

TOWN OF CANANDAIGUA

# AGRICULTURAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN



DRAFT: September 2016



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# INTRODUCTION

## HISTORY

Following the adoption of the Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Update in 2011, the Town organized a Citizens Implementation Committee to oversee and coordinate implementation of the key recommendations of the Plan. Several committees were formed to address specific recommendations, such as Agriculture, Natural Resource Inventory, Sewer Master Plan, and Mixed Use Overlay Zoning. The preparation of this Agricultural Enhancement Plan was a key recommendation of the Plan.

The Town applied for and received a grant from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to prepare the Agricultural Enhancement Plan.

## PROCESS AND ORGANIZATION

Many citizens, town staff and consultants contributed to this Plan. The Town's Director of Development, Doug Finch, was responsible for overseeing the lead consultant and facilitating meetings with the public, the CIC and the Ag Team.

In December 2015, the Town contracted with LaBella Associates to carry out the inventory and analysis, conduct farmer and stakeholder interviews, engage the public, analyze the issues, and work with Town representatives to define the vision, goals and recommendations, and prepare the final document. CC Environment and Planning assisted LaBella with mapping.

## FARMER, STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC INPUT

The information, analysis and recommendations in this Plan reflect input from farmers, agencies and residents, as well as Town staff and members Town boards and committees.

## FARMER/ LANDOWNER SURVEY

In March 2016, the Town mailed a questionnaire to farmers and owners of parcels at least 15 acres in size. The survey was also available on-line. Respondents to the survey included 11 full-time farmers (more than 50% of household income from farming), 11 part-time farmers, 33 landowners who rent land to farmers, and 38 other Town residents. The results provided information about challenges facing farmers and farmland owners and their opinions regarding potential land protection, agricultural economic development and zoning actions being considered in the Plan. (See the Survey Report in Appendix \_\_.)

### IN-PERSON FARMER INPUT

As members of the Town's Ag Team, several farmers were directly involved in the planning process and participated in meetings. Farmers who attended Ag Team meetings represent large producers of dairy, grain and beef and smaller scale production of sheep and lambs. In addition, LaBella Associates conducted in-person interviews with representatives of large dairy and grain operations.

### PUBLIC FORUMS

The first public informational meeting was held on March 23 in the Town Offices. Notice of the meeting was included with the Farmer and Landowner Survey mailing and was posted on the Town website. Agency representatives were invited via e-mail to attend.

At this meeting, the consultants presented an overview of the planning process and described the agricultural resources in the Town. Participants identified Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats relating to agriculture and farmland in the Town.

On August 27, 2016, the Town sponsored an Agricultural Economic Development Forum at the Ontario County Fairgrounds. A 11-member panel of experts identified opportunities and challenges facing the agricultural industry in the Town. Perspectives represented on the panel included large grain farming, organic farming, distribution of local produce, using local farm products in restaurants, beverage and agri-tourism.

### STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

LaBella Associates conducted interviews with representatives of the following agencies and organizations that are involved with agriculture and farmland in the Town:

- Ontario County Planning Department
- Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Canandaigua Lake Watershed Manager
- Ontario County Economic Development
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County.

### PLAN ORGANIZATION

This document documents agricultural resources, analyzes issues, identifies priority areas for farmland protection and identifies goals, strategies and actions to support the continued viability of agriculture. The summary of Current Conditions includes maps and descriptions of the Town's farmland and economic conditions. The Issues, Opportunities and Resources section analyses the challenges and opportunities raised by farmers, stakeholders and other participants in the planning process and the resources available to help address the issues and take advantage of the opportunities. The Farmland Priority and Parcel Rating delineates areas of the Town with high priority for long-term protection and presents a parcel rating system to guide Town decision-makers in identifying and evaluating suitable parcels for long-term protection.

Finally, the Goals, Strategies and Actions present specific steps that the Town will take to enhance the agricultural economy and retain well-managed farmland in the Town.

The Appendices include summaries of the farmer and public input (farmer/ landowner survey results, stakeholder interviews and public meetings) and reference information about plans and programs that complement the actions recommended in the Town's Agricultural Enhancement Plan..



# CURRENT CONDITIONS

The current conditions described in this section include land resources (soils, land in farms, ownership), economic conditions (types of farms, markets and support businesses), natural resources and development pressure.

## AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

### AGRICULTURAL LAND

#### SOILS

High quality agricultural soils include those soil types designated by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) as “prime,” “prime farmland if drained” and “farmland of statewide importance.”<sup>1</sup> Townwide, high quality agricultural soils occupy a total of 30,214 acres in the Town and comprise 75% of the Town’s total land area.

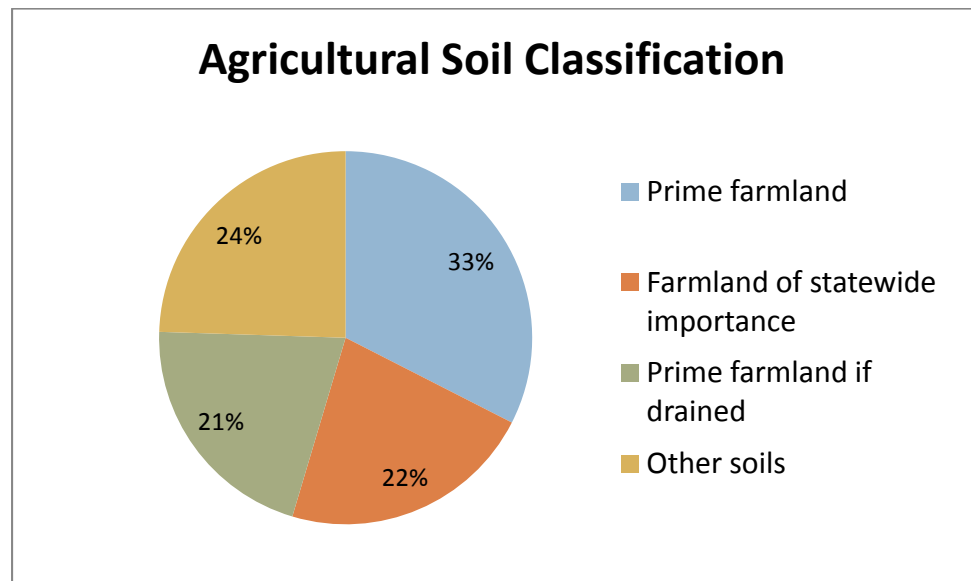
TABLE 1: AGRICULTURAL SOIL SUITABILITY

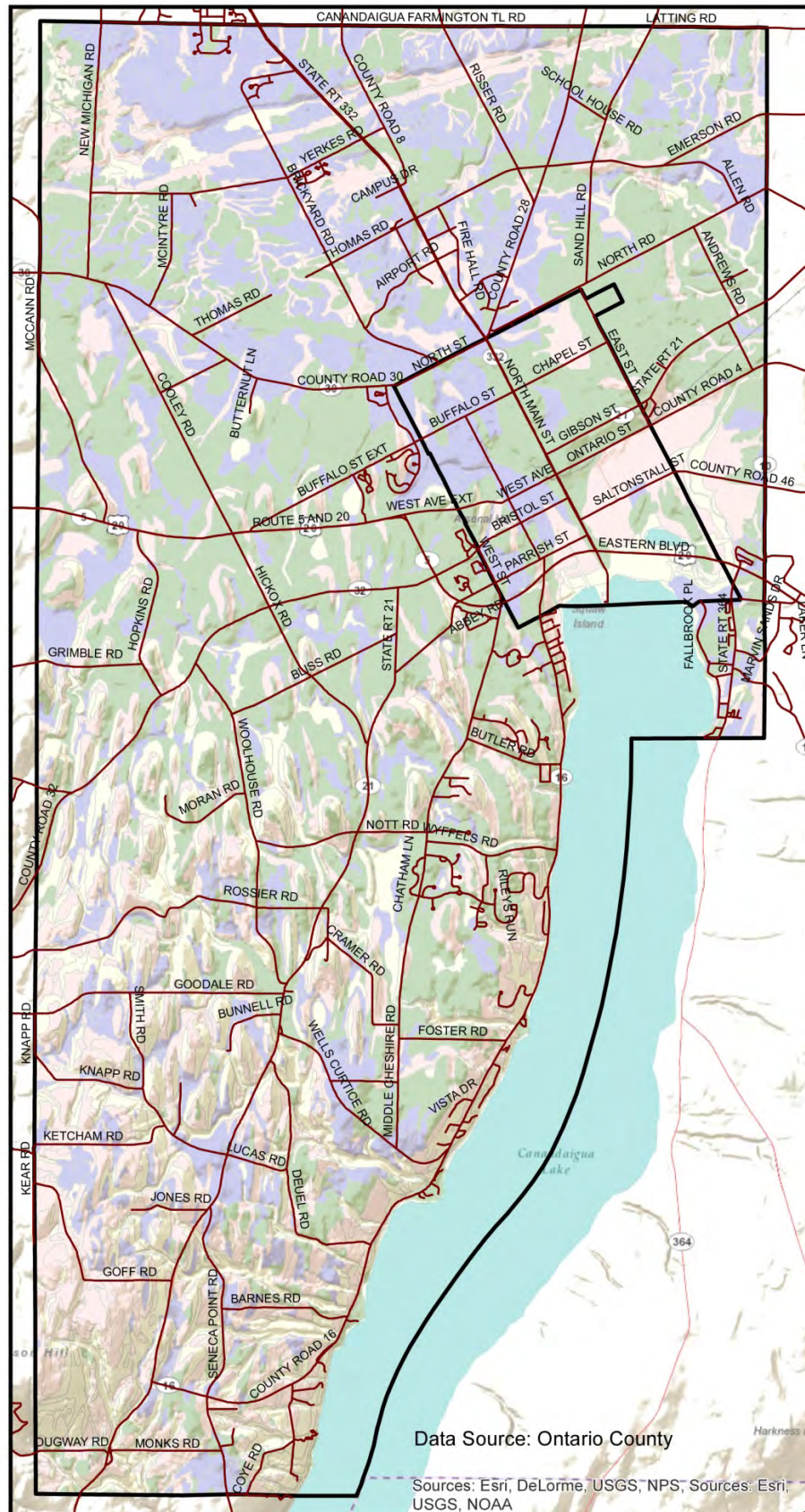
Agricultural Soil Suitability	Acres	% of Total
Prime farmland	13,008.1	32.5%
Farmland of statewide importance	8,846.0	22.1%
Prime farmland if drained	8,359.4	20.9%
Other soils	9,804.4	24.5%
	40,017.9	100.0%

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by the U.S. Farmland Protection Policy Act, prime farmland is farmland that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and is also available for these uses. Farmlands of statewide importance, identified by the NRCS State Conservationist, include those that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Soils that are prime if drained require artificial drainage to support yields comparable to prime soils.

CHART 1: AGRICULTURAL SOILS CLASSIFICATION - TOWNWIDE





## Canandaigua Agricultural

### MAP 1: AGRICULTURAL

#### SOIL SUITABILITY Soil Suitability

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Not Prime Farmland

0 1 2 Miles

Map Scale: 1:80,000

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Data Source: Ontario County

Sources: Esri, DeLorme, USGS, NPS, Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

## ACTIVE FARMLAND

Approximately 14,670 acres in the Town of Canandaigua (41% of the Town's total land area) is actively farmed. An additional 4,550 acres is old field or successional shrubland that may be suitable for farming.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 2: AGRICULTURAL LAND COVER BY TYPE

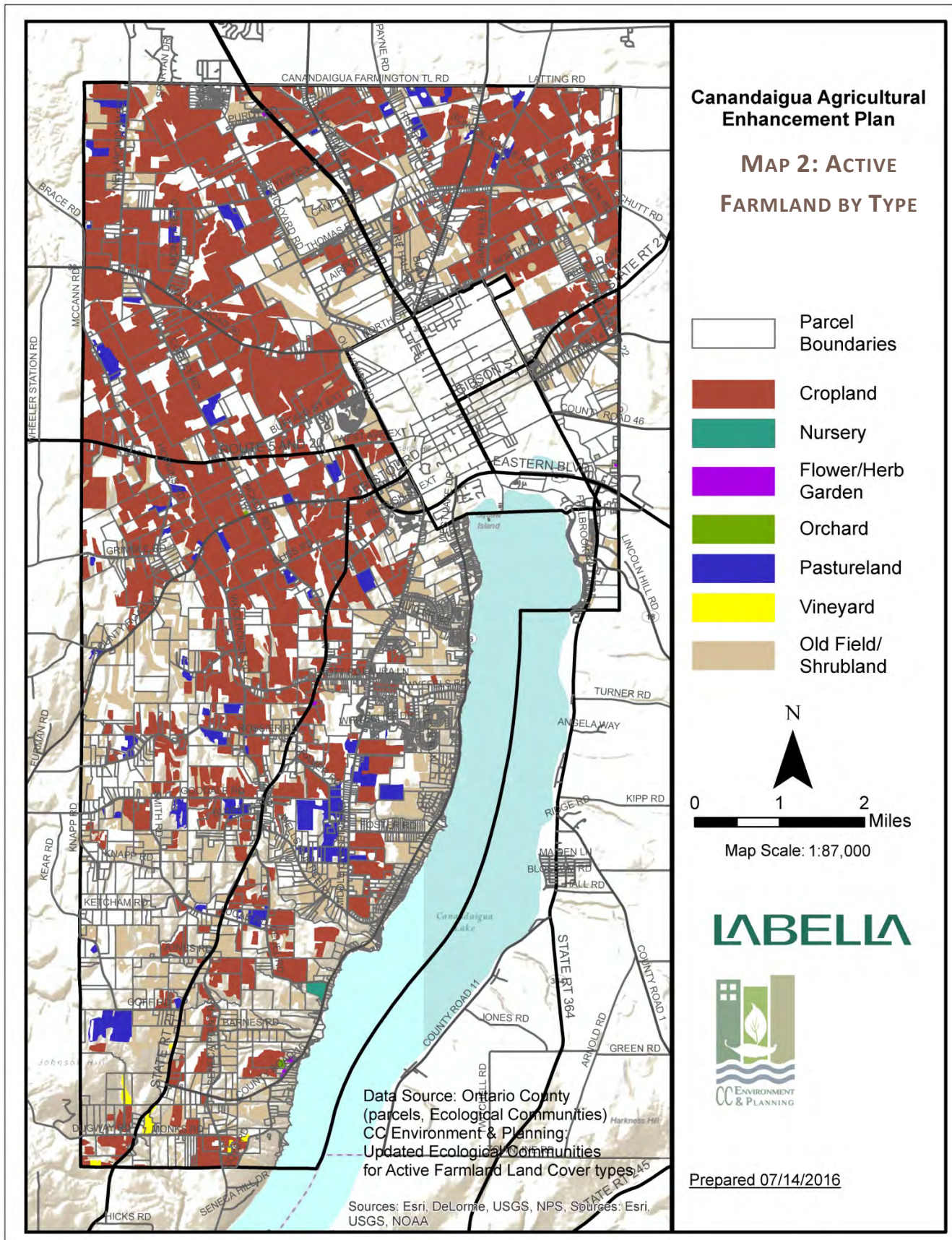
Ecological Community - Agriculture		Acres	# of Total
Cropland		13,572.2	92.5%
Pastureland		997.9	6.8%
Flower/Herb Garden		17.8	0.1%
Nursery		24.8	0.2%
Orchard		6.0	0.0%
Vineyard		51.3	0.3%
		14,670.0	100.0%

Ecological Community - Other Open Land		
Successional Old Field		3,233.8
Successional Old Field/Successional Shrubland		806.7
Successional Shrubland		509.4
		4,550.0

<sup>2</sup> Source: Land cover classifications based on "Ecological Communities of New York State," prepared for the New York Natural Heritage Program, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Initial land cover mapping from aerial photos completed in 2003 by 2003 Land Cover mapping project coordinated by the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Manager and the Ontario County Planning Department. Mapping updated by CC Environment & Planning and LaBella Associates in 2016 based on 2015 aerial photos.





## FARM PARCELS

Farmland in the Town is located on approximately 492 individual parcels. Table 3 summarizes the classifications of these parcels that are assigned by the Town Assessor for property tax assessment purposes.

TABLE 3: AGRICULTURAL PARCELS BY PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION

Property Classification	# Parcels	Total Acres
Vacant farmland (no buildings)	115	6,721.2
Field Crops	26	2,450.9
Rural Res & Ag	35	3,167.3
Dairy	4	598.9
Cattle	3	260.2
Horse Farm	14	643.8
Livestock	2	93.1
Other Stock	1	167.4
Vineyard	2	53.5
Nursery	3	11.7
Greenhouse	1	6.8
Other (Vacant, Residential):	286	6,319.4
<b>Total:</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>20,494.1</b>

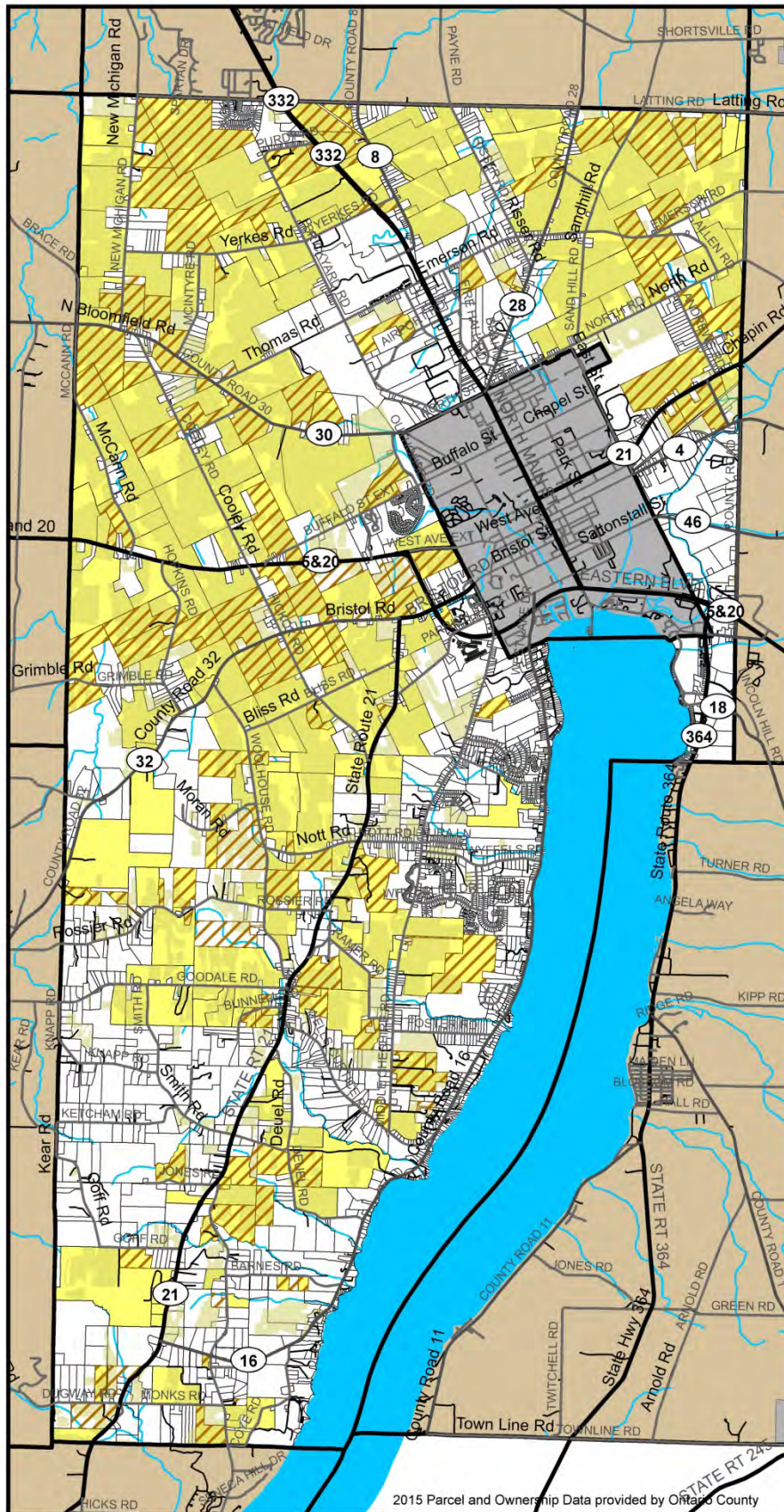
SOURCE: 2014 Real Property Tax data provided by Ontario County Planning Department

## OWNERSHIP (RENTED/ OWNED)

The 492 farm parcels in the Town are owned by 356 individual owners. Nearly one-half of the land in farm parcels are owned by 20 landowners who each own at least 200 acres.





Approximately 4,065 acres or 27.7% of the 14,670 of active farmland in the Town is not owned by farmers but is rented or leased from other landowners for agricultural production.





# Canandaigua Agricultural Enhancement Plan

## MAP 3: LEASED FARMLAND

-  Leased Farm Parcels
-  Active Ag (Cropland, Pasture, Nursery, Vineyard)
-  Parcels (2015)
-  Parcels Receiving Ag Exemption\*

\* SOURCE: Town of Canandaigua Assessor



0 1 2 Miles

Map Scale: 1:88,000

**ABELLA**



Prepared 07/14/2016

2015 Parcel and Ownership Data provided by Ontario County

## PRESERVED LAND

The following farms in the Town have permanent conservation easements that prohibit future non-farm development. The development rights to these farms were acquired through New York State's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program with assistance from the Town of Canandaigua and the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

TABLE 4: LAND PRESERVED WITH PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR)

Owner/ Name	Location	Type	Acres
Wyffels Farm	Middle Cheshire Road	Cash crops	135
Hicks Farm	Coye Road	Vineyard	82
Pritchard Farm	Northern Canandaigua	Cash crops	1,299
Total:			1,516

## LAND VALUES

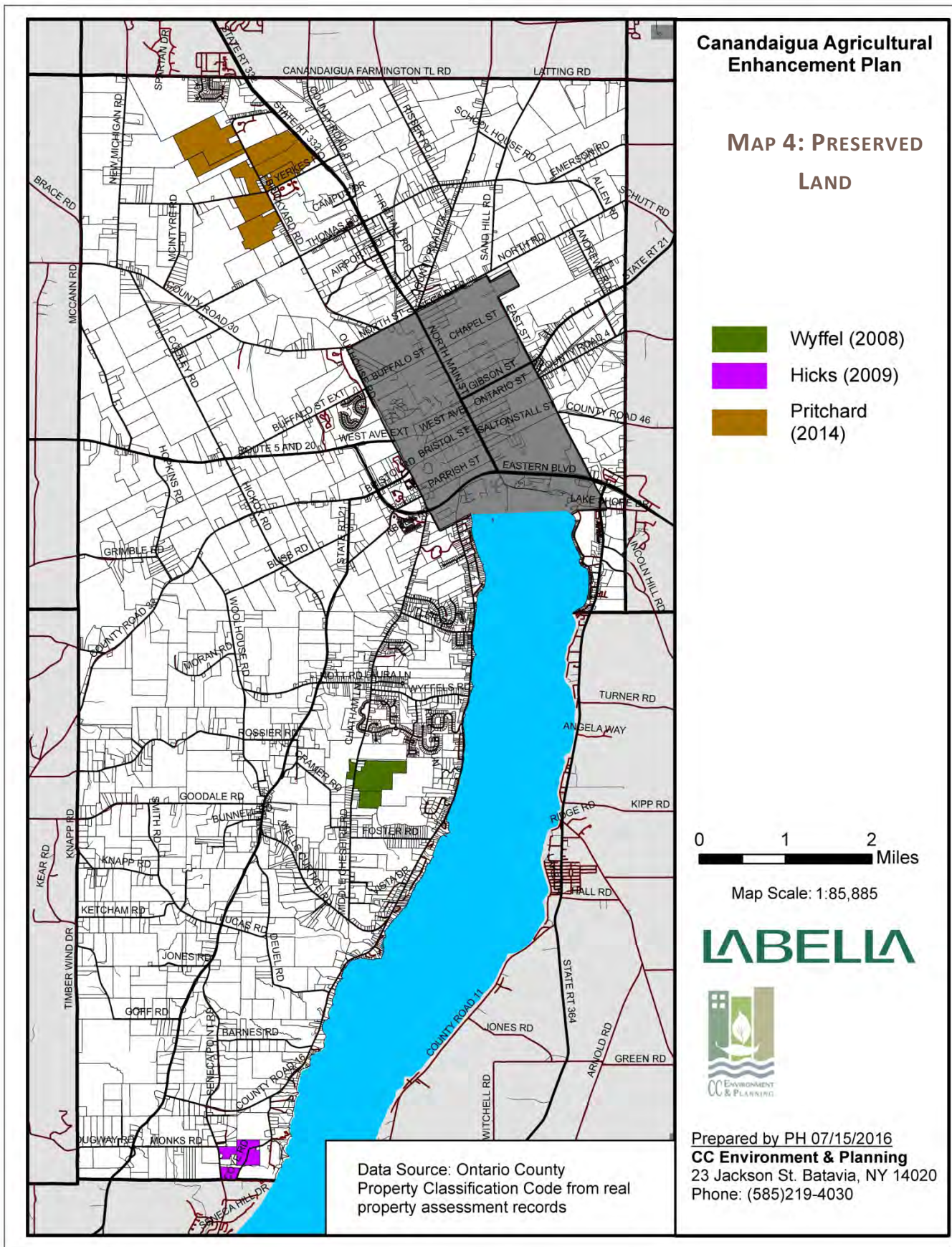
## ASSESSMENT/ TAX REVENUE

A total of 265 parcels receive a property tax exemption for agricultural use, as authorized by NYS Agricultural Districts Law. The assessed value of farmland eligible for the assessment is assigned by New York State according to Soil Group, based on the soil type and expected productivity of the land for agricultural production. Landowners must apply annually for the agricultural use exemption. To be eligible for the exemption, the land must be farmed by an operator who earns a minimum of \$10,000 per year from agricultural production. Landowners who rent to a qualifying farmer can also apply for the exemption.

Of the 12,673 acres in the parcels receiving the exemption, 11,869 acres are tillable land that is eligible for the reduced assessment. After applying the exemption, these parcels contributed a total of \$34,623 in property taxes in 2015.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> SOURCE: Town of Canandaigua Assessor, 2016.





## AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY/ REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM

### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Agriculture is a major industry in Ontario County and the region. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture (2012), farms in Ontario County generated \$180.326 million in sales of farm products. A total of \$77.235 million (43%) was from crops and \$103.091 million (57%) was from dairy.

**TABLE 5: MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD – ONTARIO COUNTY**

Type of Product	\$ million annual sales
Milk from cows	85.893
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	51.232
Cattle and calves	14.335
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	11.257
Other crops and hay	7.398
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	3.675
Fruits and berries	3.608
Poultry and eggs	0.227
Horses, ponies, mules, burros and donkeys	0.506
Sheep, goats, wool, mohair and milk	0.784
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	0.065
Other animals and their products (incl. hogs and aquaculture)	1.346
<b>Total:</b>	<b>180.326</b>

Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture

Farms in Canandaigua produce a wide range of agricultural products. These include milk from cows, cash crops (soybeans, hay, oats and wheat), fruit and vegetables, livestock farms, horses, grapes, fruit, and nursery plants. Organic produce and other niche products are a growing market. The following is a partial list of the farms in the Town.

TABLE 6: REPRESENTATIVE FARMS BY TYPE

Farm Type	Representative Farms (not a complete list)
Dairy farm	Miller, Day, Knopf
Cash Crops	Catalpa,
Cattle	Stryker
Other livestock	Sheep, alpacas (Snowbell Farm), K & P Associates
Grapes/ Vineyard	K. Purdy, Hicks
Horse farms	
Organic produce	Wegmans Organic Farm
Nursery	Spring Valley Greenhouse, 3100 Co. Rd. 10 Flowers by Stella – Retail flower sales and greenhouse Smart Landscape Design, 3915 State Route 21, greenhouse Peter Paul’s Nursery – 2661 State Route 21 Mayflowers

SOURCE: LaBella Associates from several published sources

## PROCESSING

Artisan Meats, formerly Hartmann’s Old World Sausage, is based at 2640 Brickyard Road in the Town of Canandaigua. The company manufactures sausages and other meats sold at the Wegmans deli department under the Josef Brunner label. The company works with local meat producers to source its products. The company was founded by Eugen and Brigitte Hartmann in 1963 and purchased by Josef Brunner in 2004.

Most of the agricultural products grown or raised at farms in the Town of Canandaigua are transported outside of the Town for processing.

- Soybeans are processed at the ethanol plants in Medina (Orleans County) and Oswego.
- Grapes are sold to Constellation (Constellation Brands, which produces Manischewitz wine, operates a wine production facility in the City of Canandaigua); Hazlitt (Hazlitt’s Red Cat Cellars in Naples, NY), and the National Grape Cooperative (a farmers’ cooperative which owns the Welch’s brand)
- Cattle and other livestock raised for meat are processed at a USDA slaughterhouse. The closest USDA-certified meat processing plants are in Pennsylvania.

## DIRECT MARKETS

Sales of farm products directly to the public include local farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and on-farm markets and roadside stands.

## FARMERS MARKETS

The Canandaigua Farmers Market operates every Saturday morning from June through December and every other Saturday during November through May. Vendors must be

from the Finger Lakes region and items are primarily limited to locally grown produce, meats, prepared foods.

- The Canandaigua VA Medical Center Farmer's Market operates Tuesday afternoons, June 16-October 13
- The Cheshire Union Farmer's Market operates one afternoon a week in the hamlet of Cheshire, from late June through September

### FARM MARKETS AND ROADSIDE STANDS

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Canandaigua farmers that sell products directly to consumers include:

- Meant to be Meadows Farm, Dan and Lisa Gould, 6086 Monks Road. Eggs, seasonal produce, canned goods, wreaths, arts and crafts. May to October
- Barron's Pratt Barn & Vineyard, 1990 Route 21 South. 16 varieties of NYS table grapes as well as jam, pies and other grape products. Open weekends September to October. Christmas trees available in December, by appointment.
- Rosecrest Farm, Lloyd and Mindy Kinnear, 2865 Cooley Road. Chicken, rabbit, goat, lamb pork and beef; eggs.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA)

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Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a economic model in which customers buy shares in agricultural production in exchange for a portion of the products. Some CSA's require participants to work a certain number of hours at the farm. Products distributed through CSAs include produce, meats and flowers.

- Ox Creek, Paul Batz, 5275 Parrish St. Ext. Eggs, poultry, rabbits.

### RETAIL MARKETS

Wegmans purchases locally-grown produce directly from local farmers or from wholesale businesses or distributors. Locally grown produce featured at Wegmans include strawberries, leaf lettuce, cucumbers, corn, peppers, tomatoes, summer squash, beans cauliflower, blueberries, peaches, and winter squash. A Wegmans supermarket is located in the City of Canandaigua.

### WHOLESALE/ DISTRIBUTION/ AGGREGATION

Farmers may sell their products directly to wholesale businesses at the Finger Lakes Produce Auction in Penn Yan or the Seneca Produce Auction in Romulus.

Wholesale food businesses purchase food from producers or other sources and distribute food products to retail stores and institutions. Genecco Produce, Inc., located at 1850 Rochester Road (Route 332) in the Town of Canandaigua, buys produce directly from growers and shippers and delivers to customers, including restaurants, institutions and retail outlets. Several other wholesale food businesses are located in Rochester and surrounding areas.

The “Food Hub” model focuses on connecting local farmers with local purchasers by managing aggregation and distribution of farm products, and in some cases packaging, branding and processing. Food hubs active in the region include:

- Finger Lakes Fresh Food Hub, Groton (Tompkins County). This facility contracts with multiple small and mid-sized farms, adding value through packaging, branding and processing such as quick-freezing.
- Headwater Food Hub, Ontario (Wayne County). This wholesale sales operation connects organic farmers with purchasers by managing the supply chain logistics, aggregation, distribution and sales of local products.  
(<http://headwaterfoodhub.com/>)

### SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Agricultural production requires a range of services, including technical, financial, legal, and construction. Many of these services are obtained from local businesses, such as law firms, banks, hardware stores, that are not necessarily specializing in agriculture. Others, such as implement dealers and seed or fertilizer sales, are completely dependent on sales to farmers.

Within the Town of Canandaigua, Pactiv, an international manufacturer of food packaging products, operates a plant on Brickyard Road and Route 332.

### EXISTING PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Ontario County administers a loan program through NY Empire State Development’s Grow the Agriculture Industry Now (GAIN) fund. Ontario County expects \$340,000 to be available. Applicants can borrow up to \$200,000 at 1% interest for projects that create jobs at agricultural and related businesses, including food processing, agricultural production and farm diversification.

Ontario County’s Economic Development Department supports the Tech Farm on Pre-Emption Road in Geneva, which has incubator/ accelerator space for agricultural and food-related businesses. Cheribundi, which produces tart cherry juices at the Tech Farm, has 15 employees in two locations, and distributes its products to 3,000 stores nationwide, including Wegmans. (Source: Finger Lakes Times, May 17, 2016)



### Upstate Revitalization Initiative

The Agriculture & Food Production industry cluster is one of three priority pillars that support the region's goals to grow jobs, increase regional wealth, drive private investment and reduce poverty. The agricultural and food processing sector represents 4.1% of the region's Output, compared to 2.5% in the rest of upstate NY and 2.2% nationwide. This component includes:

- Food production
- Agriculture / Ag-tech
- Wineries & craft beverage
- Agri-tourism
- Controlled environment agriculture
- Healthy, natural foods
- Sustainable farming

***"Investments in Agriculture and Food Production build on a wealth of natural resources, and place the Finger Lakes region at the forefront of nationwide trends favoring healthy, natural food."***

Potential investment of approximately \$1.3 billion from large companies, including LiDestri Foods and Wegmans Food Markets' Organic Farm in Canandaigua, and many small businesses in the region, is expected to result in 2,000 direct jobs. The Plan highlights strategies to leverage such investment to support in agricultural production as well as research and development, processing, distribution and retailing.

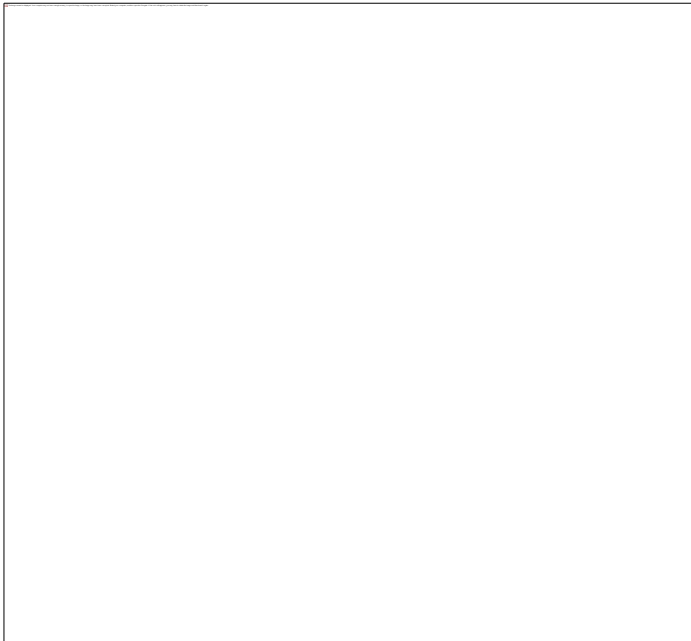


PHOTO CREDIT 1: MATT WITTMAYER, FROM FLEDC URI 2015

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Agriculture and natural resources both in the Town serves as a buffer to protect natural resources and development from the three

### CANANDAIGUA LAKE WATERSHED

Canandaigua Lake is the primary natural resource for the Town and a central feature in the region. Recreational uses, including boating, fishing and swimming, generate significant revenue for the Town and region. Canandaigua Lake is also the source of drinking water to 60,000 area residents, including those Town residents serviced by municipal water provided by the City of Canandaigua.

Approximately \_\_% of the Town's land area is within the watershed of Canandaigua Lake. The main threats to Canandaigua Lake's water quality is non-point source pollution, as stormwater runoff from farms and developed areas within the watershed carry contaminants into the lake. Programs and activities to protect water quality include agricultural best management practices and stormwater and erosion control requirements for new development.

### WETLANDS

Wetlands comprise approximately 1,000 acres (3.3%) of the Town's land area. Due to their importance as wildlife habitat and in managing stormwater, development and agricultural activities in wetlands and their buffers are limited by State and federal regulation.

### FLOOD ZONES

Approximately 1,700 acres in the Town are susceptible to flooding, as designated in Federal flood hazard maps. Agriculture is an acceptable use in these areas as the farmland can store floodwaters temporarily and limit downstream flooding and erosion.

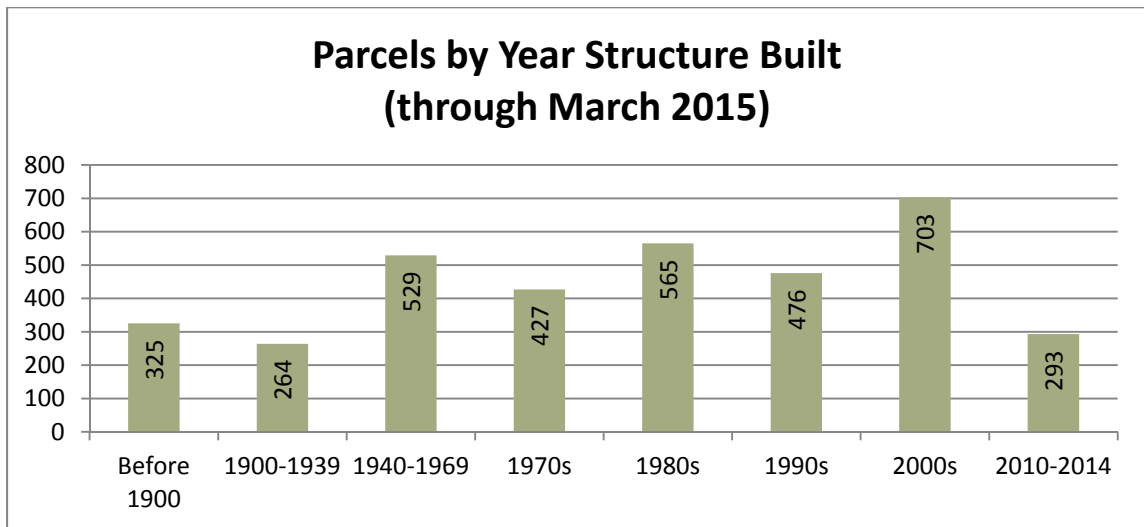
## DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE

This section describes the level of conversion pressure on farmland in the Town and the potential consequences of conversion on agriculture in the region. It includes an overview of population and housing trends, sewer and water infrastructure, and zoning regulations that influence development potential in the agricultural areas of the Town.

## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Development in the Town of Canandaigua is concentrated in areas surrounding the City of Canandaigua, along the Route 332 corridor north of the City and along the shore of Canandaigua Lake. During the past 20 years, residential subdivisions have been developed in the northern area of the Town near the Farmington town line and in the area east of NYS Route 21.

CHART 2 : STRUCTURES BY YEAR BUILT<sup>4</sup>



More than one-quarter (27.8%) of the structures in the Town were constructed since the year 2000<sup>5</sup>. Since 2000, an average of 57 new buildings per year have been constructed in the Town.

Between 2004 and 2015, the Town issued building permits for an average of 118.8 residential units per year, including an average of 61.3 for single-family dwellings.<sup>6</sup> In 2015, the Town issued building permits for 283 residential units, including 45 single-family dwellings, 110 townhouse units, 121 apartment units and seven manufactured homes.

<sup>4</sup> NOTE: Data from Real Property Tax records, "YearBuilt" field indicate number of parcels. Data do not include parcel records updated after March 2015.

<sup>5</sup> SOURCE: Real Property Tax records, "YearBuilt" field. Data provided by Ontario County.

<sup>6</sup> SOURCE: Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, Land Use Monitoring Reports.



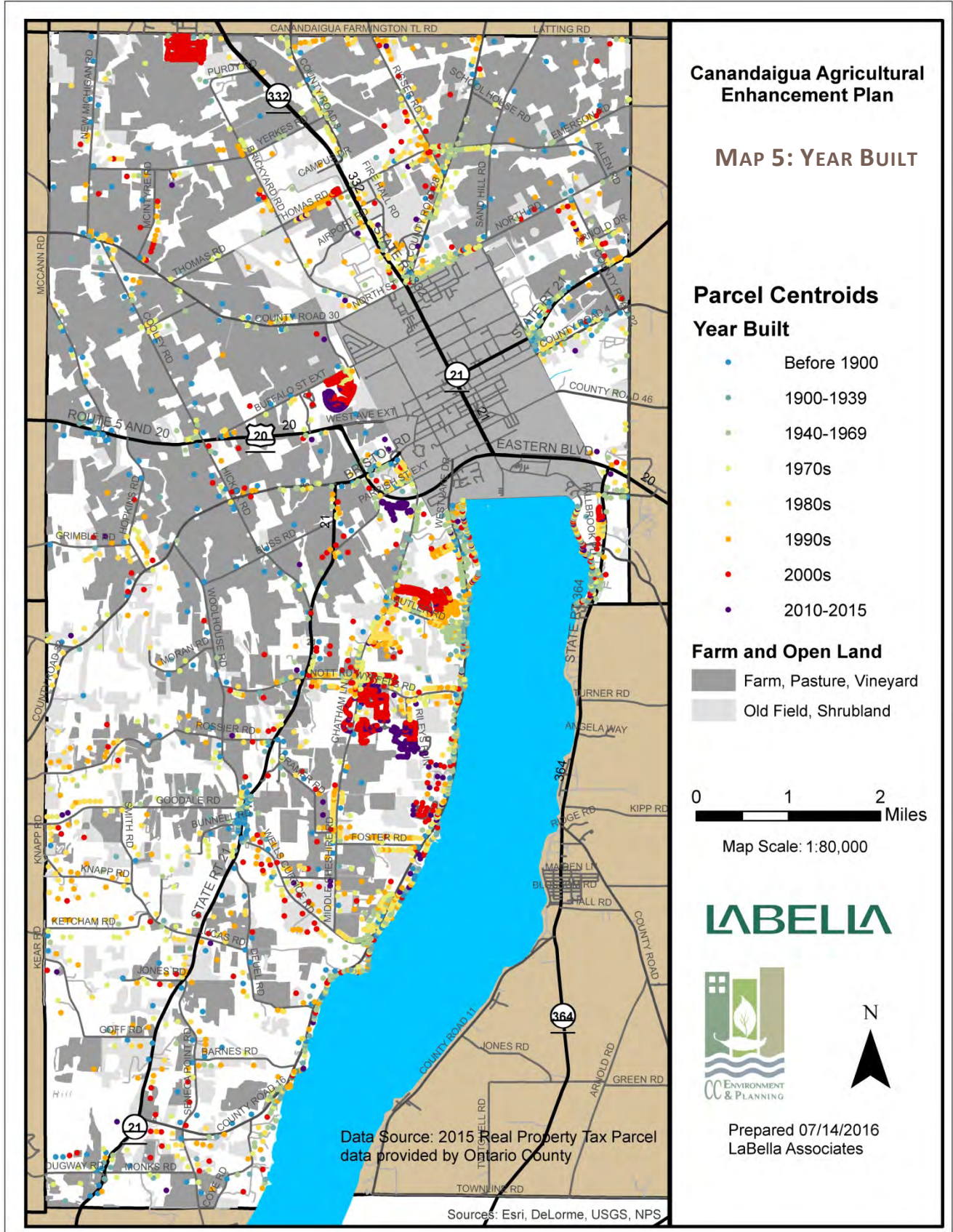
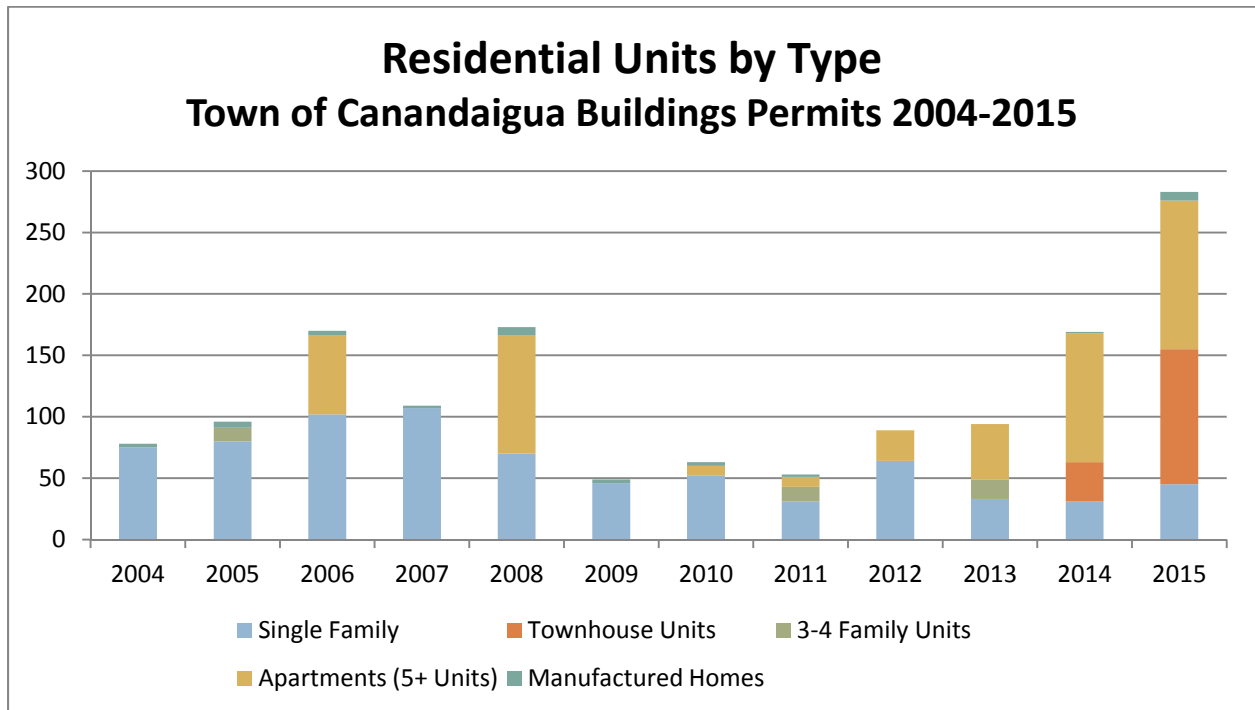
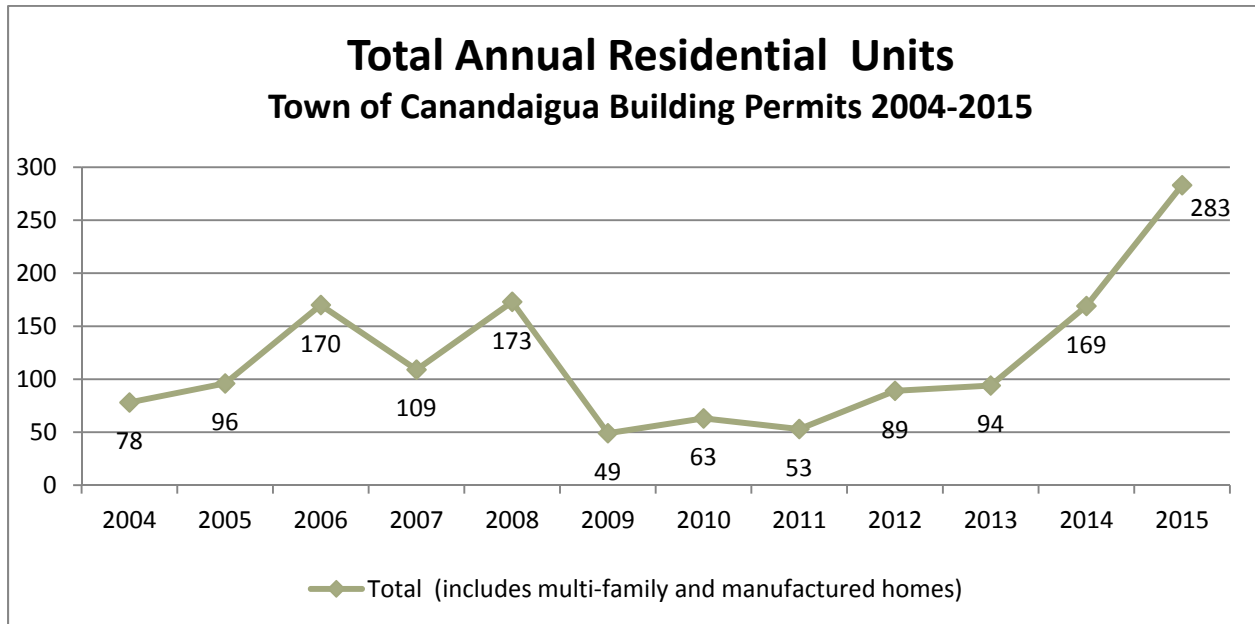


CHART 3: RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS 2004-2015

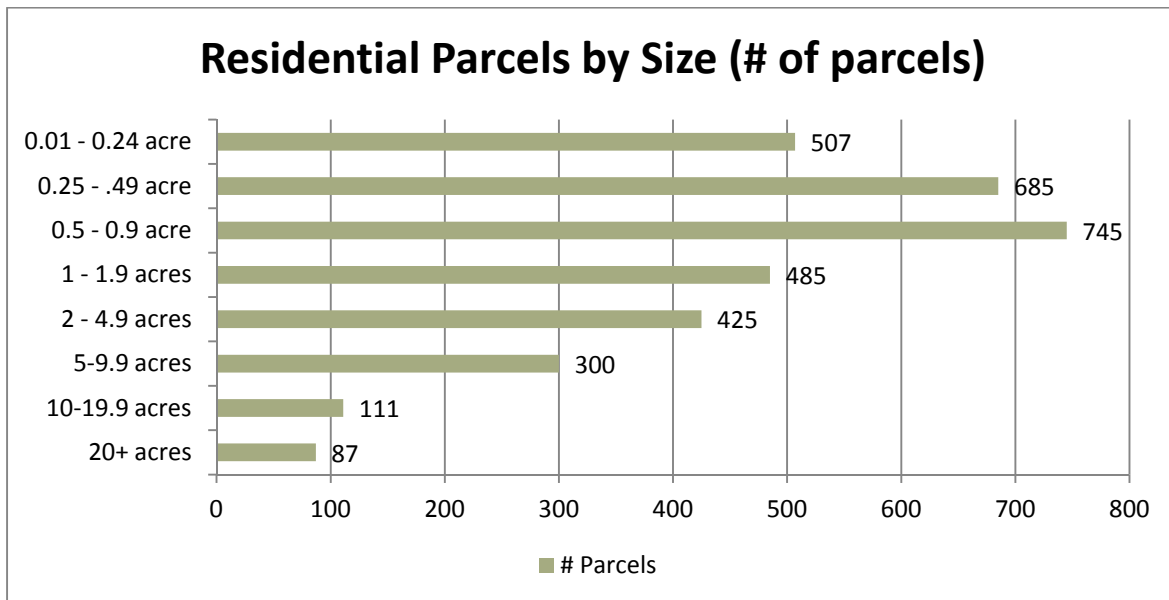


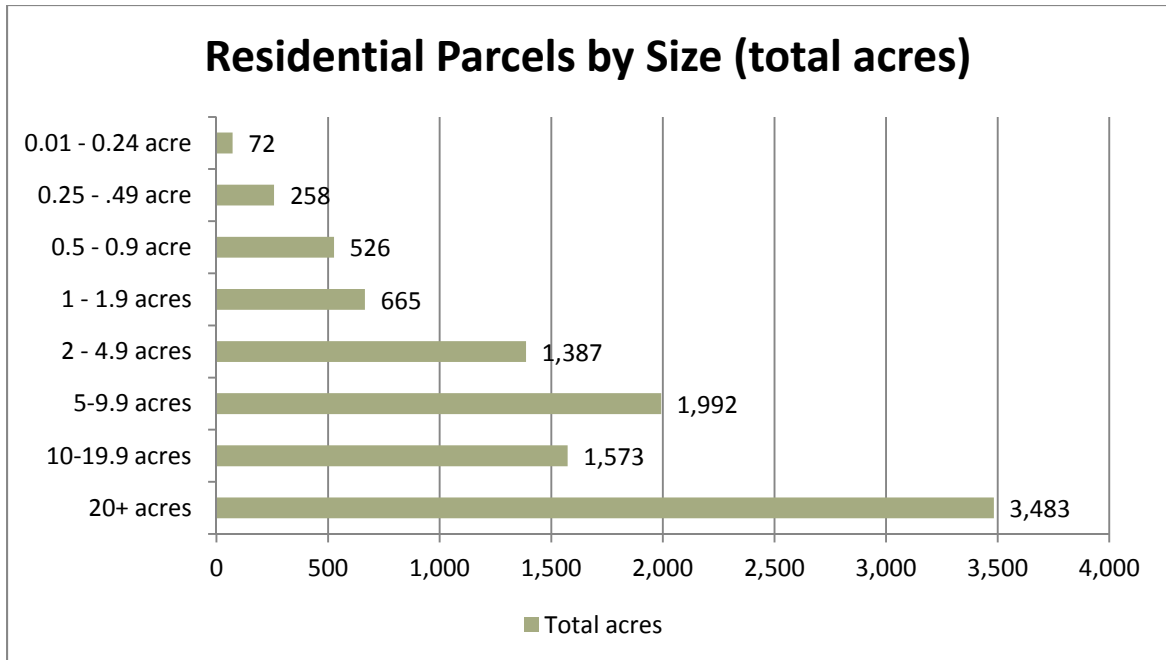
## POPULATION AND HOUSING TRENDS

The population of the Town in 2014 was estimated at 10,285. The population increased by 30% between 2000 and 2010 and another 2.6% between 2010 and 2014. A total of 4,799 housing units, including 437 seasonal or vacant units, are located in the Town.

Lot sizes for single-family residential development ranges from less than ¼ acre to more than 80 acres. A total of 3,345 residential parcels (excluding multi-family buildings, mobile home parks and parcels with Assessor's Classifications that include agricultural use) occupy 9,956 total acres with an average lot size of 2.976. Parcels with lot size of less than one acre comprise 57.9% of all residential parcels but occupy just 8.6% of their land area. Parcels with five or more acres comprise 14.9% of the total yet occupy 70.8% of the land area.

CHART 4: CHARACTERISTICS OF RESIDENTIAL PARCELS





## PROPOSED AND ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENT

During 2015, the Town issued 606 building permits which will result in 283 additional housing units. These include 45 single-family dwellings, 110 townhouses, 121 apartments and seven manufactured homes. In addition, several development projects are currently proposed or under review by the Town of Canandaigua

### CANANDAIGUA SEWER MASTER PLAN – BUILD-OUT ANALYSIS

The Canandaigua Sewer Master Plan in 2016 projected that the population of the Town would increase by 3.0% per 10-year period, resulting in an increase in population from 10,020 in 2010 to 11,875 in 2050. This represents an increase of 18.5% over the 40-year period. Assuming an average of 2.6 persons per dwelling, a total of 4,175 new dwelling units would be needed.

The Build-out Analysis prepared for the Sewer Master Plan projected the total number of units that could be developed within areas of significant development pressure (see map in Figure \_\_\_\_). The study determined that existing vacant and potentially developable parcels in the SCR-1, AR-2, R1-30, RB1, CC and I zoning districts could accommodate a total of 3,662 units, which represents 87.7% of the total anticipated need through 2050.

### PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT

Based on past trends, the Town can expect demand for approximately 100 new dwelling units per year, of which 70 are expected to be single family dwellings.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

Development within existing sewer service areas will have minimal impact on Canandaigua farms

## ZONING

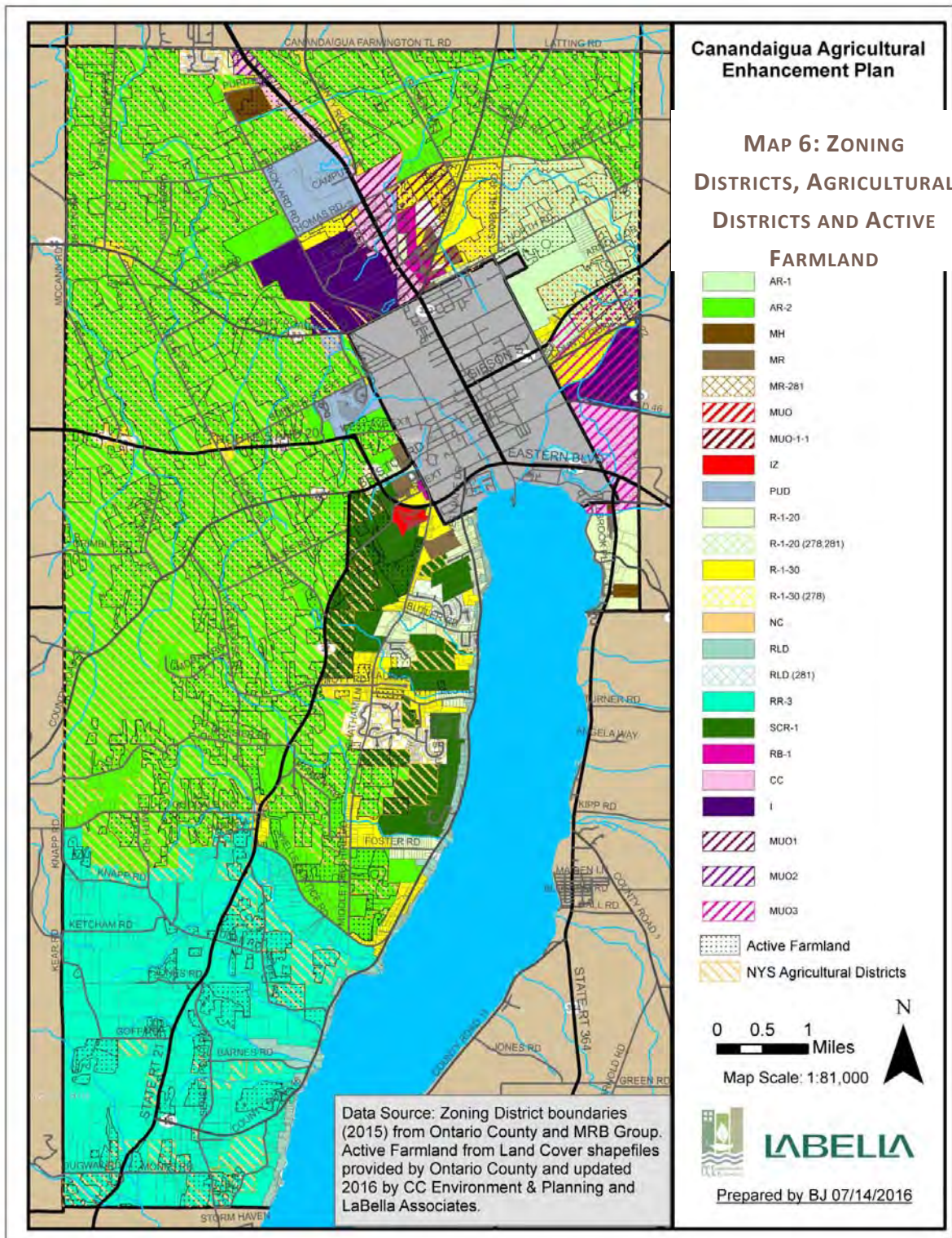
Most of the housing in the Town is located in Residential zoning districts, with newer subdivisions in the Incentive Zoning and Planned Development districts. Commercial, industrial and multi-family development is located primarily in the Commercial, Industrial and Mixed Use zoning districts.

Most (77%) of the active agricultural land in the Town is located in the AR-2 Agricultural Rural Residential zoning district, with another 8% located in the RR-3 Rural Residential district and 6% in the AR-1 Agricultural Residential district. (See Table)

CHART 5: ACTIVE FARMLAND BY ZONING DISTRICT

Zoning District (2016)	Active Farmland	
	# acres	% of total
AR-1 - Agricultural Rural Residential - 1 Acre Lot	899.8	6.1%
AR-2 - Agricultural Rural Residential - 2 Acre Lot	11,332.3	77.4%
CC - Community Commercial	111.2	0.8%
I - Industrial	73.9	0.5%
MH - Mobile Home	43.4	0.3%
R-1-20 - Residential - 20,000 Sq. Ft. Lot	17.3	0.1%
R-1-20 - Residential - 20,000 Sq. Ft. Lot/278	5.3	0.0%
R-1-30 - Residential - 30,000 Sq. Ft. Lot	409.5	2.8%
R-1-30 - Residential - 30,000 Sq. Ft. Lot/278	5.8	0.0%
RR-3 - Rural Residential - 3 Acre Lot	1,236.7	8.4%
SCR-1 - Southern Corridor Residential - 1 Acre Lot	509.2	3.5%
	14,644.4	100.0%





# ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

Farmers and other stakeholders who participated in the planning process identified opportunities and challenges relating to farming in the Town. This section presents an analysis of key issues and opportunities along with the relevant tools and resources available to farmers, Town officials, agency partners and community members.

Many of the issues and opportunities were identified at the first public informational meeting during the analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). A summary is included in the table on the following page.

Opportunities and challenges identified by farmers and other stakeholders relate to:

- economic development and improving the viability of farming;
- retaining farmland for continued agricultural production
- managing land use and development to minimize impacts on farming
- minimizing runoff from agricultural lands into streams and Canandaigua Lake
- increasing public understanding and appreciation of agriculture

## AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY / FARM VIABILITY

Farms in Canandaigua produce a wide variety of crops and livestock. They range in size from a few acres to more than 1000 acres. While the large dairy and grain producers have a huge impact on the regional economy, smaller producers provide income to many families in the Town and complement the region's tourism economy. This Plan presents strategies to support both types of farms.

In order to be viable, farms of all sizes, like any business, aim to maximize revenues and minimize costs. The large dairy and grain farms in the Town of Canandaigua have a huge impact on the regional economy. In order to be financially viable, these operations need to produce at large scale and keep costs as low as possible. Small farms, by definition, have limited capacity to produce products for sale. Relatively small changes costs or revenues can have a significant impact on their economic viability.

This section identifies issues relating to markets and farm operating expenses that can impact the long-term viability of farming in the Town.

## ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

**TABLE 7: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT)**

<p><b><u>Strength</u></b> - An asset or policy that can be leveraged to help achieve our goals</p> <p><b><u>Opportunity</u></b> - A situation or an element that can be seized or capitalized on to support our goals</p>	<p><b><u>Weakness</u></b> - A liability, hindering us in achieving our goals, that can be corrected or mitigated</p> <p><b><u>Threat</u></b> - An element or force that must be countered because it threatens achievement of our goals</p>
<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good infrastructure</li> <li>• Nearby supplies, services,</li> <li>• Soil</li> <li>• Climate</li> <li>• Business support</li> <li>• Close to markets/ Livestock market</li> <li>• Close to thruway</li> <li>• Farm history</li> <li>• Proximity to grocery store</li> <li>• Easy to work w/Town government</li> <li>• Farm community</li> <li>• 4H/Cornell Coop Ext</li> <li>• Low taxes</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of public understanding</li> <li>• Taxes (smaller parcels)</li> <li>• No high speed internet/infrastructure/ public water (some areas)</li> <li>• Not enough land (unencumbered)</li> <li>• Lack of respect – farm equipment on roads</li> <li>• Lack of support – financial, etc. struggling farmers</li> <li>• No USDA meat processor</li> <li>• No FFA</li> <li>• Not enough support – County Fair</li> <li>• Fewer Farmers/Young people</li> <li>• High School – lack of awareness/ appreciation/ understanding– Ag &amp; Farming</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local easement programs</li> <li>• Growth for Agri-tourism</li> <li>• Niche markets – Hops</li> <li>• Freight Rail</li> <li>• Vertical integration</li> <li>• Dairy processing</li> <li>• Woodlot – Maple tree tapping</li> <li>• Farm markets/ Wegmans</li> <li>• Collaboration w/ wineries</li> <li>• STC Center – Systems Technology</li> <li>• County Fair showcase</li> <li>• Partners to help farmland owners w/impact from storm events</li> <li>• Buy local               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finger lake Bounty</li> <li>○ Local Restaurants</li> <li>○ Wine &amp; Culinary Center</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Institutional Purchasing</li> <li>• Branding and Advertising</li> <li>• Partner w/ Ag Tech Farm</li> <li>• Specialized meat processing</li> <li>• Education in local schools – partner with local farms/ Businesses/ Stakeholders</li> <li>• Science in Farming</li> <li>• Need to accommodate small operations – e.g., keeping animals or buildings on small lots</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum wage/competition for labor</li> <li>• NYS/EPA regulations – changing regulations/ enforcement</li> <li>• Climate – more intense storms; runoff from farms/soil loss</li> <li>• Lack of coordination among state agencies – timing problems w/funding</li> <li>• Urban Sprawl</li> <li>• Global Commodity markets/Federal trade policies</li> <li>• Activist (extremists)</li> <li>• Taxes</li> </ul>

*Identified by participants in the Public Forum on March 16, 2016*



### LARGE-SCALE PROCESSING

Nearly all of the milk, corn, soybeans and other products from large farms are shipped long distances for processing or for sale in regional or global markets. A large-scale processing facility closer to their farms would reduce costs for transportation and increase profitability. Processing facilities that may be used by farmers in the region include soybean processing into biodiesel, dairy processing, or ethanol production.

The Town of Canandaigua has available land that is zoned industrial and adequately served by utilities to support a regional processing plant. Rail infrastructure is available to support transporting inputs and/or outputs.

Such a facility would complement the existing cluster of agriculture-oriented businesses already located in Canandaigua, including Artisan Meats, Pactiv, Constellation Brands and Wegmans. Agriculture and agri-business comprise a key regional economic cluster recognized in the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan.

Determining the feasibility of a regional processing or distribution facility in Canandaigua would require a detailed study of regional demand, competing facilities. Potential partners and sources of financial or technical assistance include:

- NYS Empire State Development
- Ontario County Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Ontario County Industrial Development Agency.

### MEAT PROCESSING

For large and small farms who produce livestock for meat, the nearest processing facilities are in Pennsylvania. The lack of local facilities limits the ability of small producers market their products to customers who want to know what farm the meat came from. Although some small livestock farmers slaughter animals on their farm, this option is not suitable for all farmers who raise animals for meat.

The challenges to siting a meat processing facility include:

- Competition from large corporations
- Need to establish financial viability
- Potential public resistance.

### DIVERSIFY CROPS TO MEET EXPANDING MARKETS

Crop diversification can expand markets and offer resilience to farms. For example, local farms are taking advantage of increasing consumer demand for organic produce, expanding markets for locally produced inputs for the craft beer industry, and straw for use in erosion control.

The market for organic produce is increasing rapidly. Farms in Canandaigua that benefit from this trend include Wegmans Organic Farm and several small producers.

Markets for hops and malting barley have increased due to the NYS Farm Brewing Law, which offers licenses to breweries that commit to using hops and other ingredients grown in New York State. [See sidebar.] Both hops and malting barley are grown on Canandaigua farms.

In a recent analysis of the supply chain for farm breweries, Cornell researchers noted that the market for malting barley is much larger than that for hops. Some challenges include the need for secondary markets for malting barley that doesn't meet strict quality standards. Potential markets include animal feed and distilling.<http://newyorkcraftbeer.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/New-York-State-Brewery-Supply-Chain-Analysis.pdf>

The Town of Canandaigua's requirement that developers spread straw during construction sites for erosion control may provide opportunities for farmers to provide the straw. Farmers are not generally aware of this potential market and Town officials may not know which farms are able to provide this product.

## DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER SALES AND AGRI-TOURISM

Farms that sell directly to consumers are able to charge retail prices and eliminate the cost of distribution. Direct sales methods include on-farm produce stands, farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and sales of meats or other products

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### Agri-Tourism Guide and Technical Assistance

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County (CCE) publishes an annual guide to farm markets, farm stands and direct sales. It promotes agri-tourism through its "Agri-Venture" website . (<http://fingerlakesagriculture.com/>) .

In addition, CCE staff and resources through Cornell and affiliated organizations are available to assist farmers with business planning and marketing.

by appointment.

In addition to increasing revenues for farmers, direct sales complement the regional tourism and recreation economy. Canandaigua Lake draws seasonal residents and visitors who enjoy the scenic views made possible by farmers keeping land open.

Similarly, sales directly from farms to restaurants and institutions can increase the price farmers receive for their goods. As consumers increase demand for local produce, restaurants

## DIRECT SALES TO RESTAURANTS

In response to consumer demand, many local restaurants seek local farm products to feature in their menus. Several have developed partnerships with local farms to provide suitable products.

Challenges associated with direct sales to restaurants include the need of restaurants for consistent quantity and quantity. Many local restaurants work directly with farmers to coordinate and schedule deliveries.

Some restaurants adjust menus daily to utilize the products that are available. With meat, some restaurants are educating their customers to accept alternatives to the most popular cuts of meat.

### INSTITUTIONAL PURCHASES OF LOCAL FARM PRODUCTS

Schools, colleges and other institutions are a potential market for local produce and o  
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#### Farm-to-School Program

New York State's Farm-to-School program encourages school districts and other educational institutions to purchase local farm products and to increase understanding of agriculture among school children. Information is available for food service directors, farmers, processors, teachers, parents and community members. (See <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/F2S/resources.html> )

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ultural products.

Challenges to increasing such purchases include:

- Inadequate space, staffing and equipment in school/ institutional kitchens prepare fresh produce for use in cooking
- Farms may not be able to provide consistent quantity and quality of products. While institutions can plan around seasonally available produce, supply must be reliable
- 

### ON-FARM VALUE-ADDED PROCESSING

On-farm processing can add value to farm products and help some small farms to increase revenue. Examples include processing milk into cheese or apples into cider. The Finger Lakes region's wineries have turned this unique micro-climate for growing grapes into a multi-million dollar food and tourism industry. Farms in Canandaigua can take advantage of the tourism generated by wineries to attract visitors to their farm stand or market.

In addition to those of farming in general, challenges to on-farm processing include:

## ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

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- government regulations regarding food safety, packaging
- financing
- difficulties in scaling up from small scale to large
- potential resistance from neighbors.

Where farmers reside on the farm property, the Town's zoning regulations that allow home-based businesses with a special use permit can be applied to accommodate secondary businesses or on-farm processing.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

Some farms in Canandaigua do not have access to high speed internet or public water. The lack of these utilities can increase production costs and affect efficiency.

## FARMLAND RETENTION

As noted in the Current Conditions section, a large portion of Canandaigua's land area is suitable for and used productively for farming. In addition, the Town has helped protect Hundreds of acres of farmland in the Town are protected from development with permanent conservation easements. However, the availability of sufficient high quality farmland is a significant concern of farmers in Canandaigua. In addition, many farms rely on rented land, which is owned by numerous landowners who may not see farming as the most desirable future use.

## PERMANENT CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

When land is protected through permanent conservation easements, it cannot be developed for non-agricultural purposes. Because the development rights are removed, the purchase price of protected land is more affordable to beginning as well as established farms. When farmers are compensated for the value of the development rights to their land, they often invest in additional land or equipment to support the continued economic viability of the farm operation.

The Town of Canandaigua has assisted three farms to sell development rights through NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets' Purchase of Development Rights program. As a result of educational programs and outreach by the Town and the Finger Lakes Land Trust, many farmland owners in the Town are familiar with how conservation easements work and the purchase of development rights program.

Landowners may also donate conservation easements to the Town or to a private land trust. Pursuant to NYS General Municipal Law Section 247, the Town may accept donations of land or easements for the purpose of protecting open space. In addition, the Finger Lakes Land Trust owns and manages conservation easements to land in the Town of Canandaigua and surrounding areas for both agricultural and natural resource conservation purposes.

Challenges relating to protecting farmland with permanent conservation easements include:

- High cost. To retain enough land to support a viable agricultural industry, thousands of acres of land would need to be protected.
- Cumbersome process. The NYS PDR program can take three years or more to prepare and submit an application, complete required surveys and appraisals, and finalize an easement. Many landowners are not willing or able to devote the time required to complete this process.
- Reduces equity. Landowners who place conservation easements on their property have less equity that they can leverage to borrow money needed to support their farm operation.
- Benefits small portion of farmland. Because of the cost and complexity of acquiring easements, and because permanent conservation is not a suitable approach for many landowners, PDR and conservation easements can protect a small proportion of the land needed to support a viable regional farm economy.

A conservation easement program should be targeted to those parcels that offer strategic benefits. Consistent with the criteria of the NYS PDR program, publicly funded

### Municipal Funding of Land/ Easement Purchases

To fund purchases of land or easements for open space, farmland and natural resource protection, municipalities can create a Capital Reserve Fund. The Town of Canandaigua's Open Spaces Capital Reserve Fund, created on December 28, 2000, was used to purchase the Outhouse Property (74 acres) and development rights to Hicks and Wyffels farms.

Bonding or direct appropriations can be used to replenish the CRF. Other sources of funding include Transfer of Development Rights or Incentive Zoning.

Subdivision fees may not be used to fund farmland protection, as they must be dedicated for recreational land

easements should target parcels with unique attributes (such as land near the lakeshore that are ideal for growing grapes but, because of high demand for development is too expensive to be acquired for farming), those that are facing development pressure but not surrounded by development, and areas that buffer significant natural resources.



### SUCCESSION PLANS

As many farmers in Canandaigua and nationwide reach retirement age, farmland may be sold for development if the landowners do not have other plans for succession.

Resources available to farmers to help with succession and estate planning include the Cornell Small Farms Program (<http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2016/07/05/successful-farm-succession/>) and private attorneys.

## LAND DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION

Zoning regulations generally guide more intensive development away from the most productive agricultural areas.

Demand for land for housing and commercial development increases the cost of land to a point where it is not affordable to farmers. Residential development in agricultural areas leads to fragmentation of farmland and increases the potential for conflicts with neighbors.

### GUIDE DEVELOPMENT AWAY FROM AGRICULTURAL AREAS

As documented in the Zoning Audit (see Appendix \_\_), the Town's zoning district boundaries and regulations support farming in the rural portions of the Town and accommodate more intensive development in designated areas where sewer, water and other services are available.

However, demand for residential development in agricultural areas has the potential to convert farmland to non-agricultural uses. Even scattered residential development in agricultural areas can fragment existing farmland and lead to neighbor conflicts that may make it more difficult to farm.

Transfer of Development Rights and Incentive Zoning are two potential tools that can shift development rights from areas targeted for farmland protection to areas more suitable for development. The TDR approach designates "sending areas" where development rights will be extinguished from the land in exchange for compensating landowners, and "receiving areas" where development credits can be applied to increase the intensity of development or allow different types of development.

As the Town has designated the Padelford Brook Greenway area as a priority for the protection of farmland as well as natural resource protection, this area is a logical priority to become a "sending area" where development rights will be acquired and conservation easements placed on the land. As the Town's Mixed Use Overlay districts allow more intensive development than zoning would otherwise permit, these areas are suitable for "receiving areas."

Incentive Zoning works in a similar fashion, but on a case-by-case basis. A developer interested in a higher density or different type of development may purchase development rights from a suitable farm parcel in exchange for the higher density.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Runoff from agricultural land contributes nutrients and chemicals to streams and Canandaigua Lake. While the Town supports agriculture as key component of the regional economy and recognizes its contributions to open space and community character, protection of water quality, especially in Canandaigua Lake, is critical.

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Farms that use best management practices reduce the risk of nutrients, sediment and chemicals running off the land into streams and Canandaigua Lake. Programs to assist farmers in planning and implementing these practices, including cost-sharing, are administered by the Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

For farms within the Canandaigua Lake Watershed, Watershed Rules and Regulations specify mechanisms for managing manure and storing chemicals.

Challenges to increasing the number of farms that utilize best management practices include:

- Some farms are unwilling to utilize government programs
- Cost of implementing measures and need to take some land out of production.
- Due to limited staffing, SWCD and NRCS programs have waiting lists for participation.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF AGRICULTURE

Although much of the Town's land is farmed, a very small number of Town residents are farmers. Despite the increasing number of residents who purchase food from local farm stands or farmers' markets, most residents are not familiar with farming. Many residents only interact with farmers when farm practices impact their daily lives, such as when slow farm equipment affects travel on roads or spreading manure causes odor.

The Town's Right to Farm Law states the Town's policy in support of agriculture in the Town.

New York State programs to increase public awareness of agriculture include the Ag in the Classroom program and programs such as Pride of New York to promote marketing of New York farm products.

Some techniques available to municipalities to raise awareness of and celebrate agriculture include:

- Farm tours – school groups and public
- Brochures and/or website to identify farm stands and direct sales to consumers
- Brochures at Town Hall to provide information about the NYS Agricultural District Law, Town Right-to-Farm Law, and other informational resources.

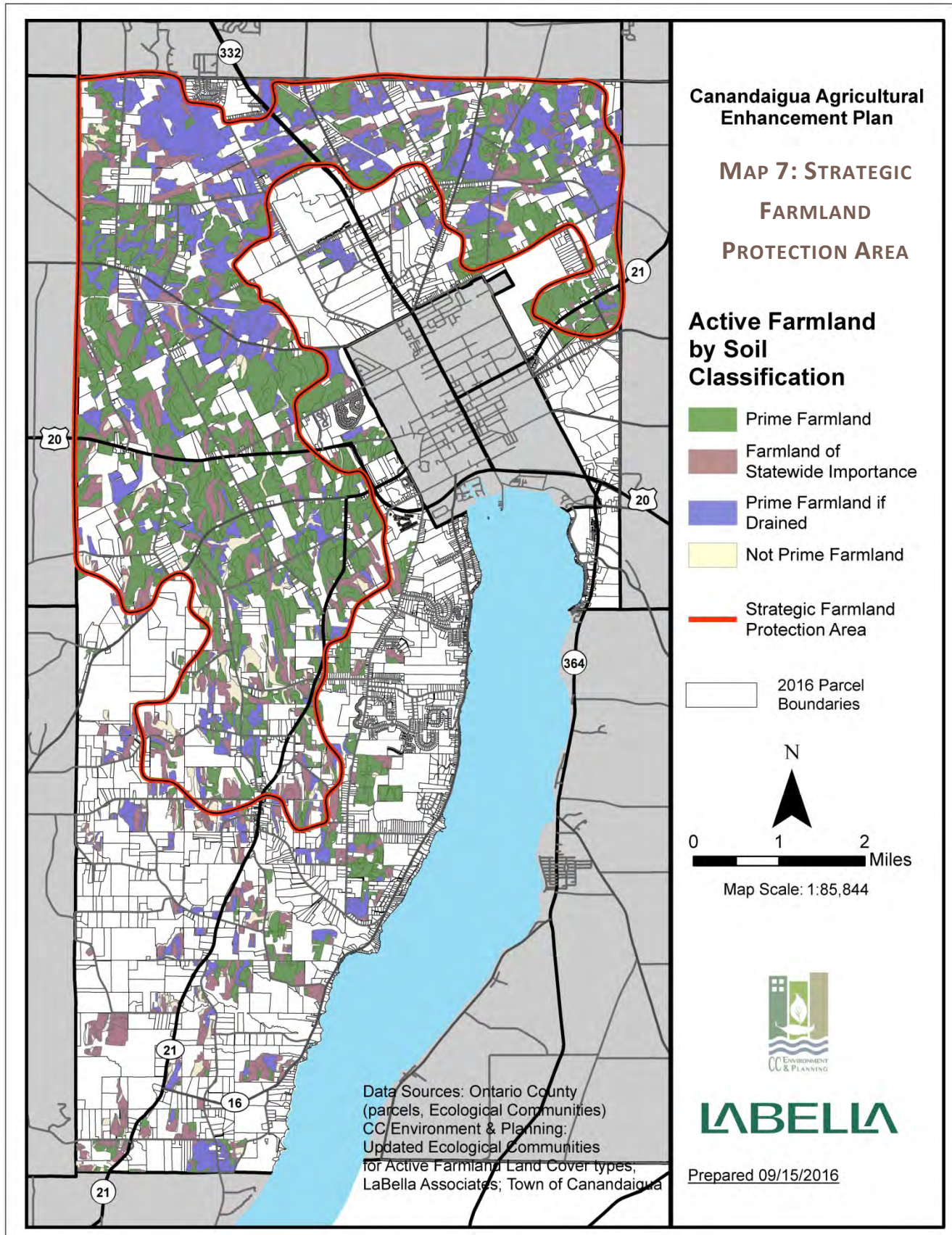
# FARMLAND PROTECTION PRIORITIES AND PARCEL RATING

The Town has identified those lands that have high quality agricultural soils and that are currently used for agricultural production as suitable for protection. The areas of active farmland were delineated based on land cover analysis and aerial photographs and represent crop fields, pasture and other open land that may be suitable for agricultural production (see Active Farmland map). High quality agricultural soils include soils classified by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey as “prime farmland,” “prime farmland if drained”, and “soils of Statewide Importance (see Map \_\_: Active Farmland by Agricultural Soils). The intersection of these two features – areas that consist of prime or important agricultural soils as well as active farmland – represent the Town’s agricultural land resources.

In order to focus agricultural land preservation efforts, the Town has delineated a portion of the Town as the highest priority for agricultural land protection as depicted in Map \_\_ on the following page. The retention of farmland in these areas would help to ensure that a “critical mass” of high quality farmland remains available to support agricultural production in the Town. Land protection efforts such as transfer of development rights and purchase of development rights should be targeted to these areas. Criteria for selecting the area included:

- not currently served by public sewers
- zoned for less intensive development. Town zoning district boundaries represent current development policies.
- encompass contiguous areas of active farmland and other open land.

To provide guidance to the Planning Board and other Town officials, the map of Strategic Farmland Protection Areas depicts both the agricultural soil classification of all actively farmed land in the Town and the priority farmland protection areas where conservation efforts will be focused. This map should be used by Town boards, staff and consultants as a reference when reviewing development proposals and in implementing conservation strategies.



## PARCEL RATING

A rating system was applied to each parcel that includes at least five acres of actively farmed land. Consistent with the criteria for evaluating parcels for purchase of development rights, the rating system has three components: agricultural soil classification; natural resource buffer; proximity to protected land; and development pressure.

The ratings are intended to serve as a starting point for determining the suitability of individual parcels for long-term protection. Due to inherent limitations of a numerical rating system, additional analysis will be required on a case-by-case basis.

For example, the Agricultural Soils Rating is based strictly on the number of acres and quality of actively farmed land on individual parcels. Large parcels with many acres of actively farmed receive the highest agricultural soils ratings. As small parcels used to raise high value crops such as vegetables would not receive a high rating using this system, the agricultural value of these smaller parcels will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, the rating systems do not group parcels that are part of a single farm operation. However, if multiple parcels are proposed for protection, the data for each individual parcel may be added together to determine the total rating for a group of parcels.

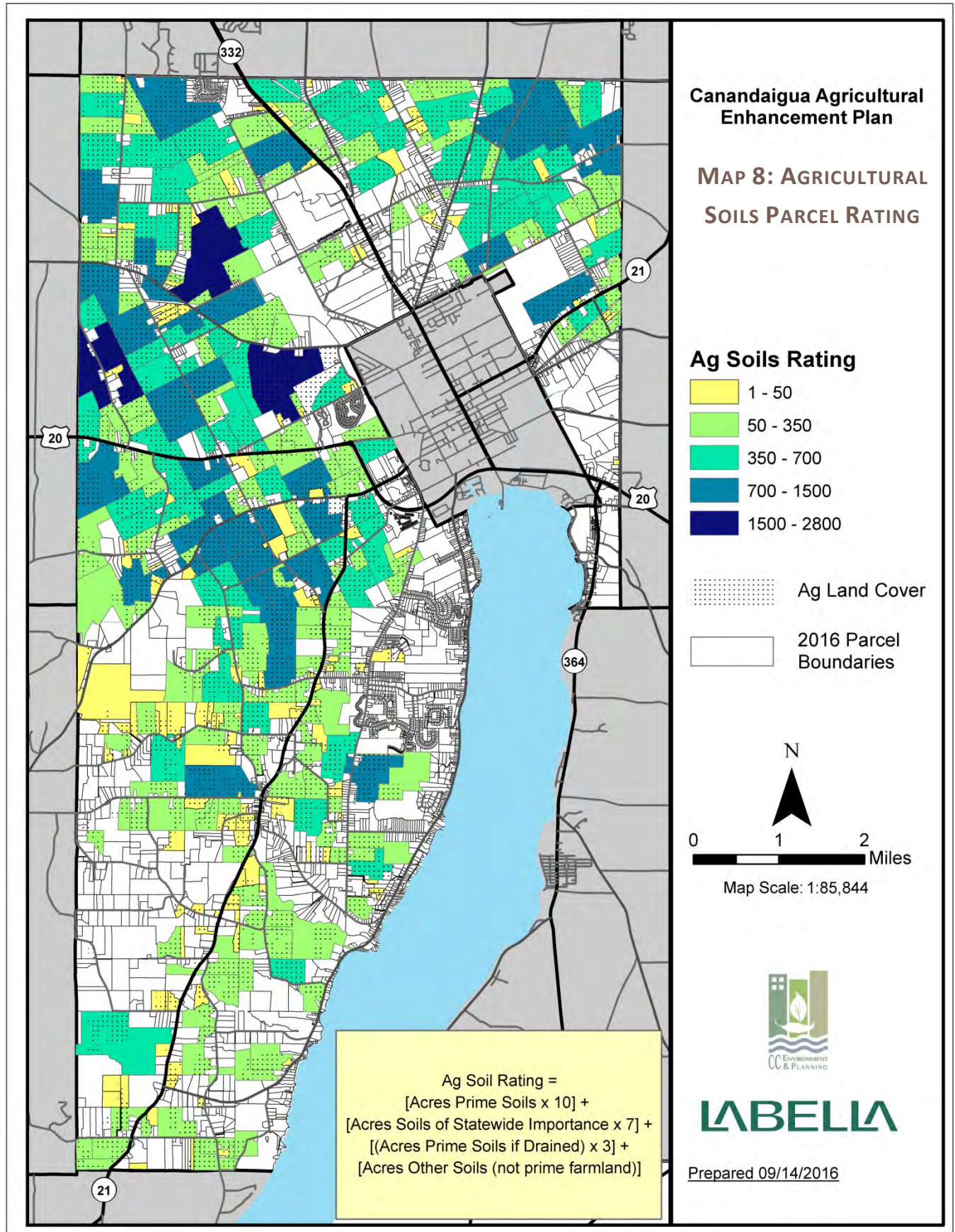
## AGRICULTURAL SOILS RATING

The following weighting factors were applied to the total number of acres of each soil category within the parcel:

### AGRICULTURAL SOILS WEIGHTING FACTOR

<i><b>Agricultural Soils Classification of Actively Farmed Land (applied to acres in each category)</b></i>	<i><b>Rating Factor</b></i>
Prime Soils:	10
Soils of Statewide Importance:	7
Prime if Drained:	3
Other soils:	1





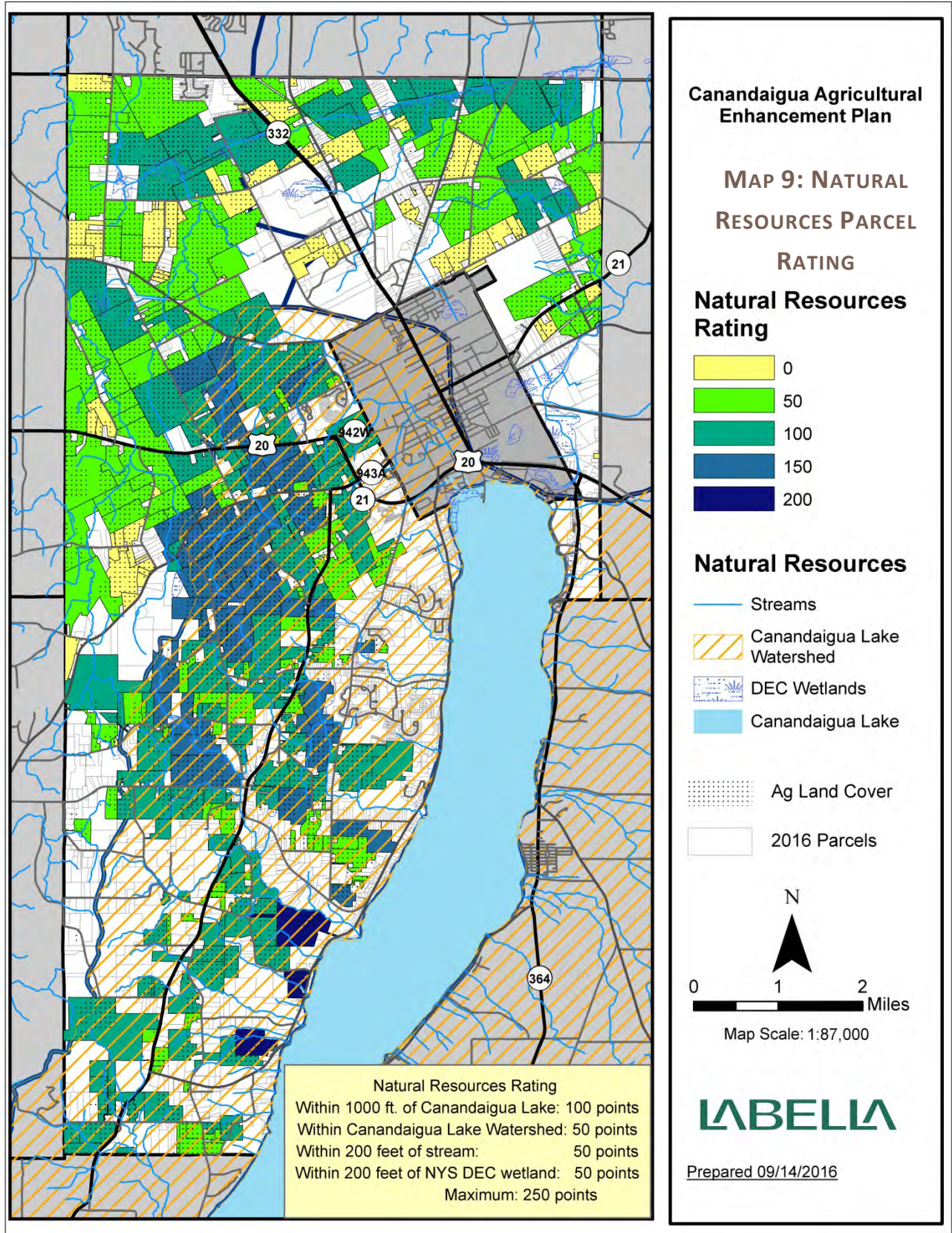
## NATURAL RESOURCES RATING

When properly managed, farmland can protect or enhance nearby streams and other natural resources. For example, cropland and pasture absorb rainwater and generate less stormwater runoff than developed land. It can serve as a buffer to forests and wildlife habitat. It can provide protection to stream corridors. The contribution of the farm toward the protection of natural resources should be considered in the evaluation of individual farm parcels for long-term protection.

### NATURAL RESOURCE BUFFER RATING FACTORS

<i>Natural Resource Factor (applied to entire parcel)</i>	<i>Rating Factor</i>
Within 1000 feet of Canandaigua Lake	100
Within Canandaigua Lake Watershed	50
Within 200 feet of stream	50
Within 200 feet of NYS DEC wetland	50





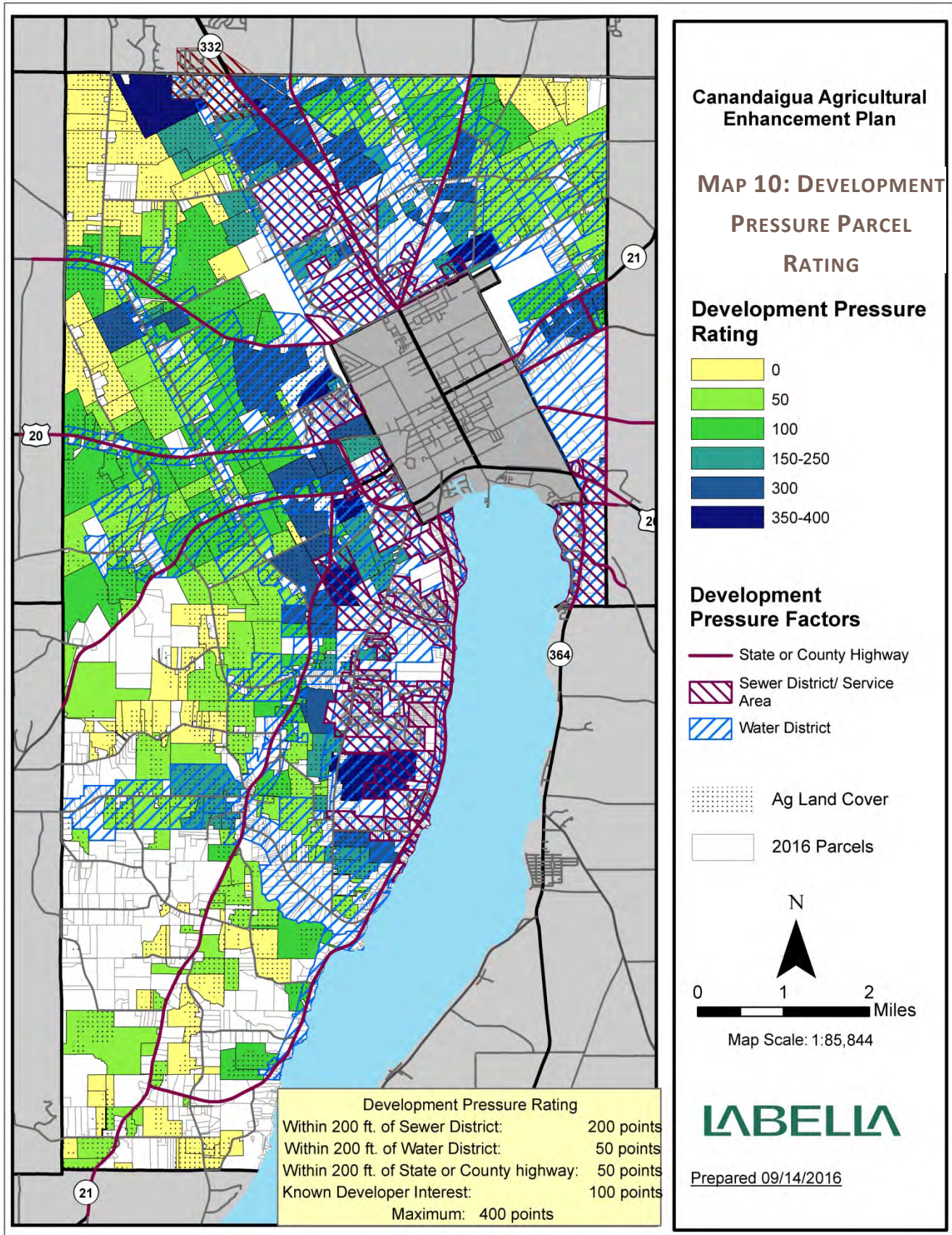
## DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE RATING

Farms that are susceptible to conversion to other uses may be a higher priority for conservation than other farms. Pressure for conversion may take the form of scattered residential development, residential subdivisions or other development and may be stimulated by infrastructure extensions or nearby development. The extent of development pressure should be a consideration in the evaluation of farm parcels for long-term protection. The following rating factors provide a rough guide to assessing the development pressure of specific parcels.

### DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE RATING FACTORS

<i>Development Pressure Factor (applied to entire parcel)d</i>	<i>Rating Factor</i>
Site of known/ suspected developer interest	100
Within 200 feet of Sewer District	100
Within 200 feet of Water District	50
Within 200 feet of State or County Highway	50





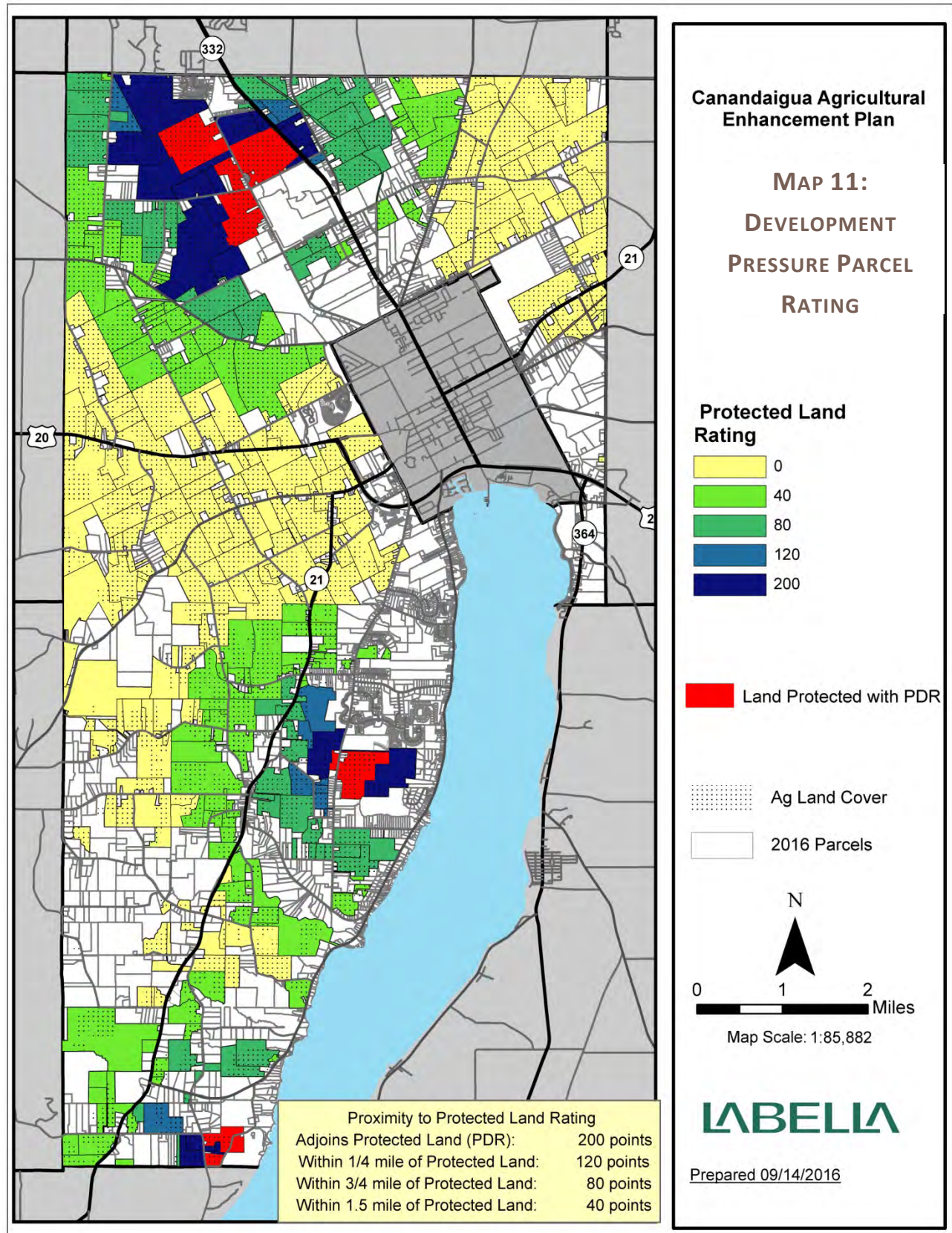


## PROTECTED LAND RATING

Farm parcels adjoining or near other protected land is a higher priority for protection, as they would add to a critical mass of protected land suitable for farming. The following factors are intended to identify these parcels.

### PROXIMITY TO PROTECTED LAND RATING FACTORS

<i>Development Pressure Factor (applied to entire parcel)d</i>	<i>Rating Factor</i>
Adjoins protected land (PDR)	200
Within ¼ mile of protected land	120
Within 3/4 mile of protected land	80
Within 1.5 mile of protected land	40



# GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The Goals, Strategies and Recommended Actions summarized below represent an Action Plan for the Town to enhance the agricultural economy, retain land for continued agricultural use, protect natural resources and increase public awareness and understanding of agriculture and farming practices.

Key Actions that are top priority for the Town are designated with the following symbol:



## GOAL A: IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF FARMS IN THE TOWN OF CANANDAIGUA.

### STRATEGY 1: RECRUIT AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING, DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY-CHAIN BUSINESSES TO APPROPRIATELY-ZONED LAND IN THE TOWN.

#### ACTIONS

- a) Evaluate the feasibility of and recruit processing and/or distribution facilities to suitable industrially-zoned land within the Town of Canandaigua. Partner with Ontario County and New York State economic development agencies to attract regionally significant industries. Leverage rail access and infrastructure to attract bio-diesel refining or other large-scale processing plant.
- b) Support agriculture-related industrial development with utility extensions and regulations.



### STRATEGY 2: EXPAND MARKETS FOR AND INCREASE SALES OF LOCAL FARM PRODUCTS.

#### ACTIONS

- a) Support additional purchases of local farm products by schools and institutions (i.e., Canandaigua Central School District, Finger Lakes Community College, Ontario County).
- b) Maintain a registry of locally-produced farm products and encourage local purchases by businesses, residents and developers in the Town (e.g., straw for erosion control.)
- c) Encourage farmers to produce for expanding markets such as organic, hops, malting barley.
- d) Notify Town residents about farm produce in season using the Town's Mail Chimp service.

**STRATEGY 3: SUPPORT ON-FARM VALUE-ADDED PROCESSING.**

**ACTIONS**

- a) Extend infrastructure (water, high-speed internet) to farm operations to support expansions or value-added processing.
- b) Maintain zoning regulations that allow home-based businesses.

**STRATEGY 4: PROMOTE AGRI-TOURISM.**

**ACTIONS**

- a) Prepare and distribute a “local farm products” guide for the Town, including farm stands, direct sales and farmers markets. Make this information available on the Town’s website.
- b) Organize farm tours, festivals or other community events that attract customers to farms with direct-to-consumer sales.

**GOAL B: RETAIN HIGH QUALITY FARMLAND FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.**

**STRATEGY 1: INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND PROTECTED BY PERMANENT CONSERVATION EASEMENTS**

**ACTIONS**

- a) Continue to solicit, rank and submit grant applications to the NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (Purchase of Development Program.
- b) Encourage local land trusts to work with landowners interested in donating conservation easements, potentially as part of succession or estate planning.
- c) Encourage permanent protection of farmland as part of conservation subdivisions.
- d) Through “Transfer of Development Rights” and/or Incentive Zoning, facilitate private conservation easements on high quality farmland in exchange for higher density or other incentives in growth areas in the Town.
- e) Contribute Town funds toward the purchase of conservation easements, such as through the Conservation Reserve Fund and/or a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) bank.



**STRATEGY 2:** ENCOURAGE OWNERS OF LEASED OR RENTED FARMLAND TO CONTINUE TO MAKE THEIR LAND AVAILABLE FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

**ACTIONS:**

- a) Provide owners of leased or rented farmland with information about property tax incentives available to them.

**GOAL C: MANAGE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT TO AVOID OR REDUCE IMPACTS ON FARMLAND.**

**STRATEGY:** MAINTAIN ZONING REGULATIONS AND DISTRICT BOUNDARIES THAT ENCOURAGE MORE INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF PRIORITY AGRICULTURAL AREAS.

**ACTIONS:**

- a) Institute a Transfer of Development Rights program to preserve agricultural land in designated conservation areas and encourage more intensive development in areas with infrastructure and access to services.
- b) Maintain zoning regulations and district boundaries that retain lower densities in agricultural areas and limit incompatible land uses such as solar farms.



**STRATEGY 1: MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE TO REDUCE IMPACTS ON FARMLAND AND AGRICULTURE.**

**ACTIONS:**

- a) Avoid extending public sewers into areas with high quality farmland. Consider potential impacts on agricultural operations when finalizing the Town's Sewer Master Plan.
- b) Continue to adopt lateral restrictions to water and sewer lines for new non-agricultural development within Agricultural Districts.
- c) When carrying out road maintenance, maintain communications with farmers and farmland owners and modify project design or timing as needed when road improvement and drainage projects abut productive farmland or may impact farm operations.



**STRATEGY 2:      REVISE AND MAINTAIN LOCAL LAWS AND LAND  
USE REGULATIONS THAT SUPPORT AGRICULTURAL  
OPERATIONS.**

**ACTIONS**

- a) Clarify provisions in zoning regulations that exempt farm operations within certified Agricultural Districts from certain zoning provisions that regulate farm practices (see Zoning Audit).
- b) Retain Home Business provisions to accommodate complementary business uses on farms.
- c) Revise subdivision and site plan review regulations to specifically require considering impacts of proposed development neighboring farm operations.
- d) Continue to administer the Town's Right to Farm law that requires notices on site plans and subdivision plats that, "This property may be near a farm, as defined in the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law, § 301, Subsection 11. Sound farming practices may generate dust, odor, smoke, noise, and vibration."
- e) Consider impacts on agriculture as well as natural resources in the review of local laws and zoning revisions.

**GOAL D: REDUCE THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL RUNOFF ON WATER QUALITY.**

**STRATEGY:** INCREASE THE NUMBER OF FARMS THAT USE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO MINIMIZE RUNOFF OF SEDIMENT, MANURE AND CHEMICALS INTO STREAMS AND CANANDAIGUA LAKE.

**ACTIONS:**

- a) Allocate Town funds to cost sharing programs to assist farmers and owners of farmland within the Canandaigua Lake Watershed to install best management practices.
- b) Provide information to landowners about programs that offer technical assistance and cost sharing for best management practices (e.g., SWCD's AEM program, USDA's conservation programs.) Conduct one-on-one outreach to farmers and landowners within the Canandaigua Lake Watershed.
- c) Support efforts by the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Manager to enforce Watershed Rules & Regulations relating to animal waste.
- d) Require natural resource conservation as part of conservation easements on farmland (conservation subdivisions, PDR, TDR).
- e) Encourage landowners who rent land to farmers to require best management practices to be installed as condition of leases.



**GOAL E: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF LOCAL FARMS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE REGIONAL ECONOMY**

**STRATEGY:** CELEBRATE LOCAL AGRICULTURE.

**ACTIONS:**

- a) Organize farm tours, festivals or other community events that celebrate the Town's agricultural heritage.
- b) Maintain information at the Town Hall about farming practices, the NYS Agricultural District Law and the local farm economy.
- c) Place signs along roads at Town gateways that acknowledge the Town's agricultural heritage and character.



