



**Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update**

**2017**

## Acknowledgments

The Town would like to recognize the Town of Binghamton Planning Board for their time and assistance over the past year in the preparation of the Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update. The Town would also like to thank the Town officials and employees, residents, and all others who contributed to the Plan through their input and resources throughout the planning process.

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## **Introduction**

The Town of Binghamton is a bedroom community located in Broome County, New York. Like many communities in Broome County and upstate New York, the Town of Binghamton must recognize the new challenges and opportunities facing its community. Changing demographics, local economic development, and environmental concerns are some of the top areas of concern for residents at the local level. With this in mind, the Town of Binghamton began updating its 2009 Comprehensive Plan to explore the new challenges and opportunities within the Town.

### ***Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan***

The comprehensive plan is the foundation for development and conservation within a community, providing a basis for future land use and zoning decisions and promoting sound growth. Having a comprehensive plan serves as a guide for Town officials, and also supports the Town in future efforts to obtain public funds. While the comprehensive plan itself is not law, New York's zoning enabling statutes require that zoning laws be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan, and other governmental agencies must consider the impact of capital projects on the adopted plan. This plan was prepared in accordance with *New York Town Law §272-a Town Comprehensive Plan*.

### ***The Planning Process***

This Comprehensive Plan update was prepared by the Town of Binghamton Planning Board in close cooperation with the Broome County Planning Department. The current plan has been updated to reflect local changes in policy and community priorities, and tracks the progress on implementation of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. Over the course of eighteen months, the Planning Board met to develop the updated plan. The planning process included an assessment of the previous plan, a brief analysis of current data and trends, a review of local laws, and community participation.

### ***Implementation***

Since the previous plan's adoption, the Town has implemented numerous recommendations related to the Town's local laws, growth and development, and stormwater management. Because of the changes in policies and community priorities, some of the previous recommendations were removed, and new recommendations were proposed. A revised set of recommendations can be found in the concluding chapter of this plan. Implementation of this plan will be the primary responsibility of the Town's various departments and may require collaboration with other local public agencies. The plan should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant to the challenges faced by the Town of Binghamton.

## ***Setting and History***

## ***Location***

The Town of Binghamton is a small town located in the south central portion of Broome County (see map in the Appendix). The Town encompasses approximately 16,147 acres or 25 square miles. 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 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.

The Town is comprised primarily of residential neighborhoods with other pockets of institutional, agricultural, and business uses. 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 in the area near the intersection of Saddlemire Road and Hawleyton Road in the south central portion of the town.

## ***A Brief 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.

The area's first road was laid out and opened in 1845-1846, creating an extension of the Monroe Turnpike which is now known as Park Avenue. Composed of dirt and crossing several hills, this original road was often muddy and difficult for the coach and wagons to navigate. Later, a plank road was built by a private company, which charged a toll at the city line. The Town's dirt roads were replaced with stone in the 1920s, beginning with Pennsylvania Avenue (now Hawleyton Road). "Paving" began at the Binghamton City limits and continued to State Line Road, near the Pennsylvania boarder.

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

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update  
Setting & History***

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 during the second half of the twentieth century, growing from 2,073 (1950 Census) to 4,969 (2000 Census). This population growth came largely at the expense of agriculture. The Town of Binghamton has become almost entirely a bedroom community for the adjoining urbanized area.

***Old Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church***

The Old Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church is an important 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 was 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. In 2006, the Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### ***Where do we get our data?***

A variety of data sources were used for the update on the Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update. These sources are described below:

#### **Decennial Census**

The Decennial Census is the official count of all the people who live in the United States. Since 1790, a census has been conducted every ten years, collecting data on the population and households. The short-form asks seven questions about the population including, name, gender, age, relationship to householder, race/ethnic group and Hispanic origin, and housing tenure. The long-form was more detailed and asked 34 detailed questions about the population and housing characteristics related to socioeconomic status. In 2010, the Decennial Census long-form was replaced with the American Community Survey. The Decennial Census is the most reliable data source for counties and small communities, so whenever available, 2010 data is presented.

#### **American Community Survey (ACS)**

The ACS is an on-going survey that replaced the Census long-form in 2010 and is distributed to households annually, rather than once every ten years. The data provides a snapshot of the population and is released in one, three, and five-year estimates. Even though the ACS was designed to replace the long-form, there are differences in the way questions are asked and the sample size of the population being surveyed is much smaller. In addition, the small sample size often leads to a Margin of Error (MOE) which is defined as the range, above or below the estimated value where the true value may fall. Considering the Town of Binghamton's sample size is relatively small, we can expect a high MOE for many questions. Because of these differences, caution was used when comparing and analyzing data based upon these estimates. The ACS is the only place to find the most current detailed population and housing data for counties and local communities. The data tables in the plan do not include the MOE for ACS estimates.

More information about the ACS can be accessed at the following links:

About the ACS: [census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/)

Detailed data tables with MOE: [factfinder.census.gov/](https://factfinder.census.gov/)

#### **Broome County Data**

Broome County construction and parcel data are presented in the housing and land use sections. Each year the Broome County Planning Department updates information on building permits issued in various municipalities. This is used as an indicator of growth and development trends. The Broome County GIS & Mapping Services continually updates the parcel data with information from the local tax assessor. For the purposes of this section, this information is used to determine land/ property uses and values.

More information about the Broome County Data can be accessed at: [gobroomecounty.com/planning/](https://gobroomecounty.com/planning/)

## ***Demographics, Housing, and Economic Base***

## **Demographics**

An analysis of the community’s demographic trends is necessary to identify population segments which are an important factor for future decisions regarding land use, infrastructure, and community services. This section provides information about population trends, age, race/ethnicity, households, families, poverty, and income. Population data for the Town of Binghamton were collected from the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey (ACS), the most comprehensive, reliable sources of demographic data. Comparisons are made between the population figures for the Town of Binghamton, Broome County, and other towns, where applicable, to put the data in perspective.

### **Total Population**

The table illustrates the population trends of the Town over the past fifty years. During this time the Town’s population grew from 3,475 residents to 4,942 residents, representing an additional 1,467 residents and a net growth rate of about 42 percent. Since 1980, there has been little to no population growth within the Town.

As of 2010, there were 4,942 residents living within the Town of Binghamton, making it the 6<sup>th</sup> smallest municipality within the County. Over the past decade, the Town’s population decreased by a total of 27 persons (less than 1 percent). This slight decline in population is consistent with the trends of most other municipalities within Broome County.

The Town’s population is spread across 15,600 acres or about 24 square miles. While the density varies throughout the Town, as a whole there are 195 people per square mile in the Town which is lower than the population densities of the neighboring rural Town of Conklin’s 217 people per square mile and the County’s 280 people per square mile.

**Town of Binghamton Population 1960-2010**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percent Change from Previous Decade</b>
1960	3,475	NA
1970	4,844	39%
1980	5,007	3%
1990	5,006	0%
2000	4,969	-1%
2010	4,942	-1%

*Data Source: Decennial Census*

**Age**

The table shows the age distribution of the Town’s population in 2010. Age is one of the most important dimensions of the population to consider when planning for the future because it relates to the labor force, housing demand, and need for certain types of facilities and services.

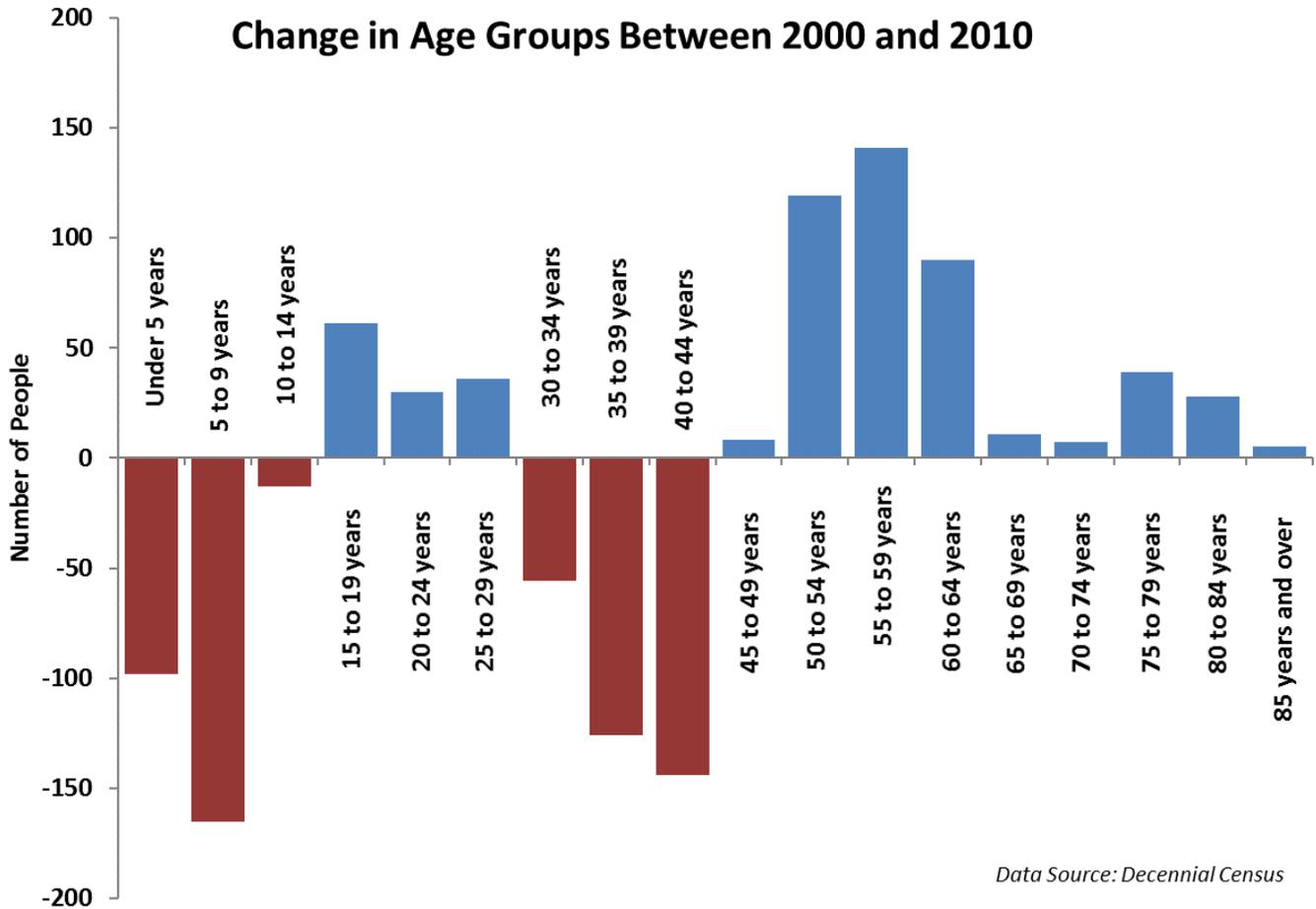
In 2010, the Town’s median age was 44.1 years which represents a four-year increase since the previous comprehensive plan. The County and many of its municipalities have experienced an increase in the median age over the past decade. In 2010, the 50 to 54 year olds represented the largest age cohort within the Town, followed by the 45 to 49 year olds and the 55 to 59 year olds. The 85 and above was the smallest age group (3 percent) in the Town, followed by the 20 to 34 age cohorts. Since the previous comprehensive plan, age cohorts above the age of 55 increased over 500 persons; they make up about 30 percent of the population. Within these age cohorts, the retirement population (age 65 and over) accounted for 15 percent of the Town, which suggests many residents are aging in place.

**Age Group Distribution in 2010**

Age Groups	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>4,942</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200,600</b>	<b>100%</b>
Under 5 years	227	5%	10,480	5%
5 to 9 years	242	5%	10,757	5%
10 to 14 years	406	8%	11,711	6%
15 to 19 years	395	8%	15,726	8%
20 to 24 years	215	4%	17,950	9%
25 to 29 years	192	4%	12,453	6%
30 to 34 years	217	4%	10,531	5%
35 to 39 years	292	6%	10,177	5%
40 to 44 years	351	7%	12,034	6%
45 to 49 years	429	9%	14,965	7%
50 to 54 years	473	10%	15,771	8%
55 to 59 years	427	9%	13,560	7%
60 to 64 years	315	6%	11,641	6%
65 to 69 years	244	5%	8,557	4%
70 to 74 years	171	3%	7,111	4%
75 to 79 years	169	3%	6,146	3%
80 to 84 years	105	2%	5,393	3%
85 years and over	72	1%	5,637	3%
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>44.1</b>		<b>40.2</b>	

*Source: Decennial Data*

The chart below shows the change in age groups between 2000 and 2010. There was a noticeable decline in the 14 years and below population, followed by a slight increase in the 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 age groups. This reveals a shift in the population composition from young children to teenagers and young adults. The 30 to 44 age cohorts experienced a similar shift between 2000 and 2010, contributing to the growth of the 45 and over population. Furthermore, all age groups 45 years and above increased in size over the past decade. More specifically, the 50 to 54 and 55 to 59 age cohorts experienced the largest increase in size over the past decade. Together, these age groups increased by 283 persons between 2000 and 2010. These trends are comparable to other small Towns throughout the County.



**Race and Ethnicity**

The table below illustrates the racial/ethnic composition of the Town and County. In Broome County, the urbanized areas including the City of Binghamton, the Town of Union and Vestal have a substantial presence of various racial and ethnic groups. Other local municipalities, including the Town of Binghamton, are less diverse in comparison. The Town’s race and ethnic composition patterns are described below.

In 2010, 95 percent of the population identified as white. The largest racial/ethnic group living in the Town was the Asian population, comprising about two percent of the Town’s total population. The other racial/ethnic groups grew marginally or decreased over the past decade.

**Race and Ethnicity: 2000-2010**

Race and Ethnic Groups	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>4,942</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200,600</b>	<b>100%</b>
One Race	4,877	99%	195,513	97%
White	4,711	95%	176,444	88%
Black/ African-American	71	1%	9,614	5%
Amer. Indian and Alaskan Native	1	< 1%	396	< 1%
Asian	85	2%	7,065	4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	< 1%	82	< 1%
Some other race	9	< 1%	1,912	1%
Hispanic or Latino	58	1%	6,778	3%
Two or More Races	65	1%	5,087	3%

*Data Source: Decennial Census*

**Households**

This table summarizes the number and types of households in the Town and County in 2000 and 2010. A family household is a household that contains at least two people and at least one person is related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption. A non-family household includes a householder living alone or with non-relatives. The Town’s household trends are generally consistent with County patterns. The Town’s household trends are described below.

As of 2010, there were total of 1,894 households in the Town of Binghamton. Nearly 75 percent are family households, compared to the 59 percent family household rate countywide. Since the previous comprehensive plan there were 81 additional households in the Town, which included an increase of 99 non-family households and a decrease of 18 family households. The increase in the number of non-family households can be partly contributed to an increase in the number of non-married couples living together and elderly residents living alone in their homes longer.

The average size of the Town’s households and families are larger than the County as a whole. At both the Town and County level, household and family sizes decreased slightly over the past decade. This continued the trend of slowly declining household and family sizes in the Town and County since 1990.

**Households and Families: 2000-2010**

<b>Households and Families</b>	<b>Town of Binghamton</b>		<b>Broome County</b>	
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Households</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>1,894</b>	<b>80,749</b>	<b>82,167</b>
Average Household Size	2.74	2.61	2.37	2.32
Family Households	1,408	1,390	50,231	48,646
Average Family Size	3.12	3.02	2.97	2.92
Non-Family Households	405	504	30,518	33,521

*Data Source: Decennial Census*

**Household Type**

This table identifies the Town’s household types by the presence of people under the age of 18 years (children) and over the age of 75 years (elderly) in 2000 and 2010. Households and family types have changed over time. There are fewer “traditional families” with married couples and children, and the increased lifespan has expanded the population ages 75 and over. These trends within the Town are described below.

In 2010, households with children under the age of 18 accounted for one-third of the Town’s households. The number of households with children under 18 decreased slightly since the previous plan. Households with one or more people over the age of 75 accounted for 15 percent of households, and slightly increased since 2000. The table shows over one-third of households are a one-person household, meaning they live alone. Fewer young children households and more elderly households reveal the demand for the Town to consider different types of housing and community services offered in the future.

**Households by Presence of People Under 18 Years and Over 75 Years: 2000 to 2010**

Household Type	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,894</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Households with one or more people under 18 years</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>33%</b>
Family Households	698	99.6%	610	99%
Non-Family Households	3	< 1%	9	1%
<b>Households with one or more people 75 years and over</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>15%</b>
1-person household	77	36%	100	36%
2-or-more person household	138	64%	176	64%
Family households	134	97%	164	93%
Non-family households	4	3%	12	7%

*Data Source: Decennial Census*

### **School Enrollment**

The table below shows the Town and County’s estimated school enrollment rates for the population over the age of three reported in 2014. More information specific to the school districts, primary schools and colleges can be accessed at: <https://data.nysed.gov/>. The school enrollment trends for the Town are described below.

The Town and County have similar enrollment rates for people over the age of three, with some slight differences between the high school and college level education. Changes in the school-enrolled population are cyclical, and often attributed to shifts in the population size and its age cohorts. For example, the majority of the Town’s school-enrolled population (56 percent) attends high school or college, which corresponds with the shift of the young children age cohorts discussed in the previous section. About 75 percent of the Town’s population was not enrolled in school in 2014.

**2014 School Enrollment Estimates for Population 3 Years and Over**

School Enrollment	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Population 3 Years and Over</b>	<b>4,770</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>192,758</b>	<b>100%</b>
Enrolled in School	1,259	26%	53,936	28%
Nursery school or preschool	71	6%	2,633	5%
Kindergarten	57	5%	2,584	5%
Elementary School (grades 1-8)	423	34%	17,440	32%
High School (grades 9-12)	369	29%	9,617	18%
College, undergraduate	313	25%	18,405	34%
Graduate or professional school	26	2%	3,257	6%
Not enrolled in school	3,511	74%	138,822	72%

*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Educational Attainment**

The table below shows the estimated educational attainment rates for the population 25 years and over in the Town and County reported in 2014. The Town’s educational attainment patterns for the population age 25 and over are similar to the County, but there are slight differences. The Town’s educational attainment trends are described below.

The Town of Binghamton is becoming increasingly educated. In 2014, it was estimated that 95 percent of the Town’s population had earned a high school degree or higher, suggesting only a small percentage are without a high school diploma. Almost one in three residents has a bachelor’s degree or higher, which is slightly greater than the countywide rate. These trends suggest the Town’s population is employable.

**Estimated Educational Attainment Levels in 2014**

Education Level	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>132,029</b>	<b>100%</b>
Less than 9th grade	23	1%	3,741	3%
9th - 12th grade, no diploma	147	4%	10,088	8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	859	25%	43,632	33%
Some college, no degree	756	22%	24,323	18%
Associate's degree	529	16%	15,644	12%
Bachelor's Degree	522	15%	19,104	14%
Graduate or professional degree	547	16%	15,497	12%

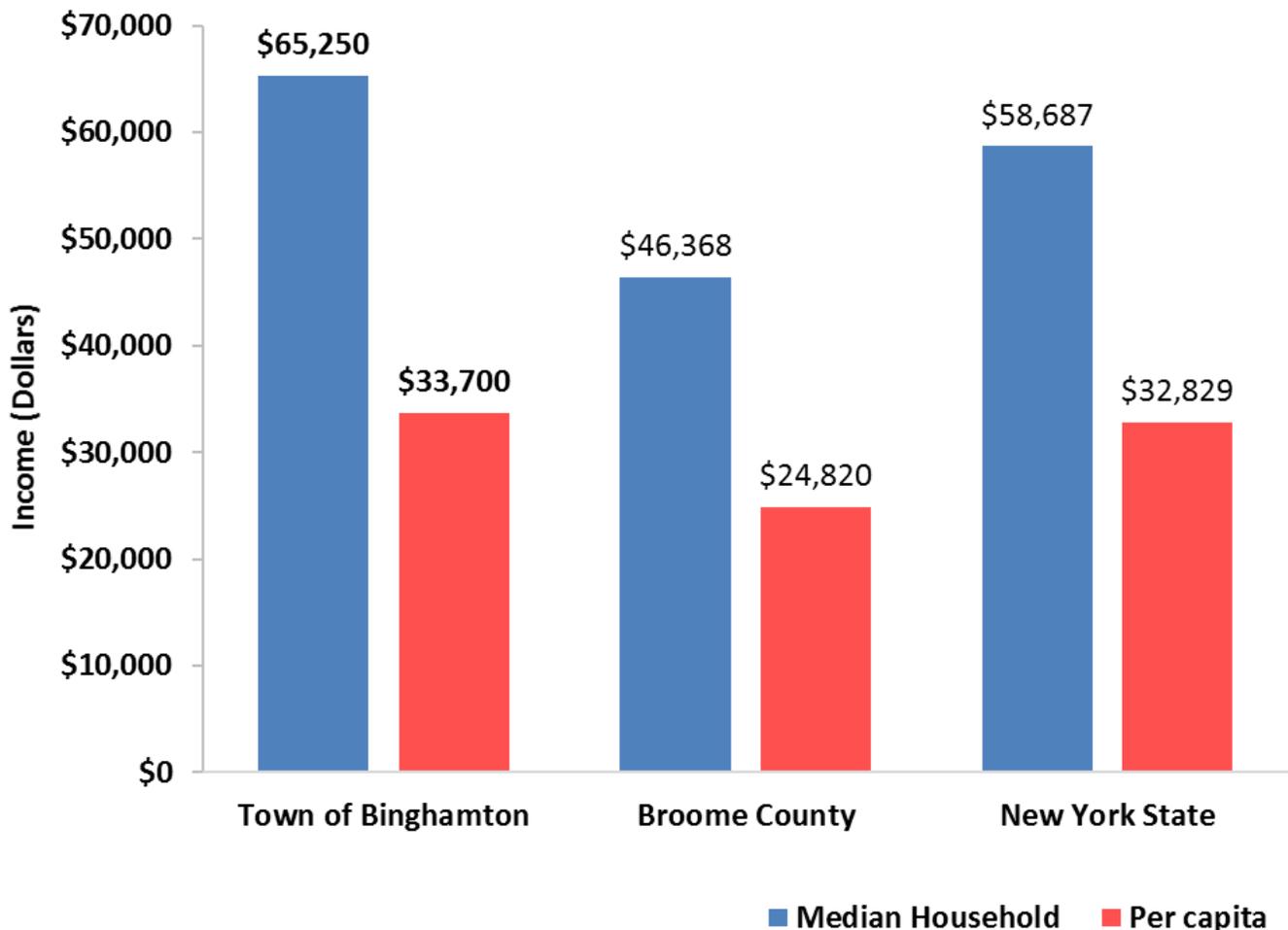
*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Income**

The chart illustrates the median household and per capita income estimates for the Town, County and State in 2014. Measuring income is one method used to gauge the quality of life and the economic well-being of residents. This section presents two income measurements. Median household income is the combined income of all members of a household, and the reported number represents the middle value of all household incomes of an area. Another measure is per capita income, which can be more useful for comparisons because it accounts for population size. The per capita income is derived by dividing the total income of an area by the number of residents in the working population (15-64 years old). The key income trends are described below.

In 2014, the Town of Binghamton’s estimated median household income of \$65,25 was higher than all other Broome County municipalities. In addition, the Town’s estimated median household income was considerably higher than the county and statewide estimates. The Town’s per capita income was greater than the other local municipalities, and also greater than the county and statewide averages.

**Estimated Income Levels in 2014**



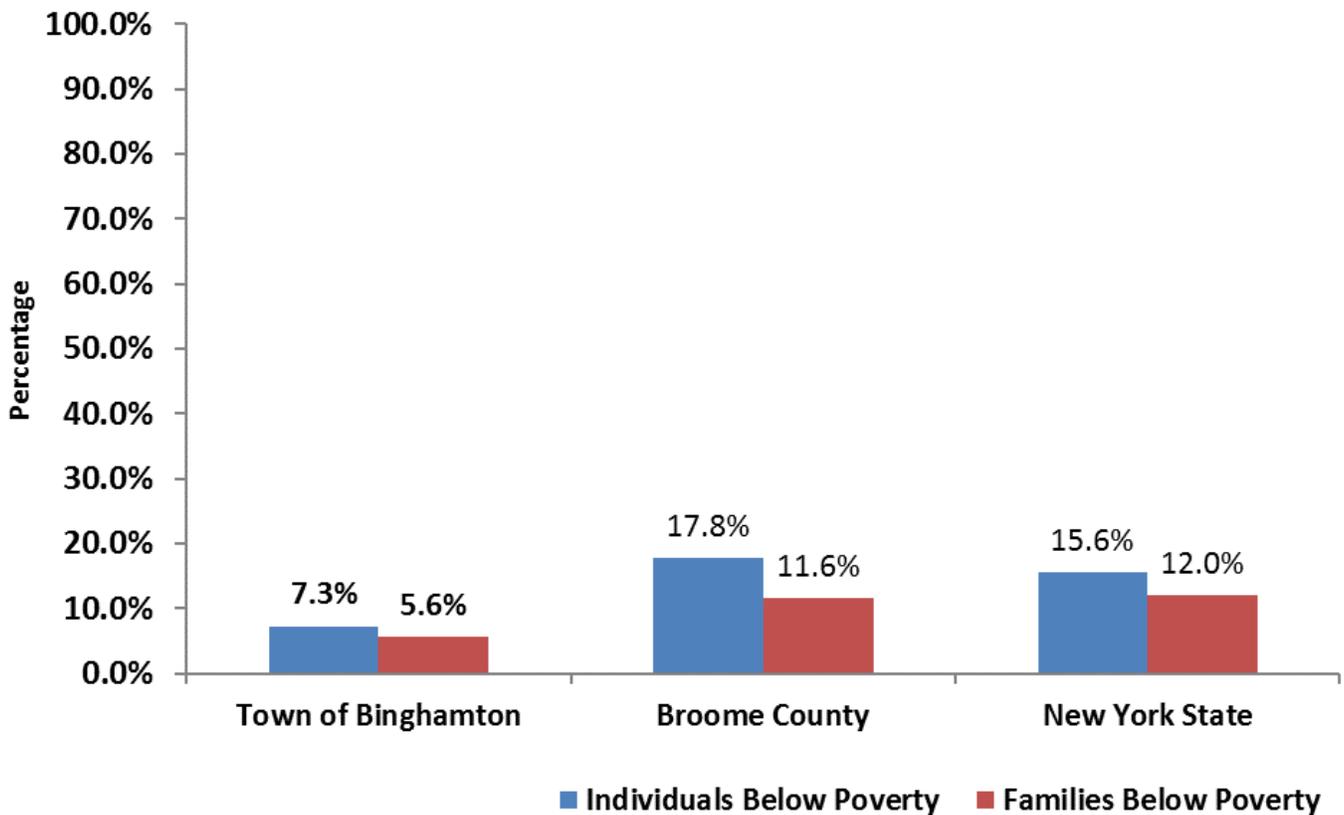
*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Poverty**

The chart illustrates the estimated individual and family poverty rates for the Town, County and State in 2014. The Census Bureau uses the poverty rate as an indicator of economic stress. The poverty rate is an estimate of the proportion of people with personal or family income below the poverty threshold (updated annually by the Census). The Town’s poverty rate patterns are described below.

Based on the information provided in the chart, about 7.3 percent of individuals and 5.6 percent of families were living in poverty in 2014. These are relatively low rates compared to the county-wide and state averages. The Town had the third lowest family poverty rate, and the lowest individual poverty rate of all other County municipalities. These low poverty rates correspond with the relatively high income values of the Town.

**Estimated Poverty Rates in 2014**



*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

## Housing

This section provides an inventory of the existing housing stock within the Town of Binghamton. It examines the quantity, type, occupancy, age and value of housing structures. In the Town of Binghamton, residential development covers 8,124 acres (52 percent of total acreage). The housing stock is largely owner-occupied, single-family homes. The average residential lot size is approximately 4.2 acres. However, the housing density varies throughout the Town.

### Housing Units

The table below shows the number of housing units in the Town and County revealing the following trends. In 2010, there were 1,985 housing units in the Town of Binghamton. The housing stock increased by 74 units since the previous comprehensive plan. While this is a small increase, the Town's housing growth outpaced the County's over the past decade.

Housing Units	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
Housing Units	1,911	1,985	88,817	90,563
Percent Change 2000 to 2010	4%		2%	

*Data Source: Decennial Census*

### Housing Mix

The table below illustrates the character of the housing stock reported in 2014. The types of homes people choose to live in have changed over the years. It is important to examine a community's housing mix because it shows the various types of housing available for people in different stages of life. Diverse housing options should be available to accommodate the changing demographics of the Town. The Town's housing characteristics are described below.

Single-family units continue to be the dominant housing stock in the Town and County. The Town has the largest proportion of single-family units compared to all other municipalities. Multi-family homes and mobile homes are not common within the Town.

Housing Type	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>90,139</b>	<b>100%</b>
Single Family	1946	96%	56,470	63%
Multi-Family	64	3%	28,991	32%
Mobile Home	10	0.5%	4,678	5%
Other	0	0%	0	0%

*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Occupancy & Vacancy Rates**

The table below identifies the occupancy and vacancy rates of the housing units for the Town and County in 2010. The occupancy rate of a community’s housing stock is a strong indicator of the economic climate and neighborhood stability. This data is often used to evaluate the need for new housing programs. The vacant “for seasonal use” category includes units that are used for seasonal, recreational or other occasional uses. The occupancy/vacancy trends are described below.

In 2010, 95 percent or 1,894 housing units were occupied within the Town of Binghamton. The owner-occupied rate was 91 percent, and was higher than all of the other municipalities and the countywide average. About five percent, or 98 housing units of the total housing stock were vacant in 2010. The vacancy rate has remained stable since the previous plan, and remains slightly lower than the countywide average.

**Occupancy Status in 2010**

Occupancy Status	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>1,985</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>90,563</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Occupied</b>	<b>1,894</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>82,167</b>	<b>91%</b>
Owner-Occupied	1,721	91%	53,260	65%
Renter-Occupied	173	9%	28,907	35%
<b>Vacant</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>8,396</b>	<b>9%</b>
For Rent	11	12%	2,522	30%
For Sale Only	19	21%	956	11%
Rented or sold, not occupied	0	0%	369	4%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	23	25%	1,843	22%
Other Vacant	38	42%	2,706	32%

*Data Source: Decennial Census*

### **Building Permits**

The table below details the construction permits obtained in the Town since 2006. The number of building permits represents development occurring in a community. While not all building permits result in a completed project, it provides a general picture. The following data is broken down by types of residential construction and other building permits required for additions, alterations, and repairs made. These values are not adjusted for inflation. The construction data reveals the following trends.

Since 2006, a total of 56 new construction permits, with the estimated project values amounting to approximately \$10.3 million were obtained in the Town. The most common type of new construction permit within the Town were for single-family developments. There were four permits for new construction of individual mobile homes, and zero permits were obtained for multi-unit dwellings since 2006. New construction permits began leveling off around 2009, which is partly attributed to the Great Recession of 2008 and the bursting of the housing bubble nationwide. The decrease in the number of new construction permits obtain may also be partly attributed to the slowly declining population rates.

Since 2006, 299 permits were obtained for improvements to residential properties, and the estimated project values totaling to \$7 million. The number of improvement permits obtained has been relatively stable over the past decade, but there was noticeable spike in 2010 followed by a substantial drop in the following year.

**Town of Binghamton Construction Permits 2006-2015**

Year	Single-Family		Mobile Home		Total New Residential Construction Value		Additions, Alterations and Repairs	
	Permits	Value	Permits	Value	Permits	Value	Permits	Value
<b>2006</b>	14	\$2,222,672	4	395,660	18	\$2,618,332	25	\$810,640
<b>2007</b>	9	\$1,353,000	-	-	9	\$1,353,000	32	\$592,085
<b>2008</b>	9	\$1,980,000	-	-	9	\$1,980,000	51	\$1,045,300
<b>2009</b>	4	\$1,506,150	-	-	4	\$1,506,150	51	\$635,065
<b>2010</b>	3	\$400,000	-	-	3	\$400,000	70	\$828,480
<b>2011</b>	3	\$630,000	-	-	3	\$630,000	22	\$793,200
<b>2012</b>	3	\$800,000	-	-	3	\$800,000	44	\$880,984
<b>2013</b>	4	\$646,700	-	-	4	\$646,700	31	\$339,830
<b>2014</b>	2	\$275,000	-	-	2	\$275,000	39	\$453,947
<b>2015</b>	1	\$50,000	-	-	1	\$50,000	34	\$623,101
<b>2016</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	\$308,227
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>\$9,863,522</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>\$395,660</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>\$10,259,182</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>\$7,310,859</b>

*Data Source: Broome County Construction Data*

**Year Structure Built**

The table below illustrates the proportion of housing built in each decade. The age of the housing stock is a strong indicator of housing quality and the amount of maintenance and repair costs. If there is a significant amount of older housing (1939 or earlier), these homes may need more maintenance and become costly to the owner. The costs and maintenance associated with older homes is especially a challenge for the “aging in place” and disabled population, who often have to modify their homes to make them more safe and accessible. The Town’s housing characteristics are described below.

The estimated median year housing structures built within the Town is about 16 years younger than the countywide rate. The Town of Binghamton has the third smallest percentage (11 percent) of housing units built before 1939, behind Vestal and Conklin. This suggests that development and the expansion of housing reached the Town later than other areas of the County that experienced growth during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The table shows a decline in housing construction after 1980 which correlates with the declining population trends of the Town and County. While the Town’s housing stock is relatively young, it is important to note that nearly half the Town’s housing stock (946 units) were built over 50 years ago, suggesting that segments of the Town’s housing stock are aging and may need repairs or updates.

**Estimated Housing by Year Structure Built in 2014**

Year Built	Town of Binghamton		Broome County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>90,139</b>	<b>100%</b>
1939 or earlier	219	11%	27,417	30%
1940 to 1949	99	5%	9,566	11%
1950 to 1959	284	14%	14,296	16%
1960 to 1969	344	17%	11,702	13%
1970 to 1979	361	18%	9,420	10%
1980 to 1989	374	19%	8,961	10%
1990 to 2000	219	11%	5,085	6%
2000 to 2009	104	5%	3,319	4%
2010 or later	16	1%	373	0%
Median Year Built	1972		1956	

*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

### **Housing Value**

The table below illustrates the range of housing values for single-family homes in the Town. These values were reported to the ACS by the owner according to what they state the value of the home is, and do not account for inflation.

Within the Town, housing values range from under \$50,000 to over \$1 million. The largest percentage of housing units are valued between \$50,000 and \$90,000, followed closely by housing values over \$200,000. Only a small percentage (5 percent) are valued less than \$50,000. The Town has the third highest estimated median housing value (\$135,200), behind the Towns of Vestal and Union.

<b>Estimated Value of Owner-Occupied Units</b>		
<b>Value</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>100%</b>
Less than \$50,000	83	5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	525	31%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	330	19%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	256	15%
\$200,000 and over	506	30%
<b>Median Housing Value</b>	<b>\$135,200</b>	

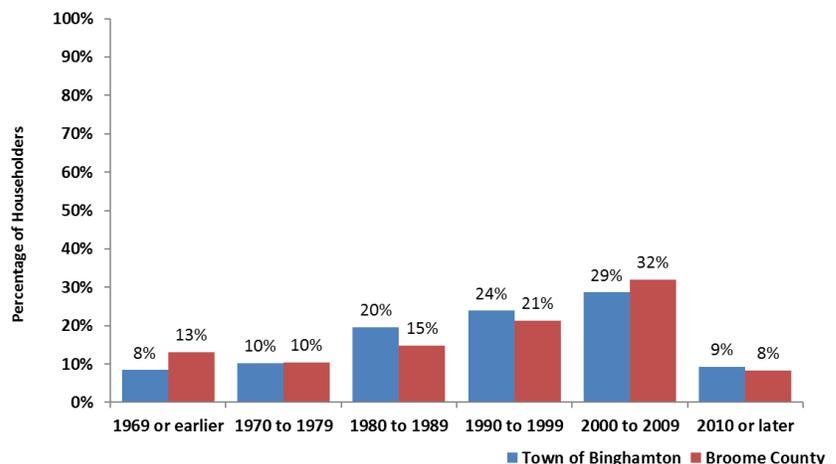
*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

### **Housing Turnover**

The chart below illustrates the longevity of households in the Town and the County. This information measures housing turnover and is an indicator of neighborhood stability. The “movers” may represent residents relocating within the Town or those moving to the Town from farther away.

There are a mix of new and long-time residents living in the Town. The majority of householders (62 percent) moved into their home after 1990 which indicates the Town is an attractive place for new home buyers. About 40 percent of the householders moved into their home before 1990 which shows there are many long-time residents living within the Town as well.

**Estimated Year Householder Moved Into Unit in 2014**



*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Economic Base**

This section provides information about the economic base of the Town and examines the labor force, industry and occupational sectors, and commuting patterns. The following data refers to residents' employment patterns, not the jobs within the Town. In many cases, comparisons to County and State data are made.

**Labor Force**

The table below details the labor force within the Town and County. The labor force is an important element of economic conditions of a community. The data is broken up by labor force participation. Many of those who are not in the labor force are retired or going to school. The characteristics of the labor force are described below.

Approximately 2,775 people, or about 68 percent of the population over the age of 16 are in the labor force. The Town's unemployment rate is 5.8 percent and is lower than the County (9 percent) and State (8 percent) unemployment rates. The Town of Binghamton has the third lowest estimated unemployment rate in the County behind the Towns of Triangle and Windsor. The unemployment rate fluctuates by seasonality; the latest figure shows the County's unemployment rate is slightly lower at 5.3% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2017) which may suggest the Town's unemployment rate is lower as well.

**Estimated Labor Force Characteristics in 2014**

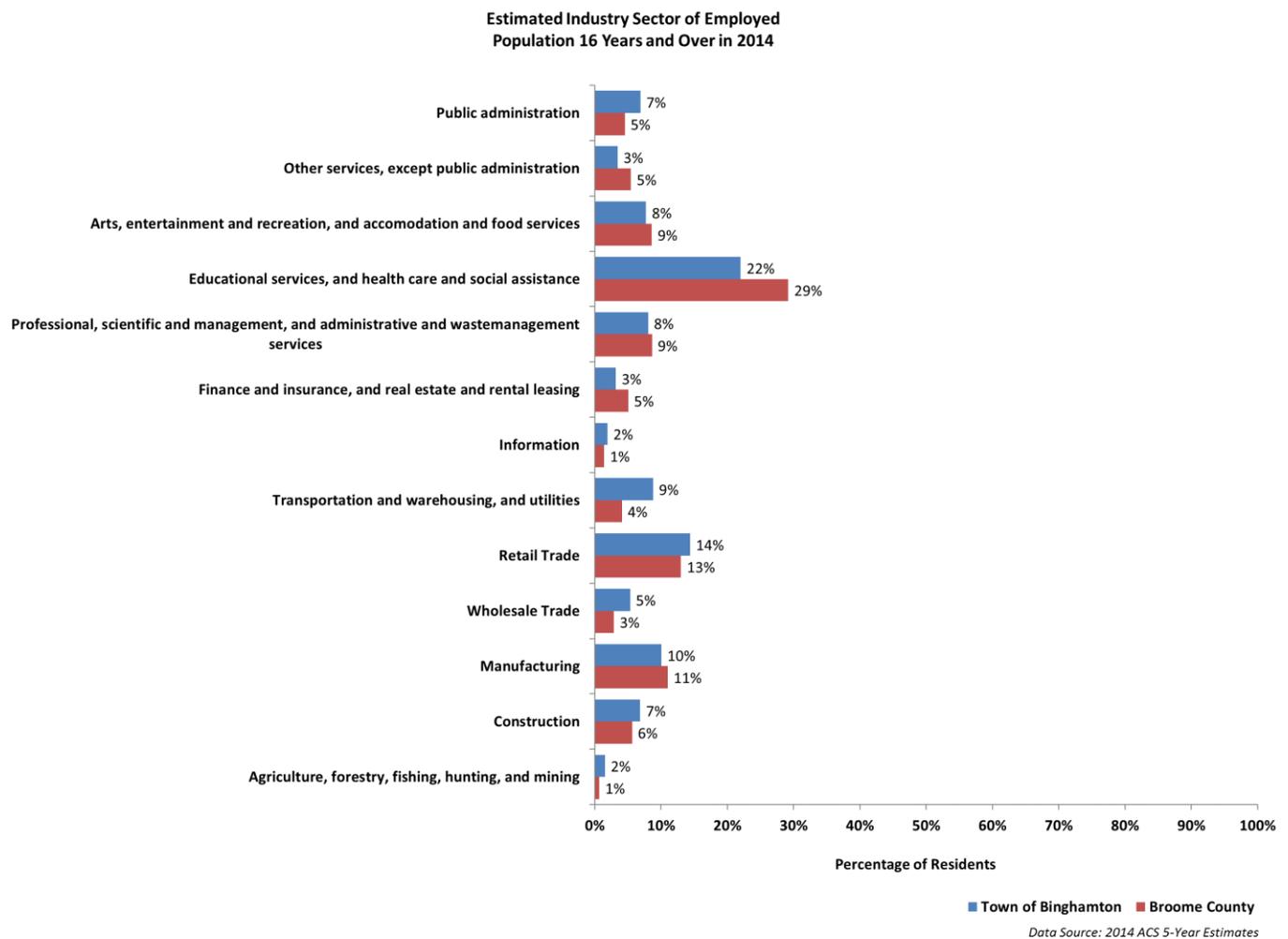
<b>Labor Force</b>	<b>Town of Binghamton</b>		<b>Broome County</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Population 16 Years and Over	4,053	100%	164,275	100%
<b>In Labor Force</b>	<b>2,775</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>96,518</b>	<b>59%</b>
In Armed Forces	-	-	56	<1%
In Civilian Labor Force	2,775	68%	96,462	59%
Employed	2,615	94%	88,182	91%
Unemployed	160	5.8%	8,280	9%
<b>Not in Labor Force</b>	<b>1,278</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>67,757</b>	<b>41%</b>

*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Industry Sector**

The chart below shows the labor force by industry sector for the Town and County in 2014. The industry refers to the type of work done at a person’s place of work. This data is used to formulate policy and programs for employment, career development and training, and to measure compliance with antidiscrimination policies. The trends for the Town’s industry sector trends are described below.

The Town and County have comparable representation in most of the industrial sectors shown below. The chart shows Town residents are employed primarily in educational services, health care and social assistance (22 percent), manufacturing (10 percent), and retail trade (14 percent). Only a small portion of Town residents work in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining (2 percent), and information (2 percent) sectors.

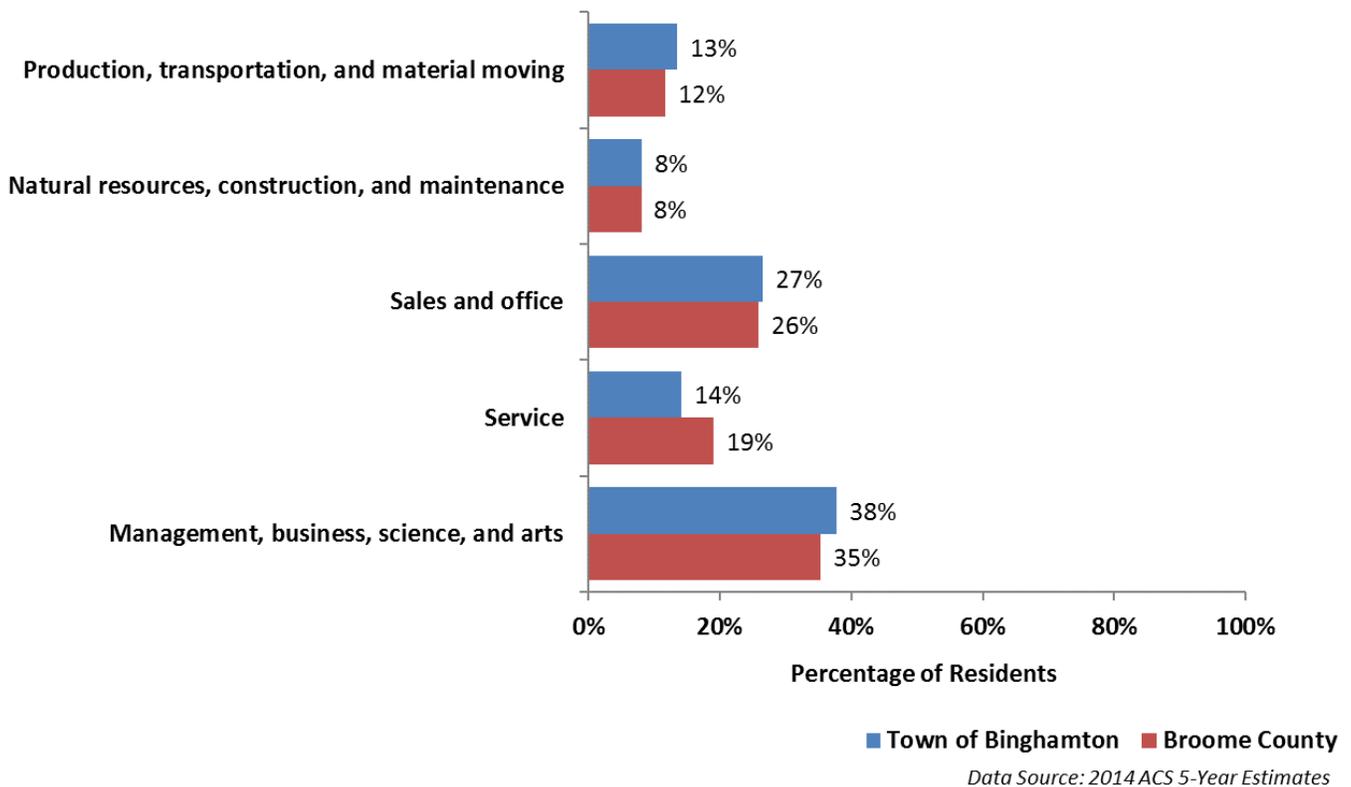


**Occupation Sector**

The chart shows the occupation sectors for the Town and County in 2014, illustrating the wide range of workers. Occupation refers to the type of work a person does to earn a living. The Census collects this data to describe the work experience of the labor force and uses the information to develop workforce programs. The occupation patterns for the Town are described below.

The Town of Binghamton closely resembles the County in regards to the proportion of occupations held by residents. The most common occupations of Town residents are the management, business, science and arts (38 percent) or the sales and office occupations (27 percent). According to the Census Bureau, management and business occupations are offer higher salaries compared to other occupations in the State, and typically require higher education levels and skilled training of the workforce. The least common occupation for residents is within the natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.

**Estimated Occupation Sector of Employed Population 16 Years and Over in 2014**



### **Commuting Patterns**

The table shows the place of work for residents and travel time within the Town and County reported in 2014. The Town of Binghamton is a bedroom community and shares a relationship with neighboring areas for jobs and economic activity. There was no significant change in the commuting patterns from the last comprehensive plan. The commuting patterns are described below.

According to 2014 estimates, about ten percent of residents work within the Town, compared to the 33 percent of County residents who work within the municipality which they live. The majority of Town residents are traveling within Broome County to their place of work. It takes about 17.7 minutes for Town residents to travel to work, which is below average for Broome County commuters. Within the Town, the majority (53 percent) of residents' commute time was between 10 and 19 minutes, and 66 percent of the residents' commute times were less than twenty minutes.

**Estimated Commuting Patterns in 2014**

<b>Commuting Patterns</b>	<b>Town of Binghamton</b>		<b>Broome County</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total Workers</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>86,308</b>	<b>100%</b>
Worked in New York	2,465	96%	84,972	98%
Worked in County	2,326	94%	76,756	90%
Worked outside County	139	6%	8,216	10%
Worked in Town	251	10%	28,579	33%
Worked outside Town	2,315	90%	57,729	67%
<b>Commuting Population</b>	<b>2,461</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>83,151</b>	<b>100%</b>
Less than 5 minutes	34	1%	3,030	4%
5 to 9 minutes	286	12%	12,373	15%
10 to 19 minutes	1,299	53%	36,171	44%
20 to 29 minutes	519	21%	18,279	22%
30 to 39 minutes	188	8%	6,616	8%
40 to 59 minutes	37	2%	3,195	4%
60 minutes or more	98	4%	3,487	4%
<b>Mean Travel Time (minutes)</b>	<b>17.7</b>		<b>18.7</b>	

*Data Source: 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

## ***Land Use***

**Introduction**

This chapter updates the previous comprehensive plan’s land use chapter. The Town’s land use 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.

This chapter analyzes 2016 Broome County Real Property Tax Service to determine land use patterns. Parcel data provides a wide range of information including land use classifications prepared by the Town of Binghamton Assessor. While this is the most complete and reliable land use data source, it has some limitations. Generally, the limitations associated with property assessments include: they are not completed on a regular basis, properties can only be classified as one use even if they have multiple uses (i.e. residential and agricultural), assessments are subjective based on the assessor, and therefore assessments and classifications may be inconsistent throughout the County. A land use map for the Town of Binghamton can be found in the Appendix.

**Current Land Use Patterns**

The Town of Binghamton has a total area of 15,661 acres (about 24 square miles) in tax parcels, and as of September 2016 contained 2,905 tax parcels. Residential is the largest land use type in the Town, accounting for 67 percent of the tax parcels (1,947) and 52 percent of the land area (8,124 acres). The second largest land use is vacant land. At over 6,000 acres (40 percent of the Town’s area) and 864 tax parcels, vacant land in Binghamton is a tremendous resource.

The table below shows the land use breakdown in the Town of Binghamton.

**Town of Binghamton Land Use in 2016**

Land Use Categories	Parcels		Acres	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agricultural	6	0.2%	215	1%
Residential	1,947	67%	8,124	52%
Vacant	864	30%	6,292	40%
Commercial	15	1%	141	1%
Recreation and Entertainment	8	0.3%	512	3%
Community Services	14	0.5%	50	0.3%
Industrial	1	0.0%	13	0.1%
Public Services	25	1%	298	2%
No Data	25	1%	16	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,905</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,661</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

**Residential**

The residential landscape has not changed significantly since the completion of the previous comprehensive plan. Residential uses encompass 8,124 acres of land, about 52 percent of the Town’s total parcel acreage. The average residential lot size is approximately 4 acres. Not surprisingly, single-family homes are the predominant type of residential dwelling in the Town. There are over 1,750 parcels with single-family homes and an additional 124 single-family residences on 10 or more acres (rural residence). Individual mobile homes account for 1 percent of the land (53 acres); there are no mobile home parks and no parcels with multiple mobile homes within the Town.

The Town of Binghamton’s residential patterns are similar to other small towns in Broome County. Single-family and rural residences are the two largest residential land use types. These two residential classifications make up 96 percent of residential land and nearly 50 percent of the parcel acreage in the Town.

The table below shows the Town’s residential land use breakdown.

Residential Uses	Residential Land Use			
	Parcels		Acres	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single-Family	1,758	90%	3,741	46%
Two-Family	42	2%	137	2%
Rural Residence	124	6%	4,054	50%
Estate	1	0.1%	10	0.1%
Multiple Residences	8	0.4%	143	2%
Apartments	4	0.2%	3	0.03%
Seasonal Residence	1	0.1%	2	0.03%
Mobile Home	9	0.5%	53	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,142</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

**Vacant**

Vacant lands are defined as lots where there is no human activity, or any type of site development. Nearly 6,300 acres in the Town of Binghamton are classified as vacant. There are three types of vacant land uses identified within the Town, which are predominately classified as residential or rural vacant lots. There are only two vacant commercial parcels covering 44 acres within the Town.

Vacant land is often viewed as developable land which can create opportunities for infill and redevelopment. When planning to develop a vacant lot, it is important to keep the other surrounding uses in mind, so incompatible uses are not in close proximity to each other. Other important factors to consider when developing vacant land for residential, commercial or industrial purposes include the lot’s existing utilities, proximity to the floodplain, and the topography of the area.

The table below summarizes the vacant land uses in the Town of Binghamton.

<b>Vacant Land Use</b>				
<b>Vacant Areas</b>	<b>Parcels</b>		<b>Acres</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Residential	751	87%	2,219	35%
Rural	111	13%	4,029	64%
Commercial	2	0.2%	44	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,292</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

**Recreation and Entertainment**

Providing access to recreation and entertainment sites is an important role of many local communities. The Town of Binghamton has a substantial amount of land dedicated to recreational uses. There are eight parcels covering 512 acres reported as recreational or entertainment uses in the Town.

Over half of the recreational uses are classified as sports facilities which include the Binghamton Tennis Center, the former Vestal Hills Country Club, and Windy Hill Farms. There are two parks in the Town, Broome County Aqua Terra Wilderness Area and Jackson Pond Town Park. Aqua Terra, formerly the Innsbruck Inn ski lodge, provides natural settings for passive recreation and covers over 400 acres on 10 parcels, however, the majority of those are classified as vacant.

The recreation and entertainment uses within the Town are summarized below.

**Recreation and Entertainment Land Use**

Recreational Uses	Parcels		Acres	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Amusement Facilities	1	13%	11	2%
Sports Facilities	4	50%	273	53%
Parks	3	38%	229	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

**Commercial**

Commercial land occupies 15 parcels in the Town of Binghamton and are scattered along the major roadways within the Town. These uses account for about 1 percent of the total parcel acreage (141 acres) of the Town. According to the Town Assessment records, there was an increase in the amount of commercial land since the previous comprehensive plan.

The largest category of commercial land use in the Town is the 65 acres of Motor Vehicle Service uses. This accounts for nearly 50 percent of the commercial land use space in the Town of Binghamton. Almost one-third of the commercial land within the Town is used as Storage, Warehouse, and Distribution Facilities, which are located in the northwest section of the Town. There were no dining establishments or retail services reported in the Town. In the public survey, respondents indicated that large-scale commercial development is not compatible anywhere in the Town.

The table below shows the breakdown of commercial land use in the Town.

**Commercial Land Use**

Commercial Uses	Parcels		Acres	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Motor Vehicle Services	7	47%	65	46%
Storage, Warehouse and Distribution Facilities	4	27%	10	7%
Banks and Office Buildings	1	7%	2	1%
Miscellaneous Services	1	7%	1	1%
Multi-purpose	2	13%	63	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

***Agricultural***

A small portion of the Town’s undeveloped land is classified as an agricultural use. That being said, the public survey revealed “protecting farms, agriculture and open space” was one of the major priorities of Town residents. A parcel is classified as agricultural if is used as part of an operating farm, without living accommodation on the lot. There are six parcels on 215 acres fitting this description. According to the previous comprehensive plan, agricultural land has increased by 42 acres.

Livestock activities represent the largest share (90 percent) of agricultural land. Livestock operations are usually larger agricultural operations because animals require more pasture land. Active cropland comprises a small portion of the Town’s agricultural land. A 21-acre apple orchard is the only reported agricultural crop operation in the Town of Binghamton.

The agricultural land uses are summarized below.

<b>Agricultural Land Use</b>				
<b>Agricultural Uses</b>	<b>Parcels</b>		<b>Acres</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Dairy Products	2	33%	38	18%
Horse Farms	3	50%	157	73%
Orchard Crops	1	17%	21	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

***Public Services and Institutional Uses***

This section combines the Community and Public Services land uses. These uses are scattered throughout the Town and include, schools, churches, government buildings, fire department facilities, cemeteries, utility facilities, and communications towers. Together these uses are located on 39 parcels covering about 350 acres.

Community services cover 50 acres on 14 parcels. Each of these parcels is classified as tax-exempt. Brookside Elementary School is located on Saddlemire Road and accounts for over half of the community services land area. Public services cover almost 300 acres on 25 parcels. Communication uses dominate the public services land area. These uses mainly include the communications towers located in the northwest section of the Town.

The community and public services land uses are summarized below.

**Community and Public Services Land Use**

Community and Public Service Uses	Parcels		Acres	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Community Services</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>14%</b>
Schools	2	14%	27	54%
Religious	3	21%	10	20%
Government	1	7%	3	7%
Police and Fire	3	21%	3	5%
Cultural and Recreation	1	7%	1	2%
Miscellaneous	4	29%	6	12%
<b>Public Services</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>86%</b>
Water	4	16%	2	1%
Communication	10	40%	222	74%
Waste Disposal	1	4%	29	10%
Electric and Gas	10	40%	45	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Broome County Parcel Data 2016*

***Industrial***

The Town of Binghamton has very little industrial development. This may be partly attributed to the Town’s topography and its distant location from a major highway. There is one 12.5-acre parcel on the western border classified as a manufacturing/processing facility. This industrial parcel is located in a Planned Development Zoning District adjacent to other parcels that are classified as residential or vacant.

## ***Facilities***

## ***Introduction***

Like most communities, the Town of Binghamton and other organizations maintain a number of facilities to provide services to Town residents. Facilities are important indicators of the development potential and the quality of life quality of life in the Town. The major public facilities in the Town of Binghamton are described below.

## ***Public Safety***

### **Fire Protection**

The entire town is served by the all-volunteer Binghamton Fire Department. Each year they host a variety of fundraising events open to the public. In the survey, over 70 percent of respondents indicated the fire protection services in the Town were “Excellent” or “Good” which suggests the level of service they provide is adequate. The fire company was established in 1950 and maintains three stations in the Town as listed 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 of 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.

## ***Recreational Facilities***

Broome County owns **Aqua-Terra Park** on Maxian Road. The park is 466 acres and is the site of the former Aqua-Terra Sportsman's Club and Innsbruck USA ski lodge. Features of the park are ideal for passive recreation and include cross-country skiing, hiking and snowshoeing, trails, and a six-acre pond. The Town of Binghamton owns **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. A variety of recreational and social events are held at the park throughout the year.

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***

### ***Facilities***

The Town of Binghamton owns and operates the **Town of Binghamton Community Center** located at 1905 Coleman Road. The center has meeting/banquet space as well as an outdoor baseball field. The facility is available and can be rented out for wedding receptions, retirement and birthday parties, holiday gatherings, and business training seminars.

The former **Vestal Hills Country Club** was a 214.5-acre, semi-private golf course located at 3115 Webb Road. The 18-hole course was designed and constructed under the supervision of Geoffrey Cornish. The country club included tennis courts, an Olympic-size heated swimming pool, and clubhouse which functioned also as a catered dining facility. In 2016, the property was purchased by an unknown buyer; its future continuing as a golf course is uncertain.

The **Binghamton Tennis Center** is a 7-acre tennis/recreation facility located on Mill Street, adjacent to the City of Binghamton Line. The club was established in 1966, and was the site of the “original ‘Masters’ tournament. This is a privately owned facility and is open year-round to its members. The facilities include: six indoor and eight outdoor tennis courts, an outdoor swimming pool, a basketball court, a service pro shop, Aces bar, and an outdoor covered patio area.

**South Wind Stable and Equestrian Center** is a 30-acre equine facility located on Mill Street, adjacent to the City of Binghamton line. This facility includes three barns with a total of 38 stalls, an indoor and outdoor riding ring, and five grass pastures. South Wind Stables offers riding lessons and boarding services.

### ***Government Facilities***

The **Town Hall** is a government building located on Park Avenue and contains office/meeting space. This building contains several departments including the Building Code/Permits, Town Court, Dog Control, Parks, Town Supervisor, Tax Collector, Town Clerk, Water and Sewer, and Youth Activities. The Town of Binghamton website allows residents to access information about these departments, meeting minutes, and online bill payments.

The **Town of Binghamton Highway Department** is located on 3.5 acres at the intersections of Hawleyton and Milks Roads. This facility houses their heavy equipment including trucks, building materials, signs, trailers, and tools. Throughout the year they provide a number of services including: maintenance and upkeep of Town roads, along with brush and leaf removal in the spring and autumn months.

### ***Educational Facilities***

The Town of Binghamton is served primarily by the Susquehanna Valley School District, however, small portions of the Town are located in the Binghamton City, South Mountain and Vestal School Districts. **Brookside Elementary** is a one-story 60,000 sq. foot facility located on Saddlemire Road. Brookside is part of the Susquehanna Valley School District; it enrolls about 375 students in grades kindergarten through fifth. The school grounds include a playground, blacktop basketball court, and open fields for recreational activities.

***Cultural Facilities***

The **Town of Binghamton Historical** Society was formed in the early 1980s with a mission to preserve the history of the greater Binghamton Township region and its inhabitants. The historical society operates a museum at the historic Hawleyton Methodist Episcopal Church on Hawleyton Road. Overtime, the two organizations have worked together to make renovations and repairs to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Gothic Revival structure. Within the museum, visitors can find an assortment of artifacts from the one-room schoolhouses, farm tools, oral histories, and more. The BTHS hosts a variety of community events throughout the year, publishes a quarterly newsletter, and participates in the NY Path Through History Weekend.

***Transportation***

## **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.

## **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, but a very small portion of Conklin Road (NYS Route 7) runs through the northeast corner of the Town. The remaining 2.9 miles of roads in the Town are private or undeveloped.

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. The major transportation corridors are described below:

- 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.

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### ***Transportation***

- 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.

### ***Public Transportation***

The Town's rural location and aging population poses a challenge for residents' mobility. Without adequate access to transportation, some residents are isolated which can negatively affect their physical, social, and economic well-being. Due to its low population density, the residents of the Town of Binghamton have limited public transportation service. 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. The Broome County Department of Public Transportation offers the following services within the Town of Binghamton:

**BC Country** is a largely a curb-to-curb service with a 48-hour advance reservation requirement. It offers service from rural locations throughout Broome County into the urban area. Service is available on weekdays, except for major holidays. The hours of operation vary by location.

**BC Lift** is another curb-to-curb service with a 24-hour advance reservation requirement. It is available to residents who cannot use the regular BC Transit fixed route due to a disability. To be eligible for BC Lift, residents must live within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the regular BC Transit route and have their health care provider complete an application. BC Lift has a limited service area and only extends into the northern section of the Town. Service is available seven days a week except for major holidays, and the hours of operation vary.

**Office for Aging (OFA) Minibus** is another curb-to-curb service with a 24-hour advance reservation requirement. This service is available to residents age 60 years and older who live within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the BC Transit regular fixed routes. Services available weekdays from 9 AM to 4 PM.

More information about these services is available at: [www.gobroomecounty.com/transit](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/transit)

**Mobility Management of South Central New York (MMSCNY)** a program of the Rural Health Network of South Central New York in Whitney Point. Its mission is to help residents overcome transportation barriers and improve transportation access in the region, especially for those living in rural areas. MMSCNY operates the *Get There Call Center*, a toll-free hotline that offers assistance with trip planning, transportation education, and travel training, staffed weekdays from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Through the Get There Call Center, some Town residents may be eligible for the Connection to Care program, which helps rural individuals with a financial need access health-related services. More information about MMSCNY and the Get There Call Center is available at: [www.rhnsny.org/programs/mmscny](http://www.rhnsny.org/programs/mmscny)

### ***Non-Motorized Transportation***

Pedestrian and bicycle travel has gained greater recognition in comprehensive land use and transportation planning. As indicated in the public survey written responses, many residents want safe places to walk with their family, 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.

### **Complete Streets**

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. In the public survey one respondent noted, “There are no sidewalks, it is hard/ scary to walk on our roads where cars are going 50+ mph” revealing the residents are concerned for their safety when walking throughout areas of the Town.

In 2012, the Complete Streets Legislation was signed requiring state, county and local legislatures to consider all modes of transportation when designing transportation projects that receive state or federal funding. Complete Streets is a concept defined as roadways that safely and adequately accommodates each transportation mode, regardless of age or physical ability. This includes pedestrians, cyclists, public transportation riders, and motorists; it includes children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The New York State Department of Transportation provides a Complete Streets Checklist to assist local governments with the planning and design of their roadways. In addition, BMTS recently adopted its Complete Streets Policy in 2016 for all regional infrastructure projects. This policy will provide uniform

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design guidelines for municipalities to adopt when they undertake a reconstruction, paving or pavement striping project.

Major roads, especially those without accommodations for all modes of travel can cause significant neighborhood divide and be barriers to access (Active Transportation Alliance, 2014). The Town may wish to develop a plan for improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, with the assistance of the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study (BMTS). 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.

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.

## ***Environment***

## **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 therefore, unique natural features of town or countywide importance should be preserved. In the public survey, one respondent wrote “I love living in the Town! The scenery is beautiful”, and many others indicated the Town’s scenic beauty is one of its top assets. This section identifies the important environmental features in the Town of Binghamton.

### **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 ¾ 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 at Aqua Terra Park (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 a map in the Appendix. These are some of the highest points in Broome County, and its close proximity to the urban core has led 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 the table below. 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.

**Slope Characteristics**

<b>Percent Slope</b>	<b>Percent of Land Area</b>
0% - 5%	9%
5% - 10%	35%
10% - 15%	23%
15% - 20%	13%
Greater than 20%	20%

### ***Surface Water***

Surface waters, such as ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, creeks, and wetlands, are important features of the landscape. On the public survey, respondents indicated protecting water quality is a major priority among Town residents. The significant surface waters located in the Town of Binghamton are described below and are shown on a map in the Appendix.

#### **Rivers and Streams**

All water bodies in New York State are classified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) 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 water body.

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 a map in the Appendix. 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.

### ***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 a map in the Appendix.

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.

### ***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

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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.

***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 reasonably 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. Therefore, the currently adopted maps may not provide an accurate representation of the flood hazards throughout the Town. In 2010, FEMA went through the process of developing updated maps. However, this process was put on hold by FEMA and the maps were never published for adoption. While these maps may not be recognized as official for the purposes of the National Flood Insurance Program, they do serve as a valuable tool for realistic flood mitigation planning.

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 a map in the Appendix.

***Flood Mitigation***

On the public survey, about 50% of respondents indicated they are concerned with potential future flooding and stormwater runoff in the Town. The Town of Binghamton participated in the 2007 and 2013 Broome County Hazard Mitigation planning processes, where they outlined a number of mitigation strategies to protect residents and major infrastructure from future flood risk. Since the completion of these plans, the Town has completed the following actions:

- The timber bridge on Maxian Road was replaced with a concrete bridge. The project also consisted of the installation of heavy stone fill at the inlet and outlet of the bridge and stream channel.

- The culvert on Hawthorne Road was replaced with a new steel pipe culvert and concrete invert. The project also included the installation of heavy stone fill at the inlet and outlet of the culvert and stream channel.
- The culvert on Felters Road was replaced with a new steel pipe culvert and concrete invert. The project also included the installation of heavy stone fill at the inlet and outlet of the culvert and stream channel.
- The culvert at Cynthia Drive was rehabilitated which included slip lining of the existing culvert with a new aluminum culvert, installation of new concrete headwalls and wingwalls at the inlet and outlet, and stabilization of the stream banks and channel with heavy fill stone.
- The bridge on Hance Road was rehabilitated. The rehabilitation project included replacement of the superstructure, construction of new concrete scour walls to protect the existing elements, and installation of heavy stone fill to stabilize the stream bed.
- The Town worked with the Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District to complete two stream bank restoration projects in Park Terrace and in Hawleyton Road.

## **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 a map in the Appendix.

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.

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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.

***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.

# ***Agriculture***

## **Introduction**

Agricultural land and natural areas contribute to the rural character of the Town and can positively impact residents' quality of life. The majority of respondents on the public survey indicated that the rural character is the Town of Binghamton's top asset. In addition, protecting farmland, agriculture, and open space was selected as one of the top priorities the Town should focus on. This chapter describes agricultural trends within the Town and County, and examines ways to promote farmland protection and conservation.

## ***Agricultural Trends***

External factors have influenced the agriculture industry in the region and Broome County. As a result, the number and size of farms has declined. The most recent USDA Census of Agriculture shows the number of farms decreased from 580 in 2007 to 563 in 2012. However, while the large farms are consolidating, the number of small farms appears to be increasing. Farm consolidation and expansion of non-agricultural land uses are partially responsible for the recent decline in farm acreage. For example, in 2012 agricultural lands comprised 79,676 acres countywide, down 6,937 acres from 2007. In sum, throughout Broome County the number of farms has decreased by 17 percent while the acreage of farmland decreased by eight percent.

## ***Agricultural Lands in the Town of Binghamton***

There are many ways to identify and classify agricultural lands within an area. One common method to identify agricultural lands is to review the property land use code of a parcel, assigned by the tax assessor. According to this data, there are six agricultural land use parcels covering 215 acres within the Town of Binghamton. This method was used in the Land Use chapter.

Another method is determining whether a parcel is in a NYS Agricultural District. These lands include "viable farmland" which includes land that is actively farmed, and land that is highly suitable for agricultural production. Using this method, 35 parcels covering 1,449 acres were identified. Agricultural districts are discussed in more detail in the following section.

In addition to the two methods discussed above, agricultural tax-exemptions can also help identify agricultural lands within an area. Agricultural assessments are intended to provide financial incentives through tax relief. Agricultural assessments are limited to lands used in agricultural production. Where the owner has seven or more acres and produces on average at least \$10,000 per year in agricultural goods. If an agricultural operation is located on less than seven acres it must gross at least \$50,000 in agricultural product. Using this method, thirteen parcels covering 460 acres were identified in the Town.

Based on the varied results of these methods, it is best to use a comprehensive approach to identify agricultural lands within the Town. A map of the agricultural parcels identified using these three methods is included in the Appendix.

### ***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. Agricultural Districts may include land that is actively farmed, idle, forested, as well as residential and commercial. 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. Any property owner can apply to have their parcels included in an Agricultural District, but only those properties considered by the State to be a “farm operation” will receive benefits. 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.

### ***Agricultural Districts***

Agricultural lands in the Town of Binghamton are located in Agricultural District No. 4, which extends across eleven municipalities in Broome County. The last eight-year review for District No. 4 was completed in 2008. Within the Town, land in an Agricultural District increased by 11 percent from 1,302 acres in 2008 to 1,448.82 acres in 2016.

### ***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 ordinances 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?

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 an 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."

### **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**

Broome County is currently undergoing an update of its Agricultural Farmland Protection Plan in partnership with NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension Service of Broome County, and Environmental, Design & Research (EDR). The intent of the plan update is to provide Broome County and its municipalities with a document that outlines methods toward building a viable agricultural industry and promotes the protection of valuable farmland throughout the County. To ensure the updated plan addresses local farmers' needs and concerns, representatives from Broome County Planning and CCE Broome hosted a number of focus groups with farmers throughout the County, including a farmer from the Town of Binghamton.

This plan updates the County's previous plan adopted in 2001, provides a framework for establishing farm policy in the rural towns, and provides major agricultural initiatives for the towns to follow. One of the major outcomes of the plan includes the development of three grant-ready projects that can be pursued for funding. The initiatives are described below:

1. Develop a vision for agriculture in Broome County
2. Collect data and inventory lands to be protected
3. Analysis of the existing conditions, trends and threats.
4. Develop recommendations to achieve Broome County's vision for agriculture

### ***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 definition for Agriculture or Agricultural Use was added to Chapter 240 Zoning in November 2010 by Local Law No. 19-2015. The farm and agricultural definitions should be periodically reviewed for consistency with the agricultural definitions found in New York State Agriculture and Markets Law and for adequacy in addressing farms and farm operations that are located in the Town of Binghamton and that the Town of Binghamton wishes to encourage. New York State Agriculture and Markets Law should be referenced in the definitions where applicable.

### ***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***

As mentioned in the previous comprehensive plan, Town Boards 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.

## ***Local Laws and Ordinance Review***

## **Introduction**

A comprehensive plan provides a basis for the Town’s future zoning code and policies that are carried out. Since the previous comprehensive plan there were changes at the state level as well as many revisions to the Town’s local codes. This chapter outlines the findings of a code review and provides recommendations to ensure the ordinances are consistent and accurate.

## **Ordinance Review Recommendations**

### **Wind Energy**

In response to the recommendation that the Town Board consider adopting a local law regulating the development of alternative energy sources, the Town Board adopted Local Law 1 of 2005 entitled Wind Energy-Deriving Towers Law of 2005. Local Law 1 of 2005 amended the following to sections of Chapter 240 (Zoning) of the Town Code to accommodate large and small wind energy projects:

- Article II Terminology Section 240-6 Definitions
- Article IX Special Uses Section 240-57.1 Wind energy-deriving towers/wind turbines
- Chapter 240 Schedule of Regulations

### **Recommended Action:**

- Section 240-57.1 should clearly list the information required in the application for small projects as it does for large projects.
- Section 240.57.1 C. Standards state that large and small projects shall be permitted with approval from the Town Board and small projects shall be permitted with approval from the Code Enforcement Officer. This discrepancy should be addressed.
- Section 240.57.1 C (1) (a) [2] and [13] contain duplicate language except that [13] includes one additional sentence – see last sentence. This duplication should be addressed. Note: [2] [13] correspond to b and m in Local Law 1 of 2005.
- Section 240.57.1 C (1) (h) (i) Decommissioning: Determine whether the lien on the property owner’s tax bill is adequate or whether a reclamation bond and penalties and fines should be required to address failure to remove a large-scale wind project. Note: “i” corresponds to 9 in Local Law 1 of 2005.
- Section 240.57.1 C (1) (h) (j) Post Installation: The fine not less than \$250, nor more than \$500 should be clarified stating whether the fine is for each and every day or for each and every week. Note: “j” corresponds to 10 in Local Law 1 of 2005.
- The Schedule of Regulations does not address large projects. The Town Board should address this omission and determine where it wishes to allow large projects.

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Local Laws and Ordinance Review***

- Consider further clarifying the distinction between small wind projects and large wind projects based on the amount of energy generated, size and location of the system, whether the energy is used on-site (accessory use) or off-site (primary use), and other relevant factors. Wind turbines are generally divided into two broad categories based on their rated capacity (kilowatts) and their intended applications.

**Property Maintenance**

The Town Board adopted Local Law 1 of 2009 which amended Town Code Chapter 165 Property Maintenance Local Law and Local Law 1 of 2015 which adopted Town Code Chapter 166 Property Maintenance – Vacant Building Registry Local Law. The Town Board addressed the recommendation to amend the Property Maintenance Local Law to state that each week a violation continues constitutes a new and separate offense, allowing fines to accumulate.

***Recommended Action:***

- Chapter 165 does not address the general maintenance of the exterior of the premise including building exterior, landscaping, curbing, sidewalks, awnings, overhangs, structural soundness. The local law does not require periodic inspections of vacant properties by the Code Enforcement Officer or address the total costs to the Town, including removal costs, attorney fees, court fees, and litigation fees. These omissions should be addressed.
- Chapter 166 does not address the total costs to the Town, including removal costs, attorney fees, court fees, and litigation fees. These omissions should be addressed.

**Floodplain**

Local Law 5 of 2010 adopted by resolution on September 7, 2010 replaced Chapter 132 with a new floodplain ordinance based on the updated model ordinance published by New York State in 2007.

***Recommended Action:***

- Section 132-12 A. 3. (b): This section states that flood damage mitigation measures shall be made a condition of the permit. The Town of Binghamton should ensure that the flood damage mitigation measures are incorporated into the site plan review. See below: **Section 240-60 Submission of Site Plan under *Other Recommendations*:**

**Mobile Homes**

Local Law 6 of 2010 adopted by resolution on September 7, 2010 addressed deficiencies in Chapter 148 Mobile Homes.

**Recommended Action:**

- The Comprehensive Plan Ordinance Review recommended that skirting be required for mobile homes. Local Law 6 of 2010 did not and Chapter 148 does not address skirting. See Union Town Code Chapter 300 Zoning, Article 33, Mobile Home Park District, Section 300-33.2 which requires each mobile home owner to enclose the bottom portion of the mobile home with either a metal or wooden skirt or other similar permanent material and proper ventilation.
- Local Law 6 of 2014 removed the definition of mobile home parks and Article IV Requirements for Mobile Home Parks from Chapter 148; however, Chapter 148 still includes mobile home parks in the purpose statement, licensing requirements, and application procedures. This discrepancy should be addressed.

**Subdivisions**

Local Law 8 of 2010 adopted by resolution on September 7, 2010 addressed minor inconsistencies in Chapter 195 Subdivision of Land.

**Recommended Action:**

- Adopt updated standards for the form of required subdivision drawings. Local Law 8 of 2010 removed “on transparent tracing cloth with black waterproof ink” in Section 195-21 A, but did not add language requiring electronic drawings.

**Junk Vehicles**

Local Law 9 of 2010 adopted by resolution on September 7, 2010 amended Town Code Chapter 224 which regulates the storage of junk vehicles. Four amendments were recommended. The recommendation that the definitions of open storage and junk vehicles should be made consistent was not addressed in Local Law 9 of 2010; however, the definitions of open storage and junk vehicles appear to be consistent throughout Chapter 224. According to Chapter 224, the definition of junk vehicles was amended by Local Law 2 of 2009.

**Recommended Action:**

- Section 224-7 should require a spill prevention plan and address draining of oils and fluids for the open storage of vehicles.

**Establishment of Districts**

Local Law 10 of 2010 amended Chapter 240 Article I Section 2 Establishment of Districts to include purpose statements for the zoning districts as recommended. **No further action recommended.**

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update Local Laws and Ordinance Review***

### **Definitions**

Local Law 10 of 2010 amended Chapter 240 Article II Section 240-6 Definitions revising the definitions as recommended. ***No further action recommended.***

### **Signage**

Local Law 10 of 2010 amended Chapter 240 Article VIII Sign Standards to address the sign recommendations. ***No further action recommended.***

### **Site Plan Review**

Local Law 10 of 2010 amended Chapter 240 Article X Site Plan Review to address the site plan review recommendations. ***No further action recommended.***

### **Performance Guarantee**

Local Law 10 of 2010 adopted by resolution on September 7, 2016 addressed the recommendation for a performance guarantee in Chapter 240 Article X Section 240-62 Performance guarantee. ***No further action recommended.***

### **Supplementary Standards**

Local Law 10 of 2010 amended Town Code Chapter 240 Article VII Supplementary Standards to address the parking recommendations. ***No further action recommended.***

### **Conservation Commission**

The Comprehensive Plan Ordinance Review recommended that the Conservation Commission be abolished. The minutes of the Joint Town Board and Planning Board Meeting on January 29, 2013 state that the Commission was abolished; however, there is renewed interest in reestablishing the Commission and this will be brought back for discussion at a future work session. Chapter 12: Conservation Commission still appears in the Town Code that is posted on the Town website.

#### ***Recommended Action:***

- Determine whether to abolish or keep the Conservation Commission.

### **State Environmental Quality Review Act**

Local Law 4 of 2010 addressed the recommendation that Town Code Chapter 119 should be replaced with a section that imposes the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) on all projects subject to Town review. Local Law 4 of 2010 amended Section 119-3 (Purpose and Intent) adding Section 119-3 C. which requires the Town of Binghamton to comply with SEQRA.

#### ***Recommended Action:***

- Since 2010 New York State Department of Environmental Conservation updated SEQRA. The Town Board should review Chapter 119 for consistency with the SEQRA changes. The Town should consider simply referencing SEQRA and the Town of Binghamton compliance requirements to avoid duplication and inconsistencies with SEQRA. The Town of Binghamton

may adopt its own list of Type II actions to supplement the SEQRA Type II actions and should list or continue to list those Type II actions in the Town Code.

### **Zoning Map**

The Town Board meeting minutes of January 20, 2009 state that the Town Board adopted a motion to use the Digital Zoning Map as prepared by Broome County as the official Town map at the meeting.

#### ***Recommended Action:***

- Chapter 240 Article I Section 240-3 Zoning Map should reference the Digital Zoning Map as prepared by Broome County as the official Town map.
- The Town website should include a link to the digital zoning map and a note that hard copies are on file in the Office of the Town Clerk.

### **Minimum Lot Size**

The Planning Board as part of the Comprehensive Plan recommended that the Town Board increase the minimum lot size for a single-family home in all districts without public sewer to two acres. Local Law No. 1 of 2016 amended Chapter 240 as follows: Town of Binghamton Schedule of Zoning Regulations All Attachments – Pages 240: A1 – A18 Single Family Lot without Public Sewer is amended to require 2 acres or 87,120 square feet.

#### ***Recommended action:***

- Chapter 240 Schedule of Zoning Regulations still requires a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet for single-family homes without public sewer. Ensure General Code Publishers updates the Schedule of Zoning Regulations to reflect this change.

### **Solar Energy**

- Adopt local laws regulating solar energy sources so that these facilities may be developed in a manner compatible with the general health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Town. Such local laws would govern the height, size, location, and other features of alternative energy sources.
- Prepare definitions for solar based on the amount of energy generated, size and location of the system, whether the energy is used on-site (accessory use) or off-site (primary use), and other relevant factors.

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Local Laws and Ordinance Review***

- Review and modify the zoning ordinance and other relevant regulations as necessary to remove barriers to the use of small-scale solar energy systems.
- Review and modify zoning and subdivision regulations as necessary to encourage as many new building lots as possible are laid out to offer maximum solar orientation.

***Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals***

The Town Code should reference the annual New York State training requirements for Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members. Chapter 240, Article XI, Section 240-64 should address the appointment of members and term of office for the Zoning Board of Appeals. New York State Town Law authorizes the Town Board to appoint a Zoning Board of Appeals consisting of three or five members.

- **Chapter 202 Telecommunications:** Ensure that Local Law 2 of 2015 amendments addressed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) new rules (Wireless Infrastructure Order) issued on October 21, 2014. The new rules adopted on October 17, 2014 (FCC-14-153) interpret and implement the “collocation” provisions of Section 6409(a) of the Tax Relief Act.

The rules provide direction for local review of applications for wireless service facility modifications, including definitions for statutory terms found in Section 6409(a), such as wireless tower or base station, collocation, eligible facilities request, eligible support structure, substantial change (“substantially changes the physical dimensions”), and transmission equipment; and clarification on the review of applications, including required documentation and timeframe.

The definition of substantial change includes specific criteria with respect to height, width, equipment cabinets, excavation/deployment beyond site and concealment elements to objectively determine whether a modification substantially changes the physical dimensions of an eligible support structure.

The rules establish that within 60 days of the date on which an applicant submits a request seeking approval for a modification under Section 6409(a), the local government shall approve the application unless it determines that the application is not covered by this section.

Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996 local jurisdictions had 90 days to act on an application for the collocation of additional antennas to existing infrastructure and within 150 days to act on an application for the construction of new infrastructure.

- **Chapter 240 Article VII Supplementary Standards:** The Comprehensive Plan Ordinance Review recommended that the Town of Binghamton adopt standards for outdoor lighting. Chapter 240 briefly addresses lighting for specific uses in Section 240-28 Parking, Section 240-43 Illumination, Section 240-49 Sign permit, Section 240-52 Prohibited signs, Section 240-57.1 Wind energy, Section 240-59 Sketch plan, Section 240-60 Submission of site plan, Section 240-60.1 Site plan review.

The Comprehensive Plan Ordinance Review recommended that the Town include in Article VII Supplementary Standards outdoor lighting standards for uses that require site plan review which would further ensure that the above sections adequately address excessive illumination such as glare, light trespass, and light pollution. Under one heading, the standards would include:

- contents of a lighting plan (location, number, type/style, mounting height, and photometric report showing lighting levels produced on the ground) that may be required as part of site plan review
- requirement that outdoor lighting fixtures be shielded or contained on the property
- requirement that exterior lighting fixtures for commercial, industrial, institutional, and multifamily uses conform to the Illuminating Engineer Society of North America criteria

See Town of Union Town Code Chapter 300 Zoning, Article 55 Outdoor Lighting Regulations.

- **Chapter 240, Article IX Special Uses, Section 240-57 Gasoline Service Stations:** Section 240-57 subjects gasoline service stations to certain restrictions.

The Comprehensive Plan Ordinance Review recommended that Section 240-57 include a requirement that gasoline services stations post a spill prevention plan on the premises. See Town of Union Town Code Chapter 300, Section 40.3 F. (4) spill prevention plan requirement for gasoline service stations and motor vehicle repair shops.

The Comprehensive Plan Ordinance Review also recommended that auto repair shops be included in Section 240-57 along with gasoline service stations.

Section 240-57 should be amended to require a spill prevention plan for automotive sales, automotive service station, motor vehicle repair shops, gasoline stations, and gasoline service stations. While not required for facilities that use or store small amounts of fuel and chemicals, spill prevention plans fall under best management practices. A basic spill prevention plan for a motor vehicle repair shop, for example, would have telephone numbers for the local New York State Department of Environmental Conservation spill office, a clean-up contractor (for larger spills), and information on measures that should be taken by workers to minimize environmental damage from a spill. Plans can also have preventative aspects, like weekly inspections of areas where hazardous liquids are stored to catch leaks early. Written plans, even simple ones, help businesses to think about potential environmental problems and remedies ahead of time.

- **Section 239-l, -m, -n, and -nn of General Municipal Law:** Town Code Chapter 240 Zoning should reference the County notification and referral requirements of Section 239-l, -m, -n, and -nn of General Municipal Law for site plan review, special use permits, and variances.

Chapter 195 Subdivision of Land, Section 195-6 Final plat requires that the final plat be referred

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to the County Planning Board if the plat is subject to such referral pursuant to Section 239-n of General Municipal Law.

Chapter 240, Section 240-14 Procedure for Planned Development Districts authorizes the Town Board to refer the application and PDD plan to the Broome County Planning Department and stipulates that the Town Board shall allow the Broome County Planning Department at least 30 days to review and comment.

- **Section 240-60 Submission of Site Plan:**

The list of items required in the site plan submittal should be amended to include the following:

- Wetlands
- Land within the Special Flood Hazard Area
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan consistent with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regulations
- Building elevations, materials, colors, design or renderings (as appropriate)
- SEQRA Environmental Form

## ***Public Input***

## **Town of Binghamton Public Input**

### **Survey**

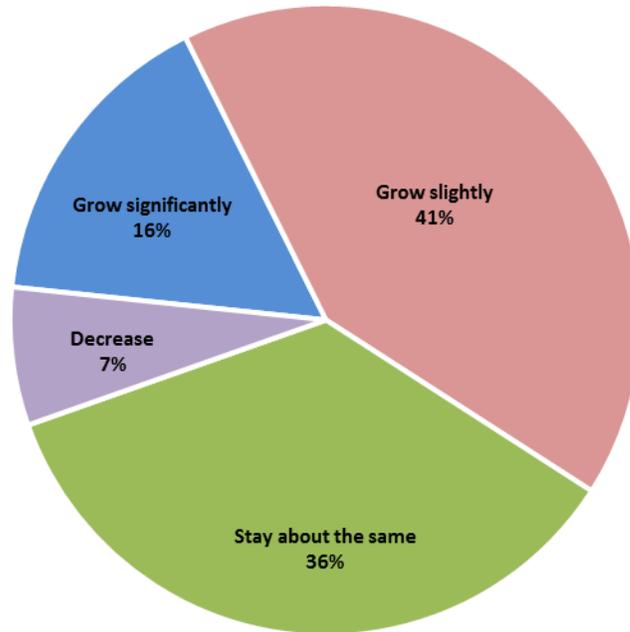
Having an understanding about resident's attitudes towards growth, development and other issues in the Town leads to a more effective plan for the future. The Town of Binghamton Planning Board worked with the Broome County Planning Department to conduct a survey in May of 2016. This survey is a key public participation component and provides the Town with a sense of residents' opinions on certain topics. To develop this survey, the Planning Board reviewed the previous comprehensive plan survey from 2009 to establish which topics are still relevant and should be included in the new survey. New questions were also included for a more complete understanding of the Town's needs and desires. In addition to the questionnaire, respondents had the opportunity to provide written comments to the board. All written comments are included in the Appendix.

The 17-question survey was made available to the public both online and in print. The survey focused on the following topics: growth and development, town services, community concerns, assets and shortcomings, community resources, and demographics. There were 1,803 surveys mailed to residents and property owners in the Town. The mailing list was carefully screened to account for duplicate household surveys and owners of vacant property. Approximately 546 surveys were completed: 366 paper surveys and 180 online surveys. This represents a very healthy 30% response rate. Not every respondent answered every question, so the number of responses for each question was recorded. The surveys that were mailed back were entered into a computer software program, QuestionPro, which tabulated the results automatically. This software also allowed for duplicate surveys to be identified. After reviewing the IP addresses, it was determined there was not a major issue with people filling out multiple surveys online.

### **Population**

This question asked how people would like to see the population change in the future. The majority of respondents (77 percent) favor modest growth (41 percent) or stability (36 percent) in the Town's population. Almost one-quarter (23 percent) of respondents would like to see the Town "grow significantly" or "decrease" (7 percent).

#### **Q1: How would you like to see the Town's population change over the next 10 years?**



**n= 538**

## Utilities and Services

All utilities and services require tax payer money which is why it is important to consider the residents' and property owners' needs. The largest percentage of respondents do not have an opinion about extended public water and sewer in all three of the areas. More respondents are in opposition, than in favor of extending public water and sewer to the specified areas within the Town.

### **Q2: Should the Town consider providing public sewer and water in the following areas?**

<b>PUBLIC WATER</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>n</b>
Park Ave corridor	18%	24%	<b>54%</b>	<b>523</b>
Pennsylvania Ave corridor	18%	27%	<b>55%</b>	<b>522</b>
Pierce Creek Road corridor	16%	24%	<b>60%</b>	<b>525</b>

<b>PUBLIC SEWER</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>n</b>
Park Ave corridor	19%	27%	<b>44%</b>	<b>524</b>
Pennsylvania Ave corridor	19%	39%	<b>42%</b>	<b>521</b>
Pierce Creek Road corridor	17%	37%	<b>46%</b>	<b>524</b>

Also, respondents were asked their opinions about services not regulated by local government. The largest percentage of respondents indicate they “currently have service” for the four services listed. More than half of the respondents have cable television (61 percent), high-speed internet (77 percent), and/or cell phone service (55 percent). One respondent wrote “cell phone cuts out all the time the town should look in to this for safety concerns” indicating cellphone reception within the Town is poor and they would like it to be improved.

### **Q3: What is your opinion regarding the following services in the Town?**

<b>Services</b>	<b>I currently have service</b>	<b>I do NOT have service, but would like it</b>	<b>I do NOT have service, and do NOT want it</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>n</b>
Natural Gas	<b>32%</b>	24%	18%	26%	<b>542</b>
Cable Television	<b>61%</b>	6%	9%	24%	<b>543</b>
High-Speed Internet	<b>77%</b>	8%	3%	12%	<b>543</b>
Cellphone	<b>55%</b>	31%	1%	12%	<b>543</b>

**Development**

Respondents were asked their opinion about the compatibility of new types of development. Respondents strongly favor single-family housing. In addition, about a third of respondents indicate senior housing (31 percent), home occupations (32 percent), large-scale solar (32 percent) and large-scale wind energy (30 percent) were compatible everywhere. The respondents' the greatest opposition is towards mobile home parks (69 percent), large-scale commercial development (49 percent), mining, stone and gravel operations (52 percent), and natural gas compressor stations (58 percent), indicating they are not compatible anywhere.

**Q4: How compatible do you think the following types of potential NEW development would be in the Town?**

<b>New Development</b>	<b>Compatible Everywhere</b>	<b>Compatible Some Places</b>	<b>Not Compatible Anywhere</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>n</b>
Single-family homes	<b>75%</b>	21%	1%	3%	<b>541</b>
Mobile home parks	1%	24%	<b>69%</b>	6%	<b>543</b>
Individual Mobile Homes	4%	37%	<b>45%</b>	13%	<b>543</b>
Housing for Senior Citizens	31%	<b>53%</b>	6%	11%	<b>546</b>
Home Occupations	32%	<b>45%</b>	6%	17%	<b>529</b>
Small stores, shops, and offices	12%	<b>74%</b>	7%	7%	<b>540</b>
Large-scale commercial development	2%	38%	<b>49%</b>	10%	<b>540</b>
Mining, stone, and gravel operations	1%	40%	<b>52%</b>	7%	<b>541</b>
Natural Gas Compressor Stations	3%	31%	<b>58%</b>	7%	<b>540</b>
Woodlots and Timbering	5%	<b>65%</b>	17%	13%	<b>540</b>
Livestock, poultry, goats, sheep, etc.	7%	<b>76%</b>	7%	10%	<b>541</b>
Greenhouses, Christmas Tree farms	15%	<b>79%</b>	1%	6%	<b>543</b>
Farmers markets, produce stands, and farm tours	23%	<b>68%</b>	2%	7%	<b>544</b>
Large-scale solar (Solar Farms)	32%	<b>48%</b>	15%	6%	<b>542</b>
Large-scale wind energy	30%	<b>45%</b>	21%	4%	<b>544</b>

## Town Services

The Town is responsible for providing residents with public services. This question asked respondents to rate the Town’s services. Some of the services in the Town such as the ambulance, police and transportation are provided by entities outside of the Town.

The responses indicate respondents are generally satisfied with the services within the Town. Respondents rated road services highly; more than 80 percent of respondents felt the Town’s road maintenance/ repair, snow plowing services were “good” or “excellent”. Public transportation received the lowest rating among respondents, slightly more than one-third (35 percent) of respondents feel public transportation within the Town is “poor”. More than 50 percent of respondents have no opinion about childcare, senior citizen, or youth activities services. While many respondents had no opinion about the senior services provided, many commented about the lack of senior services, “There are no senior citizen activities in the Town. With our aging community, there should be more services for the senior citizens”, indicating there may be a need for them within the Town.

### Q5: How would you rate the quality of the following services in the Town?

Town Services	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion	n
Ambulance service	13%	<b>33%</b>	6%	1%	46%	537
Fire service	30%	<b>41%</b>	3%	0%	26%	540
Police Service	12%	<b>44%</b>	14%	4%	26%	541
Town road maintenance/ repair	28%	<b>54%</b>	13%	3%	2%	540
Town snow plowing	38%	<b>49%</b>	6%	2%	4%	542
Public transportation	2%	9%	11%	<b>35%</b>	44%	535
Code enforcement efforts	9%	<b>42%</b>	16%	7%	27%	538
Schools	23%	<b>43%</b>	8%	2%	24%	540
Childcare services	0%	10%	6%	5%	<b>78%</b>	535
Senior citizen activities and services	2%	12%	11%	8%	<b>66%</b>	537
Youth activities and services	10%	29%	6%	2%	<b>52%</b>	538
Town Parks & Recreation	14%	<b>46%</b>	10%	2%	29%	540
Overall appearance of the Town	<b>12%</b>	<b>70%</b>	13%	2%	2%	545

**Community Concerns**

All citizens desire a safe place to live and a high quality of life. This question was intended to obtain respondents’ opinions about a variety of potential issues in the Town to determine which issues will need to be addressed. Respondents indicated they are concerned about most of the issues provided.

More than 70 percent of respondents are concerned with heroin/opioid abuse, environmental impacts from natural gas drilling, impacts to community character from natural gas drilling, and more than 80 percent of respondents are concerned about increasing taxes. Respondents indicate they are not concerned with development encroaching into the rural areas, large-scale solar energy, or large-scale wind energy.

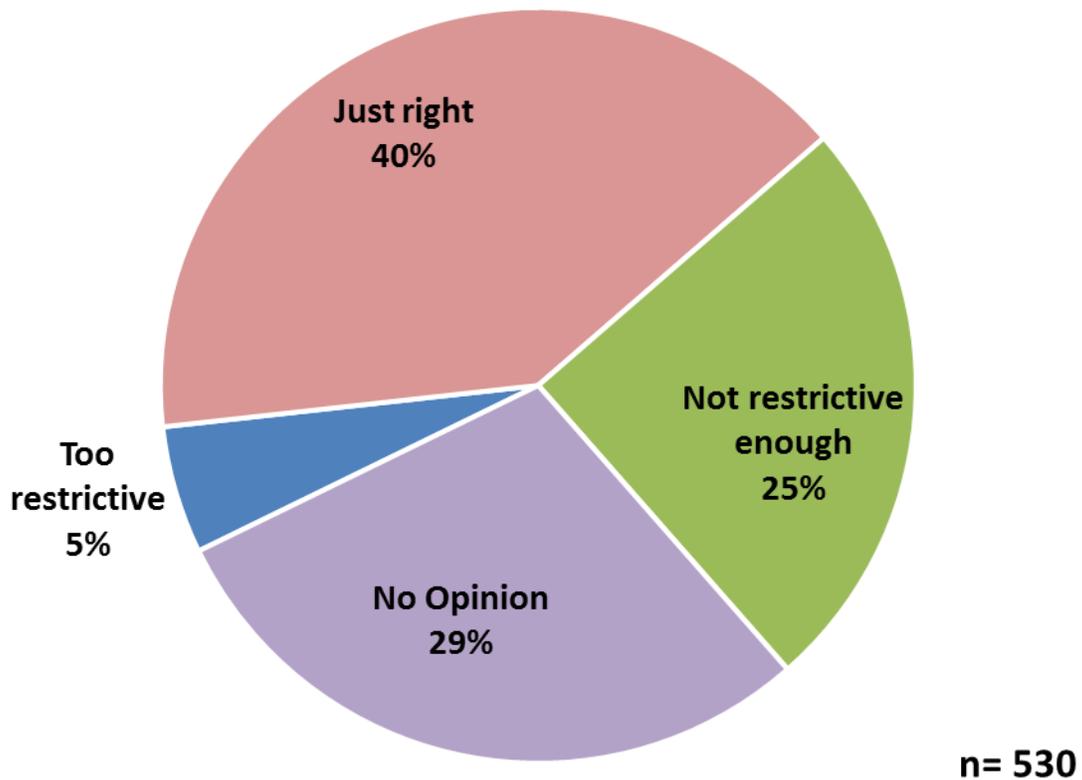
**Q6: What are your concerns for the future of the Town?**

<b>Community Concerns</b>	<b>I am concerned</b>	<b>I am NOT concerned</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>n</b>
Rising crime	<b>68%</b>	23%	8%	546
Heroin/ opioid abuse	<b>74%</b>	15%	11%	545
Residents leaving the area	56%	27%	17%	545
Declining home values	<b>70%</b>	20%	10%	546
Loss of farms	52%	29%	19%	545
Environmental impacts from natural gas drilling	<b>71%</b>	23%	6%	546
Impacts to community character from natural gas drilling	<b>71%</b>	24%	6%	543
Increasing taxes	<b>83%</b>	12%	4%	546
Loss of open space	<b>43%</b>	37%	20%	544
Illegal dumping	<b>65%</b>	12%	23%	544
Uncontrolled residential development	<b>53%</b>	35%	12%	544
Uncontrolled commercial development	<b>70%</b>	20%	10%	544
Noise	<b>54%</b>	36%	10%	543
Potential future flooding and stormwater runoff	<b>50%</b>	36%	14%	544
Effects of logging and mining operations on natural resources	<b>59%</b>	26%	15%	545
Development encroaching into the rural areas	41%	<b>47%</b>	12%	546
Large-scale solar energy	26%	<b>63%</b>	11%	544
Large-scale wind energy	29%	<b>60%</b>	10%	512

### Land Use Controls

Land use controls regulate the type of occupancy or use, lot coverage, setbacks, boundaries, density, parking, and noise permitted with new and existing development. This question asked respondents their opinion about the current land use control practices in the Town. Overall, the public is in agreement with the current practices and understand the importance of effective land use controls. The largest percent of responses (40 percent) indicate people are satisfied with the current land use practices. One in four respondents feel the Town should enforce stricter standards. A small percentage (5 percent) of respondents felt the controls are too strict.

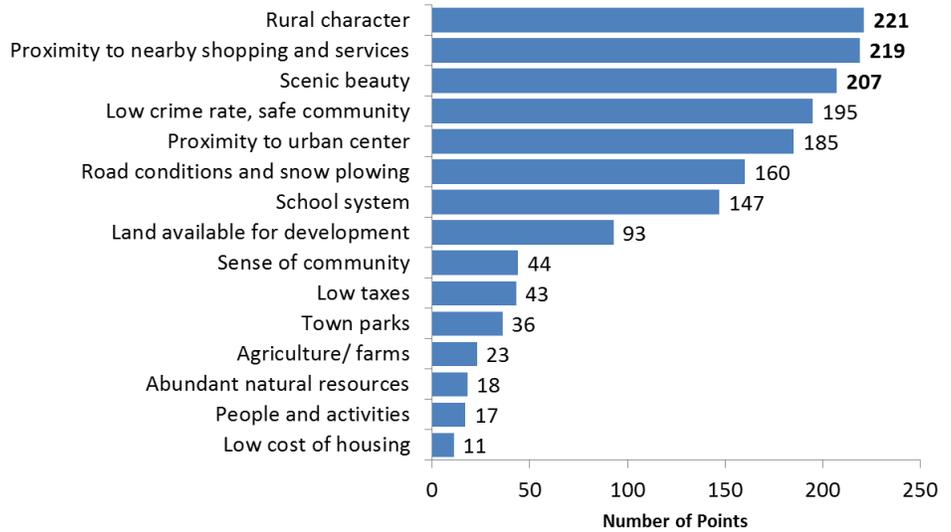
### Q7: How would you describe the current land use controls in the Town?



**Town’s Assets**

Respondents were asked to identify the major assets from a list of thirteen choices. These choices were derived from the previous plan’s top responses. Respondents were allowed to pick up to three choices, each choice represented one point; a total of 1,619 points were assigned to the choices. Based on the responses from the survey, the top three assets in the Town are its rural character, its proximity to nearby shopping and services, and its scenic beauty.

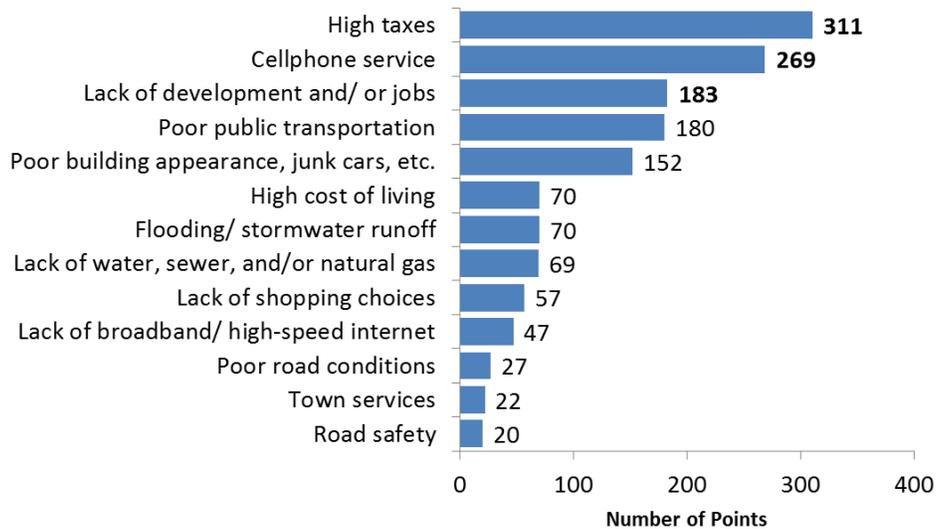
**Q8: The Town's 3 major assets are:**



**Town’s Shortcomings**

Similarly structured to the previous question, respondents chose the three shortcomings they thought were most prominent in the Town. There were thirteen choices and 1,477 points were distributed between them. Respondents identified high taxes, cellphone service, and lack of development/ jobs as the Town’s major shortcomings.

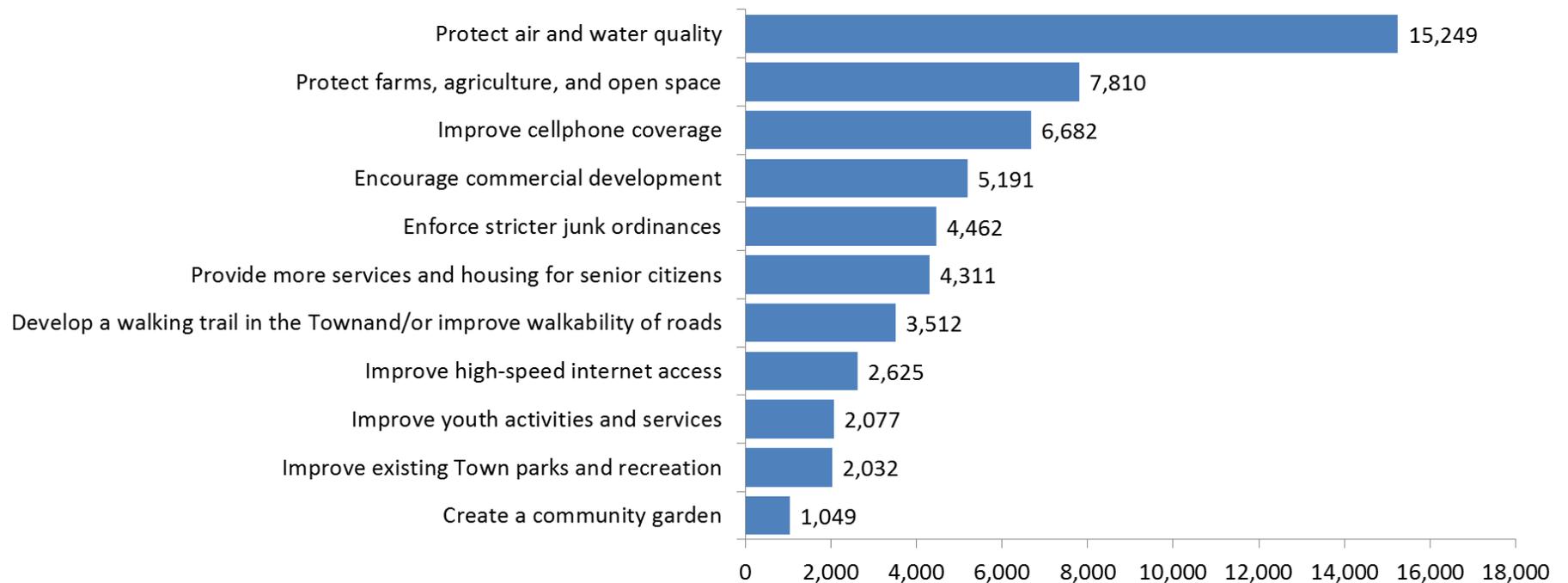
**Q9: The Town's 3 major shortcomings are:**



### Community Priorities

As previously stated, municipalities often have to make difficult decisions on how to divide resources between numerous services. This question was used to determine what the Town residents' priorities are and asked them to distribute 100 points among eleven choices. Based on the results of the survey, respondents feel the three major priorities of the town should be to protect air and water quality, protect farms, agriculture, and open space, and to improve cell phone coverage. The survey revealed the natural environment resources are very important to the Town.

#### Q10: All communities have a limited number of resources. If you had a total of 100 points to distribute between the following choices in the Town, how would you allocate resources?

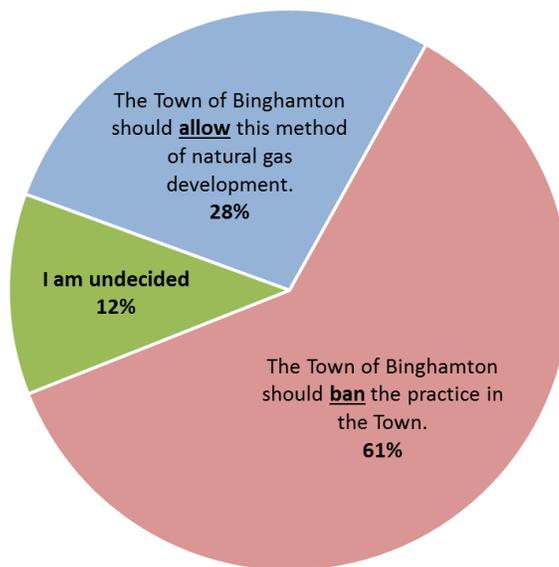


**Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**Public Input**

**Natural Gas Drilling**

One purpose of the comprehensive plan is to guide the Town’s future policy decisions. A hypothetical question was asked to gather the opinions from residents about how the Town should act if the hydraulic fracturing (fracking) policy was to change in the future. Respondents were given the choices: The Town should allow, the Town should ban, or I am undecided. The majority (61 percent) of responses indicate this method of natural gas development should be banned in the Town, if the practice were to eventually become legal in New York. There were numerous written responses regarding fracking, some were pro-fracking, stating it should be allowed in the state and the town. About 28 percent feel the Town should allow this method of natural gas development, and 12 percent were undecided.

**Q11: High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing is a method of drilling for natural gas commonly known as ‘Fracking’. Currently High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing or Fracking is not allowed in New York. Please select the statement which most closely represents your**



n= 545

## **Written Responses**

The last question of the survey allowed respondents to write in any additional comments, concerns, or suggestions they had for the comprehensive plan. This provides the Planning Board with an idea of what the major issues are and additional information that may have not been included on the survey. Over 150 written comments were received discussing a wide range of issues. The comments were reviewed and summarized into 12 categories from most to least common. Some responses were general comments about the survey and did not fall into a specific category. The most common responses were in relation to services and utilities such as, the town government, cellphone service, road maintenance, water, sewer, natural gas, etc. All of the written responses are included in the Appendix.

### **Written Responses: Content Summary**

Services/ Utilities  
Fracking  
Code Enforcement  
Taxes  
General Content with Town  
Activities/ Recreation  
Alternative Energy Sources  
Development  
General Discontent  
Safety  
Natural Resources  
Senior Services  
Sense of Community

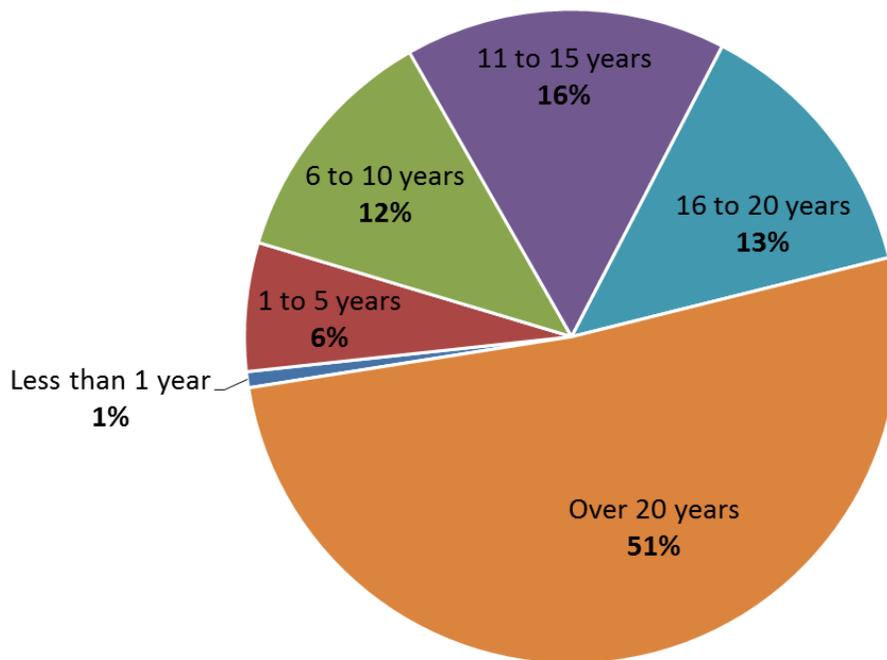
### **Respondent Demographics**

The final section of the survey was to be filled out by Town residents only and provided the Planning Board with some background information about the people living in the Town taking the survey. Just over 95% of the respondents who took the survey were Town of Binghamton residents.

### **Residency**

Slightly more than half of the respondents who took the survey are long-time residents who have lived in their home for over 20 years. Over 90 percent of the respondents have lived in their home for at least five years. As previously mentioned, the paper survey was only mailed to property owners in the Town, so the renter population may be underrepresented in the results. Copies of the survey were left at the Town Hall for residents to pick up and the survey was posted online to account for this. It is anticipated that the sample population will not impact the results because according to the ACS tenure data, less than ten percent of the Town’s population are renters.

### **How long have you lived at your current residence?**

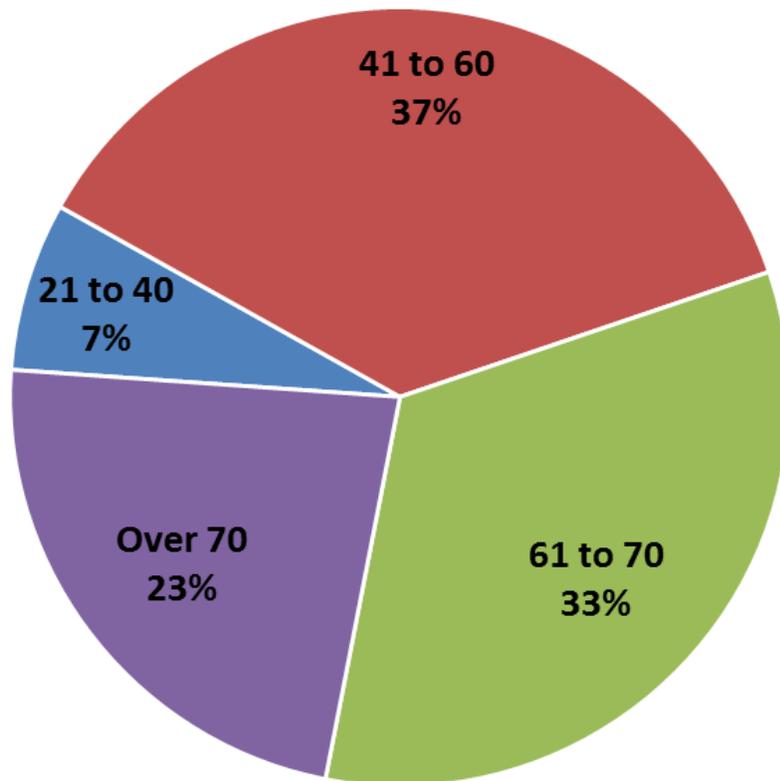


n= 504

### **Age of Householder**

Respondents were also asked the age of the householder. Most of the responses indicate the householder is between the ages of 41 and 60. This correlates with Census data which shows a large spike in the age groups between 40 and 60. Over half of the responses indicate the householders are over the age of 60. There were no householders under the age of 20 represented in the survey.

### **What is the age of the head of householder?**



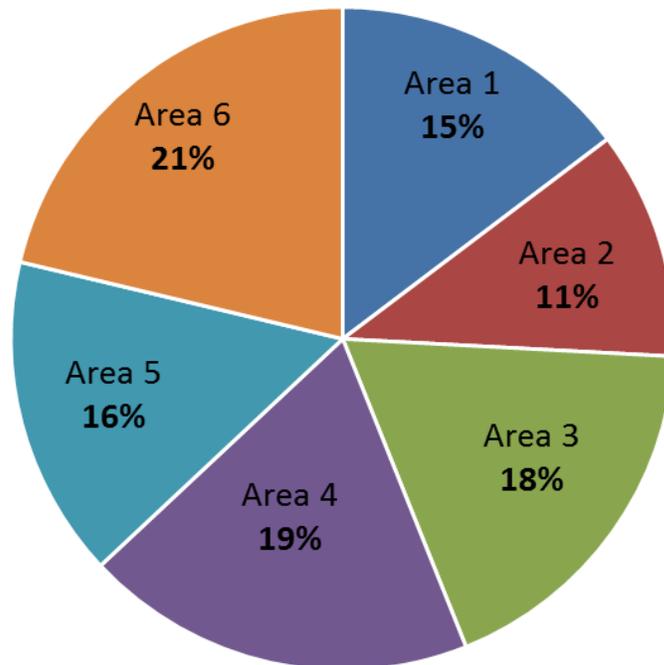
**n= 499**

**Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**Public Input**

**Location**

Respondents were asked to look at a map (shown in Appendix) with six different areas and identify where they lived. These areas were determined to be representative of communities within the Town and were also used on the previous survey. Area 6 which represents the southern portion of the Town had the largest amount of responses (21 percent), but this area is also much larger geographically. Area 2, representing the community around the Park Ave corridor had the smallest percentage (11%) of respondents. Overall, each of the different communities of the Town were well-represented in the survey.

**Using the map provided, indicate the area which you live (1-6):**



**n= 503**

**Public Meetings**

On November 1 2016, the Town’s Planning Board held a public meeting to gather additional public input from the residents. To encourage attendance, postcards were sent to property owners. At this meeting, the Broome County Planning Department provided an overview of the progress the Town has made to date, and then conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis to identify the issues facing the community. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, and opportunities and threats are external factors that are helpful or harmful to the Town. As a result of the complex issues facing the Town and the varying opinions of residents, many of the topics discussed were viewed as both positive and negative. The full results of the SWOT analysis are summarized below.

<b>Strengths (Internal)</b>	<b>Weaknesses (Internal)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water quality of private wells and sewer is good</li> <li>• Rural nature of town and its people</li> <li>• Good quality school system</li> <li>• Town Board is very approachable</li> <li>• Proximity to urban center; Town is only a few minutes away from the city, but is able to maintain its rural atmosphere</li> <li>• Town Highway Dept. is excellent with plowing and maintenance</li> <li>• Fire Department</li> <li>• Town has a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations that are reviewed and updated regularly</li> <li>• Emergency Response coverage is good</li> <li>• Annual rabies clinic for cats and dogs</li> <li>• Dumpster at Town garage where residents can dispose of large metal items</li> <li>• Free compost and wood chip piles for residents</li> <li>• Town and County response to road kill complaints</li> <li>• Good relationship between Town and County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of cell service is a major issue</li> <li>• There is no town center</li> <li>• Tax burden, taxes are very high</li> <li>• Limited natural gas utilities for residents</li> <li>• Declining population</li> <li>• Lack of tree maintenance along roads and utility lines, especially along Park Avenue</li> <li>• Lack of broadband/ high-speed internet</li> <li>• Residential services are limited to one provider (trash pickup, internet, etc.)</li> <li>• Lack of jobs, the Town is only a place to live- not work</li> <li>• Lack of active farmland, much of it is becoming vacant brush</li> <li>• Lack of interest and knowledge in youth population to learn skills like farming</li> <li>• Lack of public water and sewer; private system maintenance is difficult and expensive</li> <li>• If public water and sewer are extended be sure Town does not force people to buy-in to districts; only do it where it makes sense</li> <li>• Lack of ditch maintenance causes stormwater to flood roads, especially in Park Terrace</li> <li>• Limited sight distance on roads, they are too hilly</li> <li>• Lack of law enforcement on speeding cars, parking regulations, and ATV motorists</li> <li>• Aging population and lack of appeal to young adult population</li> <li>• Decreasing interest in Neighborhood Watch Program</li> <li>• Illegal dumping and trash burning</li> </ul>

**Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**

**Public Input**

Opportunities (External)	Threats (External)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve cellphone, cable, and internet coverage</li> <li>• Build playground in Park Terrace neighborhood</li> <li>• Create ice rink in the winter</li> <li>• Make better use of historical society; take advantage of its facilities and resources, and make contributions by sharing stories</li> <li>• Improve parking lot maintenance on Town properties i.e. community center</li> <li>• Utilize social media to create a virtual Town center</li> <li>• Encourage Smart Growth practices; new industrial development should be focused in existing areas like Conklin and Kirkwood, and Town will benefit from residential base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fracking</li> <li>• Federal, State, and County mandates/regulations</li> <li>• Increasing drug problem</li> <li>• Drugs and crime</li> <li>• 2% tax cap is very limiting on Town’s current and future resources</li> <li>• The possibility of the Town selling-out for quick money (fracking/industrial development, etc.) would pose a major risk to the quiet/peaceful nature of the Town</li> <li>• It is difficult for the Town to attract young families here because the taxes make it too expensive for them to live here</li> <li>• Flooding and stormwater runoff</li> <li>• Corruption in state and county governments</li> <li>• Increasing deer population leading to more traffic accidents</li> <li>• More bear sightings; they are becoming less afraid of people</li> <li>• Lack of sheriff patrol and poor response because calls are not a “top priority”</li> <li>• Increasing firearm discharge in neighborhoods, mainly target practice, but still a danger</li> </ul>

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Public Input***

The public meeting was also used to obtain feedback from residents on the topic of solar and wind energy land use regulations. There were two people who currently have solar panels on their property, and an additional ten people are thinking about installing small-scale wind or solar energy. Based on the discussion at the meeting, most residents are optimistic about solar and wind energy, but there are some concerns they feel should be addressed. Residents' comments about solar and wind energy are summarized below.

- The Town should make sure there are proper installation and maintenance plans in place to protect safety of neighboring properties
- Concern about the visual and noise effects
- The Town should create protections for its roads during the construction of large scale systems
- We should make these energy systems look as attractive and unobtrusive as possible
- If we are going to be free from fossil fuels, we need to embrace wind and solar energy
- The Town should not offer tax incentives for these energy systems
- Prefer wind and solar to fracking
- We should encourage large-scale wind and solar in the Town, but limit it to a few properties
- Concerns about the impact on wildlife and habitat reduction

***Second Public Meeting***

The Planning Board held a second public meeting in May of 2016 at the Town of Binghamton Community Center to present the comprehensive plan recommendations to the community. To encourage attendance, postcards were mailed to property owners, and the meeting was promoted on the Town's website and the Broome County Planning Department Facebook page. There were approximately 30 people in attendance. At this meeting, the Broome County Planning Department provided an overview of the comprehensive planning process and reviewed the public survey results that contributed to the recommendations of the plan. During the remainder of the meeting, the Planning Board and the residents engaged in discussion about the proposed recommendations.

## ***Progress Summary***

## **Ideas into Actions**

Between 2008 and 2009, numerous residents worked with the Town of Binghamton Planning Board during the comprehensive planning process, providing valuable input to identify priorities for the Town, and proposing ideas that would help improve the Town. The previous comprehensive plan was adopted in 2009 and as a result, numerous initiatives were pursued. This section provides an update on the progress the Town has made so far.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan included a thorough assessment of the Binghamton's land use laws and ordinances and made a series of recommendations. In response, the Town Board made many changes to town laws. These changes include:

- Replacing the outdated floodplain ordinance with one based on the updated model ordinance from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. (*Local Law 5 of 2010*)
  
- Upgrading the Site Plan Review process to be clearer, more effective, and more protective of community character (*Local Law 10 of 2010 and Local Law No. 19 of 2015*). These changes include:
  - Requiring performance guarantees, inspection by the building official, and integration of site plan review with other Town requirements and approvals such as special use permit.
  - Conditioning receipt of the building permit on the Town Planning Board recommendations
  - Providing for sketch plan conference between the Planning Board and applicant prior to the preparation and submission of a formal site plan to enable the applicant to inform the Planning Board of the project proposal prior to the preparation of a detailed site plan
  - Providing a detailed list of items required in the site plan submission, including watercourses, access management (parking areas, vehicle maneuvering areas, truck loading areas, access and egress and pedestrian access), outdoor storage, outdoor lighting facilities and general landscaping plan and planting schedule
  - Establishing a clear time frame for Planning Board action on the site plan
  
- Improving the standards for the design of parking lots and driveways (*Local Law 10 of 2010*) including:
  - Requiring all weather surface and proper storm water drainage for parking lots
  - Identifying the proper design of vehicular ingress and egress, driveway dimensions, parking lots, and pick-up and drop-off areas for better access management, maneuvering, and traffic safety
  - Ensuring proper emergency access
  - Establishing detailed landscaping standards for parking lots
  - Laying out the requirements for lighting fixtures in parking lots
  - Specifying the size and layout of off-street parking spaces including parking angle, staff width, stall length, aisle width, and aisle type

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***

### ***Progress Summary***

- Strengthening the Property Maintenance Local Law so that that each week a violation continues constitutes a new and separate offense thereby allowing fines to accumulate (*Local Law 1 of 2009*) and establishing a Vacant Building Registry Local Law (*Local Law 1 of 2015*)
- Amending the sign standards to require a permit for illumination of signs and to more clearly address prohibited signs, such as animated and moving signs, flashing and message signs, glaring signs, A-frame/wheeled signs, and multiple signs. (*Local Law 10 of 2010 and Local Law No. 19 of 2015*)
- Requiring single family lots without public sewer to be a minimum of 2 acres to ensure proper room for septic system construction (*Local Law No. 1 of 2016*).
- Updating the regulations for the storage of junk vehicles, including improving the definition of junk vehicle and establishing licensing and application submission requirements for open storage (*Local Law 9 of 2010*).
- Adopting the Digital Zoning Map as prepared by Broome County as the official Town zoning map. This will ensure that the map is kept up to date and is easily accessible to interested parties.
- Addressing deficiencies in regarding the regulation of Mobile Homes, including amending the definition of “mobile home” to be consistent with the Residential Code of New York State and requiring permanent foundations for mobile homes (*Local Law 6 of 2010*).
- Revising definitions in the zoning ordinance for agriculture, animal harboring, building permit, conditional approval of the final plat, final plat, wind turbine equipment, nonconforming lot, preliminary plat approval, site plan, area variance, and use variance. (*Local Law 10 of 2010 and Local Law No. 19 of 2015*)
- Amending the town code to require the Town of Binghamton to comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (*Local Law 4 of 2010*)
- Cleaning up minor inconsistencies in the Town’s subdivision regulations (*Local Law 8 of 2010*).
- Including purpose statements in the Town’s Zoning Ordinance for zoning districts (*Local Law 10 of 2010*) to clarify the intent of each district.

## ***Recommendations***

## **Introduction**

In preparing this update to the 2009 comprehensive plan, 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.

## **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. These goals were first established in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. Any tasks in that plan which were completed have been eliminated. Goals which are no longer relevant have been dropped or updated. Finally, several new initiatives have been identified here.

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:

### **Maintain the Rural Character of the Town**

Residents completing the 2016 comprehensive plan survey were asked to select the three major assets of the Town. The leading asset was 'Rural Character' with 'Scenic Beauty' in third place. From the 2009 survey, Binghamton residents stated that 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. Continued efforts are needed 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).

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***

### ***Recommendations***

#### **Manage Potential Growth at a Measured Rate**

Question 6 of the 2016 comprehensive plan survey asked ‘What are your concerns for the future of the Town?’. Seventy percent of respondents checked ‘Uncontrolled commercial development’. In the 2009 survey, respondents were asked 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’.

For the 2009 plan, threats occupied the largest part of the public meeting. ‘Improper commercial development’ was the first threat mentioned then. 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. At the November 2016 public meeting, residents expressed a desire to incorporate *Smart Growth* principles into 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. *(ongoing action)*
- Similar scrutiny should be applied to any Planned Development District proposals submitted to the Town. *(ongoing 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. Chapter 11 of this Comprehensive Plan details the information that should be required. This information includes the following: Stormwater Protection Plan (SWPP), SEQRA Assessment information, wetlands, and Special Flood Hazard Area. The full list of items is found on in Chapter 11 of this plan. *(short term action)*
- When reviewing development proposals, the Town should use the Geographic Information System (GIS) tools available on [www.bcgis.com](http://www.bcgis.com) to consider environmental impacts. The GIS tools include the ability to show wetlands, slope, and floodplains in relation to each project. *(ongoing action)*

## **Adopt Green Policies Where Feasible**

Residents also requested that the Town adopt ‘green’ policies and practices to lower environmental impacts and improve energy conservation. In the 2016 survey, 48% of residents thought that ‘Large-scale solar’ was ‘Compatible Some Places’ and 45% of respondents felt that way about ‘Large-scale wind energy’. At the request of the Town Board, a portion of the November 2016 public meeting was devoted to discussing wind and solar energy land use regulation. Most residents at the meeting were supportive of wind and solar energy development, and many were considering adding small scale wind or solar energy generation to their personal residences. However, concerns were expressed over: Proper installation and maintenance of systems; Visual and noise impacts; and Habitat reduction and general impacts to wildlife.

These green policies should include:

- New York State operates a statewide ridematching website to help commuters “find a smarter and greener way” to travel. BMTS sponsors the local Broome-Tioga rideshare program. Visitors to the site (<https://511nyrideshare.org/web/broome-tioga-rideshare/home>) can register for carpool ride matching, among other services. The Town can encourage carpooling through its website and newsletter by promoting the 511nyrideshare website. *(short term action)*
- The Town should work to make Binghamton a pedestrian friendly community. This can be done by the following techniques: *(long term actions)*
  - Recognize bicycling and walking as forms of transportation as well as recreation
  - Attend Complete Streets training for local decision makers
  - Adopt a Complete Streets policy for the Town
  - Require bike and pedestrian amenities during site plan review
  - Encourage 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 is currently researching options for the regulation of solar energy for homes and businesses. Such local laws would address the following *(short term action)*:

- Govern the height, size, location, and other features of alternative energy sources.
- Prepare definitions for solar based on the amount of energy generated, size and location of the system, whether the energy is used on-site (accessory use) or off-site (primary use), and other relevant factors.
- Review and modify the zoning ordinance and other relevant regulations as necessary to remove barriers to the use of small-scale solar energy systems.

## **Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**

### **Recommendations**

- Review and modify zoning and subdivision regulations as necessary to encourage as many new building lots as possible are laid out to offer maximum solar orientation.
  - Ensure proper installation and maintenance of systems
  - Mitigate potential visual and noise impacts, especially those related to large installations
  - Consider impacts to habitat reduction and wildlife
- To further encourage responsible alternative energy generation, the Town could host educational seminars for residential solar and wind energy. These seminars should address issues of permitting, installation, maintenance, incentives and in the case of larger projects leasing of land for solar and/or wind energy generation and distribution. A potential partner for these seminars is Southern Tier Solar Works, a non-profit in Binghamton which assists residents and business with going solar. *(short term action)*

### **Protect and Manage Natural Resources**

For Question 10 on the 2016 comprehensive plan update survey, residents were asked, “All communities have a limited number of resources. If you had a total of 100 points to distribute between the following choices in the Town, how would you allocate resources?” By a very large measure, the top response was “Protect air and water quality.” It garnered nearly twice as many ‘points’ as the number two response: “Protect farms, agriculture, and open space.” On the 2009 survey, 99 percent of respondents thought the environmental quality of the Town was ‘Very Important’ (88 percent) or ‘Somewhat Important’ (11 percent). For the 2009 plan survey, 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:

- Section 190-13 of the town code currently requires a permit from the Town’s Superintendent of Highways for ‘tree harvesting/logging’. The town may wish to strengthen this process by requiring that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Forestry Best Management Practices be followed. Forestry Best Management Practices 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.

If expanded, the tree harvesting/logging permit should exempt uses such as small-scale cutting of trees for firewood, removal of hazardous, fallen, or diseased trees and/or establish a threshold of acreage below which no permit is required. *(intermediate term action)*

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulates mining within the State, but municipalities can: Require a special permit; Establish conditions for mining; Determine where mining is allowed; or Prohibit mining town-wide. Conditions established through a special use permit are limited to:

1. Ingress and egress to locally controlled roads
2. Routing of transport vehicles on locally controlled roads
3. Enforcement of DEC reclamation requirements
4. Conditions related to setbacks, barriers to restrict property access, dust control, and hours of operation

Section 190-15 of the town code establishes a mining permit process, but the town has the authority to more closely regulate this activity. The town should determine whether there are zoning districts where mining should not be permitted and consider establishing a more robust permit process for any areas where mining will be allowed. *(long term action)*

One of the most significant issues facing the Town over the past few years was High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (HVHF). This is a method of drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale, a common geologic formation in this area. At the time of the 2009 plan, the prevailing understanding was that State law pre-empted most local zoning regarding HVHF. The recommendations in the 2009 plan reflected the thought that Towns had little control over the practice. A series of court cases, however, upended that understanding and affirmed that towns can now ban the practice. Although, HVHF is currently prohibited across New York, that decision could be reversed in future years.

For the 2016 survey, several questions were asked about HVHF. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (71%) were concerned about environmental impacts and/or impacts to community character from natural gas drilling. When asked about HVHF, 61% of survey respondents in 2016 thought the Town should ban the practice while 28% thought it should be allowed. The remaining 12% were undecided.

The Town of Binghamton will remain informed about any changes to New York State's policy regarding HVHF. Should HVHF be allowed in New York State, the Town of Binghamton may implement a grace period to place a hold on action and allow an opportunity to:

1. Inform residents and elected officials of the latest understanding of the regulations and environmental impacts associated with HVHF;
2. Solicit public input regarding HVHF; and
3. Review and amend ordinances to protect environmental resources and community character.

## **Manage Stormwater 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. As a result of these events, a surprisingly high percentage of survey respondents (86 percent) responded that it was important to 'Manage stormwater runoff' in 2006. Since then, the Town has taken steps to reduce its flood vulnerability. Now just 50% of respondents to the 2016 survey expressed concern about 'Potential future flooding and stormwater runoff'. Despite the decline in concern, flooding and

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update Recommendations***

stormwater management remain real issues in this community. 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 in 2006 and the update in 2011. The plan is scheduled for another update in 2018. In regards to the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Town of Binghamton should:

- 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)*
- Participate in the update to the Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2018 *(short term action)*
- Continue/expand programs to restore/upgrade stormwater drainage infrastructure (i.e. cobbles and riprap in roadside ditches). *(ongoing action)*
- Maintain/enhance comprehensive stormwater drain, catch-basin and culvert clearing programs. *(ongoing 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 stormwater 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. *(ongoing action)*
- The Town should vigorously enforce the conditions imposed by DEC-mandated SWPP's. *(ongoing 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 opportunity 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. *(ongoing action)*

## **Consider Expanding Utilities and Services**

Question 3 of the 2016 survey asked residents about their access to Natural Gas, Cable Television, High-Speed Internet and Cellphone coverage. The majority of respondents were happy with their Cable Television (61%) and High-Speed Internet (71%) service, but there was dissatisfaction with Natural Gas and Cellphone availability. Nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) said they did not have Natural Gas

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update Recommendations***

service, but would like it, and almost a third (31%) said the same about Cellphone coverage. To address these deficiencies, the Town should undertake the following:

- 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 the Town of Binghamton. *(long term action)*

### **Encourage Senior Housing**

Senior housing is underrepresented in the Town of Binghamton. Between 2000 and 2010, the median age increased 11%. Today, approximately 30% of the town is over the age of 55. 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)*

### **Minimize Total Tax Burden**

The number one concern expressed by residents in the 2016 survey was 'Increasing Taxes'. A total of 83% of respondents were concerned about this. On the 2009 survey, over three-quarters of the respondents to the survey thought it 'Important' to 'Lower the Town property tax rate'.

## ***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update Recommendations***

At the November 2016 public meeting, participants said that the tax burden was a weakness. Respondents to the 2009 survey, and participants at the public meetings for the original plan, both expressed doubt that the overall tax burden could be reduced through increased development. Nearly a one-third of 2009 survey respondents (29 percent) thought that increasing the tax base by encouraging development should not be pursued. At the 2009 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*)

### **Improve Code Enforcement**

Based on survey results, the Town's code enforcement efforts were improved since completion of the 2009 plan. For the 2009 plan, 32% of respondents named code enforcement poor (11%) or fair (21 percent). On the 2016 survey, this figure had improved to 23% (16% Fair and 7% Poor). Related to this, 82% of respondents in 2016 rated the overall appearance of the Town as Excellent (12%) or Good (70%). To improve code enforcement further, the Town should undertake the following action:

- 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. The Town of Conklin recently instituted an online 'Service Request' option ([conklinny.townrequest.com/publicrequest/index](http://conklinny.townrequest.com/publicrequest/index)) which allows residents to report issues related to road maintenance, graffiti, illegal dumping, and code issues. This website could be used as a model for the Town of Binghamton. (*intermediate term action*)

### **Continue to 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. Since adoption of the 2009 plan, the Town made significant improvements and updates to their ordinances. Chapter 11 detail specific additional changes recommended for the Town to undertake.

### **Track Progress**

To implement the Comprehensive Plan update, 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.

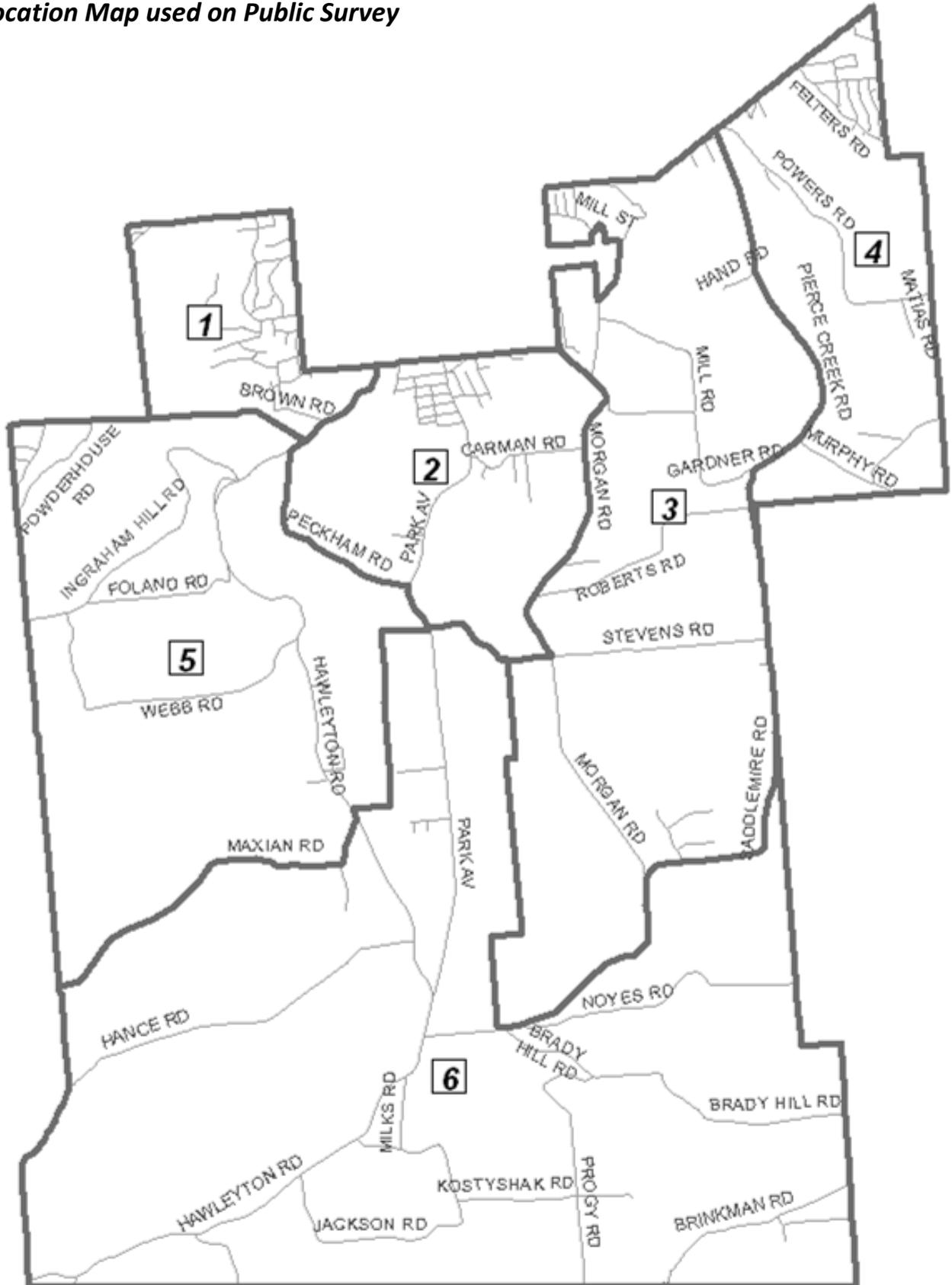
### **Maintain the Plan**

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.

## ***Appendices***

## ***Public Survey***

Location Map used on Public Survey



## **Written Responses**

Our town is very spread out with isolated pockets of community. It would be interesting to find ways to bring residents together to provide a sense of community identity as Town of Binghamton residents. What is our uniqueness?

I am very familiar with the natural gas work that has gone on just over the border in PA. It's too bad that we are missing out on the benefits. Too many people have been led to believe lies and have fallen for the emotional and unscientific hype that is pushed by opponents of the industry. I hope that New York State eventually comes to its senses and allows fracking here.

I love living in the Town! The scenery is beautiful. It is quiet-not much traffic and no pollution. I like it just the way it is.

Although I have lived in the Town for 25 years, I am unfamiliar with many of the issues raised. For instance, I would support commercial development, but I am ignorant as to where this would be accomplished in a mainly suburban-rural setting. I don't want resources wasted on areas that have little chance of achieving fruition.

Roads should be patrolled more often for speeding and unlawful vehicles on rural roads. e.g. 4-wheelers, ATVs, kids riding noisy vehicles and without helmets. Our town is lovely. The rural, quiet character is a great asset in today's world. We do need better cellphone coverage, and natural gas would be a benefit for cleaner air and cost. We commend the road maintenance for keeping roads plowed, mowed and in good condition. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

How about code enforcement getting after some of these property owners and their junk properties, starting with the Town Supervisor's junk property on Hance Road. Then go after the county and have them clean up Aqua Terra Park on Maxian Road. What an eyesore, they should be embarrassed! Do something about the high taxes and little or no services for our tax dollars. Does the Town board know that there are over 300 homes for sale just in the Town of Binghamton? You can't blame everything wrong on Governor Cuomo. The Town Board is not looking out for the residents, in my opinion.

Youth program- totally focused on sports- what about the youth who are not sports minded, what are you providing for them? How much Town money goes into non-resident youth? What is being done for the large senior population? Favor safe walking trails, senior housing, senior center or activities, meals, etc.

Common sense and freedom without negative effects to neighbors.

Would like a map showing "The Commons" within the Town of Binghamton. Why are the taxes so different? What could we do about it?

Better utilization of the Arena- should have something every night; cooking demo, lecture, music, content, dog show, family movie nights. A lot of the area is a natural backdrop for Hollywood movies; attract film makers

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

The Town should allow fracking with strict regulations controlling impacts on neighbors, roadways, aquifers, etc.

The Town of Binghamton is a beautiful, quiet, friendly place with lots of natural wildlife and a very nice little community. Too much large-scale development would crush this community's beauty and peacefulness, plus potentially pit neighbors against neighbors. Thus destroying that great sense of community and friendliness and peacefulness that has led me to live here for 30 years. Plus the schools, park and TOB sports are terrific.

Open air burning is a big problem here. We often have to close our windows because of smoke. We would also like to see a ban on ATVs. ATVs cause tremendous environmental damage to soil, water and air quality and so much noise pollution that they negate the whole reason for our wanting to live here. At the very least they should be required to use mufflers and should not be permitted in densely populated areas.

The school taxes are outrageously high

To be brief, I am retired from the City of Binghamton Engineering Department after 30 years of service. My experience and education have taught me many things, not the least which is clean water's value. Please keep this in mind when making any and all decisions. It was a mud covered laborer down in a hole repairing a broken water main who said it best "When are people going to realize this stuff (water) is more valuable than gold?"

More town services. All we hear from the town newsletter is "We don't, you can't, you need..." We would like town cleanup again, other towns take tires, freon, branches, etc.

Have resided in the Town 20 plus years- Have not seen any improvements. Feel if anything- has declined, homes have gone down in value. Issues of the homes not being taken care of- residents, many of them seem to have no pride and coding does nothing. John R. did an excellent job of being proactive with ATVs and dirt bikes, etc. And if given the chance would have done another great job of homes, junk, etc. Feel supervisor and "others" put up with appearances, but are not as proactive- they feel you call police, etc. I was also told the town doesn't have a noise ordinance- however they do- just didn't spend the money to get the equipment for it. As far as the town parks, more seem nearby Park Terrace- they are located a distance away- What is all the unused area at the Town of Binghamton location of offices? A few well-placed street lights?

Over development causes insufficient water availability, which would force residents to connect to municipal water/ sewer which would turn the Town of Binghamton into the City of Binghamton. The best part of living in this area is not having to drink city or bottled water. The water drainage system along Hawleyton Road is a "closed" system- meaning they try to keep water draining underground. The problem with that is every year leaves fall from the trees. The when we get heavy rain the grates are immediately clogged with leaves and the road is flooded and water jumps the road and floods my yard. To stop this, I have to go out in the pouring rain with my garden rake to drain the flooding. The road is damaged by flooding because I am not always around.

**Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**Appendix: Public Survey**

If hydraulic fracking is allowed in the town, we will leave the area. It is too dangerous for our area especially our children and agriculture/ livestock. We would like to see patrolling for illegal dumping. People dump garbage almost daily on Mill Road. Also, it would be wonderful if the town would give seniors consideration to a beefed-up noise ordinance or perhaps an outright prohibition against the use of loud dirt bikes, ATVs, etc. in areas where there are a certain number of residents. In my situation, I bought my home on Mill Roads in 2002 for peace and quiet, privacy and some sense of being in nature. Today, there are two young men who are NOT property owners and do not pay taxes- who indiscriminately ride their very loud dirt bikes- one within 100 yards of my once quiet property and another down the road. People who pay big taxes should not be forced to be subjected to this type of disturbance. It ruins the quiet enjoyment of our property and is a menace that only the Town can legally remedy.

I don't think youth/ senior service should be included in town budget, taxes are too high! If you want to participate in organized sports etc. pay for it yourself instead of taxing everyone.

The town does an outstanding job providing road maintenance and plowing. There are areas in the town that are very sad in appearance- houses poorly kept and yards filled with debris. As a whole, the town is hands down better than city living!

I like your idea of a survey. I've lived here since 1997 and never been asked my opinion, by anyone! My one observation is this. As I drive through the Town, on my way to and from work, I notice things that make me wonder if they are "legal" or permissible. Or I may have an idea to share to correct a perceived problem. If I had easy access to someone in authority I would be much more inclined to speak up. Does the Town have a way for the residents to contact it easily? This may sound like a stupid question but consider this: In the years that I have lived here I never had the need to mention or report something I considered serious. There have been times when I wondered if something is OK or not and don't really know any means of contacting anyone. Normally I wouldn't object to picking up the phone and calling TOB offices, but unless I was certain it was a problem I'd hesitate to call anyone and be a bother. I think most people would remain silent so as not to be perceived as a trouble maker or complainer. If they had the means to inquire about a situation anonymously they'd be more inclined to do so. If this means of communications issues already exists, then perhaps there is a method of dispersing instruction as to how to use it.

We are very happy with current youth programming and parks. More frequent yard waste pick-up would be a nice additional service. Brookside Elementary needs before school childcare.

I am 74 years old and I have not had children in school since 1988. I feel I have paid my share of school taxes. I think there comes a time to stop making people pay after the age of 70 to be relieved of this burden, I feel if South Mountain doesn't have to pay school taxes, nor should I. They have large beautiful houses with large salaries and I have a limited amount and a small house. Please consider. P.S. I make \$137 a week plus social security.

No to Fracking! No to Pipelines! No to Compressor Stations! No to Injection Wells! No to Fracking/ Pipeline traffic!

Responses in this survey represent two people in this household.

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

High water and sewer costs are a shortcoming.

Try and dissolve the common district in South Mountain are to help lower our taxes.

With increasing taxes provide more town services such as trash pickup as part of tax. Have more household garbage or junk pickup dates. Improve quality of water. Very chlorinated tasting.

County needs to increase work and maintenance on major roads. Parks needs to be ready to play sports as early as possible; this year was late and nowhere for kids to practice. Youth sports need to start planning earlier for the season; too many last minute decisions.

Primary concern should be controlling taxes, so as not to drive out current residents. Would love to see one or two small stores- a grocery, an artisan's shop. Walking trails and bike lanes would be nice in spite of our hills. We do not have enough wind (min 10 mph) to have a wind farm. Natural gas drilling is a plus to provide cheap power which is not to say conservation is not needed. We have solar and a geo system but would like to see gas development with local oversight. If gas drilling becomes a reality we should have or require that our local people "snoops" be allowed to monitor wells. Snoops would be friendly volunteers who smooze with workers and homeowners to catch problems before they develop and to insure companies are fair to all residents in the area. Courtesy and common sense please. Also concerned about rabies of wild animals- there should be someone to call. Hey how come we pay taxes in NYS but we have to pay for own garbage pickup and are taxed on that? Seems like a double whammy and slightly unfair. Thoughts?

I would like to see senior citizen housing and more services for senior citizens in the Hawleyton and Park Terrace areas

I'm one-half mile from the Binghamton City line and have no water, sewer, cable, gas, DSL, or adequate cell service. That's totally unacceptable in 2016. We can't stay in the 1980s forever! If the Town Office were located on my property, changes would be made.

I feel there should be restrictions on where apartments can be legal. We have a lot of rentals which exist that are not in rental areas at this time. Homes where more than two families live etc. There has also been an increase of junk cars in the yards these past few years.

Better cell coverage. Better internet coverage. We pay for high-speed and only get .70 at best. Frontier is our company and has told my neighbors and myself that if we don't like it they will take all their stuff back. How nice is that! TWC only comes in our road 1/2 way and has not asked any of us if we wanted it. We have no choice but to use them for phone and internet. A cross-over road between Park Ave and Penn Ave on the top of the mountain. When there are fires or accidents there are no shortcuts, we have to go all the way around. I feel this is a safety hazard.

Increase cell phone service, water, sewer and gas service down the main arteries, Park Hawleyton, Pierce Creek.

Protect air, water and soil, allow solar farms and residential solar. No natural gas drilling.

Please- No Fracking! Don't want noise, trucks, ruin our beautiful town, crime, etc.

**Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**Appendix: Public Survey**

All houses and trailers that people are not living in that cannot be repaired should be torn down or forced to repair in a decent time frame. The trailer on Pierce Creek Road needs to be removed and cleaned up.

Get control of school taxes. Seniors can't afford ever raising tax bills.

What are "solar farms?"

Youth soccer. Option to choose natural gas vs. propane

This survey is a great idea! Would like to see some beautification entering into Town lines. Also, perhaps some type of unique community function which outside communities could also attend. The Town of Binghamton is a beautiful area which we need to preserve and make sure properties are kept clean to keep our values. Also, important to keep our Town safe as crime increases nearby our town lines. The youth activities should continue with its great service and make improvements as it grows!

Limit multi-family housing

"Measured growth" is best for Town of Binghamton. Having said that, all of us being in NYS with all the challenges that come from Albany, any growth is difficult. You guys do a great job in Town of Binghamton given all the challenges/ barriers faced under the New York State umbrella.

It would be real nice to have reliable cell service at our house (Verizon) and to have more places to walk with our family outside. Thanks.

No drilling and no fracking, and no pipelines, and no gas compressor stations

I have lived in Orchard Park for 32 years and over the last 10 have seen the condition of homes decline (poor upkeep, unkempt lawns, junk cars and trailers, etc.). This is causing property values of everyone's homes to fall. Would love to see more code enforcement. And if the proper codes are not in place, have them enacted into law. Also, would like to see the dog-control officer patrol the subdivision for barking dogs. Owners put them out in fenced yards for long periods and let them bark continuously.

There are no senior citizen activities in the Town. With our aging community, there should be more services for the senior citizens. The Town of Binghamton Community Center on Coleman Road would be the ideal senior center. Maybe the Town could contract Broome County Office for Aging to implement a program using that facility. Also, I would like to see the establishment of senior housing in the Town of Binghamton. Cell phone coverage is terrible. Something needs to be done to ensure better service.

I would like to see water and sewer services to ALL residents in the town. I would like to see gas lines to all residents. The Town of Binghamton is a wonderful place to live.

Clean the junk on Pierce Creek Road Pumpkin farm, eyesore

I support fracking, but I don't think the Town of Binghamton is rural enough.

No opinion for section 2 is not really no opinion- If public services such as water/ sewer/ natural gas are going to occur; they should be made available to all not just the corridors listed.

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

Solar yes, fracking no.

No to fracking. Yes to wind and solar.

No fracking, no increase in taxes for solar.

Do not tax solar, and do not allow any gas drilling -water and air are precious

No fracking way

No new taxes on solar; that is keep the existing exemptions in place

No tax solar or wind energy

No gas drilling, anywhere in the Town, please

No taxing of solar!

Please continue to allow the tax exemptions for solar. Removing those will only reduce the number of solar installations and NOT provide any meaningful tax revenue. It would be cutting off our nose to spite our face.

Gas drilling is very problematic. The Town should enthusiastically support renewable energy since it is the ONLY ethical and sensible way forward. The amount of gas under the town is small and to attempt to allow development of it would be reckless and irresponsible.

More preschool opportunities for SV school district. More affiliation/ sponsorship with improving Ross Park Zoo property and activities.

Would love to see the Town embrace green energy in a big way. Use of solar farms and wind turbines would offset expenses for utilities of town, as well as add an aesthetic beauty and sense of being a progressive township. Youth sports seem very unorganized. Always waiting until the last moments to find out when practice will start, what the team will be, etc. For a reoccurring established organization, it seems to be lacking oversight and direction from year to year. This is discouraging to first time participants' families.

Please reduce services (lower taxes) Please develop commercial business (lower taxes)

High taxes are hurting home values and driving people away. Recently I have been considering moving to Florida, the property and school taxes would be 2/3 less than here. In North Carolina the tax saving is significantly better than that. Raising taxes has always been our politicians answer to rising costs and a lower tax base. That approach is counterproductive! Driving more people away, and making it more difficult to own or sell a house. Lower business taxes for all, not just the businesses that negotiate. Increase the business tax base and use that to lower property tax or do something to incent more businesses. This is a pretty place to live, and we would like to stay, but it doesn't make sense to retire here.

Improper ditch maintenance

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update  
Appendix: Public Survey***

This survey needs to be updated to be more realistic and current. Also the questions asking our opinion are flawed. Some questions in this survey don't even (in my opinion) pertain to our town- they are too general.

We have noticed a routine fish kill possibly due to the lower water levels at Jackson Town Park.

An excellent place to live. The Town administration does an excellent job- not too much and not too little government. You have avoided the ego driven march to do more and be more things to everyone.

Please NO FRACKING EVER! Consider solar!

Town needs to consolidate their towers and enforce their tower ordinance

As residents of the Town of Binghamton for over 20 years, we are extremely frustrated that code is violated up and down Peckham Road. We understand that it is a difficult task to cite residents for violations and or take them to court to resolve the violation. I personally would like some \$\$\$ set aside to correct the violations, be it, the violator or town should clear areas if necessary. In addition to being unsightly, it affects the value of our home. Thank you for the opportunity for allowing us to express our comments.

Clean or re-dig the ditches.

The survey is quite long. This probably reduces a lot the number of people replying. Is this a good thing?

Town government should work harder to be more transparent and more communicative

**NO GAS DRILLING!!!!**

The town personnel and services are the best I have ever known.

As a land owner my rights were taken away over fracking

Good work on controlling the tax rates. Good job by the Highway Dept. Keep testing water supply and keep it safe!

Reduce speed limit on Hawleyton Road. Develop Aqua Terra Park into a more user-friendly park. Encourage community-wide cleanup days- trash along the roadsides is a huge problem. Property reassessments- the property tax burden is not fair given the current property values in the town. Bike lanes on Hawleyton Road and Park Ave. Hire additional manpower to enforce codes in the town- there are a number of properties in the town that are extreme eyesores.

If natural gas drilling was approved, the town will quickly lose its appeal. It would be nice to have well water access instead of chlorinated and fluoridated city water where I live. There seems to be a lot of garbage off the roads and in the woods. I think this should be more enforced. The taxes are killing our finances. Is it possible to tax families based on income? We struggle and do not live in an elaborate neighborhood. Thanks for sending out a survey!

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

I feel that a simple start could be the enforcement of the codes regarding junk cars, trailers, etc. in the residential areas. The salt use could be less if the salt spreader were operating properly. Around our area there is only a trail of salt (dropped instead of spreading). Overall, I am pleased with the service provided by the Town of Binghamton.

Overgrown trees along TOB roads is becoming a huge problem in relation to road safety and protecting overhead utilities. It's just a matter of time before someone is injured or killed by falling tree limbs. I'm tired of my electric and cable going out, again, because of falling limbs.

Encourage small-scale solar (residential rooftop)

Why do questions about wind farms and solar farms appear twice? I don't even know what they are.

Didn't we do this just a few years ago?

Great place to live! Taking care of roads, water- excellent!

Provide nighttime street lighting in certain areas... i.e. Orchard Park in the Town of Binghamton

The town should develop a "wise use" of natural resources philosophy. This would include the regulated and structured use of hydraulic fracturing and timber cutting. This would enable the town to survive economically. If hydraulic fracturing is allowed, gas service should be expanded to residents currently unable to receive gas (where ever reasonable). Such a philosophy will lower taxes and greatly reduce residential heating costs.

Police coverage is poor. BCSO and SP spend all their time in the City of Binghamton. It is rare to see any patrols in the town unless they have a call. Town parks need to be kept up to date (Park Ave next to Fire Dept.)

If there is one thing this town needs, it is a code enforcement officer that does his/ or her job. I have personally called, given addresses and basically was told "oh yeah I know that person" but nothing was done. It has been a while since that call and was actually thinking to try again. I hope this survey will be taken more seriously. We really don't need to see junkyards. Thank you.

Need more businesses. Why are taxes so high compared to neighboring towns that already have sewer and water services. I will not support sewer/ water unless all town residents receive it, unless a "commercial" area is designated and pays additionally for it. Please allow safe natural gas exploration by all means, but don't over regulate. Encourage wind turbines "windmills". Private property owners gain benefit and town could impose yearly permit fees on turbine companies accumulating revenue to lower overall taxes. Win-Win. Is it true we have the highest taxes in the county? Please allow private property owners to have and enjoy private property. No one is going to pay high taxes for nothing. I will sell home and move.

I don't have suggestions, but would like to just say that growing up in the Town has been wonderful. As a senior citizen I would not want to live anywhere else. That is why I would love senior housing and programs brought to the Town.

**Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**Appendix: Public Survey**

Removal of vacant houses/ apartments. I live on Margery Street and for the past several years there have been a few eyesore vacant apartment buildings that should be demolished and removed. There has been no real action on these properties. These abandoned buildings are safety hazards for the neighborhood and lower property values.

Please improve cell phone coverage.

I have no greater concern in the Town or anywhere else in America, than the lack of quality blue collar jobs. The kind of jobs that were plentiful when I was young- the kind that so many young adults need to get off/ stay off the streets; to be able to support a family and to be able to avoid a life of crime in order to survive. Gas! Fracking! Yes!!

CONCERNS: Neighbor on Deer Run operates used car sales out of his house. At times there are up to 5 unregistered vehicles sitting at the end of his driveway on Deer Run. The end of his driveway is very wide which ironically the Town installed when revising the culverts. MAJOR CONCERN: No cell service. The fire department is slowly converting to cell phone "I am responding" dispatch. Poor cell service is a major concern for emergency dispatch

I think the Highway Department overdoes it with plowing and plowing back snowbanks onto lawns and fields. Especially when snowfall is nowhere near 30 years ago. Last winter 28" total, November to May recorded my house on hilltop on Stevens Road. Raise the wing when the front lawn is even with the road surface.

More cell phone towers in the Park Ave corridor

If fracking is allowed, I will move out of the state

Overall a great place to live.

Our highway trucks used to pick up stuff for landfill (dump) once or twice a year. This would help people get rid of a lot of stuff they don't want, but need to get rid of and need help to remove it (Maybe spring and fall). Encourage people to take better care of their property (painting, better yard appearance, care of old and falling down sheds and buildings, just neater). Offer more help to seniors; moving, shoveling, painting, general upkeep. Pay our school and property taxes at Town Hall on Park Ave.

We pay the highest taxes. No cell tower, no services in this town.

Recycle material trucks: there should be a rule that these trucks have to close their sides between stops. A lot of the trash along the roads is coming off these trucks. I have seen it happen and so have other people. If they are not required to close these sides, then the Town and County HWY Departments should clean up the roadsides. We should all want to keep our Towns clean and beautiful.

School taxes are ridiculously high- difficult to sell more expensive homes here

TOB: Great place to live. Good people in charge.

Does everyone get this survey?

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

I continue to be perplexed regarding the responsibility in the upkeep of creeks and creek beds shared with multiple home owners. Living on Hazard Hill Road, Hickory and East Hampton neighbors have a shared creek bed in their backyards. Over the years, leaves, brush, stones clog the bed from the top and new streams are created due to the overflow. As we pay to have the section cleaned on our property, it is being unattended above and we end up with a flooding situation, lawn repair and rock removal. I believe the Town should oversee this situation, so we can keep the creek bed flowing where it should. Yes, have called Town and told its' individual homeowners responsibility- Help!

Newsletter of TOB events, etc.

I love our Town. I love our sense of tight-knit community. Very proud to raise my family here.

How to keep our young people here in Broome County, instead of taking jobs out of NYS. Reduce state mandates on local governments. Term limits on local elective leaders. No multi-unit housing allowed in TOB. Neighborhood watch organize.

Allow tax incentives for renewable energy

no gas wells

Town needs to develop a solar farm on existing town-owned property

Roads administered by the Town are maintained well- ditches cleaned, shoulders maintained. County roads are terrible- trees grow in uncleaned ditches, shoulders are worn, guard rails washed away. Is it possible for the Town to take some of these services? I was told any road with a yellow line are County controlled- that seems like a lot! I see many "trashy properties" - code enforcement? I love the TOB and raised two sons here who played baseball from T-ball to age 18.

Improve cell service- easy and cheap, the companies pay for the towers.

Improvement of water quality on Felters Rd.

Keep up the good work. Consider reducing the speed limits and enforce the limit. Remember there are no sidewalks, it is hard/ scary to walk on our roads where cars are going 50+ mph.

I live in Yezzi Parkwood development. I think the amount we pay for sewer system is unreasonably high. I fear it could become a factor in selling my home when that time arrives.

We live on Maxian Rd. and do not have access to HIGH speed internet (we have very low speed DSL). We want high speed internet. Also cellphone service is very limited and should be expanded. There should be no natural gas drilling/fracking allowed since it will jeopardize the quality of water and quality of life in the TOB. Our houses are worth nothing if we don't have clean water.

The garbage thrown on the side of the roads needs to be addressed. Once in a great while we notice the Broome County inmates picking it up, although it isn't as often as needed

Would like to see solar and wind power developed in the Town. The lack of jobs and development in the Southern Tier as a whole is a shortcoming.

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

Too much garbage along the roads, the recycling truck needs to keep the sides down. I'd like to see those bushes and trees growing up in the ditches cleaned out or cut down. Too many people have so much junk around their houses. Some places don't look like they are even livable. Why plow the roads when we only have a dusting of snow

I like the Town of Binghamton just the way it is. The only way it could be better is maybe being paid to live here. Anytime I have to go to the Town Hall, the officials are always really friendly and very pleasant to deal with. Just this year I was unable to comply with the 2nd deadline for the dog license, I called and he gave me the extra week I needed with no problem. After living here, I can't even imagine trying to live anywhere else!

Push for cable service along Webb Rd. I can get no high-speed internet (no options). This will be a problem when selling my home to anyone with children as now it is a necessity for school. I have to use Frontier which is so slow it is useless.

Living on Powderhouse Road (area #5), we do not benefit from any town services. We would like greater sense of community within Town of Binghamton and an area that cherishes our environmental resources and quality of air AND water. We strongly believe that fracking would benefit only a few and end up destroying our roads, quality of life as evident in the Montrose/ Dimmock area AND would compromise our housing values

Smart and planned development is necessary and good for the Town growth, that is controlled and appropriate to the zoning, is a necessity for a successful Town. Growth, of that type should be encouraged.

High speed internet

I would like to see the Town of Binghamton remain a rural and small community where I feel brings people together. I feel it would be unfavorable to over develop and to commercialize our area of residents. Let's protect our natural resources and remain to our roots. Town of Binghamton has a lot of history along with many family members. We need to strive to keep our community safe of crime by continuing efforts to promote single home dwelling and eliminate excess of more than two family rentals. I would like to see clean up date for garbage removal along streets and vacant lots. Let's keep Town of Binghamton clean, healthy and a good place to live

Replace culverts and pave more roads. Increase the pavement marking around town. Replace highway signs. Wind and solar are great aspects to investigate

Currently live 2 miles outside TOB District 6, into Town of Conklin. Previously lived in District 3 for 30 years.

Love that this is a rural community. No commercial development please. Too many kids running ATVs or mini-bikes on Hawleyton Rd; someone will get killed! Beautiful view, need to keep them.

The city/town line runs through our property. We were recently able to tap into city sewer, something I am sure many town residents would love to have. For 20 years, we've enjoyed the wildlife and woods

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

behind our property. I would hope to keep it that way for future generations. The best of both worlds, country setting, close to stores, shopping and the city.

I am concerned about crime committed by minorities and their total disregard of community. I think people need to feel safe and that probably means more police patrols/ presence.

Improve opportunities for business to come to town, so you can lower property taxes. People are leaving the area because the cost of taxes. No new homes being built because of taxes.

Chickens (5 or under) should be allowed (for use of eggs)

The Town's rural character and proximity to urban center is its strength. Clean air and water are essential as the foundation of a healthy community. Development of walking/ biking corridors, connecting and supporting farmers markets, parks and open spaces such as, Aqua Terra and Vestal Hills would be ideal goals.

Only extend water and sewer in Pierce Creek Corridor if Coleman Road is included. Natural gas stations are compatible in some places, but they must benefit the Town of Binghamton.

#1 GOAL: NO FRACKING! Protect my well and lifestyle

Cut back on Town services. On second thought, do away with the Town altogether and consolidate under Broome County.

The speed limits on Town roads need to be lowered and enforced. Particularly on Pierce Creek Road

The town needs to seriously consider the youth commissioner position. This person has been continually ineffective in terms of getting the t-ball program going. We still have not started, and it is May 12th. Last year, our uniforms arrived at our final game of the year. How disheartening for our youngest town residents.

Has anything/much changed since you did this Comprehensive Plan in 2009?

It seems to me that nearly nothing has changed, and so I wonder if the time and effort put into this survey and whatever the Town does with the Plan may be a very big waste of money. Especially when TAX issues loom so large.

Ban fracking and gas compressors and transmission pipelines

I live in the Town of Binghamton because it is beautiful, rural location with close proximity to an urban area. However, I feel that, the biggest shortcoming of this location is lack high-speed internet access. High-speed internet access is no longer simply a luxury, but an essential component of today's society. On our road, we have no access to broadband; no cable, dsl, fiber, etc. The only options are dial-up, terrestrial wireless (<1.0 Mbps), and satellite internet (with low data caps).

I pay \$15,150 in property taxes each year, am single, never had a kid who went to school in this district and don't even have garbage pickup. I have but one voice on the decisions that are made regarding the use of my tax dollars. If the housing market wasn't so damn bad, I'd been long gone by now.

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update  
Appendix: Public Survey***

I am impressed with how well the town roads are plowed and maintained.

I was denied use of sand & salt during the winter months. I was told that many people not from the Town would stop by and take as much as they wanted. So this had to be stopped. I understand and agree that those who don't live in the town shouldn't be allowed. But I should be able to show my driver's license that I live in the town and be able to pick up some for the winter months for my driveway. You live in the Town for 20 years and you're not allowed a bucket of sand & salt. I would say that SUCKS!

Increased awareness of need for help without the town. As a semi-new resident, I do not always know what is going on, or how I can help or participate in town activities.

Cell service is terrible! There is no reason for this. We have radio towers on the hill. Why can't Verizon, sprint or any one of them put up a tower? It's coming down to a safety issue. I don't enjoy paying for a house line and a cell that only works if I'm in one spot (maybe) in the middle of my road

Don't allow fracking

Survey was too long

Keep changes to an absolute minimum. And try and lower taxes and sewer and water rates.

Better communication about what the "plan" is now, and what possible changes might be needed.

No gas drilling

No fracking

No such "commercial/industrial" development

Very strict control of natural gas pipelines that might pass through the town - especially those that provide zero local energy benefits. Even more strict controls of any natural gas processing facilities - compressors, etc.

Address cell service and ambulance response in the areas of TOB beyond Orchard Park.

A weekly yard waste collection and garbage collection should be part of your taxes, NOT an ADDITIONAL COST.

Cell phone cuts out all the time the town should look in to this for safety concerns

No fracking or gas drilling!

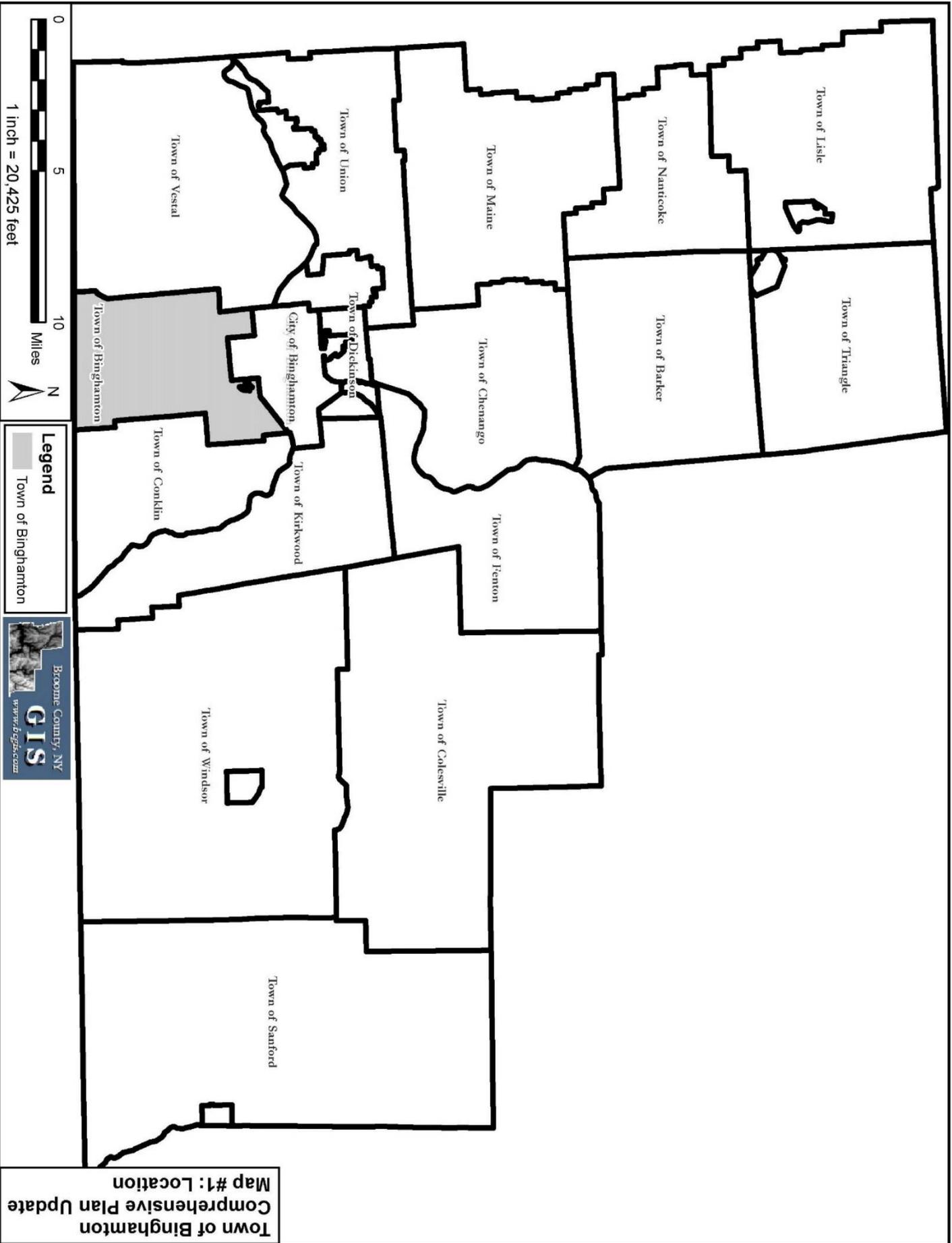
TOB did drainage work on corner of Felters and Cheryl Drive. However, this has left a runway for a car to pass through to deep ravine next to contemporary green house on Felters Road (accident waiting to happen).

Equality in the Town sucks. I see a lot of preferential treatment and a blind eye when it comes to Town employees and their families. As well as south mountain- do they even pay taxes here? Choices in Q10 seem to be slanted options and not really addressing our community needs.

***Town of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Update***  
***Appendix: Public Survey***

Work on lowering taxes! If taxes are lower more people will build and migrate to the town. Hence the tax base will grow.

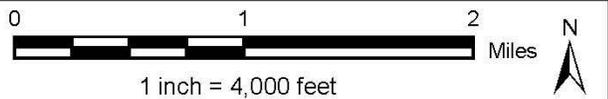
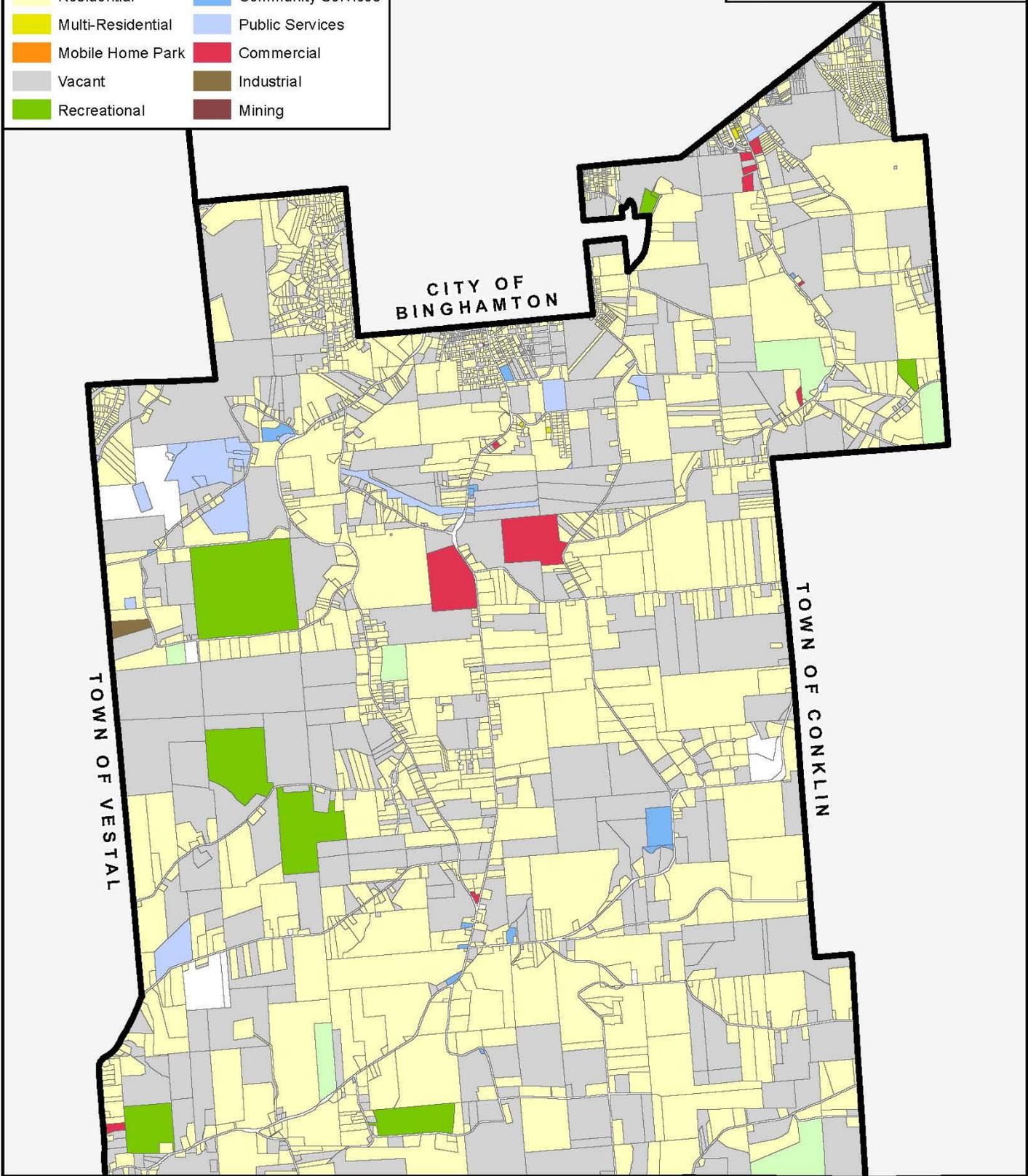
## ***Maps***



**Legend**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Agricultural      |  Wild/Forest        |
|  Residential       |  Community Services |
|  Multi-Residential |  Public Services    |
|  Mobile Home Park  |  Commercial         |
|  Vacant            |  Industrial         |
|  Recreational      |  Mining             |

**Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #2: Land Use**



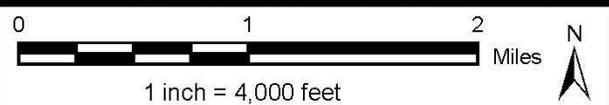
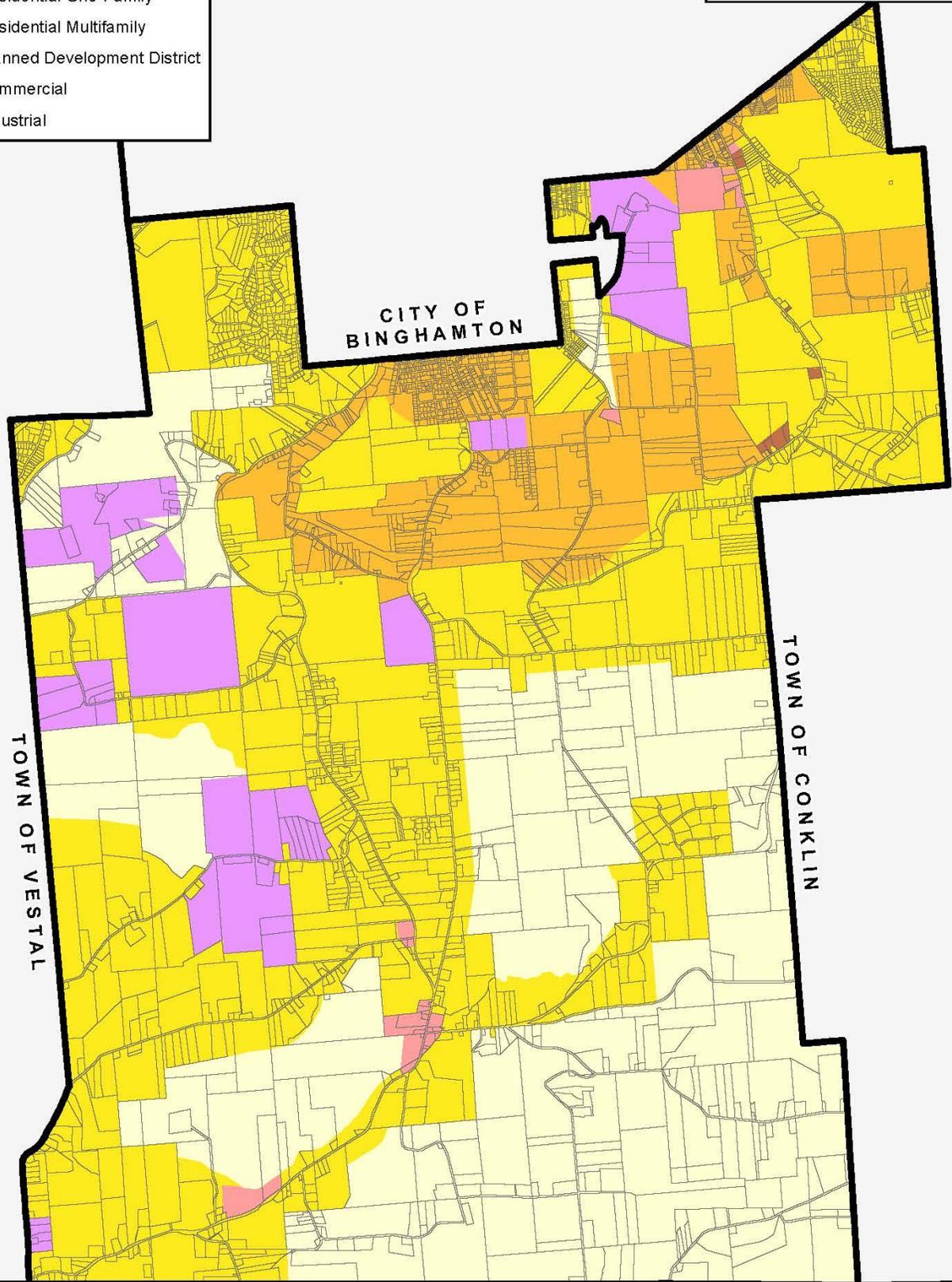
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**Legend**

- Rural Residential
- Residential One-Family
- Residential Multifamily
- Planned Development District
- Commercial
- Industrial

**Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #3: Zoning**

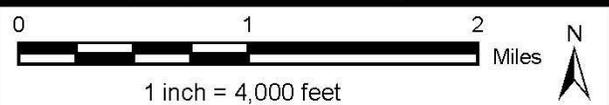
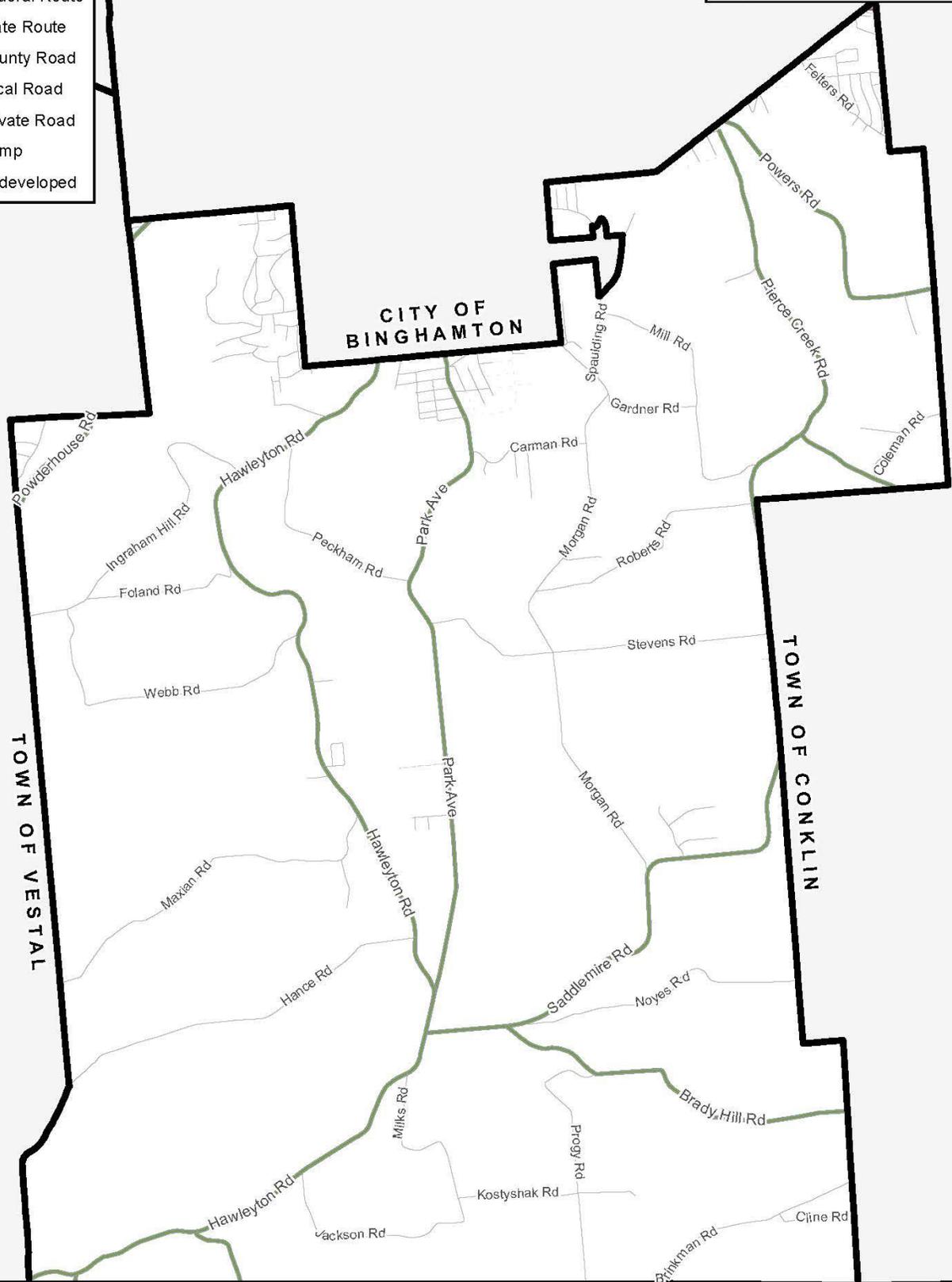


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**Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #4: Streets**

- Legend**
-  Interstate
  -  Federal Route
  -  State Route
  -  County Road
  -  Local Road
  -  Private Road
  -  Ramp
  -  Undeveloped



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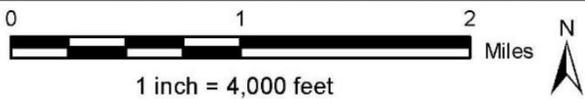
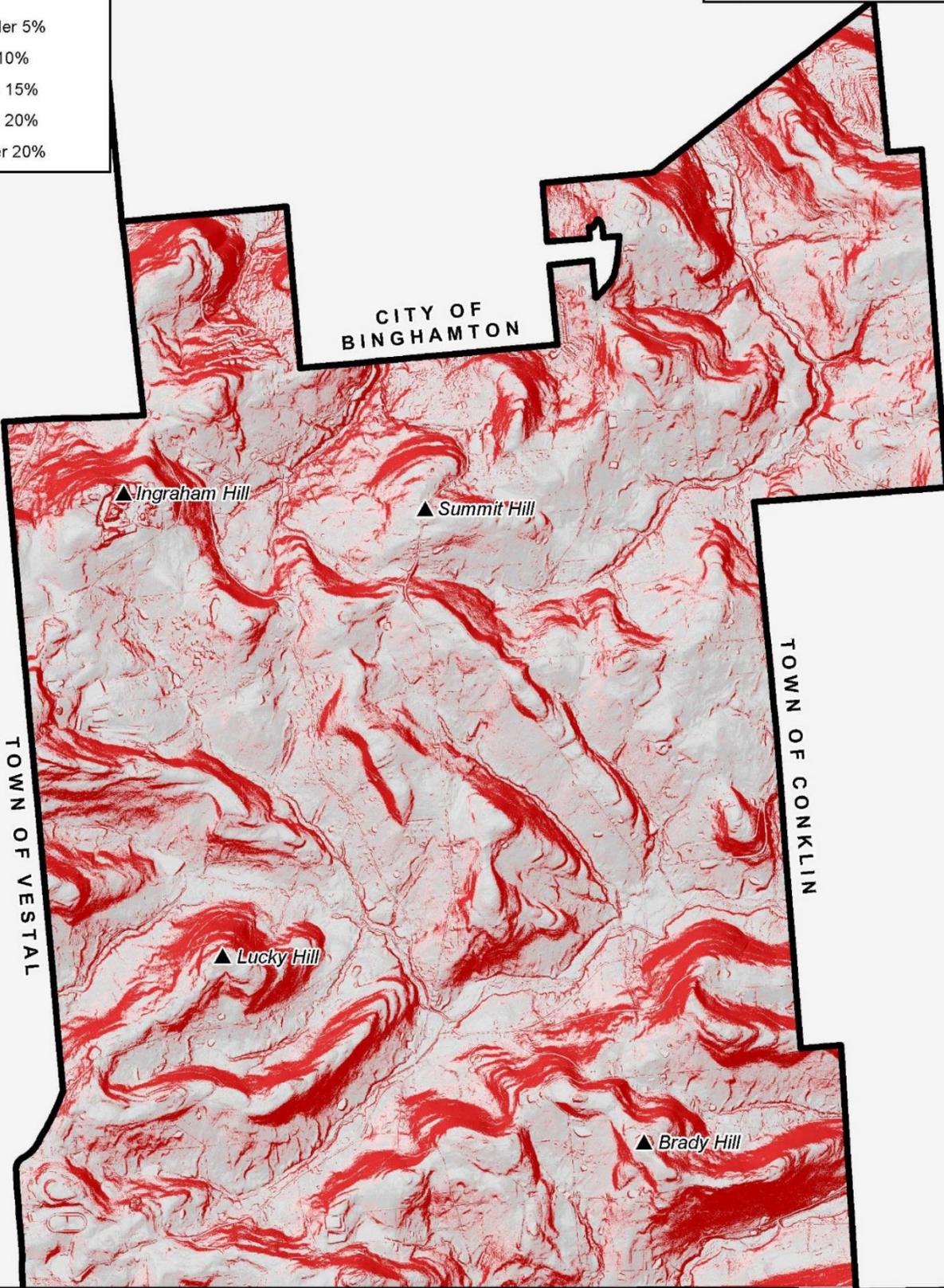
Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #5: Topography

**Legend**

- ▲ Significant Peaks

**Slope**

- Under 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 15%
- 15 - 20%
- Over 20%

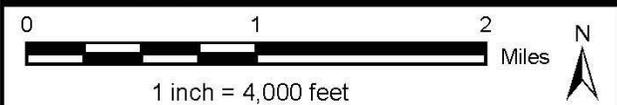
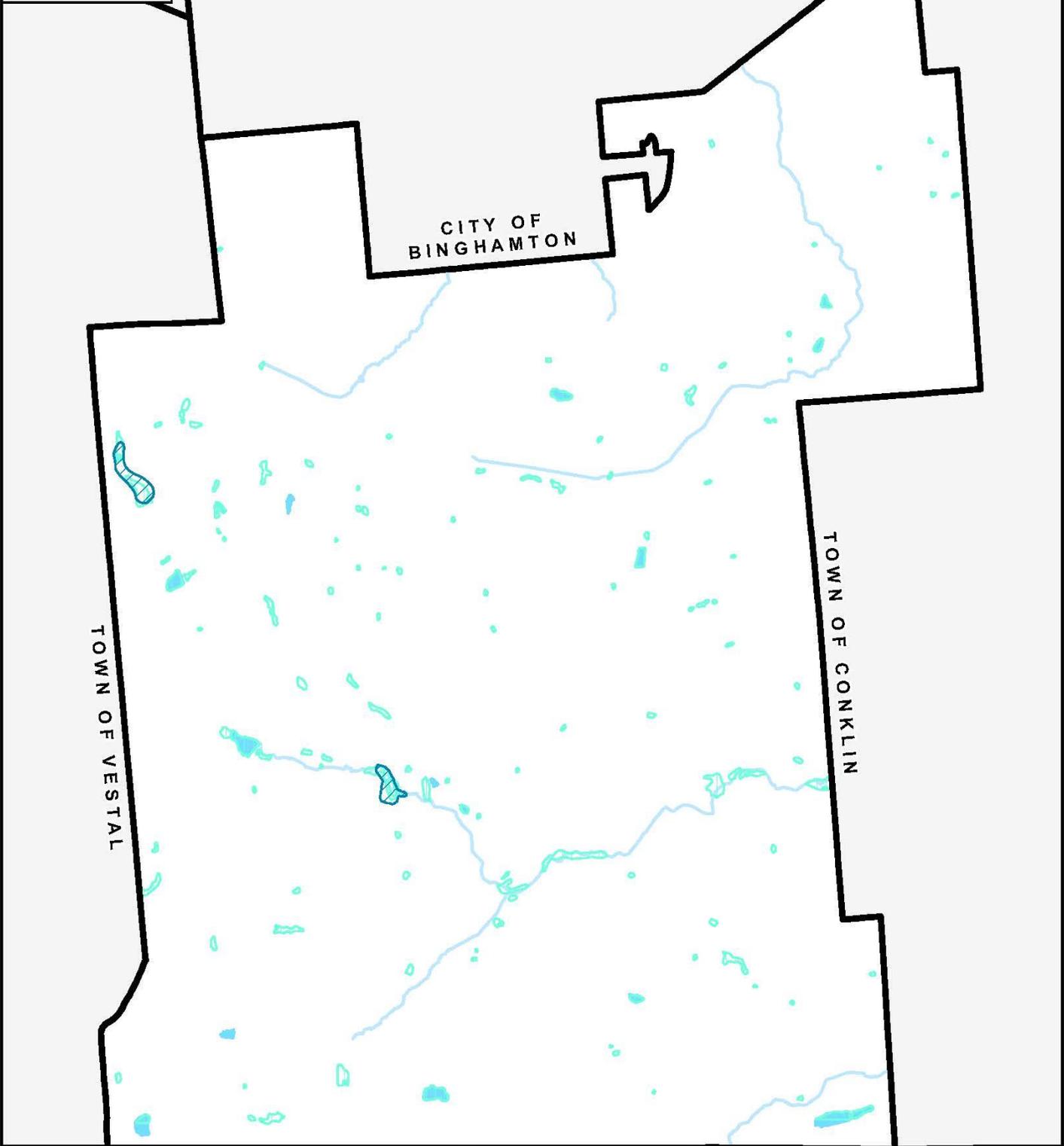


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Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #6: Water & Wetlands

- Legend**
- DEC Wetlands
  - NWI Wetlands
  - Streams
  - Water Bodies

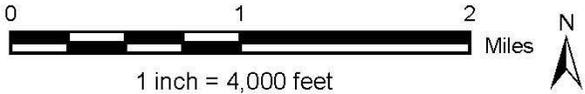
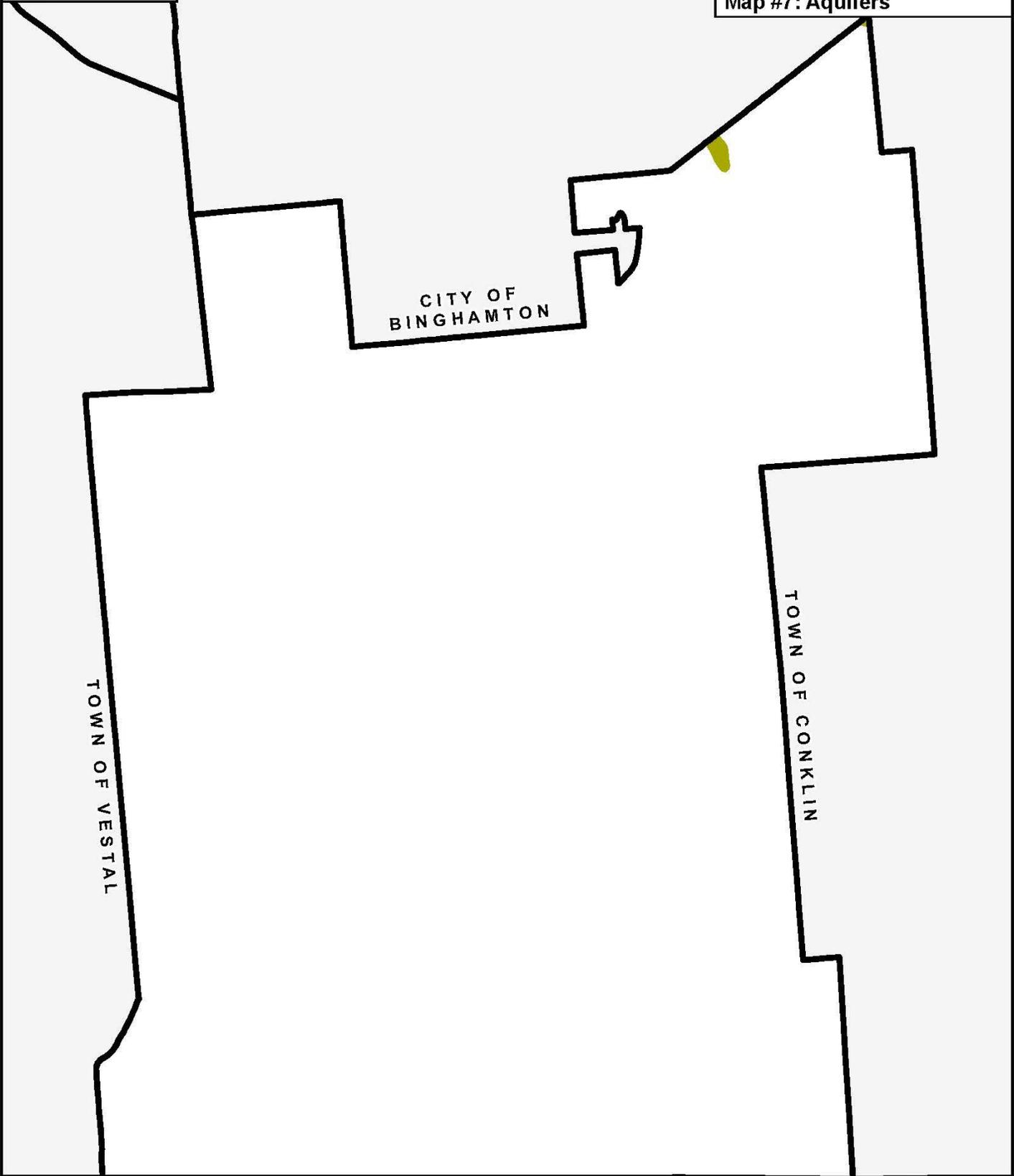


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**Legend**  
Primary Aquifers

Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #7: Aquifers



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**Legend**

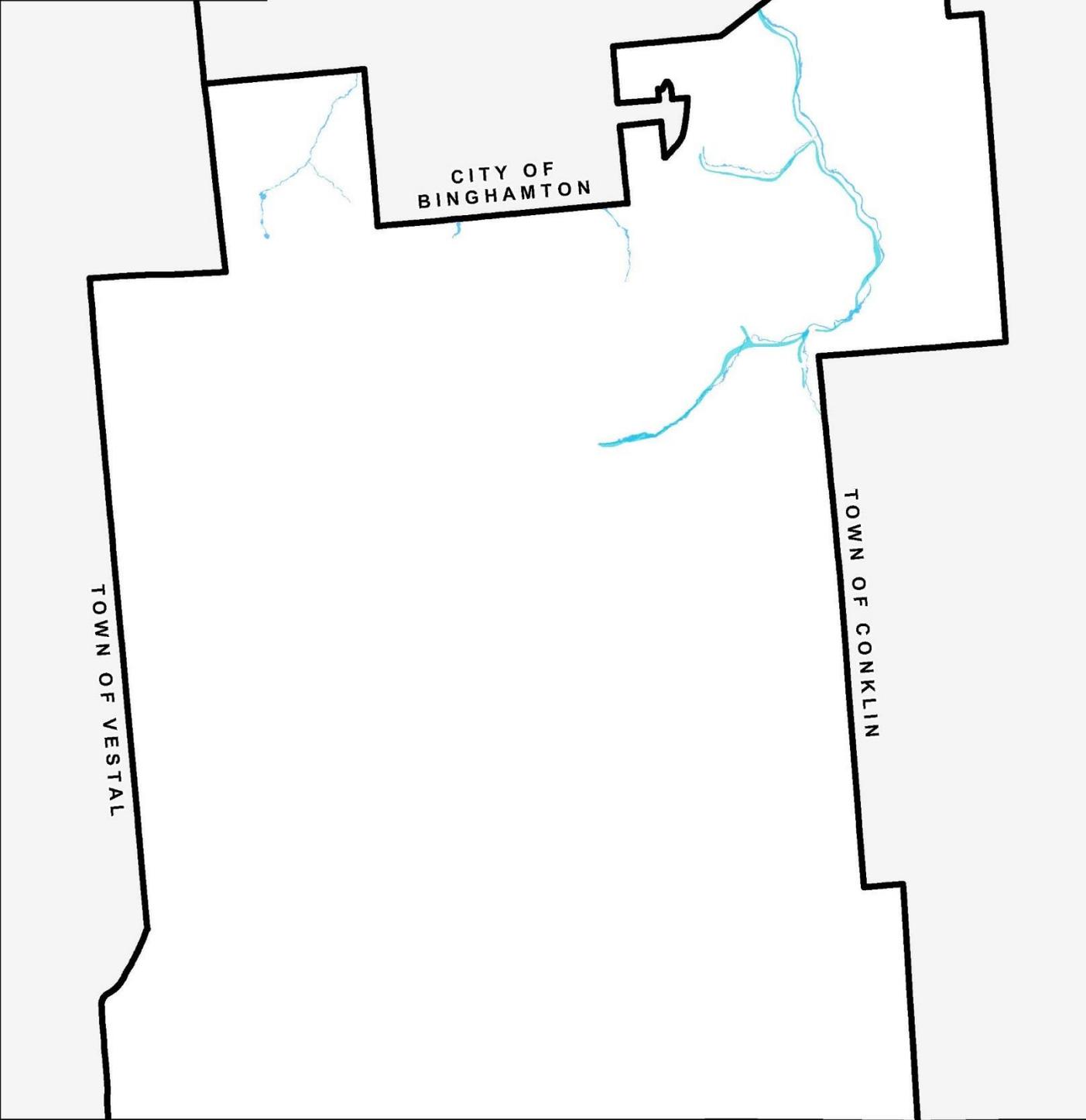
**Existing FEMA Floodplain**

-  100 Year
-  500 Year

**Preliminary FEMA Floodplain**

-  100 Year
-  500 Year

**Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #8: Existing Floodplain**



0 1 2 Miles

1 inch = 4,000 feet



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Broome County, NY

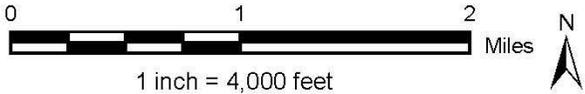
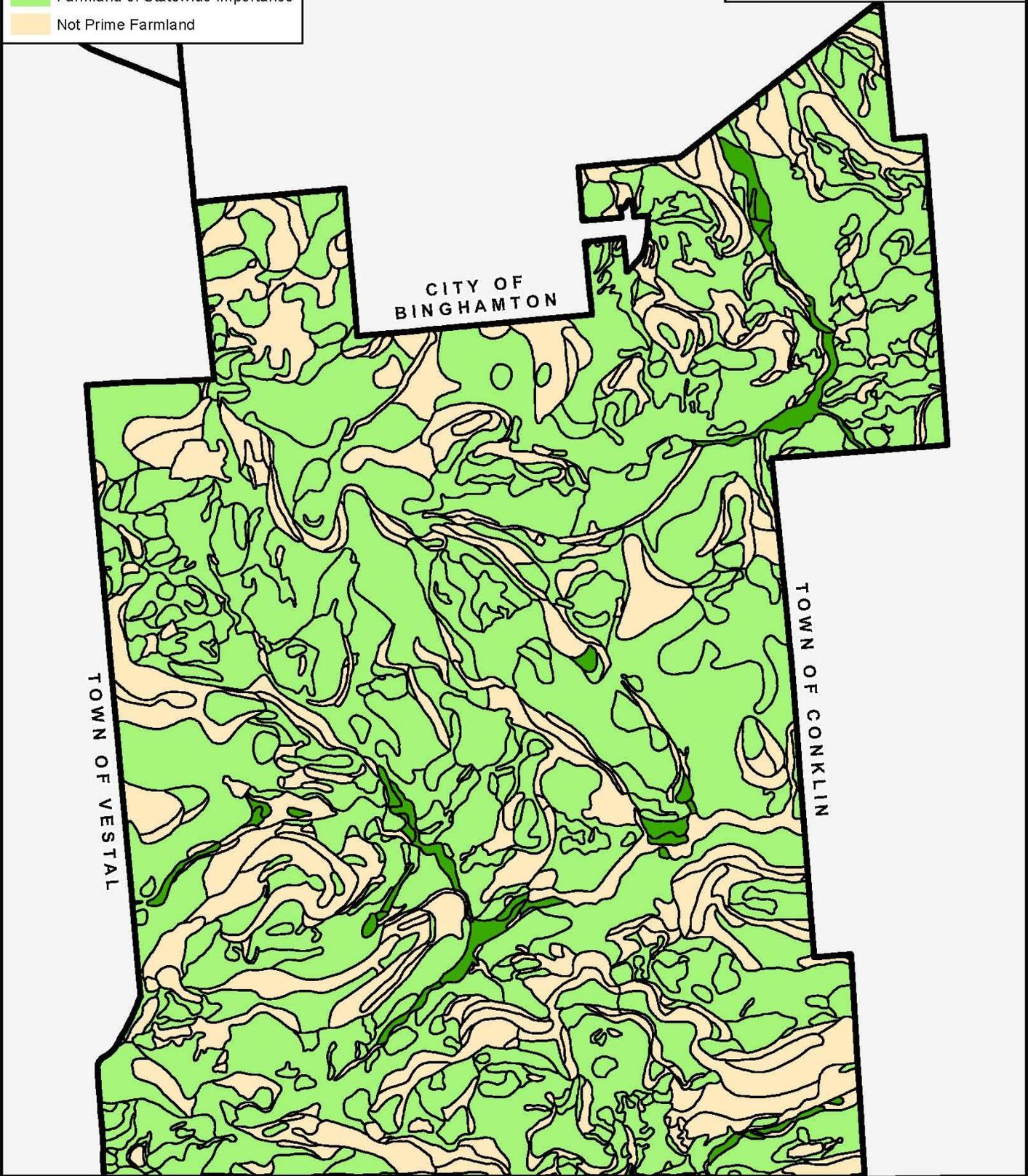


**GIS**  
www.bcgis.com

**Legend**

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Not Prime Farmland

**Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #9: Soils**



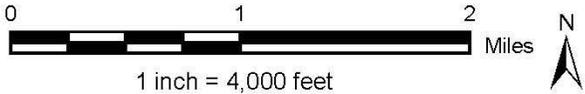
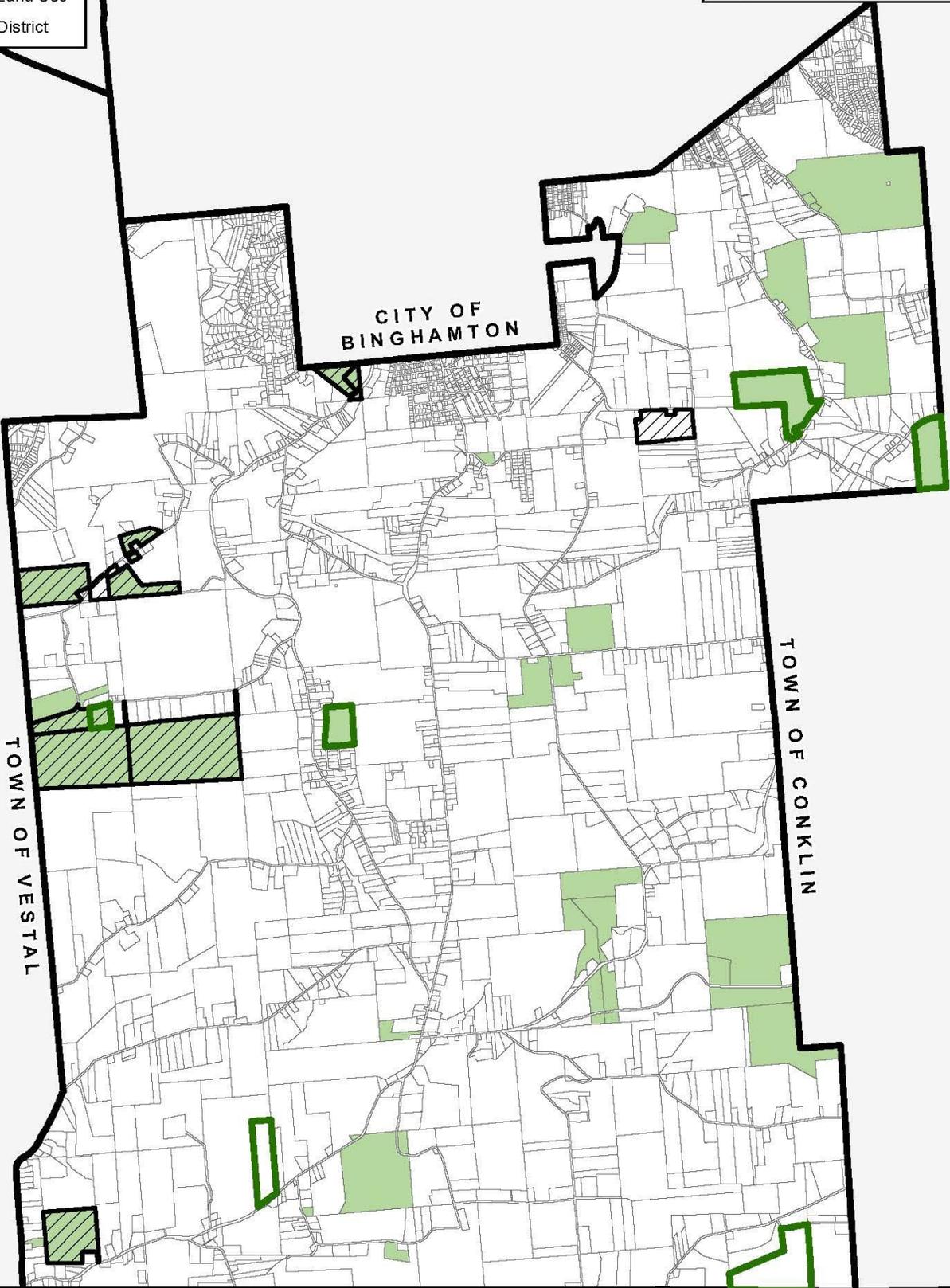
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Town of Binghamton  
Comprehensive Plan Update  
Map #10: Agricultural Lands

**Legend**

- Ag Exemption
- Ag Land Use
- Ag District



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