

**TOWN OF BINGHAMTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2009**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

*“Among the most important powers and duties granted by the [State] legislature to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning.”
Section 27s-a(1)(b) New York State Town Law*

As state law makes clear, a comprehensive plan is a powerful document. In a court of law, the comprehensive plan gives validity to local land use decisions. In a town with a comprehensive plan, other governmental agencies must consider the impact of capital projects on the adopted plan. By preparing a comprehensive plan, a community lays out its shared vision and builds consensus for projects and policies. A comprehensive plan can be used to protect resources and guide development.

This Comprehensive Plan update was drafted by the Binghamton Planning Board in close cooperation with the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development. In preparation of this plan, historic and current community information was assembled, including population, age, household size and type, income, occupation, industry, housing condition, transportation infrastructure, utilities, public facilities, environmental resources, land use, agriculture and existing ordinances. In addition, the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study was consulted to assess the transportation infrastructure.

To gather public input, the Planning Board conducted a survey of residents and held numerous public meetings. In late 2007, the Town Planning Board prepared a mail survey with 20 questions. Using records from the Broome County Office of Real Property, 2,260 surveys were mailed to property owners.

On March 11, 2008, the Town Planning Board held a public meeting to discuss elements of the Comprehensive Plan. In advance of the meeting, the Town of Binghamton mailed postcards to over 2,000 property owners and the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development distributed a press release to all local print and broadcast media. At the meeting, the staff of the Broome County Planning Department reviewed the results of the survey and conducted a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis of the Town.

All of this extensive work resulted in the recommendations found in the concluding chapter of this plan.

This comprehensive plan will ultimately be judged by how successfully it is implemented. The recommendations in Chapter 15 are the result of a great deal of work, input, and analysis, and now they should be put into action. Implementation will only be successful if the plan is dynamic. The plan should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant to the challenges faced by the Town of Binghamton.

2.0 LOCATION

The Town of Binghamton is located in the southcentral portion of Broome County (see Map 2-1 in Appendix A). It is bordered on the north by the City of Binghamton, on the west by the Town of Vestal, on the south by Pennsylvania state line, and on the east by the Town of Conklin. The Town encompasses approximately 15,756 acres. The Town of Binghamton, along with the rest of Broome County and Tioga County, is located in the Binghamton Metropolitan Statistical Area. It is accessible by automobile primarily via County Routes 117 (Hawleyton Road), 121 (Park Avenue), 141 (Pierce Creek Road), 125 (Saddlemire Road), and 8 (Brady Hill Road). There are no State or Federal roads in the Town of Binghamton.

There are no villages within the Town of Binghamton. The Town has two hamlets: Park Terrace near the border with the City of Binghamton, and Hawleyton, located at the intersection of Saddlemire Road and Hawleyton Road in the southcentral portion of the town.

The Town of Binghamton includes Aqua Terra County Park, Jackson Pond Town Park, the Town of Binghamton Community Center and the Vestal Hills Country Club, a private golf course and country club.

3.0 HISTORY

In 1786, William Bingham and two partners purchased 32,620 acres from New York State, land that would eventually include the City and Town of Binghamton and several other towns. The Town of Binghamton was divided from Bingham's original patent in 1855, and then in 1867 the City of Binghamton was subdivided away. One final division was made, creating the Town of Dickinson. This was the last major change to the Town of Binghamton's borders until the 1990's, when a section of the Town was annexed by the City of Binghamton.

Although there were settlers on the land prior to 1800, and church services as early as 1787, the first recognized land claim was made by Major Martin Hawley in 1829. Major Hawley and his son John cleared the tract and developed a successful farmstead. Originally named 'The Hemlocks', this area came to be called Hawleyton. It was eventually home to blacksmiths, sawmills, and Hawleyton Creamery. James Hawley donated land and money to build the Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church. The church was completed in 1857, at a cost of \$2,000. The Town Hall was located in Hawleyton until 1970, when it was relocated to the Park Terrace area in the former Common School District No. 7.

Telephone service arrived in Binghamton in 1904 with the establishment of the Hawleyton Telephone Company. Electricity came to all town residents shortly before World War II. In 1950, the Town of Binghamton Volunteer Fire Company was organized. The fire company was located in a barn on land donated by Mrs. Veronica Ward in Hawleyton. Later, Mrs. Lottie Whitaker donated land on Pierce Creek Road for station number 2 to be constructed. A third station was built in 1957 in the Park Terrace area.

The population more than doubled from 1950 to 2000, growing from 2,073 (1950 Census) to 4,969 (2000 Census). This population growth came largely at the expense of agriculture. In 2008, agricultural land uses makes up just 1.2% of the town. The Town of Binghamton has become almost entirely a bedroom community for the adjoining urbanized area. Commercial and industrial land uses now account for less than 1.0% of the town.

3.1 Existing Historic Resources

Old Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church

The Old Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church is important as an example of nineteenth-century ecclesiastical architecture and for its important role in the social life of the Town of Binghamton. The church was financed by the Hawleys and was built by local builder Edwin Stearns. The steep gable roof and narrow lancet-arched windows are indicative of the rural Gothic Revival style, which is unusual for a Methodist congregation of the 1850's. A square entrance tower with portico was added in 1877. In 1942 the original windows were replaced with stained glass, new wainscoting were applied over the original, and new pews were purchased and installed. In the 1950's a new church was built next door, and the original church became a repository for the town historical society's collections.

4.0 POPULATION

4.1 Introduction

An analysis of the population of a community is essential to the planning process because future decisions regarding land use, infrastructure, and community services partially depend on the population characteristics of a community, such as the population growth or decline, population age, household characteristics, and income and poverty levels.

The population data presented in this chapter were collected from the 1990 and 2000 United States Census of Population and Housing, the most comprehensive source of population data for the Town of Binghamton. The data are provided for the Town of Binghamton and for the four block groups that comprise the Town. The block groups are shown on Map 4-1 in Appendix A. The Town of Binghamton has only one census tract (127.02), which has the same data as the Town. Comparisons are made between the population figures for the Town of Binghamton, Broome County, and for other towns where applicable to put the data in perspective. The percentages shown in the tables are rounded to the nearest tens, tenths or hundredths.

4.2 Population Trends

Table 4-1 shows the total population for Broome County and the Town of Binghamton over the last six decades. In 2000, the Town of Binghamton had a population of 4,969 persons or about 2.5 percent of the countywide population and the eleventh largest population of the 16 towns.

As shown in the table, the population of the Town of Binghamton increased from 1940 to 1990, and then decreased by less than 1 percent from 1990 to 2000. In comparison, the countywide population declined in each subsequent decade after 1970 and decreased by 5.5 percent from 1990 to 2000.

Table 4-1: Town of Binghamton and Broome County Total Population 1940 – 2000									
Area	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change 1990-2000	
								No.	%
Broome County	165,749	184,698	212,661	221,815	213,648	212,158	200,536	-11,624	-5.5%
Town of Binghamton	1,576	2,073	3,475	4,844	5,007	5,006	4,969	-37	-0.7%
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.									

4.3 Block Group Population

The 2000 population figures for the Town of Binghamton and the four block groups are provided in Table 4-2. As shown in Table 4-2, one-third of the population of the Town resides in Block Group 9. Map 4-2 depicts the population density for the Town of Binghamton.

Table 4-2: Town of Binghamton and Block Group Population 2000		
Area	2000	Percent
Town of Binghamton	4,969	100%
Block Group 1	991	20%
Block Group 2	1,376	28%
Block Group 3	1,087	22%
Block Group 9	1,515	30%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

4.4 Urban and Rural Population

The U. S. Census classifies the population of an area as either urban or rural. As shown in Table 4-3, the Town of Binghamton’s population was 34 percent urban and 66 percent rural in 2000. In contrast, the countywide population was 74 percent urban and 26 percent rural. The population of Block Group 9 is entirely rural.

Table 4-3: Urban and Rural Population in 2000					
Area	Total Population	Urban		Rural	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Broome County	200,536	147,719	74%	52,817	26%
Town of Binghamton	4,969	1,698	34%	3,271	66%
Block Group 1	991	505	51%	486	49%
Block Group 2	1,376	663	48%	713	52%
Block Group 3	1,087	530	49%	557	51%
Block Group 9	1,515	0	0%	1,515	100%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

4.5 Age

Table 4-4 shows the number and percentage of persons in the “under 18” (school age), “18 to 64” (working age), and in the “65 and over” (retired) age categories, as well as the median age, for Broome County and the Town of Binghamton in 2000.

The Town of Binghamton has a higher percentage of the “Under 18” population and a slightly lower percentage of the “18 to 64” and “65 and over” populations compared to the County. The median age of the Town of Binghamton is slightly higher than the countywide median age perhaps due to the higher median age of Block Group 3.

As shown in Table 4-4, the populations of Block Groups 1, 2 and 9 are similar in age. Block Group 3 has the highest percentage of persons age “65 and over”.

Area	Total	Under 18		18 to 64		65 and over		Median Age
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Broome County	200,536	46,095	23%	121,610	61%	32,831	16%	38.2
Town of Binghamton	4,969	1,371	28%	2,927	59%	671	13%	39.7
Block Group 1	991	271	27%	600	61%	120	12%	38.7
Block Group 2	1,376	363	27%	830	60%	183	13%	39.7
Block Group 3	1,087	293	27%	609	56%	185	17%	41.8
Block Group 9	1,515	444	29%	888	59%	183	12%	38.7

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

Table 4-5 shows the change in the age of the population from 1990 to 2000 for Broome County and for the Town of Binghamton.

The Town of Binghamton experienced the biggest percentage decrease in population among persons 25 to 29 years of age at minus 51 percent. The biggest percentage increase in population occurred among those persons age 85 years and over at 116 percent.

In comparison, Broome County experienced the biggest percentage decrease in population among persons 30 to 34 years of age at minus 32 percent. The biggest percentage increase in population also occurred among those persons age 85 years and over at 33 percent.

Among the three age groups, Broome County and the Town of Binghamton experienced losses in the school age (under 18) and working age groups (18 to 64) and a gain in the retired age group (age 65 and over). As shown in Table 4-5, the retired age group increased substantially from 1990 to 2000 in the Town of Binghamton.

Age	Broome County				Town of Binghamton			
	1990	2000	Change		1990	2000	Change	
			No.	%			No.	%
Total	212,160	200,536	-11,624	-5%	5,006	4,969	-37	-1%
Under 5 years	14,516	11,271	-3,245	-22%	367	325	-42	-11%
5 to 9 years	13,947	12,961	-986	-7%	392	407	15	4%
10 to 14 years	12,646	13,996	1,350	11%	370	419	49	13%
15 to 17 years	7,472	7,867	395	5%	209	220	11	5%
18 to 19 years	7,437	7,639	202	3%	130	114	-16	-12%
20 years	4,187	3,881	-306	-7%	78	44	-34	-44%
21 years	4,222	3,506	-716	-17%	61	32	-29	-48%
22 to 24 years	9,400	7,129	-2,271	-24%	136	109	-27	-20%
25 to 29 years	17,584	19,616	2,032	12%	320	156	-164	-51%
30 to 34 years	17,931	12,124	-5,807	-32%	466	273	-193	-41%
35 to 39 years	15,445	15,107	-338	-2%	461	418	-43	-9%
40 to 44 years	14,212	15,942	1,730	12%	396	495	99	25%
45 to 49 years	11,493	14,060	2,567	22%	320	421	101	32%
50 to 54 years	9,973	12,862	2,889	29%	280	354	74	26%
55 to 59 years	9,608	10,033	425	4%	306	286	-20	-7%
60 and 61 years	3,905	3,479	-426	-11%	83	83	0	0%
62 to 64 years	6,357	5,232	-1,125	-18%	128	142	14	11%
65 to 69 years	9,948	8,015	-1,933	-19%	199	233	34	17%
70 to 74 years	8,076	8,058	-18	0%	125	164	39	31%
75 to 79 years	6,230	7,130	900	14%	83	130	47	57%
80 to 84 years	4,126	5,052	926	22%	65	77	12	18%
85 years and over	3,445	4,576	1,131	33%	31	67	36	116%
Under 18	48,581	46,095	-2,486	-5%	1,338	1,371	33	2%
18 to 64	131,754	121,610	-10,144	-8%	3,165	2,927	-238	-8%
65 and over	31,825	32,831	1,006	3%	503	671	168	33%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

4.6 Race and Ethnicity

The race and ethnicity of the County and the Town of Binghamton are presented in Table 4-6. The minority population comprises approximately 4 percent of the Town of Binghamton.

Table 4-6: Race and Ethnicity in 2000				
Race/Ethnicity	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total Race:	200,536	100%	4,969	100%
White alone	183,153	91.33%	4,777	96.14%
Black/African American alone	6,575	3.28%	62	1.25%
Amer. Indian and Alaskan Native alone	384	0.19%	4	0.08%
Asian alone	5,585	2.79%	48	0.96%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	53	0.03%	2	0.04%
Some other race alone	1,593	0.79%	19	0.38%
Two or More Races	3,193	1.59%	57	1.15%
Total Hispanic or Latino	3,986	1.99%	55	1.11%
Notes:				
Hispanic or Latino refers to ethnicity. Race and ethnicity are mutually exclusive and, therefore, the percentages, when added together, total more than 100%. Hispanic or Latino could be of any race.				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

4.7 Household and Family Size

Table 4-7 shows the numbers of households and families, the numbers of persons living in households and families, and the average household and family sizes in 1990 and in 2000 for Broome County and for the Town of Binghamton. Both the County and the Town experienced decreases in the average household and family sizes from 1990 to 2000.

Table 4-7: Household and Family Sizes in 1990 and in 2000				
Categories	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Households	81,843	80,749	1,741	1,813
Persons Living in Households	204,344	191,421	5,006	4,969
Average Household Size	2.50	2.37	2.88	2.74
Families	54,819	50,231	1,427	1,408
Persons Living in Families	167,078	149,282	4,543	4,396
Average Family Size	3.05	2.97	3.18	3.12
Notes:				
Average Family Size: A measure obtained by dividing the number of members of families by the total number of families (or family householders).				
Average Household Size: A measure obtained by dividing the number of people in households by the total number of households (or householders).				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

4.8 Family Type

The Census provides a measure of family type as shown in Table 4-8. In the Town of Binghamton a relatively high 39 percent of the households have one or more people under the age of 18 years. A relatively small percentage of these households are headed by a female.

Table 4-8: Household Type in 2000				
Area	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total:	80,749	100%	1,813	100%
Households with one or more people under 18 years:	24,500	30%	701	39%
Family households	24,109	98%	698	99%
• Female householder, no husband present	5,767	24%	110	16%
Non-family households	391	2%	3	1%
• Female householder	86	22%	0	0%
Households with no people under 18 years:	56,249	70%	1,112	61%
Family households	26,122	46%	710	64%
• Female householder, no husband present	2,957	11%	51	7%
Non-family households	30,127	54%	402	36%
• Female householder	16,858	56%	224	56%
Notes:				
A family householder is a householder living with one or more people related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. The householder and all people in the household related to him are family members. A non-family householder is a householder living alone or with non-relatives only.				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

As shown in Table 4-9, the Town of Binghamton has a slightly lower percentage of households with one or more people age 75 years and over than the countywide population. A high 64 percent of these households have two (2) or more persons.

Table 4-9: Household Type in 2000				
Area	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total:	80,749	100%	1,813	100%
Households with one or more people 75 years and over:	12,092	15%	215	12%
1-person household	6,176	51%	77	36%
2-or-more person household:	5,916	49%	138	64%
▪ Family households	5,717	97%	134	97%
▪ Non-family households	199	3%	4	3%
Notes:				
A family householder is a householder living with one or more people related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. The householder and all people in the household related to him are family members. A non-family householder is a householder living alone or with non-relatives only.				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

4.9 Group Quarters Population

The Town of Binghamton has no group quarters population. According to the Census there are two general categories of people in group quarters: 1) the institutionalized population which includes people under formally authorized supervised care or custody in institutions at the time of enumeration (such as correctional institutions, nursing homes, and juvenile institutions) and 2) the non-institutionalized population which includes all people who live in group quarters other than institutions (such as college dormitories, military quarters, and group homes).

4.10 School Enrollment

The Census provides figures for school enrollment among the population aged 3 years and over as shown in Table 4-10. The percentage of the population of the Town of Binghamton enrolled in school is slightly lower than the percentage countywide. A substantially higher percentage of the students from the Town of Binghamton are enrolled in elementary school than countywide. A substantially lower percentage of students are enrolled in the college undergraduate years.

Population	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total	194,171	100%	4,802	100%
Enrolled in School	56,153	29%	1,319	27%
Enrolled in nursery school, preschool	3,298	6%	103	8%
Enrolled in kindergarten	2,690	5%	53	4%
Elementary School (grades 1-8)	22,164	39%	730	55%
Enrolled in grade 9 to grade 12	10,790	19%	260	20%
Enrolled in college, undergraduate years	14,554	26%	150	11%
Enrolled in graduate or professional school	2,657	5%	23	2%
Not enrolled in school	138,018	71%	3,483	73%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

4.11 Educational Attainment

Table 4-11 shows the educational attainment for persons age 25 and over. The Town of Binghamton has a substantially higher percentage of persons with a higher education than countywide (42 percent compared to 33 percent, respectively).

Population	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	No.	%	No.	%
Population Age 25 and Over	132,541	100%	3,297	100%
No schooling completed	1,166	1%	0	0%
Less than 9 th Grade	5,590	4%	81	3%
9 th to 12 th , no diploma	14,705	11%	216	7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	43,393	33%	1,035	31%
Some college, no degree	24,311	18%	575	17%
Associate degree	13,355	10%	420	13%
Bachelor's degree	16,662	13%	518	16%
Master's degree	9,788	7%	266	8%
Professional school degree	2,489	2%	142	4%
Doctorate degree	1,082	1%	44	1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

4.12 Income

The 2000 Census reports the median household, family, and per capita income for 1999. These figures are provided in Table 4-12 for Broome County, the Town of Binghamton and the block groups. The median household income and median family income figures for the Town of Binghamton are substantially higher than the countywide figures. Also, the per capita income figures are higher. Most significantly, the figures for Block Group 3 are nearly double.

Table 4-12: Income in 1999			
Area	Median Household	Median Family	Per Capita
Broome County	\$35,347	\$45,422	\$19,168
Town of Binghamton	\$50,676	\$55,521	\$23,747
Block Group 1	\$39,491	\$42,125	\$17,501
Block Group 2	\$45,500	\$50,729	\$21,824
Block Group 3	\$70,000	\$77,834	\$36,851
Block Group 9	\$53,281	\$57,333	\$20,028

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing Sample Data

4.13 Poverty

The 2000 Census lists the numbers of individuals and families living below the poverty level based on 1999 income figures. As shown in Table 4-13, overall the percentage of individuals and households below the poverty level is substantially lower in the Town of Binghamton than in Broome County as a whole. However, the reverse is true for the percentages of individuals under five (5) years, family households, and for family households with related children under five (5) years where the percentage of family households with related children under five (5) years is 26 percent in the Town of Binghamton compared to 18 percent countywide.

Table 4-13: Individuals and Households Below Poverty in 1999				
Populations	Broome County		Town of Binghamton	
	No.	%	No.	%
Individuals¹	191,350	100%	4,967	100%
Individuals Below Poverty	24,559	13%	261	5%
• Under 5 Years	2,260	9%	41	16%
• 65 years and over	2,232	9%	24	9%
Households¹	80,917	100%	1,821	100%
Households Below Poverty	10,356	13%	85	5%
• Family Households	4,471	43%	61	72%
Married-couple family with related children under 5 years	234	5%	13	21%
Male householder, no wife present with related children under 5 years	113	3%	3	5%
Female householder, no husband present with related children under 5 years	434	10%	0	0%
• Non-family Households	5,885	57%	24	28%

Notes:

¹Refers to the total population of individuals and households for whom poverty was determined in 1999.

The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is poor. If the total income for a family or unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or unrelated individual is classified as being “below the poverty level.” The poverty thresholds used in the 2000 Census do not vary by geographical location.

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.0 HOUSING

5.1 Introduction

An analysis of a community's housing is important to the planning process because the future land use and development policies of a municipality are partially based on housing conditions and future housing demand. The housing data presented in this chapter were collected from the 1990 and 2000 United States Census of Population and Housing, the most comprehensive source of housing data. In addition, more current data from Broome County records are also provided to supplement the census data. The data are provided for the Town of Binghamton and for the four block groups that comprise the Town. The block groups are shown on Map 4-1 in Appendix A. The Town of Binghamton has only one census tract (127.02), which has the same data as the Town. Comparisons are made between the housing figures for the Town of Binghamton, Broome County, and for other towns where applicable to put the data in perspective.

5.2 Housing Units

As shown in Table 5-1, the Town of Binghamton had 1,911 housing units in 2000 or about 2 percent of the countywide total. The largest number of housing units is located in Block Group 9 which encompasses the rural residential area of the Town of Binghamton. However, Block Groups 1, 2 and 3, which encompass the more urban areas of the Town, have the higher concentration of housing units per square mile.

Area	2000	Percentage of Total
Broome County	88,817	100%
Town of Binghamton	1,911	2%
Block Group 1	388	20%
Block Group 2	543	29%
Block Group 3	425	22%
Block Group 9	555	29%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.3 Urban and Rural Housing Units

The Census classifies the housing of an area as either urban or rural. As shown in Table 5-2, the Town of Binghamton's housing was 35 percent urban and 65 percent rural in 2000. In contrast, countywide the housing stock was 76 percent urban and 24 percent rural. The Town of Binghamton had the eighth largest rural housing stock of the towns in 2000. This rural housing is located primarily in Block Group 9.

Area	Total Units	Urban		Rural	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Broome County	88,817	67,081	76%	21,736	24%
Town of Binghamton	1911	676	35%	1,235	65%
Block Group 1	388	208	54%	180	46%
Block Group 2	543	258	48%	285	52%
Block Group 3	425	210	49%	215	51%
Block Group 9	555	0	0%	555	100%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.4 Housing Type

The predominant housing type in the Town of Binghamton is the single-family house followed by the multiple-family units. As shown in Table 5-3, nearly 93 percent of the dwellings are single-family houses, compared to nearly 59 percent countywide. Also, the Town of Binghamton ranked sixth among the towns in Broome County in terms of the number of single-family housing units. Multi-family units comprised nearly 7 percent of the housing stock in 2000. The largest concentrations of the multi-family housing are located in Block Groups 1 and 2, the more urban areas of the Town of Binghamton. The Town of Binghamton has no mobile home parks and very few mobile homes. In comparison to the other towns in Broome County, the Town of Binghamton has the second lowest number of mobile homes.

Area	Total	Single-Family		Multi-Family		Mobile Home		Other	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Broome County	88,817	52,198	58.8%	31,211	35.1%	5,351	6.0%	57	0.1%
Binghamton Town	1,911	1,772	92.7%	125	6.6%	10	0.5%	4	0.2%
Block Group 1	389	348	89.5%	36	9.2%	5	1.3%	0	0.0%
Block Group 2	536	487	90.9%	40	7.5%	5	0.9%	4	0.7%
Block Group 3	429	409	95.3%	20	4.7%	0	0%	0	0%
Block Group 9	557	528	94.8%	29	5.2%	0	0%	0	0%

Notes:
Other: Boat, RV, van, etc.

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.5 Housing Growth

As shown in Table 5-4, the number of housing units in the Town of Binghamton increased by 6 percent from 1990 to 2000 compared to 1 percent countywide.

Area	1990	2000	Change 1990 to 2000	
			Number	Percent
Broome County	87,969	88,817	848	1%
Binghamton Town	1,809	1,911	102	6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.6 Building Permits

Each year the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development collects building permit figures from the municipalities and presents the data in the annual *Broome County Construction Report*. The building permit figures show trends in housing construction and track the amount and value of residential construction, alterations, additions, and repairs.

Table 5-5 lists the number and value of building permits issued for new residential construction in the Town of Binghamton from 1997 through 2006. The numbers of permits have fluctuated substantially by year with no discernable trend.

Year	Permits	Value
1997	66	\$1,000,000
1998	31	\$1,163,000
1999	25	\$2,187,500
2000	17	\$1,885,900
2001	30	\$3,155,200
2002	66	\$3,657,600
2003	30	\$1,336,500
2004	21	\$2,380,200
2005	17	\$1,905,000
2006	43	\$3,428,972

Notes:

Number of Permits refers to all new residential construction and does not include alterations, additions, and repairs.

The dollar figures are not adjusted for inflation.

Source: *Broome County Construction Report*.

5.7 Age of Housing

The age of the housing stock is often a key indicator of the quality of the housing, trends in housing construction, and housing demand. As shown in Table 5-6, more than one-quarter of the housing in the Town of Binghamton was constructed in the post-war years (1940 to 1959). From 1970 to March 2000 the Town of Binghamton had a relatively high percentage of new housing construction. Block Group 9 has the largest numbers of older and newer housing units.

Table 5-6: Year Structure Built													
Year	Total	1939 or Earlier		1940 to 1959		1960 to 1969		1970 to 1979		1980 to 1989		1990 to 3/2000	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Broome County	88,817	29,350	33%	25,334	28%	11,497	13%	9,376	11%	8,219	9%	5,041	6%
Binghamton	1,911	291	15%	493	26%	356	19%	334	17%	270	14%	167	9%
Block Group 1	389	55	14%	153	39%	43	11%	65	17%	62	16%	11	3%
Block Group 2	536	84	16%	66	12%	150	28%	112	21%	91	17%	33	6%
Block Group 3	429	36	8%	125	29%	81	19%	111	26%	44	10%	32	8%
Block Group 9	557	116	21%	149	27%	82	15%	46	8%	73	13%	91	16%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.8 Housing Tenure

Table 5-7 lists the number of renter-occupied and owner-occupied housing units. The Town of Binghamton has a substantially higher percentage of owner-occupied housing units than the County as a whole. The largest number of owner-occupied housing units is located in Block Group 9.

Table 5-7: Housing Tenure for Occupied Units in 2000					
Area	Occupied-Housing Units	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Broome County	80,749	52,566	65%	28,183	35%
Binghamton Town	1,813	1,614	89%	199	11%
Block Group 1	367	308	84%	59	16%
Block Group 2	518	443	86%	75	14%
Block Group 3	397	368	93%	29	7%
Block Group 9	531	495	93%	36	7%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.9 Occupancy Status

Table 5-8 shows the occupancy status of housing units for the Town of Binghamton. The Town of Binghamton had a higher percentage of occupied housing in 2000 with 95 percent of the units occupied, compared to the 91 percent countywide. Block Group 9 had the largest number of occupied housing units.

Table 5-8: Occupancy Status in 2000					
Area	Total Housing Units	Occupied		Vacant	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Broome County	88,817	80,749	91%	8,068	9%
Binghamton	1,911	1,813	95%	98	5%
Block Group 1	388	367	95%	21	5%
Block Group 2	543	518	95%	25	5%
Block Group 3	425	397	93%	28	7%
Block Group 9	555	531	96%	24	4%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.10 Vacancy Status

Table 5-9 shows the status of the 98 vacant units that were reported in Table 5-8 above for the Town of Binghamton. As shown in Table 5-9, of the vacant units, a relatively high 23 percent were rented or sold, but not occupied. The number of vacant units was fairly evenly distributed throughout the Town of Binghamton, although Block Group 3 had the largest number.

Table 5-9: Vacancy Status in 2000											
Area	Total	For Rent		For Sale Only		Rented or sold, not occupied		For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use		Other Vacant	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Broome County	8,068	3,183	39%	1,183	15%	601	7%	1,272	16%	1,829	23%
Binghamton	98	13	13%	21	21%	23	23%	19	19%	22	22%
Block Group 1	21	4	19%	5	24%	8	38%	2	10%	2	10%
Block Group 2	25	5	20%	4	16%	6	24%	3	12%	7	28%
Block Group 3	28	2	7%	8	29%	6	21%	8	29%	4	14%
Block Group 9	24	2	8%	4	17%	3	13%	6	25%	9	38%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

5.11 Housing Value Range

Table 5-10 shows the numbers and percentages of single-family houses within a range of full-market values. The full-market values were collected from the Broome County Property Assessment Records for 2007 and were determined by multiplying the equalization rate by the assessed value of the properties.

As shown in the table, 40 percent of the single-family houses located in the Town of Binghamton is valued from \$50,000 to \$99,999. The most expensive housing is located in Block Group 3, with 60 percent of the housing valued at \$150,000 or more.

Table 5-10: Full-Market Values for Single-Family Homes in 2007											
Area	Total Units	Less Than \$50,000		\$50,000 to \$99,999		\$100,000 to \$149,000		\$150,000 to \$199,000		\$200,000 and Over	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Town of Binghamton	1,853	102	5%	742	40%	532	29%	232	13%	245	13%
Block Group 1	352	39	11%	235	67%	52	15%	16	4%	10	3%
Block Group 2	497	27	5%	228	46%	184	37%	28	6%	30	6%
Block Group 3	436	18	4%	77	18%	79	18%	118	27%	144	33%
Block Group 9	568	18	3%	202	36%	217	38%	70	12%	61	11%

Notes:
The full-market value is the equalization rate multiplied by the assessed value. Comparison data are not available at the countywide level.
Source: Broome County Property Assessment Records for 2007.

5.12 Median Housing Values

Table 5-11 lists the median full-market value of single-family homes by Town and block group. The most expensive housing is located in Block Group 3 which has a median full-market value of \$167,848 for single-family homes.

Table 5-11: Median Full-Market Value for Single-Family Homes in 2007	
Area	Median Value for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units
Town of Binghamton	\$104,478
Block Group 1	\$80,846
Block Group 2	\$99,503
Block Group 3	\$167,848
Block Group 9	\$108,582

Source: Broome County Property Assessment Records for 2007.

5.13 Housing Turnover

The housing turnover rate is a general indicator of stability of the housing market. The figures for 2000 are provided below in Table 5-12 for owner-occupied units and for renter-occupied units.

As shown in the table, in 2000 the housing market for the Town of Binghamton was relatively stable for owner-occupied units and for renter-occupied units. A high 20 percent of the owner-occupied housing had been occupied since the 1970's. A high 9 percent of the renter-occupied housing had been occupied since 1969 or earlier.

A high 29 percent of the owner-occupied housing located in Block Group 1 had been occupied since the 1970's. A high 30 percent of the renter-occupied housing located in Block Group 9 had been occupied since 1969 or earlier.

Table 5-12: Tenure by Year Householder Moved Into Owner-Occupied Unit in 2000									
Area	Total Units	1969 or earlier		1970 to 1979		1980 to 1989		1990 to 2000	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Owner-Occupied Unit									
Broome County	52,570	13,549	26%	8,016	15%	11,392	22%	19,613	37%
Binghamton	1,618	325	20%	324	20%	375	23%	594	37%
Block Group 1	322	54	17%	93	29%	64	20%	111	34%
Block Group 2	434	97	22%	74	17%	124	29%	139	32%
Block Group 3	366	65	18%	42	11%	88	24%	171	47%
Block Group 9	496	109	22%	115	23%	99	20%	173	35%
Renter-Occupied Unit									
Broome County	28,179	733	2%	788	3%	2,180	8%	24,478	87%
Binghamton	195	18	9%	0	0%	16	8%	161	83%
Block Group 1	47	5	11%	0	0%	0	0%	42	89%
Block Group 2	77	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	77	100%
Block Group 3	34	2	6%	0	0%	1	3%	31	91%
Block Group 9	37	11	30%	0	0%	15	40%	11	30%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

6.0 EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

6.1 Introduction

Economic data for the Town of Binghamton was collected from the United States Census of Population and Housing (Census). Data is provided for 2000 or for the latest year for which reliable figures are available. Telephone interviews were conducted with the major employers.

6.2 Civilian Labor Force, Participation and Unemployment

The civilian labor force consists of non-military residents aged 16 years and older who are available for work and are either employed or unemployed. The unemployment rate measures the percentage of the labor force that is unemployed at the time the Census was conducted. The Census labor figures for 2000 are provided in Table 6-1.

As shown in Table 6-1, the percentage of the population 16 years and over in the civilian labor force is higher in the Town of Binghamton (65 percent) than in the County as a whole (60 percent). In 2000, the unemployment rate in the Town (3 percent) was lower than the countywide unemployment rate (5 percent).

Population	Broome County		Binghamton Town	
	No.	%	No.	%
Population 16 Years and Over	159,704	100%	3,708	100%
In Labor Force	96,563	60%	2,416	65%
In Armed Forces	55	<1%	-	-
In Civilian Labor Force	96,508	60%	2,416	65%
• Employed	91,340	95%	2,338	96%
• Unemployed	5,168	5%	78	3%
Not in Labor Force	63,141	40%	1,292	35%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

From 1990 to 2000, the labor force in the Town of Binghamton declined by approximately 7 percent, resulting in a loss of 173 persons. This is substantially higher than the Town population decline of 0.7 percent for the same period.

6.3 Occupations

The 2000 Census lists the employed civilian population 16 years and over by occupation. These figures are provided in Table 6-2 for the Town of Binghamton and Broome County. As shown in the table, a higher percentage of Town residents (40 percent) are in Management, Professional, and Related occupations than in the County as a whole (35 percent). Conversely fewer Town residents (9 percent) are employed in Production, Transportation, and Material

Moving occupations than countywide (15 percent). Percentages for remaining occupations in Binghamton are nearly identical as the countywide percentages.

Table 6-2: Occupations of the Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over in 2000				
Employed Labor Force	Broome County		Binghamton Town	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total Employed Labor Force	91,340	100%	2,338	100%
Management, Professional, and Related	31,581	35%	940	40%
Service	14,766	16%	387	17%
Sales and Office	24,779	27%	590	25%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	269	<1%	12	<1%
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance	6,369	7%	208	9%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	13,576	15%	201	9%
Notes:				
Occupation describes the kind of work the person does on the job. For those persons who worked two or more jobs, the data refer to the job at which the person worked the greatest number of hours.				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

6.4 Labor Force by Industrial Sector in 2000

The 2000 Census also lists the employed civilian population by industrial sector. These figures are provided below in Table 6-3 for Broome County and the Town of Binghamton.

As shown in the table, just under one-third (31 percent) of the employed civilian population of the Town of Binghamton work in the education, health, and social service sectors. This is substantially higher than the countywide percentage (26 percent) and may be related to the Town’s close proximity to Binghamton University. The second largest category of employment is manufacturing at 12 percent which is substantially lower than the countywide figure (17 percent).

Table 6-3: Industry for the Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over in 2000				
Subject	Broome County		Binghamton Town	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total Employed Labor Force	91,340	100%	2,338	100%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	535	1%	20	1%
Construction	4,666	5%	158	7%
Manufacturing	15,824	17%	273	12%
Wholesale Trade	3,694	4%	115	5%
Retail Trade	10,657	12%	251	11%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4,363	5%	153	7%
Information	2,449	3%	49	2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	4,638	5%	75	3%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative & waste management	6,541	7%	116	5%
Educational, Health, and Social Services	23,535	26%	729	31%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	6,614	7%	143	6%
Other Services	3,929	4%	112	5%
Public Administration	3,895	4%	145	6%
Notes:				
Industry refers to the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization. For those persons who worked two or more jobs, the data refer to the job at which the person worked the greatest number of hours.				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

6.5 Place of Work

Clearly Binghamton is a bedroom community. According to the Census, just 12 percent of workers residing in the Town of Binghamton work in the Town. Countywide three times as many workers live in the same town or city where they work. These figures are shown in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4: Place Of Work For Workers 16 Years and Over in 2000				
Subject	Broome County		Binghamton Town	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total Workers	89,552	100%	2,309	100%
Worked in minor civil division of residence	29,800	33%	283	12%
Worked outside minor civil division of residence	59,752	67%	2,026	88%
Notes:				
A Minor Civil Division (MCD) is the primary governmental and/or administrative subdivision of a county. In New York, towns are (MCD's).				
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing.				

6.6 Travel Time to Work

The average travel time for Binghamton residents (18.3 minutes) is identical to the countywide average (18.9 minutes). Table 6-5 shows the daily travel time to work for workers 16 and over in 2000. The majority of Binghamton residents (65 percent) spent less than 20 minutes traveling to work.

Table 6-5: Travel Time To Work for Workers 16 Years And Over in 2000				
Commute Time	Broome County		Binghamton	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Total Workers	89,552	100%	2,309	100%
Did not work at home	87,315	98%	2,245	96%
Less than 5 minutes	3,580	4%	26	1%
5 to 9 minutes	12,564	14%	230	10%
10 to 19 minutes	38,609	44%	1216	54%
20 to 29 minutes	19,160	22%	528	24%
30 to 39 minutes	7,268	8%	95	4%
40 to 59 minutes	2,919	3%	59	3%
60 to 89 minutes	1,713	2%	66	3%
90 or more minutes	1,502	2%	25	1%
Worked at home	2,237	2%	84	4%
Mean Travel Time (in minutes)	18.9		18.3	
Source: U.S. Census Bureau				

7.0 LAND USE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies and examines land use patterns in the Town of Binghamton. These patterns have been largely determined by topography, waterways, transportation infrastructure, and other environmental constraints. Existing land uses reveal historical development patterns and areas for future growth and open space protection.

The primary source of land use information used in this chapter is the Broome County Real Property Tax Service. The Service maintains all property information for the Town of Binghamton, including land use information that is provided by the Town of Binghamton Assessor. Property information from 2007 is used.

7.2 Current Land Use Patterns

The Town of Binghamton has a total area of 14,827 acres in tax parcels and as of July 2007 contained 2,937 tax parcels. Single, two and three family residences are the largest category of land uses, making up over 64 percent of the tax parcels (1,898) and 55 percent of the land area (8,151 acres). The second largest land use is vacant land. At over 6,000 acres (41.1 percent of the Town) and 942 tax parcels, vacant land in Binghamton is a tremendous resource.

Table 7-1 and Map 7-1 show the amount of land used for different general purposes based on property information from the Broome County Real Property Tax Service.

Table 7-1: General Land Use in 2007				
Land Use	Parcels		Acreage	
	Number	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Total
Agricultural	3	0.1%	173	1.2%
Single, Two and Three Family	1,898	64.6%	8,151	55.0%
Multi-Family	7	0.2%	24	0.2%
Mobile Home	9	0.3%	29	0.2%
Mobile Home Park	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Vacant	942	32.1%	6,093	41.1%
Commercial	11	0.4%	72	0.5%
Community Services	14	0.5%	47	0.3%
Industrial and Mining	1	0.0%	12.5	0.1%
Public Services	10	0.3%	43	0.3%
Parks	1	0.0%	50	0.3%
No Data	41	1.4%	132	0.9%
Total	2,937	100%	14,827	100%

Source: Broome County Real Property Tax Service, rev. 1/2008

Residential

Like most municipalities, residential uses dominate the landscape in the Town of Binghamton. Residential uses encompass 8,194 acres of land, over 55 percent of the total land area of the Town. Not surprisingly, single-family homes are the predominant type of residential dwelling in the Town. There are over 1,700 parcels with single-family homes and an additional 132 single family residences on 10 or more acres compared to just 3 multi-family residences.

Individual mobile homes account for less than 1 percent of the land (29 acres) in the town. According to assessor's records, there are no mobile home parks and no parcels with multiple mobile homes.

Table 7-2 summarizes residential land use in the Town.

Table 7-2: Residential Land Use in 2007				
Land Use	Parcels		Acreage	
	Number	Percent of Total¹	Acres	Percent of Total¹
Single Family Residence	1,718	90%	3,501	43%
Two-Family Residence	46	2%	141	2%
Three-Family Residence	1	0%	0.26	>1%
Residence with 10 or more acres	132	7%	4,497	55%
Seasonal Residence	1	0.1%	2	0.0%
Multiple Residences	3	0.2%	21	0.3%
Apartment	4	0.2%	3	0.0%
Individual Mobile Home	9	0.5%	29	0.4%
Multiple Mobile Homes	0	0%	0	0%
Mobile Home Parks	0	0%	0	0%
Total	1,914	100%	8,194	100%
¹ Percent of Total Residential Land Use Source: Broome County Real Property Tax Service, rev. 1/2008				

Commercial

Commercial land uses occupy just 11 parcels in the Town of Binghamton. These uses account for less than 1 percent of the total land (72 acres) of the Town.

The largest category of commercial land use in the Town is the 64 acres of Gas Station and Motor Vehicle Service. This accounts for nearly 90 percent of the commercial land uses in Binghamton. Table 7-3 summarizes the commercial land uses in the Town.

Table 7-3: Commercial Land Use in 2007				
Land Use	Parcels		Acreage	
	Number	Percent of Total¹	Acres	Percent of Total¹
General Commercial	2	18.2%	0.3	0.4%
Junkyards	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%
Storage, Warehouse, Distribution	2	18.2%	3.7	5.2%
Gas Station and Motor Vehicle Service	4	36.4%	64.0	89.1%
Auto Dealer Sales and Service	1	9.1%	0.2	0.3%
Mini mart	1	9.1%	1.5	2.1%
Retail	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%
Bank or Professional Office Building	1	9.1%	2.1	2.9%
Total	11	100%	71.8	100%
¹ Percent of Total Commercial Land Use				
Source: Broome County Real Property Tax Service, rev. 1/2008				

Industrial

The Town of Binghamton has one parcel that is used for industrial activities. This single parcel classified is located at 2920 Webb Road and it encompasses 12.5 acres. Arco Pet Foods occupies this site. No parcels in the Town of Binghamton are classified as mining.

Table 7-4 shows the number of parcels and acreage dedicated to industrial uses.

Table 7-4: Industrial and Mining Land Use in 2007				
Land Use	Parcels		Acreage	
	Number	Percent of Total¹	Acres	Percent of Total¹
Industrial	1	100%	12.5	100%
Mining	0	0%	0	0%
Total	1	100%	12.5	100%
¹ Percent of Total Industrial and Mining Land Use				
Source: Broome County Real Property Tax Service, rev. 1/2008				

8.0 ENVIRONMENT

8.1 Introduction

The natural environment has always affected settlement patterns and development decisions in the Town of Binghamton. It is critical to take into account the natural environment during the planning process because it influences the location, type, scale, and intensity of development. The natural features of the Town also contribute to the community's character and quality of life and unique natural features of town or countywide importance should be preserved to help maintain the high quality of life of town residents and visitors. This section identifies the important environmental features in the Town of Binghamton.

8.2 Topography

Topography has played a defining role in the physical development patterns of the Town of Binghamton. The Town's topography is dominated by steep hills that are characteristic of the Southern Tier region of New York State.

Elevations in the Town of Binghamton range from 880 feet above mean sea level (MSL) at its northern border with the City of Binghamton to just over 1,850 above MSL in the western edge of the town in the vicinity of Webb Road and Hogan Road. This high point is part of the *Table Rock Ridge* that runs east-west approximately 1 3/4 miles through the center-west section of the Town. Other prominent high points in the Town include Ingraham Hill (1,800 feet above MSL), Lucky Hill (1,801 feet above MSL), Brady Hill (1,790 feet above MSL) and Summit Hill (1,630 feet above MSL). These peaks are shown on Map 8-1 in Appendix A. These are some of the highest points in Broome County, and these high elevations in close proximity to the urban core has lead to the location of a number of broadcasting towers in the Ingraham Hill area.

Slope conditions are one of the most important factors that affect the development potential of land. Slopes of less than 10 percent are most suitable for development while development on land with slopes of 10-15 percent generally requires additional costs. Land with slopes greater than 15 percent is usually unsuitable for development. Slope percentages for land in the Town of Binghamton are shown in Table 8-1 and illustrated on Map 8-1. Approximately 44 percent of the land in the Town has a slope of 10%. One third of the Town (33 percent) has a slope of greater than 15 percent meaning that it may be unsuitable for development.

Percent Slope	Percent of land area
0-5%	9%
5-10%	35%
10-15%	23%
15-20%	13%
>20%	20%

8.3 Surface Water

Surface waters, such as ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, creeks, and wetlands, are important features of the landscape. The significant surface waters located in the Town of Binghamton are described below and are shown on Map 8-2 in Appendix A.

Rivers and Streams

All water bodies in New York State are classified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on a scale from AA to D according to their use and quality. Waters characterized as AA or A are considered safe as a source of drinking water. Class B waters are suitable for fishing, swimming, and other contact recreation, but not as a source of drinking water. Classification C is for waters that support fish, but that are not suitable for swimming or drinking water. The lowest classification standard is D. The Susquehanna River is a Class A water body.

Pierce Creek drains the northeast portion of the Town, and the west fork of the Little Snake Creek drains the southeast portion. Both Pierce Creek and the west fork of the Little Snake Creek are Class C streams. A number of unnamed and unclassified streams drain the remainder of Binghamton. All streams in the Town empty into the Susquehanna River.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are periodically or permanently saturated, flooded, or inundated. Wetlands include swamps, bogs, marshes, ponds, and the floodplains adjacent to rivers and streams. Wetlands provide habitat for wildlife and plants, play a role in stormwater management and flood control, filter pollutants, recharge groundwater, and provide passive recreational and educational opportunities.

There are two legally recognized classifications of wetlands: federally regulated wetlands and state regulated wetlands. The DEC requires a permit for any activity in or within 100 feet of any wetland 12.4 acres or larger. The Army Corps of Engineers regulates activities on wetlands that are greater than one acre in size and that are connected to a navigable waterbody.

State wetlands regulated by DEC are shown on DEC Freshwater Wetland maps. Federal wetlands regulated by the Army Corps are shown on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory. These sources were consulted to determine the location of jurisdictional wetlands in the Town of Binghamton.

There are two NYS regulated wetlands in the Town of Binghamton, one measuring 20.8 acres and the other measuring 14.1 acres. There are 137 wetlands on the National Wetlands Inventory ranging in size from 1,000 square feet up to just over one acre in size. The mapped wetlands are shown on Map 8-2 in Appendix A.

Not all wetlands areas are mapped or protected. These areas are valuable and care should be taken to protect them even if they are too small to fall under state or federal jurisdiction.

8.4 Ground Water

Water that does not evaporate or runoff into surface waters seeps into pore spaces between soil particles. Once pores are filled, subsurface water is then called groundwater. In Broome County, underground water is stored in aquifers, areas of sand, gravel, or fractured rock that hold a large portion of the groundwater. Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water in Broome County.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated Sole Source Aquifers throughout the United States. These are protected aquifers that supply water to areas with few other alternative sources for drinking water. Most of the urbanized area in Broome County is located above an EPA designated aquifer known as the Clinton Street Ballpark Aquifer.

The DEC defines aquifers differently. Aquifers are classified on the basis of their importance as public water supplies, their productivity, and vulnerability to pollution. Primary aquifers are highly productive, vulnerable aquifers that are currently used by a sizeable population via public water supplies. Principal aquifer systems are geologically and hydrologically similar to primary aquifers, but support a smaller population.

DEC designated aquifers cover only two very small areas in the northern portion of the Town of Binghamton. These are shown on Map 8-2 in Appendix A.

Groundwater located below much of the Town of Binghamton provides drinking water to residents outside of the areas covered by public water supply and efforts must be made to prevent its contamination.

8.5 Stormwater

In 2003, the DEC implemented Stormwater Phase II regulations. The goal of the new regulations is to apply appropriate technologies and management practices to prevent pollution from non-point sources from entering the stormwater system and to address stormwater runoff. To accomplish this goal, the regulations consist of two State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permits, both of which went into effect on March 10, 2003.

The first permit applies to all construction projects that disturb one acre or more of land excluding most residential and agricultural projects. If total disturbance is 1 acre or greater, the project is subject to Stormwater Phase II Regulations and the operator must obtain a (SPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity (Permit No. GP-02-01) from the DEC. To receive a Permit, the applicant must complete a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the DEC stating that the SWPPP will be implemented.

The second permit applies to operators of small municipal separate stormwater sewer systems (MS4's). The Town of Binghamton is an MS4 because it operates a stormwater system and because it is located within the Binghamton urbanized area. To receive the (SPDES) *General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer Systems (MS4s)* (Permit No.GP-02-02), the Town filed a NOI with the DEC. The NOI states that the Town will develop and implement a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) that will comply with the Stormwater Phase II Regulations. The Town of Binghamton must report annually to DEC on their progress toward implementation of this program. The Town is a member of the Broome-Tioga Stormwater Coalition, which includes all of the MS4's from Broome and Tioga counties. The goal of Coalition members is to work together on stormwater issues and secure state funding to help member communities implement stormwater management programs.

8.6 Floodplain

A floodplain is the relatively flat area of low land adjoining a body of water (i.e., lake, stream, river, or wetland) that may periodically become inundated during a flood. Flood management experts are most concerned about 100-year floodplains, which are lands that have one-percent chance of occurring during any given year. The 100-year period has special significance for floodplain management because it is the maximum level of flooding that can reasonable be expected during a project's lifetime. Development within the 100-year floodplain is usually regulated so that flood storage capacity of the floodplain is not reduced. Floodplain development in the Town is regulated through the Local Law of the Town of Binghamton for Flood Damage Prevention adopted in 1987.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepares floodplain maps for communities. Flood zones are mapped on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which indicate the areas that require special flood insurance for development. Zone A on the FIRM indicates the Flood Hazard Area boundary which is the area most likely to experience a flood. FIRM maps were last revised for the Town of Binghamton in 1984.

There is a 100-year flood zone along nearly the entire length of Pierce Creek and an unnamed tributary to Pierce Creek in the Town of Binghamton. These 100-year flood zones are shown on Map 8-3.

8.7 Soils

Soils can have a significant impact on land use within a municipality. Some soils are deep and nutrient rich and are ideal for agriculture while other soils are rocky or sandy. Well-drained soils are suitable for traditional septic systems whereas other soils require more innovative waste-management systems.

Soil information for the Town of Binghamton was obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service State Soil Geographic Database (STATSGO). Soil maps for the STATSGO database are produced by generalizing the detailed soil survey data. The mapping scale for STATSGO is 1:250,000. This level of mapping is

designed to be used for broad planning uses. The Town of Binghamton portion of the STATSGO soil map is provided on Map 8-4 in Appendix A.

There are three major soil associations found in the Town of Binghamton: Mardin-Lordstown-Volusia, Volusia-Mardin-Lordstown, and Urban Land-Howard-Niagara.

The overwhelming majority of soil in the Town of Binghamton and Broome County is of the Mardin-Lordstown-Volusia association. These soils occur primarily in upland areas. They have slow infiltration rates and severe limitations that reduce the choice of agricultural plants or require special conservation practices. Development of most kinds is difficult.

The soils in the southernmost portion of the Town of Binghamton are in the Volusia-Mardin-Lordstown association. These soils are predominantly gently sloping to steep, deep and moderately deep, somewhat poorly drained to well drained, medium-textured soils on uplands. This association is predominately forested, while some locations may be used for hay, corn crops, and pasture.

Soils in small portions of the northernmost part of the Town, as well as an area along Ingraham Hill Road are Urban Land-Howard-Niagara association. These are developed areas where the soil is deep, well-drained, medium textured soils that formed in glacial outwash.

8.8 Other Environmental Considerations

There are two sites of potential environmental concern within the Town of Binghamton. The first, the former Ingraham Hill Firing Range, is located at 197 Ingraham Hill Road. The site was used as a firing range since mining operations ceased during the 1970's. Firing ranges have the potential to have an impact on site soils and groundwater due to the presence of lead in spent bullets. There has been no known testing of the site.

The second site is the former Town of Binghamton landfill located at 2945 Hance Rd. The former dump is still owned by the Town, but it has been inactive since the 1970's except for tree waste disposal (1994 tornado debris) and some illegal dumping.

The use of the dump by a rural town without much industry or chemical-using commercial development makes it unlikely that large-scale disposal of hazardous materials took place. Household hazardous wastes can contain a variety of chemicals, however. It is expected that some effort was expended in limiting chemical disposal to Town residents. The off-site migration potential for chemicals in groundwater is probably limited by the presence of underlying glacial till soils, assuming that the soil layer beneath the waste materials is still intact. Private wells at intermediate distances (approximately 1,000 feet) have been clean over two sampling rounds. Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) exposures in future on-site buildings would probably be minimal because of the long amount of time since waste disposal ceased. Excavators could be exposed to residual chemicals in the buried wastes. Future on-site occupants might contact waste materials brought to the surface by digging or erosion.

Map 8-5 in Appendix A shows the two sites of potential environmental concern.

9.0 AGRICULTURE

9.1 Introduction

Agriculture is an important industry in Broome County and in the Town of Binghamton. Planning for its future is essential because farming provides tremendous benefits to the area. Farms help strengthen the local economy by supporting farm-related businesses such as feed supply and equipment stores but they also support a wide variety of non-farm related businesses such as hardware stores and banks. Agricultural lands also contribute to the rural character and open space in the Town. The *Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan* (December 2001) cites the following top ten benefits of farming for Broome County:

1. Farming represents a \$99,158,000 business investment in Broome County.
2. Farming provides year-round business for other Broome County enterprises.
3. Income from agriculture goes further than other sectors in helping the economy.
4. Agricultural opportunities can actually increase with development of an area.
5. Farms lower taxes.
6. Farms create rural character and attract tourism.
7. Successful farming limits suburban sprawl.
8. Farms and forests preserve natural environments.
9. Farms and forests support wildlife and sport hunting.
10. Farmland is an invaluable resource for future generations.

The *Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan* is discussed further in section 9.6 of this chapter.

Although most communities value agriculture, farming continues to decrease and many remaining farmers find it increasingly difficult to remain profitable. In communities where the population is increasing, or where there is commercial development pressure, agricultural land is often the first to be converted to other uses.

Agriculture remains a vital part of the local economy. Between 1992 and 2002 (the most recent figures available) land in farms in Broome County grew from 97,879 acres to 98,276 acres according to the United States Census of Agriculture. This represents a significant rebound from 1997, when land in farms in Broome County stood at 93,922 acres. This likely reflects the local increase in specialty and hobby farms and non-traditional agriculture such as Christmas tree farms.

9.2 New York State Agricultural Districts

The primary land use tool used in Broome County to protect farmland is the New York State Agricultural District. The Agricultural Districts Law (Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law) was created in 1971 to protect New York's farming communities. The purpose of the agricultural districting is to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural use through landowner incentives and protections designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Benefits include tax benefits and protections against overly restrictive

local laws, government funded acquisition or construction projects, and private nuisance suits involving agricultural practices.

There are three agricultural districts in Broome County. Each district can be amended annually and undergoes a full review every eight years. All agricultural district changes must be approved by the Broome County Legislature and certified by the State of New York Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets.

9.3 Agricultural Districts Law and Local Government

The New York State Agricultural Districts Law imposes certain restrictions on local governments as outlined below:

1. Local ordinances cannot restrict structures and activities normal to farming.
2. Public agencies cannot take farmland and public funds cannot be used to fund non-farm development without special justification.
3. Sewer and water taxes cannot be levied on farmland beyond a house and lot once a district has been formed, and
4. Property tax assessments may be based on agricultural use instead of market value

Additionally, Section 305-a (1)(a) of the Agriculture and Markets Law (and Section 283-a of the Town Law) states:

“Local governments, when exercising their powers to enact and administer comprehensive plans and local laws, ordinances, rules or regulations, shall . . .not unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations within agricultural districts . . . unless it can be shown that the public health or safety is threatened.”

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets can review proposed or existing local laws and ordinance to determine compliance with Section 305-a. In reviewing local laws and ordinances, the Department of Agriculture and Markets examines the following factors:

1. Is the affected farm within an agricultural district?
2. Does the regulated activity encompass farm operations?
3. Is the local law or ordinance reasonable?
4. Is the public health and safety threatened by the regulated activity?

If the Department of Agriculture and Markets concludes that the proposed law or ordinance unduly restricts farming, they will contact the municipality and attempt to arrive at a solution. If a solution cannot be found, the Department of Agriculture and Markets may bring an action in State Supreme Court or may issue an order to comply with Section 305-a of the Agriculture and Markets law.

Section 239-m of General Municipal Law (GML) provides another protection for farms. According to §239-m(3)(b)(vi), special use permits, site plans, and use or area variances that are within 500 feet of a farm operation located in a agricultural district must be submitted to Broome

County Department of Planning and Economic Development for review. The County’s review is advisory only. However, according to GML §239-m(5), if the County Planning Department, “recommends modification or disapproval of a proposed action, the referring body (*local planning board or zoning board of appeals*) shall not act contrary to such recommendation except by a vote of a majority plus one of all members thereof.”

9.4 Agricultural District No. 4

Agricultural lands in the Town of Binghamton are located in Agricultural District No. 4, which extends across eleven municipalities in Broome County (See Map 9-1). The eight year review for District No. 4 was completed in 2008. From 2000 to 2008, Agricultural District No. 4 decreased by 4 percent, (68,525 acres in 2000 to 65,975 acres in 2008). However, land in an Agricultural District within the town increased by 36 percent from 955 acres in 2000 to 1,302 acres in 2008. Table 9-1 shows the changes in Agricultural District No. 4 between 2000 and 2008.

Town	Ag. District acreage in 2000	Ag. District acreage in 2008	Percent Increase/Decrease
Barker	132	0	-100%
Binghamton (T)	955	1,302	36%
Chenango	3,106	2,718	-12%
Colesville	30,169	29,409	-3%
Conklin	3,052	2,706	-11%
Fenton	5,271	5,794	10%
Kirkwood	866	1,028	19%
Maine	3,331	2,940	-12%
Sanford	319	321	1%
Union	858	685	-20%
Windsor	20,298	18,933	-7%
Windsor (V)	168	186	11%
Total	68,525	65,975	-4%

Source: Broome County Agricultural District No. 4 Eight-year Review, 2008.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, it appears that agriculture in Broome County is stabilizing, and is growing with the Town of Binghamton.

9.6 Local Planning

The most successful local agricultural plans are those that combine various land use tools. Agricultural districts can discourage urban sprawl, leap-frog development, and the costly expansion of public services. In addition, there are other measures local governments can use to protect and promote agriculture and guide development in desired directions. This section outlines those measures available to agricultural towns in Broome County.

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan

The *Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan* is a county-wide agricultural plan prepared for the Broome County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Service of Broome County, the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development, and the Shepstone Management Company. The *Plan* was adopted by the Broome County Legislature in 2001. The full text of the *Agricultural Economic Development Plan* can be reviewed online at:

www.gobroomecounty.com/planning/PlanningPubs.php.

The *Plan* provides a framework for establishing farm policy in the rural towns and provides Major Agricultural Initiatives for the towns to follow. The initiatives are described below:

1. Added Value Enterprise Initiative establishes measures to promote agricultural enterprises.
2. Direct Marketing Initiative outlines measures to develop markets for farm products. The initiative recommends the establishment of an Agricultural Marketing Specialist.
3. Agricultural Tourism Initiative establishes measures to promote agriculture as a tourist attraction.
4. Forest Management Initiative establishes measures to promote the local forest industry.
5. Agricultural Planning Initiative recommends the following measures to ensure agricultural interests are incorporated into land use planning and zoning.
 - Agricultural zoning districts should generally match the New York State Certified Agricultural Districts;
 - Local zoning laws should provide for small niche type agricultural enterprises outside agricultural districts;
 - Local officials should be provided continuous education on farm issues and agricultural law;
 - Agricultural community should be involved in local government and planning; and
 - Right-to-farm laws should be encouraged in Broome County's major agricultural towns to protect the rights of farmers to grow and expand within the community.
6. Agricultural Awareness Initiative outlines measures to maintain good relationships between farmers and farm neighbors.

Local Zoning

A combination of zoning and agricultural districts can be useful for guiding land use patterns in desired directions. Zoning that directs growth away from farming areas toward places where there is adequate infrastructure to support development and achieves a balance between

agricultural and non-agricultural development benefits the entire community. Examples of zoning that support agriculture are provided below:

- Farm-based businesses, including traditional and accessory farm uses, are clearly provided for in the zoning code.
- Zoning permits on-farm enterprises and agricultural support businesses.
- Farm-based businesses not related to production such as farm stands or u-pick operations, remain an accessory use and do not interfere with adjacent farms or cause nuisances for neighbors.
- Zoning allows farmers to expand their business with non-traditional off-season or complementary seasonal uses.

The Town of Binghamton’s Zoning Ordinance and its relationship to agriculture are discussed in Chapter 13: Ordinance Review.

Communication between Farm and Non-Farm Communities

Farm and non-farm conflicts have the potential to increase as residential growth spreads into farming areas. The relationship between agricultural and residential use is a critical issue in general in Broome County. More communication between farm and non-farm communities and more education to deal the agricultural issues is needed in Broome County.

Some towns have instituted a local agricultural notice program targeted to builders and realtors to avoid potential conflicts between farms and residences.

Workshops and farm tours hosted by the local town, local farmers, and farm agencies are other tools that can be used to help the community understand the value of agriculture to the community.

Representation on Planning Board

Town Boards also have the authority to appoint one or more agricultural members to the Planning Board to involve members of the agricultural community in local government and planning. In towns where an agricultural district exists, Section 271.11 of the New York State Town Law provides that a town board may include on the planning board one or more agricultural members who earn at least \$10,000 per year in gross income from agricultural pursuits in the town. Such members can be in addition to the other members the Town Law specifies each Board must have.

10.0 TRANSPORTATION

10.1 Introduction

It is important that a town comprehensive plan include recognition of the close linkage between transportation and land use. The value of land for development is dependent in part on access. A parcel of land located immediately adjacent to an interchange on an Interstate highway, for example, has much greater value for commercial development than a similar parcel situated on an unimproved Town road. As such, decisions on transportation improvements must be coordinated with the Town's desired land use patterns.

It is also important that all transportation facilities in the Town provide an acceptable level of reliability and safety to Town residents, visitors, and through traffic. This applies to all modes of travel, including automobile and truck travel as well as cycling and walking.

Road networks in New York are multi-jurisdictional in nature. New York State, through its Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), owns and is responsible for the maintenance of Interstate and State highways. Broome County is responsible for County roads through its Department of Public Works. The Town of Binghamton has jurisdiction over the remainder of the public roads in the Town.

10.2 Highways and Roads

There are 72.7 centerline miles of public roads in the Town of Binghamton. Of these, 22.8 miles are owned by Broome County, and 49.9 miles are Town roads. There are no State highways in the Town.

There are a number of Broome County highways in the Town, ranging from suburban arterial streets to rural roads. Suburban roads provide some direct access to individual homes and businesses, but more often there are intersecting residential streets, as in the Park Terrace neighborhood. Rural roads provide direct access to adjacent properties, which are primarily large-lot residential or agricultural, and have few intersections with streets or roads. These roads are all similar in nature. They typically have 11-foot wide lanes, a marked center line, and edge of pavement markings. Paved shoulders are minimal, varying from non-existent to 2 feet. Speed limits vary from 40 mph to 55 mph, with lower limits in more built up areas and, for example, in the vicinity of the Brookfield Elementary School.

- ♦ Pennsylvania Avenue/Hawleyton Road (CR 117) and Park Avenue (CR 121) are the main north-south arterials through the Town, running roughly parallel from the City of Binghamton line and joining immediately north of the hamlet of Hawleyton. Park Avenue is suburban in nature for a short distance south of the city line, with the intersecting streets of Park Terrace. With that exception, both are typical two lane rural roads as described above.
- ♦ Pierce Creek Road (CR 141) and Powers Road (CR 161) diverge very near the City of Binghamton line and provide north-south access from the eastern portion of the Town to the Town of Conklin. Pierce Creek Road has an urban/suburban character for a short distance, but both roads become rural for most of the mileage within the Town.

- ♦ Brady Hill Road (CR 8), Murphy Rd (CR 157), Quaker Lake Road (CR 109), and Saddlemire Road (CR 125) are all entirely rural in character.

The Town of Binghamton has jurisdiction over the remaining roads in the town. These roads also vary from suburban neighborhood street design in the South Mountain and Park Terrace areas to rural low-volume road design throughout the remainder of the Town.

- ♦ The streets in Park Terrace lack the curbs, gutters, and sidewalks that one might expect to find in a residential neighborhood.
- ♦ The streets in South Mountain are a mix, depending on age of development. Many have no curbs or gutters, while newer segments are curbed. There are no sidewalks.
- ♦ The Town's rural roads typically have a 20-foot cross section and no pavement markings, including a center line. Because of the low traffic volume, this does not present a significant hazard to motorists.

There is essentially no traffic congestion on any of the roads in the Town, due to the low-density exurban and rural character of development.

Safety is the other critically important factor in assessing transportation facilities. Based on crash history, there do not appear to be any exceptionally hazardous roadway locations in the Town. It is often the case on low-volume rural roads that while they do not meet textbook design standards, the traffic is nearly all local and familiar with the roadway terrain and geometry.

10.3 Public Transportation

Due to its low population density, the residents of the Town of Binghamton are minimally served by the Broome County Department of Public Transportation, only through the rural dial-a-ride service, BC Country.

Rural residents typically have limited public transportation service. BC Country is a curb-to-curb service with a 24-hour advance reservation requirement. It offers service from rural locations into the urbanized area. Service is available on all weekdays. The service operates from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. There is no weekend service. In general, the isolation of the rural poor and elderly who do not have a car or cannot drive has been identified as a significant social issue to which lack of public transportation contributes. It contributes to lack of access for such basic needs as employment, medical care, and shopping for necessities like food. This service gap is noted in the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study's *Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan* (March 2007).

Since transit is a County service, the Town may choose to advocate on behalf of its transit-dependent residents for improved service with the Broome County Executive and Legislature.

10.4 Non-Motorized Transportation

Pedestrian and bicycle travel has gained greater recognition in comprehensive land use and transportation planning. People want safe places to walk, and want to be able to travel safely by

bicycle as well. That means having sidewalks and crosswalks in appropriate locations. Cyclists can benefit from a variety of on-street treatments, from designated bicycle lanes to wider curb lanes. In addition, the provision of trails can benefit both user groups. Walkers use them mostly for recreation, but cyclists may use them as an off-street part of a longer trip.

Walking along rural roads in the Town of Binghamton is not an attractive option, although residents do so. Roads are narrow, and most have no shoulder. While traffic volume is low, speeds can be high. In the residential neighborhoods in the Town, absence of sidewalks means residents must walk in the street. While speeds are much lower, this is still not an attractive option.

The Town may wish to develop a plan for improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, with the assistance of the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study. Such a plan can identify where the installation of sidewalks or road shoulders is the most critical. There is a clear benefit to the quality of life for Town residents and visitors in developing better bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

10.5 Conclusion

Given the desire of residents to retain the exurban and rural nature of the Town, without new concentrations of residential or commercial development, there is no driving force for roadway improvement. The Town and County should be expected to concentrate their resources on maintaining the roadway infrastructure in a state of good repair. It is appropriate, however, to consider over time the construction of facilities to improve the safety and attractiveness of walking and cycling, and to enhance available public transportation services.

11.0 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

11.1 Introduction

Like most communities, the Town of Binghamton maintains a number of facilities that are used to provide services to Town residents. The major public facilities in the Town of Binghamton are described below and shown on Map 11-1 in Appendix A.

11.2 Federal Facilities

There are no significant Federal facilities in the Town of Binghamton.

11.3 State Facilities

There are no significant State facilities in the Town of Binghamton.

11.4 County Facilities

Aqua-Terra County Park

Broome County owns and operates Aqua-Terra Park on Maxian Road. The park is 466 acres and is the site of the Aqua-Terra Sportsman's Club and Innsbruck USA ski area. Facilities at the park include cross-country skiing, hiking, snowshoeing, guided nature walks, and an approximately 7 acre pond.

11.5 Town Facilities

Town Hall

The Binghamton Town Hall is in a former school building located at 279 Park Avenue. The parcel measures 3.4 acres. The Town Hall currently is in need of renovations, and the Town Board is considering its options.

Town Highway Department Garage and Salt Storage Facility

All Town of Binghamton Highway facilities, garage, cold-storage, and salt storage, are located on 3.5 acres at 865 Hawleyton Road. The garage was sited there in 1958 and has been added to over the decades. The facility has back up power for use in case of a disaster.

Jackson Pond Town Park

The Town of Binghamton owns and operates Jackson Pond Town Park. The 50 acre park is located at 3317 Jackson Road. The park has 4 baseball fields, a pond, a small playground and a picnic pavilion.

Town of Binghamton Community Center

The Town of Binghamton owns and operates a community center located at 1905 Coleman Road. The community center is on a 10.7 acre parcel. The center has meeting and banquet facilities as well as a baseball field. The Town makes the facility available for free to public service groups such as the Boy Scouts, and they rent it out for wedding receptions, retirement and birthday parties, holiday gatherings, and business training seminars.



11.6 Other Local Facilities

Vestal Hills Country Club

The original Vestal Hills Country Club was opened as a 9-hole golf course in 1924 on a site in the neighboring town of Vestal. In 1956, the Club accepted a purchase offer from a developer and found the new site in the Town of Binghamton. The current Vestal Hills Country Club is 214.5 acres, 18-holes, and is located at 3115 Webb Road. The course was designed and constructed under the supervision of Geoffrey Cornish. The country club campus also includes tennis courts, Olympic sized swimming pool, and clubhouse which functions also as a catered dining facility.

11.7 Public Safety

Fire Protection

The entire town is served by the all-volunteer Binghamton Fire Department. The fire company maintains three stations in the Town as described below:

- Town of Binghamton Station 1: 967 Hawleyton Road
- Town of Binghamton Station 2: 2120 Pierce Creek Road
- Town of Binghamton Station 3: 457 Park Avenue

Police Protection

The Town is served by the Broome County Sheriff’s Office, which is located at the Broome County Public Safety Facility off Upper Front Street in the Town of Dickinson, and by the New York State Police.

Emergency Medical Services

In the Town of Binghamton, paramedic and emergency transportation services are provided by the Broome County Volunteer Emergency Squad. It is a part-volunteer, part-paid squad that is

the primary emergency medical service provider to several municipalities in Broome County. The fire department that serves the town also provides basic life support.

12.0 PUBLIC UTILITIES

12.1 Introduction

Public water and sewer are provided in the following areas in the Town of Binghamton: Hawthorne Heights; Ross Park Terrace; Carman Road; Sherwood Heights/Beechnoll Drive; Powers Road/Burr Avenue; and Orchard Park. In addition, there is a public septic system for the Parkwood subdivision. Map 12-1 in Appendix A shows the areas of the Town served by public water and sewer.

12.2 Water Supply

The majority of properties in the Town of Binghamton rely on private wells for water. There are a total of 759 water customers in the Town, out of 1,911 households (*Source: US Census of Population and Housing*). Technically, there are 8 separate water districts, but these have been consolidated into one district. These 8 districts are located adjacent to the City of Binghamton, and the water supply for the public water customers comes from the City's water department. The primary source of this public water is the Susquehanna River, with less than 1/2 of one percent from a public well (the Olmstead Well).

Potential threats to the public water supply for the Town of Binghamton include natural sources of coliform bacteria, industrial discharge, erosion of natural deposits, fertilizer and pesticide runoffs, and releases from gasoline storage tanks. All drinking water, whether from the Susquehanna River or the Olmstead Well, is treated prior to delivery to the customer.

The New York State Department of Health requires providers of public drinking water to sample, analyze, and publish findings for numerous contaminants. These include total coliform bacteria, turbidity, inorganic group compounds, nitrate, nitrite, lead and copper, volatile organic compounds, and miscellaneous chemical compounds. The City of Binghamton's Annual Water Quality Report for 2007 lists no contaminants over the State allowed limit (Maximum Contaminant Level). The full water quality report is available online at the City of Binghamton's website:

www.cityofbinghamton.com

12.3 Sewage Disposal

Most properties in the Town of Binghamton rely on private, on-site systems for sewage disposal. The Town however, does maintain 9 sewer districts. Sewage in districts 1 through 8 is conveyed to the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Plant (BJCJSTP) in Vestal. These districts are conterminous with consolidated water districts 1 through 8.

In addition, there is sewer district 9 which serves the Parkwood subdivision. This district is not connected to the other 8, and sewage is treated on site. Public water is not available for sewer district 9.

13.0 ORDINANCE REVIEW

13.1 Introduction

A comprehensive plan update provides the community an opportunity to review the adequacy of its local laws, ordinances, and resolutions. Court decisions, or changes in state laws, may make certain ordinances or definitions out of date. In other instances, there may be gaps or oversights in the current legal framework for making land use decisions. Finally, some ordinances, although well intentioned, may not be functioning as originally planned.

In accordance with Subdivision 3 of §20 of the Municipal Home Rule Law, the local laws, ordinances, and certain resolutions of the Town of Binghamton are known collectively as the “Code of the Town of Binghamton, New York v1”. The Code was adopted by local law of the Town Board and updated on June 15, 2003.

This chapter discusses the ordinances that affect land use. These ordinances include: Chapter 12, Conservation Commission; Chapter 48, Planning Board; Chapter 119, Environmental Quality Review; Chapter 148, Mobile Homes; Chapter 195, Subdivision of Land; Chapter 224, Vehicles, Junk, and Chapter 240, Zoning. The Town of Binghamton has a Telecommunication Tower Ordinance that will be added to the Town Code.

13.2 Chapter 12, Conservation Commission

Section 239-x of the General Municipal Law provides for the creation of a Conservation Advisory Council. The Town of Binghamton creates an 8-member Conservation Commission in Chapter 12. The intent of the Commission is to foster unified action by Binghamton residents on environmental problems.

The powers and duties of the Commission include advising the Town Board on environmental matters, developing and conducting public information efforts, maintaining an inventory of natural resources in the Town, maintaining an index of open spaces, coordinating and assisting the efforts of private groups, working with the Planning Board on plans related to environmental improvement for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan and accepting gifts, grants, and bequests in the name of the Town of Binghamton to conserve and utilize open spaces.

13.3 Chapter 48, Planning Board

Chapter 48 of the Town of Binghamton code creates the Planning Board and authorizes it to review and approve subdivisions. Section 271 of General Town Law allows for either a 5 or 7 member Planning Board, but Chapter 48 does not specify the number of members on the Binghamton Planning Board. In addition, no training requirements are stipulated for Planning Board members. The Planning Board members, however, have pursued and kept track of their training consistent with State law.

13.4 Chapter 119, Environmental Quality Review

The Planning Board is empowered by Chapter 119 to conduct environmental quality reviews of “actions which may have a significant effect upon the environment.” Adopted in 1977, the purpose of this chapter is to “incorporate the consideration of environmental factors into the planning and decisionmaking processes of the Town.” The Chapter is similar in format to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) but it differs substantially in its definitions and content.

Like SEQR, Chapter 119 defines Exempt Actions, Type II Actions and, the potentially most environmentally significant actions, Type I actions. However, Chapter 119, unlike SEQR, provides an inventory of potential land uses that are considered to be Type I actions. This list includes chemical pulp mills, sulfuric acid plants, petroleum refineries, and fuel conversion plants, etc. Chapter 119 goes on to provide a number of quantifiable measures for determining whether a land use is a Type I action such as, “Any facility, development or project which would generate more than 1,000 vehicle trips per hour or more than 15,000 vehicle trips per any eight-hour period.”

SEQR no longer provides a list of actions which are defined as Type I, but instead has a set of thresholds such as the construction of 50 housing units not connected to public water and sewer. Projects that exceed these thresholds are considered to be Type I actions under state law. SEQR allows agencies to adopt their own, more inclusive lists of Type I actions. However, the threshold approach of SEQR is more flexible than the specific list of actions currently provided in Chapter 119.

The Type II actions of Chapter 119 follow SEQR more closely than do the Type I actions. An action that is Type II under both laws is the granting of individual setback and lot line variances. However, there are substantial differences between SEQR and Chapter 119 Type II actions. A example of these differences is that under Binghamton’s Chapter 119, “all waterway maintenance activities, including but not limited to: 1) repair and replacement of riprap, concrete and bank protection; 2) shoreline maintenance; 3) excavating silt refill to restore channels to design dimensions” are considered Type II actions. There is no corresponding Type II action in SEQR.

13.5 Chapter 132, Flood Damage Prevention

There is a 100-year flood zone along nearly the entire length of Pierce Creek and along an unnamed tributary to Pierce Creek in the Town of Binghamton. The 100-year flood zone in the Town of Binghamton is shown on Map 8-3, and is described in Chapter 8: Environment.

Chapter 132, “Flood Damage Prevention” is intended to: 1) regulate uses that may increase erosion, flood heights, or flood velocities, 2) protect facilities that are vulnerable to floods, 3) control the alteration of natural floodplains, control filling, grading, dredging and other development which may increase erosion or flood damages, 4) regulate the construction of flood

barriers and 5) qualify the Town for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. The chapter was adopted by the Town of Binghamton in 1987 and amended in 1989.

In 2007, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation introduced a substantially revamped model local law for flood damage prevention. There are significant differences between Binghamton's Chapter 132 and the State's current model ordinance.

A number of definitions have changed since Chapter 132 was last amended, and the 2007 model ordinance introduces new definitions. These changes include revised definitions for 'area of special flood hazard', 'elevated building', 'flood or flooding', 'manufactured home', 'new construction', and 'start of construction'. New definitions added to the 2007 model ordinance, that are not included in the Town's Chapter 132, include 'FEMA', 'Flood Elevation Study', 'Floodplain', 'Floodprone area', 'Local Administrator', and 'Substantial Damage'.

In addition to the changed and added definitions, there are numerous other differences between the current model ordinance from the State's and Chapter 132. For example, the floodplain development permit requirements have changed substantially, the information to be retained by the local administrator is new, and a section on manufactured homes and recreational vehicles has been added.

13.6 Chapter 148, Mobile Homes

Chapter 148 is known as the "Mobile Home-Trailer Ordinance of the Town of Binghamton". Chapter 148 consists of a detailed set of regulations contained in six articles which provide the general provisions, including the purpose and definitions; licensing; application procedures and requirements; requirements for mobile home parks; mobile homes located outside mobile home parks; and administration. The requirements for mobile home parks include the requirements for the site, the mobile home lot, mobile home, mobile home stand, accessibility, parking, utilities and service facilities, open space, landscaping, bonuses, registry and compliance.

The definition of "mobile home park" is "any parcel of land which is planned and improved for the placement of two or more mobile homes which are used as dwellings and for occupancy of more than 90 consecutive days." The definition could also include the provisions "any parcel or tract of land of common undivided ownership or a group of individually owned lots that were developed as a single development project."

Chapter 148 has several shortcomings; specifically:

- the definition of "mobile home" is not consistent with the definition that is provided in the Residential Code of New York State.
- Article III, Applications of Chapter 148 states that upon receipt of the application from the Town Clerk, the Planning Board shall review the general arrangement of the mobile home park or trailer camp. The term trailer camp is not defined in Chapter 148.
- The phrase "Erwin Plan specifications" is used in Section 148-14 C; however, this term is not defined in Chapter 148 or in Chapter 240.

- Chapter 148 does not specify that all mobile homes shall be in compliance with standards equal to or more stringent than the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Manufactured Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standards, 24 CFR Part 3280 (1976) and any amendments and revisions thereto. The law does not require that the applicant is responsible for providing adequate evidence that these standards have been complied with. The presence of a permanent certification label affixed to the mobile home by the manufacturer shall be presumptive evidence that the construction of a mobile home is in compliance with such standards.
- Chapter 148 does not require that mobile homes located outside mobile home parks be placed on a permanent foundation extending below the frost line or upon a reinforced concrete slab
- Chapter 148 does not specifically require anchors or tie-downs capable of securing the stability of the mobile home, although Section 148-14 requires “the retention of the home on the lot in a stable condition”
- Chapter 148 does not require skirting to screen the space between the mobile home and the ground
- The term “mobile home stand” which is referenced in Section 148-14 is not defined.

13.7 Chapter 195, Subdivision of Land

Chapter 195, Subdivision of Land of the Code of the Town of Binghamton regulates the subdivision of land. This chapter was adopted by the Town Board on September 7, 1976 by Local Law No. 8-1976 as Chapter 27 of the 1969 Code with subsequent amendments. Chapter 195 follows Article 16 of Town Law of New York State with a few exceptions as outlined below:

The definitions presented in Section 195-22 are not entirely consistent with the definitions provided in Section 276 of Article 16 of the Town Law of New York State as described below:

Section 276 of Article 16 of the Town Law provides definitions for the following terms: *subdivision*, *preliminary plat*, *preliminary plat approval*, *final plat*, *conditional approval of a final plat*, and *final plat approval*.

In comparison, Section 195-22 of the Code of the Town of Binghamton does not mention the terms *preliminary plat approval*, *conditional approval of a final plat* and *final plat approval*. Also, Section 195-22 refers to the *preliminary plat* as the *preliminary layout* and the *final plat* as the *subdivision plat* which could cause confusion.

Chapter 195 does not include reference to General Municipal Law Section 239-nn which became effective on July 1, 2006. General Municipal Law Section 239-nn requires that notice be sent to the clerk of the adjacent municipality prior to holding a hearing on a subdivision plat for property that is located within 500 feet of the municipal line. Notice must be given at least 10 days prior to the hearing.

Section 195-5 states that the preliminary plat application shall comply with the provisions of the Town Law, including Sections 276 and 277. However, Section 195-6 does not state that the subdivision plat application shall comply with the provisions of the Town Law.

Chapter 195 does not make reference to two important procedural requirements of Section 276 of Town Law which if referenced could be beneficial to the applicant and to the Planning Board as described below:

- Chapter 195 does not reference the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act. Although the requirements of SEQRA are described in the Town Law Section 276 to which the applicant and Planning Board must comply, it could be beneficial to the applicant and to the Planning Board to reference SEQRA as a requirement of the subdivision law.
- Chapter 195 does not reference the public hearing requirements of Town Law Section 276-5 (d) for the preliminary plat and Town Law Section 276-6 (d) for the final plat, except in passing in Section 195-6 C.

Chapter 195 does not require the applicant to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Article IV of Chapter 195 describes the specifications of the preliminary layouts and subdivision plats. However, the specifications with regards to the drawing, scale and size of plat and construction detail sheets of the subdivision plat as outlined in Section 195-21 A. of Article IV are outdated. It states that the “subdivision plat and construction detail sheets shall be clearly and legibly drawn on transparent linen tracing cloth with black waterproof ink. The reference to the form of the required drawings is out of date.

13.8 Chapter 224, Vehicles, Junk

Chapter 224, Vehicles, Junk of the Town Code regulates the storage of junk vehicles. It was adopted in 1989.

This chapter provides two slightly different definitions of ‘open storage’. Chapter 224-3 defines open storage as ‘Storage other than in a completely enclosed structure, such as a garage or other structure constructed of wood, brick, metal or similar material.’ Chapter 224-7 (A) defines open storage as meaning ‘storage outside a building.’

Chapter 224-7 goes on to outline the process for applying for a license for open storage. The storage area must be enclosed by a solid fence at least eight feet high, and vehicles in the open storage area must not be visible within 300 yards from the storage area at a height of six feet, or the storage area and vehicles therein shall not be visible from any public road. The maximum size and location of the storage area on the property may be designated by the Town Board. The specific information required by the applicant on a license application is not specified. Typical license provisions for a junk vehicle storage operation are as follows:

- Typical site plan requirements:
 - (1) address and real property tax number of the site;
 - (2) property lines including the names of owners of adjacent property and adjacent land uses;
 - (3) streams, lakes, wetlands, flood plains, and other water bodies, including those available for fire protection purposes;
 - (4) topography of the site and any plans for grading the property to be shown at a contour interval of not more than five feet;
 - (5) the location of all wells and sanitary facilities on the property or within 100 feet of the boundary of the property;
 - (6) depth to the water table;
 - (7) drainage patterns on the site;
 - (8) existing and proposed structures, including fences;
 - (9) existing and proposed open storage areas; and
 - (10) existing aquifers; and
 - (11) soil type.

- Typical license application requirements:
 - (1) name, residence, address and telephone number of each individual owner, partner, or if a corporation or other organization, each officer and director;
 - (2) trade name, address and telephone number of the business;
 - (3) statement as to whether or not the applicant has been convicted of any crime, misdemeanor, or violation of any municipal ordinance, or any violation of Article 6 of the General Business Law;
 - (4) name and address of the owner of the real property and the nature of the right under which the applicant possess the property;
 - (5) description of the storage operation; Specifically, questions such as where will vehicles be flushed or emptied of fluids, how will fluids be handled and disposed of, how will waste tires be disposed, what is the depth to the water table, will the applicant be dismantling vehicles, will the applicant be selling parts, will the applicant be operating a crusher, and will burning occur on site?

Chapter 224 does not give the Town Board any guidance in reviewing a junk vehicle open storage license. The review of licenses of this type generally considers (1) whether or not the proposed location will affect the public health and safety by reason of offensive or unhealthy noise, odors or smoke, or of other causes; (2) the proximity of flood plains, (3) potential impact to groundwater supplies and/or public water supplies; (4) local drainage patterns; (5) the availability of municipal fire protection and the adequacy of the water supply for fire protection purposes, (6) nature and development of surrounding property; and (7) the effect of the proposed storage area on the aesthetics of the environment.

There is an apparent conflict between the definition of a junk vehicle as one that is, “being held or used for the purpose of resale of used parts therefrom or for the purpose of reclaiming for use some or all of the materials therein or for the purpose of disposing of the same” (Chapter. 224-3

A. 3) and Chapter 224-7 (9) which states “There shall be no sale of salvaged vehicle parts from any junk or disabled vehicle located on the premises and no installation on the premises into other vehicles of parts taken from junk or disabled vehicles located on the premises.”

There is no provision in Chapter 224 requiring a fire break and safe access on the site for fire vehicles. An example of this provision is as follows:

Inside, adjacent to and continuous with the fence or enclosure, one strip of land at least ten feet in width which shall be kept free of all dry grass, junk, plant growth, or other combustible material so as to provide a fire lane or break around the entire area where business activity is conducted. (Source: James A. Coon Local Government Technical Series, New York State Department of State, January 2004.)

13.9 Chapter 240, Zoning

The zoning law or ordinance provides the most extensive regulation of land use in most communities. New York’s zoning-enabling statutes (the state statutes which give cities, towns and villages the power to enact local zoning laws) all require that zoning laws be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan should provide the foundation for the local zoning law.¹

Section 13.9 evaluates the format and content of the Town of Binghamton’s zoning law for adequacy based on the standard practices in zoning and on the parameters set in “Questions for the Analysis and Evaluation of Existing Zoning Regulations” of the James A. Coon Local Government Technical Series of the New York State Department of State while keeping in mind the unique characteristics, needs and desires of the Town of Binghamton.

13.9.1 History

Chapter 240, the “Zoning Law of the Town of Binghamton, Broome County, New York,” was originally adopted on December 17, 1974 by Local Law No. 3-1974. Chapter 240 was adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Binghamton on September 7, 1976 by Local Law No. 8-1976 as Chapter 36 of the 1969 Code. Chapter 240 has been subject to ongoing revisions. Updates to Chapter 240 are presented in the endnotes of the “Code of the Town of Binghamton.”

Chapter 240 consists of 11 articles and attachments. The major zoning topics that are covered in Chapter 240 and evaluated in this Chapter 13 are the districts; zoning map; terminology; use regulations; nonconforming uses; schedule of regulations; Planned Development District PDD; Planned Mobile Home District PMHD; supplementary standards; sign standards; special uses; site plan review; and administration.

13.9.2 Zoning Map

¹ Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan, James A. Coon Local Government technical Series, New York State Department of State, December 1999.

The Zoning Map is an official document, mandated by New York State law to be kept on file in the Town Clerk’s office. The Zoning Map is referenced in §240-3 of Article II of the Town Code. A copy of the Zoning Map is provided as Map 13-1 and Map 13-2 in Appendix A. The Table of Zoning Map Amendments is provided near the end of Chapter 240. The latest adoption date listed in the table is September 15, 1987.

Section 240-3 provides that the Town Clerk with the assistance of a civil engineer or other qualified person as may be designated by the Town Board shall make changes on said map as directed by the Town Board. One option available to the Town is for the Zoning Map to be maintained by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development. The Broome County Planning Department maintains the Broome County Geographic Information System (GIS) which is available online to the municipalities and the public. It includes the municipal zoning maps which the Department keeps current for the municipalities at their direction.

Section 240-3 states that said map shall be kept on file in the Town Clerk’s office, where it is available for inspection by the public. It does not state “at any time during regular business hours in the office of the Town Clerk” as mentioned in other zoning ordinances with regards to the official zoning map.

13.9.3 Article IV, Schedule of Regulations

The Town of Binghamton is divided into seven (7) use districts as follows:

- R1 Residential One-Family District
- R2 Residential Multifamily District
- RR Rural Residential District
- C Commercial District
- PDD Planned Development District
- PMHDPlanned Mobile Home District
- I Industrial District

The districts are shown on the official zoning map of the Town of Binghamton which is attached as Map 13-1 and Map 13-2. The residential districts are based on a hierarchy of uses with the R1 District the more restrictive district than the R2 and RR districts.

Each schedule of regulations lists the permitted uses; yard requirements (minimum lot area, minimum lot width, minimum lot frontage, building setbacks); maximum building heights; minimum gross floor area; required off-street parking; required off-street loading; site plan review requirements and sign standards for each district, as applicable. The schedule of regulations lacks a maximum building square footage.

Chapter 240 does not provide a purpose statement for the R1, R2, RR, C and I districts. While many zoning codes put the schedule of regulations in table format rather than text format, this format does not accommodate the purpose statement which provides the framework for the district. The purpose statement typically includes the intent of the district, the type of development allowed, the type of development encouraged and suitable, the intensity of

development intended in the district, the preferred location, and the items, such as the availability of infrastructure and access to an adequate street system, that need to be considered before development can occur in the district. An example of a purpose statement is provided below:

The purpose of the Commercial Neighborhood (C-N) District is to provide a convenient shopping environment of small scale retail sales and commercial services that are compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. The C-N District is suitable for commercial uses of a low intensity and of a neighborhood character which cater directly to residents of the immediate neighborhood only, rather than to the entire Town. One of the intents of this zoning district is to provide goods and services that people frequently use in close proximity to their homes. The C-N District should be located convenient to the neighborhood(s) it serves. The uses in this district are intended to be of low intensity to be compatible with residential living. Ample landscaping and creative design are encouraged in the C-N District. Uses include small groups of retail commercial, professional, office, recreational, and other convenience commercial uses.

The districts are evaluated in more detail below:

R1 Residential One-Family District: The R1 District is the predominant district in the Town of Binghamton. It encompasses much of the Town of Binghamton from Hawleyton Road and Saddlemire Road to the City of Binghamton boundary and covers all size tracts of land, ranging from small lot subdivisions to 100 plus-acre parcels. The R1 District extends along all of the major roads and borders all of the districts in the Town of Binghamton.

The permitted principal uses are the one-family dwelling; place of worship and related buildings; public or private school; health center; nursing home; library; private (noncommercial) park; playground or recreation area; public building and animal harboring. Professional office is allowed with a special permit. A customary home occupation is allowed if it does not occupy more than one-half of the floor area of the principal building.

In areas without public sewer, the minimum lot size is 40,000 square feet, or approximately one acre. In areas with public sewers, the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet. Septic system design must be approved by the Broome County Health Department. The Department recommends a minimum 2-acre (87,120 square feet) lot for new residential construction on lots not served by public sanitary sewer. This recommendation is based on the *Individual Residential Wastewater Treatment Systems Design Handbook* published in 1996 by the New York State Department of Health.

R2 Residential Multifamily District: The R2 District occupies three suburban/urban areas of the Town of Binghamton: (1) the north central portion of the Town extending generally from Hawleyton Road to Mill Road and from Roberts Road to the City of Binghamton border, (2) the northeastern portion extending generally along the City of Binghamton border north to Felters Road and (3) the northeastern portion extending generally along a portion of Powers Road east to the Town of Conklin border. The R2 District covers 50 plus-acre and 100 plus-acre parcels as well as small-lot subdivisions in the more populated areas near the City of Binghamton limits.

The permitted principal uses in the R2 District are all uses specified in the R1 District subject to all regulations delineated therein; the two-family or multi-family dwelling not to exceed four-family dwelling units; and the boarding or rooming house. The permitted accessory uses are all those accessory uses allowed in the R1 District.

As with the R1 district, areas without public sewer have a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. In areas with public sewers, the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet. As stated above, the Broome County Health Department recommends a minimum 2-acre (87,120 square feet) lot for new residential construction on lots not served by public sanitary sewer.

RR Rural Residential District: The RR District encompasses most of the southeastern portion of the Town of Binghamton extending generally from Stevens Road on the north, the Pennsylvania border on the south, Hawleyton Road on the west and the Town of Conklin border on the east. The RR District occupies large tracts of land between Hawleyton Road and Hance Road and between Maxian Road and Powderhouse Road in the western portion of the Town of Binghamton. The RR District encompasses 5 plus-acre lots located along Spaulding Road and Morgan Road.

The permitted principal uses in the RR District are all uses specified in the R1 District, subject to all regulations delineated therein; two-family dwellings and farming. The permitted accessory uses are the same as those accessory uses allowed in the R1 District and roadside stands.

The Schedule of Regulations for the RR Rural Residential District does not differentiate between minimum lot size requirements for properties with public sewer or without public sewer. In this district, the minimum lot size for one-family dwelling of 80,000 square feet, which is close to the minimum recommended 2-acre (87,120 square foot) lot size.

C Commercial District: The Town of Binghamton is a bedroom community with only very few areas of commercial development. The C District occupies three areas along Hawleyton Road, one parcel along Gardner Road and several parcels along Burr Avenue.

The permitted uses in the C District are all multi-family residential uses specified in the R2 District; retail and service store (i.e., food, variety, barber- and beauty shops, dry cleaning, laundry); fabrication related to the principal use, provided that no more than 20 percent of the floor area is used; gasoline service station, by special permit; bank theater, office, restaurant, funeral parlor, boarding- or rooming house, tourist home, public building, fraternal organization and private club; wholesale and warehouse establishment; and parking lot for the temporary storage of cars.

The C District has a mix of commercial uses some of which could be considered neighborhood commercial uses (beauty shops and dry-cleaning) and some of which could be considered general commercial uses (office, public building) or industrial uses (wholesale and warehouse establishment).

Article II does not define: tourist home, public building, fraternal organization and private club; wholesale and warehouse establishment; and parking lot for the temporary storage of cars. The lack of definitions for these terms leaves the door open for undesirable uses in the C District. The phrase “parking lot for the temporary storage of cars” is vague and leaves it open to

interpretation. For example, “parking lot” could mean a commercial establishment parking lot or an apartment building parking lot; “temporary storage of cars” could mean 6 months or 18 months or longer.

“Wholesale and warehouse establishment” could mean a distribution center or a supercenter. In addition, the schedule of regulations for the C District does not provide a maximum building square footage for wholesale and warehouse establishments. “Wholesale and warehouse establishment” could also be more appropriately defined as an industrial use.

I Industrial District: The Town of Binghamton has very few industrially zoned properties. The I District occupies parcels at four locations scattered along Burr Avenue. These parcels range in size from less than 1 acre to more than 24 acres. According to Broome County Real Property records, the uses include auto body sales; trucking terminal; gas station; storage, warehouse or distribution facility; mobile home; and a rural residence.

The permitted uses in the I District are manufacturing industry; machinery and equipment sale; warehouse; wholesale use; public utility; enclosed service and repairs; trucking and freight terminal; enclosed industrial process and service; garage for automotive equipment repair and parking.

PDD Planned Development District: The PDD occupies nine areas in the Town of Binghamton all located adjacent to the R1, R2 and RR districts. Six of these areas of PDD are located west of Hawleyton Road surrounded by the R1 and RR districts. These nine areas of PDD are described below:

- One area of 10 parcels ranging in size from 1 acre to 60 acres located between Mill Road and the City of Binghamton border in the northeastern portion of the Town of Binghamton. The property uses are residential, vacant and recreational.
- One area of three parcels ranging in size from 12 acres to 23 acres located on the east side of Park Avenue north of Carman Road. One parcel is residential, one has a large structure, and one is public service owned by a broadcasting company.
- One area of nine parcels ranging in size from less than 1 acre to more than 90 acres located on the north side of Ingraham Hill Road and one 37-acre parcel located on the south side of Ingraham Hill Road. These parcels are designated vacant or public service and are dedicated to telecommunication uses.
- One 59-acre parcel located on the west side of Park Avenue. This parcel is dedicated to commercial use (auto body) and is located between the residential districts.
- One 215-acre parcel located on the north side of Webb Road and west of Hawleyton Road. This parcel is occupied by the Vestal Hills Country Club.
- One area of seven parcels ranging in size from less than 5 acres to more than 20 acres located along Webb Road and the Town of Vestal border. These parcels are dedicated to various uses including industrial manufacturing and processing, vacant residential, residential mobile home, one- and two-family residences and agricultural dairy products.

- One area of 16 parcels ranging in size from 1 acre to 90 acres located on the north and south sides of Maxian Road, west of Hawleyton Road in a rural setting. These parcels are dedicated vacant land, vacant rural land, vacant residential land, one-family residences, vacant land owned by Broome County, and undeveloped park land owned by Broome County.
- One area of five parcels ranging in size from less than 1 acre to 4 acres located along Hance Road at the Town of Vestal border north of Hawleyton Road. The uses are one-family residential properties, vacant rural land, and commercial auto body repair, tire shop or auto sales.

The Planned Development District offers an alternative means for developing property not available through traditional district zoning by providing unique standards and regulations for site and building design for a particular site or sites. The PDD generally applies to tracts of land similar in location, area and character and promotes the development of these similarly situated tracts on a unified basis. The PDD is intended to promote the more efficient and effective use of land, improved amenities, creative design and a better environment.

The PDD in the Town of Binghamton is established for principal uses in the following categories: Residential, Business and Commercial, Industrial and Recreational.

The list of permitted principal uses in the Residential category includes the professional office; however, the list does not include the home occupation.

The purpose, procedures, development plan requirements, findings required and general standards of the PDD are provided in Article V. The one important finding requires that “The uses proposed will not be detrimental to the natural characteristics of the site or to present and potential surrounding uses, but will have a beneficial effect which could not be achieved under any other district.”

PMHD: Planned Mobile Home District: There are no parcels located in the Town of Binghamton that are designated PMHD; however, as stated above, the district is provided for in Attachment IV Schedule of Regulations, in Article VI of Chapter 240 and in Chapter 148, Mobile Homes of the Code of the Town of Binghamton. The purpose of the PMHD is to provide for areas within the Town of Binghamton where mobile homes or parks and related services may be located in a well organized environment. The uses permitted in the PMHD include the mobile home; park rental office; religious institution; school; community center; membership clubhouse; public outdoor recreation; and parking. The required minimum lot area is 10 acres. Article VI provides the purpose, procedure, development plan requirements, findings required and general regulations of the PMHD.

13.9.4 Article II, Terminology

Definitions are provided in Article II, Terminology of Chapter 240. The ordinance does not include the following terms which are often included in the definition section of a zoning code:

- Building permit
- Convenience store and mini-mart
- Curb
- Curb cut
- Group home
- Motor vehicle repair garage
- Nonconforming lot
- Parking facility
- Parking space
- Planning Board
- Principal use
- Restaurant
- Roadside stand
- SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act)
- Site Plan Review
- Special permit
- Use, change of
- Use Variance and Area Variance
- Zoning Board of Appeals

It is recommended that the Town of Binghamton consider adding the above terms to Article II, as applicable.

Article II does not include terms associated with senior housing and senior care. As the Town seeks ways to address senior living, the Town should consider including terms, such as the following: assisted living facility, congregated care facility, elderly, custodial care facility, and adult day care.

In addition, Article II does not include terms that are associated with recycling and environmental protection. As the Town seeks ways to address these issues, the Town could include terms that pertain to these topics, such as the following: solar access, solar energy equipment, solar energy system, recycling and composting.

Article II defines a home occupation, but does not provide examples of uses permitted as a home occupation. Some communities provide a separate section in the zoning ordinance to handle home occupations. This section could include:

- occupations meeting the standards;
- prohibited occupations;
- persons that would be allowed to conduct the home occupation;
- maximum livable floor area that could be used to conduct the home occupation;
- maximum vehicle traffic that could be generated by the home occupation; and
- maximum number of deliveries that would be allowed on a daily or weekly basis; and parking standards.

The definition of professional office provides a list of professions, that are allowed such as the office of an architect, accountant, or chiropractor; however, the definition does not state whether the list is all inclusive. There are other professions, such as insurance agent/broker, photographer, artist and realtor that could be considered for the professional office.

The definition of farming is not the same as the definition provided by the New State Department of Taxation and Finance, which defines farm production to mean the production of tangible personal property for sale by farming. Farming includes agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, viticulture, aquaculture, silviculture, or floriculture; stock, dairy, poultry, fruit, vegetable, fur-bearing animal, graping, truck and tree farming; ranching, operating nurseries, greenhouses, vineyard trellises, or other similar structures used primarily for the raising of agricultural, horticultural, vinicultural, viticultural, silvicultural, or floricultural commodities; operating orchards; raising, growing, and harvesting crops, livestock, and livestock products; and raising, growing, and harvesting woodland products, including but not limited to timber, logs, lumber, pulpwood, posts, and firewood.²

Agricultural tourism (agri-tourism) is not defined in Article II, yet it is customary in rural areas. Agricultural tourism business is farm based and is accomplished with recreational and retail purposes beyond basic food and fiber production. Examples include farm tours, specialty products, production demonstrations, hayrides, sleigh rides, horseback rides, product tastings, historic buildings and exhibits. Business types include farm stands, Christmas tree farms, u-pick operations, maple products, greenhouses, nurseries, wineries, livestock breeding and sales, farm-based bed & breakfast operations, farmers markets and others.³

The “roadside stand” is a permitted use in the RR District, but it is not defined in Article II.

13.9.5 Supplementary Standards

Article VII of Chapter 240 presents performance standards under which all land uses in all districts shall operate. These performance standards address noise, odor, dust and dirt, off-site parking, noxious gases, radioactive materials, fire and safety hazards, open storage, smoke, pollution of water and waste disposal. Lighting is not addressed in these standards. A sample standard for lighting is as follows:

Any lighting used to illuminate any off-street parking shall be so shielded as to deflect the light away from adjoining premises and public rights-of-ways and avoid light spillage onto adjacent properties. All lighting shall be designed so as to avoid unnecessary or unsafe spillover of light and glare onto operators of motor vehicles, pedestrians and land uses in proximity to the light source. Standards pertaining to (1) the type of light source, (2) the maximum illumination permitted at the property line and (3) the maximum permitted height of the light could be established. (Source: Zoning Law of the Town of Deerpark, New York.)

² ST-125 (2/04) Farmer’s and Commercial Horse Boarding Operator’s Exemption Certificate, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance.

³ Zoning Practice, American Planning Association, Issue Number Four PRACTICE SMART SIGN CODES, April 2008.

13.9.6 Sign Standards

Article VIII of Chapter 240 provides the sign standards for the Town of Binghamton. These sign standards do not address the latest sign technology, such as backlit awnings, electronic message centers and digital video displays.

The regulatory approaches to signs can be grouped into three general categories: ³

- 1) Most sign ordinances are still silent on the issue of digital video displays, but almost all do regulate electronic message centers and also prohibit or restrict signs that move, flash, strobe, blink, or contain animation.
- 2) A smaller but growing number of sign ordinances contain a complete prohibition on digital video display signs while still permitting electronic message centers.
- 3) A relatively small number of sign ordinances have been amended to allow video display signs under narrowly prescribed circumstances and with numerous conditions.

Article VIII contains sign definitions; permitted signs and sign regulations for the residential, commercial and industrial districts; sign standards; sign permit and special permit requirements and provisions for nonconforming signs and political signs.

Section 240-36 Definitions provides definitions for the following types of signs: business sign, advertising sign, double-faced or V-Type sign, ground sign, political sign, projecting sign, roof sign and wall sign. Section 240-36 does not provide definitions for the following terms which could be included in a sign ordinance:

- Directional sign
- Awning or canopy sign
- Commercial directory sign
- Pole sign
- Sign height
- Rotating signs
- Changeable copy sign (changing sign)
- Banner, flag, pennant sign

Section 240-43 Illumination states that illumination of any sign shall be non-flashing, indirect or diffused and shall be arranged so that direct rays of light do not shine or reflect into adjacent residential districts. The phrase “indirect or diffused” illumination is not defined in Section 240-36 or in Section 240-43.

Section 240-49 Sign permit required; contents of application: This section lists the information required in the sign permit application. It does not ask if the sign is to be illuminated and the lumens. The sign standards do not address the brightness of a sign both during the day and after dark.

13.9.7 Special Uses

Article IX of Chapter 240 identifies the uses that are subject to special provisions. These uses are public utility facilities, mobile homes, professional offices and gasoline service stations. These sections should be referenced in the other appropriate sections of Town Code. For example, Section 240-55 which addresses mobile homes should be referenced in Chapter 148, Mobile Homes.

There are several uses which are not included in Article IX but which could be considered special uses. Some examples of such uses are the following: home occupation, animal husbandry, commercial agriculture, animal hospitals and auto repair shops.

Section 240-56 addresses professional offices, which is a home occupation; however, home occupations in general are not addressed in Article IX.

Section 240-57 addresses gasoline service stations and lists the restrictions to which these uses are subject. It states that no gasoline service station shall be located within 250 feet from any lot or parcel occupied by a health center, library, school, church or nursing home, but does not restrict distances from residential properties. Section 240-57 does not require a spill prevention plan to be posted on the premises. Auto repair shops could also be included in Section 240-57.

13.9.8 Site Plan Review

Article X, Site Plan Review establishes the procedures for site plan review, including the submission of the site plan, site plan action, permits and fees.

Section 240-59 Submission of site plan, establishes the information required to be submitted to the Town of Binghamton Planning Board for review. The information required includes the site plan, elevation plans, storm drainage and grading plan and sign plans.

Section 240-60 Site Plan Action, establishes four objectives by which the Town Planning Board is to review the site plan, including harmonious relationship between uses, maximum safety of vehicular access and egress, maximum adequacy of interior circulation and parking facilities and the adequacy of transitional landscaping and setbacks.

Section 240-61 Permits establishes the rules by which the Building Official may issue building permits, permits for occupancy and certificate of nonconforming use.

Article X has several shortcomings which are described below:

- Article X does not present a clear review process, a time frame for review and approval allowing for informal and formal reviews by Town staff and Planning Board members or a description of the different components of the site plan review application.
- Article X, Section 240-59 does not specifically mention the following items as required for site plan review:
 - Completed Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan where appropriate;
 - Completed SEQRA Environmental Assessment where appropriate;

- Location of all existing watercourses, wooded areas and rights-of-way within the project area;
 - Water, Sewer and Septic systems;
 - Lighting plan;
 - Location of all significant landscaping and ground cover features, proposed and existing, including detailed landscaping and planting plans;
 - Adjacent land uses;
 - Variance(s) requested before the Zoning Board of Appeals; and
 - Description of the building design, materials and colors.
-
- Article X does not mention County referral pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 239-1 and -m. This law requires that certain projects subject to site plan review be submitted to the county planning board or agency or regional planning council for review.
 - An objective could be added to Section 240-60 assessing conformance of the proposed development to the requirements of the zoning ordinance and other applicable codes and ordinance. As explained in the bulletin *Zoning Practice: At the heart of every site plan review process should be an assessment of compliance with the zoning ordinance, including setback and bulk requirements, proposed use, and site development requirements, such as parking, landscaping and sign standards.*
 - Access management could be added to the objectives of Section 240-60 with the goal of encouraging shared driveways and access where possible.⁴
 - Article X does not provide landscaping standards or guidelines that are applicable to specific uses such as professional office buildings, shopping plazas, and other commercial uses or require a landscaping plan for specific residential and non-residential uses.
 - Article X does not mention the appeals process for any person aggrieved by any decision of the Planning Board or any officer, department, board or bureau of the Town of Binghamton.
 - Article X does not require a performance bond or performance guarantee or other security to be posted for the project.
 - Article X does not indicate the effect of the site plan approval. It does not state that the site plan as approved by the Town Planning Board shall be binding upon the applicant. It does indicate the re-submittal and re-approval procedures required when changes are made to the approved site plan. It does not provide an effective date for site plan approvals, after which the site plan approval is no longer valid.

13.9.9 Administration

Article XI, Administration provides the procedures for administering the zoning regulations of the Town of Binghamton as presented in Chapter 240. It addresses enforcement, Zoning Board

⁴ Zoning Practice, Issue Number Eleven Practice Site Plan Review, American Planning Association, November 2007.

of Appeals, abatement of violations, penalties for offences, amendments and disclosure of interest of public employees. Article XI has several shortcomings which are discussed below:

- Section 240-63 addresses enforcement of the Zoning Code. It states that the Town Board shall appoint or authorize an official to administer and enforce the provisions of Chapter 240, and it should be the duty of such official to enforce this chapter. Section 240-63 should specify the title of the official. This official should be the same official responsible for enforcing the State Building Code. This section could also mention the duties of the official, such as to examine all applications for permits, issue permits and/or certificates of occupancy, record and file all applications for permits.
- Section 240-64 discusses the duties of the Zoning Board of Appeals, including issuance of special use permits and variances. It does not mention interpretations and appeals, although it does state that the Zoning Board of Appeals shall be vested with full powers and duties conferred by the Town Law. This section could also include the following information:
 - Number of members appointed, whether three or five
 - Term of office
 - Compensation, if any
 - Training requirements
 - Attendance requirements
 - Interpretations
 - Appeals
 - Variances could be revised to address Area Variances and Use Variances

13.9.10 Other Zoning Issues

Zoning Actions

The number and extent of variances granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals is one measure of the effectiveness of a community's zoning ordinance. If use variances are frequently granted, it may indicate that the zoning districts do not reflect current development pressures and trends. If area variances are routinely granted it may demonstrate that the zoning ordinance is not in keeping with current design and construction standards.

According to the Building Inspector, there were six variance requests from 2002 through 2008. Four of these requests were granted and two were denied as follows:

- Area Variance to build a house garage with less than the required setback; Approved 2002;
- Area Variance to build house addition with less than the required setback; Approved 2003;
- Use Variance to expand commercial business in a residential district; Approved 2005;
- Area Variance to build a house garage in front of the principal use; Denied 2008;
- Area Variance to build a house garage in front of the principal use; Denied 2008; and
- Area Variance to build a house garage in front of the principal use; Approved 2008.

Off-Street Parking and Loading

The Schedules of Regulations specify the number of off-street parking and off-street loading spaces required for the various land uses in each district and the lane widths. However, the parking standards do not address the following:

- The standards do not differentiate between the various types of parking configurations (e.g., 90-degree parking configuration with two-way vehicular traffic or angled parking with one-way traffic).
- The standards do not designate an ‘all weather surface’ for parking lots and drives.
- The standards do not stipulate where on the lot the parking is permitted.

Performance Guarantees

Chapter 240 does not mention performance guarantees. One of the primary frustrations that arises in administering any zoning ordinance is ensuring that when projects are built they fully follow the approved site plan. For example, a project may receive approval at the end of a construction season and there is no opportunity to install landscaping until the following year. Zoning administrators need a mechanism to compel developers to implement all elements of a site plan or conditions of approval.

One such mechanism is a provision for performance guarantees that can be placed upon developers seeking approvals. These can include money placed in escrow, letters of credit, or performance bonds. The intent of a performance guarantee is to ensure that all elements of a site plan are built. With proper provisions in the zoning ordinance, the Town can require that funds sufficient to complete the site plan are placed in escrow until such time as all elements of the site plan are finished.

Local Landmarks

The Town of Binghamton has no Local Landmark Code.

13.10 Wireless Telecommunications

One significant change to the Town’s ordinances occurred with the adoption of Local Law Number 3 of 2003: A Local Law Regulating the Siting of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, adopted June 17, 2003. It governs the location, design, and construction of telecommunications facilities such as cellular telephone towers.

The local law was reviewed by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development pursuant to the Section 239 l-and-m of General Municipal Law. The County made a number of recommendations regarding application requirements, set backs, and maintenance requirements, all of which were incorporated into the final law.

The local law, as adopted, promotes the shared use of existing towers and the placement of antennas on existing structures and gives the Town reasonable control, to the extent permitted under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, over height, location, lighting and materials used on towers. The ordinance also provides for the removal of telecommunications facilities at the sole expense of the owner or special use permit holder.

The local law requires the applicant and the owner to execute and file a performance security which shall remain in full force and effect throughout the term of the Special Use Permit and/or until the removal of the wireless telecommunications facilities and any necessary site restoration is completed.

The law states that the Town Board may impose reasonable restrictions and/or conditions on height and specifies height limitations. The law does not specify different height limitations in different zoning districts, or a preferred style of tower.

14.0 INPUT FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

14.1 Introduction

The Town Planning Board sought input from the Town of Binghamton residents through a survey that was mailed to all owners of property in the Town and through a public meeting conducted by the Town Planning Board for the purpose of gathering input during the drafting of the Comprehensive Plan update.

14.2 Survey

In late 2007, the Town Planning Board, in close collaboration with the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development, prepared a mail survey with 20 questions. Using records from the Broome County Office of Real Property, 2,260 surveys were mailed to property owners. A total of 58 were returned undelivered by the Post Office, and 552 surveys were completed. This results in a 25 percent return rate (552 completed of 2,260 delivered). The survey results are provided in Appendix B.

The overall impression in reviewing the survey results is that respondents were pleased with the Town, and did not want to see dramatic growth or development. The first question in the survey asked ‘How would you like to see the Town’s population change over the next 10 years?’ Eighty-one percent of the respondents wanted to see the population grow slightly (48 percent) or stay about the same (33 percent). This compares to 16 percent that wanted to see the population grow significantly. Question 12 asked respondents which of 17 possible action items were ‘Important’ and which ‘Should Not Be Pursued’. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72 percent) thought it was important to ‘Control commercial development’ and two-thirds (66 percent) thought it was important to ‘Control residential development’. Several comments from the survey also support this conservative approach to development. These include:

- ‘The town of Binghamton is Broome County’s best kept secret, let’s keep it that way,’
- ‘We moved here to get out of the city. We understand the need for development but would prefer if it was limited to 5-acre lots’
- ‘Don’t overdevelop this beautiful town’.

Satisfaction with the town extended to town government and town services. Question 11 asked respondents to rate the quality of services in the Town of Binghamton. Town road maintenance was rated good (38 percent) or excellent (44 percent) by 82 percent of respondents, and the Town’s snowplowing scored even higher with 86 percent of respondents considering it good (33 percent) or excellent (53 percent). Question 13 gave residents an opportunity to list the three major assets of the Town, and a set of responses grouped under ‘Town government and services, especially road maintenance and snowplowing’ was considered the number one asset of the Town. The most poorly rated town service was code enforcement with nearly a third of respondents naming it poor (11 percent) or fair (21 percent). Code enforcement and dilapidated buildings was also one of the top shortcomings of the Town as listed by respondents in question 14.

Questions 2 and 3 asked respondents if the Town Board should consider providing public water and public sewer in three areas of the Town: Park Avenue corridor, Pennsylvania Avenue corridor, and the Pierce Creek Road corridor. There was support, but not overwhelming interest, in providing these public utilities in all three areas. Responses range from 66 percent to 72 percent saying ‘yes’ or ‘maybe’ to considering providing public water or public sewer in the selected areas. This interest was roughly 40 percent ‘yes’ and 30 percent ‘maybe’, with a consistent 30 percent saying ‘no’, the Town Board should not consider providing water or sewer. The strongest support was in the Park Avenue corridor (39 percent yes to water and sewer) and Pennsylvania Avenue (37 percent yes to water and 39 percent yes to sewer).

Question 4 through 7 asked which of the following services were missing or inadequate in the town: natural gas, cable service, high-speed internet, and cell phone service. Of these services, cell phone coverage was the most poorly rated. Nearly half of respondents (49 percent) have a cell phone but are not satisfied with service in the Town, and an additional 5 percent would like a cell phone but have concerns about service in the Town. After cell phone service, natural gas was the most highly sought service, with approximately one-quarter (24 percent) of respondents desiring natural gas.

Question 12 gave respondents a chance to identify which action items were most important for the Town of Binghamton should pursue. The two most highly rated items were ‘Protect groundwater’ (93 percent) and ‘Protect air quality’ (90 percent). This is a common finding in surveying residents as part of preparing a comprehensive plan, but a surprisingly high percentage (86 percent) responded that it was important to ‘Manage stormwater runoff’. This finding was backed up by numerous comments received, including the following:

- ‘Many trees have been cut down (near Gillen Drive) and pavement areas (added) leading to flash flooding,’
- ‘We see increasing and accelerated run-off. Granted 9/04, 6/06 and 11/06 (past floods) were extreme events but it is possible these will be the norm,’
- ‘Managing stormwater runoff is a priority.’

14.3 Public Meetings

On March 11, 2008, the Town Planning Board held a public meeting to discuss elements of the Comprehensive Plan. In advance of the meeting, the Town of Binghamton mailed postcards to over 2,000 property owners and the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development distributed a press release to all local print and broadcast media. The meeting was held at the Town of Binghamton Community Center on Coleman Road.

At the meeting, the staff of the Broome County Planning Department reviewed the results of the survey and conducted a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis of the Town. Through the SWOT analysis, residents listed the assets that Binghamton can draw on, the shortcomings or deficits that must be overcome, the opportunities that should be seized upon, and the dangers that face the Town. There can be substantial overlap between these categories. For example, a soft housing market may be considered a weakness for current property owners but an opportunity to attract new residents.

The quality of life, and associated items such as low crime rate, were considered a strengths of the Town. The Town's convenient location to activities was also cited as a strength, and this was one of the top assets listed in the survey. Residents seem to be comfortable with the Town of Binghamton being a bedroom community, and traveling neighboring areas for shopping and employment. Residents at the meeting also reported that they had a 'pleasant working relationship' with Town government officials.

The first weakness cited at the public meeting was cell phone service. Lack of cable and natural gas service were also listed as weaknesses of the Town of Binghamton. Police protection and enforcement was reported as a weakness at the public meeting, and this confirmed one of the findings of the survey. Nearly one third (29 percent) of survey respondents rated Police service as 'fair' (21 percent) or 'poor' (8 percent). There was not a call for a Town police service, but rather more frequent and higher profile patrols by the Broome County Sheriff's Department.

When asked to consider opportunities, residents suggested creating a bike/pedestrian transportation system. This would be a healthier and would be a more environmentally sensitive transportation system. Following the public meeting, one resident wrote to encourage the Town to include strategies for making Binghamton a more walkable and bikeable community.

Residents also requested that the Town adopt 'green' policies and practices to lower environmental impacts and energy conservation. Participants at the meeting also wondered if recycling might be a revenue source. Residential development was recommended as a means of increasing the tax base. Participants suggested that senior development, such as assisted living facilities, should be pursued. Reworking of the tax burden, beyond the Town's property taxes, was considered an important opportunity for the Town to advocate.

Threats occupied the largest part of the public meeting. 'Improper commercial development' was the first threat mentioned. Residential development was also considered a potential threat that had the potential to increase demand for services that outstripped increase in tax revenues, created unwanted uses, and demands for infrastructure such as public sewer and water. Participants expressed a concern that fast paced development was especially threatening. Despite concerns about poor cell phone service, residents were troubled by the installation of cell and broadcast towers.

The potential for natural gas drilling in the Town of Binghamton was the subject of extensive discussion. Participants were very concerned about the potential for adverse environmental impacts related to natural gas exploration and extraction.

The notes of the public meeting SWOT are attached as part of Appendix B.

15.0 GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 Introduction

In preparing this plan update, the Town of Binghamton Planning Board assembled historic and current community information, including population, age, household size and type, income, occupation, industry, housing condition, transportation infrastructure, utilities, public facilities, environmental resources, land use, agriculture and existing ordinances. The Planning Board consulted with various authorities such as the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development and the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study. This work was augmented by a survey of residents and public meetings. Based on this extensive work, the Planning Board has established the following goals and recommendations for action.

15.2 Goals and Recommendations

The identification of the goals for this plan comes from the public meetings, the survey, and the extensive discussion and consideration by the residents of the Town. To achieve these goals, recommendations for specific actions are made. Each of these actions is given a priority: short term (within two years); intermediate term (two to three years); and long term (three to five years). The goals and recommendations for the Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update are as follows:

15.2.1 Maintain the Rural Character of the Town

Residents completing the Comprehensive Plan survey were asked to list the three major assets of the Town. When these open-ended responses were aggregated, it was clear that the various elements of ‘Rural Character’ were one of the primary assets of Binghamton. For Binghamton residents, rural character has many facets, including the open space, beautiful setting, quiet, and ‘controlled growth’. Unchecked suburbanization and commercial development can erode this character. This erosion can occur with the introduction of a major new commercial development or by numerous, smaller-scale changes. Proactive steps should be taken to ensure that as development proceeds Binghamton does not lose the rural character residents value so highly.

The goal to preserve rural character will not be achieved by a stand-alone set of recommendations. Instead, this goal will be achieved by implementing a number of related objectives. These include: Manage Potential Growth at a Measured Rate; Protect and Manage Natural Resources; and Improve Code Enforcement (to preserve the scenic landscape).

15.2.2 Manage Potential Growth at a Measured Rate

Question 12 of the Comprehensive Plan survey asked respondents which of 17 possible action items were ‘Important’ and which ‘Should Not Be Pursued’. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72 percent) thought it was important to ‘Control commercial development’ and two-thirds (66 percent) thought it was important to ‘Control residential development’.

Threats occupied the largest part of the public meeting. ‘Improper commercial development’ was the first threat mentioned. Residential development was also considered a potential threat

that had the potential to increase demand for services that outstripped increase in tax revenues, created unwanted uses, and demands for infrastructure such as public sewer and water. Participants expressed a concern that fast paced development was especially threatening.

Town residents clearly want to see growth take place in a well-managed and thoughtful fashion. The Town Board expressed a desire to incorporate *Smart Growth* principles to any potential development. Under this planning philosophy, development is concentrated in the urban core to avoid sprawl.

To accomplish these goals, the Town should undertake the following:

- Carefully consider any rezoning requests that would expand commercial or industrial districts within the Town. The full impacts of any proposed rezonings should be carefully assessed. (*short term action*)
- Similar scrutiny should be applied to any Planned Development District proposals submitted to the Town. (*short term action*)
- Consider environmental impacts when reviewing development proposals. This review of environmental impacts begins with requiring more in-depth information from applicants for site plan approvals. Section 13 of this Comprehensive Plan details the information that should be required. This information includes the following: Stormwater Protection Plan (SWPP), SEQRA Assessment information, existing watercourses, lighting, landscaping, and a description of building design and materials. The full list of items is found on page 13-7. (*short term action*)
- When reviewing development proposals, the Town should use the Geographic Information System (GIS) tools available to consider environmental impacts. The GIS tools include the ability to show wetlands, slope, and floodplains in relation to each project. (*short term action*)

15.2.3 Adopt Green Policies Where Feasible

Residents also requested that the Town adopt ‘green’ policies and practices to lower environmental impacts and improve energy conservation. These green policies should include:

- The Town should update its environmental regulations. Chapter 119 of the Town Code empowers the Planning Board to conduct environmental quality reviews of “actions which may have a significant effect upon the environment.” This Chapter was modeled upon the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), but it has become outdated and is no longer followed by the Town. Chapter 119 should be replaced with a section that imposes SEQRA on all projects subject to review by the Town. (*short term action*)
- The Town should pursue mechanisms for alternate transportation including public transportation for residents. The rural nature of Binghamton makes public transportation

- difficult, but techniques like ‘park and ride’ where bus riders park in a common lot and use public transportation to complete their trip may work. Preliminary inquiries with Broome Transit regarding a ‘park and ride’ location within the Town indicate it is not feasible, but car pooling and ride sharing could be pursued. The Town can encourage these uses by promoting car pooling through its website and newsletter and providing parking for ride sharing groups. (*long term action*)
- The Town should work to make Binghamton a pedestrian friendly community. This can be done by the following techniques: (*long term actions*)
 - Encouraging the placement of sidewalks or wide shoulders that are striped to delineate walking/biking lanes when approving subdivisions and Planned Development Districts.
 - Identify key walking/biking corridors within the Town and inspect/maintain shoulders, consider widening shoulders where feasible (as appropriate), and use striping to establish walking/biking lanes.
 - Consider grant sources for developing a walking/biking trail plan and to implement the plan.
 - The Town Board could receive requests in the future from local residents and businesses for the installation of alternative energy sources, such as wind turbines, for homes and businesses. The Town Board should consider adopting a local law regulating the development of alternative energy sources to accommodate the necessary infrastructure for residential and commercial alternative energy-generating facilities so that these facilities may be developed in a manner deemed compatible with the general health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Town. Such a local law would regulate and restrict the height, size, location, and other features of alternative energy sources. (*intermediate term action*)

15.2.4 Protect and Manage Natural Resources

On the Comprehensive Plan survey, 99 percent of respondents thought the environmental quality of the Town was ‘Very Important’ (88 percent) or ‘Somewhat Important’ (11 percent). Question 12 gave respondents a chance to identify which action items were most important for the Town of Binghamton to pursue. The two most highly rated items were ‘Protect groundwater’ (93 percent) and ‘Protect air quality’ (90 percent).

Making these goals more specific, 60 percent of the respondents believed that regulating logging operations was ‘Very Important’ and 62 percent thought it ‘Very Important’ to regulate mining in the Town. To address these issues, the Town should implement the following:

- Promote best management practices (BMP) for logging within the Town. Forestry BMP’s include harvesting timber when the ground is dry, frozen, or snow covered; avoiding streams and wetlands, steep slopes, and unstable soils; maintaining equipment to prevent leaks of fuel, lubricants and hydraulic fluids; minimizing the number of stream crossings; and implementing stabilization, drainage and control measures. To foster

BMP's, the Town could host a seminar on these topics for landowners interested in entering into logging agreements with timber companies. (*intermediate term action*)

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulates mining within the State, but local municipalities can impose additional requirements. Through a mining permit ordinance, the Town could require a reclamation bond for any proposed mines as well as establish a method and schedule for reclamation. The Town of Binghamton should consider adoption of a mining permit ordinance. (*long term action*)

The most significant, current threat to the natural resources of the Town is the potential for extensive natural gas drilling, testing, production and transmission. During the drafting of this plan, there has been an overwhelming amount of activity and discussion regarding leasing of property for drilling of natural gas. This potential activity was discussed extensively at the Comprehensive Plan public meeting. Participants at the meeting were very concerned about the potential for adverse environmental impacts related to natural gas exploration and extraction.

New York State pre-empts most natural gas related regulations, and the best resolution to these concerns is still being researched. However, there are some activities that the Town can undertake now. These include:

- Continue to coordinate, host, and publicize seminars for property owners regarding natural gas leasing and potential environmental impacts that should be mitigated in the lease. (*short term action*)
- Participate in education and research on local ordinances that can be adopted to regulate the natural gas drilling, testing, production and transmission process. The most promising subject of research appears to be protection of roads through designating routes for gas drilling rigs and associated traffic, benchmarking the condition of roads, entering into maintenance agreements with the drilling companies;. (*short term action*)
- If local regulations are proposed, consider adopting uniform ordinances in close coordination with other Broome County municipalities. (*short term action*)

15.2.5 Manage Storm Water Runoff

Storm water management is increasingly recognized as important to protect the environment and to avoid property damage offsite. This issue was highlighted during the extreme flooding events of 2006 which included historic riverine flooding in June, and extensive flash flooding in November. As a result of these events, a surprisingly high percentage of survey respondents (86 percent) responded that it was important to 'Manage stormwater runoff'. This finding was backed up by numerous comments received in the survey. To address these concerns, there are two sets of recommendations:

The Town of Binghamton, along with all municipalities in Broome County, participated in the development of a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan, required by the Federal Emergency

Management Agency for communities seeking hazard mitigation funding, is now complete pending adoption. In regards to the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Town of Binghamton should:

- Adopt and keep current the Hazard Mitigation Plan that the Town worked with the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development to develop. (*short term action*)
- Continue/expand programs to restore/upgrade stormwater drainage infrastructure (i.e. cobbles and riprap in roadside ditches). (*short term action*)
- Maintain/enhance comprehensive stormwater drain, catch-basin and culvert clearing programs. (*short term action*)
- Develop options for repair/replacement of the timber bridge at Maxian Road to prevent loss of service. (*intermediate term action*)
- Assess Roberts Road near Morgan Road for re-grading or other options to address seasonal flooding. (*long term action*)

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) requires that Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPs) be developed and approved for construction projects that meet certain thresholds. Inspection for compliance with these plans falls to local municipalities. To better manage storm water runoff, three recommendations are made in relation to SWPP's:

- The Town should pursue training opportunities as offered by New York State for the enforcement of stormwater regulations. (*intermediate term action*)
- The Town should vigorously enforce the conditions imposed by DEC-mandated SWPP's. (*intermediate term action*)
- Under Section 239 of Town Law, Broome County Planning forwards for review site plans for projects in neighboring municipalities that are proposed to be built within 500 feet of the municipal border. The Town has the authority to officially comment on these projects to help ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the community. The Town should use its authority to comment on projects, so that they are built in a responsible fashion. In addition, should projects commence in neighboring municipalities without following the 239 process, the Town should pursue its legal options as warranted. (*short term action*)

15.2.6 Consider Expanding Utilities and Services

Questions 2 and 3 of the survey asked respondents if the Town Board should consider providing public water and public sewer in three areas of the Town: Park Avenue corridor, Pennsylvania Avenue corridor, and the Pierce Creek Road corridor. The interest was strongest in Park Avenue

corridor and Pennsylvania Avenue corridor. However, while there was interest, there was not overwhelming support, in providing public utilities in these areas.

Question 4 through 7 asked which of the following services were missing or inadequate in the town: natural gas, cable service, high-speed internet, and cell phone service. Of these services, cell phone coverage was the most poorly rated. Nearly half of respondents (49 percent) have a cell phone but are not satisfied with service in the Town, and an additional 5 percent would like a cell phone but have concerns about service in the Town. After cell phone service, natural gas was the most highly sought service, with approximately one-quarter (24 percent) of respondents desiring natural gas. To address utilities and services, the Town should undertake the following:

- Any future discussion of public water and sewer in the Town of Binghamton should focus on the Park Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue corridors. (*short term action*)
- The Town of Binghamton should investigate, in a preliminary fashion, the process and costs associated with providing water and sewer in these areas. (*long term action*)
- With these preliminary findings, the Town should solicit more in depth input from the residents in these areas regarding their interest in public water and sewer. (*long term action*)
- The Town Board should approach the cell phone providers to explore ways that cell phone service could be improved. (*short term action*)
- The Town Board should meet with representatives from New York State Electric and Gas to determine the feasibility of expanding natural gas service in Binghamton. (*long term action*)

15.2.7 Encourage Senior Housing

Senior housing is underrepresented in the Town of Binghamton. Between 1990 and 2000, the population aged 65 and older increased 33 percent, and the population over 85 increased 116 percent. Despite the growing elderly segment of the population, there are no senior housing facilities located in the Town.

Housing options for the elderly begin with helping seniors maintain their current home in safe condition. Repair and weatherization programs are in place for seniors throughout the County. When living alone is no longer an option, then planned senior housing is appropriate. Senior housing includes a wide spectrum of housing choices from retirement communities for active seniors to congregate care and skilled nursing facilities for the frail elderly. Senior housing is typically provided by a non-profit or private developer and not by the local municipality.

To address the senior housing issues in the Town, the following actions should be taken:

- The first step to securing decent, safe, and affordable housing for the elderly is to promote the current repair and weatherization programs to the Town's seniors. The

Town could promote these programs through their newsletter and website. As a follow up, the providers of these programs could be invited to host an open house at the Binghamton Community Center. (*short term action*)

- The Town should work with the providers of assisted senior housing to determine if there is sufficient market demand to support senior housing development. (*intermediate term action*)
- If the local market is strong enough to warrant new senior housing, the Town should encourage its development by working with the appropriate agencies. This can include assisting with site selection, providing letters of support for grants, and making zoning changes when necessary. (*long term action*)

15.2.8 Minimize Total Tax Burden

Despite overwhelming satisfaction with Town services, over three-quarters of the respondents to the survey thought it ‘Important’ to ‘Lower the Town property tax rate’. At the public meeting, the issue of property taxes arose, and residents expressed a desire to lower the total property tax burden (town, county, school).

Respondents to the survey, and participants at the public meeting, both expressed doubt that the overall tax burden could be reduced through increased development. Nearly a one-third of survey respondents (29 percent) thought that increasing the tax base by encouraging development should not be pursued. At the public meeting, residential development was considered an opportunity as well as a threat because the increasing demand for services could outstrip the increases in tax revenues.

To minimize the total tax burden, the Town of Binghamton should undertake the following:

- Continue to work closely with Broome County and neighboring municipalities to share services where appropriate. (*short term action*)
- Pursue funding under the New York State Department of State Shared Municipal Services Incentive (SMSI) program as appropriate (*intermediate term action*)
- Investigate other grant writing opportunities to reduce the cost of government services. (*intermediate term action*)

15.2.9 Improve Code Enforcement

Although residents are very happy with Binghamton’s services, one area needs improvement: Code Enforcement. Nearly one-third of respondents named code enforcement poor (11 percent) or fair (21 percent). Code enforcement and dilapidated buildings was also one of the top shortcomings of the Town as listed in question 14. Question 12 asked ‘How important is it for the Town of Binghamton to do the following?’ and nearly one-half of the respondents (49

percent) thought providing stricter code enforcement was important. To improve code enforcement, the Town should undertake the following actions:

- Consider allowing online submission of code complaints. The Town of Binghamton has an excellent website, and allowing for online submission of code complaints would let residents contact Town officials at their convenience. In addition, it would create an instant record of the complaint, and could be set up to facilitate tracking of the case, follow up with complainant, and reporting to the Town Board. (*intermediate term action*)
- The property maintenance code (Chapter 165 of the Town Code) provides for a fine of up to \$1,000 for violations. This is in addition to the lien that can be placed on the property to cover expenses incurred by the Town to address weeds and tall grass, or to remove garbage, rubbish or other materials. The Town should consider amending its property maintenance code to state that each week a violation continues constitutes a new and separate offense, allowing fines to accumulate. According to the New York State Department of State, “The ability to get successive fines is often a valuable deterrent in obtaining voluntary compliance after the start of a court action.” (*intermediate term action*)

15.2.10 Update Codes

Through the process of preparing a Comprehensive Plan, a community has an excellent opportunity to assess the adequacy and consistency of its local laws, ordinances, and resolutions. Court decisions, changes in State laws or the development of new land uses make certain ordinances or definitions out of date. In other instances, there may be gaps or oversights in the current legal framework for making land use decisions. Finally, some ordinances, although well intentioned, may not be functioning as originally planned. The ordinances of the Town of Binghamton should be amended as follows.

- The Conservation Commission as established by Chapter 12 of the Town Code should be abolished. The Commission has not been active, and it is not fulfilling its function to advise the Town Board on environmental matters. (*intermediate term action*)
- Chapter 132 of the Town Code covers “Flood Damage Prevention”. This section follows an outdated model ordinance. The Town should adopt a new floodplain ordinance based on the updated model ordinance published by New York State in 2007. (*intermediate term action*)
- Chapter 148 of the Town Code governs mobile homes and mobile home parks. The section of Town Code has several deficiencies that are discussed in detail in Chapter 13: *Ordinance Review* of the Comprehensive Plan. These shortcomings should be addressed by amending Chapter 148 of the Town Code to accomplish the following: (*intermediate term actions*)

- Provide definitions that are consistent with the Residential Code of New York State;
 - Require that all mobile homes in the Town be in compliance with current standards;
 - Require a permanent foundations, anchors or tie-downs, and skirting for mobile homes in parks or on individual lots.
- Chapter 195, Subdivision of Land, regulates the division of parcels within the Town for development. In Chapter 13: *Ordinance Review*, the Comprehensive Plan outlines several minor inconsistencies within Chapter 195 that should be addressed by the Town Board. These should be corrected as follows: (*intermediate term actions*)
 - Provide definitions that are consistent with Article 16 of the Town Law of New York State;
 - Incorporate a reference to SEQRA within the subdivision regulations;
 - Require that subdivision applicants prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP).
 - Adopt updated standards for the form of required subdivision drawings.
 - The Town of Binghamton regulates the storage of junk vehicles in Chapter 224 of its code. This section of the Code should be amended as follows: (*intermediate term actions*)
 - Definitions for ‘open storage’ and ‘junk vehicles’ should be made consistent throughout Chapter 224;
 - Applicants for junk vehicle storage operations should be required to provide substantially more detail on site plans and license applications (see Chapter 13: *Ordinance Review*);
 - Chapter 224 should provide the Town Board with guidance in reviewing junk vehicle open storage license applications;
 - Chapter 224 should require that junk vehicle storage operations provide a fire break and safe access onto the site for emergency vehicles.

The heart of the land use laws for the Town of Binghamton is Chapter 240, “Zoning Law of the Town of Binghamton”. Chapter 13 of this plan discusses the zoning law in great detail. The most significant zoning recommendations are as follows:

- The Town Board, with the assistance of other qualified persons, should review and adopt the digital version of the zoning map as prepared by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development. (*short term action*)
- The Town Board should consider preparing and adopting a purpose statement for each zoning district to better define the intent of each district. (*intermediate term action*)
- The minimum lot size for a single-family home in all districts without public sewer should be two acres. (*short term action*)

- Missing and vague definitions should be revised as outlined in Chapter 13 of this plan. (*intermediate term action*)
- The sign standards should be updated to address the latest sign technology, such as backlit awnings, electronic message centers and digital video displays. (*long term action*)
- Article X, Site Plan Review, should be amended to provide a clear application process including a time frame for review and approval. (*intermediate term action*)
- The authority to require a performance bond, guarantee, or other security mechanism should be included in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that projects are completed in accordance with their approved site plans. (*intermediate term action*)
- The Off-Street Parking and Loading should be expanded to include standards for various parking configurations. (*intermediate term action*)

15.2.11 Track Progress

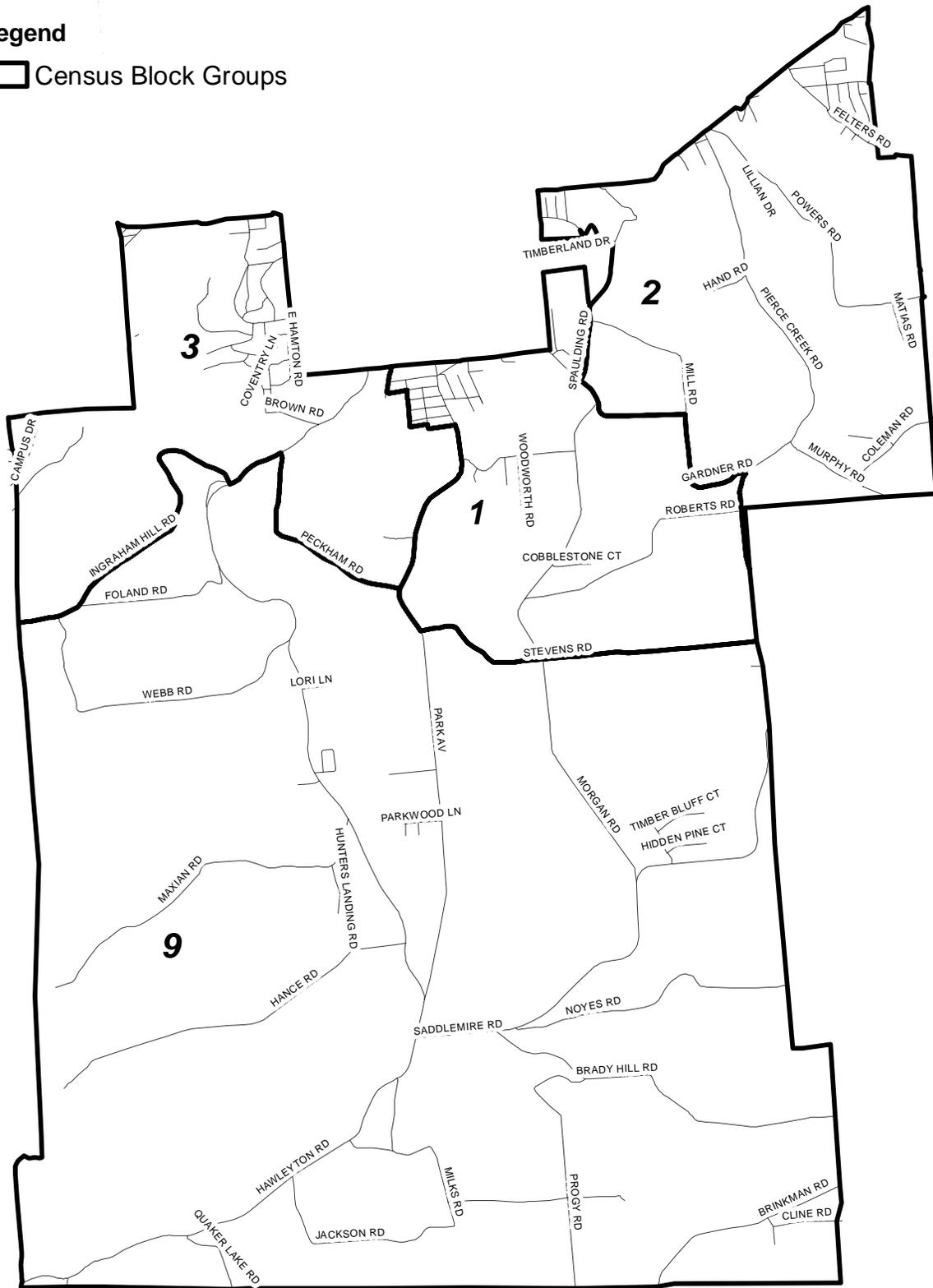
To implement the Comprehensive Plan, progress towards carrying out these action items needs to be assessed on an on-going basis. The Planning Board should, on an annual basis, review the above listed action items to assess progress, and to reprioritize them, if necessary.

15.2.12 Maintain the Plan

To be effective, a Comprehensive Plan must remain current. As conditions change and new information becomes available, the plan should be reviewed to ensure that it remains accurate and relevant to the needs of Town of Binghamton residents. To keep the plan current, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed, and amended as necessary, no later than five years after its adoption and every five years thereafter. This should include updated demographic information as it becomes available from the 2010 Census.

Legend

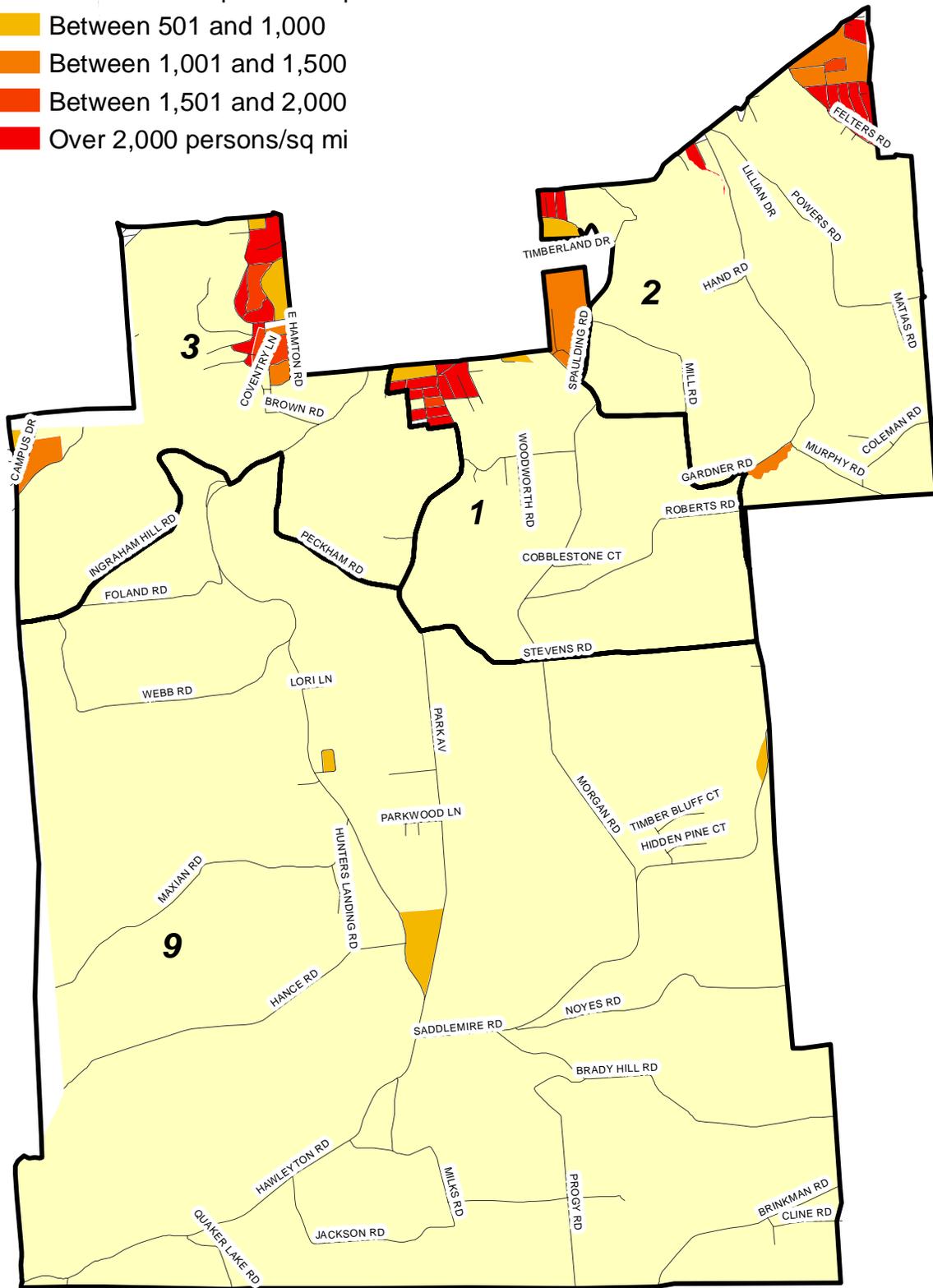
 Census Block Groups



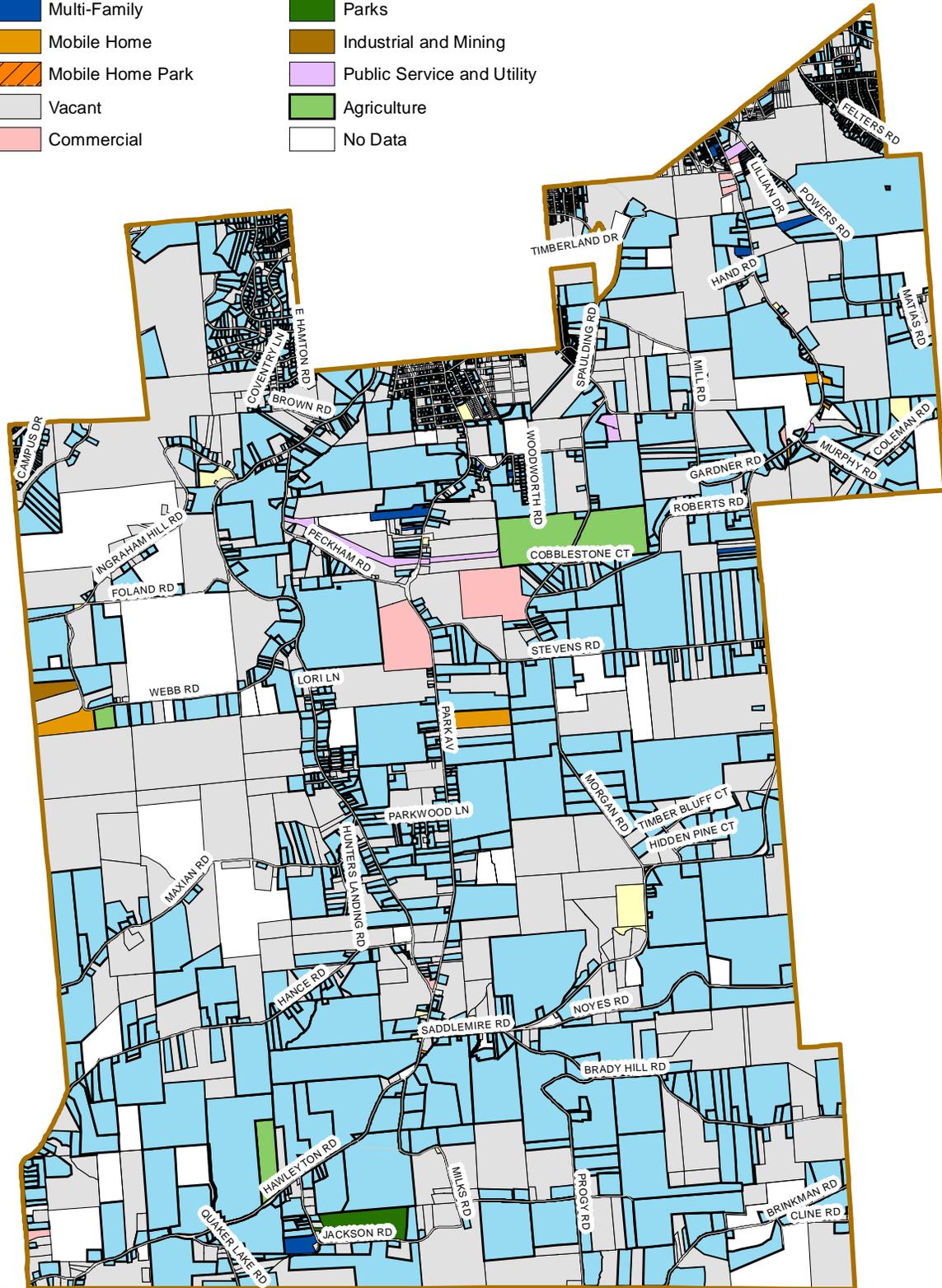
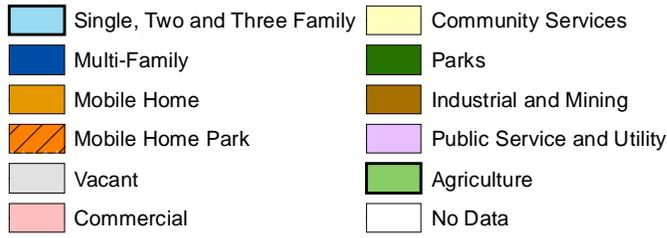
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Population Density

- Less than 500 persons/sq mi
- Between 501 and 1,000
- Between 1,001 and 1,500
- Between 1,501 and 2,000
- Over 2,000 persons/sq mi

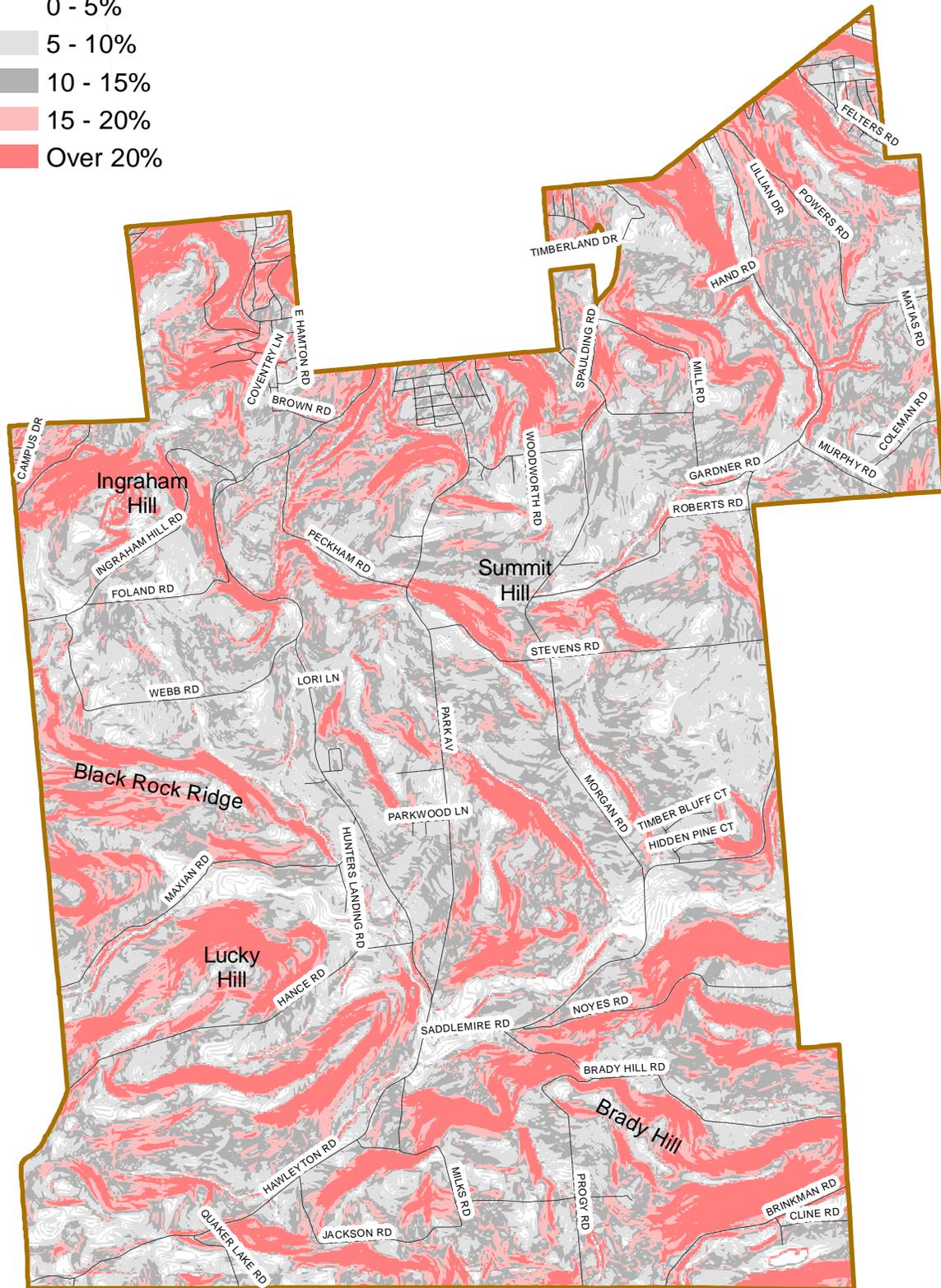


Land Use



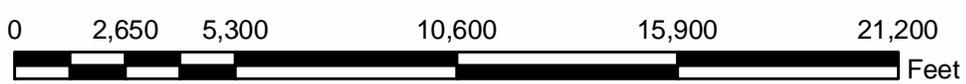
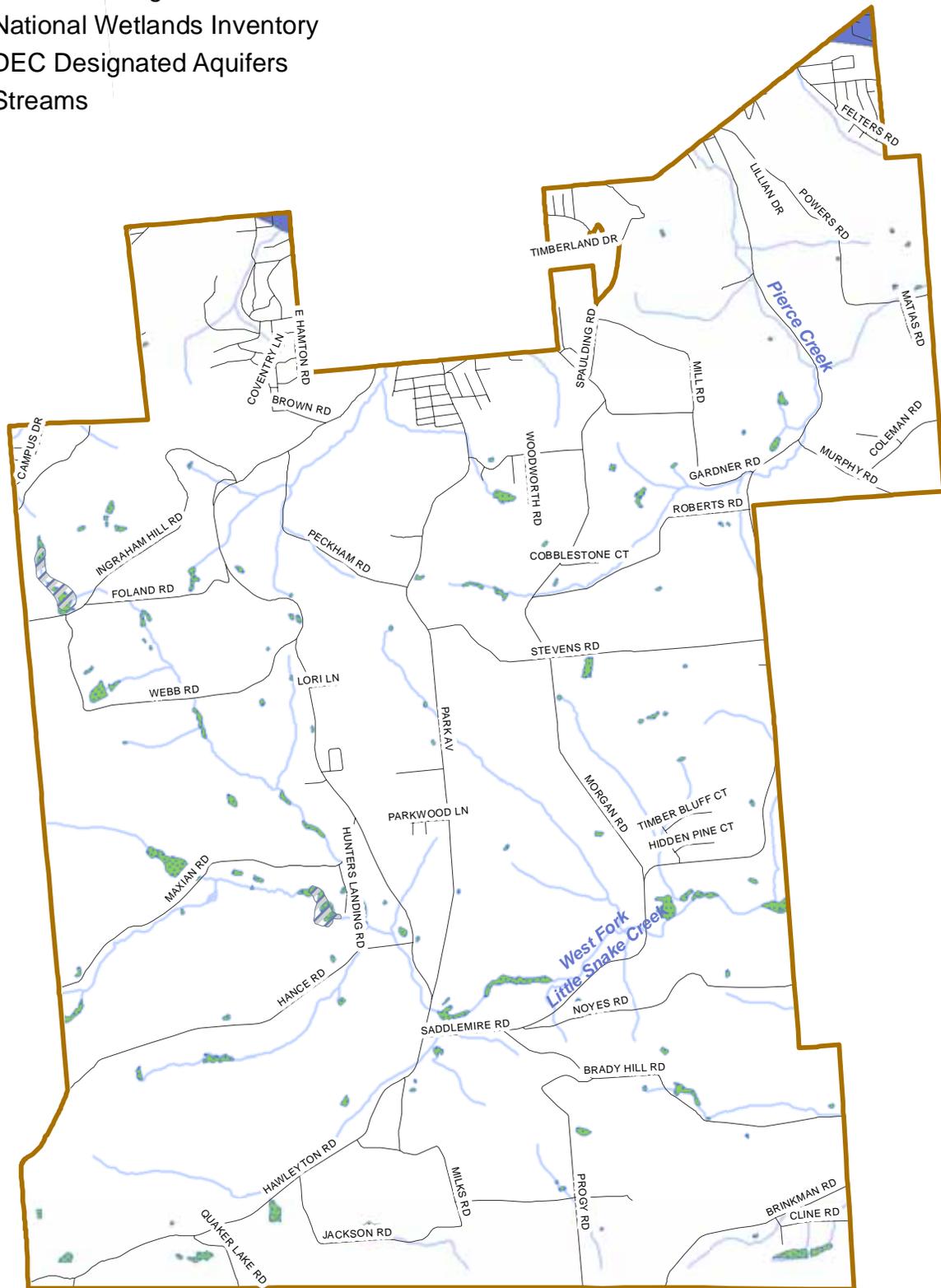
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- Slope**
- 0 - 5%
 - 5 - 10%
 - 10 - 15%
 - 15 - 20%
 - Over 20%



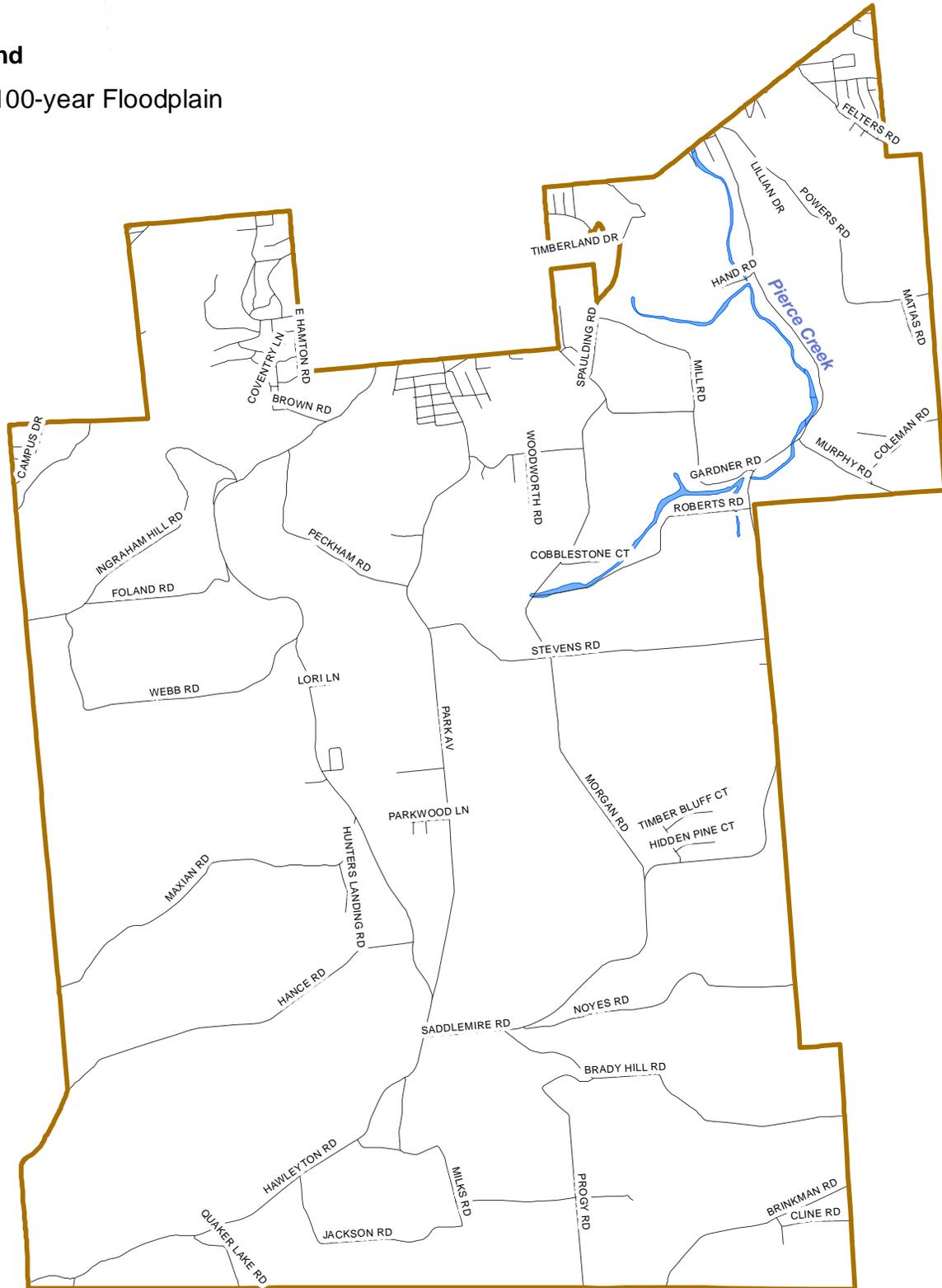
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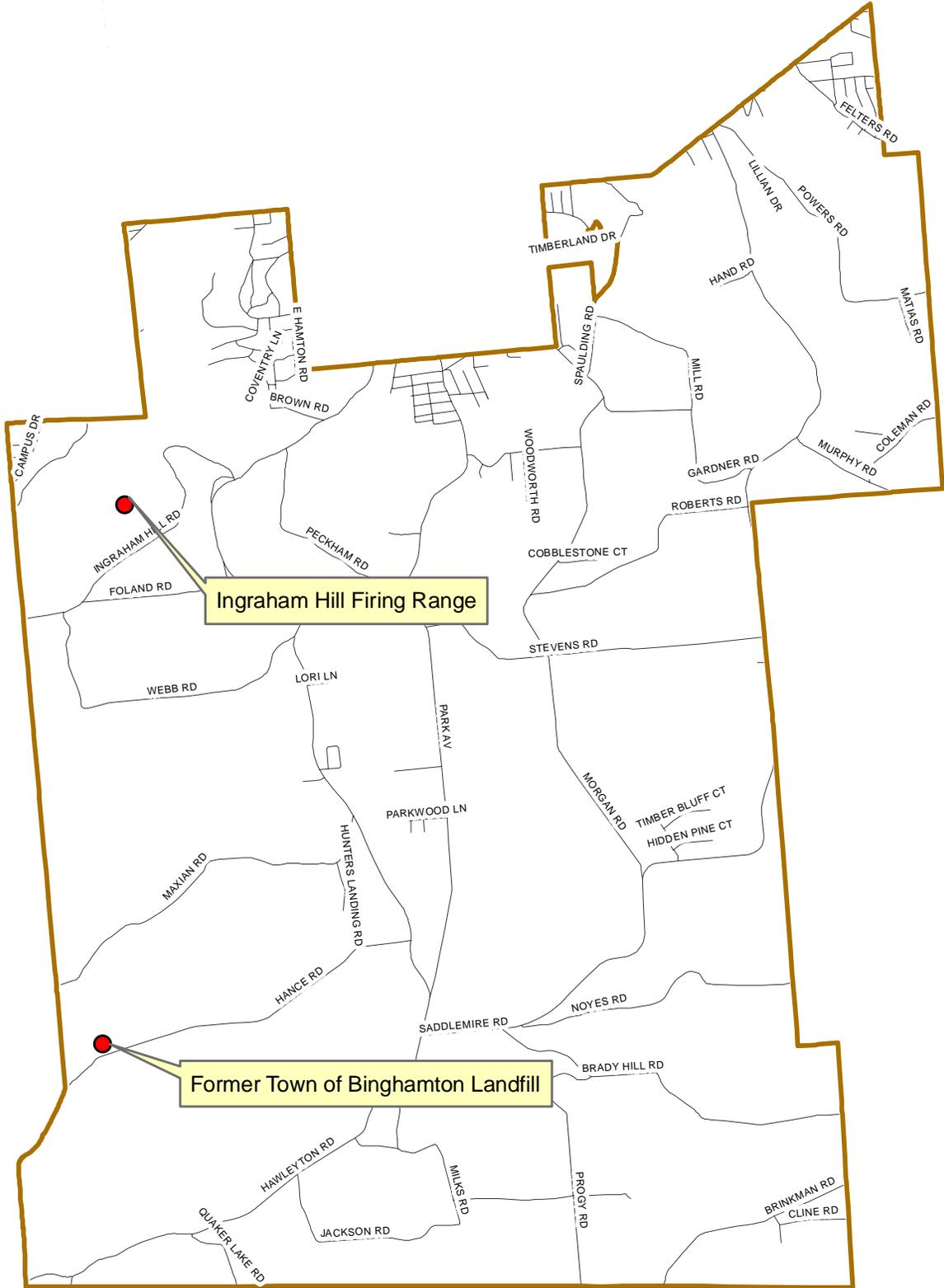
-  NYS DEC Regulated Wetlands
-  National Wetlands Inventory
-  DEC Designated Aquifers
-  Streams

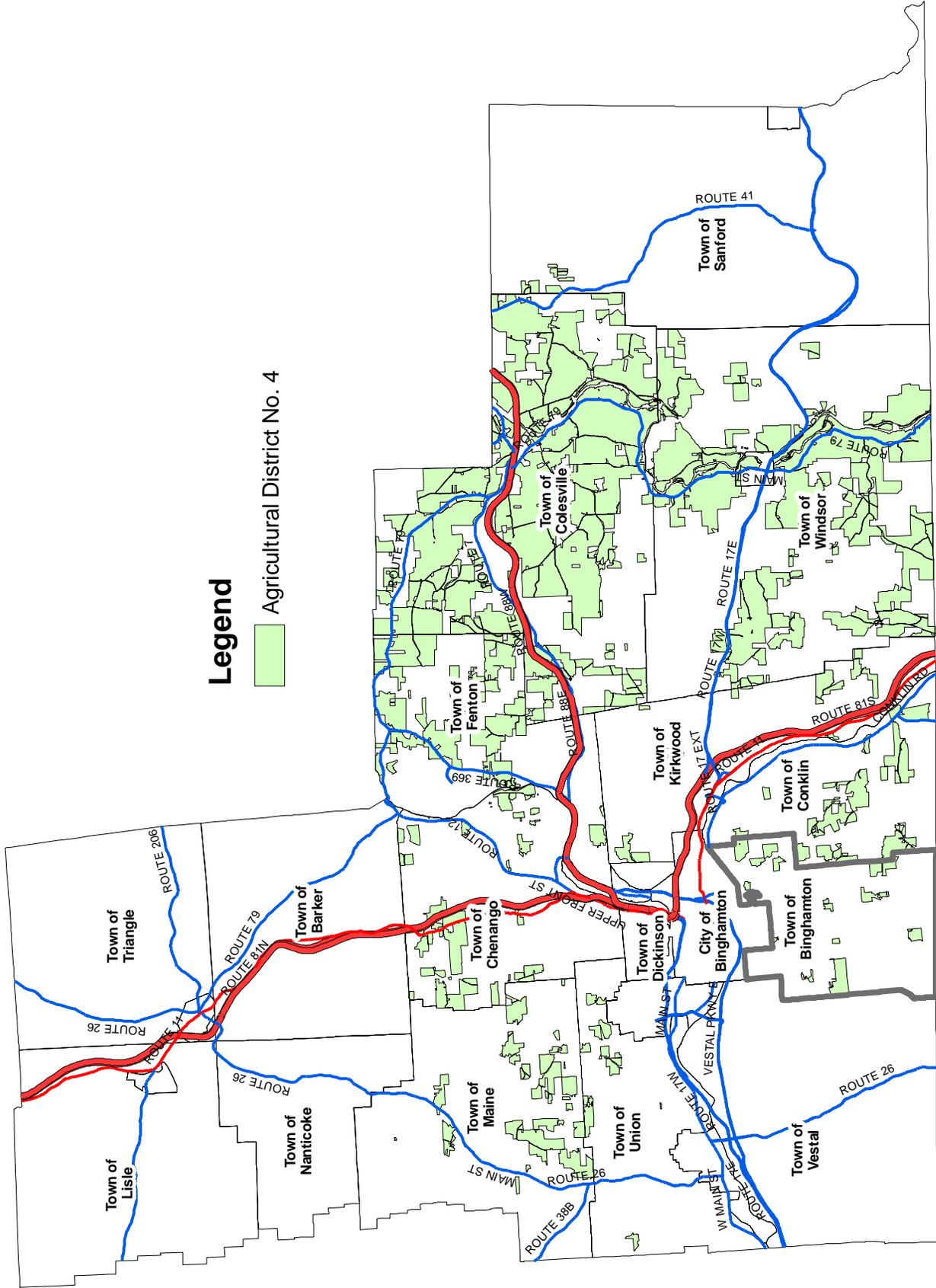


Legend

 100-year Floodplain







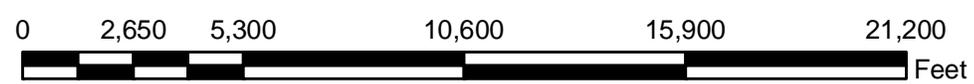
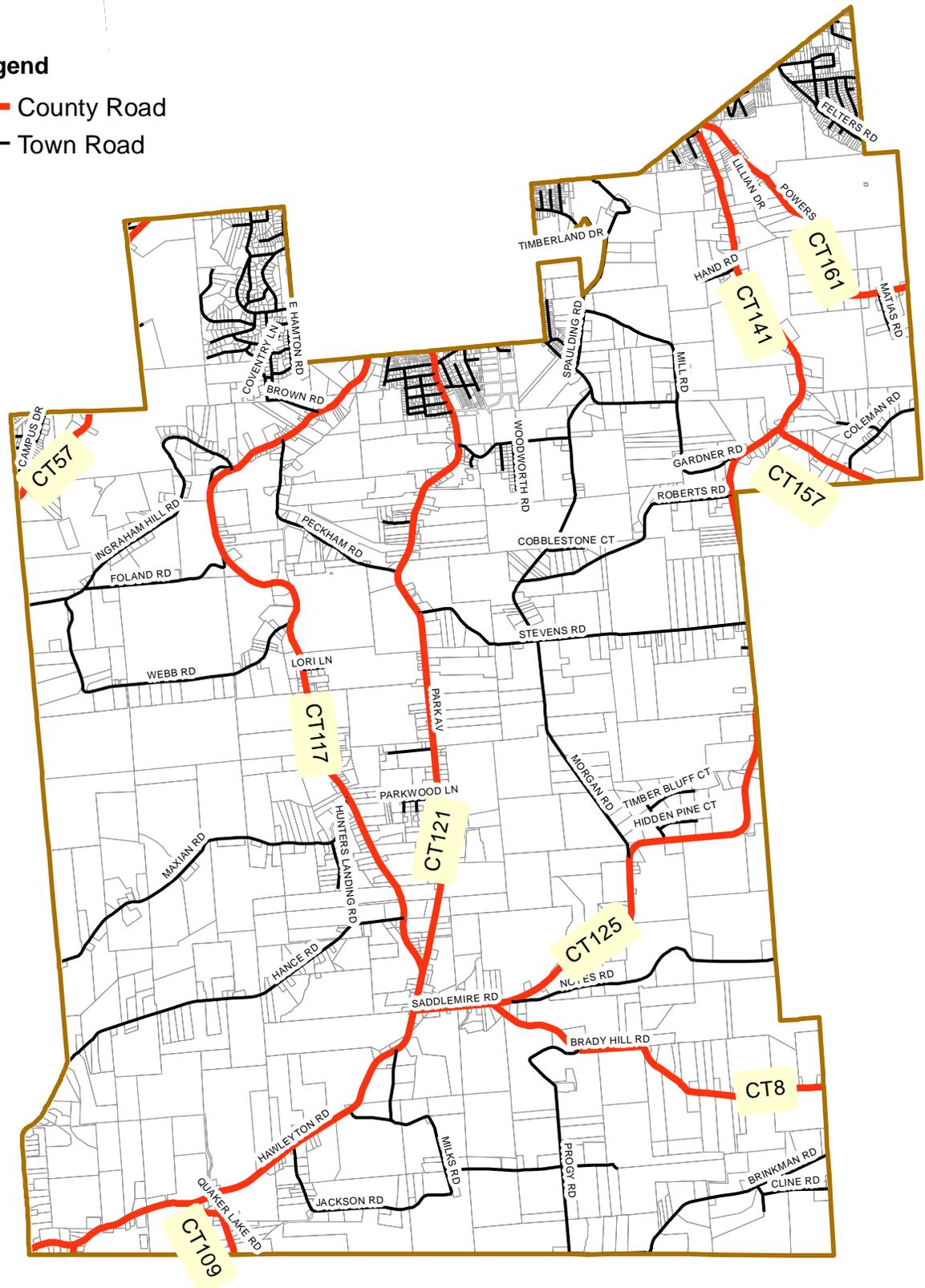
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 Agricultural District No. 4



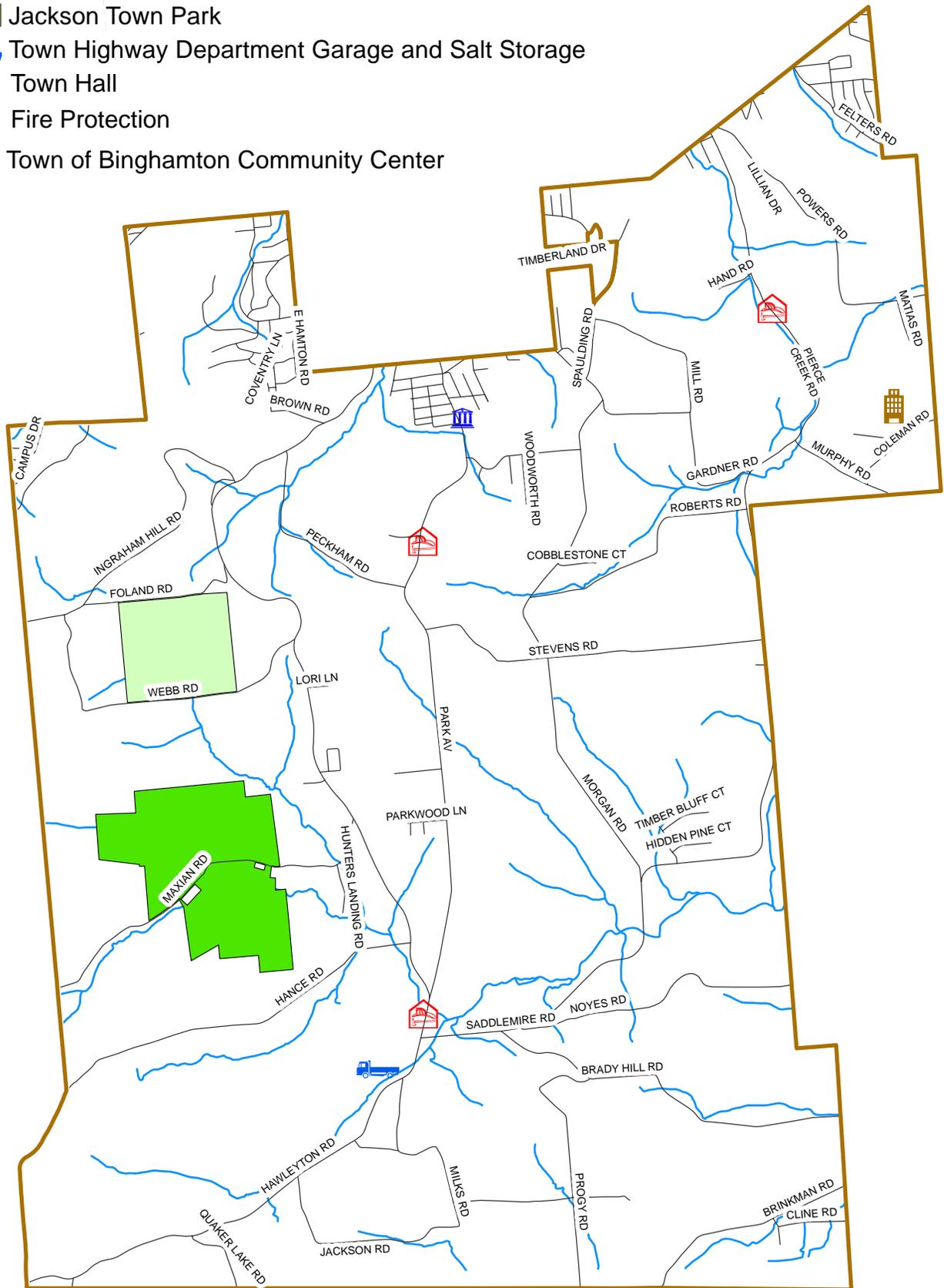
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-  County Road
-  Town Road



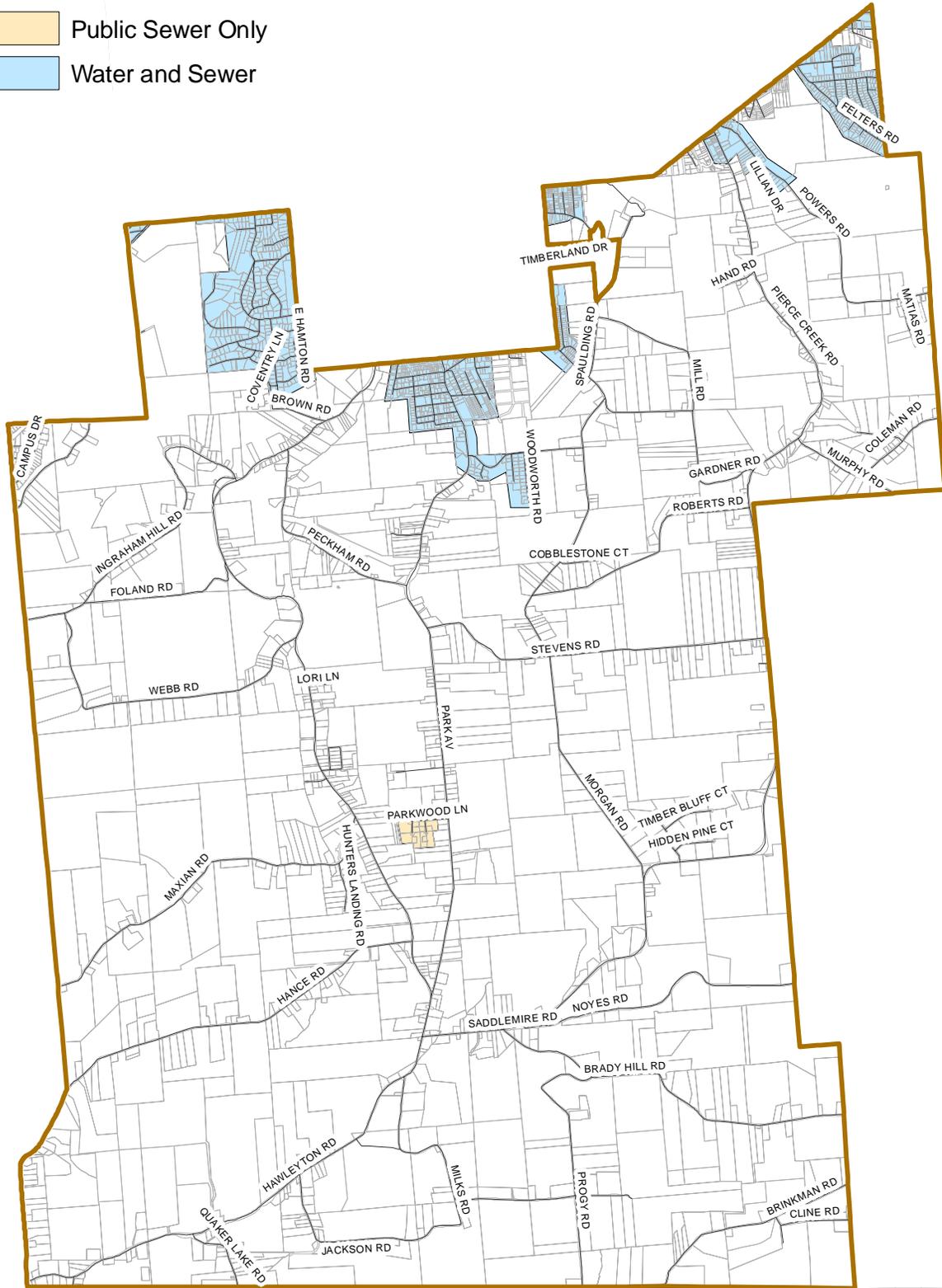
Legend

-  Vestal Hills Country Club
-  Aqua-Terra County Park
-  Jackson Town Park
-  Town Highway Department Garage and Salt Storage
-  Town Hall
-  Fire Protection
-  Town of Binghamton Community Center



Legend

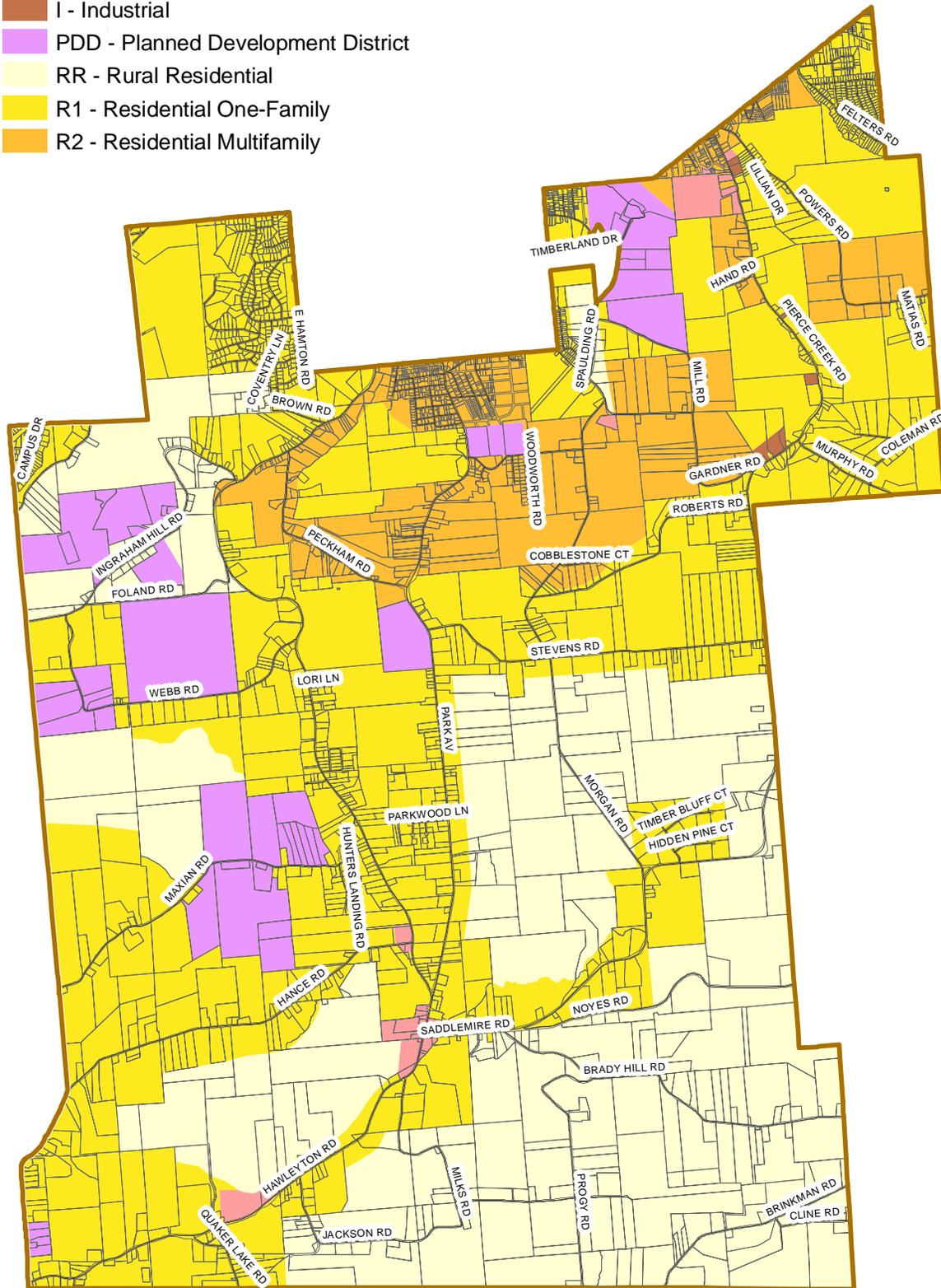
- Public Sewer Only
- Water and Sewer



Legend

Binghamton Zoning

- C - Commercial
- I - Industrial
- PDD - Planned Development District
- RR - Rural Residential
- R1 - Residential One-Family
- R2 - Residential Multifamily



1. How would you like to see the Town's population change over the next 10 years?

grow significantly	16%
grow slightly	48%
stay about the same	33%
decrease	3%
<i>No response:</i>	26

2. Should the Town Board consider providing public water in the following areas:

	Yes	No	Maybe	<i>No Response</i>
Park Avenue corridor	39%	30%	31%	49
Pennsylvania Avenue corridor	37%	31%	31%	41
Pierce Creek Road corridor	33%	34%	33%	50

3. Should the Town Board consider providing public sewer in the following areas:

	Yes	No	Maybe	<i>No Response</i>
Park Avenue corridor	39%	28%	33%	57
Pennsylvania Avenue corridor	39%	29%	32%	44
Pierce Creek Road corridor	33%	32%	35%	56

4. What is your opinion regarding natural gas service in the Town?

I currently have natural gas	44%
I do NOT have natural gas but would like it	24%
I do NOT have natural gas and do NOT want it	22%
No opinion	9%
<i>No response</i>	10

5. What is your opinion regarding cable television service in the Town?

I have cable service currently	78%
I do NOT have cable service, but would like it	11%
I do NOT have cable service and do NOT want it	8%
No opinion	3%
<i>No response</i>	6

6. What is your opinion regarding high-speed Internet service in the Town?

I have high-speed Internet service currently	62%
I do NOT have high-speed Internet service, but would like it	13%
I do NOT have high-speed Internet service and do NOT want it	10%
No opinion	14%
<i>No response</i>	8

7. What is your opinion regarding cell phone service in the Town?

I have a cell phone and I am satisfied with service in the Town	35%
I have a cell phone and I am NOT satisfied with service in Town	49%
I would like a cell phone, but I have concerns about service in the Town	5%
I have no interest in cell phone service	7%
No opinion	4%
<i>No response</i>	7

8. What type(s) of housing development (if any) should be permitted in the Town of Binghamton:

Types of Housing	Should be Permitted Anywhere	Should be Permitted in Specific Areas Only	Should Not Be Permitted	No Opinion	No response
Single family homes on individual lots (traditional subdivision development)	60%	31%	5%	4%	15
Single family homes on large lots (greater than 5 acres)			1%		
Single family homes in a cluster subdivision with small lots and a reserved greenspace	69%	23%	19%	7%	22
Housing for senior citizens	25%	48%		7%	20
Mobile homes in mobile home parks	30%	56%	6%	8%	23
Manufactured or Modular housing	3%	32%	59%	5%	29
Townhouses	51%	31%	11%	7%	24
Apartments or Condominiums	16%	59%	19%	6%	20
	11%	53%	29%	7%	19

9. Should the Town consider consolidating the following:

Service	Should Be Pursued	No Opinion	Should NOT Be Pursued	No Response
a. Fire Service	44%	19%	36%	19
b. Town Court	52%	25%	22%	19
c. Public Works/Highways	45%	18%	37%	19
d. Town Government	42%	22%	36%	22

10. How important to you are each of the following characteristics of the Town?

Characteristic	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Sure	No Response
a. Quality of schools	79%	14%	5%	2%	13
b. Place to raise children	84%	10%	4%	1%	13
c. Job opportunities in the area	53%	29%	11%	6%	20
d. Scenic beauty	72%	23%	3%	1%	20
e. Environmental Quality (water, air, etc.)	88%	11%	1%	1%	14
f. Natural areas (wetlands, forests, etc.)	69%	26%	4%	2%	13
g. Social activities	19%	49%	25%	7%	18
h. Recreational opportunities	27%	55%	15%	3%	18
i. Cultural activities	16%	47%	28%	9%	20
j. Places to shop	17%	31%	42%	10%	19
k. Rural character	58%	32%	6%	4%	19
l. Overall quality of life	90%	8%	1%	1%	14
m. Cost of living	84%	14%	1%	1%	18

Which 3 of the above items are most important	a. Quality of schools	197
	l. Overall quality of life	178
	e. Environmental Quality	177
	m. Cost of living	176

Town of Binghamton
Comprehensive Plan Survey

11. How would you rate the quality of the following services in the Town of Binghamton?

Services	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Sure
Ambulance service	16%	35%	8%	1%	39%
Fire service	40%	33%	3%	1%	23%
Police service	12%	36%	21%	8%	22%
Town road maintenance	44%	38%	12%	3%	2%
Sidewalks	4%	12%	10%	9%	64%
Town's snow plowing	53%	33%	9%	2%	3%
Public transportation	3%	9%	16%	26%	46%
Code enforcement efforts	8%	30%	21%	11%	30%
Schools	27%	52%	7%	2%	11%
Child care services	2%	9%	8%	4%	77%
Senior citizen activities and services	5%	22%	11%	2%	59%
Youth activities and services	14%	40%	10%	2%	34%
Parks	16%	50%	17%	2%	14%
Recreational activities	11%	38%	21%	3%	27%
Overall Appearance of the Town	14%	67%	15%	2%	2%

12. How important is it for the Town of Binghamton to do the following?

Activity	Important	No Opinion	Should Not Be Pursued	Do Not Know	No Response
Regulations					
Provide stricter code enforcement	49%	22%	13%	15%	24
Control residential development in the Town	66%	13%	12%	8%	21
Control commercial development in the Town	72%	11%	9%	7%	18
Increase the tax base by encouraging development	45%	15%	29%	11%	22
Lower the Town property tax rate	78%	10%	5%	6%	20
Natural Resources					
Protect groundwater	93%	5%	1%	1%	17
Protect air quality	90%	6%	2%	1%	17
Preserve open space	80%	14%	3%	2%	22
Preserve agriculture	68%	23%	4%	4%	19
Manage stormwater runoff	86%	10%	2%	3%	17
Regulate logging operations in the town	60%	21%	10%	8%	18
Regulate mining operations in the town	62%	19%	9%	10%	27
Services					
Improve existing parks and recreation	53%	31%	12%	5%	24
Establish more parks and recreational activities	33%	35%	24%	7%	21
Improve senior citizen activities and services	31%	42%	13%	14%	22
Provide senior citizen housing	37%	31%	18%	14%	21
Improve youth activities and services	44%	35%	10%	10%	23

13. The Town of Binghamton's 3 major assets are:

	<u>No. of Responses</u>
Town government and services, especially road maintenance and snowplowing	263
Rural Character	220
Location and access to area businesses and services	130

14. The Town of Binghamton's major shortcomings are

	<u>No. of Responses</u>
High taxes (including County, School, and New York State)	128
Limited services, especially recreation and senior housing	105
Code Enforcement and delapidated buildings	83

16. Do you own property in the Town of Binghamton?

Yes 94% No 5% *No response* 0

17. Are you a resident of the Town of Binghamton?

Yes 89% No 11% *No response* 0

18. How many people live in your residence?

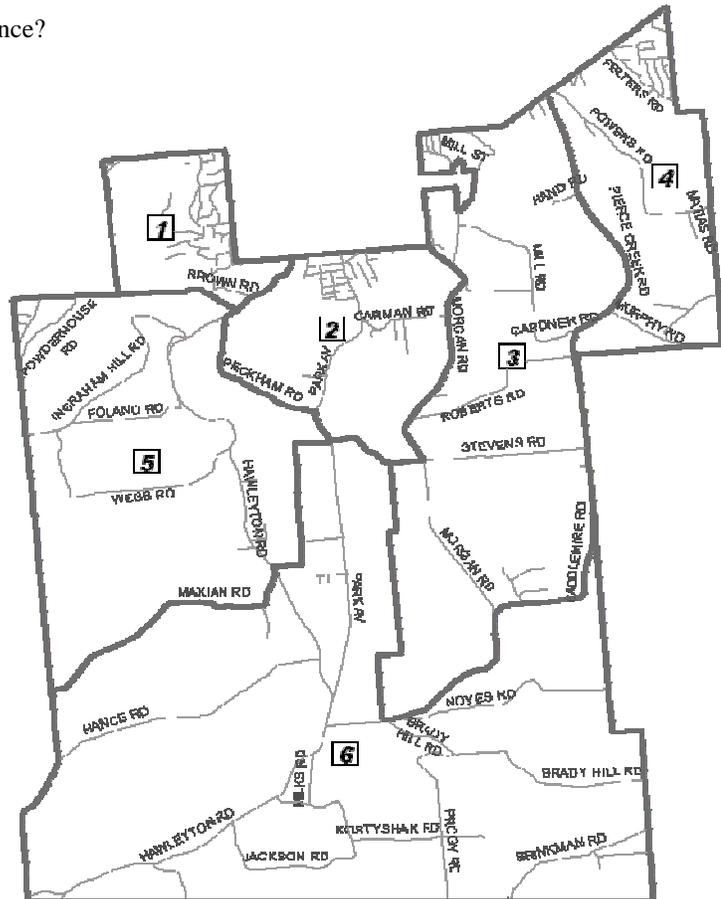
2.5 (average)

19. How long have you lived at your current residence?

Less than 1 year	2%
1 to 5 years	14%
6 to 10 years	14%
11 to 15 years	9%
16 to 20 years	13%
Over 20 years	47%

20. Using the map provided, please indicate the area in which you live.

1	14%
2	12%
3	15%
4	22%
5	15%
6	22%



Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the survey

Has anyone seen or really know where the fill is coming from/being put on land above town hall? And what has been put there? PVC sewer digs from downtown breaks, etc?

- 1) Peak oil - resource planning
- 2) If you don't know what PO is - Google!
- 3) Tell Albany to stay out of small government
- 4) We must start an ELP plan - Economize, Localize, Produce
- 5) Its better to be 10 yrs to early than 10 minutes too late

How about running water up St. Clair Road?

Would like improvements like gas, water, sewer but not a too high a cost, and knowing it will bring unwanted development.

The town of Binghamton is Broome County's best kept secret, let's keep it that way.

The Town of Binghamton is a great place to live! I love it just the way it is - No trailers is a huge plus.

Road crews are awesome, have no complaints

I appreciate the dumpster for metal items that we have. It has helped me get rid of all kinds of debris that has been left by others years ago. Anything that can be done to help get rid of unwanted items would be an investment in the environment. It is difficult to get rid of tires , batteries smoke detectors , paint, used motor oil, stuff that we should not send to the landfill.

Do not lower taxes and then borrow to pay for it. Pay existing loans before lowering taxes.

Thank you for free woodchips. I wish I could make a huge pile of branches in my front yard and have somebody come by with a chipper and shred the branch and just leave a pile of wood chips on my property. That would get rid of branches and eliminate transporting woodchips in my car.

Do we have that service?

Don't grow and stop paying all medical mandates as a protest. Get either towns to join you and get this straightened out with the state

maintenance crews to respect private property

The Planning Board should develop a comprehensive long range plan that would include, single family homes being developed, townhouses, senior citizen housing, work with Broome County to extend public transportation, even if it was limited service

We moved here to get out of the city. We understand the need for development but would prefer if it was limited to 5 acre lots

Deer population control (they are taking over our yards)

More nighttime security patrol

They should not and better not pay for the Leech field on Yezzy lane. The home owners using it

should. Roads need to be plowed more often.

With an aging and declining population base across Greater Binghamton and the Southern Tier consolidation of municipalities is a must. The town should take a leadership position in efforts to keep taxes affordable for the remaining property owners. Town employees must pay a larger portion of their health insurance costs. Costs are rising and it cannot be business as usual!

Better roads!?! Please

If it's against the law to burn yard waste, ect. why is wood burning to heat homes permitted. It pollutes the air, stinks up the neighborhood, and is a fire hazard.

I would like to see the board look into a garbage pickup service.

The creeks need to be cleaned up and maintained to prevent future flooding. (stones, stumps, branches)

If the town has no money, get the county involved.

No mobile homes or parks

Overall satisfied town resident. They keep us informed of everything happening in the town with the 'TownTalk' newsletter.

My husband and I moved here a year ago with our two young children. We came from the Philadelphia area where there is always traffic, lots of subdivisions and very little undeveloped land. In the short time we have been here, we have come to appreciate the slower pace of life the beautiful scenery that has not been destroyed by subdivisions with houses that all look the same, and the feeling of community that now exists in the Town of Binghamton. We would encourage the Planning Board to make decisions that protect the natural resources, the beauty & the small town feeling that is getting harder to find. These are the reasons we want to raise our children here.

The town does not need to provide services that are available in the 'greater Binghamton' area, youth and senior services. The town should pursue consolidation.

great place to live

Control expansion and development. Do it gradually.

We really, really need cell phone service throughout town of Binghamton. This is a major safety concern, particularly on our rural roads. It is inexcusable to let a vocal minority dictate our ability to get help at night on back roads or during one of our power outages. Otherwise, please strive to keep Town of Binghamton a quaint place to live and a great one to raise kids in. Thanks for your hard work, we love it here.

Owning cattle, it is extremely important to me to have road water, winter salt -- all running off onto my property (washing out my drive, etc.) because the town refuse to dig a ditch along my property to control this problem. This all ends up in the pasture(s) & ultimately affects the animals.

I do not think that further development on South Mountain is prudent given the water runoff problems that are present in the Gillen Drive and other areas atop the mountain. Many trees have been cut down and pavement areas lead to flash flooding.

Enforce the codes. Too many junk cars and garbage.

Keep it looking like a country and not a housing development.

Need better upkeep on the sides of roads as far as keeping bushes and trees cut down for better appearance and safety.

I have been an absentee owner for over 50 years. My memories revert to my friends (name withheld) and supervisor (name withheld). Who help me with the legal aspects of building my home on Walter Street, as a young man before my army service WWII. I sold this property in 1990 to a neighbor. He trashed it! Violated his contract, pay taxes and improvements were not paid. I had to foreclose and outbid others to get my property back. He declared bankruptcy. I never got a cent. Bu my costs to Attorneys, back taxes etc., etc cost about \$18000. To repair the house over \$45,000. Now trashed again. Bid to repair \$9000. Currently in progress by Ron Bennett. I've had my property listed for over 5 years. Couldn't get a buyer, even at assessed values - either the duplex or the improved lots. I guess that pretty well describes my dilemma. The previous buyer was deceased - 10 months after bankruptcy. A nearby neighbor!

I have always been treated kindly by all Town's officials.

I do not have children but my neighbors that do speak well of the school system, an opinion not necessarily shared outside of the town. If the perception could be improved the quality of residents in the town would improve.

Get rid of snarky preachy newsletter. If you threaten to shoot my dog in the newsletter again, I will run for town council and fire every one of you.

It is a natural human trait to fee we have to always do more and get bigger because that is always better. Please try to resist the drive to always do more. You are doing a good job and I like the character of the town. It feels like home not a corporate entity.

Overall the Town is a great place to live and is a on the way to making it better! I couldn't be happier living here!

Do not over regulate. In many ways - Towns codes and regs are about right. Encourage agriculture, let farmers manage their lands w/o interference.

Do not consolidate with other governments. Don't lose our independence. For the few extra dollars it costs to have our own government - It is well worth it.

I have no answers for these problems. I think the town of Bing. Is pretty much as good as it gets in NYS.

I Love TOB!

Trash yard sales on city streets NOT good. City trash and garbage left by renters and drifters are city offenders.

No big track developments, no apartments, consider consolidation if it will save money

Only to exchange my second point - need a master plan.

We love living in the Town of Binghamton.

We are happy to reside in the Town of Binghamton.

We live in a perfect location. From our back door, we can walk in the woods. From our front door, we can see the Susquehanna Valley and our fire hydrant. Yet in a few minutes by car, we can be at a grocery/drugstore, restaurant, post office or hospital.

Every snowy day, we thank our lucky stars for our snowplow crews. We live on the sharpest curve and steepest part of our hill. Round the clock, our road is cleaned. What a contrast to the unsafe mess we encounter in the city.

We see increasing and accelerated run-off. Granted 9/04, 6/06 and 11/06 were extreme events but it is possible these will be the norm. The open ditch was covered several years ago. The in-flow intake area with hillside run off seriously erodes and the source of the flow has been strong enough to break up the pavement around the grate and at our driveway.

1. For the amount of taxes we pay we should have garbage pick.
2. Better snow removal & sanding of second & dirt roads.

With expansion, the board needs to ensure that existing homes are protected from environmental issues.

I really value the tight knit, close community in the town of Binghamton. I grew up here as a child and returned to live as an adult because of it. Many of my peers have done the same. I would like the planning board to keep development to a minimum. My backyard view was once woods and now it is of homes. That's ok, but I would not want to see the Town of Binghamton turn into the Town of Vestal.

Cell tower's

Need for nondenominational teen center, equipped with billiards, darts, ping-pong tables, PC's, music. Safe place to gather safely.

Need to development Saddlemire Road with natural gas and public sewer system so more people will build homes which will bring more younger family to the Town of Binghamton to help lower the cost of living (lower taxes). Lower taxes keeps families in the community.

We really need to do something about keeping our roads safer. Too many people are driving way too fast and do not even stop at the stop signs. Please, please enforce our speed limits in the town on Pierce Creek Road and on Morgan Road in particular. Thank you

Don't upset the 'apple cart'!!
Things are good as is...

We will be building a new house in the Town of Binghamton on Jackson Rd, but it will be 1000 feet off the road and keeping all 90 acres wooded.

Would like speed to slower as it's dangerous to cross street to my mail box. Cars traveling 50 to 80 miles an hour pass my home.

40 years or so can remember the town road maintenance was better as street was cleaned - my ditches in front of my home cleaned out in Spring and fall faithfully so water would not collect in my front lawn. Now the years you call and call and are promised they will be by but no show. I don't

believe one should have to beg for this service.

Also much too heavy trucks go by to break up road - our water and gas lines are under the road so with heavier trucks and faster travel (speeding) it's dangerous for the safety of these lines.

Please stop hunting close to homes and on private land.

Continue to control off-road vehicle activity

Continue to support stopping trespassers - comments in the town newsletter help remind people of common courtesy.

Growth is important. Reasonable taxes important. Tough to manage both - good luck. But I live here because of the country setting.

I purchased 5 acres in Hawleyton with the intent of building my retirement home. I grew up in this area and my connection is very strong, based mostly on the lack of change in the last 40 or so years. I'd like to see as little development as possible.

We came here to live a few years ago from Town of Union and never want to leave. You have a real 'hometown' sense here and we love it. Please stay 'Country'.

Need better control of dirt bikes/atv's.

1. Seniors should be exempt from school taxes as we have down our part over and over and over again. When we had children of school age we didn't mind but how long do we have to be punished! Let the young families take over like we had to for years.

2. We should be able to get good reception for our cell phone in this day and age. It's not like we live in Antarctica.

Please remember that bigger is not always better. We live here because we LIKE THE SMALL TOWN!

Very pleased with the town appearance, social activities, town Board's organization. Much prefer single-family dwellings. AGAINST multi-apartments, townhouse developments. Prefer minimum size lots of 75 ft wide, limits on house size per small lot.

It would be a good idea to locate a polling station a little closer for residents in Orchard Park.

Provide incentives to new businesses to come into the Town and existing businesses to expand and employ - Provide a broader tax base to lessen the burden on the homeowner - provide additional utilities to draw in these new businesses without losing the Town's ability to work one on one with the residents. New growth is needed to provide jobs and lessen the current tax burden.

We cannot keep raising taxes. It is slowly make the area a hard place to justify living with the taxes.

If consolidation of services will lower or stop increases in taxes, consolidation should be pursued.

cell tower

Cable TV is too expensive
Childcare in the area is needed

Managing stormwater runoff is priority. This could easily be done with an increase in taxes.
Review of payroll and benefit packages for town employees.

I have asked for something to be done about water runoff in my yard and driveway since I bought the house in 1980. I am still waiting to have dialog with someone regarding this problem.

My opinion regarding many of these issues is limited because I own property in the town, but do not live there.

Please pursue 'Teacher Next Door' and 'Firefighter Next Door' status through these program, so that the Town of Binghamton can be listed within these excellent programs.

A cross town connector (Stevens to Webb) would benefit the town, plus emergency vehicles, I believe the town should the road and homes would eventually be built to defray the cost!

I feel Park Terrace is left out. Many of the homes are abandoned or falling apart. Junk everywhere! Let's get it as nice as South Mtn and Orchard Park :)

I would to be more informed/educated about the town zoning policies.

With every rainfall my neighbors and I are losing property or having rocks, trash and other debris wash onto property.

The town and county have done very good jobs post-flood, but preventative measures (e.g. creek maintenance) would be better than reactionary ones.

Make all decisions with the best interests of residents in mind. Keep our taxes from being raised.

If drainage was taking care of the way it should have been there wouldn't been thousands of dollars damage done to our homes.

One of the most important problems that need to be addressed is the November 16, 2006 storm damage to properties along Pierce Creek extending to Gardner and Roberts Road in the Town of Binghamton.

To this date county and town officials have had meetings regarding this problem but to this date nothing has been done.

(Name withheld)

1. Town provides very little if any 'family' gatherings such as Conklin/Kirkwood Christmas tree lighting parties at Christmas, concerts in parks, community bbq.
2. Code enforcement is poor. Example is junk cars, octagon building on Park Ave, Started 20+ years ago - now has blue tarps falling off of it, Code officer needs to look I yards not just drive by.
3. Snow plowing push snow back first day. Residents shovel drives - then plow pushes it back in 2 days after storm. Worst situation is the sanding/salting. Donahue gets paid by the mile from BC he only salts the corners and tops of hills - very little in between. Salting operation is always too little too late.

My wife and I have lived in the Town at the same address on Geneva for over 46 years. We have

found it a great place to raise our children and a great place to live. The school system was very good and all four children graduated and went on to college. All graduated from college and one got a PhD and another a Masters in Business.

I firmly believe that commercial development does not help the tax base but increases the cost of services.

Our highway department has always been excellent. We live off upper Mill Street. One block from the city line. Our streets have always have been well plowed and many times much better than the city.

Our one short coming has been the inability to keep assessments current. During our time here we have had at least two townwide reassessments and maybe three. After the last we were pretty good until about 4 years ago and now are about 20% off true market value. I would hope that this could be corrected with resorting to again having to hire some one to reassess the entire town.

Thank you for taking the time to do this survey.

(name withheld)

The town need not lose its identity but definitely should consolidate services with other towns. e.g. combine w/ Kirkwood and Conklin to purchase health insurance, accounting services, fleet management, purchase of supplies and materials and recreational facilities.

New residents should be encouraged/invited to participate in local government via town board positions, youth commission, etc. Residents should be encouraged to use Community Center. Youth groups should use it more often. Town should encourage and support use of school building even on weekends. Reciprocal agreements between town and school should be expanded.

I have lived in the TOB for 3 years, on Saddlemire Rd. After I moved in and connected to satellite TV, the FCC has denied me all major channels (CBS, ABC, FOX) on 5 separate occasions. I believe this is because I have a Bing 13903 address, and it is assumed I have cable access. This has been most frustrating. I also have a teenager, and for her to get on-line for homework, or myself, for business purposes, is a nightmare w/ dial up service. I have friends in much more rural areas that have internet and cell phone access.

I do plan to put my house up for sale this spring, mainly due to these issues.

Thank you for allowing residents this opportunity to help provide better services in the TOB.

(name withheld)

Would rather pay for a town garbage disposal - may be provide jobs for local residence?

Upgrade Town's infrastructure to handle increased discharges from developments and handle weather related surges to drainage system.

Improve tracking of resident complaints and better communication with town residents regarding problem areas in town's infrastructure and plans of corrective action and suggestions to preserve/protect from failures in infrastructure.

#1 the road (Jackson Rd) needs some way to control speed. When games or practice is on. The drivers drive like a super highway. Some people have junk cars or car not licensed. Selling around. Jackson Pond needs stock some bass. Whoever had the bright idea to stock Jackson Pond with all

them grass eating carp need's there head looked at they put in way too many. They ate all the grass in the pond.

They also should put not hunting signs around the park area. I like to use the walker path around the pond, but did not dare to walk during deer season.

Keep the old school system in place. Stop inc property taxes.

Stop spending fruitless money on school pools improvements.

I have spend a great deal of time and money (maintaining my property), over the last almost 20 years, since the house was built. Because this is a neighborhood of diversity, you find people, who are totally abusive of their properties, and they look terrible. However, b/c they are so close, it impacts my property. For years, I have commented to the code enforcement officers, Larry Seeley who was the code enforcer before Mr. John Simmons, at least tried on a few occasions. However, J. Simmons, is not effective. I am surrounded by trailer park mentality. A few neighbors, like myself, who take pride in their properties are fine, but the others take the value of our properties down. They also disrespect my property, especially during hunting season and summer with off-road vehicles. They rip off the no trespassing signs, etc. It takes the joy out of living in a beautiful setting.

The creeks in the Town of Binghamton should some work done on them to help when high water comes.

Things such as tree removal (trees have fallen into creeks) or just cutting them into small pieces would help prevent bridge clogging and flow direction change.

Keep doing what you're doing. Nice place to live!

Town government should not exist. Services should be consolidated with Broome County.

I'm proud to be a resident of Town of Binghamton. In my opinion the town is a great place to live and raise a family.

I would like to see minutes of town board and other meetings put on website.

The town should be more involved in working with residential and commercial developers to secure growth using tax breaks. We need more people to lower taxes. The people will go where they can find low taxes. We need a long term plan.

Though this may not be the towns issue or mine (common school zone), school taxes are a huge impediment especially with SV schools fiscal crises from the floods. Broome County Schools MUST be consolidated in order to contain and lower taxes. Until this happens and school taxes become affordable we will not see solid growth.

Only in certain areas so as not to take away from the beauty of the town.

Totally unfair that homes in town of Binghamton but in special school district although significantly higher priced pay less in school taxes.

My name is (name withheld) and I live at (number withheld) Circuit Drive. Which is just over the city line and is in the town of

Binghamton. The road I live on is a very narrow road and it is a dead end road. Some time back the town of Binghamton made a nice big turn around at the dead end of Circuit Drive. When that turn around was made at the end of Circuit Drive it was big enough for the large school busses to use to turn around in without any problems. Then a couple of years ago the person who owns the land along side of that turn around, at the dead end of Circuit Drive. They filled it in with concrete and debris. So now that turn around at the dead end of Circuit Drive is small for a big vehicle and it is almost impossible for a big vehicle to turn around there.. I am a 78 year old senior lady a widow who does not drive. So I depend on my Office of the Aging mini bus to pick me up at my home to go out to get my groceries and anything else I may need. Bu my Office of the Aging mini bus got stuck at that turn around at the end of Circuit Drive 2 weeks ago. Because when it rains it is only a mud hole there and it got stuck in the mud. The turn around is now so small that they didn't have the room to get the bus out of the mud any other way but to pull it out. So now because of this the Office of the Aging will no longer come and pick me up for me to go out to get my groceries. Because of the condition (the mud) and the size of the turn around at the end they feel it makes it almost impossible for the bus to turn around there. My question for you is what right did a private person have in filling that turn around of Circuit Drive in the first place? And why hasn't the Town of Binghamton done something about it.

The no parking signs are not being enforced so why post them? People seem to think it's seasonal, sometimes they park on both sides and can barely get through them.

Too many property owners need to get rid of junk like tires, cars (people keep the plates on them even though they are not running them on the road). Should have one car limit on property.

Making the town of Binghamton a great place to live.

- a) would be to minimize sexual offenders who live here.
- b) eliminate any commercial or rental properties (police constantly there)
- c) keep healthy, clean environment.

We have been here for 23 years, raised 2 children and have enjoyed living and growing in the town of Binghamton

Find ways to curtail spending, look at current staffing levels to see if and where cuts can be made.

My road, Coleman Road, is not on your map. Is it in your study?

Someone has to control the high cost of utilities (fuel oil) and skyrocketing school taxes before people from this area (and others) move south.

Change the South Mountain strange school district that pays significantly lower school taxes than the rest of us, to be included into the SV School District where they would pay their fair share!

We need an east west road system through the town for buses (school) and others, to get to Conklin from the western part of town

The water has been an on-going problem since we moved to Cheryl Dr. 20 years ago. Rust is the major problem. We have NEVER had CLEAR water to bathe. We don't drink the water due to the rust and must buy bottled water for drinking. Clothes (white/light) are washed only on days where water appears to have less rust. We do ask for "ironout" from TOB water dept, however substituted it for another brand which does not work as well on clothes.

Good place to live.

Good town government.

Please remind my neighbors to pick up their dog's mess and not to let their dogs loose in the neighborhood.

Remember, if our local government is consolidated out of existence, will the legislators who mainly represent the majority of the people who live in Union or the City of Binghamton really care about what makes the Town of Binghamton the good place it is to live.

I'd move here again and truly feel that, with the resources available, the Town does an excellent job.

look into dissolve town government via county consolidation

Since living in the town since 1984 I have seen snow removal become very poor to non-existent on my street!

Install traffic/street lighting @ major intersection.

No matter how many times folks complain, nothing gets fixed. Our current town lawyer wants towns people to do his job. I have complained for years about a commercial/business on Morgan Road (108 Morgan). Our town lawyer asked me to do his work and could not be bothered to even visit the property. The previous lawyer did visit the site and agreed there was a business there in a residential area, yet no action to halt. It appears to me this happens all over the Town.

This is not bad, it's unacceptable.

The maintenance of the creek on Beechknoll has not been addressed in 10 years. Due to the flooding one would think someone would have been thru to clear it out. Or at least addressed in 10 years. Due to the flooding one would think someone would have been to clear it out. Or at least assess the necessity of that.

less government! no comprehensive plan!

more services for seniors needed

my neighbor on Roberts road has a dog kennel - the non-stop yapping and barking makes me go inside, even on nice summer days - I can't stand the noise!!

I have no problem with them making money but dogs should be kept quiet!

I would like to have a sewer system so my cellar would not catch all the water when it rains and snows. - Thank you

To pursue obtaining grants to help subsidize costs associated with Lillian Dr water project.

Once a year large trash pick up at each home (if needed) and taken to landfill. Try this once and see how it works, lots of homes need stuff removed and would welcome this chance to clean up their land and homes. They aren't able to get to the landfill and need a way to get rid of unwanted stuff.

The way we see over the next 10 years population will decrease because the cost of living is high

taxes are high, there is no to many job opportunities with good pay rate. The parks and recreational activities needs to be updated/more playgrounds, the zoo needs to be upgraded with more activities.

Access to entertainment, shopping, etc. we have to travel to other areas. We could use a small mall and recreational area for all residents.

Park Terrace area still has not been fixed after Nov. 06 flash flood. Flood problems would have never happened if the town properly left the natural draining stream (down Jefferson under Mildred through my property to and under Margery into larger creek base). Left this as nature intended when putting in the putting in the public water some 10+ years ago. It dried the whole stream up until that flood. Also suggest sidewalks for all the kids in Park Terrace area now that cars go faster.

Well thought out and meaningful survey.

Generally very pleased to live in Town of Binghamton since 1945

I would like to see a designated dog park, it would be nice to let our dog off the leash and not be hassled. We take care of children, walkers, fishers, sports, picnickers, etc

seniors need housing at mid-level income, not wealthy and not poor. We have lived in; the town over 40 years and want to stay. Nothing is available here.

reduce school taxes

Don't overdevelop this beautiful town

No industry (commercial pollution, chemicals, etc.)

Keep the rural country of our town

I walk outside my backdoor and see acres upon acres of undeveloped land (Aqua Terra Park) leave it as it is!

lets keep taxes low, please.

Traffic in both directions (on Burr Avenue) in my opinion at times exceeds 50 to 60 mph!!

This is a situation that could and probably will result in a serious or fatal accident.

Many of the vehicles are heavy construction types that cannot come to a stop or slow down quickly.

I have seen and witnessed some 'very' close calls!!

I feel that it is important that the governing body of a rural community should adopt the principles and desires of a city population

Could leaf pick up be more convenient

There are a lot of high priced homes that pay high taxes that deserve a decent response time for either a fire or medical emergency. The way to meet these needs would be to have a combination Fire Dept that has paid drivers to start that are also EMT's. This would make the response time 5 mins or less that is the difference between life or death.

Eliminate the Town Justice and Town Court.

MUST do something to stop unsightly, illegal dumping of trash and debris along Mill and Morgan roads, crack down on illegal atv and motorcycle riding, mostly atvs- increase patrols

It would be great to have cell service, we have a cell phone but have to go elsewhere to use it. Housing for senior citizens would be useful to us in the not too distant future.

Consolidation must be done. Reduce services if necessary to lower property taxes.

I live on a county road, have a well and septic. Pay for garbage, use propane for heat, and private ambulance service, and covered by State police. What do I get for my town taxes? Nothing! The Town of Binghamton could cease to exist and I wouldn't know the difference.

Thanks for asking; I'm happy to know the Planning Board and the County are interested in hearing from property owners.

I think the town of Binghamton should consider a merger with the town of Conklin. TOB suffers from a higher tax base because of a lack of commercial and industrial tax base. A merge could provide the benefits of Conklin's industry while preserving the rural character. Combining the highway, parks, code enforcement and courts would be a benefit for both towns. The two towns combined would still be smaller than vestal.

I'm very happy with the TOB. I think we need to be careful to control taxes and not let our town government get too big. Most jobs today don't offer paid benefits and lots of holidays off. Spend our money carefully!

Storm runoff has cascaded onto my property causing much damage on 2 occasions 10 to 15,000 each time.

a walking trail would be beneficial, bus service from NY/PA border to Binghamton

place pole lights on the streets, define roads with centerlines

Rental properties = problems

Beware of the false promises of 'consolidation'

Promote 'shared services' instead

why is all that money being used for the disabled women on Theresa Blvd.? and taking the property off the tax roll? Why are they in the middle of a development anyway - especially if the area is zoned for no businesses. Cars are in the road around the clock. Not right!

Would like to see ToB stay the rural, family oriented town that it is. Love the open space, parks and beauty of of the local environment. Don't let developments take away the beauty.

I'm very happy in the ToB. I think we need to be careful to control taxes and not let our town government get too big. Most jobs today don't offer paid benefits and lots of holidays off. Spend out money carefully!

email notice of town meetings and recreational activities. More for senior citizens

Make people mow their lawns! Keep old cars off property. Our town is not a junkyard. Some people put old cars in the woods or out of site from the road to rot and put chemicals into our ground water.

We want LESS government, LESS regulations. We want our FREEDOM. NO comprehensive plan!!!!

Living close to the City of Binghamton line, our needs might not reflect those of the residents who live in more rural sections of our town. Consider: 1. public transportation, 2. ambulance service to distant locations, 3. creation of jobs in non-service sector such as light manufacturing, telemarketing,

I have phones for questions about spending in the S.V. school district several times with no return calls.

Individuals who work in the town offices are very pleasant and helpful

The Town of Binghamton has many horse owners and we appreciate the 5 acre rule. My wife and I tried to pasture horses in the Town of Conklin and we were sharply told to remove the horses because it wasn't zoned for agriculture.

I would like to see a grassy shoulder on the Town of Binghamton roads. On one side so horses can be ridden and people can use for jogging.

We appreciate the town because it is not over-regulated. We need to stay sensible and keep big government out.

I have lived here 70 years and consider the ToB kind of a gem and don't like to think about sharing it with too many others. Development never lowered taxes or made a better town.

Adjust the town line bordering Vestal. My house is 50% in Vestal and 50% in the town. I pay more taxes to the town of Binghamton than I pay to Vestal. The houses in the Upper Stair Tract should be transferred to the Town of Vestal. I receive all my services from Vestal.

I think it's crazy that cable is unavailable to us where we live.

I don't have anything right now, but will keep them in mind if I do think of anything.

I really love Hawleyton. I feel at home here. My family is close by. Considering the topography, hills and valleys, it would be extremely difficult to install public water and sewer systems here. How did you plan to increase the tax base and lower the tax rate?

**Town of Binghamton
Comprehensive Plan Update
Public Meeting – SWOT Analysis
March 11, 2008**

STRENGTHS

- Quality of life
- Affordable housing
- Convenient location to activities
- School District
- Ease of movement in any direction around Town – very manageable to maneuver around Town
- Involved residents – residents involved in community
- Quality of public services
- Rural location but close to the urban area
- Town government – pleasant working relationship with the community
- Size of the Town in terms of population and square acreage
- Diversity of development in the Town – offers both rural development and planned development
- Low crime rate
- Open space

WEAKNESSES

- Cell phone service – inadequate
- Police protection and enforcement (police rarely seen in the Town)
- Water quality – poor water quality in Orchard Park due to rust in the water and galvanized pipes
- Cable service - inadequate
- Natural gas service - inadequate
- Town government – limited hours of business

OPPORTUNITIES

- Petition for reduction in taxes: The residents asked that Town officials petition public officials at the higher levels of government for a reduction in taxes.
- Create Bike/Pedestrian System: The residents would like other means for maneuvering around the Town, such as bikeways and pedestrians walkways.
- Promote green policies: The residents would like green measures incorporated into the Town's policies and practices, such as measures that incorporate lower environmental impacts and promote more energy conservation.

- Increase tax base through residential development: The residents would like new residential development to occur to increase the tax base.
- Facilitate senior housing and assisted living development: The residents would like the Town to facilitate the development of senior housing, such as assisted living facilities.
- Pursue recycling as a revenue source: The residents suggested that the Town pursue recycling as a revenue source.
- Review allocation of taxes: The residents would like Town officials to review the allocation of taxes to determine whether the taxes paid to Broome County are in proportion to the services received.

THREATS

- Improper commercial development
- Residential development has the potential to result in the following threats:
 - an increase in demand for services that outweighs the increase in tax revenues
 - unwanted uses
 - demands on the infrastructure and environment, such as the public sewer system and private water well recharge area
- Impending electrical power line – New York Regional Interconnect (NYRI)
- Fast pace development and redevelopment: Residents believe fast paced development puts undue demands on the Town. They would prefer to maintain the present slower rate of growth and believe the present course of incremental growth is fine as it has not put undue demands on the Town.
- Lack of public transportation (e.g., bus service)
- Lack of ambulance services
- Lack of services for an aging population, such as public transportation and senior housing: The aging population requires a public transportation system and senior housing.
- Change in property ownership as the population ages
- Cost of new public utilities and infrastructure for proposed development that never materializes: Existing homeowners are forced to support new public utilities and infrastructure through tax increases when proposed development does not materialize
- Natural gas drilling: The Town has no ordinance regulating natural gas drilling. The residents asked if the Town could impose restrictions to address the impacts of natural gas drilling.
- Excessive installation of cell towers and broadcast towers
- Volunteer Fire Department: The residents expressed the concern that it is difficult to maintain a volunteer fire department with an aging population, increased regulation on fire fighting and the burden on families of volunteer fire fighters.