

Building Healthy Communities



A Smart Growth Assessment Project

Partners

Town of Fort Edward

Glens Falls Hospital Health Promotion Center

Genius Loci Planning

Funded by NYS Dept. of Health – Creating
Healthy Places to Live, Work and Play



Program Overview

- Project Background and Purpose
- Connections to Land Use
- The Importance of Planning
- What is Smart Growth
- Looking Ahead

Building Healthy Communities

The landscapes we create have direct influence on how we live, work and play.

Do the places we live in...

- Promote physical activity?
- Provide for pedestrian safety?
- Have connected networks for non-motorized transportation?
- Help foster social interaction through outdoor recreation facilities and civic spaces?
- Help sustain the integrity of natural systems?



Mullen Park, Fort Edward



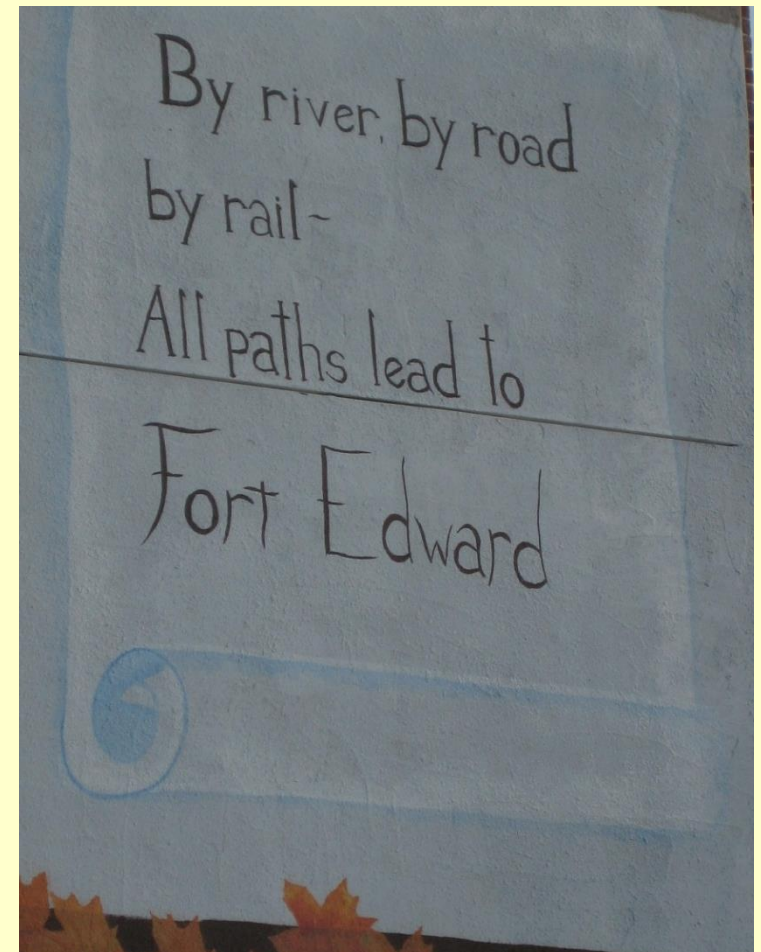
Radburn, NJ

Project Purpose

Conduct an assessment of the town's land use regulations and provide a framework to make meaningful changes to these regulations to create an environment that fosters physical activity and healthy eating.

And more specifically,

- Completion of Smart Growth America Code and Zoning Audit
- Completion of a report/ summary with recommendations, including priorities for implementation, based on audit results
- Meetings and tutorials with leaders (planning board, town board-- includes a land use training session recommended for state-required credit)



The Role of Land Use Tools

Site Plan Review

The review of the arrangement, layout, and design of a proposed use on a single parcel of land

The adoption of these tools is a local decision (towns, villages, and cities)

Zoning

Regulates use – can regulate the type of use, the dimensional/ areal aspects of the use, and the intensity of the use; typically a municipality is divided into zones with varying regulations

The details and characteristics of these land use tools are also decided locally (so long as local regulations are in accordance with state statutes)

Subdivision Regulations

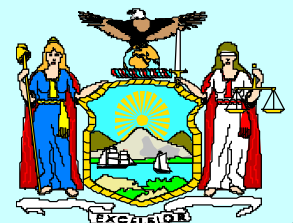
Review the division of a parcel of land into a number of lots, blocks or sites



Town of Bethlehem

“All land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan...”

**Town Law
§ 272-a**



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- Expression of a community's goals and recommended actions to achieve those goals
- Outline for orderly growth, providing continued guidance for decision-making
- Document which focuses on immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development
- NYS statutes encourage, but do not require, municipalities to undertake a comprehensive plan
- Town Law §272-a.

69% of NYS municipalities have a written comprehensive plan – NYS Leg. Comm. on Rural Resources, 2008

The Planning Process

- Public involvement (throughout)
- Developing a vision
- Inventory of resources and survey or collection of information
- Analysis of collected information
- Development of goals and recommendations
- Implementation

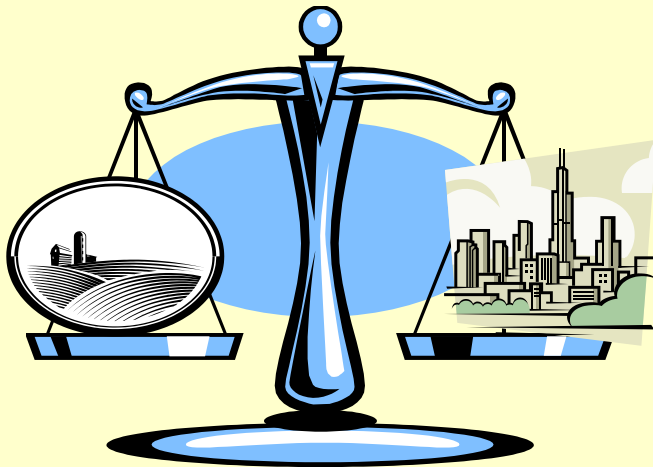
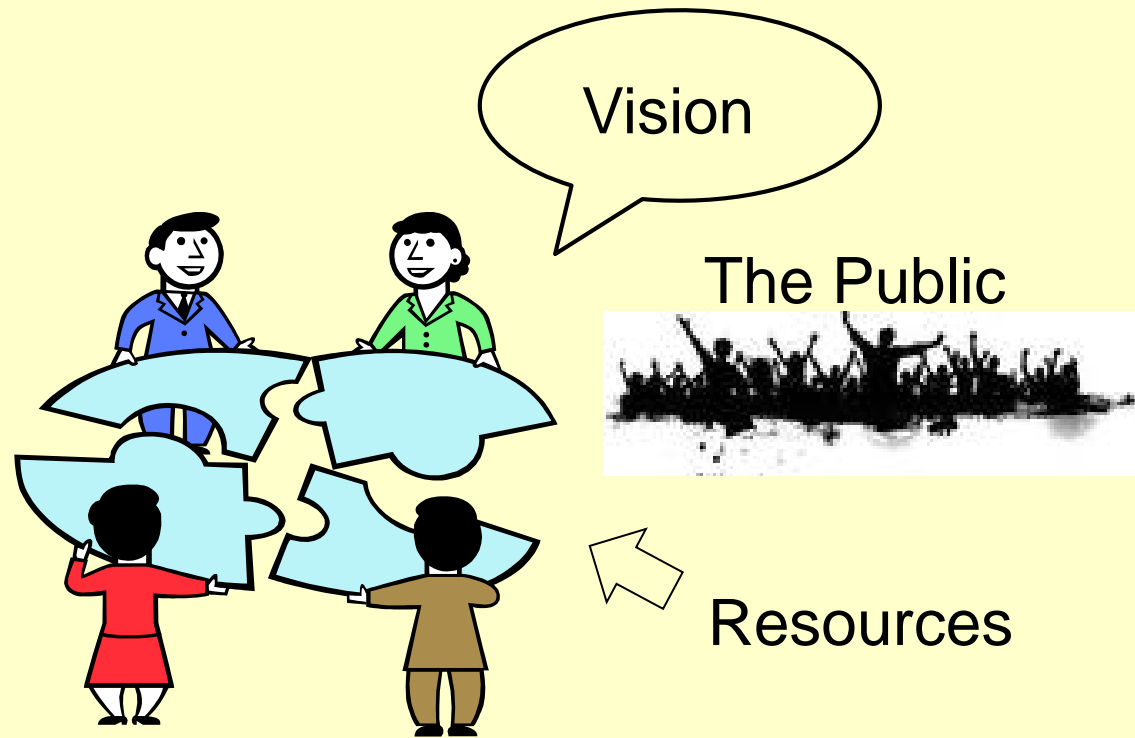


“The participation of citizens in an open, responsible and flexible planning process is essential to the designing of the optimum town comprehensive plan.”

- Town Law § 272-a.

Integrating the Components of a Comprehensive Plan

- Transportation
- Historic Preservation
- Farmland Protection
- Economic Development
- Open Space Protection
- Housing
- Recreation
- Infrastructure
- Community Services
- Land Use
- Community Character



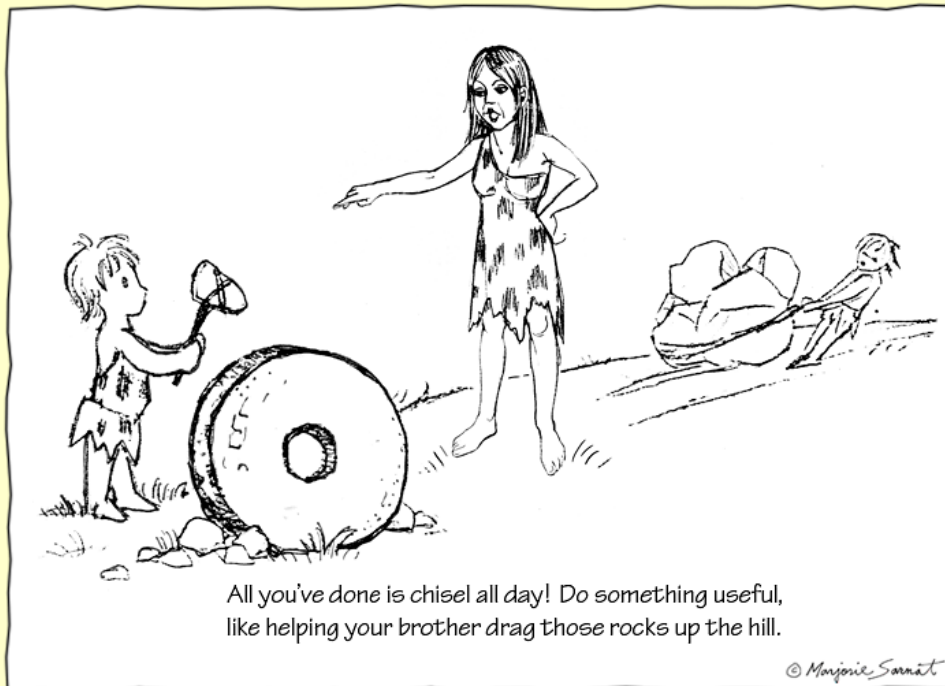
In many ways, *Smart Growth* helps balance interests, setting policy and direction for the community

What is Smart Growth?

“Planned economic and community development that attempts to curb urban sprawl and worsening environmental conditions.”

- Google

“Smart growth is a better way to build and maintain our towns and cities.... building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports local economies and protects the environment.” – Smart Growth America



Related terms

- New Urbanism
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Quality Communities

What is Smart Growth? (Continued)

Smart growth often depends on the context

Is it a prescription to remedy detrimental patterns of growth or a set of actions to carry out traditional settlement patterns?...

... Many communities have retained the qualities that make them special; other communities have lost some of these qualities are looking to regain them.

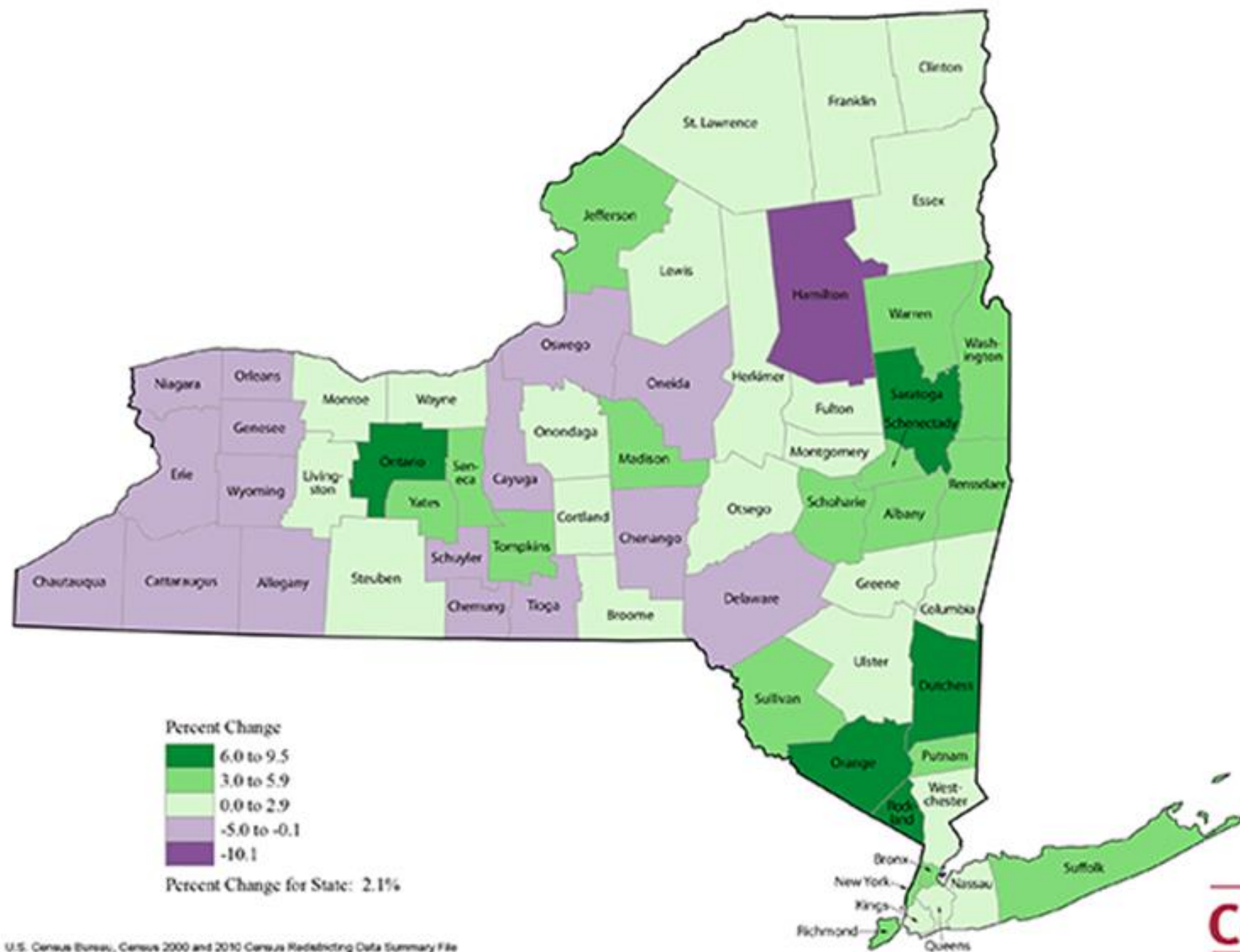


While some communities are losing population, others are experiencing, or are likely to experience, growth.

What about Fort Edward?

NEW YORK - 2010 Census Results

Percent Change in Population by County: 2000 to 2010



Complete Streets

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed to enable safe access for all uses, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work.

The town and the village have adopted Complete Streets Resolutions

... WHEREAS, the Town of Fort Edward has the ability to work with the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board to explore the maintenance and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and trail connections within neighborhoods and address issues of these amenities as needed; and

WHEREAS, many studies show that when roads are better designed for bicycling, walking and transit use, more people do so; and

WHEREAS, the design and construction of new roads and facilities in the Town of Fort Edward should anticipate future demand for biking, walking and other alternative transportation facilities...



**Fort Edward, NY
Complete Street Amenities**

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, or bicycle to work. This map is a snapshot of Fort Edward's current environment.

Public Places Audit:
Overall Score: 64% (108 out of 168)

Subcategories

- Access, Linkages & Information: 79% (41 out of 52)
- Comfort & Image: 70% (36.5 out of 52)
- Sociability: 53% (10.5 out of 20)
- Uses & Activities: 45% (20 out of 44)

Scores are based on a 1-mile walk along Broadway St, S Sweet Placers Street and No. Dame St. Opportunities for improvement include welcoming signage, sidewalk repair, maps including public transportation, re-bill space.

Sidewalks	Medical
Future Sidewalks	Trailhead
Crosswalks	Local Roads
Path	US Hwy 4 (State Bike Route)
Bike Lane	State Rte 197
Bike Rack	County Roads
Bus Stop	Rail Lines
Train Station	Parkland
Town & Village Hall	Surface Water
Library	Streams
Post Office	County Boundary
Museum	Village Boundary
Canal Lock	Distance Buffer from Town Hall
Roger's Island Visitor Center	

Scale: 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

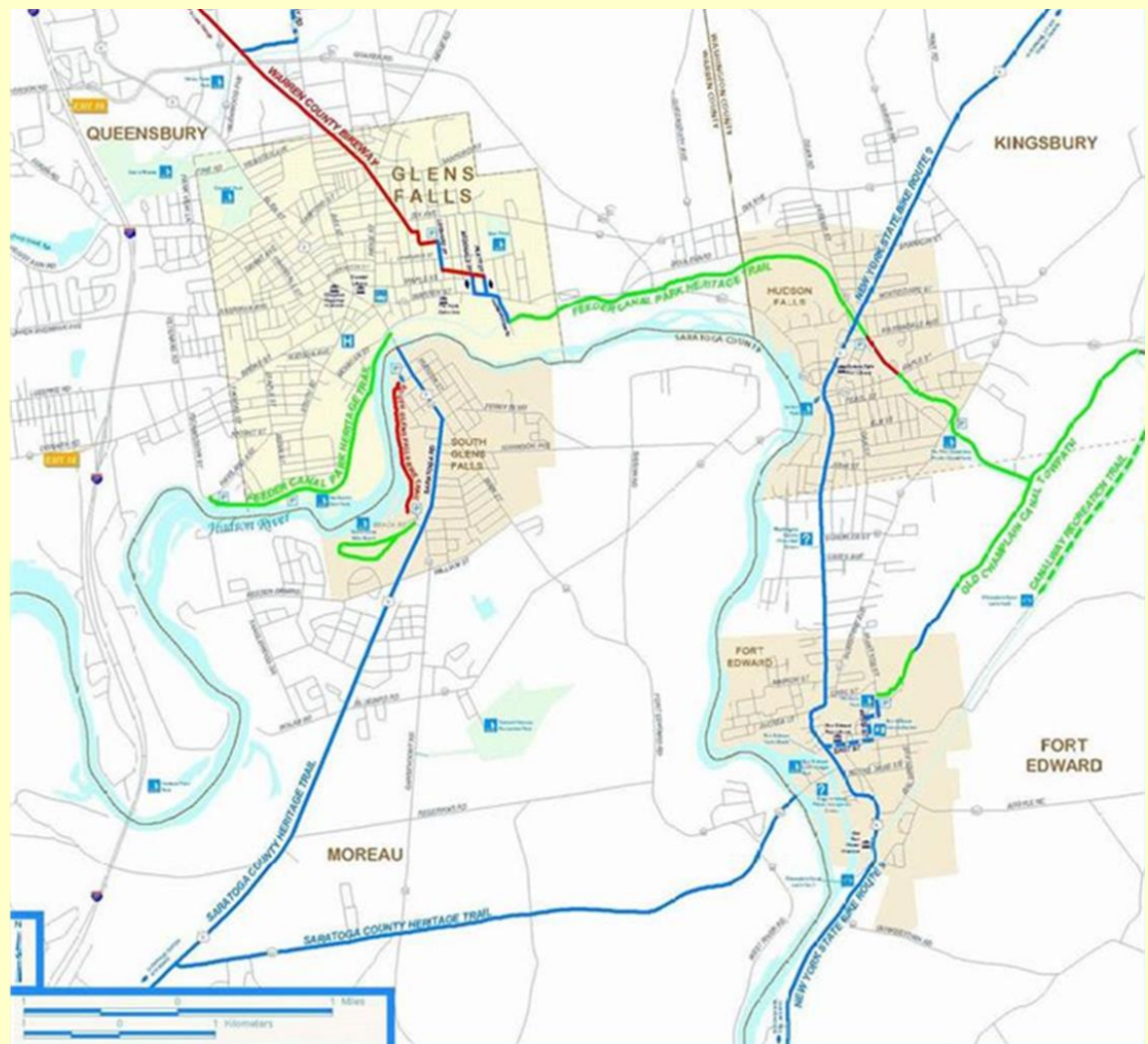
For Planning Purposes Only
Data Sources:
Aerial Imagery: Google Earth Pro
GIS Data: GIS Department
Map prepared by Rick Leisner-Schaefer

Subcategories:

- Access, Linkages & Info
- Comfort & Image
- Sociability
- Uses & Activities

Opportunities for improvement include welcoming signage, sidewalk repair, maps including public transportation, retail space



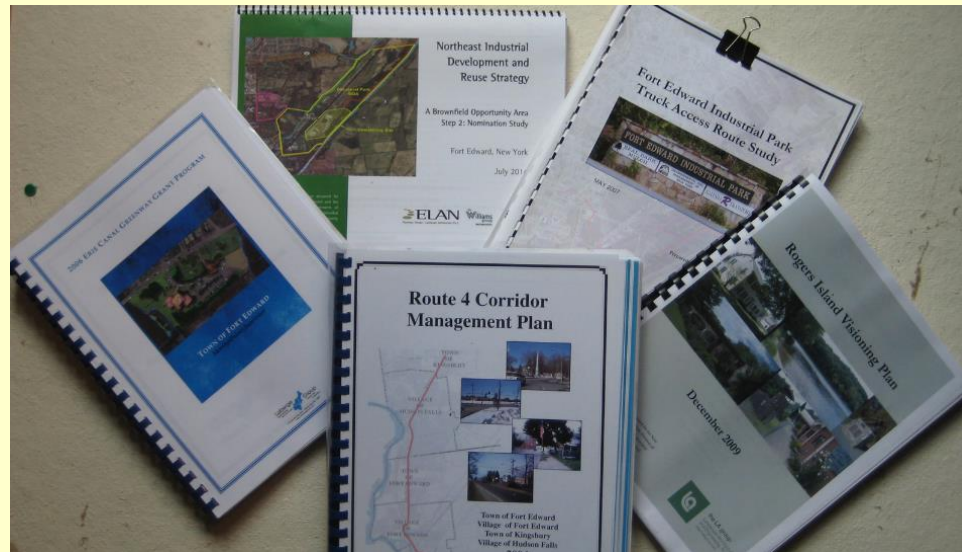


Town Policy:

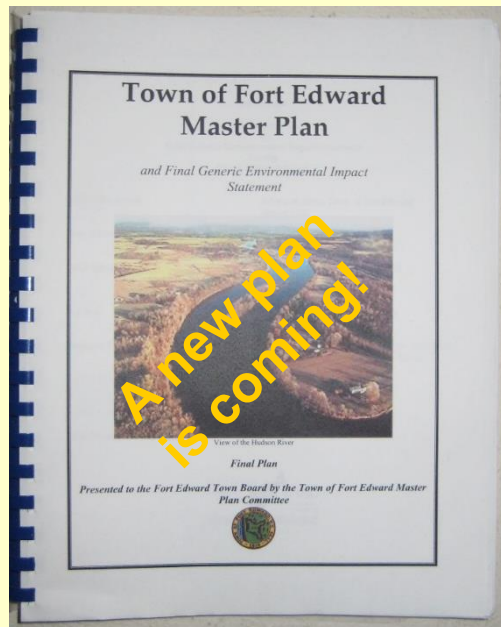
- explore the maintenance and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and trail connections within neighborhoods and address issues of these amenities as needed
- the design and construction of new roads and facilities in the Town of Fort Edward should anticipate future demand for biking, walking and other alternative transportation facilities



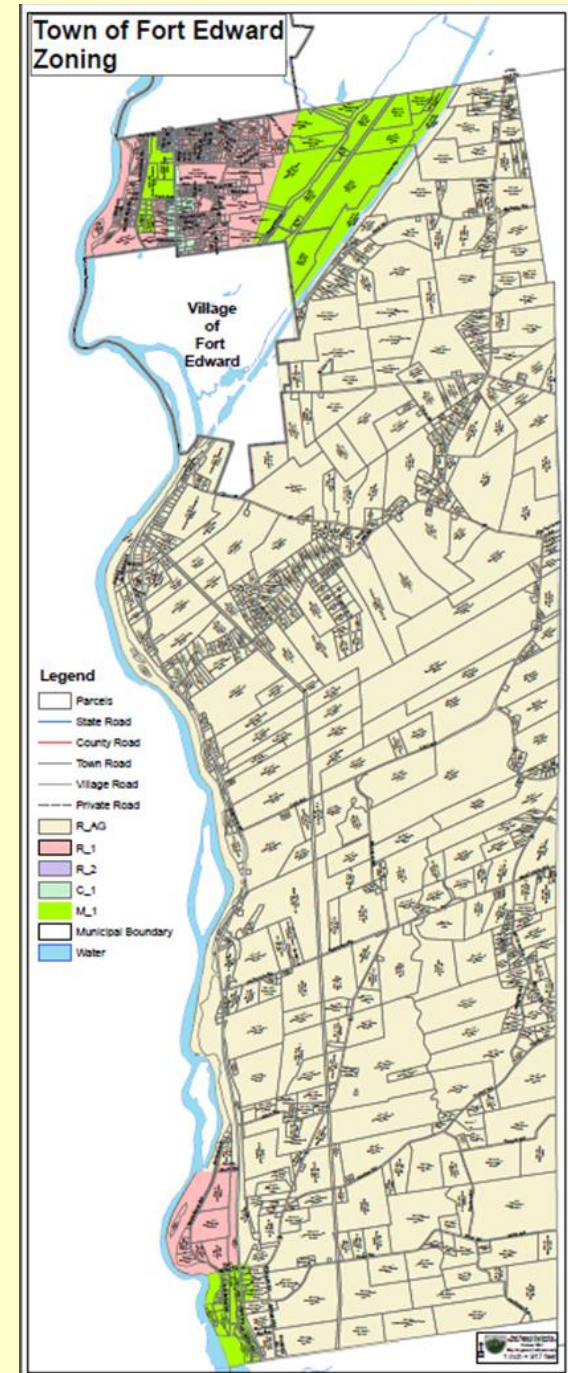
How do our existing plans envision healthy communities?



How will our new plans and visions promote healthy communities?



How will our land use regulations articulate the goals and objectives of these plans?



What resources, strategies, and tools will help us build healthy communities?

Partnerships

- Elected leaders
- Public Participation and Talent
- Local and Regional Organizations
- Government Agencies
- Assistance Providers and Specialists
- Private Investment
- Grantors



Land Use Tools

- New York State land use statutes are flexible and include many tools to assist communities in guiding land use changes and achieving their visions.

... and, there's no shortage of examples...



NYS Department of State is the repository for all local laws adopted in New York State

Improved Cluster Development Regulations

How to Create Conservation Subdivisions

Step 1

Require a map of the open space system for the parcel and surrounding area.



Locate Development Pocket

Step 2

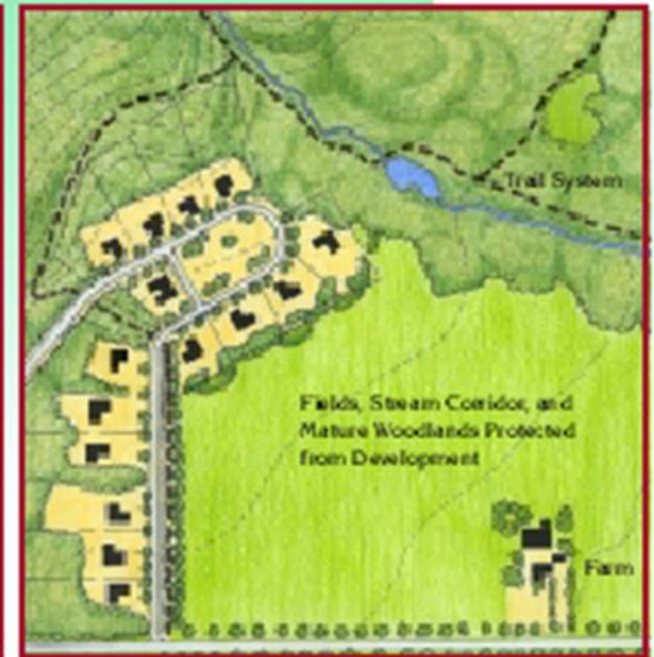
Conventional sketch layout determines maximum lot count under existing three-acre zoning.



Typical Superimposed Subdivision

Step 3

The same number of houses can fit in to the landscape while preserving 80 percent of the open space.

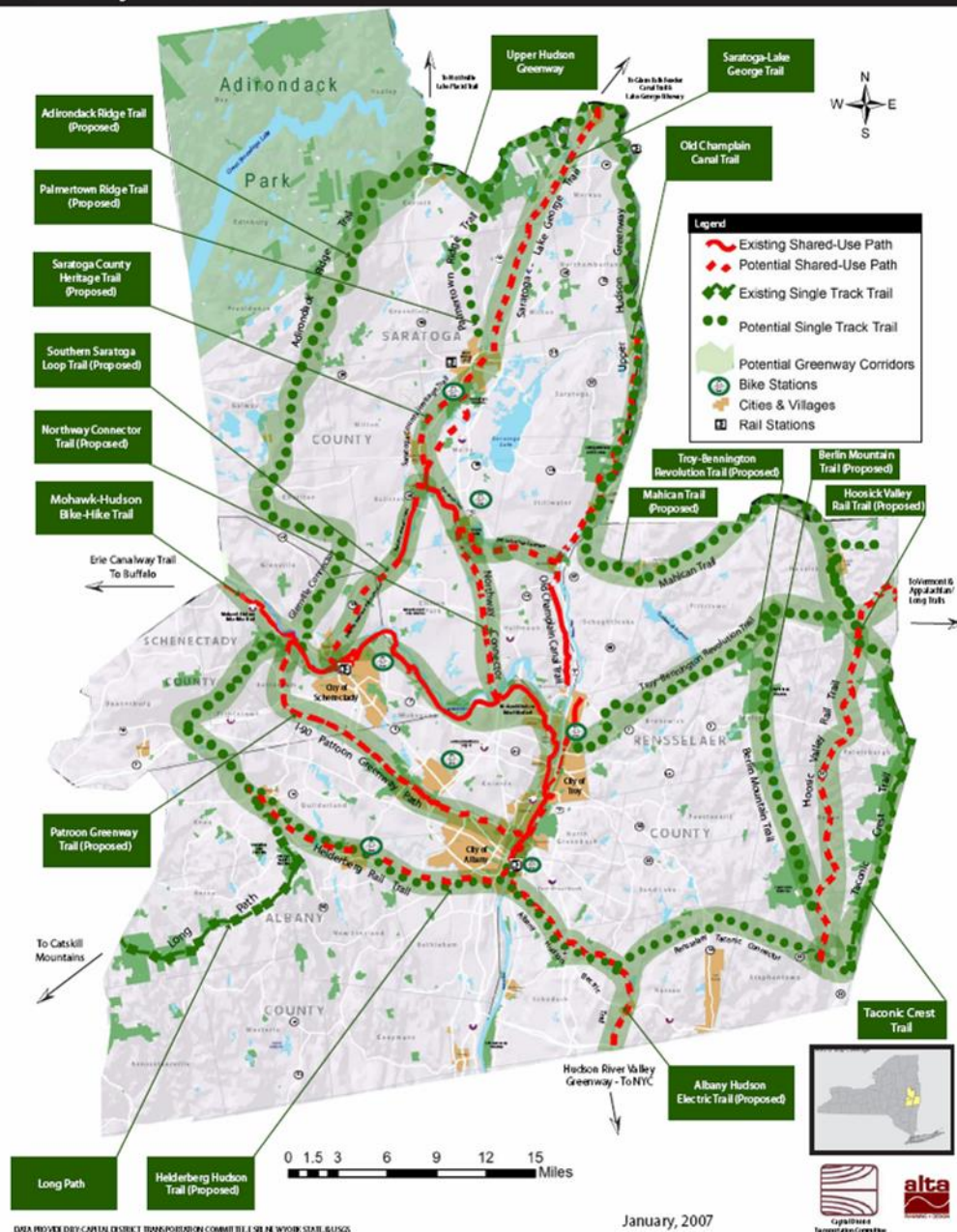


Conservation Subdivision

Source: Dutchess County Planning, Greenway Guides

Consider an Open Space Plan

Tech Valley Trails - Vision

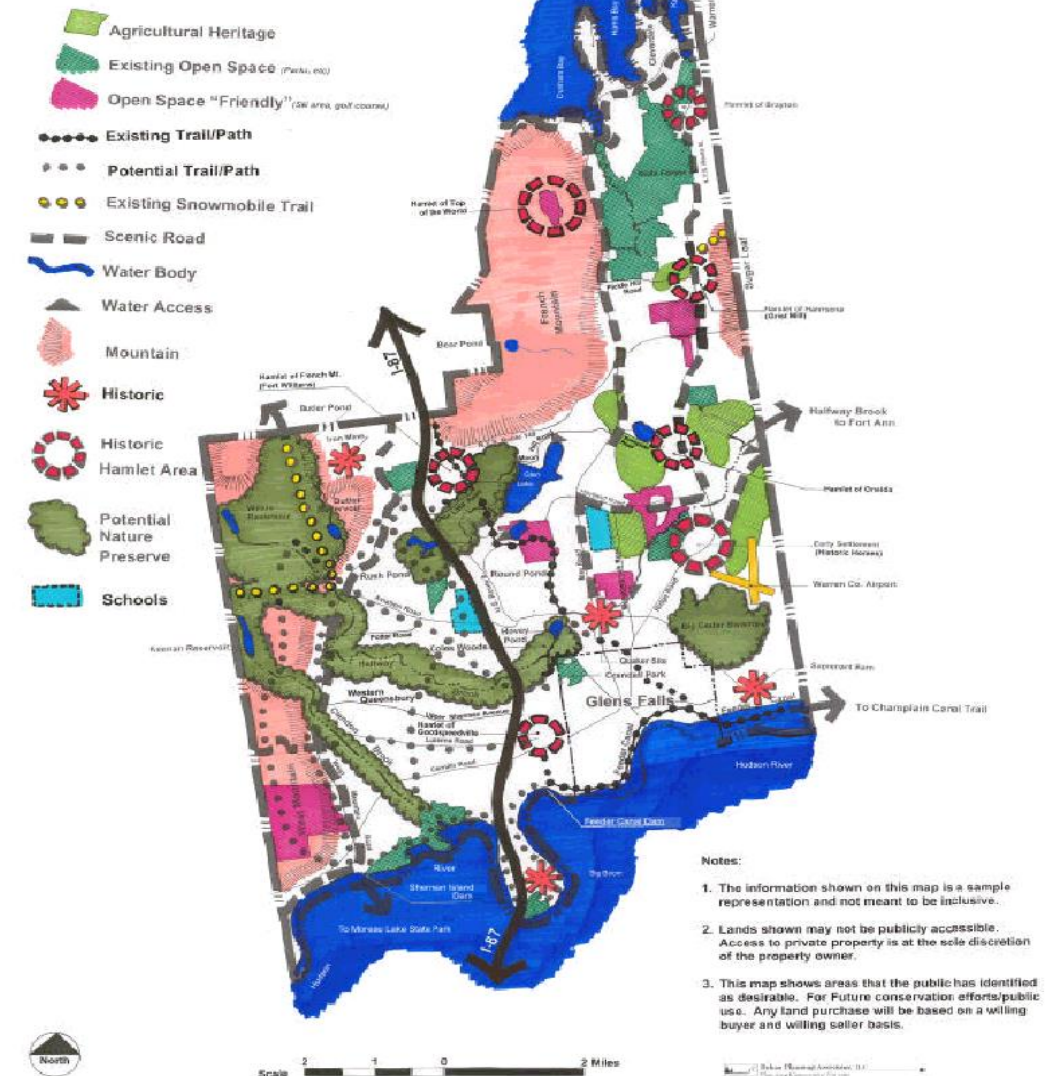


Town of Queensbury Open Space Vision

Final

June 2003

LEGEND



Notes:

1. The information shown on this map is a sample representation and not meant to be inclusive.
2. Lands shown may not be publicly accessible. Access to private property is at the sole discretion of the property owner.
3. This map shows areas that the public has identified as desirable. For future conservation efforts/public use. Any land purchase will be based on a willing buyer and willing seller basis.

Consider an Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan

Coordinate with County

Explore tools for implementation, e.g.

- PDR
- Conservation Easements
- Value added products; diversification
- Incentive zoning

Seek assistance from NYS Ag and Markets, American Farmland Trust, e.g.



Little Theater on the Farm (www.littletheater27.org)

Official Map

Town Law §270, §273, §280,-A & §281

BARRIERS



► No through streets or walkways

Walking is made difficult when streets look like spaghetti and there are no paths that take you directly to your destination.

SOLUTIONS



► Through streets

Streets or paths which connect to multiple destinations encourage walking. In these neighborhoods, people walk up to 3 times as often.



Red Hook Traditional
Neighborhood Extension
Illustrative Sketch Plan

Scale: 1 inch = 300 feet

Local Government Commission Center for
Livable Communities





- Revised Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations to remove “strip” and “large-lot” zoning regulations that encourage sprawl
- Adopted new Town Center district based in New Urbanist/ Traditional Neighborhood design principles
- The general design pattern for the Town Center is to create walkable, highly integrated, multifunctional public and private spaces, through a network of connected streets, sidewalks, and uses
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement outlines the positive economic impacts from the Town Center
- The 616-acre district protects 133 acres of state designated wetlands
- No land acquisition by the town; the land is privately owned

Town Center (Business) District - Design Principles

- Establish a coordinated image for the Town Center
- Bring buildings up toward the sidewalk and street edge
- Promote a mix of commercial and residential uses in multistory buildings
- Promote the prominent positioning of civic buildings and central green spaces in order to enhance community identity and public interaction
- Promote pedestrian activity through a safe and walkable environment
- Create narrow, tree-lined streets to slow traffic



www.lagrangeny.org

Town Center (Business) District - Design Principles

- Minimize the visual impact of the automobile by managing the placement and screening/ landscaping of parking areas
- Create an interconnected street system for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic
- Encourage the development of both on-street parking and shared parking areas between nearby uses
- Provide multiple housing options
- Protect important natural and historic features



Town Center Illustrative Plan

Adopted as part of the
Comprehensive Plan

“...intended to serve as a
template for the application
of specified design principles
in order to achieve a desired
form and appearance of
development. “



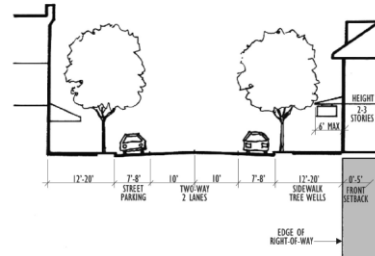
Design Review Process

Planning Board and applicant guided by standards (written and graphic) to achieve “favored forms and principles of site design”

Streetscape and site standards:

- Street dimensions
- Blocks and lots
- Sidewalks
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Furniture & waste receptacles
- Fencing and walls
- Parking
- Architectural features

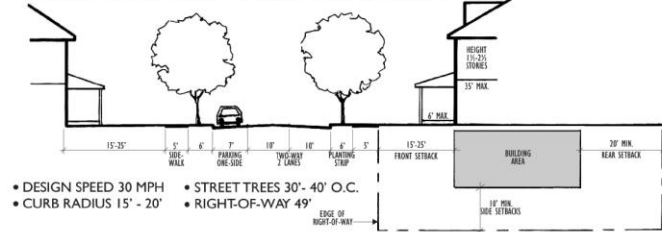
COMMERCIAL TOWN STREET



- DESIGN SPEED 20-25 MPH
- CURB RADIUS 15' - 25'
- STREET TREES 25' - 30' O.C.
- STREET LIGHTS 15' MAX. 40' - 60' O.C.
- EXTENDED CURBS AT CROSSWALKS
- RIGHT-OF-WAY 58'-76'

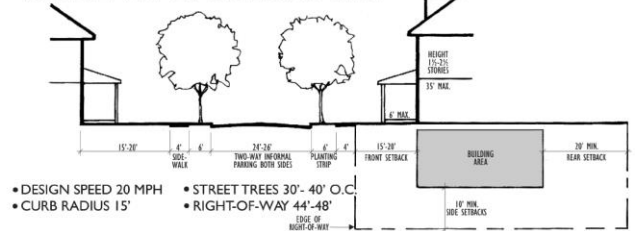
FIG. 1 TC-B TYPICAL STREET HEIGHT AND SETBACK REQ

RESIDENTIAL COLLECTOR STREET



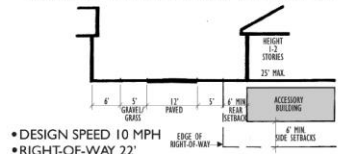
- DESIGN SPEED 30 MPH
- CURB RADIUS 15' - 20'
- STREET TREES 30' - 40' O.C.
- RIGHT-OF-WAY 49'

RESIDENTIAL ACCESS STREET



- DESIGN SPEED 20 MPH
- CURB RADIUS 15'
- STREET TREES 30' - 40' O.C.
- RIGHT-OF-WAY 44'-48'

RESIDENTIAL REAR LANE



- DESIGN SPEED 10 MPH
- RIGHT-OF-WAY 22'

- GENERAL:**
- PLANNING BOARD MAY APPROVE 0-FOOT SIDEYARD SETBACKS
 - 6' MIN. SIDE AND REAR SETBACKS FOR ALL GARAGES AND ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

FIG. 2 TC-R TYPICAL STREET STANDARDS HEIGHT AND SETBACK REQUIREMENTS

Questions?

Discussion

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