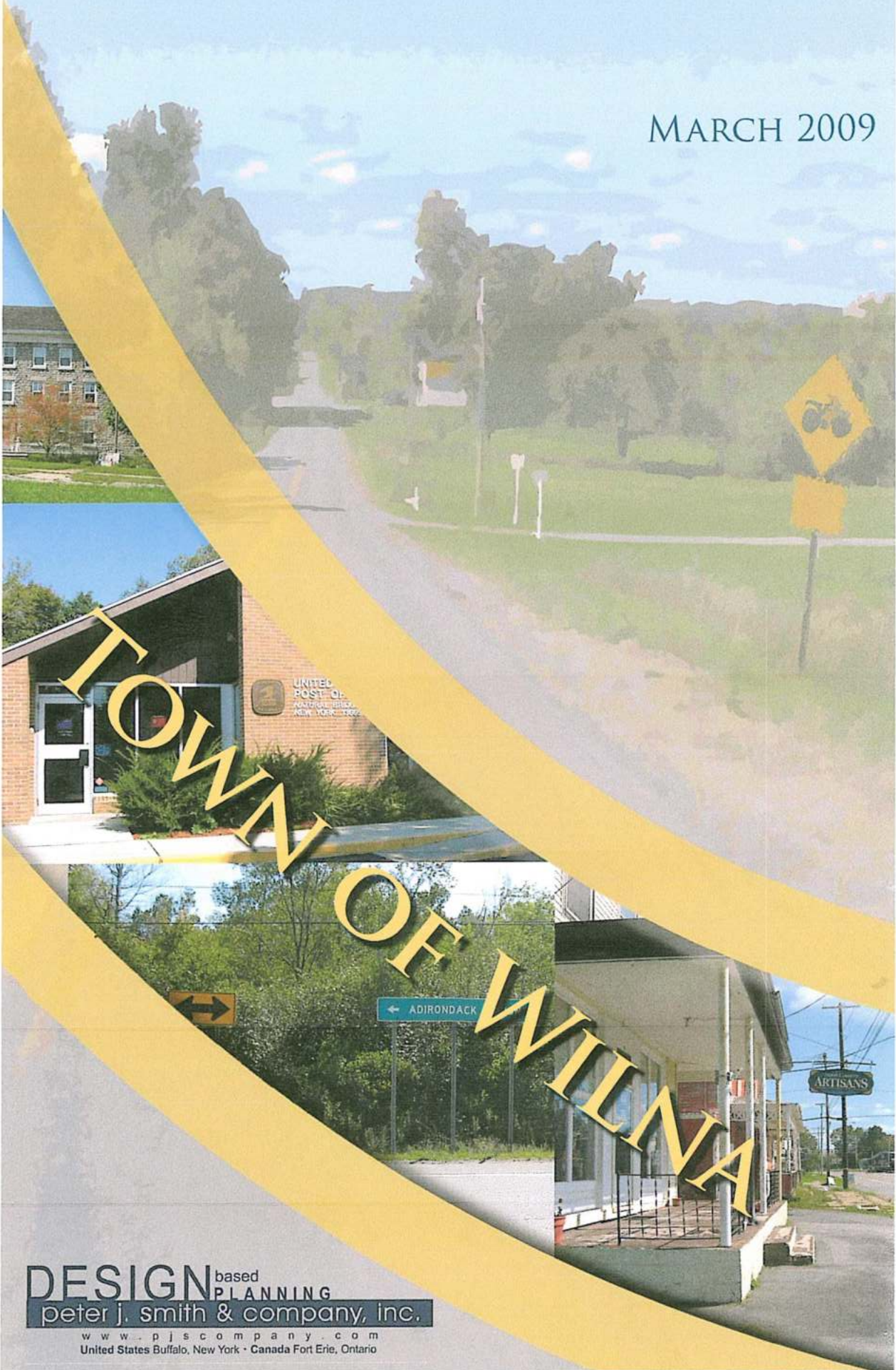


WILNA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MARCH 2009



DESIGN based **PLANNING**
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

peter j. smith & company, inc., would like to thank the following participants for the input and assistance in preparing the Town of Wilna Comprehensive Plan. Recognizing the need for cooperative planning, the participants helped prepare the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Wilna along with three separate documents for the River Area communities of Champion, Carthage and West Carthage and a Background Report for the RACOG.

River Area Council Of Governments (RACOG) Executive Board

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Village of Carthage, President

Terry L. Buckley
Town of Champion, Supervisor

Scott Burto
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Village of West Carthage, Trustee

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Town of Wilna, Councilman

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peter j. smith & company, inc.

March 2009

The Comprehensive Plan is a vision of the future for the Town of Wilna.

It includes policies and projects to implement the Future Land Use Plan and the local and regional Goals and Objectives. It is a guide to land use decision-making in the community. An equally important function of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a framework for guiding decision-making within the context of the vision of the future crafted by the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is a lens through which development proposals should be evaluated. Each proposal should answer the question: Will this development advance the goals of the future as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan? If the proposal is not consistent with the plan, either the proposal or the plan should be revised to accurately reflect the goals of the future. The plan should be evaluated on an on-going basis to ensure it meets changing expectations. This introduces flexibility through time to evaluate changes in expectations, attitudes or conditions that can't be anticipated by the plan.

The entire Comprehensive Plan should be revisited and updated every five years. These revisions should reflect changes in the economic, demographic and other aspects of the community and should incorporate changing goals, objectives and policies. The five-year review is the time to accommodate changes in philosophy or direction.

TOWN OF WILNA Comprehensive Plan

March 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Town Introduction</i>	2
<i>Regional Context</i>	6
<i>Goals & Objectives</i>	8
<i>Background Report Findings</i>	12
<i>Existing Land Use</i>	14
<i>Existing Zoning</i>	16
<i>Future Land Use Plan</i>	18
<i>Zoning Evaluation</i>	20
<i>Comprehensive Plan Policies</i>	22
<i>Implementation Recommendations</i>	26

TOWN INTRODUCTION

Wilna is a River Area community unique for its heavily wooded areas and its potential for development along the Route 3 corridor.¹ The following summary introduces some of the community aspects of the Town of Wilna.

¹ As discussed in the Steering Committee Vision Session on September 15, 2008.

Historic Beginnings

The Town of Wilna was carved from the Township Number Four of the Black River Tract. Its settlement began in what would become the Village of Carthage in 1798 and in 1814 had more than 250 inhabitants. The population nearly quadrupled by 1825, partly due to the end of the War of 1812 and the return of soldiers to the area to farm and start families. The Town was incorporated in 1813 when the state Legislature redefined the boundaries of the counties and a large portion of Lewis County which was incorporated and named Wilna. Interestingly, unlike most other towns and villages, Wilna is not named after a person or significant natural form or historic event; in fact, there is no agreement on why it is so named. The hypothesis that emerges most frequently is that it is named after the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius or Vilna, known also as Wilna and Vilno.

Water covers 0.6 square miles of the town including Black Creek and Indian River but most principally the Black River. The town's borders are defined by the Black River to its south, the towns of LeRay and Philadelphia to the west, Antwerp to the north and Lewis County to the east. The incorporated villages in Wilna are Carthage, Deferiet and Herrings. Among them, these villages comprise 3.7 square miles of the town. There are also a number of hamlets: Natural Bridge, Ormiston Corners, North Croghan, Karter Crossing, Devoice Corners, Fargo, Hewitt Park and Munns Corners.

Military Presence

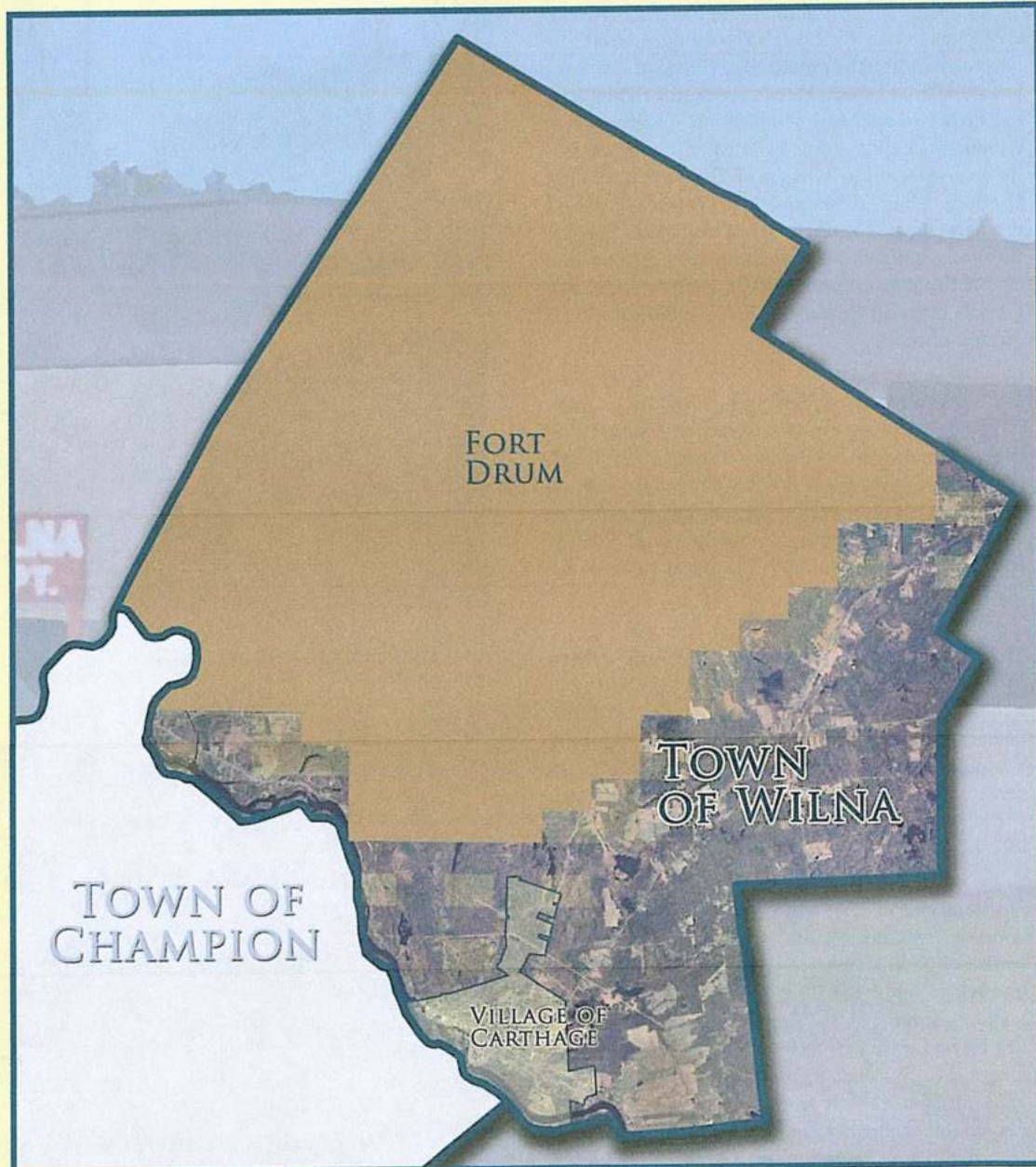
While the area of the Town is large, in fact the area its leaders govern is just under 60% of the total land area of the town. Since 1941, the US Army Reservation, first as Pine Camp, later as Camp Drum and currently as Fort Drum home to the light infantry's 10th Mountain Division, has controlled a large portion of the north side of the town roughly defined by NY Route 3 just west of Backus Road outside of Natural Bridge to Hewitt Park and then due west from there to the railroad and north to CR 36/NY Route 3A and generally west to the town line from there. CR 36/NY 3A runs through the military reservation and for the past 30 years there have been intermittent discussions about returning the portion of the town south of the road to the town's control. While that has not happened, the road has remained open to civilian traffic.

Town Government

The Town of Wilna Town Hall is located on 414 State Street in the Village of Carthage. It houses the town clerk, supervisor, zoning, planning and assessor's offices and the town board. The town elects a supervisor and four council members. Also elected is one town judge who presides at the Carthage Municipal Building. The planning board's five members are appointed. The Town of Champion town offices host the monthly meeting of the five-member Cooperative Zoning Board of Appeals which hears appeals for the towns of Wilna and Champion as well as the Village of Carthage. The Town of Wilna Highway Garage is located at NY Routes 3 and 3A in the hamlet of Fargo.



Town of Wilna Highway Department



TOWN OF WILNA AERIAL

Regional Historic Background

The Carthage area was originally home to the Oneida Indian Tribe, part of the Iroquois nation. The Oneida ceded their territory to the United States government at Fort Stanwix in Rome in 1784. A group led by men with names that are still familiar to residents of the area today bought the land in the area that now includes the Town of Wilna. They were: Alexander Macomb, Daniel McCormick and William Constable and the land they bought was known as the Macomb Purchase and the area that includes the Town of Wilna was known as Township Number 4 of the Black River Tract.

Macomb and his group intended to market the land in the Macomb Purchase to unfortunate French aristocrats fleeing the French revolution. Indeed, the area surrounding the present-day village of Carthage was purchased by one Peter Chassanis of Paris, and the French established a number of settlements in the area including Long Falls which runs between the two present-day villages of Carthage and West Carthage. Early development of Long Falls was off to a slow start. For a number of years Jean Baptiste Bossuot, a contemporary of Baron Von Steuben and one of the two original settlers of the village, was the sole resident, innkeeper and ferry operator for a number of years.

The next wave of settlers came west from New England, following the new roads that were being built, widening this northern frontier. In 1804, these settlers incorporated Jefferson County. By the time the Village of Carthage, was incorporated, in 1841, there were thriving communities on the east (Carthage) and west (West Carthage) sides of the Black River.

The river provided an advantage to the early settlers. With a drop of 55 feet in less than a mile, the river supplied an abundance of power for the sawmills, flour mills and gristmills, sash and blind factories, a veneer mill, foundries and machine shops, the electric light works and a number of paper mills that would come to line the shores of the villages and its islands.

Development of the area hastened as technology improved and bridges and dams were built across the Black River. The state legislature authorized the first bridge across the Black River in 1812 and a toll bridge was built at the Long Falls in 1812-13. A free bridge, or rather, series of five free bridges leap frogging from island to island were constructed in 1829 – they lasted less than two years. Also in 1829 the old toll bridge became free. Since 1853 a bridge over the Black River linking Carthage and West Carthage has been the responsibility of the State of New York which has built and maintained a series of bridges at the site.



Stone's Atlas of 1864



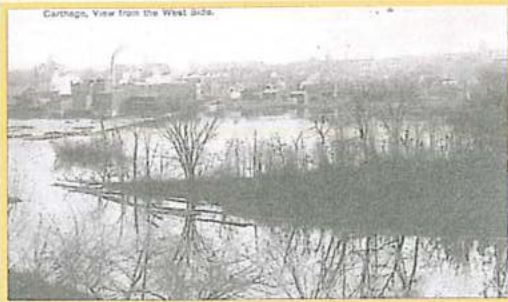
Heritage Room Collection



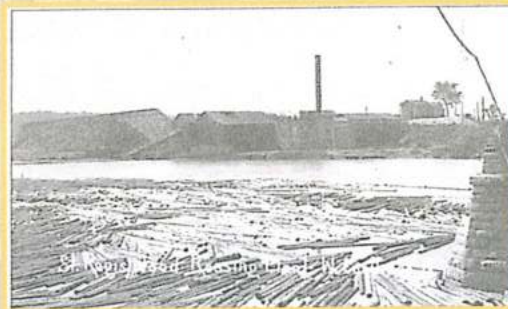
Historic Images Courtesy of Lynn M. Thornton



Town of Wilna Archives



Town of Champion Archives



Town of Champion Archives

Historic Images Courtesy of Lynn M. Thornton

The prospects for the river area communities improved in 1836 when a canal linking the Erie Canal with Lyons Falls (then known as High Falls) and terminating in Carthage was authorized. The Black River Canal was an engineering marvel that included the taming of 42 miles of river above Port Leyden allowing access to Carthage and West Carthage. Once the Black River Canal was completed in the 1850s, the Adirondacks were opened to logging, furnishing canal towns like Carthage and West Carthage with the raw materials to advance the paper and pulp industries that would shape the development of the communities. Prosperity in the villages continued as water service was established in 1893 for Carthage and 1896 for West Carthage. The milling industry, with names like Carthage Tissue, Champion Paper, West End Paper, LeRay Paper, National Paper Products and Crown Zellerbach among many others, thrived for nearly a century until economic and supply factors crippled the industry.

By the late 1870s, the villages had become strong commercial centers in the region. In the 19th century, the communities had saw, grist and oil mills, clothing manufactories, tanneries, cabinet shops, schools, churches, grocery stores, fire companies, doctors and lawyers. Agriculture was also very important to the economic life of the communities, with the town of Champion in particular noted for its cheese making. Yet this state of prosperity did not last long. As railroad tracks were laid from Rome to Watertown the economic center of the county shifted to Watertown. Before long, the Utica and Black River Railroad accomplished the same task as the canal once had and later a railroad linking Carthage and Watertown was constructed. Much later the Carthage and Adirondack Railroad was built. In 1922, the Black River Canal was closed due to very large reductions in the products being transported. The presence of the railroad, however, allowed commerce in the villages to continue.

As with water, fire has also transformed the Twin Villages, striking first in 1861 and again with more disastrous results in 1884 when a fire spread from village to village via islands in the Black River. Yet the communities were able to rebuild and quickly recover from tragedy. History seemed to repeat itself in early March 2002 when a significant block of downtown Carthage, anchored by the Carthage Community Auction Center burned in a fire believed to have started in the auction center by a wood burning furnace.

Today the history of the communities continues to be an important aspect in the Town as the Carthage area maintains its rural qualities and industrial roots. Much of the history of the communities has been captured in Lynn M. Thornton's *Images of America, Around Carthage and West Carthage*.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Town of Wilna is a River Area community along the Black River. Proximate to Fort Drum, the City of Watertown and many picturesque North Country communities, the Town is positioned to define its future through planned development.

Wilna is a rural community with just over one thousand residents. A large part of the northern portion of the Town is part of the Fort Drum Military Installation. Also within the Town are several hamlets including Natural Bridge and Fargo.

Wilna is located in the eastern corner of the fast growing Jefferson County. With Fort Drum within the Town, Wilna is growing in context with this major military installation. According to the Fort Drum Growth Management Strategy, more than 17,000 soldiers are assigned to the base and more than 3,700 civilians are employed at the base.

The Town of Wilna is also located along several important environmental and recreational corridors including the Blueway Trail along the Black River and the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway that travels through Natural Bridge. Also, the Town is along Route 3, the road to the Adirondack Park. Therefore Wilna, an historic River Area community, is positioned between expected growth and environmental and recreational attractions.

The Black River



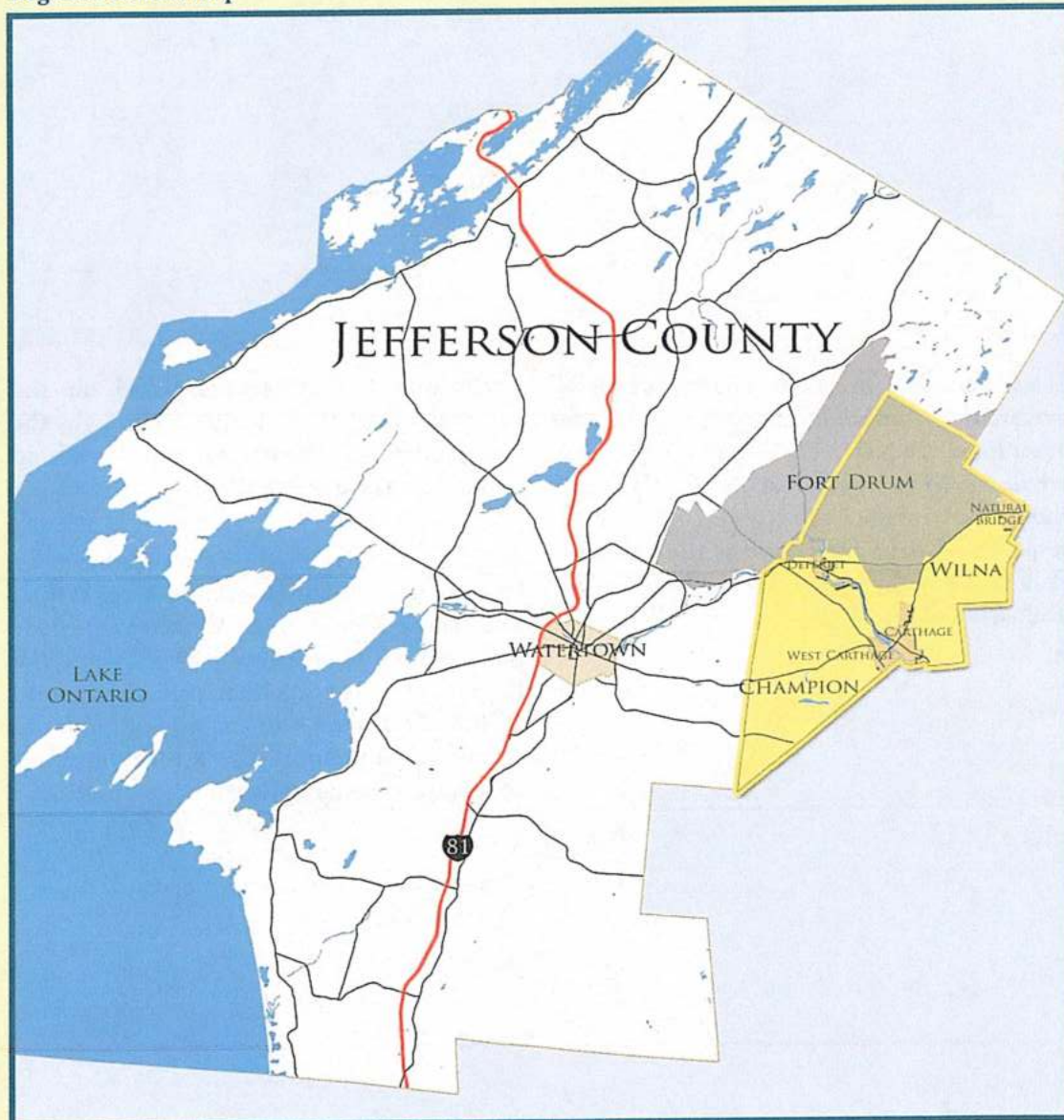
Regional Planning for Wilna

The Town, in addition to having its own government, is part of the River Area Council of Governments (RACOG). The RACOG is an organization that helps its member municipalities improve their residents' quality of life and deliver public services affordably and efficiently. RACOG also links municipalities to the Tug Hill Commission, which is the umbrella agency for all councils of government in the Tug Hill region. The municipalities participating in RACOG are the Towns of Champion and Wilna, and the Villages of Carthage and West Carthage.

Environmental Setting

Wilna is on the northeastern edge of the Tug Hill Plateau, which rises east to over 2,000 feet. Northern hardwood forests grow over gentle slopes of limestone bedrock shaped by glacial scouring. The Black River, which separates the Town of Champion and the Village of West Carthage from the Town of Wilna and the Village of Carthage, drains out to Lake Ontario. The river changes as it passes through these communities: It flows into the area from an upstream, calm, flatwater section and becomes whitewater soon after passing the villages of Carthage and West Carthage due to a sharp decline in altitude. Between the villages there are approximately 29 islands, the largest being: Decater, Tannery and Lathrop Islands. There are wetlands along the river, just east of both village's boundaries. The area's climate is quite cool and well known for its long, snowy winters. High winds and sudden, heavy snow squalls frequently move into the area from Lake Ontario.

Regional Context Map



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Objectives provide a framework to guide development and change for Wilna. They set standards for the Town and the Town residents to meet and provide a benchmark for evaluating the direction of growth in the community and the region.

Goals should be: broad, declarative, general, overarching, umbrella statements. On the other hand, Objectives are more specific and are designed to implement the Goals. They should be strategic; directly related to their respective Goals; they serve as the basis for Policies; and they should be able to guide evaluation of the Plan.

Goals and Objectives are based on the entirety of what is learned through the Comprehensive Plan process and everything that is contained in the Plan.

The Town and Regional Goals and Objectives have been established for the Town of Wilna. The Town Goals and Objectives provide guidance on Town specific issues while the Regional Goals and Objectives, common to all RACOG communities, provide guidance on shared community issues that should be cooperatively accomplished.

TOWN GOAL #1

PROMOTE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN WILNA

Objectives:

1. To support the concentration of development in the villages of Carthage, West Carthage, Deferiet, Herrings and the hamlets
2. To provide appropriate buffer zones from areas of military activity to protect the health, safety and quiet enjoyment of the towns for their residents
3. To provide adequate and appropriate land use controls to manage growth in commercial areas that are under development pressure
4. Encourage agriculture protection strategies
5. Ensure that development is planned in accordance with environmental and natural resources factors and constraints

TOWN GOAL #2

SUPPORT AN APPROPRIATE CIRCULATION SYSTEM TO PROMOTE SAFETY, ENCOURAGE COMMERCE AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS

Objectives:

1. To maintain the existing circulation network in cooperation with county and state transportation agencies
2. To enhance safety for multi-modal transportation and recreation use of the Town roadways
3. To use the future land use plan to plan appropriately for additional roads
4. To address congestion in high growth areas of the towns
5. To address the impacts associated with the off-road circulation system

REGIONAL GOAL #1

CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE AND COOPERATE WITH OTHER RIVER AREA COMMUNITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

Objectives:

1. To maintain and enhance an open forum for communication and capacity building among the river area communities
2. To evaluate and implement measures to enhance the quality, efficiency and economy of local program and service delivery and capital facility planning
3. To continue to collaborate in land use regulation and decision making
4. To welcome additional participants into regional planning as appropriate
5. To seek open interaction and communication with other regional agencies including neighboring communities, counties, the Army and local, regional and state economic development agencies



REGIONAL GOAL #2

PROTECT AND USE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AS THE CENTRAL CHARACTERISTIC OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Objectives:

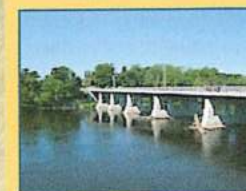
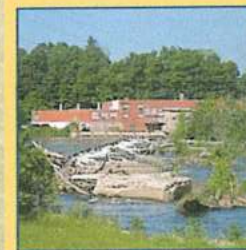
1. To protect and enhance the ecology of the Black River and our other waterways
2. To identify and remediate environmentally challenged areas
3. To promote appropriate exploration and enjoyment of our waterways, forests and open spaces
4. To implement regional plans for recreation, interpretation and economic development based on the Black River
5. To focus on sustainability in our interactions with natural resources, animals and plants

REGIONAL GOAL #3

PROMOTE OUR QUALITY OF LIFE TO
PROSPECTIVE RESIDENTS, VISITORS
AND BUSINESSES

Objectives:

1. To encourage local entrepreneurs and attract businesses and industries that will employ local residents
2. To preserve a range of housing types in healthy residential neighborhoods and rehabilitate or remove substandard housing
3. To focus development in appropriate areas to preserve our community character
4. To reinforce the visual quality of the community in the built environment
5. To ensure that adequate recreation space and programs are available for all residents



REGIONAL GOAL #4

PRESERVE OUR LOCAL INSTITUTIONS
TO BENEFIT CURRENT AND FUTURE
RESIDENTS

Objectives:

1. To promote and support our local independent health care and school systems
2. To maintain local economic and business development agencies
3. To support the activities of the COG, management consultant and staff
4. To support and encourage the activities of local civic, heritage, cultural and fraternal organizations
5. To celebrate and share our heritage, culture and local traditions

BACKGROUND REPORT FINDINGS

As part of the Comprehensive Plan a Background Report for the four RACOG communities that participated in this planning effort was developed. This section details the findings that resulted from the Report.

Public Input Findings

The following are some key point identified during the public input program:

- The RACOG communities are considered a small, family-friendly communities that work together to maintain and improve the North Country quality of life.
- While development has brought more opportunities to the RACOG, the negative impacts of growth including the effects of uncontrolled growth, the increasing costs resulting from development and the loss of the community character in the RACOG is a central concern.
- The public workshop identified the small town atmosphere and rural setting of the Carthage area as the most valued characteristic by the participants.

Demographic & Housing Findings

The following are some key point identified in the demographic and housing analysis:

- The population for the RACOG area, while difficult to estimate due to fluctuations in population related to Fort Drum, appears to be stable or contracting somewhat.
- The Carthage elementary school closest to Fort Drum has shown recent growth, which may indicate influx in population due to Fort Drum.
- The number of housing units in the RACOG area has generally remained consistent with a 1% increase between 1990 and 2000.
- While the RACOG area generally consists of a young population, median age data for Champion shows a trend toward an aging population.

Transportation & Circulation Findings

The following are some key point identified in the transportation and circulation analysis:

- The transportation focus in the RACOG area is primarily automotive.
- The most traffic in the RACOG area can be found in the Villages, with the most traveled local roads in the Village of Carthage and the most traveled area along a state route at the bridge connecting the two Villages. These higher traffic counts are appropriate for the downtown areas in the Villages and as a major regional route traveling through the core of the Villages.
- While high traffic counts are currently focused around the Villages, the highway counts around the Fort Drum area can be expected to increase as the army continues to expand.
- Efforts to diversify the use of major corridors are underway with the completion of scenic byway programs and waterfront plans to make the RACOG area a pedestrian friendly, tourism-ready area that appreciates the natural beauty and recreational opportunity that is abundant in the RACOG.

Recreation & Open Space Findings

The following are some key point identified in the recreation and open space assessment:

- The recreation system in the RACOG consists of town, village and school facilities as well as some private recreation facilities.
- The communities have formed an award winning ad committee to address recreation issues.
- The need for a recreation master plan for the RACOG area has been suggested by community recreation stakeholders.

Economic Conditions Findings

The following are some key points identified in the economic conditions analysis:

- Assessment of the labor force and income shows that the Village of Carthage experiences the most economic hardship.
- Education, health and social services are the largest industry in the RACOG area.
- The majority of the manufacturing industry is concentrated outside the Villages.
- The occupation data for the RACOG area suggests that the Villages of Carthage and West Carthage have a relatively larger white-collar workforce than the Towns.
- Fort Drum is the single largest economic factor in the "North Country" region.
- Tourism, a growing industry in within Jefferson County, has the potential for growth in the RACOG area.
- Several features in the RACOG area are potential tourist attractions including the recreation features along the Black River that are showcased in the Waterfront Plan and in the plan for the Blueway Trail as well as the Olympic Byway, a recognized scenic byway that travels along Route 3.
- The two largest industries in terms of taxable sales are retail and accommodations and food services.

Natural Resource Findings

The following are some key points identified in the natural resources assessment:

- Proper watershed management is critical for the health of the environment. Several watershed initiatives have been conducted for watersheds in the RACOG area that can help guide watershed management in the region.
- With floodplains generally concentrated along the river and creek corridors, waterfront development needs to be appropriately planned.
- With wetland scattered throughout the RACOG, development needs to be conscious of the location of wetlands and ensuring the protection of the environmental resources.

Infrastructure Findings

The following are some key points identified in the infrastructure assessment:

- All properties in the RACOG area have electricity available to them though not all are developed and have a service connection.
- The Carthage/West Carthage water source is the Indian River, which is surrounded by 1,500 acres of Village owned uninhabited forest.
- The capacity of the water filtration facility in the Villages has ample room for population growth in the villages and/or an expansion of the service area.
- The water treatment facility in the Villages was built in the early 1970s when there were several paper mills operating, therefore the facility has the capacity for significant increase in population or extension of services.
- If higher density is desired in any of the areas outside the water and sewer areas, services must be extended.

Community Facilities Findings

The following are some key points identified in the community facilities assessment:

- The RACOG area hosts a variety of health care facilities and programs including: the Carthage Area Hospital, a Veterans Administration Clinic, a Community Dental Clinic, school-based health centers, the Carthage Area Hospital Community Foundation, Country Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and Carthage Care at Home.
- Both school districts in the RACOG area are in good standing according to the New York State District Report Card.
- The RACOG area has several cultural facilities that serve the community including the Carthage Free Library, the 4 River Valleys Historical Society and several nationally listed historic buildings.
- The two Village Police Departments are in the process of considering the benefits to consolidation.
- The two Fire Departments serving the RACOG, while consolidation is not considered a beneficial solution are interested in working together for acquisitions and training purposes.
- Fort Drum is interested in working with the communities for a mutually beneficial future and have developed a buffer for the base that will help the communities develop in a way that works with the communities.

These Findings, along with the existing land use and existing zoning review were used to develop the future land use plan, zoning evaluation and implementation recommendations.

EXISTING LAND USE

Land use patterns illustrate how the community has developed and help determine where future development should be focused. The general land use pattern in Wilna is a large military presence bordered by residential and vacant land uses.

Within Carthage there are eight different types of land uses, the following describes these uses:

Agricultural

Wilna has a small amount of agricultural land in the eastern portion of the Town. Approximately three percent of the land area in Wilna is agricultural. Types of land uses include livestock and products, field crops and vacant agricultural land.

Commercial

Less than one percent of the land area in Wilna is designated as commercial land. Commercial land uses are concentrated in Natural Bridge, Fargo and bordering Carthage.

Community Services

With about 64 percent of the total land area in Wilna, is the largest land use in the Town. The types of community service land uses in Wilna include religious, government, protection (including Fort Drum) and other uses such as cemeteries. Fort Drum is the primary community service in the Town, encompassing the northwestern portion of Wilna.

Industrial

Less than one percent of the total land area is designated as industrial. The industrial lands in Wilna include two parcels, both categorized as mining and quarrying lands.

Public Services

Approximately one percent of the total land uses in Wilna are designated as public service lands. The majority of this land is described as railroad land uses. Other land uses include those categorized for water uses, hydro power electric and gas and waste disposal.

Recreation and Entertainment

Less than one percent of the total land area is dedicated to recreation and entertainment. These land uses are described as playgrounds, picnic grounds, camping grounds and other outdoor sports.

Residential

Residential land uses is the second largest land use in the Town and consists of about 15 percent of the total land area. Residential land uses include rural residence with acreage, single family homes, two and three family homes, apartments, seasonal residences, mobile homes, mobile home parks and residential multi-purpose uses.

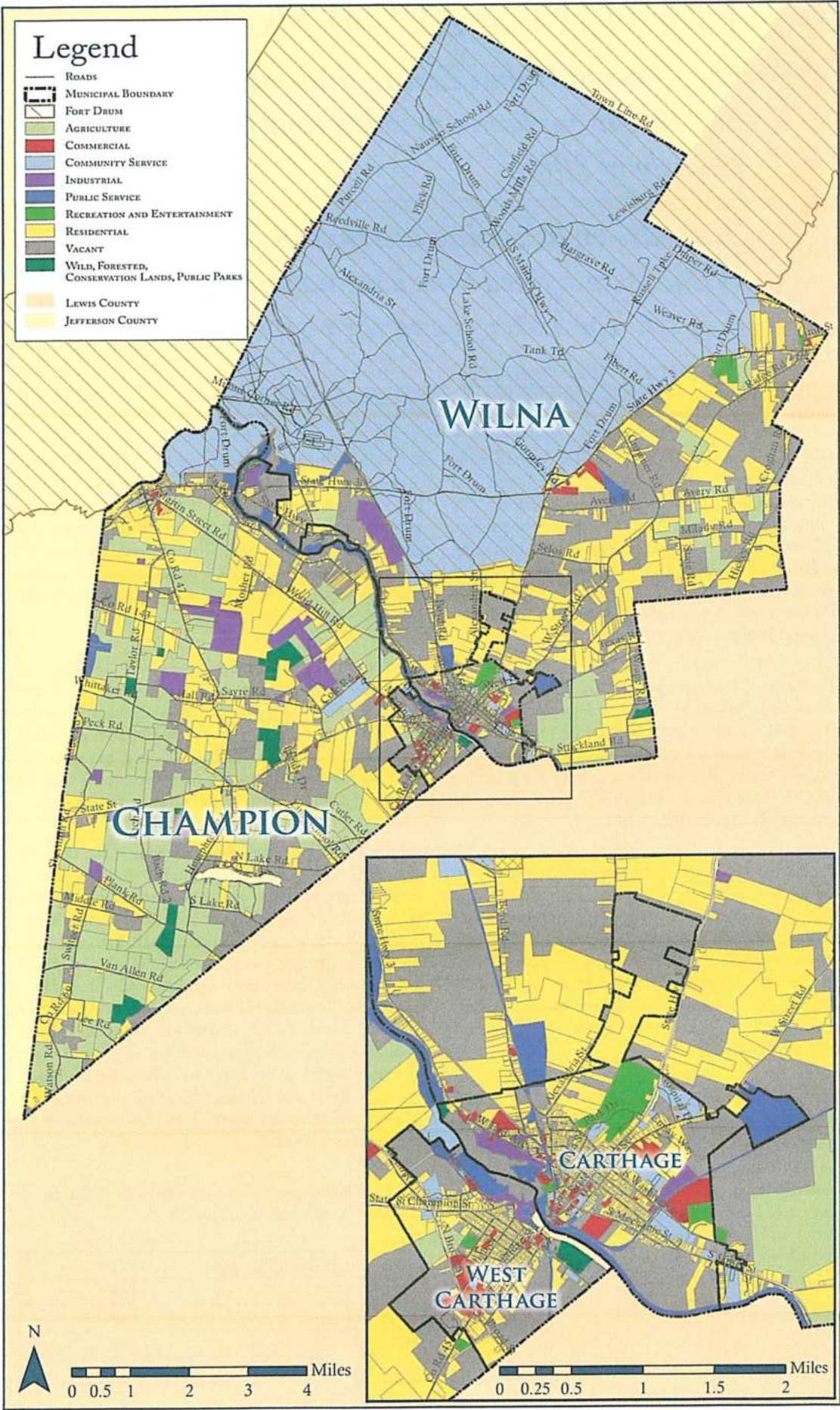
Vacant

With about 15 percent of the total land area in the village, vacant land is third largest land use in the Town. The vacant land is scattered among the residential land uses in the Town.

Wild, Forest, Conservation, Public Parks

Less than one percent of the total land area in the Town is designated as Wild, Forest, Conservation, Public Parks land. Two parcels in the southern most portion of the Town make up this land use. Both parcels are categorized as reforested state land.

Wilna Land Uses	Land Area Percentage
Agricultural	2.7%
Commercial	0.2%
Community Service	64.3%
Industrial	0.5%
Public Service	1.2%
Recreation and Entertainment	0.3%
Residential	15.4%
Vacant	15.3%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands, Public Parks	0.1%



EXISTING ZONING

The Town of Wilna Zoning Law was adopted in 1987. It has been amended nine times, most recently in 2008.

There are eight zoning districts in the Town of Wilna, seven fixed districts and one floating district. The districts and the purpose of each are summarized below:

AR – Agricultural Rural Residence – The purpose of the AR district is to promote agriculture and other natural resource uses and to accommodate rural residences. The minimum lot area in the district is 40,000 square feet. Much of the Town is zoned AR with a swath bordering Fort Drum in the area north and east of the villages of Deferiet and Herrings and most of the eastern portion of the town including an area just north of the hamlet of Natural Bridge.

B-1 – Business – The purpose of the B-1 district is to promote retail, wholesale and service businesses along with a mix of single family dwellings and offices. The B-1 district is dense, with minimum lot areas of 7,500 square feet. B-1 districts are located along State Route 3A/County Route 36 east of Deferiet and in the Hamlet of Natural Bridge.

B-2 – Business – The purpose of the B-2 district is to accommodate a variety of business and services. The district accommodates a variety of commercial uses including automobile service and repair enterprises. The B-2 district is much less dense than the B-1 district with minimum lot sizes of 30,000 square feet. The only B-2 district is located at the Hamlet of Fargo where State Route 3A/County Route 36 meets State Route 3 and County Route 40.

R-1 – Residential – The purpose of the R-1 district is to encourage residential development including one- and two-family homes and seasonal dwellings. Home occupations are allowed in this district. The minimum lot area in the R-1 district is 25,000 square feet. There are R-1 districts located between the villages of Deferiet and Herrings and along the Route 26 spine from Herrings to Carthage, also north of the Village of Carthage and south of the Hamlet of Natural Bridge.

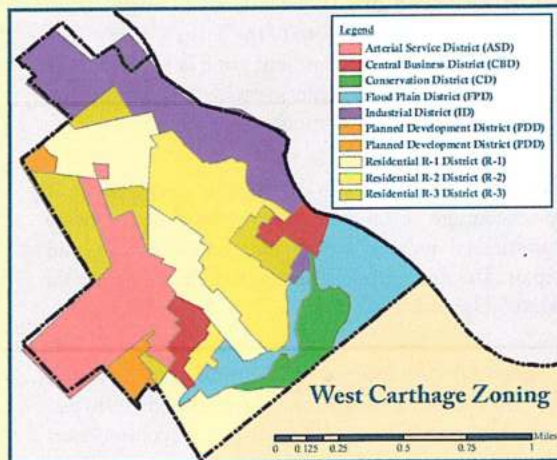
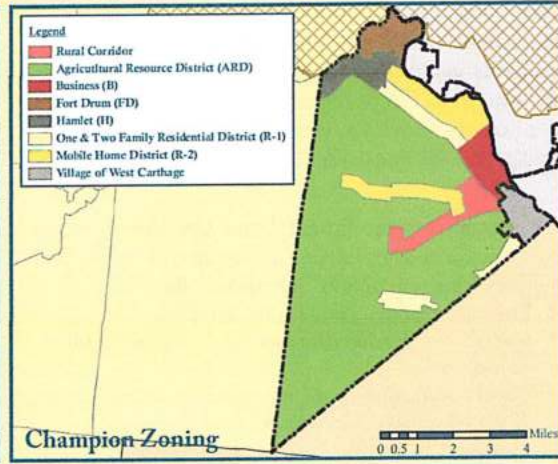
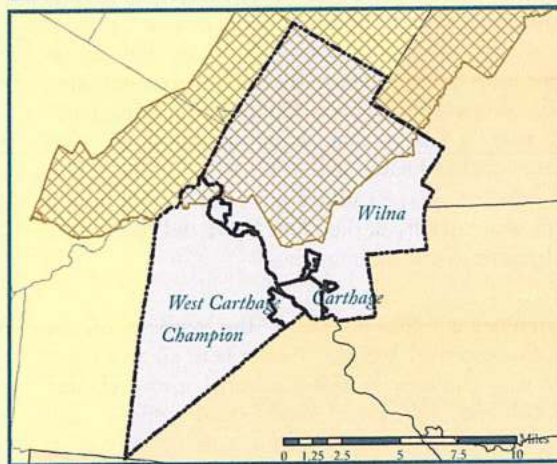
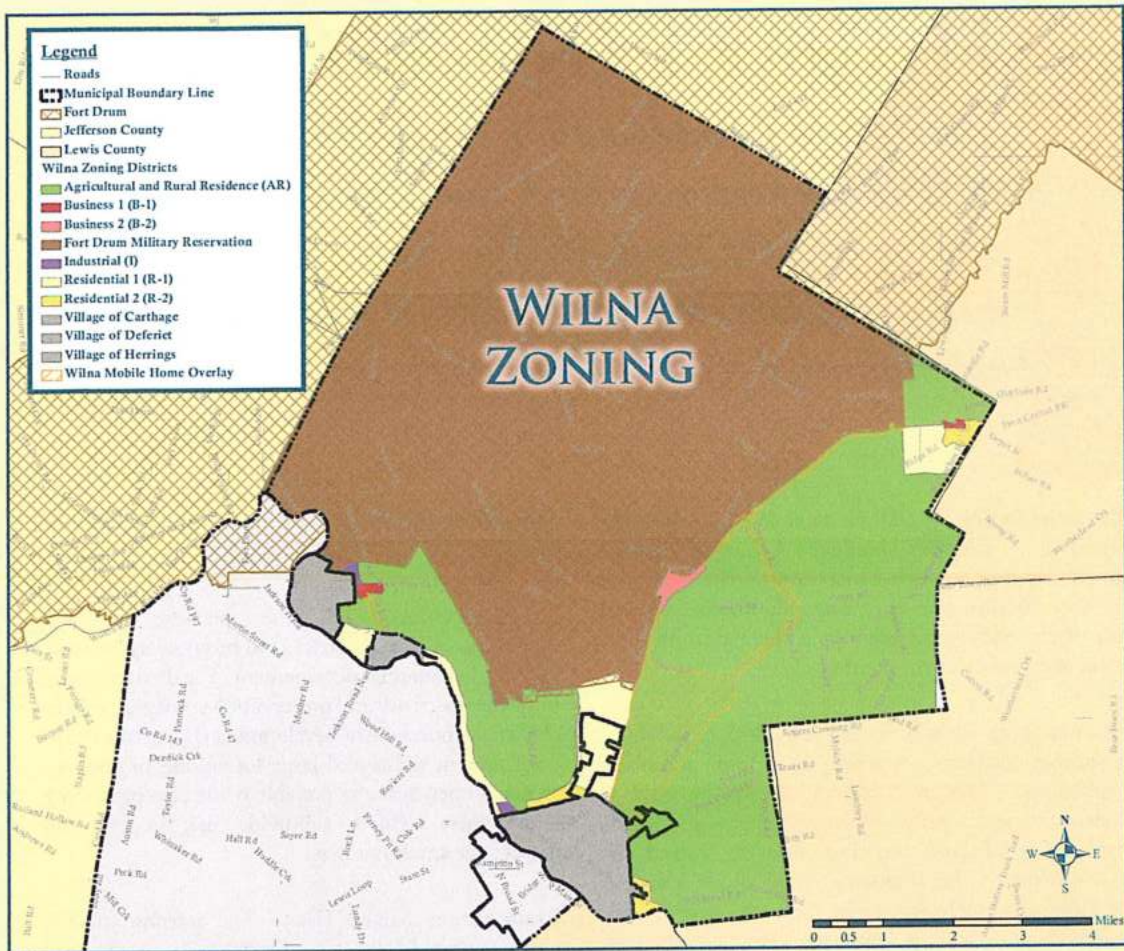
R-2 – Residential – The purpose of the R-2 district is to encourage one- and two-family residential uses and home occupations at a slightly higher density than that allowed in the R-1 district. Seasonal dwellings are not allowed in the R-2 district. The minimum lot area in R-2 is 20,000 square feet. There are R-2 districts located east and north of the Village of Carthage and in the Hamlet of Natural Bridge.

I – Industrial – The purpose of the I district is to encourage manufacturing and industrial uses. All uses permitted in the B-2 district are also permitted in the I district. Minimum lot sizes are 30,000 in the district. There are two small I districts located between the Deferiet Village limit and County Route 37 and on State Route 3 just north of the Village of Carthage.

MHO – Manufactured Home Overlay – The purpose of the MHO overlay district is to prevent the location of manufactured homes and manufactured home parks in areas that have been identified for higher-value uses. Permitted uses in the district include those of the underlying district except the location of individual manufactured homes on individual lots. The MHO overlay has been placed on an AR district on County Route 37 between Deferiet and Herrings, along State Route 3 between the hamlets of Fargo and Hewitt Park, on State Route 3 east of Fargo to Natural Bridge, along Crouner Road and County Route 42 and the entire area bounded by State Route 3 and County Route 42 south of Selos Road.

The table below summarizes the land area in the Town of Wilna in each zoning district.

Agricultural Rural Residence	77%
B-1 Business	1%
B-2 Business	1%
Industrial	1%
R-1 Residential	17%
R-2 Residential	3%



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan for the Town of Wilna reflects a unified, four community zoning code for the RACOG. In the future, the villages of Herrings and Deferiet should join the communities' comprehensive zoning.

The new zoning should be flexible and encourage mixed use. Controls should be enhanced through simple design standards which control the impact of the use. By incorporating design standards a broader mix of uses may occur improving the appearance and economic vitality of the community.

The new code should incorporate design standards including: districts, specific uses and additional regulations. Design standards should be easy to understand and used to replace districts minimizing segregation of land use and allowing mixed use development. The standards could guide elements of buildings, such as height, setback, proportions, composition, roofline, appurtenances, orientation, color, context, materials, entrances, illumination, transparency, signage and address number. The standards could also allow the community to guide the appearance and character of site elements such as adjacency, coverage, connection, buffer, landscape, signage, access, pedestrian linkage and parking.

The concept for the Future Land Use plan is based upon the ideal of protection of the health, safety and welfare of the population, and also on these ideals:

- Preserve open space and natural resources
- Concentrate development to areas that have already developed
- Preserve and enhance the water and natural resources of the Black River Corridor for recreation and commerce
- Introduce flexibility to uses, relying on design standards rather than zoning to preserve and revitalize the communities
- Provide areas buffering Fort Drum activities from residents while allowing for commercial enterprises related the base personnel, activities and opportunities
- Provide conservation measures to ensure that Pleasant Lake is accessible, and healthy for enjoyment by all
- Address housing affordability and diverse housing choices
- Revitalize the downtowns

18

Also utilized in the Future Land Use Plan is the Fort Drum Land Use Planning Zone, the buffer developed through the Growth Management Strategy to ensure land use surrounding Fort Drum is compatible.

There are seven proposed zones. They are summarized below:

Agricultural/Rural – The purpose of the Agricultural/Rural district is to promote agriculture and rural residential development. The district would implement agricultural preservation strategies such as clustering, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights and large lot zoning to preserve as much open space as possible while also protecting land owners' rights to subdivide their property and protect the small hamlets.

Conservation Mixed Use – The purpose of the Conservation Mixed Use district is to protect and enhance the Black River Corridor as a source of economic vitality, open space and recreation and as the heart of the historic Black River communities. The primary goal of the Conservation Mixed Use district is ensure that water dependent uses are developed and sustained on the waterfront and that these developments adhere to standards that protect the water quality of the Black River and the historic character of the communities.

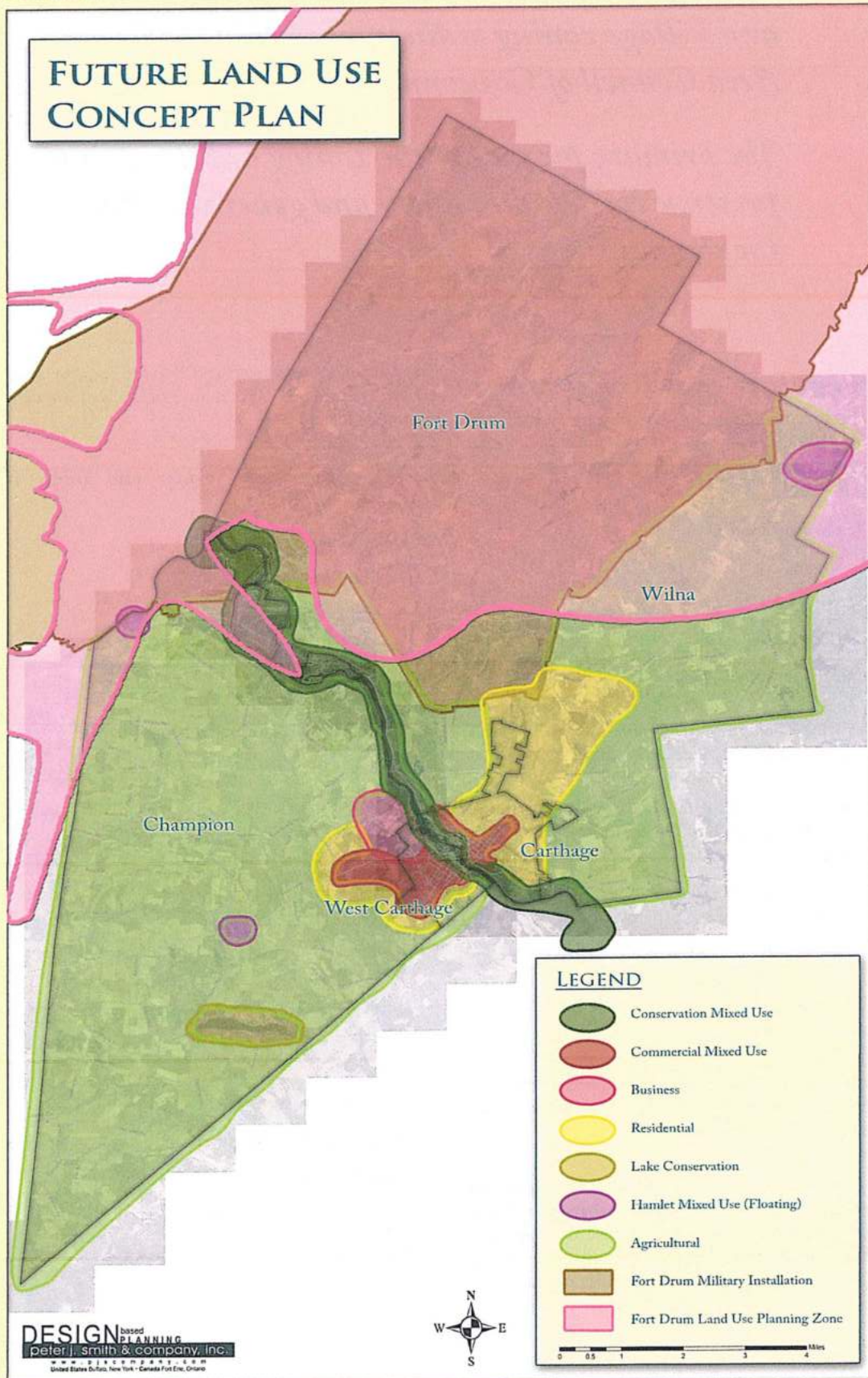
Commercial Mixed Use – The purpose of the Commercial Mixed Use district is to allow a range of uses commercial and residential uses including retail establishments, professional offices, and single- and multi-family homes as well as mixed use commercial/residential development. It encompasses the downtown areas of both of the Twin Villages. The goal of this dense development zone is to encourage vital, walkable village centers serving the commercial needs of the towns and villages.

Business – The purpose of the Business district is to encourage a range of uses including highway commercial uses including auto sales, service and repair. The district is less dense than the Commercial Mixed Use district.

Residential – The purpose of the residential district is to encourage vital walkable neighborhoods in urban and suburban settings. The district accommodates one- and two-family homes.

Lake Conservation – The purpose of the Lake Conservation district is to restore and protect the quality of Pleasant Lake and the local aquifer and to provide access to the lake for recreation. Lot size and septic system setbacks are among items to be addressed in the zone.

Hamlet – The purpose of the Hamlet zone is to protect and revitalize the mixed use character of the hamlets, particularly Natural Bridge and Great Bend, but also Champion and other areas that may be appropriate for this designation.



ZONING EVALUATION

The following is a review of the Town of Wilna Zoning Ordinance in context with other Town and Village zoning ordinances within the River Area Council of Governments.

The primary purpose of the zoning ordinance is to preserve the “health, safety and general welfare of the community”.

Overview and Review

Zoning law should also be viewed as a tool to design the form of the community, to locate and organize land uses and to enhance community character.

Land use law should:

- Be easy to understand
- Easy to use
- Encourage quality development
- Expedite development
- Enhance community identity

The existing Zoning Ordinance for the Town of Wilna was adopted in 1987 and last amended in 2008.

Additional zoning ordinances for the communities in the River Area Council of Governments included the following:

- Town of Champion - adopted in 1997, last amended in 2006
- Village of Carthage - adopted in 1984, last amended in 2004
- Village of West Carthage - adopted in 1986, last amended in 2005

Existing Zoning Ordinances are adequate but could be enhanced and streamlined to represent one Ordinance style for the four communities.

The new zoning should be flexible and encourage mixed use. Controls should be enhanced through simple design standards which control the impact of the use. By incorporating design standards a broader mix of uses may occur improving the appearance and economic vitality of the community.

The following are recommendations to improve local zoning ordinances. The zoning ordinances for each community should:

1. Have the same format and table of contents

- Quick Reference Guide
- Table of Contents
- General Information
 - Purpose
 - Document Usage
- Zoning Map
- Zoning Designations and Purpose
- Land Use Matrix
- Accessory Use Matrix
- Dimensional Requirements Matrix
- Districts and Design Standards
- Special Purpose Districts and Design Standards
- Additional Regulations for Specific Uses and Design Standards
- Regulations Applying to All Districts and Design Standards
- Procedures
- Non-conformities
- Administration and Enforcement
- General Provisions
- Word Usage and Definitions
- Appendix

2. Minimize the number of districts to approximately four or five:

- a. Agriculture
- b. Residential
- c. Business
- d. Commercial
- e. Industrial
- f. Planned Development District (floating zone)

Overlay Zones should apply to areas either a portion of or more than one zone and include:

- g. Flood Hazard
- h. Historic

3. Incorporate design standards including: districts, specific uses and additional regulations.

Design standards should be easy to understand and used to replace districts minimizing segregation of land use and allowing mixed use development. The standards outlined below are not applicable to all uses; they are guidelines in the preparation of future standards:

- Building: height, setback, proportions, composition, roofline, appurtenances, orientation, color, context, materials, entrances, illumination, transparency, signage and address number.
- Site: adjacency, coverage, connection, buffer, landscape, signage, access, pedestrian linkage and parking

4. Expand Additional Regulations

The proposed zoning ordinances should include additional regulations for specific uses including but not limited to: Accessory Uses, Animal Related, Car Wash, Telecommunications Tower, Drive - Thru, Home Occupations, Mini-Storage Warehouse, Motor Vehicle Rental/Repair/Sales/Service, Places of Worship, Residential Care, Temporary Uses, Sexually Orientated Business, Truck Terminal, Waterfront Uses, Wind Energy Conversion System, Mobile Home, etc.

Regulations applying to all Districts should including: Air Conditioning, Air Quality, Dumpsters and Refuse Storage, Fences/Walls, Landscape, Buffers/Screening, Tree Removal, Excavations/Site Grading and Filling, Hazardous Materials, Lighting, Off-Street parking, Off Street Stacking, Outdoor Storage, Outdoor Displays, Sign Regulations, etc.

5. Facilitate the Approvals Process

The approvals process should be facilitated by developing an equitable and comprehensive zoning and design standards document. The benefit of design based zoning is that residents, developers, staff and elected officials can easily use the regulations to create a more attractive and enhanced community experience. The approvals process should use a concise checklist based on specific design standards that incorporates variations as defined in the ordinance.

The completed checklist of design standards is certified and submitted by a design professional to the municipality. The project should be pre-approved if it meets the standards with minor variations. If the variations exceed the prescribed minor variation but the majority of standards have been complied with the project may be approved with amendments. If a project does not employ prescribed design standards the time for approvals will be increased. The design standards are used as guidelines to evaluate the project.

The proposed Zoning Ordinance for the Town of Wilna and the three other River Area communities should be easy to understand and use by elected and appointed officials, residents, municipal staff and the development community. To be more effective the Ordinance needs to be universally formatted, design standards need to be encoded for all districts, the number of districts should be reduced and a comprehensive approach to the development of additional regulations and applicable design standards needs to be introduced.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES

The Policies for the comprehensive plan are based upon the Regional and Town Goals and Objectives. The purpose of this is to ensure that the policies reflect the desired direction of the plan.

Based on the entirety of what is learned through the Comprehensive Plan process, the Goals and Objectives are the foundation for the Policy of the plan.

The Policy established for the Town of Wilna build on the Town and Regional Goals and Objectives. These Policies should direct decision-making for the Town. Regional Policy established will help the local communities work together towards an ideal future.

Guiding Policies for the Achievement of Town Goal #1:

1. Development should be permitted where adequate roadways, utilities, and/or other public service infrastructure are available
2. The Towns should adopt land use controls as part of their zoning that include appropriate Fort Drum buffer zones
3. Agricultural production should be encouraged on the Town's prime agricultural lands and strategies to protect and conserve agricultural lands should be adopted

TOWN GOAL #1
PROMOTE
APPROPRIATE
DEVELOPMENT IN
WILNA

Guiding Policies for the Achievement of Town Goal #2:

1. A variety of transportation options including bus, car, bicycle and walking should be promoted as a part of the circulation system
2. The towns, in collaboration with the villages, the county and Lewis County should participate in regional planning for off-road recreation such as snowmobiling and ATV-riding to mitigate harmful impacts and increase tourism
3. Access management strategies should be incorporated into future development to address traffic impacts of growth areas of the towns

TOWN GOAL #2
SUPPORT AN
APPROPRIATE
CIRCULATION
SYSTEM TO PROMOTE
SAFETY, ENCOURAGE
COMMERCE AND
ENHANCE THE
QUALITY OF LIFE FOR
RESIDENTS

*Guiding
Policies for the
Achievement of
Regional Goal #1:*

**REGIONAL GOAL #1
CONTINUE TO
COLLABORATE AND
COOPERATE WITH
OTHER RIVER AREA
COMMUNITIES FOR
THE BENEFIT OF OUR
RESIDENTS AND
BUSINESSES**

1. Opportunities to combine government functions and services should be identified and pursued
2. The appropriate boards should be assigned the responsibility of developing strategies and actions to implement the Comprehensive Plan
3. Revisions, amendments and deletions of Goals, Objectives and Policies or to the Comprehensive Plan itself and the implementation of the Plan should be identified and recommended through a defined process of review and updating coordinated by the town board and including all stakeholders
4. RACOG should strengthen existing and seek additional partnerships to protect and enhance the communities' abilities to achieve their shared goals
5. Zoning changes should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and minimize potential land use conflicts

*Guiding
Policies for the
Achievement of
Regional Goal #2:*

**REGIONAL GOAL #2
PROTECT AND USE
OUR NATURAL
RESOURCES AS
THE CENTRAL
CHARACTERISTIC OF
OUR COMMUNITIES**

1. A program of monitoring the quality of area waterways should be initiated
2. Opportunities to seek funding for environmental and ecological remediation should be aggressively pursued
3. The adopted waterfront and recreation plans are one basis for economic revitalization of the communities and their policies and implementation strategies should be incorporated into the comprehensive plan for implementation
4. Flood plains and flood areas should be protected from future development
5. Appropriate regulations to protect ground water and water quality should be adopted and enforced

Guiding Policies for the Achievement of Regional Goal #3:

**REGIONAL GOAL #3
PROMOTE OUR
QUALITY OF LIFE
TO PROSPECTIVE
RESIDENTS, VISITORS
AND BUSINESSES**

1. Economic development planning should embrace a regional approach
2. Diverse housing choices should be available and developed in appropriate areas
3. The Future Land Use Plan will be consulted for appropriate type, scope and location of future development
4. Appropriate land use regulations and design standards should be adopted to preserve and enhance the visual character of residential and commercial areas
5. The communities should continue to actively pursue development of recreational facilities that will serve current and future populations
6. Opportunities to acquire land for parks and open space should be identified

Guiding Policies for the Achievement of Regional Goal #4:

**REGIONAL GOAL #4
PRESERVE OUR LOCAL
INSTITUTIONS TO
BENEFIT CURRENT
AND FUTURE
RESIDENTS**

1. Opportunities to collaborate and cooperate with local organizations including the schools, hospital, social civic, heritage, cultural and fraternal organizations should be developed including opportunities to provide residents with avenues to make meaningful contributions to the communities
2. The towns and villages should collaborate for local economic development activities
3. The cooperating communities of the COG should reinforce their commitments to the COG in order to increase predictability and continuity of its management

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Adopt the Comprehensive Plan
2. Work cooperatively on a shared Zoning Ordinance and Map that is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan
3. Continue regional planning efforts to protect and enhance the quality of life for residents of the Carthage area
4. Encourage the involvement of all River Area communities in RACOG planning efforts including the villages of Herrings and Deferiet
5. Continue to work with the US Army, Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization and Fort Drum neighbors towards Growth Management for a Mutually Beneficial Development Pattern
6. Focus future development in areas where infrastructure already exists.
7. Ensure appropriate development surrounding Fort Drum and the natural resources including wetlands, flood plains and water sources.
8. Continue to review school enrollment levels to prevent classroom crowding.
9. Support efforts to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the communities including local health care, planning, economic development, civic, historic and fraternal organizations.
10. Continue to focus on diversifying circulation routes through the promotion of waterfront and scenic byway development.
11. Consider the use of a recreation master plan to help ensure the delivery of recreation services to all parts of the community.
12. Continue to work together to address recreation issues in the communities.
13. Support growing industries in the communities such as tourism and appropriate retail and service development.
14. Utilize regional watershed planning efforts to help guide development.
15. Continue to work together to seek ways to cooperatively deliver services to the RACOG residents.
16. Continue to preserve the historic resources in the community that highlight the communities agricultural and industrial heritage.
17. Pursue projects and implementation measures identified in Destination Blueway: A Waterfront Plan for the Villages of Carthage and West Carthage, White, Still & Wild, A Blueway Trail Development Plan for the Black River and the Olympic Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan.

