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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Village of Alden Comprehensive Planning effort, which commenced in August of 1999, has resulted in the development of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is an update of the 1972 Comprehensive Plan, which was a joint planning effort between the Town of Alden and the Village.

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan identifies five Goals and Objectives for the community. These include: preservation of the rural character of the Village, enhancement of the overall economic vitality of the business district, open space and natural resource preservation, improvement of parkland and recreational opportunities, and maintenance of a quality infrastructure system and safe and efficient transportation network.

The preparation of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan involved the collection and analysis of existing data, information, and trends, and the solicitation of public input throughout the process. With the assistance of an active Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, sound findings and recommendations were devised for the Village to achieve the Goals and Objectives. These recommendations will be accomplished through an implementation strategy, which outlines priority items for the short and long term.

These recommendations/implementation items can be generalized as the following:

- Guiding appropriate growth and development in the Village through various zoning amendments and other regulatory improvements to avoid the adverse impacts of sprawl.
- The protection of the Village's rural character through amendment of various site plan, subdivision and zoning provisions to maintain the quality of life in the Village.
- The protection, improvement, and redevelopment of the central business district through the development of an effective economic development strategy.
- The protection of the sole source groundwater aquifer as the long-term source of potable drinking water for the Village.

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- The preservation and protection of important open space, waterways and environmental features in the Village, especially as they relate to the rural character of the community.
- Increasing and improving recreational opportunities in the Village, for all age groups, including the development of trails and bikeways, youth programs and passive and active parks facilities.
- Properly managing the transportation network without adversely impacting the character of the community by improving conditions for pedestrian safety and circulation in the business district, improving traffic patterns and establishing alternate travel routes.

The 2015 Village of Alden Comprehensive Plan will be utilized proactively to effectively guide and manage growth and development in the community. Every two years the implementation strategy will be reviewed by the Planning Board or their designee, acted upon and updated in an effort to achieve the Village's goals and objectives and vision for the future.

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SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan is a written document formally adopted by the municipality that contains goals, objectives, policies and strategies for the immediate and long-range development, enhancement, growth and protection of the community. This plan creates a blueprint for future development and preservation of a community, guiding not only physical and economic development, but also accommodating social, environmental and regional concerns. New York State, under Village Law Section 7-722, enables communities such as the Village of Alden to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan by local law or ordinance.

The comprehensive planning process presents an opportunity for a local government to inventory the resources, assets and needs of the community, to develop a shared vision for the future, and to build consensus and support for actions that will implement this vision. With a comprehensive plan in place, strategic land use regulations can be adopted and other legislative actions undertaken to implement the plan, thereby protecting the community's natural resources and encouraging physical and economic development where desired and directed by the plan.

The Village of Alden, in collaboration with the Town of Alden, adopted a comprehensive plan in 1972. This plan characterized the Village of Alden (and the Town) as experiencing moderate development pressures caused primarily by eastward metropolitan expansion. To avoid the impacts of sprawl it was deemed important to direct growth to acceptable areas and implement high design standards rather than allowing indiscriminate development. Housing conditions were found at that time to be above average but the relatively high proportion of older homes was seen as posing a potential threat of eventual blight unless appropriate housing standards were adopted. There were also concerns regarding environmental degradation, traffic circulation and economic transition. These findings were based on the perceived impacts of population growth and development increases derived from 20-year statistical forecasts. To address the impacts identified in the 1972 plan a number of goals and objectives were developed to guide future development patterns, revitalize the central business district,

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protect important natural resources, increase stormwater drainage capacity in problem areas, and better manage traffic flow.

The 1972 plan was written under the premise that the population would increase due to an in-migration of families, causing a build out of new single-family homes in the community. The population, however, did not grow as originally thought (in fact, it decreased) and the concerns spelled out in the 1972 plan were not adequately addressed. Although some build out has occurred in the pattern described in the plan, which was proximate to the central business district, it has also occurred on the outskirts of the Village in areas not designated for development in that plan. The result has been an increase in vehicular traffic and a loss of open space. Thus, the Village of Alden has embarked on the preparation of an updated Comprehensive Plan.

The Village of Alden 2015 Comprehensive Plan will replace the 1972 plan and will address issues and opportunities that have occurred in the Village since the adoption of the original document. Although the Town of Alden has played an advisory role in the preparation of this updated plan, the Village is undertaking this effort on its own. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan has been developed around a number of guiding principles identified by Erie County, which embrace topics such as economic development and environmental resources, to ensure that it effectively addresses significant local and County-wide issues. The updated Village of Alden Comprehensive Plan will serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development, public and private investment in the Village, and the preparation of any additional plans or studies that may examine or address issues identified in the Plan. All land use regulations to be adopted or amended will be done so in accordance with the recommendations of this Plan. It is the hope of the Village of Alden that the 2015 Plan, once adopted, will effectively guide growth and development in the Village well into the next century.

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1.1 Regional and Local Setting

The Village of Alden is located approximately 15 miles east of the City of Buffalo and encompasses approximately 2.5 square miles. The Village is located entirely within the boundaries of the Town of Alden (Map 1) in the northeastern portion of Erie County. The Village contains a mix of dense residential development, which stretches around the central business district, with open space to the north and south. The character of the Village is rural in nature.

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SECTION 2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives for the Village of Alden Comprehensive Plan are based upon public input gathered from the community during the fall of 1999, with direction provided by the Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning that were developed by the Erie County Department of Planning and Development. These goals and objectives have been reviewed by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and shaped into a form that will guide future land use decisions in the Village. The public comments utilized to develop these goals and objectives were received from local residents, special interest groups, and Village representatives, and they represent what is considered to be important with regard to effectively managing future growth and development of the Village.

2.1 *Preserve and enhance the rural community character of the Village of Alden, which is an important asset to the area*

- Maintain the existing high quality of life in the community
- Protect and enhance the central business district as a rural service center and a recognized essential component of the overall character of the community
- Preserve and maintain the housing stock in the Village
- In cooperation with Erie County, encourage and facilitate the construction and/or rehabilitation of housing units affordable to all housing income groups and inclusive of all housing types, which are compatible with the rural character of the Village
- Enhance the aesthetics of the central business district to improve its attractiveness
- New development and redevelopment in the business center should be designed to reflect the rural and historic character of the area
- Protect important open space and agricultural lands from the negative impacts of urban sprawl
- Identify areas where future growth would be encouraged/discouraged
- Encourage intermunicipal cooperation between the Village, Town of Alden and Erie County
- Encourage “slow” growth controls to manage growth and discourage improper development

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- Encourage non-traditional types of development in order to foster efficient use of land and transportation facilities
- Promote the use of signage that is attractive and informative and that does not create traffic hazards
- Preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources

2.2 *Enhance the economic climate of the Village to foster a more vital business environment and promote the establishment of new business enterprises to improve the overall economic vitality of the area and enhance the quality of life for Village residents*

- Encourage a balance between commercial and residential growth to provide for a diverse living environment and a stabilized tax base for the future
- Provide for the growth of multiple forms of economic activity
- Strive to not overly restrict commercial development so as to drive business out of the area
- Increase the diversity of industry and commerce in the community
- Promote tourism to spur commercial activity and benefit local businesses.
- Undertake improvements in the central business district to “capture” tourist traffic that moves through the Village
- Encourage existing commercial businesses to be “good citizens” of the community
- Increase and improve opportunities for parking in the business district to encourage better use of this area by residents and tourists
- Promote cooperative programs that provide area youth with the opportunity to learn and offer businesses improved manpower resources
- Engage economic development agencies that service the area to promote adequate and stable employment

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2.3 *Preserve and protect lands that serve as important natural habitats, natural drainage channels, scenic resources and areas of open space.*

- Promote intra-community cooperation to protect the quality of the sole source groundwater aquifer
- Adopt land use controls that are designed to protect the Village's water supply, a sole source groundwater aquifer
- Use water protection controls to limit development types and densities in areas underlain by the Village's sole source aquifer
- Participate in watershed protection programs that affect the Village
- Encourage private acquisition of open space lands for land conservancy
- Minimize the use of road salt and utilize alternatives for roadway de-icing to protect surface and groundwater quality
- Identify Ellicott Creek as part of a stream corridor of regional significance and identify means to preserve and enhance this stream corridor
- Acquire or otherwise protect environmentally-sensitive lands
- Limit the amount and type of development that can occur within floodplains
- Consider scenic resources as an important natural element and minimize the negative visual impacts of development so as to preserve these resources
- Minimize the negative impacts of erosion, sedimentation and storm drainage on natural resources
- Promote the use of stormwater management techniques during building construction
- Encourage the implementation of non-traditional development techniques to protect natural resources and preserve open space
- Buffer parklands and important areas of open space from inappropriate land uses
- Buffer residential development from non-residential land uses
- Support and promote the collection of household hazardous waste

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2.4 *Provide and improve public parkland and recreational opportunities for Village residents*

- Enhance pedestrian experiences in the Village to provide greater opportunities for recreational walking
- Improve opportunities for bicycling in the Village
- Increase and improve amenities for youth in the Village
- Provide increased opportunities for passive recreation
- Increase the diversity of recreational opportunities for Village residents

2.5 *Maintain a quality infrastructure system and a safe and efficient transportation network that appropriately serves the needs of the community*

- Upgrade storm drainage in certain areas of the Village that experience flooding problems
- Maintain existing water and sewer transmission lines and systems to minimize impacts on the environment in the Village
- Develop a contingency plan to provide for future inter-municipal connections with the Erie County Water Authority to enhance public safety options in the event such emergency need should arise
- Improve and restrict crosswalks in the Village to enhance public safety
- Initiate a cooperative agreement with the New York State Department of Transportation to ensure proper maintenance of storm drainage appurtenances to prevent recurrent flooding under the viaduct on Broadway
- Encourage development that is related to the capacity of the transportation system and discourages unnecessary sprawl that would require excessive, inefficient and disruptive expansion of transportation facilities
- Improve traffic controls at certain locations in the Village to address traffic problems
- Investigate avenues for managing the increased truck traffic through the Village that results in noise, safety hazards, traffic conflicts and air quality problems
- Reduce the need for the use of cars in the central business district by providing the necessary infrastructure for safe walking and bicycling

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- Encourage the use of Erie County's Community Development Block Grant Program to improve the capital infrastructure in the Village

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SECTION 3 EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

3.1 Existing Land Use

As shown on Map 2, the Village of Alden contains a mix of single-family residential housing with a considerable amount of wooded open space, which surrounds a small central business district (CBD). The Village serves as a rural service center to the surrounding Town of Alden and the rural areas in Genesee County to the east and the Town of Marilla to the south. The CBD is located along Broadway, which bisects the Village. The Village is also bisected by the Norfolk Southern railway corridor, which is mostly located south of Broadway.

Public uses in the Village include the Village Department of Public Works building on Railroad Street, the post office and library, a municipal water tower on Maple Ridge Drive, and the Village sewage treatment plant, which is located off of West Main Street, at the end of Willow Woods. The Village Municipal Building (which houses the Village Hall office, police station and fire station) is located on Broadway in the central business district. Residential neighborhoods surround the CBD to the north, south and west, extending along (and in the vicinity of) West Main Street, Crittenden Road and Exchange Street (see Map 2). Industrial land uses in the Village are limited and found primarily along the railroad, south of Broadway. The firms that operate in this area are engaged in warehousing and metal fabricating.

The Alden Central School District owns 59 acres of land in the north-central section of the Village that contains the intermediate school and high school, as well as a playground and several athletic fields. Directly adjacent to the school district property is a 66-acre Alden Town Park. This park and the school district facilities serve both Village and Town residents. Land use directly adjacent to the school to the west is rural residential and to the east is single and multi-family residential.

Since 1972, development in the Village has consisted primarily of single and multi-family residential housing and commercial development. Apartment complexes have been built near the schools and along Broadway. Subdivisions have also been constructed in the Village, along West Main Street, Crittenden Road and Exchange

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Street. Recent commercial development in the Village has consisted of an Eckerd drug store on Broadway, opposite the Ames Plaza; and a new Tops Supermarket on Broadway, which is located in a new plaza that spans the western Village boundary. These uses supplement the other commercial uses in the CBD. Additional commercial development is located west of the Village limits, on Broadway, in the Town of Alden.

There is little to no agricultural activity in the Village. Lands presently utilized for agriculture comprise a few small parcels in the northwestern section of the Village that are operated by landscaping and nursery enterprises. There are a large number of open fields, primarily south of the railroad tracks, which were formerly used for agricultural purposes, but are no longer being farmed.

3.2 Land Use Regulations

The Village of Alden has adopted a number of regulations to govern land use activities in the community. These include a Zoning Ordinance, subdivision regulations, a Building Construction and Fire Prevention Law, a Flood Damage Prevention Law, the Mobile Home Parks Law, laws regulating the sewer system and solid waste management, and a water use and service law. The Village has not adopted its own environmental quality review legislation, therefore, the environmental impacts of proposed land use activities or regulation must be reviewed in compliance with State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA – 6 NYCRR Part 617). The following is a brief description of the existing Village regulations.

3.2.1 Zoning

Zoning in the Village is regulated pursuant to Chapter 210 of the Village Code. This ordinance establishes 11 zoning classifications to guide and regulation land development in the Village. Permitted uses, accessory uses and uses allowed by special permit are specified for each classification. The zoning regulations also contain bulk standards to control the size and location of specific permitted uses. Although the zoning ordinance specifies 11 use classifications, they are not all shown on the Zoning Map (Map 3). Certain classifications are designed to allow flexibility in design and site layout, and are to be applied through a rezoning process to achieve

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specific development objectives. These 11 classifications are generally outlined as follows (more detailed information on the zoning district requirements can be found in the Village Code):

- Rural Agricultural (R-A) – allows low and medium density single-family residential uses; agricultural, floriculture and horticultural uses; places of worship; schools; forestry uses; kennels and riding stables; veterinarians; private golf courses; private wildlife reserves and conservation projects; cemeteries; gun clubs; and any other uses approved by special permit
- Single-Family Residential (R-1) – allows medium density single-family residential development, places of worship and schools.
- Two-Family Residential (R-2) – allows two-family medium density residential development and rooming houses for not more than four boarders or tourists (with certain restrictions), and any uses permitted in and R-1 district.
- Multifamily Residential (R-3) – high density multifamily residential development, condominiums and cooperatives by special use permit, and any uses permitted in an R-2 district.
- Residential Commercial (R-C) – administrative, professional and executive offices; specialty studios, telephone exchanges, mortuaries, medical offices, nursing and convalescent homes, nonprofit institutions, government uses, mobile home parks by special use permit, and uses permitted in an R-3 district.
- Commercial (C-1) – retail sales, restaurants, taverns, hotels, commercial recreation uses, dry cleaning and laundromats, specialty shops, and any use permitted in an R-C district. Gasoline stations, garages, drive-in theaters, golf driving ranges, storage facilities and veterinarian office are allowed in a C-1 district by special use permit.
- Industrial (I-1) – Baking plants, bottling works and creameries, building material and coal yards, concrete and ready-mix products plants, contractor’s equipment storage yards, dry cleaning plants and laundries, freight and truck terminals, grain storage and feed mills, warehouses and storage facilities, and any nonresidential use permitted in a C-1 district (including those that require a special use permit).

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- Conservation Sector – this overlay district was established to limit development on flood-prone lands abutting Ellicott Creek and its tributaries. The conservation sector is superimposed over all mapped zoning districts and covers all those lands that comprise the designated 100-year flood plain. Permitted uses in the conservation sector are limited to certain horticultural and recreational uses that require no human habitation.
- Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Cluster Development (CD) – these are districts that are created specifically to allow for flexibility and creativity in the design of residential and mixed use developments to: preserve open space, better manage pedestrian and vehicular traffic, provide a wider variety of housing types and designs, create a stronger sense of community and safer accommodations, provide an alternative to strip development, and reduce the costs of infrastructure.
- Condominiums and Cooperatives - this is another district that was created to provide for greater flexibility and more creativity in the design of multifamily housing developments.

The zoning ordinance also specifies the administrative authorities in the Village and the procedures for site plan review and approval, zoning amendments and appeals. It details the duties of the Planning Board, Village Engineer and Zoning Board of Appeals with respect to their respective areas of responsibility and authority.

The minimum floor area and minimum lot sizes of the various residential and commercial zones, in combination with the succession structure of the Zoning Classifications allows for a mix of housing density and types in the Village. The minimum floor area of housing units in the R-2, R-3 and succeeding districts is 600 square feet, which is considered an affordable size apartment by rural standards because demand is not extremely high. The minimum floor area of housing units in the R-1 districts is 1,000 square feet to cater to higher income households. The permitted uses in the various districts are structured in succession. For example, an R-C mixed commercial-residential district also allows uses permitted in R-3, R-2, and R-1 Districts. So land zoned R-C can be used for a host of other compatible residential uses and densities.

3.2.2 Other Regulations

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Subdivision activity in the Village is regulated by Chapter 181 of the Village Code - Subdivision of Land. These regulations outline the application and approval process for major and minor subdivisions as well as the general requirements and design standards for roadways and drainage systems. In addition, the regulations identify the specific documents that must be submitted for review and approval by the Village Planning Board, Superintendent of Public Works and Village Engineer, and the process to be followed for variances and waivers. Final approval is issued by the Planning Board.

With respect to land development in the Village, the subdivision regulations specify that any land subject to flooding, or deemed by the Planning Board to be uninhabitable, shall not be included on a subdivision plat for residential occupancy. Such land must be set aside for uses that are not endangered by periodic or occasional inundation, unless improved in a manner acceptable to the Planning Board to remedy potential hazard conditions.

The Subdivision Regulations also require that wherever possible, the preservation of all natural features that add value to residential development and to the community, such as large trees or groves, watercourses and falls, historic spots, vistas and similar irreplaceable assets. No tree with a measured diameter at breast height (DBH) of six inches or more shall be removed unless such tree is with the right-of-way of a street as shown on the final plat. Removal of additional trees is subject to Planning Board approval. Under no circumstances shall a tree with a DBH of eight inches or more be removed without prior approval from the Planning Board.

The Village subdivision regulations require that where lands specified for recreational use in the Comprehensive Plan fall within a subdivision, in whole or in part, the Planning Board shall require that such area(s) be shown on the subdivision plat. These area(s) may be dedicated to the Village (Town or County) if the Village Board approves such dedication. It is further required that not less than three acres of recreation space be provided for every 100 dwelling units proposed, to be dedicated to the Village or County as approved by the Village Board.

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As specified in Section 210-33 of the Zoning Ordinance, site plan review is required by the Village. Site plans must be reviewed by the Village Planning Board, the Superintendent of Public Works and the Village Engineer. Site plans are approved by the Village Board of Trustees prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Mobile home parks are regulated under Chapter 131 of the Village Code. This law establishes general application and variance standards for the development of these uses. The law also requires that mobile home parks be licensed by the Village and inspected regularly. The Building Department is currently revising this ordinance. These revisions, when adopted, will establish new visual and service maintenance requirements upon all new and existing mobile home parks in the Village regulating waste disposal and other health and safety considerations.

The Village regulates development in flood prone areas under Chapter 105 of the Code. Development in a floodplain requires a permit from the Village and must be undertaken in compliance with established design standards.

3.3 Demographic and Socioeconomic Factors

3.3.1 Population

The population of the Village of Alden in 2000 was 2,666 persons. This figure represents an increase of 8.5 percent from the 1990 population of 2,457. This increase follows two decades of decline, which has been experienced since the 1970's. The 2000 population figure represents an increase of 15 persons (or 0.5 percent) since 1970. The population decline experienced by the Village in the past has been less than that of Erie County during the same time period (Figure 1). According to recent projections, the population of the Village is expected to continue to increase. The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council projects the Village population will be 2,832 persons by 2015.

While population has been essentially stable, the number of households in the Village has been increasing. Between 1970 and 1990, the number of households grew from 774 to 955, an increase of 23.4 percent, or an average of about nine new households per year. This trend was primarily due to the decrease in the size of households. The

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average number of persons per household decreased from 3.4 persons to 2.56 persons during that same time period. Growth in the number of households has continued over the past 10 years. Between 1990 and 2000, the Village of Alden experienced a 13.4 percent increase in the number of households in the Village. There are currently 1,083 households in the Village, an increase of 128 households since 1990, or an average of about 13 households per year. Average household size is currently 2.45 persons.

The Village of Alden is populated primarily by young families. About 31 percent of the population is between the ages of 25 and 44, and approximately 26 percent is under the age of 18. About 15 percent of the population (or 407 persons) is over the age of 65; 24 percent is over the age of 55. Young adults (age 20 to 24) make up about 5 percent, and “empty-nesters” (age 45 to 54) make up about 12 percent of the population of the village.

The age distribution of Village residents shifted between 1990 and 2000; population growth is strongest among the very young and the older residents. The number of children under the age of 18 increased by 14 percent to 701 persons, and the number of elderly over the age of 65 increased 15 percent to 407 persons. While there was also growth in the number of residents aged 18 to 64, it was at a slower rate (4.6 percent). According to US Census of Population and Housing, as of 2000, there were 34 persons of a minority race and five persons of Hispanic origin residing in the Village.

Of the 1,083 households in the Village, 723 (or approximately 67 percent) are family households. Of the remaining 360 households (33 percent), 306 are comprised of persons living alone. There are children living in a significant proportion of households in the Village: 34.6 percent of all households have children under 18 years of age. Approximately 28 percent of all households have an individual aged 65 or older. Of these older households, approximately 45% consist of single person households.

The high school graduation rate of 79.5 percent in 1990 was greater than that of the County as a whole (76.4 percent).¹ The poverty rate in the Village remained essentially constant between 1969 and 1989, even though the median per capita

¹ At this writing, 2000 Census data on graduation rates, income, poverty and employment are unavailable.

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income increased. In 1969, 5.7 percent of the population lived below the poverty line. This figure was 5.6 percent in 1989. The percent of students enrolled town-wide in the free/reduced lunch program increased from 17.8 percent to 22 percent between 1991 and 1994.

3.3.2 Employment

Economic activity in the Village is mostly in the professional and semi-professional service and retail service sectors. In 1990, 1,236 Village residents were active in the labor force. Most local workers are employed in the Village and surrounding towns. Others commute to other parts of the County. The breakdown by occupation and industry sector shows that, between 1970 and 1990, large numbers of workers shifted from the durable goods manufacturing sector to the administrative, retail and professional services sectors. A similar trend occurred in the region and at the national level. US Census figures for 1990 show large numbers of Village residents employed in administrative, retail, precision manufacturing and professional service occupations (Figure 2).

In addition to the numerous commercial employers in the Village, the industrial sector of the local economy is made up of two large employers. These are Bennett Manufacturing, a metal fabricating company located on Railroad Street (who commenced operations in the Village in 1906), and Zoladz Construction, on Railroad Street. Bennett Manufacturing currently employs 125 full time workers and Zoladz employs 62 full time workers.

The median family income in the Village of Alden was \$35,878 in 1989. Relative to inflation, this represents a decline in the total number of families that earn incomes that have kept pace with the cost of living since 1969. However, Village median income compares favorably to that of the County, where median family income in 1989 was \$28,005. Changes in per capita income over the same period show an increase in aggregate Village wealth. The per capita income of the Village in 1989 was \$13,510, an increase over the 1969 level of \$10,220².

² Adjusted using the Consumer Price Index for all commodities to reflect 1989 dollars.

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3.3.3 Building Construction and Demolition Trends

The Village has experienced moderately slow residential and commercial building growth since 1988. There were 17 permits issued between 1988 and 1998 for building demolition. During the same period 13 permits were issued for commercial construction, 50 permits were issued for commercial remodeling, and 4 permits were issued for commercial additions.

Residential construction has had more of an impact upon the Village than commercial construction. There were 10 construction permits issued between 1988 and 1998 for multi-family housing. These permits were issued for two separate apartment projects, one located adjacent to the Town Park and the High School, and another located on Broadway. Together these projects totaled 54 housing units. During this same period, 84 construction permits were issued single-family dwelling units and 48 permits for manufactured or mobile homes. There are presently 21 vacant parcels within approved residential subdivisions in the Village. Since 1991, the number of single-family construction permits issued has ranged between one and six per year.

3.3.4 Commercial Activity

The central business district in the Village of Alden is located along Broadway, primarily between the western boundary of the Village and Rusher Drive. This district serves as a rural service center for the Village and surrounding Town of Alden. The business district contains 37 storefronts and mixed-use buildings, which house neighborhood retail and service shops, and a shopping plaza with 11 storefronts. The Village's central business district provides a diverse mix of commercial uses including: barber shops and beauty salons, professional offices (e.g., medical, legal, insurance), restaurants and bars, travel agents, florists, home decorators, a history museum, a candy shop, a library, a bank, and automotive service stations. There are also a small number of commercial businesses located on Exchange Street and Railroad Street, in the vicinity of the railroad tracks.

The Village has experienced a loss of commercial business. A survey conducted in July of 1999 identified four vacant sidewalk storefronts and five vacant plaza

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storefronts. One of the anchor stores in the Ames shopping plaza is presently vacant. This facility formerly housed a Tops Supermarket, which relocated to a new facility at the western end the Village, in the Village. With the loss of this major tenant, as well as the McDonald's Restaurant, additional vacancies in the shopping plaza are anticipated unless a new anchor tenant is found. The local branch of the U.S. Postal Service has recently moved into the Ames plaza, although this move is viewed as beneficial, it alone will not have a significant effect on retail activity in the plaza.

3.4 Housing

3.4.1 Existing Supply and Conditions

In 2000, the Village of Alden contained 1,144 housing units, including 61 vacant units. This represents an increase of 16 percent since 1990, when the Village contained 985 housing units, including 30 vacant units. Of the occupied units, 762 (70 percent) are owner-occupied, and 321 (30 percent) are rental units. The condition of housing can be characterized as generally well kept. About 12 percent of the housing stock was less than 10 years old at the time of the 1990 Census, with an additional 12 percent built in the 1970's. Another 22.5 percent of the housing stock was built in the 1960's. Generally 30 percent of the houses in the Village were built prior to 1939. Of the remaining 25 percent of the housing stock, most was built in the 1950's. As of 1990, 98 percent of all homes were connected to the Village's sanitary sewer system, and only one home still used its own well for water. The vacancy rate of owner-occupied units in 2000 is 2 percent, while the vacancy rate of rental units is 8 percent. The vacancy rate for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units has increased since 1990, when it was one percent for owners and 5.2 percent for rental housing.

3.4.2 Affordable Housing

Data indicate that based upon the percentage of household income spent on housing in 1990 there is an apparent need for more affordable housing in the Village. A 30 percent benchmark is used to determine the affordability of housing. As of 1990, 42 percent of households in rental units spent 30 percent or more of their household

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income on housing. Furthermore, 19 percent of households in owner-occupied units spent 30 percent or more of their total household income on housing.

Since 1990 several apartment complexes have been constructed providing an additional 54 rental units inside the Village. These units were constructed without any public subsidy. There have also been 46 permits issued for mobile or modular homes. The construction of this type of housing has likely not reduced the need for affordable housing in the Village. However, there are several County and State programs that could be used to provide affordable housing in the future if the need arises.

The Village is a member of the Erie County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consortium. Several housing programs that Village residents could be eligible for are funded under the CDBG program. There are also several programs administered by the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, such as Section 8 Rental Subsidy Assistance, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and the Home Investments Partnership Program (HOME). These programs are typically reserved for use in areas whose residents have an income of less than 80 percent of the county-wide median family income, but specific program eligibility requirements should be reviewed for use in the Village of Alden.

3.5 Community Facilities

3.5.1 Parks and Recreation

The Village of Alden is serviced by a 66-acre Alden Town Park, which is located along the north side of West Main Street, west of Crittenden Road. There are also several ballfields situated adjacent to this park that are associated with the school district property on Crittenden Road. There is an additional Town park located just west of the Village line, on West Main Street, and a small neighborhood playground on Kellogg Street, south of Broadway (Map 4). There are no other park facilities located in the southern part of the Village to benefit residents living in this area.

The Town of Alden is responsible for the provision and maintenance of large-scale park services and facilities in the Village. To avoid duplication of these services, the Village has focused on providing convenient, age-appropriate neighborhood parks.

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There are a small number of facilities that provide after school and weekend youth activities, including a youth center at the Alden Town Hall, on Wende Road, and a new teen center on Broadway, in the Village. Programs are also provided periodically at the Village community center, such as weekend Little League baseball. Local churches also offer numerous recreational activities.

Based on land use planning standards developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association, the Village is served by more than 10 acres of park space per 1000 residents, which is more than an adequate. However, the available recreation space is comprised of the Town Park, which does not all the needs of Village residents. Figure 3 identifies the number of recreational facilities, such as ball fields, that exist in the Village and compares this number with the number suggested by park planners. Although there are some deficiencies in the number of basketball courts and tennis courts that exist, there is no perceived demand for more of these types of facilities in the Village. However, all of the court and ball field facilities that exist in the Village are located in the Town Park and on the School District property on Crittenden Road, and are not owned by the Village or designated primarily for Village resident use.

Alden Town Park is home to the Joe Panza nature trail. This 1.5-mile trail winds through approximately 35 acres at the northern portion of the park. An unimproved spur off the trail follows a part of the Ellicott Creek corridor. The trail can be utilized year-round for nature study, hiking, picnicking, bird watching, and cross-country skiing, as well as the high school cross country track meets. The trail is intended for use as a nature preserve, therefore, horses and motorized vehicles are prohibited.

3.5.2 Schools

Village residents are served by the Alden Central School District. Alden Intermediate and Middle School are located on Crittenden Road and Alden High School is located on Park Street in the Village. The Alden primary school is located approximately four miles west of the Village, on Broadway, near Town Line Road in the Town of Alden, and serves students from kindergarten level through second grade. Enrollment at these schools declined between 1970 and 1990 but has increased since 1990 (Figure 4). Enrollment for pupils in grades K-12 for 1970 totaled 2,936 in 1970. This figure

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declined to 1,726 by 1990 but since then has climbed again to 2,128 (1999). The original school district facilities and buildings are still serving the current student population, with recent improvements made in 1998 through 1999 under a significant renovation project at the middle school and high school. A community-based committee recently reviewed the existing facilities to evaluate district needs and future requirements for expansion.

3.5.3 Police and Fire Services

The Village of Alden has a police department that is staffed by the Erie County Sheriff's Office, who operate out of the Village Hall. The Village contracts with the County for 16 hours of on-site coverage with a specific officer assigned to the Village. At all other times, the Village relies on the New York State Police and Sheriff's for patrol coverage of the area. There are no prisoner holding facilities located within the Village. Sheriff's transport prisoners to the Erie County Holding Center in Downtown Buffalo when the need arises. Presently, the Village is contemplating the establishment of a Village police force and patrol.

Fire protection and ambulatory services are provided by the Village of Alden Fire and Emergency Services Departments consisting of over 65 volunteer members. Their offices, garages, and equipment storage areas are located at the Village Hall, and at a substation on Broadway, outside the Village.

3.5.4 Other Government Facilities

The Village has offices for the clerk, building inspector, court clerk and other village officials in a building on Broadway constructed in 1960 but renovated in 1997. The Fire Department also has offices and garages in this building, as does the Erie County Sheriff. The Village also has a Public Works Garage on Railroad Street where it stores and repairs its landscaping and snowplowing vehicles and equipment, and a wastewater treatment facility at the end of Meadow Drive.

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The Village has a public library on Broadway that received operating subsidies from Erie County. The hours of operation generally remain constant from 10 AM to 6 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, but change slightly during the school year to allow more access. The library has a collection of 24,000 video, audio and bound materials and expects to offer internet access to the public within the next year. This facility also offers materials to aid the visually handicapped.

3.6 Historic and Archaeological Resources

The first settlement in the area of the Village occurred in 1810 by an Irish immigrant family. Alden was originally known as "Grannytown", in honor of the mother-in-law of one of the first settlers, who was a lineal descendent of John and Priscilla Alden. The first schoolhouse was built in the Village in 1815, the first small grocery was built in 1816, and subsequent mercantile businesses began operations during the 1820's. During this period a large number of German immigrants settled in the Village and Town. The Alden Village Cemetery (known as Evergreen Cemetery), which is located off Broadway, immediately north of the railroad tracks, is the burial site of many of the original settlers in the area.

Although the Village of Alden did not incorporate until May of 1869, the actual existence of the Village may be dated from 1823, when the first post office was established. The Buffalo & Attica Railroad (now operated by Norfolk Southern) was constructed through the Village in 1843 and a passenger station was subsequently built. The first major institution in the Village was a high school called the Alden Seminary, built in 1854. This building did not survive over time however. By 1884, the Village had about 600 inhabitants, three churches, three hotels, a railroad depot, four retail stores (including a jeweler), a hardware store, a tannery, a saw mill and a cheese factory.

The Bennett Manufacturing Company started operating in the Village of Alden in 1906. Their first products included metal dashboards for buggies and other horse-drawn vehicles. They built a building on Railroad Street in 1922 that they still occupy today. They currently offer custom sheet metal fabrication services.

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Alden received national fame in the early 1900's as the location of the Black Water Baths, thought to possess healing qualities. First found in 1891, the medicinal qualities of the black water were not recognized until 1903. The Original BathHouse opened in November 1904 and during the first 10 years over 60,000 baths were given, *curing* an innumerable number of people afflicted with rheumatism and other diseases. By 1915, there were thirty boarding houses in the Village. The increasing cost of operation eventually killed the business. Of the three bathhouses that operated for close to 50 years, two burned down and the other was demolished.

There are no sites within the Village of Alden listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but there are several buildings and sites of local and state-wide historic and architectural significance, as cataloged by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and listed within several local guides. These sites, as listed below and shown on Map 4, exhibit either a unique architectural style or have special cultural and scenic value to Village.

1. Rundell Seminary (1854) 13104 Broadway Ave. Also known as the Alden Seminary was the first large frame school in the Village. This school provided increased educational opportunities for Alden youth, replacing the smaller schoolhouses that preceded it.
2. The Ewell Free Library (1914) 13280 Broadway Ave. Donated by Col. Joseph and Carrie Ewell, early philanthropists to the Village, as a memorial to their daughter. The building exhibits a unique Beaux Art Classicism (1890-1920) Revival architectural style.
3. Village Park Bandstand (1935) West Main Street and Broadway. Constructed by the Works Progress Administration program during the New Deal, the structure exhibits an octagonal architectural style unique in Erie County (renovated in 1999).
4. The Alden Presbyterian Church (1908) 13298 Broadway Ave. Oldest Parish in the Village.
5. Site of a Black Water Bathhouse and Well (1904) West Main Street. Black waters pumped from these wells were thought to have healing powers and attracted thousands of visitors to the Village.
6. Henskee Road Schoolhouse (1840's) Town Park- West Main Street. Original town school. Relocated inside the Village for display in 1976.

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7. Milliman-Langdon House (1894) 1454 Exchange Street. Exhibits unique Stick Style architecture (1870-1900).
8. Masonic Lodge (1860) Church Street. One of the original school buildings constructed in the Village; sold to the Masons in 1904. Presently being renovated for use as a community theater, café and gift shop.

The Village of Alden contains an area of archaeological and geologic significance. The Spring Creek Fossil site is located in the northeast corner of Village. Over 50 species of invertebrates, dating back 385 million years, have been obtained from the shales in the creek bank. This site has yielded highly preserved fossils and nodules of pyrite. This site is one of the most important in New York State and one of only 20 such sites in all of North America (C.E. Brett, University of Cincinnati, 2/00). The documented significance of this area and its recognition as a unique resource warrants the need for its protection and preservation.

3.7 Natural Resources

3.7.1 Topography, Geology, and Soils

According to the Erie County Soil Survey (U.S. Department of Agriculture, December 1986), the Village of Alden is located within the Erie-Ontario lake plain physiographic province. The lake plain province has little significant relief and typifies the topography of an old glacial lakebed. The United States Geological Survey topographic maps show elevations in the vicinity of the Village ranging between 820 and 920 feet above mean sea level. The Alden Village area consists of gently rolling beach ridges developed by wave action and erosion. These ridges extend southwest, from Alden to North Collins.

The geologic composition of the Village of Alden includes glacial till and outwash deposits. Hamilton Bedrock, which consists of shale and limestone, is found throughout the Village. The primary soil series within include Remsen, Alton and Wayland. The Soil Survey of Erie County, New York, which is on file at Village Hall, contains a complete map of all soil classifications in the Village. As shown on Map 5, the majority of the Village is comprised of soils with the potential for hydric inclusions

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and a significant, but smaller amount of hydric soils. These soils drain poorly or somewhat poorly and contain a high potential for wetland areas.

3.7.2 Wetlands

Considering the existence of numerous creeks and streams, as well as hydric soils, in the Village of Alden, floodplains and wetlands are spread throughout the area. Usually located near lakes and rivers, wetlands are found in low-lying areas where water is retained and groundwater seeps to the surface for extended periods of time. The State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Federal Army Corps of Engineers regulate wetlands. The State of New York identifies wetlands, usually 12.4 acres or larger, by a combination of factors including vegetation. As shown on Map 6, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation classified one area in the northeast corner of the Village and one area in the southwest corner of the Village as State –designated wetlands. Federal wetlands are typically smaller than the NYSDEC wetlands and are identified by hydric soils. The US Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory classifies portions of Spring Creek, Ellicott Creek and Tannery Brook as federal wetlands. It is prohibited to develop within a federal or state wetland without a permit from the United States Army Corps or the New York State Department of Conservation. In addition, it is prohibited to develop within one hundred feet of a State-designated freshwater wetland without obtaining a permit or approval from the NYS DEC.

The headwaters to Ellicott Creek and Spring Creek are located within the Town of Darien in Genesee County. Spring Creek and its tributaries enter the Village in the central eastern portion and flow northwest to Crittenden Road. At Crittenden Road, Spring Creek is channeled under a bridge and flows north into Ellicott Creek. Ellicott Creek flows southwest from the Village's northern border and exits the Village just east of the Village's Wastewater Treatment Facility. The headwaters to Tannery Brook and the Tributaries to Ellicott Creek are located within the southern portion of the Village. These tributaries flow into Tannery Brook just south of Broadway. At Broadway and the railroad tracks, this creek is channeled through culverts. Tannery Brook flows northwest and exits in the western portion of Village near West Main Street. The

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stream corridors in the Village discharge into Ellicott Creek, which flows northwest through Erie County, and discharges into the Niagara River.

3.7.3 Flooding and Erosion

The Village of Alden contains flood zones that have been designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as depicted on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the Village. These zones are established based upon the degree to which an area is susceptible to flood damage. The two general flood zones that exist within the Village include:

- “A” Zone – (also called the area of special flood hazard) is that area of land that would primarily experience still water flooding, without significant wave activity, during the 100-year storm; and
- “C” Zone – areas of minimal flooding.

These natural flood zones or plains are flat areas that surround streams and are periodically inundated with water due to overbank flow. As shown on Map 6, the A Zone areas are located around Tannery Brook, Spring Creek and Ellicott Creek. The majority of the Village is located within the C Zone, and not subject to flood hazards.

According to the Village of Alden Department of Public Works, Tannery Brook (which is tributary to Ellicott Creek) occasionally floods where it intersects with West Main Street, near the western Village boundary. As discussed in Section 3.9.3, localized storm drainage and flooding problems occur in the vicinity of the central business district as the result of poor drainage conditions. There are no known erosion problems in the Village (B. Sitzman, Village of Alden, December 13, 1999).

3.7.4 Water Quality

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has classified all streams within the Village as Class C surface water bodies. The best usage for Class C surface waters is fishing. These waters are suitable for primary and secondary

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contact recreation as well, although certain factors may limit the use for these purposes. These streams are also unprotected and therefore the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation does not regulate stream crossings or stormwater discharge into these creeks. The Village of Alden Creeks are discharge points for stormwater drainage, which is conveyed to these waterbodies through outfalls. Outfalls are typically considered point source locations for the introduction of pollutants carried in stormwater. Depending on the type of development present, stormwater runoff can be a source of metals, organic compounds, nutrients or other contaminants, in addition to pathogens. Measures can be implemented to reduce contaminant loadings in the effluent. This approach typically involves expensive structural devices that address a relatively small portion of the entire contributing watershed area, but can be effective for localized water quality problems. At present, there is no indication that the quality of the stormwater effluent delivered to the Village's Creeks is degrading these creeks to the extent that it would require this type of mitigation. A more feasible means of improving the quality of stormwater flows in the Village would be to institute a best management approach, as discussed below.

The primary impact to water quality in the Village is non-point source pollution. Non-point source pollution is pollution that reaches a surface water body through unconfined or indiscrete means. Examples include stormwater sheet or overland flow (i.e. – unchannelized flow from paved surfaces, buildings and construction sites) which carries animal wastes, road oil and other automotive by-products, pesticides and fertilizer; and groundwater infiltration that can carry contaminants from faulty cesspools or septic tanks or toxins from other sources of pollution. The best way to control the rate of non-point contaminant generation and transport in upland areas is through the use of “best management practices” such as public education initiatives (such as reducing fertilizer and pesticide applications, properly disposing of pet wastes, proper disposal of automobile waste oils, etc.) and other non-structural means. This approach is relatively inexpensive as compared to costs of employing structural measures to mitigate point source pollution.

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3.7.5 Vegetation and Wildlife

According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Natural Heritage Program, there are no threatened, rare, endangered species or species of special concern within the Village. Although NYSDEC never surveyed Ellicott Creek within the Village of Alden, they have collected data at a downstream location in Lancaster. According to their records, the following species of fish are common in Ellicott Creek (J. Evans, NYS DEC, October 6, 1999): white sucker, northern hog sucker, rock bass, common shiner, stoneroller minnow, john darter, and rainbow darter.

According to New York State Biological Surveys, the remaining streams in the Village are small and intermittent in the summer or during dry periods and probably wouldn't provide recreational fishing opportunities. NYSDEC further stated that no endangered, threatened or species of special concern were identified within any of the streams in the Village.

3.7.6 Environmental Hazards

In response to a Freedom of Information Act request, NYSDEC searched the Region's Solid Waste, Environmental Remediation, Spills Management and Solid and Hazardous Program files to identify spill sites in the Town of Alden and Village of Alden. Ninety-eight minor gasoline and oil leak sites were report between November of 1985 and January of 1999, 91 of which have been cleaned up are in compliance with State remediation requirements. The eight remaining sites are relatively small in nature and have not been remediated in accordance with State requirements. There are no known significant environmental hazards within the Village boundaries.

3.8 Visual Resources

The rural character of the Village of Alden, with its parks, creeks, historic structures, and the central business district enhances the aesthetics of the community and surrounding area. As previously discussed in Section 3.6, the majority of the historic structures in the Village are located on Broadway and Exchange Street within the

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central business district. The Village of Alden is also comprised of numerous creeks, Fireman's Park, and Spring Creek Fossil site, which add scenic value to the area.

3.9 Public Infrastructure

Village of Alden residents are provided electric service on an individual contract basis through New York State Electric and Gas. Natural gas service is provided in the same manner from the National Fuel Gas Company. Also, Reserve Gas (based on Railroad Street in the Village) is a private provider that services a few Village businesses and some residential customers.

3.9.1 Water Supply

The Village of Alden uses a public well water distribution system that was established in 1898. There are four pump stations in the Village with a combined daily capacity of 0.5 million gallons. There is also a storage tank in the Village that holds one million gallons. The location of these facilities is identified on Map 7. Average daily water production in the Village fluctuates throughout the year with the greatest production occurring in the summer. For the month of June 1999, average daily production was 316,450 gallons. The Village's Public Works department and Village Engineer have identified significant excess capacity in the existing water supply. Village Pump Station #4 was rehabilitated in 1998 and Pump Station No. 1 is scheduled for rehabilitation during the winter 2000 and spring of 2001. Prior to distribution, water is chlorinated and aerated. Due to iron concentrations in two wells, iron is sequestered with calcicrust.

The four water supply wells in the Village of Alden are shown on Map 7. These wells are screened in a confined and semi-confined sand and gravel aquifer, which measures between 15 and 20 feet thick and overlies a bedrock foundation (U.S. Geological Survey, Report 96-4229). Well No. 1 was dug in 1900 to a depth of 14 feet. Wells Nos. 2, 3, and 4 range in depth from 36 to 45 feet below grade. This aquifer extends through the Village in a southwest to northeast direction and is bordered by Ellicott and Cayuga Creeks. It is the sole source of potable water for Village residents. Water from these wells meets the State drinking water quality standards but is treated to remove iron and hydrogen sulfide.

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The boundaries of the groundwater aquifer were delineated by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in 1985 (USGS Report 84-4334) and 1996 (USGS Report 96-4229). The 1996 study indicated a slight reduction in the overall size of the aquifer over this 11-year period. Although representatives from the USGS note that this variation in the boundary area does not warrant alarm, this resource should still be protected and its quality monitored due to its shallow depth. The Village has prepared a draft aquifer protection ordinance that will be adopted in 2000.

Fifty percent of the Village of Alden's water distribution system was constructed in 1899 and the remaining half was constructed in 1972. This system primarily utilizes cast iron and ductile iron water mains that measure between 4 to 12 inches in diameter. The water distribution system supplies water to all residents and businesses within the Village boundaries. Future system improvement projects include the development of a fifth well and improvements to their existing water treatment facilities. The Village is currently examining the feasibility of developing the additional well site.

3.9.2 Wastewater Disposal

According to Village of Alden Superintendent of Public Works, the Village is entirely serviced by a Village-owned and operated wastewater treatment plant, which is located one-half mile north of West Main Street. The Village wastewater treatment plant was constructed in 1985. Its current operating capacity is 640,000 gallons per day (gpd). It is presently handling 420,000 gpd. Treated effluent is discharged through an outfall to Ellicott Creek. Currently, the Village's wastewater plant is able to handle peak flow conditions. (B. Sitzman, Village of Alden, December 13, 1999)

The majority of the Village sanitary sewer system was built in 1935. This system utilizes a series of sewer mains that measure between 8 inches and 15 inches in diameter. With the exception of Sullivan Road, the entire Village has sanitary sewer service. Due to the low density of housing on Sullivan Road, installation of a sewer line is currently too expensive. Currently, the Village of Alden does not have any combined sewers.

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3.9.3 Stormwater Drainage

Stormwater runoff in the Village is managed through a stormwater drainage system. Stormwater is collected along roadways via curb inlets and open ditches and conveyed through subsurface piping or the open ditches to Spring Creek, Ellicott Creek and Tannery Brook. Stormwater also reaches these waterways through overland sheet flow. Inadequate and/or undersized storm sewers have resulted in flooding problems, especially in the vicinity of the central business district. A number of locations along Broadway (US Route 20) flood approximately twice a year during heavy rainfall events. These include the intersections of Broadway and Elm Street, Broadway at Mechanic Street, Broadway at Kellogg Street and Emerson Street, Exchange near Broadway (B. Sitzman, Village of Alden, December 13, 1999).

3.9.4 Solid Waste Disposal

All municipal solid waste (MSW), recyclables, and yard waste is collected by the Village of Alden Department of Public Works. The Village markets the recyclables to various vendors based upon their bid price. The MSW is sent to the American Refuel Waste to Energy Facility in Niagara Falls, New York. Collected yard waste is either chipped or composted and given to Village residents and the Wyoming County Correctional Facility. The Wyoming County Correctional Facility also receives recyclable plastics from the Village.

3.9.5 Transportation Systems

The transportation network of roadways in the Village of Alden includes Broadway (US Route 20), Exchange Street (County Route 578), Crittenden Road (County Route 1), West Main Street (County Route 346), and a number of local collector streets. The local roadways fall under the jurisdiction of the Village of Alden.

Broadway is the principal arterial roadway in the Village. This road runs in a west to east direction, bisecting the Village. The New York State Department of Transportation

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(NYSDOT) has conducted traffic counts on Route 20 (Broadway) at various times during the last decade. Between 1990 and 1996, the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) count on Route 20, west of the Village line, has varied between 10,500 and 11,000 vehicles. An AADT of 11,500 vehicles was recorded in this area in 1999. In 2000, NYSDOT took two traffic counts on Broadway. An AADT of 13,088 vehicles was reported as measured 50 feet east of Church Street, and AADT of 14,060 vehicles was report 50 feet west of Kellogg Street.

The AADT on Route 20, east of the Village line, has varied substantially over the last nine years. Traffic counts at this location measured an AADT of 6,200 in 1990. In 1996 traffic counts declined to a measured AADT of 5,250 vehicles, and then climbed again to 6,800 vehicles in 1999.

Exchange Street and Crittenden Road function as major collector roads. These roadways, along with Broadway, are the major trucking routes through the Village, connecting to the interstate highway system. The number of trucks using Broadway, Crittenden, and Exchange streets has increased, creating a hazard for pedestrians crossing north to south on Broadway, and east to west on Crittenden. The AADT on Crittenden Road, between Route 20 and North Road in the Town of Alden, has remained relatively unchanged since 1994, with counts measuring between 3,759 vehicles in 1994 and 3,900 vehicles in 1998. Similarly, traffic volumes on Exchange Street, which were counted just south of Railroad Street, have increased modestly since 1994 from an AADT count of 2,071 vehicles to an AADT of 2,517 vehicles in 1999.

The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) utilizes established Level of Service (LOS) standards as a means of measuring roadway operating characteristics and traffic flow conditions. Under the LOS system, roadways are given a rating between A and F, with A describing primarily free flow traffic operations and F describing forced operations with extreme congestion and delays. Currently, Crittenden Road and Exchange Street have an LOS of A. Broadway has an LOS of C, which essentially means that traffic flow on this roadway is generally stable but minor incidents can easily result in the deterioration of operating conditions and minor delays. If traffic volumes continue to increase along Broadway, it is possible that the LOS for this roadway could be downgraded, and the roadway or designated

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portions thereof, could be targeted for capacity expansion. In addition, if operating conditions on the stretch of Broadway that runs through the Village deteriorate further, the Village may be a candidate for programs to aid in transportation management. At present there are no capacity improvement projects scheduled for the Village.

According to 1990 census data, most of the Village population (81.23 percent) commutes to work alone (Figure 5). NYS Route 33 (also known as Genesee Street) is located north of the Village and provides access to the Buffalo International Airport in the Town of Cheektowaga, and the Amtrak Passenger Rail depot in Depew, off of Broadway. The closest New York State Thruway (I-90) interchange is located approximately 9 miles northeast of the Village, in Genesee County. Routes 20 and 33 handle the flow of commuters from the Village and are also designated trucking routes. Commuters also utilize Walden Avenue and Clinton Street.

The GBNRTC has graded all of the roadways in the Village as having fair or better pavement conditions, based on the 1993 surface scores used by the Federal Aid Eligibility System. The Village is technically outside of the National Highway System 1990 Urban Boundary which reduces the level of reporting that is done in regional transportation plans about pavement conditions. But Route 20, Crittenden Road and Exchange Street are a part of the Federal Aid Highway System and hence are eligible for improvements funded through Federal Highway Administration programs.

The NFTA operates Metro express bus service in and out of the Village, along Broadway. These buses arrive and depart twice in the morning and twice at night, Monday through Friday. The small size of the Village makes this level of service adequate. In fact, commuting figures reported in the 1990 US Census indicate that the working population in the Village rarely utilizes this service. Paratransit services are provided by Erie County to transport senior citizens to bus stops that are within three-quarters of a mile from their homes.

There is no passenger rail service provided in the Village, but the Norfolk Southern line running through the south end parallel to Railroad Street has the capacity to provide service if a spur were built. This rail line, called the Southern Tier Connection, makes direct connections to intermodal transfer stations, warehouses, and a lumber reload

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center in Buffalo, and also runs east to Corning, Binghamton and New York City. At present, no businesses in the Village use this rail line for shipping or receiving.

There are no formal on or off-road bicycle paths in the Village. There is a nature trail in Alden Town Park, but it does not connect to any development or neighborhoods. An on-street bicycle route is proposed along Route 20. It will run west, from the Village of Alden to the Village of Lancaster, as identified in the Niagara Frontier Bicycle Master Plan (GBNRTC, 1998). There is currently no signage along Route 20 to designate it as a bicycle route.

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SECTION 4 ISSUES ANALYSIS

4.1 Land Availability

The land use data gathered through the inventory process indicate that there is an ample amount of open land to support future development in the Village. However, this open land must be examined based upon existing environmental constraints, as outlined in Section 4.2 below, and upon the availability of infrastructure and essential public services to support such development. In addition, the potential for in-fill development and redevelopment, particularly in the vicinity of the Village center, must be considered. The discussion of land availability that follows, as well as the environmental constraints analysis, is based on a division of the Village into four quadrants.

Beginning in the northwest quadrant (which includes all lands located north of Broadway and west of Crittenden Road), there are two large parcels of undeveloped land and one smaller property, all located north of West Main (Map 8). With the exception of a narrow parcel of land situated between Meadow Drive and Homecourt, these lands are zoned Rural Agricultural (R-A), which allows for low and medium density single-family residential uses (see Map 3). The narrow parcel of land is zoned R-1, which permits medium density single-family residential development. There are a few small vacant properties, which are available for in-fill development, along West Main Street. These properties are zoned R-1 and R-3, which allows single-family residential and multi-family residential development, respectively. There are also two small vacant, landlocked properties in this area that may likely remain undeveloped.

The northeastern quadrant of the Village includes the land area located east of Crittenden Road and north of Broadway. This area contains developed residential properties and a substantial amount of open land, which is bisected by or lies north of Spring Creek. These lands are primarily zoned R-1 and R-A for single-family residential development, with some areas of road frontage that are zoned for commercial use. There are also a small number of vacant parcels located on the north side of Broadway, east of Westcott Street. These properties are zoned for Commercial C-1 to support commercial and retail development.

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The southeastern quadrant of the Village, which essentially encompasses those lands situated south of Broadway and east of Exchange Street, contains a large area of undeveloped land that was formerly utilized for farming. This quadrant also includes a large number of properties, situated north of the railroad corridor near the Village center, which could support in-fill development. These properties are zoned Commercial C-1, Residential Commercial R-C and Industrial I-1. The open lands located south of the railroad corridor are zoned R-A for low-density residential development, with the exception of the frontage properties along Exchange Street and Maple Ridge, which are zoned for medium density residential use (R-1 Single-Family Residential).

The southwestern quadrant of the Village includes all of the land lying south of Broadway and west of Exchange Street. This area contains the largest amount of undeveloped land in the Village. There are five significant parcels of open land in this quadrant that are zoned for a combination of uses, including Single-Family Residential R-1, Multi-Family Residential R-3 and Commercial C-1 (see Map 3).

4.2 Environmental Constraints

At first glance, the land availability map (Map 8) illustrates immense areas of open land throughout the Village that could support future planned growth. There are, however, a number of significant natural resources in the Village that pose constraints to development. These include NYSDEC regulated and federally protected wetland areas, floodplains, unique geologic features along Spring Creek, an underlying groundwater aquifer and large areas of hydric soils. In general, hydric soils typically drain very poorly and are very likely to contain wetlands. In certain locations they are fully saturated or flooded. The high moisture content and slow permeability highly restricts these soils for many farming and urban uses. The entire Village is serviced by a municipal sewer system so the adverse impacts typically associated with the use of on-site sanitary waste disposal systems are not a concern. As shown on Map 9, both apart and in combination, the existing environmental resources in the Village clearly define areas where development should be limited, redefined with respect to the current zoning, or prohibited. In addition, there are certain areas that, with proper mitigation, could support development activities.

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The biggest impediment to development in the Village is the underground aquifer¹ that lies beneath approximately 50 percent of the area (Map 9). The entire Village relies on this aquifer for potable water. The aquifer extends south of Broadway and west of Exchange Street and Kellogg Street, encompassing much of the southwestern quadrant. It also underlies a significant portion of the northwestern quadrant and extends east, through the northern portion of the northeast quadrant. The land area affected by the groundwater aquifer includes approximately one half of the vacant open space in the Village, and about half of the Village center.

The aquifer is recharged, in part, by wetland areas and stream corridors in the Village and in outlying areas, and by groundwater infiltration. The aquifer is susceptible to degradation from non-point pollution, including constituents carried in stormwater runoff, which is received through infiltration. Properly managing the amount of impervious surfaces and future demand for public water supply is critical to this area. Allowing development and land uses that will not adversely impact the aquifer is an important consideration for protecting the quality and quantity of this resource.

A large area of land in the northwest quadrant of the Village is located within the 100-year floodplain, which follows Ellicott Creek to the north, and contains four areas of federally protected wetlands. As previously noted, the groundwater aquifer underlies the southern portion of this quadrant. This area also contains a significant amount of hydric soils. These constraints must be factored into land use decisions for the developable land in this quadrant. Of particular concern are the hydric soils, which are typically poorly drained with rapid permeability and unstable, and can place severe limitations upon development activities, as well as the presence of the aquifer.

The northeast quadrant of the Village contains a large area of undeveloped open space, much of which is isolated from the Village center by Spring Creek. The Spring Creek corridor contains an area of steep embankments that is renowned for its geologic significance. The groundwater aquifer stretches across the northern portion of this quadrant. There is one NYSDEC regulated wetland in the northeast corner of this area and a few smaller areas of federally protected wetlands. The creek and wetland areas generally correspond with areas of hydric soils. Soils in the upper portion of this quadrant are better drained. In addition to the above, this area of the Village contains significant stands of mature woodland that provide valuable habitat, which

¹ An aquifer is a subsurface layer of water bearing rock, sand or gravel.

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should be recognized and protected. Future development activities in this quadrant of the Village should be designed in a manner that respects these important resources.

The southeastern quadrant of the Village is the least impacted by environmental constraints. This area is traversed by Tannery Brook, a good portion of which is designated as a federal wetland. There are also two other small areas of federal wetlands and some intermittent areas of hydric soils. Much of this area, however, contains soils with potential hydric inclusions. Potentially hydric soils and landforms with potential hydric inclusions tend to drain poorly and may contain wetland characteristics. Although these soils are somewhat poorly drained, they are fairly stable. This area of the Village lies outside of the boundaries of the groundwater aquifer area but is located within the outlying watershed area that recharges directly to this resource. Due to the limited extent of environmental constraints in this area, this quadrant is considered best suited for development if proper mitigation measures are imposed to address potential impacts associated with soils and wetlands.

The southwest quadrant of the Village contains a large area of State and Federal wetlands, which affects approximately 30 percent of the developable area. A portion of Tannery Brook and its accompanying floodplain extends through the northeastern corner of this quadrant. Hydric soils are located along this stream corridor and along a small tributary branch of the brook, in the vicinity of the wetlands. Much of the Tannery Brook corridor is also a federal wetland. Much of the soils in this area are normally dry (fairly well drained) and stable. The groundwater aquifer underlies most of this area, with the exception of the southeastern corner. Although development would not be precluded from this area of the Village, the protection of these resources must be factored into future development decisions.

Thus, it is apparent that future planning efforts for the Village must view the land available for development with respect to the environmental constraints that would impact such development. It is clear that there are areas that are better suited for development or for accommodating certain land uses than others. With this in mind, the Village can develop a plan for the future that balances development with the protection of important resources. A plan that will strive to maintain the economic vitality and quality of life in the Village and benefit its residents for years to come

4.3 Regional Trends

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The Village of Alden is located within the Buffalo/Erie County region, and the community functions within this regional economy. Regional trends, such as demographics and economics, affect the local community, and govern, to a certain extent, what is feasible or realistic. The local municipality often has limited influence over these trends. However, the Village must be aware of what is occurring in the region, and take these issues into consideration when developing plans and recommendations. In essence, these trends form the framework or baseline within which the locality must operate.

The Buffalo region has been characterized by declining population over the past decades. Between 1970 and 2000, the population in Erie County decreased from 1,113,491 to 950,265, a loss of 14.6 percent, or approximately 163,000 persons. Much of the decline occurred throughout the 1970's, primarily due to out-migration. Population estimates suggest that while the region has experienced continued population loss since 1980, the rate of decline has slowed. Future population figures prepared by the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council for transportation planning purposes indicate that the population is expected to stabilize, increasing by very modestly 2000 and 2010.

Despite overall population declines, there have been areas of the County that have been growing. Population has been shifting from the older, more urbanized areas in the County to the surrounding suburbs. While communities such as the Cities of Buffalo, Tonawanda and Lackawanna and the more developed Towns of Cheektowaga, West Seneca and Tonawanda experienced population losses between 1990 and 2000, growth has been strong in communities such as Clarence, Lancaster, Elma, Orchard Park and Newstead. The Village of Alden experienced a significant increase in population between 1990 and 2000; however, growth in the Town of Alden, outside the Village, experienced a minimal increase. There has been growth in the adjacent communities, especially in the Towns of Newstead and Lancaster. It is expected that the Village of Alden will see increasing pressures for development in the future, as population continues to move outward from the urban core to the more rural areas of the County.

The population in the region has also been aging. In part, this is a national trend, as the baby boom generation ages, but the trend is intensified in Western New York because much of the out-migration has been concentrated in younger age groups. Although, currently, Alden's population is largely comprised of young families, an increase in the number of older residents in the Village is expected.

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Another regional trend has been an increase in the number of households in the region, despite population loss. This has been a national trend, and is attributable to a trend toward smaller household size. The number of households in Erie County grew from 288,927 in 1970 to 376,019 in 1990², while average household size decreased from 3.1 persons per household in 1970 to 2.5 persons in 1990. This trend toward smaller households is expected to continue, particularly as the population in the region ages and there are increasing numbers of seniors living alone. As a result, the number of households in the region is expected to continue to increase. This trend has implications in terms of housing, affecting both the number of units needed to house the population, and the type of unit appropriate for the household. While in the near term, the need will be greater in the more urban communities in the region; this may be an issue that the Village will need to address in the future.

Employment trends have also changed dramatically in the region. In the past, employment in Western New York was manufacturing-based, and there were large employment concentrations. Now, smaller, service industries predominate, and employment is much more dispersed throughout the region. There has also been a dramatic shift in the location of the area's employment, with a greater proportion of jobs located in suburban areas, in new industrial and office parks. With the dispersal of employment, it will be easier for people to commute to jobs from rural communities like Alden, and this will affect where people choose to live. The change in the employment base and location has also complicated commuting patterns, increasing traffic volumes on major routes, like Broadway, which link suburban communities.

Another trend has been the change in the nature of retailing in the region and the nation. Increasingly, retail outlets are located in strip plazas, easily accessible by car and serving a wider market area than the traditional community centers. Many of the stores in these plazas are chains or "big box" retailers who require a different type of retail space than is typically available in older storefronts. The change in the retail environment has important implications to the Village of Alden, which is a rural center with a strong existing downtown retail core. The redistribution of shopping in the region has also contributed to traffic problems. The new retail centers tend to be automobile-oriented, and not pedestrian friendly, resulting in more automobile trips and traffic volumes, while making non-automotive alternatives (pedestrian and bike trails) more challenging.

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These regional trends and issues have an impact on the Village of Alden to a greater or lesser extent. By being sensitive to these issues, and taking them into consideration in local planning efforts, the Village will be better able to address the opportunities and constraints they present.

² As of this writing, household size data from the 2000 Census is not available.

SECTION 5 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Preserving Community Character

Protecting the quality of life in the Village of Alden is a major priority in the community. Village residents clearly voiced their strong appreciation of the rural character of the Village, and they do not want to see it sacrificed to the pressures for growth and development. As emphasized in the Goals and Objectives, controls should be established to properly guide growth and manage the pace at which it occurs.

There is a large amount of undeveloped open space in the Village. Development activity has primarily occurred around the Village center and along major roadways. To date, pressure for development has not forced a significant amount of residential subdivision or other development activity, allowing the Village the ability to properly plan for future growth. As the environmental constraints discussion points out, future development in certain areas of the Village would be affected by the presence of the groundwater aquifer and other environmental conditions. In addition, future retail and commercial development should be encouraged in close proximity to the central business district, with greater emphasis placed on guiding residential uses and other uses to more preferable areas, with a focus on infill development in and around the business district and preserving open space in outlying areas.

Preservation of the central business district is also important, as it is directly tied with the preservation of the unique character of the Village. This district has long represented the Village center and provides economic vitality for the community, as well as high levels of service to the communities that surround the Village. To this end, Erie County has recognized the Village's central business district as a rural service center of Countywide significance. The vitality of the Village center should be protected and strengthened by encouraging the location of residential housing close to the area and discouraging any high-density commercial and retail development of outlying areas, away from the Village center. The character of the business district should also be preserved and enhanced through the adoption of adequate architectural review standards, a review of the zoning and uses presently permitted and not permitted in this area, and by undertaking other

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physical improvements to the area. The protection and preservation of historic structures is also important for the area. Ample and convenient parking is another essential ingredient to a resourceful business district that cannot be neglected. Efforts should be undertaken to provide convenient and improved parking opportunities in the area. In addition, the Village should strongly discourage the State from undertaking any future roadway widening of Broadway. Such action through the Village would change forever the unique character of this area and significantly impact the business district.

Village population has been essentially stable over the past decade, but modest growth is projected for the next 15 years. Increases in the number of households in the Village are also expected to continue, but at a pace that the Village can absorb. While the Village will continue to have a large proportion of family households, it is expected that there will be an increasing number of empty nester and senior households in the future whose housing needs will change. There are areas in the vicinity of the Village center that can accommodate in-fill development. The development of alternative housing, that is convenient to the central business district, should be encouraged to accommodate changing lifestyles and further diversify the existing housing stock.

The need for affordable housing for seniors is another quality of life issue that must be considered in the Comprehensive Plan. According to the 1990 Census data, incomes in the Village tend to be well above the County level and wealth, as measured by per capita income, has been increasing relative to inflation. However, there are senior households paying more than an affordable level for their housing. Furthermore, as situations in life change, many seniors find they can no longer afford to keep their house but have no viable alternative for maintaining residence in the Village. Although the diversity of the housing stock has improved with the construction of a relatively large number of rental units in the Village over the last 10 years, some of this multi-family development is not priced within a range comfortable for seniors and lower income families. The Village should seek to ensure that elderly residents are able to afford the costs of maintaining residence in the area. As the population and the housing stock ages, this will become more of an issue. There is clearly a need for affordable senior housing and the provision of housing types and styles that meet the needs of seniors. The Village zoning, subdivision and site plan review regulations should be reviewed to ensure that they provide adequate flexibility to enable the development of such housing.

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In addition, the Village should encourage future residential development to incorporate greater diversity in pricing and style. This will help maintain the unique character of the Village while ensuring that additions to the housing stock will be affordable to a wide range of income groups. More creative housing styles and types, that create a blend of residential opportunities, should be encouraged over standard, “cookie-cutter” subdivision development that essentially segregates the population by age and income. Here again, zoning, site plan review and subdivision regulations should be reviewed to ensure flexibility with regard to density, location and design to enable the development of alternative housing styles of varying cost. By providing a variety of housing choices for all incomes and age groups, that addresses the needs of an ever changing population, and by encouraging the creation of diversified residential areas that provide a blend of housing choices, the Village can maintain a strong sense of community and protect and enhance the existing character of the area.

Major Issues:

- *Preserving and maintaining the rural character and quaint atmosphere of the community*
- *Preserve and protect remaining historic structures and resources in the business district*
- *Managing growth and development at a reasonable rate*
- *Preserving the character of the Village central business district (see Section 5.2)*
- *Ensuring that housing in the Village is affordable to residents of all age groups, both for home owners and renters*
- *Providing alternative housing styles and types for senior and non-traditional households*
- *Encourage the development of diversified neighborhoods that perpetuate the strong sense of community that currently exists in the Village*

5.2 Economic Development

As discussed above, the Village of Alden functions as a rural service center and is an important asset to the Village community and the surrounding area. However, there are threats to the health of the Village’s business district. The Tops Market, formerly located

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in the Ames shopping plaza, near the Village center, has relocated to a new commercial development situated to the west, at the Village boundary with the Town of Alden. Although the Tops Market is still situated within the Village limits, its relocation has placed the store beyond a safe and comfortable walking distance for most residents. This loss was followed by the relocation of the McDonalds restaurant from this plaza (to the new plaza) and may likely result in the continued loss of businesses to other locations within that new development or elsewhere outside the Village.

In general, there is an urgent need to revitalize the Ames shopping plaza to improve the overall economic climate of the area. Attracting new shops and stores in the plaza and to other areas in the Village center in the future may be difficult due to the age and smaller size of existing vacant structures that exist. It is often more expensive for potential businesses to renovate older structures than to construct a new building on vacant land or lease space in a newly developed property. The Village should formulate an economic development and downtown revitalization strategy and adopt policies to enhance and protect the economic health of the central business district to ensure its ability to function as a vital service center for the surrounding area. Furthermore, additional opportunities to promote the downtown and develop an identity for this area should be devised as a means of focusing on the business district as a vital service center rather than a tourist destination.

New commercial development that is occurring outside of the Village may have other impacts on the Village economy as well. Village businesses may lose revenue if motorists traveling along Broadway choose to shop at businesses located outside the area. The lack of convenient, organized and visible parking in the central business district may act to further discourage through traffic from shopping in the Village. As noted in Section 5.1, parking improvements in the central business district are necessary for improving the economic conditions in this area. Without convenient parking, motorists are less apt to stop and shop. A study should be conducted to assess the availability of and potential for the acquisition of land in the Village center for municipal parking purposes. In addition, the use of the existing on street parking, and the proper delineation of these spaces, must be examined to make sure that shoppers are provided ample opportunities to utilize such parking. Use of on street parking by shop owners should be discouraged. The feasibility of instituting time restrictions or some other

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means of parking space control should also be examined to ensure the adequate availability and efficient use of the limited parking supply.

Another concern is the volume of traffic that travels through the central business district. The uncomfortable walking distance to the new Tops Market and adjacent development, coupled with seasonal conditions that limit the use of the existing pathways beneath the Broadway railroad viaduct (which leads to the new plaza), is likely to aggravate this problem by forcing an increase in auto usage in the Village. If traffic volumes along Broadway reach a certain level, the New York State Department of Transportation may lean toward recommending road widening or other improvements to expand roadway capacity in this area. Actions of this type could adversely affect the character of the central business district and are likely to further detract from proposed economic revitalization efforts. Although the Village has little control over the amount of traffic that moves through the Village from outside areas, efforts can be made to reduce the need for vehicular usage within the Village. Wherever possible, transportation improvements, such as walking and bike trails, should be developed to enable residents in outlying areas easier access to the Village center without using their car. This would, in turn, help to improve economic conditions in the Village center. Furthermore, areas in the business district, or in close proximity to the district, that lack sidewalks should receive them. Sidewalks should also be improved in areas where they are substandard or in disrepair.

The Village must strive to keep its business district vital and to attract clean, wealth-generating businesses by ensuring an adequate amount of properly zoned land to accommodate future commercial and industrial activities. The Village should review the uses currently permitted in the business district and consider the creation of an overlay district to allow for flexibility and design creativity to achieve the goals and objectives of this Plan. The approval processes must also be designed to enable development to occur without undue complication, assuming all environmental constraints are adequately considered.

Major Issues:

- *Revitalize the downtown and plaza areas to stabilize occupancy and the tax base*

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- *Develop business opportunities to support existing enterprises and to attract new businesses to the Village center*
- *Develop an economic strategy to devise a clearer identity for the central business district and to promote the downtown area as "a place to shop, work and live"*
- *Develop a plan or program to put the economic strategy in action and revitalize the area as a rural service center for the surrounding region*
- *Improve the availability and visibility of parking in the business district*
- *Enhance non-vehicular access to shopping (safe and improved pedestrian and/or biking opportunities)*
- *Traffic management and calming measures are needed, particularly along Broadway, to control traffic in the Village center and avert the need for road widening*

5.3 Environmental Protection

The Village uses a large "sole source" groundwater aquifer to provide potable water to residents and businesses. The Village has chosen to operate its own water supply system and is resistant to connect to the County system. Thus, protecting this groundwater resource and eliminating or restricting any potential sources of contamination is important to public health and the viability of providing Village residents with a long-term source of potable drinking water. Possible sources of contamination include a variety of chemical, biological, petroleum and metal contaminants that are carried in stormwater runoff. Planning decisions must respect the fact that the aquifer, although renewable, is a resource that warrants comprehensive protection from point and non-point sources of pollution. Educational outreach efforts should also be undertaken to inform local residents of the importance of protecting the aquifer. Techniques, such as informative signage, reading "*Now Entering the Alden Aquifer Area*", could be utilized as a means of increasing awareness of this important resource. In addition, the Village should consider restriction on lot clearance and the use of pesticides and fertilizers to further protect water quality.

Currently, the Village has designated the area along stream corridors that run through the area as conservation sector zoning districts. Flood plains and/or wetlands are present along all of the wooded streams in the Village. The conservation sector zoning is designed as an overlay district for the flood prone areas of Ellicott Creek and its

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tributaries. The conservation sector zoning designation needs to be revised to perform the role of, 1) providing a buffer area to protect the flood plain area as well as wetlands, woodlands and the shoreline area of these important water resources; and 2) protecting the significant geological fossil geology along Spring Creek. These creek corridor areas not only recharge groundwater, but also function as important wildlife habitats. The wetlands also aid in protecting property from damage caused by flooding and erosion.

The southwest section of the Village contains a large area of wetlands that have not been afforded protection through the conservation sector zoning (see Map 6). These wetlands correspond with areas of hydric soils and soils with potential for hydric inclusions. This wetland area is also underlain by the aquifer, making it a primary area for environmental conservation.

There are other locations in the Village that contain large areas of hydric soils. These soils have severe limitations for development that must be recognized. Future development actions must be cognizant of the presence of these soils and mitigative measures must be developed to address potential impacts associated with the development of these lands.

The northeast section of the Village contains large areas of mature woodland that provide important habitat, aid in recharging the aquifer and contribute to the rural character of the area. Emphasis should be placed on preserving woodlands in this area through appropriate development techniques. In addition, this area of the Village contains the geologically significant Slate Banks area of Spring Creek, which is renowned for its archaeological significance. Every effort should be made to protect and preserve this area as well.

Major Issues:

- *Protecting the quality of the groundwater aquifer*
- *Minimizing impacts of development on resources such as wetlands, stream corridors, flood plains and hydric soils*
- *Preserving open space and woodlands*
- *Ensuring full protection of stream corridors and the natural resources located in and around these watercourses*

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- *Ensuring that development is appropriate given soil constraints, transportation access and other environmental concerns*
- *Protect the archaeologically significant area of the Slate Banks*

5.4 Parks and Recreation

The Village has a limited amount of passive and programmed park space, including recreational space provided by the Alden Central School District. At present the Village contains one Town park facility, three small neighborhood playgrounds on Kellogg Street, Willow Woods and Maple Ridge, a playground adjacent to the Alden Intermediate School, and a small commons area in the central business district. There are no large, multi-purpose parks in the southern portion of the Village. Residents in this area must travel to the northern part of the Village or to other communities for recreational opportunities. The small playground on Kellogg Street is insufficient to address the recreation needs of residents who live south of Broadway. Any future large-scale development activities in the southern portion of the Village should include provisions for new recreational space in the southern portion of the Town, particularly near Tannery Brook in the vicinity of Railroad Street and Exchange Street. The Alden School District recreation facilities are utilized at capacity and overburdened, although information about exactly what types of facilities are needed to provide relief has not been collected. There is also a need for small neighborhood parks in residential areas throughout the Village. Other recreational amenities desired by Village residents include bicycle and walking trails and facilities for local youth. Future recreational planning in the Village should provide for a diversity of opportunities, making sure the needs of all users are addressed, including young children, older youth and seniors. Consideration should also be given to the potential for establishing bicycle lanes along Exchange Street and Crittenden Road.

Residents also clearly want to preserve areas of open space. To this end, the Village should define areas where growth is appropriate and where development should be limited or prohibited. In addition, consideration should be given to the extent of lot clearing to preserve greenspace, particularly in areas underlain by the aquifer. It is recommended that the Village seek to provide conservation areas, whether through the

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acquisition of undeveloped lands, conservation easements or other acceptable means. These areas can be used for passive recreation and nature education, thereby preserving important, environmentally significant lands. The Village should also encourage clustered development and other similar development practices that seek to preserve open space.

There are a number of historic resources in the Village that warrant protection. The majority of these structures are located in the vicinity of the Village center. The Village should consider adopting architectural standards that seek to preserve the character of these resources and that help to enhance and continue the visual appeal and character of the business district.

Major Issues:

- *Increasing and improving recreational opportunities, including development of trails, additional youth programs, and passive recreation*
- *Lack of recreational opportunities in the southern portion of the Village*
- *Establishing conservation areas and encouraging the preservation of open space*
- *Preserving and protecting important historic resources*

5.5 Infrastructure and Transportation Management

Although 82 percent of Village residents drive to work, commuting accounts for only a fraction of all vehicle trips in the general area. Many factors have resulted in increased traffic in the Village. The new location of commercial development west of the Village has changed travel patterns. It will likely continue to affect travel decisions among Village residents who seek commercial and retail shopping opportunities, and force residents to utilize their cars to access services that they can no longer walk to. The residential development that has occurred south of Broadway is too far away from the business district to allow comfortable walking opportunities, resulting in additional traffic along Exchange Street. The capacity of the existing roadway system, the distance to the commercial businesses and potential alternate travel routes should all be taken into consideration as new development is proposed for the Village.

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An inefficient transportation system is also affecting the Village's quality of life, particularly the lack of sufficient travel routes in the southern portion of the Village. In addition to the problems associated with increasing traffic volumes along Broadway and other main arteries, which includes an increasing number of trucks on these roadways, there is a growing need to improve vehicular access to the southern portion of the Village. At present, Exchange Street is the primary route in and out of the Village for most residents who reside south of Broadway. This places significant pressure on the intersection of Broadway and Exchange Street, which is currently unsignalized, and it presents a problem for emergency access as well. This situation is further complicated by the location of the active railroad corridor just south of Broadway. There is a critical need to provide alternate travel routes to this area, especially since this portion of the Village has been identified as a more preferable location for future development.

Consideration should be given to providing safe and ample opportunities for pedestrian activity in the central business district. Broadway accommodates a large volume of traffic that moves through the Village. Certain intersections present safety concerns for pedestrians and motorists alike, exhibiting a need for improved crosswalks. In particular, the intersection of Exchange Street and Broadway, which is unsignalized, and other locations in the vicinity of the Village commons area, are difficult to cross during periods of heavy traffic. These issues of safety and convenience, including the possible need for traffic signals, proper pavement striping and secure locations for pedestrian crossing, need to be examined and properly addressed. In addition, sidewalks should be further extended along Broadway to areas where they are currently lacking. This would provide residents in certain areas more convenient opportunities to access the central business district, as well as the new plaza at the western Village boundary. In addition, the Village should strongly oppose any future widening of Broadway. This action would not only make it more hazardous for pedestrian activity in the business district, but it would be detrimental to the overall character of the downtown and the Village as a whole. Efforts should be undertaken to calm traffic as it moves through the Village. This would help to not only improve safety conditions for pedestrians but can result in secondary benefits for local businesses. Streetscaping and other minor roadway improvements can help to achieve this effect.

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Traffic in the Village, along Exchange Street, Broadway and Crittenden Road, has increased over recent years, with a significant increase in the number of trucks that utilize these roadways. While it is important to effectively deal with increased volumes, it is also important to ensure that any methods for managing this flow that are proposed by the New York State Department of Transportation do not have adverse impacts on the central business district. In particular, any roadway widening would be detrimental to the community character and local economy and should be avoided, if possible.

Storm drainage is another problem in isolated locations in the Village. Inadequate and/or undersized storm sewers have resulted in flooding problems, especially in the vicinity of the central business district. A number of locations along Broadway flood approximately twice a year during heavy rainfall events. These include the intersections of Broadway and Elm Street, Broadway at Mechanic Street, Broadway at Kellogg Street and Emerson Street, and Exchange Street near Broadway. Action should be taken in these areas to remedy these localized flooding problems.

Major issues:

- Coordinating development plans with the transportation network to properly manage traffic, aid in ease of access to the business district and to avoid sprawl*
- Improving opportunities and safety for pedestrian traffic*
- Improving traffic patterns and establishing alternate access routes, particularly in the southern portion of the Village*
- Managing traffic volumes on major roadways, particularly Broadway, without adversely affecting community character*
- Remediating storm drainage problems that result in localized flooding*

5.6 Vision Plan

Based upon the findings and recommendations outlined above, and the environmental constraints and regional trends information outlined in Section 4, the following plan was developed to achieve the Village's vision and desires for the proper management of future growth and development (Map 10). This plan is a visual representation of the goals and objectives for the Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations portrayed on this map are based upon an analysis of the existing land use patterns and roadway

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system, economic conditions, and environmental resources and constraints, in conjunction with the issues and opportunities identified by the public. It is recommended that the Village establish partnerships with the Town of Alden and other surrounding communities in an effort to further this plan and develop a complimentary vision at a more regional level.

In general, commercial development is recommended to continue along both sides of Broadway, throughout the Village. Of particular importance is the area generally situated between Heisler Street and Rusher Drive, which comprises the Village center and should be enhanced and protected. An economic development strategy should be developed to encourage the location of a variety of personal service businesses to benefit the surrounding area, including restaurants. This strategy should capitalize on the existing "personality" of the Village and the identified needs of the local and regional customer base. The goal is to strengthen and enhance the Village center and enrich the community. It should be determined what types of businesses are desired and would benefit the area, how the existing zoning relates to identified needs, and what actions should be taken to make the changes necessary to rejuvenate the business district. Infill development and the reuse of existing structures is encouraged to maintain and improve the character of the area. The infill development of residential uses in and immediately around the business district is also recommended. Efforts should be taken to continue the unique appearance and quality of the central business district through architectural standards that regulate size and design style, and other physical improvements to the area. To enable the Village to achieve these various improvements in the central business district, it is recommended that an overlay district be designed to provide a mechanism to enhance redevelopment and revitalization of this area.

The Ames plaza has suffered the loss of some of its more prominent businesses and needs to be revitalized. This area should be redeveloped, over time, into an office or business park setting that would provide uses other than standard retail establishments and provide local employment opportunities to benefit the community and not compete with the retail business district corridor. This plaza would also be a good location for a small theater complex and/or a youth-oriented recreation facility (e.g., skating rink).

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The outer stretches of Broadway, west of the railroad viaduct and east of Rusher Drive should be developed with commercial uses. This development, however, should not be designed as commercial strip development and uses that locate in these areas should complement the central business district rather than compete with it. This is where an overlay for the central business district could help to distinguish appropriate uses from these distinct areas.

As shown on Map 10, future *residential* development is recommended to continue in varying degrees throughout the Village, as determined by the availability of land for development and existing environmental conditions. Other land uses were deemed appropriate for certain areas of the Village to allow for a mix of uses that would help to balance the tax base. In all cases and locations, future land development (whether for residential use or other uses) should comply with the provisions of the subdivision regulations that apply to drainage improvements, lands subject to flooding, and parks, open space and natural features (see Section 3.2.2 of this Plan or the Village Code for greater detail). For the purposes of the following discussion, the four quadrants that were utilized to assess land availability and environmental constraints will be used as a guide.

The southeastern quadrant of Village, which is bounded by Broadway to the north and Exchange Street to the west, was found to be the best suited for additional residential use. This area is situated outside of the boundaries of the groundwater aquifer and contains the lowest extent of environmental constraints that would restrict development activity. Medium-density residential development (two to four units per acre) could be continued off of, and in the vicinity of, Maple Ridge Road, with new roadway connections developed to Exchange Street and Sullivan Road. Additional residential growth in this area must provide parkland as a part of the development, whether provided in the form of a neighborhood park or land that is set to be merged with adjoining lands, which are also designated for parkland, to create a larger facility that would benefit a greater extent of the community in this area of the Village. This quadrant provides opportunities for planned unit development.

Park facilities in the southeastern quadrant should be located in the vicinity of the Tannery Brook corridor, which is recommended for designation as a conservation sector. This stream corridor acts as a natural buffer between the railroad and

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industrial/commercial activity to the north and the open lands and residential development to the south. The use of this area as a buffer should be continued and tied into any residential development that occurs to the south. A trail system should be established through this area that would interconnect with the business district and new residential development and parkland to the south, as well as a Village-wide trail system, to provide broad opportunities for passive recreation. Future parkland in the Tannery Brook area could also be made accessible, through pathway connections and a small creek crossing, to Railroad Street and the residential area located immediately to the north. This would provide recreational opportunities for residents and local workers in that vicinity.

Additional industrial and commercial development is also encouraged in the southeastern quadrant, north of the railroad line. This area has traditionally accommodated industrial activity in the Village and is a suitable location for the continuation of such use. Here provisions should be made to extend Railroad Street further to the east, and to develop a roadway connection north from Railroad Street to Broadway to provide another source of ingress and egress to this area (see Map 10). This could be accomplished by continuing Rusher Drive all the way through. Land use along Railroad Street should be a combination of industrial, light industrial and commercial, taking advantage of the proximity of the Village center. North of this area land uses should include residential development, with commercial uses along Broadway. Infill development is encouraged in this area to maintain an active Village center. Areas for municipal parking should also be identified in this area to accommodate the businesses along Broadway.

The southwestern quadrant of the Village, which is bounded by Broadway to the north and Exchange Street to the east, is recommended for commercial and light industrial development, in a park like setting, that is deemed suitable with respect to protection of the underlying aquifer. Uses that are non-polluting and that do not require large quantities of water for processing would be preferable, such as office development or certain light manufacturing uses. This area of the Village should provide a roadway connection between Broadway and Exchange Street that would service new development and provide alternate access between these roadways. This quadrant is another location that is highly suited for planned unit development. Site planning efforts

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should consider conservative designs with respect to pavement and lawn area to allow for the retention of natural area and the enhancement of natural recharge.

The southernmost portion of this quadrant, near Exchange Street is considered suitable for residential development. This area, which is situated outside the boundary of the aquifer, could support multi-family residential development or a mix of residential uses.

Any development activity that occurs in the southwestern quadrant must not adversely impact wetland resources located here. This area, which contains both State and Federally regulated wetlands, should be protected and incorporated into adjacent development as parkland and conservation area. A trail system that allows residents to utilize and appreciate the area for passive recreation is encouraged. As development is proposed in the area, the full extent of the wetlands should be formally delineated to better direct and design such actions in this vicinity and determine areas that should be protected from development.

The northwest quadrant of the Village, which is bounded by Broadway to the south and Crittenden Road to the east, primarily contains a mix of residential development and open space. There are two large parcels of undeveloped land, along with the corridor for Ellicott Creek, which represent the bulk of the open space in this area of the Village. The lands surrounding the creek, as well as the Town Park and school district property should be protected from development. This area contains a large area of flood plain, wetlands and mature woodlands. The Joe Panza trail system that exists in the northern portion of this area should be maintained and enhanced to provide increased opportunities for passive recreation. This trail provides access to the natural resources in the Ellicott Creek area and is a recreational asset for the Village. This trail system should be interconnected with any development that may occur in this quadrant in the future and to the trail system proposed for Spring Creek. This system could also be linked with the open space and creek corridor conservation areas recommended in other areas of the Village, thereby creating a continuous system of nature/walking trails for recreational use throughout the Village and a connection to the business district.

The southern portion of the northwest quadrant is underlain by groundwater aquifer and also contains some significant areas of hydric soils and soils with hydric inclusions.

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Development that may occur in this quadrant should be residential in nature and be designed in a manner that is highly respectful of these environmental constraints. Clustering or very low-density residential development is strongly encouraged to preserve open space and to accommodate environmental limitations.

The northeast quadrant of the Village, which is bounded by Broadway to the south and Crittenden Road to the west, contains significant stands of mature woodlands and Spring Creek, which includes a wide stretch of geologically important land (the Slate banks). This portion of the Village was considered the most significant with respect to protecting natural resources and restricting development, particularly the area to the north that lies over the groundwater aquifer. The Spring Creek corridor is recommended for designation as a conservation sector, with future development activity being set back from the creek to protect the existing resources. A trail system is recommended along the creek corridor that would connect with the trails developed west of Crittenden Road. Although residential development is not precluded from this area, it should occur in a manner that is sensitive to the natural resources that exist here. Clustered development, and possibly a planned unit development, is highly recommended in this area to preserve open space to the greatest extent practicable. The establishment of conservation easements is also encouraged, that could enable a developer to obtain certain incentives in exchange for the dedication of lands around the creek.

Land use south and west of Spring Creek, outside of the designated conservation area, should continue as residential, with commercial use along Broadway. In-fill development, where appropriate, is encouraged in this area. As previously noted, the Village should discourage commercial strip development in this area of Broadway and be mindful of uses that would compete with or otherwise adversely impact the central business district. Commercial uses that develop along this stretch of Broadway should complement the business district and provide valued service to the area. Sidewalks should also be extended to the east, along Broadway, to provide more convenient access to the business district.

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SECTION 6 IMPLEMENTATION

The preparation and adoption of the Village's plan is only the beginning of an overall planning process. The comprehensive plan is an active document and will continually be updated. Therefore, the Village must take the necessary steps to ensure that the recommendations of this plan are implemented. Thus, this section of the Village of Alden Comprehensive Plan outlines an implementation strategy for accomplishing the recommendations set forth in Section 5 and achieving the goals and objectives of the Plan. This strategy includes a step by step approach with established priorities.

It should be understood that because the Comprehensive Plan is an active document, over time, as local conditions change, so too may the priorities of the Village. Therefore, upon adoption of the Plan, one of the first priority actions is for the Village Board to designate the Planning Board as the entity responsible for the implementation of this document. The Village Board shall maintain the authority to appoint representatives from the community to assist the Planning Board with this action. Furthermore, information contained in the Comprehensive Plan must be kept current so that the recommendations, as well as the implementation process, are based on, and reflect, existing conditions. As outlined in Section 8 of this Plan, a bi-annual review process should be established to allow for the continuing review and updating of this plan.

In addition, members of the Village Board or their designated representatives should meet with local, County and State agencies to discuss the Comprehensive Plan and determine how these agencies could help with the implementation of this Plan. In particular, the Village should seek to strengthen its relationship with the Town of Alden to better coordinate future planning endeavors that may impact both communities.

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6.1 Priority Items – Year One

1. *Full Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan*

The Alden Village Board, after holding an appropriate public hearing and completing the State Environmental Quality Review process, should adopt the Comprehensive Plan. Failure to adopt the Plan would prohibit the Village from effectively managing growth and development and fully accomplishing the goals and objectives of the Plan.

2. *Comprehensive Plan Implementation*

As previously noted, the Alden Village Board should, by resolution, designate the Village Planning Board as the entity responsible for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Village Board shall also designate selected members of the local community to assist the Planning Board with these duties. The Planning Board and designated community representatives meet at a minimum on a quarterly basis to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is being implemented. This body would be responsible for reviewing the priority items outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, identifying actions to be taken, overseeing the work of consultants as required, evaluating the results of implemented actions, and updating/re-prioritizing the action items outlined in Section 6 of the plan, as necessary, to keep the Comprehensive Plan an active document for the Village. The Planning Board and its community designees should also meet at the end of each two-year period to review the actions taken during the previous two years and map out an action strategy for the next two years. Identified problems, suggested modifications and recommended actions should be presented to the Village Board for their review and approval (see Section 8 for further detail on this process).

3. *Funding and Budgeting for Implementation*

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To effectively implement the appropriate funding must be put in place. This involves grants funding as well as designating monies in the Village budget, as required, to ensure implementation. The Planning Board would provide an approximate budget for each year to the Village Board, and would assist the Village grants consultant, where required, to identify actions for funding and prepare funding applications. Projects and actions that cannot be funded through grants programs would be recommended for inclusion in the annual Village budget. Based upon the recommendations of the Planning Board, each consecutive year, the Village Board should decide on the direction to take, budget monies and authorize Boards, Committees and/or consultants to perform the work identified by the Planning Board. The Village Board should continue to seek funding assistance for implementation actions, as deemed appropriate.

6.2 Priority Items – Years One through Two

1. Amendment of the Village Zoning Code

The Village Zoning Code and Map will require a number of revisions that will necessitate a series of amendments over the first one to three years. Here, with the approval of the Village Board, the Planning Board and community designees must develop a rezoning strategy that will enable the Village to accomplish the changes recommended in the plan to properly manage growth over time. Certain of these changes will likely require the assistance of a consultant to help construct amendments and guide the Village through the required processes. The recommended zoning changes include the following.

- Amend the zoning classification of certain lands in conjunction with the recommendations outlined in Section 5 of this Plan.
- Develop and adopt a light manufacturing zoning classification that would allow industrial park and office park type uses.
- Revise the Conservation Sector zoning provisions to extend the protection of this district beyond flood plains, and rezone the creek corridors as conservation sectors.

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- Develop and adopt an overlay district for the central business district to control aesthetics, landscaping and signage, protect historic resources and allow some flexibility in uses for designated area.
- Develop and adopt an overlay district to protect the groundwater aquifer.
- Undertake some minor revisions to the zoning code to revise certain uses that are currently permitted by right or by special permit in the residential and commercial zoning districts, consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

2. Extension of Slade Drive

The Village should initiate the development of the extension of Slade Drive. Slade Drive is a paper street situated immediately east of the new Tops plaza property, near the western Village Boundary. This roadway would allow for proper traffic and access management for the adjacent plaza development and provide access to the undeveloped lands to the south. Once constructed, the plaza development should install driveway access onto Slade Drive to offset traffic flow and better accommodate cars making left-hand turns from the plaza onto Broadway. The intersection of Slade Drive and Broadway should be controlled by a traffic signal, which should be requested from the NYSDOT. Plans for the development of the Slade Drive spur road should be developed by the Village as soon as possible to expedite the potential installation of the traffic signal.

3. Sidewalks along Broadway

To provide residents safer and more convenient opportunities to access the central business district, sidewalks should be installed along Broadway in areas where they are currently lacking. In addition, sidewalks should be improved in other areas of the Village where they are substandard or in disrepair.

4. Water Quality Education Program

A program should be developed to educate the public on the importance of protecting the groundwater aquifer, which is the sole source of drinking water for the Village. This program would include instruction on best management practices to

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protect the quality of this resource, as well as conservation measures, and information about preventing and reducing non-point source pollution.

5. Land acquisition and conservation easements

The Planning Board and community designees should prioritize land for preservation and strive to secure funding for acquisition or negotiate conservation easements as a part of development approvals.

6.3 Priority Items – Years Three through Five

1. Amendment of the Village Zoning Code

Efforts to amend the zoning classification of certain lands in conjunction with the recommendations outlined in Section 5 of this Plan should be continued.

2. Increase municipal parking

The Village should undertake a study to determine how and where municipal parking could be provided in the immediate vicinity of the central business district. Where identified, properties should be converted for parking, whether through acquisition of land or other means.

3. Localized Storm Drainage Problems

With the assistance of the NYSDOT and County Highway Department, as required, the storm drainage problems that impact the intersections of Broadway and Elm Street, Broadway and Mechanic Street, Broadway and Exchange Street, and Broadway at Kellogg Street and Emerson Street should be remedied. The exact cause of such flooding should be determined and appropriate remedies employed.

4. Sidewalks

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Sidewalks should be improved in areas of the Village where they are substandard or in disrepair. Other areas where sidewalk extensions would afford residents safe and convenient travel opportunities should be investigated.

5. Economic Development strategy

Economic changes that have occurred over time have effected the vitality of the central business district in the Village. In an effort to revitalize this district to ensure its ability to continue to function as a vital service center for the surrounding area, an economic development and downtown revitalization strategy should be developed. In turn, policies should be adopted to enhance and protect the economic health of the area.

6. Site clearance standards

As a means of preserving open space and protecting the rural character of the Village, standards should be adopted to control the amount of vegetation that can be cleared from development sites. Such standards would prevent clear cutting and help to preserve natural vegetation wherever possible.

7. Bike Lanes along Exchange Street and Crittenden Road

The Village should work with the County to design and develop bike lanes along Exchange Street and Crittenden Road. These lanes would provide for safety travel for bicyclists, including children who ride to school, and pedestrians alike.

8. Extension of Railroad Street/ Extension of Rusher Drive

To improve and promote economic development in the vicinity of Railroad Street, where a mix of commercial, light industrial and industrial uses are proposed, Railroad Street and Rusher Drive should be extended. The extension of Rusher Drive would provide for a through connection to Broadway. The extension of Railroad Street would allow for the development of new uses in this area of the Village.

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9. Land acquisition and conservation easements

The Planning Board and community designees should prioritize land for preservation and strive to secure funding for acquisition or negotiate conservation easements as a part of development approvals.

6.4 Continuing and Long Term Priority Items

The following is a list of actions that should be implemented over the course of the Plan. Some of these items are ongoing actions.

1. Establish a Village-wide trail system

To provide local residents with additional means for passive and active recreation, and to allow for the interconnection of various portions of the Village without utilizing local roadways, a system of trails should be developed. As illustrated on the Vision Map in Section 5, this system would focus on the creek corridors and undeveloped areas in the Village. This system should be constructed over time, with trails incorporated as part of development proposal wherever possible.

2. Traffic control measures and devices

With the assistance of the NYSDOT and the Erie County Highway Department, the need for localized improvements in the Village should be examined. Wherever possible, these improvements should be undertaken to enhance traffic safety and operations, particularly along Broadway, West Main Street, Crittenden Road and Exchange Street.

3. Land acquisition and conservation easements

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As discussed in Section 5, there are certain areas in the Village that contain important natural resources that warrant preservation. In particular, the woodlands in the northeast quadrant and the wetlands in the southwest quadrant should be preserved to the greatest extent practicable. Lands along Spring Creek, in the area of the Slate Banks, are also important and should be protected. The Village should devise the means to acquire these important lands. Grants funding for land acquisition, conservation easements, deed restrictions and other similar means should be the primary approach for protecting these resources.

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SECTION 7 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Typically the potential environmental impacts of a Comprehensive Plan are evaluated through a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). To meet this requirement, the Comprehensive Plan itself can be set up to represent the GEIS. Thus, the reviewers, Lead Agency, involved and interested agencies, and the public can review one comprehensive document for the community that outlines plans for the future and the environmental implications of these plans. This section of the Comprehensive Plan has been provided to assist with the environmental review for this document.

A GEIS, like an Environmental Impact Statement, includes a section on Environmental Setting. Section 3 of this Comprehensive Plan provides a review and analysis of the environmental setting of the Village of Alden as it exists now. This section of the plan includes information on the following:

- Existing Land Use
- Land Use Regulations
- Housing
- Community Facilities
- Historic and Archeological Resources
- Vegetation and Wildlife
- Wetlands and Water Quality
- Environmental Hazards
- Flooding and Erosion
- Topography, Geology and Soils
- Transportation Systems
- Visual Resources
- Open Space, Parks and Recreation
- Public Water Supply
- Wastewater Disposal and Stormwater Drainage

7.1 Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Impacts

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Although the underlying purpose and a major goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to avoid significant adverse environment impacts in the Village, it is important here to discuss these potential impacts.

1. *Short term/long term and cumulative impacts*

Based on the environmental setting of the Village of Alden, the following potentially significant adverse environmental impacts could occur if the Village does not plan adequately and provide the proper tools for the management of growth and development.

a. *Impacts on Land*

- The Village of Alden is a rural service center for the surrounding area. The Village is rural in nature; a characteristic that is valued by area residents. Inappropriate planning and development actions could impact the character of the Village and its viability as an economic center. The Comprehensive Plan is aimed at properly guiding growth in the Village to lessen the impacts of land use and development decisions.
- The Village of Alden contains significant areas of hydric soils, wetlands, and floodplains, and is underlain by a sole source groundwater aquifer. These areas have been identified on maps in Section 3. Improper development of these areas, and in certain locations any form of development, could result in drainage, flooding and erosion problems within the Village and in outlying areas. Some locations in the Village also contain significant areas of mature woodland that should be protected, to the greatest extent practicable, to maintain the rural character of the Village and preserve areas of open space. The Comprehensive plan is aimed at guiding growth to lessen the impacts of land use and development on these and other environmental resources in the Village.

b. *Impacts on Water*

- The Village of Alden obtains its drinking water supply from a sole source aquifer that underlies the area. The quality and quantity of this groundwater

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supply is critical to its continued use by Village residents and businesses. Failure to properly plan development and other actions in the Village could result in the pollution and overuse of this resource, ultimately forcing the Village to obtain water from other sources.

- The Village is traversed by the Ellicott Creek, Spring Creek and Tannery Brook corridors. All or portions of these creek corridors are surrounded by flood plains that present limitations for development. Inappropriate development activities in these areas could result in heightened flooding conditions and hazards to public safety. These creeks also represent important areas for wildlife habitat and open space that should be protected.
- The Village has concentrated areas of wetlands and hydric soils. These areas are typically located in the vicinity of the creek corridors. The northeastern section of the Village has a large area of hydric soils, and the southwestern section has a significant area of wetlands. Other areas of poor soils and wetlands are scattered throughout the Village. As recommended in the Comprehensive Plan, these environmental constraints should be considered when making planning and development decisions so as to reduce environmental impacts to these resources.
- The Village, through this plan and previous studies, has identified certain locations that have drainage and flooding problems. There are certain intersections that flood approximately twice a year due to poor drainage conditions. The lack of corrective action and maintenance, coupled with improper development decisions in the future, could worsen these conditions.

c. Impacts on Flora and Fauna

- The Village's expansive areas of open meadows, abandoned farm fields and woodlands, as well as the wetlands and creek corridors, support many non-threatened and non-endangered plant, avian and animal species. These areas provide important habitat for many resident and migrating species, and lend to the rural character of the Village. Over development and poor site planning decisions could adversely impact these resources. Thus, the open

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areas of the Village should be preserved to the maximum extent possible through wise planning and development practices.

d. Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

- The rural atmosphere, the appearance of the business district, the creek corridors and areas of open space all comprise the aesthetic resources of the Village. Ill-planned patterns of development could have a major affect on these resources.

e. Impacts on Historic and Cultural Resources

- The Village has several locally significant historic structures that warrant preservation. Only through proper planning, that establishes guidelines and restrictions on the redevelopment of these structures and the aesthetic character of the Village, can these resources be preserved.

f. Impacts on Parks and Recreation

- The southern portion of the Village has no large or significant areas of parkland or recreational resources. Residents in this part of the Village must travel to the Town Park to the north or out of the Village for recreational opportunities. Without proper planning, recreational resources may not be developed in this area of the Village to benefit local residents.

g. Impacts on Transportation

- The transportation system in the Village is heavily based upon roadways and automobiles. The railroad is utilized for business freight and service purposes only.
- The major roadway corridors in the Village include Broadway (Route 20), Crittenden Road and Exchange Street, and to a lesser degree, West Main Street. Route 20 is the most heavily traveled highway and has a level of Service of C. If traffic volumes increase on Broadway, the level of service

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rating could be downgraded. Although the Village cannot control the volume of traffic that utilizes Broadway, without proper planning, impacts to connecting roadways that service the Village and to the local community cannot be properly analyzed and mitigated.

- Travel through the central business district for pedestrian and bicyclists can be difficult due to the large volume of traffic along Broadway, the lack of signalized intersections, and the lack of adequate crosswalk locations. Proper study and planning is required to identify problem locations and corrective measures to improve public safety in this area. Without such action, conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians in the Village will only worsen.
- Exchange Street provides the only means of ingress and egress between the southern portion of the Village and the central business district (Broadway). Exchange Street is bisected by an active rail line that can temporarily prohibit travel along this roadway. This can result in traffic tie-ups and have serious ramifications during emergency situations. An alternative travel route is necessary to provide emergency access and to alleviate congestion at the intersection of Exchange and Broadway. Failure to adequately plan such actions could result in the further deterioration of traffic conditions and hamper the delivery of emergency services in this area of the Village.

h. Impacts on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- At the present growth rate of the community, the population is expected to rise by approximately eight percent over the next 15 years.
- The growth rate of residential construction since 1991 has not been high (about 5 units per year) and the pattern of growth has been fairly random. Much of this residential construction has been for manufactured homes or in-fill housing on vacant lots or on lots in approved subdivisions. However, the Village has diligently reviewed a small number of residential subdivisions.

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- The Village's Goals and Objectives for the Community clearly integrate the need for directing growth towards the central business district and to areas deemed suitable for development based on the environmental constraints analysis.
- The Village highly values the central business district, which serves the surrounding area as a service center. This district has suffered from an increasing vacancy rate and requires economic revitalization. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of addressing this issue in an effort to allow the Village to continue to effectively service the community well into the future.

7.2 Adverse Environmental Impacts that Cannot be Avoided

With or without the adoption and implementation of the Village of Alden Comprehensive Plan, the Village will continue to have new development that will impact the environment. The adoption of this plan will allow the Village to better manage growth and development, and reduce potential environmental impacts. All development actions taking place after the adoption of this plan will still be subject to the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process on a site specific basis.

7.3 Growth Inducing Aspects of the Plan

Most of the implementation actions outlined in this plan will help to control and moderate growth within the Village of Alden community. Certain actions will act to encourage development in specific areas of the Village and redevelopment in and around the central business district. These areas have been deemed to be the most appropriate areas for development.

7.4 Mitigation Measures

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To address the potential impacts to the environment in the Village of Alden, the following measures are proposed (see Sections 5 and 6 of the Comprehensive Plan for a more thorough explanation of these actions).

a. Impacts on Land

- The Village has certain existing regulations, and new regulations are proposed, that are aimed at directing development away from problematic land use areas in the Village. Other existing regulations will be amended, as required, to more properly guide development to areas where impacts to the environment will be reduced.

b. Impacts on Water

- The creeks and streams within the Village have been identified. Recommendations have been made for improving their protection through the designation of additional conservation areas and the acquisition and/or preservation of land along the creek corridors to create buffer areas from existing and potential development.
- The areas within the Village noted as having a high concentration of wetlands and/or hydric soils have been targeted for conservation or reduced density development through appropriate zoning measures.
- Development shall be reduced in density, limited in scale or activity, or prohibited in areas that lie over top of the groundwater aquifer in the Village.

c. Impacts on Plants and Animals

- Areas deemed valuable as habitat for wildlife have been identified. Recommendations for acquisition, the designation of conservation easements and/or reduced development density have been developed to help preserve these areas.

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d. Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

- The aesthetic resources of the Village of Alden are composed of its rural atmosphere, the central business district, areas of woodlands and creek corridors, and the large open areas. To protect and preserve these resources, as well as the rural character of the Village, this plan has proposed a number of actions as outlined in Section 6.

e. Impacts on Historic and Archaeological Resources

- This plan contemplates the adoption of guidelines and/or standards to control the manner and extent of redevelopment of historic structures and other existing structures in the central business district. The design and character of new development will also be regulated to protect and enhance the aesthetic quality of the Village center. In addition, potential changes in the zoning regulations will further control development around historic structures.

f. Impacts on Parks and Recreation

- At present, the only significant park facilities in the Village are located north of Broadway. The provision of additional parks facilities in the southern portion of the Village will provide opportunities for residents that currently do not exist. Such facilities will alleviate the need for automobile travel to reach local parks and reduce the demands on existing recreational resources in the area.
- The development of a Village-wide trail system will provide new and improved opportunities for passive recreation for Village residents.
- The Alden School District's recreation program and facility, as well as programs offered by the Town of Alden, will continue to serve the needs of residents in the Village of Alden. Demands on these resources and facilities will be offset by the provision of additional park facilities in the southern portion of the Village in the future.

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g. Impacts on Transportation

- Exchange Street is presently the only means of access to Broadway and areas to the north from the southern portion of the Village. The Comprehensive Plan recommends the provision of an alternate means of access to better manage traffic flow in the Village and to provide another route for emergency vehicles to reach this area.
- The Comprehensive Plan calls for the assistance of the State and County transportation agencies in alleviating traffic and other roadway problems throughout the Village. The improvement of roadway safety and operations in the Village is imperative and will help to protect pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike.
- The railroad within the Village could be an important component of the Village's future economic development. This corridor should be preserved for future opportunities for business and industry, as well as the long term potential for residential usage (i.e., commuter line).
- The central business district is targeted for continued growth and redevelopment. A major component of that success is the ability of this district to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access. The Comprehensive Plan prioritizes the need to complete sidewalks to the area, promote safe pedestrian crosswalks and the need for bicycle paths and lanes. Parking issues in the business district are also addressed in the Plan.

h. Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

- As stated throughout the Comprehensive Plan, the Village of Alden would like to control growth and keep the community a rural Village with a thriving central business district. The actions suggested throughout the Plan and this section should help the Village in achieving this goal. Although the plan proposes actions that may encourage growth, it is proposed in a more managed and

VILLAGE OF ALDEN 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

deliberate fashion so as to protect community character and important natural resources within the Village.

7.5 Evaluation of Alternatives

Throughout the Planning process, alternatives for helping the Village achieve its Goals and Objectives were evaluated. These recommendations and implementation alternatives were evaluated for not only their desired results, but also their impact to the environment, the needs of local resident and private property rights, and the vitality of the community as a rural service center.

It must be noted that long term recommendations were not thoroughly evaluated in this section since these actions are only to be considered in extenuating circumstances where the Village is seeing greater levels of growth pressure or where short term recommendations are not achieving the desired results.

Under the present growth conditions in the Village, the "No Action" alternative was considered. However, to enable the Village to properly plan for its chosen future, to prepare for potential development activity over the next 15 years, and to better direct and manage such growth and development, this alternative was deemed inappropriate. Furthermore, the chosen action plan will provide greater protection to the environment than the present course of action.

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SECTION 8 BI-ANNUAL REVIEW

The Village of Alden Planning Board shall conduct a bi-annual review of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the plan remains a dynamic and useful document and to judge the accomplishments of the Village in implementing and enforcing the goals and objectives of the plan. As a part of this review, the Planning Board shall be assisted by representatives from the local community, as designated by the Village Board. This bi-annual review shall include the following.

- All Site plan and subdivision approvals issued during the previous two years will be reviewed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to determine where this activity has occurred, if it has occurred consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the overall impact of these planning approvals on general land use trends in the Village.
- All rezoning decisions approved during the previous two years will be reviewed in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan to determine if these actions were consistent with the recommendations of the plan and the overall impact of the rezoning decisions on the general land use trends in the Village.
- The priority listing of zoning amendments specified in the Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished and which ones should be undertaken in the coming years. The overall impact of these rezoning decisions should be evaluated with respect to general land use trends in the Village. The Planning Board should also determine if there are any new zoning actions that should be added to this list.
- The list of other priority items, as contained in the implementation section of the Comprehensive Plan, will be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished during the previous two years. It should also be determined if there is a need to update or amend this list.
- Comments from Village Boards, departments and committees and public input gathered during the previous two years will be evaluated in conjunction with the

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information ascertained from the reviews outlined above, and an action plan for Comprehensive Plan implementation activity in the coming two years will be developed.

- The Planning Board will prepare a statement outlining the accomplishments of the past two years, including a listing of all site plan, subdivision and rezoning approvals, and a list of accomplishments in terms of zoning code amendments and other implementation achievements, as specified in the Comprehensive Plan. This information, along with the action plan for the continuing implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, should be presented to the Village Board for their review and approval.

VILLAGE OF ALDEN 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

GLOSSARY

The following are definitions of words and planning terms used in this document. It is an attempt to explain these items in common language for the benefit of the reader.

Aquifer

An underground source of water that lies within or between water bearing layers of permeable rock, sand or gravel.

Central Business District

The Village center is an area, consisting of retail, commercial, institutional, and public service establishments, that functions as the primary location for commerce.

Clustered Development

Clustered Development is a design technique for development projects that concentrates residential buildings in specific areas on a site to allow the remaining land to be set aside for recreation, common open space or environmental preservation. This is done by allowing housing to be constructed on smaller lots as long as the original density (the number of houses that can be built as-of-right on the property under the existing zoning) does not change.

Effluent

Outflowing material (such as stormwater or wastewater) that is discharged into the environment.

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)

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The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council is the interagency planning group that established transportation policies and programs for Erie and Niagara Counties. In 1975, the GBNRTC (which was then known as the NFTC- Niagara Frontier Transportation Committee) was designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization to be responsible for transportation planning in these counties. The organization provides a regional decision-making forum for the development of a multi-modal integrated transportation system that best serves the Niagara Frontier.

Headwater(s)

The source or beginning of a stream, including the general area contributing runoff or drainage to the stream channel.

Housing Stock

The overall supply of housing in an area, including all sizes and styles of residential development.

Hydric Soils

Soils are considered to be hydric if they are saturated, flooded or impounded long enough during the growing season to develop low oxygen levels and changeable chemical conditions in the upper layer. These soils are very poorly drained and have a high probability of containing wetlands.

Infrastructure

The underlying framework of public works systems that includes sewers, water lines, roadways, drainage piping, and other utility and service systems.

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Level of Service

This term refers to a measurement of the amount of automobile traffic on roadways. Level of Service or LOS, as defined in the NHTC 2010 Transportation System Plan is a qualitative measure describing the operational conditions within a stream of traffic. It is a means of quantifying or “grading” the operational quality of service provided by a roadway facility (NHTC, December 1994). LOS employs a rating system of “A” through “F”, with “A” representing the best conditions with minimal delays and “F” representing failing conditions with extensive congestion.

Overlay District

An Overlay District is created by identifying an area on the Village Zoning Map and specifying additional regulations to supplement the underlying zoning regulations. The underlying zoning of the area does not change, rather, additional restrictions are overlain onto the district. When development is proposed within the boundaries of an overlay district, the developer must comply with the requirements of the existing zoning district and the overlay district.

Passive Recreation

Passive recreation involves non-strenuous activities such as picnicking, bird watching, casual walking and scenic viewing.

Potentially Hydric Soils

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Soils that drain somewhat poorly and contain some wetland characteristics. Most potentially hydric soils have a seasonally high water table.

Subdivision

The division of any parcel of land into two or more lots for immediate sale or development with or without streets or highways.

Wetlands

Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, or that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands include bogs, swamps, marshes, cattail ponds, wet forests and meadows. These areas may not be wet or covered by water throughout the year.

Zoning Districts

In a municipality there exists zoning which tells you what can be built on the property (the use), and how it shall be built on the land (bulk requirements including size, height, etc.). Zoning is identified through a zoning map that depicts where the boundaries of the zoning district exist.

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APPENDIX

Village of Alden, New York

Data Book



WENDEL

Introduction

The data in this report presented were collected from multiple sources throughout 1999, during the process of updating the Village of Alden Comprehensive Plan. These data are presented in six sections: Population and Housing; Economics and Employment; Building Permit data; School enrollment; Historic Resources and sites; and Agricultural Production. Data were not available for all of the census periods reviewed.

Population and Housing data

The statistics gathered below have come from two secondary sources: The Empire State Development Corporation and the US Bureau of the Census. The 1991-1996 population data are census estimates obtained from the Empire State Development Corporation, while the pre-1991 data were derived from the Decennial Census from 1990, 1980 and 1970.

Data collected in 1980 are incomplete due to the fact that the Village’s population dropped to 2488 persons, which is 12 people short of the cut off for compiling data for “places 2,500-10,000”. In 1970, the US Census Bureau did not breakout data collected during the 1970 Census of Population and Housing for places with populations less than 10,000. Census Block Group and Traffic Analysis Zone data covering the Village overlap into the Town of Alden, which further aggravates data compilation. For the purposes of accuracy, Census Block Group and Traffic Analysis Zone data were not gathered.

US Census Population Estimates from 1991 to 1996

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Population	2,457	2,540	2,564	2,566	2,556	2,545	2,547

US Census of Population and Housing 1970, 1980 and 1990

	Year	1970	1980	1990
Total population		2,651	2,488	2,457
SEX				
Male		NA	NA	1,178
Female		NA	NA	1,279
AGE				
Under 5 years		NA	NA	190
5 to 17 years		NA	NA	424
18 to 20 years		NA	NA	92
21 to 24 years		NA	NA	137
25 to 44 years		NA	NA	752
45 to 54 years		NA	NA	245
55 to 59 years		NA	NA	124
60 to 64 years		NA	NA	139
65 to 74 years		NA	NA	218
75 to 84 years		NA	NA	120
85 years and over		NA	NA	16
Under 18 years		1031	NA	614
65 years and over		207	NA	354
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE				
		1970	1980	1990

Total households	774	893	955
Family households (families)	NA	NA	667
Married-couple families	601	NA	558
Other family, male householder	NA	NA	32
Other family, female householder	NA	NA	77
Nonfamily households	NA	NA	288
Householder living alone	NA	NA	251
Householder 65 years and over	206	NA	134
Persons living in households	NA	NA	2,443
Persons per household	3.4	2.79	2.56
GROUP QUARTERS			
Persons living in group quarters	NA	NA	14
Institutionalized persons	NA	NA	0
Other persons in group quarters	NA	NA	14
RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN			
White	NA	NA	2,449
Black	NA	NA	3
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	NA	NA	1
Asian or Pacific Islander	NA	NA	3
Other race	NA	NA	1
Hispanic origin (of any race)	NA	NA	7
Total housing units	791	931	985
OCCUPANCY AND TENURE			
Occupied housing units	893	955	1067
Owner occupied	658	681	743
Renter occupied	235	274	328
Vacant housing units	38	30	26
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	0	0	0
Homeowner vacancy rate	NA	0.8	1.2
Rental vacancy rate	NA	6.4	5.2
Persons per owner-occupied unit	NA	2.7	2.79
Persons per renter-occupied unit	NA	1.76	1.99
Units with over 1 person per room	NA	NA	6
UNITS IN STRUCTURE			
1-unit detached	510	NA	538
1-unit attached	*included above	NA	7
2 to 4 units	180	NA	186
5 to 9 units	NA	NA	74
10 or more units	NA	NA	25
Mobile home, trailer, or other	101	NA	155
VALUE			
Specified owner-occupied housing units	NA	NA	470
Less than \$50,000	NA	NA	40
\$50,000 to \$99,999	NA	NA	381
\$100,000 to \$149,999	NA	NA	42
\$150,000 to \$199,999	NA	NA	5
\$200,000 to \$299,999	NA	NA	1
\$300,000 or more	NA	NA	1
Median (dollars)	NA	NA	70,600
	1970	1980	1990
CONTRACT RENT			

Specified renter-occupied housing units paying cash rent	NA	NA	266
Less than \$250	163	NA	62
\$250 to \$499	10* 200&above	NA	200
\$500 to \$749	NA	NA	4
\$750 to \$999	NA	NA	0
\$1,000 or more	NA	NA	0
Median (dollars)	110	180	302
RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN OF HOUSEHOLDER			
Occupied housing units	791 *	893	955
White	NA	NA	952
Black	NA	NA	2
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	NA	NA	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	NA	NA	0
Other race	NA	NA	1
	NA	NA	4

Year	1970	1980	1990
URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE			
Total population	2,651	2488	2,457
Urban population	NA	NA	0
Rural population	NA	NA	2,457
Farm population	NA	NA	8
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT			
Persons 3 years and over enrolled in school	NA	NA	595
Preprimary school	NA	NA	40
Elementary or high school	NA	NA	404
Percent in private school	NA	NA	7.7
College	NA	NA	151
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
Persons 25 years and over	1,373	NA	1,614
Less than 9th grade	NA	NA	121
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	NA	NA	210
High school graduate	NA	NA	618
Some college, no degree	NA	NA	310
Associate degree	NA	NA	144
Bachelor's degree	NA	NA	120
Graduate or professional degree	NA	NA	91
Percent high school graduate or higher	NA	NA	79.5
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	NA	NA	13.1
Year	1970	1980	1990
RESIDENCE IN 1985			

Persons 5 years and over	2,410	NA	2,267
Lived in same house	1,710	NA	1,404
Lived in different house in U.S.	677	NA	863
Same state	81	NA	787
Same county	476	NA	685
Different county	201	NA	102
Different state	120	NA	76
Lived abroad	7	NA	0
DISABILITY OF CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED PERSONS			
Persons 16 to 64 years	NA	NA	1,550
With a mobility or self-care limitation	NA	NA	66
With a mobility limitation	NA	NA	43
With a self-care limitation	NA	NA	27
With a work disability	NA	NA	134
In labor force	NA	NA	60
Prevented from working	NA	NA	70
Persons 65 years and over	NA	NA	354
With a mobility or self-care limitation	NA	NA	55
With a mobility limitation	NA	NA	51
With a self-care limitation	NA	NA	24
CHILDREN EVER BORN PER 1,000 WOMEN			
Women 15 to 24 years	NA	NA	243
Women 25 to 34 years	NA	NA	1,468
Women 35 to 44 years	NA	NA	2,248
VETERAN STATUS			
Civilian veterans 16 years and over	NA	NA	312
65 years and over	NA	NA	85
NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH			
Total population	2,651	NA	2,457
Native population	2,561	NA	2,401
Percent born in state of residence	82.50%	NA	90.9
Foreign-born population	90	NA	56
Entered the U.S. 1980 to 1990	NA	NA	2
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME			
Persons 5 years and over	NA	NA	2,267
Speak a language other than English	NA	NA	64
Do not speak English "very well"	NA	NA	20
Speak Spanish	NA	NA	10
Year	1970	1980	1990
Do not speak English "very well"	NA	NA	4

Speak Asian or Pacific Island language	NA	NA	2
Do not speak English "very well"	NA	NA	0
ANCESTRY			
Total ancestries reported	NA	NA	3,508
Arab	NA	NA	20
Austrian	NA	NA	17
Belgian	NA	NA	0
Canadian	NA	NA	8
Czech	NA	NA	14
Danish	NA	NA	0
Dutch	NA	NA	31
English	NA	NA	378
Finnish	NA	NA	0
French (except Basque)	NA	NA	98
French Canadian	NA	NA	13
German	NA	NA	1,414
Greek	NA	NA	1
Hungarian	NA	NA	38
Irish	NA	NA	441
Italian	NA	NA	188
Lithuanian	NA	NA	3
Norwegian	NA	NA	5
Polish	NA	NA	557
Portuguese	NA	NA	0
Romanian	NA	NA	0
Russian	NA	NA	5
Scotch-Irish	NA	NA	25
Scottish	NA	NA	50
Slovak	NA	NA	15
Subsaharan African	NA	NA	0
Swedish	NA	NA	38
Swiss	NA	NA	4
Ukrainian	NA	NA	16
United States or American	NA	NA	42
Welsh	NA	NA	17
West Indian (excluding Hispanic origin groups)	NA	NA	0
Yugoslavian	NA	NA	0
Other ancestries	NA	NA	70

Year	1970	1980	1990

Total housing units	791	931	985
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT			
1989 to March 1990	NA	NA	30
1985 to 1988	NA	NA	43
1980 to 1984	NA	NA	43
1970 to 1979	NA	NA	113
1960 to 1969	224	NA	222
1950 to 1959	223	NA	168
1940 to 1949	61	NA	73
1939 or earlier	283	NA	293
BEDROOMS			
No bedroom	NA	NA	4
1 bedroom	NA	NA	96
2 bedrooms	NA	NA	309
3 bedrooms	NA	NA	386
4 bedrooms	NA	NA	164
5 or more bedrooms	NA	NA	26
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS			
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	NA	7	1
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	NA	NA	2
Condominium housing units	NA	NA	6
SOURCE OF WATER			
Public system or private company	775	NA	965
Individual drilled well	16	NA	17
Individual dug well	*is included in drilled well	NA	1
Some other source	0	NA	2
SEWAGE DISPOSAL			
Public sewer	756	NA	966
Septic tank or cesspool	29	NA	19
Other means	6	NA	0
Occupied housing units	774	NA	955
HOUSE HEATING FUEL			
Utility gas	NA	NA	854
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	NA	NA	7
Electricity	5	NA	55
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	NA	NA	11
Coal or coke	NA	NA	0
Wood	NA	NA	24
Solar energy	NA	NA	0
Other fuel	NA	NA	4
No fuel used	0	NA	0
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT			
Year	1970	1980	1990

1989 to March 1990	NA	NA	159
1985 to 1988	NA	NA	247
1980 to 1984	NA	NA	121
1970 to 1979	NA	NA	183
1960 to 1969	451*includes up to Mar. 1970	NA	124
1959 or earlier	323	NA	121
TELEPHONE			
No telephone in unit	16	NA	11
VEHICLES AVAILABLE			
None	63	NA	77
1	475	NA	387
2	211	NA	347
3 or more	25	NA	144
MORTGAGE STATUS AND SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS			
Specified owner-occupied housing units	NA	NA	468
With a mortgage	NA	NA	299
Less than \$300	NA	NA	2
\$300 to \$499	NA	NA	54
\$500 to \$699	NA	NA	100
\$700 to \$999	NA	NA	98
\$1,000 to \$1,499	NA	NA	43
\$1,500 to \$1,999	NA	NA	2
\$2,000 or more	NA	NA	0
Median (dollars)	NA	NA	690
Not mortgaged	NA	NA	169
Less than \$100	NA	NA	0
\$100 to 199	NA	NA	9
\$200 to \$299	NA	NA	67
\$300 to \$399	NA	NA	79
\$400 or more	NA	NA	14
Median (dollars)	NA	NA	310
SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989			
Specified owner-occupied housing units	NA	NA	468
Less than 20 percent	NA	NA	256
20 to 24 percent	NA	NA	75
25 to 29 percent	NA	NA	49
30 to 34 percent	NA	NA	29
35 percent or more	NA	NA	59
Not computed	NA	NA	0
GROSS RENT			
Specified renter-occupied housing units	NA	NA	274
Less than \$200	163	NA	12
\$200 to \$299	10 *at \$200 or more		42
Year	1970	1980	1990
\$300 to \$499	NA	NA	177

\$500 to \$749	NA	NA	39
\$750 to \$999	NA	NA	0
\$1,000 or more	NA	NA	0
No cash rent	NA	NA	4
Median (dollars)	110	180	393
GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989			
Specified renter-occupied housing units	NA	NA	274
Less than 20 percent	NA	NA	84
20 to 24 percent	NA	NA	42
25 to 29 percent	NA	NA	27
30 to 34 percent	NA	NA	21
35 percent or more	NA	NA	94
Not computed	NA	NA	6

Employment and Income data

The statistics gathered below were derived from the US Decennial Census that was conducted in 1970 and 1990.

Data collected in 1980 is incomplete due to the fact that the Village's population dropped to 2488 persons, which is 12 people short of the cut off for compiling data for "places 2,500-10,000". The US Census Bureau did not break out the 1970 data for places with populations less than 10,000. In addition, Census Block Group and Traffic Analysis Zone data covering the Village overlap into the Town, further aggravating data compilation. For the purposes of accuracy, data from these sources were not gathered and are not included below.

The methods used by the US Bureau of the Census, between 1970, 1980 and 1990, to categorize and classify employment in the Standard Industrial Classifications and types of Occupations causes several inconsistencies. Carefully examine all data lines for notes before citation.

Year	1970	1980	1990
LABOR FORCE STATUS			
Persons 16 years and over	1,708	NA	1,904
In labor force	1,001	NA	1,281
Civilian labor force	1,001	NA	1,281
Employed	950	NA	1,236
Unemployed	51	NA	45
Armed Forces			0
Not in labor force	707	NA	623
Males 16 years and over	850	NA	893
In labor force	699	NA	670
Civilian labor force	699	NA	670
Employed	652	NA	646
Unemployed	47	NA	24
Armed Forces			0
Not in labor force	151	NA	223
Females 16 years and over	NA	NA	1,011
In labor force	302	NA	611
Civilian labor force	302	NA	611
Employed	298	NA	590
Unemployed	4	NA	21
Armed Forces	NA	NA	0
Not in labor force	556	NA	400
Females 16 years and over	NA	NA	1,011
With own children under 6 years	NA	NA	166
With own children 6 to 17 years only	NA	NA	148
Own children under 6 years in families and subfamilies	NA	NA	222
All parents present in household in labor force	NA	NA	131
Own children 6 to 17 years in families and subfamilies	NA	NA	374
All parents present in household in labor force	NA	NA	266
Persons 16 to 19 years	NA	NA	125
Not enrolled in school and not high school graduate	NA	NA	5
Employed or in Armed Forces	NA	NA	0
Unemployed	NA	NA	0
Not in labor force	NA	NA	5
Year	1970	1980	1990

COMMUTING TO WORK			
Workers 16 years and over	NA	NA	1,215
Drove alone	NA	NA	987
In carpools	NA	NA	95
Using public transportation	NA	NA	6
Using other means	NA	NA	5
Walked or worked at home	NA	NA	122
OCCUPATION			
Employed persons 16 years and over	950	NA	1,236
Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations	109	NA	117
Professional specialty occupations	143	NA	153
Technicians and related support occupations	*	NA	43
Sales occupations	63	NA	161
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	135	NA	152
Private household occupations	5	NA	3
Protective service occupations	23	NA	56
Service occupations, except protective and household	82	NA	173
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	4	NA	12
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations	170	NA	167
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	112	NA	88
Transportation and material moving occupations	81	NA	84
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	23	NA	27
* These jobs were reported with Professional specialty occupations in 1970 Census			
INDUSTRY			
Employed persons 16 years and over	950	NA	1,236
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	NA	NA	8
Mining	NA	NA	3
Construction	84	NA	62
Manufacturing, nondurable goods	45	NA	81
Manufacturing, durable goods	252	NA	146
Transportation	59	NA	68
Communications and other public utilities	9	NA	19
Wholesale trade	191	NA	43
Retail trade	*combined w/ row 88	NA	267
Finance, insurance, and real estate	49	NA	51
Business and repair services	NA	NA	20
Personal services	NA	NA	27
Entertainment and recreation services	NA	NA	22
Health services	NA	NA	116
Educational services	115	NA	119
Other professional and related services	187*includes all prof. & related ser.	NA	94
Public administration	36	NA	90
CLASS OF WORKER			
Employed persons 16 years and over	950	NA	1,236
Private wage and salary workers	671	NA	894
Government workers	191	NA	270
Local government workers	134	NA	168
State government workers	NA	NA	81
Federal government workers	NA	NA	21
Self-employed workers	88	NA	72
Unpaid family workers	NA	NA	0

Year	1970	1980	1990
INCOME IN 1989			
Households	NA	NA	962
Less than \$5,000	NA	NA	21
\$5,000 to \$9,999	NA	NA	1 01
10,000 to \$14,999	NA	NA	86
\$15,000 to \$24,999	NA	NA	170
\$25,000 to \$34,999	NA	NA	189
\$35,000 to \$49,999	NA	NA	204
\$50,000 to \$74,999	NA	NA	149
\$75,000 to \$99,999	NA	NA	24
\$100,000 to \$149,999	NA	NA	13
\$150,000 or more	NA	NA	5
Median household income(dollars)	NA	NA	29,600
Family households	640	NA	678
Less than \$5,000	44	NA	7
\$5,000 to \$9,999	196	NA	28
\$10,000 to \$14,999	269	NA	36
\$15,000 to \$24,999	126	NA	101
\$25,000 to \$34,999	NA	NA	154
\$35,000 to \$49,999	5 *includes all the way to \$50,000	NA	175
\$50,000 to \$74,999	NA	NA	139
\$75,000 to \$99,999	NA	NA	22
\$100,000 to \$149,999	NA	NA	11
\$150,000 or more	NA	NA	5
Median family income (dollars)	11,151		35,878
Nonfamily households	NA	NA	284
Less than \$5,000	NA	NA	14
\$5,000 to \$9,999	NA	NA	73
\$10,000 to \$14,999	NA	NA	52
\$15,000 to \$24,999	NA	NA	69
\$25,000 to \$34,999	NA	NA	41
\$35,000 to \$49,999	NA	NA	23
\$50,000 to \$74,999	NA	NA	10
\$75,000 to \$99,999	NA	NA	0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	NA	NA	2
\$150,000 or more	NA	NA	0
Median nonfamily household income (dollars)	NA	NA	15,259
Per capita income (dollars)	3,025	NA	13,510
Year	1970	1980	1990

INCOME TYPE IN 1989			
Households	640	NA	962
With wage and salary income	564	NA	739
With nonfarm self-employment income	100	NA	86
With farm self-employment income	0	NA	12
With Interest, Dividend, or Net Rental Income	NA	NA	455
With Social Security income	90	NA	294
With public assistance income	15	NA	43
With retirement income	NA	NA	176
POVERTY STATUS IN 1989			
Persons for whom poverty status is determined	2,645	NA	2,451
Below poverty level	151	NA	138
	1,620	NA	1,849
Below poverty level	NA	NA	95
Persons 65 years and over	207	NA	354
Below poverty level	NA	NA	27
Related children under 18 years	NA	NA	596
Below poverty level	57	NA	37
Related children under 5 years	NA	NA	189
Below poverty level	NA	NA	22
Related children 5 to 17 years	NA	NA	407
Below poverty level	NA	NA	15
Unrelated individuals	NA	NA	354
Below poverty level	46	NA	54
Families	NA	NA	678
Below poverty level	25	NA	34
With related children under 18 years	NA	NA	318
Below poverty level	NA	NA	27
With related children under 5 years	NA	NA	147
Below poverty level	NA	NA	16
Female householder, no husband present	13	NA	68
Below poverty level	NA	NA	18
With related children under 18 years	NA	NA	51
Below poverty level	NA	NA	16
With related children under 5 years	NA	NA	7
Below poverty level	NA	NA	7

Building Permit data

Statistics gathered from the Village of Alden Office of Building Inspections.

Type of	Year										
Construction	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Accessibility	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial Addition	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Commercial Building	2	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0
Commercial Remodel	1	3	2	5	5	6	4	6	6	8	4
Deck/ Porch	15	5	0	15	15	7	11	8	5	4	14
Demolition	2	0	1	4	2	1	2	1	1	1	2
Fence	0	5	7	7	5	6	5	9	8	4	4
Fire Repair	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Garage	2	5	0	3	8	3	5	17	10	0	8
Heating Device	0	0	0	3	1	1	2	1	3	1	1
Mobile/ Modular Home	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	3	17	23
Multi- Family Dwelling	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	3	1	1
Petroleum Tank Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Plumbing Repair	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Residential Addition	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	7
Residential Remodeling	3	7	8	9	12	11	1	10	16	23	2
Shed	5	16	33	17	11	12	17	11	18	8	16
Sign	4	8	4	7	0	0	3	6	5	7	5
Single Family Dwelling	6	37	17	5	2	2	4	2	2	1	6
Swimming Pool	2	11	5	10	3	3	10	10	10	5	6
Total Permits	45	101	81	88	69	62	77	73	100	83	102

Alden Central School District Enrollment

The following figures were collected from the Alden Central School District.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
K-2	338	351	373	401	414	415	434	408	423	411	442	446	457
3-5	330	366	404	419	402	423	433	444	478	472	434	465	481
6-8	360	333	363	381	385	421	452	452	460	469	497	500	513
9-12	683	624	594	525	538	543	563	581	617	639	628	631	677
ungraded	60	63	22	0	71	62	48	32	2	2	28	3	0
total	1771	1737	1756	1726	1810	1864	1930	1917	1980	1993	2029	2045	2128

Historic Resources and Sites

There are no structure in the Village of Alden listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are several local and state sites of historic significance, however, as listed below. This list was derived after reviewing listings provided by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation and comparing this information with the following local guides: 125 Years and Growing, the silver centennial guide of the Village of Alden, and The Town of Alden –1823-1973...A History.

1. Rundell Seminary (1854) 13104 Broadway Ave. First School in the Village.
2. Milliman-Langdon House (1894) 1454 Exchange Street. Unique “Stick” architectural style.
3. Village Park Bandstand (1935) Broadway and Exchange Street. Unique “Octagon” Architectural Style.
4. The Ewell Free Library (1914) 13280 Broadway Ave. Donated by Col. Joseph and Carrie Ewell, early philanthropers to the Village.
5. The Alden Presbyterian Church (1908) 13298 Broadway Ave. Oldest Parish in the Village.
6. Sites of the Black Water Bathhouse and Well (1904) One site on West Main Street. Black waters pumped from these wells were thought to have healing powers and attracted thousands of visitors to the Village.
7. Spring Creek Fossil site
8. Henskee Road Schoolhouse (1840’s). Town Park- West Main Street. Original town school. Relocated inside the Village for display in 1976.

Agricultural Production

The US Department of Agriculture conducts a farming household survey every five years. The last survey was conducted in 1997. Data were available at the State, County, and Zip Code level only. The zip code serving the Village of Alden is 14004. This same zip code also covers a very large portion of rural Erie County as well. Due to the extent and difference in geographic coverage, data for the 14004 area were not collected.

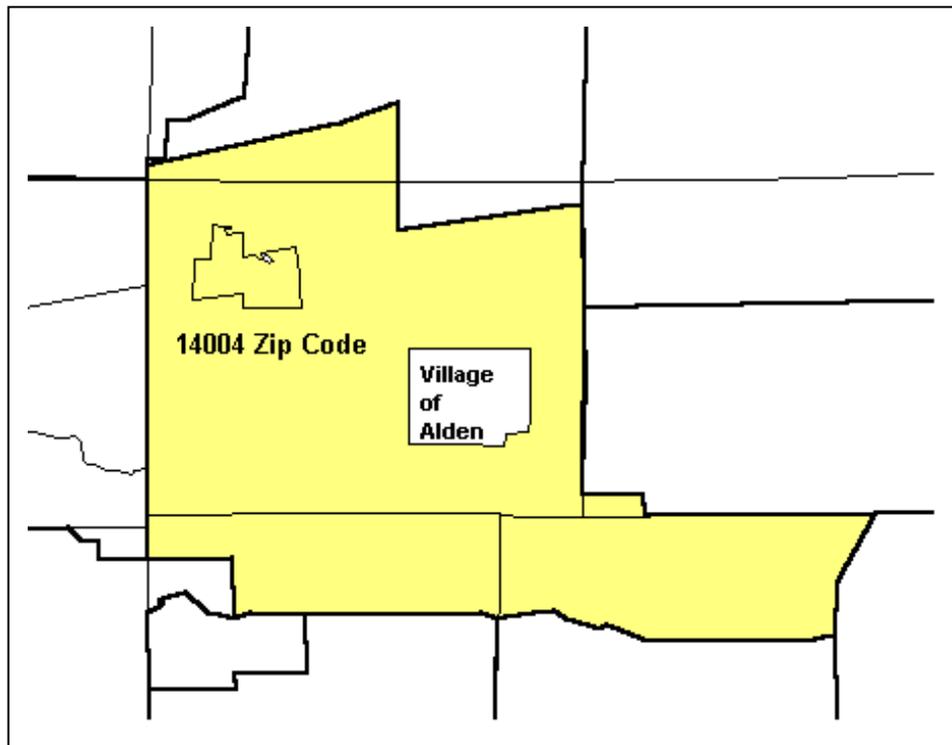


Figure 1							% Change
Total Population	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	1990-2015
Village of Alden	2,651	2,488	2,457	2,666	2,757	2,832	13.24%
Erie County	1,113,491	1,015,472	968,532	950,265	1,015,510	1,027,255*	5.72%
United States	203,302	226,545	248,718	274,634	297,716	310,229**	19.83%

(US figures in thousands)

* projections derived from GBNRTC 2010 Transportation System Plan (1997)

** projection from Statistical Abstract of the United States (1997).

Figure 2
Employment of Village of Alden Residents by Occupation - 1990

<i>Total workers, age 16 and over</i>	1236
Service occupations, except protective and household	173
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations	167
Sales occupations	161
Professional specialty occupations	153
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	152
Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations	117
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	88
Transportation and material moving occupations	84
Protective service occupations	56
Technicians and related support occupations	43
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	27
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	12
Private household occupations	3

**Figure 3
Existing Recreational Facilities**

Type of Facility	Existing in Village	NRPA Suggested Guideline
Tennis Courts	6	5
Basketball Courts	7	20
Baseball Diamonds	4	2
Softball Diamonds	5	4
L. League Diamonds	5	4
Community Center	1	0
Playgrounds	2	*

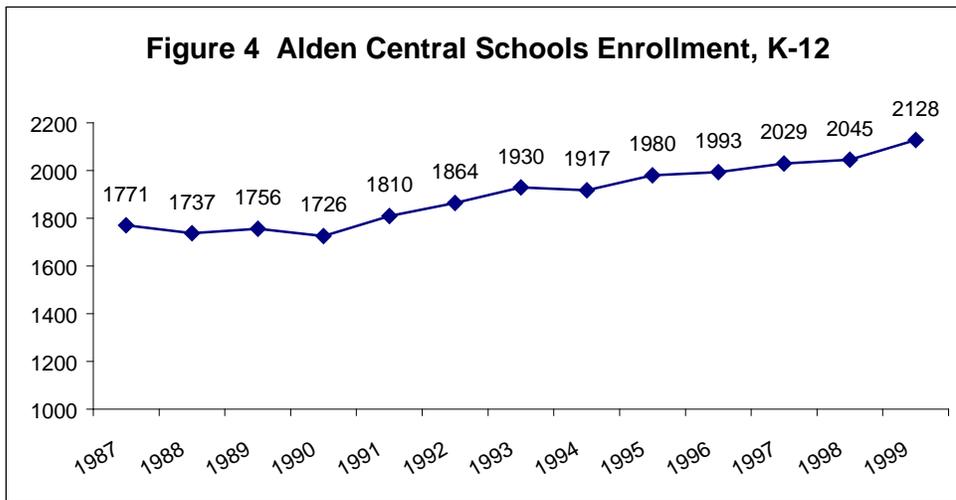


Figure 5 - Commuting To Work

	1990
Workers 16 years and over	1,215
Drove alone	987
In carpools	95
Using public transportation	6
Using other means	5
Walked or worked at home	122