

VI. GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Plan-Making Method

A five-step methodology was developed to extract "layers" of area resource data from the computer maps and to derive the data combinations appropriate for constructing growth management plans. The steps are described linearly below, but in fact the process was iterative and done in cycles. During each pass taken through the synthesis procedure, new relationships were discovered among data and planning decisions were made. Concurrent with overlay map manipulations, the development guidelines chart (Figure 74) was created as a means of recording and presenting development requirements. The plan synthesis process is elaborated below in the following five steps.

Step One

Existing settlement areas were plotted as potential future growth centers and significant "receiver" zones.

Step Two

The most sensitive resources were aggregated and documented including steep slopes of 15% and greater, surface water and classified wetlands, publically-owned open space preserves and cemeteries. These were seen as potential "no-build" areas or severely restricted protection zones and became the Natural Resource Protection (NRP) growth management districts. Other land classifications (i.e. forest and agricultural uses) falling within these most sensitive areas were incorporated in the NRP districts as they were superceded by the more restrictive data categories.

Step Three

All remaining forestlands were then extracted from the computer maps and differentiated by type: upland forest on higher elevations with mature stands of continuous vegetation of over 50 acres; valley forest on lower elevations following

linear patterns along rivers, streams and gullies; woodlots of 20-50 acres surrounded on at least 3 sides by active agricultural uses, and transitional fields or areas of scrub growth in early stages of succession. All forestland was placed in one of these four classification types and each became a potential residential growth management district with different site requirements.

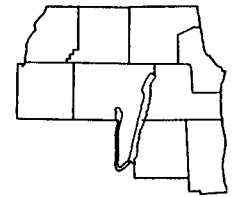
Step Four

Prime agricultural land and farmsteads were recorded (constituting essentially all remaining land areas in the town with a few unordinary land-use exceptions, such as the salt mines in Milo). It was postulated that these areas could probably receive a limited amount of development if carefully planned. They became a separate Agriculture/Farmstead growth management district.

Step Five

Scenic resource zones and important historic sites were then added from previous inventory work as possible overlay districts.

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Step Six

A comprehensive, county-wide system of greenways was determined and plotted utilizing existing linear features in the landscape. It was conceived as a continuous, unbroken system connecting important resources and settlement areas throughout the county, buffering and mediating between disparate land-use areas, and conceived as a network of trails for recreation and protective corridors for wildlife.

From this procedure of "sandwiching" area resource data and interjecting the important planning concepts of scenic and greenway amenities, small-scale residential pockets and mixed land-uses, the following 8 Growth Management Districts were formed. They are listed from the most to least restrictive in terms of future development density. Two Special Overlay Districts were also formed to address the future of scenic and greenway zones throughout the county. The growth management and overlay districts are fully

described later in this section of the guidebook.

Growth Management Districts

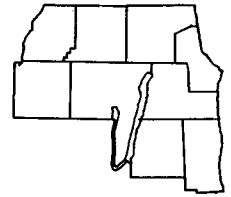
1. Natural Resource Protection
2. Agriculture/Farmstead
3. Upland Forest Residential
4. Valley Forest Residential
5. Transitional Field Residential
6. Woodlot Residential
7. Lakeshore Development
8. Growth Centers

Special Overlay Districts

1. Scenic Resource Overlay District
2. Greenways Overlay District.

The towns must realize that the landscape is in a state of constant flux with nature exerting its ubiquitous forces of change on the land. An agricultural plot, if not farmed, will soon become a transitional field which will one day transform into a woodlot. This aspect of dynamic change has to be dealt with in the ongoing planning and development review activities in each town. For

this reason, it is unwise to think of the growth management district locations as forever fixed, physically and/or legislatively. Periodically the towns will have to update the district boundaries as the landscape configuration changes over time as a result of human use and the forces of nature. In the plan-making process, the Growth Management Districts were "passed through" a framework of development planning guidelines, which were in large part formulated along with the districts themselves. These guidelines (including amounts and sizes of things) have been summarized in the Development Guidelines Chart (Figure 74) and described below.



Development Planning Guidelines

Suitability for Development

In order to assess the suitability for development, each growth management district has been evaluated for: access, proximity, subsurface conditions and site characteristics. *Access* is defined as the ability to link or connect private property to public and/or private roads and in some cases to navigatable waterways. *Proximity* is the relative distance and location of a given growth management district to any of the County's villages, hamlets, corners, and linear places and to other adjacent land uses. The proximity to existing settlements is an important factor in determining the ability of government and related private entities to provide facilities and services for development that occurs in any of the growth management districts. *Subsurface conditions* refers to soil and rock characteristics found in Yates County and includes the following features: soil drainage capacity/percolation rate, depth to

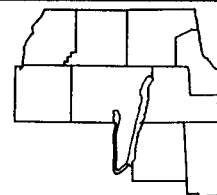
bedrock, slope, depth to watertable and quality and quantity of groundwater. *Site characteristics* are the important elements found above the groundline that determine a district's ability to accommodate development. These include wooded/forest cover, open hilltop, valley floor, ability to conceal or absorb development, wildlife, view from site and a site's susceptibility to impacts from adjacent land uses.

The guidelines must continually adapt to a changing landscape over time.

Sites were evaluated for their development suitability and ranked accordingly.

Each growth management district has been evaluated according to the criteria in the above four categories (Figure 74), Development Guidelines Chart). The districts are ranked according to their appropriateness for development with a check-plus indicating very suitable and a check-minus representing an unsuitable condition for development. Bracketed marks are intermediate ratings.

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Compatible Uses

In the interest of promoting the sound and productive use of land which benefits the community, two categories of compatible uses have been introduced for each of the growth management districts: *primary uses* and *special permit uses*.

Primary uses are those which most significantly contribute to the development suitability of a

given district. For example, in the Woodlot Residential district, primary uses include woodland agriculture and accessory uses, forestry uses and structures, open space/recreation uses and structures and single family dwellings.

Special permit uses are also appropriate, but because of their unique character are subjected to planning board review and approval. The special permit use is intended to control activities that may be

considered as more or less desirable, but if not handled in a particular way could create negative impacts on the landscape or surrounding community. The review process can result in requiring certain equipment or structures to be incorporated into the project to mitigate any undesirable impacts, which might include fences, safety devices, landscaping, access roads,

Each growth management district in the plan has a set of primary and special permit uses.

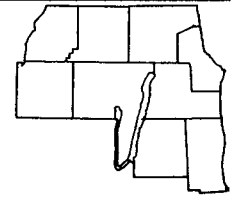
screening, outdoor lighting, handicap ramps, or special equipment that limits the excessive emission of odors, dust, smoke, garbage and noise. In the case of the Woodlot Residential district, the special permit uses are agricultural service uses, multiple family dwellings, tourist camping areas, and mobile home parks (of 50 units or less). These are considered to be special permit uses because of the potential increase in traffic and congestion, need for access road(s), fresh water and septic systems and their impact on the woodlot environment.

Average Parcel Size

This figure refers to the typical existing *average parcel size* (in acres) found in the growth management districts. In all cases a range is given so as to accurately reflect the thresholds of parcel ownership within the county.

More importantly, the *average parcel size* was a significant factor in defining growth management districts themselves and determining their Development Intensity Ratings (DIR) described below. A sampling of landholdings from the various districts yielded mean and median parcel sizes which were applied to determine the DIR of the growth management districts.

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Residential Density

Residential density guidelines include three sub-categories: development intensity ratings, lot size (minimum and maximum) and maximum subdivision size.

The Development Intensity Rating (DIR) determines the amount of new development that can occur on land located in each growth management district. The Development Intensity Rating is expressed as a ratio of how many acres of land are required for each principal building. DIR goes hand-in-hand with lot size guidelines and is an important tool in rural planning. In an urban or suburban context, the presumption is that all land will be built upon and minimum lot size guidelines alone are sufficient to regulate a desired pattern of development. However, in rural areas like Yates County involving large tracts of undeveloped land and a desire to preserve the existing character of open space, DIR is an important planning concept because it encourages a more consolidated pattern of development.

Under this system it allows the landowner an option of clustering units onto the most appropriate areas of the site, retaining open land in current use as agriculture or forest at a lower tax rate. DIR establishes an equitable development potential in response to various site conditions. As an example of how DIR works, the Transitional Field Residential district calls for one principal residential building for each five acres of transitional land. Therefore, a typical parcel of 30 acres would yield a maximum of six residential units (30 acres ÷ 5 = 6 units). However, each unit does not need to be built on a five acre parcel, but instead could be sited on the minimum lot size of 3/4 of an acre (or on any lot size up to 5 acres). By grouping the units together on smaller lots, considerable cost savings can be achieved in a more compact development and the remaining land can be set aside as common open space or be used for agricultural or forestland production. In the above

example, if the landowner chose the minimum lot size (in Transitional Field), then the actual developed area of the 30 acre parcel would be 4 1/2 acres (3/4 acre x 6 units) and the remaining 25 1/2 acres could become access roads, common open space or be retained in its pre-development land use.

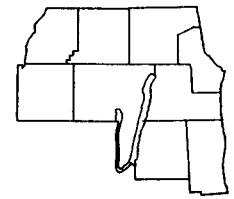
In the plan, future residential densities are controlled by setting development intensity ratings, lot size and subdivision size.

The minimum lot size is the smallest acceptable area for an individual land parcel to be subdivided in a

given growth management district. Minimum lot sizes ensure that each principal building and accessory structure will have adequate space for off-street parking, septic systems, fresh water wells, open space and other needs.

The maximum lot size refers to the maximum allowable area for a subdivided parcel of land. It only applies to the Agricultural/Farmstead district and was mainly intended to limit the loss of prime

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agricultural land to over-sized lots and to encourage the location of larger residential lots on non-agricultural lands.

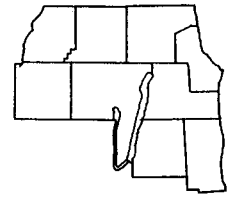
It is important to note that in the growth management system proposed for Yates County, the DIR guideline is critical in controlling the overall maximum density in each growth management district and that minimum lot sizes are intentionally small (especially in woodlot and lakeshore districts) in order to promote open space preservation of undeveloped land. However, it is understood that this approach will not always meet New York State standard water and sanitary treatment regulations and will require in many instances common utility systems where water supply and septic disposal will need to be shared by several residential units. This could also facilitate the need for alternative and/or innovative waste water treatment facilities involving aeration and organic decomposition (ie., Clivus Multrum or comparable facilities).

Maximum subdivision size is another factor which effects perceived residential density. This requirement is designed to limit the total number of lots that can be subdivided and developed from one original parcel. It is intended to give landowners the

Large DIR's and small lot sizes promotes a cluster development pattern with open spaces preserved.

maximum development potential for their property, but to also minimize the impact on the rural landscape of excessively large subdivisions. For example, the Agriculture/Farmstead district has a maximum subdivision size of 10 and a Development Intensity Rating of 1 principal building for every 12 acres. A hypothetical 288 acre parcel can therefore yield a maximum of 10 contiguous development lots, even though this 288 acre parcel could theoretically yield 24 development parcels in the absence of a maximum subdivision size.

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Dimensional Requirements

The dimensional regulations that are recommended in the growth management plan include minimum frontage, minimum setback, minimum side/rear yard, and maximum building height.

The minimum frontage is the dimension of the front property line as measured along a road, street, highway, or shoreline. It is used to ensure that land owners have ample access to public right-of-ways, that the desired character of the street is maintained (i.e., number of driveways), and that land parcels be of more or less uniform shape within a development area.

The minimum setback, also commonly called the front yard, is the open space area that extends for the entire length of the lot from the front property line to the principal building. The space is to be unoccupied of all structures and is measured at the least distance from the primary building to the front property line.

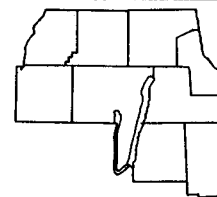
Like frontage, it too determines the character of a neighborhood as perceived from the road — the larger the setback minimum, the more rural in character.

Similar to the minimum frontage, the minimum side/rear yard requirement is the unobstructed open space that extends between the principal building and the perimeter of the lot or property line. It is measured at the nearest distance from the primary building to the side or rear property lines to assure a desired degree of privacy. In a "zero-lot-line" condition, the exterior building wall can rest directly on the property line and be attached to a neighboring building as in a duplex, linked or rowhouse type of development.

The maximum building height is the vertical distance, measured in feet, from average grade level to the highest point of a flat roof, or to the average height of a pitched, gable, hip or gambrel roof excluding bulkheads, penthouses, towers, silos and other similar structures which are not intended for human occupancy. The intent

Dimensional requirements will dictate the visual character and "feeling" of a new development area.

behind using the maximum building height is to maintain the scale of new development with that of neighboring buildings and to protect views from adjacent properties. It also ensures that new structures do not excessively disrupt the surrounding scenic landscape by limiting their height above adjacent vegetation. In most cases, trees are able to minimize the impact of new and existing buildings by proper site planning and landscaping.



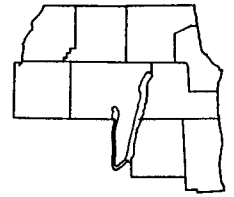
Special Guidelines

In an area as diverse and complex as Yates County, no single rule or regulation can include all the potential development scenarios and protect the public's interest. Therefore, special guidelines are needed to direct future development in areas that need additional oversight. If followed, these guidelines will insure that appropriate and compatible development will be carried out in each of the growth management districts. Special guidelines help promote high quality, sensitive development appropriate to a site, while maintaining the rural character and stabilizing the tax base by protecting adjacent property values. For example, homes along the shoreline are highly desirable in Yates County, however without special guidelines in place to ensure that new development follows regulations pertaining to septic systems, fresh water wells and the cutting of vegetation, existing homes and businesses could be negatively impacted by unsupervised shoreline development.

These development planning guidelines will be discussed vis-a-vis each of the growth management districts in the plan.

Special guidelines help promote high quality development.

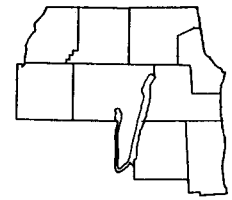
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GROWTH MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS	AVERAGE PARCEL SIZE	SUITABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT				RESIDENTIAL DENSITY				DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS			
		Access	Proxi- mity	Sub- Surface	Site Character	Dev. Intensity Rating (Bldg/Acres)	LOT SIZE		Max Sub- Div. Size (units)	Minimum Frontage	Minimum Setback from Road	Minimum Side/Rear Yard	Maximum Building Height
							Max.	Min.					
Natural Resource Protection	NA	-	-	-	-	1 / 14	NA	3 acres	4	300'	200'	50'	30'
Agriculture/Farmstead	100-200 acres	+	(+)	+	-	1 / 12	3 acres	1 / 4 acre	10	75'	50'	15'	25'
Upland Forest Residential	50-100 acres	-	-	-	+	1 / 6	NA	3 acres	25	300'	200'	50'	30'
Valley Forest Residential	NA	-	(-)	-	+	1 / 6	NA	2 acres	10	200'	100' from River ----- 150' from Road	50'	30'
Transitional Field Residential	30-80 acres	+	-	+	-	1 / 5	NA	3 / 4 acre	15	100'	250'	25'	25'
Woodlot Residential	20-50 acres	+	-	+	+	1 / 4	NA	1 / 4 acre ----- 1 / 8 acre	16	75'	50'	15'	30'
Lakeshore Development	10,000 SF	(+)	-	(-)	+	NA	NA	15,000 SF	NA	Lakefront 100' ----- Road 100'	100' from Water ----- 20' from Road	10'	25'
Growth Centers Villages Hamlets Linear Places Corners	NA	+	+	+	+	NA	NA	5,000 SF	NA	25'	Match Existing Neighbor. Building	Zero Lot Line	35'

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES CHART

Figure 74. Development Guidelines Chart.



Growth Management Districts

The text and diagrams to follow describe the salient characteristics of each growth management district in the plan. Each district is discussed for its suitability for certain kinds of development, compatibility of land uses that could occur in the district, and special guidelines that should be adhered to when developing within the boundaries of the district. They are first presented generically, then referenced to site application in the towns. The districts are organized from the most to the least restrictive in their ability to accommodate future development. The district descriptions summarize the main points and should be referenced to the growth management Development Guidelines Chart (Figure 74) .

NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Natural Resource Protection (NRP) district is formed from a combination of five distinct and important land/water types: D.E.C. classified wetlands of 12.4 acres or larger, lakes and other surface waters, steep slopes of 15%+gradients over a continuous run of 500 feet or more; public lands in open space and those held in the public trust by not-for-profit corporations, and cemeteries.

The NRP district is characterized by sensitive resource conditions that are not appropriate for conventional development or standard agricultural/cultivation practices. These areas are generally not suitable for development because of severe limitations on access, proximity, subsurface condition and site characteristics.

Access via roads into most of these NRP districts is limited due to the difficulty in

building, operating and maintaining year-round roads. These roads must perform under harsh conditions that range from excessively steep grades cut into bedrock subjected to erosion and runoff, to soft organic soils that are periodically inundated by flood waters. Therefore, roads within this zone are typically very costly to construct and require frequent repairs and monitoring to ensure their safe use. Another access-related problem in NRP districts is the difficulty in getting to publicly owned land. With an estimated 98% of all the land around the Finger Lakes held privately, accessibility to these resources is significantly restricted.

Proximity is another issue in NRP Districts. The majority of wetlands, steep slopes and public land in Yates County are relatively isolated from the villages, hamlets and other small crossroad communities. Therefore, the ability to connect to public and/or private utilities is limited and usually

