 38;
- * Viewpoint 8 – Westbound travelers on the NYS Thruway (looking southwest) - Figures 39 and 40;
- * Viewpoint 9 – Residential subdivision to the north (Ashford Way looking south ±500' from project site) – Figures 41 through 44.

Photographs and Photosimulations

To determine the potential visibility of the Project from the selected viewpoints, two existing condition photographs were taken at each location, one in winter and one in summer, to show varying vegetation conditions. Using the 3D modeled site, developed for the viewshed simulations, views were captured from the same locations as the existing condition photographs. With actual site grading surfaces indicated in the modeled site and buildings accurately massed per the site development plan, an accurate analysis of the potential visibility from the selected viewpoints can be determined. It must be noted that no additional landscaping, other than what is existing, has been placed into the 3D modeled site.

To best review the photo simulations, the 9 viewpoints have been categorized into the Landscape Districts which best describe the context of the locations from which the photographs were taken.

VI. Visual Impacts to Landscape Districts

As illustrated in the viewshed sections, the areas with the greatest potential for visual impacts are the areas to the immediate north and southeast of the project site within the one mile radius. Beyond the one mile radius, potential views of the Project are concentrated to the west, continuing clockwise to the southeast.

Impacts to Landscape District I (Suburban-Residential): Viewpoints 3 and 9

This district occurs in pockets throughout the three mile view shed. Within the one mile radius they are concentrated to the north and east of the Project site. From one to three miles, the districts pockets are sporadically interspersed throughout the viewshed radius. Residences north of the site, across the Thruway, and the residences along Lane Rd. have been identified as having views into the project site.

Viewpoint 3 (Figures 19, 20, 21 and 22) was taken along Lane Road, east of the project. The existing vegetation, even without foliage, effectively screens the project site from this viewpoint. There is no visual impact from this viewpoint.

Viewpoint 9 (Figures 41, 42, 43 and 44) was taken from Ashford Way, just north of the NYS Thruway. The lots on Ashford Way back up to the NYS Thruway. The NYS Thruway in this area is a 300' wide corridor with little vegetation to screen the road or anything beyond it. Ashford Way is at a higher elevation than the Project. This creates opportunities for views into the project site. Visual impacts for residents at this viewpoint can be expected to be moderate. As the photosimulations illustrate, roof lines of the proposed buildings will be below the horizon. As such they will tend to blend in with the existing landscape as background. The visual impacts during daylight hours will be more apparent during the winter months because the screening vegetation is primarily deciduous.

Little measurable visual impact is expected for the remainder of Landscape District I as most of the locations have no view of the project site. The proposed development poses little overall visual impact to the viewer groups within this district.

Impacts to Landscape District II (Agricultural/Rural – Residential): Viewpoints 5 and 7

A majority of the three mile radius viewshed is categorized as the agricultural/rural residential landscape district. Of this area, only a small percentage was indicated as having potential views of the Project. The majority of that small percentage having potential views lies within two miles of the project site.

Viewpoint 5 (Figures 27, 28, 29 and 30) was taken from High Street, looking south. This viewpoint is located in an area that has been identified as having views into the project site. It shows that while the project is visible, it is well below the horizon and has the same appearance as existing roof lines. This allows the view to recede into the background, making minimal visual impacts for this viewpoint.

Viewpoint 7 (Figures 35, 36, 37 and 38) was taken from the Ganondagan State Historic Site. Portions of the Ganondagan site have been identified as having views of the project site. Viewpoint 7 shows a small portion of the Project that is visible. The Project is below the horizon and blends into the distant hills. The Project is part of the background from this viewpoint. There are no visual impacts from this viewpoint.

Little, if any, measurable visual impacts are expected for the remainder of Landscape District II.

Impacts to District III (Commercial): Viewpoints 1, 2, 4, and 6

This district is located along major roads throughout the viewshed area. A portion of District III is adjacent to the southern edge of the Site. With proposed development involving earthwork, grading and the removal of existing vegetation adjacent to the roadways, the most open views of the Project will occur along Victor Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) and near the intersection of Victor Mendon Road (NYS Route 251).

Areas to the south and west, within a one mile radius of the site, have also been identified as having views into the site.

Viewpoint 1 (Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14) was taken at Victor Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) at the proposed western access drive looking north. Being one of the two main entrances to the site, there is significant visual impact due to the signage and the lower tier development around the major pond. Views of the multi-story residential units will also be prominent in this location.

Viewpoint 2 (Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18) was taken at Victor Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) at the eastern access road across from Victor Mendon Road (NYS Route 251). As with Viewpoint 1, there is significant visual impact due to the signage and the lower tier development around the major pond. The lower tier development at this entrance consists of restaurants, retail space and the low-rise residential units.

Viewpoint 4 (Figures 23, 24, 25 and 26) was taken along Victor Mendon Road (NYS Route 251) looking north to the main entrance to the Project Site. Being further away from the project at this location, the viewing angle is increased resulting in a significant visual impact at this viewpoint. From this point, the views will be deeper into the site with more residential units and structures in the main commercial neighborhood starting to be visible.

Viewpoint 6 (Figures 31, 32, 33 and 34) was taken along Rowley Road looking east. Viewpoint 6 can be included into Landscape District II as well as District III. The area seems to be transitioning to more commercial uses, thus the choice of District III. The existing trees to be preserved screen the project site along with a natural vertical ridge but the multi-story residential units will be seen between the trees. When the trees have leafed out, a lesser visual impact from the developed site will exist. Additional landscaping can be planted to provide a denser buffer if required by a future determination.

Other than Landscape District VI, this district will have the most visual impact from the Project as it will be seen from two of the corridors throughout the year. The grades, stepping up the site in concert with the topography, will buffer the upper tiers of the site which consist of the more dense development. The lowest tier of development has more separation between buildings resulting in denser landscaping and more natural land forms. In addition, the distance from the roadway to the first buildings is such that most travelling viewers will not be focused on the activity on site.

Immediately above this initial tier, the next tier of development consists of residential units which follow the character of existing development along the corridor.

Visual impacts to the Commuter/Shopper viewer group in Landscape District III will range from minimal for viewers not on NYS Route 96, to significant for those that are. The most significant potential visual impacts occur along the Victor Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) corridor near the eastern entrance and looking north from Victor Mendon Road (NYS Route 251). However, this viewer group on Route 96 tends to experience the district in a dynamic way as they travel through the area. They have a limited exposure along the corridor due to the travel speed and have less attention to detail as a result. For those stopped at the traffic light at Route 96 and Route 251, the visual exposure will be of significant impact. Mentioned above, the lower tier structures are set back a greater distance from the roadway so there will be few visually active foreground elements (signage, building architecture, etc.) for viewers to focus on and to a much lesser degree on the background beyond. Because of these factors, even though there are some significant potential visual impacts, overall there will be low perceived impacts from the proposed development within District III

Impacts to Landscape Districts IV and V (Undeveloped and Village/Small Town):

Undeveloped land (District IV) is scattered throughout the viewshed. Few, if any undeveloped areas have potential views of the project site. From the list of Viewpoints established in the Scoping process, there are no locations within this Landscape District for evaluation. Undeveloped land in the district has significant trees and /or landforms that screen the views beyond their boundaries. The Village of Victor (District V) is located approximately 2 miles from the project site and has few areas that have been identified as having potential views of the project site. The Viewshed Section 3 shows the potential visibility from the Village of Victor to the Project site. The views of the project site will be limited to the backgrounds, beyond existing buildings and roof lines. There are no discernible visual impacts for this Project to Landscape Districts IV (Undeveloped) and V (Village/Small Town).

Impacts to District VI (The New York State Thruway):

This area has been identified in the Viewshed Analysis as having views of the project site. Viewpoint 8 photograph and photo simulation (Figures 39 and 40) was taken along the New York State Thruway across westbound lane looking southwest to the Project site. The project is clearly visible from this viewpoint. Travelling through this District views are screened by topography and existing vegetation until you are travelling parallel to the site, and is therefore visible for only a short period of time. Due to the high travel speed and drivers' attention to the road instead of side background, it has a moderate visual impact.

VII. Mitigation

The Project will significantly alter the land use, and therefore the views of and on the Project. As shown on the Grading and Drainage drawings (Appendix A), the proposed grading and placement of buildings is designed to follow the existing topography to the greatest extent practicable. As indicated in the Grading plans, the site consists of tiered development stepping up the existing sloped topography. As the tiers rise, the density of the development increases with the largest structures at the highest elevations along the northern portion of the site adjacent to the NYS Thruway. The lowest elevations at the southern portion of the site, along Route 96, have the larger open space, the pond

designed to follow the natural topography, and smaller, more separated buildings with buffered parking areas. Additional trees will be used to supplement the existing buffers to provide visual interest and will control the views of the parking areas and buildings for travelers along Victor Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96).

New landscaping will be used to supplement the existing treed buffers that are being preserved along the overall perimeter of the Project Site. In addition, strategically placed rolling earthen mounds will replace the existing topography where grading had to occur for the development. To better portray the topographic effects, Figures 46 and 46 have been included. These lower angle screen shots depict the stepped levels and the proposed landscaping buffer the areas. A detailed planting plan will be created during the site plan review process. The future landscape plan will show a variety of evergreen trees, shade trees and both evergreen and deciduous shrubs to assist with screening, add aesthetic quality and heighten visual interest. Additional plantings, located where necessary throughout the site as the plan is progressed, are also expected to be provided, subject to the Town’s input. See Appendix B for the Proposed Plant Palette.

The buildings will be designed to follow the architectural vernacular of the Village, with the desire to develop a Finger Lakes style of architecture. Design elements will be included to minimize the appearance of large uniform walls with assistance from vegetative screening. The elements will include varied rooflines and will utilize a palette of building materials to increase the visual interest of the building facade. Building mounted architectural accent lighting, plantings, and benches will also be positioned to enhance the façade and create pedestrian scale comfort zones.

The "Lifestyle Center", will consist of multiple smaller buildings with varying adjacencies to create interesting spaces between buildings leading to the larger open spaces that form the activity area of the Lifestyle Center. Walking through the retail neighborhoods of the Center will be a similar experience to walking through the Village with much reduced vehicular traffic. Articulation of the streets and sidewalks will strengthen the pedestrian oriented experience. The variation of textures and colors of walkways/streets will help the orientation within the Center, i.e., neighborhoods will have their own identifying elements. Coordinated hardscape features such as lights, bollards, park benches and trash receptacles will be selected to augment the desired feel of the development.

All these architectural elements will further reduce the visual impact of the project from both on and off site. From on site they will create views that have a comfortable scale, are inviting, and enhance the overall experience. From off site, the varying roof lines, facades and details will make the project smaller in scale and appearance, allowing it to recede into the background and minimize potentially undesirable overall visual impact.

VIII. Alternatives

Any development of the project site will remove vegetation, open views into the site, and change the present-day visual character of the site and its immediate surroundings.

To successfully develop the project site, the project will need to balance two visual thresholds:

- 1) Minimize the visual impact to users that are sensitive to the proposed changes; and,
- 2) Maximize the visibility of the project for patrons from Victor-Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96).

Any alternative should minimize and/or mitigate views of the project from adjacent existing residential uses. Buildings should be located within the interior of the site except for limited frontage lots along

Route 96 to allow for the maximum setbacks and visual buffering afforded by the proposed topography. Building pads should be terraced to conform to the existing site and to minimize earthwork. The majority of building heights should be kept below the horizon line from critical viewpoints within the Viewshed, to maintain an unbroken natural horizon silhouette. If buildings break the horizon line, they should be kept to a minimum and designed to minimize their visual impact through color, shape and form. Generally taller buildings should be placed on lower elevations within the site, while shorter buildings should be located in areas of higher elevations. Healthy buffers of existing vegetation on steep slopes and within preserved wetlands should be maintained between the proposed development and adjacent residential areas.

IX. Compliance with Town Comprehensive Plan

The Route 96/251 Corridor Overlay District Regulations describe the intent of the regulations as:

...to improve the quality of development along the corridor. The corridor is unique in its variety of topography, including steep slopes and wetland areas. These characteristics can enhance the design of future projects. The overlay district will restrict or control site access along Route 96 and Route 251 in the Town of Victor in order to prevent potentially significant traffic congestion problems and vehicular and pedestrian conflict areas. The overlay district will also require compliance with design guidelines to enhance the character of the corridor.

It is not the intent of this section to show compliance with the letter of intent of the Town of Victor Comprehensive Plan and the Corridor Overlay District, yet this section must show compliance with guidelines that control the Visual Impact on properties within the district. Initially it can be said that the Project meets one goal of the district by minimizing site access along Victor Pittsford Road (NYS Route 96) as the Project design limits access to two curb cuts for almost 2,500 L.F of frontage. Also, along Route 96, existing landscaping and land forms will be maintained and enhanced by additional landscaping to direct the lines of visibility into the site.

The Corridor Overlay District states that existing landforms are distinct to the Corridor. Any proposed development should be sympathetic and reinforce those distinct features of the corridors' topography. The Project Site steps in tiers following the existing topography as much as possible. Internally, several of the steep slopes have to be modified to provide a slope complying with engineering standards for vehicular movement. The resulting development tiers control the visual impact of the Project by buffering the larger scale development located in the interior tiers/neighborhoods. The more dense development, being the larger scale structures on the top tier, will not be visible from the Route 96/251 corridor. This also meets one of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan – to concentrate commercial development close to the NYS Thruway corridor rather than the Route 96/Route 251 corridors.

To reduce the size of the parking areas the parking ratios will be kept below the 4.5 standard required by the Town of Victor. Parking on the first tier of the site will be well buffered by landscape to reduce the visual impact, focusing more of the architecture of the buildings. To comply with the intent of the Overlay District regulations as to building design, structures will be designed to closely follow the guidelines for the High Street Extension area, even though the guidelines don't specifically apply to the Project Site. The applicant has requested the design team to create a Finger Lakes vernacular as the basis for building design on the Project. Thus the lines of visibility into the site will be directed to the buildings that will be in keeping with the architecture of the Village, rather than the less aesthetic elements of the development.

Existing vegetation and topography will remain intact along the eastern boundary of the property to screen residences on Lane Road from the Project Site. The project as currently proposed, will keep

the entire wetland intact that adjoins the residences to the east along Lane Road. The wetland that remains on site will be part of the preserved tree and buffer areas. Existing vegetation and topography will also remain intact in the southwest corner of the parcel along NYS route 96 to preserve the rural character of the corridor. Landscape areas in the vicinity of the two access roads and stormwater management basin will be sculpted to reflect the rural nature of the surrounding landforms, not reduced to a flat plane reflective of a traditional urban or suburban landscape. (Figure XX)

Existing vegetation is preserved along the balance of the perimeter of the project. Preserving the existing trees and introducing new vegetation will improve buffers to surrounding properties. These buffers will control views into the site, as well as insure mature greenspace and wildlife habitat. New trees and other plantings will be installed to soften the visual impact of the roads and highlight certain facades of the buildings. Additional plantings will enhance the natural character of the slopes and aid in screening the parking lots and buildings beyond. Development plans for the project pertinent to the VIA have been included in Appendix A of this VIA.

The Project adheres to the guidelines and recommendations contained in the Town of Victor Comprehensive Plan, and the Route 96 Overlay District by attempting to respect the rural community’s natural resources, follows the existing topography as closely as possible, provides natural buffers to adjoining properties and sets a standard for development along the corridor with inviting architecture and open spaces. By doing so, the Project Site is developed with the least negative visual impact possible for a Project of this scale.

X. References

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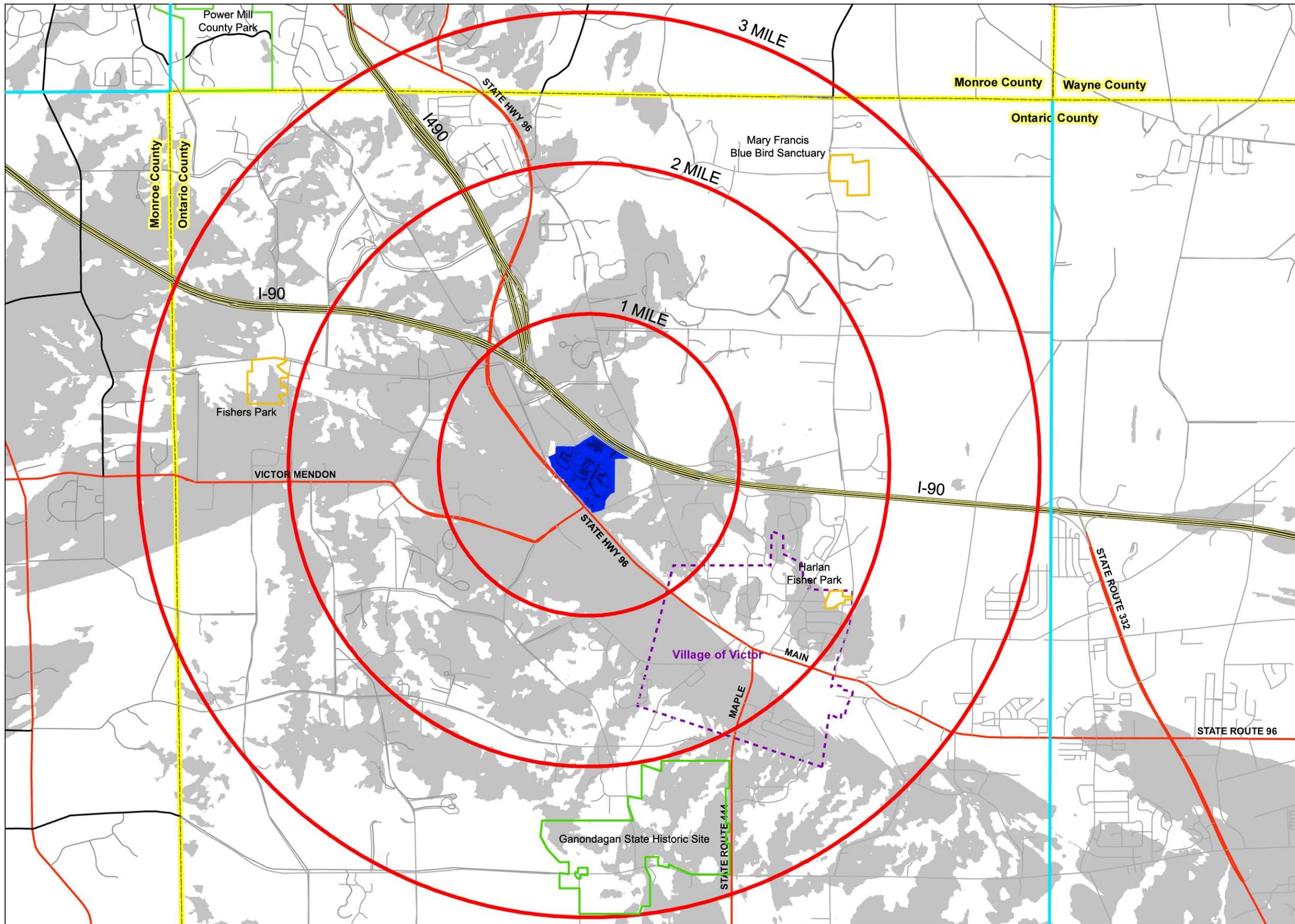
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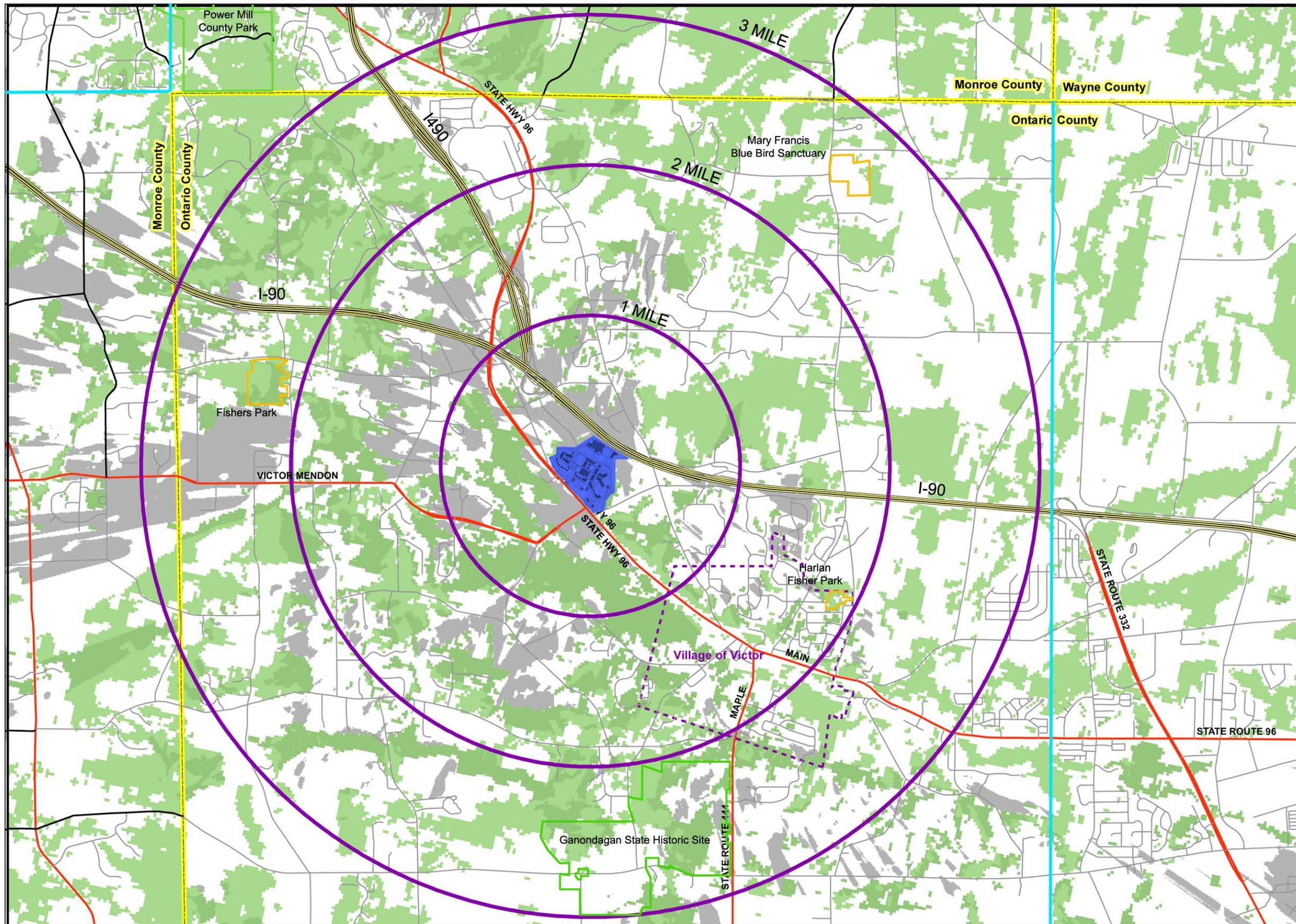
Legend
Landscape Districts

-  LD1 - Suburban Residential
-  LD2 - Agricultural/Rural Residential
-  LD3 - Commercial/Industrial
-  LD4 - Undeveloped
-  LD5 - Village/Small Town
-  LD6 - NYS Thruway
-  Counties
-  Villages
-  Towns
-  Site Area
-  Visible Area
-  Tree Canopy



Legend

- Counties
- - - Villages
- Towns
- Site Area
- Visible Area



- Legend**
- Counties
 - - - Villages
 - Towns
 - Site Area
 - Visible Area
 - Tree Canopy



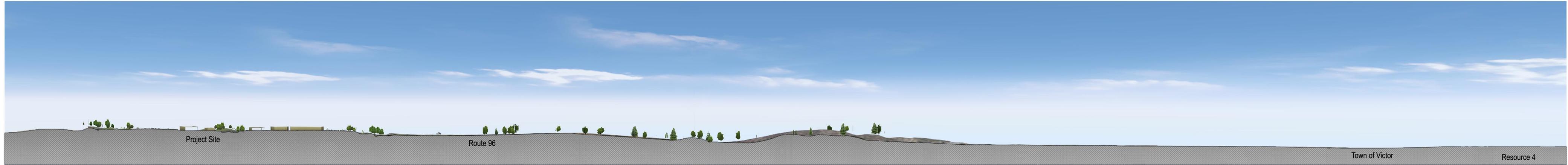


Figure 8 - Section 3

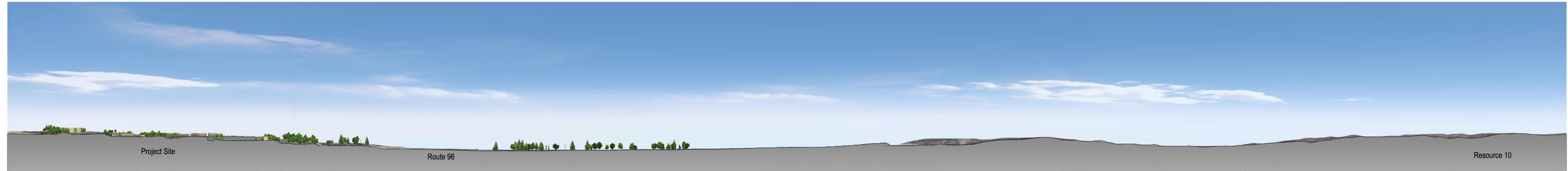


Figure 9 - Section 4

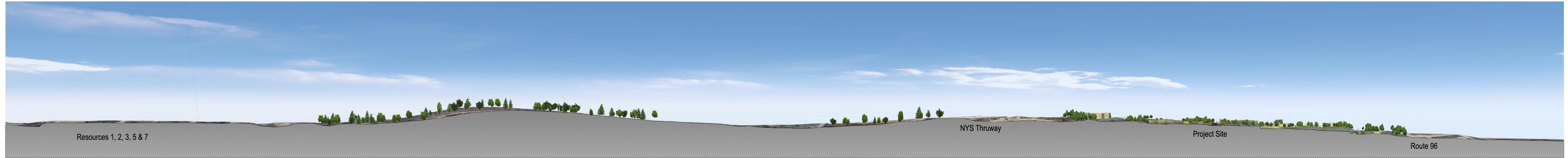


Figure 6 - Section 1

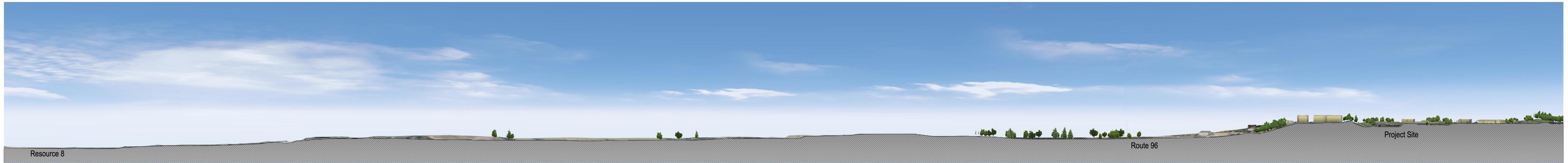


Figure 7 - Section 2





















































Project Location

PLEASE STOP AT THE
VISITORS CENTER TO PURCHASE
YOUR STICKER TO VISIT
THE BARK LONGHOUSE



Project Location



















