An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. The terrain is divided into a grid of rectangular fields, some of which are green and others are brownish-yellow. A winding road or path cuts through the fields, and there are several small buildings or structures scattered throughout the area. The overall scene is a typical agricultural or rural setting.

**Chapter 1**

**Community Profile and Vision**



## COMMUNITY PROFILE

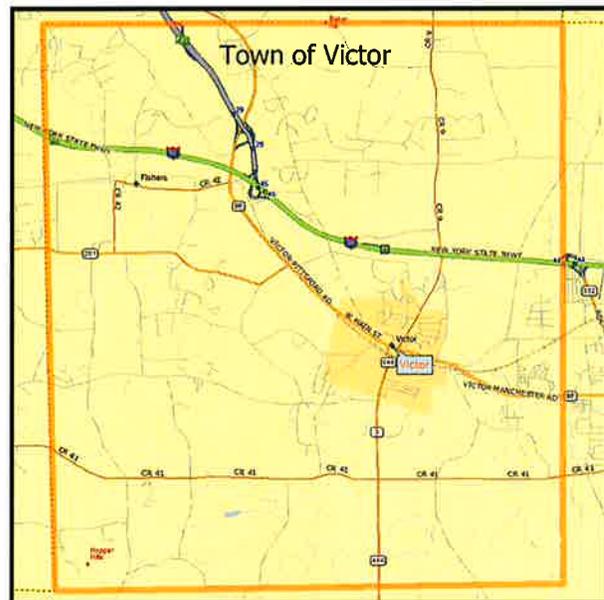
### BACKGROUND

Victor is a small, rural, growing community located in western New York State within the nine-county Genesee Finger Lakes region<sup>1</sup> depicted in the map immediately below.

Located within Ontario County, the Town of Victor borders Monroe County and is a short drive south from the City of Rochester to which it is linked by I-490. The NYS Thruway, which transects the Town, intersects with the eastern terminus of I-490 at Thruway Exit 45, also located within the Town. NYS Route 96 passes through the Town and NYS Routes 5 & 20 can be found a short distance south of the Town.



The Town of Victor includes land both within and outside the Village of Victor. The Village is centrally located within the Town. The Village business district is oriented around Route 96 and its intersection with NYS Route 444. Further north within the Town and a short distance north of the Village boundary, NYS Route 96 also intersects with NYS Route 251. Further beyond and outside the Village, a major commercial center which includes Eastview Mall is found in the northern reaches of the Town along Route 96 just north of the Thruway. The presence of the NYS Thruway and I-490 exits on Route 96 lead to the route's role as a significant commuting corridor for those travelling to Monroe County and the City of



<sup>1</sup> The Genesee/Finger Lakes region is a nine-county planning region focused upon by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization known as the Genesee Transportation Council and served by the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council. The region includes the City of Rochester, the surrounding County of Monroe, and eight additional neighboring counties: Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates. The 2010 census reported a population of approximately 1.2 million for the nine-county region.

Rochester located to the north. The presence of the NYS Thruway, I-490, NYS Route 96 and NYS Routes 5 & 20 mean that Victor also serves as a gateway to the Finger Lakes region located to the south.



Residents take pride in Victor's extensive natural beauty and park system.

The Residents of Victor are proud of the community's agricultural heritage, small town atmosphere, friendly neighbors, community parks and trails, and the quality of their school system. However, Victor's story is not merely one of strategic geography and attractive community character. Unlike many small communities in New York State, Victor has been facing increasing residential and commercial development pressure as residents and businesses move to the community. Although it has increased more recently, this pressure as well as the resulting impacts to the character of the community, were already primary concerns for town residents in the early 1990s. The following statement was included in the introduction to the Town of Victor's 1995

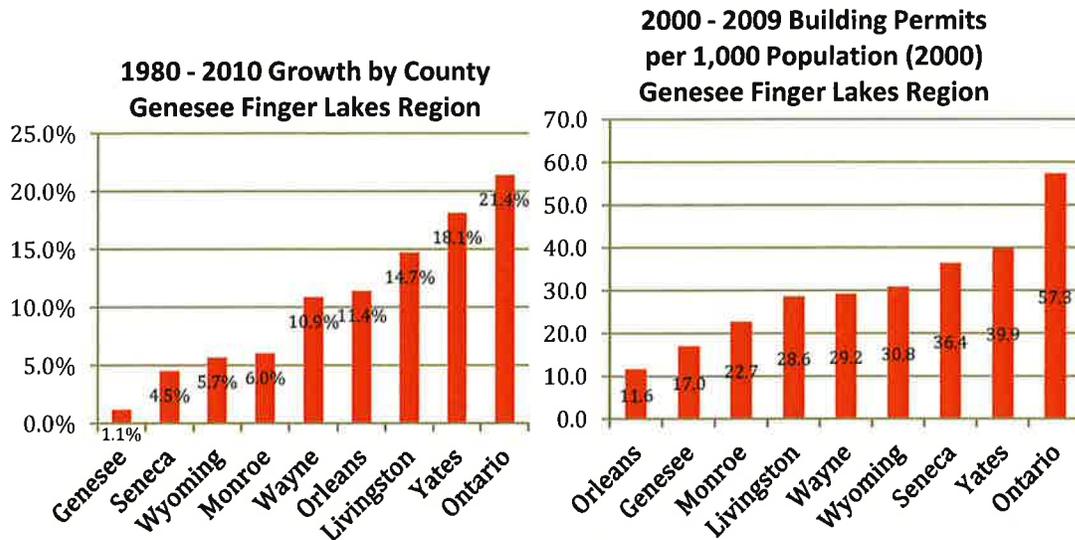
Comprehensive Plan:

*"The Town continues to experience the pressure of growth. Due in large part to the scenic qualities, the Town has become an increasingly popular location for residential development. Many residents have expressly stated that their primary attraction to the Town is its rural character. The preservation of this environment in the face of increasing development pressure has become an important local concern and is one of the primary objectives of comprehensive planning in the Town of Victor. . . The Town continues to address the following critical issues: management of anticipated growth, preservation and enhancement of the Town's aesthetic qualities, and prevention of inefficient and unattractive sprawling development. The Town's planning process must address the objectives and concerns of the Town's citizens. It must be sensitive to environmental conditions. It should be utilitarian in approach and provide a basis for future capital investment decisions."*

Since adoption of the 1995 plan, the growth and development referenced in that document has continued and even accelerated. The 1995 plan pointed out how the Town population, including the Village, had grown by 24% in ten years - from 5,784 in 1980 to 7,191 in 1990. However, the 2010 census cited in the present plan reveals that in the twenty years that followed the 1990 population went on to double<sup>2</sup> - a growth rate of more than 40% per decade.

Although some growth has been experienced throughout the Genesee Finger Lakes region as a whole, the growth rate has been highest in Ontario County as illustrated in the charts that follow. Among the nine counties, Ontario County also ranked highest in the number of building permits issued on per capita basis in the period 2000 – 2009.

<sup>2</sup> The 2010 census reported a population of 14,275, as cited in Chapter 4 of this plan which provides additional detail regarding recent growth.



Source: Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Atlas, Genesee Transportation Council, 2014

The growth and building permit activity within Ontario County as a whole stands out within the region. However, a comparison of Victor's figures to those for Ontario County as a whole serves to illustrate the dramatic growth experienced within Victor in particular.

The nine county region as a whole grew by 8.12% during the thirty year period from 1980 to 2010. Of these nine, Ontario County had the highest growth of 21.39%. However, even when compared to the growth of this most rapidly growing county, Victor's growth is startling. Over the same thirty years, Victor grew by 146.8% when including the Village and by 239.2% when the Village is excluded from the tally. The comparison of the number of building permits issued per capita is equally revealing. Whereas 26.7 permits were issued per 1,000 population in the nine county region, 57.3, more than twice the number per thousand, were issued in Ontario County. However, in the same period Victor issued 188.6, more than seven times the number per thousand issued in the nine-county region, when including the Village and, when excluding the Village, Victor issued 240.5 per thousand.

Comparing Victor to the Region and Ontario County		
Region	1980 – 2010 Growth	2000 – 2009 Building Permits per 1,000 Population (2000)
Nine County Region	8.12%	26.7
Ontario County	21.39%	57.3
Town of Victor including Village	146.8%	188.6
Town of Victor outside Village	239.2%	240.5
Village of Victor	13.76%	31.2

Source: Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Atlas, Genesee Transportation Council, 2014

The following statistics<sup>3</sup> help to characterize demographic and related factors operating in Victor:

- > With respect to housing, in 2010 95.41% of Victor's 5,490 housing units were found to be occupied, a minor decrease from the 95.95% rate found in 2000 and consistent with the 95.34% rate found within Ontario County as a whole.
- > The 2011 median value of housing within Victor was found to be \$216,600, a higher median than any other Ontario County municipality and a median surpassed within the nine county region only by the median housing values reported for the Towns of Pittsford and Mendon.
- > The median year built for all structures in Victor was found in 2010 to be 1991, significantly more recent than medians for other municipalities in the county where the medians ranged from 1939 to 1983.
- > The value of taxable real property within the Town of Victor reported in 2010 was \$1,470 million, approximately \$40.9 million per square mile and \$102,965 per capita, compared to \$7,675 million, or \$11.9 million per square mile and \$71,108 per capita within Ontario County as a whole.
- > Eastview Mall and the surrounding commercial development within the Town of Victor is recognized as a significant generator of sales tax revenues within the county and the region. Ontario County sales tax reported for the March 2010 through February 2011 period totaled \$1.98 million, or approximately \$18.35 per capita, versus \$15.79 million or approximately \$12.99 per capita within the nine county region as a whole.
- > Regarding household income, only 1.72% of those living in Victor in 2010 were found to be living below the poverty level, much lower than the corresponding proportion of 8.72% found within Ontario County as a whole. The median income reported in 2010 for Victor was \$85,392, significantly higher than the figure of \$56,468 reported for the county as a whole, higher than any other Ontario County municipality, and surpassed within the nine county region only by the Towns of Pittsford and Mendon.
- > Among the 6,888 workers identified within the Town of Victor in 2010, 88% drove alone to work, compared to 82% within the county as a whole, 6% car-pooled compared to 9% within the county as a whole, 5% worked at home compared to 4% within the county as a whole, and only 1% walked as compared to 4% within the county as a whole. No Victor residents were reported to be relying on cycling for travel to work. The median length of commuting travel minutes reported in 2010 for Victor was 20 to 24 minutes, shorter than that reported for some county communities but longer than that reported for others. The number relying on public transportation to reach work was only one-tenth of a percent, compared to more than four-tenths of percent reported for the county as a whole.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Atlas, Genesee Transportation Council, 2014.

- > Public transit data compiled for all of Ontario County for 2012 reported 328,633 annual passenger trips and approximately 2.1 million annual passenger miles, levels surpassed within the region only by the Regional Transit Service (RTS) based in Monroe County.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are widely distributed in Victor. The map presented on page 1.9 simply indicates the presence and location of the following natural resources:

- > Streams and Open Water including, with respect to streams, a riparian buffer extending from the stream bank a distance of 75 feet;
- > Wetlands (both New York State Department of Conservation Freshwater Wetlands and others included on the National Wetland Inventory and regulated under the jurisdiction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers) including regulated adjacent areas within 100 feet of the wetland boundary;
- > Floodways and 100 year floodplains<sup>4</sup>;
- > Steep slopes, in excess of 15% where highly erodible soils are present, in excess of 20% in all other areas, and immediately adjacent areas extending an additional 50 feet beyond the steep slope boundary;
- > Forested areas of 10 or more acres including an area immediately adjacent extending 50 feet beyond the forest edge; and,
- > Parks and Trails.

The map reveals that areas influenced by these natural resources are pervasive throughout the community and not concentrated exclusively within any particular neighborhood or district. Habitat is richer and green infrastructure<sup>5</sup> influence is more pronounced where multiple resources are found

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<sup>4</sup> Floodplains often contain and/or support wetlands and other important ecological areas that impact directly on the quality of the local environment. Surface water, ground water, floodplains, wetlands and other features do not function as separate and isolated components of a watershed, but as a single, integrated natural system.

<sup>5</sup> The term "green infrastructure" is used to distinguish green infrastructure components and systems from "gray infrastructure". Victor's usage of the term "green infrastructure" is derived from the book Green Infrastructure Linking Landscapes and Communities, by Mark A. Benedict and Edward T. McMahon, The Conservation Fund, 2006. Benedict and McMahon define "gray infrastructure" as "man-made systems that support communities, including roads and other transportation systems, stormwater management systems, and utilities. Also called built infrastructure." As pointed out by the authors, some use the term "green infrastructure" to refer only to "engineered structures such as storm water management or water treatment facilities designed to be environmentally friendly". Victor, however, has incorporated the much broader definition of green infrastructure provided by Benedict and McMahon, namely: "Our world's natural life-support system – an interconnected network of waterways, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats, and other natural areas; greenways, parks, and other conservation lands; working farms, ranches, and forest; and wilderness and other open spaces that support native species, maintain natural ecological processes, sustain air and water resources, and contribute to the health and quality of life for communities and people."

together. The map presented on page 1.10 helps to identify areas in which multiple natural resources are found. This map simply presents all of the areas of influence identified on preceding map with a uniform transparent color overlay. Areas in which multiple resources are present therefore exhibit a darker pigment than do those where only a single resource is found. The greater the number of different resource types present, the deeper the pigment of the overlay that is shown. In addition, six specific areas were recognized as having particular value due to the concentration of multiple resources and their function as connecting corridors. These are depicted in both of the maps presented on pages 1.10 and 1.11 (by a pattern of blue parallel lines on the Levels 1 and 2 map and by a yellow overlay on the Areas of Interest map that follows). The identified areas and their relevant characteristics are presented in the table that follows:

Areas of Interest (see Maps on pages 1.10 and 1.11)	
Area	Distinguishing Characteristics
Fishers Limited Development District	Wetlands; steep slopes; Irondequoit Creek Floodplain; glacial kettles; pre-glacial Genesee River aquifer; Virgin forest (Land Trust) & Conservation Club property; connection north to Power Mills Park along Auburn town trail; connection south across I-90 via Auburn rail tunnel; two road bridges; one stream underpass, west within stream gorge south of Eastview Mall (BJ's); and, some agriculture.
Fishers	Irondequoit Creek Floodplain; Fishers Park; wetlands; prime soils; abandoned gravel pits and landfill (prime soils lost in this area); southern portion included within light industrial zone; connection West to Mendon and Rush linear parks (along Lehigh Trail).
Glacial Lake Dana Outflow Bed	Lehigh Crossing Park; three major town trails; extensive DEC freshwater wetlands; source of two major streams; Fisher-Village aquifer; within light industrial zone; unique geological stream terraces and springs; important northwest to southeast corridor.
Ganondagan and Dryer Road Town Park	Major historical and town park area; steep slopes; major stream; connection south to Boughton Park via Great Brook; connection to Hopper Hills via Trout Brook.
Ganargua - Mud Creek Floodplain	Major streams; extensive floodplain; connections to east and northeast and along Auburn Trail; connection to west along old trolley trail (Auburn) and Great Brook in the Village; possible connection south via Fish Creek.
Baker Hills - Valentown Road	Large forested area; steep slopes; connection north to similar area in Perinton; some agriculture; prime soils; wetlands; town parks.

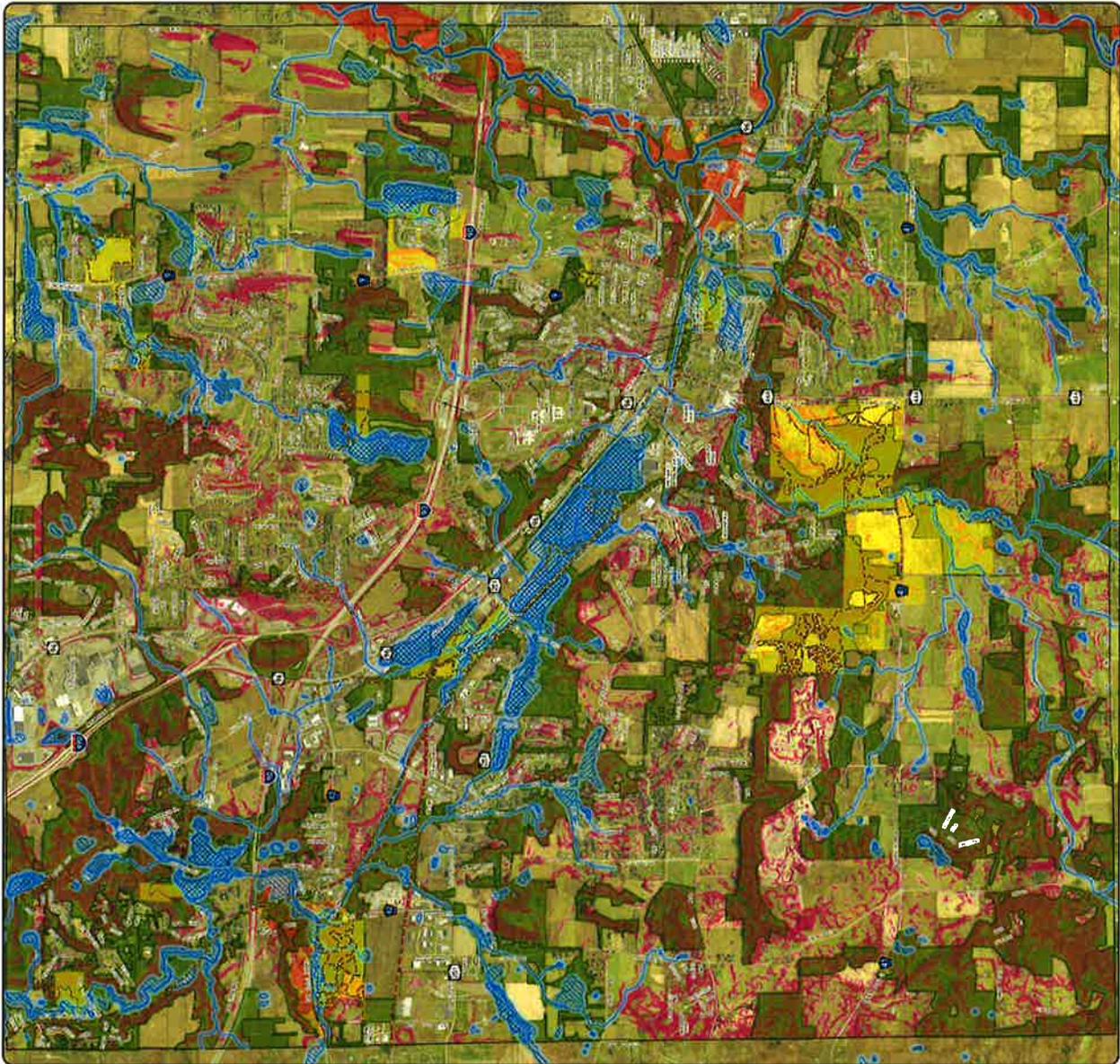
## NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

The Town of Victor recently completed a 2014 Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment (the "NRI"). This document provides a wealth of additional information and detail regarding natural resources and is incorporated within this Comprehensive Plan in its entirety by reference, as it may be amended from time to time (see Appendix XI).



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN  
LEVEL 1

- Legend**
- Victor Trails
  - Public Parks
  - Forester Areas (10-Acres +) with Buffer (50-feet)
  - Streams and Open Water
  - Streams Buffer (75-feet)
  - NW Wetlands
  - DEC Wetlands (2011)
  - Wetlands Buffer (100-feet)
  - Floodway
  - 100-YR Floodplain
  - 500-YR Floodplain
  - Slopes Greater Than 20% or Greater Than 15% on Highly Erodible Soils

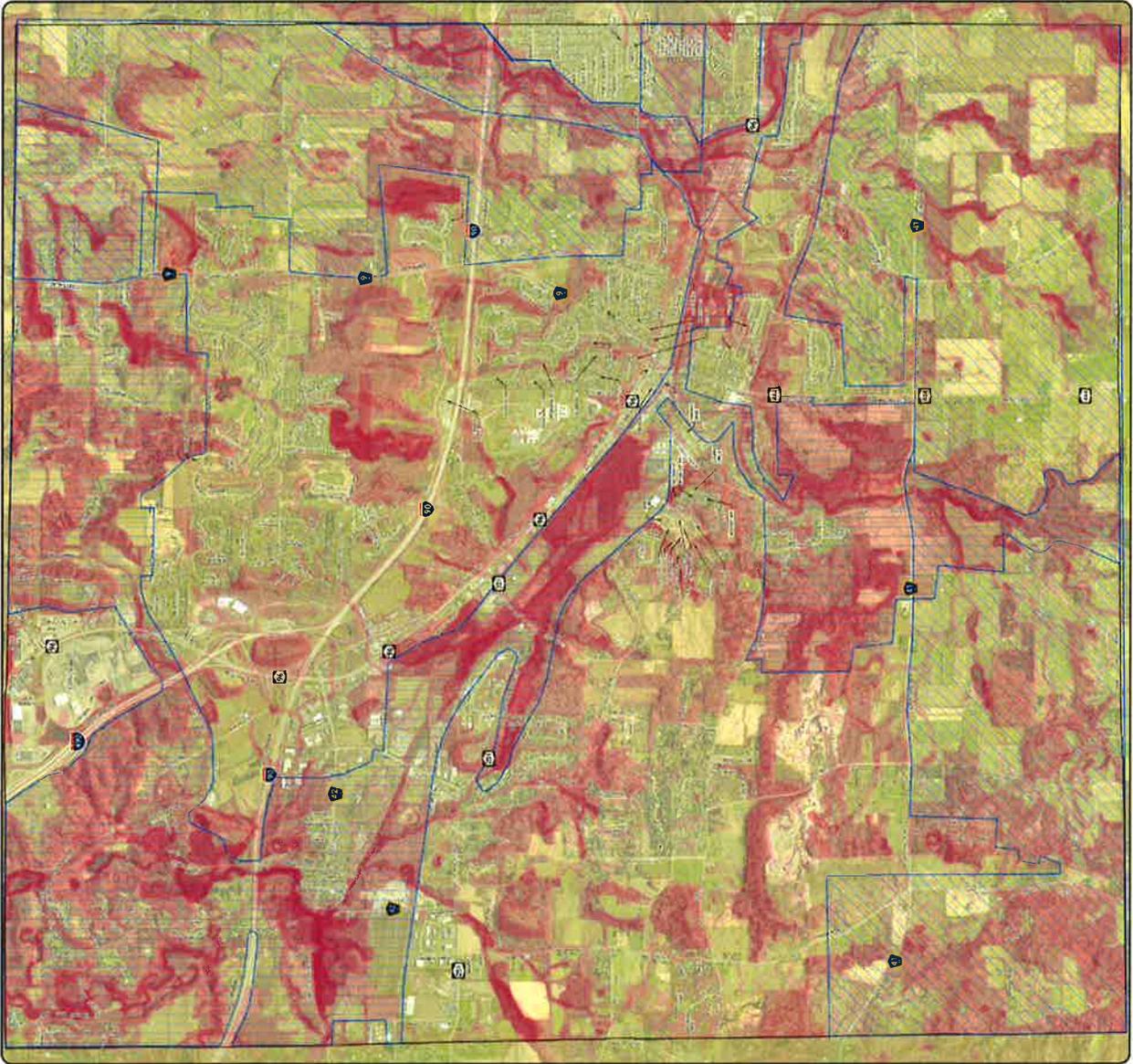




### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN LEVELS 1 and 2

- Legend**
- Areas of Interest (Level 2)
  - Level 1

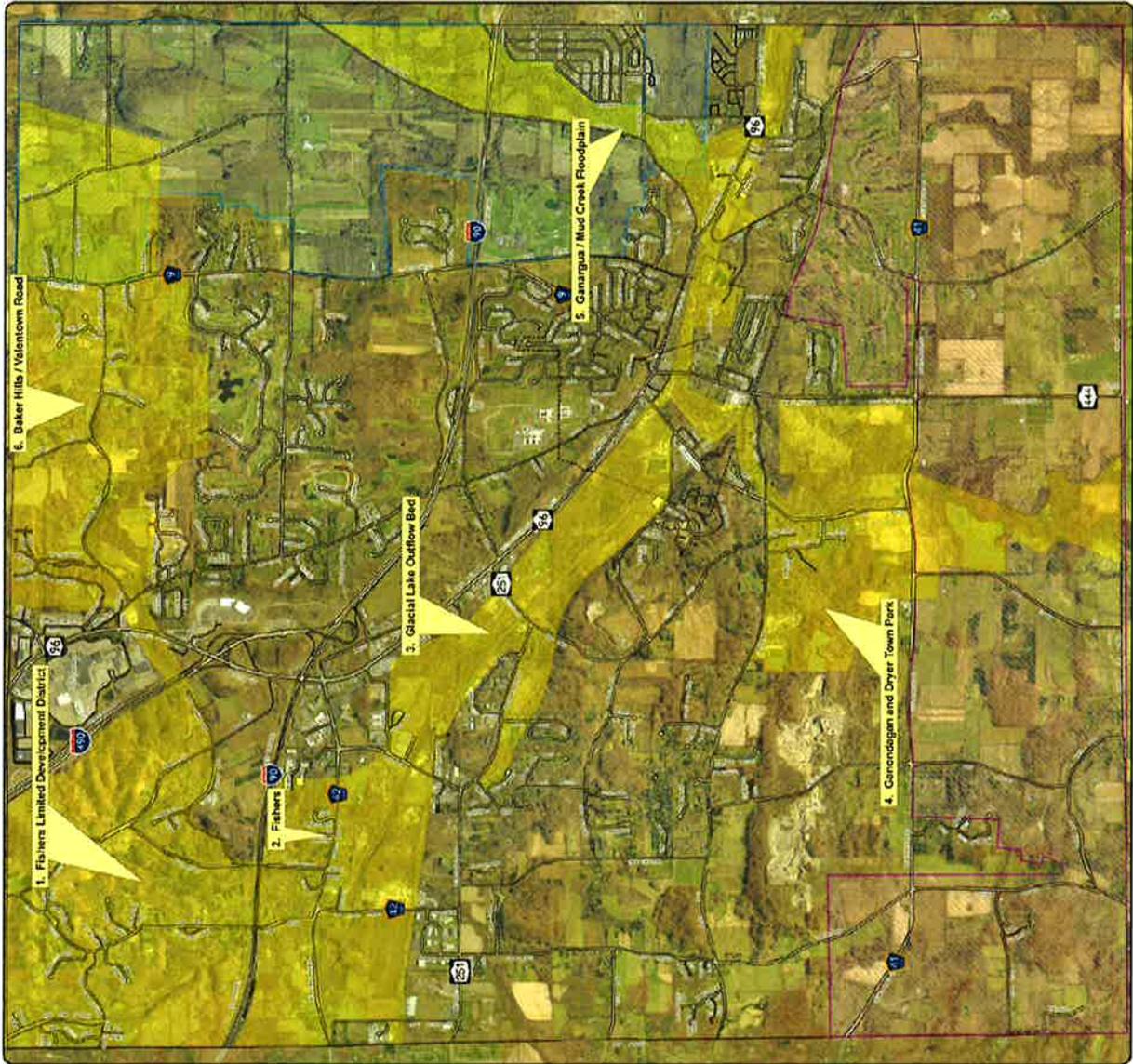
**NOTE:** Lightest shade of pink indicates presence of a single resource. Darker shades indicate presence of multiple resources.





# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN AREAS OF INTEREST

Green Infrastructure and Agricultural Areas (I. Focus)



## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Victor is also rich in cultural resources including many archaeological, architectural, and other historic resources<sup>6</sup>.

Included among Victor's historic resources are both sites and buildings. One such site found in Victor, Ganondagan, is listed on the New York State Historic Site list. It is the only Native American site in New York State given this status. The following Victor buildings are also listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places:

- > Valentown Hall and surrounding buildings of the Victor Historical Society;
- > Felt Cobblestone Store, 6452 State Route 96;
- > Cobblestone Railroad Pumphouse, Country Road 42 in Fishers; and
- > Jeremiah Cronkite Cobblestone House, 11095 Lynaugh Road.

In addition, as of 2013 the Town has also deemed 58 sites as local historic resources and recognized 63 buildings within the Town with Historic Plaques (for a listing, see Appendix XII).

To cite a final example, the Hamlet of Fishers in particular, is unique. Its historic qualities should be allowed to be enhanced to let the hamlet grow without sacrificing the character that makes it a special place. The existing Fishers hamlet center should be preserved and enhanced as a complementary rural district consistent with the Vision for the Hamlet of Fishers developed in June 2007 (included in Appendix XII).

## AGRICULTURE

According to coding utilized by the Victor Town Assessor, parcels involved in farm operations in Victor presently include the following classifications: dairy products; cattle, calves and hogs; horse farms; field crops; apples, pears, peaches, etc.; nursery and greenhouse; and, agricultural vacant land.

Victor represents an unusual convergence of multiple factors important to agriculture:

- > Presence of prime soils;
- > Proximity to metropolitan population centers; and,
- > Proximity to regional and statewide transportation networks.

Regarding agricultural soils<sup>7</sup>, the greatest concentration of such soils is found along the town's eastern boundary. A belt of these soils, interspersed in some areas with soils of less importance, extends approximately one mile or more into the town along the eastern boundary north and east of Route 96. These soils are also present, but less prevalent, to the west of this belt (more than one

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<sup>6</sup> In general, the term historic resources refers to above-ground buildings, structures, objects and sites and excludes archeological resources found beneath the surface.

<sup>7</sup> See the map provided in Chapter 3 on page 3.7.

mile from the eastern town boundary, but still to the east of Route 96). Another notable concentration of these soils is found south of Route 96 in the southeastern corner of the town. This block extends west to Route 444 and a little beyond. Yet another concentration is found in the vicinity of Route 251, west of Route 96, south of the Thruway and north of Modock Road. Prime soils can also be found interspersed in other areas within the town, such as within the northwestern corner, but they are generally much less dense within these other areas. Within the southwestern quadrant located south of Dryer Road and west of Route 444, the presence of soils important to agriculture is relatively rare.

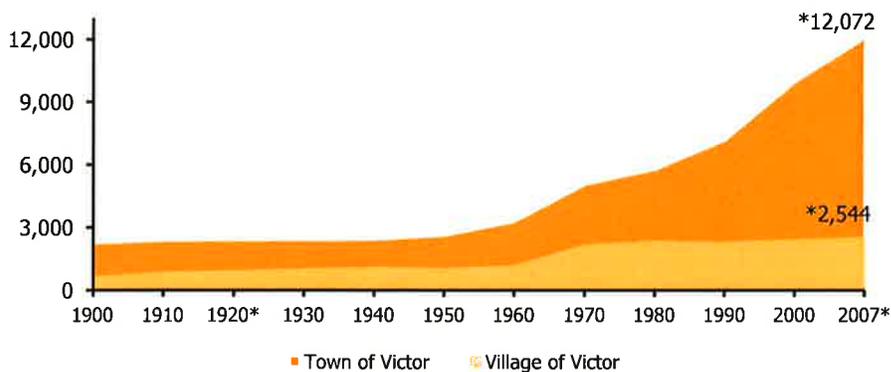
The Town includes a number of agricultural districts.<sup>8</sup> Districts comprise much of the southern-most region of the Town, a significant area within the north-eastern quadrant and several smaller areas along the western town boundary. Active agricultural exemptions and active farmland are found both outside these districts as well as within them.<sup>9</sup>

However, active farms are not as prevalent within Victor as they once were. Although development pressure and demand for development sites is cited by some as having contributed to this decline in Victor, a significant reduction in the number of active farms has also been experienced elsewhere in Western NY even where development demand is minimal.

Non-traditional forms of agriculture have been developed within Victor more recently. The presence of prime soils, access to major transportation corridors and proximity to significant centers of population are believed to be critical factors leading to demand for arable land from non-traditional agricultural uses.

## GROWTH

As already indicated, Victor has been recognized as one of the most rapidly growing communities in the



state. Although now somewhat outdated, the adjoining graph of population over the past century was reviewed by both the committee and the public when work first began on this plan in 2008. It reveals significant increases in village and town population levels that had been stable

<sup>8</sup> See the map presented in Chapter 3 on page 3.7.

<sup>9</sup> See the maps presented in Chapter 3 on pages 3.12 and 3.13.

throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but then began to increase in the late 1940s and early 1950s following the expansion of the New York State Thruway. The greatest growth occurred over the 1960s, when the village population nearly doubled – from 1,180 to nearly 2,200 residents. Likewise, the population within the town jumped 54 percent – from 3,300 persons to over 5,000 persons. Unlike many communities in Upstate New York, substantial growth has continued at an unprecedented rate through the second half of the century – specifically in the town. The population in the town doubled once again between 1970 and 2000. As this planning effort continued, regional estimates and projections based upon the 2007 population as well as more recent data were reviewed. These indicated an expectation for continued growth in the next several decades.

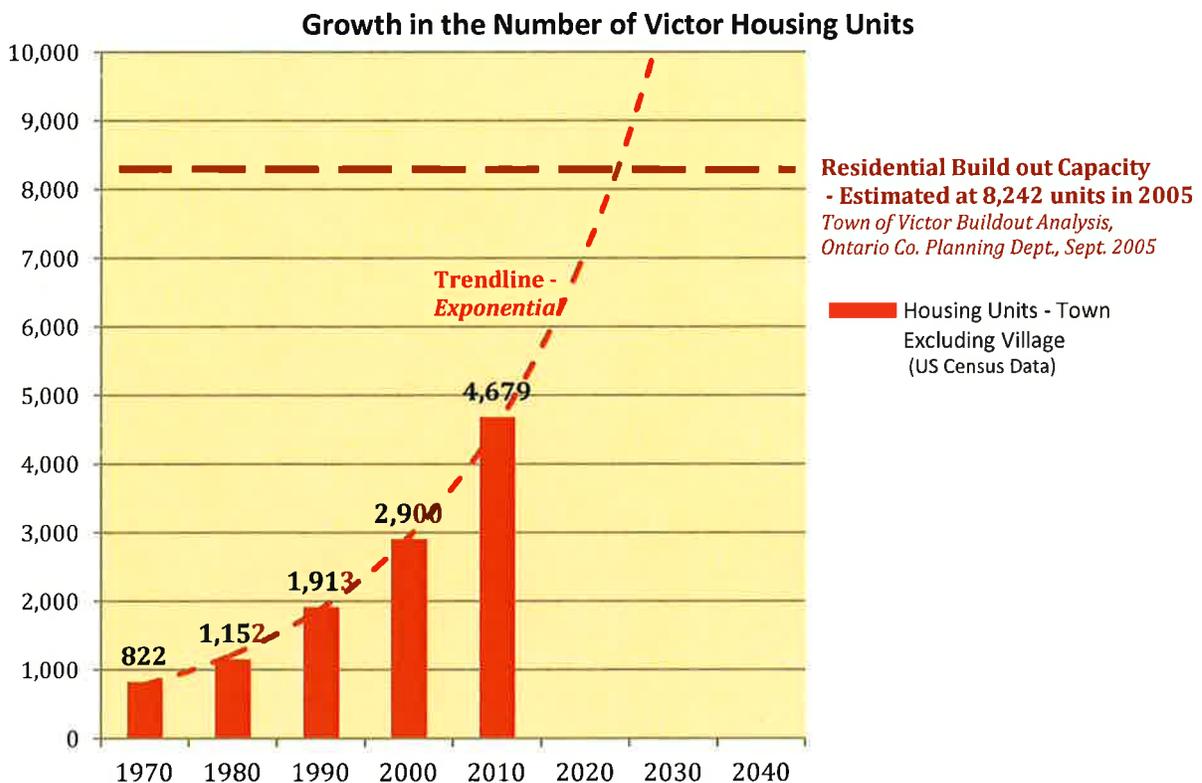
More recently, the 2010 census found a population of 14,275, more than 40 percent above even the 2000 population level of 9,997 depicted in the foregoing graph (these figures include Village residents as well as those within living within the Town, but outside the Village). This represents an average annual compound growth rate of approximately 3.65%. In the same period, the population of town residents living outside the Village increased from 7,564 to 11,579—an increase of more than 53 percent and an average annual compound growth rate of approximately 4.35%.

As would be expected, the associated growth in residential units has been remarkable. From 2000 to 2010 the number of Victor housing units increased by about one-half, from 3,872 to 5,822 (or by more than 60 percent, from 2,900 to 4,679, if only those units outside the Village are considered). Victor growth has also led to development of many commercial and industrial sites, particularly within and adjacent to the Route 96 corridor.

Although the recent growth rates are the most impressive, it should be noted that significant population growth and increases in the number of Victor housing units are not new to Victor. Forty years ago, in 1970, the number of housing units in Victor outside the Village was less than one-fifth the number present today (822 units in 1970 versus the 4,679 units found by the 2010 census). The figures also indicate that while there has been growth in the number of housing units within the Village as well as within the town as a whole, the growth rate has been highest within the areas of the town located outside the Village.

In 2005, the Town of Victor commissioned a build-out analysis to be completed by the Ontario County Planning Department (see Appendix VIII). In addition to reviewing population and housing trends, the study also took into account the availability of parcels for development, zoning constraints including local open space and density provisions, the availability of public utilities, and environmental constraints. Assuming no change in local regulations and requirements, the study forecast a maximum residential build-out of approximately 8,242 units outside the Village – about 5,342 additional when compared to the 2,900 units found by the 2000 census. The 2010 census subsequently indicated that 1,779 of the 5,342 anticipated units had been built between 2000 and 2010. This would leave only 3,563 to be built in 2011 and the following years before reaching the estimated full build-out of 8,242 units. It should be noted that this maximum build-out estimate incorporated local requirements as they were in 2005. A significant change in those, and in maximum allowed residential densities in particular, would lead to a revised estimate – higher or lower, as the case might be.

The chart that follows on this page presents the number of housing units within the Town but outside the Village as reported by the census over the past forty years. A dashed horizontal line indicating the maximum residential build-out estimated in the 2005 study has also been included in the figure. The included dashed trendline reveals not only the exponential nature of housing unit growth experienced over the forty-year interval but also how rapidly the maximum build-out would be approached were the acceleration in growth rates experienced in the past to continue in the future. Looking more closely at the period from 2000 to 2010, the increase in the residential unit growth rate does seem to have slowed more recently<sup>10</sup>. However, were those declines to be reversed such that future increases in the number of building units followed the exponential curve fit to the data from the past forty years, the estimated maximum residential build-out would be attained sometime around 2025. Assuming the more recent decline in housing starts is not reversed, it would now seem reasonable to anticipate that significantly more than fifteen years will actually be required to attain the estimated residential build-out.



## GROWTH AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

As noted earlier, it is the open space. Farmland and rural character found in much of Victor has attracted many residents to the community and that remains a defining part of the community identity for those born and raised in Victor. However, declines in dairy and crop farming and the increased demand for development sites have led to the loss of much open space, farmland and associated rural character. The

<sup>10</sup> The number of residential building permits for new units issued by the town peaked in 2001 through 2004, was down from that level by about one-third in 2005 through 2008, and then dropped further by about another third in 2009.

growth that has occurred over the past 40 years has resulted in extensive development of residences and subdivisions on lands that were previously undeveloped and “open”. Much of this open land had once been farmed, some was wooded, and some was simply idle. Town residents and officials have noted and reacted to this accelerating growth in the number of housing units and simultaneous loss of open space. Although the build-out analysis prepared by the County Planning Department also estimated the anticipated build-out within the industrial and commercial sectors, it is the residential growth and development that residents perceive to have affected open space and rural character most profoundly.

Not surprisingly, the present plan has found that the foregoing concerns identified in 1995 remain at the forefront with many residents. Reflecting upon the changes experienced over recent decades, many would argue that the growth management initiatives implemented in the years following the 1995 plan have proven insufficient to preserve the Town’s character and arrest the sprawling development cited in the 1995 introduction<sup>11</sup>. Many residents fear that what remains of the open space, rural character and natural resources that they identify with so strongly will be lost over the next decade or two. In addition, many property owners have argued that past responses to development pressure, including a 2000 reduction in the maximum residential density permitted within certain regions of the town, unfairly imposed the cost of preserving open space solely upon landowners.

Development has also threatened to overwhelm efforts to preserve natural resources and green infrastructure. The mapping included in this chapter and in Chapter 2 reveal how pervasively natural resources are distributed throughout the community and how a community-wide initiative will, therefore, likely be necessary to conserve the integrity of such an extensive network.

The Town has recently made progress in establishing a voluntary pre-application screening process intended to ensure identification and consideration of natural resources early in the design of a proposed development. The process presently includes consultation with the Town Conservation Board and a focus upon ensuring that developments are planned to fit the intended site, rather than the converse. However, room for improvement remains. Applicants and board members alike cite instances in which recognition of potential resource conflicts still arise late in the review cycle leading to needless expense, complication, frustration and confrontation. Many have shared their opinion that a more formal, more predictable, sketch plan review process that is not merely voluntary is necessary to ensure that opportunities to preserve natural resources and green infrastructure are recognized and addressed by all parties as early as possible in the planning and design cycle.

The sanitary sewer system<sup>12</sup> has also been impacted. The present system is one that has evolved incrementally over time, largely as a consequence of successive expansions that have been

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<sup>11</sup> These initiatives are described in the Chapter 4 discussion of Growth Management and Open Space.

<sup>12</sup> Wastewater that is generated within the Village and within some areas of the Town immediately adjacent to the Village is conveyed to the Village Wastewater Treatment Plant. Wastewater from areas of the Town further from the Village—in particular, those north of the Village and near Route 96, Route 251, County Road 42 and County Road 9—are conveyed to the Farmington Wastewater Treatment Plant.

undertaken to meet growing demand from new development. Segments of the system of sanitary sewers and associated pump stations serving northern areas of the Town were recently found, in addition to nearing the end of their design life, to also be approaching their design capacity.

Regarding stormwater management and drainage infrastructure found within residential areas, a recent study found that responsibility for maintenance of the numerous residential stormwater management improvements constructed over the past 30 years was unclear in most instances and being disregarded in many others<sup>13</sup>. Failure of these improvements rarely puts a responsible party at risk and most frequently threatens downstream properties and/or environmental features.

Development pressure and demand for residential sites has also affected the inventory of vacant industrial and commercial sites. As residents have reacted to development pressure by opposing further residential development within their neighborhoods, developers have looked to rezone vacant industrial or commercial parcels to residential use in order to avoid neighborhood resistance.

Finally, in addition to the effects upon open space, rural character, natural resources, and the infrastructure noted above, development in Victor has also impacted the transportation network. Segments of Route 96 and associated arterials are presently operating with volumes near or beyond their design capacity. Back-ups on Route 96 and within the Village are common<sup>14</sup> and effectively divert through-traffic into rural neighborhoods where roads are utilized as alternate routes around the congestion.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### **Water and Sewer Infrastructure Map**

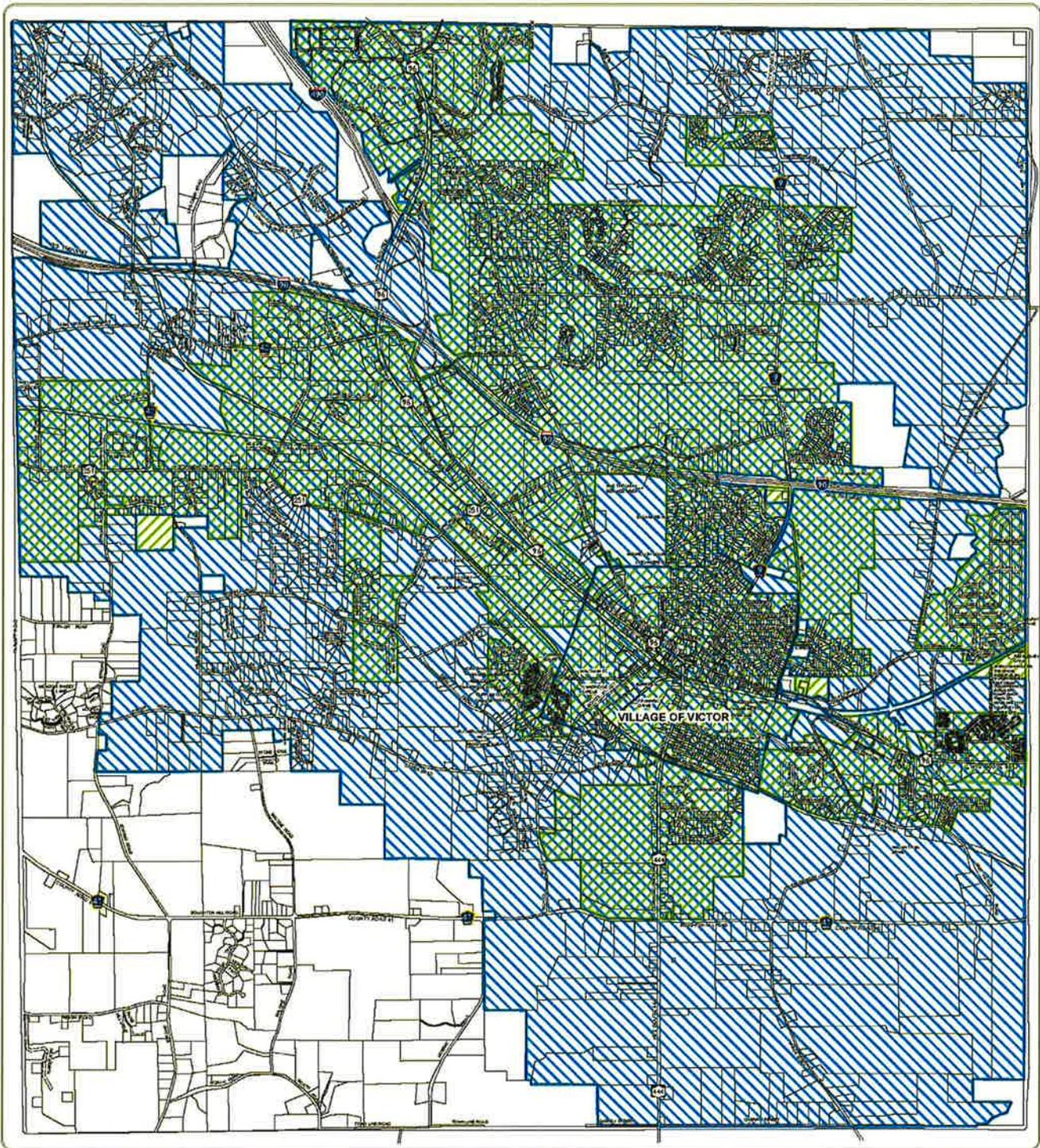
The map on the following page describes the extent to which the Town and Village of Victor are served by water and sewer lines. Water covers nearly every part of the town except for the southwest corner. Sewer lines are more localized to the center third. From an agricultural preservation perspective, it is harder to protect land served by water and sewer lines, because the infrastructure increases the value of the land for development.

Although sanitary sewer service is frequently recognized as the most powerful driver of residential development, there are instances within areas where there is no sanitary sewer in which the availability of public water alone may increase the demand for residential sites. As is noted below in the discussion of recommended strategies, a key strategy related to further extension of utilities is included in the chapter focused upon Growth Management and Open Space.

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<sup>13</sup> Discussions included in Chapters 2 and 4 of this plan provide more detail regarding these findings.

<sup>14</sup> See the Chapter 7 discussion of Transportation for more detail regarding volume and capacity ratios on roads and highways within Victor.



- 2013 Tax Parcels (Source: Ontario County)
- 2012 Water District (Source: LaBella Associates, D.P.C.)
- 2013 Sewer District (Source: LaBella Associates, D.P.C.)

# INFRASTRUCTURE



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Between 2000 and 2010, the Town of Victor led Ontario County in population growth and housing unit starts partly due to the Town's improving economy and high quality of life. Victor's reported 2010 population of 14,275 was the largest of any Ontario County municipality.

Regarding employment of Ontario County residents, top employers have shifted from traditional manufacturing sectors to health care, food related industries, and tourism. Regarding employment by companies within Ontario County (as opposed to employment of county residents) employment in Health Care, Accommodation/Food services, Management positions, Arts/Entertainment, and Retail increased the most between 2000 and 2013. Recent declines in employment in the manufacturing sector continued. However, retail trade, government, and manufacturing remain the largest industry employers within the county as of 2013.

Between 2000 and 2013, the number of professional, scientific, and technical firms established in the 14564 zip code increased by more than 77 percent.

Based on five-year estimates prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (2006-2010 American Community Survey), the Town of Victor has a high labor force participation rate of 71.5 percent compared to the labor force participation rates for the County (67.4%), State (63.7%) and Rochester Region (64%). Victor's resident workforce is composed of a significantly higher share of white collar occupations (Management, Sales, Science) than is the case within either Ontario County or New York State. Similarly, Victor also has a lower share of its resident workforce employed in traditional blue collar occupations (production, transportation, construction).

The top paying jobs in the Victor Community fall within the Management, Businesses, and Financial occupational sector. Employees in these occupations have estimated median earnings of more than \$91,000 in 2010 in Victor – far greater than every other occupational sector. Other high paying sectors in Victor and within Ontario County include Computer, Engineering, and Science occupations and Health Care Practitioner and Technical occupations. It should also be noted that Victor residents generally have higher earnings in each occupational category compared to their counterparts within Ontario County, the Rochester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and New York State as a whole.

Finally, residents in the Town of Victor have higher educational attainment levels than those residing in Ontario County, the Rochester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)<sup>15</sup>, and New York State. It is estimated that in 2010, just over 66% of the Town's residents over the age of 25 had a college

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<sup>15</sup> As explained on the US Census website ([www.census.gov/population/metro](http://www.census.gov/population/metro)), metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas are geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for use by Federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing Federal statistics. A metropolitan area contains a core urban area of 50,000 or more population, and a micropolitan area contains an urban core of at least 10,000 (but less than 50,000) population. Each metropolitan area consists of one or more counties and includes the counties containing the core urban area, as well as any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration (as measured by commuting to work) with the urban core.

degree, be it Associate, Bachelor, Graduate, or Professional. Furthermore only 1.6% of residents in the Town of Victor had less than a high school degree.

Eastview Mall continues as the heart of a regional retail center that began emerging when the mall opened in 1971. Even though it represents only a part of the retail business transacted in the area, the following statistics reveal the mall's role as an economic force in the region:

- > 180 stores;
- > 1,300,000 square feet of retail space;
- > Employs 3,800 people – 40% full time and 60% part time;
- > Annual Sales exceed \$300 million; and,
- > Total payroll in excess of \$55 million.

## TRANSPORTATION

As already indicated, the past several decades have brought significant growth to Victor, including unprecedented residential growth. The pace of residential development within neighboring Ontario County towns has also been significant. In addition, the past few decades have also seen significant commercial development along the segment of NYS Route 96 corridor that lies between the NYS Thruway and the Town's northern boundary as well as industrial development within the Victor neighborhoods immediately south of the NYS Thruway. As many Ontario County residents travel to workplaces located to the north and closer to Rochester<sup>16</sup>, the increase in the number of residents has led to corresponding increases in the number of vehicles traveling through the Town, especially along the Route 96 corridor. Together, all of this development has led to increased traffic congestion, not only on State highways and local roadways in the vicinity of the Mall and nearby commercial shopping plazas, but also along the section of Route 96 that transects the Village of Victor and is used by motorists travelling to or from these destinations<sup>17</sup>.

Traffic congestion has become major source of concern in Victor. Traffic congestion within the Village is most prominent during the morning hours of 7:00-9:00 AM and during the afternoon hours of 3:00-6:00 PM. Traffic at these times includes "pass through" motorists travelling between locations to the south and east and Interstate 490 or the NYS Thruway as well as motorists moving to and from destination points in Victor such as Eastview Mall, the Victor Central School District campus, and Victor's village center. Recent development proposals have begun to suggest Victor's potential emergence as a regional destination. In addition to the extensive retail and other opportunities

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<sup>16</sup> The Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Atlas published by the Genesee Transportation Council reported an estimate that half or less of Ontario County worked within the county and the proportion of Ontario County workers commuting to Monroe County for work in 2010 was between 20% and 49%.

<sup>17</sup> As reported in later in this chapter as well as in multiple traffic studies submitted by project sponsors requesting municipal approvals, several routes and intersections within Victor exhibit volume to capacity (V/C) ratios greater than 1.0.

already present within the Route 96 corridor, the other factors that would support such an emergence include many of those that have driven past development including the proximity to Thruway Exit 45, the termination of I-490 - a convenient route to the heart of the Rochester MSA, and the role played by Victor and Route 96 as gateways to the Finger Lakes Region. Of course, development of the sort expected to accompany development of a regional destination would certainly lead to further traffic increase.

Some characterize traffic congestion as the inevitable cost associated with the remarkable economic development and growth that has brought Victor so many other benefits, including jobs, a large property tax base and generous sales tax revenues. Residents point out, nonetheless, that in addition to slowing the movement of vehicles, increasing accident rates and creating safety issues, high volumes of traffic and traffic congestion also diminish the quality of life for Town and Village residents. Congestion within the corridor has also increased traffic through adjoining residential neighborhoods as motorists take alternate routes around the heart of the corridor.

Although a number of initiatives focused upon Victor traffic have been completed, these "solutions", such as the Route 96 improvements through the Village<sup>18</sup>, the expansion of the Thruway between Exits 44 and 45, and the more recent progress with signal synchronization, have only mitigated rather than eliminated traffic congestion. As a consequence, many residents continue their calls for "the magic bullet" – a project, or series of projects, that will resolve Victor's traffic congestion once and for all.

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<sup>18</sup> Confinement by topography and patterns of development are among the obstacles encountered in past efforts to increase capacity within the Route 96 corridor, especially within that segment passing through the Village of Victor. These constraints are reviewed in more detail in Chapter 7.

## THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

To address new concerns as well as many of those previously identified in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, Victor has once again taken a comprehensive look at issues related to its continued growth and development. This plan finds that Victor's primary concerns are ensuring that Victor:

- > Retains its rural, small- town character;
- > Remains a great place to live and work; and,
- > Protects her natural resources, open spaces, and agricultural land.

### COMMUNITY CHOICES

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Building on the strategic plan Process that was completed during 2006, the Town and Village of Victor cooperatively developed this joint Comprehensive Plan. The Plan's intent is to provide the citizens of the community with policies and actions that accurately reflect the physical, environmental, social, economic, and cultural resources of the area; and establish a vision and action framework to manifest these goals. Through this process, the community was asked to make choices:

- > What kind of a community do residents want to live in?
- > What areas of the community are expressions of the community character and should be protected or enhanced?
- > What kind of economic growth should be encouraged? Where and why?
- > What should new businesses look like?
- > Where should transportation improvements be made?
- > What type of transportation improvements can enhance connectivity throughout the town and into the village?

### THE PLAN

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Victor residents, business owners, and public officials asked themselves these questions during the comprehensive planning process. The resulting strategies establish Victor's Vision and set specific goals, as well as the timetable for action to achieve them.

This comprehensive plan is not an instruction manual. While providing specific guidance in some areas, it serves a broader purpose.

### Victor's Comprehensive Plan:

- > Establishes a vision and creates a framework for investments in the community;
- > Gives decision makers and stakeholders (including elected officials, town, village, and regional staff, planning and zoning board members, developers, property owners and other citizens) a guide as they create new policies, set funding investment priorities and judge new development projects; and,
- > Helps the community increase opportunities for grant money, as state and federal government agencies and private foundations prefer to fund projects that fit into a rational plan for the future.

Victor's Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document. A good test for any proposed project, program or action is to make sure that proposed change furthers the vision and accomplishes the goals of the plan. The plan will not succeed if it is constantly changes to meet the demands of every particular project. However, the community should refine elements of the plan as the need arises and undertake a comprehensive review **at least every five years** to update, to ensure currency, and measure progress.

### THE PLANNING TEAM

The Town Supervisor and Village Mayor designated a committee to craft the comprehensive plan with the assistance of a team of consultants. Each member of the committee was invited to participate based on his or her understanding of the community and/or unique skills to benefit the planning process. Members included residents, regional planning experts, business owners, open space and environmental interests and those concerned about protecting the rights of individual property owners. Together, this committee worked to create a plan that strives to achieve an economically and environmentally sustainable future for Victor. This Plan is the culmination of their work and efforts to bring diverse interests together to shape common goals.

Public participation was actively invited throughout the planning process. Engaging the public, educating them about planning, and listening to their concerns, ideas, and dreams was crucial in developing a plan that will stand the test of time. In the Victor comprehensive planning process, there were many opportunities for the public to become involved.



At a series of community meetings, residents were asked to identify key issues and needs in the community.

### PUBLIC OUTREACH

Working with the consultant team, the comprehensive plan committee ran an extensive public outreach process for the Victor comprehensive plan. It should be noted that every one of the Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings and subcommittee meetings was open to the public. At the

end of each Committee meeting time was always allotted for residents to add comment to the process.

The public participation outreach process involved the following:

- > Two issues identification and ranking workshops held at the temporary Town Hall in October 2008.
- > Topic specific workshops for agriculture, economic development, parks and recreation, and historic preservation.
- > Town Board update midway through the process (July 2009).
- > Interviews in-person and on the telephone with numerous stakeholder representatives from the arts, tourism, economic development and business community.
- > A community-wide update meeting where the vision, goals and strategies of the comprehensive plan were presented for comment to the general public.
- > Fourteen Committee meetings (all were open to the public).

#### COMMON THEMES

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Through the public participation process a number of common themes emerged. These included, in no particular order:

- > Protection and enhancement of open space and the rural character
- > Environmental sustainability
- > Preservation of historic characteristics and resources
- > Enhancement of walkable / bike-able community
- > Creation of high quality employment opportunities

#### TOPICAL ORGANIZATION

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This plan sets forth a vision, goals and strategies based on these themes. Goals and strategies related to these themes are presented in the following chapters:

- > Natural Resources and Cultural Resources (Chapter 2);
- > Agriculture Protection (Chapter 3);
- > Growth Management and Community Character (Chapter 4);
- > Community Development (Chapter 5);
- > Economic Development (Chapter 6);
- > Transportation (Chapter 7); and,
- > Future Land Use (Chapter 8)

In general, each chapter presents related goals, an introduction, a review of existing conditions as well as existing plans and activities, a discussion of key findings and a summary of strategies recommended for implementation.

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## OTHER BACKGROUND

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Multiple studies were completed in an effort to understand the existing conditions prevailing within Victor. These studies are among the resources presented in the appendices:

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|--|--------------|
| > Zoning Audit                           | Appendix I   |
| > Socioeconomic Overview                 | Appendix II  |
| > Land Use Inventory and Analysis        | Appendix III |
| > Cost of Services Study                 | Appendix IV  |
| > Analysis of Victor's Senior Population | Appendix V   |
| > Transportation Existing Conditions     | Appendix VI  |
| > Downtown Victor Parking Study          | Appendix VII |

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## A VISION FOR VICTOR

The following Vision Statement was developed by the Comprehensive Planning Committee as work on this plan commenced.

**TOGETHER, THE TOWN OF VICTOR AND THE VILLAGE OF VICTOR WILL PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY'S HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, ECONOMIC VITALITY, NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES.**

**TOWN POLICIES WILL PROMOTE A SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE. THE WALKABLE VILLAGE CORE WILL SERVE AS A CENTRAL FOCUS SUPPORTING VICTOR'S COHESIVE, AFFORDABLE AND HEALTHY NETWORK OF NEIGHBORHOODS INCLUDING THE HAMLET OF FISHERS.**

**WE WILL PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR EXTENSIVE NATURAL RESOURCES AND THEIR SUPPORTING LANDSCAPES, WHICH WEAVE THROUGHOUT THE TOWN AND VILLAGE. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WILL MAINTAIN OUR ROLE AS A REGIONAL CROSSROADS OF COMMERCE BY EMBRACING MODELS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY THAT ARE SUSTAINABLE OVER THE LONG TERM.**

**WE WILL HONOR OUR AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE AND FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL GROWTH OF TRADITIONAL AND NEW FARMING MODELS. WE WILL CONSERVE PRIME SOILS FOR AGRICULTURAL USE, NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE.**

**ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CONTINUED SUCCESS MUST WALK HAND-IN-HAND WITH RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY. WE PLEDGE TO WORK TO MAXIMIZE BOTH IN ALL ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LIFE.**