



# Comprehensive Plan Town of Sandy Creek Village of Sandy Creek Village of Lacona

SEPTEMBER 2013





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### **GIS DATA Disclaimer**

The original source(s) of each dataset is identified on the maps. Due to the different sources and scales of projection, key features such as roads, parcel boundaries and streams may not overlap accurately when comparing several data layers on the same map.

Acreage calculations for various parameters in this report were generated through the use of ArcGIS and are an approximation of the actual size. For more precise measurements, contact the Oswego County Planning Department.



# Chapter 1: Introduction



Farmland along Scenic Route 3 - The Seaway Trail in Sandy Creek

## Before beginning, plan carefully.

- *Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman statesman and orator (106-43 BC).*

In the book *Comprehensive Planning for the 21st Century: General Theory and Principles*, the author notes “Planning is so universal and so much a part of all activities that it is usually taken for granted. Because it is inconspicuous by its universal presence, the process of planning is seldom specifically identified and considered [yet] Illustrations of different applications and results of planning are almost without limit.” Analysis of planning process shows us that the endeavor is basically the same in all its applications. Within any kind of planning program, including that which this Comprehensive Plan is a part of, a sequence of specific actions are formulated and detailed sufficiently to achieve an objective: (1) collection of descriptive and prescriptive information, (2) analysis of this information, (3) reaching conclusions, (4) making decisions, (5) designation and effectuation of implementing actions, and (6) comparison of the results of planning with its intentions, and corresponding adjustment or revision as indicated.

The planning of settlements in North America (cities, towns, and villages) after the arrival of the Europeans reflected both old and new values and ideals that were expressed through a variety of spatial arrangements and cultural compositions. Grid patterns for efficient movement of citizens and troops were employed in cities like Santa Fe, Mobile and Savannah. New York City, with hundreds of rectangular blocks and no alleys, was conceived to generate the most profit for land speculators. The Washington, D.C. plan of long radiating avenues and grand plazas was designed to communicate to the world through design the greatness of America.

Planning practices of recent decades in the United States, with emphasis on zoning, housing, and transportation, grew out of the efforts of nineteenth century reformers who sought to improve the often deplorable conditions of America’s then overcrowded cities with early tenement laws. In the 1890s, a progressive reform movement began in architecture and urban planning that sought to beautify cities, not so much out of aesthetic concerns as to engender moral and civic virtue among urban populations. Over many years, a more comprehensive planning approach evolved; a method to address a broader range of issues related to a geographic area and community development over a longer time frame.

Comprehensive planning, as illustrated herein, employs an analytical approach, method, procedure, and body of techniques for investigating the past and present conditions of the Town of Sandy Creek; envisioning its future; determining what is to be accomplished and attempted; and finally programming actions to be taken. This Comprehensive Plan is comprised of a set of interrelated objectives, policies, and sequential actions derived from analysis and decision concerning the present state and future development of the Town of Sandy Creek. Once adopted, the Plan serves as the community’s statement of intent, strategy, programmed accomplishment, and expected actions, and should be periodically re-examined to determine any necessary or desirable modification, revision or replacement as emergency conditions or unexpected major events dictate. This Plan serves additionally as a principal measure of managerial or legislative leadership performance.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From *Comprehensive Planning for the 21st Century: General Theory and Principles*. Contributors: Melville C. Branch - author. Publisher: Praeger. Place of Publication: Westport, CT. Publication Year: 1998.



The Town of Sandy Creek Comprehensive Plan was developed to guide elected officials in the town and villages in making future decisions affecting land use, environmental resources, economic development, transportation, utilities, tourism, recreation, community services, and quality of life. It is a statement of policy and a guide to the continuing physical development of the Town of Sandy Creek.

This Comprehensive Plan functions as a long-range plan for the future growth of the community. It provides a general, broad overview of the physical development of the community and reviews past development patterns that have led directly to present conditions. The plan also provides a forward-looking view of how the community should develop or redevelop by examining past trends and enlisting various planning techniques to determine desired future scenarios. Simply stated, this comprehensive plan depicts where the community has been, where it is presently, where it wants to go, and how it plans to get there.

### **Federal and State Land Use Policy**

As European settlers emigrated to the United States they adopted English common law under which land they owned, their “property,” meant a place in which they held a bundle of rights including:

- 1) the right to control and use the property;
- 2) the right to benefits from the property;
- 3) the right to transfer or sell the property; and
- 4) the right to exclude others from the property.

However, those rights were not absolute; they were, as they still are, subject to the rights of society often as codified in law. In the early history of the United States, society placed few limitations on the use of land as it seemed an endless resource, especially with a limited population base. From Jefferson’s Corps of Discovery to the Homestead Act to massive federal irrigation, road building, and energy producing projects, the challenge was not limiting use of land but rather getting it settled, cultivated, and developed. However, as the population increased and people began to congregate in cities, the need arose for local governmental control to put some limits on the movement of industry and commerce into residential areas and to prevent residents from becoming nuisances to each other. These limitations generally took the form of zoning ordinances regulating incompatible uses, building heights, setbacks, and lot sizes. However, as the density of populations grew and spread, some began to recognize a need for planning, and noting the changing times, Theodore Roosevelt reminded his constituents in the summer of 1910: “Every man holds his property subject to the general right of the community to regulate its use to whatever degree the public welfare may require it.”

Concern for the public welfare reached a peak in the 1960s and 70s as members of Congress observed that the balance between economic growth and development on the one hand, and protection of natural resources on the other, had tipped too far in the direction of growth and development. Congress moved to expand legal limitations that would address the issue of dwindling natural resources and environmental degradation. As a result, federal laws such as The National Environmental Policy Act, The Wilderness Act, The National Forest Management Act, The Endangered Species Act, etc., were enacted that have had significant impacts on land use. Many states also passed their own laws and adopted policies that complemented the new federal laws.

*The planning process  
is, in part, a process  
of formulating acceptable  
and desirable public goals  
and coordinating public  
and private efforts  
for the benefit of the  
community as a whole.*

In New York, the enactment of Article IX of the State Constitution, the Municipal Home Rule Law, the Statute of Local Governments, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act have provided municipalities the power to enact local laws that compliment several of the federal laws mentioned above. The scope of this power and the procedures for implementing it are set out in the Municipal Home Rule Law, adopted in 1963. Section 10 of the Municipal Home Rule Law contains the constitutional grants of power to local governments and adds thereto the powers to collect local taxes authorized by the Legislature, to provide for the protection and enhancement of the physical and visual environment, the apportionment of local legislative bodies, and assessments for local improvements, as well as the powers granted to local governments in the Statute of Local Governments.

The Municipal Home Rule Law also includes a Bill of Rights for Local Governments and provision for a unique Statute of Local Governments, under which home rule powers may be given to quasi-constitutional protection against change (Section 2(b)(1)). Among the rights and powers enumerated under the Bill of Rights for Local Governments are the right to have a legislative body elected by the people; to adopt local laws; to have local officers elected or appointed by the local residents or officers; the power to agree (as authorized by the Legislature) with the federal government, a State, or other government, to provide cooperative governmental services and facilities. Also included are the power of eminent domain; the power to make a fair return on the value or property used in the operation of certain utility services, and the right to use the profits therefore for refunds or any other lawful purpose; and the power to apportion costs of governmental services of function upon portions of local areas as authorized by the Legislature.

### ***Conservation Advisory Councils***

An additional tool available to the local legislative body of any city, town or village is described in Article 12-F Section 239-X of the NYS General Municipal Law enabling the establishment of a Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) to advise in the development, management and protection of its natural resources. CACs are strictly advisory bodies that can be established by municipal resolution, the creation of an ordinance or local law. CACs work to provide land research including open space, wetlands and natural resource inventories and maps; advise, cooperate and work with other unofficial and official municipal agencies involved in similar activities; publish informational and educational literature; and may prepare an annual report.

In 1971 New York State amended the legislation concerning conservation councils to include Section 239-y. This section enables a Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) to become a Conservation Board (CB). Although still an advisory board, this status denotes the support and acceptance of the CB as a valid agency of municipal government with the opportunity to review any proposed land use application affecting any open areas listed on an officially approved Open Space Inventory (OSI) and map.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> From New York State Association of Conservation Commissions (<http://www.nysaccny.org/cactocb.ph>, accessed March 1, 2009)

## **Comprehensive Planning and Legislative Authority**

In the State of New York, village and town governments are granted authority to adopt a comprehensive plan pursuant to Village Law §7-722 or Town Law §272-a. The comprehensive plan, a set of policy and analytic documents and maps, strategies and tools for the guidance of community well-being, land use, and development, is also intended to provide the foundation for local zoning laws. Once adopted, all land use policy decisions in the Villages and Town must be in accordance with the comprehensive plan. The review of future projects no longer occurs on an independent project-by-project basis, but rather in consideration of the comprehensive plan and the community vision. This Plan provides guidance as to where and how future development should occur in the Villages and Town. In addition, all other governmental agencies must consider this plan when directing or funding capital projects that occur within the Villages or the Town.

This plan must meet the provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act prior to final adoption of the Plan by Town Councilors and the Village Trustees. Adoption of a comprehensive plan is a discretionary decision and is considered a Type I action pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law and Title 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations Part 617.4(b) (1). The purpose of adopting a comprehensive plan is the protection of the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the community. This plan should be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis. It is recommended that the plan undergo a review and necessary update every seven to ten years from the date of its adoption.

### ***Organization of the Plan***

This Plan is organized in four chapters illustrated and supported with detailed and keyed maps, figures, conceptual drawings, and photographs. Chapter One is the Introduction. Chapter Two, Community Analysis, focuses on an a detailed inventory and analysis of the community, from location, history, and demographics, to land use, infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources. Chapter Three, Regional Influences, explores the economic, environmental, recreational, cultural, and other entities, initiatives, activities, and events that influence the community. Chapter Four, the final chapter, begins with a the community vision statement, and issues of community significance. This chapter is where the inventory and analysis of previous chapters leads to a list of specific Goals for the community and Recommended Actions to be taken.

## **Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Sandy Creek**

In the last decade, there has been a much wider recognition that long-term planning is a desirable and important function of local government. In 2007, the Town of Sandy Creek approached the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB) and asked for assistance in developing a comprehensive plan to expand upon the ideas and recommendations that were suggested in the 2005 Town of Sandy Creek Strategic Plan. A group of concerned citizens was organized in a committee to collaborate in planning to enhance the existing land use regulations and direct future growth and change in the town and village; while protecting the unique natural resources of the area.

As part of the planning process, the Comprehensive Planning Committee together with the CNY RPDB held a series of four public meetings to discuss the Comprehensive Plan at the Sandy Creek Central School District Board Room. The first was held on April 17, 2007. At this meeting, a visioning session was conducted with a public discussion of topics including: community assets and limitations, natural resources, cultural and historic features, economic development, land use, and next steps in the Comprehensive Planning process. Results of the visioning session and survey conducted at the April 2007 meeting are included at the end of Appendix A of this Plan.

The second public meeting was held June 18, 2007 and consisted of a review of the visioning results, critique of the vision statement, critique of goal statements, and a discussion of additional public comments. The third public meeting was held on July 25, 2007 with more review of visioning results, statements and goals. Implementation strategies were discussed along with additional public comments and questions. The fourth public meeting was held on October 24, 2007 focusing on continued review and discussion of the vision, goals and strategies. The need for a public survey was also discussed at this meeting. In April of 2007, a community survey was completed by some number of residents at a Town public meeting. Unfortunately, the 2007 survey results have been misplaced and were unavailable for analysis in this Plan. In 2011, a new community survey was conducted with a mailing of approximately 3100 surveys to all residents and business owners in the Town. In addition, the survey was distributed to junior and senior students at the Sandy Creek High School. The survey response rate with 698 completed surveys returned was 23%. The results of the community survey informed the goals and recommendations in this Plan, and are included in Appendix A

In the next chapter, issues of community significance, strengths and weaknesses identified through the visioning sessions and community survey will be discussed in addition to specific goals and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Various legal instruments are available to the Town and Villages that have a direct bearing on their ability to carry out the goals and recommendations of the plan. Site Plan Review and Subdivision regulations are in place, but need to be updated and amended to reflect the community's goals and objectives, as specified in the Comprehensive Plan. Another legal instrument that will be beneficial to the town and villages as they begin to implement the Plan is a capital improvements program. This device is a fiscal plan for the long range financing of major items and public improvements including such things as the acquisition of land and the construction of buildings. The capital improvements program should be based on the long-range program of public improvements as suggested in the Comprehensive Plan.



**South Pond, Sandy Creek, NY. April, 2010**

Land use planning tools that can be used to implement a Comprehensive plan include: Preliminary Sketch Plan Review, Conservation Subdivision Requirements, Overlay Districts, Business Improvement Districts, Streetscape Improvement Plans, Historic Districts & Preservation Plans, Environmental Impact Assessments, Purchase of Development Rights or Transfer of Development Rights (PDR's and TDR's), and Architectural Design Guidelines. To implement the community's vision as embodied in this Comprehensive Plan, it is important to learn more about which land use tools may be most effective without being too complex to manage.

Implementation of a Comprehensive Plan depends, ultimately, on the aspirations and actions of the elected officials and members of the community. There must be a general understanding of the objectives sought in the plan and the community must be in agreement with them. The planning process is, in part, a process of formulating acceptable and desirable public goals, and coordinating public and private efforts for the benefit of the community as a whole.

The next chapter provides a summary of the Community Analysis with a discussion of the community's vision, and identified strengths and weaknesses, followed by a numbered list of goals and recommended actions the community should take as opportunities allow to achieve its vision.



## Chapter 2: Goals & Recommendations



Oswego County Fairgrounds in the Village of Sandy Creek, home the annual summer fair since it was known as "Old Sandy" in 1858

## Summary Analysis

Sandy Creek is a rural/agricultural town with valuable natural resources, some of which, the community is well aware have already been compromised through inadequate protections from pollutants from both shorefront household wastewater and agricultural runoff. Sandy Creeks' future depends on the protection of its resources, both natural and cultural, and on improving land use regulation and town policies with an eye toward accomplishing specific goals and objectives identified in the 2011 community survey.

The Town of Sandy Creek is well-situated regionally, only about an hour's drive south from the Canadian border and less than an hours drive to the Syracuse Metropolitan area with direct access to points north and south via Interstate Route 81. An operating CSX rail line also bisects the town through the Village of Lacona. Within the geographic boundaries of the town, a wealth of natural and cultural resources have the potential to bring substantially greater numbers of visitors to the area. Little Sandy Creek, Blind Creek, North and South Sandy Ponds and a 17 mile stretch of Lake Ontario shoreline known as the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex that includes the highest concentration of state-designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats in New York State (NYS). These resources and the location of the community along a key transportation corridor makes it an attractive setting for living, working, recreation, business, and industry.

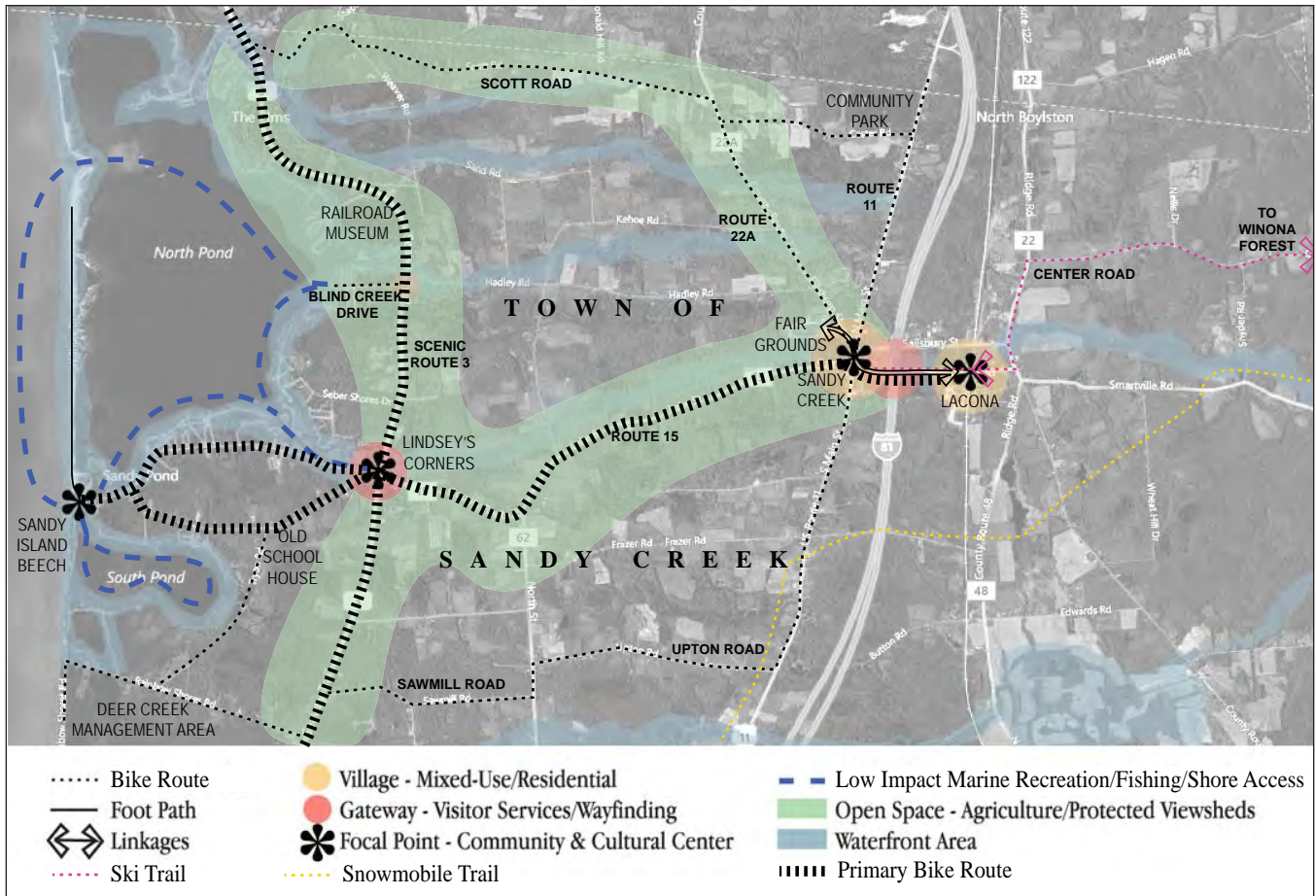
Situated at the northern edge of Oswego County, The Town borders the eastern shore of Lake Ontario and extends east to the western reaches of the Tug Hill Plateau. The northern temperate climate features four distinct seasons with heavy lake-effect snowfall in winter that is ideal for winter sports. Pleasant stretches of eastern Lake Ontario shoreline and the Little Sandy Creek corridor through a variety of scenic agricultural lands combine in a rich natural environment. The Town and Villages are located in close proximity to a variety of all season recreational points of interest as well as within a convenient distance to regional cultural and economic centers. Although, at present, there is little in the way of welcoming or interpretive signage highlighting the existence of Sandy Creek at key points; the town possesses a wealth of natural and cultural offerings.

The historic Villages of Lacona and Sandy Creek feature a diverse collection of nineteenth century architecture that are deserving of preservation and reuse. The fairgrounds in Sandy Creek has hosted the Oswego County Fair every summer in the location since 1858 when the event was known as "Old Sandy". Unfortunately, many of the historic structures in the Village remain vacant and deteriorating, or without local regulation to protect them from historically incompatible renovations. Although the Sandy Creek Historic District, added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 includes 37 acres and 14 buildings along Harwood Drive and Lake Street dating from 1825 to 1949, the community has been unable to fully capture the greater potential economic and social benefits that would be possible through targeted cooperative efforts to generate and support the growth of existing and new recreation- and tourism-based business.

The community's potential for economic growth and sustainable development, directly linked to its wealth of existing natural and cultural resources, has not yet been fully realized. With easy access to I81 and the CSX rail line, and an adjacent large area of developable land in the Village of Lacona, the Town has the potential to attract new compatible industrial development that could result in growth in local jobs and businesses. The Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona are situated less than 5 miles from some of New York State's most diverse and wonderful natural and recreational resources. Winona Forest Recreation Area (in the neighboring Town of Boylston), on the western

*The community's potential for economic growth...has not yet been fully realized...without prominent gateways at key locations and access to and interpretation of many points of interest, the community is losing potential...benefits... every day.*





**Figure 1. How nodes and recreational trails across the Town of Sandy Creek could ideally function to improve connectivity between the Villages and area environmental, cultural, and recreational resources.**

edge of the Tug Hill Plateau is a 9,233-acre state forest that offers hiking, skiing, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, trapping, dog sledding, birdwatching and horseback riding. Less than 5 miles northeast of the Village of Lacona, the popular recreation area offers year-round recreation and one of the best trail systems in New York State and is home to the Tug Hill Tourathon with 21.8 miles of cross-country ski trails, 8.7 miles of snowmobile trails (some designated New York State Snowmobile Corridor Trails), 9.9 miles forest roads, and 5 parking lots. To the west, Sandy Creek is home to miles of Lake Ontario shorefront and the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex with the highest concentration of state-designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats in New York State (and a NYS Natural Heritage Area), and beautiful Sandy Island Beach. At the heart of the community, the Oswego County Fairgrounds has drawn thousands of summertime visitors every summer for the past 153 years.

Yet, even as the community is surrounded with this amazing array of recreational resources, it lacks the connection of designated and marked trails between the Villages, the lakefront, and the Winona Forest recreation area. To realize the full economic and quality of life potential possible, these major recreational assets should be linked with hiking, biking, skiing and riding paths, as well as additional public access to fishing and lakefront areas. This will give both community members and visitors opportunities to fully enjoy the wealth of assets that the community has to offer.

The community lacks public access to its most valued natural resource, Lake Ontario. With few opportunities for public access to the waterfront in the Town, improved access to the existing public right-of-way to the lakefront at the end Blind Creek Drive can fulfill a community need. The existing Town right-of-way is a public asset and could potentially provide an important access point to the waterfront for low impact community recreational use. There is potential for a Town boat launch at Groman Shore where a property is currently in Receivership and awaiting legal action. If Sandy Creek is protected from incompatible, environmentally damaging, or unsightly development and works to build recreational interconnections and public access to the waterfront, those steps will provide the foundation upon which the community can succeed in achieving its vision for a truly vibrant future. Taking stock of (and promoting) the strengths, and addressing each of the challenges discussed in the following section will help the community to reach its full potential.

### **Community Vision Statement**

*The Sandy Creek community seeks to preserve, enhance and celebrate those characteristics of the Town and Villages including the unique composition of natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources in the Town; to encourage sustainable economic growth; to foster revitalization of its two historic villages; to protect the health of its environmental resources and productive agrarian landscape; and to create an inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors to experience between the western slope of the Tug Hill Plateau and the Lake Ontario waterfront.*

### **Issues of Community Significance**

Some primary issues of concern to the community were identified in the community survey and visioning sessions related to growth and development. These issues are addressed in the following goals and recommendations and include promoting good governance and economic development, natural resources protections, housing and community services, and recreation and cultural development.

Some important findings from the survey include the fact that 10% of survey respondents indicated that they have no treatment of household sewage waste (only a 55 gallon drum or similar container). With the steady decline in water quality in the ponds, 58% of those surveyed would like to see an inventory of failing septic systems conducted in the Town.

The Town has valued scenic views and natural areas that its residents want to preserve, along with protections for natural resources (sand dunes, wetlands, water, air, etc.). There is a local desire to encourage restaurant facilities and additional single family housing in the Town, and to encourage Lake Ontario public access, and farmer's and artisan's markets. Professional services, shopping (retail) business, senior citizen housing, renewable energy (wind, solar, bio-energy), hiking, biking and skiing paths, and outdoor athletic fields were supported by over 70% of survey respondents.

Only 44% of survey respondents thought the Town of Sandy Creek should consider zoning, but positive responses were registered for the development of specific land use regulations to address issues including: rental housing inspections and landlord registration; land use that adversely impacts environmental quality; mobile home placement and site requirements; land use that significantly lowers surrounding land use values; degradation of environmentally sensitive areas; and loss of rural character, scenic views and open space; siting for cellular towers; siting for commercial and residential wind towers; routine septic system inspections; and protections from negative visual impacts (setbacks, visual buffers or architectural design standards for signage, etc. for commercial development).

*To be successful  
in bringing about  
positive changes, the  
community must  
wholeheartedly  
embrace the Goals of  
this Comprehensive  
Plan as guiding  
principles, and bring  
to bear strong local  
leadership and a  
spirit of volunteering  
in working  
partnerships...*

## Strengths

### **An easily accessible location**

Sandy Creek is located along Interstate Route 81, only 55 miles from Canada and less than 55 minutes from the Syracuse metropolitan area with direct access to CSX Transportation north-south rail corridor. The Town and Villages are well situated to attract the interest of regional and international visitors as well as new residential and industrial development. The Route 81 exit at Sandy Creek provides easy access to the eastern Oswego County/Tug Hill recreational trail systems for snowmobiling, hunting, cross country skiing, hiking, biking, and nature appreciation.

### **Scenic rural landscapes and a wealth of recreational resources**

Much of the Town of Sandy Creek remains undeveloped with rolling hills and farmland along productive creeks between Lake Ontario and the Tug Hill Plateau, providing the setting for a high quality of life as well as an ideal backdrop for four-season recreational use by cyclists, hikers, horseback riders, and cross-country skiers.

### **Lake Ontario, North and South Pond**

Access to Great Lakes recreation including boating, fishing, camping, swimming, strolling on a sandy beach, sunset watching, site-seeing, and cruising represents a tremendous potential opportunity for growth in tourism and quality-of-life-based economic development. Economic rewards for the entire community could be tapped through improved public access to the waterfront with linked commercial and recreational development areas and corridors that are compatible in design with the historic and scenic rural character of Sandy Creek.

### **Existing drinking water resources and capacity for growth**

In combination with the Town's convenient Interstate highway and rail access to quality development sites, the availability of nearby water resources of the Tug Hill Aquifer provide for an opportunity for strategically located compatible industrial development that could bring job opportunities to the community.

### **A strong tradition of community events**

Sandy Creek has a long history of hosting well-attended community events like the 150+ year-old annual Oswego County Fair that draws visitors from across the region. The Town and Villages could further leverage the existing fairgrounds to host a greater variety of events and festivals year-round, boosting community-wide economic and cultural development.



Fair-goers enjoy the rides at the annually held Oswego County Fair in Sandy Creek (source: [http://photos.syracuse.com/post-standard/2011/07/oswego\\_county\\_fair\\_2011\\_day\\_3.html](http://photos.syracuse.com/post-standard/2011/07/oswego_county_fair_2011_day_3.html))

## Challenges

### **Lack of Tools and Resources for Effective Governance**

The Town of Sandy Creek faces several persistent challenges to community well-being and compatible economic growth including as haphazard, poorly-sited, and environmentally destructive development that impacts and limits quality of life and economic development opportunities for the entire community. Issues of public health, safety, and equity also arise from a lack of tools and resources to assist in good governance that can protect the community. Without zoning, the Town of Sandy Creek will continue to lack the ability to plan for and guide quality development in the Town. To preserve the community's many assets and make the most of its potential economic opportunities; local regulatory tools are needed to ensure: rental housing inspections and landlord registration; environmental protections from negative land use impacts; siting requirements for mobile home placement; protections from land uses that significantly lower surrounding land values; good stewardship of environmentally sensitive areas; preservation of rural character, scenic views and open space; siting guidelines for cellular towers, commercial and residential wind towers; routine septic system inspections; and protections from negative visual impacts (setbacks, visual buffers or architectural design standards for signage, etc. for commercial development).

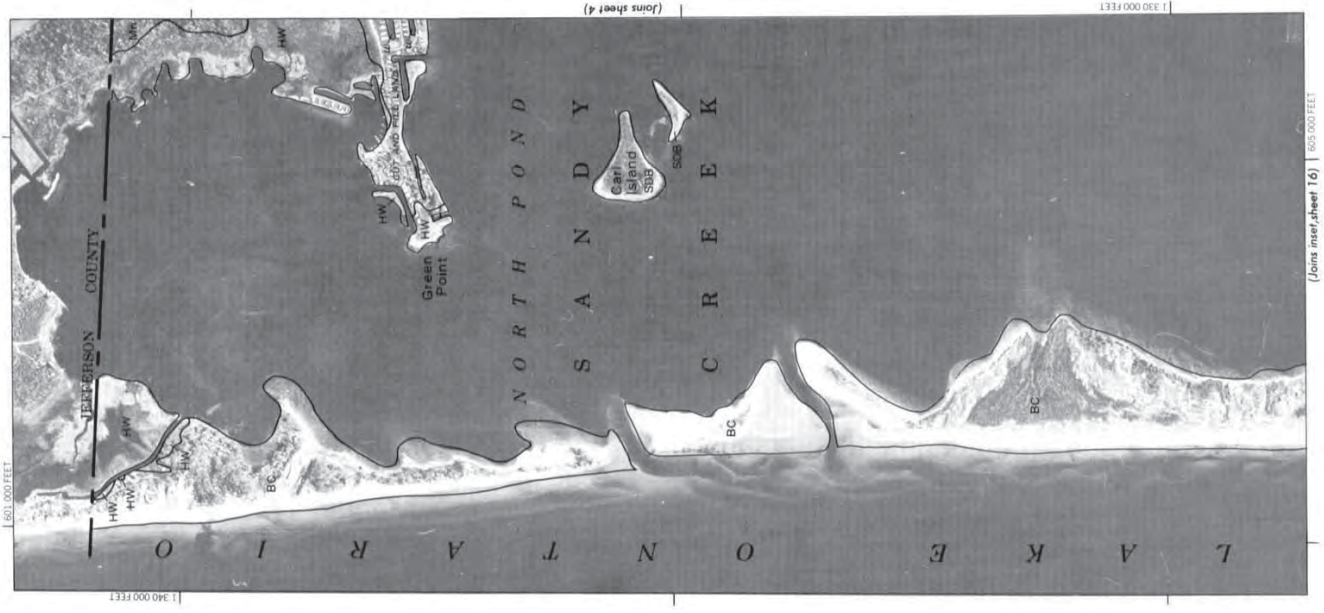
### **Declining Water Quality in North and South Ponds and Lake Ontario**

Sandy Pond, separated from Lake Ontario by a barrier beach and sand dunes supports a significant tourism and recreation economy in the Town of Sandy Creek, and also provides important habitat for nesting birds and waterfowl. North Sandy Pond is approximately 2 miles wide and 4 miles long. South Sandy Pond, connected by a narrow waterway, is smaller. A 76-acre New York State conservation area at the north end of the spit of land dividing North Sandy Pond from Lake Ontario, about 2 miles north of Sandy Island Beach State Park, hosts a bird sanctuary supporting large numbers of shorebirds during migration. Because of the natural beauty and direct access to Lake Ontario from North and South Sandy Ponds, their sandy shorelines have been extensively, and densely developed over many years with seasonal and year-round residences. Issues related to waste water treatment (septic effluent) can, and may have already impacted water quality in the ponds and Lake Ontario due to the soil types that exist in heavily developed waterfront areas. As indicated in the Oswego County Soil Survey, predominant soil types in the waterfront areas include HkB, AAC and AgB which all have excessive permeability<sup>23</sup> and potential for seepage of contaminants. Soil type Mn features wetness that can impede the proper performance of conventional leach lines in use in the area. Soil limitations are considered in permitting new lakeshore development, but water quality must also be protected from effluent contamination from older existing septic systems through inspections that assure proper functioning where expanded or more intensive use of wastewater treatment systems has occurred or where it is being proposed (see Oswego County Soil Survey Maps on the following pages).

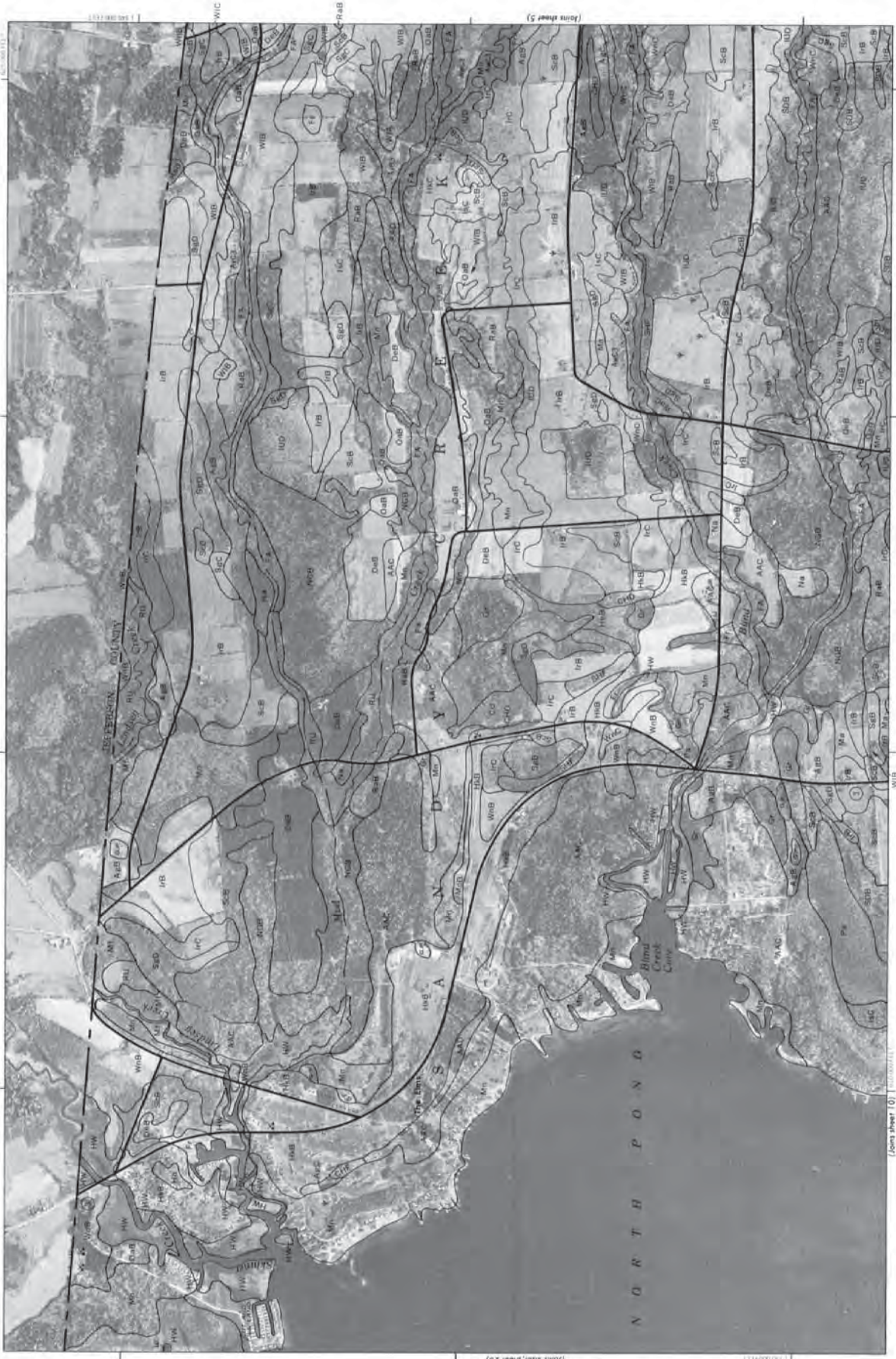
In a January 2010 report titled "Sandy Pond Oswego County, New York" by Joseph C. Makarewicz and Matthew J. Nowak from The College at Brockport, State University of New York, impacts to water quality directly related to land use in the drainage area of the ponds are noted, including agricultural runoff, septic system failures, and "gray water" discharge, which have lead to the cultural eutrophication of the pond. Within North Sandy Pond, nuisance algae and macrophytes periodically impact boating and

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Oswego County Soil Survey "Table 8. Sanitary Facilities", <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/manuscripts/NY075/0/oswego.pdf>



OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK — SHEET NUMBER 4



1:50,000 (1:1)

(Join Sheet 5)

(Join Sheet 10)



This map is compiled on 1975 aerial photography by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and cooperating agencies. Coordinate grid lines and land division centers, if shown, are approximately justified.

OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK — SHEET NUMBER 10



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(Join sheet 4)

(Join sheet 15)

(Join sheet 11)

(Join sheet 12)



swimming. The report provides a synopsis of data collected monthly from May through September (2005 to 2009) on the water quality of North Sandy Pond and the lakeside (swimmable depth) of Lake Ontario near the pond, and it states “Phosphorus is of concern as it stimulates the growth of plants, causing blooms of algae such as Cladophora... The average Sandy Pond total phosphorus (TP) levels (38.3+11.1 µg P/L) exceeded the NYSDEC ambient guideline of 20 µg P/L, as did lakeside concentrations (27.8+4.1 µg P/L). Sandy Pond and lakeside water TP concentrations were higher than in the open (9.5+ 0.7µg P/L) offshore waters of Lake Ontario.”

These conditions not only threaten the health of the ecosystem and its ability to support healthy recreational uses in the ponds, but also impact the quality of the waters of Lake Ontario, an important regional drinking water resource. Without local controls on waterfront development, inventory of and protections from failing, non-existent, or inadequate septic systems, and protection from upland drainages of nutrient loaded agricultural runoff, North and South Pond and Lake Ontario water quality (a public drinking water source), and community health, may be threatened. The introduction of new water service, currently in progress, to the Sandy Pond area could further accelerate water quality issues and should be accompanied with a plan for addressing wastewater treatment issues.



**In addition to nutrient loaded runoff from upland agricultural lands, dense waterfront residential development, with failing or nonexistent septic systems in the Town of Sandy Creek, are likely contributing to declining water quality in North and South Sandy Ponds, 2011 (source: <http://www.bing.com/maps>, Microsoft Corporation 2011, NAVTEQ 2010)**

## Visual Impacts to Scenic Character

The community values the scenic rural historic character of the Town and Villages, and residents expressed, in the 2011 community survey, a desire to preserve these features. Ongoing haphazard development, careless siting of buildings and trailers, and a lack of screening of mobile home parks along scenic roadways in the Town, contribute to a general loss of scenic character, quality of life, and potentially a loss of economic development as developers and new residents look for locations that offer protections from impacts to their investments. Sandy Creek's wealth of natural and cultural resources (shore-front areas, sand dunes, wetlands, historic buildings, country roads, agricultural fields, etc.) are all critical components of the Town's scenic character and unique identity as a very special place in central New York. These features, with official designations of significance given by state and county agencies were also noted in the community survey as some of the most important characteristics of the Town. Without protections that consider the condition of existing development and the scale, placement and compatibility of new development, Sandy Creek's scenic character and unique identity could be lost.



## Economic Decline

Economic growth and community revitalization are interdependent. The Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona have experienced periods of increased unemployment and continues to struggle to retain occupancy in vacant or partially vacant buildings. The condition of aging and historic housing in the Villages is an issue and suggests that a housing rehabilitation program could be important in revitalization efforts. The Town of Sandy Creek has struggled to attract and sustain a diversity of both commercial and professional services, and employment opportunities for the community. The recent economic recession has hit the community hard with rising commuting costs, rising property taxes, and high unemployment. This has impacted the ability of small business and families to thrive in the Town and threatens to contribute to the loss of seasonal and year-round residents. With a significant portion of the Town's



Unregulated roadside signs along NYS Scenic Route 3 can detract from a visitor's experience.



An example of a creative and attractive roadside restaurant sign with visual compatibility within a scenic context. (Source: <http://www.chow.com/food-news/54043/the-other-napa/2/>)



Siting without consideration for appropriate set backs, facade appearances, organized parking facilities, sidewalks and street trees does little to attract investment to the area.



This pedestrian friendly streetscape includes continuous sidewalks and vegetated buffers that add to quality of life in this Town.



Mobile home and trailer siting can require visual screening from roadways to preserve an attractive setting throughout the Town, as well as age and condition standards.

economic base in (non-essential) commercial recreation, additional opportunities for economic growth must be explored to spur a more diverse local economic climate and bring new employment opportunities to Sandy Creek. Encouraging restaurant facilities and additional single family housing in the Town, along with developing additional Lake Ontario public access, farmer's and artisan's markets are all recommended ideas noted by a majority of community survey respondents.

Other important strategies include expanded and diversified use of the Sandy Creek Fairgrounds; developing and linking 4-season recreation in the Town with related resources in the surrounding region; developing new recreation-related supporting services such as inns, shops and eateries; developing more local professional services, retail business, and senior citizen housing; and attracting new light industry to locate at prime sites in the Town.



**The Fairgrounds in Sandy Creek is a major cultural and economic development resource that the Town should be leveraged to bring year-round events and festivals to the Town and significant benefits to the community.**

Particularly well-suited sites in the Town, should be considered for their potential to serve as development areas for light industrial uses that could bring employment opportunities and revenues to the Town and Villages. These well-suited sites have particular characteristics (see next page) that are sought after for industrial development, and not available at other development sites in the Town. For this reason, they should be



**Due to proximity to Interstate Route 81, the CSX Railroad, and other industrial uses in the Village of Lacona, large parcels in this area just southeast of the I81 North exit are attractive candidates for future light industrial development.**

protected from the encroachment of residential or commercial development which can render them much less attractive for industrial uses.

### **Lack of Public Access to Waterfront and Community Services**

Older residents of Sandy Creek remember the days when one could walk 10 miles of sandy beachfront on Lake Ontario in the Town. Today, nearly all of the waterfront of Lake Ontario and North and South Ponds has been rendered inaccessible to those without waterfront property of their own, through uninterrupted private residential development. Public waterfront areas in the Town are either state-controlled, or only accessible to those who have a boat to get to them. This leaves a significant portion of the community without the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate Sandy Creek's most valuable natural resource and contributes to community divisiveness. Expanded community access along the waterfront where spectacular sunsets can be enjoyed by all would raise the quality of life for the entire community, and could be tapped as an asset for economic growth in the summer tourism industry. A bike route connecting the Villages with public access to the waterfront could help to spur recreation-related economic development that would benefit the entire Town. Community services are needed in the Town include housing rehabilitation, public water infrastructure improvements, high speed internet, pharmacy, grocery and professional services.

We do make a difference  
– one way or the other.  
We are responsible for  
the impact of our lives.  
Whatever we do with  
whatever we have, we  
leave behind us a legacy  
for those who follow.

- *Stephen Covey*

### **Community Goals and Recommended Actions**

In addition to economic, environmental, and community research undertaken specifically for this Comprehensive Plan; the goals and recommendations set forth in this chapter have been developed in accordance with proven planning and development strategies and methodologies such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's *Main Street Four-Point Approach*. Over the long term, these strategies have demonstrated impressive reinvestment with documented statistics indicating economic development success in many types of communities across the United States. The following goals and recommendations represent a comprehensive and incremental approach to capitalizing on existing assets and encouraging quality planning and design solutions in the Town of Sandy Creek. Some of the recommended actions listed under these goals will require the pursuit and acquisition of state or federal grant funds to implement. To be successful in bringing about positive changes, the community must wholeheartedly embrace the Goals of this Comprehensive Plan as guiding principles, and bring to bear strong local leadership, and a spirit of volunteering in working partnerships to implement specific recommendations listed under each goal.

## Goal 1: Promote Good Governance

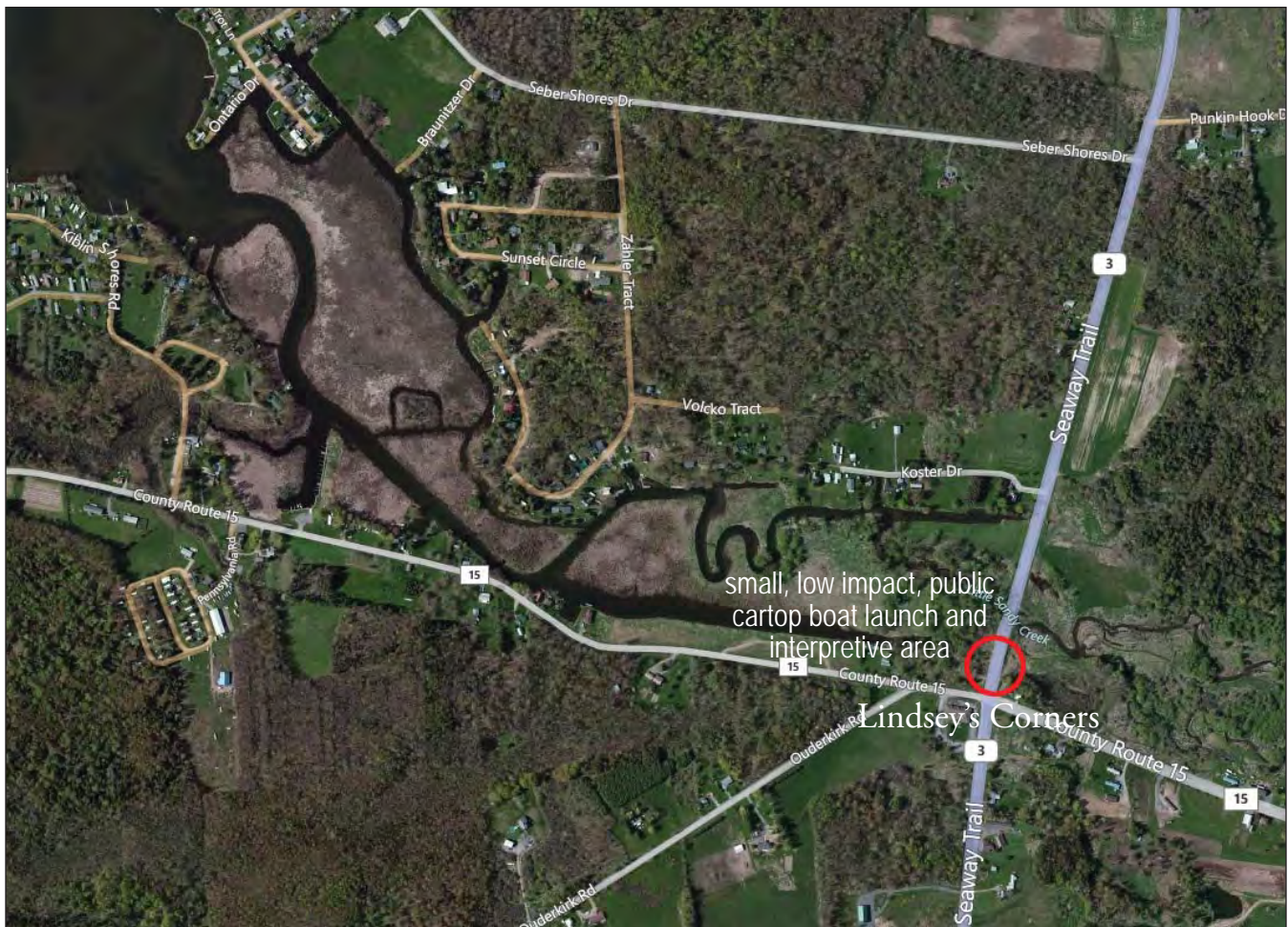
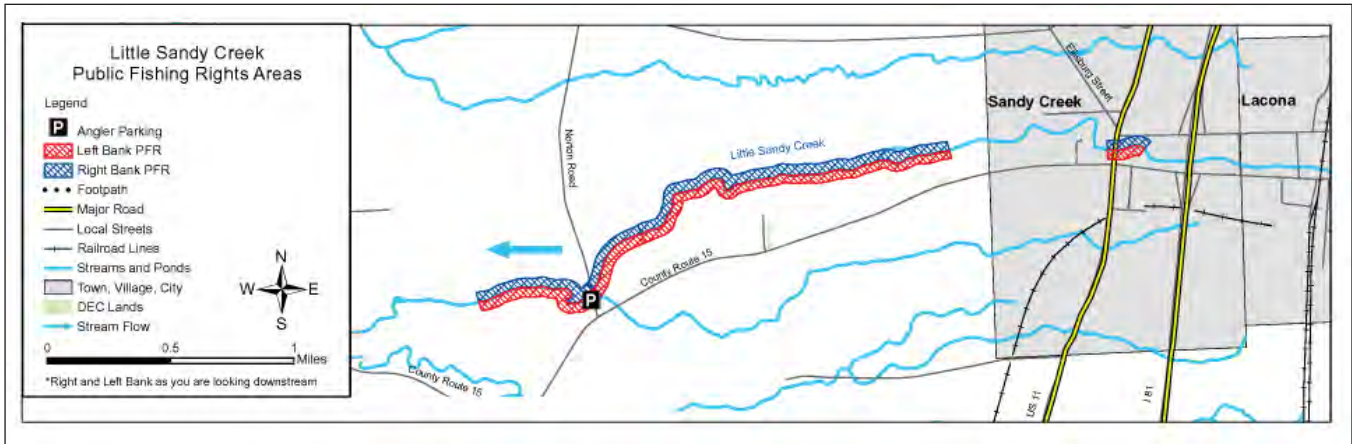
A continued focus on improvements to community facilities and providing public access to Lake Ontario, as well as youth and senior programs is key to good governance in Sandy Creek. Land use regulatory tools and zoning in the Town and Villages must be carefully constructed to effectively manage land uses that encourage complementary growth while protecting the community's cultural identity, historic, and environmental resources. Protection of the North and South Pond waterfronts does not have to preclude compatible use if special consideration is given to protecting the ponds watershed. A focus on stakeholder collaboration in issues of public well-being, fair taxation, green technologies, and renewable energy in all future government endeavors will be increasingly important.

### **Recommended Actions to Promote Good Governance:**

- a. Establish a good governance committee to develop and prioritize a five year capitol improvement program and plan for the community in consideration of the goals and recommendations listed in this plan.
- b. Work together with the local school district to coordinate municipal services, resources, and community programming efforts.
- c. Establish effective local outreach efforts through a routinely issued news item or community calendar, website or through social media.



**The Town-owned 50' right of way to Sandy Pond along Blind Creek Drive has potential to support low impact public access to recreation on Sandy Pond. This access could be limited to use for car-top boat launching and day-use parking as illustrated at left.**



A potential opportunity exists to connect a Town and region-wide bike route with a “blueway” recreational water trail leading to Sandy Pond at the intersection of Scenic Route 3 and Little Sandy Creek just north of Lindsey’s Corners. A small access area with low impact public access with interpretive signage related to the cultural history of Lindsey’s Corners and the ecology of the wetlands and outlet of the creek at Sandy Pond, and limited nearby day use parking would attract visitors and support recreation related economic development throughout the Town.

d. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions through an inclusive process that maximizes participation and results using public meetings, small group interviews, and community surveys. Collaborate with federal, state and local authorities with jurisdiction over public trust and coastal natural resources.

e. Use Site Plan Review and adopt Town and Village zoning and land use regulations such as Conservation Subdivision regulations to ensure that the goals and recommendation in this Comprehensive Plan are met, including reducing neighbor conflicts, better mobile home siting, reducing negative visual impacts and impacts to surrounding land values.

f. Establish more and improved public access to waterfronts including public boat launch areas on the ponds and fishing areas on the creeks.

g. Ensure that code enforcement is sufficient, fair, and effective in protecting the community in related health and safety issues.

h. Establish a landlord registry and rental housing inspections to assure compliance in matters of health and safety.

i. Encourage the expansion of existing, and the addition of new programs for seniors and youth in the community including assisted living facilities for seniors and recreational and educational opportunities for youth and seniors with an active and accessible community center.

j. Ensure the availability of high quality public water facilities including the protection of municipal wells and aquifers and effective treatment of all wastewater in the Town and Villages through a town-wide stormwater management plan.

k. Continue to work toward complete pedestrian and alternative transportation facilities in the community including well-marked crosswalks, greenway trails, blueway trails for car-top boats, and bike paths that interconnect with recreational facilities and points of interest throughout the town and villages (see map on page 165).

l. Participate in on-going meetings with representatives of NYS Parks and Recreation offices and neighboring municipalities to pursue common interests.

m. Conduct an energy audit and make energy efficiency upgrades to all public facilities for optimum use of municipal resources to meet energy



**Dedicated bike lanes interconnecting recreational points of interest, along with bike route signage, would help to create a system of recreational activity and bring opportunities for related business development and cultural growth to the Villages.**





needs. Encourage local energy efficiencies by working with Oswego County Planning Department, Operation Oswego County, NYSERDA, and other agencies to develop an incentive program for commercial use of green technologies.

n. Identify, map and work to conserve potential prime sites for renewable energy development, and explore future opportunities to develop community renewable energy facilities.

o. Clarify the process for permitting renewable energy projects, and whether such projects are allowed “by-right,” by special permit, use variance, or site plan review.

p. Develop public services (water, sewer, etc.) rate structures that ensure an adequate municipal reserve fund for public facility maintenance and necessary upgrades.

q. Establish a formal community volunteer program and encourage participation in the program by local school and community groups.

r. Work to establish outreach to the local Amish community to address potential issues and opportunities.

s. Dedicate a staff person or enthusiastic volunteer to assist community groups with grant writing and marketing including developing and maintaining a comprehensive community website.

## Goal 2: Economic Development

The goal of economic development in both the Town and the Villages Business Districts is to encourage investment, occupancy, and the creation of local jobs, as well as to positively affect property values throughout the community. The development of links to a four season recreational tourism economy in the Town and region is an important economic development strategy that is compatible with both existing natural resources, and identified community needs such as additional recreational trails (skiing, biking, hiking, horseback riding and snowmobile riding) and public waterfront access, retirement living facilities, small scale retail shops, restaurants, and guest lodging. A mix of commercial/retail and business/professional uses in combination with second or third floor residential units should be encouraged along with protection and restoration of historic buildings in the Villages. Prime locations for industrial development in the Town, such as the large undeveloped area to the south of Harwood Drive between Route 81 and the railroad corridor to the west of the aquifer are of significant economic value to the community and planned light industrial development areas should be kept separated from commercial and residential development which can discourage prospects development that could bring jobs to the community.

Economic growth in the town and the villages are interdependent. A vibrant economy in the Villages spurs town-wide economic development opportunities; and economic growth in the town brings added life to the villages. Proactive management and guidance of the community's local land uses, the protection of its scenic and historic resources, and support of public recreational infrastructure directly effects the development of a dynamic and sustainable local economy.

### **Recommended Actions for Economic Development:**

- a. Establish a business development committee and consider website/social media outreach
  
- b. Develop an inventory of key structures and sites and throughout the Town of Sandy Creek that are vacant, under-used, or have particular economic development potential. Seek assistance from the regional planning agency in drafting pre-development plans for desired future uses.
  
- c. Plan and zone for a light industrial development area to the south of Harwood Drive between Route 81 and the railroad corridor to the west of the aquifer. Keep this area separated from commercial and residential uses and consider pre-development planning, with assistance from the regional

planning agency for a future industrial park (see image on page 175).

d. Encourage the development and implementation of a coordinated, town-wide business outreach program to target desired business and industry in optimal locations in the Town, and to foster sustainable job creation.

e. Develop a pre-development masterplan for public access areas on the Lake Ontario and North and South Pond waterfronts that is appropriate to the environmentally sensitive waterfront setting.

f. Encourage growth in mixed uses including commercial business, professional and community services, and second and third story residential in the core of both villages.

g. Seek and review model ownership structures (such as Bedford Hills, NY Trail System <http://bedfordny.info/html/parks.html>) for trail planning, and support plans for the development of an interconnected (and regionally-linked) system of recreational trails (skiing, biking, snowmobile riding), public waterfront access and boat launch areas (see map on page 165).

h. Develop programmatic linkages (community events, trails, business opportunities) between both Villages and regional, state or national outdoor competitive events such as dogsledding, cross country skiing, biking, hiking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, kayaking, sailing, etc. Work with the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, regional tourism organizations, and neighboring communities to promote these links.

i. Maintain close coordination with economic and job development organizations such as Operation Oswego County.

j. Explore opportunities to expand economic development relationship with Fort Drum and Jefferson Community College by potentially hosting distribution facilities, satellite sites, etc.

k. Support the implementation of a locally coordinated National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program to rehabilitate, preserve and promote historic Village character.

l. Explore opportunities through NYS Ag & Markets funding to promote growth in local agricultural business such as niche crops, biomass production, and a local farmers markets.

### Goal 3: Environmental & Natural Resources Protection

Protection and preservation of the community's resources is crucial to improving and sustaining the environmental, social, and economic health of the Town of Sandy Creek. Identification of these vital resources is the first step in their protection, and managing growth and development as a sustainable force means that it must coexist in balance with natural and cultural resources. A GIS-based community resource inventory map that locates all valuable natural, scenic, cultural and historic resources is an important tool for preservation of community resources (some of this data currently resides with the OCDP). Water quality in North and South Ponds, as well as wellhead and aquifer protection are of primary importance, as is the future success of agricultural operations in the Town of Sandy Creek. These resources are directly impacted by zoning and subdivision regulation. To help conserve water quality in both ponds, routine septic inspections must be encouraged and waterfront development must be held to the carrying capacity of the sensitive waterfront environment. Valued farmland in the Town should be identified in an Agricultural Plan including soil characteristics and proximity to developed areas. Infrastructure improvements such as extensions of public water, often lead to new residential and commercial development, and should be avoided in both sensitive shorefront environments and in prime areas for agriculture. Similarly, historic resources are a great asset to the community, and are worthy of mapping and preservation efforts.

#### **Recommended Actions for Environmental & Natural Resource Protection:**

- a. Establish a local Conservation Resources Committee (CRC) charged with responsibility for maintaining an inventory and map of local natural, scenic, cultural and historic resources and establish a process for periodic updates to the community resource inventory and map.
- b. Reach out and encourage organizational collaboration and public education between Ontario lakeshore and upland area communities toward stewardship of environmental resources through programs like Dune Stewards in schools and at community events.
- c. Investigate funding opportunities for improved wastewater treatment, through testing and retrofitting failing septic systems, tracking upstream sources of nutrient inputs, and implementing a green infrastructure program around North and South Ponds with an educational component.



- d. Create a checklist of community resource categories (natural, scenic, historic, etc.) to be evaluated and considered for protection by the Town Planning Board during site plan and subdivision reviews.
  
- e. Limit infrastructure development in valued agricultural areas, assist local farmers in protecting these lands through the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program offered by NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, and participate on Oswego County's Agricultural and Open Space Protection program.
  
- f. Work together with New York Sea Grant, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, and New York State Parks to encourage local participation in the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune Steward Program to promote stewardship of the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex, and to advance the educational role of the stewards.
  
- g. Work with New York Rural Water Association to map all aquifers and their recharge zones serving the Town. Adopt a Wellhead and aquifer Protection Plan and delineate and define a wellhead protection overlay district with regulations restricting the maximum amount of impervious surface allowed for new development within the aquifer recharge zone.

- h. Prepare a North and South Ponds Watershed Management Plan that identifies areas of excessive sediment, or nutrient runoff, and wastewater disposal to Sandy Pond, Sandy Creek, Little Sandy Creek, Blind Creek, Mud Creek and other surface waters. Establish timely procedures to evaluate problem areas and ensure effective wastewater management in unsewered areas. (See 2007 – 08 Salmon River Watershed Plan as an example)
- i. Implement structural and/or non-structural stormwater management measures to mitigate sediment loss in priority areas, and adopt legislation to minimize the application of phosphorus and nitrogen fertilizers and pesticides in the creeks and ponds watersheds.
- j. Even without Town-wide zoning, local review procedures and standards for Site Plan Review can be adopted to ensure future land use is carried out in a way that makes a positive addition to the community. Conservation Subdivision Design process is a standard model that can be used for major subdivisions (see Appendix A pg. 186).
- k. Encourage green infrastructure approaches to development at the site and community scales to increase protection and resilience from environmental hazards. Work with the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District to develop guidelines for the protection of sensitive areas prone to soil erosion that may contribute to siltation of water resources.
- l. Reserve some recreational and wildlife appreciation areas in the Town exclusively for non-motorized use (quiet all-season recreational zones) for activities such as cross country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, fly casting, and nature appreciation that require quiet.
- m. Work with NYS Department of State Division of Coastal Resources, Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and Department of Environmental Conservation to develop a vision and plan for improving community access to North and South Pond waterfronts.
- n. Work with NYS DEC and Oswego County Soil and Water District to ensure that sensitive dune and shoreline areas are protected from over-development where outdated or incorrect mapping of lake water levels continue to be used as a basis for environmental and building permits.
- o. Adopt local zoning and include overlay districts to protect valued scenic, historic and waterfront areas; to ensure the prevention of soil erosion in trail development areas; and to protect of areas of natural or cultural significance from negative impacts of incompatible development.



#### Goal 4: Housing and Community Services

The rehabilitation and reuse of existing housing stock and historic structures in the Villages is a priority to provide needed housing options, and to ensure the preservation of both the traditional rural character of the Town of Sandy Creek and the compact traditional form of the Villages of Lacona and Sandy Creek. Improvement and addition of community recreation facilities, as well as public water infrastructure improvements and upgrades for high speed internet are important community service goals as well. Village streetscapes should be maintained in their historic form with sidewalks, crosswalks and other pedestrian amenities made available where needed.

#### **Recommended Actions for Housing and Community Services:**

- a. Establish a local housing and community services committee to work with the local governance committee to ensure housing health and safety issues are resolved.
  
- b. Support and promote the rehabilitation of existing housing stock to provide options such as condos, townhomes or multi-family units for all residents including seniors for a range of incomes and needs within the Villages and Town through for funding through CDBG or USDA housing rehabilitation grants, and/or working with Oswego County Housing Development Council to implement a housing rehabilitation program.

c. Seek opportunities for an enhanced, graduated senior living and long term care facility (see Brookside Senior Community or Springbrook in Pulaski as models). Due to its central location between Syracuse, Watertown and Oswego on the I81 corridor, the availability of water, the existing and compatible quality of life, and the shortage of senior facilities in the area, the Town of Sandy Creek could be a good location for a senior living development project.

d. Preserve residential densities in the Village to maximize efficient use of the existing infrastructure and resources including ensuring that Village zoning supports second or third floor rental opportunities .

e. Preserve and enhance the existing historic village form and character through the use of specific form-based architectural review and guidelines, preservation incentives and grant programs, and compatibility standards for design and development in all Village commercial and mixed uses.

f. Encourage improved access to food and grocery services in the Villages and create opportunities to tie grocery services in with local farmer's markets.

g. Consider implementing land use regulation or zoning to encourage infill and reuse in existing commercially developed areas and in close proximity to the Villages prior to considering new "green field" development areas for new commercial growth .

h. Ensure that aging infrastructure is identified (including septic systems) and that future needs and improvements are considered in all plans so that upgrades can be made in a timely manner and to avoid infrastructure failures or impacts to environmental or community health.





## Goal 5: Recreation and Cultural Development

The Town of Sandy Creek has always been a haven for lake-related recreation in summer, and it is also in close proximity to major winter recreational resources and events. The Town and Villages have a rich community history of summer life at the lake which was historically shared with visitors from outside the community and made possible through links via rail corridor to major population areas like Syracuse. The hardy year-round community also once supported successful theater establishments, hotels and other seasonal visitor related businesses. These aspects of life in Sandy Creek are still highly valued by Sandy Creek residents as expressed in the 2011 Community Survey. Although the rail corridor no longer brings visitors to Sandy Creek, Route I81 remains a connection to potential visiting populations, but for this potential to be realized, the Town must support recreational and cultural resource development that can provide the basis for a quality of life that is attractive to the community and to visitors.

### **Recommended Actions for Recreation and Cultural Development:**

- a. Establish a recreation and cultural development committee and consider a plan for additional uses for the fairgrounds for year-round events and festivals, and make use of website/social media outreach.
  
- b. Plan and establish an inter-connected network of walkways, bike paths and bike racks that are well-marked with a signage system that is informative and attractive . Link major recreational assets in or near the Town with the Villages with this network of trails and signs.
  
- c. Encourage the establishment of a Town history and interpretive museum in one of the historic Village buildings to showcase the rich recreation-related history of the Town of Sandy Creek and how that history relates to life in Sandy Creek today. Tell the story of the development and life of the Town and Villages through historic photos and documented efforts to save the Town's cultural and environmental resources.
  
- d. Develop plans for improved fishing access to Sandy Creek in or near the Villages as well as public park amenities such as seating, playgrounds, and river viewing areas with trail connections to a Town-wide system of recreation points of interest.
  
- e. Ensure that all development within the village meets required architectural and signage review standards that respect the traditional scale, setbacks, and character of the historic village form.
  
- f. Encourage garden club or other volunteer beautification program for the Village main streets with seasonal displays of flowers, etc.
  
- g. In the Town, carefully consider development prior to approval to be sure it is directed to best-suited sites or site planning to avoid negative visual impacts to the Town, especially those that will result in the loss of valued scenic areas and rural character.



## Strategic Plan & Catalytic Projects

A Strategic Plan is a well thought out, step-by-step strategy that identifies and prioritizes programs and projects that have the most potential to help the community reach its goals and objectives. These projects are known as catalytic projects. Certain projects can jump start community revitalization and development by having directly related positive consequences of their implementation. They result in the generation of other programs or projects that bring economic, cultural, or environmental benefits to a community.

The Strategic Plans should identify focus areas for development, revitalization, conservation, or other priorities. One approach might be a *village gateway corridor* focus with the development of supportive community infrastructure such as complete streets with pedestrian amenities and street trees. Another could be the establishment of *community-wide bikeways, greenways, water trails*, and a well-planned interpretive system to guide visitors through the community and to increase public access to local points of interest. A focus on *reuse and redevelopment of vacant buildings in the villages* might provide low additional income housing or mixed use development where needed. A good strategic plan, based on the comprehensive plan, will identify and prioritize catalytic projects that will work to increase economic opportunities while protecting the existing assets of a community.

### Plan Implementation

All of the work that the community has done thus far in preparing a Comprehensive Plan can be lost without a solid framework for implementation. This framework must be based on available funding resources and realistic expectations in terms of phases of development if the strategies are to result in on-the-ground change. Some programs will be implemented over a long time horizon, others will be a concentrated, short-term effort, but all elements of the Strategic Plan should be considered in terms of budgets and timeframe. This plan calls for the implementation of committees of volunteer community members for each of the goals listed in this plan who work regularly to guide the implementation of the goals and recommendations.

A Comprehensive Plan is a valuable resource a community can use to win significant grant funding from a wide variety of sources. Local committees can form partnerships with various public agencies at the local, county, state and federal levels, and this is advisable. These agencies can often assist communities in their implementation efforts especially if a community has already developed a Vision Plan and a Strategic Plan. It may be a good idea for a community to hire a trained, professional community planner to oversee public initiatives and applying for and implementing grant awards.

Special committees should be established by the Town and Village boards to address the specific focus areas identified in the Strategic Plan. These committees should include members of the community most familiar with the Comprehensive Plan and its guiding principles. Examples of such committees are a *Recreation and Cultural Development, Economic Development, Housing and Community Services, and Environment and Natural Resources Protection*. Through all of these efforts, the town and village boards should pursue joint relationships with other agencies and neighboring municipalities. Planning for, and implementing change can be impacted by, and have impacts on the region as a whole that a community is a part of. Community efforts can often be strengthened and community benefits broadened by cooperative planning and promotional strategies among neighboring communities.

### **Short-Term Focus (0-12 Months)**

- Formally adopt the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to Town Board and Village board approvals, actively seek support from local and regional groups.
- Establish Community Volunteer Committees to address each of the special focus areas represented by the five goals listed in this Plan.
- Make multiple copies of the plan available to these groups and to the public at public organizations such as the local library.
- Establish a community website and use it to announce events and foster community involvement.
- Seek assistance in developing zoning and subdivision regulations that will support the recommendations of the comprehensive plan.
- Determine if any private landowners are encroaching on publicly owned land along waterfront areas.
- Work to identify possible lands available for acquisition by the town or village for community use such as additional public access to the Lake Ontario or the Little Sandy Creek waterfronts.
- Seek and cultivate working relationships with neighboring communities, public agencies, private entities, and non-profit land conservancies in meeting community goals and objectives.
- Establish a lead committee comprised of one member of each of the five goal committees to work together to organize Midterm Focus efforts.
- Begin to review and assess the effectiveness the Comprehensive Plan as well as existing zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations to produce the desired effects and conditions in the community, and consider making updates as necessary to achieve community goals.
- Seek an Environmental Finance Center Rural Water Quality Grant of \$5K to work together with Oswego County Health Dept. to provide outreach and educational material to septic system owners adjacent to North Sandy Pond, regarding the problems with failing systems and possible solutions; identify and summarize the types of existing systems using County parcel data (if available) and their appropriateness relative to soil conditions and other environmental factors; complete a preliminary, GIS-based investigation of the possible location and extent of a collection system and small onsite sewage treatment facility (“package plant”) to address septic failure issues.
- **Midterm Focus (1-3 Years)**
- Work to develop a Strategic Plan with identified catalytic programs and projects.
- Assess the feasibility of priority programs and projects and adjust timelines and budgets accordingly.
- Look for opportunities to join in cooperative planning and development efforts with neighboring municipalities and regional organizations where appropriate.
- Actively pursue opportunities for grant funding for specific programs and projects outlined in the Strategic Plan.

- Actively pursue private donations to the community of land or funds for specific programs and projects outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Actively pursue volunteer committees and groups to supply services needed for specific programs and projects outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Ensure that any private, or public entities (local, state or federal) address the community's vision in any new development or improvement projects, and that adequate compensation is given for any significant impacts on the Town of Sandy Creek or the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona.
- Begin to implement priority programs and projects identified in the Strategic Plan as funding, volunteer labor, or private donations become available.
- Continue to review and assess the effectiveness of goals and recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan as well as existing regulations to produce the desired effects and conditions in the community, and consider making updates as necessary to achieve community goals.

#### ***Long-Term Focus (4-10 Years)***

- Continue to ensure that any private or public entities (local, state or federal) address the community's vision in any new development or improvement projects, and that adequate compensation is given for any significant impacts on the Town of Sandy Creek or the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona.
- Continue to look for opportunities to join in cooperative planning and development efforts with neighboring municipalities and regional organizations where appropriate.
- Continue to actively pursue opportunities for grant funding for specific programs and projects outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Continue to actively pursue private donations to the community of land or funds for specific programs and projects outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Continue to actively pursue volunteer committees and groups to supply services needed for specific programs and projects outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Continue to implement priority programs and projects identified in the Strategic Plan as funding, volunteer labor, or private donations become available.
- Begin to review and assess the effectiveness of implementation of programs and projects from the Strategic Plan to produce the desired effects and conditions in the community.
- Continue to review and assess the effectiveness of goals and recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan as well as existing zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations to produce the desired effects and conditions in the community, and make updates as necessary.
- Consider developing a new Comprehensive Plan.

## Chapter 3: Community Analysis



Looking west along Harwood Drive, Sandy Creek New York

If we could first know where we are,  
and whither we are tending, we could better judge  
what to do, and how to do it.

*- Abraham Lincoln, president*

To adequately plan for the community’s future, and as part of the comprehensive planning process, it is important to understand the history of the Town of Sandy Creek and to determine the existing conditions in the community. This section of the comprehensive plan describes the existing conditions of various components of the town and villages including socio-demographic trends, cultural and natural resources, environmental features, land use composition and regulation, and infrastructure.

### Location

The Town of Sandy Creek is located in the northwest corner of Oswego County, New York and covers a total area of 46.5 square miles. The land is rolling and slopes to the west; the east part of the town is about five hundred feet above Lake Ontario.

Lake Ontario serves as the town’s westernmost boundary, while the Town of Ellisburg in Jefferson County serves as Sandy Creek’s northern border, the Town of Richland serves as the southern border, and the Towns of Boylston serves as the eastern border of Sandy Creek. The Town of Orwell borders Sandy Creek’s southeast corner. Sandy Creek is located approximately 45 miles (45 minutes) north of the City of Syracuse, 27 miles (40 minutes) northeast of the City of Oswego, and 28 miles (30 minutes) south of the City of Watertown (Map 1).

The Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona are found entirely within the Town of Sandy Creek and are adjacent along County Rt. 15, Harwood Drive (formerly called Railroad St.), and County Rt. 22A, Salisbury Street (formerly called School St.). The Village of Sandy Creek encompasses 1.4 square miles (3.7 square kilometers); while the Village of Lacona is 1.0 square miles (2.6 square kilometers). The two Villages are adjacent along Harwood Drive, and lie between the eastern shore of Lake Ontario and the Tug Hill Plateau. The Village of Sandy Creek is centered on Route 11 just west of Interstate 81. The Village of Lacona is centered on the north-south CSX Railroad corridor. Little Sandy Creek runs west throughout the town and the northern portions of the Villages of Lacona and Sandy Creek.

The Town of Sandy Creek lies in the snowbelt region of the eastern Great Lakes, characterized by heavy amounts of lake effect snow and has a regional reputation for heavy snow accumulations and adverse traveling conditions in winter.

**Table 1. Distance and travel time between Sandy Creek and Syracuse, Oswego and Watertown.**

Municipality	Direction from Sandy Creek	Distance from Sandy Creek (miles)	Travel Time from Sandy Creek (minutes)
City of Oswego	Southwest	27	40
City of Syracuse	South	45	45
Watertown	North	28	30



(INSERT MAP 1 Reg Location.pdf)



*During the late nineteenth century, the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona featured many hotels and guest houses reflecting the importance of stage coach travel along the Salt Road (Route 11)*



The Salisbury house of half a century ago was as prominent a public house as the Thomas House of 1925. Here many of our people made their home for a time; and here in Franklin Hall centered the social affairs and donations of the day. About the great fireplace gathered the men as they came to town or came in from the village. It was a temperance house where liquor was never sold while Benjamin F. Salisbury was the proprietor, being exceptional in this respect for those days. It was burned in 1883.

**Salisbury House (Source: Centennial Souvenir History 1825-1925 of the Town of Sandy Creek, Oswego County NY)**

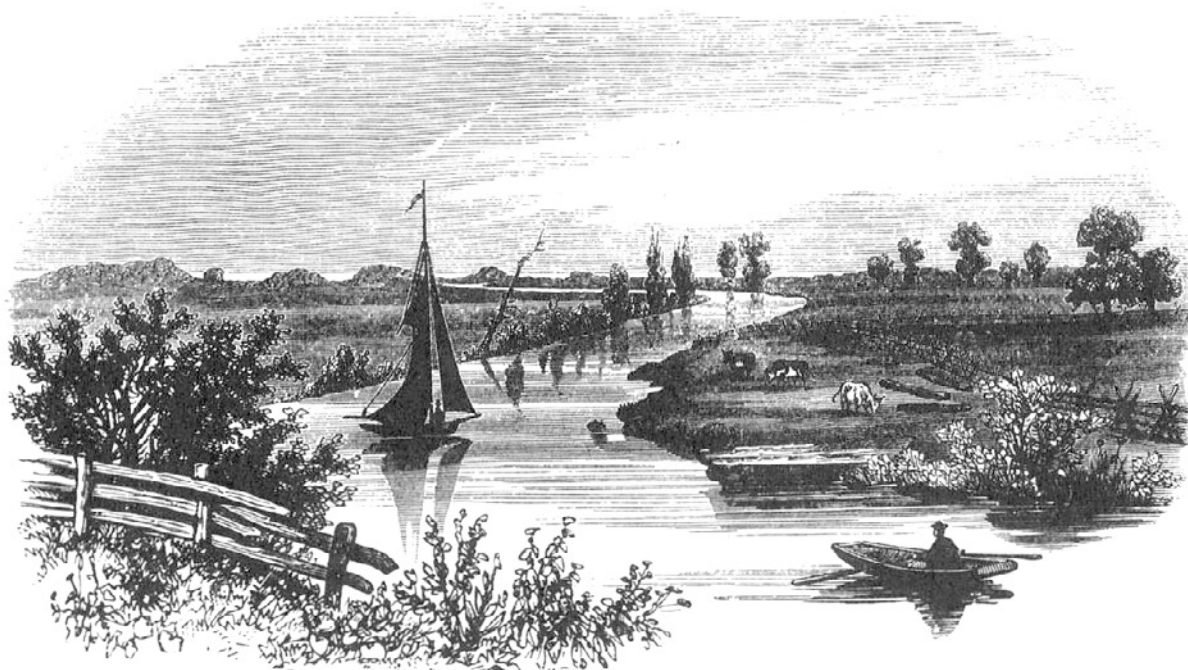
### History of the Community<sup>3</sup>

The Town of Sandy Creek is rich with a history of settlement dating back to the early 1800's. Prior to early nineteenth century settlement, the land and waters today known as the Town of Sandy Creek were seasonal hunting and fishing grounds of Native Americans of the Iroquois Confederacy, and several habitation sites exist in the town. It is assumed that these sites were annual totemic or family hunting and fishing camps occupied only in late summer and early autumn. Native American sites in the Town include the T. R. Blount site, Ballou Road, which included burials (discovered in 1886). Artifacts have been discovered in the post-WW II era on the John Caster Farm, Caster Road. Other sites where artifacts have been found include: Lindsey site, described in an oral history, Henderson Road; a probable site at the southwest corner of Hadley Road and Norton Road, near the south branch of Blind Creek; Wigwam Cove site, on the southeast side of Ouderkirk Road, near Co. Rt. 15; Noyes site, on the east side Co. Rt. 48 almost at the Richland town line; Douglas Towles site (former Kent Homestead), a spring at creek side, on the south side of Frazer Road.<sup>4</sup>

The earliest colonial settlers came to Sandy Creek in 1803 and established residences in the eastern part of what is now the Village of Lacona (Skinner family), in addition to the extreme northwest corner (Lindsey family) of the town. In 1806, the town's first tavern and store were opened. Shortly thereafter, P.T. Titus erected the town's first sawmill on Deer Creek. The first school in town was taught in the house of George Harding in the winter of 1806-7; the teacher was his daughter, Mamrie Harding. In the fall of 1807 a log schoolhouse was built at Lacona and prior to 1812 a similar structure was erected.

<sup>3</sup> (Excerpts taken from [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyoswego/towns/sandycreek/index.html#gaz](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyoswego/towns/sandycreek/index.html#gaz) and Landmarks of Oswego County New York, edited by John C. Churchill, L.L.D., assisted by H. Perry Smith & W. Stanley Child, Syracuse, N.Y., D. Mason & Company Publishers, 1895. )

<sup>4</sup> Source: A Reconnaissance Level Architectural Survey of Oswego County, pg. 934.



**This etching titled “Place of Battle at Sandy Creek” is annotated as follows: “This view is from the bridge, about 100 and fifty rods above the point where the engagement took place....” (Source: *Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812*, by Benson Lossing, 1869, <http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>)**

During the War of 1812, because of the town’s strategic location along the route from Oswego to Sackets Harbor, many settlers and businesses within the town were directed to participate in the war and/or manufacture goods that would support the war effort. The location of Wigwam Cove (known today as North Sandy Pond) on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario which was easily accessible from the St. Lawrence River meant that it was a practical place to land troops and military equipment. In 1814, a British flotilla entered and was captured in south Jefferson County at Big Sandy Creek. Town lore has it that following the battle, some 200 men carried a five ton, 6 inch diameter cable over land on their shoulders, from the battle site at Big Sandy Creek to Sackets Harbor, a distance of about twenty miles, to equip the frigate “Superior” for naval service in the war.

After peace was declared between England and the United States, immigration and settlement began in earnest in Sandy Creek. In the year 1820, the Salisbury family settled in Sandy Creek, and were later involved in the underground railroad. During the same time frame, the Reuben, Rufus, Nathan and Daniel families all settled in the Town all contributing to the financial, social, political, and religious life of the community.

The decade between 1820 and 1830 marked a transition period when passable roads were surveyed and opened in the most populated portions of the town. In 1825, the Town of Sandy Creek contained about 1,615 inhabitants and was officially formed from the Town of Richland. The former Town of Sandy Creek was originally included in the great Boylston tract and formed a part of the survey township of “Rhadamant” or No. 10. The Ridge Road at this time was a busy highway, and at the first town meeting, the sum of \$250 was appropriated for roads and bridges and the usual road districts were designated. In 1826, John B. Smith established a tannery, which employed a large number of men. In the late 1800’s the tannery was lost to fire and upon the site buildings were erected by the Sandy Creek Wood Manufacturing Company, Ltd., for the manufacture of pie plates, hardwood veneer and butter dishes.



**Captain George Best “Hermit of Sandy Pond.” (Source: Sandy Creek History Center, <http://sandycreekny.tripod.com/id12.html>)**

From 1830 to 1840, dairying, especially cheese-making, had become an important industry in the southern part of Sandy Creek. In 1835 cheese making made the locality famous. Col. Thomas S. Meacham, fond of remarkable things, in that year conceived the idea of making a mammoth cheese as a gift for President Andrew Jackson in 1835. Meacham had 150 cows, and for five days their milk was turned into curd and piled into an immense cheese-hoop and press constructed the cheese until it tipped the scales at 1,400 pounds. Forty-eight gray horses drew the wagon on which it rested to Port Ontario, where it was shipped November 15, 1835, by boat moving away amid the firing of cannon and the cheering of the people on its journey to Washington. Colonel Meacham accompanied the gift of cheese along the water route by way of Oswego, Syracuse, Albany, and New York. Reaching Washington the huge cheese was formally presented to the President of the United States in the name of the “governor and people of the State of New York.” In return for the giant cheese, General Jackson presented Colonel Meacham with a dozen bottles of wine.

The Sandy Creek Union School was organized in 1871, the two districts, No.9 and 10 being consolidated. Shortly thereafter, members of the community voted to consolidate districts 9 and 10, comprising the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona, into one Union school district. Four acres of land on Salisbury Street at the end of Academy Street, lying partly in each village was used to construct a two-story brick building in 1872, and the first term was held in the winter of 1872-3.

One of the factors that materially contributed to the prosperity of the Town of Sandy Creek in the mid to late 1800's was the entrance of the Rome and Watertown Railroad through the Village of Lacona. With better means of transportation, new enterprises were encouraged and needed industries were introduced. In the 1870's, the Syracuse Northern Railroad connected with Lacona by way of Pulaski, but was discontinued in 1878 upon the removal of the junction to Richland.



**Looking southwest at the New York Central Railroad Station, Park Street, Lacona, in 1976, Photo by: Marie Parsons (Source: A Reconnaissance Level Architectural Survey of Oswego County.**

Among the leading industries was the Blount Lumber Company, established in 1894. It provided employment to a large number of men and handled millions of feet of lumber in the course of a year. In 1908 Blount was organized as a stock company and was one of the largest hardwood flooring plants in the State of New York.

During the late nineteenth century, the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona featured many hotels and guest houses reflecting the importance of stage coach travel along the Salt Road (Route 11). The Town of Sandy Creek and its two villages suffered disastrous fires throughout the mid to late 1800's. Most of the commercial sections of the villages have been rebuilt over the ashes of former buildings. Fires in 1882, 1884, 1890, 1898 and 1912 destroyed several commercial blocks and the businesses in Sandy Creek and Lacona.



Salisbury Hotel (Source: Sandy Creek History Center, <http://sandycreekny.tripod.com/id12.html>)



Lost to fire in 1912, the California Block on the east side of Main Street in Sandy Creek was named for the investment of the builder known as one of the Old Forty-Niners.

## The Village of Sandy Creek

In 1812, only two or three frame houses and a few log buildings existed in what was originally called the Creek Settlement. More significant settlement of the village of Sandy Creek began in the 1820's when pioneers from New England arrived building modest residences, retail establishments and small water-powered industries along the south banks of Little Sandy Creek, on what is now Harwood Drive. In 1824-1825 the little settlement where the Salt Road (Route 11) crossed Sandy Creek became known as Washingtonville. Eventually, though, the title of Sandy Creek prevailed. Throughout the 1820's a fulling and carding mill was in active operation in the Village. By the mid 1830's the village settlement had grown to include a few stores, taverns, gristmills, churches, blacksmith shops, shoemakers, a distillery, and a woolen mill.

The Syracuse-Watertown Plank Road (now known as Main Street and U.S. Rt. 11) opened in 1849 and provided the first overland link between the growing manufacturing and commercial centers at Watertown and Syracuse. It brought commercial, and later tourist traffic through the Village of Sandy Creek. Early tourism along with trade based on the prosperous local farm economy stimulated businesses such as hotels, blacksmith and harness shops, and stores. Commercial activity was then concentrated at the crossroads of Main Street and Harwood Drive.

In the year 1849, a group of citizens purchased a town bell at the Troy Bell foundry. The bell was very large and heavy, and tuned at low G with a deep, rich tone. The bell was rung at times of pleasure and at times of sorrow. March 4, 1851, at a town meeting held at the house of B. F. Salisbury, "it was voted that the town should raise two hundred and fifty dollars to erect a Town house, according to an act of the legislature passed May 5,



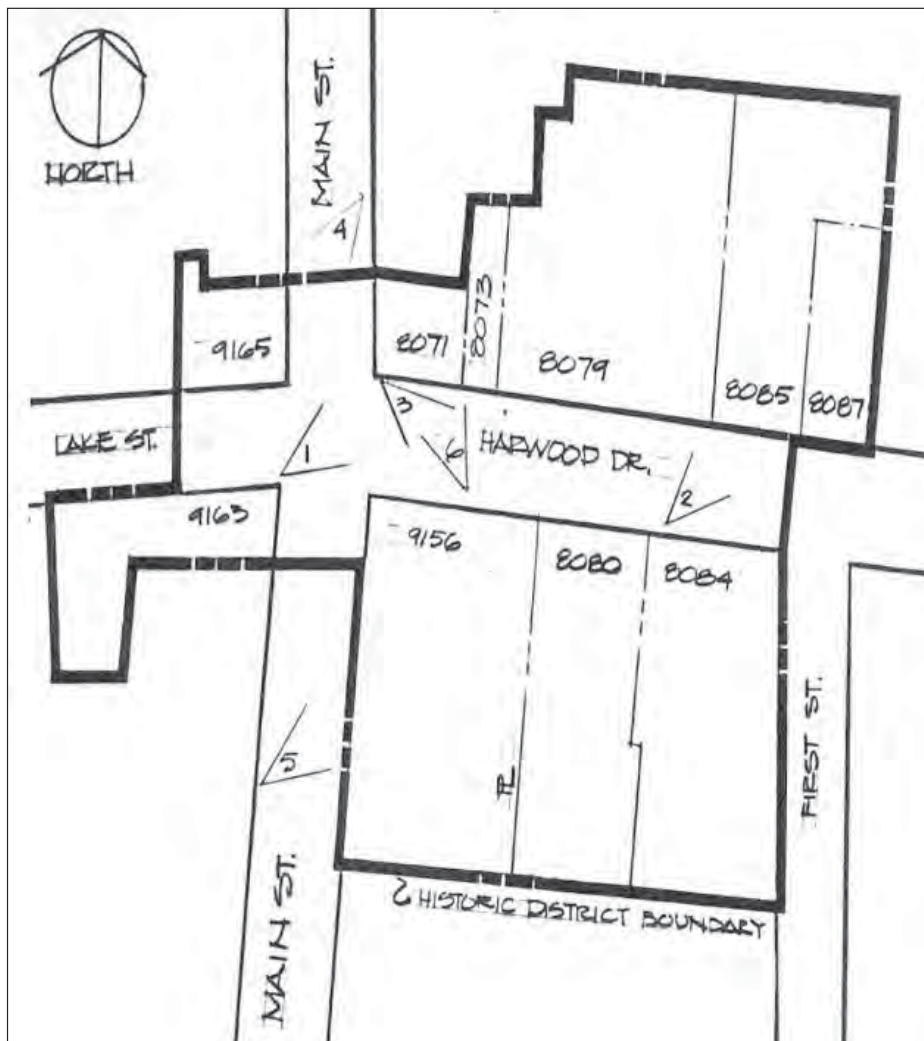
Sandy Creek looking westward, c.1940 (Source: Sandy Creek History Center, <http://sandycreekny.tripod.com/id12.html>)

1847.” A building was erected and a belfry added, and with the consent of all, the bell was hung and was rung at nine o’clock in the morning calling the children to their school duties; at twelve o’clock, noon, the hour for mid-day meal; one o’clock p.m., when the noon hour was over, and at nine o’clock p.m., the hour of rest.

The Village of Sandy Creek was incorporated in 1878, and on March 13 of that year the first village meeting was held. The first Village President/Mayor was Hamilton E. Root who served from 1878 to 1880.

By the late 1800’s, the Village of Sandy Creek featured a private bank, opera house, hotel, steam granite and marble works, and the Sandy Creek Wood Manufacturing Company, Ltd. The Allen Opera House, was eventually purchased by the Sandy Creek Grange, and razed in 1960 for the construction of I81. Prior to and just after the turn of the twentieth century the Allen Opera House hosted professional touring company productions and feature films such as “The Great Train Robbery.”

In 1891, the village corporation constructed the water works system. Water was originally taken from a spring on a farm owned by David Hamer, two miles east of the Village of Sandy Creek, who generously donated to the village board the land surrounding the spring, and all riparian rights. Since its inception, the waterworks has expanded areas served and wellfields accessed to provide public water to the residents of the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona.



Map showing the extent of the Sandy Creek Historic District added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. The Historic District includes 37 acres, 14 buildings along Harwood Drive and Lake Street dating from 1825 to 1949





Looking west along Harwood Drive in the Village of Lacona, c.1915.

### The Village of Lacona

East Sandy Creek became the Village of Lacona, named after Laconia, a province in Greece. Lacona grew from a sparsely settled farming community into an incorporated village in 1880 following the completion of the railroad that was established in a north-south direction through the Village in 1851. Situated on the banks of Little Sandy Creek, which flows westerly through its center, Lacona grew around enterprises connected with water power, the Salt Road (Route 11) and the railroad also centered there. By the 1860's the village settlement included a gristmill, general store, a drug store, machine shop, post office and the Lacona House, which was a private residential dwelling converted in to a hotel. In 1885, the Lacona Fire Department, consisting of one engine company and a hose company was organized.

By 1910, one could travel by one of four local passenger trains each way from the Village of Lacona between Syracuse and Watertown. Connections were available at Richland for Oswego, Rome and Utica, and by overnight sleeper service to New York City. The Railroad brought in the mail and everything not locally produced, and carried away local products including milk, cheese, strawberries, melons, hay, wood flooring and other wood products manufactured locally. Commerce of all kinds flourished in Lacona including hospitality at local hotels and inns. Summer residents travelled by train to stay at camps on Sandy Pond. Natural gas piped from a field of gas pockets near Lake Ontario supplied the gas street lamps and gas stoves in the Village.<sup>5</sup> In 1913, a joint meeting of the Sandy Creek and Lacona Village Boards voted to connect the two Village water mains. It was 1948 before the Sandy Creek and Lacona Joint Waterworks was established.

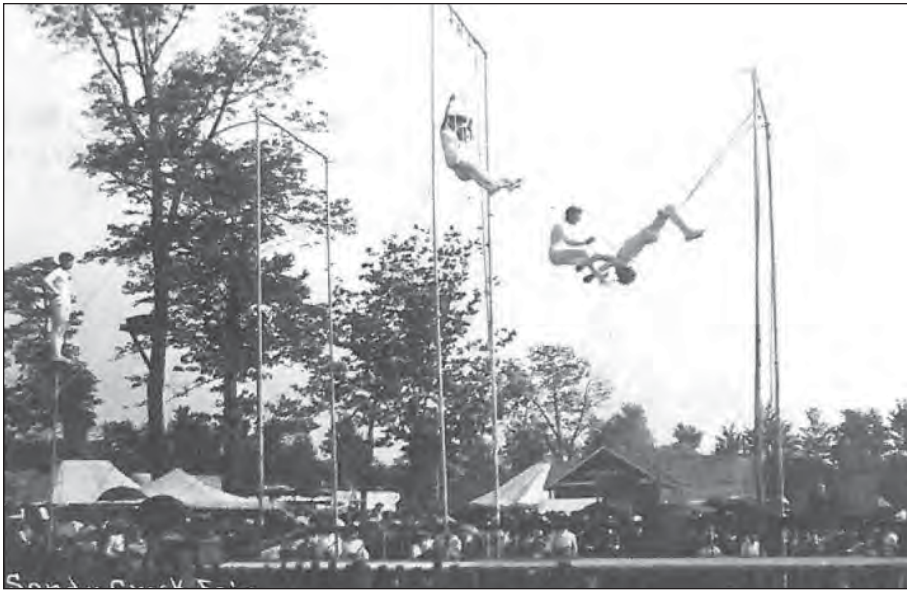
Although there are currently no museums, art galleries or theaters in the Town, the Village of Lacona does have a history of theatrical events. Austen Hall, still standing today, was built by Dr. Frederick Austen c.1913 and first used for movies in c.1919. Such early movie stars as William S. Hart, Theda Bara, Mary Garden, Will Rogers, Pauline Frederick, Mabel Normand, Mary Pickford and many others were featured. In addition to being used as a movie theater, Austen's Hall featured the Edward White Medicine Show and was the location where community dances were held.

5

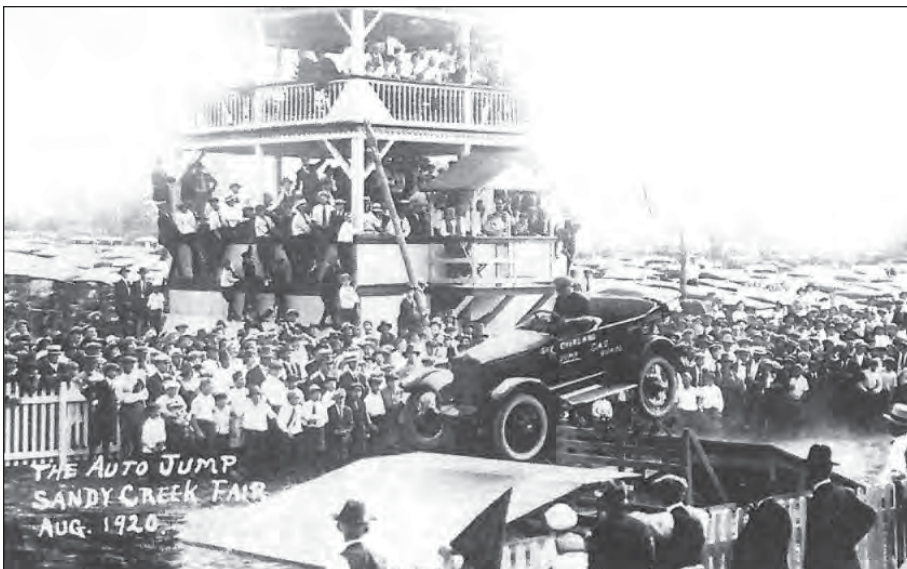
From *Village of Lacona 125 Years of History*, Essay by Perry W. Hastings January 2002

## The Sandy Creek Fair and Grange

The fair, once known as “Old Sandy” is today known as the Oswego County Fair and it has been held every summer in the same Sandy Creek location since 1858. The 152 year-old annual event has traditionally featured prize livestock, home made baked goods, hand crafts, talent contests, parades, picnics, parachute jumps, horse races, stunts, drag races, food and drink, and exhibits and amusements of all kinds.



Acrobats perform on their flying trapeze for crowds of visitors at the Sandy Creek Fair in 1911.



The “Auto Jump”, a 14’ leap of faith judged from the high judges stand in the background was witnessed by throngs of fair-goers in 1920.



**Fair-goers on the very same grounds of today's Sandy Creek Fair at around the turn of the 20th century.**

The two-day long Sandy Creek Fair, organized by the Sandy Creek, Richland, Orwell & Boylston Agricultural Society, was held for the first time in 1858 on the fairgrounds at Franklin and Ellisburg Streets in the Village of Sandy Creek on land owned by Oren R. Earl. Mr. Earl later gifted the land to agricultural society which in 1873 became a New York State Grange.

“The Grange, officially called the Patrons of Husbandry, is a nation-wide farm organization and fraternal order. In 1866, Oliver Hudson Kelley (1826-1913), an employee of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, was sent by the government on tour of the southern states to ascertain the conditions of the farmland after the war. Kelley inspected the devastated land and the impoverished people; he conceived the idea of a fraternity of farm people from both the North and the South. The organization would work to repair the war-torn communities in the south and would help to ameliorate the hatred between the regions.

The seven founders of the National Grange were Kelley, William Saunders (one of the nation's greatest landscape architects; he designed the cemetery at Gettysburg). William M. Ireland (chief clerk in the finance department of the Post Office Dept.), Dr. John Trimble (an Episcopalian minister working at the time in the Treasury Dept.), John R. Thompson (a Civil War veteran who also worked in the Treasury Dept.) Aaron B. Gorsh (a retired Universalist minister who worked in the Agriculture Dept.), and Francis Marion McDowell, a prominent fruit grower of Steuben County, New York. Later, Miss Caroline Hall of Boston was recognized as a founder because of her work in forming the Minnesota State Grange (the first state Grange in the nation) and her insistence upon equality for men and women in the order.

On December 4, 1867, the National Grange was formally organized with William Saunders as master and Oliver H. Kelley as secretary. Potomac Grange No. 1 of Washington, D.C., became the trial Grange to work out the newly formed ritual and degree work.

The name “Grange” was selected because old English farm estates were called “granges;” offices of the Grange were named for the employees of these English estates. (Taken from 100 Year History of the New York State Grange: 1873-1973: by L. Roy Alexander, no publisher listed. 1973. pp 108-109).

An important aspect of the Grange organization was the inclusion, from the beginning, of women in its membership. Only one other social group of the period, the Independent Order of Good Templars, a pre-Civil War temperance group, included women as fully equal members. Some Grange men were fearful that admitting women might encourage feminist excesses (that is, equal suffrage!), but most believed women could enjoy equality without untoward consequences. As Marti points out, the Grange “admitted women to full membership, reserved four offices for them while excluding them from none of the others, and refused to charter state organizations when those rules were not followed (“Sisters of the Grange: Rural Feminism in the Late Nineteenth Century” by Donald B. Marti. *Agricultural History*, Vol. 58, #3, July, 1984. p248). In 1893, the National Grange adopted an equal suffrage resolution, later referred the subject back to the states, but, in 1915, endorsed an equal suffrage amendment to the United States Constitution.

A leading feminist of Oswego County and a Congressional Medal of Honor winner, Dr. Mary Walker, attended the New York State Grange in 1892 and praised the Grange for its willingness to give equality to women (from *Journal of Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Session of the New York State Grange, 1892*, pp 33-34). Fredonia Grange #1 in Chautauqua County, New York, became the first dues paying Grange to be organized in New York State (1868). At the end of the fourth year of Grange activity there were 1,005 individual Granges in the United States. By 1875, 11,723 men and women were members of Granges in New York and membership in the U.S. totaled more than 750,000.

Important achievements of the Grange in the U.S. include: the removal of the isolation of the farm home; the promotion of rural education; the encouragement of farm men and women as logical thinkers, writers and fluent speakers; participation in political issues such as railroad regulation, rural mail delivery, establishment of agricultural colleges and experimental stations; the promotion of farm cooperatives, the provision of insurance for farm families, and encouraging the availability of rural phone and electric service.

In Oswego County, forty-nine Granges were organized in the 1873-1973 period. Of that number, nine are still active: Volney, Mt. Pleasant, Ricard, Ne-ah-ta-wan-ta (reorganized as the combination of Lower Oswego Falls, Bowen’s Corners, and Granby Granges), Sandy Creek, Palermo (Mexico Grange has joined with Palermo), Granite (also located in the Town of Palermo), Central Square, and West Monroe.

Of the 26 Juvenile Granges organized between 1904 and 1973, only the Sandy Creek Juvenile Grange was active recently, but with the decline in agriculture in the Town, it too is now inactive.<sup>6</sup>



“Advertising Ice Cream Cones” for the Sandy Creek Fair in 1907 (Source: Sandy Creek fair 150 Years, 2007)

6 From *HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES of OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK, A Reconnaissance Level Survey 1999* by Helen Moore Breitbeck, Ph.D., Coordinator: Katharina Bergmann Wilder,

## Population

According to the 2000 United States Census (the Census), 3,863 people reside in the Town of Sandy Creek. Since 1960, the Town of Sandy Creek's population has increased by 54% and has consistently remained higher than that of the Towns of Ellisburg, Boylston, and Orwell. Richland's population has always been higher than Sandy Creek's and the adjacent towns. Oswego County's population has increased by over 40% since 1960. Jefferson County has experienced a 27% increase in population over four decades; while Onondaga County has only experienced an 8% increase.

**Table 2. Population trends for the Towns of Sandy Creek, Richland, Ellisburg, Boylston, Orwell and the Counties of Oswego, Jefferson and Onondaga. Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Sandy Creek	Richland	Ellisburg	Boylston	Orwell	Oswego Co.	Jefferson Co.	Onondaga Co.
1960	2,506	4,554	3,285	293	663	86,118	87,835	423,028
1970	2,644	5,324	3,385	276	836	100,697	88,508	472,746
1980	3,256	5,594	3,312	390	1,031	113,901	88,151	463,920
1990	3,451	5,917	3,386	443	1,171	121,771	110,943	468,973
2000	3,863	5,824	3,541	505	1,254	122,377	111,738	458,336
2010	3,939	5,718	3,474	549	1,167	122,109	116,229	467,026

The population in the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona has increased by 13% and 6%, respectively; while the population in the Villages of Ellisburg and Mannsville has decreased by over 10% from 1960 to 2000. Pulaski's population continues to increase and is higher than that of the surrounding communities.

**Table 3. Population trends for the Villages of Sandy Creek, Lacona, Pulaski, Ellisburg, and Mannsville from 1960 to 2000. Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Sandy Creek	Lacona	Pulaski	Ellisburg	Mannsville
1960	697	556	2,256	328	446
1970	731	556	2,480	337	494
1980	765	582	2,415		
1990	793	593	2,525	246	444
2000	789	590	2,398	269	400
2010	771	582	2,365	244	354

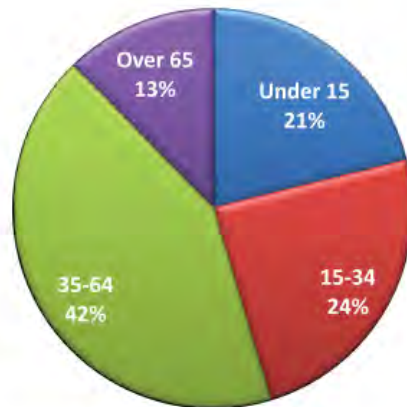
*Since 1960, the Town of Sandy Creek's population has increased by 54% and has consistently remained higher than that of the Towns of Ellisburg, Boylston, and Orwell*

The fluctuation in the population of the Town of Sandy Creek and the surrounding communities during the last 40 years reflects social, cultural, and demographic trends evident among municipalities throughout the nation. The trend in recent decades toward smaller family size, more single-parent and single-person households, and people migrating from the urban centers outward to suburban and rural areas have contributed to population decreases in many Village centers, while the population of rural towns such as Sandy Creek, Richland, Ellisburg, Boylston, and Orwell continues to increase.

## Population By Age Group

According to the 2000 Census, the majority of residents in the Town of Sandy Creek are between the ages of 35 to 64. Residents between the ages of 15 and 34 comprise the second largest age group in the town. In 2000, the median age of all the residents in the town was 37.8 years.

**Age of Sandy Creek Residents**



According to the 2000 Census, the majority of residents in the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona are between the ages of 25 and 44. People under the age of 18 comprise the second largest age group in the Village of Lacona; while residents between the ages of 45 and 64 are the second largest group in the Village of Sandy Creek. In 2000, the median age of the residents in the Village of Lacona was 35.5 years and 37.2 years in the Village of Sandy Creek.

## Household Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, there were a total of 1,543 households in the Town of Sandy Creek in which 31.0% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 54.1% were married couples living together, 9.4% had a female householder with no husband present, and 31.0% were non-families. The average household size was 2.50 persons and the average family size was 2.97 persons. The total number of owner-occupied housing units in the Town of Sandy Creek has been slightly decreasing since 1970. In 1970, 90.2% of the housing stock was owner-occupied and by the year 2000 almost 86% of the housing units were owner occupied, according to the Census. According to the 2000 Census, 76.3% of the housing units in the town were owner occupied.

Within the Village of Sandy Creek, there were a total of 311 households in which 30.2% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 51.8% were married couples living together, 11.3% had a female householder with no husband present, and 32.8% were non-families. The average household size was 2.54 persons and the average family size was 3.04 persons. According to the 2000 Census, 65.9% of the housing units in the town were owner occupied.

In the Village of Lacona, a total of 243 households (34.6%) had children under the age of 18 living with them, 42.8% were married couples living together, 15.6% had a female householder with no husband present, and 35.8% were non-families. The average household size was 2.43 persons and the average family size was 2.97 persons.

*Rapid residential development of the surrounding open lands, especially in former agricultural and lake shore areas is not a positive development profile for a rural historic Town experiencing rapidly accelerating population growth.*

## Housing

In consideration of the following data, some important observations should be noted. While population in the Town of Sandy Creek has grown tremendously, some 68% in the past 40 years, and growth in the number of housing units in the Town has reached 54% in that same period. Meanwhile, vacant housing units have increased in the Village of Sandy Creek by 25%, and by 29% in the Village of Lacona.

Since 1970, the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona have seen a much slower rate of population growth than has the Town, only 9%. The total number of housing units in the Village of Sandy Creek has increased, but also at a much slower rate than that of the Town of Sandy Creek. From 1970 to 1990, 95 new homes or housing units were constructed in the Village of Sandy Creek. From 1990 to 2000, only 6 new units were built. Residential development in the Village may continue to increase, but it may be at a very slow rate unless land in the Village is made available for infill development.

Since 1970, the total number of housing units in the Village of Lacona has increased, but at a much slower rate than that of the Town of Sandy Creek and the Village of Sandy Creek. Fewer than 60 homes or housing units were constructed from 1970 to 1990. An additional 6 homes were built between 1990 and 2000. As in the case of the Village of Sandy Creek, within the Village of Lacona, new residential development can be located on parcels of land converted to residential use or on vacant parcels that may present opportunities for infill development.

The trend away from residential development in traditional urban centers and toward rapid residential development of the surrounding open lands, especially in former agricultural and lake shore areas is not a positive development profile for a rural historic Town experiencing rapidly accelerating population growth.

**Table 4. Housing unit totals for several municipalities in Oswego County.**  
Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.

	Town of Richland	Village of Pulaski	Town of Sandy Creek	Village of Sandy Creek	Village of Lacona	Town of Ellisburg	Town of Boylston	Town of Orwell
1970	1,973	877	1,422	237	206		176	388
1980	2,434	1,040	2,030	283	228		234	592
1990	2,636	1,147	2,465	332	265	1,531	263	650
2000	2,890	1,155	2,607	338	271	1,781	333	701
2010	2,766	1,188	2,653	329	270	1,902	296	800

### Vacant Housing

United States Census data indicates that in general, the number of vacant housing units in municipalities across the Central New York Region has continued to decline with the exception of the Town of Richland, and the Villages of Pulaski and Lacona. The Village of Lacona showed an increase by 47% in vacant housing between the 1980s and 2000. In contrast, vacant housing units in the Village of Sandy Creek decreased some 21% between 1990 and 2000.

Across central the New York region, including several counties and the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the data reflects an over-all increase in the number of vacant housing units (averaging at approximately 20%) between the years 1990 and 2000. The Syracuse MSA and Cortland County showed the steepest increases in vacant housing units at 40 and 33 percent respectively. The more rural Madison County had

the smallest increase in housing vacancies at six percent. These contrasting statistics in vacant housing units are reflective, at least partially, of the gradual loss of manufacturing jobs in the industrial sector across central New York.

**Table 5. The total number of vacant housing units in several municipalities.**  
Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.

	Sandy Creek	Richland	Ellisburg	Boylston	Orwell	Oswego Co.	Jefferson Co.	Onondaga Co.
1960						4,001		
1970	42	345			23	3,678		6,658
1980	95	173			43	2,378	2,430	11,430
1990	1,204	444	388	110	301	6,114	12,668	12,980
2000	1,064	633	512	140	282	7,309	14,002	19,527
2010	1,043	502	646	89	381	7,198	14,515	14,671

### **Owner Occupied Housing**

According to the 2005-2006 Profile for New York State, owner-occupied housing surpassed 67% on average state-wide by 2004. Owner occupied housing increased between 1990 and 2000 across the Central New York Region including a seven percent increase with 2,143 units added in Oswego County. In the Town of Sandy Creek, owner-occupied housing units have grown some 58% over the past 40 years, but owner-occupied housing is still only 45% of the total number of housing units in the Town. The total number of housing units in the Town of Sandy Creek continues to rise, at a slightly faster rate than the increases in population. According to the data presented in the Census, the greatest surge in new housing units in the Town of Sandy Creek was during the 1980's when 435 homes were constructed in 10 years, and from 1990 to 2000, another 142 new homes were built. Many of these new housing units were constructed on large lots consuming rural open space, or in new waterfront developments throughout the town. Rural, eastern Lake Ontario communities surrounding Sandy Creek are experiencing similar trends in housing unit growth.

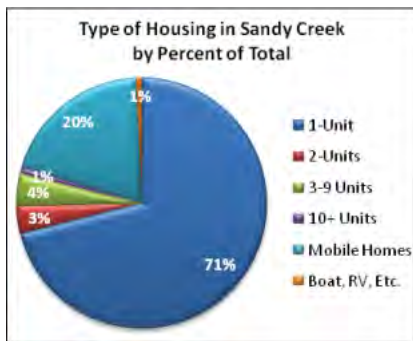
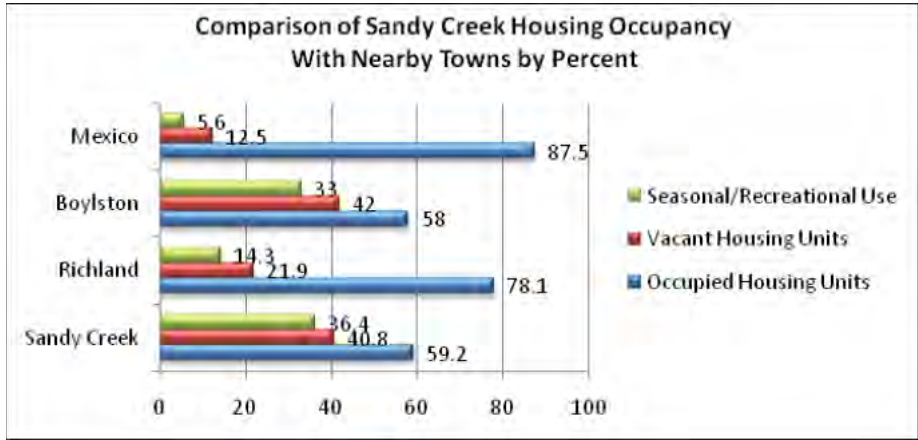
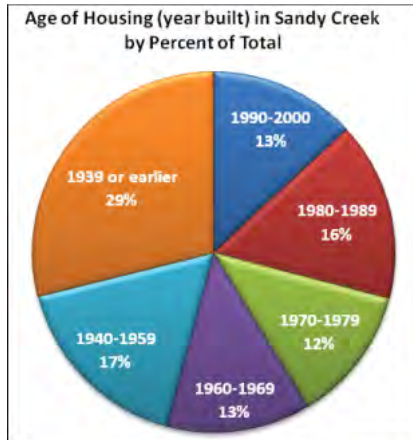
**Table 6. Number of owner-occupied housing units. Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Sandy Creek	Richland	Ellisburg	Boylston	Orwell	Oswego Co.	Jefferson Co.	Onondaga Co.
1970	1,280	1,567		73	354	25,897	na	90,976
1980	1,814	1,804		124	547	32,842	32,276	165,677
1990	2,184	1,886	915	136	603	37,092	35,107	112,990
2000	1,167	2,136	1,037	167	617	40,431	37,908	120,923
2010	1,257	1,526	1,032	178	351	33,504	25,278	121,374

Much of the existing residential stock in the villages dates to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These well-constructed, often architecturally significant homes can be opportunities for preservation or rehabilitation efforts. The housing stock in the Town of Sandy Creek is diverse in architectural style and age. 29% of the housing stock was built prior to 1939, and the median age of housing in the town is 1962.



Approximately 36% of the total housing stock in the Town of Sandy Creek was identified as seasonal, as compared to 41% vacant, and 59% occupied, based on U.S. Census data. The Town of Sandy Creek has a large percentage of mobile homes at 20% of the total. 71% of dwellings are single unit, 4% are 3-9 units, 3% duplexes, and 1% or less are 10+ units or boats or recreational vehicles



**Median Housing Value**

According to findings in the U.S. Census 2000, the median value of a home in the United States was \$119,600. This value represented an increase, nationally of 18 percent over the 1990 value of \$101,100, after adjusting for inflation. Of central New York Counties, Oswego County fared better over-all between 1990 and 2000, with a 14 percent increase in the median housing value, up by almost \$10,000. Despite this increase, the median housing value in Oswego County is less than most of the adjacent counties, with the exception of Jefferson County. Onondaga County reported the highest median housing value (\$85,400) in 2000 and was closely followed by Madison County (\$81,500). Cayuga County had the greatest increase in median housing values at 27 percent. Throughout the Central New York Region, median housing values increased about 15 percent between 1990 and 2000, at an average of \$78,200, which is approximately \$4,000 higher than the values reported for Oswego County.

According to the 2000 Census, the median household value in the Town of Sandy Creek increased by over \$15,000 between 1990 and 2000 to \$73,200, an increase of about 21% over the 1990 value of \$57,900. A 15% increase in median value is evident in the 1990 to 2000 data for the Village of Sandy Creek, and a 19% increase for the Village of Lacona. Compared with adjacent communities, the median housing value the town was higher than any other, indicating a valuable asset to the community.

**Table 7. Median housing values for several counties, the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and the Central New York (CNY) Region. Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Cayuga County	Cortland County	Jefferson County	Madison County	Onondaga County	Oswego County	Syracuse MSA	CNY*
1990	\$59,500	\$66,000	\$59,600	\$68,900	\$80,600	\$64,900	\$76,900	\$67,980
2000	\$75,300	\$74,700	\$68,200	\$81,500	\$85,400	\$74,200	\$82,500	\$78,220
2010	\$99,800	\$101,500	\$128,000	\$115,900	\$129,600	\$91,200	\$119,900	\$107,600

\* Average value for the Central New York Region, which includes Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga

**Median Monthly Gross Rent**

The median monthly gross rent for the United States as a whole in 2000 was \$602, a 5.4 percent increase over the \$571 median for 1990. By contrast, the median monthly gross rent in the Town of Sandy Creek rose 29 percent in that same period while remaining at only 81 percent of the national median for 2000. This data reveals both a growth in demand, and comparatively affordable housing in the Town of Sandy Creek. The average median monthly gross rent for the ten statistical areas rose 26 percent between 1990 and 2000. The Town of Orwell showed the most dramatic increase at 51 percent in that period.

**Table 8. Median housing values for several municipalities in Oswego County. Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Town of Richland	Village of Pulaski	Town of Sandy Creek	Village of Sandy Creek	Village of Lacona	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico	Town of Albion	Village of Altmar	Town of Orwell
1990	\$66,800	\$68,300	\$57,900	\$57,500	\$55,600	\$63,600	\$63,300	\$57,100	\$45,000	\$46,700
2000	\$72,200	\$72,400	\$73,200	\$67,300	\$68,500	\$74,200	\$68,400	\$62,500	\$60,300	\$61,400
2010	\$84,800	\$88,900	\$90,700	\$75,400	\$88,100	\$90,000	\$96,300	\$79,600	\$78,800	\$78,600

Across the central New York region, the median monthly gross rent increased an average of approximately 25 percent between 1990 and 2000. At \$504 in 2000, central New York remained at approximately 88 percent of the national average median monthly gross rent of \$571. These comparisons reveal an element of potential economic opportunity for the region, Oswego County, the Town of Sandy Creek, and the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona through growing yet competitive rental markets.

**Table 9. The median monthly gross rent collected for rental units in several municipalities throughout Oswego County. Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Town of Richland	Village of Pulaski	Town of Sandy Creek	Village of Sandy Creek	Village of Lacona	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico	Town of Albion	Village of Altmar	Town of Orwell
1990	\$369	\$371	\$388	\$393	\$392	\$398	\$392	\$381	\$413	\$375
2000	\$468	\$431	\$488	\$503	\$450	\$502	\$472	\$492	\$505	\$566
2010	\$609	\$564	\$789	\$660	\$692	\$606	\$581	\$650	\$625	\$800

Within the Town of Sandy Creek, there is only one senior citizen housing complex, located on Route 11. The Creekside Apartments complex consists of 20 units of senior rental housing spread out over 3 buildings, in addition to a community room and gathering place, and also includes family living apartments. The setting of the complex is about one half mile north of the Village of Sandy Creek on the rural edge.

There are also a number of low-income, senior, and assisted living housing opportunities are located about 6 miles south of Sandy Creek in the Village of Pulaski. Springbrook Apartments, located on North Jefferson Street adjacent to the Evergreens Home, has 119 apartments available for rent. Springbrook Apartments, Inc constructed the high-rise apartment complex in 1972 and continues to serve as the owner and operator. There are 63 efficiency apartments and 56 one bedroom (~650 square feet) apartments in the

**Table 10. The median monthly gross rent collected for rental units in several counties, the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and the Central New York Region (CNY). Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**

	Cayuga County	Cortland County	Jefferson County	Madison County	Onondaga County	Oswego County	Syracuse MSA	CNY*
1990	\$391	\$396	\$400	\$398	\$440	\$392	\$431	\$403
2000	\$482	\$471	\$486	\$509	\$550	\$507	\$535	\$504
2010	\$631	\$672	\$803	\$703	\$708	\$669	\$702	\$677

\* Average value for the Central New York Region, which includes Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego County. **Data provided by the United States Census Bureau.**



**Creekside Apartments on Route 11 in Sandy Creek, 2009.**



**Springbrook Apartments in the Village of Pulaski, 2007.**



**Maple Manor Adult Home in the Pulaski, 2007.**

complex. Currently, there are no vacancies. It generally takes 6 months to a year, after being placed on the waiting list, for an apartment to become available for a new tenant. Approximately 40% of the tenants receive rental subsidies while 10% of the apartments at Springbrook are rented at fair market value (income does not exceed \$48,132). The remaining apartments are rented without income restrictions or rental subsidies.

The Maple Manor Adult Home, on Canning Factory Road, provides independent and assisted living for the elderly and disabled. The facility was purchased in 1983 by James E. Kane and has undergone significant renovations since then. This facility, located in a country setting, has the potential to expand and accommodate additional patients. Maple Manor currently has 24 beds and provides 24-hour supervision to all patients. There is a long waiting list of those wishing to reside at Maple Manor.

The Evergreens Home is another assisted living complex owned by James E. Kane, since 1983. It is located within the Village of Pulaski on North Jefferson Street, approximately 4 miles from the Maple Manor Adult Home and adjacent to the Springbrook Apartment Complex. The Evergreens Home is a 24-bed facility that provides 24-hour supervision. Currently, there are no vacancies at the Evergreens Home. There is, however, currently a waiting list filled with people that would like to move in.

**Per Capita Income**

Per capita income, according to the United States Census Bureau is defined as the mean money income received by every man, woman, and child in a geographic area. It is derived by dividing the total income of all people 15 years old and over in a geographic area by the total population in that area. This measure is rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

Money income includes amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income.

According to the 2010 Census, the per capita income for residents of Oswego County was \$21,611. This figure represents an increase of over \$14,242 from the 2000 Census, but is still less than the average per capita income for the Central New York Region as a whole. The county with the greatest per capita income is Onondaga County followed by Cayuga County. The Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area’s per capita income was \$25,905, as reported in the 2010 Census.

**Table 11. Per capita income for several counties, the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and the Central New York (CNY) Region. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.**

	Cayuga County	Cortland County	Jefferson County	Madison County	Onondaga County	Oswego County	Syracuse MSA	CNY*
1990	\$11,671	\$11,228	\$11,160	\$12,334	\$14,703	\$11,792	\$13,918	\$12,346
2000	\$18,003	\$16,622	\$16,202	\$19,105	\$21,336	\$16,853	\$20,002	\$18,383
2010	\$23,008	\$21,634	\$22,649	\$23,660	\$27,385	\$21,611	\$25,905	\$23,460

**Table 12. Per capita income for several municipalities in Oswego County. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.**

	Richland	Pulaski	Sandy Creek	Sandy Creek (V)	Lacona	Mexico	Mexico (V)	Albion	Altmar	Orwell
1990	\$11,937	\$12,578	\$12,015	\$10,903	\$13,554	\$12,828	\$13,316	\$10,628	\$10,604	\$8,423
2000	\$16,780	\$16,458	\$17,228	\$17,297	\$16,418	\$17,498	\$18,228	\$16,022	\$19,333	\$15,256
2010	\$22,905	\$26,947	\$22,622	\$19,862	\$22,020	\$25,944	\$24,721	\$21,625	\$13,957	\$19,249

**Median Family Income**

Over the past thirty years, the median family income in the Town of Sandy Creek, Villages of Sandy Creek and surrounding communities has continued to increase. Within the last 10 years, between the 1990 and 2000 Census, the median family income in the Village of Sandy Creek exceeded that of the Town. By comparison, the median family income for all nearby communities is lower than that of the Village of Sandy Creek.

Although the Town of Sandy Creek median family income has continued to increase in recent years, it is important to note that according to the U.S. Census of 2000, it remained at a level of approximately 82% of the national average median family income of \$50,046. The Village of Sandy Creek median family income in 2000 was approximately 94% of the national average.

In Oswego County, the median family income has increased by almost \$10,000 since the 1990 Census. Compared to the adjacent counties, families in Oswego County make less money than most with the exception being Jefferson and Cortland County, in addition to the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area. Since 1990, the greatest increase in median family income was reported in Madison County, with an increase of nearly \$14,250.

**Table 13. Median family income for several municipalities in Oswego County. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.**

	Town of Richland	Village of Pulaski	Town of Sandy Creek	Village of Sandy Creek	Village of Lacona	Town of Ellisburg	Village of Ellisburg	Town of Orwell
1980	\$17,955	\$18,800	\$17,444	\$17,404	\$16,591			\$14,943
1990	\$33,101	\$34,044	\$31,290	\$32,159	\$32,604	\$28,426	\$29,375	\$23,571
2000	\$43,564	\$40,089	\$41,089	\$47,188	\$41,111	\$40,903	\$45,313	\$37,500
2010	\$58,134	\$57,578	\$55,400	\$55,167	\$62,857	\$45,000	\$48,182	\$52,333

**Table 14. Median family income for several counties, the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and the Central New York (CNY) Region. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.**

	Cayuga County	Cortland County	Jefferson County	Madison County	Onondaga County	Oswego County	Syracuse MSA	CNY*
1990	\$32,736	\$32,517	\$29,535	\$33,644	\$38,816	\$33,888	\$35,449	\$34,320
2000	\$44,973	\$42,204	\$39,296	\$47,889	\$51,876	\$43,821	\$39,750	\$46,153
2010	59,593	55,704	\$51,834	60,152	\$65,929	\$56,364	63,516	59,548

\* Average value for the Central New York Region, which includes Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego County



## Economic Base

The economy of the Town of Sandy Creek has changed considerably over the last century and especially during the most recent few decades. The dense and continuous forests, once predominant in the Town, led to the establishment of a strong lumber industry in the community. As late as 1860 there were eleven saw mills and two shingle mills, and other kindred establishments in active operation. The manufacturing of potash and the sawing of lumber was the major source of income, in addition to silvicultural practices. As the lumber resource thinned, related activities gave way to agriculture in soils well adapted to raising grain, hay, corn, potatoes and fruit and eventually dairy farming. In the early 1900's, dairy farming was conducted on an extensive scale, and resulted in the establishment of a number of cheese factories in the town. The raising of good cattle engaged the attention of the farmers of the community and some of the world's record Holstein-Friesian cows originated in Sandy Creek.



Today, a saw mill is still in operation in the Village of Sandy Creek and farming in the Town includes blueberries, christmas trees, and livestock operations that include horses, deer raised for meat and for sport hunting, and an elk farm that raises elk for meat that is served in local restaurants.



## Recreation and Tourism

Tourism is considered a major industry in Oswego County. More than 1.2 million visitors are believed to vacation in Oswego County and generate more than \$166 million in revenue for the municipal governments and County. Oswego County leads New York State in the number of anglers it attracts, with 114,130 per year and an estimated \$45.6 million a year spent on fishing in the County. The Town of Sandy Creek has a substantial resource base in terms of parks, open space, and recreational lands available for use by residents and tourists.

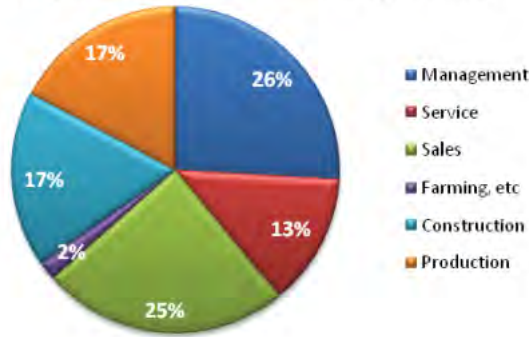


Summer tourism is strong in the Sandy Creek area because of its unique natural resources like Sandy Island Beach on the shores of eastern Lake Ontario and its numerous seasonal activities, public parks, and resorts. The nearby Village of Pulaski is widely known for its sport fishing with world-class Coho salmon runs up the Salmon River, but the fisheries within the Town of Sandy Creek are also popular recreational destinations for trout and salmon fishing. Due to its location on the Interstate 81 corridor, the Sandy Creek area benefits by providing a primary access point to Lake Ontario in summer and Tug Hill for winter recreational opportunities like cross-country skiing at Winona State Forest for visitors along this corridor. The Town is also located on an extensive snowmobile trail system, which connects to other trail systems throughout central and northern New York. The system of trails in and near Sandy Creek have resulted in a growing economic base in winter tourism as the reputation of the trail systems have grown.

**Economic Characteristics of Residents**

Although farming continues to be a major land use, and evident throughout the Town outside of the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona, the primary source of economic activity in the Town comes from the occupations of Management (26%), Sales (25%), Production and Construction each at (17%), and Service (13%). Only 2% of Town residents were found to be in Farming occupations in the 2000 U.S. census.

**Occupation of Sandy Creek Residents by Percentage**



The Town of Sandy Creek had 1,649 residents, ages 16 and over, in the workforce in 2000. From 1990 to 2000, the largest increase in employment was seen in the service industry, where over 200 residents secured employment in a 10 year period. Residents of Sandy Creek also found a significant amount of employment in the managerial and professional industries, representing a 56% increase in workforce employment from 1990 to 2000. The farming, forestry, and fisheries industries experienced the greatest loss in workforce employment during the 10 year period from 1990 to 2000. Nearly half of the workforce was forced to find alternative work in the town and throughout the surrounding communities. The work force in the Village of Sandy Creek increased between 1990 and 2000; while Lacona's workforce decreased.



**Employment, by occupation, for the Village of Sandy Creek from 1990 to 2000.**

	1990	2000	% change
Managerial and professional	51	122	139.2%
Service	94	40	-57.4%
Sales	38	85	123.7%
Farming, forestry, and fishing	10	2	-80.0%
Construction	45	35	-22.2%
Production	63	68	7.9%
<b>Total Workforce</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>16.9%</b>



**Employment, by occupation, for the Village of Lacona from 1990 to 2000.**

	1990	2000	% change
Managerial and professional	69	81	17.4%
Service	76	33	-56.6%
Sales	25	62	148.0%
Farming, forestry, and fishing	8	5	-37.5%
Construction	41	21	-48.8%
Production	54	42	-22.2%
<b>Total Workforce</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>-10.6%</b>



*Because of the unique natural resources like Sandy Island Beach on the shores of eastern Lake Ontario, and its numerous seasonal activities and resort destinations Summer tourism is strong in the Sandy Creek area.*

Type of Industry	# Employed
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	64
Construction	152
Manufacturing	212
Wholesale Trade	69
Retail Trade	253
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	136
Information	29
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Renting and Leasing	50
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	92
Educational, Health, and Social Services	316
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	152
Public Administration	43
Other Services	81

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

### Major Employers

The largest employer in the Town of Sandy Creek is the Sandy Creek School District. Both Villages, Sandy Creek and Lacona, are located in the district. The SCSD employs over 200 people in education-related administration, technical and professional occupations. Laser Transit, located in the Village of Lacona, provides transportation, warehousing, distribution and logistics services to Canadian and American customers. 190,000 square feet of heated, dry and protected space is available for storage and/or distribution needs. With over 20 truck docks, an enclosed rail service dock and a convenient location off of Interstate-81 close to the Canadian border, Laser offers a US presence to either the American market or the Canadian market and employs over 50 people in its operations.



Laser Transit, one of the Town's major employers on Demott Street in the Village of Lacona, 2007.



BioSpherix, Ltd., located adjacent to Laser Transit on Demott Street in Lacona is a rapidly growing Biomedical Instrument Company employing over 40 area residents and operating within the dynamic new global field of regenerative medicine, stem cell therapy, tissue engineering, and gene therapy. BioSpherix has been designing, manufacturing, installing and supporting state of the art biofunctional gas control and monitoring systems for over 30 years and is at the forefront of cutting edge laboratory research. Other companies that employ a significant number of residents from the Town of Sandy Creek include numerous small retail stores in the community, as well as Schoeller Technical Papers, Inc. and the Pulaski Academy and Central School District in the Town of Richland. Many residents of Sandy Creek also travel to Watertown and

Syracuse for employment.

In Oswego County, the largest growth in employment has been seen in the health service industry with an increase of over 200% since 1970. The industry that has faced the largest decline in employment in the County over the last three decades has been the agricultural, fishing, and other extractive fields with only 1.3% of the workforce in Oswego County remaining in 2000. Despite the fluctuations in the percentage of Oswego County’s workforce that is employed, new businesses and manufacturing firms have relocated to the county. The number of manufacturing firms has increased over 27% since 1970, despite decreases in the total number of persons in the workforce employed in the field.

Industry	1970	1980	1990	2000
	Oswego	Oswego	Oswego	Oswego
Retail - Wholesale	16.8	18.3	21.3	16.2
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	2.7	3.5	4	4.1
Health Services	3.4	5.7	6.6	10.7
Education Services	12.7	13.4	11.8	11.6
Public Administration	3.6	4.3	3	3.8
Other Services	26.2	23.8	30.5	35.4
Manufacturing	31.8	28.7	21.1	17
Agriculture, Fishing, etc.	2.8	2.2	1.8	1.3

**Table 15. Oswego County percentage of workforce composition. Source: “Socioeconomic Trends and Well Being Indicators in NYS 1950 – 2000. Published by the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, Spring 2004.**

Similar trends were seen in Jefferson and Onondaga Counties, especially in the health services industry, with the exception that these two counties also experienced significant increases in the educational services industry. This growth can best be attributed to the fact that there are many more institutions of higher learning in Jefferson and Onondaga County than in Oswego County and these facilities have expanded to accommodate additional students and new degree programs.





*“How we manage change, how we protect and conserve open land and historic sites while providing space for the homes, commercial centers and industrial parks we need, will have a profound impact on future generations.”*

Source: New York Open Space Conservation Plan, November 2006

## Land Use

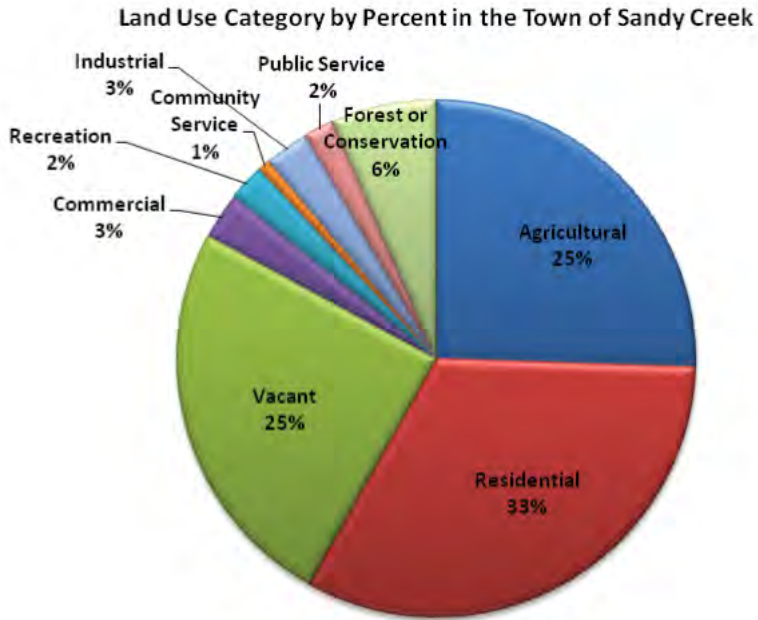
Information on the primary and secondary uses of parcels of land within a community is needed for many aspects of land use planning and policy development. It is also essential for monitoring and/or modeling environmental change.

The manner in which property is used is one of the primary concerns in the development of a Comprehensive Plan. Currently, the New York State Office of Real Property Services uses a simple classification system for land assessment administration throughout the State. The nine major categories of land use classifications are:

Agricultural (100)	Community Services (600)
Residential (200)	Industrial (700)
Vacant Land (300)	Public Services (800)
Commercial (400)	Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands, and Public Parks (900)
Recreation and Entertainment (500)	

The data used to compile this section was obtained from the New York State Office of Real Property Services. Property class codes are determined at the local level, by the assessor, and may not be indicative of a parcel’s current land use. Codes may also be misleading as a property can have several uses including residential, agricultural, forested, and vacant land. Vacant land can include non-productive or abandoned agricultural land, undeveloped residential land, swamps, woods and brush of non-commercial species, or unused public utility company lands.

The Town of Sandy Creek is a rural community, with a significant amount of land classified as residential, vacant, and agricultural (Map 2). The Village of Sandy Creek is primarily residential with additional land classified as vacant, commercial, recreational, agricultural and community services. The Village of Lacona has large areas of agricultural, commercial, industrial and vacant uses in addition to residential, community services, and recreation. The dominant land use in the eastern Lake Ontario shore area is seasonal residential, recreation, and agriculture or former agriculture with intensive seasonal residential development rapidly consuming available waterfront areas. The chart below indicates the percentage of land use by category in the Town of Sandy Creek including the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona.



An old barn and farmland along Lake Rd.



One of the many farms in Sandy Creek

**Agricultural Use**

Within the Town of Sandy Creek (excluding the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona), 25% of the land is classified as agricultural use, according to the New York State Office of Real Property Services. Most of these parcels are located outside of the Villages and support a variety of farming practices including raising livestock such as cows, horses, goats, white-tailed deer, red deer and elk. As of 2007, there were approximately 9 livestock farms in the Town of Sandy Creek having from 50 to 100 head of cattle. There are a few hobby horse farms and one large breeding and riding stable in the town as well. Cash crops raised throughout the town include hay, blueberries, asparagus, corn, and trees.



AltaCrest Red Deer Farm farm on Hadley Road in the Town of Sandy Creek , April 2010.

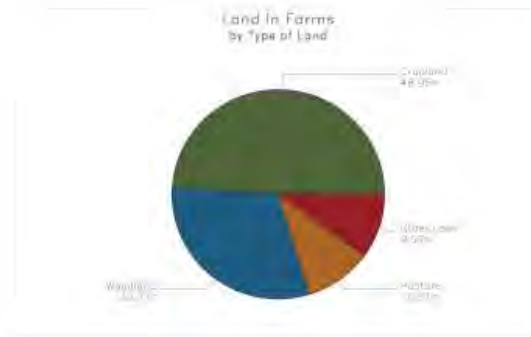
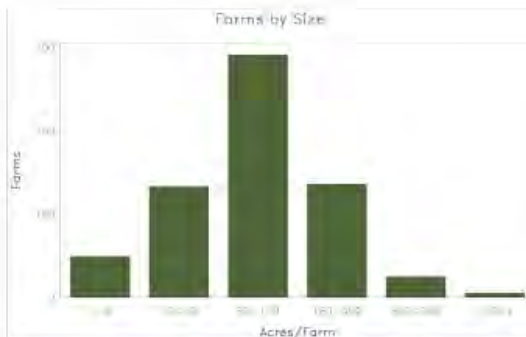
# 2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

County Profile



## Oswego, New York

	2007	2002	% change
<b>Number of Farms</b>	639	682	- 6
<b>Land in Farms</b>	100,195 acres	103,156 acres	- 3
<b>Average Size of Farm</b>	157 acres	151 acres	+ 4
<b>Market Value of Production</b>	\$39,342,000	\$31,526,000	+ 25
Crop Sales \$26,050,000 (66 percent)			
Livestock Sales \$13,292,000 (34 percent)			
Average Per Farm	\$61,568	\$46,226	+ 33
<b>Government Payments</b>	\$482,000	\$786,000	- 39
Average Per Farm	\$3,445	\$5,313	- 35



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service

[www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov)

# 2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

## County Profile

### Oswego, New York

#### Ranked items among the 62 state counties and 3,079 U.S. counties, 2007

Item	Quantity	State Rank	Universe <sup>1</sup>	U.S. Rank	Universe <sup>1</sup>
<b>MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD (\$1,000)</b>					
Total value of agricultural products sold	39,342	40	61	1,780	3,076
Value of crops including nursery and greenhouse	26,050	19	61	1,307	3,072
Value of livestock, poultry, and their products	13,292	43	58	1,846	3,069
<b>VALUE OF SALES BY COMMODITY GROUP (\$1,000)</b>					
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	2,570	28	54	1,715	2,933
Tobacco	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	437
Cotton and cottonseed	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	626
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	16,565	6	59	128	2,796
Fruits, tree nuts, and berries	2,457	20	58	266	2,659
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	2,231	27	61	755	2,703
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	341	9	54	147	1,710
Other crops and hay	1,886	35	55	927	3,054
Poultry and eggs	49	45	57	1,681	3,020
Cattle and calves	3,042	37	54	2,056	3,054
Milk and other dairy products from cows	9,386	40	54	497	2,493
Hogs and pigs	160	16	55	1,265	2,922
Sheep, goats, and their products	49	44	55	1,684	2,998
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys	205	39	57	1,095	3,024
Aquaculture	225	14	40	521	1,498
Other animals and other animal products	177	29	57	743	2,875
<b>TOP LIVESTOCK INVENTORY ITEMS (number)</b>					
Cattle and calves	9,985	38	55	2,600	3,060
Layers	1,776	42	57	1,178	3,024
Horses and ponies	1,204	33	58	1,155	3,066
Hogs and pigs	991	11	55	1,212	2,958
Goats, All	677	27	58	1,137	3,023
<b>TOP CROP ITEMS (acres)</b>					
Forage-land used for all hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop	23,835	36	54	887	3,060
Corn for grain	4,114	36	53	1,462	2,634
Vegetables harvested, all	3,713	14	58	225	2,794
Corn for silage	2,681	41	52	533	2,263
Onions, dry	2,575	1	46	18	1,013

#### Other County Highlights

Economic Characteristics	Quantity	Operator Characteristics	Quantity
<b>Farms by value of sales</b>			
Less than \$1,000	160	Principal operators by primary occupation:	
\$1,000 to \$2,499	66	Farming	349
\$2,500 to \$4,999	69	Other	290
\$5,000 to \$9,999	76	Principal operators by sex:	
\$10,000 to \$19,999	65	Male	498
\$20,000 to \$24,999	14	Female	141
\$25,000 to \$39,999	20	Average age of principal operator (years)	
\$40,000 to \$49,999	13		56.5
\$50,000 to \$99,999	50	All operators <sup>2</sup> by race:	
\$100,000 to \$249,999	58	American Indian or Alaska Native	2
\$250,000 to \$499,999	12	Asian	(-)
\$500,000 or more	16	Black or African American	2
Total farm production expenses (\$1,000)	32,856	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	(-)
Average per farm (\$)	51,418	White	974
Net cash farm income of operation (\$1,000)	8,943	More than one race	4
Average per farm (\$)	13,996	All operators <sup>2</sup> of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Origin	(-)

(D) Cannot be disclosed. (Z) Less than half of the unit shown. See "Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series" for complete footnotes.

<sup>1</sup> Universe is number of counties in state or U.S. with item.

<sup>2</sup> Data were collected for a maximum of three operators per farm.



**Snowy Ridge Ranch sells, leases and boards horses on Ellisburg Road in Sandy Creek.**



***Residential Use***

Residential uses occupy the second largest land area (over 7,130 acres) in the Town of Sandy Creek, outside of the Villages. Individual parcels are scattered throughout the community, and are especially numerous along the waterfront of North and South Sandy Ponds. In fact, with the exception of 305 acres of waterfront conservation land, 223 acres of commercial land, and 140 acres of recreational land; waterfront land in the Town is comprised of a great number of small residential lots often having 50' of frontage or less.





Many waterfront residences have been located on highly permeable sand within a few feet of North and South Sandy Ponds with septic/wastewater treatment facilities that may be ineffective or even nonexistent, and may be contributing to documented water quality decline in North and South Sandy Pond and Lake Ontario which is a public drinking water supply for other communities in the Central New York Region. (Source: “Sandy Pond Oswego County, New York”, January 2010, by Joseph C. Makarewicz and Matthew J. Nowak, SUNY Brockport.)

Cottage residences have been densely developed along the shorelines of North and South Sandy Ponds and even on and among the narrow lakefront dune complex. Building permits continue to be approved for new development in this designated Critical Environmental Area (CEA) due to out of date coastal erosion hazard area boundary mapping still used by the state regulatory agency NYDEC.



Dense residential development like this, in addition to commercial marinas, is nearly contiguous for approximately 65% of the 11.4 mile shoreline of North Sandy Pond.

**Recreation/Entertainment**

Two percent of the land use in the Town of Sandy Creek is dedicated to Recreation or Entertainment. Some larger parcels on or near the waterfront have become sites for several dozen mobile home rental units in widely varying states of age and condition. In addition to aesthetic impacts on the environment, these collections of trailers may also present potential septic/wastewater treatment and disposal issues.



Trailer parking and trailer parks are located throughout the Town of Sandy Creek with a concentration around North Sandy Pond.



The Sandy Creek Little League field is located on 15 acres on Edwards Road.



The Elms Golf Course is located on approximately 150 acres overlooking North Sandy Pond.

**Commercial Use**

Within the Town of Sandy Creek, 2% of the land or approximately 585 acres (almost 43 parcels) are classified as being used for commercial purposes. These properties are scattered throughout the town, most having road frontage or easy access to it. Some larger waterfront parcels, although located within flood zones and state and federal wetlands, have been extensively developed to support high density use as seasonal trailer parks or mobile home camps. The single largest commercial use parcel is 210 acres located on a sandy peninsula extending out into North Sandy Pond that supports a large marina and trailer park with approximately 150 residential units. Other parcels being used for commercial purposes are located on South Pond, and in close proximity to Interstate 81.



Spyc Marina is one of two private membership marinas owned by Sandy Pond Resorts located on North Sandy Pond.



Sandy Pond Marina Campground occupies several acres on Route 15 at Ouderkirk Road.



Aerial view of the development at Greene Point Marina and Mobile Home Park on a peninsula on North Sandy Pond.





**Hanson Aggregates owns the largest industrial site in the Town of Sandy Creek, a total of over 600 acres along the rail corridor on County Route 22.**

***Industrial Use***

Over 890 acres of land in the Town of Sandy Creek are categorized as industrial use according to the information from the NYS Real Property Tax Service records. These properties may not all currently have an active industrial operation on the land, and there is no current zoning ordinance, but the assessor has identified these parcels as suitable locations for this type of use in the future. This land area represents 10 parcels and approximately 3% of the town’s total area. The largest cluster of industrial use parcels total over 600 acres, and are owned by Hanson Aggregates, an extraction company. This industrial use land is located on County Route 22 just north of the Village of Lacona. Hanson Aggregates also owns a 35 acre industrial parcel in the Village of Lacona adjacent to the railroad.

***Public Lands***

Public land is a term used to describe parcels of land that are owned by federal, state, county, and/or municipal entities. These properties support goods and services to the public, including educational, recreational, and economic opportunities. Through public lands, communities and visitors are able to access, learn more about, and enjoy the natural and cultural resources embedded in our landscapes.

Community access to public lands and waters such as parkland, state forests, North and South Sandy Ponds, and Lake Ontario, is very important to ensure that everyone has opportunities to experience these places. Preservation of Sandy Creek’s town-



**The Nature Conservancy owns this building and 200 acres of conservation land between Tryon Rd and Rt 3.**

owned rights-of-way to the waterfront and other public lands should be an important consideration in future land use and regulatory decisions.



This National Grid power transfer station is on a small public use parcel on Lake Street in the Village of Sandy Creek.

**This 22 foot-wide Town-owned right-of-way to North Sandy Pond is one of the last remaining public access points to North Sandy Pond, and a Town asset to be preserved and made accessible for low impact community use.**

In the Town of Sandy Creek, there are 5,865 acres that are publicly owned by the town, the Villages, Oswego County, the State of New York, the Federal government, or the Nature Conservancy (Map 3). The State owns 906 acres in the town. The Town and Villages own 163 acres. These properties are in locations throughout the Town and provide space for the municipal offices, highway department, and other facilities. Oswego County owns 12 acres of land on Miller Road between I81 and the rail corridor in the Town of Sandy Creek. Shared by both Villages, are 209 acres of land along Salisbury Street in use by the The Sandy Creek Central School District.



The Village of Sandy Creek and Village of Lacona Joint Water works owns 65 acres of public use land immediately to the south of the Hanson Aggregate industrial land in the Village of Lacona

(INSERT MAP 2 Existing Land Use



(INSERT MAP 3 Existing Land Use - Village Detail)



(INSERT MAP 4 Existing Land Use - North and South Ponds Detail)





(INSERT MAP Public Lands)

### ***Land Use Regulations and Local Laws***

The Town of Sandy Creek has adopted several land use regulations to help guide growth and development in the Town including site plan review, junkyard and mobile home land development laws, and regulation for fish cleaning stations, incinerators, and dog control. The Town of Sandy Creek and Village of Sandy Creek have a joint planning board; while the Village of Lacona's planning board remains separate. As of 2012, the town has not considered adopting subdivision regulations or zoning ordinances.

### **Municipal Infrastructure and Public Utilities**

The Town of Sandy Creek and the Villages of Lacona and Sandy Creek provide residents of the community with limited public services. Municipal services include public drinking water in both Villages and areas of the Town adjacent to Village service areas. Municipal services in both the Town and Villages include road maintenance and education of the community's youth. The following sections provide more detail on a number of these municipal services, in addition to the public utilities available in the town and villages.

### ***Sewage and Wastewater Treatment Facilities***

All residents in the Town of Sandy Creek, Village of Sandy Creek, and Village of Lacona treat their sewage through on-site wastewater treatment systems. However, there are camps along the lakeshore that were established prior to requirements for engineering design permits for septic systems. Because it is a function of a single local codes officer to (among many other things) identify and report potential septic pollutant issues to the County Health Department, these camps may still have ineffective or no wastewater treatment in place. Continued use of these ineffective systems may be contributing to the documented decline of water quality in North and South Sandy Pond as well as Lake Ontario which is a public drinking water supply. Currently, no public wastewater treatment is available in the Town. Because new water infrastructure, currently being developed to serve the development at Sandy Pond, could further accelerate water quality issues, new sewer development or a inventory to determine the effectiveness of existing on-site wastewater treatment and disposal will be critical to support existing development and water quality in North and South Sandy Pond.





**Sandy Creek Town Hall on Harwood Drive in Sandy Creek.**

### ***Public Water Facilities***

The Village of Sandy Creek and the Village of Lacona provide water to their residents by making wholesale water purchases from the Sandy Creek / Lacona Joint Waterworks. The Joint Waterworks owns the water supply source (the wellfields) and is operated by a Board of Trustees comprised of the Mayors for the Village of Sandy Creek and the Village of Lacona. Each village is a member of the Joint Waterworks and must purchase water from the Joint Waterworks. The villages own their own distribution systems including the hydrants, and pipelines. Each village also has the authority to establish their own rate structure and fees, in addition to their own billing system. All residents within both villages are connected to the public water system, in addition to 50 to 60 residences located on Route 11, Hadley Road, County Route 22, County Route 15, and Route 48, within the Town of Sandy Creek.

In the 1940's a series of shallow, gravel-packed dug wells, located adjacent to the railroad line in Lacona on Route 15, were created to provide drinking water for residents in the community. Two additional wells were installed throughout the 1980's to increase the amount of drinking water available for consumption. A majority of the residents that live throughout the Town of Sandy Creek (outside of the villages) must rely on private, groundwater wells for their water. Over the past several years, many of these shallow wells have run dry in the peak summer months due to the low water table. Consequently, many residents have had to dig deeper, secondary wells to access reliable water supplies. Municipal wells have not proven able to provide enough water for the growing community demand, and therefore, the villages hired HydroSource Associates, Inc. to locate and develop another source of plentiful, high-quality drinking water for the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona. A promising site, north of Lacona and east of the railroad property, was identified as a suitable location for a well and long-term pumping tests were conducted.

In 2007, the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona received over \$4.5 million in grant money and interest free loans from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation. The grant money will be used to provide water system improvements, in addition to paying off a higher interest loan, and providing a new loan with no interest so that the villages can continue to make improvements to the system. Also in 2007, the United States Geological Survey and the United State Department of the Interior published a report titled “Hydrogeology of Two Areas of the Tug Hill Glacial-Drift Aquifer, Oswego County, New York.” The report highlights the studies previously conducted by the USGS in cooperation with the Villages of Sandy Creek, Lacona, Pulaski and the Oswego County Health Department to refine the understanding of the ground-water-flow system in parts of the Tug Hill aquifer, specifically near production wells for the villages. The report also discussed the differences in estimates of ground-water recharges ages and ground-water-flow rates estimated using numerical ground-water-flow modeling and geochemical data presented by different researchers.

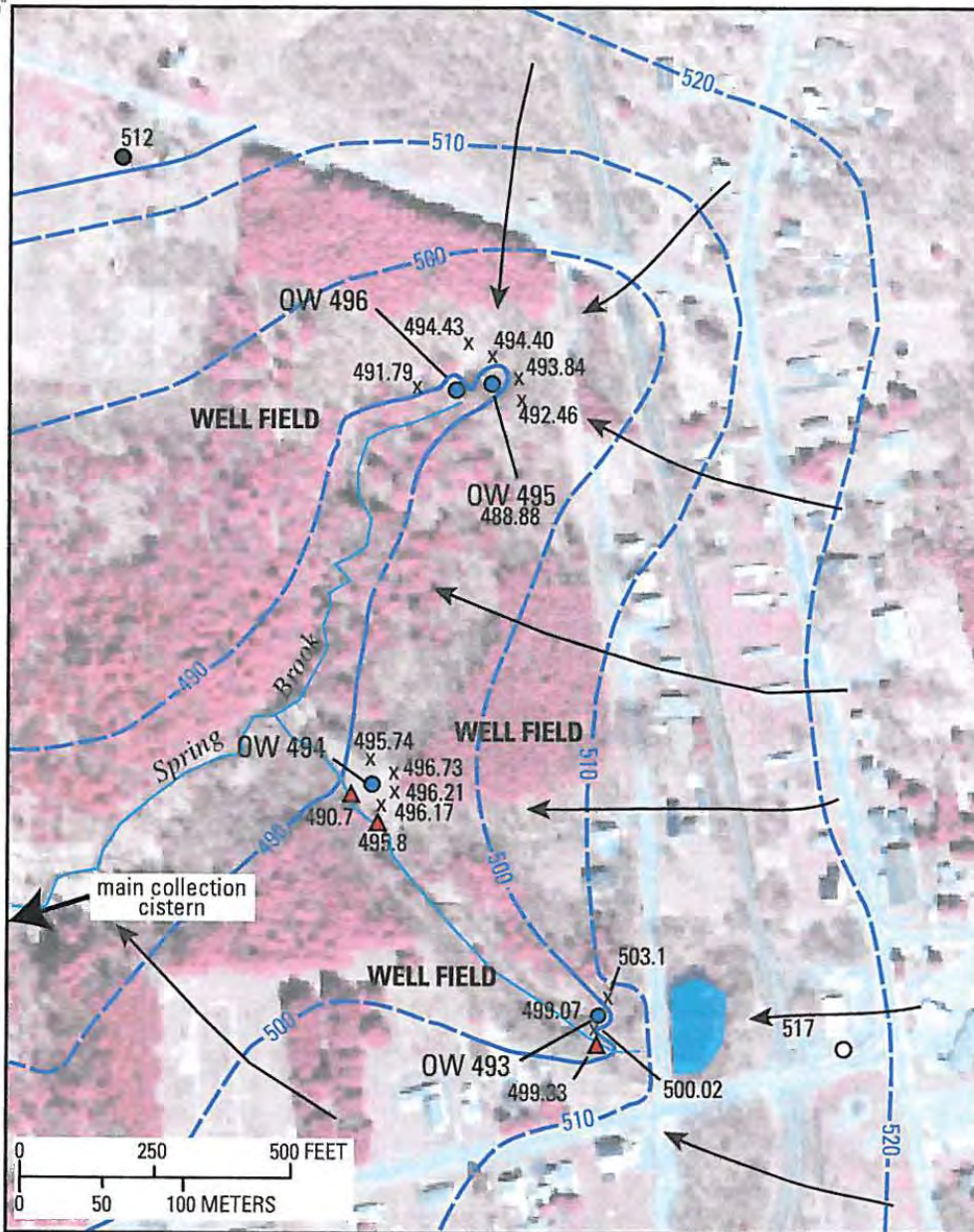
The Eastern Shore Water System is a joint project between the Towns of Sandy Creek and Richland which would expand water service to Town of Sandy Creek residents not currently served by existing public water facilities, while also bringing public water to residents in the Town of Richland. Eastern Shore Water System facilities would provide water to approximately 845 users in the Town of Sandy Creek, and 185 users in the Town of Richland. Water would be provided by Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona water system and also the Town of Richland’s Schoeller Well Site at Blue Springs Meadow. Areas proposed to be served generally include residents along roads in the northern portion of the Town of Richland, and residents west of Route 3 and south and east of North Pond in the Town of Sandy Creek. The proposed water system would also replace existing water mains that currently serve Town of Sandy Creek residents outside of the Village of Sandy Creek. An elevated water storage tank would also be constructed in the Town of Sandy Creek, near the northern boundary of the proposed Water System. The proposed facilities include about 28 miles of new 8-inch ductile iron water mains and fire hydrants at approximately 600-foot intervals. This project would provide water where contaminated public and private wells exist in both Sandy Creek and Richland. The Towns would seek interest free and extended term financing , and up to \$2M in grant dollars, through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF).

Currently in progress, is Sandy Creek Water District 1 which will bring water to Sandy Pond from the Town of Richland along Rt. 3 and the shoreline, with a new water tower on Weaver Rd. Water District 2 is in the early planning and funding stages, and will bring water from the Sandy Creek and Lacona Joint Water District wells to properties north of the Fairgrounds where water infrastructure has been inadequate for many years.

**Opposite page: From the 2007 report titled “Hydrogeology of Two Areas of the Tug Hill Glacial-Drift Aquifer, Oswego County, New York.”**

76°03'23"  
43°34'25"

43°03'



43°34'04"

Topographic base from U.S. Geological Survey Richland, N.Y., 1982, 1:24,000, topographic map, Universal Transverse mercator projection, Zone 18N, NAD 1927; Orthophoto base from New York State Office of Cyber & Critical Infrastructure Coordination, Spring 2004

### EXPLANATION

- 510 — WATER-TABLE CONTOUR—Shows approximate altitude of water table (fall of 2003). Contour interval 10 ft. Datum is NGVD 1929. Dashed where approximate
- ← GROUND-WATER-FLOW PATH—Arrow shows generalized direction of ground-water flow
- 496.17 x PIEZOMETER WATER-LEVEL MEASUREMENT SITE—Number is altitude of water-table surface. Datum is NGVD 1929
- 499.33 ▲ SURFACE-WATER-LEVEL MEASUREMENT SITE—Number is altitude of water surface. Datum is NGVD 1929
- OW 493 ● PRODUCTION-WELL SITE WATER-LEVEL MEASUREMENT—Number is altitude of water surface (OW numbers are USGS well numbers referred to in report). Datum is NGVD 1929
- 512 ● DOMESTIC-WELL WATER-LEVEL MEASUREMENT SITE—Number is altitude of water-table surface. Datum is NGVD 1929
- 517 ○ COMMERCIAL-WELL WATER-LEVEL MEASUREMENT SITE—Number is altitude of water-table surface. Datum is NGVD 1929

# Proposed Eastern Shore Water System

July 2009 Proposed Revision

*The purpose of this information sheet is to familiarize residents with the best information that the Towns' engineering consultant has compiled thus far. This project is still in its very early stages, and the Town Boards of Richland and Sandy Creek are currently seeking feedback from the public.*

## Project Description

The Eastern Shore Water System is a joint project between the Towns of Richland and Sandy Creek which would expand water service to Town of Richland residents not currently served by existing public water facilities, while also bringing public water to residents in the Town of Sandy Creek. Eastern Shore Water System facilities would provide water to approximately 185 users in the Town of Richland and 845 users in the Town of Sandy Creek. Water would be provided by the Town of Richland's Schoeller Well Site, and also the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona water system. Areas proposed to be served generally include residents along roads in the northern portion of the Town of Richland, and residents west of Route 3 and south and east of North Pond in the Town of Sandy Creek. The proposed water system would also replace existing water mains that currently serve Town of Sandy Creek residents outside of the Village of Sandy Creek.

An elevated water storage tank would also be constructed in the Town of Sandy Creek, near the northern boundary of the proposed Water System.

The proposed facilities include about 28 miles of new 8-inch ductile iron water mains and fire hydrants at approximately 600-foot intervals. This project would provide water to contaminated public and private wells in both Towns. The Towns would seek interest free and extended term financing, and up to \$2M in grant dollars, through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF).



## Survey Results

In February 2008, a survey amongst Town of Sandy Creek residents was conducted to gauge interest in public water. The results shown below are for property owners in the proposed Eastern Shore Water System.

- 28.8% occasionally run out of water
- 21.8% need to buy bulk water
- 11.5% have wells that have been contaminated
- 18.2% have water that tastes like sulfur or iron/metal
- 52.0% are concerned about fire protection
- 55.1% are in favor of public water

Surveys were conducted in the Town of Richland during preliminary stages of Water Districts 1 and 2. The results shown below are for property owners in the proposed Eastern Shore Water System.

- 86% answered 'yes' to public water

## Estimated Annual User Costs

Based on a 30-year, interest free loan from DWSRF

	Typical Home	Vacant Land
Water District Cost	\$330	\$115
O&M**	\$150	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$480</b>	<b>\$115</b>

Total estimated project cost: \$14,000,000

Estimated grant from DWSRF: \$2,000,000

\*\*O&M cost estimate includes the cost of water, which would ultimately be determined by the Town Boards



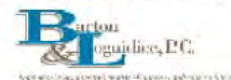
## Estimated Hookup Charges

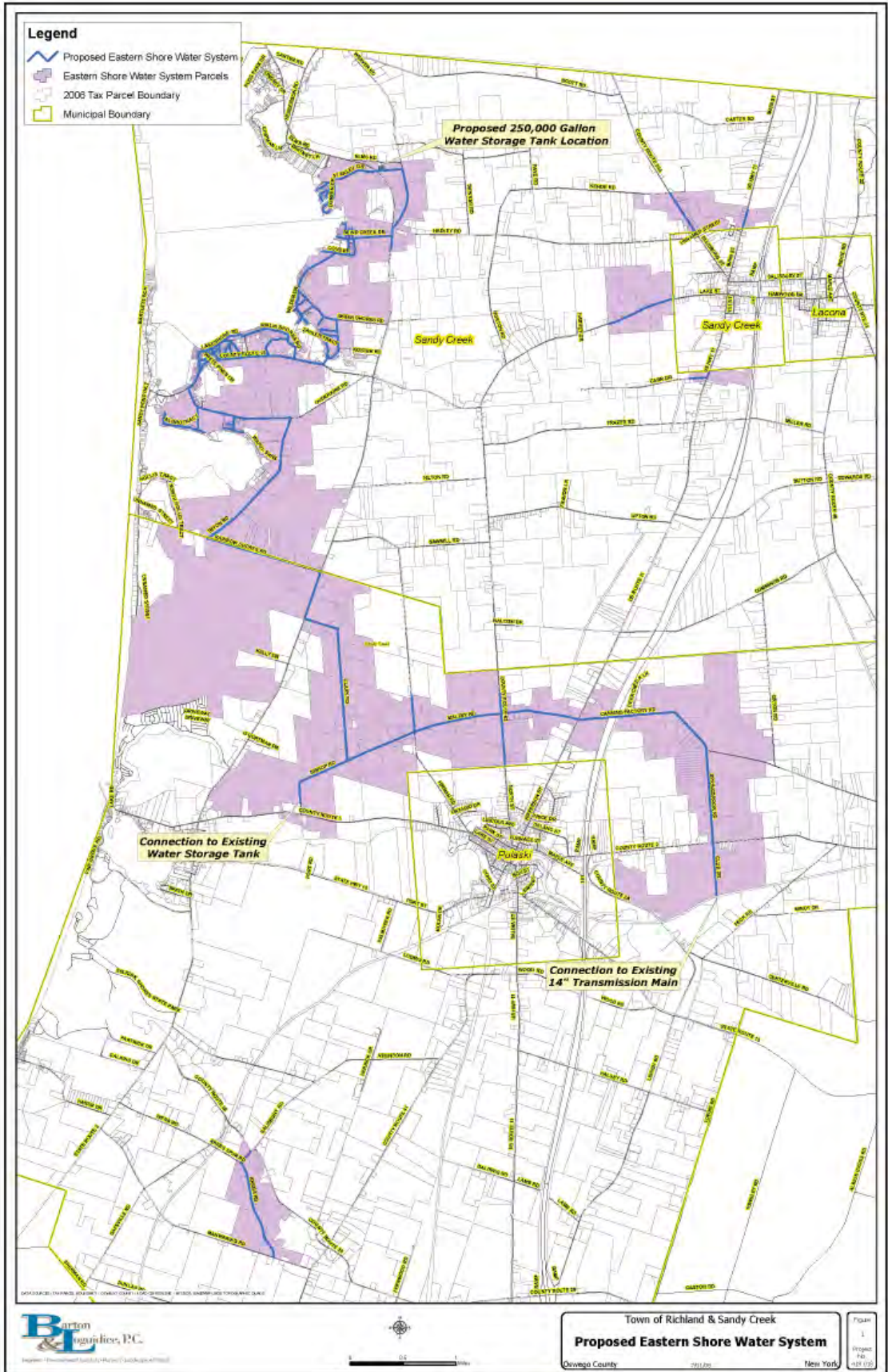
These charges represent the cost of connecting a building to the water main.

- Approximately \$10/foot of pipe from ROW boundary to house (Typical house is about 50 feet from ROW)
- Meter Pit, if house is more than 150 feet from ROW (about \$700)
- Water Meter (about \$150)
- Inspection (\$125)
- In-house water connection

## Next Steps

1. A Preliminary Engineering Report and the application for a grant and loan from the DWSRF would be completed this summer.
2. Should favorable funding be granted to the Eastern Shore Water District project, the Towns' consultant could complete a Map, Plan and Report which would give detailed descriptions of estimated project costs and components.
3. The Water District could be formed by petition or by order of the Board per Article 12a of the Town Law.
4. Following detailed design, construction could begin in the spring of 2011.





**Transportation Infrastructure**

The Town of Sandy Creek and Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona are conveniently located adjacent to Interstate 81, a major transportation corridor between Pennsylvania and the United States-Canadian Border through New York State. Access to Interstate 81 in the Village of Sandy Creek is unusual in that the location of the on/off ramps is described as a diamond intersection. Vehicles traveling north on Interstate 81 can only reach the Village of Sandy Creek by exiting at Harwood Drive. The on-ramp to I-81 north is located on Salisbury Street, north of the Harwood Drive. Alternatively, vehicles traveling south on Interstate 81 can reach the Village of Sandy Creek by exiting at the Salisbury Street exit. The on-ramp to I-81 south is located on Harwood Drive, east of Route 11. State Routes 3 and 11, County Routes 15, 22A, 48 and 22 are other major roadways through the town and villages.

Over the past several years, the New York State Department of Transportation and the Oswego County Department of Transportation have conducted traffic counts along various roadway segments in the Town of Sandy Creek and Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona to determine traffic patterns and usage.

**Table 16. AADT counts in the Town of Richland from 2004 to 2006.  
Data provided by the New York State Department of Transportation.**

Road	Segment	Year	AADT
RT 3	RT 13 PORT ONTARIO TO CR 15 CENTER CHURCH	2006	3,277
RT 3	RT 13 PORT ONTARIO TO CR 15 CENTER CHURCH	2004	3,243
RT 3	CR 15 CENTER CHURCH TO HADLEY RD	2006	1,333
RT 3	HADLEY RD TO JEFFERSON CO LINE	2006	1,719
RT 3	HADLEY RD TO JEFFERSON CO LINE	2004	1,700
RT 11	CR 5 PULASKI TO CR 15 SANDY CREEK	2006	2,881
RT 11	CR 5 PULASKI TO CR 15 SANDY CREEK	2004	2,818
RT 11	CR 15 SANDY CREEK TO JEFFERSON CO LINE	2006	1,568
RT 11	CR 15 SANDY CREEK TO JEFFERSON CO LINE	2004	1,540
I 81	ACC SALISBURY RD TO CR 22A	2006	13,269
I 81	ACC SALISBURY RD TO CR 22A	2005	18,310

During the winter months, the Town of Sandy Creek Highway Department is responsible for plowing and deicing all the town-owned roads, in addition to approximately 22 miles of county-owned roads and approximately 20 miles of village streets. In addition, the Town of Sandy Creek Highway Department has been asked to take responsibility for plowing privately-owned roads that are not accessible to the public. The Villages of Lacona and Sandy Creek use private contractors for areas not addressed by the Town such as Village office and fire hall parking areas. The Joint Waterworks uses a private contractor for the well field area. During the summer months, the Town highway department is responsible for maintaining and repairing local roads. New York State owns, maintains, and removes snow from Interstate 81 and State Routes 3 and 11.



INSERT Transportation Infrastructure Map HERE



INSERT Railroad Transportation Map HERE





Syracuse Hancock International Airport.  
[www.visitingdc.com/airports/syracuse-airport-address.asp](http://www.visitingdc.com/airports/syracuse-airport-address.asp)



**Oswego County Airport.**  
[www.co.oswego.ny.us/airport.shtml](http://www.co.oswego.ny.us/airport.shtml)

In addition to vehicular traffic, there are opportunities for goods to be transported via railway in Sandy Creek and the villages. CSX Transportation owns and operates over 1,300 miles of railroad tracks throughout New York State. They handle 104,000 carloads of freight annually in New York; provide service to over 360 industries; and ship items such as coal, automobiles, wheat, and municipal waste.

In Central New York, rail lines follow along the New York State Thruway and Interstate 81. In the Village of Pulaski, a rail line heads east-west along the southern shore of the Salmon River, crosses County Route 2 (Richland Road) in the Hamlet of Richland, and heads north into the Village of Lacona, Town of Sandy Creek. From here, the CSX rail line follows I81 and Rt. 11 to Watertown and continues north to Ogdensburg where a CSX TRANSFLO Bulk Transfer terminal is located. This terminal is a part of CSX's North American network of full service bulk product transfer facilities with more than 160 locations in 21 eastern states and 1 in Canada. Eventually, the CSX rail line enters into Canada and continues on from there.

The Town of Sandy Creek and Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona are in close proximity to several airports, including the Oswego County Airport and Syracuse Hancock International Airport. The Oswego County Airport is a small regional airport located about 35 miles from Sandy Creek in the Town of Volney. The airport has 5,200 feet of primary runway and serves a population of more than 120,000 people, in addition to national/international companies in and around the County of Oswego. Approximately 25,000 aircraft take off and land at the Oswego County Airport per year. The airport features a fully equipped training facility, flight school, restaurant, and a joint aeronautical degree program offered by Cayuga Community College and BOCES.

The Syracuse Hancock International Airport, located in Onondaga County, is approximately 40 miles (40 minutes) south of the Town of Sandy Creek and is easily accessed via Interstate 81. With 9,000 feet of primary runway, the Syracuse Hancock International Airport is the principal commercial airport in the Central New York region. Seven commercial airlines operate out of the airport including American Eagle, Continental, Delta, Jet Blue, Northwest, United Express, and USAirways. Of the major passenger airlines, USAirways continues to service the majority of the enplanements and deplanements through the airport. There are also several commuter and regional airlines operating out of Syracuse Hancock International such as ComAir, CommutAir, and Shuttle America. In 2007, the airport served over 1.3 million passengers and enplaned almost 14,000 tons of mail and freight through 18 different carriers.

The Port of Oswego, located just 28 miles from the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona, is the first U.S. port of call on Lake Ontario and the Great Lakes from the Atlantic Ocean and the St. Lawrence Seaway. It is also the gateway to the New York State Barge Canal System through the Oswego River Canal, also known as the Erie Canal, and to the Atlantic Intercoastal Waterway. The Port's location near the crossroads of the great Northeastern U.S. market allows shippers to reach the industrial and agricultural centers of the Northeast without the coastal port congestion and big-city traffic bottlenecks. The Port is only 45 miles from the entrance to the St. Lawrence River and offers easy access to major highway and railway transportation routes.

On average, the Port of Oswego welcomes over 50 commercial vessels a year from the Atlantic Ocean and all across the Great Lakes region. Primary products handled at the Port include aluminum ingots, agricultural fertilizers, cement, road salt, materials for recycling, and heavy machinery. Cargo is moved efficiently by convenient dockside rail service and by a modern, four-lane highway system. On-site conveyors, hoppers, and





The Port of Oswego. Source: <http://www.city-data.com/picfiles/pic16764.php>

a 50-ton mobile crane assist in cargo management. Additional equipment capable of handling up to 200 tons is available.

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the Port of Oswego works around the clock to accommodate vessels from all Great Lakes ports and ports around the world. It boasts an entrance depth of 27 feet, a width of 750 feet, a turning basin of 115 acres, and it has no restrictions on beam length for ships entering the harbor.

Through agreements and cooperative ventures, the Port of Oswego Authority accommodates the H. Lee White Marine Museum; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Commission; the Oswego Maritime Foundation and its 1850s-style Great Lakes Schooner, the OMF Ontario; the Oswego International Marina; and the Oswego East Side Marina. The Port leases property to private management for the popular Admiral Woolsey's restaurant overlooking the harbor.

The Port's strategic location as the only deep water U.S. port on Lake Ontario, and as a direct and cost-effective link to trade routes throughout North America, helps make Oswego County an attractive location for industry. The Port's commercial capabilities coupled with the County's vast resources of low-cost water, available full-service industrial sites, storage facilities, and a trained labor force will continue to help stimulate economic development in the region. Plans are currently in progress that could make the Port of Oswego the only American port in Lake Ontario capable of handling overseas container shipments. Port officials predict two to three container vessels will stop at the port weekly, creating a 24-hour-a-day operation. The Oswego facility would tie-in with a larger \$300 million container terminal under development in Nova Scotia.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the state's Canal Corp., the agency that oversees the 524-mile New York State canal system, hopes to connect with the Oswego container port when it becomes operational.

<sup>7</sup> *Port of Oswego Slated for Container Shipments*, by Tom Schmitt / The Post-Standard, Accessed at [syracuse.com](http://syracuse.com), January 5, 2008

The best way to  
predict the future is to  
invent it.

- Immanuel Kant

## Oswego's new link to global shipping

By 2011, the Port of Oswego could become the only American port in Lake Ontario capable of handling overseas container shipments. Port officials predict two to three container vessels will stop at the port weekly, creating a 24-hour-a-day operation.



### What is container shipping?

The modern shipping container was invented in 1956. These standardized "boxes" can be loaded on ships, trucks, trains and airplanes. Today more than 90 percent of the world's goods are shipped by container.

#### Standard 20' container

**Inside length:** 19'4"

**Inside width:** 7'8"

**Inside height:** 7'10"

**Capacity:** 1,172 cubic ft.

**Max. cargo:** 47,999 lb.



Source: Maersk Line, of Denmark, the world's largest shipping container operator

### Great Lakes cities to get container facilities

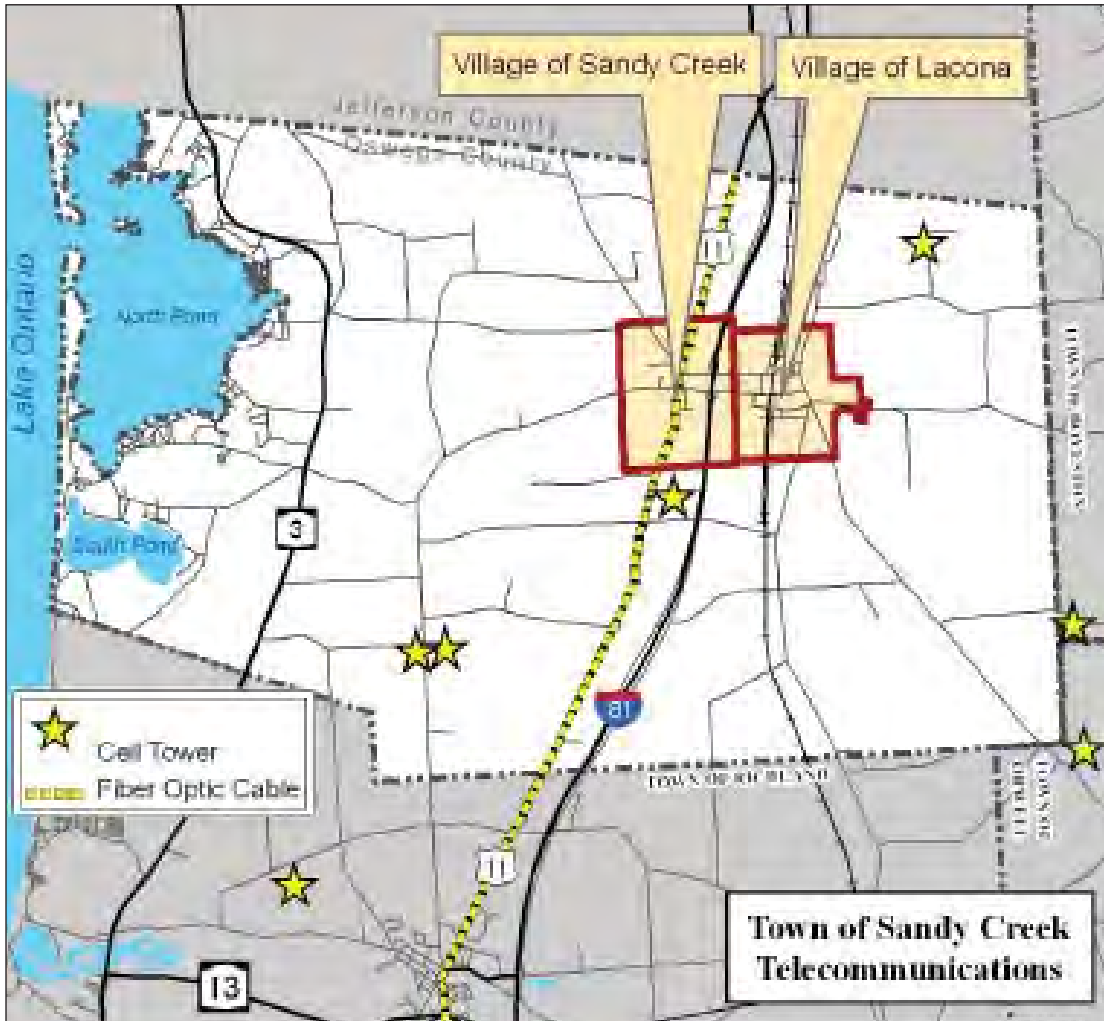


Map of the plans for Port of Oswego and locations of proposed container ports in the Great Lakes. Source: The Post-Standard, [syracuse.com](http://syracuse.com) Accessed January 5, 2008.

### **Electric, Gas & Telecom Utility Service Providers**

National Grid provides electric service to all the residents in the Town of Sandy Creek, Village of Sandy Creek and Village of Lacona. Residents in the Town of Sandy Creek largely heat with propane or oil, but a majority of the residents in the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona heat their homes with natural gas also available through National grid. These heating products are delivered by a variety of suppliers including Suburban Energy, Glider Oil Services, and Alaskan Oil Company (Sunoco). National Grid provides natural gas service to a limited number of residents in the Town of Sandy Creek in areas adjacent to the Villages. (Map 6).

Frontier, Verizon, AT&T, and Time Warner provide telephone (landline and/or wireless) service to the residents throughout the Town of Sandy Creek. Time Warner, Frontier, and The Circuit's Edge provide Internet service to the community. WiFi service (wireless local access networks) is also available in select locations throughout the village of Sandy Creek including the library. Time Warner provides cable television service to the residents, as well as several companies that offer satellite television service, such as Direct TV.



Telecommunication facilities in the Town of Sandy Creek and adjacent communities.



Insert Energy Map Here



(INSERT Map Natural Gas Facilities HERE)



### **Public Safety Facilities**

Within the Town of Sandy Creek, Village of Sandy Creek, and Village of Lacona, Oswego County and New York State provide police protection. The Sandy Creek and Lacona Volunteer Fire Departments provide fire protection throughout the town and villages.



**Sandy Creek Volunteer Fire Department on South Main Street (Route 11) in the Village of Sandy Creek.**



**Lacona Volunteer Fire Department on Maple Ave. in the Village of Lacona.**



**The H. Douglas Barclay Court House, located in the Village of Pulaski.**

The Northern Oswego County Ambulance (NOCA) provides emergency transportation to the residents of the community.

The H. Douglas Barclay Court House, located in the Village of Pulaski (Town of Richland), is the closest County Courthouse to the Town of Sandy Creek. It was named after Senator Barclay in recognition of his service to the Pulaski community. Originally built in 1819 of local bricks, additions have maintained the original design. The most famous trial involved Horace Greeley, a New York City newspaper editor and a local politician D. C. Littlejohn. The Court House, located on Bridge Street, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Educational Facilities**

A majority of the children that live in the Town of Sandy Creek and the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona attend classes in the Sandy Creek Central School System (SCCS) (Map 7). The district also serves children from the surrounding towns of Boylston, Ellisburg, Orwell, Osceola, Richland, Redfield, and Williamstown. The SCCS provides educational programming to 1,150 students in pre-kindergarten through the twelfth grade. The district just completed a \$33 million renovation project, which nearly doubled the size of the district’s single school building. The district now offers state-of-the-art educational and athletic facilities to its students, staff, and members of the community.



**Sandy Creek Central School on Salisbury Street is located between the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona.**

A small percentage of children in the Town of Sandy Creek are enrolled in the Pulaski Academy and Central School District. A few students attend classes at the Lura Sharp Elementary School in grades pre-kindergarten through 6 located on Hinman Road and the Pulaski Junior/Senior High School.

The Annie Porter Ainsworth Memorial Library, located on South Main Street in the Village of Sandy Creek, offers books, magazines, video and DVD rental, photocopying and facsimile services, public meeting facilities, in addition to high-speed internet access and an employment information center for residents of the community.



**Lura Sharp Elementary School**



**Ainsworth Memorial Library on South Main Street in the Village of Sandy Creek.**

(INSERT Map School Districts)





## Healthcare Facilities & Community Services

The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith.

- *President Franklin*

*Delano Roosevelt*



The Samaritan Health Center, located in the Village of Lacona on DeMott Street, provides primary care medical care and assistance to the residents in the Town of Sandy Creek and the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona. This facility is staffed by physicians, physician assistants, and/or nurse practitioners, and provides a full continuum of care for an individual's

lifetime, from birth through senior years. It is a part of the Samaritan Health System, whose main health center is located in Watertown.

Residents from the Town of Sandy Creek, including both villages, also seek medical treatment at St. Joseph's, Upstate, and University Hospitals in Syracuse, as well as Good Samaritan Hospital in Watertown, and medical facilities in the City of Oswego.

Within the Town of Sandy Creek, enrolled school children can seek medical attention at the School Based Health Center, which has been serving the health care needs of enrolled students in the district since 1996. The center is a state funded health care facility and is an extension of Northern Oswego County Health Services Incorporated. Care is provided to enrolled students with either insurance billing, or with no fee should the pupil not be covered by an insurance plan. The School Based Health Center offers a variety of services including diagnosis and treatment of illness, immunizations, allergy shots, comprehensive physicals, prescriptions phoned to pharmacy, referrals to counseling, and x-ray scheduling. The center's hours of operation follow the school schedule, as well as being open for business on a reduced schedule in the summer months. When the center is closed, patients are encouraged to call and use the Pulaski Health Center, in the Village of Pulaski, for their health care needs.



The Pulaski Health Center.

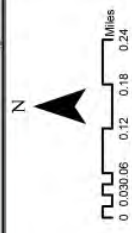
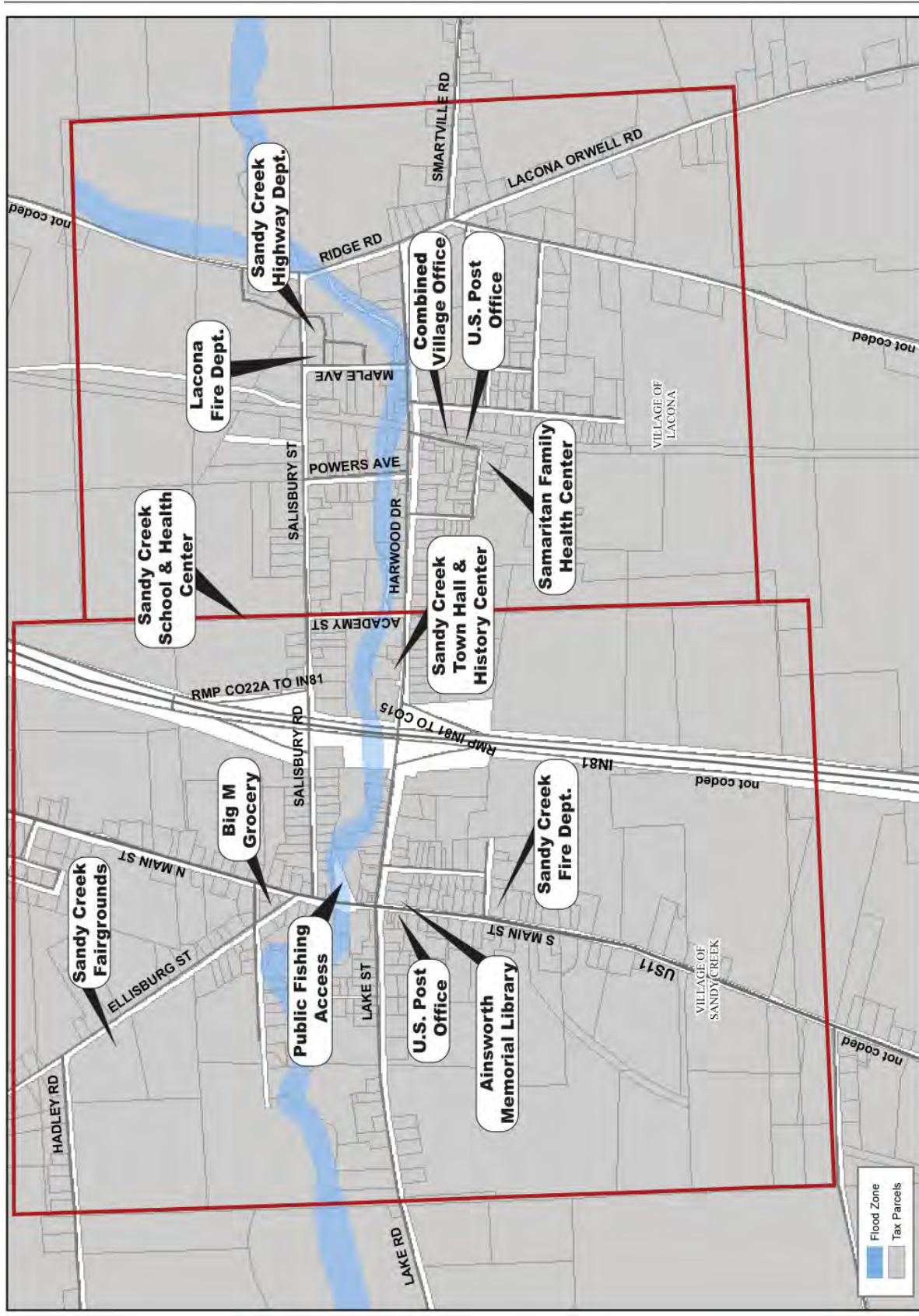
The Pulaski Health Center is a family oriented health care practice that provides Northern Oswego and Southern Jefferson County residents with a variety of comprehensive healthcare and related services, located on Delano Street in the Village of Pulaski. Day to day operations of the facility are guided by the Northern Oswego County Health Services. Residents from the Town of Sandy Creek also seek medical treatment at St. Joseph's, Upstate, and University Hospitals in Syracuse, as well as Good Samaritan Hospital in Watertown and medical facilities in the City of Oswego.



Rural and Migrant Ministry in Richland NY

Within the Town of Richland, about five miles to the south, the Rural and Migrant Ministry provides medical treatment for the uninsured, in addition to special women's services, youth counseling, and emergency assistance. Operated by United Way, this facility on Stewart Street is open on Monday and Wednesday and the clinic is open on Wednesday evenings.

North Country Christian Church at 49 Salisbury Street in Lacona operates a soup kitchen Monday through Wednesday each week, and a summer recreation program at Sandy Creek Central School provides activities and free lunches to about 100 children in the 6 week program. The Friendship Shoppe also provides fresh and emergency food, and other necessities to those in need.



## Town of Sandy Creek Community Resources

Data obtained from the NYS Office of Real Property Services. This map was created for planning purposes only. The CNY RPDB does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this map.

Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board  
 128 North Salina Street 1100 Clinton Square, Suite 200  
 Syracuse, NY 13202  
 Phone: (315) 422-3276 fax: (315) 422-9051  
 June 2013

## Historic, Scenic and Cultural Resources

Dreams come true;  
without that possibility,  
nature would not incite  
us to have them.

- John Updike, writer

The Town of Sandy Creek is home to many historic and culturally valued sites and structures that have as yet not been formally recognized or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include 19th century one room schoolhouses, gracious former hotel buildings, farm houses, churches, carriage and livestock barns, bridges and historic fairgrounds. In 1976, a reconnaissance level architectural survey of Oswego County was undertaken by the Heritage Foundation of Oswego County. The survey included a 74 page section devoted to the Town of Sandy Creek with an historic overview, themes and property types, existing conditions, photographs and a map of property locations. The Sandy Creek section of this document is included in Appendix B of this Plan for reference in protecting the community's valued historic and cultural resources.



Seelye Schoolhouse, built in 1870 by William Howlett at Cummings and South Ridge Roads once served 40 to 60 pupils and, in addition was used for church services. In the photo at left, the octagonal bell tower is pictured (Source: Cemeteries located in the Town of Sandy Creek, Noyes Cemetery, The Sandy Creek History Center). At right, minus the entry roof (removed c.1973), steps and bell tower (removed c.1983), the building still stands in the same location today (photo taken May 2010). The Ridge Road is said to follow the prehistoric shoreline of "Lake Iroquois" and was laid out along an ancient Native American trail.



The Oswego County Fair was once known as the Sandy Creek Fair, and has been held at the Sandy Creek Fairgrounds every summer since 1858. The racetrack pictured at right, just below Little Sandy Creek is found in the same location on historic maps dating prior to 1878. The Village landscape has been the site of horse races and other recreational competitions for over 150 years.



**The Carl S. Burritt Block (Post Office and Laundromat), built in 1899 at the corner of South Main Street (Route 11) and Lake Street (Route 15), 2009.**

In 1988, a 37 acre area at the center of the Village of Sandy Creek was listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places as the Sandy Creek Historic District. The nationally recognized district includes 14 contributing structures with architectural styles including Italianate and Greek Revival dating from 1925 through 1949. In addition, there are nine individually listed historic buildings on the National Register within the Town of Sandy Creek, five of these being located in the Village of Lacona.



**The P. M. Newton House, built in 1851 on Harwood Drive in Sandy Creek is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2009.**



**Grove's Adult Home, built c.1890 on Harwood Drive in Lacona, 2009.**



**At left, the Former Martin Hotel (Thomas House) c.1854, 1890, and right the Watkins House and later the American Hotel) c. 1850 on Harwood Drive in the Village of Sandy Creek, 2008.**



**Overlook (Holyoke Cottage), a cobblestone bungalow built in 1905-06 overlooking North Sandy Pond, 2009.**

Many historically notable buildings, structures and landscapes remain throughout the Town of Sandy Creek, from early 20th century cottages at the lake shore to one room school houses, railroad bridges, and farmsteads. Architecture in the styles of Craftsman, Victorian, and Queen Anne are among Sandy Creek's many National Register-listed historic properties.

While Sandy Creek and Lacona have no Historical Society of their own, the Half-Shire Historical Society in the Town of Richland and the Pulaski Historical Society in the Village of Pulaski are nearby. Founded in 1972, the Half-Shire Historical Society represents the northern Oswego County Towns of Albion, Amboy, Boylston, Orwell, Parish, Redfield, Richland, Sandy Creek, and Williamstown. The group is headquartered (since 1974) in the former Richland school, a two-story brick structure built in the nearby Town of Richland in 1926. The society museum has been undergoing extensive



**Ballou Schoolhouse, c.1900 at Ouderkirk and Tryon Roads is another wood frame, one room schoolhouse with a bell tower.**



**Mark V. Sellis House, built c.1870 by Master Mason Samuel Sadler on North Main Street in Sandy Creek, 2009.**



**Former First National Bank of Lacona, now Pathfinder Bank on Harwood Drive in the Village of Lacona, built in 1922. The clock tower was built in 1925.**



**Half-Shire Historical Society building in the Town of Richland.**



**Masonic Lodge Temple, former Congregational Church, c.1832 -1879 on Harwood Drive, Sandy Creek, 2008.**



**Former New York Central Railroad Station, Park Street in the Village of Lacona, built in 1890.**

second floor renovations including refitting for domestic arts, agriculture, and logging exhibits. The library holds a large collection of genealogical material on the region with a large emphasis on Redfield families. The Half-Shire Historical Society has coordinated the Heritage Building Exhibit at the Oswego County Fair, held at the fairgrounds in the Town of Sandy Creek, for many years.

Additional historic information can be found at the Ainsworth Memorial Library in the Village of Sandy Creek and the Pulaski Library in the Snow Memorial Building on North Jefferson Street in Pulaski. Copies of the “Pulaski Democrat” from 1834 to 1990 can be accessed on microfilm at the Pulaski Library, in addition to cemetery records of northern Oswego County, information about the Underground Railroad in Oswego County. Additional information can be obtained from the Town of Sandy Creek Historian. The Town of Sandy Creek appointed a Town Historian and a History Center, open for public research, is maintained at the Sandy Creek Town Hall where all town records, history materials and artifacts are kept in a fire-safe room with environmental controls.

### **Churches**

A class of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in town as early as 1811, but the First Methodist Episcopal church of Sandy Creek was not legally incorporated until 1830. In 1831, under the pastorate of Rev. Elisha Wheeler, a church edifice was erected and dedicated in the village. It served its purpose for many years— nearly half a century, —when a new brick structure was built.

The First Congregational church of Sandy Creek was the first regular religious society formed in town and dates back to 1817 when a council of three ministers constituted it as a Presbyterian church. In 1832 an edifice was erected in Sandy Creek.

The First Baptist church of Sandy Creek was constituted in 1820. The first church edifice was built by subscription around 1840. The new church was built in 1917-1918 and is distinguished by its unusual octagon shape and its interior Akron plan layout, consisting of a central sanctuary surrounded by small meeting rooms and galleries.

A Society of Christian Workers was organized in the Village of Lacona in September 1885 to foster and sustain religious worship. This movement resulted in the formation of the parish of Emanuel Church (Protestant Episcopal) in 1892. A neat frame edifice was built in 1892 and opened for services in June of that year. (See Appendix B for the complete Sandy Creek section of the Architectural Survey of Oswego County, Heritage Foundation of Oswego County, Inc.)

**Cemeteries**

There are several cemeteries throughout the Town of Sandy Creek. Most are abandoned, including Rice Family, Scripture, Stevens, Noyes, Pioneer/Goodenough District, North Road/Barnard, although each has been documented and mapped with pictures of the gravestones, and family genealogies.



**First Baptist church, built 1917-18 on Harwood Drive, Sandy Creek, 2008.**



**Boylston - Sandy Creek Wesleyan Cemetery, two miles east of Lacona., 2009.**



**Wesleyan Church, North Main Street, Sandy Creek, built in 1852.**



**A grave stone from 1856 marked with the name Lindsey at Pioneer Cemetery near Henderson Road.**

Currently active cemeteries are Woodlawn and Sandy Creek/Boylston Wesleyan. Around 1820, half an acre of land near the present Village of Sandy Creek was purchased by subscription and opened for burial purposes. It was deeded to the Presbyterian Church, in addition to another half-acre parcel in 1850. In 1866, the Union Cemetery Association of Sandy Creek (Woodlawn) was established. An adjoining five acres were purchased and the trustees of the Presbyterian Society deeded the old plot to the new association. By the late 1880's, two and half additional acres were added and a brick, receiving house was built.



**Noyes Cemetery on Ridge Road.**



Rail City Museum, established in 1955 by Dr. Stanley Groman, was the first steam-operating railroad museum in the United States. Located near Sandy Pond and NYS Scenic Route 3, Rail City offered visitors an opportunity to view an extensive collection of railroad locomotives, rail cars, streetcars, interurbans, buildings, structures, and equipment including 16 full-size steam locomotives through 1974. In its heyday, the highlight of the museum was a 1.5 mile train ride with No. 11, a 2-6-0 Baldwin locomotive formerly from the Bath and Hammondsport Railroad, at the head of the train. The Rail City Historical Museum building, originally built in 1873 is the former New York Central Railroad station from Deer River, NY. and one of many original railroad structures dismantled and reconstructed on the Sandy Creek site. In 1995, twenty years after the closure of Rail City, the 1873 station building was renovated and reopened for a short time (1997 through 1999) routinely from Memorial Day to mid-October. Today, although only open by appointment, the collection housed in the old rail station features steam-era railroad photographs and memorabilia as well as the complete history of Rail City Museum from 1952 to 1974.

“Visitors to Rail City wave from the top of a 50,000 gallon RR water tank from Lowville, NY. Engineer, Ray Owens and Fireman, John Miller are in the cab of “Old 38” from the Huntingdon and Broad Top Mountain Railroad, Huntingdon, PA. Old 38 made the Final Steam Passenger Run in New York State on the NYC RR while enroute to Rail City on June 6, 1954. [RCHM Photo Collection]” (Sources: Rail City Museum, [http://www.railcitymuseum.com/RCHM\\_v.11.29/index.html](http://www.railcitymuseum.com/RCHM_v.11.29/index.html))



The Rail City Historical Museum building, originally built in 1873 is the former New York Central Railroad station from Deer River, NY (Sources: Rail City Museum, [http://www.railcitymuseum.com/RCHM\\_v.11.29/RCHM.html](http://www.railcitymuseum.com/RCHM_v.11.29/RCHM.html))



## Natural Resources and Environment

The Town of Sandy Creek is located on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario, on the northern border of Oswego County and is in the Lake Ontario Plain physiographic province to the west of the Tug Hill Plateau. The region is characterized by level to gently rolling till-plain sloping in a gentle westerly inclination, the eastern border of the Town is approximately 500 feet above the waters of Lake Ontario.

Habitats in the region having been greatly modified by modern man, with wetlands drained, forests cleared, dams constructed, and urban areas developed. Settlement areas dedicated to rural residential and urban use are scattered throughout the region. The Town of Sandy Creek is comprised of some 46 square miles, approximately 9% of which is water. With several miles of west-facing sandy shoreline in the Town, intensive seasonal residential development has rapidly consumed the majority of available waterfront area. There is currently some remaining forest and shoreline land in conservation through The Nature Conservancy and the State of New York.<sup>8</sup>

As the population in the Town of Sandy Creek has grown, natural resources within the community have experienced increased pressure from development. Since a majority of the development is irreversible, planning at the local and county level is crucial to natural resource conservation. Long-term planning, with an emphasis on resource protection, provides individual municipalities with a rational system for guiding development with respect to the distribution and value of natural resources.

<sup>8</sup> Compiled by Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, and the Eastern Region. From "U.S. Forest Service Ecological Subregions of the United States," 1994.

*Nestled on the shores of Lake Ontario and North and South Sandy Ponds and adjacent to the Tug Hill region with expanses of undeveloped land and forested areas, the Town of Sandy Creek provides a variety of recreational opportunities for residents and tourists.*





Looking south along the sandy beaches of the eastern shore of Lake Ontario in the Town of Sandy Creek.

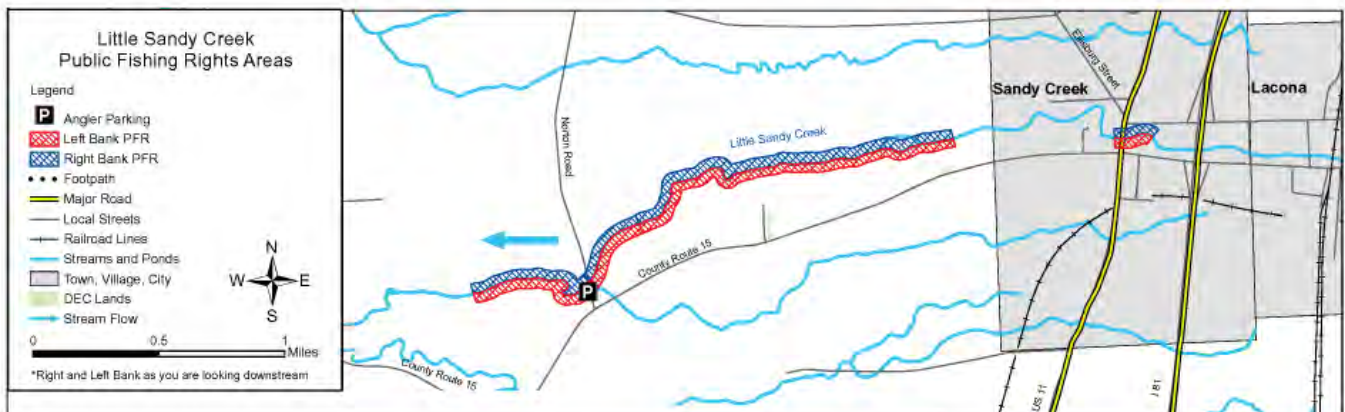


**Little Sandy Creek winds its way through the Villages of Lacona and Sandy Creek crossing the Town and draining to North Sandy Pond.**

Private landowners, government agencies and other organizations can use the information contained in this section to protect the most important resources in the town and villages. Several approaches can be implemented including the use of non-regulatory tools such as land acquisition, open space plans and resource-specific plans, natural resource education programs, and citizen involvement in such advisory bodies such as a local Conservation Advisory Council. There are also several regulatory tools that elected officials in the Town of Sandy Creek and Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona can implement to help protect their natural resources including zoning, preservation overlay districts, park dedications, transfer and/or purchase of development rights programs, and setback or buffer requirements.

Commerce in the Town of Sandy Creek revolves heavily around fishing and tourism driven by the natural resources of the area due to the close proximity of Little and South Sandy Creek and Lake Ontario. At one time, Lake Ontario supported the largest population of lake-dwelling Atlantic salmon known to man, however, by 1900 the salmon had vanished, and by 1950 lake trout had also disappeared from most of the Great Lakes due to the destruction of habitat, over fishing, predation by an exotic parasitic fish called sea lamprey, and numerous man-made dams which prevented salmon from reaching spawning streams. Today, blue pike is considered extinct, and other species have seen a dramatic decline in numbers. Unplanned introductions of species like sea lamprey, and planned introductions of coho and chinook salmon, have created changes in the Lake Ontario fisheries over time. Largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye, yellow perch, northern pike, and emerald shiner are commonly found in the quiet shoreline areas of Ontario. brown trout, rainbow trout, coho salmon, and chinook salmon can be found in Little Sandy and South Sandy Creeks.

Little Sandy Creek features salmon and a few brown trout running the creek from early October through the end of November, and is known for its winter and spring steelhead runs. Winter thaws of the January and February ice cap often temporarily expose some of the best winter steelhead fishing in the region. About two miles of NYS public fishing rights areas are located off of Norton Road, and another designated fishing access area is located in the Village of Sandy Creek.





Looking southeast across Renshaw Bay, the northern extent of North Sandy Pond, from Renshaw Bay Road, April 2010.

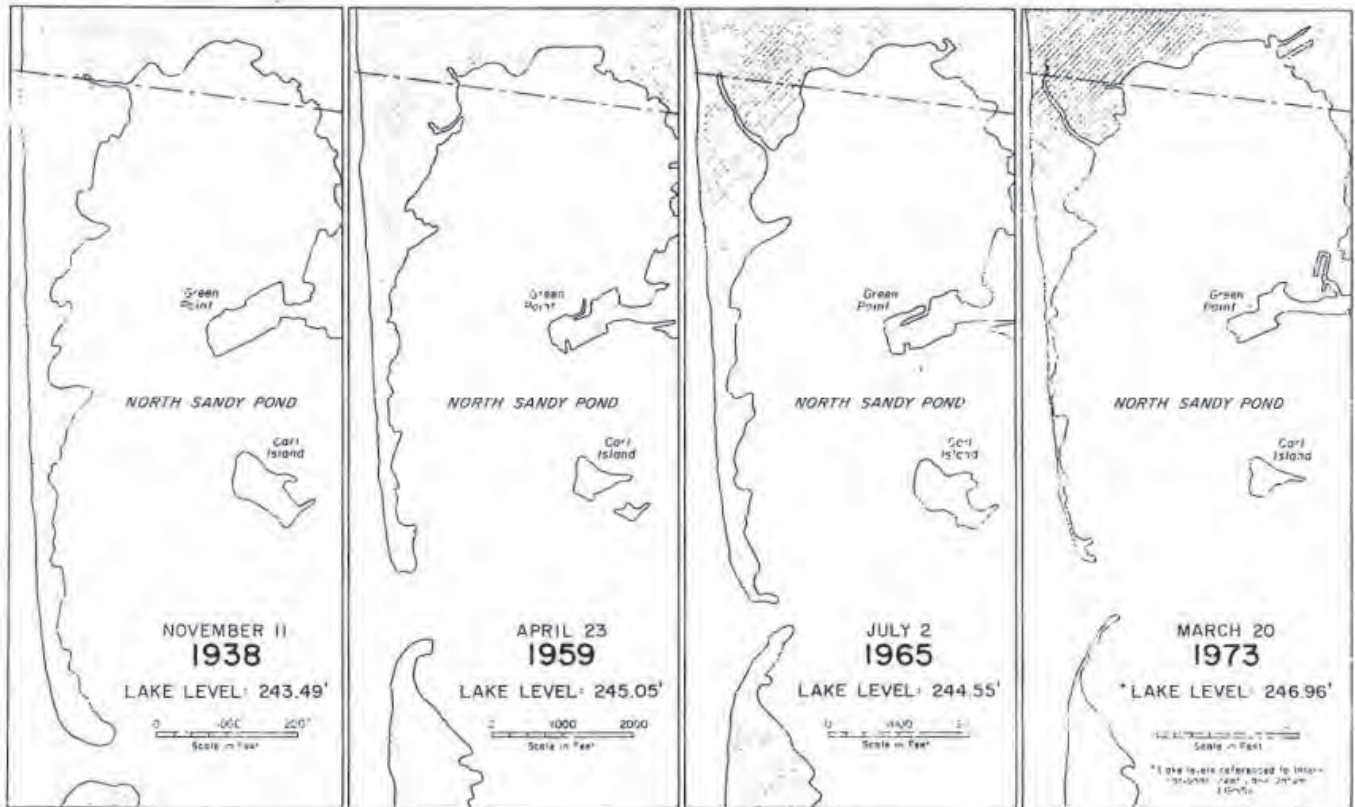
### ***Hydrological Features***

The Town of Sandy Creek encompasses 29,760 acres and is drained by Little Sandy Creek, Blind Creek and many smaller streams that are today a prime source of outdoor recreation including fishing, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, and other activities.

The principal stream in the town is Little Sandy Creek, which flows westerly across the Town and into an embayment of Lake Ontario. This embayment is a nearly landlocked cove consisting of two bodies of water connected by a narrow, winding channel. The larger of the two bodies of water is known as North Sandy Pond and the smaller as South Sandy Pond. Sandy Pond is the only considerable indentation of the coast of Lake Ontario in Oswego County.

North and South Sandy Pond, as well as adjacent wetlands and coastal stretches along the western edge of the Town of Sandy Creek, have been impacted by the regulated water levels on Lake Ontario since about 1960. Lake Ontario water levels have historically fluctuated to highs and lows that benefit native ecologies in these sensitive areas. Levels have generally been kept higher to facilitate shipping in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System, but it is the elimination of the natural pattern of low and high water levels that interferes with natural cycles of seed germination and other factors that contribute to the diversity of wetland plant communities and the habitats they provide for fish and wildlife.<sup>9</sup> The currently proposed plan (Bv7) by the International Joint Commission, to regulate lake levels could impact the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex, Sandy Pond and shoreline property owners. To date, no final proposal has been accepted, nor revised Orders of Approval accepted, but there is likely to be a change in the regulatory environment regarding lake level in the near future.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Lake -Level Variability and Water Availability in the Great Lakes, USGS Circular 1311, <http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/2007/1311/>



This graphic illustrates lake level impacts to North Sandy Pond and Lake Ontario shorelines from 1938 to 1973 (Source: *Sandy Pond Memories*, Sandy Pond New York Part I, Charelene Cole, Town and Village of Sandy Creek and Village of Lacona Historian)



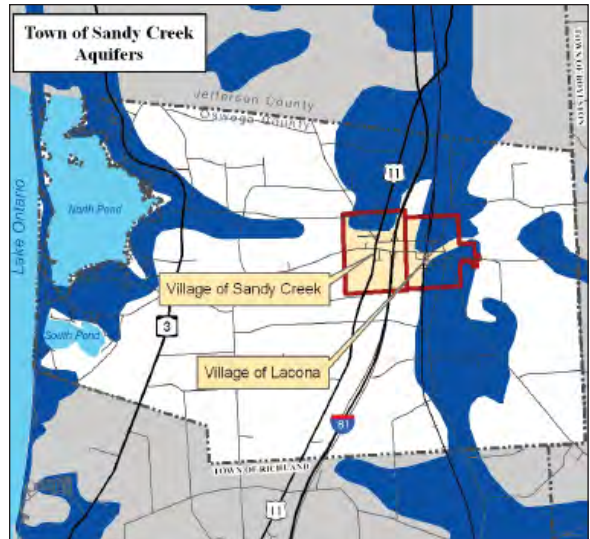
A satellite image of the larger North Sandy Pond, and the smaller South Sandy Pond at the bottom. Renshaw Bay, pictured on previous page, is the upper-most area of North Sandy Pond.

North Sandy Pond, also known as North Pond or Big Sandy Pond is about 2,200 acres in size with an interior shoreline of 11.4 miles and a maximum depth of about 16 feet. The pond is accessible from Lake Ontario by a natural channel formed through the existing barrier beach and sand dune complex. In 1989, there were eight private marinas, 53 commercial charter operations, and 485 permanent boat slips all at 100% occupancy in the pond. The shallow and shifting channel through the inlet provides navigation access to and from the pond and lake by recreational vessels, including charter-fishing vessels operating from the several privately-owned marinas on the pond. Inclement weather conditions and shoaling of the entrance channel (inlet) sometimes result in treacherous navigation conditions, including temporarily trapping shallow draft vessels within the bay and/or excluding vessels from entering the bay altogether. Based on numerous visual assessments of the inlet's recent and current geomorphology, there is a strong indication that the inlet, if left undredged may close.

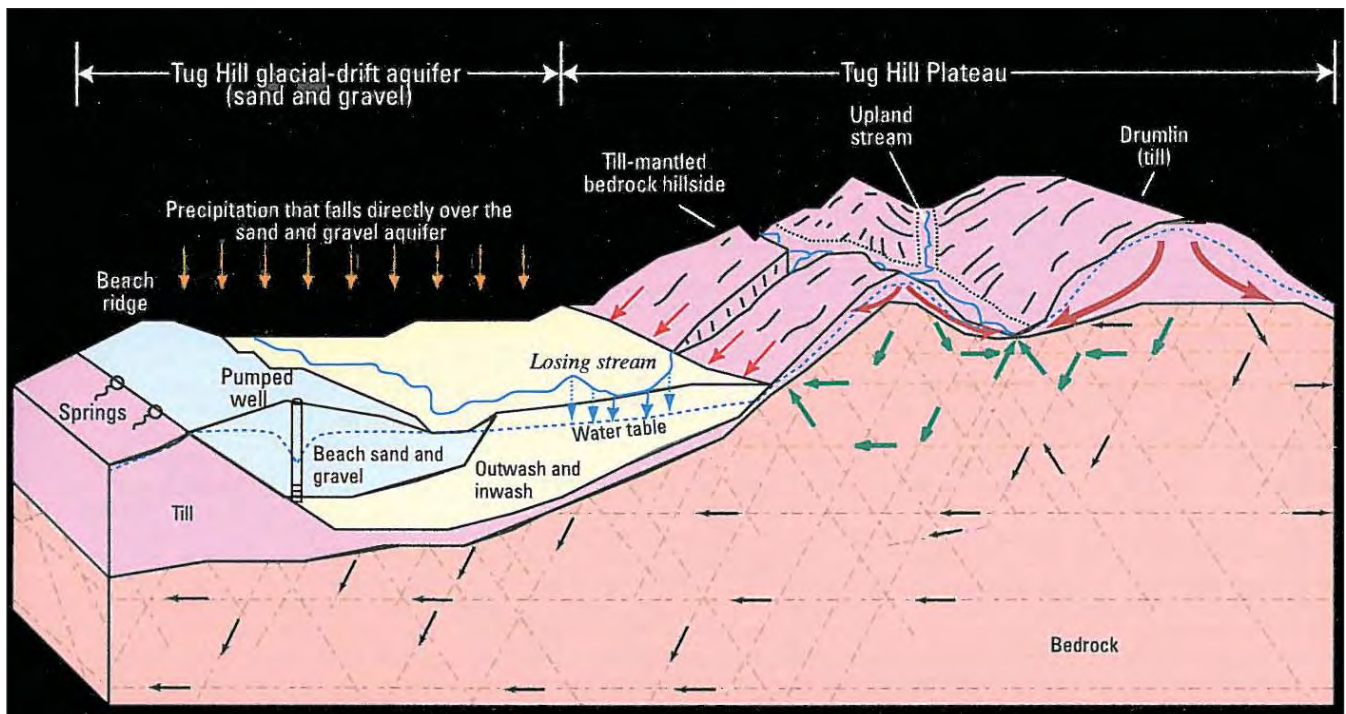
In an effort to maintain a safe navigation connection between the cove and lake, the channel was dredged by Oswego County in 2000 and by the private Sandy Pond Channel Maintenance Association each year through 2012. Officials from the Town of Sandy Creek, in addition to resource managers from a number of agencies and organizations, residents, and water-dependent business operators are greatly concerned about the potential economic and environmental impacts of the inlet closure. However, the opportunity exists to develop a safe and well-maintained navigation channel to enhance economic potential of the region. Of greatest concern are potential impacts on water quality in the pond, economic impacts on the water-related businesses requiring navigation access to Lake Ontario, and on traditional recreational uses of the pond and lake.

South Sandy Pond, also located in the Town of Sandy Creek, is small pond approximately 400 acres in size located directly south of North Pond and north of Rainbow Shores. It is connected to North Sandy Pond by a narrow, winding channel. The maximum depth of the south pond is 15 feet and it is considered to be a very good place for recreational boating, water skiing, and fishing. Many year-round homes and small camps line the shores of South Sandy Pond and are owned by town residents and out of town owners from near and far.

In 1987, an area encompassing both North and South Sandy Ponds was designated a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) by the Town of Sandy Creek. The Sandy Pond CEA includes approximately one third of the entire Town of Sandy Creek extending east from the Lake Ontario shore. When Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) were first established, the designation meant that the land had earned special protection under SEQR regulations, i.e. projects within CEA areas qualified as a Type I Actions requiring full environmental assessment. This regulation no longer applies, and today a CEA designation does little more than provide a special label to these designated lands. To be designated a CEA, the area must have one or more of the following characteristics: It is a benefit or threat to human health. It is a natural setting. Wildlife habitats, wetlands, forests, and lakes are some examples of a natural setting. It has agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values. It has an inherent ecological, geological or hydrological sensitivity to change that may be adversely affected by any change.<sup>10</sup> Although CEA designation does highlight the environmental significance of a particular area, it does not provide protections from misguided land use decisions.

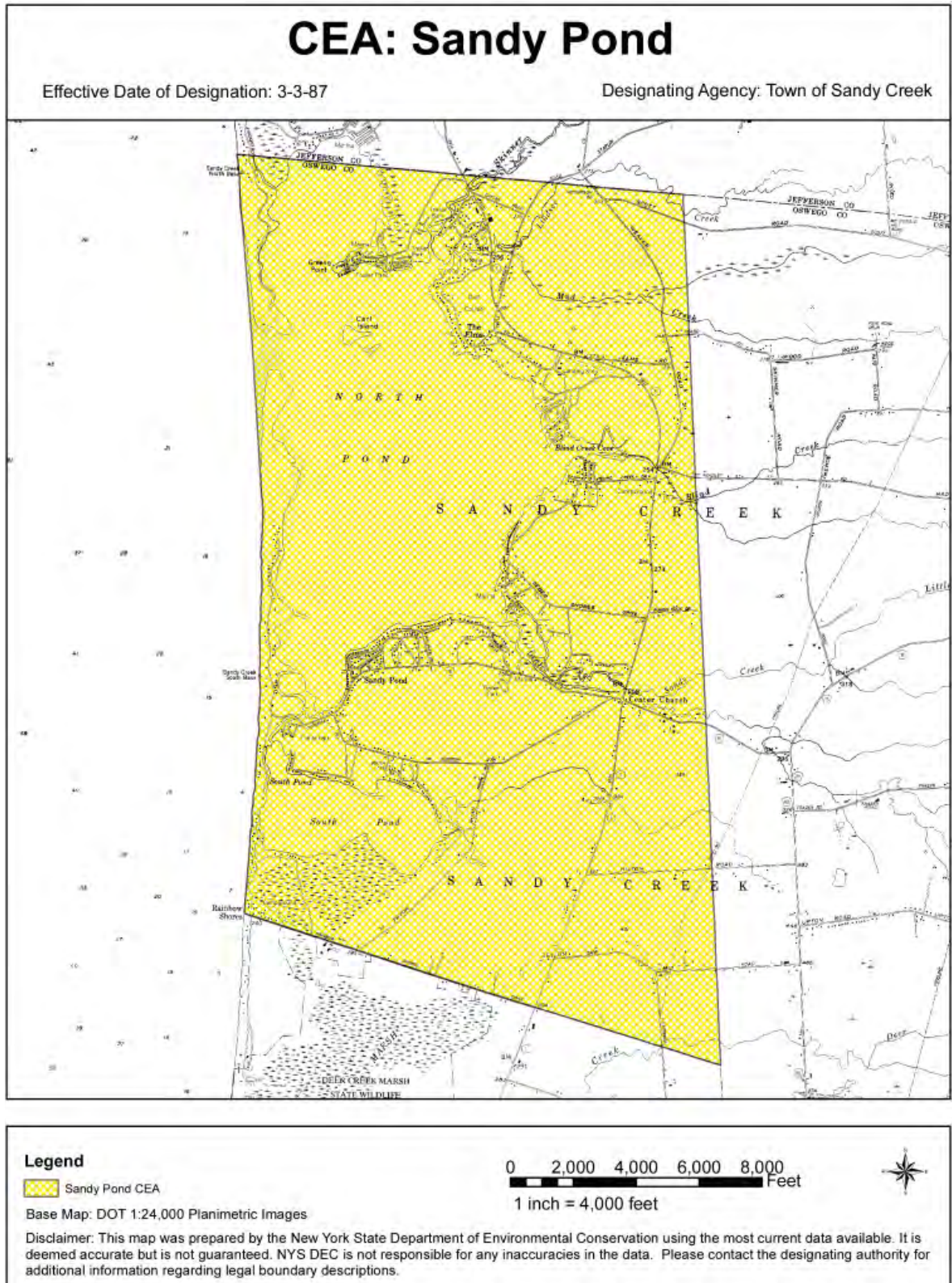


10 [http://www.nysegov.com/citguide.cfm?ques\\_id=1403&superCat=28&cat=5&content=relatedfaqs](http://www.nysegov.com/citguide.cfm?ques_id=1403&superCat=28&cat=5&content=relatedfaqs)



**Cross-section illustrating the hydrogeology of the Northern Tug Hill Glacial Drift Aquifer**  
 (Source: *Hydrogeology of Two Areas of the Tug Hill Glacial-Drift Aquifer, Oswego County, New York, USGS, 2007*).

The Northern Tug Hill Glacial Aquifer, composed of glacial sediments covers approximately 14 square miles, extending into the Town of Sandy Creek. This Sole Source Aquifer under the provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) of 1974 supplies a population of approximately 1,400 in the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona.





**Looking south at Greene Point, a densely developed recreational residential peninsula extending out into North Sandy Pond at just above current lake water levels, April 2010. The Town of Sandy Creek has many such at-risk areas for flooding.**

### ***Floodplains and Flood Hazard Areas***

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regularly updates the floodplain maps for New York State to determine areas that are prone to flooding based on elevation, water levels, and the occurrence of storm events including mapping the 100-year floodplain for the Town of Sandy Creek, in addition to the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona (Map 8). The 100-year floodplain is defined as the flood elevation that has a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded each year. Thus, a 100-year flood could occur more than once in a relatively short period of time. The area determined to be affected by the 100-year flood, which is the standard used by most Federal and State agencies, is used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as the standard for floodplain management and to determine the need for flood insurance. A structure located within a special flood hazard area shown on an NFIP map has a 26 percent chance of suffering flood damage during the term of a 30-year mortgage.

FEMA Region 2 is in the process of “Risk Mapping” and assessment for the Great Lakes to determine data gaps in historic flooding areas and to inventory community infrastructure location and conditions for seawalls, bulkheads, breakwaters, piers, bridges, culverts, etc. The updated maps are expected to be completed in spring or summer of 2013 and will include “V Zone” mapping, areas subject to wave action. The updated HAZUS risk maps will be valuable resources for municipal and regional flood mitigation planning. Oswego County recently completed a hazard mitigation plan that could be used by municipalities working with FEMA to update local flood infrastructure inventories. Employing higher standards for risk reduction will allow municipalities to join the Community Rating System (CRS) through the NYS DEC to become eligible for reduced flood insurance rates.

Over 1,480 acres of land in the Town of Sandy Creek are within the 100-year floodplain (Map 8). These areas, scattered throughout the town, are found adjacent to the lake and streams. Land within the Village of Sandy Creek determined by FEMA to be within the 100-year floodplain are primarily located adjacent to Little Sandy Creek. Lands determined by FEMA to be within the 100-year floodplain, within the Village of Lacona are primarily located adjacent to Little Sandy Creek and along the east side of Ridge Road.

*Insert Floodzones Map*







**Deer Creek Marsh at the southern edge of the Town of Sandy Creek.**

### ***Wetlands***

The Clean Water Act, defines wetlands as: “Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.” Wetlands provide suitable breeding grounds for various species of waterfowl and resting and feeding habitat for migrating birds. They also provide excellent habitat for migratory waterfowl and serve as wintering yards for many animal species that utilize the low growing vegetation for cover and a year-round food source. Wetlands provide spawning and nursery grounds, supply food, and lend protection to fish and other aquatic species. They also provide excellent recreational, aesthetic and educational opportunities.

Wetlands play an important role in water quality improvements and flood prevention. They act as sedimentation areas and filtering basins to remove soil particles and other impurities from surface water, thereby enhancing water quality. Wetlands protect downstream areas from flooding by slowing runoff and temporarily storing excess surface water. They can also recharge groundwater and increase the flow of surface water.

There are several threats to the health and function of wetlands including industrial, commercial and residential development. As the surface area of these naturally occurring landforms is minimized, the capacity of the wetland to store and filter runoff is reduced resulting in increased potential for damage from high water and the decline of water quality.

Wetlands in the U.S. are categorized as state or federal, and some wetlands can be both. Title 6 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York (6NYCRR), Part 664.5 establishes four ranked regulatory classifications of

state wetlands based on the degree of benefits supplied, which depend on many factors including vegetative cover, ecological associations, special features, hydrological and pollution control features, distribution and location. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulates wetlands that are at least 12.4 acres (5 hectares) in size. Activities within the wetlands and within a 100-foot buffer are subject to New York State regulations. For further information see 6 NYCRR Part 663.

Federal wetlands are designated by the Army Corps of Engineers, according to the species composition present in the area. Federally regulated wetlands strive to maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters of the United States through the control of discharges of dredged or fill material. Regulations are based on the precept is that dredged or fill material should not be discharged into the aquatic ecosystem, unless it can be demonstrated that such a discharge will not have an unacceptable adverse impact either individually or in combination with known and/or probable impacts of other activities affecting the ecosystem. From a national perspective, the degradation or destruction of special aquatic sites, such as filling operations in wetlands may represent an irreversible loss of valuable aquatic resources, and is therefore considered to be among the most severe environmental impacts covered by Federal Guidelines.

There are a number of New York State designated wetlands located in the Town of Sandy Creek and Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona (Map 9). Within the town, there are both New York State designated wetlands and Federally designated wetlands. The largest area of contiguous wetland extends south between South Pond and Rainbow Shores Road in close proximity to Lake Ontario, but there are many extensive and smaller wetland areas throughout the Town. In the Village of Sandy Creek, significant wetland areas are located on eight parcels to the west of Route 11 and on six parcels at the eastern edge of the Village. In the Village of Lacona, New York State designated wetlands are located on 15 separate parcels, primarily in the western end of the Village.



Many wetland areas in the Town have been filled and developed for residential or commercial use. This is one such area on Ontario Drive.



Wetlands surround the paths of several creeks as they wind their way westward through the Town terminating at North and South Sandy Pond and Lake Ontario.

*Insert Wetlands Map*





**Looking west on Smartville Road toward the Village of Lacona and Lake Ontario, the varied topography in the Town of Sandy Creek is evident, 2009.**

### ***Slope and Topography***

Planning that considers the shape and relief of the landscape, slope and topography, is important in determining future uses and development of the land that can prevent negative impacts to natural and cultural assets that are valued by the community. The topography of the Town of Sandy Creek is comprised of gently rolling hills, with soil varying from clay and gravel to sandy loam, and in the eastern end, pure sand with patches of gravel—evidence of the former coast of a prehistoric lake. To reduce construction costs, minimize risks from natural hazards, and to minimize the impacts of proposed development on natural resources such as soils, vegetation and water systems, the slope of the land must be considered. Proper land use planning and design will lead to the optimal use of the natural terrain and the maintenance of natural features and scenic vistas located throughout the Town of Sandy Creek.

Data for slopes in the town and villages were found in the soil series and map unit description sections of the Soil Survey data. A soil series is a group of soils that have major horizons that are similar in thickness, arrangement, and other important characteristics. Soils within the same series can differ in texture of the surface layer and in slope, stone content, or other characteristics that affect use of the soils. On the basis of such differences, soil series are divided into phases or map units. For the purposes of this comprehensive plan, the map units with similar slope percentages were grouped together and assigned the following “limitation categories”:

Low:	0 to 6% slope
Low to Moderate:	6 to 8 % slope
Moderate to Steep:	8 to 12% slope
Steep:	12 to 20% slope
Extremely Steep:	Slopes greater than 20%

Based on available data, much of the Town of Sandy Creek, the Village of Sandy Creek, and the Village of Lacona have slopes that are less than 8% (Map10). The areas best suited for development are those with slopes less than 15%. The Town features varying conditions of slope in small pockets of moderate, steep, and extremely steep slopes scattered throughout the Town. The most consistently pitched area in the Town is to the east of the rail corridor where the moderate to high slope up to the Tug Hill Plateau begins. Areas with the steepest slopes (greater than 20%) are found immediately north of the Village of Lacona along the east of the rail corridor, and on the lake front dune areas at the western edge of North and South Sandy Ponds. These are the areas most at risk for destructive erosion that can be accelerated through development activities including access roads and construction.



**West Shore Drive crosses a part of the sensitive lake front Dune area where residential development has expanded along the western edge of North Sandy Pond, April 2010.**

*Insert Slope Map*



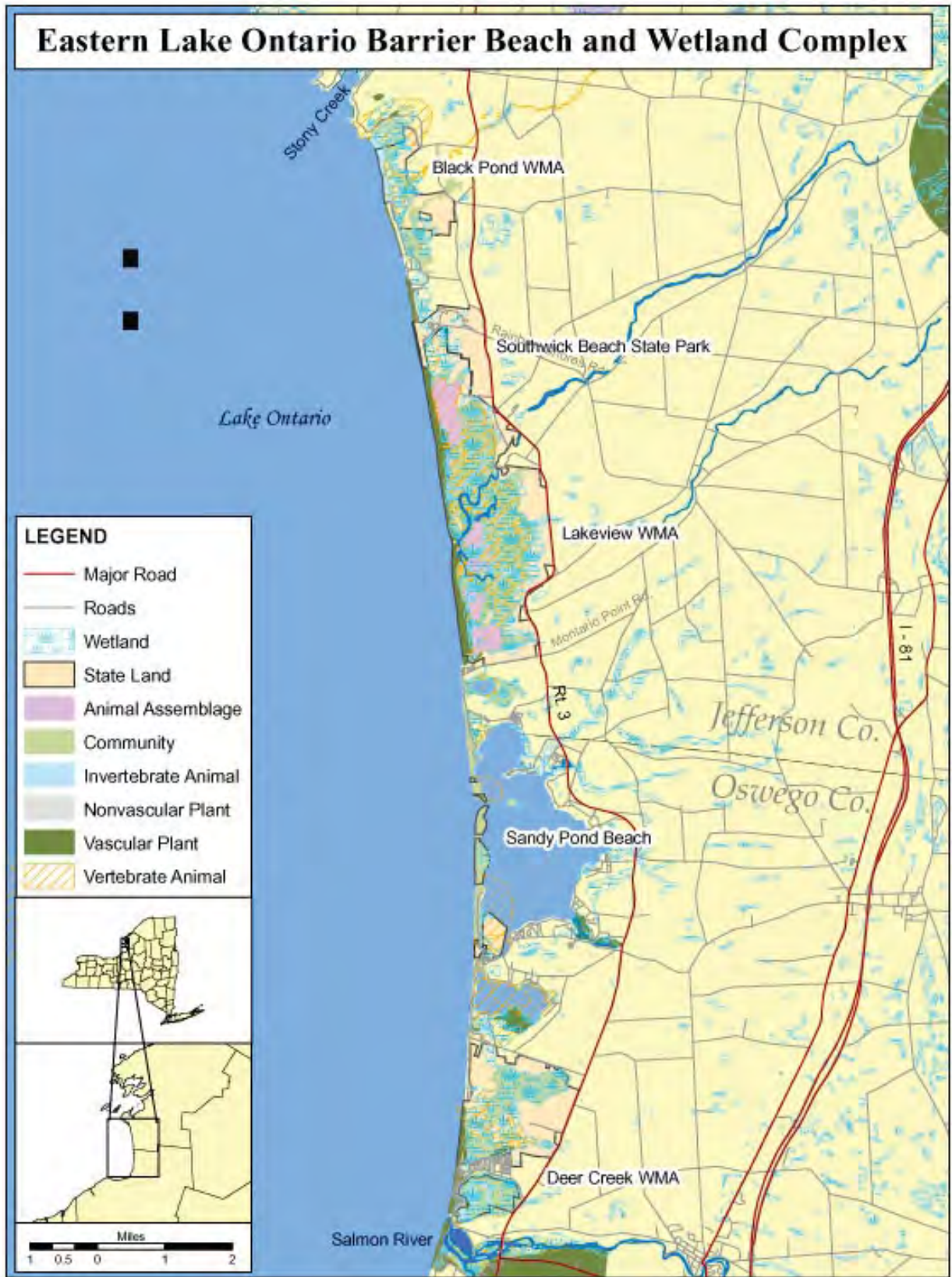
### ***Sand Dunes, Open Space, Parks and Recreation***

The Town of Sandy Creek is fortunate to include along its western border, on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario, an important natural resource deserving of special consideration and protection in future land use planning efforts. This approximately 17-mile stretch of land is the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex, a unique and delicate natural resource that is an integral part of a coastal barrier system that consists of beaches, sand dunes, embayments, and wetlands. The barrier system contains the largest and most extensive freshwater sand dune formations in New York State. Walkovers and viewing platforms have been constructed to protect the fragile dune environment and the area provides seasonal visitors with opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, picnicking, camping, hiking, and bird watching. Sunsets over the lake are spectacular.

The value of the dune system for recreation and tourism is significant, especially since thousands of people visit the system each year. Dunes have very important natural values as well. They provide habitat for a variety of birds and wildlife. Two rare or threatened plant species thrive there. But most importantly, the dunes form a barrier that absorbs the energy of storm-driven lake waves, creating calmer conditions in the low-lying expanses behind the barrier where extensive high quality wetlands have developed. The Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex includes the highest concentration of state-designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats in New York State (NYS).

*The Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex includes the highest concentration of state-designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats in New York State.*





Eastern Lake Ontario Barrier Beach and Wetland Complex (source: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39003.html>)



**Bird's-eye view of a the Lake Ontario Dunes along the eastern shore in Sandy Creek, NY. (source: <http://www.bing.com/maps>)**

A Dune System Report released in 2007 by the NYS Division of Coastal Resources titled *New York's Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland System: Guidelines for Resource Management in the 21st Century*, offered a 16-point plan for the protection of the important natural resource including:

1. Public recognition of dune and wetland system resources and values
2. Active management of areas and resources
3. Recognition of ecological systems
4. Management coordination and partnerships
5. Public interest, support, and awareness
6. Management balance
7. Sustainable economic benefits
8. Understanding resource carrying capacity
9. Effective shoreline management
10. Educational and scientific use
11. Informed and effective planning
12. Effective regulations to guide use and development
13. Cultural enrichment
14. Personal actions for effective stewardship
15. Adequate funds for resource management
16. Effective response to changing conditions<sup>11</sup>



**Eastern Lake Ontario Barrier Beach and Wetland Complex from the air. (source: <http://www.nysgextension.org>)**

Sandy Pond Beach Natural Area is a small area located on the south spit of North Sandy Pond. The area, purchased by The Nature Conservancy in 1994, is now owned and

<sup>11</sup> Source: <http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/downloads/ny%20elodws/default/nys%20elodws.htm>



**Eastern Lake Ontario Barrier Beach.**  
<http://www.sandypondresorts.com>

managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Two designated walkways connect North Sandy Pond to Lake Ontario. A bird-sanctuary is located at the northern tip of this sandy spit. The bird sanctuary and other protected areas are off limits to hikers and are surrounded by string fencing.

Sandy Island Beach State Park and Sandy Pond Beach Natural Area are two of six places within the dune and wetland complex that are open to the public for limited use. Sandy Island Beach State Park is located off of State Route 3 on County Route 15 between North and South Sandy Ponds, in the Town of Sandy Creek. The park amenities include a sand beach, swimming, recreational programs, picnic tables, bathroom facilities and changing areas, in addition to a concession stand.



Other nearby areas open to the public for limited use include Deer Creek Wildlife Management Area just outside the southern border of the Town of Sandy Creek, and to the north, Lakeview Marsh Wildlife Management Area, Southwick Beach State Park, Black Pond Wildlife Management Area, and the El Dorado Nature Preserve. All of these properties are owned and maintained by New York State, except the El Dorado Nature Preserve, which is owned by The Nature Conservancy.

Although the natural environment in the region has been modified over past decades with major roads and dams constructed, wetlands drained, forests cleared, and pockets of urban areas developed, Sandy Creek's natural heritage is reflected in the remaining open lands throughout the Town. The Town of Sandy Creek is nestled in a region with a wealth of outdoor recreation lands and open space with abundant wildlife. Key parcels of open space remain in the Town of Sandy Creek that provide important links in an interconnecting system of outdoor recreational opportunity and wildlife habitat throughout the region.





**The heart of the most extensive wetland area in the Town of Sandy Creek just south of South Pond is more than just open space, it contains areas of coastal fen, a delicate ecosystem supporting endangered species such as the Bogbean Buckmoth.**

The open spaces in Sandy Creek support a diverse collection of fauna populations including the masked shrew, cottontail rabbit, eastern chipmunk, woodchuck, southern flying squirrel, white-footed mouse, raccoon, long-tailed weasel, striped skunk, and white-tailed deer. Historically, the bison, elk, mountain lion, and timber wolf were all fairly common in the region, but have long been extirpated. The white-tailed deer, bald eagle, and wood duck are three animals which made respectable recoveries during the 20th century after being nearly extirpated in the past.<sup>12</sup>

Common birds found in Sandy Creek's open, forested, and waterfront lands include the least bittern, American redstart, pileated woodpecker, green-backed heron, mallard, American kestrel, American woodcock, mourning dove, downy woodpecker, eastern wood-peewee, red-eyed vireo, common yellowthroat, rose-breasted grosbeak, song sparrow, northern oriole.

Water and shore birds of many species feed and rest on the sensitive and constantly changing shoreline areas along Sandy Creek's western edge at Lake Ontario. This critical bird habitat provides crucial resting and feeding grounds for migrating birds on their long



**The endangered Bog Buckmoth**  
(Source: [http://www.woodstockconservation.org/Endangered\\_and\\_Threatened%20Species.htm](http://www.woodstockconservation.org/Endangered_and_Threatened%20Species.htm)).

<sup>12</sup> Compiled by Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, and the Eastern Region. From "U.S. Forest Service Ecological Subregions of the United States," 1994.



**Buckbean, *Menyanthes trifoliata* L. a wetland native species in Sandy Creeks' coastal fen plays an important part in the life cycle of the endangered bog buckmoth (Source: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, [http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id\\_plant=metr3](http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=metr3))**



**The Nature Conservancy owns and maintains about 200 acres near South Pond in the Town of Sandy creek.**



**The Town of Sandy Creek owns the 30 foot-wide right-of-way to the waterfront at Blind Creek Drive.**

journey to the southern hemisphere, and has thus been recognized with the establishment of two bird sanctuaries, the Nature Conservancy's El Dorado beach, and NY DEC's Sandy Pond Outlet preserve. These unique shoreline habitats support gulls, terns, the semipalmated sandpiper and plover, the lesser yellowlegs, and the common loon.

The delicate coastal fen lands adjacent to the shoreline in the Town of Sandy Creek are particularly rich in species diversity. "Coastal fens are floating mats of plants, made up of sphagnum moss knitted together by grasslike sedges and low shrubs like sweet gale and leatherleaf in areas where surface flow [of water] is very slow."<sup>13</sup> Unusual insect-eating plants including the sticky-leaved sundew and the vase-like pitcher plant grow in the fen, as does the bog buckbean that plays an important part in the life cycle of the endangered bog buckmoth also found in the coastal fen. Another threatened species supported by this unique habitat in the Town of Sandy Creek, is the Bog Turtle. Small discrete populations of Bog Turtles depend on diverse microhabitats like those found in the coastal fens and sedge meadows of western Sandy Creek, that include dry pockets, saturated areas, and areas that are periodically flooded. The greatest threat to this species survival is the loss, degradation and fragmentation of its habitat.<sup>14</sup> Amphibians and reptiles found include the spotted turtle, American toad, leopard frog, snapping turtle, painted turtle, northern water snake, garter snake, and milk snake.

The Nature Conservancy owns and manages 200 acres of protected land between State Rt. 3 and Tryon Road with areas of wetlands and steep slopes to the east of South Pond. Open lands not only support wildlife, but provide numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation. The Town of Sandy Creek is at the heart of a region widely known for its four-season recreational opportunities. There are opportunities in the Town of Sandy Creek, the Village of Sandy Creek, and the Village of Lacona for outdoor recreation including biking, hiking, golfing, swimming, fishing, boating, canoeing, kayaking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding and a variety of other activities.

<sup>13</sup> From "Eastern Lake Ontario Dunes, Wetlands, and Creeks, Backdune Wetlands Interpretive Panel," New York Sea Grant, 2010

<sup>14</sup> U.U. Fish and Wildlife Service "Bog Turtle Recovery Plan", <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/nyfo/es/bogturtle.pdf>



Walking north along protected areas of the Lake Ontario shoreline from Deer Creek Wildlife Management Area just south of the Town of Sandy Creek.

The Oswego County Fair, held every summer in the same Sandy Creek location since 1858 on approximately 50 acres of former farm land in the Village of Sandy Creek draws crowds from near and far with its traditionally featured prize livestock, home made baked goods, hand crafts, talent contests, parades, picnics, parachute jumps, horse races, stunts, drag races, food and drink, and exhibits and amusements of all kinds.

The Town recently acquired 15 acres on Edwards Road for the establishment of community ball fields. Public fishing access is available along Little Sandy Creek, and the Elms Golf Course occupies approximately 80 acres in a beautiful setting overlooking North Sandy Pond and is open to the public for golfing and other recreational activities. There are approximately 12 public campgrounds within the community.

Community Park, located on Route 11 at the northern edge of the Town was once St. Lawrence University property planted with evergreens in the 1930s. Today the park is a privately-owned, multi-use recreational facility, about 20 acres of which is located in the Town of Sandy Creek, that is open for use by residents of the town and surrounding communities. The private community park is supported by a recreation club and offers hiking trails with benches, motorized vehicle (bike) trails, picnic areas, baseball fields, and camping facilities.

The Town of Sandy Creek owns a 30 foot right-of-way (ROW) to the waterfront on North Pond at the end of Blind Creek Drive, and a boat launch ROW at Wigwam Dr. off of Route 15. With few opportunities for public access to the waterfront in the Town, this right-of-way is a public asset and could potentially provide an access point to the waterfront for low impact community recreational use.

New York State owns and operates several recreational areas within the town, including Sandy Island Beach State Park and the Sandy Pond Natural Area (Map 11). Sandy Island Beach State Park is located off State Route 3 on County Route 15 in Sandy Creek, NY between North and South Ponds. The park has a sand beach with a swimming area, recreational programs, picnic tables, bathroom facilities and changing areas, in addition to a concession stand and environmental interpretive panels. The park is part of the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Wetland Complex, a seventeen-mile stretch of shoreline recently designated as a NYS Natural Heritage Area, which extends from the Town of Richland, north along Lake Ontario to Jefferson County. The area has also been designated an Audubon Important Bird Area, a New York State Bird Conservation Area, and a National Natural Heritage Area for significant coastal fish and wildlife habitats.



**Fifteen acres of town-owned land on Edwards Road supports the Sandy Creek Little League, May 2010.**



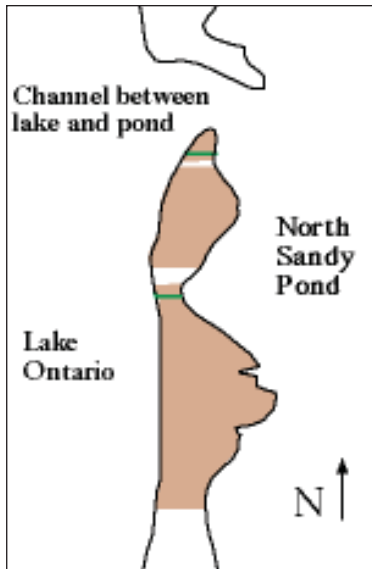
**The Oswego County Fair takes place annually on 55 acres in the Village of Sandy Creek.**



**Community Park is actually privately-owned recreational land on Rt. 11 in the Town of Sandy Creek.**



**Town-owned access to the waterfront on North Pond at the end of Blind Creek Drive.**



(Source: NY Sea Grant)



**Sandy Pond Beach Natural Area is located at the end of the south spit of land between Lake Ontario and North Sandy Pond in the Town of Sandy Creek.**



**Visitors enjoying the scenery at a viewing platform at Sandy Island Beach on the shore of Lake Ontario.**



**Signs mark the 70 mile network of trails through the mature pine/spruce woodland at Winona State Forest.**

New York State owns approximately 466 acres of conservation land, bisected by Deer Creek, on Cummings Road in the Town of Sandy. Winona State Forest, 9,233 acres of public land in nearby Boylston was abandoned agricultural land purchased by the New York State in the 1930s. Today Winona State Forest offers opportunities for four seasons of outdoor recreation. Much of the land was planted with pine and spruce, now mature and providing a sheltered and beautiful setting for 70 miles of hiking and cross-country ski trails maintained by the Winona Forest Recreation Association. Wider trails and roadways through the state forest serve as dog-sledding events and ski race trails for the annual 25K Tug Hill Tourathon attended by hundreds of winter sports enthusiasts.

A short drive from Sandy Creek, in the neighboring Town of Richland, is Selkirk Shores State Park, established in 1925 to support recreational access to Lake Ontario. This park, located on the east shore of Lake Ontario, between the Salmon River and Grindstone Creek, is a 980-acre multiple use facility located on a bluff above the lake and offers spectacular sunset views. With 148 campsites, 26 cabins, a camp store and a recreation building, the park attracts many visitors who stay for several days. Small boats can be launched from the NY State-owned Pine Grove Boat launch site and larger boats from Mexico Point State Boat Launch on the Salmon River. The park has over five miles of hiking and biking trails, which also serve snowmobilers and cross country skiers in the winter. Guided nature walks are offered on a regular basis for the campers and day visitors. Selkirk Shores is on the direct migration route for a wide variety of bird species, as well. In 2007, over 178,870 people visited the park for day use or longer-term recreational activities.

New York State-owned and operated Deer Creek Marsh Wildlife Management Area is also in the Town of Richland. This 1,195 protected acres consists of uplands, wetlands, handicapped access, boat access, a viewing tower, scenic vistas, parking lot, bird watching, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting, fishing and trapping. Deer Creek Marsh is part of the Eastern Lake Ontario Barrier Beach and Wetland Complex and represents the remains of one of the largest inland dune systems in the eastern Great Lakes and contains some of the highest quality freshwater marshes in New York State. It is one of more than 85 Wildlife Management Areas owned by New York State and operated by the DEC acquired primarily for habitat protection so as to enhance wildlife populations.

The Lake Ontario waterfront within the Town of Sandy Creek represents a prime recreational asset; however, a majority of the Town's waterfront land is privately-owned and has been developed for residential or commercial recreational use. Small areas of

State-owned and operated waterfront lands in the Town provide limited public access, use and conservation opportunities.

The Town of Sandy Creek and the surrounding area are host to numerous private resort campgrounds and marinas along the waterfront. Campgrounds and mobile home park located in the Town of Sandy Creek include: Kiblin Shores Mobile Home Park, Sandy Pond Campground, Sandy Pond Beach Campground, Groman Shores LLC, Rainbow Shores Campsite and Motel, Seeber Shores Marina and Campsite, Sandy Pond Estates, Colonial Court Campground, Sunset Campground/Angler's Roost Lodge, Green Haven Manufactured Home Community, Greene Point Mobile Home Park & Marina which occupies a 213 acre peninsula on North Sandy Pond. Sandy Pond Marina and Campground has 75 boat slips located on Rt. 15; Bayview Marina, Bayview Cabin Rentals and SPYC Marina are on the south bay of North Sandy Pond.

A short distance to the south of the Town of Sandy Creek is Rainbow Shores Campground located in the Town of Richland, and Brennan's Beach, another private 200-acre lakeside park located in the Town of Richland with 1,163 seasonal campsites, 216 transit sites, and 15 rentals operated by Equity LifeStyle Properties of Chicago, and Brennan's Bay RV Resort and Marina is located just north of the Town of Sandy Creek on North Sandy Pond.

During the summer months, residents of the Town and Villages participate in a variety of activities in the surrounding communities including the City of Oswego's Harborfest celebration in July, bird watching at the Derby Hill Bird Observatory in Mexico (NY), kayaking and whitewater rafting along the Salmon River, nature walks along the trails in the Salmon River Falls area, automobile races at the Oswego Speedway, the Oswego County Fair in Sandy Creek, and a number of other community events.

To undermanage  
reality is not to keep  
free. It is simply to let  
some force other than  
reason shape reality.

- Robert S. McNamara,  
*Secretary of Defense for  
Presidents Kennedy and  
Johnson, The Essence of  
Security (1968)*



**Fireworks display at the  
Oswego Harborfest.  
[www.oswegoharborfest.com](http://www.oswegoharborfest.com)**





Expanses of agricultural land along County Route 22 in the eastern part of the Town of Sandy Creek offer stunning views of the rural landscape in addition to the production of a variety of marketable crops.

*...sustainable practices in farming open land contributes to the high aesthetic values associated scenic farmland views from surrounding lands, and can provide food and forage for migrating birds.*

### **Agriculture and Silviculture**

According to the USDA, recent trends in agriculture show “The number of farms in the United States has grown 4 percent and the operators of those farms have become more diverse in the past five years”... also, “The 2007 Census counted 2,204,792 farms in the United States, a net increase of 75,810 farms. Nearly 300,000 new farms have begun operation since the last census in 2002. Compared to all farms nationwide, these new farms tend to have more diversified production, fewer acres, lower sales and younger operators who also work off-farm.”

The U.S. Census 2000 indicated that the Town of Sandy Creek had a population of only 91 people per square mile which, in part, reflects the rural, agricultural character of the town. Historically, the practice of agriculture has been an important component of the culture and economy of the Town of Sandy Creek. High quality agricultural soils are an important natural resource in the town, and when environmental Best Management Practices (BMPs) in farm management are used faithfully, farming is good land stewardship practice. In addition, diverse and sustainable practices in farming open land contribute to high aesthetic values associated scenic farmland views from surrounding lands, and can provide food and forage for migrating birds.

Soils within the Town of Sandy Creek consist of gravelly loam and disintegrated shale. They have historically produced excellent crops of grain, hay, corn, potatoes, and fruit.

In addition, the land is drained by several small streams, nearly all of which have rapid currents interrupted by falls that once furnished valuable water power used in the local timber industry. The dense forests that originally covered the area for many years afforded much remunerative employment with large quantities of valuable timber converted into ashes, which in turn were manufactured into potash. As late as 1860 there were eleven saw mills, two shingle mills, and other similar establishments in active operation in the Town. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century only remnants of the primitive forests remained. Vegetation types in the region include northern hardwood, beech-maple, and elm-ash and pine forest. Today, there are several silvicultural operations in the Town producing Christmas trees as well as farm operations raising livestock including Elk, Red Deer, and a variety of crops for harvest.

There are several regulatory and non-regulatory programs in place to protect farmers and ensure the viability of farming for future generations. In 1971, New York State's Legislature passed the Agricultural District Law to protect agricultural lands that were being jeopardized by non-agricultural pursuits. The law was designed to encourage and strengthen the agricultural industry by offering farmers and opportunity to protect themselves from the rising costs and problems associated with encroaching urbanization. Agricultural Districts create an identity and solidarity for the farm community, provide protection from conflicting land use and demonstrate a commitment to the future of the farming industry. "The socio-economic vitality of agriculture in New York State is essential to economic stability and growth of many local communities and the State as a whole." (NYS Agriculture and Markets Law, Article 25AA)



Insert Ag District Map HERE





**Hemlock Haven Christmas Tree Farm  
on Ellisburg Rd.**



**Farnham Farm on Ellisburg Rd.  
produces blueberries, asparagus and  
hay in addition to horse boarding  
and services.**

Agricultural Districts must predominately consist of viable agricultural land; more than 50 percent of the land must be in farms. Agricultural Districts help keep lands in production, help municipalities manage growth and development, and help communities maintain their rural character, and protect scenic landscapes. Participation in an Agricultural District is a voluntary commitment by the landowner to keep their land in farming for 8 years. At the end of the 8-year period, the County Farmland Protection Board reviews the district and parcels can be added or removed at that time.

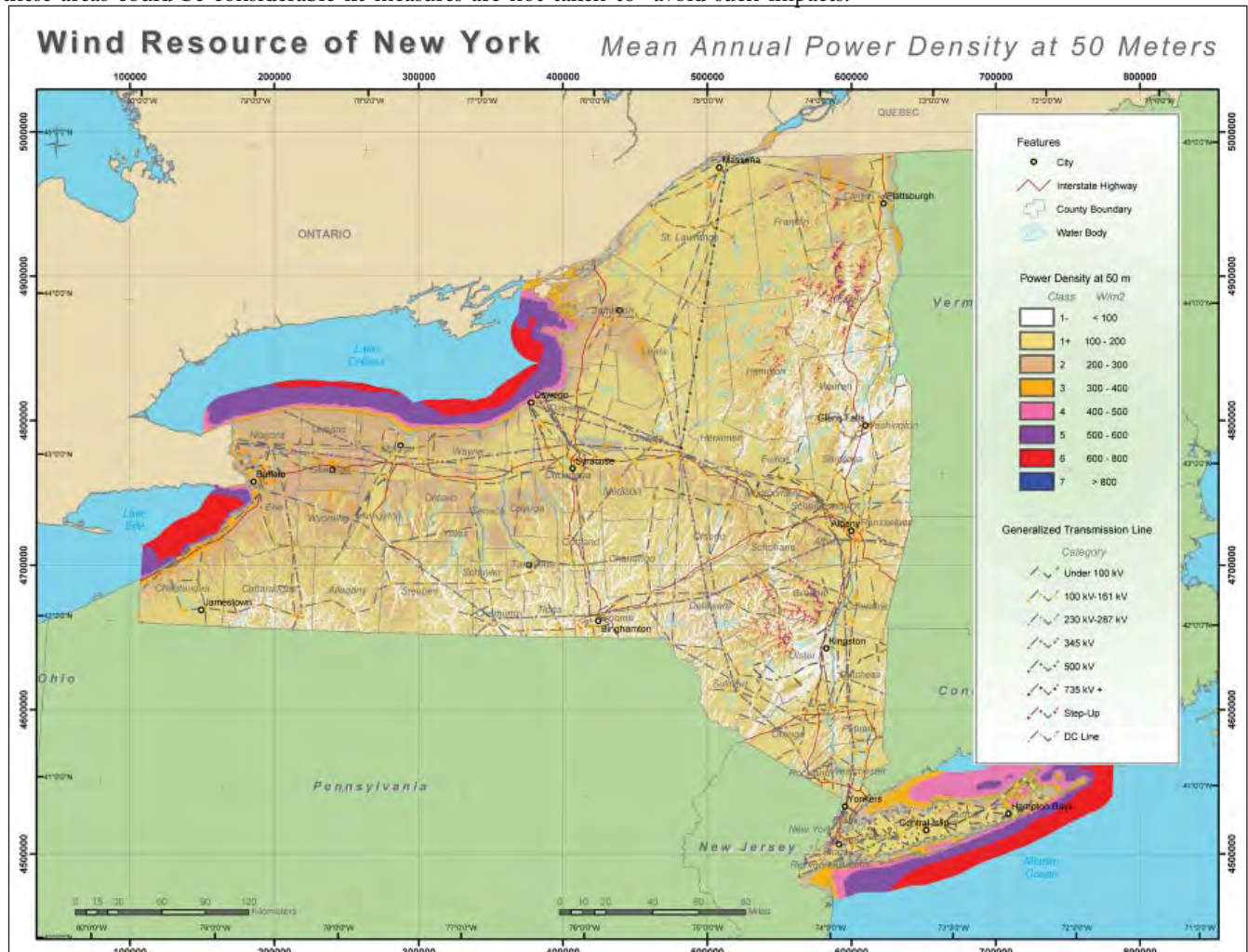
The Oswego County Farmland Protection Board has established one Agricultural District that spans the entire county. In the Town of Sandy Creek, Agricultural District lands are interspersed with non-ag district lands across the Town. The largest contiguous areas of agricultural district lands are located along County Route 22 and State Route 11 with other parcels along Scenic Route 3, Hadley Road, Frazier Road and Center Road. Agricultural district lands extend into the Village of Sandy Creek at the southeast corner along Interstate Route 81, and cover nearly the entire northeast quadrant of the Village of Lacona (Map 12). The Oswego County Planning Department and the Farmland Protection Board reviewed the current agricultural district in 2007 at which time land was allowed to be added or deleted from the existing district. The District will not be reviewed again until 2015.

The Town of Sandy Creek, because of its location on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario, is facing pressure to convert its farmland into residential developments. Successful farmland preservation requires that a Town begin to plan for a future including agriculture. Planning for agriculture can include identifying current farming operations, identifying their needs in terms of processing and marketing, and creating a vision for where and what types of agriculture the Town of Sandy Creek would like to see. The State of New York works to preserve farmland through its PDR selection process, identifying agricultural areas to preserve based on how suitable the land is for agriculture (i.e. the quality of its soils), the amount of development pressure the farmland faces (i.e. proximity to water, sewer, number of subdivisions and building permits near farmland) and the degree to which the land buffers a natural resource such as a stream, wetland, lake etc.



## Wind & Wind Energy

Wind energy is a renewable resource that is abundant in Oswego County. With some of the highest power density class ratings in New York State, the Town of Sandy Creek has already experienced commercial wind siting proposals to take advantage of this resource. If planned for wisely, wind resources like those in the Town of Sandy Creek could help to boost local economic development and contribute to resource conservation and the mitigation of global warming. The Town of Sandy Creek features average annual wind speeds of 14 to 15 mph, with areas near the shoreline of Lake Ontario having averages in the 15 to 17 mph range (Map 5). Unfortunately, areas in the Town of Sandy Creek that are particularly well-suited to wind development are also considered important scenic coastal resources that a largely tourism-based economy is dependant upon. Many residents of the Town along with residents of adjacent towns have expressed their concerns about the impacts of wind development on tourism business related to the lake and shoreline. Concerned citizen groups have organized strong opposition to wind development in the eastern Lake Ontario area, and the Town of Sandy Creek currently has a local law on residential WECS. The most compelling issue of concern regarding the siting of windmills is that the coastal zone and nearshore areas in the Town are a migratory pathway. Impacts to birds in these areas could be considerable if measures are not taken to avoid such impacts.



Source: <http://www.windexplorer.com/NewYork/NewYork.htm>, AWS Truewind, LCC,  
[http://www.awstruewind.com/files/NY\\_pwr50m.pdf](http://www.awstruewind.com/files/NY_pwr50m.pdf)

### *Addressing Potential Visual Impacts of Wind Turbines*

Scenic agricultural and historic landscapes throughout the Town of Sandy Creek presents potential aesthetic challenges to the siting of wind turbines. For effective operation, wind turbines must be visible sometimes resulting in concerns over aesthetics, however, there are techniques for assessing and mitigating the visual impacts of Small Wind Energy Systems (SWES) that can allow residents, business owners and community organizations to take advantage of this valuable renewable resource. A simple, single overlay zoning district can be an effective way to allow wind energy systems where they are desirable and appropriate. For example, a town may wish to promote facilities beneficial to the community on certain educational, industrial, or municipal land, but discourage them within scenic and historic districts or sensitive habitat areas.

In certain instances, views from adjacent properties can be minimized by locating a turbine in a manner that uses existing mature trees or structures to block views of the turbine. For instance, if a site was determined to be potentially impacted, a simple line-of-sight analysis to nearby sensitive receptors could be completed to establish whether screening could be effective. In areas where there are distinctive scenic vistas, landscapes, and roadways, municipalities can consider prohibiting wind facilities. Alternatively, locating turbines so that they appear toward the edge of the viewshed (rather than dominating the view) could potentially lessen the visual impact. A municipal scenic resource inventory and evaluation offers many benefits including determining which significant local areas merit some protection.

#### **Scenic Vistas**

The Town of Sandy Creek, nestled on the shores of Lake Ontario adjacent to the Tug Hill region, has expanses of undeveloped land, forested areas, several miles of frontage on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario, several productive creeks, many acres of wetlands, agricultural and open lands, and historic vernacular architecture along scenic roadways. These natural and cultural assets provide a variety of recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors including opportunities to enjoy scenic vistas and drives, boating, fishing, hiking, biking, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. Quality recreational pursuits add significantly to the growth potential of the economy of the Town of Sandy Creek, which relies heavily on revenue from tourism and related activities. Therefore, future growth and development in the town must be premised on environmental resource protection, with a focus on the protection of valued natural and cultural resources of the community.

Residential and commercial development pressures in many rural areas of central New York have resulted in the displacement of wildlife, the loss of recreational corridors, and an increase in the frequency and severity of soil erosion and flooding. Since most development is irreversible, careful planning at the local level, with county and regional planning review, is crucial to natural resource conservation. Long-term planning, with an emphasis on resource protection, provides individual municipalities with a rational system for guiding development with respect to the distribution and value of natural resources.

Natural resources and scenic vistas add value to rural landscapes because they reflect desirable aesthetic attributes of a high 'quality of life' environment. These features attract visitors and represent potential economic development opportunities for town and village residents. The term "ecotourism," defined as the attraction of visitors through the promotion of an area's cultural and natural resources, is the type of development that should take place throughout the town and villages. The Town of Sandy Creek is fortunate to have an abundance of quality of life resources



**Scenic view looking west across the Town of Sandy Creek of farmland, forest and Lake Ontario.**

remaining but will likely face growing residential or commercial development pressures in these scenic and environmentally sensitive areas. Parcels that are valued for their natural or cultural resources should be identified and protected.

The Town of Sandy Creek should anticipate development trends and work to identify natural and cultural features as well as scenic view sheds that should be protected from insensitive development. Decisions to allow development of environmentally sensitive parcels, or across scenic vistas should take into consideration the potential loss to the community of the rural character that defines the Town of Sandy Creek and contributes to its future economic growth potential. Many planning tools are available to prevent the loss of natural and cultural resources to insensitive development including conservation subdivision regulations, conservation overlay districts, and community purchase or transfer of development rights (PDR's and TDR's). The single most effective and simplest tool a municipality can use to encourage conservation in approval of development is to require "Preliminary Sketch Plan Review" as a part of the Site Plan review process. Preliminary review of a developers sketch plan, prior to submission of expensive full development plans, allows communication between the planning board and the developer as to conservation opportunities, and can save the developer time and money.

When considering sites for development, the suitability analysis for tax parcels in the Town of Sandy Creek (Map 13) provides some guidance in determining those parcels that may be best suited for development, as well as characteristics of parcels that should be considered as high priority conservation lands. The suitability map, developed through the use of both Geographic Information System (GIS) and field analysis, identifies many parcels with limited development suitability based on constraints of ownership, physical characteristics of the land, parcel size, proximity

*Scenic vistas are disappearing rapidly from rural landscapes as lands are developed without the effective use of planning tools ...that can protect these valuable community assets.*



Mistakes are lessons  
of wisdom. The past  
cannot be changed.  
The future is yet in  
your power.

- *Hugh White, politician*

to conservation lands, and special districting. Land identified in Map 3 pg. 55 as public land, large (100 acre plus) parcels, land with twelve percent or greater slopes, wetlands, floodplain areas, agricultural district land, and land with associated scenic views (as indicated in the legend at right) should be considered for conservation. Areas featuring publicly accessible scenic views should be protected from insensitive development. Development that is allowed in these areas should be considerate of existing views and compatible with the local language of the rural landscape.

Although this map does not provide a thorough analysis of all parcels; in general, parcels indicated on the map in pale yellow are more likely to be better suited for development. There are additional (as yet unidentified) town or village parcels that feature historic vernacular architecture or other culturally valued features that should be documented and protected from loss or development as well. The identification and mapping of environmentally sensitive and culturally valued parcels provides an important tool to assure their preservation.

Several approaches can be implemented to protect the most important resources in the town and villages, including the use of non-regulatory tools such as land acquisition, conservation easements, open space plans, resource-specific plans, and natural resource education programs, and should include citizen involvement.



### **Protecting Aesthetic and Scenic Resources**

Local legislatures frequently adopt regulations to minimize the negative aesthetic impacts of new development, and to protect and enhance the positive aesthetic features of the community. In fact, basic zoning provisions such as set back, minimum lot area, and height requirements serve aesthetic, among other, purposes. They set a context for future development by defining the neighborhood environment and establishing scenic quality. The same can be said of the separation of land uses into zoning districts, which creates a physical environment that enhances the quality of life and property values. These zoning provisions protect and enhance community appearance as well as advance a variety of public health and safety objectives.

Communities protect local aesthetics and scenic resources in a variety of ways in addition to these basic zoning provisions. They regulate the size and placement of signs, limit the location - or require the removal - of billboards, and establish architectural review boards to uphold design standards in new construction. In addition, they adopt tree preservation ordinances and other natural resource protection laws, protect historic districts and landmarks, and place conditions on subdivision, site plan, special permit, and rezoning approvals, and variances to protect the aesthetic quality of the affected neighborhood or of an identified viewshed or view corridor.

*What is the legal justification for aesthetic regulations?*

All land use regulations must protect the public health, safety, welfare, or morals. Aesthetic regulations are justified principally as a method of protecting the public welfare. They do so by stabilizing and enhancing the aesthetic values of the community. This enhances civic pride, protects property values, and promotes economic development. Vibrant communities generally contain natural and man-made features that provide visual quality and distinction that, in turn, enhance the reputation of the community as a desirable place to work, visit, and live. Regulations that protect important visual features and that prevent visual blight further the public welfare and constitute a valid exercise of local law.<sup>15</sup>



True life is lived when  
tiny changes occur.

*- Leo Tolstoy*

15 *BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LAND USE LAW*  
Land Use Law Center Pace University School of Law [www.law.pace.edu/landuse](http://www.law.pace.edu/landuse)

insert suitability map here

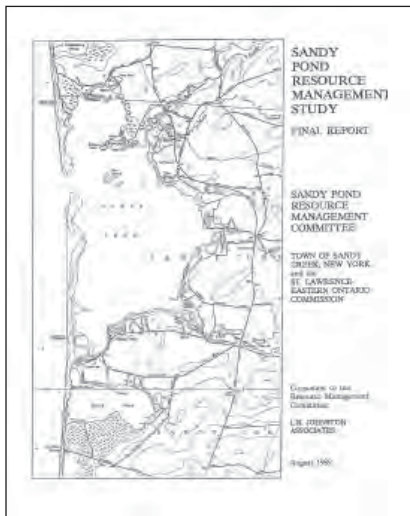


## Planning in the Town of Sandy Creek

Land use planning in the Town of Sandy Creek has steadily become of increasing concern to the local and regional community. A recognition of the limitations of, and the need to protect, the Town's valuable natural and cultural resources sparked early efforts to inventory and understand the Town's unique assets and growing concerns. These efforts, which have provided a foundation for continuing planning initiatives including this Comprehensive Plan, began with a *Comprehensive Analysis of Community Resources in the Town* completed in 1979 describing the existing geology, climate, hydrology, soils and slopes, natural wildlife and habitat. The 1979 comprehensive analysis also provided a chronology of local history in the Town of Sandy Creek.

In the 1980's, the Town of Sandy Creek Planning Board began putting together the Town's first comprehensive plan. Staff was hired to type up the plan, which was unfortunately lost in a fire. Since then, the town has received periodic assistance from the Oswego County Planning Department, but has been unable to complete a comprehensive plan.

In 1988, the western-most part of the Town of Sandy Creek was designated as a critical environmental area by the NYS DEC recognizing the unique environment that exists there comprised of lake shore dunes and wetlands.



**Sandy Pond Resource Management Study, 1989.**

In addition, a *Sandy Pond Resource Management Study* was completed in 1989, which described the physical conditions, institutional framework for resource management, problems and issues, planning units for resource management as well as maps, goals, objectives, and policies for resource management. Seven goals listed in the study include: establishing an increased role for the Town of Sandy Creek in management and regulation of land and water uses; to protect and enhance the natural resources of the Sandy Pond area for use and enjoyment of all; to plan for and regulate boating and other water uses for safe, orderly and efficient use; to plan for and regulate land use and development in a manner consistent with environmental carrying capacity; to provide municipal services and facilities to ensure community health, safety and welfare; to promote and support suitable water access for public recreation; and to protect and enhance the quality of life in residential neighborhoods.

In 1991, the St. Lawrence – Eastern Ontario Commission (SLEOC) in cooperation with the Sandy Creek Regional Planning Board prepared the report titled *A Natural Resources Inventory (1991 Update)*. The document presented an update and expansion of a natural resources inventory conducted by SLEOC in 1981. The goal of the document was to serve as a tool for increasing public awareness of and concern for the town's natural resources. As a reference document, the document was intended to assist local planners in their efforts to guide future land use and development in a manner that will conserve rather than impair or destroy the natural resources of the area.



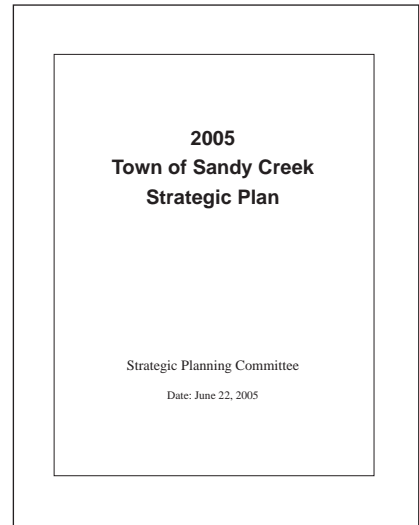
**Sandy Creek Waterfront Initiative, 2001**

In 1993, a development suitability map was created as part of the town's comprehensive planning process. The map illustrated the community's desire to preserve the character of Sandy Creek, yet allow for development that is compatible with the present character of the area.

In 2001, the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Council for Community Design Research prepared a document titled the *Sandy Creek Waterfront Initiative*. The initiative resulted in a Vision Plan including a set of goals and action steps, and thoughts on implementation. Goals in the initiative included: promote and protect unique natural and cultural resources to allow for human interaction within the carrying capacity of the resource, preventing degradation; encourage managed economic development compatible with existing natural and cultural patterns; maintain

and support existing farms and preserve the visual character of the agrarian landscape; manage land uses to improve water quality of ponds, creeks and Lake Ontario; encourage cooperative partnerships and educational outreach to acknowledge valued resources and address community issues; and strengthen connections between the waterfront and the community to allow increased opportunities for public appreciation and use of the waterfront. A Design Study was also developed based on community feedback described a conceptual plan for a bicycle trail route along Route 15 including destinations across the Town as a component of a comprehensive multi-use trail system.

In 2002, the Town of Sandy Creek, in cooperation with the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona applied for funding through the Governor’s Office for Small Cities 2003 Technical Assistance Grant Program to prepare a strategic plan. The funding was awarded and the Oswego County Department of Planning and Community Development was hired to assist the town in building upon the existing research and carry over the relevant elements to formulate an implementation plan, which would aim to improve the main street area and strengthen community development in throughout the town. The strategic planning project involved a significant amount of public education and outreach including a community wide survey, with special emphasis on the Sandy Pond area and historic buildings. A visual simulation analysis and series of public meetings were also conducted as part of the strategic plan project. The Plan includes 9 goals: expand local telephone service area to Syracuse and/or Watertown; improve the appearance of the built environment; revitalize Sandy Creek and Lacona Village main street areas; increase business opportunities; increase awareness of natural and cultural resources in the community; increase participation in community events and activities; strengthen the connection between the waterfront and the community to increase opportunities for public enjoyment of the waterfront; improve water quality in Sandy Ponds and tributary streams; and evaluate progress on the Strategic Plan.



**2005 Town of Sandy Creek Strategic Plan**

In 2007, the Town of Sandy Creek approached the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board and asked for assistance in developing a Comprehensive Plan to take into consideration the inventory, analysis, goals, and recommendations of previous planning efforts relating to the Town. The purpose of this document is to provide local government leaders and residents in the Town of Sandy Creek a framework within which they can work together in the coming years to guide the future growth and development of their community. To that end, this plan will also provide guidance and support to inform future land use decisions and regulations.

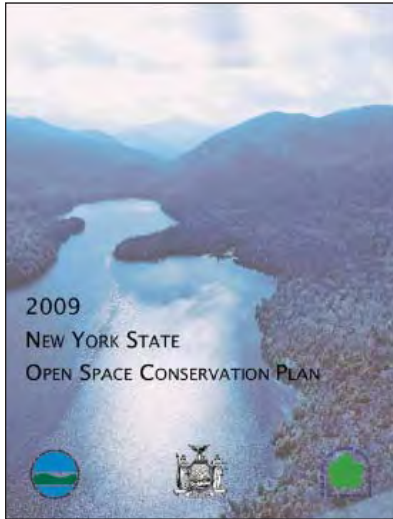
**Federal, State and Regional Planning Initiatives**

In addition to local planning efforts and initiatives concerning the immediate Town of Sandy Creek area that have been undertaken over the years, plans and initiatives of a more regional scope have also been developed. These reports provide addition analysis and guidance to inform future development and conservation plans.

In 2007, the *Sandy Creeks Ecosystem-Based Management Stakeholder Outreach Report* was prepared for the New York State Tug Hill Commission by EcoLogic, LLC. The ecosystem-based management project was designed to incorporate an adaptive, integrated approach to managing the resources of the Sandy Creeks watershed for a sustainable future. The ecosystem-based management report was based on an extensive public outreach and focus group effort and resulted in recommendations including: continued stakeholder involvement; responsive local government; public education and communication; addressing specific objectives and measure with regard to human population (limited land use development).

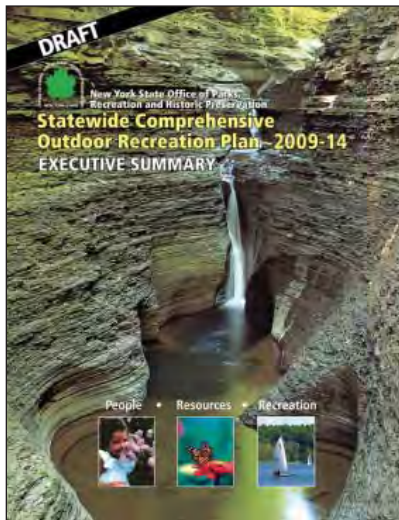


**Sandy Creeks Stakeholder Outreach, 2007**



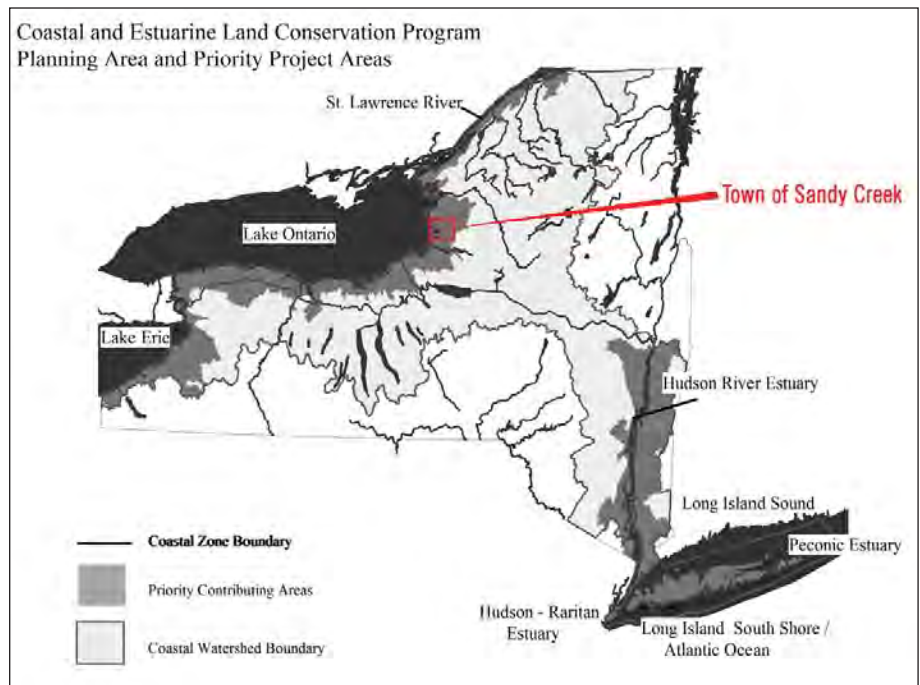
**New York State Open Space Conservation Plan, 2009.**

The *New York State Open Space Conservation Plan* (2009) serves as the blueprint for the State's land conservation efforts, which during the past several years, have conserved nearly a million acres of land with an investment of more than \$658 million. The Plan is required by law to be revised every three years. The 2009 Plan was released on June 17, 2009. In the plan references the federal Coastal and Estuarine Land conservation Program (CELCP) established in 2002 to protect important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses (Public Law 107-77, Department of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Act of 2002). Priority status is given to lands which can be effectively managed and protected and that have significant ecological value. As indicated in the map below, most of the Town of Sandy Creek, New York lies within these federally identified priority areas.



**New York Statewide Comprehensive Recreation Plan (SCORP), 2009-2014**

The *New York Statewide Comprehensive Recreation Plan (SCORP)* is prepared periodically by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to provide statewide policy direction and to fulfill the agency's recreation and preservation mandate. The updated SCORP serves as a status report and as an overall guidance document for the recreation resource preservation, planning, and development through 2014. The document is also used to guide the allocation of state and federal funds for recreation and open space projects. The document provides guidance for the allocation of municipal and not-for-profit funds to local areas and facilities with the greatest needs. Sandy Pond in the Town of Sandy Creek with along with the largest freshwater dune system in the northeastern United States is listed in the Plan one of 135 regional priority conservation project in the State of New York. These projects are eligible for funding from the State's Environmental Protection Fund as well as other state and federal funding sources.



In 1996, the Metropolitan Development Association of Syracuse and Central New York published the original *Vision 2010 report – Vision 2010: A Regional Economic Strategy for Syracuse and Central New York* – in 1996. Updated in 2004 and published as *The Essential New York Initiative, Transforming Central Upstate to a Knowledge-Based Economy*, the 50 page report envisions a broad level of cooperation among the many businesses, not-for-profits, economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, public officials and private individuals who comprise the leadership of a 12-county region in central New York. The plan outlines a vision for regional development and offers a detailed implementation strategy with initiatives in four major areas: education, entrepreneurial development, governmental policies, and cluster-oriented economic development. Six core strategies addressing Upstate New York’s challenges and opportunities are listed in the report including:

1. Aggressively targeting middle-market companies with high potential for expansion and supporting existing industries
2. Optimizing key industry clusters
3. Creating, retaining, and attracting talent in central upstate New York
4. Leveraging colleges and universities as economic and community growth engines
5. Encouraging the creation and growth of a stronger entrepreneurial culture, and
6. Developing a broader regional consciousness

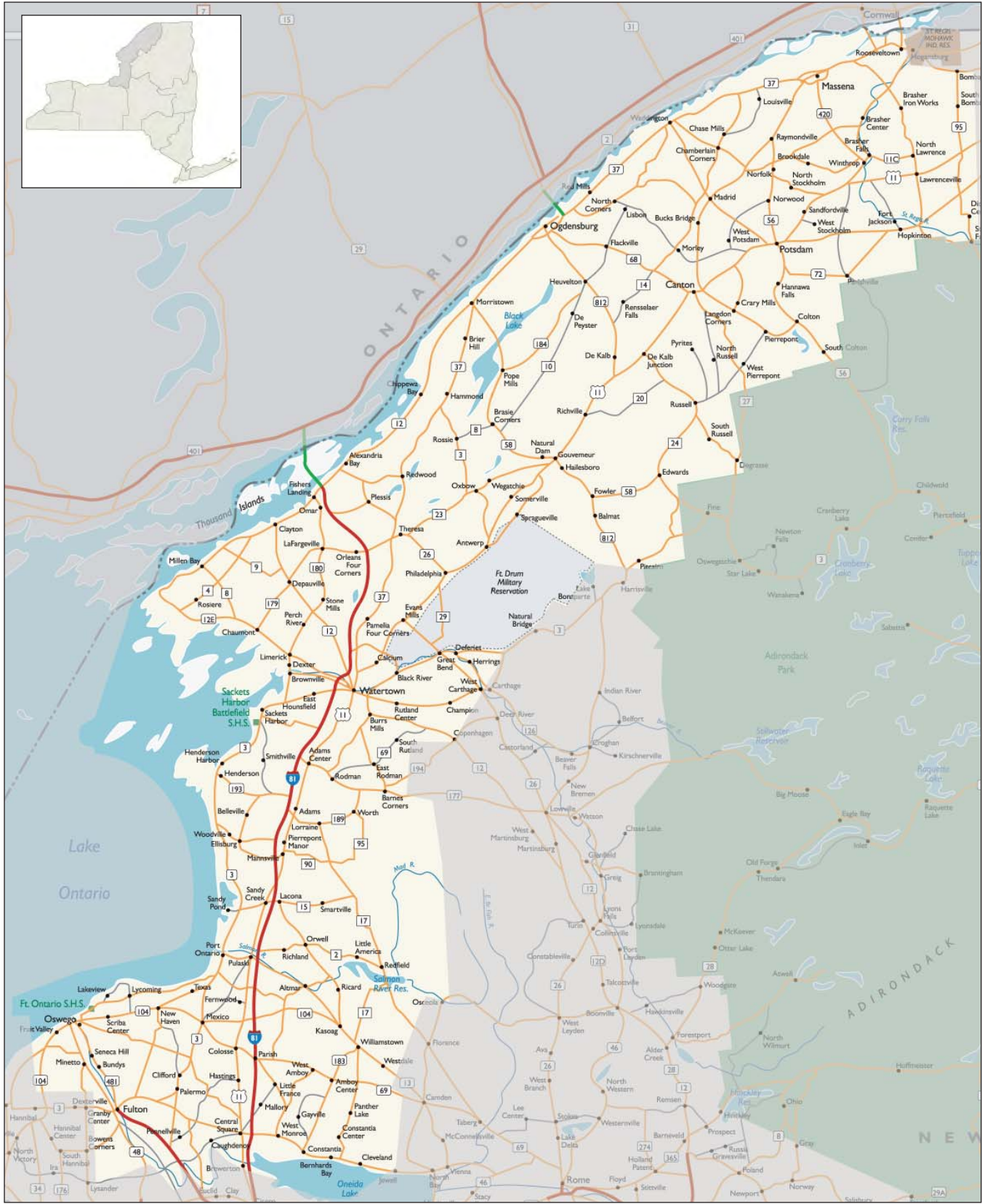
In June of 2008, the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board released a report prepared annually titled the *Central New York Initiative, A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Central New York*. The primary focus of the document is on short-term actions that support economic growth in central New York. Listed in the economic development strategy are Oswego County project priorities near the Town of Sandy Creek. These include: Planned expansion of the Port of Oswego; Parish Business/Industrial Park; and the 600 acre potential development site at the Route 81/Tinker Tavern Interchange.



## Chapter 4: Regional Influences



North Sandy Pond on Lake Ontario



Map of the Thousand Islands - Seaway Region of New York State  
 (Source: [http://www.iloveny.com/\\_files/map\\_region\\_ti.pdf](http://www.iloveny.com/_files/map_region_ti.pdf))

## Central New York Region

Regional influences are of critical importance in long-term planning for a town or village. Issues related to trends in growth and economic activity, environmental impacts or use of resources, and infrastructure development among many other considerations, can have profound effects, both positive and negative, on communities even though they may not be right next door. Consideration of regional conditions and trends during a community's comprehensive planning process can help to identify those issues and opportunities that are relevant to the community's own goals and objectives.

The Town of Sandy Creek is located in NYS Department of Tourism's "Thousand Islands - Seaway Region", an international tourism destination that encompasses communities on both sides of the US and Canada border along the St. Lawrence River and the eastern shores of Lake Ontario. The region takes its name from the more than 1000 islands that dot Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River along this international waterway and extends from Kingston to Cornwall on the Canadian side, and from Oswego to Massena on the US side, reaching inland to the foothills of the Adirondack mountains.

The Central New York (CNY) region is situated in Upstate New York and consists of five counties including Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego. The region covers an area of 3,120 square miles and has an estimated population of 780,000. Central New York has an abundant supply of cultural, historic, and natural resources serving to enhance the quality of life within the region. The rolling terrain and four season climate in Central New York adds to the sense of environmental diversity.

By most measures, the region forms an area of interdependent economic activity. There is a central concentration of activity in Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse. In addition to this major urban center, there are intermediate areas of activity in cities located in each of the other four counties. These cities include Auburn (Cayuga County), Cortland (Cortland County), Oneida (Madison County), and Fulton and Oswego (Oswego County). The five-county region comprises a balance of an urban center, suburban areas, small cities, rural towns and villages, and farming communities. The region is located in the center of New York State and is in close proximity to Rochester, Buffalo, Albany, and Binghamton; and just a few hours drive from NYC, Toronto, Boston, and other major cities in the Northeast.

Central New York has an extensive transportation network including Syracuse Hancock International Airport, the deep water Port of Oswego, a CSX intermodal rail center along with freight and passenger service, Interstate Routes 81 and 90 that bisect the region in a north/south and east/west direction. Central New York is also served by an extensive network of public sewer and water facilities. Electric and gas service is provided by several private utility companies including National Grid, New York State Electric and Gas, and Rochester Gas and Electric. The region is also served by an advanced telecommunications system that is provided by such major service providers as Verizon, Time Warner and AT&T.

The region's labor force currently numbers over 400,000 workers. Annual wage cost in the five-county area is competitive with national levels and significantly below major metropolitan areas in the northeast. In CNY, 35.1% of the age 25 population and over are high school graduates and 53.2% have some college education, including 16.4% with a bachelor's degree and 10.1% with a graduate degree. The skills of the Central New York labor force support a wide range of economic sectors including manufacturing, health care, education, professional business services, warehouse and distribution, wholesale and retail trade, the construction trades, transportation and utilities, and government.



**Rolling farmland in Central New York State**

Central New York has a strong foundation of several important industrial and occupation clusters. These include biosciences, digital and electronic devices, environmental systems, precision metalworking, packaging, information management, engineering, medical services, and logistics. These clusters account for more than 670 establishments in Central New York and employ more than 40,000 people – nearly 10% of the region’s employment base.

Economic activity in the Central New York Region includes a diversity of manufacturing types, a strong wholesaling sector, a significant agricultural activity, and a sizeable representation in the finance, insurance and real estate sectors. Although manufacturing employment has declined over the last two decades, it has maintained its importance as a critical part of the regional economy. The traditional role of manufacturing in generating supportive employment and paying relatively high wages is no less important to the Central New York Region than it is to the nation as a whole.

The service sector of the economy in central New York, represented by finance, insurance and real estate businesses, has accounted for a large amount of employment growth in the region since the 1960’s. This trend represents the transformation of the region’s post-industrial economy to a new service economy supported by an in-migration of financial and insurance companies.



Wayfinding sign along Interstate 81.  
[www.upstatenyroads.com/region7/photos.shtml](http://www.upstatenyroads.com/region7/photos.shtml)

The region's wholesaler sector is concentrated in the Syracuse area which has established Syracuse as the major center of economic activity and helped define the region as a functioning economic unit due to intra-regional flows of labor and products. Agriculture has been declining as an economic activity when measured by direct employment, number of farms, and land area, but displayed considerable strength in increasing the market value of agricultural sales. Recently, with advances in alternative energy technologies such as ethanol production, field crop production is focused more on corn rather than hay or soybeans. Agricultural activity and related agribusiness is the primary base of economic activity in the rural areas of the region, particularly in Cayuga, Cortland, and Madison Counties.

## **Fort Drum**

### ***Location***

Fort Drum, located in Jefferson County, New York approximately 40 miles (50minutes) north of the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona, has been used as a military training site since 1908, however the Army's presence in the North Country may be traced back to the early 1800's. In 1908, Brigadier General Frederick Dent Grant, son of General Ulysses S. Grant, was sent to the "Pine Plains" training facility outside of Watertown, New York, with 2,000 regulars and 8,000 militia. The following year money was allocated to purchase the land and summer training continued at the Pine Plains facility throughout the years.

### ***History***

The camp's first introduction to the national spotlight came in 1935 when the largest peacetime maneuvers were held on Pine Plains and surrounding farm lands. Thirty-six thousand, five hundred soldiers came from throughout the Northeast to take part in the exercise. Some soldiers traveled by trains which arrived in town every 15 minutes, coming from as far away as Buffalo and New York City.

With the outbreak of World War II, the area now known as Pine Camp was selected for a major expansion and an additional 75,000 acres of land was purchased. Within a period of 10 months and at a cost of \$20 million, an entire city was built to house the divisions scheduled to train at Pine Camp. Pine Camp became Camp Drum in 1951, named after Lt. Gen. Hugh A. Drum who commanded the First Army during World War II. During and after the Korean Conflict a number of units were stationed and trained at Camp Drum to take advantage of the terrain and climate. The post was designated Fort Drum in 1974 and a permanent garrison was assigned.

The first 10<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry division troops arrived at Fort Drum on December 3, 1984 and the unit was officially activated on February 13, 1985. The name was changed to the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) at that time. The division reached full strength (10,000 soldiers) in 1989. The mission of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) is to be manned and trained to deploy rapidly by air, sea, and land anywhere in the world, prepared to fight upon arrival and win. Today, Fort Drum consists of 107,265 acres of land. Its mission includes command of active component units assigned to the installation, provide administrative and logistical support to tenant units, support to tenant units, support to active and reserve units from all services in training at Fort Drum, and planning and support for the mobilization and training of almost 80,000 troops annually.

### ***Employment and Payroll***

Located within the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC), Fort

Drum is one of the largest employers in north-eastern New York and thus a major element of the northern New York economy, and less than an hour's drive from Sandy Creek. In 1989, when Fort Drum reached full strength, there were approximately 10,000 soldiers employed at the garrison. This figure remained relatively stable through the '90s and into 2000. In 1996, Fort Drum employed approximately 10,080 military personnel and an additional 2,784 civilians. By 2003, Fort Drum had grown significantly with the addition of a new third brigade. As a result, total employment at the base increased to 14,665. From FY 1996 to FY 2006, Fort Drum experienced a 42% increase in military personnel employment and an increase of 25% in civilian employment. Overall, the total employment at Fort Drum increased by 39% from FY 1996 to FY 2006.

**Table 17. Employment and payroll information for Fort Drum from 1996 to 2006. Data obtained from the Economic Impact Statements for FY 1996 through FY 2006.**

	1996	1998	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006
Military Employees	10,080	10,515	10,810	12,117	14,055	15,082	17,438
Civilian Employees	2,784	2,463	2,439	2,548	3,050	3,626	3,712
Total Employees	12,864	12,978	13,249	14,665	17,105	18,708	21,150
Payroll (million)	\$3.18	\$3.26	\$3.66	\$3.93	\$4.46	\$5.92	\$9.70

In addition to increases in military and civilian employment, Fort Drum's total payroll expenses have increased over 67% from fiscal year (FY) 1996 to FY 2006 (Table 17). In FY 1996, payroll expenses for Fort Drum were approximately \$3.18 million. By 2003, payroll increased to nearly \$4 million dollars. By 2006, payroll expenses are approaching the \$1 billion dollar mark. Over the decade between FY 1996 and FY 2006, Fort Drum's payroll expenses increased by 67%.

### **Community and Economic Impact**

Fort Drum is a prominent member of the Northern New York (NNY) community. The installation provides employment for more than 3,500 area residents and millions of dollars in trade for local businesses. Soldiers and their family members receive medical care from local health care providers and enroll in local schools and colleges. Since FY 1998, the post's total spending has exceeded \$9 billion dollars. The resulting economic and social impact benefits not only northern New York, but New York State as well.

In 1999, Nutter Associates prepared an analysis of the economic impacts of Fort Drum on the regional economy of Jefferson, St. Lawrence, and Lewis Counties and concluded the following:

1. The army base is a direct generator of jobs and personal income especially since Fort Drum alone employs nearly 13,000 full-time workers, with a payroll of \$326 million per year.
2. The army base is a generator of additional non-base impacts by purchasing over \$103 million dollars per year in goods and services from suppliers in the region. Altogether, these effects support \$237 million per year of business sales in the region, with over 3,750 associated jobs.
3. Total impacts indicate that Fort Drum is responsible for over 16,735 jobs and \$429 million per year of personal income added to the region, which represents nearly 14% of all jobs and income in the Tri-County area (Table 18).

**Table 18. Summary of the regional economic impacts of Fort Drum annually. Data provided by Nutter Associates in the Fort Drum Regional Economic Impact Study, 1999.**

Alternative Measure of Impact	Direct Effect	Indirect, Induced & Dynamic Effect	Total Effect
Jobs	12,978	3,759	16,737
Payroll	\$326 million	\$103 million	\$429 million
Gross Regional Product <sup>1</sup>	\$326 million	\$141 million	\$467 million
Gross Output	\$485 million <sup>2</sup>	\$237 million <sup>3</sup>	\$722 million

In addition to calculating the total economic impact of Fort Drum on the Tri-County Region, researchers and economic forecasters have recently started to identify business and resource gaps that could be filled by existing or new businesses in NNY. In February 2007, the Economic Development Research Group, Inc. released a report titled the North Country Business and Resource Gap Analysis. The gap analysis determined that the recent base expansions at Fort Drum in the early 2000's helped Jefferson, St. Lawrence, and Lewis Counties achieve lower unemployment rates, but local job quality remains low in terms of wages and stability. The study concluded that in order to increase the North Country's share of military expenditures a comprehensive marketing plan should be created to attract new companies, as well as increasing existing local industry's share of military contracts to improve job stability and wages. The study also identified 13 primary target industries and nine secondary industries with goods and services that are forecast to be in demand by the Army in the next several years. The industries at the top of the list included medical and dental services, electronic components, insurance carriers, and office furniture.

In addition to the gap analysis conducted by the Economic Development Resource Group, the Center for Community Studies at Jefferson Community College released the results of their Fort Drum consumer market analysis. The market analysis identified a variety of Fort Drum consumer markets, in addition to spending patterns of military personnel and their spouses. According to the report, the Fort Drum consumer market currently consists of 17,000 households with a total population of 34,000 people and a combined pre-tax income of approximately \$600 million per month. Fort Drum consumers, according to the Center for Community Studies, have distinct spending habits and desires that are different from the typical civilian in the Tri-County area. Therefore, the study suggests a variety of strategies for local businesses to implement in order to attract more business (and revenue) from the Fort Drum consumer market including the following: increasing the use of direct mail and mailbox flyers to promote local products and businesses; offering military customer referral awards and other loyalty benefits, creating a newcomer package/welcome wagon service to new arrivals at Fort Drum; developing entertainment experiences that supplement the retail experience; promoting popular brands as well as store names and locations; and focusing product offerings and promotional program efforts toward multiple consumer markets identified at Fort Drum.

This study also stated that the expanding Fort Drum population represents new market and economic development opportunities for the region. There are military consumer needs that are not currently being fulfilled such as entertainment opportunities, ethnic restaurants, retail outlets, and visual and traffic enhancements. Several of these needs could be met by businesses in close proximity to Fort Drum, including in the Sandy Creek area.

Coupled with the Business and Resource Gap Analysis results released in February, the Fort Drum Consumer Market study will help to shape economic growth and development in Northern New York, as well as the surrounding communities including the Town of Sandy Creek.

## Tug Hill Region

Tug Hill Plateau is a remote section of upstate New York located a short drive north of Syracuse, between the east end of Lake Ontario and the Adirondack Mountains. Comprised of eastern Oswego, southern Jefferson, western Lewis and northern Oneida counties, this area is popular in the winter for snowmobiling and skiing due to the large snowfalls that come off of Lake Ontario; in the spring and summer for its numerous trout streams and back roads used for hiking and mountain biking; and its abundance of large and small game make hunting in the area enjoyable in the fall. The Tug Hill region contains many large parcels of state land, which are open to the public for a variety of recreational uses.

Tug Hill Plateau receives over 300 inches of snow each year, more than any area east of the Rockies. Cross country skiers discovered this wooded, winter wonderland, about thirty years ago. Other visitors travel into the area in spring, summer and fall, but the area is especially well-known for its fine recreational cross country skiing. Many new trails have been developed over the last twenty years since the Tug Hill Tourathon, well known 50K citizens race began. The managed of about 10,000 acres, purchased in the 1930s and 1940s, includes Winona State Forest and some county lands. During the 30s and 40s the Civilian Conservation Corps planted pine seedlings on much of the old farm acreage. The trails are used by skiers of all skill levels who wind their way through the quiet wilderness with almost daily winter snowfall. There are miles of ATV and snowmobile trails as well.

The region surrounding the Tug Hill contains numerous attractions and recreational opportunities nestled in its many small villages and hamlets. Tourists can find antique shops, flea markets, handmade furniture, gifts and crafts, fishing and hunting guide services, miles of snowmobile trails, restaurants, lodging, bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, boating, canoeing, both down hill and cross-country skiing, pure maple syrup products, numerous roadside produce stands and much more.

To the west, Lake Ontario, from Mexico Bay on the southeast corner of the lake to Sackets and Henderson Harbors is renowned for its sport fishing including salmon, trout, bass and walleye along with numerous panfish. The Fort Tompkins site at Sackets Harbor, features remnants of Fort Kentucky, and portions of an 1813 battlefield which are reminders of the War of 1812. The salmon and steelhead runs in the Salmon River flowing through Pulaski and Altmar are world famous and draw fisherman from around the world. There is abundant lodging and restaurants along the lake as well as state and private campgrounds, boat launches, and marinas.

To the north, Watertown leads into the 1000 Island Region of the St. Lawrence River. Heading east to the Black River valley is Carthage and Lowville. This area is very picturesque with its many dairy farms.

The eastern portion of the region south to Booneville is bounded by the Black River Valley. The river has numerous public launch areas and good populations of bass, walleye, northern pike and panfish. Many portions of the river feature slow meandering lazy water and make for enjoyable canoeing. To the east of the valley are the foothills of the Adirondacks. The city of Rome, south of Booneville, was an important point before the Erie Canal when the boats were brought up the Mohawk River from the Hudson River and transferred to Wood Creek to allow travel through Oneida Lake to the Great Lakes. Fort Stanwix historically protected this important transfer point and remains at this location today.



Wayfinding sign along Interstate  
81. [www.norcog.org/](http://www.norcog.org/)



**Snow plow at work in Oswego, NY.** Source: Gary Walts / The Post-Standard, accessed at [syracuse.com](http://syracuse.com), January 5, 2008.



Charter fishing boats at Selkirk on Lake Ontario.



*Tug Hill Plateau receives over 300 inches of snow each year, more than any area east of the Rockies...trails are used by skiers of all skill levels who wind their way through the quiet wilderness with almost daily winter snowfall.*



Skiers in the 28th annual Tug Hill Tourathon take off from the starting line in the 25K event at Winona Forest CCC Camp, in Mannsville. Source: Gary Walts / The Post-Standard, accessed at [syracuse.com](http://syracuse.com), January 5, 2008.

#### **Tug Hill Aquifer**

“The Tug Hill Aquifer is a 47-mile-long underground rock and soil formation that is shaped like a crescent bending around the western and southwestern side of the Tug Hill region, from Jefferson County through Oswego County and into northern Oneida County.”<sup>16</sup> The Tug Hill Aquifer is made of sand and gravel that was deposited by retreating glaciers approximately 12,000 years ago and travels beneath the Salmon River watershed in the Sandy Creek, Lacona and Pulaski. The aquifer has sections, which are unconfined (water table conditions) and confined (capped and pressurized by a layer of impermeable material such as clay or glacial till).

Groundwater is the major source of water for resident’s living on or adjacent to the Tug Hill Aquifer. Before 1960, groundwater use was low because development was sparse. Most groundwater withdrawals were from springs, dugwells, and some drilled wells that supplied homes, farms, and small communities. After 1960, parts of the aquifer that could yield large quantities of water were tapped for industrial use by Schoeller Technical Papers, Inc., a paper company in the Town of Richland, and the Altmar Fish Hatchery. Extensive well fields were established that yield as much as 1.5 to 2.3 million gallons of groundwater per day.

In November of 2006, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated the northern section of the Tug Hill Aquifer, and its tributary surface watershed, as a Federal Sole Source Aquifer (FSSA). It is important to note that the Sole Source designation includes not only the land surface directly above the section of the aquifer, where water exists under ground, but also the land surface watershed in this section of the aquifer. The Northern Tug Hill Glacial Aquifer includes portions of eight towns in Jefferson County (Adams, Champion, Ellisburg, Lorraine, Rodman,

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.tughill.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/DesignationOfNorthernTHAquiferAsSoleSourceAquifer2007.pdf>

Rutland, Watertown, and Worth), portions of three towns in Lewis County (Denmark, Montague, and Pinckney), and portions of four towns in Oswego County (Boylston, Redfield, Richland, and Sandy Creek).

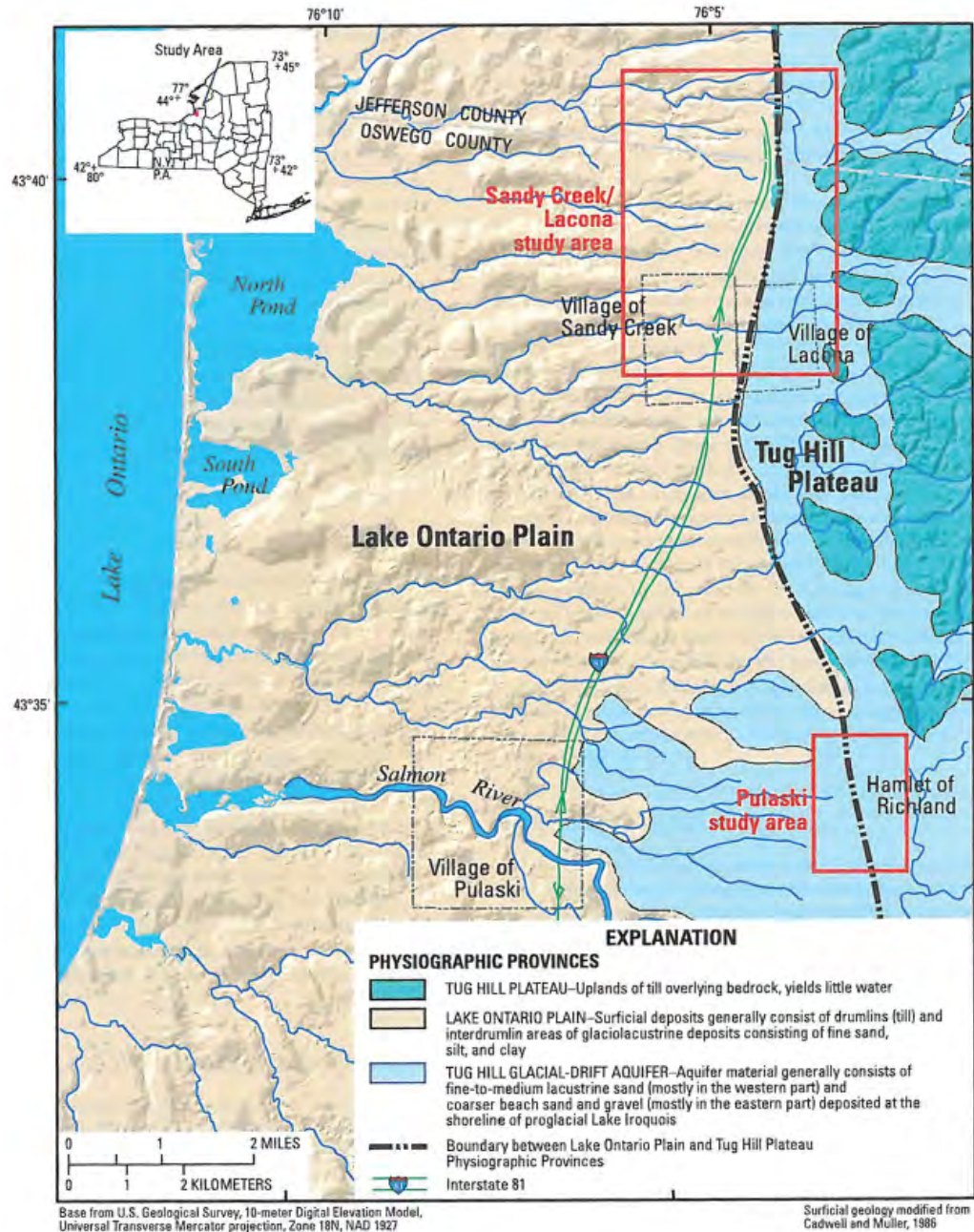


*The Tug Hill Aquifer is a 47-mile long underground rock and soil formation that is shaped like a crescent bending around the western and southwestern side of the Tug Hill region, from Jefferson County through Oswego County and into northern Oneida County.*

## Colleges and Universities

In Upstate New York, there are over 44 institutions of higher education with a combined enrollment in excess of 215,000 students. In total, there are at least 18 colleges and universities within 50 miles of the Town of Sandy Creek (Map 14).

Many are part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system, the nation's largest comprehensive system of public higher education. The State University of New York's 64 geographically dispersed campuses bring educational opportunity within commuting distance of virtually all New Yorkers and offers students a wide diversity of educational



This graphic illustrates the physiographic relationship of the Northern Tug Hill Glacial Drift Aquifer to the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona. (Source: *Hydrogeology of Two Areas of the Tug Hill Glacial-Drift Aquifer, Oswego County, New York*, USGS, 2007).

options: short-term vocational/technical courses, certificate programs, associate degree programs, baccalaureate degree programs, graduate degrees and post-doctoral studies. The University offers access to almost every field of academic or professional study somewhere within the system — some 7,669 degree and certificate programs overall.

There are also numerous private colleges and universities within 50 miles of the town and villages, including Syracuse University and LeMoyne College.



Campus of SUNY Oswego. Source: [http://www.oswego.edu/about/centers/CELT/Campus\\_Quad.jpg](http://www.oswego.edu/about/centers/CELT/Campus_Quad.jpg)



**Table 19. Colleges and universities within a 50 miles radius of the Town of Richland. Data provided by the schools' websites for the 2007 – 2008 academic year. Tuition and fees are estimated.**

Academic Institution	Number of Students	Tuition	Tuition, Room and Board
Bryant and Stratton – 2 Campuses	500+	Not reported	Not reported
Cayuga Community College – Fulton Campus	967	\$3,839	-
Cazenovia College	1000	\$22,894	\$32,396
Crouse Hospital School of Nursing	300	\$7,352	-
Hamilton College	1,775	\$36,860	\$46,210
Jefferson Community College	3,590	\$3,508	\$11,916
LeMoyne College	3,600	\$24,280	\$36,900
Mohawk Valley Community College – Rome Campus	5,300	\$3,150	\$9,900
Onondaga Community College	10,637	\$4,641	\$10,112
Saint Joseph's Hospital Health Center School of Nursing	275	\$13,110	\$16,810
Simmons Institute of Funeral Services, Inc.	50	\$5,150	-
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry	2,100	\$4,350	\$19,306
SUNY Oswego	8,000	\$4,350	\$14,904
SUNY Upstate Medical	1,200	\$4,350 +	-
Syracuse University	19,082	\$30,470	\$45,280
Utica School of Commerce – 3 campuses	600	\$10,900	-

(INSERT

Map

SC\_Colleges.pdf)





**Oswego County Airport Industrial Park in the Town of Volney.** Source: [www.co.oswego.ny.us/airport/industrial.html](http://www.co.oswego.ny.us/airport/industrial.html)



**Oswego County Industrial Park.** Source: [www.oswegocounty.org](http://www.oswegocounty.org)

## Industrial Parks

Although approximately 3% of the land in the Town of Sandy Creek is currently considered in use for industry, there is no zoning in the Town for industrial use. All of the industrial use parcels in the Town of Sandy Creek are located adjacent to the CSX rail line that bisects the town. There are also a few large parcels of vacant land located adjacent to the CSX rail line with potential for future industrial use.

There are several sites throughout Oswego County that are suitable for industrial development. The Oswego County Airport Industrial Park is located within the Town of Volney, approximately 35 miles (55 minutes) southwest of the Town of Sandy Creek. The park encompasses over 170 acres of land and is already zoned for industrial uses. This site is suitable for manufacturing and service companies that are in need of air transportation in close proximity. Public water, electrical service, and natural gas are available at this site. The New York State Thruway, Interstate 81 and 481, New York State Routes 3 and 48, and County Route 176 are easily accessible from the Oswego County Airport Industrial Park. The Oswego County Industrial Park is a full-service industrial park set near the Phoenix intersection of NYS 264 and NYS 481 with level to slightly rolling topography and very fine sandy loam soil. This facility is adjacent to Interstate

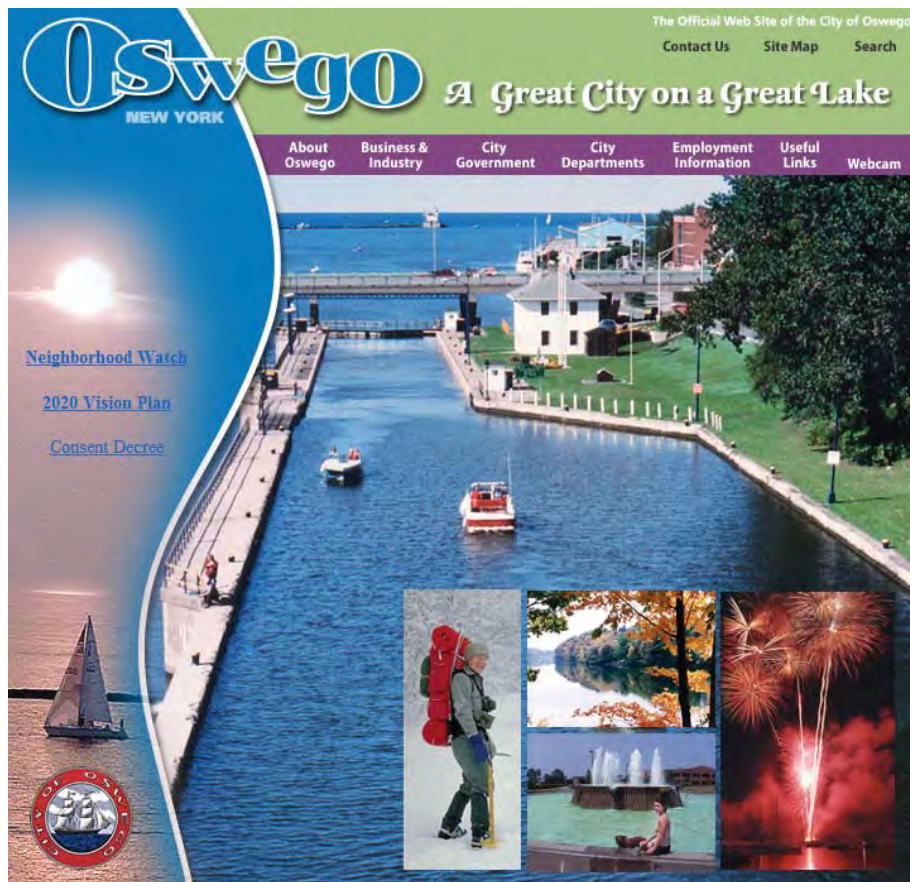


481 encompasses over 180 acres of land, with nearly 150 acres available. Public water and sewer is available from the Village of Phoenix, in addition to electricity and natural gas which is supplied by National Grid. Only 12 miles from I-81, the park is 15 miles from Hancock International Airport in Syracuse, 20 miles from the Port of Oswego, and 9 miles from the Oswego County Airport. There are 220 acres available at the park, and an additional 600 Acres available to the north. In Jefferson County, the Center City Industrial Park in the heart of downtown Watertown is another facility available for new economic development opportunities. This 70 acre site is fully developed and located within an Empire Zone. Electric, natural gas, public water and sewer are already available, and there is convenient access to NYS 481.

Within Onondaga County, the Radisson industrial park is a 950-acre corporate park that provides building sites for industry and offices. All of the sites are serviced by underground water, sewage, gas, electric and telephone (including fiber) utilities. Several sites are also adjacent to a rail line. The Corporate Park is currently home to over 20 firms including Anheuser-Busch Brewery, Ball Container, Goetz Dolls, McLane Northeast, and National Grid. The site is generally flat, has access to transportation infrastructure, and is zoned industrial. The location is convenient to the labor force of northern Onondaga County and southern Oswego County.

### The City of Oswego

The City of Oswego, is known as the port city of Central New York and is located in Oswego County on the southeast shore of Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Oswego River. With an estimated population of 18,096 in 2000, Oswego is home to an interesting







**Bird's Eye View of Downtown Syracuse, NY at Columbus Circle.**  
 (source: Microsoft Corporation, NAVTEQ, Pictometry International Corporation, 2008)

history with the Revolutionary Fort Ontario and museums as well as restaurants, festivals, fishing and hiking opportunities. Oswego is just 28 miles from the Village of Sandy Creek, and is also home to the Oswego Speedway and the State University of New York - SUNY Oswego.

### **The City of Syracuse**

The City of Syracuse, located in Onondaga County in the geographic center of New York State and less than 45 miles from the Village of Sandy Creek, is a major north east metropolitan center. With an estimated population of 139,070 (in 2007); over 136 million people live within a 750 mile radius of Syracuse, including over 50 percent of the population of Canada and the United States. With a labor force of 333,000 (in 2008), Syracuse MSA is home to several major employers. Featuring much distinctive architecture from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Syracuse is also a major cultural center in Upstate New York. The city area offers dozens of parks, nature centers, golf courses, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park, several museums and galleries, including the nationally known Everson Museum of Art, designed by I.M. Pei, Syracuse Opera, the only year-round professional opera company serving Central New York, Syracuse Stage, Central New York's only professional theater, The Carrier Dome, home of Syracuse University athletics, the Museum of Science & Technology with New York state's only IMAX-Dome theatre, numerous music festivals including Jazz Fest, NYS Blues Fest and Empire Brewing Musical Festival, Ethnic festivals including the Polish Festival, Jewish Music & Cultural Festival, Bavarian Festival, Latino-American Festival, Irish Festival, La Festa Italiana, and Oktoberfest.<sup>17</sup>

*With a labor force of  
 333,000 (in 2008),  
 Syracuse MSA is home to  
 several major employers  
 ... (and) a major  
 cultural center.*

<sup>17</sup> Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, [http://www.syracusechamber.com/chamber\\_info/facts\\_relocation/media/SyracuseFacts.pdf](http://www.syracusechamber.com/chamber_info/facts_relocation/media/SyracuseFacts.pdf)

*Destiny USA*, a proposed 848,000 square foot expansion of the 1.5 million square foot Carousel Center, proposed as a retail, entertainment and recreation complex, was publicized as a “green” building project to be powered entirely by renewable resources. Planned to exceed 3.2 million square feet of space, the project was expected by many to have a major impact on the central New York economy by drawing millions of tourists to the area.

### Great Lakes Seaway Trail

The Great Lakes Seaway Trail, established in 1978, is a 518-mile scenic route running parallel to Lake Erie, the Niagara River, Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River in Pennsylvania and New York State. The trail tells the story of America through its unique history, culture, recreation, maritime heritage, agricultural as travelers make their way through sophisticated cities, quaint villages, quiet fishing ports, dozens of family attractions, restaurants, accommodations and shops. The trail is well marked with green & white trailblazers to guide tourists from West Springfield, PA (Lake Erie) to Rooseveltown, NY (St. Lawrence River). The four big waters of the Seaway Trail: the St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario, the Niagara River and Lake Erie - and all the fish-rich tributaries - the Salmon River, Black River, and Oak Orchard Creek - make for world-class freshwater sportfishing. The Seaway Trail is dotted with numerous lighthouses, some of which are open to the public and available for overnight accommodations. The Great Lakes Seaway Trail, which crosses the Town of Sandy Creek along Scenic Route 3, was selected as one of “America’s Byways” by the U.S. Department of Transportation because it “possesses outstanding qualities that exemplify the regional characteristics of our nation.”

### New York State Fair

One of the most celebrated and time-honored tourist attractions for the region is the New York State Fair. First opening in 1841, the 11-day New York State Fair is the oldest fair in the United States and currently draws over 800,000 people each year. This summer fair includes over 30,000 displays, exhibits, demonstrations, and competitions, which encompass almost every aspect of life in Central New York. During the remainder of the year, the State Fairgrounds are the site of numerous events including livestock competitions; art exhibits; and shows featuring arts and crafts, garden accouterments, antiques, boats and cars, and outdoor recreation equipment.

### Oswego County Fair & Harborfest

The Oswego County Fair, also known as the Sandy Creek Fair, is held each year for six consecutive days in July. The fairgrounds are located on 6 acres of land on Ellisburg Street in the Village of Sandy Creek. Most walkways at the fairgrounds are paved and the buildings are wheelchair accessible. Approximately 60 vendors participate in the event, with booths set up both inside and outdoors. Admission and parking are free and an estimated 30,000 people attend each year. Some of the most popular fair events include the demolition derby, operated by the Sandy Creek Fire Department, harness racing, tractor pulls, 4H livestock shows, and a variety of contests and concerts. The annual fireworks display is also a popular event. In 2007, the Oswego County (Sandy Creek)Fair celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

For four days in July the City of Oswego hosts Harborfest, Central New York’s favorite summer festival. Harborfest brings more than 100 choices of admission-free



Artist rendering of the 1,342-room Grand Destiny Hotel planned for Phase 2 of the Carousel Center/Destiny USA.

Source: <http://blog.syracuse.com>



entertainment to stages located at scenic venues throughout the city. These stages feature local, regional and nationally known recording artists and entertainers. Entergy Nuclear Northeast hosts a fireworks spectacular, one of only seven such continuous presentations in the Northeast. It's an annual Saturday night Harborfest event that brings more than 100,000 spectators. For young families, Harborfest provides activities and entertainment for children at its popular Children's Stage and Children's Activity Area. The Children's Stage features entertainment carefully chosen to inform, entertain, and educate youngsters. Harborfest also features a diverse assortment of handmade and manufactured merchandise for sale, in addition to amusement rides and games. Harborfest has earned 10 International Festival and Events Association Awards, has been named an American Bus Association Top 100 North American Event for 1996, 1998 and 2005 and was voted as the "Best Festival in Central New York" in a poll conducted by WSTM-TV3, a major regional television broadcast station.



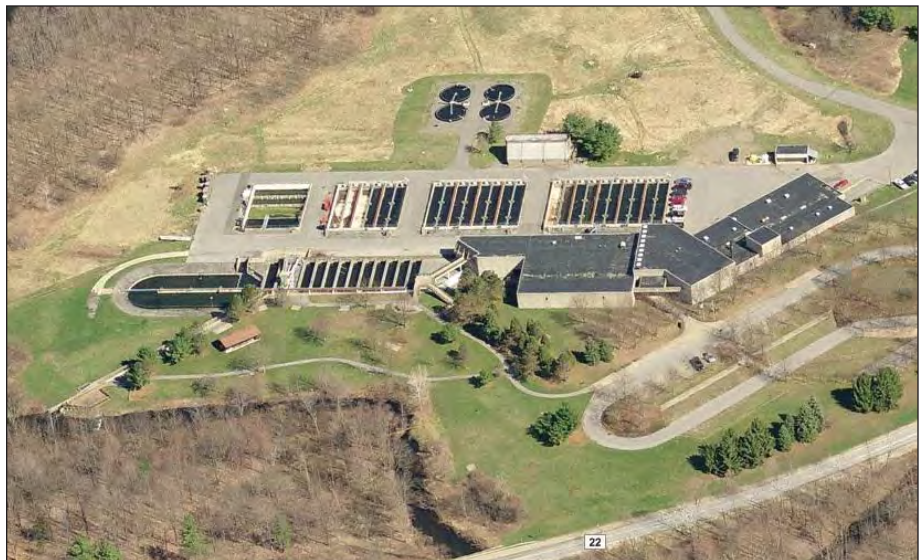
Fireworks display at the  
Oswego Harborfest.  
[www.oswegoharborfest.com](http://www.oswegoharborfest.com)

### Salmon River Fish Hatchery

The Salmon River Hatchery on County Route 22 in Altmar, NY, approximately 15 miles southeast of the Village of Sandy Creek, is less than 25 minutes away and produces about four million trout and salmon each year to help make sportfishing opportunities in New York among the best in the world. The Salmon River Fish Hatchery, which began operation in 1981, is part of a major effort by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to meet stocking needs of Lakes Erie, Ontario and Champlain and their tributaries. The hatchery raises 250,000 Coho salmon; 3.2 million Chinook salmon; 600,000 steelhead; 200,000 landlocked Atlantic salmon; and 300,000 brown trout each year.

### Oswego County Electric/Gas Utilities

Operation Oswego County, an economic development strategy organization refers to Oswego as the "Powerhouse of the Northeast", generating over 5,500 megawatts of electricity with extremely high reliability. There are three nuclear power plants, 10



Salmon River Fish Hatchery, Altmar NY (source: Microsoft Corporation, NAVTEQ, Pictometry International Corporation, 2008)

hydroelectric plants, four natural gas and fossil fuel power plants in Oswego County (Map 5).

The closest facilities to the Town of Sandy Creek are the two hydro power plants operated by Erie Boulevard Hydropower, LP in the Town of Orwell. Known as Lighthouse Hill and Bennetts Bridge, they harness hydropower from the Salmon River Reservoir system with a combined operating capacity of almost 35 megawatts.

Oswego County’s Public Utility Service offers low-cost electrical energy to new and expanding businesses in Oswego County. Entergy Nuclear will provide up to 10 megawatts of electricity a year, at \$32 per megawatt-hour, between 2005 and 2010. Current day-ahead prices range between \$45 and \$50 per megawatt-hour. Businesses may request an allocation through the Oswego County Public Utility Service. Applicants must provide detailed information about the new project they are undertaking, their job creation plans, and their power usage requirements. To be eligible, businesses must meet certain minimum usage requirements and commit to create permanent new jobs. Select Energy, a leading provider of energy solutions in the Northeastern U.S., has been chosen by Oswego County to administer the low-cost power program on behalf of the county.

A new transmission line associated with the development of the Hounsfield Wind Farm on Galloo Island is proposed across the Town of Richland intersecting with the existing transmission line between Altmar and Oswego.

### Salmon River and Lighthouse Hill Reservoirs

The Salmon River Reservoir, also known as the Bennetts Bridge, Stillwater, or Redfield

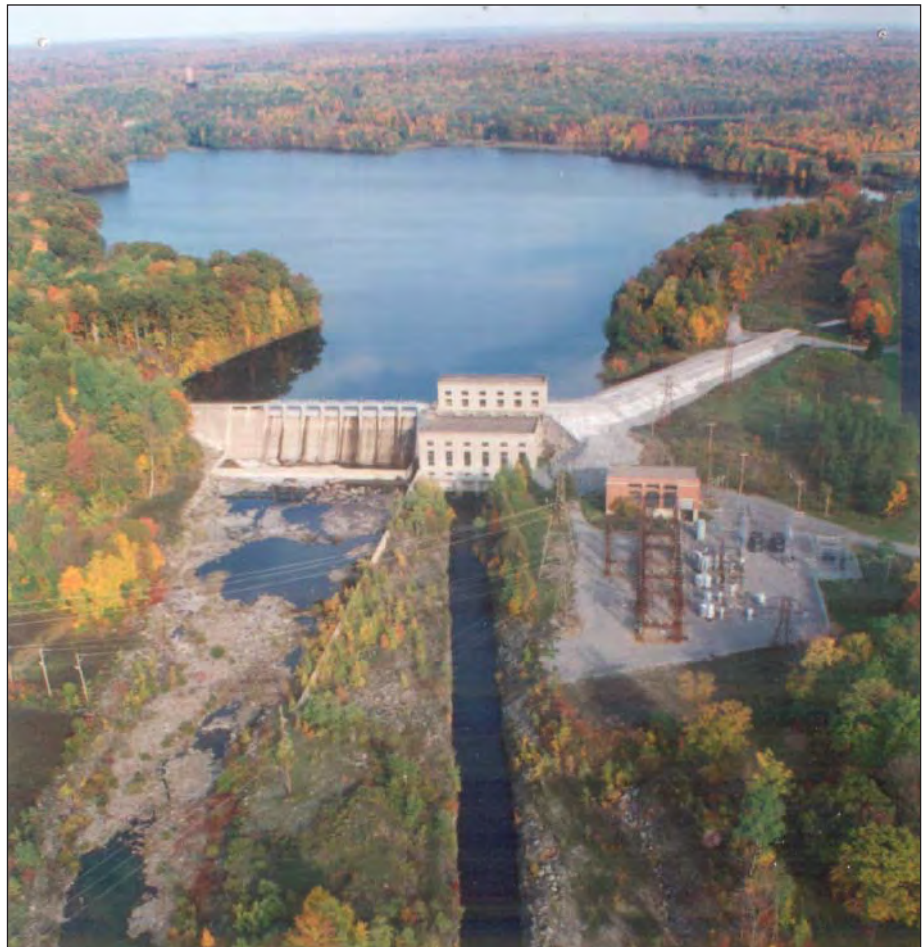
**Table 20. Electric and gas utility service providers in Oswego County as of 2006. Data provided by the Operation Oswego County website (www.oswegocounty.org/) and Platts Energy.**

Utility	Location	Capacity	Fuel Source
Constellation Nuclear	Town of Scriba	1,550 MW	Nuclear
Entergy Nuclear Northeast	Town of Scriba	825 MW	Nuclear
Indeck Operations, Inc.	City of Oswego	50 MW	Natural Gas
NRG Energy, Inc.	City of Oswego	1,700 MW	Oil / Natural Gas
Erie Boulevard Hydropower, LP	City of Fulton	0.90 MW	Hydro
	Town of Granby	9.48 MW	
	Oswego Falls Westside	2.0 MW	
	City of Fulton Oswego Falls Eastside	4.15 MW	
	City of Fulton	5.88 MW	
	Town of Minetto		
	Varick, Oswego		
	Bennetts Bridge	30.5 MW	
	Town of Orwell Lighthouse Hill	7.93 MW	
Town of Orwell			
Dynegy	Town of Scriba	1,056 MW	Gas Fired
Algonquin Power Income Fund	Village of Phoenix	3.4 MW	Hydro
Fulton Cogeneration Associates, LP	City of Fulton	47 MW	Gas Combustion
Sunoco Inc. Ethanol Plant	City of Fulton	5.5 MW	Steam
Oswego County	City of Fulton	3.6 MW	Steam
City of Oswego	City of Oswego – High Dam	12.0 MW	Hydro

Reservoir, is located in the Towns of Redfield and Orwell and is a source of hydroelectric power. The reservoir itself is 3,550 acres in size and is used to store excess runoff during spring peak flow periods. Some of the reservoir's water is later released during summer low flow periods. The energy generated by the Salmon River Reservoir is integrated into the Reliant Energy power grid, which provides Upstate New York customers with 5.1 MW of power<sup>18</sup>. The Salmon River Reservoir discharges into the Lighthouse Hill Reservoir, which is the only other waterbody with any flood-control function on the Salmon River. The Lighthouse Hill Reservoir, located in the Town of Orwell, is much smaller than the Salmon River Reservoir (164 acres) and is almost completely undeveloped. Powerhouses are located on the eastern and western sides of the reservoir. In 2006, The Low Impact Hydropower Institute (LIHI) announced Brookfield Power Corporation's Salmon River Hydroelectric Project earned LIHI's Low Impact Certification. The Salmon River Project is the first New York hydropower project to receive an eight-year certification in recognition of meeting special watershed management criteria which includes a buffer zone dedicated for conservation purposes.<sup>19</sup>

18 SUNY ESF Watershed Ecology Class. 2002. The Salmon River Watershed: An overview and status report.

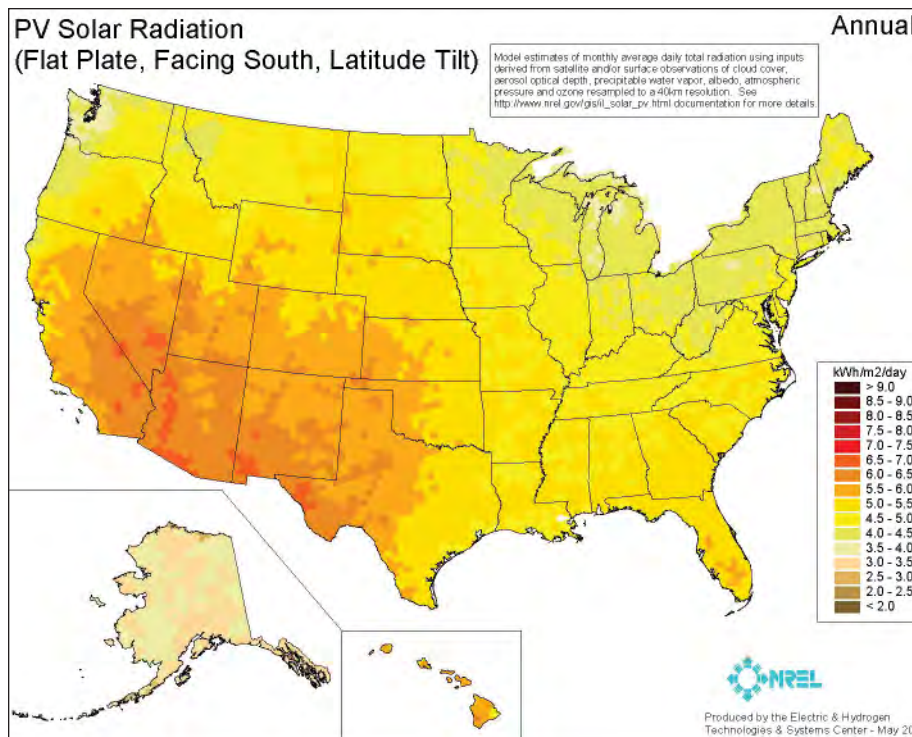
19 The Low Impact Hydropower Institute, <http://lowimpacthydro.org/application-details.aspx?id=22>



**The Salmon River Reservoir in Redfield and Orwell NY. Source: The Low Impact Hydropower Institute, <http://lowimpacthydro.org/application-details.aspx?id=22>**

## Renewable Energy in Central New York

With a robust renewable portfolio standard and progressive net metering legislation in place since 2012, New York State is well situated to become a leader in the development of renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, and biomass. Central New York’s local governments can play a critical role in advancing the state’s policies for the reliability, affordability and environmental sustainability of its renewable energy supply. The regulatory and institutional landscape of federal and state energy policy, as well as the “Home Rule” authority of New York State municipalities, makes local governments critical partners in promoting efficient resource use, renewable energy market development, and location efficiency within the built environment. Local governments have strong reasons to promote sustainable energy planning practices, and a number of local governments throughout central New York, including Madison County and the Town of Prebble, are already doing so. Among the main energy-related concerns driving local action are: the need for price stability; the public health and safety consequences of energy unreliability; strong public support for environmental initiatives; and quality of life considerations. Another key reason why Central New York communities are increasingly interested in renewable energy is the importance of affordable and reliable energy to economic development as evidence suggests that high energy costs are a leading factor behind the exodus of businesses from the state.



National Solar Radiation Map (Source: National Renewable Energy Lab [NREL])

### Solar Energy

There has been tremendous growth in the use of solar energy to produce electricity in the United States. New York State currently ranks ninth in installed solar electric capacity, behind California, New Jersey, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Florida and Pennsylvania.

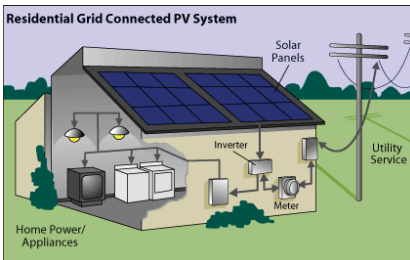
At a cost of \$5 to \$8 per watt to install a PV system, the initial high cost of equipment can make it difficult to justify the up-front investment. These costs can be reduced through incentives and policies available in New York State. New



**Roof-mounted, flush to roof solar electric array (Source: National Renewable Energy Lab [NREL])**



**Ground-mounted solar electric array (Source: National Renewable Energy Lab [NREL])**



**Residential Solar Electric Installation with Net Metering Program (Source: US Department of Energy)**

York's net metering law, which allows users of residential systems to sell excess electricity generated to their investor-owned utility, has been a major factor behind the growth of total installed photovoltaic capacity in the state. NYSERDA offers incentives for residential and non-residential systems that can reduce the installation costs, and New York State and federal tax credits for PV systems also exist.

**Municipal Role**

Municipalities and school districts across New York State have installed PV systems on their buildings in order to reduce the amount of retail electricity they need to purchase and to reduce the negative environmental effects of fossil-fuel based electricity generation. While Central New York may not have the abundant solar resources of Southern California or the southwestern states, it is important to recognize that PV systems can perform well in relatively cloudy and cold climates. In fact, cold temperatures and snow cover can actually increase the electrical output of PV modules. While cloudy regions will require larger, more expensive solar arrays than sunny regions, the size and cost of other components such as inverters will stay the same. Because a system's PV panels represent only about 30 percent of a system's total installed costs, a system installed in an area with one-half the sunlight of another area does not cost twice as much. Even in Syracuse, which averages only about 3.65 kWh per square meter per day of solar radiation capacity for the year, PV systems can be cost-effective under certain conditions.

Municipalities have increasingly turned to a variety of alternative financing mechanisms to pay for the costs of installing PV systems on their facilities. One popular model, which may account for as much as 90% of municipal projects, is a third-party power purchase agreement in which a solar developer pays for and installs the PV system on a municipal facility. In exchange, the municipality signs a guaranteed contract to purchase the electricity for 15-20 years. The solar developer receives all of the federal tax benefits and other incentives that result from the electricity produced by the system. Alternatively, municipalities can issue Clean Renewable Energy Bonds or Qualifying Energy Conservation Bonds, through which the federal government provides tax credits in lieu of interest payments, providing an attractive low- or no-cost financing mechanism for local governments. The rules for these programs favor small projects, and municipal PV projects have accounted for more than half of total funded projects.

An emerging tool that municipalities can use to help spur investment in residential PV systems is the property tax assessment model, pioneered by the Berkeley FIRST (Financing Initiative for Renewable and Solar Technology) program. The Berkeley FIRST program allows property owners to borrow money from the city's Sustainable Energy Financing District to install solar photovoltaic electric systems and allow the cost to be repaid over 20 years through an annual special tax on their property tax bill. The primary innovation of this program is that both the solar system itself and the tax obligation remain with the house. This means that if the property is transferred or sold, the new owners pay the remaining tax obligation. Little or no up-front cost is incurred for the homeowner, and the primary risk (that the homeowner may move before they recoup their investment in reduced energy costs) is eliminated.

## Wind Energy

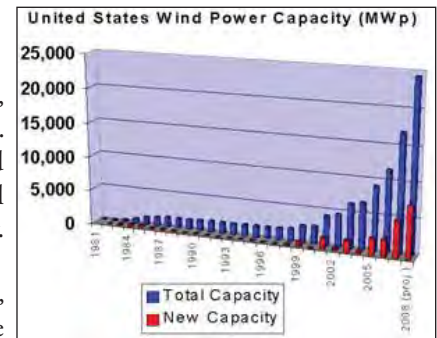
Wind energy is now the fastest growing source of electricity in the world. In recent years, there has been a rapid expansion of wind energy in the United States and in New York State. Despite the financial crisis, 2008 was a record year for growth in wind power installed in the United States with a total of 8,358 MW of new capacity according to the Global Wind Energy Council. As of the end of 2012, the US had 60,007 MW of total capacity.

In Upstate New York, there are currently three large scale, commercial wind farms, two of which are located in Madison County and one located in Lewis County. The Maple Ridge Wind Farm, jointly owned by Portland, Oregon based PPM Energy (PPM) and Houston, Texas based Horizon Wind Energy, is located in Lewis County approximately one hour northeast of the Town of Sandy Creek. The wind farm area includes the Towns of Martinsburg, Lowville, Watson, and Harrisburg on the Tug Hill Plateau. Maple Ridge has a total of 195 turbines producing 320 MW of electricity, enough to power 160,000 average New York homes. According to the project's website ([www.mapleridgewind.com](http://www.mapleridgewind.com)), the Maple Ridge Wind Farm will prevent the annual emission of approximately 586,117 tons of carbon dioxide, 627 tons of nitrogen oxide (which causes smog), and more than 812 tons of sulfur dioxide (which causes acid rain). This is the equivalent of taking approximately 105,000 cars off the road.

In the early part of 2008, the Upstate NY Power Corporation proposed the installation of 77 wind turbines on Galloo Island on Lake Ontario, some of the most favorable locations for wind power generation in the U.S., located approximately 25 miles northwest of the Town of Sandy Creek. The proposal also called for the installation of dozens of single-line poles through 36 miles of farmland in Oswego and Jefferson Counties. Plans and negotiations for routing the grid connection were not completed although property owners were to receive approximately \$4,000 per four acres as compensation for power lines located on their property. Upstate NY Power Corporation put the project on hold in 2012, reportedly because of the all-time low price of electricity and also due to local opposition and difficulties in getting the project off the ground.

### *Community-Based Wind Energy*

Many sites that are smaller in size than that preferred by corporate wind developers, could be developed with community-based wind energy projects. Community-based wind energy projects are typically developed by local farmers, ranchers, and investors, or local governments or educational institutions, rather than national or local professional developers. Community-based projects have historically been smaller in size than corporate-owned projects, but some second-generation projects are around 100 MW and third-generation projects may be 350 MW and larger. The earliest community-based projects had similar features to the development of first-generation ethanol and biodiesel projects, and were often owned and operated by cooperatives or other local business interests. Publicly-owned community-based projects have typically been quite smaller and have often been used to provide "on-site" or "behind-the-meter" lower-cost energy for local governments or community institutions.



US installed wind power, 1981-2008.  
Data is from <http://www.awea.org/projects/>





Maple Ridge Wind Farm in Lewis County. [www.mapleridgewind.com](http://www.mapleridgewind.com)

Change will not  
come if we wait for  
some other person  
or some other time.  
We are the ones we've  
been waiting for.  
We are the change  
that we seek.

*- Barack Obama,  
president elect*

The U.S. Department of Energy has recently suggested that wind energy could produce 20 percent of U.S. electricity needs by 2030. Meeting that goal would require adding 16,000 MW of new capacity every year by 2018 and thereafter, nearly twice as much as was added in 2008. AWEA projects that there will likely be 75,000 MW of installed wind capacity by 2015, which is an increase of 50,000 MW over the 2008 level. According some estimates, if 10% of that additional 50,000 MW were community wind (5,000 MW) then approximately \$64 billion of investment could be generated.

According to the US DOE, New York State ranks fifteenth in terms of total available wind resource but ninth in terms of installed wind power capacity. The rapid growth in wind power in New York State is a result of improved technological and economic performance as well as a supportive public policy framework. In fact, many wind energy developers and advocates believe that the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard mandate, which calls for 25% of the state's electricity to be produced by renewable sources by 2013, has been the most important factor in supporting new wind energy projects. At the same time, there has been significant local opposition to many of the larger, commercial-scale wind farms that have been proposed or that are in development, with many municipalities in Upstate New York passing moratoria or outright bans on large wind turbines. While less than 1 percent of total U.S. installed wind capacity may be classified as community-based and there are currently no such projects in New York State, it is important to understand the many economic, social and environmental

benefits of wind energy in general as well as the advantages to municipalities and residents of community-based development over corporate development.

Wind energy has many economic benefits. It can help to revitalize rural areas, diversifying the economy and providing much-needed tax revenues. Wind power projects can co-exist with other economic development initiatives and activities such as farming, and there is little, if any, evidence that wind power projects negatively impact tourism or local property taxes. Wind energy can stimulate local economic development, providing much-needed additional source of income for farmers. Agricultural landowners who lease their farm land for corporate wind farm development may receive between \$2,000-\$4,000/year or more in income each megawatt of wind energy produced, even though only 2-5% of the land within the wind farm boundary is typically used for turbines and access roads. Community-based wind projects produce returns on equity for local community investors, not just wind lease payments for landowners or local tax revenue for local government. Several studies have demonstrated that community wind projects generate greater local returns, have higher multiplier effects, create more jobs, and bring more new total investment into local communities than corporate-driven development. Wind energy also offers electricity cost predictability and stability. Because wind energy carries no fuel cost, wind projects can help energy users to hedge against volatility in conventional fossil fuel energy markets and predict energy costs decades into the future. Finally, wind energy also creates good-paying jobs. Each megawatt of wind provides 2.3-3 job-years of employment and approximately 1 skilled O&M (operations/maintenance) job for every 10 turbines installed. According to a study by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), wind energy creates 27% more jobs than a coal-fired plant and 66% more than a natural gas combined-cycle plan per unit of energy created. Wind power also offers opportunities for business startups and expansion and “green jobs” in the areas of construction, wind manufacturing, wind repair.

Wind energy also has many social and environmental benefits. Wind power can potentially displace substantial amounts of natural gas consumption, thus reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels. These concerns are particularly acute for New York State, which, according to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, imports over 90% of its energy fuels at a cost of over \$30 billion dollars per year and produces approximately two-thirds of its electric power by the burning of fossil fuels. Distributed community-based wind power adds reliability to the region’s electrical grid by decentralizing generation. Wind energy also produces clean electricity. Electricity generation, with its heavy reliance on fossil fuels, is the nation’s largest industrial source of air pollution, accounting for two-thirds of sulfur oxides, one-quarter of nitrogen oxides, two-fifths of carbon dioxide, and one-third of mercury emissions. Wind development is a non-polluting source of energy that reduces greenhouse gas emissions as well as emissions that cause smog and acid rain. A single megawatt of wind power can displace 1,800 tons of carbon dioxide each year. Wind energy also protects water resources. Turbines produce no particulate emissions that contribute to mercury contamination of lakes and streams, a particular concern in New York State. Wind energy also conserves water resources; producing the same amount of electricity with nuclear power or coal uses 600 times and 500 times, respectively, more water than wind. Finally, wind energy can help to preserve land resources because wind farms increase the local tax base in rural areas, which can alleviate the tax-driven tendency to convert agricultural land to residential subdivisions that displace farmland. While wind farms are spaced over large areas, their actual footprint covers only a small portion of that land and has minimal impact on crops or livestock.



250 kW Harbec Plastics in Ontario,  
New York

Community-based wind energy produces all of these benefits and has additional benefits over corporate-driven wind development. Perhaps most significantly, local investment and control may enhance community support. The profits from community-based wind projects stay in the community and are typically distributed more evenly among community residents. Experience with community-based wind projects in the Midwest suggests that local issues and concerns may be eliminated or satisfactorily addressed by local involvement. There are technical and management benefits to community-based wind projects as well. Smaller projects may avoid interconnection or transmission constraints because they may not need access to high voltage (greater than 35 kV) transmission lines. The smaller scale of community and on-site wind projects may make it easier to obtain the necessary permits and satisfactory environmental reviews. Finally, distributed smaller projects may be more attractive to utilities because they pose less technological risk and may actually improve overall system reliability and performance.

### *On-site Wind Energy*

Unlike community-based wind energy projects, which typically use megawatt-scale turbines to produce electricity for export to the grid, on-site generation typically uses smaller turbines to power a facility directly, offsetting the need to purchase more expensive retail electricity. Because the power produced by the wind turbine is used by the owner to offset retail purchase of electricity in cases of on-site wind, rather than sold to the grid at wholesale, the financial feasibility is significantly different. First, the higher value of electricity at the retail rate brings the potential for shorter payback periods with on-site wind. Similarly, higher value lowers acceptable site characteristics, reducing the need for “world class” wind sites and enlarging the market to include farms, businesses, schools, municipal and government facilities such as prisons, hospitals and nursing homes.

In most respects, the development process for on-site wind is the same as that for utility generation. In terms of site evaluation, it is important to avoid obstructions to wind resource (trees, buildings, etc.), establish appropriate set backs from neighbors, ensure that there are suitable soils for foundation and sufficient access for crane and lay down area. Regarding permitting Issues, local (municipal ordinances for height or requiring minimum setbacks), state (environmental review, wetlands) and federal (FAA Obstruction Lighting) requirements must be met. And, while the scale of on-site wind power projects are typically much smaller than utility generation, a similar range of environmental issues must be addressed (visual impacts, noise impacts, “flicker” or shading, radio frequency interference, public safety).

There are several on-site wind power systems in operation or in the development stage in upstate New York, including:

- a 250kW Fuhrlaender system that produces 20-25% of the electricity used at Harbec Plastics, a small custom-injection molding company in Ontario (Wayne County)
- a 10kW Warner system that will offset the electricity purchased by Paul de Lima Company, a coffee distributor located in Cicero (Onondaga County)
- a \$3 million (approximately 1.5MW) wind system recently approved by voters for the Sodus School District in Sodus (Wayne County)

The range in size, location and application of these wind power systems demonstrates the flexibility of on-site distribution.

### ***Bioenergy***

The practice of agriculture in Sandy Creek has declined in recent years due to national trends toward ever larger, fewer, and more profitable agribusiness operations throughout the nation. However, developing technologies in the use of woody biomass as a feedstock for biofuels, bioproducts, and bioenergy offer tremendous potential for a resurgence of farming in the town. Sustainable agriculture such as woody biomass production offers potential opportunities for continued growth of the industry in associated with emerging technologies in the use of woody biomass as a feedstock for biofuels, bioproducts, and bioenergy. The development of woody biomass resources has several advantages over many agricultural resources. Bioenergy and bioproducts from woody biomass offer higher net energy ratios in the generation of end products which has resulted in a growing market for their use. Woody biomass is abundant in the U.S. and can be produced and harvested on a sustainable basis as short-rotation woody crops (SWRC) such as shrub willow. Biomass crops can easily be grown in ways that reduce total carbon in the atmosphere by capturing the carbon in the soil. Untilled soil, with perennial grasses, woody crops, or no-till annual crops, not only captures carbon that is held in the roots, leaves and stalks left on the soil; it also prevents soil erosion and minimizes storm water runoff and sedimentation of water resources. So, for both economic reasons and water quality reasons woody biomass production offers especially important benefits for agricultural use in the Town of Sandy Creek.



**Traditional farmland and barn along a hamlet roadside in the central New York Region, 2008.**

### **Agriculture & Farming**

Historically, central New York State has been recognized as farm country, with expansive and scenic rolling fields of corn, grain, orchards, and pasture lands dotted with old farmhouses and red barns. Over the last several decades, changing agriculture markets and practices have resulted in land use changes effecting farmland throughout the region. These trends toward much larger and less diverse agribusiness operations have also resulted in decreases in the demand for farm labor. Many smaller, family farms have consolidated into larger-scale agribusiness operations. Smaller scale parcels of farmland, since providing less opportunity to be competitive with the large agribusiness operations, have in many cases transitioned to residential development. Over the last forty years, farms across the state have in general become much larger, with fewer product offerings and many fewer people employed.

Although the shape and character of successful agricultural activity has been changing in central New York as elsewhere, farming continues to be an important regional practice. Production volumes fluctuate significantly from year to year based on changing market and climate factors. Since 2006, the State of New York lost approximately 800 farms, but according to a September 2008 report from the NYS Field Office of the USDA, production rose due to an increase in the number of acres

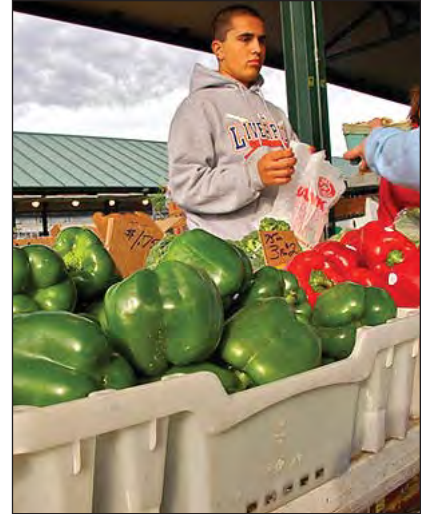
for harvest and favorable growing conditions. Grain corn production was expected to rise 20 percent, and soybean production was forecast to be up 38 percent from 2007.

New York state is home to a large number of Amish communities in around 30 settlements where traditional, smaller-scale farming is practiced. New York ranks as the state with the sixth largest Amish population and has attracted a large number of out-of-state ‘immigrant Amish,’ more than any other state since 2002. Migration of Amish farmers to central New York, including Oswego County, and recently to the Town of Sandy Creek, is influenced by the Amish desire to avoid suburban congestion and sprawl, high land prices, tourism and other intrusive outside influences, and is characterized by the horse and buggies they use instead of automobiles. Factors that attract Amish families to central New York include fertile farmland at reasonable prices, non-farm work in specialized occupations, and rural isolation that supports a traditional, family based lifestyle.<sup>20</sup> Amish farms have grown more specialized in recent decades, with dairy cows and, in some cases, chickens or hogs. Specialized farms tend to be more mechanized, but still less so than neighboring non-Amish farms. A growing trend toward small specialty operations that produce vegetables, herbs, and flowers has emerged in some settlements, and some use organic methods to target specific urban markets.<sup>21</sup>

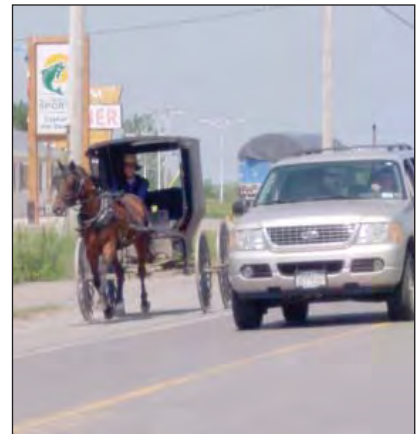
In 2007 there were 3,285 operating farms on over 777,000 acres of land in the five county region of central New York, and cash products from farming in the region totalled nearly 5 million dollars. Central New York farm produce is offered year-round, both for wholesale and retail markets at the Central New York Regional Market in Syracuse, NY.

In Oswego County in 2007, 615 farms were operating on 101,000 acres. Leading agricultural products were vegetables (37%), dairy products (34%), and other products including hay, fruits, and nursery and greenhouse (29%).<sup>22</sup>

20 From Amish America Plain Insights and Observations from Pennsylvania to Oregon. Source: [http://amishamerica.typepad.com/amish\\_america/new\\_york\\_amish/](http://amishamerica.typepad.com/amish_america/new_york_amish/)  
21 From <http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Occupations.asp>  
22 From the USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service, and Oswego County Farm Statistics. Source: [http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/New\\_York/Publications/County\\_Estimates/index.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_York/Publications/County_Estimates/index.asp)



**For 70 years local farmers have been selling their produce at the Central New York Regional Market. Source: [www.syracuse.com](http://www.syracuse.com) May 12, 2008.**



**Traffic sharing the broad shoulder with an Amish buggy along Rome Road in Pulaski, NY. 2008.**



**The Syracuse center of Excellence in Environmental Systems.**  
Source: [http://blog.syracuse.com/progress\\_impact/2008/02/large\\_0211-lead-green-main-.jpg](http://blog.syracuse.com/progress_impact/2008/02/large_0211-lead-green-main-.jpg)

### **Economic Development Initiatives**

Depending on available funding as noted in 2008 *Central New York Initiative*, there are several organizations and programs, that may have influence regionally on economic development opportunities including: Syracuse University Center of Excellence in Environmental Systems, a research and development facility for indoor environmental systems and alternative energy; The CNY Biotechnology Research Center, the CNY Tourism Development Fund, CNY Enterprise Development Fund, targeted to small manufacturing companies and producer service firms; CNY Strategic Training Partnership Fund, to assist companies looking to upgrade their employee skills; CNY Regional Business Recruitment Program, a comprehensive business development and recruitment program; and The CNY Growth Energy Fund, to assist farmers with capitol costs associated with developing marketable alternative energy crops.

*The Essential New York Initiative, Transforming Central Upstate to a Knowledge-Based Economy* report envisions six core development strategies to address Upstate New York's challenges and opportunities. These strategies including: aggressively targeting middle-market companies with high potential for expansion and supporting existing industries; optimizing key industry clusters; creating, retaining, and attracting talent in central upstate New York; leveraging colleges and universities as economic and community growth engines; encouraging the creation and growth of a stronger entrepreneurial culture; and, developing a broader regional consciousness.





## Appendix A - Conservation Subdivisions

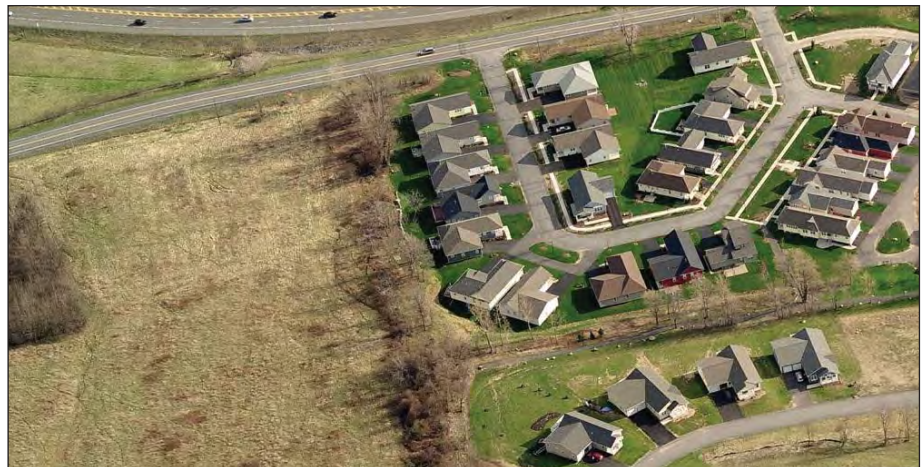
*“...a conservation oriented design (bottom) that maintained half of the tract as green space had substantially less environmental impact and cost half as much to build.”*

In any community that values its scenic, rural-agrarian character, the subdivision of land should be approached from the perspective of analyzing land proposed for development with the goal of preserving or protecting natural, scenic, historic, or agricultural resources determined to be of value to that community.

Conventional subdivision regulations currently in use in the Town of Sandy Creek do not effectively support the community’s desire to protect the scenic, rural-agrarian character of the Town. As recommended under *Goal 1e: Promote Good Governance ...*;



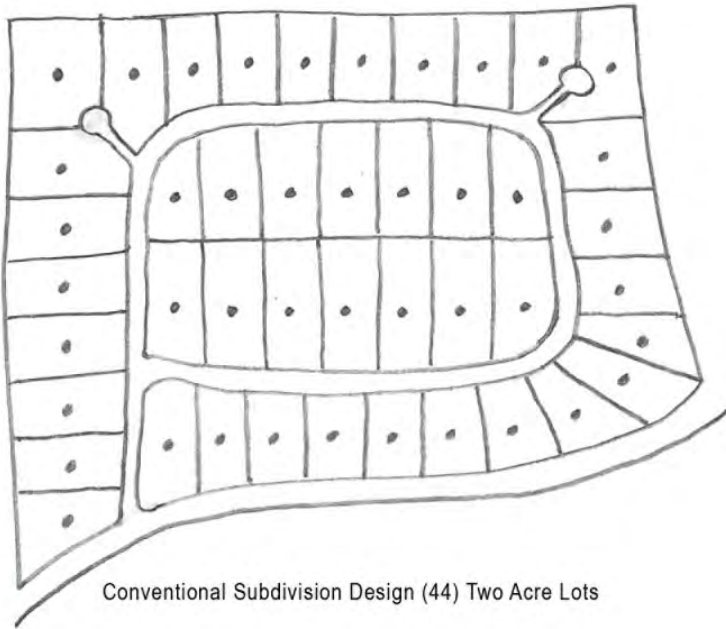
Above, a conventional subdivision development in Manlius, New York consumes large tracts of the rural landscape without any protected open space. Open space, scenic views and rural character are lost as a result. The type of development shown above is known as sprawl because it can quickly and severely consume a community’s rural-agrarian character as perceived from existing residential areas and adjacent roadways.



In contrast, a popular neighborhood, Annesgrove, in Camillus New York, where property sells quickly and for very good prices, is an example of the smaller lot sizes of compact developments. Open space is retained next to the tucked-in development allowing the preservation of viewsheds, farmland, or wildlife habitat, and helps to prevent or minimize the loss of a community’s valued rural-agrarian character.

it is recommended that the Town “Use Site Plan Review and adopt Town and village zoning and land use regulations such as Conservation Subdivision regulations to ensure that the goals and recommendation in this Comprehensive Plan are met...”

The process of Conservation Subdivision Design entails a “conservation analysis” prior to site plan layout. This allows the Planning Board an opportunity to identify and recommend protection for valued natural and cultural resources prior to subdivision and development decisions. The first step in this process requires identifying the location of any significant natural or cultural resources, or areas with conservation value on the parent tract, and within 200 feet of the parcel boundaries.



Conventional Subdivision Design (44) Two Acre Lots



Conservation Subdivision Design (44) 3/4 Acre Lots  
& Protected Open Space

This information should be indicated on a sketch plan and include a description of the land, and an analysis of the conservation value of various site features.

The next step is a dialogue between the property owner (or developer) and the planning board about the conservation value of the lands proposed for development. Resources that should be identified on the initial sketch plan and considered for their conservation value include the following:

- constrained land such as steep slopes and sand dunes or other highly erodible soils
- scenic views
- prime agricultural soils
- public water supply watersheds and wellheads
- trail corridors
- stream corridors
- wetlands
- woodlands with unique tree stands or forested lands
- historic structures and archaeological sites
- stone walls
- land exhibiting present or potential future recreational value

The conservation method of subdivision of land used to allow an opportunity to preserve or protect natural, scenic, historic, or cultural features that are of value to the community, while also allowing flexibility in subdivision design and an opportunity for developers to initiate creative solutions to design while protecting important community resources. Planning and development studies in recent years have demonstrated clear economic and environmental benefits of using conservation subdivision design vs. conventional subdivision design. Smart planning strategies such as implementing a process to encourage conservation subdivision design can result in far less open land being consumed by development, and much less money spent by a municipality on infrastructure and community services than would be spent as a result of conventional subdivision design. One example of the success of this method, "The Belle Hall study, evaluated the economic and environmental costs of two different residential subdivision plans and concluded that a conservation-oriented design that maintained half of the developed tract as green space had substantially less environmental impact and cost half as much to build."<sup>24</sup>

The illustrations on the previous page contrast the layout of conventional (typical) subdivision design using 2 acre lots, with the smaller 3/4 acre or less lots of a conservation subdivision. Because conservation subdivisions are intended to preserve important natural features of the land while allowing flexibility in overall design and layout of the subdivision, the method of preserving or protecting the identified resources can vary allowing the developers an opportunity to initiate creative solutions in siting and design that also protects important community resources such as open space, wildlife habitat, recreational trails, and scenic views. Preservation of these features can result in much more desirable home sites, and, ultimately, a higher quality of life for residents. Tested methods of managing areas dedicated to conservation include neighborhood association agreements with modest fees, land trust easements or municipal ownership.

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<sup>24</sup> South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Charleston Harbor Project, The Belle Hall Plantation Charrette (1994).



Appendix B

Architectural Survey of the Town of Sandy Creek  
(from *A RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY  
OF OSWEGO COUNTY*)



