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Town of Boston Comprehensive Plan: A Vision for the Year 2020

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The Town of Boston is a rural, historically agrarian community located in Western New York; the Town is approximately 20 miles southeast of Buffalo in the south-central portion of Erie County. Boston is bordered by the Towns of Hamburg, Orchard Park, Colden, Eden, North Collins and Concord. Boston is characterized as a peaceful “bedroom community” and has a pleasant, small town atmosphere. These qualities, in addition to the availability of land, modest taxes and affordable housing, makes the Boston community an attractive place to live and raise a family.

In anticipation of change, the Town of Boston has recognized the need to manage its physical and financial resources and prepare itself for future growth. Population projections have forecast an increase in the population of Boston over the next 20 years. Population growth would likely fuel development in the Town and a demand for public services. In updating the Comprehensive Plan, the Town has taken a proactive position in the balance of growth and the maintenance of its rural character. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan will illustrate the commitment of the Town to a coordinated vision of the future and a strategy to achieve that vision.

1.2 The Comprehensive Plan Defined

New York State, provides procedures for municipalities to prepare and adopt, by local ordinance or law, a comprehensive plan. New York State statutes define a comprehensive plan as:

“...the materials, written and/or graphic, including, but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town... The town comprehensive plan...shall...serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development, public and private investment and any plans which may detail one or more topics of a town comprehensive plan.”

Town Law, under Section 272-a defines two important impacts of adopting a comprehensive plan:

- “All town land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to town law.
- All plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the town comprehensive plan...shall take such plan into consideration.”

The comprehensive plan is a, “means to promote the health, safety and general welfare of Town residents and offer consideration to the needs of those in the region of which the Town is a part.”¹ In general, the plan will:

- “ Provide a process for identifying community resources, long range community needs and commonly held goals.
- Provide a process for community consensus.
- Provide a blueprint for future government actions.”²

1.3 What the Plan Can Accomplish

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Boston can accomplish the following:

- Document local Boston characteristics and trends regarding population, land use, the environment, economic development and community service provision.
- Serve as a comprehensive source of current information that can be used by Boston Town Officials in their efforts to secure state and federal funding for capital improvement projects.
- Assist the Boston community in determining future land use decisions and marketing the Town for future developers and other interests through the identification of community goals and objectives.
- Reveal future service needs in Boston and explore the potential for facility and utility management in the Town, which may include the acquisition of land and public improvements.
- Promote open space conservation and recreational opportunities to help preserve the rural heritage of Boston and enhance the overall quality of life in the Town.

¹ New York State Department of State. Local Government Handbook: Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan. Albany: Department of State. 2000. p. 204.

² Ibid. p. 210.

1.4 How the Plan Can Be Used

The Comprehensive Plan will be useful for:

- Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members in the measurement of the desirability of new developments. The members may also use the plan to adopt policies and procedures to assist projects in compliance with goals and objectives.
- Municipal employees as they become aware of the future direction of their communities. Employees may also use the plan while interpreting legislative mandates, making administrative decisions, prioritizing work efforts and enforcing development codes.
- Local residents and community groups as they also become aware of the future direction their communities. Local residents may also use the plan as a reference when making residential choices, evaluating the effectiveness of local government and when choosing political representation.

These guidelines clearly reveal the comprehensive plan as the guiding principals on which future decisions should be based. The comprehensive plan therefore sets the stage for future growth in the Town of Boston.

1.5 Preparation of the Plan

The Plan represents the collaborative effort of Town Officials, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and residents. The Plan is a collection of inventory and policies prepared to guide the Town over the next ten to twenty years. This section outlines the many tasks completed in preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Steering Committee Meetings

A series of meetings were held with the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Committee consisted of the Town Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Boards, Town Attorney, Town Planner, Conservation Advisory Council and the County Department of Environment and Planning. The Committee met periodically with the consultant to discuss and direct the preparation of the plan. The Committee reviewed documentation and mapping, provided contacts and helped determine representatives to participate in a series of focus group sessions. There was also a visioning session held with the Committee to develop initial goals and objectives and to help define the future of Boston.

Inventory

An extensive data collection process was completed for the Plan. The information contained in the plan was supplemented by data from various governmental and private agencies, to help ensure the accuracy of the document. With the help of the various agencies, information was obtained regarding local laws and ordinances, land use, the environment, population, community services, housing, municipal services and economic development. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data was provided by the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning to create maps and illustrate land uses, environmental conditions and the location of community services and transportation corridors.

Focus Group Sessions & Telephone Interviews

A series of interviews were conducted to obtain additional information. Several officials, including the Town Clerk, Historian and others, provided valuable information through telephone interviews in the preparation of the plan. There were a total of three focus groups held with representatives from Transportation; Business and Local Development; and Recreation and Open Space.

Community Survey

One of the final components in the preparation of the plan was the input of residents of the Town of Boston. A random survey was distributed to both homeowners and renters in the Town. The questionnaire was designed to determine the opinions of Town residents on a variety of topics, including town image, recreation, transportation, housing and community services. The results have been tabulated and analyzed.

Generic Environmental Impact Statement

The Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) was created and submitted to both interested and involved parties of the Town of Boston Comprehensive Plan. The GEIS examines the Plan with respect to potential impacts including environmental, social, cultural and financial. Although the adoption of the plan itself will not adversely affect the environment, as the plan is put into practice environmental impacts may occur. The GEIS addresses the potential impacts and provides mitigating measures and alternatives to eliminate or alleviate negative environmental impacts in the Town of Boston.

Public Meetings/Hearings

Two public meetings were conducted in Boston, where the public was invited to hear about the plan and provide comments. The public meetings were held during Spring 2001; the first in March and the other in April. These sessions helped provide the consultant and Town officials with valuable feedback on the plan and future of the Town of Boston.

Implementation

A broad collection of goals, policies and actions for the Town of Boston were developed and have been included in the Plan. The goals, policies and actions were developed based upon the visioning session and the results of the community survey. These goals, policies and actions are intended to lead to the overall improvement of the Town and a better quality of life for Boston residents. The goals, policies and actions coincide with the chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, including population, housing, community services, economy, land use, environment and transportation and infrastructure.

1.6 Summary of the Town History

1.6.1 Native American Heritage

The first Native Americans to occupy the Town of Boston area, were the Erie Indians. Both Lake Erie and Erie County were named after this tribe. In the early 1600's, the Iroquois Indian Nation, relatives of the Erie Indians, dominated the area. The Iroquois Nation was also known as the Iroquois Confederacy. The most prevalent tribe of the Confederacy were the Seneca Indians. However, by the time pioneer settlers came to the Boston area, the Seneca were residing on reservations in Buffalo, Cattaraugus Creek or elsewhere.³

1.6.2 Early Pioneer History

Boston is one of the oldest Towns in Erie County, and was formed during the spring of 1817. The territory upon which the Town is presently located was formerly a part of Eden. At the time of its establishment, the Town of Boston had about 150 residents as the first settlement in the area occurred in 1803. The first settlers were Charles and Oliver Johnson. These men settled in the area before the Town of Boston was officially formed. At the time of pioneer settlement, the Holland Land Company owned the land in Boston. The company sold the land at between \$2.00 and \$2.50 per acre. However, before the deeds were rendered, the settler had to agree to clear the land, construct a cabin and grow crops on the land. Many of the settlers were unable to meet the terms of the agreement and they either sold their interest in the claims or the land reverted back to the Holland Land Company.⁴

In autumn 1803, the Johnson brothers purchased land from the Holland Land Company for \$2.25 per acre. Charles Johnson built the first cabin where the present Liebler Road intersects Boston State Road. Johnson chose this land because there were no trees to be cleared, making it easier to comply with the agreement of the Holland Land Company.

³ Bradley, Charles, A Brief History of the Town of Boston. Boston, New York: Boston Publication Committee, 1964. p. 4.

⁴ Bradley, Charles, OP. Cit., p. 5.

1.6.3 Agriculture and Industry

Agriculture has historically been an important part of the Town's local economic activity. In the days of early settlement, Bostonians purchased large parcels of land to build homes and for farming. Much of the land was rich and ideal for plowing and cultivation. The first settlers had been farmers of wheat and corn. Agriculture was the primary occupation along with hunting and carpentry.

In 1809, the first gristmill was constructed in Boston by Joseph Yaw near Boston "Village". Industrial and commercial uses that followed, included, a distillery, tanneries, sawmills, wool mill, cheese factory and the largest bell-manufacturing factory in the nation, which was operated by the Yaw family.

The distillery at Torrey's Corners was established around 1818. Torrey's corners was a small community located near the Town line, which separated Boston from the Town Concord. The tannery was built in Torrey's corners not long after the distillery.⁵

In 1903, construction began on the Susquehanna Railroad through Boston Valley. In 1906, the railroad began its operation from Buffalo to Wellsville, managed by the Goodyear Brothers of Buffalo. The route through Boston was considered to be a scenic route and was often fully occupied with passengers in addition to freight. The railroad proved beneficial to both industry and agriculture through the transportation of products and supplies. However, the railroad would close ten years later. The closing was upsetting to the Town, but after development of mass production, motor vehicles would provide shipping and personal travel in place of the railroad.

1.6.4 The Hamlets

There are three hamlet areas that comprise the Town of Boston; these are North Boston, Patchin and Boston. The hamlets can be traced back to the early 1800's. The Boston and North Boston hamlets originated from the location of post offices in the communities. However, the first hamlet has a different origin. The first settlements were made in the center of Town in an area, which was called Boston Centre for many years. Then, in 1850 the hamlet (after the successful petitioning for a post office) would be re-named Patchin, after Talcott Patchin whom had previously owned a Tannery in the hamlet.⁶ The citizens of Boston Centre wanted to create a name that would distinguish itself from the existing Boston and North Boston Hamlets.

⁵ Bradley, Charles, OP. Cit., p. 8.

⁶ Bradley, Charles. OP. Cit., p. 15

1.6.5 Recent History

In 1959, the Hamburg Central School District constructed the Boston Valley Elementary School on Back Creek Road. The school educates children in grades kindergarten through five. Boston elementary is the only school within the Town limits and remains a part of the Hamburg Central School District.

During the 1960's Erie County acquired land along Zimmerman Road between Belcher and Rice Hill Roads. The "Boston Forest," as it is commonly known, has been used strictly as conservation land. Plans are currently underway to use the land for passive recreational purposes.

Also during the 1960's proposals were made to construct the "Southern Expressway," a highway project through the Town of Boston. The construction of the highway was intended to relieve congestion on Route 219 (currently Boston State Road) and open the Town of Boston to the surrounding areas and provide residents with accessibility to the City of Buffalo and the immediate region. The Southern Expressway was completed in the 1970's and was later incorporated into US Route 219, the limited access freeway. The existing road, which had been Route 219 before the construction of the Southern Expressway was re-named Boston State Road.

Over the last few decades the Town has experienced economic and population changes. The Town has seen a decline in agriculture as less people are farming; the economy has become increasingly non-agricultural. The Town has been in a state of transition from its traditional, agricultural economic and rural way of life, to a non-agricultural economy and gradually more suburban way of life.

Most Boston residents work outside of the Town in the City Buffalo, Town of Hamburg and other municipalities throughout Erie County. In addition to employment concentrations, the Town is linked to the Buffalo Metropolitan region through shopping. The Town lacks certain shopping conveniences and many residents travel outside Town borders to shop for specialty items. But the Town has experienced population growth. The population has increased from about 5,100 people in 1960 to nearly 7,500 residents in 1990; this is an approximately 30% increase.

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2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

During the process of preparing the Comprehensive Plan, the Town has identified goals they wish to achieve over the next 10-20 years. These goals will guide the type and scale of growth that occurs in the future and enable Boston to maintain a high quality-of-life for their residents. Below each goal are policy statements, which further define the goal; the policies are then accompanied by actions that identify specific ways in which the Town can achieve the stated goal.

2.1 Population

Goal: To promote the social, cultural and economic well-being of both current and future residents in the Town of Boston.

Policy: We promote pride in our residents that focuses on the distinct quality of life, unique history and various assets in our community.

Action: The Town should seek ways to promote the public in site plan review recommendations when no provisions for public involvement occur. This could include advertising meetings where projects will be discussed or printing the agenda for meetings in the paper.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
Zoning Board of Appeals
Town Attorney

Time Frame: Immediate

Action: The Town should continue to work with the Technology Committee in determining the feasibility of creating a Town Website to disseminate information. The Town should also explore the distribution of information on meetings, services, projects and programs; where possible the Town should link the site to local regional and statewide information sites.

Responsibility: Town Board
Technology Committee
Various Departments

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

Policy: We acknowledge that our population is growing and will plan for this growth.

Action: The Town should work to deliver appropriate services in appropriate areas for existing and future residents in Boston; this could include recreation facilities/programs, snow plowing, sewer/water, police, fire, etc.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
Various Departments

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The population in the Town of Boston, like most of the region, is aging. Current residents are interested in staying in their communities as they age. To meet this end, the Town should encourage the development of additional senior housing within the Boston or North Boston hamlet; the Office for the Aging could assist with this process. The Town should develop a set of priority sites, appropriate for senior housing and market this effort to potential not for profit or private developers.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

2.2 Housing

Goal: To promote high quality housing to meet the needs of current and future residents in the Town of Boston.

Policy: We promote additional housing opportunities within the Town of Boston to help diversify our housing choices.

Action: The Town should consider areas within the three hamlets to be designated for higher density “affordable” housing (such as patio homes, apartments or townhouses) for seniors and moderately income residents. This would include completing an inventory of vacant parcels to determine potential locations for these developments. The Town should encourage potential developers to assess the hamlet areas for construction of new housing that will help diversify the population.

Responsibility: Town Board

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

Action: The Town will encourage development of attractive, market rate housing that will attract new homeowners to invest in the community. This could include clarifying the development process and updating the land use regulations in appropriate locations where new housing would be encouraged.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

Policy: We ensure that new housing is compatible with the character of the Town of Boston.

Action: The Town of Boston should develop a viewshed protection study to ensure views to the hills and from hills are protected. The topography of Boston helps make the Town unique in Western New York and protection of the spectacular views is essential to ensure the quality of life is maintained. The viewshed protection study would identify areas that would be protected from future residential development and determine guidelines for development that could occur. This information would be used to develop the view protection area overlay zone proposed for the zoning.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
Conservation Advisory Committee

Time Frame: Immediate

Action: The Town should encourage new homes in areas that are currently serviced with sewer or water. Absent any material change in conditions, the Town should not extend sewer or water lines outside existing districts to discourage development of the more rural portions of the community. This would help maintain the rural and agricultural uses in the Town as new development occurs.

Responsibility: Town Board

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should restrict new housing developments from environmentally sensitive areas such as river floodplains or wetlands. These areas are prone to creating hazard conditions for new developments and should be maintained as open space in Boston.

Responsibility: Town Board
Conservation Advisory Committee
NYS DEC
Army Corps of Engineers

Time Frame: On-Going

2.3 Community Services

Goal: Provide high quality and cost effective community services for Boston residents.

Policy: We provide a comprehensive recreation system in our Town.

Action: The Town of Boston should develop a comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. As part of the study, the Town should consider areas of the Town where there are currently no recreational facilities for residents to utilize. The study should assess each of the facilities available in the Town and assess if they are meeting the needs of the Town's residents. Programs provided within the Town should be assessed to determine duplication and potential additional programs that should be offered.

Responsibility: Town Board
Grant Writer
Recreation Department

Time Frame: Immediate

Action The Town should support the County's initiative to determine appropriate passive uses for Boston Forest and participate in implementing any recommendations. The Town should offer consideration for walking, hiking, horse and snowmobile trails, bird watching stations and other passive uses within the Boston Forest.

Responsibility: Town Board
EC Department of Parks

Time Frame: Immediate

Action: The Town of Boston should begin negotiations with Erie County to determine the location of trail within the Boston Forest. The County will be undertaking a comprehensive Recreation Master Plan and the Town should begin discussions to ensure this issue is considered.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
EC Department of Parks

Time Frame: 6-12 Months

Action: The Town of Boston should consider the development of a linked open space system that connects to the regional system. The Town's trail system should create a loop to include Eighteen Mile Creek and the utility right of way to improve access to this recreational resource; the Town should seek funding for this activity. In addition, Boston should work with surrounding municipalities to develop a linked open space/trail system that could be used during all seasons.

Responsibility: Town Board
GBNRTC
NYS DEC
Surrounding Communities

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

Action: Based on information obtained from the survey and focus groups, there could be a need for additional soccer fields in the Town. The Town should consider adding soccer fields to accommodate the growing popularity of the sport in the community; this should be confirmed in the Town's Recreation Master Plan.

Responsibility: Town Board
Recreation Department

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

Action: The Town should develop a Master Plan for the 17-acre site located across from the Town Hall. This area could accommodate many of the current needs (new soccer fields, playground) indicated in the Comprehensive Plan. The Recreation Master Plan should further define the programming for the site to ensure the facility meets the needs of existing and future users.

Responsibility: Town Board
Recreation Department

Time Frame: 1-2 Years

Action: The Town should explore the feasibility of outright purchase, obtaining conservation easements or purchasing of development rights of specific parcels that should be preserved and/or contribute to the future open space needs of residents. These parcels could be used for passive recreational purposes for Town residents while protecting the rural character of the community.

Responsibility: Town Board
Town Attorney

Time Frame: 3-5 Years

Policy: We strive for high-quality education that utilizes the latest computer and teaching technology.

Action: The Town of Boston will continue communications and work with the school districts and library to provide a high quality education in a cost effective manner to Boston residents. This could be done by regularly meeting with the districts to discuss district programming and collaborative opportunities including, shared resources and joint solicitation for program funding. In addition, the Town should work with the schools to ensure they offer a full year of events that serve a variety of age groups.

Responsibility: School Districts
Boston Free Library Association
Town Board
Boston Recreation Department

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town of Boston encourage BOCES to improve education on computers and applications for adult continuing learning opportunities. Updating skills for adults is important to ensure workers are up to date on the latest technology and business needs.

Responsibility: BOCES
Town Board

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should work with the Boston Free Library Association, through the Recreation Program, to maintain and expand public library services in the Town of Boston. The Town should ensure the local branch of the library is maintained in the Town to serve people within the community. The Town should also assist in promoting the library branch to residents by utilizing facilities for various functions.

Responsibility: Boston Free Library Association
Town Board
Boston Recreation Department

Time Frame: On-Going

Policy: We ensure that all residents have access to appropriate community services in the Town of Boston.

Action: The Historical Society should determine if any local historic sites are eligible for designation as National or State landmarks. The designation should be pursued, as it would generate interest in the Town and its history and provide protection for the sites.

Responsibility: Historical Society

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should strive to reduce the number and impact of police, fire, and emergency incidents in the Town. This may be accomplished by educating residents on fire prevention and personal/public safety.

Responsibility: Fire Companies
Ambulance Providers
Town Board

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should help coordinate quality, cost effective senior support services. This could include recreation resources, housing, home delivered meals, social services, in home care or access to transportation.

Responsibility: Office of the Aging
Town Board

Time Frame: On-Going

2.4 Economy

Goal: To create a vibrant economy that encompasses the public and private sectors.

Policy: We provide an attractive business climate that results in stable, good paying jobs in the Town of Boston

Action: The Town should continue to meet with and regularly interview Town businesses in conjunction with the local Chamber of Commerce. This is important to remain aware and informed of the needs and plans of existing businesses and industries.

Responsibility: Town Board
Chamber of Commerce
Businesses

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town of Boston should promote the educational opportunities provided through Erie County to existing agricultural businesses. The opportunities include the County Fair and educational events such as farm and agri-business tours and new farming technology workshops.

Responsibility: Town Board
EC Dept. of Environment and Planning

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town of Boston should encourage appropriate business development for various types of commercial activity (such as neighborhood retail and service retail) in the three hamlet areas. The Town would provide potential areas for new services to occur and ensure residents have access to the needed commercial services that will improve their quality of life. This should be included in updates to the Town's zoning ordinance.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should continue to allow appropriate home occupations in Boston. These types of businesses provide several benefits including allowing residents to conduct business without relocating (keeping both the resident and business in Boston), fostering development of businesses that may grow into larger companies and maintaining the rural and small town character of the community.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: 6-12 Months

Action: The Town should consider zoning amendments to promote commercial and light industrial development in appropriate locations. Areas that should be considered are those that are serviced, are near population centers (the hamlets) and offer areas for future expansion.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: 6-12 Months

Policy: We understand the importance of the regional economy on the health of the Town of Boston.

Action: The Town should maintain open communications with nearby municipalities and plan regional economic development strategies. The communities could develop educational programs aimed at increasing business skills, offer technical support for existing businesses and encourage expansion of existing businesses in the Town.

Responsibility: Town Board
Surrounding Communities
EC Dept. of Environment and Planning

Time Frame: On-Going

2.5 Land Use

Goal: To coordinate future growth patterns and development in the Town of Boston while maintaining the character and quality of life.

Policy: We regularly update our land use regulations to meet the changing needs of our residents and community.

Action: The Town should update their land use regulations and map to ensure they comply with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. This would include updating their zoning ordinance to include the following:

- Zoning districts redefined, where necessary, based on the Future Land Use Plan of the Comprehensive Plan
- Cluster commercial areas of development developed along Boston State Road in the three Hamlet Areas
- Develop design guidelines for new commercial development along Boston State Road in the Hamlet areas
- Designate appropriate setbacks for various types of development in the Hamlet areas and outside the Hamlet areas along Boston State Road
- Create overlay districts to protect scenic and natural resource areas especially views to and from the hills (View Protection Area Overlay)
- Developing appropriately strict design guidelines for the View Protection Area Overlay that ensure conformance to the Town's Road Grade and Design Standards
- Update cluster provisions to allow various types of housing in appropriate zones
- Determine areas where cell towers would be allowed and continue to promote sharing of existing facilities

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
Town Attorney

Time Frame: Immediate

Action: The Town should encourage development in the three Hamlet areas as they currently have transportation and infrastructure networks. The three hamlets should be zoned to allow a mixture of medium density residential and commercial uses. Areas outside the Hamlets along Boston State Road should require traffic calming techniques, such as shared curb cuts, to reduce potential hazards and conflicts.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
Zoning Board of Appeals

Time Frame: On-Going

Policy: We view Boston on a regional basis while still maintaining the rural, "hill community" that makes us unique.

Action: The Town of Boston should encourage links among the three hamlet areas of North Boston, Patchin and Boston through strict design guidelines along the Boston State Road corridor. Pedestrian linkages among the three areas should also be developed through a combined sidewalk and trail system that creates a loop within the Town. The feasibility and extent of a sidewalk system within the hamlet areas should be evaluated; pedestrian trails should be used to link the hamlets.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town of Boston should make land use decisions with input from adjacent communities. By working cooperatively with surrounding communities on issues such as future land use planning decisions and future cost savings on services, Boston can ensure that the quality and type of growth will improve their character. The Town could also assign a Board member to serve as liaison with neighboring communities and the Southtowns Planning and Development Group (SPDG).

Responsibility: Town Board
Surrounding Communities
SPDG

Action: Time Frame: On-Going
The Town of Boston should improve communications with County and Regional Agencies (GBNRTC, NFTA). Opening the lines of communication with these agencies will ensure the Town is involved in decisions that are made for the region that could impact their quality of life. At the same time, these agencies could contribute to local decisions that are made and may have a regional impact.

Responsibility: Town Board
EC Dept. of Environment and Planning
GBNRTC
NFTA

Time Frame: On-Going

2.6 Environment

Goal: To protect and enhance significant environmental assets and promote sound environmental practices.

Policy: We protect scenic and natural resources in the Town of Boston.

Action: The Town should minimize negative impacts on Eighteen Mile Creek from new residential, commercial and industrial development. In addition, the Town should seek funding to improve the banks of Eighteen Mile Creek for the public to use and enjoy it more fully and to protect adjacent properties; this could include vegetation management along the creek (removal of dead logs/branches or planting for erosion control). The proposed trail along the creek would allow residents and visitors greater access to the water resource in the Town.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
EC SWC District
Grant Writer

Time Frame: Immediate

Action: The Town should inventory its open spaces and determine those that are significant and should be protected. Factors to be considered in this determination include habitat areas, mature forests and wetlands. Once the inventory is complete, the Town should identify parcels that could be remain undeveloped to protect the character of the community.

Responsibility: Town Board
Conservation Advisory Committee

Time Frame: Immediate

Policy: We consider all relevant environmental data and issues in land use decisions made in the Town of Boston.

Action: New developments should be discouraged in environmentally sensitive areas. To ensure this occurs, the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals should use available environmental data including this Comprehensive Plan, soils surveys, steep slope/topographic information and groundwater resource inventories.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
Zoning Board of Appeals

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should utilize the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) in reviewing development proposals. Under SEQRA regulations, the Town may request the developer to conduct particular studies that are needed to ensure adequate review of the project. The studies may include drainage, soil suitability or traffic impacts.

Responsibility: All Town Departments

Time Frame: On-Going

2.7 Transportation and Infrastructure

Goal: To ensure appropriate infrastructure and transportation systems for Town residents.

Policy: We promote a safe and efficient transportation system

Action: The Town should consider implementing traffic calming initiatives to reduce the risk of congestion and speeding along major transportation routes. This could include streetscape improvements along Boston State Road, strict restrictions at the northern Route 219 interchange and design guidelines for new development that may increase traffic.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board
County Highway Department

Time Frame: Immediate

Action: The Town should encourage environmentally sensitive development (i.e. consideration of topography, views, available services, land use compatibility) for any new development at the southern Route 219 interchange. This will ensure that any new development is compatible with the land uses and character of the Town.

Responsibility: Town Board
Planning Board

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should request that the County Highway Department provide bicycle lanes along Boston State Road. This would improve safety for cyclist and provide linkages among the three hamlets.

Responsibility: Town Board
County Highway Department

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town should work with the NFTA to ensure continuation of the bus service to the community. In addition, the Town should encourage a variety of transportation alternatives such as expanded bus service, sidewalks, bike and/or trail system.

Responsibility: Town Board
NFTA

Time Frame: On-Going

Action: The Town of Boston should consider installing additional sidewalks within the hamlet areas; these amenities would provide a safe means of travel and increased mobility for those residing in these areas.

Responsibility: Town Board

Time Frame: 3-5 Years

Policy: We provide appropriate water and sewer services to our Town residents.

Action: Before additional expansions occur, the Town should thoroughly review the costs and impacts of extending water service beyond the established district boundaries. The Town should consult with the Erie County Water Authority and any other municipality who would potentially be affected by such extension in order to determine the impact of such extension on existing facilities. The design and construction of any extension should take into account the relative responsibilities of the Erie County Water Authority and the new district for construction of transmission and/or distribution facilities. Land use impacts should also be assessed before any expansions occur.

Responsibility: Town Board
Erie County Water Authority
Southtowns Water Conservation
Surrounding Communities

Time Frame: On-Going

3.0 Population

3.1 Recent Changes in Population

Between 1990 and 2000, Erie County has experienced a loss in population. The population has decreased from 964,956 to 950,265, a loss of about 1.9%. The Town of Boston has shown a slight population growth during this same time frame. The 1998 Census estimates the population in Boston at 7,692. The 2000 Census shows a population of 7,897; this is an increase of 6.0% since 1990. As a percentage, the population growth in the Town is less than neighboring Town of Eden and Orchard Park and Town of Colden, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 3-1 Change in Population 1990-2000
Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden, Orchard Park, Erie County and New York State

Location	1990 Population	1995 Population	1998 Population	2000 Population	Percent Change (1990-2000)
Town of Boston	7,449	7,810	7,692	7897	6.0%
Town of Colden	2,901	3,039	3,059	3323	14.5%
Town of Eden	7,420	7,712	7,566	8076	8.8%
Town of Orchard Park	24,646	24,875	24,415	27,637	12.1%
Erie County	968,584	959,193	934,471	950,265	-1.9%
New York State	17,990,778	18,136,081	18,175,301	18,976,457	5.5%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

3.2 Population Projections and Trends

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) completed population projections for all communities in Erie and Niagara Counties. The methodology for completing the population projections included developing both high and low estimates for the region, based on regional trends between 1980 and 1990. The Review Team and the GBNRTC Planning and Coordinating Committee reviewed the high and low projections and agreed upon a single set of estimates for the region.

In 1995, the GBNRTC commissioned a consulting team to disaggregate the regional totals into municipal levels. Through numerous site visits, data gathering and following an extensive analysis process, estimates were prepared for each of the cities and towns in the area. The study shows that the region is in a “zero sum” game and that growth will occur in the suburban and rural third ring communities. “The growth will most undoubtedly follow the current form of low-density sprawl.”⁷ These Projections are based on local expertise, knowledge of the region and recent growth/decline over the past few years.

⁷ NFTC Phase 2 Economic/Demographic Overview Study Final Report.

The projections are important to the Town of Boston as future policy decisions are made regarding the services and facilities that will be offered in the community. When considering these projections, noting that they were completed for the purpose of allowing the GBNRTC to plan for future transportation needs is important. The population and household figures may not predict an exact future for the community, but they offer a good starting point and a sound basis for the evaluation of the Town's future needs.

The GBNRTC projections estimate that the Town of Boston will have a population of 9,000 in the year 2025. This number constitutes a 14.0% increase from the community's 2000 population. As demonstrated by the following table, this is a fairly large increase. With the exception of the projection for the neighboring Town of Orchard Park, which represents an increase of 15.8%, Boston's population increase is one of the largest in the area.

Table 3-2 Population Projections - 2025
Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden, Orchard Park, Erie County and New York State

Location	2025 Projection	Projected change (2000-2025)
Town of Boston	9,000	14.0%
Town of Colden	3,000	-9.7%
Town of Eden	8,000	-0.9%
Town of Orchard Park	32,000	15.8%
Erie County	1,039,000	9.3%

Source: GBNRTC

The GBNRTC projections for households predict an increase in housing units of at least 5% for all the communities. Boston's housing is expected to increase by 22%, a significantly higher figure than the County's anticipated 6% increase. Boston's figure is also higher than the projected increases of 5% and 7% for Eden and Colden, respectively. Of the surrounding communities, Orchard Park alone exceeds Boston's projected housing increase, with an estimated 30% increase.

3.3 Specific Characteristics of the Population

The following section describes specific characteristics of the populations in the Town of Boston. Specifically, age, ethnicity, education, income, employment characteristics and poverty levels are considered.

3.3.1 Age and Household Characteristics

In the Town of Boston, the 2000 population was 7,897 while the 1990 population was 7,445; the increase over the 10-year period is approximately 6%.

Table 3-3 Age Characteristics -2000
Town of Boston

Total Population	1990		2000	
	7445		7897	
SEX	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Male	3,746	50.3%	3,964	50.2%
Female	3,699	49.7%	3,933	49.8%
AGE				
Under 5 years	510	6.9%	455	5.8%
5 to 17 years	1,388	18.6%	(5-14) 1,177	14.9%
18 to 20 years	300	4.0%	(15-19) 519	6.6%
21 to 24 years	384	5.2%	(20-24) 337	4.3%
25 to 44 years	2,346	31.5%	2,265	28.7%
45 to 54 years	1,021	13.7%	1,390	15.3%
55 to 59 years	392	5.3%	1,209	7.2%
60 to 64 years	364	4.9%	365	4.6%
65 to 74 years	498	6.7%	630	8.0%
75 to 84 years	189	2.5%	303	3.8%
85 years and over	53	0.7%	70	0.9%
Under 18 years	1,898	25.5%	(under 19) 2,141	27.0%
65 years and over	740	9.9%	1,003	12.7%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

As this table indicates, approximately 25% of residents in the Town of Boston were under the age of 18 in 1990; this increased slightly to 27.0% in 2000. This is similar to the 1990 County percentage of 24% and 2000 percentage of 26.9%. People over the age of 65 comprise about 10% of the population in 1990 and 12.7% in 2000; the 2000 percentage is similar to the County's 15.0% for people over 65.

The youth population decreased by 41 individuals between 1990 and 2000; the senior population increased by approximately 260 people. These figures, and the trends within these populations, are significant to the consideration of services that will be required in the future for these special need age groups.

The population between 5 and 17 years of age decreased by 4.8% between 1990 and 2000 due, in part, to the decrease in family size during this time frame. The 18-24 age group increased from 9.2% to 10.9% during this time period indicating an aging of the population in the Town.

The 2000 census information on households in the Town of Boston indicates that almost 75% of households in the Town are family households. Married couples head 86% of the households, and non-family households comprise fewer than 25% of the households. Approximately 21% of householders in the Town of Boston are living alone, and about 9% are over the age of 65.

Table 3-4 Household Type -2000
Town of Boston

Total households	2,997	100.0%
Family households (families)	2,246	74.9%
Married-couple families	1,937	86.2%
Other family, female householder	209	9.3%
Nonfamily households	741	24.6%
Householder living alone	617	20.5%
Householder 65 years and over	263	8.8%
Persons per household	2.63	

Source: US Bureau of the Census

In the Town of Boston, over 99% of householders are White. All other groups, including Black, American Indian and Asian/Pacific Islander, make up less than 1% of the householders in the community. The race of householders in the community, rather than being a function of unequal homeownership distribution, is consistent with the Town's demographics.

Table 3-5 Race of Householder -1990
Town of Boston

Race of Householder	Total	Percentage
Total Households	2,623	100.0%
White	2,614	99.7%
Black	2	0.1%
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	2	0.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4	0.2%
Other race	1	0%
Hispanic origin (of any race)	12	0.5%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

3.3.2 Ethnicity Characteristics

According to the 2000 census, in New York State, the population is approximately 70% White compared to the Erie County percentage of 83%. The ethnicity characteristics in the Town of Boston are much different from both the State and the County.

In Boston, over 98% of the residents are White. As indicated in the table, Black residents comprise only 0.1% of the population. All non-white races comprise slightly more than one percent of the population.

Table 3-6 Ethnic Origin of the Population -2000
Town of Boston

Race and Hispanic Origin	Total	Percentage
Total Population	7,897	100%
White	7,811	98.9%
Black	11	0.1%
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	11	0.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	17	0.2%
Other race	8	0.1%
Combination of Two or More	39	0.6%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

The percentages in the table above are similar to the Town's 1990 figures. In 1990 in the Town of Boston, 99.8% of the residents were White and other races comprised less than 1% of the population.

3.3.3 Education Levels

The US Census completes a classification of the population according to the highest level of education they have attained. The levels of education in a given population are important considerations for determining and planning for future growth, especially for job opportunities and the economic sector.

The following table illustrates the educational attainment for the Town of Boston, the County of Erie and the State of New York.

Table 3-7 Educational Attainment -1990
Town of Boston, Erie County and New York State

Educational Attainment	Boston	Erie County	New York State
Persons 25 years and over	4,863	640,137	11,818,569
Less than 9th grade	4.1%	8.5%	10.2%
9 th to 12th grade, no diploma	10.3%	15.1%	15.0%
High school graduate	36.6%	31.7%	29.5%
Some college, no degree	15.4%	16.4%	15.7%
Associate degree	14.7%	8.3%	6.5%
Bachelor's degree	11.6%	12.0%	13.2%
Graduate or professional degree	7.2%	8.0%	9.9%
Percent high school graduate or higher	85.6%	76.4%	74.80%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	18.8%	20.0%	23.10%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

The percentage of residents with a college degree (associates degree or higher) in the Town of Boston is 33.5%, higher than in both Erie County (28%) and the State of New York (30%). The percent of high school graduates in the Town (37%) is also higher than the County and State figures of 32% and 30% respectively.

The figures for current school enrollment in the Town of Boston indicate that 27% of the total population is enrolled in school, a figure approximately equal to the County and State figures. In Boston, a slightly lower percentage of the population is enrolled in private school and fewer residents are in college than in the County or State. The following table depicts the characteristics of school enrollment in the Town of Boston:

Table 3-8 School Enrollment -1990
Town of Boston, Erie County and New York State

School Enrollment	Boston		Erie County		New York State	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Persons 3 years and over enrolled in school	1,961	26.3%	247,150	25.5%	4,656,218	25.9%
Preprimary school	207	2.8%	20,211	2.1%	321,178	1.8%
Elementary or high school	1,353	18.2%	149,907	15.5%	2,895,841	16.1%
Percent in private school	-	12.3%	-	14.7%	-	14.8%
College	401	5.4%	77,032	8.0%	1,439,199	8.0%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

3.3.4 Income Levels and Poverty Status

In 1990, the median household income in the Town of Boston was \$39,164, a figure that surpasses the per capita incomes for New York State, Erie County, and all the neighboring Towns with the exception of Orchard Park. Boston's per capita income is still one of the highest in the area, exceeding the County's by over \$10,000 and trailing behind Orchard Park only by \$1,250.

In the Town of Boston, the greatest percentage of people earn between \$35,000 and \$74,999. Almost half the households in the Town earn an income in this range. The percentage of Boston residents whose incomes fall in this range surpasses the figures for all the neighboring municipalities, the County and the State. In Boston, a greater percentage earn over \$100,000 than in the County or in neighboring Towns of Eden and Colden; however, the number of households with incomes exceeding \$100,000 is greater in New York State and Orchard Park than in Boston. The following table summarizes the income distribution in New York State, Erie County and the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park and Colden.

Table 3-9 Income Distribution - 1990
NYS, Erie County, and the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park and Colden

Income in 1989	Boston	Eden	Orchard Park	Colden	Erie County	New York State
Households	2,651	2,522	8,832	1,036	376,019	6,634,434
Less than \$5,000	1.5%	2.3%	1.2%	3.0%	6.2%	6.1%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	4.6%	7.4%	5.1%	6.0%	11.6%	9.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.6%	6.5%	7.1%	9.6%	9.3%	7.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14.6%	12.9%	14.7%	16.8%	17.8%	15.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	16.3%	20.8%	14.1%	16.1%	15.9%	14.3%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	22.5%	22.6%	19.5%	23.4%	18.2%	17.3%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	24.1%	18.3%	20.0%	18.9%	14.0%	16.7%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7.8%	6.5%	9.4%	3.6%	4.2%	6.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	2.3%	2.1%	5.3%	2.1%	1.9%	4.3%
\$150,000 or more	1.8%	0.7%	3.6%	0.6%	1.0%	2.5%
Median household income (dollars)	39,164	35,040	40,419	33,790	28,005	32,965
Per capita income (dollars)	16,376	13,465	18,694	13,369	13,560	16,501

Source: US Bureau of the Census

Per capita income is the amount of income for each person in a community and is a useful tool for examining poverty within that community. In 1990, the Town of Boston's per capita income was \$16,376, lower than the figures for the State and Orchard Park, but higher than Erie County and the neighboring Towns of Colden and Eden. Considering per capita income figures, the Town of Boston appears to have more of a poverty problem than New York State. However, the per capita income figures do not take the area's cost of living into account and may not accurately portray the poverty in a community. For this reason, considering other figures to get a true picture of a community's economic well-being is important.

The census poverty level is a reliable figure gauging the likelihood of a community to be suffering from lack of employment opportunities, low education levels or a high number of residents with special needs.

Table 3-10 Poverty Status -1989
Town of Boston, Erie County and New York State

Poverty Status in 1989	Boston		Erie County		New York State	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Persons for whom poverty status is determined	7,414	100.0%	944,942	100.0%	17,481,762	100.0%
Below poverty level	206	2.8%	115,613	12.2%	2,277,296	13.0%
Persons 18 years and over	5,536	74.7%	721,379	76.3%	13,300,706	76.1%
Below poverty level	175	3.2%	74,963	10.4%	1,477,765	11.1%
Persons 65 years and over	740	10.0%	140,052	14.8%	2,239,085	12.8%
Below poverty level	43	5.8%	14,640	10.5%	265,863	11.9%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

As indicated by the previous table, the overall poverty level in Boston is well below the levels in Erie County and New York State. Likewise, the percentage of the youth and senior populations below the poverty level less than a third of the percentages for the County and State.

The reception of public assistance by residents in the Town is an additional indicator of the economic well being in the community. In the Town of Boston, about 27% of households receive social security income, a figure consistent with neighboring municipalities, the County and the State. The percentage of households receiving public assistance in the town of Boston (2.7%) is slightly lower than the figures for the neighboring Towns and considerably lower than the County and State percentages of 9.3% and 9.1% respectively.

Information for public assistance is summarized in the following table.

Table 3-11 Public Assistance -1990
Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden, Orchard Park, Erie County and New York State

Income Type In 1989	Boston	Colden	Eden	Orchard Park	Erie County	New York State
Households	2,651	1,036	2,522	8,832	376,019	6,634,434
With Social Security income	27.2%	25.4%	26.8%	30.5%	31.9%	26.8%
With public assistance income	2.7%	4.3%	3.9%	3.5%	9.3%	9.1%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

3.3.5 Employment Characteristics

The nature of the types of employment in a community depend on the education level in the community, the income of the community's residents, the proportions of different age groups in the population, and other demographic characteristics described in this section.

The Town of Boston residents have a fairly high participation in the labor force. Almost 68% of the population above 16 years of age is in the labor force and only 3.8% of them are unemployed. The percentages in Boston are slightly higher than those for Erie County, where 62% are in the labor force and 4.3% are unemployed; and for New York State, where 64% are in the labor force and 4.4% are unemployed.

Table 3-12 Labor Force Status -1990
Town of Boston, Erie County and New York State

Labor Force Status	Boston		Erie County		New York State	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Persons 16 years and over	5,779	100.0%	766,698	100.0%	14,191,044	100.0%
In labor force	3,918	67.8%	476,256	62.1%	9,029,546	63.6%
Civilian labor force	3,913	67.7%	475,366	62.0%	8,989,621	63.3%
Employed	3,694	63.9%	442,126	57.7%	8,370,718	59.0%
Unemployed	219	3.8%	33,240	4.3%	618,903	4.4%
Armed Forces	5	0.1%	890	0.1%	39,925	0.3%
Not in labor force	1,861	32.2%	290,442	37.9%	5,161,498	36.4%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

The most significant industries that employ Boston residents include Retail Trade (16.2%), the Manufacture of Durable Goods (12.9%), and Health Services (10.8%). These are consistent with the County and State, with the exception of Education being a larger presence in New York State than Manufacturing Durable Goods. Boston's significant industries are also consistent with the surrounding communities. The only discrepancy is in Colden, where Construction surpasses Health Services. The following table provides a summary of the major employment sectors in New York State, Erie County, and the Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden and Orchard Park.

Table 3-13 Employment Sectors -1990
Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden, Orchard Park, Erie County and New York State

Industry	Boston	Eden	Orchard Park	Colden	Erie County	New York State
Employed persons 16 years and over	3694	3511	12197	1311	442126	8370718
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	2.8%	6.8%	1.7%	4.6%	0.9%	1.2%
Mining	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.1%	0.1%
Construction	9.8%	9.5%	5.1%	10.4%	4.7%	5.2%
Manufacturing, nondurable goods	4.2%	5.4%	4.7%	1.0%	6.6%	6.3%
Manufacturing, durable goods	12.9%	10.6%	11.7%	18.8%	10.7%	8.4%
Transportation	5.2%	5.7%	4.4%	4.8%	4.5%	5.2%
Communications and other public utilities	3.8%	5.2%	2.6%	2.1%	2.3%	2.7%
Wholesale trade	4.4%	4.8%	5.4%	4.4%	4.5%	4.2%
Retail trade	16.2%	14.1%	18.7%	14.1%	18.6%	14.9%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	5.1%	5.3%	7.2%	7.1%	7.1%	9.3%
Business and repair services	3.9%	3.6%	4.4%	4.9%	4.1%	5.2%
Personal services	1.1%	2.1%	2.0%	0.5%	2.4%	3.0%
Entertainment and recreation services	1.2%	1.5%	1.3%	0.0%	1.2%	1.5%
Health services	10.8%	9.3%	10.2%	9.5%	11.2%	10.1%
Educational services	6.4%	8.3%	8.5%	8.8%	9.7%	9.6%
Other professional and related services	7.0%	4.5%	9.0%	4.9%	7.1%	8.2%
Public administration	4.7%	3.5%	3.1%	3.2%	4.4%	5.1%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

In addition to assessing the composition of industrial uses in communities, the Census Bureau also evaluates the occupations of residents in the communities. In the following table portrays the major occupations for residents in the Town, the County and the State.

Table 3-14 Occupations – 1990
Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden, Orchard Park, Erie County and New York State

Employed persons 16 years and over	Boston	Colden	Eden	Orchard Park	Erie County	New York State
	3,694	1,311	3,511	12,197	442,126	8,370,718
Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations	11.5%	12.4%	8.9%	16.0%	11.4%	13.3%
Professional specialty occupations	16.7%	18.3%	12.7%	19.8%	15.5%	16.7%
Technicians and related support occupations	5.1%	3.3%	4.1%	4.3%	3.6%	3.5%
Sales occupations	11.1%	8.3%	11.2%	13.7%	12.7%	11.2%
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	14.8%	9.1%	12.7%	16.1%	17.1%	18.4%
Private household occupations	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%
Protective service occupations	0.9%	1.1%	1.4%	1.0%	2.1%	2.5%
Service occupations, except protective and household	8.7%	5.6%	10.3%	7.7%	12.1%	11.4%
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	3.2%	1.8%	5.9%	1.1%	0.8%	1.1%
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations	16.1%	19.6%	16.0%	9.8%	10.4%	9.4%
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	4.2%	7.7%	6.6%	4.4%	6.3%	5.1%
Transportation and material moving occupations	4.8%	5.5%	6.5%	2.7%	3.8%	3.7%
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	2.8%	6.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.9%	3.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

In the Town of Boston, major occupations include Precision production, craft, and repair occupations, at 16.1% of total occupations, Administrative support occupations, including clerical (14.8%), Sales occupations (11.1%) and Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations (11.5%). The Town's major occupations are consistent Service occupations, except protective and household is included in the significant County and State occupations. Colden has less Administrative Support Positions (9.1%) and has more Precision Production (19.6%) than does Boston. By contrast, Orchard Park has less Precision Production (9.8%) than Boston.

3.3.6 Urban and Rural Populations

The following table summarizes the urban and rural populations of the Town of Boston and surrounding communities:

Table 3-15 Urban and Rural Populations -1990
Towns of Boston, Colden, Eden, Orchard Park, Erie County, New York State

Urban and Rural Residence	Boston		Eden		Orchard Park		Colden		Erie County		New York State	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Total population	7,445	-	7,416	-	24,611	-	2,899	-	968,532	-	17,990,455	-
Urban population	2,869	38.5%	3,088	41.6%	17,966	73.0%	0	0.0%	858,538	88.6%	15,164,245	84.3%
Rural population	4,576	61.5%	4,328	58.4%	6,645	27.0%	2,899	100.0%	109,994	11.4%	2,826,210	15.7%
Farm population	141	1.9%	220	3.0%	74	0.3%	120	4.1%	2,245	0.2%	82,256	0.5%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

At 61.5% rural, the population in Boston is much more rural than either the County or the State. However, Boston is similar when compared to its neighboring municipalities. Its ratio of urban and rural residences is roughly equal to that in the Town of Eden. Both are between Colden (100% rural) and Orchard Park (27% rural).

4.0 Housing

Housing is an important aspect in any community. The type and condition of housing is a significant consideration for community residents. The Town of Boston can play a vital role in determining the type of new housing and improving the condition of housing in the community. This section will examine existing housing characteristics in Boston. Statistics for Erie County and the Towns of Eden, Orchard Park and Colden have been included for comparison. Most of the data for this section was obtained from the United States Census Bureau. Additional information was obtained from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning (ECDEP), Greater Buffalo Association of Realtors (GBAR) and the Town of Boston.

4.1 Existing Characteristics

4.1.1 Total Housing Units

Between the years 1980 and 2000 housing units in the Erie County increased by approximately 31,000 units, an 8% increase. In the Town of Boston the number of housing units increased by about 560 units or 22% during this time period. The Town of Orchard Park had the largest increase of 29.6%. These figures are also compared to the Towns of Eden and Colden in the table below:

Table 4-1 Total Housing Units 1980-2000
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	Change: 1980-2000	
				Number	Percent
Town of Boston	2,559	2,772	3,122	563	22.0%
Town of Eden	2,407	2,650	2,995	588	24.4%
Town of Orchard Park	8,210	9,157	10,644	2,434	29.6%
Town of Colden	1,106	1,141	1,377	271	24.4%
Erie County	385,038	402,131	415,868	30,830	8.0%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.1.2 Units in Structure

Of the 2,772 housing units in the Town of Boston the most abundant are single unit detached, which the Town has previously set a priority to maintain. This housing type accounts for 2,257 structures or 81% of the total. The second most abundant structures are 2 to 4 units, which make up approximately 8% of the total number of housing units. Ten or more unit structures are not prevalent in Boston and make up only about 1% of the total units.

The table below illustrates the types of housing units available in the Town of Boston.

Table 4-2 Housing Structures –1990
Town of Boston

Units in Structure	Number	Percent of Total
1-unit detached	2,257	81.4%
1-unit attached	35	1.3%
2 to 4 units	222	8.0%
5-9 units	68	2.4%
10 or more units	32	1.2%
Mobile Home, Trailer, or other	158	5.7%
Total	2,772	100.0%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.1.3 Housing Occupancy

Information regarding the occupancy of housing in a community specifies vacancy levels and the breakdowns of owner and renter occupied units. This information commonly indicates the desirability of a community and the condition of housing stock.

4.1.3.1 Vacancy Rates

In general, low vacancy rates indicate a relatively healthy community. According to the table below, the Town of Boston has a vacancy rate of 4.2%, suggesting a healthy level of demand for housing in the community. This number is lower than the County percentage, which shows 8.4% of its units vacant. The number of vacant structures in Boston is slightly higher than the Town of Orchard Park. The table below details the vacant units in the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County.

Table 4-3 Vacancy Rates -2000
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Vacant Units as a Percent of Total Units
Town of Boston	2,997	125	4.2%
Town of Eden	2,995	140	4.6%
Town of Orchard Park	10,644	367	3.4%
Town of Colden	1,377	75	5.4%
Erie County	402,131	25,137	6.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.1.3.2 Owner & Renter Occupancy Rates

The rates of owner and renter occupied housing may sometimes depict the condition of structures. These rates help indicate housing quality as most owners tend to maintain their properties better than renters. The Town of Boston has a larger percentage of owner occupied units than Erie County. This figure is also higher than the Towns of Eden and Colden, but slightly lower than Orchard Park. The following table depicts the occupied units in the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County.

Table 4-4 Owner & Renter Occupied Housing Units –2000
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied as a Percent of Total Units	Renter Occupied	Renter Occupied as a Percent of Total units
Town of Boston	3,122	2,498	83.4%	499	16.6%
Town of Eden	2,995	2,482	86.9%	381	13.1%
Town of Orchard Park	10,644	8,083	78.7%	2,000	21.3%
Town of Colden	1,377	1,087	86.1%	150	13.9%
Erie County	415,131	248,767	65.3%	132,106	34.7%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.1.4 Age of Housing

In Erie County, approximately 38% of the housing units were built before 1939. Roughly 20% of the units in the Town of Boston were constructed in 1939 or earlier. The majority of the structures (41%) in Boston were assembled between 1960 and 1979. The Town had the second largest percentage of structures (11.9%) built between 1980 and 1990, when compared to the County and surrounding municipalities. Orchard Park had the largest units constructed during that time period with 12%. Both construction percentages (between 1960-1979 and 1980-1990) indicate a relatively new housing stock in Boston.

In the Towns of Eden and Colden the largest percentages (32.9% and 33.7% respectively) of housing structures were constructed before 1939. These percentages indicate an older housing stock that is expected to need some form of rehabilitation. The figures also indicate the potential need for new housing in these communities, as structural weakening is evident in older housing.

The age of the housing stock and the need for housing in these communities may also lead to population transfers from these communities into the Town of Boston and other municipalities. The following table summarizes the construction of housing units in the communities of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County.

Table 4-5 Units by Year of Construction
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	1939 or Earlier		1940 -1959		1960-1979		1980-March 1990		Total Units
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	
Town of Boston	462	16.6%	817	29.4%	1,163	41.9%	330	11.9%	2,772
Town of Eden	873	32.9%	831	31.3%	738	27.8%	208	7.8%	2,650
Town of Orchard Park	1,324	13.3%	3,522	35.3%	3,905	39.2%	1,203	12.0%	9,954
Town of Colden	385	33.7%	287	25.1%	357	31.2%	112	9.8%	1,141
Erie County	152,376	37.8%	126,175	31.3%	96,480	23.9%	27,100	6.7%	402,131

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.1.5 Housing Costs and Expenditures

4.1.5.1 Owner Occupied

In 1990, the median value of owner occupied housing in the Town of Boston was \$83,600. This figure is roughly 13% higher than the Erie County value of \$73,600. The Town of Orchard Park had the highest median housing value of \$100,500. The following table depicts the value of housing in the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County.

Table 4-6 Median Value and Housing as a Percent of Income -1990
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	Median Value	Percent of Owner Occupied Units Spending more than 30% of Income on Housing
Town of Boston	\$83,600	9.9%
Town of Eden	\$73,700	12.4%
Town of Orchard Park	\$100,500	14.7%
Town of Colden	\$75,400	12.3%
Erie County	\$73,600	12.7%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), housing costs should not exceed more than 30% of a family's income. When 30% or more of a family's income is devoted to housing the burden of the housing costs may be placed on the occupants, reducing the amount of disposable income.

Homeowners in Boston do not dedicate large amounts of their incomes to housing costs. According to the table above the Town of Boston has the smallest percentage of families (9.9%) spending 30% or more of their income on housing, which is less than the county and most of the surrounding municipalities.

4.1.5.2 Rental Housing

The median housing rental cost in the Town of Boston was \$418, which is approximately 8% higher than Erie County. This figure is also higher than the surrounding communities with the exception of Orchard Park with a median rent of \$522. Most renters in the Town of Boston do not contribute an excessive amount of their incomes towards housing. The Town of Boston has the smallest percentage (27%) of renters spending 30% or more of their income on housing than the specific surrounding municipalities and Erie County. The table below summarizes rental amounts in the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County.

Table 4-7 Median Rent and Rent as a Percent of Income -1990
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	Median Rent	Percent of Renter Occupied Units Spending more than 30% of Income on Housing
Town of Boston	\$418	27.0%
Town of Eden	\$350	31.4%
Town of Orchard Park	\$522	42.5%
Town of Colden	\$375	28.0%
Erie County	\$384	44.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

The Town of Boston has five (5) housing complexes with nearly two hundred units. There are two standard and one luxury apartment complexes offered to all people. In addition, there is one senior and one low-income apartment buildings available to age and income eligible persons.

The table below describes the types and locations of the apartments in Boston.

Table 4-8 Apartment Complexes
Town of Boston

Name	Location	Type	Number of Units
Boston Town Apartments	8951 Boston State Road	Standard	32
North Boston Limited Partnership (Belmont)	7355 Boston State Road	Senior	24
Oakwood Luxury Apartments	7287 Boston State Road	Luxury	64
Creekside Court Apartments	Creekside Road	Standard	44
Southtowns Rural Preservation Co.	9441 Boston State Road	Low Income	3

Source: Town of Boston

4.1.5.3 Housing Tenure

In 1990, the majority of Boston residents (66.7%) lived in the same house they were living in five years before, while (28.0%) lived elsewhere in the county. This data indicates that the population of Boston is not exceedingly transient. The following table shows the tenure of residents in the Town of Boston in 1990:

Table 4-9 Tenure of Residents – 1990
Town of Boston

Residence in 1985	Number	Percentage
Persons 5 years of age and older	6,935	N/A
Lived in same house	4,632	66.7%
Lived in different house (same county)	1,947	28.0%
Lived in different house (different county/same state)	150	N/A
Lived in different house (different state)	166	N/A
Lived Abroad	40	0.5%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.1.5.4 Substandard Housing

The US Bureau of the Census provides an estimate of the amount of substandard housing in an area. The census estimates substandard housing conditions by counting the number of housing units with plumbing deficiencies. The bureau counted 17 units in the Town of Boston with incomplete plumbing; this figure is less than 1.0% of the total units. The County and Towns of Eden, Orchard Park, and Colden all have relatively small numbers of units with substandard plumbing, when compared to the total number of housing units. These figures indicate that substandard housing is not an important issue in the Town of Boston and its surrounding communities.

The Bureau also provides data on overcrowded conditions. The number of persons per room determines this information. A housing unit with more than one person per room is considered to be overcrowded. The Town of Boston has 40 units or 1.4% of the total units with more than one person per room. The table below indicates the number of substandard and congested units in the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County.

Table 4-10 Substandard and Overcrowded Housing Units – 1990
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Substandard Units	Percentage	Overcrowded Units	Percentage
Town of Boston	2,772	17	.6%	40	1.4%
Town of Eden	2,650	7	.2%	36	1.3%
Town of Orchard Park	9,157	13	.1%	69	.7%
Town of Colden	1,141	28	2.4%	18	1.5%
Erie County	402,131	1,588	.4%	5,464	1.3%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

4.2 Housing Trends

Housing trends indicate the level of investment in a community and the appeal of the area as a good place to live and raise a family. Trends in housing also help indicate growth in a town and may assist in the assessment of future housing needs. Much new housing construction in the Town of Boston has taken place in the Eighteen Mile Creek Valley. Residential developments have occurred in scattered patterns along existing roads within the more concentrated subdivisions of the hamlet areas. There has also been increased housing construction in many of the rural portions of town. Residents have sited their homes in these sections in search of more privacy and open space. This section presents data on recent construction activity, home sales and the types of apartments in the Town of Boston.

4.2.1 Building Permits

The activity of building permits helps to indicate the health of a community. There seems the more building permits issued the more healthy a community. The Town of Boston between 1996 and 1999 issued 382 building permits for a variety of construction projects, an average of 96 per year. During this time period 86 permits were issued for the construction of new single, double and multiple family homes. The total construction cost for all building permits was nearly \$16.5 million. The following table summarizes this information.

Table 4-11 Issued Building Permits 1996-1999
Town of Boston

Permit Classification	Number Issued	Value of Construction
Single Family Dwellings	80	\$10,305,380
Additions to Single Family Dwellings	137	\$2,397,200
Accessory Buildings to Single Family Dwellings	110	\$736,160
In ground Swimming Pools	26	\$340,355
Two Family Dwellings	1	\$110,000
Multiple Family Dwellings	5	\$1,520,000
Agricultural Buildings	6	\$231,500
Commercial Buildings	3	\$510,000
Additions to Commercial Buildings	7	\$135,500
Other	7	\$194,020
Total	382	\$16,480,115

Source: Town of Boston Code Enforcement Officer

4.2.2 Home Sales

Housing sales data obtained from the Multiple Listing Service (Greater Buffalo Association of Realtors) has been reviewed to compare housing costs in the Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County. During 1999 Boston and Eden experienced a similar number of home sales (66 and 70) and average sales prices (\$118,000 and \$110,900). The Town of Orchard Park had the highest average sales price among the municipalities at \$164,848 and the largest number of sales with 240. The following table depicts this information.

Table 4-12 Home Sales – 1999
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden and Erie County

Municipality	Number of Sales	Average Sales Price
Town of Boston	66	\$118,000
Town of Eden	70	\$110,900
Town of Orchard Park	240	\$164,848
Town of Colden	23	\$123,000
Erie County	9,023	\$90,748

Source: Greater Buffalo Association of Realtors

4.3 Housing Programs

The provision of sufficient housing for current and future residents of the Town of Boston is an important goal of the Comprehensive Plan. Good housing stock will allow families to live in the community while maintaining the quality of life in the Town. Numerous governmentally funded housing programs are available to the Town to develop and sustain affordable housing opportunities.

Community Development Block Grant Program

Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is administered by Erie County for community and economic development and infrastructure. The funds may be used for a variety of purposes including meeting the housing needs of low-income persons and the rehabilitation of communities. The Town of Boston may be eligible for funding through CDBG programs. Several housing programs available through CDBG funding are described below.

- Mobile Home Rehabilitation Program (proposed) - Erie County has realized the need to rehabilitate mobile homes and has planned to use a portion of CDBG funds during 2001 to address this need. In 1990 the Town of Boston had approximately 150 or 6% of its housing units classified as mobile homes. The Town may be able to use these funds to their advantage and improve the conditions of mobile homes.
- First Time Homebuyer Program - The CDBG program provides deferred loans for income eligible persons that can be forgiven after the occupant has resided in the home for ten years. Assistance can be provided for up to \$6,000 per dwelling and can be used to assist with down payments, closing costs and mortgage reductions. To meet eligibility requirements the homes must be owner- occupied, one-or two family dwellings.
- Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program - The housing rehabilitation program administered by Erie County provides low interest loans at 0-3% fixed rates to income eligible homeowners to assist with repairs and to bring the property into compliance with housing codes. The properties must be owner occupied and between one and four unit dwellings. The maximum cost of housing rehabilitation cannot exceed \$15,000. The program requires that the owners hire private contractors whom will pay directly by the county with CDBG funds.
- Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program - The loan program provides no interest loans to the owners of rental properties for the purpose of bringing their properties up to compliance with housing codes. Financial assistance is available for up to \$6,500 for 1 bedroom, \$7,500 for 2 bedroom units and \$8,500 for units with 3 or more bedrooms. The size of the structure does not matter, however the units must be inhabited by low-income persons for a minimum of 7 years after the rehabilitation work has been completed. If the structure is sold or the deed is transferred the loan must be repaid.

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5.0 Community Services

The quality, supply and variety of a community's services and facilities are important to the overall quality of life a community can offer its residents. Education, emergency services, recreational opportunities and cultural enrichment have a substantial impact on the appeal of a community as a place to live. This chapter explores the resources available to residents in the Town of Boston, including educational facilities, libraries, emergency services, recreational facilities, social services and historical resources.

5.1 Educational Facilities

5.1.1 Public Schools

Residents of the Town of Boston are assigned to one of four school districts, depending on where they live within the Town. These districts include Eden Central, Hamburg Central, Orchard Park Central and Springville-Griffith Institute Central School Districts. Although no private or parochial schools are located in the Town, options are available in surrounding communities.

There is one school building located in the Town of Boston. The Boston Valley Public School, serving elementary students is located at 7476 Back Creek Road. Depending on where in the Town residents are located, Boston children attend elementary school in neighboring school districts. Boston Valley is a part of the Hamburg Central School District.

In Boston, the public middle school in grades 6 through 8 and high school children in 9 through 12 attend one of the four school districts depending on where they live. Residents living in the northeast part of Boston attend Orchard Park. Those in the northwest to central part of the Town attend Hamburg. The western to southern section of Boston is included in the Eden District. The southeast corner is in the Springville-Griffith District.

The following table outlines the performance and funding standards, according to the NYS Department of Education, met by each of the school districts that Boston residents attend.

**Table 5-1 School Districts Serving Boston
Boston, New York**

Standards	Eden	Hamburg	Orchard Park	Springville-Griffith	New York State Public
K-12 Enrollment	1,812	4,197	5,363	2,498	--
Student/Teacher ratio	14.5 to 1	14 to 1	15 to 1	16.8 to 1	--
Attendance Rate, 1996-7	96%	96%	96%	96%	92%
Dropout Rate	2.2%	1.9%	1.0%	1.7%	3.4%
Public Expenditure per Pupil	\$7,852	\$8,653	\$8,562	\$8,194	\$9,321
Students - Limited English Proficiency	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	7.7%

Source: New York State Department of Education

The Eden School District serves approximately 1,800 students while the Springville-Griffith School District serves approximately 2,400. These school districts are significantly smaller than Hamburg and Orchard Park, which are both experiencing growth as the two Town's populations increase. The student to teacher ratios in all school districts are below 20 students for each teacher with Springville-Griffith being the highest at almost 17 to 1.

The table indicates that the four districts serving the Town of Boston have higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates than the State. On a given day, 96% of students in the four districts are attending school, compared to 92% in the State. In each of the school districts serving the Town of Boston, the dropout rates are approximately half that of New York. The satisfactory attendance and school completion in the districts allows teachers to focus more on education and additional programs, rather than devoting their energy to student retention.

The public expenditure per pupil is lower in Eden than the other three school districts serving the Town of Boston, but all four are within approximately \$800 of each other. The expenditure per pupil is lower than the State as a whole in part because of the lower cost of living in Western New York when compared to other parts of the State.

According to the table, each of the districts has a lower percentage of students with limited English proficiency than the State of New York as a whole. According to part 154 in New York State Regulations, a student has limited English proficiency if he or she scores below the 40th percentile on a standardized English reading test and comes from a home where a language other than English is spoken. As the percentage is very low in the districts serving Boston, bilingual programs and language tutoring would not appear to be a concern in these schools.

5.1.2 Libraries

The Boston Free Library is one of 52 libraries that are part of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System. The facility is located at 9475 Boston State Road between Boston Cross and Boston Colden Roads. The library's approximate collection is 18,000 books with a circulation of approximately 51,000. In addition, the library offers CD-ROM's, computer programs, DVD's, audio books and videos for loan.

The library has computer and Internet resources, including four networked Gateway computers and a Macintosh computer. These resources are open to the public, and users may also print materials on library computers.

The library is wheelchair accessible and contains radio receivers for the visually impaired. Within the building, a meeting room provides space for community events and library functions. Among those that meet at the library are Boy and Girl Scout troops, tutors and their pupils, reading clubs and Junior High level reading teams. The library celebrates National Children's Reading Week in November, and hosts various children's programs throughout the year. The library is open 35 hours during both winter and summer months, including four evenings a week.

5.2 Emergency Services

5.2.1 Law Enforcement

The Town of Boston receives police protection from the Erie County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police, which is headquartered in the Town of Batavia. The Town of Boston has a New York State Troopers Barracks at 8500 Boston State Road that patrols the entire community. The Town also uses two satellite stations for the Erie County Sheriff's Department, which are not manned 24 hours a day but may be used in the event of the need for additional forces. The satellite stations are located in Holland and East Aurora, and each station has two cars on duty.

The Town of Boston does not have any outstanding crime problems, and the crime level is consistent with the Town's peaceful rural profile. Neighborhood or Community Watch Groups do not exist in Boston at this time but could help promote cohesion and cooperation within neighborhoods and protect the quality of life in the Town.

5.2.2 Hazardous Materials

In the event of an incident with hazardous materials in Boston or any other municipality in Erie County, the county has a hazardous materials response team known as ECHO (Erie County Hazardous Materials Organization). The team of about 50 members are prepared to respond to small or full-scale spills and offer technical assistance and perform decontamination, if needed.

The team is divided into four divisions, North, Central, Southeast and Southwest. The team is made up of Nurses, Doctors, Chemists, Hazardous Waste Specialists, Firefighters and other emergency services personnel. ECHO is available 24 hours a day and are dispatched by the County Medical Emergency Radio Service.

In addition to ECHO, the disposal and pick up of hazardous materials are often handled by private contractors. The contractors would be whomever the municipality decides to hire.

5.2.3 Fire

The Town of Boston consists of one Fire Protection District that includes three service areas: North Boston, Patchin and Boston Fire Companies. Members of the company are required to complete the Fire Essentials Training within the first year of joining, which is provided by Erie County. Once calls are placed to 911 they are intercepted by the County Sheriff's Department, which contacts Hamburg Fire Control to dispatch teams from the three fire companies. Fire fighting equipment includes mini pumpers, tankers, and engines with pumpers.

Boston Fire Company

The Boston Fire Company covers both the Towns of Boston and a portion of the Town of Concord; the Town of Concord is covered under a separate contract with that community. The service area includes the southern section of Boston. The Fire Company has approximately 45 active members. The fire station is located in the southwest part of the Town while the company substation is located near the southern border of the Town.

North Boston Fire Company

The North Boston Fire Company covers the northwestern portion of the Town and is supported by the North Boston Volunteer Fire Company. The North Boston Volunteer Fire Company was founded in 1904, when a fire destroyed a local hotel. In the aftermath of the destruction, the community rallied to form the Town's first fire company. Today, the North Boston Fire Company has 42 active members that assist the Patchin Volunteer Fire Company, the Boston Fire Company and the Boston Emergency Squad. The company also helps sponsor a local Boy Scout Explorer Post. The company has one station, located along Route 277.

Patchin Fire and Community Association

The Patchin Fire and Community Associates serves central and northeast Boston and is serviced by the 50 member Patchin Fire Company. The fire company has two firehouses: one located on Cole Road and the other on Boston State Road. The company answers an average of 125 calls per year.

5.2.4 Ambulance

The Boston Emergency Squad provides ambulance service to the Town of Boston Ambulance District that encompasses the entire Town. The squad is located adjacent to the Town Hall at 8500 Boston State Road. The service has 38 volunteer members who share time on duty by signing up on a roster. Supplies are provided by funds from the Town and from donations received by the organization. The Emergency Service also provides aid to Colden, when necessary.

5.3 Health and Human Services

5.3.1 Healthcare

Medical

Many Boston residents receive medical treatment and care from the Boston-Colden Health Care Center. The facility is located at 8975 Boston State Road. For emergency care, the closest facilities are Bertrand Chaffee Hospital on Main Street in Springville or Mercy Ambulatory Care Center on Route 20 in Orchard Park. For other medical care, the closest facilities are Our Lady of Victory Hospital in Lackawanna, Mercy Hospital on Abbott Road and Bertrand Chaffee Hospital in Springville.

Dental

There are three dental offices in Boston available in the Town of Boston for residents to utilize. They are located on Boston State Road and Herman Hill Road. Others are located in surrounding communities and offer residents a wide choice of services.

5.3.2 Social Services

Southtowns Rural Preservation Company

The Southtowns Rural Preservation Company is a not for profit grant-funded housing and repair company located at 9441 Boston State Road. The organization provides resources for housing repairs for low-income persons. Funds for housing rehabilitation are provided for income-eligible homeowners through state and federal programs administered by Erie County. Home owner-occupants with incomes below 80 percent of area median household income can apply to the County or Preservation Company for loans with interest rates between 0 and 3 percent, depending on income. Homeowners may choose their own contractors, and are responsible to supply two estimates of work needed.

The Southtowns Rural Preservation Company also leases subsidized apartments for residents in the appropriate income range.

Churches

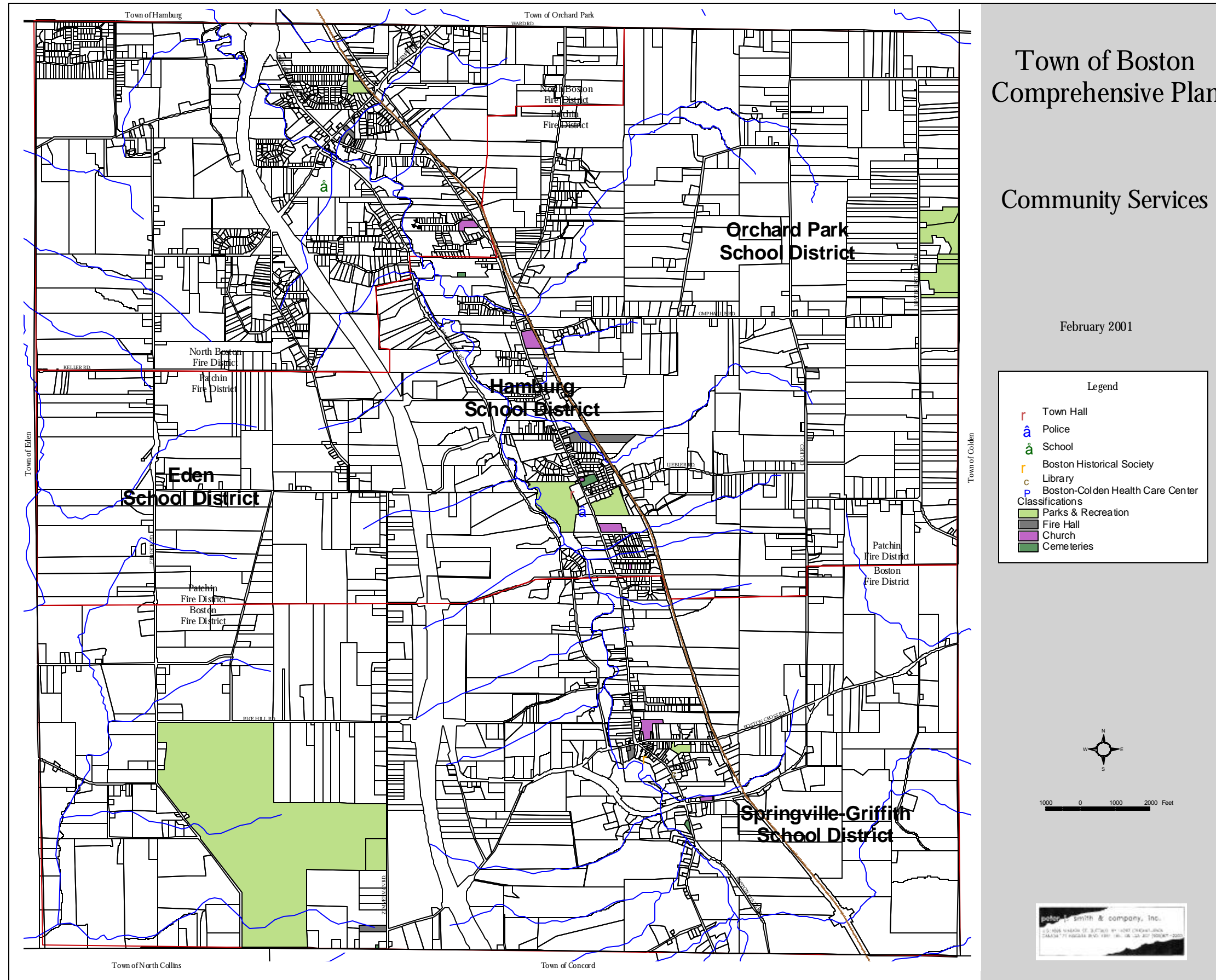
The churches in Boston provide not only spiritual foundations for the residents of Boston, but are also a community base that provides services benefiting the entire population. The churches in the Town of Boston are:

- Berean Free Presbyterian Church, 8435 Boston State Road
- Churchill Memorial United Methodist Church, 8019 Boston State Road
- Faith United Church of Christ, 6641 Holiday Drive
- Good Shepard Lutheran Church, 6113 Thornwood Drive
- Saint John the Baptist Church, 6889 Boston Cross Road

American Association for Retired Persons

Located at 9033 Rockwood Road in the Town of Boston, the American Association of Retired Persons provides low cost prescriptions, health and automobile insurance, promotes special legislation and provides support and general assistance to senior citizens in the area. The organization serves the Town and entire Western New York region.

Figure 5-1 - Community Services Plan



Youth Services

There are numerous youth services available to Boston residents, many of which are recreational in nature. In addition to a wide range of sports teams, there are Boy and Girl Scout troops, open gym recreation, 4H clubs, a concert band and summer day camps. Details for these services may be found in local publications that are widely available to residents.

Child Care

There is one large day-care center located within the Town; this is the Churchill Child Care Center on Boston State Road. The Center is a not-for-profit facility that offers day care and pre-school programs to children ages 18 months to 14 years and it currently provides care to 165 children. There are many in-home day care facilities that service a smaller number of children and operate out of care provider's homes.

5.4 Recreation

Recreational facilities and programs offer opportunities for residents to unwind and spend leisure time interacting with members of their community. The accessibility of safe and attractive recreational facilities and programs influences the desirability of a community. This section explores the recreational facilities and programs available in the Town of Boston.

5.4.1 Recreation Facilities

Boston Common

Boston Common is a ¼ acre passive use municipal green located at the intersection of Boston State and Boston Cross Roads in the southeastern portion of the Town. Facilities at the common include benches, a war memorial, trees and a flagpole. The Common is an important green space in the community and acts as a gathering space for several community events in Boston.

South Boston Park

The Town of Boston has a 4.3-acre park in the southeastern section of the Town at 6980 Boston Cross Road. Facilities at the park include tennis courts, volleyball courts, basketball courts, baseball diamonds and a horseshoe pit. Additional facilities include a well-maintained playground, a tot lot, picnic tables and shelter and restrooms. The park has adequate accessibility, visual quality, landscaping, signage and parking.

North Boston Stadium

The 7.3-acre municipal facility, located at 5678 Meadow Drive, is used for a variety recreational activities. The facility is handicapped accessible and includes baseball diamonds, restrooms and a snack bar. North Boston Stadium has adequate accessibility, but parking is minimal. The signage is poor as are the linkages with the surrounding neighborhood and landscaping.

Boston Town Complex

The Town's central recreational complex is located at the rear of Boston Town Hall at 8500 Boston State Road. The site has active recreational uses with playfield, playground and picnic amenities. The complex also includes two ponds and a path for cycling, jogging or hiking. The 50-acre site serves as an appealing and friendly open space in the center of Boston. The facilities are in good to average condition although parking during peak use is a concern.

Creative Playground

The Creative Playground, owned by the School District, is a 1-acre playground at 7448 Back Creek Road located adjacent to the Boston Valley Elementary School on school property. The facility is widely used by the children who attend the elementary school. The creative playground has excellent accessibility. Signage is average and could be improved. Linkages with the Town could be enhanced, as could parking for additional cars.

Boston Forest

The Boston Forest is located on Feddick Road between Rice Hill and Belcher Roads. The forest, owned by the Erie County Bureau of Forestry, is approximately 700 acres. Recreational use of the facility is strictly prohibited in accordance with Erie County Public Use policies; the forest is utilized only as a conservation area. Currently, a study is being performed to help develop a passive use policy for the forestland.

Buffalo Ski Club

The Buffalo Ski Club is a private ski club with two locations (North and South) on Lower East Hill Road. The Ski Club provides ski and other snow related recreational activities to a number of patrons in the town and throughout the region. The Ski Club is open to the public during the week and is not accessible on the weekend.

Ski Tamarack

Tamarack is a ski resort located in Colden, NY; this facility is a regional attraction. Activities available at the resort include alpine skiing, snowboarding with quarter and half pipes, and night skiing. The base elevation of the mountain is 1,000 feet and the summit elevation is 1,500 feet. There are 100 acres of skiable area at the resort, three lifts and 15 trails. The longest run is 3,300 feet. The resort opened during the ski season on Thursday through Sunday. They offer lessons, rentals and children's programs. The resort is also a participant of the New York State "Learn to Ski 123" and the "4th Graders Ski and Ride 4-Free" programs. Both programs are sponsored by Empire State Development's Division of Tourism and Ski Areas of New York (SANY).

Kissing Bridge Ski Resort

The Kissing Bridge Ski Resort is located in Colden, NY; alike the Tamarack Ski Club the resort is a regional attraction. The resort has 37 slopes with ten lifts and more than 100 ski instructors for first timers and beginners. Private lessons are also available for intermediate skiers. The slopes are 1-1/4 miles wide and offer nearly 800 acres of terrain. The facility also offers snow boarding and lessons. The average annual snowfall at the resort is approximately 180 inches, making for good skiing and snowboarding opportunities. The resort is a participant of the NYS "Learn to Ski 123" and the "4th Graders Ski and Ride 4-Free" programs.

Boston Valley Conservation Club

In 1920 the Boston Rod and Gun Club was organized, and in 1931 it became the Boston Valley Conservation Society."⁸ The Boston Valley Conservation Club is located on Zimmerman Road; this private membership, social club provides recreational activities for its members. The activities include a gun range inside the building and hunting and the shooting of skeet outside.

Future Facilities

During the month of January 2001, the Town purchased a seventeen-acre parcel of land, located across from the Town Hall for the development of recreational facilities. The development of the parcel may serve to alleviate conflicting uses of the Boston Town Park, located at the rear of Town Hall. In addition, the Town is seeking funding in the amount of \$54,000 from the Recreational Trails Program of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for the purchase and development of an one-acre parcel, located adjacent to the Town Park. The parcel will be used as a linkage for the existing two-acre nature trail that runs along Eighteen Mile Creek.

⁸ Bradley, Charles, A Brief History of the Town of Boston. Boston, New York: Boston Publication Committee, 1964 p. 29.

5.4.2 Recreation Programs

The Town of Boston offers an excellent selection of recreation programming for youths and adults. The programs available to residents are outlined in the following table. Unless otherwise indicated, the activities are open to anyone, within and outside the Town, based on a first-come first-serve basis.

**Table 5-2 Recreational Activities
Opportunities Available in the Town of Boston**

Activity Name	Ages Participating	Number of Participants in 2000
Adult Soccer	adult age groups	30
Indoor Soccer	7-9	80-90
Outdoor Soccer	6-15	200
Baseball and Softball	5-20	400
Bowling	7-19	20
Football and Cheerleading	7-15	150
Friday Night Open Gym	13-18	20
Friday Night Recreation Program	8-11	85-90
Skiing-Kissing Bridge	8 and up	90
Summer Recreation Program	6-15	300 (residents only)

Source: Town of Boston Recreation/Open Space Focus Group

The soccer program in Boston includes residents of the Town as well as those living outside Boston. The soccer season begins in August and ends in October.

The adult soccer program currently serves 30 individuals, and the indoor and outdoor soccer programs for children have close to 300 participants collectively. There are currently three small fields for the soccer programs, where two larger fields (200'x300') could enhance the program.

Baseball and softball programs in the Town currently serve 400 children. The season runs from May to July and has adequate diamonds for practices and games: four baseball, one T-ball, three softball and a practice field in South Boston Park.

The football program currently includes 150 children and has three teams of different age groups. The football season lasts from August to November. The teams involved in the program use one field for both practicing and playing games. The size of the program requires a practice field in addition to the playing field. According to the group, a practice field is needed. The cheerleading program, associated with the football team, is also in need of practice space. The program currently uses whatever green space they can find.

Boston provides a variety of recreational programs, but facilities are not always adequate. Because there are no middle or high schools located within Boston, there is often a lack of practice space that schools would normally provide for local teams. The only school in Boston is the elementary school, which does not have any sports fields associated with it.

5.5 Historic and Archeological Resources

The Boston Historical Society owns and manages the Boston Historical Museum at the former Pioneer Church on Boston State Road. The museum collection includes farm equipment, household artifacts and fireman apparel. The Historical Society organizes tours of the facility, manages the archives for the Town, conducts fundraising and allows visitors to perform genealogical research. In addition the Historical Society maintains historic markers that designate significant historical sites in the Town.

5.5.1 Historic Sites

North Boston Fire Department

An historic marker is placed in front of the North Boston Fire Station on Route 391 to commemorate the formation of the fire department following the fire at a hotel dance in 1903; one of the department's first hand pumps is on display at the Historical Museum.

Talcutt Patchin Home

An historic marker stands in front of the home where Talcott Patchin lived until 1834. Talcutt Patchin was the founder of the Patchinite religious sect; the hamlet of Patchin was named after him.

John Love Historic Marker

On Zimmerman Road, a marker stands at the John Love murder site, where Love was killed by two men who owed him money. They were hanged in 1825 in the only public hanging in Erie County. Love's original grave marker is in the Historical Museum.

First Settler Marker

In 1803 Charles Johnson, the first settler of Boston, built his cabin at the corner of Liebler Road and Route 391 (Boston State Road). A historic marker commemorates the site.

Typhoid Well

At Zimmerman and Route 391, a historic marker designates the site of a well where contaminated water caused the death of twenty-eight Boston residents in 1843. An investigation following their deaths uncovered that each of them had drunk from a tavern well where a traveler had died shortly before the epidemic.

Railroad Culvert

The Old Railroad Culvert runs over Landon Brook. Its construction was completed in 1906, and although the rail was short-lived, it had a big impact on the Town in terms of shipping goods and traveling between municipalities.

Ellen Beach Yaw

Ellen Beach Yaw was a famous soprano singer from Boston. She toured all over the United States and Europe performing concerts. A marker currently stands at the birthplace of Ellen Beach Yaw on Boston Cross Road as she was perhaps the most well known Bostonian. The Town Historian and other volunteers work to maintain the historic markers that designate sites within Boston. The markers are a reminder of the Town's history and help animate the Town's past.

5.5.2 Archeological Sites

In the Town of Boston, there are several archeological sites.⁹ The exact location of these sites is not indicated on the maps to help protect their integrity. These include: Duffy Site, Rockwood Site, Yodes Site, Jensen Site, Cary I Site, Cary II Site, Borst Site, May Site, Brock I Site, Thornwood Site, Webber Site, Haley Site, Boston Valley 2, Endress Site, Toll House, Banko II Site, Weiss I Site, Fittry Site, Boston Earthworks Site, K P/L 2, Szalay 1 Site, Emerling Loci 1-8, and K P/L #9.

⁹ NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

6.0 Economy

Similar to many rural communities, the economy of the Town of Boston is highly dependent on economic forces outside its municipal boundaries. Issues such as utility rates and land values are often influenced by factors outside the control of local government. Most of the detailed information pertaining to the economic base in Boston is contained in the population chapter of the document. Information contained in this section has been gathered from several sources including the US Census Bureau, US Department of Labor and interviews with local business owners and operators.

The Regional Economic Trends section reviews the economy of the Town of Boston in the context of Erie County and the trends and activities within the Town itself. The Local Economic Activity section includes information on the existing condition of businesses available in the Town of Boston. The Local Business Profiles section lists and describes several businesses that have a significant impact and role in the local economy.

6.1 Regional Economic Activity

The Town of Boston is continually affected by changes taking place within and outside its borders. Economic trends experienced at the County and State levels in many ways control the economic health of small communities, like Boston. The health and success of the State and Erie County economies could be considered representative of that in the Town of Boston.

6.1.1 Labor Statistics

The number of people in the labor force, the number of unemployed persons and the unemployment rate in Erie County could be indicative of conditions in the Town of Boston. The table below illustrates the labor statistics at the County level over the past decade; the numbers are based on yearly averages.

Table 6-1 Labor Statistics 1990-2000
Erie County

Characteristics	2000	1999	1998	1995	1990
Persons in labor force	461,054	460,700	466,300	462,400	481,000
Employed Persons	438,827	436,500	442,700	456,400	438,100
Unemployed Persons	22,227	24,200	23,600	24,600	24,200
Unemployment Rate	4.8%	5.2%	5.1%	5.2%	4.5%

Source: US Department of Labor

Erie County unemployment rates have fluctuated over the last decade; rising then falling. In 2000, the number of unemployed persons was at an all time low with 22,227 people. Unemployment rates in Erie County are consistently lower than those for New York State. In 1990, the unemployment rate in the County was 4.5%, while the state rate was 6.6%; in 1998, the unemployment rate in Erie County was 5.1%, while the State rate was 5.7%.

6.1.2 Per Capita Income

Per capita income indicates the amount of income for each person in a community. In the Town of Boston, the per capita income has been considerably higher, on average, than Erie County. However, the figures have been somewhat lower than New York State. In 1980, the per capita income in Boston was \$7,926, 11% higher than the county and 22% percent lower than the State. By 1990 the comparative percentages would change; in Boston the per capita income was \$16,376, 20.0% higher than Erie County and 0.7% lower than New York State. The table below illustrates the per capita income for the Town of Boston in comparison to the County, State and its surrounding municipalities.

Table 6-2 Per Capita Income 1980-1990
Towns of Boston, Eden, Orchard Park, Colden, Erie County and New York State

Municipality	1990	1980
Boston	16,376	7,926
Eden	13,465	7,138
Orchard Park	18,694	8,922
Colden	13,369	6,902
Erie County	13,560	7,094
New York State	16,501	10,252

Source: US Bureau of the Census

6.1.3 Business Statistics

According to 1997 Economic Census data, the manufacturing and wholesale trade industries have the largest sales of any industry in Erie County. In 1997, both industries totaled more than \$14.0 billion in sales. Although the retail trade industry has more establishments its sales totaled \$8.0 billion during the same time period.

The following table depicts the number of establishments and total sales for industries in Erie County.

**Table 6-3 Business Statistics by Industry and Total Sales
Erie County - 1997**

Type of Business	Number of Businesses	Total Sales (\$1,000)
Manufacturing	1,251	14,054,477
Wholesale Trade	1,680	14,962,507
Retail Trade	3,628	8,036,261
Real Estate and Rental	738	719,104
Professional	1,790	1,413,930
Administrative	896	885,601
Educational	101	39,979
Health Care	1,916	1,396,985
Arts and Entertainment	241	233,298
Accommodation and Food	2,143	935,441
Other	1,603	585,877

Source: 1997 US Economic Census

6.1.4 Agriculture

Agriculture has traditionally defined the economy of many Towns in Erie County. Agriculture has not remained a major employer or economic contributor due to the continuing decrease in farming. In 1997, agriculture related activities, including farming, forestry and fishing, accounted for less than 4,000 jobs in the county as whole. In 1998, there were approximately 650,000 acres of agricultural land with 1,100 full time farms in Erie County. Among the leading products sold were dairy, poultry, cattle, nursery and greenhouse and vegetables.

6.1.4.1 Agricultural Statistics

While reviewing statistics from the last decade, the nature of farming has changed significantly. Farming in the Town of Boston reflects trends occurring throughout Erie County. The table below illustrates farming in Erie County between 1987 and 1997.

**Table 6-4 Farm Statistics (1987-1997)
Erie County**

Year	Number of Farms	Land in Farms (Acres)	Total Cropland (Acres)
1987	1,201	166,121	120,228
1992	995	145,679	108,509
1997	973	143,234	102,573

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1997 Census of Agriculture

Between 1987 and 1997, the number of farms decreased by 27% while the land in farms declined by 17% and the total cropland decreased by 18%. Some of reasons for the decline of agriculture may be the decline in farming profitability due to rising land values and increases in property taxes. In addition, there have been increased demands for higher environmental performance from agriculture. "Environmental regulations on agriculture have become stiffer and farmers have had to find alternatives to conventional practices."¹⁰ These demands have lead to higher production costs.

While the figures appear to show a decline in farming throughout the County, the significance of agriculture remains highly important as many of life's necessities are derived from the crops, livestock and timber generated by farms. The information provided should present a primary motivation for the perseverance of agriculture.

6.1.4.2 Financial Summary

This section briefly discusses the financial aspects of farming operations in Erie County including farming expenses, net farm income, real estate values and the secondary financial impacts. Unfortunately, this data has not been compiled on a municipal level to depict the Town of Boston and is only available for the County.

6.1.4.3 Farm Expenses

According to the United States Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, between 1997 and 1998 Erie County farm production expenses rose by approximately 3% and between 1994 and 1998 expenses rose by nearly 12.5%.¹¹

Agricultural suppliers such as John Deere and Agway, which are relied on heavily for farming supplies and equipment, have relocated to other areas making them less accessible to area farmers.

6.1.4.4 Net Farm Income

According to the United States Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, between 1994 and 1998 net farm income in Erie County, fell from \$1,855 to a net loss of \$827.

¹⁰ American Farmland Trust, *Saving American Farmland: What Works*. Washington, DC.: American Farmland Trust, 1997. p. 13.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data, Local Area Personal Income: Erie County, New York.

6.1.4.5 Farm Real Estate Values

In 1997, the average value of buildings and land per farm in Erie County was \$249,147.

6.1.4.6 Secondary Financial Impacts

As a net exporter of goods and primary extractive industry, agriculture also generates substantial indirect and secondary economic effects. As a result, its total financial influence is estimated at three to four times its gross farm production value.

Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Codes are numeric codes designed by the federal government to create uniform descriptions of business institutions. SIC codes bring together businesses that produce similar products or services. Two SIC codes that apply to agricultural production include:

Agriculture Production - SIC 07

Agricultural service firms include crop, veterinary and other animal and landscape and horticulture. The number of agricultural service firms has grown in the county from 265 firms in 1990 to 308 firms in 1997. The sector has employed between 1000 and 2499 workers since 1994; more specific data is unavailable due to census confidentiality regulations.¹²

Food Processing Firms - SIC 20

The food processing industry includes food and associated manufacturing products such as meat precuts, preserved fruits and vegetables, grain mill and bakery products and prepared foods. The number of food processing businesses in the County has declined from 106 companies in 1990 to 77 companies in 1997. While during the same period the number of employees has declined from 7,264 to 6,098, the wages paid by food processing firms has risen from \$181,306 to \$201,861 yearly.¹³

In 1990, the United States Census Bureau recorded 104 persons in the Town of Boston 16 years and older employed in the agricultural industry. Similarly, 117 persons recorded farming, forestry and fishing as their occupations. In addition, the US Census Bureau indicates that 68 Boston households have farm self-employment incomes.

¹² www.fisher.lib.virginia.edu - accessed October 5, 2000.

¹³ Ibid.

6.2 Local Economic Activity

This section lists the employment characteristics, existing businesses and industries in the Town of Boston to assist in identifying trends and/or business concentrations that could be expanded upon.

6.2.1 Economic Base

The Town of Boston has certain economic strengths that can be further promoted to enhance future economic development in the Town.

- Boston has several local companies experiencing growth over the last five years.
- Town commercial businesses provide a mixture of goods and services for local residents.
- The Town has easy access to a transportation system that provides connection to a number of economically significant municipalities in the Buffalo Metropolitan Region and the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport.

6.2.2 Community Employment Patterns

Although there are many Boston residents employed in some of the local businesses within Town boundaries, there are limited employment opportunities within the Town of Boston. In Boston, there are no major employers that provide a large number of jobs to residents. The majority of Boston residents are employed elsewhere in Erie County; most are employed in communities in the Buffalo Metropolitan Region, principally neighboring Towns to the north. In 1990, according to the US Census Bureau the majority of Boston residents were employed by the manufacturing sectors, in precision production and repair occupations.

6.2.3 Employment and Income

According to the US Census Bureau's 1990 census data, approximately 3,700 (63%) people in the Town of Boston over the age of 16 were employed. The employment sectors for Boston residents are diverse, including manufacturing (14%), retail trade (16.2%) and health services (10.8%). Of the employed persons over the age of 16 in Boston, the largest occupations were professional specialty (16.7%); precision production, craft and repair occupations (16.1%); and administrative support, including clerical (14.8%).

The median household income for Boston residents in 1990 was \$39,164. This figure is higher than Erie County and New York State (\$28,005 and \$32,965 respectively). The median household income includes the total number of households in a community, although they may include unrelated family members.

6.2.4 Agriculture

Agriculture makes up approximately 6,000 acres of land in the Town of Boston. This includes uncultivated lands and land currently being farmed. In 1990, according to the US Census Bureau, there were 104 persons in Boston employed in the agriculture industry. The Census Bureau also indicates 68 households in the Town whom listed agriculture as self-employment income during the same time period. In 1992, according to the US Census of Agriculture, there were a total of 7 farms in the Town; 5 of these contained between 50 and 999 acres of land.

6.2.5 Commercial

There are approximately 64 businesses in Boston offer a variety of goods and services to Boston residents. These businesses include a variety of stores, professional offices and restaurants. The commercial properties make up approximately 180 acres of land in the Town. Most of the businesses can be found along Boston State Road. The following table represents local businesses in the Town of Boston.

Table 6-5 Commercial Businesses
Town of Boston

Type of Business	Number of Businesses
Service	24
General Commercial	20
Automotive	12
Restaurant	5
Contractor	1
Health Care	2

* Table does not include businesses operated as home occupations

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

From this table, the following characteristics about Boston commercial businesses can be observed:

- The majority (38%) of the local businesses are service related establishments, which include insurance companies, dental offices and hair salons, etc.
- General commercial uses account for 31% of Town business establishments; these businesses include markets, delis, pharmacies and other stores.
- Restaurants account for a small number of businesses (8%) in the community.

According to the data provided, business activity occurring in Boston can be summarized as primarily commercial business and services rather than goods. Many Boston residents travel outside Town boundaries for certain merchandise. Several of the goods obtained outside of Boston includes food, clothing, furniture and appliances.

6.2.6 Industrial

There are limited industrial lands in the Boston community. There are two industrial locations and both are located on Trevett Road in the southeastern end of the valley. Both industrial businesses provide trucking equipment and supplies.

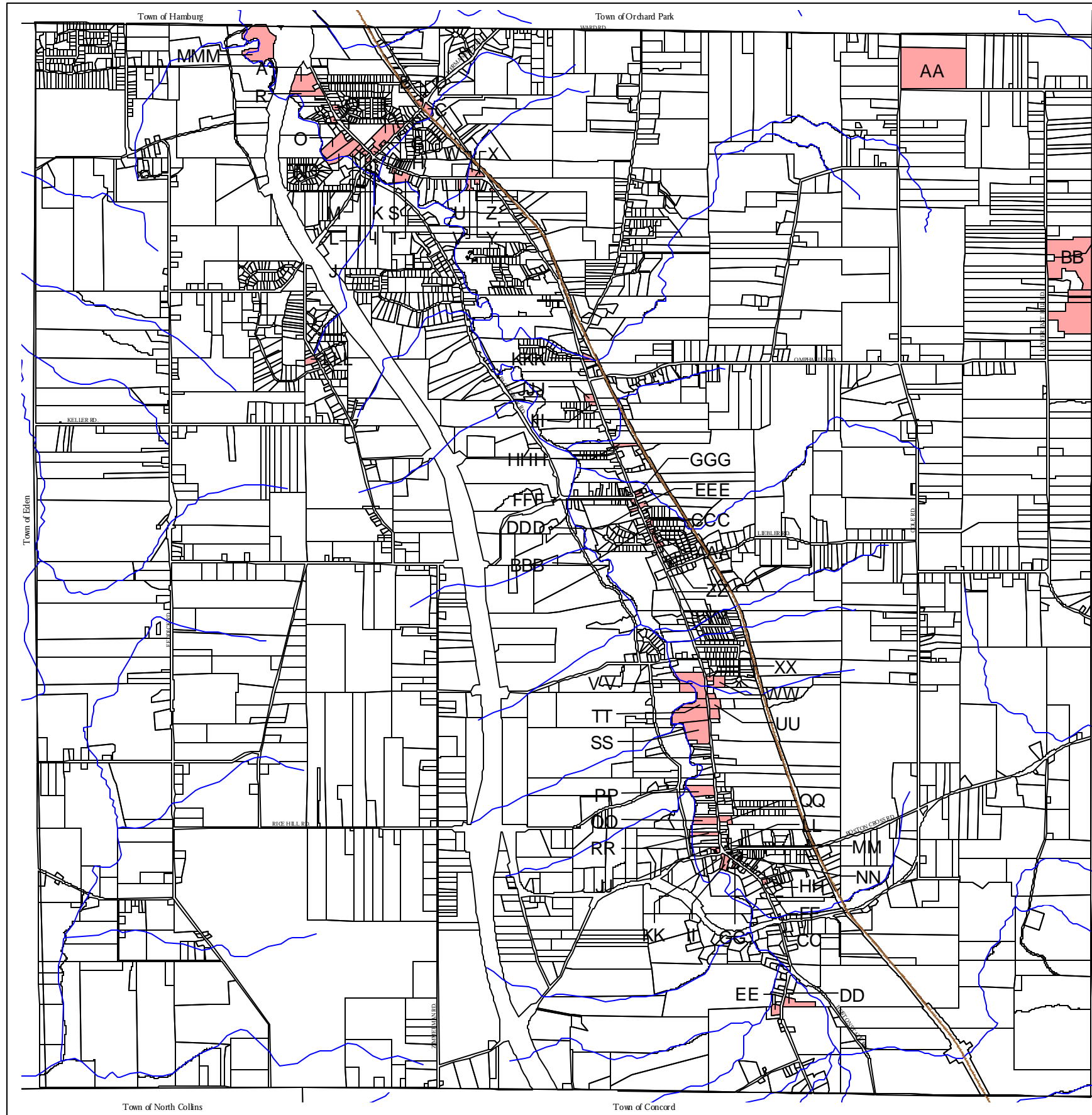
6.2.7 Recent Business Activity

Between 1996 and 1999, the Town of Boston Code Enforcement Officer recorded the following business activity:

- Three permits were issued for the construction of new commercial structures; the commercial construction amounts equaled \$510,000.
- Seven permits were issued for the construction of additions to commercial buildings, equaling \$135,000.

From the information provided, between 1996 and 1999 approximately \$650,000 was spent in the construction of new commercial structures and for additions made to commercial buildings in the Town of Boston. During the same time period, 4 permits were issued for agricultural buildings, totaling \$231,500 in construction costs. The trends between commercial and agricultural businesses are indicative of trends occurring at both the County and State levels.

Figure 6-1 - Commercial Businesses Plan



Town of Boston Comprehensive Plan

Commercial Uses

February 2001

Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A-Expressway Auto motive | AA-Boston Hill Nursery |
| B-Park Wholesale | BB-Buffalo Ski Club |
| C-George's | CC-Star Service Station |
| D-Terrison Realty | DD-Alloy Welding Fabrication |
| E-Boston Hardware | EE-Valley Fabrication & Equipment |
| F-WNY Door Distributors | FF-North Glass |
| G>MainLine Utility Inc. | GG-Boston Veterinary Clinic |
| H-Mobil | HH-Private Club |
| I-Evans National Bank | II-Boston Hotel |
| J-Country Creations Florist | JJ-Old Liberty Tavern |
| K-Altos-Attea | KK-Boston Valley Automotive |
| L-K's Mini-mart | LL-Captured Spirits |
| M-Laundromat/Post Office | MM-Boston Inn |
| N-North Boston Liquor/Alstate | NN-Boston Deli |
| O-Glad Your Hair | OO-Alfred W. Dye Inc. |
| P-Gift Shop | PP-General Dentistry |
| Q-Boston Cville | QQ-Wurtz Funeral Home |
| R-Back Barn Antiques | RR-Service Star |
| S-Moors Auto Sales | SS-Chevrolet Dealer |
| T-Dairy Barn | TT-Red Barrel Cider Mill |
| U-Alpha Pines | UU-Business Park |
| V-Friendship Construction | VV-Super Chicken Cafe |
| W-CVS/Quick | WW-Valley Floor |
| X-Car Wash | XX-JG Szalay Inc. |
| Y-Yamaha Dealer | YY-Boston Eye Center |
| Z-North Boston Garage | ZZ-Tony's Patchin Pizzeria |
-
- | |
|-----------------------------------|
| AAA-Boston Professional Building |
| BBB-Dolzar Security |
| CCC-Puffer Belly's Bakery |
| DDD-Boston Barbecue Pool & Supply |
| EEE-Sunoco |
| FFF-Valley View Inn |
| GGG-Farmer Stand |
| HHH-Marianos Restaurant |
| III-Nelles Restaurant |
| JJJ-Auto America |
| KKK-Boston Place Gift Shop |
| LLL-RJS Molini |
| MMM-Wala Wala |



1000 0 1000 2000 Feet



6.2.8 Local Business Profiles

To obtain data on the business climate in the Town of Boston, some of the local businesses were contacted for information pertaining to their company. This summary is not intended to serve as a complete inventory of the local companies, but rather to provide insight into the type of businesses that operate in the Town.

Emerling Chevrolet

In operation since 1947, the Emerling Chevrolet Automobile Dealership maintains one location at 9000 Boston State Road and a Ford and Mercury Dealership in the Village of Springville. Emerling Chevrolet is a local, family owned business that employs a total of fifty people including clerical staff, automobile mechanics and sales people. Although there are numerous automobile dealerships considered competition for Emerling Chevrolet, the company has grown over the last 5 years. The company has no intentions of relocating and plans to remain in the Boston community indefinitely.

Zittel Dairy Farms

Located in the northwestern portion of the community near the Hamburg border, the locally owned and family operated Zittel Dairy Farms has been in operation for more than one hundred years. The farm employs approximately 8 people with skills that include: mechanical, computer and animal husbandry. Even though there are additional farming operations in the Town and surrounding rural communities, Zittel Farms has not experienced any negative impacts from competition. The farm has no intentions of relocating or concluding its operations in Boston and expects to remain in the community for the foreseeable future.

Alfred W. Dye, Inc.

The locally owned and operated insurance company located at 9322 Boston State Road provides coverage for all insurances lines including automobile, homeowners and life insurance. The company has been in business for more than eighty years. Alfred W. Dye, Inc. employs 4 property and casualty licensed insurance brokers/agents. While there is existing competition from a similar business in Town, the company has maintained its client base and intends to remain in the Boston community in the future.

Charlaps Dairy

Located in North Boston at 7228 Boston State Road, the Portland, Maine based dairy products distributor offers a variety of dairy products to the Town of Boston and surrounding Buffalo Metropolitan Region. The company has existed in the Boston community for approximately forty years. The distributor employs forty-seven people; employees of Charlaps have skills as truck drivers and computer operators. The company reports minimal decline over the past 5 years and has positive hopes for growth over the next 5 years. Charlaps also has plans to expand its local operations in the near future.

Valley Fabrication and Equipment

The locally owned and operated truck equipment company located at 9776 Trevett Road in Boston, provides municipal truck equipment and supplies. The company has been in business for a little over three years and employs eleven people. Valley Fabrication and Equipment employees are skilled in welding, hydrology and electrical wiring. Since its establishment the company has experienced some growth, but has no current plans to expand. The company has no intentions of relocating or concluding its operations in Boston, and expects to remain in the community.

Rucker Lumber

Located at 9184 Boston Road, the locally owned and family operated lumber retail company provides lumber throughout the Town of Boston and its surrounding communities. The company has existed in the Town of Boston for approximately 75 years. Rucker Lumber employs 10 people whose skills include truck and forklift operation, computer and people skills. The company has reported no decline over the last 5 years with hopes of growth within the next 5 years. The company has no intentions of relocating and plans to remain in the Boston community indefinitely.

Hamburg Overhead Door

The residential and commercial specializing overhead door corporation, located at 5659 Herman Hill Road, has been locally owned and operated for more than 30 years. The company employs 35 people whose duties include electric operations and loading dock equipment product lines. The company recently relocated from Boston State Road to its Herman Hill Road location. It has expanded its warehouse and office to accommodate its present and future inventory and employees. The company has experienced growth of the last five years and has hope for continued growth within the next five years. The company plans to remain in the Boston community in the future.

7.0 Land Use

Land use development patterns are a long-term commitment by a community of a non-renewable and very valuable resource. Once land is developed, land use changes seldom occur. In general, land will change from an undisturbed, open character to a residential, commercial or industrial development. The importance of making good land use decisions will affect not only immediate “neighbors” but the entire community; land use decisions should complement adjacent users rather than create conflicts.

Boston is a growing community and land use patterns have, and could continue to, change dramatically. Eighteen Mile Creek has had a substantial influence on land use patterns in the Town of Boston. The creek is a very natural and desirable amenity. Most development patterns have occurred around the creek. (see pp. 10 of 1984 Plan) This chapter examines the physical characteristics of land in the Town of Boston, including how the land is currently used and zoned and the role of agriculture in the community.

7.1 Land Uses

Generally, the Town of Boston is a rural residential community. Large lot residential development is located on the western and eastern hills of the Town. Smaller more suburban style housing is located in the hamlet area of the Town and along roads through the center of the community. Boston State Road, running through the center of the community, is the major corridor where most commercial uses are found. There is very little industrial development in the Town of Boston; most is located in the southeast section of the Town.

An existing Land Use Map has been prepared for the Town depicting the current New York State land use classification for each parcel in the community. A base map was acquired from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning; this information was verified on-site with a windshield survey during the month of August 2000. The resulting map provides a representation of land uses in the Town of Boston.

The state classifications of land use are agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, recreation and entertainment, community service, public service, wild, forested, conservation & public parks and vacant.

The acreage dedicated to each land use in the community is shown in the table below:

Table 7-1 Generalized Land Use Categories - 1999
Town of Boston

Land Use	Town of Boston	
	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	5,921.8	27.3%
Residential	2,584.9	11.9%
Rural-Residential	5,504.1	25.4%
Commercial	176.2	0.8%
Industrial	5.5	0.1%
Recreation and Entertainment	124.1	0.6%
Community Service	93.2	0.4%
Public Service	144.2	0.7%
Forested, Wild, Conservation & Public Parks	2,657.3	12.2%
Vacant	4,501.6	20.7%
Total	21,712.9	100.00%

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning; and peter j. smith & company, inc.

7.1.1 Agricultural

Agriculture has played an important part of the history of the Town of Boston. Preservation of the existing agricultural land is important to maintain the rural character that attracts many people who are interested in making Boston their home. Agriculture, as a non-renewable resource, is a valuable commodity to all of Erie County and Western New York. Once developed, agricultural land has little chance of reverting to its original use. Agricultural lands are and will continue to face development pressures in the Town of Boston.

The agricultural land uses represent property used in the raising of crops or livestock. The agricultural land use classification was applied to lands currently being farmed and uncultivated lands. Nearly all areas of the municipality is characterized by farming; agricultural parcels are interspersed throughout the Town. Agriculture represents a substantial portion of land use in the Town of Boston. The agricultural land uses comprise the largest acreage of land use in the community, which amounts to 5,921.8 acres or 27.3% of the total land area. The agricultural land improves and enhances the rural character and quality of the Town of Boston.

7.1.2 Residential

For the most part, residential development has been the main type of new investment in the Town of Boston over the past ten years. People interested in a quiet, attractive, rural character find the Town to be a prime location for housing and living.

The residential land uses consist of property established for human occupancy. Residential uses are also prevalent throughout the community and are not concentrated in one particular area. Many of the residences are intermingled among the numerous agricultural and commercial parcels; the properties were probably divided from adjoining farmlands. Farmlands are often adjacent to large rural lots while several suburban style homes on a number of smaller properties are concentrated in specific areas of the Town.

Since some residential parcels are rather large in the Town of Boston, two residential classifications have been established. Residential includes all lots under 5 acres and rural residential includes all lots over 5 acres. The residential uses constitute 2,584.9 acres or 11.9% of land and rural-residential uses account for 5,504.1 acres or 25.4% of land in the Town.

7.1.3 Vacant

Land with no apparent use that is not wooded or maintained as open space, or lacks permanent improvements and is not fallow farmland, is commonly classified as vacant. There is a total of 4,501.6 acres or 20.7 % of vacant land in the Town of Boston. The lands are interspersed throughout the Town and are not concentrated in one particular area. These parcels may have potential as development, open space or recreational sites.

7.1.4 Commercial

The commercial uses include properties used for the sale of goods and services. Commercial uses do not constitute a large percentage of land uses in the Town of Boston, this is common in many rural communities. The commercial lands include 176.2 acres or 0.8% of land in Boston.

The majority of commercial properties are found on the Town's main corridor: Boston State Road. Among the larger businesses are Emerling Chevrolet, WNY Overhead Door Distributors and Charlaps Dairy. Smaller commercial businesses include a mix of stores, services, professional offices and restaurants.

7.1.5 Recreation and Entertainment

The recreation and entertainment land uses include facilities used for recreation, amusement or entertainment such as auditoriums and theatres; the uses also include playgrounds, athletic fields and playgrounds. The Town of Boston has few recreational and entertainment facilities, but is located within 5 miles of Chestnut Ridge County Park. The land uses account for 124.1 acres or 0.6% of the total land area. The Town has a few public parks. The largest, Boston Town Complex is located at the rear of Boston Town Hall. Significant private recreational and entertainment sites include the Buffalo and Tamarack Ski Clubs.

Table 7-2 Recreation and Entertainment
Town of Boston

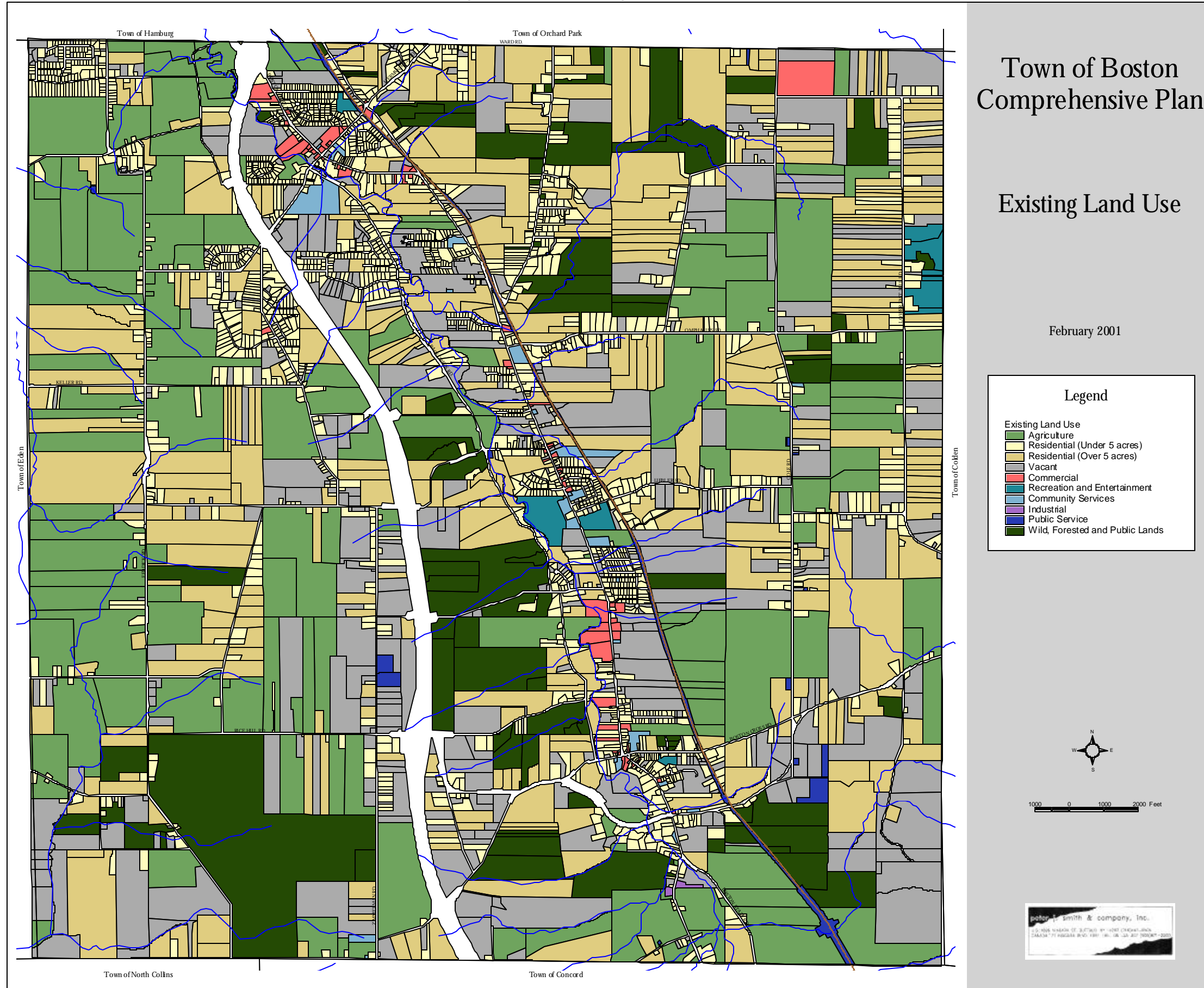
Name	Location
Boston Town Park	8500 Boston State Road
Boston Common	Boston Cross Road & Boston State Road
Creative Playground	7448 Back Creek Road
North Boston Stadium	5678 Meadow Drive
South Boston Park	6980 Boston Cross Road
Buffalo Ski Club	7707 Lower East Hill Road
Tamarack Ski Club	7570 Lower East Hill Road

Source: Town of Boston

7.1.6 Community Services

The community services classification includes land uses that provide services to the Town and provide for the well being of residents; these include municipal buildings, land and service areas, fire halls, churches, schools, cemeteries and other significant “semi-public” uses. The uses comprise 93.2 acres or 0.4% of land in the Town of Boston.

Figure 7-1 - Existing Land Use Plan



The following table summarizes the community services located in the Town of Boston:

Table 7-3 Community Services
Town of Boston

Name	Location
Boston Town Hall	8500 Boston State Road
Boston Valley Elementary School (Hamburg School District)	7476 Back Creek Road
Town of Boston Library	9475 Boston State Road
Town of Boston Historical Society	9410 Boston State Road
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	6113 Thornwood Drive
Churchill Memorial Methodist Church	8019 Boston State Road
Berean Free Presbyterian Church	8435 Boston State Road
Glenwood Presbyterian Church	9386 Boston State Road
Faith United Church of Christ	6641 Holiday Drive
Saint John the Baptist Church	6889 Boston Cross Road
Faith United Church of Christ Cemetery	8651 Boston State Road
Maplewood Cemetery	Boston State Road
Old Quaker Cemetery	Deanna Drive
Town of Boston Cobble Hill Cemetery	Boston State Road
West Boston Cemetery	Feddick Road
Town of Boston Fire Hall	6746 Mill Street
Town of Boston Fire Company	6734 Mill Street
North Boston Fire Company	Route 277
New York State Police	Boston State Road
Epsilon Housing Corporation	8169 Boston State Road
Patchin Fire and Community Association, Inc.	8333 Boston State Road

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning; and peter j. smith & company, inc.

7.1.7 Industrial

The industrial land uses include property used for the production of intensive and non-intensive man made goods. The industrial uses are located in the southeastern portion of the Town along Trevett Road. The industrial sites include 5.5 acres or 0.1% of the total land. There are only two (2) industrial land uses in the community including a welding and a fabrication company.

7.1.8 Public Service

The public service uses include public works facilities, such as utilities, that provide services and infrastructure support. In the Town of Boston, a total of 144.2 acres or 0.7% of the land is dedicated to public services.

The land uses include a power line right of way that extends in a north-south direction parallel to Abbott Road and a television/radio satellite station near the center of the Town in close proximity to Zimmerman and Polish Hill Roads. There is also a ground water tank on Brown Hill Road. Additional public services are located throughout the community.

7.1.9 Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks

The wild, forested, conservation lands and public parks include wooded areas with densely covered trees, wetlands, conservation easements and State, County, and Town owned public parks. The Town has a total of 2,657.3 acres or 12.2% of its land devoted to this land use classification.

The lands are located throughout the municipality and are not concentrated to one specific area. Erie County Parks Department Bureau of Forestry owns Boston Forest a 700 acre wooded area on Feddick Road between Belcher and Rice Hill Road.

7.2 Agricultural Analysis

Historically, agriculture has been the predominant land use in most towns throughout Erie County. The local economy has been historically based on agriculture, as crops, livestock and timber help provide for the majority of our primary needs. Farming has, in many ways, helped define the Town of Boston as farming occupies a large amount of the land within the Town.

In looking at the land use percentages and economic characteristics, farming is an important feature for the Town of Boston. Therefore, its future role should be defined in the Comprehensive Plan. There are several specific issues to be addressed in the plan. These include:

- The importance of farming in the community;
- The future development of agricultural lands;
- The best way to use land no longer desirable for farming; and
- The incentives or programs that may be provided to continue the operation of farms in the community.

7.2.1 Agricultural District Facts

Erie County also gathered information on a number of factors in the agricultural districts including the number of active agricultural operations by principal enterprises, number of operations according to annual gross farm sales, amount of harvested cropland and number of livestock. The following information summarizes the agricultural district in the Town of Boston. In 1997, nearly half, or 45%, of the agricultural operations were committed to dairy and dairy related crops; 14% of agricultural operations were committed to horticulture specialties. Raising livestock accounted for 5% while there were no acres dedicated to poultry and vineyards in the district.

Table 7-4 Agricultural Operations by Principal Enterprises (1997)
District No. 3 (includes rented lands)

Principal Enterprises	Number	Percent
Dairy and Related Crops	10	45%
Cash Crops	8	36%
Livestock	1	5%
Horticulture Specialties	3	14%
Poultry	-	0%
Vineyards	-	0%
Total	22	100%

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

The majority of operations (35%) in the agriculture district had gross farm sales between \$200,000 and \$499,999 while 29% had gross farms sales between \$10,000 and \$ 39,999. Other gross farm sales information is summarized below.

Table 7-5 Number of Operations According to Gross Farm Sales (1997)
District No. 3 (excludes rented lands)

Gross Farm Sales	Number	Percent
Below \$ 10,000	3	18%
\$ 10,000 to \$ 39,999	5	29%
\$ 40,000 to \$ 99,999	1	6%
\$ 100,000 to \$ 199,999	1	6%
\$ 200,000 to \$ 499,999	6	35%
Over \$ 500,000	1	6%
Total	17	100%

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

The following table illustrates that most of the harvested cropland consists of Corn and Hay (1,200 and 1,300 acres consecutively), while the least harvested consists of Wheat, Barley and Rye (5 acres each). Although grapes were harvested in the district, vineyards do not constitute principal enterprises.

Table 7-6 Harvested Cropland in Acres (1997)
District No. 3

Crops	Acres
Corn	1200
Wheat	5
Oats	170
Barley, Rye	5
Vegetables	320
Hay	1300
Grapes	7
Apples	-
Nursery	180

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

In 1997, the majority of livestock raised in the district were milk cows and the least were beef cattle. No poultry, hogs, sheep or horses were raised in the district.

Table 7-7 Livestock Raised (1997)
District No. 3

Livestock	Numbers
Milk Cows	1710
Heifers and Calves	755
Beef Cattle	70
Poultry	-
Hogs	-
Sheep	-
Horses	-

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

7.2.2 Farmland Protection Programs

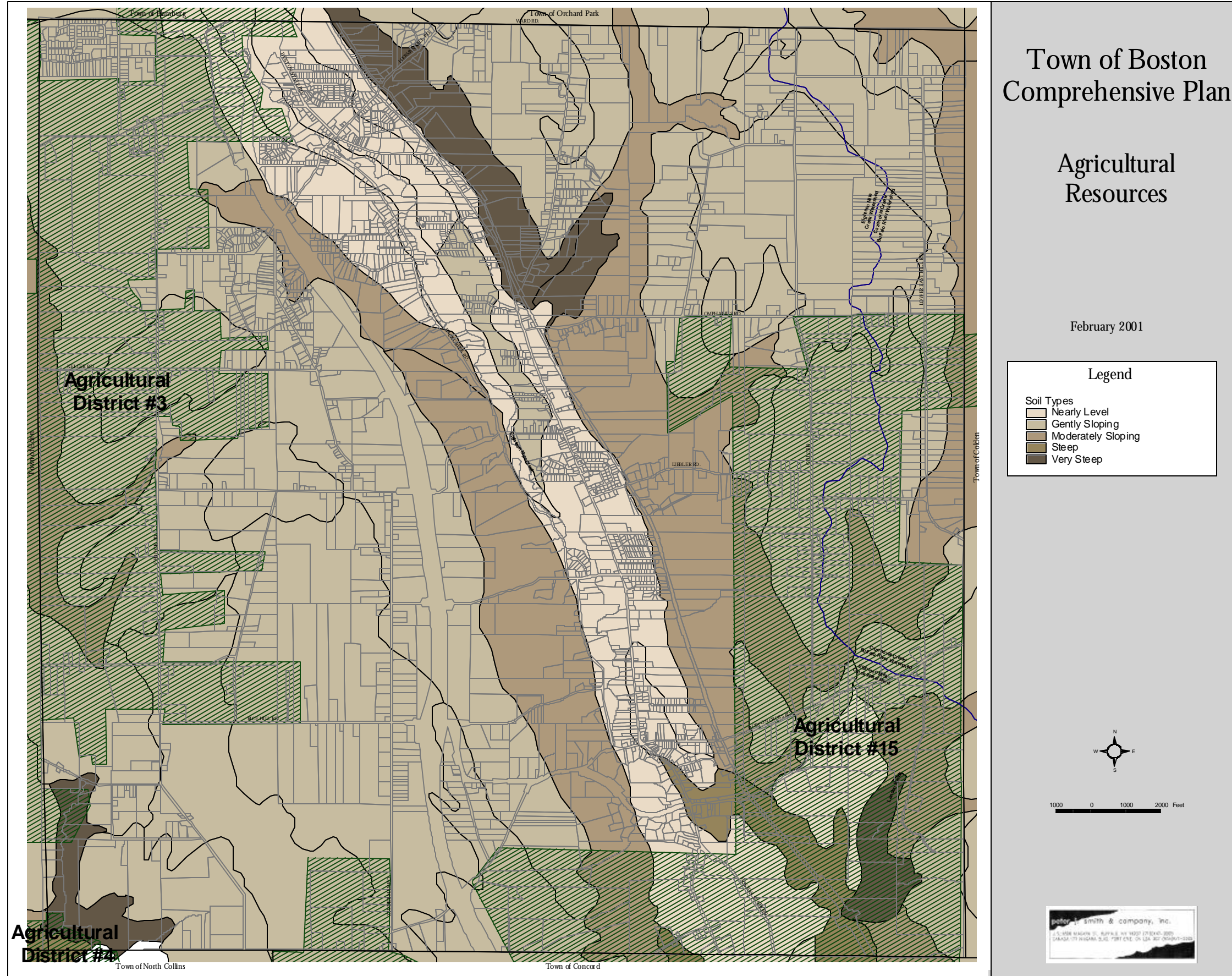
As mentioned in this Chapter, farmlands should be protected when feasible in the Town of Boston. Aside from aesthetic incentives, there are fiscal and economic benefits of preserving farmland. According to a number of studies performed by the American Farmland Trust, “farmland provides fiscal benefits by generating more in local taxes than it demands in local services.”¹⁴ The median findings of these studies are as follows:

For every \$1.00 attained from municipal taxes,

- Residential uses require \$ 1.15 in services,
- Farm/forest uses require \$ 0.35 in services, and
- Commercial/industrial uses require \$ 0.27 in services.

¹⁴ Daniels, Tom and Deborah Bowers, *Holding Our Ground: Protecting Americas Farms and Farmland*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997. p. 15.

Figure 7-2 - Agricultural Resources



While these figures have not been specifically gathered for the Town of Boston, the finding point is the cost effectiveness of farming as farmlands pay more in taxes than demanded from public services. The following sections describe the numerous farm protection programs created as an effort among state and local governments and private landowners to support and preserve agriculture.

7.2.2.1 Agricultural Districts

“Agricultural districts are used in twenty-one states to provide some greater security for farmland owners against the intrusion and complaints of non-farmers.”¹⁵ There are more than 28 million acres of land in agricultural districts across the nation. Agricultural districts began in 1965 in the State of California, followed by New York State with the formation of a comprehensive agricultural district program in 1971. “About 8 million acres, or roughly half of New York’s farmland and one quarter of the entire state, have been placed in agricultural districts.”¹⁶ An agricultural district is created by the county legislature upon petition by interested landowners. The owners must collectively own at least 500 acres (or 10%) of the land proposed for the district.¹⁷ The NYS Agricultural Districts Law supports agriculture through several provisions:

- Agricultural assessments for land in active agricultural production;
- Limits on taxation of farmland for certain municipal improvements;
- Limits on public utility taxes to ½ acre of farm devoted to housing;
- Requirements that state agency policies support farming;
- State review of local ordinances which affect agriculture;
- Limitations on public investment for non-farm development;
- Agricultural impact statement requirements for public projects;
- Right to farm protection for sound agricultural practices;
- Disclosure notices to real estate purchasers in agricultural areas;
- Right to recover legal fees where a farmer wins nuisance lawsuits.¹⁸

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 90.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 99.

¹⁷ Ferguson, Kirsten, Cosgrove, Jeremy and Teri Ptacek. Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York. Albany: American Farmland Trust, 2000, p.10.

¹⁸ American Farmland Trust. Op. Cit. pp. 198-201.

Boston is a part of a four town Agricultural District (District # 3), which also includes the Towns of Eden, Orchard Park and Hamburg. Boston is also part of Agricultural District # 15 (Concord, Boston, Colden, North Collins and Collins); however, according to the County no definitive information was derived for the Town of Boston for agricultural district #15. Data for Boston will be derived from Agricultural District # 3. Summary data compiled by Erie County DEP on the District is provided.

Table 7-8 Agricultural District Characteristics
District No. 3

Characteristics	District No. 3
Year Established	1973
Acres (1997)	8,800
Prime Soil	91%
Active Agricultural Operations (1989)	26
Active Agricultural Operations (1997)	22

Source: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, 1997

In 1997, in its 8-year review of the district, the ECDEP made the following observations about Agricultural District # 3:

- The Eden-Boston portion of the Agricultural District experienced an one-hundred thirty-two (132) acre decrease in the number of farming operations between 1989 and 1997;
- 91% of the districts land has prime or viable soils;
- Portions of the e xisting district containing prime soils are now farmed; others out of production;
- There is a large portion of cleared land within the soils categories for active farming pursuits;
- The Towns of Hamburg and Orchard Park are currently developing toward areas containing portions of the agricultural districts. The districts in these towns are not widespread with dispersed agricultural businesses, which are quite significant;
- Boston contains dairy operations adjoining the Town of Eden with some smaller residential development along the road frontages;
- Portions of the sewer and water districts overlap the agricultural district, however these are not viewed as a concern as the Residential- Agriculture (R-A) zoning complements agriculture;
- A predominant land use throughout the district is single-family homes along existing roads.

Among the reasons indicated in a report by the County Planning Agency for the continuance of the agricultural districts are:

- They will maintain the agricultural vitality in the county through the encouragement of farming and its continued investment.
- They will help to work against the untimely retirement of farmland and the loss of viable soils needed for continuous production.
- They are consistent with the County's adopted "Farms for the Future" agricultural strategy plan.
- They will assist in retaining the buffered areas adjoining the agricultural operations.
- They will help maintain an important source of local food supplies.
- They serve as an incentive for non-intrusive growth.
- They will continue to provide an important source of open space and assist in maintaining a rural and semi-rural character.
- They will assist the operation of farming by prohibiting local regulations that may possibly restrict farming operations that could otherwise be considered without the agricultural district designation.
- They will become important elements of the various towns and Erie County's comprehensive planning processes.

7.2.2.2 New York State Tax Relief

To help reduce the tax burden of farmers, the New York State legislature enacted the 1996 Farmers Protection and Farm Preservation Act. This law made farmers eligible for a refundable income tax credit for school taxes paid. The program is completely funded by the state. In addition, farm buildings and structures are also exempt from certain provisions of the Real Property Tax Law (RPTL):

- Section 483 exempts new and reconstructed farming operation buildings for ten (10) years;
- Section 483-a entirely exempts certain limited use farming structures, such as silos and other storage and handling facilities;
- Section 483-c exempts temporary greenhouses; and
- Limited tax exemption is available for rehabilitation of historic barns.

The eligible structures are exempt provided the new or rebuilt structures increase the assessed value of the land, the exemption is not based on the construction costs.

7.2.2.3 Transfer of Development Rights Programs

Transfer of Development Rights Programs allow landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. In the context of farmland protection the TDR is used to shift development away from agricultural areas to areas closer to urban services.¹⁹ In many instances development pressures may be offset by a TDR program. Such programs can be looked upon as a proactive approach to preserving a community's significant farmland resources.

7.2.2.4 Purchase of Development Rights Programs/Grants

The purchase of development rights programs compensate landowners for permanently limiting the non-agricultural use of their land. In doing so commonly a deed restriction or agricultural conservation easement is placed on their property.²⁰

In 1996, New York State Legislature amended Article 25-AAA to provide grants for the purchase of development rights on farmland. Those eligible for funding (under the 75% state contribution/ 25% local contribution program) were municipalities with approved agricultural and farmland protection plans.

In 2000, the state awarded "\$12 million to 15 municipalities to help protect economically viable farmland from development. The award is the largest amount ever appropriated for farmland protection in New York and represents a 56% increase over last years funding."²¹

There were some municipalities in Erie County awarded grants for farm protection from the state. The Town of Marilla was granted \$375,000 for the purchase of development rights on one or several farms from a list of agricultural operations. The Town of Amherst was granted \$100,000 for the purchase of development rights from list of agricultural operations approved by the Town.

¹⁹ American Farmland Trust. OP. Cit. pp. 121.

²⁰ Ibid. pp. 50.

²¹ www.agmkt.state.ny.us - accessed July 28, 2000.

7.2.2.5 Agricultural/Farmland Preservation and Protection Strategy

In 1996, the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning along with the Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board adopted the *Farms for the Future Agricultural and Farmland Preservation and Protection Strategy*. The study was completed with funds provided from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. The goals of the County preservation and protection strategy are as follows:

- To protect agriculture and farmland using the resources available to allow the industry to be profitable and flourish;
- To preserve farmland and associated agricultural land using techniques to assure that the lands will be kept in a good state as long as possible; and
- To secure the support of the community and governments through education and the promotion of agriculture as a neighbor and major economic distributor.

Within Agricultural District # 3 the Towns of Hamburg and Orchard Park have been considered as transitional areas while the other Towns (Eden and Boston) have been considered “Agricultural Reserve Areas.” Since the Erie County Farms for the Future strategy has designated the Town of Boston as an Agricultural Reserve Area, no major growth is anticipated in the area and that the land be reserved for agricultural uses.

7.2.2.6 Right to Farm Legislation

In January 1999, the Erie County Legislature adopted the “Erie County Right to Farm Law.” The legislation is designed to protect the county’s farmers, farm activity and agricultural land against encroachment from residential development. The legislation recognizes the economic and sociological value of agriculture to local communities.

The law seeks to minimize conflicts between agricultural and residential uses, particularly the number and effects of nuisance lawsuits brought by non-agricultural neighbors against farm operations.

Through a disclosure requirement for all purchase and sales contracts for residential properties in the county, the law advises potential buyers of the affects of farming activities such as the operation of machinery and the application of pesticides and fertilizers. Some local farmers have expressed the desire to have this notification made more prominent by realtors so new homeowners completely understand the rights of neighboring farmers.

7.2.3 Agricultural Agencies and Organizations

7.2.3.1 Erie County Farm Bureau

The Erie County Farm Bureau is an East Aurora based, volunteer organization concerned with agricultural issues and the creation of economic opportunity within the farming community. In Erie County membership totals 865 member families.

Besides the opportunity to submit ideas on important issues, benefits available to Farm Bureau members consist of displays at agricultural events such as the Erie County Fair, interaction with other agricultural organizations, automobile discounts and reduced rates on life and health insurance and selected personal services.

7.2.3.2 Erie County Agricultural Farmland and Protection Board

The eleven (11) member board is responsible for farm preservation throughout the county. The responsibilities include the review of NYS Agricultural Districts, review of specific development proposals and the review and approval of local farmland protection plans (required by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to receive agricultural grants). The formation and duties of the board are outlined in the NYS Agricultural District Law.

The Board consist of 4 farmers and 1 agri-businessperson and representatives from several governmental and non-governmental agencies: Erie County Legislature, County Department of Environment and Planning, Soil & Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension, County Real Property Tax Department and the WNY Land Conservancy.

7.2.3.3 American Farmland Trust

The American Farmland Trust is a private non-profit conservation organization founded in 1980 and dedicated to the preservation of the nation's agricultural resources. AFT works to stop the loss of productive farmland and to promote farming practices that contribute to a healthy environment. The AFT provides programs of public education and technical assistance to communities by managing conservation easements and other local farm protection programs.

7.3 Zoning

7.3.1 Residential

The Town of Boston is usable land primarily designated as residential zoning (R1- R4) districts. Within R-1 and R-2 districts, allowed uses include single-family dwelling units; in the R-2 district cluster housing units are allowed. Both R-1 and R-2 districts allow churches and other places of worship, schools and other public facilities, hospitals and charitable institutions. There are also uses subject to special use permits in the district including private garages, off-street parking, storage facilities, swimming pools, tennis courts and in-home-offices. Many of the R-1 districts are located on the residential roads that run perpendicular to Boston State Road such as Lu-Don and Holiday Drives.

In the R-2 district, special permitted uses include bed and breakfast establishments, nursing or convalescent homes and horse stables. Many of the R-2 districts are located on roads perpendicular Boston State Road such as Chestnut Ridge, Omphalius and Boston Cross Road.

Allowed uses in the R-3 districts include uses allowed within the R-2 districts with exception to those requiring special use permits. The uses also include two or more family condominiums and residences where served by sewer systems.

Permitted uses in the R-4 districts include licensed mobile home courts. Mobile homes are considered to be year round residential units. The mobile units do not include “recreational vehicles, vans motor home or pick up trucks with caps or other enclosures, travel/camping trailers designed to be driven or towed by automobile.”²² The mobile home residential districts are located off of Boston State Road, not far from Valley View and Wildwood Drives.

The community also includes a General Residence-Restricted Business District R-C zoning district. Within the R-C districts the permitted uses include those permitted in the R-2 districts and three or more family dwellings with the exception of cluster housing and those requiring special use permits. The uses within the districts may include real estate and insurance offices, mortuaries, art and dance studios, doctor and professional offices, meeting rooms and physical fitness facilities. These districts are primarily located along Boston State Road.

²² Town of Boston. Local Law No. 2-1997 (Mobile Home Court Law of the Town of Boston).

7.3.2 Agriculture

A substantial portion of the land in the Town of Boston is zoned R-A, Residential Agriculture. The purpose of the zoning designation is to protect agricultural lands and provide for limited rural residential development in the community especially where no services are provided. Permitted uses and structures in the R-A district according to the Town's zoning include:

- Uses and structures included in the principal R-2 district.
- Two family dwellings.
- Agricultural, floricultural and horticultural pursuits in the production of crops and livestock.
- Veterinarians, small animal hospitals and dog kennels provide the animals are within a 100 feet of any lot line.
- Private wildlife reservation or conservation projects.
- Cemeteries, hospitals, rehabilitative, religious, philanthropic or charitable institutions.
- Nonprofit private clubs, including tennis courts, swimming pools catering to members and their guests.

There are also special use permits that may be authorized by the Town Board. The permits may be obtained for the following uses:

- Radio and television transmission facilities with a combined weight of no more than 50 pounds; facilities that are not readily visible and are buffered as not to interfere with the transmission or reception of any signal.
- Gun Clubs.
- Private Airports with air strips that meet the approval of the federal government's aviation agency.
- Picnic Grounds or groves with rental charges, excluding amusement devices other than customary playground equipment.
- Fur farming, for the sole purpose of raising animals for their fur without any attempt to domesticate the animals.
- Raising of domestic honeybees in that the distance of hives be substantially away from adjacent dwellings or areas used by adjoining landowners.

Based on the land use regulations, the Town of Boston has provisions to effectively restrict incompatible development in agricultural areas. However, these regulations may not be enough and the zoning ordinances may be need to be amended to resist pressures and address changes in the nature and form of the regulations.

Most of the Residential-Agricultural zoning designations are located near the outer boundaries of the Town on in close proximity to the perimeters of the Towns of Eden and Colden, along or near Feddick and Boston Cole Roads.

7.3.3 Commercial

The Town of Boston includes two commercial zoning designations. They include (C1) Local Retail Business Districts and (C2) General Commercial District. Permitted C-1 uses include retail business establishments and personal services, restaurants, hotels and lodging, dry cleaners, car washes, theaters and banks.

Uses which require special use permits in the C-1 district include gasoline stations and car repair shops, radio and television transmission facilities with a combined weight of 50 pounds and two family dwellings with a side lot adjacent to the side lot of any R-1, R-2 or R-3 district. These districts are located mostly along Boston State Road.

Allowed uses in the C-2 district include those included in C-1 district in addition to boat and marine sales and service and warehouses not including the storage of flammable materials, custom shops not limited to printing, woodworking, electrical, heating and plumbing shops.

7.3.4 Industrial

Portions of the Town have been designated as (M1) Industrial Park/Research and Development and (M2) General Industrial districts. The M-1 designations allow for the use of office buildings and professional offices, medical or dental clinics, research and development facilities, light manufacturing and fabrication plants and lumberyards.

The permitted uses in M-2 districts consist of coal yards, incinerators, the manufacturing of heavy machinery, concrete and the storage of petroleum, automobile assembly and fabrication, open storage yards including junk yards and adult uses subject to approval after a public hearing. There are relatively few industrial zoning districts in the Town; these are located in the southeastern section of the community.

7.4 Future Land Use Projections

Determining future land use is important to assist a community in developing a vision for the future. Maintaining a sense of balance between residential, commercial and industrial uses, combined with essential services and green spaces, helps to create an attractive community; more importantly, the community can ensure that they are able to support the new development in terms of infrastructure and other service costs.

Land Use Standards are generalized from a number of traditional communities to demonstrate a balance of land use and tax base. Standards should not be specifically applied to the community to designate surpluses and deficiencies, but to serve as a comparative view for the community.

7.4.1 Residential

Number of Units

To determine the number of housing units needed in the Town of Boston an analysis of the existing housing units and the need for additional units was completed. The Greater Buffalo Regional Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC) projected population figures for the year 2022 were used for the analysis.

The GBNRTC projects the population of the Town could increase from 7,445 to 9,000 by the year 2025. For this analysis, the Towns projected population will be estimated at 8,200, which is the midpoint of the GBNRTC projections.

As part of the analysis, the project population was divided by the average household size for the community in 1990. According to the 1990 census information, the average household size in the Town of Boston was 2.8.

The following formula was used to calculate the number of residential units needed to meet the projected population estimated for the year 2025:

$$\frac{\text{Projected Population}}{\text{Mean Household Size}} = \text{Projected Number of Housing Units}$$

Using the above formula, the housing required for the Town of Boston in the year 2025 is estimated to be 3,200 units.

Rental

The Rental rate for the Town of Boston is approximately 16 %. In Erie County, the rental rate was 33 %, which is higher than the Town of Boston. The community should consider developing more rental units to help provide for a more diverse housing community.

Senior Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development offers no standard for the number of senior units that should be available in a community, but they recommend that approximately 10% of seniors should have access to subsidized housing.

The population over the age of 65 in Boston is approximately 720. Of the seniors approximately 43 or 6 % live below poverty level. If subsidized housing were available to 10 % of all seniors 72 should have access to special housing. Assuming a household size of seniors of approximately 1.1, there should be approximately 65 senior units in the community.

Affordable Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has a standard definition for affordable housing based on the following formula. Current guidelines for eligibility state that the total rent/mortgage payment plus utilities should be no more than 30% of the total monthly gross income.

According to the 1990 census, the yearly median family income in the Town of Boston was \$39,164. The median rent is \$ 353/ month or \$ 4,236 per year. Presuming annual utility payments are \$1,800 per year, the housing cost could be estimated at \$ 6,036 per year for a renter. This is approximately 15 % of the median income for the community.

According to the 1990 census, the monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income, for those holding a mortgage includes 19 % for the Town of Boston. These figures would suggest that, overall, housing is affordable in the community.

Residential Acreage

To determine the acreage required to meet the need of current and future residents, a residential acreage analysis was completed. The community should encourage clustered housing to protect agriculture and open space in the Town. The following guidelines are recommended for new residential development:

SF Residential	1.0 units per acre
<u>Rural Residential</u>	<u>0.5 units per acre</u>
Total	1.5 units per acre

These guidelines were determined by dividing the number of housing units by the number of residential acres.

7.4.2 Commercial

The amount of commercial land that should be available in each community varies considerably. Changes in land use patterns over the past decade have a great impact on the percentage of land that is designated for commercial use. Retail malls and plazas include extensive parking to meet the needs of its customers. The acreage required for commercial uses seems inflated because of the large amount of space needed for commercial parking areas.

In 1992, the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) adopted an updated land use ratio information for communities. According to this information, approximately “10% of lands in a community could be designated for commercial uses.” This percentage has increased from 2% in 1955 to 7% in 1983 to 10% in 1992 due to changes in commercial land use development.

In 1999, in the Town of Boston there were approximately 176 acres designated for commercial uses; this is 0.8% of the total land area. This number is substantially less than the standard establish by the PAS.

When using these figures to determine new commercial growth, the character of the community should be considered. The proposed commercial development should be viewed as an asset and improvement to the quality of life for residents. In addition, aesthetic quality should be considered. The Town should concentrate commercial uses in designated areas and new developments should be determined on an individual basis.

7.4.3 Industrial

The Planning Advisory Service and American Planning Association provided information on industrial land uses. The guidelines are based on communities nationwide to create a balance of industrial land uses. The standard industrial guidelines recommend that 12 acres of land per 1,000 residents should be set aside as a reserve for industrial development. In addition, 12 acres per 1000 residents should also be set aside for future reserve.

Using this standard as a guideline, the Town with a population in 1990 of 7,445. should have approximately 84 acres in current reserve and 84 acres for its future reserve targeted for industrial development. Based on the projected population of 9,000 in 2025 by the GBNRTC the community should have 108 acres on current reserve and an additional 108 for future reserve.

In summary, to meet the guidelines the Town should have between 200-250 acres of industrial land that is both developed and undeveloped, but ensure that this land use does not conflict with the Town's bedroom community character. In 1978, there were approximately 72 acres of industrial land in the community. This acreage has decreased to 5.5 acres in 1999.

7.4.4 Parks

According to standard recreational guidelines, the following are recommended for parks and recreational facilities in a community:

Table 7-9 Standard Park Recommendations
Town of Boston

Park Type	Recommended Acreage (per 1000 residents)
Playground	1.5
Neighborhood Park	2.0
Playfield	1.5
Community Park	3.5
Total	8.5

Source: National Parks and Recreation Association

In 1999, the community had approximately 124.1 acres of land dedicated to entertainment and recreational uses, which include parklands. Of these, approximately 63 acres are parkland. According to the NRPA standards, there should be a minimum of 8.5 acres of total parkland per 1000 residents. Therefore, the Town of Boston should have approximately 60 acres of land dedicated for parks.

7.5 Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan for the Town of Boston identifies various uses for land that should be reflected in the Town's zoning and other land use regulations. Each of these land use regulations are described below:

Low Density Residential

Most of the Town is designated as low density residential to fit in with the existing rural character of the Town. The hills on both the east and west are designated as low density residential to encourage single family housing on existing lots; new subdivisions should be discouraged in these areas.

Medium Density

Medium density residential would be located in the valley along Boston State Road to link the three hamlets in the Town. These areas would allow for higher density housing such as smaller lot single family, two or more family dwellings. Developments in these areas should be encouraged to share curb cuts and other traffic calming techniques to reduce congestion on Boston State Road.

Mixed Use Hamlet

The hamlet areas (North Boston, Patchin and Boston) are designated as mixed use hamlet areas. Uses should include a variety of higher density housing, small scale retail and office. These areas should become the focus for future development in the Town and would be linked with a comprehensive sidewalk and trail system.

Highway Commercial

Highway commercial uses would be designated at the northern Route 219 interchange. A portion of this area would overlap the North Boston hamlet area. Uses that should be encouraged in this area would be highway related uses such as convenient stores, gas stations or restaurants. Strict design guidelines should be established for this area to ensure minimal impacts from any future development.

Viewshed Protection Area

A viewshed protection area has been designated on the hillsides facing the valley in the Town of Boston. These areas should be protected from development that would negatively impact the visual character of the Town of Boston. This would be accomplished by implementing strict regulations and innovative zoning techniques on any new development within this boundary.

Figure 7-3 – Future Land Use Plan

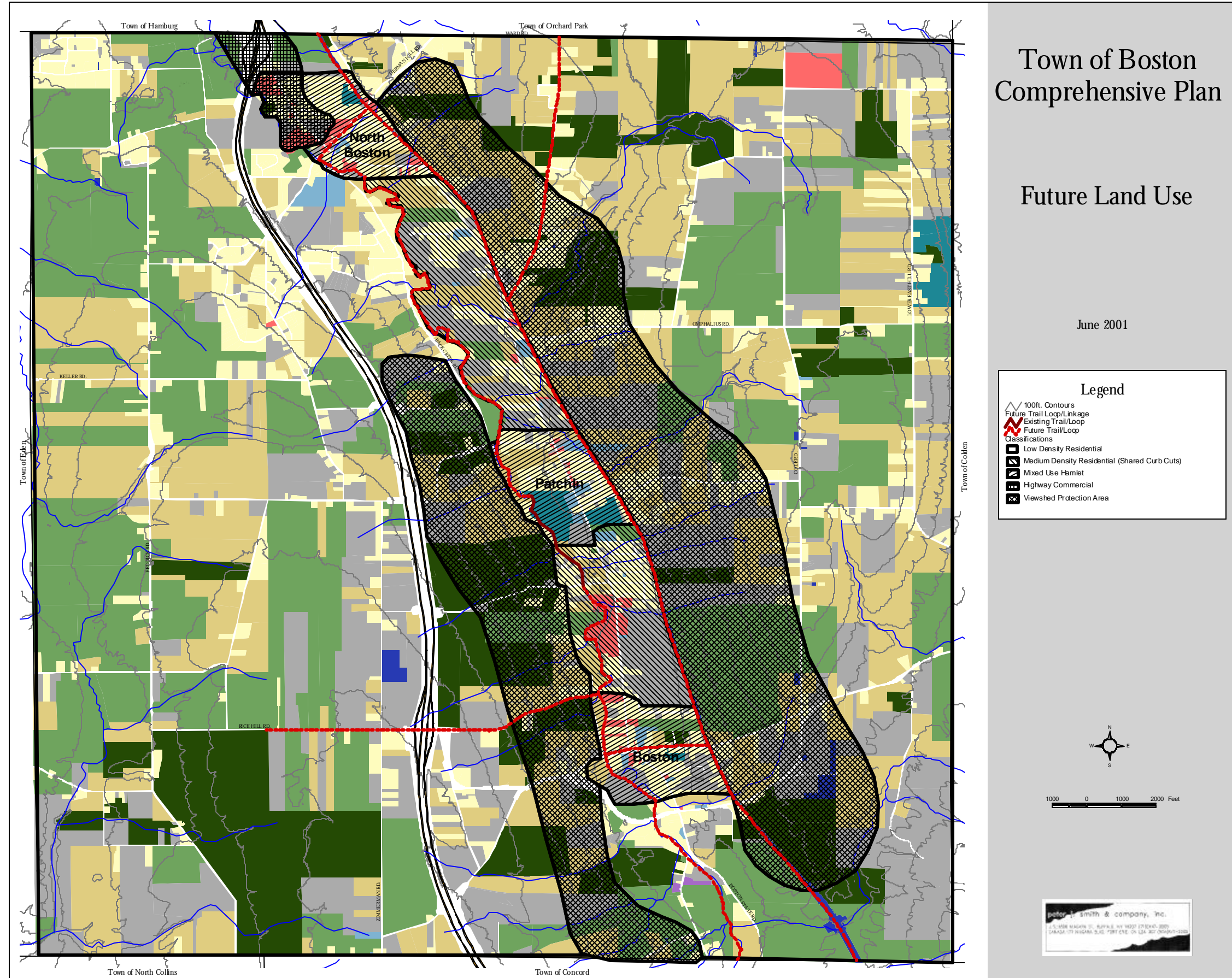
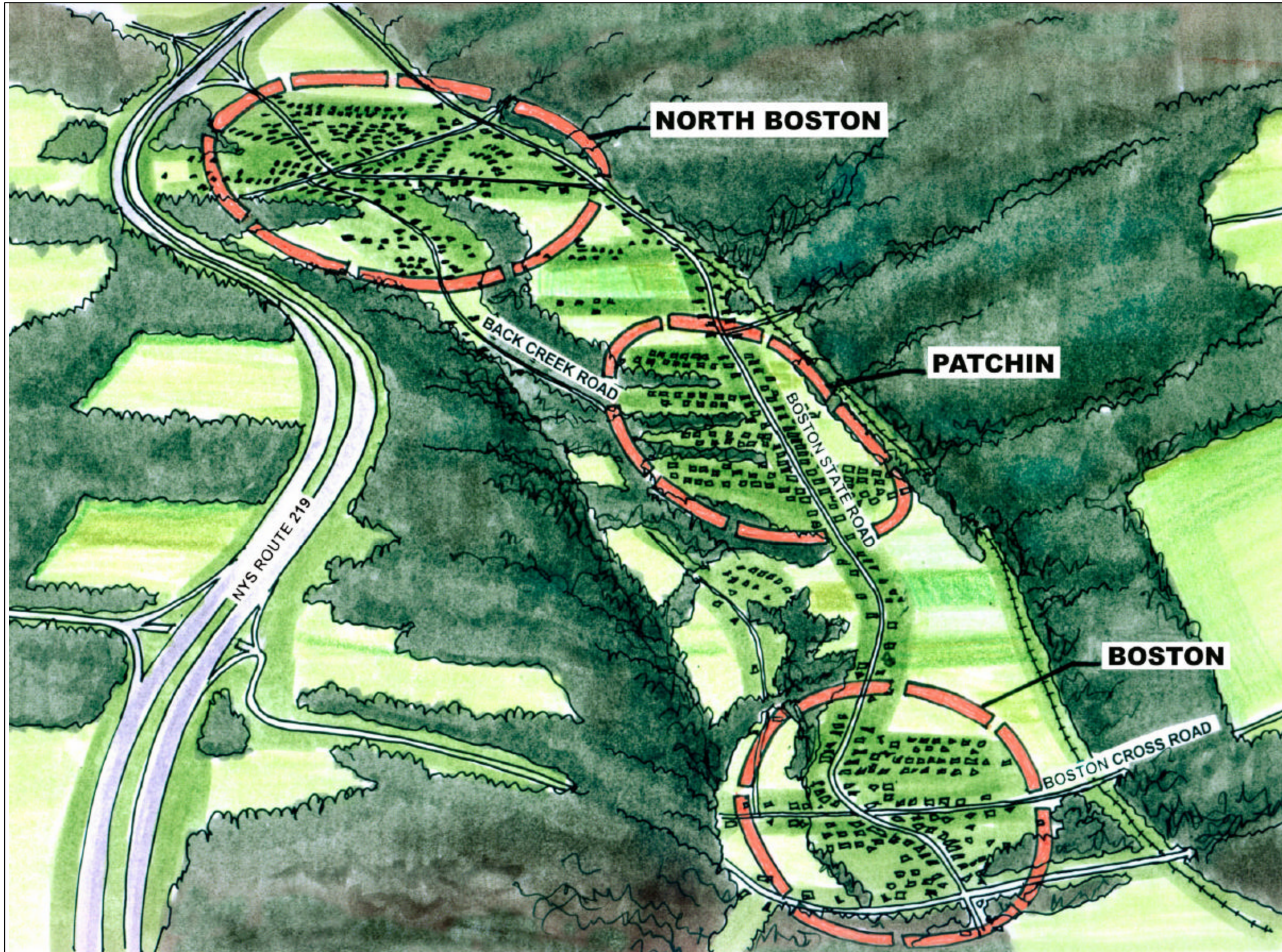


Figure 7-4 Graphic Illustrating Future Land Use Plan



Town of Boston
Comprehensive Plan

Aerial Perspective
of the
Town of Boston

June 2001

8.0 Environment

The natural environment of a community often initiates the type and density of development that occurs in an area. Protection of the natural environment often requires the preservation of ecological resources and, in some cases, if the resources are carefully managed, they can increase growth in a community. This section concentrates on the natural conditions that affect and distinguish land in the Town of Boston. The environmental characteristics of land, such as the soils, topography, groundwater and plant life are important to the community and will be examined. The Town's environmental conditions influence the following:

- Quality of life;
- The benefits of character and scenic value;
- Viewing and recreational opportunities; and
- Constraints to development.

Information for this section was obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Soil Conservation Service and Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Erie County Department of Environment and Planning and the Town of Boston. The Town of Boston 2010 Master Plan (August 1984) was used as an additional resource.

8.1 Soils

This section discusses soils in the Town of Boston and their impact on current and future land uses in the community. Soils are naturally occurring bodies at the surface of the earth. They are the products of the earth's weather conditions and added processes that act on parent materials. Parent materials are the "unconsolidated organic and mineral materials in which soil forms."²³ The properties of any soil are dependent upon a combination of factors including:

- The physical and chemical composition of the parent material;
- Climate and Topography;
- Animal and plant life; and
- Time.

²³ US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service. Soil Survey of Erie County, New York. December 1986. p. 229.

The influence of each of these factors is what generates differences among soil types. The effects of plant, animal life and climate may be influenced by topography and the nature of the parent material. In other instances, the influence of just one of the four factors, such as time, may have a dominant influence on soil type.

8.1.1 Soil Groupings

The soil types in the Town of Boston include a combination of several soils including Volusia-Mardin-Erie; Orpark-Manlius-Derb; Hudson-Varysburg-Valois and Blasdell-Farnham-Alton. These soils have the following characteristics in order of their prevalence:

Volusia-Mardin-Erie

Approximately 45% of the land in the Town is comprised of these soils. These are mostly derived from siltstone, sandstone and shale. The soils are “dominantly gently sloping and sloping deep, somewhat poorly drained and moderately well drained, medium textured soils that have a fragipan; on upwards.”²⁴ The land is suitable for dairy farming and much of the land has been cleared for that purpose. The cultivation of these lands is limited by difficulties in controlling erosion and the drainage of some of the wetter lands. These soils are located in the southern sections spreading to the northeastern portions of the Town.

Orpark-Manlius-Derb

Nearly 35% of the land in Boston is comprised of these soils. A large amount of the soils are derived from sandstone and shale. The soils are “dominantly nearly level through very steep, moderately deep and deep, somewhat poorly drained to excessively drained, moderately fine textured or medium textured soils; on uplands underlain by acid shale bedrock.”²⁵ These soils can be found in the northern most and northwestern portions of the Town of Boston. Of the soils located in less steep areas, some have been cleared of forest cover and many are used for general farming. Gullies are common throughout Erie County along steeply sloping areas containing these soil types. Many of the gullies are dangerous and pose limitations to cultivation and development.

²⁴ Ibid. p 8.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 9.

Blasdell-Farnham-Alton

About 15% of the land area consists of these soils. The soils are “dominantly gently sloping through moderately steep deep, moderately well drained and well drained medium textured and moderately fine textured soils; in valleys.”²⁶ The soils are situated through the center of Town along the valleys of Eighteen Mile Creek. The soil types often make for good agricultural land and home sites. However, steep slopes, seasonal wetness and occasional flooding are some of the limitations affecting the use of these soils. Many areas containing these soils are prone to slumping. Slumping is a form of land erosion, causing land to sink heavily and in certain instances collapse.

Hudson-Varysburg-Valois

Roughly 5% of the land is comprised of these soils. The soils are “dominantly nearly level through sloping, deep, moderately well drained to somewhat excessively drained medium textured soils, in valleys and on plains.”²⁷ The soils can be found in the southeastern portion of Boston along Landon Brook a tributary of Eighteen Mile Creek. Of these soils those with relatively small slopes are often used for farming. Much of the steeper sloping soils tend to slip and slump, making them less conducive for farming.

Many of the soil groupings in the Town of Boston often conflict with septic systems. According the Town’s 1984 Master Plan, “most of the land area contains soil types that are not suited to the successful operation of septic systems without extremely large leach fields.”²⁸ The incompatibility of the soils with the septic systems mostly result from sloping and flooding tendencies. As a result Boston has previously recommended that residential lots of two acres or less be confined to areas near public sewer systems. The sewer accessible areas are those located most near Erie County Sewer District #3. The sewer district will be discussed in more detail in the infrastructure chapter.

In addition, the soil types closest to waterways have potential for slumping. Slumping is a result of erosion, causing the land to sink heavily and in some instances collapse. Much of the land areas in town with slumping potentials exist along or near Eighteen Mile Creek. The potential slumping soils prevalent in the Town are the Blasdell-Farnham-Alton grouping. Water movement through these soils are generally moderately rapid, sometimes causing excessive drainage and possibly leading to soil slumping.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 12.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 16.

²⁸ Economic Consultants Organization, Inc. Town of Boston 2010 Master Plan: A Guide for Future Town Development. Boston, NY. Town of Boston, 1984. p. 29.

8.1.2 Prime Farmland

Soils are very important for agriculture, as the soil type will help govern a land's productivity for farming and its suitability for future development. The United States Department of Agriculture considers prime farmland as one of several classifications of important farmland. "Prime farmland is the land best suited to produce food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops."²⁹ The soils must have a favorable temperature, moisture supply and growing season to generate high yields of crops. Prime farmland may exist in crop land, pastures and woodlands and does not normally exist in urban, built up land and wetlands. The lands contain a small number or no rocks and are permeable to both air and water.

Prime farmland is important in providing the nation's short and long range food supply. The supply of high quality farmland is rather limited in the country. However, the soils in Erie County have been considered by the USDA-Soils Conservation Service as some of the best in the nation. In the Town of Boston prime farmland as classified by the Soils Conservation Service, are located along and near Eighteen Mile Creek, which runs in a northwest to southeast direction through the center of the town. The soils along the creek consist primarily of Blasdell-Farnham-Alton and some Hudson-Varysburg-Valois soils.

Most of these soils have high contents of shale fragments and are generally deep and well drained. However, some of the lands are located in areas that are steeply sloping and have the potential for slumping. The steep slopes inhibit their use in the production of food and fiber, which does not allow these lands to be classified as prime farmland.

8.2 Topography

Topography deals with the shape of land surfaces, indicating relative heights and positions of the land's natural and man made features. Topography influences the use of land by affecting its wetness, accessibility and erosivity. In general, lands with a slope of 15% or greater are deemed steep and considered to be unsuitable for most uses. Steep slopes often create constraints to development as long term structural integrity normally requires costly design and engineering work.

In general, much of the land in the Town of Boston is gently to moderately sloping. The lands with moderate to steep slopes are located along the valley of Eighteen Mile Creek. "Other significant groupings of steeply sloped lands are found west of South Feddick Road and East of Lower East Hill Road."³⁰ There are also steeply sloped areas along the northerly sections of Boston State Road.

²⁹ US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service. Op. Cit. p. 158.

³⁰ Economic Consultants Organization, Inc. Op. Cit. p. 25.

In addition, there are steeply sloping areas along Hampton and Landon Brooks in the west and southeast portions of the Town. Many of the steeply sloping areas possess scenic quality due to their natural vegetation. Along the gently and moderately sloping areas near Keller Road in the western section of the Town there is a beautiful vista of Lake Erie.

The 1984 Town of Boston Master Plan includes a recommendation regarding sloping lands. The proposal recommends that, “the lands be protected from development as to remain in their natural state.” The areas are visually pleasing, provide open space and are the principal habitats for many plant and animal species. In addition, the Town may want to limit the development of these areas as steeply sloped areas have potentials for mass movement (landslides) and other erosion hazards. The development of these areas is expensive to develop, may create risks to both life and property and may potentially require recurring public funds for the repair of private and public lands.

8.3 Natural Gas Resources

In 1998, there were 24,733 MCF (million cubic feet) of natural gas produced in the Town of Boston.³¹ This figure is just 1.7% of the county total of 1,439,443 MCF. There are four New York State gas fields, located within the Town. The fields are Brant-Eden; Colden; Concord and Orchard Park-Hamburg. There were thirty-two (32) active gas wells in the Town of Boston. Active wells represent production occurring from all or part of the fields. There were also two (2) inactive gas wells, with no natural gas production from the formerly active fields. The geological producing formation for natural gas in Boston is Medina.

³¹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources: 1998 Annual Report. Albany: NYSDEC- Division of Mineral Resources, 1998. p. 28.

8.4 Hydrology

Healthy water sources are essential to the health of humans and the well-being and survival of fish, plant and animal species. The quality of water bodies is also integral to the support of recreational opportunities such as fishing, swimming and boating. This section examines the water sources in the Town of Boston. These resources include streams, flood areas and wetlands.

8.4.1 Streams

The State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) assigns classifications to surface water resources due to its direct links to the health and sustenance of plant and animal life. Surface water classifications are ranked from highest (A) to lowest (D), with sub-class (T) indicating streams capable of supporting trout and (TS) signifying streams that are trout-spawning. The (A-D) classifications are described as follows:

Class A – Waters in this class are best used for drinking, cooking and food processing purposes and primary and secondary fishing and recreational uses. The waters should be suitable for the survival and propagation of fish.

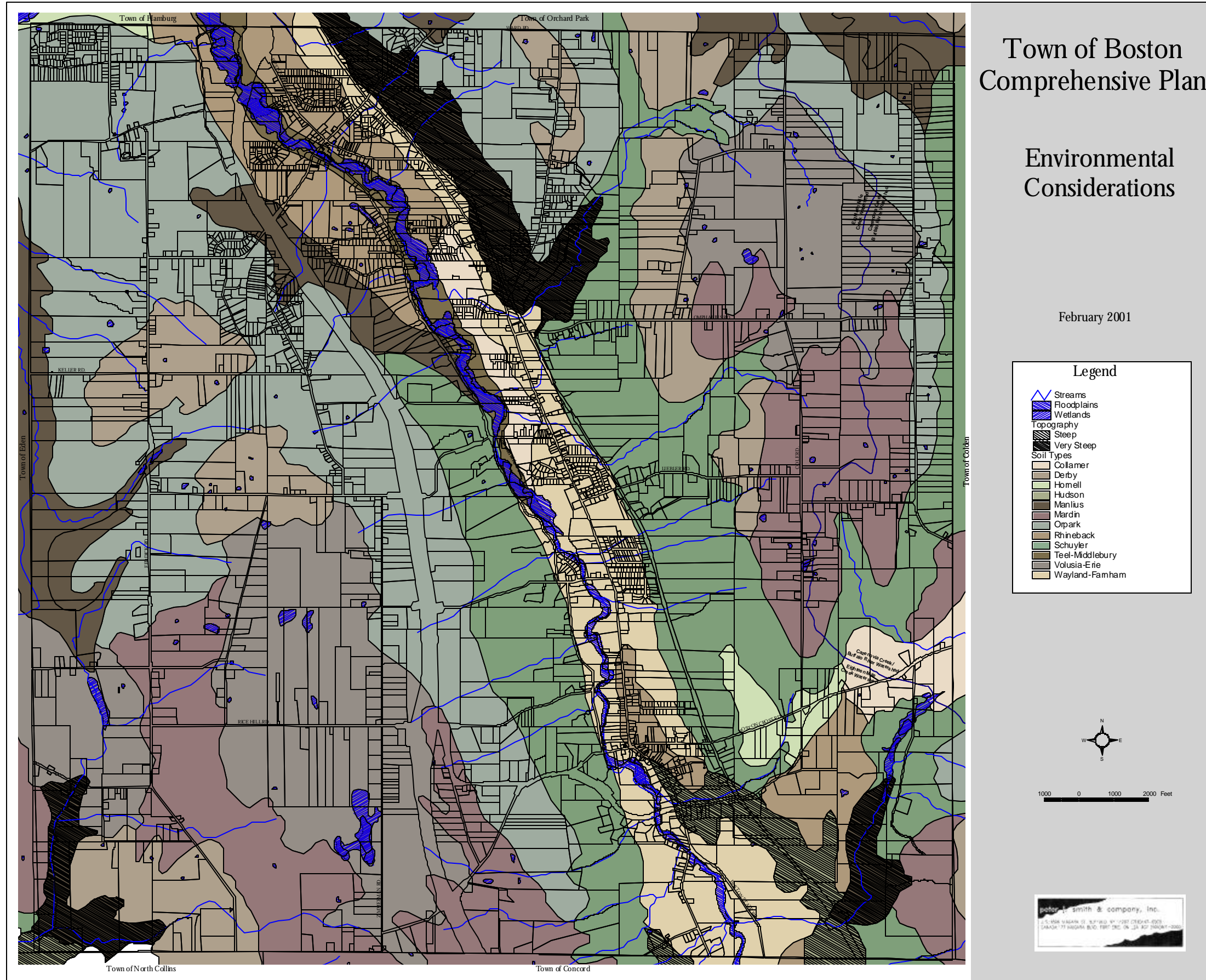
Class B – The best uses for this class of water are primary and secondary contact, fishing and recreation purposes. The waters should be appropriate for the propagation and survival of fish.

Class C – Waters in this class are best used for fishing. The waters should be suitable for fish survival and propagation. The waters should also be suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation. However, other factors may limit this use.

Class D – The best uses for this class of water is fishing. The waters should be appropriate for fish survival, although they will not be suitable for propagation. The water quality should be suitable for primary and secondary contact recreational purposes, although factors may limit such use.

The major water body in the Town of Boston is Eighteen Mile Creek, which has been categorized by the DEC as Class A, which allows the water in the creek to be used for cooking, drinking and recreational purposes. This classification has remained to date. In the spring of 2000, the DEC performed tests on the water in Eighteen Mile Creek, indicating the creek waters may continue to be used for recreation, cooking and drinking.

Figure 8-1 - Environmental Considerations



8.4.2 Flood Areas

There are many municipalities throughout the nation that are prone to flood hazards. Data on flood zones are documented and mapped by the National Flood Insurance Program under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). There are several areas in the Town of Boston disposed to flooding. The flood prone areas in the Town are as follows:

- Eighteen Mile Creek;
- Anthony Gulf at Eighteen Mile Creek;
- Irish Gulf at Eighteen Mile Creek;
- Hampton Brook in the western portion of the Town;
- South Branch of Eighteen Mile Creek in southwestern portion of town; and
- Landon Brook in the southeast section.³²

The flood areas may result from heavy rainfalls, significant run-offs from snow melts and the effects of erosion on the banks of creeks and streams. Flooding in the above areas may be recurrent, but is normally not severe enough to cause substantial property damage. Of the above flood areas Eighteen Mile Creek is an identifiable FEMA flood plain. The creek is a zone (A) flood plain, which is a 100 year flood hazard area. The 100 year flood standard has been adopted by FEMA as a basis for flood plain management.

Historically, floods of certain sizes occur every so many years. The 100 year flood boundary indicates the possibility of a flood occurring once every 100 years. It is based on statistical analysis of stream flow and rainfall records and runoff characteristics in the watershed. The floodplain is commonly referred to as the '100 year flood" or base flood; this does not indicate that a flood will occur for another 100 years. The 100 year flood has been adopted by FEMA and the Town of Boston as the standard for flood plain management under the National Flood Insurance Program.

The classification of an area as a flood plain was provided by FEMA in the Flood Insurance Study. Flood hazard area pose development constraints as development in usch areas places human life and property at risk. The Town of Boston has adopted the minimum federal standards under the National Flood Insurance Program to address potential flood plain development proposals and to guide unwise uses to other areas to avoid recurring expenditures of public funds towards repairing public and private property.

³² Town of Boston. Op. cit. p. 27.

Wetlands

Wetlands as defined by the federal regulatory agencies are “ those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater.”³³ These include areas such as swamps, marshes and areas along the shorelines of rivers and lakes. The areas do not have to exhibit surface water to be declared a wetland; the water content of the soil can cause an area to be acknowledged as a wetland.

Wetlands are separated into two categories: those designated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and those designated by the federal government. The DEC maps wetlands 12.4 acres or greater and the federal government maps wetlands regardless of size.

State Wetlands

The NYS DEC has mapped wetlands of 12.4 acres or greater. State regulations require that a 100 foot buffer exist around the boundary of the wetland for protection against draining, dredging, filling, construction and the discharge of sewage and liquid wastes. Any of the above or other activities proposed for the wetland or within the buffer area must be approved by the DEC.

There are two state designated wetlands in the Town of Boston. The wetland in the west of town located just east of Zimmerman Road is approximately 40 acres and the wetland in the eastern part of town just north of Dunn Road is about 20 acres. Permits may be issued for regulated activities in any class wetland if the project meets the criteria set forth in Part 663.5(e) Standards for Permit Issuance.

Federal Wetlands

The federal government has designated wetlands as small as one acre considering they meet parameters for soils, hydrology and vegetation. Permits for activity within the wetland areas must be issued by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Town of Boston contains several federal wetlands. These are located throughout the Town and range in size from less than one (1) acre to ten (10) acres. The largest wetlands are located in the southwestern portion of the community and near Landon and Hampton Brooks and Eighteen Mile Creek.

The conservation of wetlands are important as wetlands often support a large portion of wildlife species and function as a natural form of water purification. Wetlands absorb and filter a variety of sediments, and other natural and manmade pollutants that would otherwise degrade rivers, lakes and streams.

³³ US Environmental Protection Agency. Wetlands: Regulation Guidebook for New York State. New York: EPA. 1993. p. 1.

8.4.3 Watersheds

Watersheds are areas of land that catch precipitation, such as rain and snow, which then seeps or drains into groundwater, marshes, streams, lakes or rivers. John Wesley Powell, a scientist-geographer defined watersheds as being, “that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are extricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become apart of a community.”³⁴ Therefore, all land regardless of location, lies within a watershed. Homes and farms, big cities and small towns can make up a watershed.

Watersheds often cross municipal boundaries; they may cross-county, state and national borders. They also exist in various shapes and sizes. Some are millions of square miles and others are just a few acres. Just as creeks and streams drain into rivers, many watersheds are normally a part of a larger watershed. Lands in the Town of Boston drain into two watersheds:

- Cazenovia Creek/Buffalo River Watershed; comprised of Cazenovia Creek and the Buffalo River.
- Eighteen Mile Creek Watershed; consisting of Eighteen Mile Creek.

Most of the land use in the watersheds is residential, ranging from multiple-family to rural low-density uses. Both watersheds are located in the eastern portion of the Town, near the Town of Colden border. They are a part of a much larger watershed, the Buffalo-Eighteen Mile Creek Watershed as designated by the EPA. This watershed covers most of Erie County; additional watersheds included in the larger watershed are as follows:

- Lake Erie;
- Cayuga Creek;
- Cazenovia Creek;
- Hunter Creek; and
- Smokes Creek.

³⁴ www.epa.gov/win/what.html - accessed November 8, 2000.

The preservation of watersheds is important as much of the ground water we use obtains its resources from a watershed. We should not take the sanitation and availability of our groundwater for granted. We must consider some very interesting facts concerning our groundwater. For example, “scientists estimate groundwater accounts for more than 95% of all fresh water available for use, approximately 50% of Americans obtain all or part of their drinking water from groundwater, about half of irrigated cropland uses groundwater and about 40% of river flow nationwide (on average) depends on groundwater.”³⁵

8.4.4 Water Protection

New York State is rich in natural water resources. Healthy creeks, streams, lakes rivers, wetlands and watersheds are important as they are “necessary for drinking and bathing; agricultural, commercial and industrial uses; and fish and wildlife habitats.”³⁶ They also provide recreational, educational and aesthetic opportunities. Governmental agencies have established regulations and programs and provided grants to protect our water resources. The Town of Boston may want to make use of these assets to safeguard its water bodies. The following is a list of several regulations, studies, programs and funding available for the protection of water resources:

WNY Land Conservancy

The land conservancy has received a grant from the Department of Agriculture towards the environmental planning of farms in the WNY area. The conservancy has been involved with identifying resources and best management practices for farms. The agency is also attempting to identify best management practices for local water bodies, including the Eighteen Mile Creek Watershed. The agency has investigated the stream banks of Eighteen Mile Creek, identifying erosions, sediment and other debris visible by on site inspection.

US Army Corps of Engineers

The Army Corps of Engineers “regulates the placement of dredge spoil and the construction of certain structures in waterways and wetlands.”³⁷ There is a joint application process coordinated between the DEC and Corps of Engineers for development permits within water bodies. The development of structures within waterways must be approved by both the state and federal agencies.

³⁵ www.ctic.purdue.edu/groundsurface.html - accessed November 10, 2000.

³⁶ NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. Protection of Waters Program-Applicants Guide. Albany: Department of Environmental Conservation, 1991. p. 1.

³⁷ *Ibid.* p. 9.

State Environmental Quality Review Act

The DEC must meet the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) in order to approve or fund a privately or publicly sponsored project. It must be established that the proposed project will not have adverse effects on the environment. If the project poses an adverse impact, the applicants must submit a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The statement must include ways to avoid or reduce adverse impacts related to the project. If the statement is accepted the DEC may approve or fund the project.

Wetlands Program Development Grants

The federally funded “Wetlands Grants” provide financial assistance to state and local governments and federally recognized Indian Tribes in the provision of plans that will support the development of new and to improve existing wetland conservation and protection programs. The grants are used to fund individual wetland projects and recipients must match 25% of the total costs. Applications are available through the EPA and deadlines vary by region.

Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program

This program is also known as the “small watershed program.” It provides financial and technical assistance to tackle the resource and economic problems of watersheds. “Projects related to watershed protection, flood prevention, water supply, water quality, erosion and sediment control, wetland creation and restoration, fish and wildlife enhancement and public recreation are eligible for assistance.”³⁸ Funding is available to states, counties, towns, water and flood control districts and are limited to watersheds less than 250,000 acres. Funding information is available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

³⁸ www.epa.gov/owow/watershed.html. - accessed November 9, 2000.

8.5 Woodlands

Wooded areas are an important resource to a community. They support ecological systems, provide shade and areas for recreation, offer scenic views, create natural buffers and exist as an economic resource for the community. This section examines the woodlands and forests in the Town of Boston. There are six forest types recognized throughout Erie County, named according to the dominant species within the group ; some of these types are prevalent in the Town of Boston. The forests of the County include the following:

- Maple-Beech
- Elm-Ash-Red-Maple
- Oak
- Aspen
- White Pine
- Other softwood plantations.³⁹

Common forest types in the Town of Boston are the Northern Red Oak, Sugar Maple and White Ash. In Boston, many wooded properties are interspersed among farmlands and residential areas. The lands are fundamental to the natural quality of the municipality. A large quantity of the woodlands are located within steeply sloping areas in highland sections of Town.

With the continual benefits that woodland areas offer to the community, valued wooded areas should be identified to preserve their character. For sites under development pressures, the support of a conservation agency could be employed to purchase or transfer development rights or for total property purchase, to guarantee the preservation of wooded areas in the future.

³⁹ US Department of Agriculture. Op. Cit. p.160.

9.0 Transportation and Infrastructure

The transportation network in a community determines how easily people and goods can move into, out of and within a community. The following chapter looks at the existing transportation network in the Town of Boston and identifies where improvements may be needed. The plan looks at Boston in its larger regional context, specifically at how it connects with adjacent municipalities and the greater metropolitan Buffalo region. The transportation section includes an investigation of the existing transportation system including rail, air, roads, public transit, bicycle travel, and pedestrian and boat access.

9.1 Rail and Air

There is presently no direct rail service to Boston residents, although rail transportation is available in the metro Buffalo area. The closest rail station for Boston residents is the Buffalo-Exchange Street Amtrak station that is located approximately 20 miles from the Town of Boston. There is a second Amtrak station, approximately 20 miles from Boston, located in Depew.

For air transportation, residents would typically use the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport. Located approximately 22 miles from Boston, this airport has 133 flights daily and flies directly to 22 different cities. The Buffalo-Niagara International Airport recently completed a major expansion project that resulted in a new terminal that now has a fifteen-gate capacity. A second phase of expansion, including the construction of parking lots, is currently underway. Residents may also occasionally choose to fly out of either the Rochester or Toronto Airports.

Two smaller, private airports are also located within relatively close proximity to Boston. One airport, located 7 miles away in Hamburg, is a public-use airport that maintains a 2,500-foot paved runway and can house up to 18 private aircraft. The Chautauqua County/Jamestown Airport is a public airport located south of Boston in Jamestown, NY. This airport has a 5,299-foot asphalt runway and averages 104 flights per day. Although there is no scheduled air carrier service, 87% of their flights are for general aviation, 12% of the flights are commercial, and 1% of the flights are for military purposes and air taxi services.

9.2 Highways

The road system in Boston includes a US Route, NY State Routes, arterial roads and additional town roads.

US Route 219 is the Town's only major artery and is a limited access divided highway. Route 219 runs in a north-south direction through all of Boston, originating in West Seneca and, the limited access highway portion, terminating in Springville. Route 219 traverses Boston for a total of 6.61 miles. Route 219 has two lanes of traffic in each direction, with lane widths of 12 feet and shoulder widths of 10 feet throughout. The latest available traffic count taken in 1998 includes the 4.7 mile strip between Rice Hill Road in the southern portion of Boston and the intersection of the 219 and NY Route 391 in northern Boston. Data from the New York State DOT shows that an average of 12,750 vehicles traveled this portion of Route 219 each day in 1998.

Residents of Boston have suggested that traffic on Route 219 needs to be controlled and there has been some interest in creating a link between Route 219 and the mainline Thruway. In addition, there has also been recent talk of using Route 219, through Buffalo, to create an international trade corridor from Toronto, Ontario to Miami, Florida. Members from a number of eastern states support the highway scheme, known as Continental One. Supporters include New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland. The success of the proposed plan is currently dependent on how much money will be granted to both New York and Pennsylvania to improve existing segments of the Route in both states. In New York, improvement and expansion is necessary from Springville to Salamanca and in Pennsylvania funds need to be diverted to improving the road in the northern portion of the state, rather than funding only Route 15 between Williamsport and Harrisburg, PA.

NY Route 277 is a primary highway and a north-south connector road. Route 277 begins in Boston at the intersection of Route 391 and terminates in the Town of Amherst. The length of Route 277 in Boston is approximately 1 mile. Route 277 is a two-lane road, with one lane of traffic in each direction. The width of each lane is 11 feet and the shoulders are only 3 to 4 feet. Traffic counts between the origination of Route 277 and its first exit in Boston show that, on average, 2,580 vehicles travel that 0.5-mile distance daily. An additional 2 miles takes the Route north into Orchard Park where traffic increases to 3,050 vehicles per day. No specific traffic problems have been cited with relation to this route.

NY Route 391, commonly referred to as Boston State Road, is a northwesterly-southeasterly route that links Boston to the Town of Hamburg. Route 391 covers approximately 1 mile in Boston and has two lanes, with one lane of traffic in each direction. For a small segment of its distance in Boston, Route 391 becomes a divided highway and has a lane width of 13.5 feet and a shoulder width of 11 feet. However, for the majority of its distance it has a lane width of 12 feet and a shoulder width of 8 feet. Although bike lanes are not designated, the shoulder width provides adequate space for pedestrians and bike riders and the possibility for future designation as a bike route. The latest traffic count was taken in 1997 when an average of 10,400 vehicles traveled 0.8 miles from the roads intersection with Route 277 North to its intersection with Route 219.

In North Boston, Route 391 becomes a local arterial road known as Boston State Road. Truck traffic is a current issue and future developments along Boston State Road could possibly increase the traffic problems. Alternating speeds of 40, 45 and 55 miles per hour are also of some concern, especially in the areas with heavier residential populations.

9.3 Local Corridors

There are a number of arterial roads, or connectors, that link Boston and its surrounding municipalities.

Abbott Road

This local corridor, linked to Boston State Road in North Boston, creates a north-south link between Orchard Park and Concord.

Zimmerman Road

Upon linking with Route 277 in North Boston the road creates a north-south corridor. Zimmerman Road links Orchard Park to Concord and continues on to North Collins.

South Feddick Road

Originating in northern Boston the corridor moves in a north-south direction, providing a direct route from Boston into North Collins.

Haag and Zenner Roads

Running parallel to one another, these roads provide an east-west link for direct movement between Boston and Eden.

Boston Colden Road

This road allows direct travel from Boston eastwardly into the Town of Colden. Although state law considers all roads in the Town useable for bikers and pedestrians, the shoulder width along Boston Colden Road is very narrow and should not be recommended for heavy bike and pedestrian use.

The Boston Highway Department received triple their usual funds in the 2000 budget to improve road conditions in all local subdivisions. This work is to begin early this year. Roads in poor condition will be repaved and newer roads, in good condition, will be resealed.

9.4 Public Transit

Bus service is provided for Town of Boston residents through the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority. Express Bus #74 travels along Boston State Road and provides service to Boston residents from Monday through Friday. All buses are handicap accessible and busses are rarely filled as the majority of Boston residents have cars, which they opt to utilize.

The earliest bus leaves Boston and heads towards Buffalo at 6:16 AM on weekday mornings. The latest bus to leave Boston is at 8:28 PM. Similarly, the earliest bus leaving Buffalo, heading towards Boston is at 5:49 AM and the latest is at 7:45 PM.

Boston is considered a part of Zone 4 with respect to bus service, signifying that Boston residents must pay the highest one-way fares when traveling to the Buffalo area. The cost for an adult, per trip, is \$1.85, while children and senior citizens can travel for \$0.85.

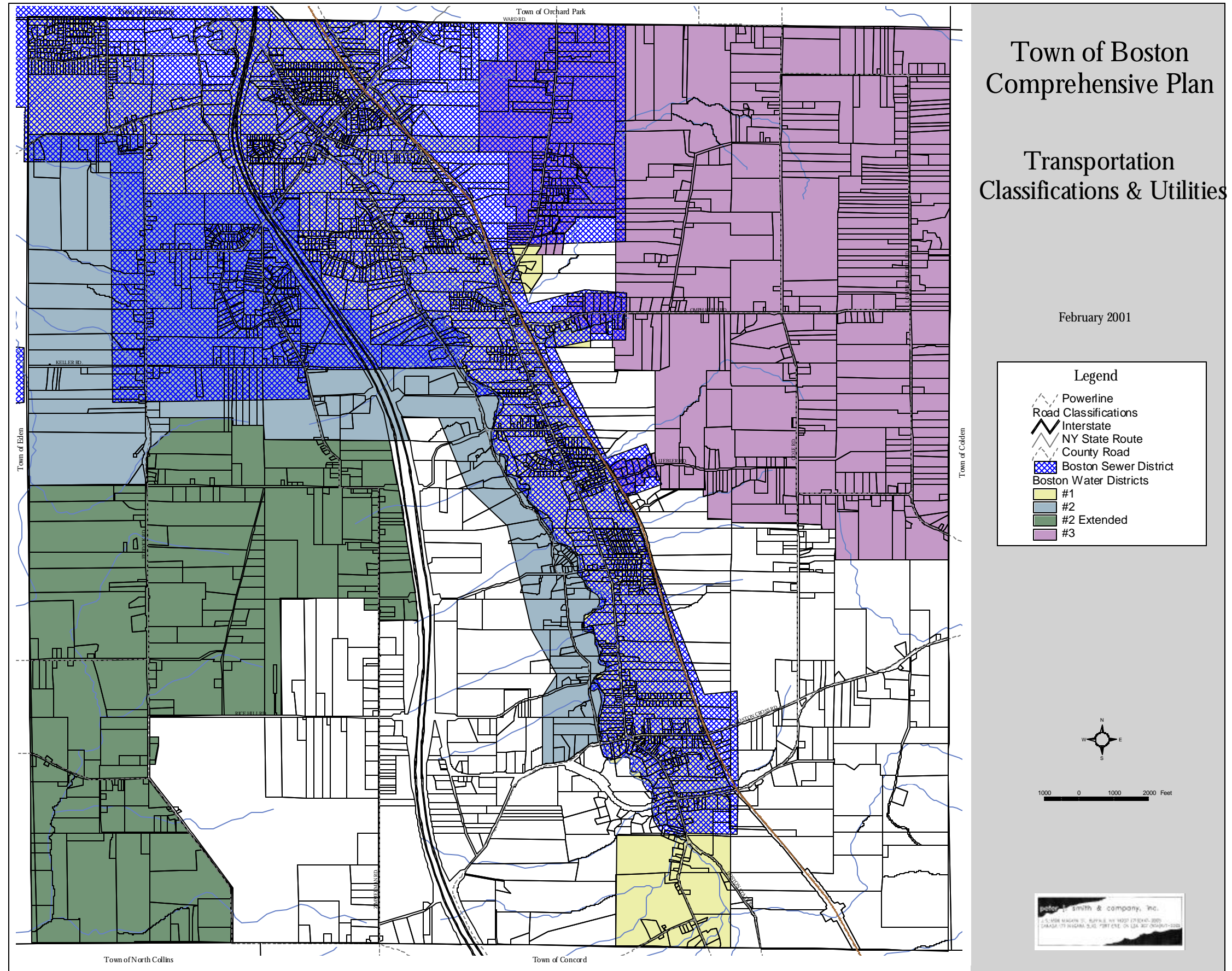
There is a park and ride lot near the Mobil Gas Station that does not currently have a shelter to cover people as they wait for the bus. The bus turnaround is located in the parking lot of Rural Preservation Services and cost the NFTA thousands of dollars to pave and keep up to standards.

Long distance bus service is provided through Greyhound and New York Railways, with both offering transportation via downtown Buffalo.

9.5 Bicycle Access

Boston has not developed any identifiable bicycle paths within the Town. The only options for biking in Boston are along roadways. According to New York State, all roadways in the State, with the exception of interstate highways, are considered bicycle routes. However, many of the local roads within the Town do not have adequate shoulder widths to provide safe biking routes. Ideal locations for future bike trails have been identified along Back Creek Road and Abbott-Newtown-Chestnut Ridge Roads. Town residents have declared a biking program in the Town to be a pertinent issue.

Figure 9-1 - Transportation Plan



Town of Boston Comprehensive Plan

Transportation Classifications & Utilities

February 2001

Legend

- Powerline
- Road Classifications
 - Interstate
 - NY State Route
 - County Road
- Boston Sewer District
- Boston Water Districts
 - #1
 - #2
 - #2 Extended
 - #3



1000 0 1000 2000 Feet



9.6 Pedestrian Access

The only sidewalk that currently exists in the hamlet of Boston is located near the new Post Office. The absence of sidewalks may be attributable to the rural setting of Boston, where sidewalks are generally not considered a traditional characteristic. Sidewalks function as a traffic calming element which may be beneficial in areas of Boston State Road where excessive speeds have been the cause of some concern to area residents.

The Town Board has been somewhat receptive to recent inquiries regarding the installation of sidewalks and is currently exploring cost options for them. The most significant issue related to providing sidewalks for Boston residents would be the tax increase that would likely result from their installation and upkeep.

9.7 Infrastructure

This section presents a discussion of additional support infrastructure available to Boston residents. These services include water, sewers and public utilities.

9.7.1 Water/Sewer

Sixty five percent of Boston residents, covering twenty-five percent of Boston's geographical area, receive public water. The remaining thirty-five percent of the Town's residents receive their water from private wells. Residents who reside in the Boston Hills may also tap into local ponds for their water supply. According to 1990 Census data, there were 2,772 housing units in the Town of Boston. 1,851 of the housing units received public water, 790 received water from a drilled well, 101 received water from a dug well and 30 people took their water from another source, such as the local ponds.

The water service provided to Boston residents by the Erie County Water Authority is focused in the northwest corner of the municipality and along all of Boston State Road. Those people residing in the northeast quadrant of the Town recently were added to the Erie County Water System. A third water district was created in the Town in the area known as the East Hill District. The new water district is bounded by Chestnut Ridge Road to the west, Omphalius Road, Cole Road and Wohlheiter Road to the south and Lower East Hill Road on the east.

The money to create the new water district was secured by a \$416,500 grant from the US Department of Agriculture, a \$1.9 million dollar bond issue and \$500,000 grant from the Erie County Water Authority. The project involves the construction of 45,000 feet of waterline.

Sewage disposal methods are documented in the 1990 Census. Based on 2,772 housing units, 1,577 were hooked up to the public sewer system, 1,179 used a septic tank or cesspool and 16 units had an alternative means for sewage disposal.

Boston is currently located in Erie County Sewer District #3 with the majority of service occurring along Boston State Road and in the northern areas of the Town. The district includes the Boston State Road area south to Boston Colden Road and north to the Town border of Orchard Park. The eastern border, in the northern section of the Town is just past Chestnut Ridge Road. Sewer district #3 extends west to the Town of Eden border, including the majority of Keller Road, and the northern portions of Feddick Road, Zimmerman Road and Back Creek Road. The majority of pipelines run directly along and off of Boston State Road.

This district provides mostly trunk sewer service in transmitting the majority of sewage to the Erie County/Southtowns Sewage Treatment Agency. Extensions of the initial sewer service in Sewer District #3 included lateral sewer service to the Town of Boston almost two decades ago. The Town may provide sewers within its existing Town Districts, otherwise County District No. 3 may provide sewers. The Erie County/Southtowns Sewage Treatment Agency is an independent agency that was formed by article G of the General Municipal Law and is managed by its own Agency Board.

The Erie County/Southtowns Sewage Treatment Agency provides treatment of sewage at its Wastewater Facility located on Lake Erie near the Ford Motor Company Plant. At one time the Town of Boston had its own Wastewater Treatment Facility, which was taken down in the early 1980's when Boston was made part of the Erie County Sewer System.

9.7.2 Utilities

The reliability and service related to public utilities affects the quality of life that residents enjoy. In today's communities, residents have come to expect basic services that make their lives easier and more enjoyable, such as electricity, natural gas, telephone service and cable. In addition, in today's communication age, residents also expect certain services associated with cell phones and computer services. Ideally, these services should be accessible to all residents and provided without any major obstructions. There are currently no major issues associated with the provision of public utilities in Boston.

- Electricity is provided to Boston residents through New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG). Electric lines run throughout the town, supplying electricity to all Boston residents.
- Natural gas service is provided in the Town of Boston through National Fuel Gas.

- Telephone service is provided to residents through Verizon.
- Cable television service is available through Adelphia Communications. This service is provided throughout the town and has recently been upgraded to include digital cable service, allowing for a greater variety of channels, more premium channels and pay-per-view and music channels.

Telecommunications

The Town recognizes the demand for wireless communication transmitting facilities and towers but does not want these towers to adversely affect the landscape of the Town or Town residents. In 1997 the Town passed a Telecommunications Law that provides regulations for communication towers. In doing so, they hope to minimize adverse visual affects of towers, avoid damage to nearby properties and maximize the use of already existing towers while still allowing wireless service providers to meet their needs.

New permits are issued to suppliers if they meet the following criteria: the telecommunication facility is necessary to meet current or expected demands, the facility conforms with all regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, the facility complies with the local ordinance, the facility is designed in a manner which minimizes visual impact and the facility is located in the most desirable site possible.

The 1997 Amendment also supplied Telecommunication companies with a set of design requirements. The first of these requirements is that the facility be located at least 1500 feet from schools, residences, houses of worship, public meeting places and Historical Districts. In addition, the tower should be less than 150 feet above ground and should provide vegetative screening if it abuts residential or public property. Towers must include a fall zone and must be surrounded by a fence, at least 8 feet high, which is also equipped with an alarm system. No Tower is allowed to have any signs or advertising devices.

There are several cell sites within the Town, which provide greater service and better reception to cell phone users in that area. One site is partially maintained by Sprint PCS and is located off of Ward Road in North Boston. The cell tower is 250 feet high and has both antennas and lights. There is also a cell tower location on the East Hill just south of Wohlheuter Road, the site is maintained by Frontier Cellular.

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10.0 Public Input

10.1 Community Survey Analysis

The Town of Boston Comprehensive Plan would not be a “comprehensive” document without the input of community residents. The participation of residents in the Plan is important as the decisions made upon completion of the Plan will have a direct effect on the lives of residents. In addition, the public can provide pertinent information and ideas on numerous issues. In November 2000, 365 survey questionnaires were distributed to homeowners (300) and renters (65) in the Town of Boston. There were 183 surveys (50% of the total) returned by the December 13, 2000 deadline. There were 164 homeowner and 19 renter respondents. The number of respondents are adequate for statistical analysis. This section outlines the community survey and responses of Boston residents.

10.1.1 Community Identity

Of the 183 survey respondents, 31% feel that Boston should encourage residential growth and the necessary commercial businesses to achieve this goal. 36% believe the Town should remain a rural community and not promote growth, while 19% believe the Town should encourage residential, commercial and industrial growth, to create a balanced community.

More than 96% of the residents agree that the Town of Boston is a good place to live. Similarly, nearly 85% are happy with the image the Town presents to Western New York. More than half of the respondents (58%) wish the community to remain the same over the next twenty (20) years. The table below illustrates the responses of Boston residents to community identity.

Table 10-1 Community Identity Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Good place to live	56.2%	40.4%	1.6%	0.5%	1.0%
Happy with image	38.7%	45.9%	7.6%	3.2%	1.0%
Wish to remain rural	34.9%	24.0%	8.1%	21.8%	3.2%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.2 Community Services

Most of the respondents (75%) feel that there is high quality police protection in the Town. Similarly, the majority agree that fire and emergency protection and municipal water service meets their needs (89% and 71% respectively). A majority of respondents (44%) believe that sanitary sewer service should be expanded, while 30% do not agree with sewer expansion. There is also 90% of respondents who feel that garbage collection meets their needs. In the Town, 63% feel that the schools offer a good learning environment. The majority of those answering the survey (26%) were within the Hamburg School District. The table below represents citizen responses to community services.

Table 10-2 Community Services Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
High quality police protection	33.8%	42.0%	12.0%	6.0%	3.2%
Fire and emergency meets needs	51.9%	37.1%	7.6%	1.0%	0.5%
Municipal water meets needs	39.3%	32.2%	6.5%	5.4%	14.2%
Expand sewer service	18.0%	26.7%	19.6%	16.3%	14.2%
Garbage collection meets needs	37.1%	53.0%	4.3%	2.1%	2.1%
Good schools	29.5%	33.8%	22.9%	6.5%	3.8%
School district	Hamburg	Eden	Orchard Park	Springville-Griffith	
	26.7%	4.3%	6.5%	2.1%	

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.3 Housing

Many respondents (43%) agree that the Town should offer additional senior housing opportunities. Among the respondents, 50% believe that there is affordable housing in the community. Nearly 42% feel that the Town should encourage high-end residential developments to help diversify the population. Approximately 60% of the respondents feel that new housing developments should be concentrated near the hamlet areas to protect the Town’s rural character.

The table below illustrates the responses of Boston residents to housing in the community.

Table 10-3 Housing Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Additional senior housing	14.2%	28.9%	30.6%	13.6%	8.7%
Community offers affordable housing	8.7%	41.5%	37.1%	9.8%	1.0%
Encourage high-end residential	10.3%	31.6%	24.0%	20.7%	10.3%
Concentrate housing near hamlet areas	25.6%	33.8%	20.2%	15.3%	2.1%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.4 Transportation

Among the survey respondents, 34% were concerned with traffic levels in the community, while 39% were not concerned with the levels of traffic. Among those concerned with traffic levels, most of them perceived traffic problems along Route 391(Boston State Road). The majority of respondents (51%) did not perceive truck traffic problems. Of the 9% who perceived truck traffic problems, most were concerned with Boston State Road.

In Boston, 60% of the respondents agree that the Town should develop bikeways and walkways to link the hamlet areas. 46% of residents feel Boston should develop trails to link the Town with surrounding communities. Of those who answered the survey, 30% agree there should be additional public transit opportunities, while 26% do not. Among those who agree on additional public transit service, many feel that there should more buses and more frequent bus service to Buffalo and other communities.

The table below represents the responses of Boston residents to the topic of transportation in the community.

Table 10-4 Transportation Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Concerned with traffic levels	13.1%	21.3%	23.4%	36.0%	3.2%
Truck traffic problems	3.2%	6.5%	36.0%	45.3%	6.5%
Develop bike and walkways	24.5%	36.0%	16.3%	13.1%	4.9%
Develop trails to link with communities	19.1%	27.3%	23.4%	18.5%	6.0%
Need additional public transit	12.0%	18.0%	38.2%	19.1%	7.1%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.5 Land Use Regulations

Among survey respondents, 37% agree that the Town should promote commercial growth in the Hamlet areas, while 48% disagree. 44% of respondents do not agree with the targeting of commercial growth at Route 219 interchanges, while 37% agree with the targeting of commercial growth at the interchanges. It appears that the Town is split concerning the promotion and targeting of commercial growth in the hamlets and at route 219 interchanges. The Town may want to further explore this issue with its residents.

Many of the respondents (56%) do not want industrial growth encouraged along specific corridors. Among the 25% of respondents that agree with the encouragement of industrial growth, most believe it should occur along Boston State Road. The majority of the survey respondents agree with the strict use of land use regulations to protect the character of the community, agricultural lands, and open space and natural resources (70%, 66% and 69% respectively).

Additionally, most of the respondents agree that open space and natural resources should be protected throughout the entire Town, not in just one or some particular locations. The following table illustrates the responses of Boston residents to land use regulations in the Town.

Table 10-5 Land Use Regulations Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Promote commercial growth in hamlet areas	7.6%	30.0%	11.4%	24.0%	24.0%
Target commercial growth at Route 219 interchanges	9.2%	28.4%	16.9%	17.4%	27.3%
Encourage industrial growth along specific corridors	6.0%	19.1%	15.3%	26.2%	30.6%
Develop and enforce stricter land use regulations	37.1%	33.3%	12.0%	10.9%	3.8%
Use stricter regulations to protect agricultural lands	33.3%	33.3%	20.7%	8.1%	3.8%
Use stricter regulations to protect open space and natural resources	37.7%	32.2%	16.9%	8.1%	2.7%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.6 Recreational Activities

Many of the respondents (41%) feel that there are enough parks and playgrounds in the community, and 62% agree that there is a wide variety of recreational activities. 33% agree that more senior programs are needed, while 49% have no opinion of senior programs. Respondents are divided in their opinion about the need for more organized recreational activities. 25% agree that more organized activities are needed and 32% disagree. Many respondents had strong opinions about snowmobile and mountain bike trails. Nearly half (40%) of the respondents would like to see mountain bike trails and 34% would like to see snowmobile trails in the Town. The table below represents the responses of Boston residents to recreational activities in the community.

Table 10-6 Recreational Activities Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
More parks and playgrounds needed	6.5%	15.8%	33.3%	30.6%	10.9%
Have wide variety of recreational activities	14.2%	48.6%	25.1%	15.8%	32.7%
Additional recreation programs needed	8.1%	20.2%	28.9%	30.0%	7.1%
Adequate senior activities available	4.9%	28.4%	49.1%	9.8%	2.7%
More organized recreational activities needed	4.9%	20.2%	30.0%	25.6%	7.1%
Need snowmobile trails	12.5%	21.8%	28.4%	18.0%	16.3%
Need mountain bike trails	14.2%	26.2%	30.6%	13.1%	12.0%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.7 Growth and Development

Many respondents had strong opinions regarding growth and development. More than half of the respondents (55%) would not agree to pay additional fees to ensure the rural character of the Town. Many disagreed that more growth and development in the Town should be encouraged. Most residents (54%) do not feel that more residential development is needed and 61% do not feel that commercial growth is needed. Similarly, 57% of respondents do not agree that more light industrial growth and development is needed to complement the Town’s character.

The majority of the respondents (51%) do not agree that the Town requires additional business or tax incentives to attract new businesses. 47% disagree with the development of commercial pockets to meet the needs of residents. However, many residents (39%) feel that commercial development should be encouraged along heavily traveled roads, while 40% are opposed.

Additionally, 33% of the residents agree that economic change in the community should occur at a slow rate over the next ten years. They also agree that population growth should occur slowly over the same time period. The tables below illustrate the responses of Boston residents concerning growth and development.

Table 10-7 Growth and Development Survey Responses
Town of Boston

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pay additional fees to preserve the rural character	6.5%	24.0%	12.0%	28.4%	26.7%
Residential growth is needed	5.4%	26.2%	12.5%	32.7%	21.3%
Commercial growth is needed	4.9%	20.2%	10.3%	31.1%	30.6%
Light industrial growth is needed	5.4%	19.6%	13.1%	25.6%	31.6%
Require additional incentives to attract new businesses	4.3%	14.7%	24.5%	25.1%	26.7%
Commercial pockets further developed to meet needs	5.4%	25.1%	20.2%	25.6%	21.8%
Encourage controlled commercial development	9.8%	29.5%	16.4%	19.6%	21.3%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

**Table 10-8 Growth and Development Survey Responses
Town of Boston**

	Minimal	Slow	Moderate	Moderately Fast	Rapid
Economic change	32.7%	33.3%	30.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Population growth	26.2%	37.1%	28.4%	3.8%	0.5%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.8 Personal Information

Most of the survey respondents (41%) resided in households with between 3 and 5 people. All except 5 % were at least 31 years of age; 18% were between 31 and 40; 24% were between 41 and 50; 21% were between 51 and 60; and 28% were more than 60 years old. The majority of the respondents (83%) own their homes, while 10% rent. Most of the respondents (60%) lived in the community for more than 16 years. The table below represents the responses of Bostonians on the subject of personal information.

**Table 10-9 Personal Information from Survey Respondents
Town of Boston**

	1/21-30/ Owner/<5	2/31-40/ Renter/6-15	3-5/41-50/ 16+	6 plus/51-60	Over 60
Number in household	14.7%	40.9%	41.5%	2.1%	
Age of respondent	5.4%	18.0%	24.0%	21.8%	28.9%
Own/Rent	83.0%	10.3%			
How long in community	21.8%	17.4%	60.1%		

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

10.1.9 Additional Commentary Provided by Respondents

The Boston survey respondents made additional comments as to what they believed the Town should be aware of as the Comprehensive Plan is developed. The following are recurring comments made by Boston residents. The respondents feel that the Town should have only one zip code and one school district. At present, the Town is covered by 5 zip codes and is serviced by 4 school districts. Residents would like to see more lighting on rural roads. They would also like all residents to have access to municipal water service, as many use private wells. Many of the respondents want the Town to attract a fast food restaurant. Boston residents would also like the Town to encourage community events, to help maintain the Town as a “close knit community.”

10.2 Focus Group Sessions

Three focus group sessions were held with special interest groups in the Town of Boston. These include a group with the business interests in the Town, recreation interests in Boston and transportation related interests. The following summarizes the results of each focus group session.

Business

Attendees

John Zittle, Zittle Dairy Farms
Maurice Emerling, Boston Chamber & Emerling Chevrolet
Frank Antonucci, Boston Chamber & LPL Financial Services
Jewel Dye, Boston Chamber & Alfred Dye, Inc.

Summary of Comments

The Town does not offer a relatively development and business friendly environment. People in Boston prefer the Town as a bedroom community and are commonly geared towards Hamburg. They like things the way they are.

Advantages:

- Proximity to Buffalo, NY.
- Easy access- purchase of commodities.
- Utilities in the Valley – good for development along corridor.

Disadvantages:

- Sprawl/development pressures.
- Encroachment of Buffalo – reductions in farmland; formerly hundreds of acres and now less than 100 acres of dairy farming in the valley (NW corner).
- Inexperience of the Planning and Town Boards (training?) – causing problems in the development process.
- Need for design guidelines – North Boston businesses (strip developments).
- Elongated Town (4 school districts; 3 fire districts) – identity problems.
- Competition among the 3 hamlets, lack of common identity.

- There is a need for business nodes in North Boston (219 presence).
- The Town may want to create a “gas light village” similar to Morristown – cutesy.
- The Town should keep out urban amenities (i.e. sidewalks). Bostonians do not want pay more taxes for these amenities. Boston is not a city and they do not want to pay for and maintain these.
- The should offer affordable housing for those with lower incomes; to suit employees of the agriculture business and for seniors.
- The affordable homes should also reflect the needs of first time homebuyers, whom the town may want to attract.
- Community Involvement – grassroots movement – common theme for consensus building.
- Skateboard area needed for children. Due to the lack of sidewalks the children often concentrate in areas with pavement, which is commonly near businesses.
- The Town should also create a snowmobile trail. Visiting Snowmobile riders commonly ride across agricultural lands with disregard to the private property of the farmers.
- Lights are needed in the Boston Common, creating a better gathering or focal point for area businesses.

Open Space

Attendees

Bonnie Clesse, Recreation Director
Jerry Lindsey, Baseball & Softball Recreation Leader
Jim Reichert, Football Leader
Sean Greene, Soccer Leader
Summary of Comments

- There are good programs in Boston, which consist of the following:
 - Football and Cheerleading (ages 7-15), 150 children.
 - Baseball and Softball (ages 5-20), 400 children.
 - Outdoor Soccer (ages 6-15), 200 children.
 - Indoor Soccer (ages 7-9), 80-90 children.
 - Adult Soccer (adult age groups) on Sundays, 30 adults.
 - Skiing- Kissing Bridge Program (ages 8 and up), 90 children.
 - Summer Recreational Program (ages 6-15) 300 children – Boston residents only.
 - Friday Night Recreation Program (ages 8-11), 85-90 children.
 - Friday Night Open Gym (ages 13-18), 20 children.
 - Bowling (ages 7-19), 20 children.
 - Variety of other recreational activities, (see Boston Recreation and Youth Services 2000 sheet).
- Most of the sports programs are available to anyone, regardless of residency, on a first come first serve basis and whomever pays the registration fee. With the exception of the recreation director and baseball softball leader, the leaders and coordinators of sports teams are volunteers and are not compensated for their assistance.
- There are some issues with sports facilities in the Town.
- Parking at Boston Town Complex is an issue during games. Especially on any given Saturday when more than one type of game is taking place.

- There is a lack of communication between the sports leaders and the Town. There is a need for more involvement and coordination between the two.
- The road is also being moved further away from the fields (contact Wayne Kreitzbender from highway Department).
- Baseball/softball has sufficient numbers of diamonds. (4 baseball; 1 T ball; 3 softball and a practice field in South Boston Park. The season begins in May and ends the first Saturday in July.
- Football, has only one field, the team practices on the play field. The football team needs a practice field. There are three teams of different age groups. The season begins the first of August through the end of November.
- There is the possibility of allowing the football team to practice at North Boston Park. However, there is inadequate lighting.
- Cheerleading, has no designated practice area; they practice wherever there is green space.
- Soccer, has three small fields, but there needs to be two large fields (200'X300') to accommodate the older children. The season starts at the beginning of August through the third week of October.
- The issue of the four school districts has an affect on sports facilities in the Town. Most middle and high schools have sports fields and this normally alleviates the needs for many addition fields. However, there is only one school, which is an elementary school without sports fields.
- There are also safety issues in the Town Park. The playground is located directly behind Baseball diamonds. Perhaps the playground should be moved, possibility creating more space for sports fields.

[The following are statements made by members of the Boston CAC regarding open space as it exist presently and how it may exist in 2020].

- A primary concern is that open space must include not only "vacant land", and "green space" around development, but also an adequate amount of habitat for wildlife.
- Natural amenities (such as ravines, small and large, and such as Irish Gulf and Anthony Gulf) need to be protected. Scenic overlooks are also important.
- Eighteen mile Creek is not only a major drainage but a wonderful recreation source in its natural state.
- Open space areas need to be of substantial size, left in a near natural state, and when possible connected to one another.
- Steep slope areas may be developed in the future regardless of their hazards or ecological significance. They should be protected and some should be made available for passive uses.
- The town must offer incentives to the land owners, and in some instances purchase may be necessary. The Town could secure a first right of purchase; purchase development rights resulting in agricultural zoning, or secure a conservation easement.
- Boston could organize its own land trust. Funds from a real estate transfer tax could go to a Land Bank to buy and protect open space. We are sure there are also other tools to preserve open space
- The perception of open space is important. People still come to Boston for a ride in the country. In October many business were ready for fall foliage tourists.
- Boston State Road should be improved to provide a perception of open space. Tools include incentives to new and existing businesses and landowners, a tree ordinance, a sign ordinance and building design and landscape requirements for each new business. A scenic Boston auto route can be designated and protected.
- Boston must decide what types of areas need to be protected to adequately preserve open space, and determine where these areas are. To that list should be added a list of areas of concern. Areas of concern might include possible future sites of development (desirable or otherwise), stream banks, and potential drainage problem areas.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *A C.A.C. photo contest highlighting favorite places in Boston showed that residents place high value on places of beauty and places for passive recreation - streams, woods, waterfalls (George's Hot Dog Stand too!)

Transportation

Attendees

Bob Miller, GBNRTC
James Morrell, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
Ed Rutkowski, NYS Department of Transportation
Joe Tock, Alternative Transportation Representative

Summary of Comments

- The Terrain, North/South Roadway System, East/West Hills have lead to Development in the Valley and represent unique physical features in the Town.
- There is a choice of transportation alternatives, such as buses (NFTA), or walking, biking.
- Walking could be expanded through the creation of sidewalks.
- Biking could be expanded through the creation of biking trails. Bike trails may be ideal along Back Creek Road or an Abbott-> Newton-> Chestnut Ridge bike path.
- Biking and Sidewalk programs in the Town are pertinent.
- DOT Policy – states that reconstruction projects must place in sidewalks and the Towns must maintain them.
- The NFTA services the Town of Boston with one express bus #74, which travels along Boston State Road. There is trouble filling the bus as the majority of Bostonians have cars. There is a park and ride lot near Mobile Station and a bus turn around in the lot of the Rural Preservation Services. The NFTA had to pay thousands to pave the lot as its turn around.
- The park and ride lot may need a shelter.
- The NFTA is in need of a southern turn around in the Town.
- NYS Rural Transit Aid (section 18) provides funding for rural rider-ship, in Towns like Boston.
- The NFTA has proposed a Hub Link program (local community circulators) connecting Boston, N. Boston and Patchin in conjunction with Rural Transit Services. The program may also connect the Town with Orchard Park & West Seneca (contact J. Morrell for info. on Hub Link and Boston user information).

- There are two growth nodes on 219 Expressway; the Town may want things to remain as they are or to development in some form a strip mall development area.
- The 219 is an inter-municipal route, however it needs recognition into the Colden Valley (Rice Hill Rd. is present route into valley).
- The Transportation Bond Act, would have created numerous changes in transportation issues, including route 219.
- DOT may have information on TAX 21 - \$300 million approximate costs form highway expansions.
- Continental One – company wanted to expand route 219 further south into PA and beyond (Florida).
- Route 15 Coalition organization – expansion through to Salamanca

10.3 Public Hearings

On March 15, 2001 at 7:45 PM the first public hearing was held regarding the Comprehensive Plan in the Town of Boston Court Room. Prior to the hearing, at 7PM, a public presentation was performed by the consultant. The presentation included an introduction to the Comprehensive Plan process and a review of the inventory to date.

The following is a list of attendees at the public presentation and hearing:

- Reed Garner, Town Resident
- William R. Wiate, Town Resident
- Robert Mammoser, Town Resident
- Maurice Emerling, Town Resident
- Margaret Edington, Town Resident
- Thomas Edington, Town Resident
- Lisa Rood, Town Supervisor
- Michael Perley, Town Attorney
- Paul Jusko, Planning Board Chair
- Kevin Maxwell, Planning Board
- Steve Tills, Town Board
- Karl Simmeth, Town Board
- John Opalka, ECDEP
- Lynn Zachmann, CAC
- Walter Slomka, CAC
- Mary Alice Tocke, CAC
- Connie Miner, Town Grant Consultant
- Regina Vietara, Buffalo News
- Damian Wiktor, Town Board
- Pat Ball, Reporter - Citizen
- Heather Kapsuris, Springville Journal
- Joe Tocke, Partners for Alliance WNY

After the public presentation specific questions were asked regarding the plan. Many of these included questions about land use and land use regulations, the community survey, 2000 census data and the next steps in the completion of the plan. The answers to many of the questions will be addressed in the goals, policies and actions phases, which are the next steps in the Comprehensive Plan process. In addition, comment sheets were provided to the attendees, several were returned to the consultant. These comments will be evaluated and addressed in the Plan. Following the question and answer period, the Town began the public hearing. There were no comments made by Boston residents concerning the Comprehensive Plan.

A second public hearing was held on June 13th, 2001 to review the goals, policies and actions developed for the Town of Boston. The public hearing, held in Town Hall, included a slide presentation and discussion session with members of the public.

Appendix - List of Contacts

Boston Conservation Society
Boston Historical Society
Bonnie Cless, Town Recreation Department
Jewel Dye, Alfred W. Dye, Inc.
Richard Emerling, Valley Fabrication and Equipment
Erie County Industrial Development Agency
Annette Fachka, GBAR
Bob Grower, NFTA
Gerald Hice, Zoning Board of Appeals
Chet Jandzinski, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
Paul Jusko, Town of Boston Planning Board
Wayne Kreitzbender, Town Highway Superintendent
Mark Lee, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
Harold Morris, GBNRTC
Daniel Reider, County Highway Department
Tammy Reinhardt, Ermerling Chevrolet
Roger Pelcheski, Charlaps Dairy
Michael Perley, Town Attorney
David Schenk, Town of Boston Town Clerk
John Zittle, Zittle Dairy Farms

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