

TOWN OF BRANT VILLAGE OF FARNHAM MASTER PLAN



AUGUST 2003

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BUFFALO, NY**

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August 2003

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Master Plan*

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1.0 The Plan

1.1 Introduction

The Town of Brant and Village of Farnham are rural municipalities located within the outer ring suburbs of the City of Buffalo in Erie County, New York. They are approximately 25 miles southwest of the metropolitan core. The Village of Farnham is wholly within the Town of Brant, in the western portion of the Town. The Town of Brant is south of the Town of Evans and west of North Collins. It is due north of the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation. Its western border is Lake Erie. Evangola State Park occupies the northwest corner of the Town.

The Town of Brant was established in 1839, 16 years after Erie County was founded. The Village of Farnham was established late in the 19th Century, in 1892. The Town and Village are both rural in character; much of the Town is devoted to agriculture and produces a number of field crops, including sweet corn, cabbage and snap beans; fruits such as grapes and strawberries; and two local nurseries grow trees and shrubs. In the small close-knit communities in this rural area, cooperation among towns and villages has resulted in a consolidated school district, overlapping fire districts and an ongoing friendly relationship with the neighboring Seneca Nation of Indians.

As the urbanized area continues to reach out over the farmlands in southern Erie County, the citizens of Brant and Farnham have focused on ways they can control the type, location and quality of growth in their communities. Much of the eastern portion of the Town of Brant is included in agricultural districts, and the goals of farmland preservation as established by Erie County through its "Farms for the Future" strategy and the American Farmland Trust's Farmland Preservation Strategy for the Town of Evans, Brant and North Collins.

1.2 The Plan Defined

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

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“... 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 (village) 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 (village) comprehensive plan.”

Town Law, under Section 272-a and Village Law, under 7-722, defines the need for a comprehensive plan for communities with the following findings.

- a) Significant decisions and actions affecting the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the state and its communities are made by local governments.
- b) Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a ... [local] government is the authority and responsibility to undertake ... comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens.
- c) The development and enactment by the ... government of a ... comprehensive plan, which can be readily identified, and is available for the public, is in the best interest of the people of each [community].
- d) The great diversity of resources and conditions that exist within and among the [communities] of the state compels the consideration of such diversity in the development of each...comprehensive plan.
- e) The participation of citizens in an open, responsible and flexible planning process is essential to the designing of the optimum comprehensive plan.
- f) The ... comprehensive plan is a means to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the [community] and to give due consideration to the needs of the people of the region of which the [community] is a part.
- g) The comprehensive plan fosters cooperation among governmental agencies planning and implementing capital projects and municipalities that may be directly affected thereby.

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- h) It is the intent of the legislature to encourage, but not to require, the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan pursuant to this section. Nothing herein shall be deemed to affect that status or validity of existing master plans, comprehensive plans, or land use plans.¹

Town and Village Law define 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.”²

Generally, 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.”³ 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.”⁴

1.3 Why Do A Plan?

The Master Plan for the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham provides a snapshot of the Town and Village at the present moment in the context of the historical development of the communities. The Town and Village use this information to help craft a vision of a preferred future. In this way the Master Plan can:

- Document local characteristics and trends regarding resident population composition, land use, the natural environment, economic development and service provision;
- Provide a benchmark for evaluating the compatibility of individual development proposals with the long range development objectives of the communities;
- Reveal future service needs and explore the potential for regional cooperation, including land acquisition and the construction of public improvements;

¹ Village Law Section 7-722 and Town Law Section 272-a.

² Ibid.

³ New York State Department of State. Local Government Handbook: Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan. Albany: Department of State. 2000. p. 204.

⁴ Ibid. p. 210.

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- Serve as a comprehensive source of current information that can be used by the Town and Village in their efforts to secure state and federal funding and marketing the area to potential developers;
- Provide leverage for obtaining state and federal funding by expanding the scope of intended beneficiaries to include residents of both communities;
- Promote open space conservation designed to preserve the rural heritage of the communities and enhance the overall quality of life;
- Attract potential developers to the Town and Village through the identification of community goals and objectives for the next 20 years;
- Lay the foundation for future cooperative efforts between the Town of Brant, Village of Farnham and all of Erie County.

1.4 Implementing the Plan

The adoption of the Master Plan is a commitment to a coordinated vision for the future. The Plan's success is measured through committed use by elected officials, municipal employees and residents.

Elected officials will use the regional plan to learn about their residents' vision of the community's future and adopt local codes and ordinances to support those goals. The Plan's extensive analyses and policy statements provide both background information and leverage as elected officials negotiate inter-governmental agreements or dedicate financial and administrative support for identified Plan objectives.

Zoning and planning boards will measure the desirability of development applications by their conformity with plan goals and objectives. In addition, they should adopt policies and procedures that actively assist those projects that comply with Plan's goals and objectives to discourage those projects that fail to honor the community's vision. Working closely with developers, local Boards will target investment to projects that promote plan objectives, reduce the need for excessive variance hearings and create detrimental development patterns.

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Municipal employees will use the plan when interpreting legislative mandates, making administrative decisions, enforcing development related codes and prioritizing work efforts. Employees will understand the vision set out by the elected officials to meet the goals of the people; municipal staff will have a greater buy-in to these goals through every day decisions that are made based on the plan.

Finally, local residents will use the plan as a reference when making residential location choices, evaluating the effectiveness of local government, lobbying for financial or legislative support and when choosing political representatives. This comprehensive plan illustrates to all residents of the Town and Village the vision set out by the officials they have elected to maintain their quality of life.

The Master Plan clearly reveals the vision for Brant and Farnham and, therefore, sets the stage for future growth in the Town and Village.

1.5 Adopting the Plan

Regulations regarding the adoption of a comprehensive or master plan are found in Town Law Section 272-a and Village Law Section 7-722. Specific steps to be followed for adoption are:

- Referral of the draft Comprehensive Plan to the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning in accordance with General Municipal Law Section 239-l and -m;
- One or more public hearings held by the Town Planning Board and Village Planning Board;
- One or more public hearings held by the Town Board and Village Board;
- Adoption of the plan by resolution of the Town Board and Village Board.

Town Law Section 272-a-10 and Village Law Section 7-722-10 provide for periodic review of the comprehensive plan, as follows:

"The Town Board [Village Board] shall provide, as a component of such proposed comprehensive plan, the maximum intervals at which the adopted plan shall be reviewed."

The Plan should be reviewed every five (5) years to make sure it reflects current conditions and the direction the communities wish to follow. For amending the Master Plan, the procedures are the same as those required for initial adoption of the Plan.

1.6 Preparation of the Plan

The Plan represents the collaborative effort of Town and Village officials, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, the Master Plan Steering Committee and residents. The Plan is a collection of inventory and policies prepared to guide the Town and Village over the next 10 to 20 years. This section outlines the tasks completed in preparation of the Master Plan.

Steering Committee Meetings

A series of meetings were held with the Master Plan Steering Committee. The Committee consisted of Town and Village Board members, a Planning Board member, a local businessperson and a member of the Erie County Department of Environment. 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 Brant and Farnham.



Autumn comes to Brant.

Inventory

A data collection process was completed for the Master 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 telephone 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 recreation, elected and appointed officials, businesses and agricultural interests.

Community Survey

A random survey was distributed to both homeowners and renters in the Town and Village. The survey was designed to determine the opinions of residents on a variety of topics, including community image, recreation, transportation, housing and community services.

Public Meetings/Hearings

One public meeting and one public hearing were conducted in Brant and Farnham for the Master Plan. The public was invited to hear about the plan and provide comments. The public meetings were held during Spring 2003. These sessions helped provide the consultant and elected officials with valuable feedback on the plan and future of the Town and Village.

Implementation

Goals, policies and actions were developed for the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham to help guide decisions over the next 20 years. 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 two communities and a better quality of life for all residents.

1.7 Goals, Policies and Actions

During the process of preparing the Master Plan, the communities have 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 the communities 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 and Village can achieve the stated goal.

Agriculture

Goal 1 To promote a strong collaborative regional approach to future development

Policy: Recognize that the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham are part of a larger agricultural region and coordinate future efforts to maintain our character and viability.

Joint Action: Adopt the Master Plan as a guide for decision-making. The plan incorporates a detailed analysis of inventory and extensive public input. As a legal basis for any zoning changes, the Master Plan should be revisited every five years to ensure the direction and vision is updated to meet changing conditions.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board

Time Frame: Immediate – Adoption
3-5 Years – Updates

Town Action: Implement the Regional farmland Protection Plan for the Towns of Brant, Evans and North Collins. The Town of Brant should continue to participate with the County and neighboring communities such as Evans and North Collins to support farmers and protect productive farmland.

Responsibility: Town Board
Town of Evans

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Town of North Collins

Time Frame: *Ongoing*

Policy: Establish and maintain communications with neighboring communities to keep apprised of local planning strategies

Joint Action: *Notify neighboring towns of proposed actions within the Town and Village. This would allow additional input from other municipalities in the region and encourage the Town and Village to consider the potential impacts to neighboring communities.*

Responsibility: Town Board
 Village Board
 Town and Village Planning Boards

Timeframe: Ongoing

Joint Action: *The Town and Village should open lines of communication and facilitation and make a deliberate attempt to incorporate one another in their respective decision making process by appointing a liaison to attend one another's board meetings.*

Responsibility: Town Board
 Village Board
 Town and Village Planning Boards

Timeframe: Ongoing

Joint Action: *Participate as a full partners in regional and multi-municipality planning efforts. The impact of planning and development decisions can be considered on a regional basis to ensure that all partners are fully informed of proposals and that they all can plan for the positive and negative impacts of these actions.*

Responsibility: Town Board
 Village Board

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	Timeframe:	Ongoing
Policy:	Utilize the resources available from County and regional agencies in local planning decisions.	
Joint Action:	<i>Consider all possible effects of development proposals, including impacts on soil, natural resources, and transportation. The Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Soil & Water Conservation District along with other local agencies should be consulted when reviewing local development proposals. This will assist the Town and Village in making informed decisions taking into account the impacts of development.</i>	
Responsibility:	Town Board Village Board Town and Village Planning Boards Erie Co. Dept. of Environment and Planning	
	Timeframe:	Ongoing

Population

Goal 2 To direct controlled population growth to appropriate areas within the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham

Policy: Review and modify policies to protect and enhance the agriculturally productive land in Brant.

Joint Action: *Focus residential development within the Village and areas of the Town that have access to existing infrastructure. The Town and Village should collaboratively determine their shared land use approach for directing population development within the Town and Village and revise existing policies or draft new policies consistent with this approach.*

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Responsibility:	Town Board Village Board Town and Village Planning Boards
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Policy:	Promote the advantages of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham as places to live
Joint Action:	<i>Identify channels to publicize the benefits of living in the Brant-Farnham community. The benefits of living in Brant and Farnham should be promoted in ways that will increase community pride and raise awareness of the quality of life in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant.</i>
Responsibility:	Chamber of Commerce Erie County Real Estate Board Realtors
Time Frame:	Ongoing

Housing

Goal 3 To ensure there are safe, affordable and attractive housing choices of all kinds for all of the residents of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham.

Policy: Provide senior housing opportunities in Brant-Farnham

Joint Action: Brant-Farnham should encourage a senior housing project and formulate strategies to attract developers. Census figures from 2000 show that 24% of Village residents and 26% of Town residents were age 55 years or older. In order to allow Town and Village residents to seek supportive living environments without having to leave their communities, senior housing should be encouraged. Public contributions can include in-kind goods and services such as street paving, lighting, water extension, etc., possibly in exchange for open space dedication

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Responsibility:	Town Board Village Board Erie Co. Dept. of Environment and Planning Private developers Erie Co. Industrial Development Agency
Time Frame:	1-3 years
Policy:	Ensure that existing housing units are safe and adequately maintained.
Joint Action:	<i>Continue efforts to bring all housing units in Brant and Farnham up to the current building code. Over 88% of the homes in Village and 66% of the homes in Town were constructed before 1960. The age of the housing stock means that rehabilitation and maintenance of the housing stock is needed. A housing maintenance law would require people owning an existing home in the Town/Village to maintain it according to established thresholds. Enforcement would require property owners to maintain their property according to established thresholds.</i>
Responsibility:	Code Enforcement Officer
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Joint Action:	<i>Brant-Farnham should continue to seek funding at all governmental levels that can be made available to residents for housing rehabilitation. Funding could include Small Cities Community Development Block Grants and other monies available for this purpose. Funding information can be obtained from the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR).</i>
Responsibility:	Town Board Village Board Erie County

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Time Frame: Ongoing

Land Use

Goal 4 To preserve and enhance the rural character of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham

Policy: Ensure consistency among land use regulations in Brant-Farnham with the goals of the Master Plan



Harvest time at Rosiek's Farm Market

Joint Action: The Town and Village have shown a high degree of cooperation in the formation of this Master Plan. They can now go to the next step and coordinate a comprehensive update of their zoning ordinances and other land use regulations, including design standards, to reflect the uses on the future land use plan including:

- *Focusing commercial growth near*
- *Maintaining very low density residential north of NY Route 5, where most prime soils are located*
- *Focusing industrial development in the as designated on the Future Land Use Plan*

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board
Town and Village Planning and Zoning Boards

Time Frame: Immediate

Policy: Ensure that future development in Brant-Farnham conforms to the Future Land Use Plan

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Joint Action: *Encourage new development in the Village and areas of the Town where infrastructure, such as water, electric, gas service already exists to protect prime agricultural soils and maintain the rural character of the community.*

Responsibility: *Town Board
Village Board
Town and Village Planning Boards*

Time Frame: *Ongoing*

Policy: Incorporate all available environmental data into land uses decisions.

Joint Action: *Utilize SEQRA when reviewing development proposals. The provisions of the State Environment Quality Review Act (SEQRA) should be fully utilized by the Town and Village in their review of development proposals. Under SEQRA regulations the municipality may request developers to conduct specific studies to adequately review projects, such as soil suitability or traffic studies. The SEQRA law can ensure maximum environmental quality, minimize negative impacts and otherwise protect the character of the community.*

Responsibility: *T own Board
Village Board
Town and Village Planning and
Zoning Boards*

Time Frame: *Ongoing*

Community Facilities

Goal 5 To ensure the community services are adequate such as schools and emergency services, and appropriate recreational opportunities and cultural facilities for all residents of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham

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Policy: Ensure a high quality educational system that meets the needs of Brant and Farnham residents

Joint Action: Address educational issues through continued efforts to foster open communication and build a working relationship between the Town, Village and School Boards.

Responsibility: School Districts
Town Board
Village Board

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Policy: Ensure that the Town of Brant/Village of Farnham emergency service companies are adequately staffed.

Joint Action: Assist and Support Emergency Service Providers. As the fire companies that service the community are staffed on a voluntary basis it is imperative to assure that these services are sufficiently staffed to provide quick response times. The Town of Brant and Village of Farnham should provide continuing assistance to these entities by publicizing the need for volunteers. The Town and Village should also continue to maintain their mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities to foster cooperation among the companies.

Responsibility: Fire Departments
Town Board
Village Board

Time Frame: Ongoing

Policy: Preserve and protect the significant historic resources in Brant and Farnham

Joint Action: The Town and Village should review existing inventories of historic sites to ensure they include acknowledged historic sites as well as potentially historic sites.

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Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board
Erie Co. Dept. of Environment and Planning
Brant Historical Society

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Joint Action: Nominate potentially historic sites, properties or districts to the State and National Register of Historic Places. Such designations should be aggressively pursued, as they would generate interest in the Town and Village and their history, provide protection for the designated sites and guidelines for their maintenance and rehabilitation. In addition, these designations can make funding sources and incentives available to the owners of designated properties and properties within designated districts.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board
NYS OPRHP
Brant Historical Society

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Town Action: There are numerous historic and potentially historic places scattered throughout the Town. Development of an interpretive historic trail and a visitors center in the Hamlet of Brant would help to tie these disparate sites together thematically, attract visitors and help to develop retail commercial opportunities in the Town of Brant.

Responsibility: Town Board
Town Historical Society
Volunteers and Activists

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Policy: Provide additional recreational opportunities for Brant and Farnham residents.

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Joint Action: *Develop a linked system of open space and trails that connects to the regional system. The Town and Village should work with state and regional agencies to develop a regional open space/trail system that could offer a variety of recreational opportunities.*

Responsibility: Town Board
 Village Board
 NYS Dept. of Parks and Recreation
 Erie Co. Dept. of Environment and Planning

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Joint Actions: *The Town and Village should commission a joint open space and recreation Master Plan to ensure the diverse recreational opportunities within the Town and Village are fully utilized. The Town and Village each have parks and designated open space. These are complemented by Evangola State Park, which provides additional recreational facilities and activities. Evangola State park is also the Town and Village residents' only access to Lake Erie. An Open Space and Recreation Master Plan would engage Niagara Region Parks in the communities' recreation and wants. Once a plan is in place, funding sources may be identified to assist in implementation.*

Responsibility: Town Board
 Village Board

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Village Action: *The Village should establish a supervised skateboard park. Such a park would provide youths with a place to practice their skateboard skills off public street and sidewalks.*

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Responsibility: Village Board

Time Frame: 1-3 Years

Joint Action: Provide opportunities for all residents to become involved in the community. Activities such as the now defunct Strawberry Festival provided a focal point for the communities. Events that celebrate the communities' historical ties to the land, community recreational activities and celebrations can help to engage residents and increase community volunteerism and provide other spin off benefits.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board

Time Frame: Ongoing

Transportation and Infrastructure

Goal 6 To ensure that the resources devoted to transportation, public transportation and utilities development protect and enhance the quality of life for residents of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham.

Policy: Promote a safe and efficient transportation system.

Village Action: The sidewalk construction program that was initiated in the Village should be completed and sidewalks properly maintain once constructed. This would provide for safe mobility for pedestrians in the area.

Responsibility: Village DPW

Time Frame: Immediate

Joint Action: Continue regional collaboration on bike/pedestrian pathways. The Greater Buffalo-

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Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) is working to create a system of bicycle and multi-use trails that traverse the region. Their Plan identifies an on-street bicycle route through the Town of Brant. The GBNRTC has indicated that it plans to meet with Town officials to seek input on a "Shoreline Trail" concept.

Responsibility: Town and Village DPW
Planning Boards
GBNRTC
NYS Dept of Parks and Recreation
NYSDOT
Erie County Highway Department

Time Frame: Immediate

Joint Action: The Town/Village should work with the appropriate parties (NYSDOT and the Erie County Highway Department) to address those intersections that need improvements. Residents have expressed concerns about numerous accidents and some fatalities that have occurred in the area. Concern has been expressed about segments of roadways and intersections along the following: Mile Strip Road, Brant Reservation Road, Versailles Plank Road and NY Route 249. The Town and Village should also work with the State and County to insure that roads in need of repaving are addressed.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board
NYSDOT
Erie Co. Highway Dept

Time Frame: Immediate

Joint Action: Determine the need for expanded bus service for Brant and Farnham residents.

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Responsibility:	Town Board Village Board
Time Frame:	Immediate
Policy:	The extension of municipal water/sewer lines should follow the planned growth pattern specified in the Master Plan.
Town Action:	<i>The Town should review the costs and environmental considerations of extending its water and installing sewer lines only in those areas that have been identified in the Master Plan as suitable residential growth areas.</i>
Responsibility:	Town Board
Time Frame:	Ongoing

Economy

Goal 7 To expand the economic base and promote the development of economic opportunities for the residents of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham

Policy:	Provide an attractive business climate that results in stable, good paying jobs in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham.
Joint Action:	<i>Encourage appropriate business development. The Town and Village should develop strategies to attract appropriate business development for various types of commercial activity; this could include neighborhood retail and agri-businesses in the Village, Town Center and/or areas zoned for Commercial and Industrial uses</i>
Responsibility:	Town Board Village Board Erie Co. Dept. of Environment and Planning Erie Co. Industrial Development Agency
Time Frame:	Ongoing

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<i>Joint Action:</i>	<i>The Town and Village should maintain open lines of communication with the Seneca Nation of Indians regarding possible casino gaming development on the reservation to ensure that potential negative effects to transportation and infrastructure systems are minimized and to ensure that the Town and Village would be in a position to exploit any economic opportunities that develop as a result of such a development.</i>
<i>Responsibility:</i>	Town Board Village Board
<i>Time Frame:</i>	Ongoing
<i>Policy:</i>	Support the agriculture industry as an important part of the Brant and Farnham economy.
<i>Joint Action:</i>	<i>Market the agriculture industry in Brant and Farnham. The Town of Brant once boasted a very diverse agricultural industry, which included the production of fruits and vegetables for the regional consumer market. While much of that diversity has been lost, the Town still possesses a strong agricultural base and excellent soils and growing conditions. Rising transportation costs and growing concerns about international food security may present an opportunity for the Town to reclaim its food crop legacy.</i>
<i>Responsibility:</i>	Local Farmers
<i>Time Frame:</i>	Ongoing
<i>Joint Action:</i>	<i>The Town and Village should work with Erie County to identify appropriate businesses that could benefit from a location in the Town. Such businesses could include small- scale food processing (i.e. cider, jams, sauces, etc.), agri-tourism (petting zoos, sleigh rides, hay rides, bed-and-breakfasts, etc.), and wine-</i>

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related industries. Once these businesses are identified, the Town and Village can identify strategies to attract and encourage them.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board
ECDEP
Local Entrepreneurs

Time Frame: Immediate

Joint Action: The Town and Village should work with entities such as Farm Bureau, Cooperative Extension, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, farmers' professional organizations and others to develop ways to increase awareness and understanding of agriculture and its importance in the local economy and the importance of sound land stewardship.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board

Time Frame: Ongoing

Policy: Keep apprised of the needs and plans of existing businesses and industries.

Joint Action: Maintain communication with local companies on a regular basis. A business liaison within the Town and Village should be designated who would maintain communication with local companies on a regular basis. This individual would become informed of specific short-term and long-term needs (i.e. infrastructure, workforce, services), thereby enabling the Town and Village to proactively address concerns at an early stage.

Responsibility: Town Board
Village Board

Time Frame: Ongoing

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<i>Joint Action:</i>	<i>Work with area secondary educational institutions to develop educational programs, on-the-job training and internships that will meet the needs of local businesses and industries. These programs will provide area residents with specific skills needed by companies, thereby enabling the companies to obtain qualified employees and enabling area residents to find work in the community.</i>
Responsibility:	School Districts Town Board Village Board
Time Frame:	1-3 Years

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1.8 Implementation Matrix

The following chart summarizes recommendations outlined in this Plan. This section presents, in chart form, the recommended Actions identified in the Master Plan. Each action has been assigned a time frame to signify when it should be addressed: I = Immediate, S = Short Term (1-3 Years), L=Long Term (3-5 Years), and O = Ongoing. The boards or agencies responsible for carrying out the actions are also identified.

**Implementation Matrix
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost/Funding Sources
AGRICULTURE			
Adopt the Master Plan	Town Board Village Board	I-Adopt L-Update	N/A
Implement the Regional Farmland Protection Plan for the Towns of Brant, Evans and North Collins	Town Board Town of Evans Town of North Collins	O	N/A
Notify neighboring towns of proposed actions within the Town/Village	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards	O	N/A
Town and Village incorporate one another in their respective decision making process through a liaison to one another's board meeting.	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards	O	N/A
Participate as a full partners in regional and multi-municipality planning efforts.	Town Board Village Board	O	N/A
Consider all possible effects of development proposals, including impacts on soil, natural resources, and transportation	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards ECDEP	O	N/A
POPULATION			
Focus residential development within the Village and areas of the Town that have access to existing infrastructure	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards	O	N/A
Identify channels to publicize the benefits of living in the Brant-Farnham community	Evans-Brant Chamber of Commerce Erie Co. Real Estate Board Realtors	O	N/A

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HOUSING			
Encourage a senior housing project and formulate strategies to attract developers	Town Board Village Board ECDEP Private developers ECIDA	S	Varies
Continue efforts to bring all housing units in Brant and Farnham up to the current building code	Code Enforcement Officer	O	N/A
Continue to seek funding at all governmental levels that can be made available to residents for housing rehabilitation	Town Board Village Board Erie County	O	Varies
LAND USE			
Town and Village coordinate the updating of their zoning ordinances and other land use regulations	Village Board Town Board Planning Boards Zoning Boards	I	\$25,000-30,000 for Zoning Update
Encourage new development in areas where infrastructure already exist	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards	O	N/A
Utilize SEQRA when reviewing development proposals	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards	O	N/A
COMMUNITY FACILITIES			
Address education issues through open communication and working relationships between Town, Village and School Boards	Town Board Village Board School Districts	S	N/A
Publicize the need for volunteers for emergency response agencies and maintain mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities	Town Board Village Board Fire Departments	O	N/A
Ensure that acknowledged historic sites as well as potential historic sites are included on inventories	Town Board Village Board Erie County Brant Historical Society	S	N/A
Nominate potential historic sites, properties and districts to the State and National Register of Historic Places	Town Board Village Board NYS OPRHP Brant Historical Society	S	N/A
Develop an interpretive historic trail and visitors center in the Hamlet of Brant	Town Board Brant Historical Society Volunteers and Activists	S	\$15,000-\$40,000 Depends on scope and visitor center purchase

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Develop a linked system of open space and trails that connects to the regional system	Town Board Village Board ECDEP NYSOPRHP	S	Varies
Commission a joint Open Space and Recreation Master Plan	Town Board Village Board	S	\$25,000
Develop a supervised skateboard park	Village	S	\$10,000-\$25,000
Provide opportunities for residents to become involved in the community	Town Board Village Board	O	N/A
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE			
Complete sidewalk construction program and properly maintain sidewalks when completed	Village DPW	I	N/A
Continue Regional collaboration on bike/pedestrian pathways	Town and Village DPW Planning Boards Zoning Boards NYSDOT Erie Co. Hwy. Dept.	I	N/A
Address roadways and intersections that need improvements	Town Board Village Board Planning Boards NYSDOT Erie Co. Hwy. Dept.	I	N/A
Only those areas that have been identified in the Master Plan as suitable residential growth areas should be considered for water and sewer service	Town Board	O	N/A
ECONOMY			
Develop strategies to encourage appropriate business development	Town Board Village Board ECDEP ECIDA	O	N/A
Maintain open lines of communication with the Seneca Nation of Indians	Town Board Village Board	O	N/A
Market the agriculture industry in Brant and Farnham	Local Farmers Farm Bureau Coop. Ext.	O	N/A
Work with Erie County to identify appropriate businesses that could locate in the Town and Village	Town Board Village Board ECDEP Local Entrepreneurs	I	N/A

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Develop ways to increase awareness and understanding of agriculture and its importance to the local economy	Town Board Village Board Regional Agencies Farm Bureau 4H FFA Coop Ext.	O	N/A
Maintain communication with local companies on a regular basis	Town Board Village Board	O	N/A
Work with area secondary education institutions to develop educational programs, on-the-job training and internships	School Districts Town Board Village Board Local Businesses	S	Varies

Potential Funding Opportunities

The following list of funding opportunities reflects options available for development and improvement projects within Brant and Farnham. Each source includes contact information; the contact should be consulted for the most current status of each funding program.

Public Funding

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Provides grants to carry out a variety of community development activities including neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services that primarily benefit low to moderate-income people. Local governments are eligible for application.

Contact: US Department of HUD
Buffalo Field Office, Lafayette Court, 465 Main Street 5th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14203, (716) 551-5755
www.hud.gov

Environmental Protection Act Fund (EPF)

Provides matching grants for the acquisition, development and improvement of parks, historic properties, and heritage areas. Municipalities and nonprofit organization with an ownership interest may apply.

Contact: Bureau of Grants Management, NYSOPRHP
Rockefeller Empire State Plaza, Agency Bldg 1, 16th Floor
Albany, NY 12238, (518) 474-0427
www.nysparks.state.ny.us

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Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

A matching grant program for the acquisition, development and/or rehabilitation of outdoor park and recreation facilities. Funds are available to municipal public agencies and Indian tribal governments.

Contact: Bureau of Grants Management, NYSOPRHP
Rockefeller Empire State Plaza, Agency Bldg 1, 16th Floor
Albany, NY 12238, (518) 474-0427
www.nysparks.state.ny.us

HOME Investment Partnership Program

Provides grants to states and local governments to fund housing programs that meet local needs and priorities. Home funds may be used to assist renters, new homebuyers or existing homeowners. Municipalities must provide a 25% match of HOME funds.

Contact: Department of Neighborhood Services
65 Niagara Street Room 313
Buffalo, NY 14202, (716) 851-4182
www.hud.gov

National Preservation Loan Fund (NPLF)

Provides loans to establish or expand local and statewide preservation revolving funds; acquire and/or rehabilitate historic buildings, sites, structures and districts; to purchase easements; and to preserve National Historic Landmarks. Tax-exempt non-profit organizations and local governments are eligible to apply.

Contact: National Trust for Historic Preservation
Northeast Region Office, Seven Faneuil Hall Marketplace
Boston, MA 02109, (617) 523-0885
www.nationaltrust.org

New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal

Administers housing development and community preservation programs, including State and Federal grants and loans to housing developers to partially finance construction or renovation of affordable housing.

Contact: Thomas Van Nortwick, Regional Director, Statler Towers
107 Delaware Avenue, Suite 600, Buffalo, New York 14202

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716) 842-2244 ext. 221
www.dhcr.state.ny.us

Recreational Trails Program

A matching grant program for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and trail-related projects. Funds are available to non-profit organizations, municipal, state and federal agencies, Indian tribal governments and other public agencies and authorities.

Contact: Bureau of Grants Management, NYSOPRHP
Rockefeller Empire State Plaza, Agency Bldg 1, 16th Floor
Albany, NY 12238, (518) 474-0427
www.nysparks.state.ny.us

Supportive Housing for the Elderly

HUD provides interest-free capital advances to private, nonprofit sponsors to finance the development of supportive housing for the elderly. The capital advance does not have to be repaid as long as the project serves very low-income elderly persons for 40 years.

Contact: US Department of HUD
Buffalo Field Office, Lafayette Court, 465 Main Street 5th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14203, (716) 551-5755
www.hud.gov

Private Funding

Fannie Mae Delegated Underwriting and Servicing Multifamily Loans

A debt-financing program that provides funds for the acquisition of existing or newly constructed properties dedicated to multi-family or long-term care housing.

Contact: Housing and Community Development
Northeastern Regional Office, 1900 Market Street - Suite 800
Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 575-1400
www.fanniemae.com

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Kodak American Greenways Awards

Provides grants up to \$2,500 for the planning and design of greenways in communities across the country

Contact: American Greenways Program Coordinator, Conservation Fund
(703) 525-6300
www.conservationfund.org

Rural New York Grant Program

Provides grants up to \$5,000 for projects that enhance and sustain economic vitality of rural areas through community planning and the preservation of historic resources. Program areas include Economic/Community Planning, "Main Street" Revitalization, Heritage Tourism and Community Building Preservation.

Contact: Preservation League of New York State, (518) 462-5658 or
(607) 272-6510
New York Planning Federation, (518) 432-4094
www.preservenys.org/rnyguidelines.htm

Southtowns Rural Preservation Company Inc

Provides loan and grant application assistance, housing rehabilitation, and housing counseling and referral services to rural towns and villages in Southern Erie County.

Contact: 9441 Boston State Rd, Po Box 153, Boston, NY 14025, (716) 941-5787
www.dhcr.state.ny.us

Tony Hawk Foundation

Provides grants from \$1,000 to \$25,000 for the construction of public skateboard parks in low-income areas throughout the United States.

Contact: P.O. Box 1780, El Granada, CA 94018
www.tonyhawkfoundation.org

2.0 The Communities

2.1 Population Characteristics

This chapter analyzes a variety of population characteristics of the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant. The information presented in this chapter is based on figures obtained through the U.S. Bureau of the Census in 2000 and 1990. Population projection statistics were obtained through the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), and is also based on 2000 U.S. Census data. Analysis of the demographic data presents a picture of the Town and Village and how they compare to their neighboring communities. The analysis will include population trends, income, education and employment characteristics. In order to better understand the regional context of the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant, this analysis also includes the neighboring Towns of Evans and North Collins, as well as the interior villages of these towns, which are Angola and North Collins respectively. The figures presented for the towns are inclusive of their interior villages. Information for Erie County will also be used to demonstrate how these communities compare in a larger context.

2.1.1 Changes in Population

Between 1990 and 2000, both the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant show a considerable loss of population. The Town of Brant lost 10.1% of its population, decreasing from 2,119 to 1,906 persons. Much of this population loss can be attributed to the loss of population within the Village of Farnham, which lost nearly a quarter of its population (22.2%). The Town of Brant, not including the Village of Farnham, still experienced a 7.1% loss of population.

The Village of North Collins also exhibits a substantial loss of population from 1990 to 2000. The Village lost 19.3% of its population, decreasing from 1,335 to 1,078 persons. However, the Town of North Collins, not including the village, showed a 6.0% increase in population. Both the Village of Angola and the Town of Evans experienced modest gains in population, while Erie County as a whole lost 1.9% of its population.

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**Table 2-1 – 1990 and 2000 Population
Brant, Farnham and Region**

	1990	2000	% Change
Town of Brant	2,119	1,906	-10.1%
Town of Evans	17,478	17,594	0.7%
Town of North Collins	3,502	3,376	-3.6%
Village of Farnham	415	323	-22.2%
Village of Angola	2,231	2,266	1.6%
Village of North Collins	1,335	1,078	-19.3%
Town of Brant*	1,704	1,583	-7.1%
Town of Evans*	15,247	15,328	0.5%
Town of North Collins*	2,167	2,298	6.0%
Erie County	968,532	950,265	-1.9%

* Town not including interior village

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Population projections generated by the GBNRTC predict that in 2025, the Town of Brant will have a population of 2,036. This represents an increase of 6.8% from the Town's population in 2000. However, the expected growth of the Town of Brant is less than the 9.3% population increase expected by Erie County over the same time period.

**Table 2-2 – Population Projections
Brant and Erie County**

	1990	2000	2025 Forecast	% Change
Town of Brant	2,119	1,906	2,036	6.8%
Erie County	968,532	950,265	1,039,000	9.3%

Source: Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council

2.1.2 Age Characteristics

The breakdown of age cohorts within a community will assist in determining what age groups are more prevalent now and will be in the future. The analysis helps to set the context for the decline in population in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant by identifying which age groups are less present than in the previous Census. Special attention can be focused on retaining this segment of the community in order to maintain a stable population, and to providing programs and services gauged to the appropriate population.

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In the Village of Farnham, all age groups are evidence a decrease in population. However, children under the age of 17 and people between the ages of 25 and 45 are age groups that have lost the greatest share of the population. The statistics would suggest that family units are moving out of the village. The Town of Brant is losing population of age groups between the ages of 18 and 35. This is the age group of people fresh out of high-school and college either leaving the Town to places closer to employment or leaving the county altogether. The Town does not appear to be losing the population of younger children, as is the case in the Village of Farnham. With the young adults emigrating from the Town and Village, senior citizens are slowly becoming a dominant segment in these communities. The following table summarizes the change in population of each age group from 1990 to 2000 and the percent of population each age group represents in those years.

**Table 2-3 – 1990 and 2000 Age Characteristics
Brant, Farnham and Region**

	Village of Farnham				Town of Brant			
	1990		2000		1990		2000	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total:	415		323		2,119		1,906	
Male:	195	47.0%	140	43.3%	1,034	48.8%	901	47.3%
Female:	220	53.0%	183	56.7%	1,085	51.2%	1,005	52.7%
Under 5 years	40	9.6%	24	7.4%	155	7.3%	109	5.7%
5 to 17 years	84	20.2%	64	19.8%	379	17.9%	362	19.0%
18 to 24 years	18	4.3%	33	10.2%	177	8.4%	125	6.6%
25 to 34 years	77	18.6%	36	11.1%	311	14.7%	225	11.8%
35 to 44 years	60	14.5%	47	14.6%	308	14.5%	302	15.8%
45 to 54 years	28	6.7%	41	12.7%	240	11.3%	289	15.2%
55 to 64 years	47	11.3%	25	7.7%	237	11.2%	191	10.0%
65 to 74 years	32	7.7%	39	12.1%	181	8.5%	185	9.7%
75 to 84 years	25	6.0%	14	4.3%	110	5.2%	91	4.8%
85 years and over	4	1.0%	0	0.0%	21	1.0%	27	1.4%
Under 18 years	124	29.9%	88	27.2%	534	25.2%	471	24.7%
65 years and over	57	13.7%	53	16.4%	291	13.7%	303	15.9%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

2.1.3 Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity are two separate characteristics. Usually, an ethnic group is a subset of a racial group. However, people of Hispanic origin make up an ethnic group that includes people of different races. For the purpose of this analysis, people of Hispanic origin will be treated as a separate racial group. The racial classification of 'Other' used in this survey includes Asian and Pacific Islander racial groups, people belonging to two or more racial groups, and those who reported their race as 'other' on the 2000 Census form.

In the Town of Brant, 91.2% of the residents are white. Although the town is adjacent to the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, only 3.6% of the population is American Indian. Black, Hispanic and 'other' racial groups each account for 2.0% of the population or less. In the Village of Farnham, almost 97% of the residents are white. The racial makeup of these communities is not significantly different than that of the surrounding municipalities with the exception of a sizeable Hispanic population in the Village of North Collins (7.0%). All of these communities contain a significantly higher concentration of white residents than Erie County as a whole. However, the county includes urbanized areas that are not typical of these communities.

**Table 2-4 – Race and Hispanic Origin (2000)
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
White*	96.9%	95.3%	88.6%	91.2%	97.0%	94.5%	80.9%
Black*	1.5%	0.8%	0.0%	2.0%	0.5%	0.0%	12.7%
Hispanic or Latino	0.9%	1.3%	7.0%	2.0%	1.1%	3.0%	3.2%
American Indian*	0.0%	2.4%	2.1%	3.6%	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%
Other*	0.6%	0.1%	2.3%	1.3%	0.9%	1.7%	2.6%

* Not of Hispanic origin

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

2.1.4 Urban and Rural Populations

The urban-rural characteristic is not just a function of population density. The statistic is also an indicator of the lifestyle of a community's inhabitants. The attribute has a substantial influence on many other demographic indicators, such as racial composition, educational attainment, income levels and employment opportunities.

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The following table summarizes the proportion of urban and rural populations within Farnham, Brant and the comparison communities. Both the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant are 100% rural communities. The Village and Town of North Collins are also completely rural communities. The Town of Evans, which borders Brant to the north, has a population that is 84.7% urban. This community is on the edge of the urban expansion from the city of Buffalo. This information not only illustrates how sharp the demarcation is between urban and rural populations, but also how close that line is to the Town of Brant.

Erie County's population is 91.0% urban. The difference in this characteristic between the County and the Town of Brant makes comparison of other demographic statistics misleading.

Table 2-5 – Urban and Rural Populations – 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Urban Population	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	84.7%	0.0%	91.0%
Rural Population	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	15.3%	100.0%	9.0%
Farm Population	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	0.2%	3.2%	0.1%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

2.2 Education Levels

Educational attainment and school enrollment are good indicators as to the quality of the workforce within a community. There is a strong correlation between education and income levels.

2.2.1 Educational Attainment

The following table illustrates the educational attainment of the Village of Farnham, the Town of Brant, as well as the surrounding communities and Erie County.

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**Table 2-6 – Education (Persons 25 Years or Older) 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Less than 9th Grade	7.4%	2.8%	4.5%	5.9%	4.0%	4.2%	5.2%
9th to 12th Grade, no diploma	11.9%	11.1%	14.2%	13.1%	11.6%	11.8%	11.9%
High School Graduate	31.7%	34.7%	39.4%	33.3%	36.4%	37.4%	29.9%
Some College, no degree	23.3%	20.1%	20.8%	21.4%	18.6%	19.2%	19.0%
Associate Degree	17.3%	11.9%	8.6%	11.2%	11.0%	10.5%	9.5%
Bachelor's Degree	6.4%	11.1%	7.8%	10.2%	10.9%	9.7%	14.4%
Graduate/Professional Degree	2.0%	8.4%	4.7%	5.0%	7.5%	7.2%	10.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

In the Village of Farnham, only 8.4% of the population over the age of 25 has achieved a Bachelor's degree or better. This figure is significantly lower than any of the municipalities in this analysis. In the Town of Brant, 15.2% of the specified population has attained at least a bachelor's degree. The proportion of college graduates in the Town of Brant is lower than its neighboring towns. All of these communities have a significantly lower percentage of graduates than Erie County, which has 24.5%. The Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant also have the highest percentage of people without a high school diploma with 19.3% and 19.0% respectively.

2.2.2 School Enrollment

The following table is a presentation of school enrollment for those old enough to attend school. These numbers are useful for planning current or near future programs. The figures show that the Village of Farnham has 30.1% of its population enrolled in school, while only 24.6% of the population of Brant is enrolled in school. These numbers are fairly consistent with the surrounding communities and the County, which has an enrollment of 28.0%. Only 1.5% of those attending a pre-college school in the Town of Brant are enrolled in a private school. This rate is about half that of the surrounding communities and all of Erie County. Perhaps the lack of a private institution alternative is something that demands consideration.

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**Table 2-7 – School Enrollment (Persons 3 years and Over) 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Not enrolled in school	69.6%	70.2%	74.1%	75.4%	71.1%	74.4%	72.0%
Preschool / Kindergarten	5.4%	3.6%	2.1%	3.5%	3.2%	4.2%	3.2%
Elementary School	13.4%	15.1%	16.3%	13.0%	13.8%	13.5%	12.1%
High School	6.1%	6.8%	5.5%	4.9%	7.0%	5.6%	5.8%
College	5.4%	4.4%	2.0%	3.1%	4.9%	2.4%	6.9%
Attend a Private School	0.0%	0.6%	3.7%	1.5%	2.9%	2.6%	2.9%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

2.3 Housing

This section assesses the housing conditions in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham. For comparison purposes, data for the bordering communities of Evans and North Collins as well as the villages of Angola and North Collins and Erie County as a whole are included.

Housing conditions for the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham are evaluated through a review of total number of housing units, total units in each structure, age of the housing stock, selected monthly costs, value of the housing, housing occupancy and vacancy, household size and composition, public utilities, building permits, housing programs and other data. The goal of this evaluation of the housing stock of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham is to ensure that there is adequate housing for all resident of the community.

2.3.1 Characteristics of Existing Housing

2.3.1.1 Total Housing Units

In 2000, there were 125 housing units in the Village of Farnham and 812 housing units in the Town of Brant. This compares with 1990 totals of 162 housing units in the Village of Farnham and 883 housing units in the Town of Brant. This is consistent with the loss of population, households and

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housing units in both communities. The table below illustrates the trend in population and housing in Farnham and Brant in 1990 and 2000.

Table 2-8 – 1990 and 2000 Population and Housing
Farnham and Brant

	Village of Farnham			Town of Brant		
	1990	2000	% change	1990	2000	% change
Total population	427	322	-24.6%	2,119	1,906	-10.1%
Households	149	113	-24.2%	774	710	-8.3%
Housing units	162	126	-22.2%	883	812	-8.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 1990, 2000

2.3.1.2 Units in Structure

The number of units in structures is an indicator of population density. As units in structures increases in a community, the number of structures decreases. In rural and suburban communities, housing is generally predominantly single-family detached dwellings. In more urbanized settings, higher numbers of units per structure indicates increased population density.

Existing housing the Village of Farnham (74.4%) and the Town of Brant (85.1%) is predominantly one-unit detached single-family housing. There are few attached dwellings in either community; while the Village of Farnham has a fairly large proportion (22.4%) of two-to-four-unit dwellings. This composition is consistent with the rural character of the Town of Brant and the denser settlement of the Village of Farnham. It is also fairly consistent with housing in the adjacent villages and towns. The table below illustrates the mix of housing types in the Village of Farnham, Town of Brant, adjacent villages and towns and Erie County.

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**Table 2-9 – 2000 Housing Unit Types
Farnham, Brant and Region**

Municipality	1-unit, detached	1-unit, attached	2 to 4 units	5 to 9 units	10 or more units	Mobile home, trailer, manufactured home
Farnham Village	74.4%	1.6%	22.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Angola Village	65.6%	1.6%	30.9%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
North Collins Village	74.7%	0.0%	22.8%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Brant Town	85.1%	2.1%	8.5%	0.4%	0.0%	3.9%
Evans Town	80.3%	3.5%	7.8%	1.0%	2.6%	4.8%
North Collins Town	83.8%	0.8%	13.2%	0.4%	1.8%	0.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 2000

2.3.1.3 Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Housing occupancy and tenure are important tools in planning a community's future because they contribute to an understanding of the overall condition and affordability of the community's housing stock.

Housing in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant are both predominantly owner-occupied, like their neighbors and the county as a whole. In the Village of Farnham, almost 30 percent of the occupied housing units are renter-occupied. This is consistent with the other local rural villages, which also have a higher proportion of rental properties.

The Town of Brant is also consistent with its neighboring towns, with more than 80 percent of its occupied housing being owner-occupied. This is higher than the owner-occupancy rate of the county as a whole (65.3 percent).

The Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant both exhibit very low vacancy rates for both owner- and renter-occupied housing. These rates suggest that there is competition for available housing in the study area. Vacancy rates for housing in the Village and Town are either consistent with or better than the vacancy rates in the neighboring communities and the county as a whole. The table below illustrates the occupancy and vacancy of housing.

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**Table 2-10 – 2000 Housing Occupancy and Tenure
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Occupied housing units	113	844	414	710	6639	1254	380,873
Vacant Housing Units	13	59	80	102	868	149	34,995
Seasonal, recreational or occasional use	1	2	10	52	447	39	2,076
Homeowner vacancy rate	2.4%	1.6%	5.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.2%	1.8%
Rental vacancy rate	3.1%	11.1%	25.0%	2.9%	9.4%	16.9%	8.8%
Owner-occupied housing units	82	603	312	577	5385	1038	248,867
Renter-occupied housing units	31	241	102	133	1254	216	132,106

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 2000

Vacant housing units in the Town of Brant and the Town of Evans that are for seasonal, recreational or occasional use is probably indicative of the presence of summer cottages and camps along the Lake Erie shoreline and throughout the area, of hunting camps.

2.3.1.4 Age of Structure

The age of the housing stock can be an indicator of need for housing rehabilitation programs for a community. Aging housing stock will exhibit need for roof, foundation and other repairs.

The housing stock in the Village of Farnham is somewhat older than that of the Town of Brant and of the surrounding communities. Most of the housing in the Village (79.2%) is more than 60 years old.



Residential development, Lakeshore Road, Brant.

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This lack of newer housing starts is consistent with the general loss of population and lack of growth noted for the village. Like its neighbors, the Town of Brant exhibits a fairly consistent but generally slowing housing development trend over the course of the past 60-plus years.

Neither Farnham nor Brant was able to take advantage, proportionally, in the housing development boom of the post-war years. Between 1940 and 1959, Farnham's housing stock grew by 9.6%, while Brant's grew 17.6%. Neighboring communities were able to capitalize on this trend. By the 1960s, however, housing starts slowed throughout the area.

The absence of evidence of a spike in housing starts in the 1980s or 1990s, both periods of relative prosperity and suburban expansion, is evidence that the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham are outside of the reach of suburbanization associated with the City of Buffalo.

The table below illustrates the growth trends in housing for Farnham, Brant, the surrounding communities and Erie County.

Table 2-11 – Historic Housing Development Trends 2000

Year Structure Built	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
1999 to March 2000	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.7%	1.0%	0.7%
1995 to 1998	0.0%	2.9%	2.5%	3.4%	3.6%	6.4%	2.6%
1990 to 1994	4.0%	1.8%	0.6%	4.9%	3.6%	3.3%	3.6%
1980 to 1989	3.2%	1.8%	1.5%	4.1%	5.9%	5.2%	6.0%
1970 to 1979	0.0%	5.4%	2.5%	10.1%	17.5%	5.6%	10.5%
1960 to 1969	4.0%	7.8%	7.8%	10.6%	9.4%	9.4%	12.5%
1940 to 1959	9.6%	32.0%	27.6%	17.6%	30.4%	27.5%	32.3%
1939 or earlier	79.2%	48.1%	57.4%	48.8%	28.8%	41.6%	31.9%

Farnham, Brant and Region

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 2000

2.3.1.5 Value of Housing

The value of the housing stock in a community, taken in context of the age of the structures is an indicator of the condition of the housing supply. As the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant lose population, there is an over abundance of housing and the value of the housing stock falls.

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The value of housing in the Village of Farnham is depressed, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The housing value in the Village of Farnham is well below that of the neighboring villages of Angola and North Collins. Housing value in the Town of Brant, however, is in keeping with that of its neighbors. Both communities show housing values below that of Erie County as a whole. Two factors impacting the housing value in the Village of Farnham are age and population loss.

In both the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant, more than two-thirds of the housing is worth more than \$50,000 but less than \$100,000. This is somewhat consistent with the region. In the Village of Angola, a little more than 80 percent of the housing falls into the \$50,000 to \$99,999 value category.

The median housing value in the Village of Farnham in 2000 was \$65,800; in the Town of Brant, the median housing value was \$82,200. Median housing value in Erie County was \$90,800.

Table 2-12 – Value of Housing Stock 2000

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Specified owner-occupied housing units	64	534	294	405	4,530	701	201,460
Less than \$50,000	18.8%	5.2%	9.5%	7.9%	11.6%	13.3%	8.1%
\$50,000-\$99,999	68.8%	66.7%	81.0%	67.7%	61.9%	63.1%	52.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	12.5%	26.4%	4.1%	20.2%	19.1%	16.3%	25.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.0%	1.7%	3.4%	3.0%	4.4%	4.9%	8.5%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	2.8%	1.7%	4.3%
\$300,000 or more	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.7%	0.2%	0.8%	1.6%
Median (dollars)	\$ 65,800	\$ 83,500	\$ 74,600	\$ 82,200	\$ 84,200	\$ 79,700	\$ 90,800

Farnham, Brant and Region

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 2000

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2.3.1.6 Sales of Existing Single-Family Homes

Sales of existing single-family homes are important because they reflect the actual current market value of the property in a community. Market value is a more accurate measure of the value of housing stock than is assessed valuation or the self-reported statistics found in the US Census. The exception to these rules is in communities with few sales, providing what can be a less-than-accurate snapshot of housing value. For this reason, the table below shows the housing sales for the Town of Brant including the Village of Farnham. The small number of sales in the Village of Farnham does not present an accurate picture of the housing market and so they have been aggregated with the Town of Brant sales.

Table 2-13 – Single Family Home Sales, 1998-2002
Town of Brant, including Farnham

1998	
Total = \$1,594,520	
Low = \$12,000	High = \$159,000
Avg. = \$69,327	Med. = \$53,500
1999	
Total = \$1,592,428	
Low = \$10,000	High = \$125,000
Avg. = \$61,247	Med. = \$56,700
2000	
Total = \$1,779,900	
Low = \$17,600	High = \$178,000
Avg. = \$77,387	Med. = \$79,000
2001	
Total = \$1,561,320	
Low = \$27,000	High = \$189,600
Avg. = \$82,175	Med. = \$77,900
2002	
Total = \$1,447,196	
Low = \$12,000	High = \$165,000
Avg. = \$68,914	Med. = \$70,000

Sources: Town of Brant, peter j. smith & company, inc.

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Housing values in the Town of Brant have generally increased, but median prices are still far below those of Erie/Niagara⁵ as a whole, where sales through October 2002 had a median price of \$84,445. Brant single-family home median prices jumped between 1999 and 2000, but have seemed to level off since. Home prices are off almost \$8,000 per home through November of 2002.⁶

2.3.1.7 Selected Monthly Costs

The proportion of income that is spent on housing is an indicator of the affordability of housing in a given community. An analysis of housing costs for owner-occupied housing shows that housing is a fairly low proportion of costs for most of the homeowners in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant. However, for nearly 11 percent of Farnham Village homeowners and more than 23 percent of Town of Brant homeowners, housing costs are in excess of 30 percent of monthly income.

While the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant compare favorably with Erie County, the high proportional housing costs are of concern, particularly in light of the relatively moderate housing costs because they indicate that some members of the community may be struggling with housing costs and bills.

This is an even greater concern among renters in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant. More than 40 percent of renting households report that their monthly rent is 30 percent or more of their monthly income. These statistics suggest there is a need for a mechanism to lower monthly housing costs or increase income levels for both renters and owners in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) monthly housing costs of 30 percent or more are considered burdensome. The table below summarizes housing costs for owners and renters in the study area and neighboring communities.

⁵ Accessed on-line at <http://www.BNAR.org>

⁶ Home prices for Brant and Farnham were gathered by reviewing assessor's records. Only those sales that appeared to have taken place either on the open market or at fair market price were recorded for this use.

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**Table 2-14 – Housing Costs as a Percentage of Income 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Specified owner-occupied housing units	64	534	294	405	4,530	701	201,460
Less than 20% of income	53.1%	51.3%	43.6%	55.6%	46.0%	51.8%	53.1%
20% to 24% of income	20.3%	17.0%	19.0%	13.0%	15.7%	13.3%	15.2%
25% to 29% of income	15.6%	6.6%	10.5%	4.2%	11.7%	10.1%	9.8%
30% to 34% of income	0.0%	6.7%	3.1%	3.7%	7.5%	8.3%	6.2%
35% or more of income	10.9%	16.5%	23.8%	22.7%	18.2%	16.5%	15.2%
Not computed	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.5%
Specified renter-occupied housing units	33	241	83	110	1,227	187	131,271
Less than 20% of income	33.4%	38.2%	37.4%	34.5%	30.4%	40.7%	29.6%
20% to 24% of income	0.0%	7.9%	4.8%	9.1%	12.4%	5.9%	11.2%
25% to 29% of income	9.1%	6.2%	7.2%	8.2%	7.8%	5.3%	9.9%
30% to 34% of income	30.1%	7.9%	3.6%	9.1%	8.0%	11.2%	7.1%
35% or more of income	12.1%	36.5%	32.5%	25.5%	29.7%	23.0%	36.1%
Not computed	15.2%	3.3%	14.5%	13.6%	11.7%	13.9%	6.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 2000

2.3.1.8 Local Property Taxes

The basic town and county tax rate in the Town of Brant is 11.34 per \$1000 of assessed value and the basic tax rate for the Village of Farnham is 9.44 per \$1000 of assessed value. Depending on the location of the property within the town and village additional special district rates (sewer, water, school) would also apply and would be added to the basic rate.

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There is a tax exemption available for real properties that use alternative energy systems. According to section 4.01-RPTL Section 487 of the New York State Office of Real Property Services Assessor's Manual, real property that contains a solar, wind or farm waste energy system approved by the State Energy Research and Development authority may be exempt from taxation for a period of 15 years on any increase in assessed value due to the system. This exemption was originally enacted in 1977 and reenacted in 1990. The exemption presently applies to installations that occur before January 1, 2006 and may be extended.

2.3.1.9 Substandard Housing

The U.S. Bureau of the Census attempts to get a picture of the number of housing units that are substandard by determining how many housing units are without complete plumbing facilities. It also enumerates housing units without complete kitchen facilities and those lacking telephones.

Table 2-15 – Domestic Facilities 2000

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Total households	115	844	414	710	6,639	1,254	415,868
Selected Characteristics							
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	0.4%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.3%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%
Lacking telephone	0.0%	1.5%	1.7%	0.0%	0.6%	1.3%	1.5%

Farnham, Brant and Region

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – 2000

As the table above illustrates, no Village of Farnham residents and a very small proportion of Town of Brant households are without complete kitchen and/or plumbing facilities. No members of the community are without telephone service.

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2.3.1.10 Household Size

Household size is an indicator of the presence of families with children. Larger household sizes are indicative of growing communities with younger residents. A community with smaller household sizes could be indicative of a contracting community. These data are important in the development of programs and services for existing residents of the Town and Village as well as to attract new residents.

More than two-thirds of households in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant are comprised of three or fewer persons. The most popular household composition is two-person households. This is generally consistent with the other towns and villages, as well as with Erie County as a whole. The table below illustrates the household sizes in the Village of Farnham, the Town of Brant, the neighboring communities and Erie County.

**Table 2-16 – Household Size 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Total	115	844	414	710	6,639	1,254	380,873
1-person household	19.1%	21.9%	31.6%	19.7%	23.4%	22.2%	30.5%
2-person household	30.4%	30.2%	28.3%	37.9%	31.9%	33.8%	32.1%
3-person household	20.0%	20.3%	12.8%	14.9%	17.9%	16.3%	15.6%
4-person household	14.8%	16.7%	15.7%	13.2%	16.5%	16.8%	13.2%
5-person household	13.9%	7.6%	10.6%	10.4%	6.8%	7.2%	6.1%
6-person household	1.7%	2.3%	0.0%	2.7%	2.4%	1.9%	1.9%
7 or more person household	0.0%	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.0%	1.8%	0.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

In the Village of Farnham, 56 percent of households overall have children under 18 years of age that are related to the householder in family and non-family households. In Brant, 43 percent of households have related children present. The presence of children in Farnham is relatively consistent with neighboring villages, while Brant's presence of children is lower than that of the neighboring towns. In Erie County, 50 percent of households have related children under 18 years of age present.

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Households in both the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant have fewer children under the age of 6 than do their neighbors or the county as a whole. The communities are consistent with their neighbors and Erie County in terms of the numbers of families and households with children between the ages of 6 and 17.

Average household (2.68 persons) and family (3.07 persons) size for the Town of Brant is fairly consistent with neighboring communities and with the county as a whole. The average household (2.84 persons) and family (3.28 persons) size in the Village of Farnham is slightly higher than its neighbors and the county as a whole.

The table below depicts the breakdown of families and households with children under 18 as well as average family and household size.

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**Table 2-17 – Presence of Children
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Total:	86	645	269	520	4,840	910	244,376
Married-couple family:	70.9%	75.0%	81.4%	79.8%	79.4%	83.0%	74.0%
With related children under 18 years:	50.8%	48.3%	55.3%	42.2%	47.6%	48.9%	45.0%
Under 6 years only	16.1%	20.5%	16.5%	15.4%	23.1%	17.3%	22.0%
Under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	25.8%	26.1%	19.0%	24.6%	22.4%	25.7%	21.5%
6 to 17 years only	58.1%	53.4%	64.5%	60.0%	54.5%	56.9%	56.5%
No related children under 18 years	49.2%	51.7%	44.7%	57.8%	52.4%	51.1%	55.0%
Other family:	29.1%	25.0%	18.6%	20.2%	20.6%	17.0%	26.0%
With related children under 18 years:	68.0%	72.7%	72.0%	46.7%	65.5%	42.6%	62.8%
Under 6 years only	16.0%	13.0%	14.0%	9.5%	10.7%	8.4%	13.9%
Under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	12.0%	16.8%	4.0%	6.7%	5.2%	5.8%	11.9%
6 to 17 years only	40.0%	42.9%	54.0%	30.5%	49.5%	28.4%	36.9%
No related children under 18 years	32.0%	27.3%	28.0%	53.3%	34.5%	57.4%	37.2%
Average household size	2.84	2.68	2.58	2.68	2.63	2.68	2.41
Average family size	3.28	3.13	3.11	3.07	3.11	3.16	3.04

Source: US Bureau of the Census

One influence on household size is the age of the householder. As illustrated by the table below, households and family households in Brant and Farnham are generally somewhat older than those of the neighboring communities and of the county as a whole. In the Village of Farnham in particular, non-family households are significantly older than the other communities, with almost 41 percent of householders are between the ages of 65 and 74 years of age.

These statistics suggest that the populations of the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant are aging and that programs and services developed in the future should focus on the needs of teenagers and on older adults.

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**Table 2-18 – Age of Householder
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Farnham Village	Angola Village	North Collins Village	Brant Town	Evans Town	North Collins Town	Erie County
Family households	79.6%	75.8%	63.3%	73.6%	72.7%	73.2%	64.2%
Householder 15 to 24 years	0.0%	1.6%	3.0%	0.6%	1.3%	1.5%	2.7%
Householder 25 to 34 years	16.3%	14.9%	14.5%	13.1%	15.2%	14.1%	15.1%
Householder 35 to 44 years	18.6%	31.2%	38.3%	21.5%	28.6%	31.5%	25.6%
Householder 45 to 54 years	26.7%	23.7%	20.1%	25.0%	25.8%	23.0%	22.4%
Householder 55 to 64 years	16.3%	10.9%	12.3%	16.3%	13.8%	14.2%	14.2%
Householder 65 to 74 years	19.8%	11.0%	9.3%	15.2%	10.0%	11.3%	12.0%
Householder 75 to 84 years	2.3%	6.0%	2.6%	6.3%	4.4%	3.5%	6.9%
Householder 85 years and older	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	1.9%	0.9%	0.9%	1.1%

Non-family households	20.4%	24.2%	36.7%	26.4%	27.3%	26.8%	35.8%
Householder 15 to 24 years	0.0%	6.8%	1.3%	3.7%	2.0%	0.6%	6.3%
Householder 25 to 34 years	0.0%	11.2%	1.9%	12.8%	8.8%	4.8%	13.9%
Householder 35 to 44 years	31.8%	3.9%	23.7%	15.5%	13.3%	22.5%	14.7%
Householder 45 to 54 years	13.6%	15.5%	9.0%	11.8%	16.6%	7.5%	15.2%
Householder 55 to 64 years	0.0%	11.7%	17.9%	9.6%	17.7%	16.8%	12.9%
Householder 65 to 74 years	40.9%	22.3%	12.2%	28.3%	18.1%	17.4%	15.4%
Householder 75 to 84 years	13.6%	24.3%	25.0%	11.2%	16.9%	21.9%	16.2%
Householder 85 years and older	0.0%	4.4%	9.0%	7.0%	6.5%	8.4%	5.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

2.3.2 Housing Trends

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council generates population projections at the town level to give planners and residents a picture of the level of growth or decline it can anticipate. The projections show that in the Town of Brant, the trend of population loss and household size contraction will begin to reverse itself between 2000 and 2025. However, this reversal will not equal the loss of population and households between 1990 and 2000. The table below depicts these projections.

Table 2-19 – Population Projections
Town of Brant

POPULATION			
1980	1990	2000	2025 forecast
2,467	2,119	1,906	2,036
HOUSEHOLDS			
1980	1990	2000	2025 forecast
841	777	710	753

Persons per HH 1990	Persons per HH 2000	Persons per HH (2025)*
2.73	2.68	2.70

Source: Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council

2.3.3 Housing Programs and Suppliers

2.3.3.1 Community Development Block Grant Program

Erie County administers federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for eligible projects in the categories of community development, economic development and infrastructure. Several municipalities within the County are part of the County Consortium – the group of communities that compete for funding from the roughly \$1 million available each year. CDBG funds may be used to meet community development and housing needs principally for low and moderate-income persons and/or for the prevention or elimination of slums and blight.

Municipalities in the County Consortium may apply for funding for community-initiated new housing construction, acquisition of property, property conversion for permanent affordable housing, or housing rehabilitation projects.

The various housing programs available through the CDBG funding are described below.

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Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program

The County's Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program provides low-interest loans (fixed rates of 0 to 3 percent) to eligible homeowners with household incomes of no more than 80 percent of the County's median for that family size, to make needed housing repairs and to bring their properties into compliance with applicable housing codes. To be eligible, properties must be owner-occupied one- to four-unit dwellings.

The aim of this program is to bring housing up to federal housing quality standards. Housing rehabilitation projects will concentrate first on maintaining the structural integrity of the home, which usually involves work on items such as the foundation, roof, or electrical system. The program requires that the homeowners hire the private contractors, who are then paid by the County with CDBG funds. The cost of each project cannot exceed \$15,000, \$17,000 if foundation work is to be included.

Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program

The CDBG Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program provides financial assistance in the form of no interest loans to rental property owners to bring their properties into compliance with applicable housing codes. Financial assistance is available for a maximum of eligible rehabilitation cost up to a maximum of \$6,500 for 1-bedroom units, \$7,500 for 2-bedroom units, and \$8,500 for 3- or more bedrooms units. Any size structure is eligible, as long as low- to moderate-income tenants at fair market rents occupy rehabilitated units for at least 7 years after the work is completed. If the property is sold or transferred, the loan must be repaid.

First-Time Homebuyer Program

The CDBG First-Time Homebuyer Program provides deferred loans for eligible low- and moderate-income homebuyers that can be forgiven after 10 years occupancy. Financial assistance of up to \$6,000 per dwelling is available to assist with closing costs, down payment or mortgage reduction. To be eligible, properties must be owner-occupied, one- or two-family dwellings.

Mobile Home Rehabilitation Program

The County has recognized the need for rehabilitation of mobile homes throughout the communities and plans to set aside CDBG funds to fund a mobile home rehab program to address this need.

2.3.3.2 Southtowns Rural Preservation Company

The Southtowns Rural Preservation Company is a private 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1986 to provide community development assistance in southern Erie County. The Company administers a home repair program as described below.

Since 1990, the Southtowns Rural Preservation Corporation has provided home repair grants through funding from the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation obtained through a competitive grant. The Company also has funds for home repairs for households with very low incomes – described as 50 percent or less of the median.

Grants are available for 60 percent of the cost of repairs up to \$6,000. For very low-income households, a supplemental grant of up to \$6,000 is available. Grants are made for repairs on owner-occupied homes and the owner must meet income limit guidelines. A residency period is required. If the homeowner fails to meet the residency period, all or part of the grant must be repaid.

The Company accepts applications for assistance on a rolling basis. A waiting list has been established and a wait of about a year is typical. Since the program's inception, seven Village of Farnham and six Town of Brant homes had been repaired under the program. In December 2002, there were two current Town of Brant projects underway.

2.3.3.3 Suppliers

According to the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, the three major suppliers of affordable housing in Erie County are Belmont Shelter Corp., Delta Development Corp., and People, Inc. All are not-for-profit agencies that construct and manage affordable housing developments. The not-for-profit affordable housing corporations apply to state, federal, and local grant programs for funding and apply to local municipalities for project approval. The organizations also provide other housing assistance services such as home ownership counseling, rental housing referrals, and administration of the County's HUD Section 8 housing program for the Erie County Consortium.

2.4 Findings

The general demographic characteristics of the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant are summarized below. These are points that should be addressed through the formulation of policies and programs to serve the residents of the Town and Village.

- The Village of Farnham lost nearly one-quarter of its population between 1990 and 2000.
- The population loss in the Town of Brant over the same period was roughly seven percent.
- Projections by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council estimate that in 2025 there will be a population gain for the Town of Brant, but this gain, 6.8 percent, is not enough to make up for the loss in population over the 1990-2000 period.
- Age characteristics for the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham suggest that the community is losing young families and that senior citizens are emerging as a dominant segment of the population.
- The population of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham is overwhelmingly white and completely rural according to the US Department of the Census.
- The population of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham has a lower educational attainment level than surrounding communities.
- Numbers of housing units in both communities has fallen between 1990 and 2000, consistent with the loss in population.
- The mix of housing types is consistent with the rural character of the Town and the denser settlement of the Village. Both are still overwhelmingly single-family dwellings.
- Low vacancy rates suggest there may be competition for existing housing.
- The housing stock of the Village and Town are both aging.
- The median value of the housing in the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant is low, and housing costs are low for all but a small but significant portion of the residents.
- Median home values in the Town of Brant jumped between 1999 and 2000, but have leveled off since.
- The largest proportion of households in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham are comprised of two or three persons.

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- Based on the age of householder and the presence of children, the dominant emerging age cohorts in the communities are teenagers and senior citizens.
- A projected increase in households to 2025 does not make up for a loss in population and households between 1990 and 2000.
- There are a number of housing assistance programs available to residents of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham.

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3.0 The Land

This chapter examines the physical characteristics of the land in Brant and Farnham, how the land is currently being used, the environmental qualities and constraints of the land, and the role that agriculture plays in the two communities.

The analysis of existing conditions forms the basis of the future land use plan for the communities. The future land use plan also incorporates the needs and goals expressed by local residents and decision-makers during the planning process. The purpose of the future land use plan is to provide a picture of how the two communities could look over the next 20 years and to guide the preparation of subsequent land use regulations in Brant and Farnham.

3.1 Land Use

The existing, observable land use of each parcel in Brant and Farnham is important because it reveals the pattern of past growth, the location of areas that should be preserved, and the potential locations for future development.

An Existing Land Use Map has been prepared for the Town and Village showing the current land use classification for each tax parcel in the two communities. A base map was obtained from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning and supplemented with visual verification of properties in the fall of 2002. The resulting map provides a picture of the current pattern of land uses in Brant and Farnham. Currently, there are no active landfills and no plans to establish land fills.

Brant and Farnham have a combined land area of 14,927 acres. The table below indicates the number of acres currently devoted to each land use in the two municipalities.

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**Table 3-1 – Existing Land Use - 2002
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

Land Use	Town of Brant		Village of Farnham		Total	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	7,876	55.1%	158	25.2%	8,034	53.8%
Residential	2,995	20.9%	201	32.1%	3,196	21.4%
Vacant	2,391	16.7%	128	20.4%	2,519	16.9%
Recreation/Entertainment	580	4.1%	42	6.8%	622	4.2%
Public Service	213	1.5%	72	11.5%	285	1.9%
Commercial	158	1.1%	7	1.1%	165	1.1%
Community Service	61	0.4%	13	2.1%	74	0.5%
Industrial	26	0.2%	5	0.8%	31	0.2%
Total	14,300	100%	626	100%	14,926	100%

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

The categories of land use are agricultural, residential, vacant, recreation/entertainment, public service, commercial, community service and industrial. A more detail description of each category is provided below.

3.1.1 Agricultural

Parcels that were being farmed or that appeared to have been recently farmed but were lying fallow were classified as agricultural. Over 50% (8,035 acres) of the land area in Brant and Farnham is classified as agricultural.

Agricultural parcels are more numerous in the Town of Brant (55.1%) than in the Village of Farnham (25.2%). The Town has 7,876 acres of agricultural land.

Agricultural parcels are found throughout the municipality except along the lakefront.



Springtime comes to the fields in Brant.

The Village of Farnham has about 158 acres of land classified as agricultural. It is the second largest land use in the Village. Agricultural land uses are primarily found in the eastern portion of the Village.

3.1.2 Residential

A total of 21.4% (3,196 acres) of the combined land area of Brant and Farnham has residential uses. This percentage is reflective of the higher number of residential properties in the Village core.

Residential is the second largest land use in the Town of Brant, accounting for 20.9% (2,995 acres) of the Town's land area. Residences are found along the lakefront and interspersed among agricultural parcels east of Route 5. There are clusters of residential parcels in the vicinity of Route 20 and the I-90.

In the Village of Farnham residential is the most prevalent land use utilizing 201 acres, or 32.1% of the Village's land area. Residences are primarily single family (74.4%) or two family (20.8%) units on deep lots. The largest housing structures in the Village only contain 3-4 units (1.6%). According to the 2000 Census 28.6% of the occupied housing units in the Village were specified renter occupied.

3.1.3 Vacant

Land with no apparent use, that has no buildings and is not fallow farmland is classified as vacant. Land that is considered vacant is the third largest land use in the Brant-Farnham community, occupying a total of 2,519 acres (16.9%) of the Brant and Farnham land area. Some of these parcels may have potential as development sites, open space buffers or recreational uses.

The Town has 2,391 acres (16.7%) of vacant land interspersed between residential and agricultural lands. Parcels are of various sizes and configurations. There are several large vacant lots in the area west of Route 5 and east of Lakeshore Road.

There are 128 acres (20.4%) of vacant land dispersed throughout the Village of Farnham. There are several large vacant parcels along Route 5 and another large vacant area south of the intersection of Commercial Street and Church Street next to the rail right-of-way.

3.1.4 Recreation/Entertainment

Recreation and Entertainment uses account for 622 acres or 4.2% of the total acreage of Brant and Farnham and includes government owned forests and parkland. Evangola State Park, which is partially located within the Town of

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Brant, accounts for the majority of the Town's land (581 acres) devoted to recreation/entertainment uses. Other recreational sites within the Town are the Brant Memorial Park at the intersection of Route 249 and Route 323 and the Brant Family Recreation Area on Brant Farnham Road.

Within the Village, recreational/entertainment land uses occupy 42 acres. The major portion of this acreage represents portions of Evangola State Park that fall within the Village's boundaries. The Steve Ranker Memorial Park on Detroit Street is the only Village controlled recreation facility.

3.1.5 Public Service

Public services uses include utilities and public works facilities that provide infrastructure support to residents. The Brant-Farnham community has 285 acres (1.9%) of this land use.

The Town of Brant has 1.5% of its land devoted to public service uses. The major public service uses are the power line and rail right-of-ways that parallel each other east of Route 5 and the power line right-of-way along the New York State Thruway. The same power line and rail right-of-ways east of Route 5 in Brant also accounts for the Village's 11.5% public service uses.

Figure 3-1 – Existing Land Use
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

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with a preview included in it.

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This EPS picture will print to a
PostScript printer, but not to
other types of printers.

Source: Erie County and peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.1.6 Commercial

Commercial uses account for 1.1% (165 acres) of the land area in Brant and Farnham. The limited availability of commercial enterprises means that residents must travel 15-20 minutes away, to neighboring communities, in order to meet most of their shopping needs.

The Town has 158 acres (1.1%) devoted to commercial uses. Commercial uses are dispersed throughout the Town east of Route 5. A small cluster of commercial sites is found in the vicinity of the intersection of Brant Farnham Road and Angola Brant Road. There are also several commercial parcels located along Southwestern Boulevard.

The Village of Farnham has approximately 7 acres (1.1%) of commercial land. The few commercial sites within the village are dispersed and can be found intermingled among residential lots.

3.1.7 Community Service

A total of 74 acres or 0.5% of the land area in Brant and Farnham is devoted to community service uses. The community service category refers to those uses that provide services to the residents of the community such as health, education, religion and protection. The Town of Brant has 61 acres (0.4%) of land area in community service.



Brant School is part of the Lakeshore District.

These include:

- ♦ Brant Elementary School
- ♦ Brant Justice Court
- ♦ Brant Police
- ♦ Brant Town Clerk
- ♦ Brant Volunteer Fire Company
- ♦ Brant Post Office
- ♦ Churches
- ♦ Cemeteries

Community services in the Village Farnham occupy 13 acres (2.1%) and includes:

- ♦ Farnham Post Office
- ♦ Farnham Village Office
- ♦ Farnham Volunteer Fire Company
- ♦ Churches
- ♦ Cemeteries

3.1.8 Industrial

Industrial uses in the Brant-Farnham community account for 0.2% (31 acres) of their land area. Within the Village a site on Church Street is used for industrial purposes. There are a couple of sites in the Town that have industrial uses, one along Brant Farnham Road and the other along Angola Brant Road.

3.2 Land Use Regulations

Town of Brant

The Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Brant provides for 6 districts:

- Rural Residential (RR)
- Medium Density Residential (R1)
- Seasonal Residential (R2)

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- Agricultural (A)
- Commercial (C)
- Industrial (I)

The Zoning Ordinance also establishes permitted uses, minimum lot sizes, minimum front, side and back yardage for principal and accessory buildings, maximum building heights, maximum building coverage and minimum floor area within each district.

Rural Residential (RR)

Rural Residential districts permit one family dwellings (32,375 square feet minimum lot size), as well as religious and public uses, farms and nursing homes. Also allowed in this district, with a special use permit, are campgrounds, outdoor commercial recreation, excavation operations, mobile home courts, business and professional offices, and Veterinarian office or animal hospitals.

Medium Density Residential (R1)

Medium Density Residential Districts allow one and two family dwellings, religious and public uses, farms, multifamily dwelling and boarding and rooming houses. Cluster residential developments are also allowed, if a special use permit is obtained. A minimum lot size of 25 acres is required for cluster residential development and lots should be at least 10,000 square feet for each one-family dwelling. Farms must have a minimum lot size of five acres. One-family dwellings must have a minimum lot size of 12,000 square feet with a minimum width of 90' and minimum depth of 125'. The minimum side yard requirement for a one-family dwelling is 10' for one side and 25' for both sides. Two-family dwellings must have a minimum lot size of 18,000 square feet with a minimum width of 140' and minimum depth of 125'. The minimum side yard requirement for a two family dwelling is 10' for one side and 30' for both.

Seasonal Residential (R2)

Seasonal Residential Districts permit one- and two-family dwellings as well as religious and other public uses, nursing homes and farms. Campgrounds and cluster residential development are allowed by special permit. Lot size requirements for farms and one- and two-family dwellings in this district are the same as those in the Medium Density Residential District.

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Agricultural (A)

Permitted uses in Agricultural District include one-family dwellings, religious and public uses and farms. As in the Rural Residential District, one-family dwellings must have lots of at least 32,375 square feet, while religious and public uses and farms must have at least 5 acres.

Commercial (C)

The Commercial District permits retail and service uses, mixed dwelling and non-dwelling, religious and public uses, multifamily dwellings, one family dwellings and public garages. Commercial Districts also allow planned businesses, wholesale business areas, motor vehicle service and filling stations, motels, drive-in restaurants, new and used car lots and wholesale businesses with a special use permit.

Industrial (I)

Within the Industrial District permitted uses include manufacturing and industrial uses, offices, laboratories, one and two family residences and farms. Excavation operations, veterinary offices and animal hospitals require a special use permit.

Village of Farnham

The Zoning Local Law of the Village of Farnham provides for 3 zoning districts:

- Residential (R)
- Commercial (C)
- Industrial (I)

Residential Districts

The permitted principal uses for Residential Districts are one-family (920 square feet minimum floor area, exclusive of garage and basement space) and two-family (800 square feet per unit) dwellings. Other uses include religious and quasi-public uses; nursing homes; professional offices and home occupations. Permitted accessory uses are private garages, customary residential structures, shelters for domestic house pets, home occupations and home professional occupations. Public utility uses are a special permit use.

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Commercial Districts

All permitted and special permit uses in the Commercial District require the approval of a site development plan. Permitted principal uses in the Commercial District include all residential district uses with the addition of retail; general business and personal service establishment; mixed dwelling and non-dwelling units; commercial off-street parking; meeting facilities and membership clubs. Permitted accessory uses include off-street parking and loading areas, garages for commercial vehicles and customary accessory uses. Special permit uses include multifamily dwellings (10 units minimum), motor vehicle service or filling stations, public garages, wholesale businesses conducted entirely within an enclosed structure, public utilities uses, drive-in restaurants, car sales lots and showrooms and hotels and motels.

Industrial District

Industrial Districts also require approved site development plans for all permitted and special permit uses. Industrial districts uses include all uses allowed in the previous two districts as well as light industrial uses; office buildings for executive, engineering and administrative purposes; scientific or research labs; manufacturing or processing of pharmaceutical and cosmetic products; wholesale businesses, contractor's yards, exterior storage, lumberyards, laundry and dry cleaning establishments and farms and related activities (provided no odor or dust producing activity is located within 100 feet of adjoining lot line).

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Figure 3-2 – Current Zoning
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham



Source: Town of Brant, Village of Farnham and peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.3 Future Land Use

3.3.1 Projections

The Future Land Use Plan for the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham anticipates that the communities will continue to be rural in nature. External forces including the New York State Thruway and potential gaming center on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation are not likely to change the character of the land uses in Brant and Farnham. Similarly, a lack of sewer service throughout the communities will have the effect of concentrating denser residential development as well as larger commercial and industrial uses in areas where public sewer service is available. Even with the possible provision of public water in areas of the Town where public water is not currently available, without sewer service, denser development is unlikely and larger more rural lot conditions will prevail.

As a result of these factors, the Future Land Use Plan for the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant anticipates that the limits to growth are the limits of infrastructure. It may not, however, be unreasonable to modestly expand the existing sewer districts to accommodate additional commercial or industrial growth.

3.3.2 Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan for the Village of Farnham and Town of Brant concentrates development nodes and anticipates a rural future for the Town. The commercial and industrial development areas are concentrated around the Village of Farnham, with the development of a new classification for the Village and Hamlet of Brant. The following outlines the Future Land Use Plan for the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham based on the inventory and analysis in this Master Plan:

Agricultural/Residential

Agricultural residential would comprise most of the Town of Brant. Low-density residential development would be allowed with a focus on protecting the existing agricultural lands and character of the Town of Brant.

Residential

The residential classification is targeted for the Village of Farnham and immediately adjacent areas. The higher density development would provide a market for potential Village businesses and maintain the quality and character of the built environment of the Village.

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Waterfront Residential

The Waterfront Residential area is the area of the Town of Brant on Lake Erie that is already built out with mainly summer homes and cottages. The district would allow for denser development than the Village Residential with smaller lots and setbacks.

Commercial

There are two mixed use/commercial areas designated in the Future Land Use Plan each in and adjacent to the Village along the major East/West thoroughfares. Uses that would be classified as regional commercial uses should be concentrated in these areas, protecting the rural character of the rest of the Town while providing development opportunity and access to commercial markets for the residents of the Town and Village.

Hamlet CBD

Two Hamlet/Central Business Districts are targeted for retail, service and mixed use. These areas, in the historic Village Center and Hamlet, would offer the highest density of commercial uses with residential and office uses also allowed throughout.

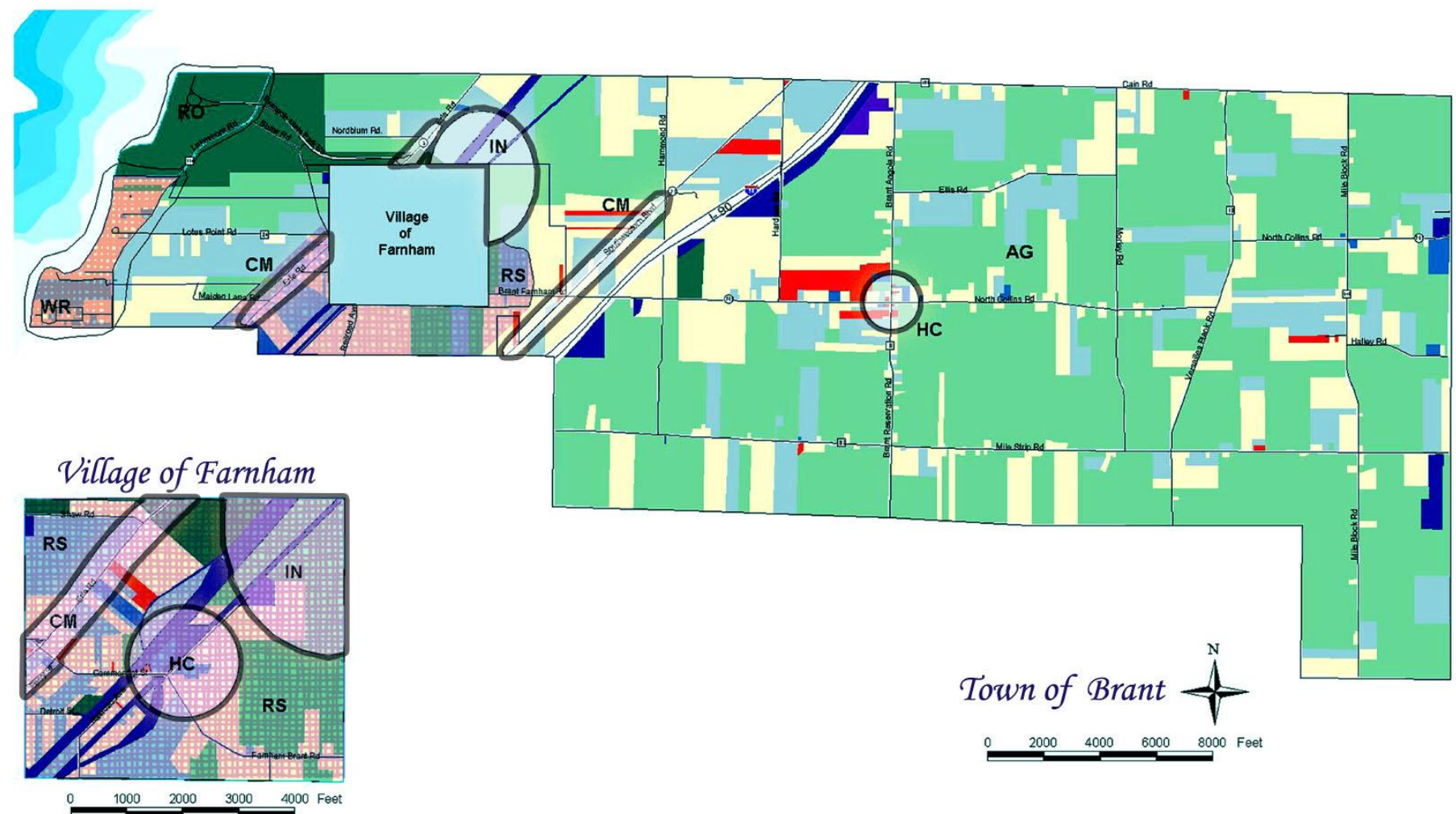
Recreational/Open Space

The Future Land Use Plan acknowledges the unique resource of Evangola State Park.

Industrial

The Industrial areas are located in the Town and Village together and are located in such a way that adjacent resident uses can be buffered from them, but also so that they can take advantage of the existing infrastructure in the Town and Village.

Figure 3-3 – Future Land Use Plan
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham



Water Districts	
Farnham Water District	
Brant Water District	
Sewer Districts	
Brant- Farnham Sewer District	
Lotus Bay Sewer District	
Land Use	
Agricultural	
Residential	
Vacant	
Commercial	
Recreation & Entertainment	
Community Service	
Industrial	
Public Service	
Wild/Forested	
Future Land Use	
AG - Agricultural	
RS - Residential	
WR - Waterfront Residential	
CM - Commercial	
HC - Hamlet Commercial	
RO - Recreation/Open Space	
IN - Industrial	

Future Land Use

Town of Brant - Village of Farnham

Master Plan

peter j. smith & company, inc.
USA: 1895 Niagara St. Buffalo, NY 14207
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(716) 447-0926

Nussbaumer
& Clarke, Inc.
ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS

July 2003

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.4 Findings

The general land use characteristics of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham are summarized below:

Town of Brant

- Agriculture is the most prevalent land use in the Town, accounting for 55.1% of the Town's land
- Residential uses account for 20.9% of the Town's land area
- Vacant land account for 16.7% of the Town
- Commercial and Industrial land account for 1.1% and 0.2% of the Town's land area respectively
- The Town of Brant has 6 zoning districts; all of which allow one family dwellings

Village of Farnham

- The most prevalent land use in the Village is Residential; accounting for 32.1% of Village land
- Agriculture accounts for 25.2% of the Village's land
- Vacant land is 20.4% of the Village's land area
- Commercial land accounts for 1.1% of the Village
- The Village has three zoning districts: Residential, Commercial and Industrial. Residential zones are the most restrictive in uses and industrial are the least. Farms are a permitted use in Industrial districts only, unless they were preexisting in the other zones. All permitted and special permit uses in Commercial and Industrial districts require approved site development plans.

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4.0 Agriculture and Natural Resources

4.1 Agriculture

Rural Service Centers are villages, hamlets and other unincorporated places in rural and semi-rural areas within Erie County that provide essential services (i.e. retail, postal, banking, and government facilities) to residents. In addition to providing services, Rural Service Centers possess unique characteristics that define their communities, are places where historical structures are usually located and possess the infrastructure necessary for development such as sewer and water, reinforcing the denser development of the center and preventing sprawl into open spaces and farmland. Erie County encourages local officials to protect and strengthen rural service centers through local planning and enactment of ordinances. Ten villages (including Farnham, Angola and North Collins) and several unincorporated areas within Erie County have been defined as “Rural Service Centers of Countywide Significance” because of the relatively high levels of services they provide. Rural centers and hamlet areas that provide lower levels of services (such as Brant and areas of North Collins) are considered Rural Center of Local Significance.⁷

4.1.1 Significant Agricultural Areas

Agriculture has been the predominant land use in most Erie County communities. However, since 1940, the number of farms and amount of land in farming in Erie County has decreased by 81% and 65% respectively, which is reflective of increased suburban development around the City core, and structural changes in the Western New York economy.

According to the Brant, Evans and North Collins Farmland Protection Plan, family farms within these three communities have contributed to the region’s economy scenic landscape, culture and quality of life. Over the years some local farms became larger, some focused on new commodities, and others have gone out of business and have been developed into residences or commercial establishments. These changes affected the three towns differently. Portions of the Town of Brant have maintained a large land base, but there are serious concerns about farm viability.⁸

⁷ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning, December, 1999, pp. 22-27

⁸ American Farmland Trust. A Regional Farmland Protection Plan for the Towns of Brant, Evans and North Collins, 2001

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The Brant, Evans and North Collins Farmland Protection Plan, indicates that 9.1% (1,335 acres) of the Town of Brant and 2.4% (19 acres) of the Village of Farnham are not potential USDA “prime farmland” or “soils of statewide importance.” Of the Town of Brant’s 14,735 acres, USDA Prime Farmland accounts for 2,703 acres, an additional 3,393 acres have the potential to be USDA Prime Farmland if drained, and 7,304 acres are designated as soils of statewide importance. The Village of Farnham has 247 acres designated as USDA Prime Farmland, 239 acres designated as USDA Prime Farmland if drained, and 270 acres of soils of statewide importance within its 776 total acreage.⁹

The USDA defines prime farmland as “land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, without intolerable soil erosion, as determined by the Secretary.” The USDA does not consider soils of



One of several nursery enterprises in Brant.

statewide importance the best agricultural soils, but they are highly productive and they are among the best soils in the State of New York.¹⁰

Agricultural district designation is one method being used by the Town of Brant to protect this valuable resource. Agricultural districts provide incentives to farmers and other agricultural based businesses to keep their land in agriculture. Land within the Town of Brant can be included in either one of two Agricultural districts depending on their locations: Brant-Evans-North Collins No.1 and Brant-Evans No. 2. Approximately 67% of Brant’s land area is included within the two agricultural districts. There is no land in the Village of Farnham included in an agricultural district.

The American Farmland Trust reviewed the results of 70 Cost of Community Service Studies (COCS) conducted throughout the country and found that for every \$1.00 spent in municipal taxes:

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

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- ◆ Residential uses require \$1.15 in services
- ◆ Farm/forest uses require \$0.35 in services
- ◆ Commercial/industrial uses require \$0.27 in services.¹¹

These figures are not specific to the Brant-Farnham community but they do indicate the relative cost-effectiveness of farming as a land use. Since agriculture is an important aspect of the Town and Village character and economy, some savings may be realized in providing services to the communities if the development of residential uses on agricultural land is discouraged.

4.1.1.1 Agricultural Districts

Land within the town of Brant can belong to one of two Agricultural Districts: Brant-Evans-North Collins No. 1 or Brant-Evans No. 2. These Agricultural Districts were scheduled for their eight-year recertification in 2000 but the process has been delayed due to efforts to include additional properties into the Districts. In the interim, the Town of Evans prepared a Comprehensive Plan that designates a large area in the southern and eastern part of the Town of Evan as Agricultural Land Use-Low Density. This area may be incorporated in to the agricultural district. The review process should be completed in 2003. According to the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning the two agricultural districts are likely to be merged into one.¹²

According to the Brant, Evans and North Collins Farmland Protection Plan, Agricultural Districts in Brant occupy an estimated 6,474 acres, which is approximately 3% of the total acreage in Agricultural Districts within Erie County. The study noted that its estimates of 20 farms and 6,474 acres of active farmland did not reflect the total number of farms or active farmland in the area because agricultural districts do not include all of the actively farmed land and not all farmers and farmland owners opt to be included in agricultural districts.¹³ Of the reported 6,474 acres of farmland in the two agricultural districts 2, 750 acres were rented.¹⁴

¹¹ Median rate.

¹² Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

¹³ Ferguson, Kirsten, Cosgrove, Jeremy and Teri Ptacek. Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York, American Farmland Trust, 1999.

¹⁴ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Survey of Agriculture conducted in Spring 2000.

4.1.1.2 Farmland Protection

A number of state, county and local programs have been enacted to preserve agricultural land and/or provide economic support to local agricultural operations and a review of these programs follows.

NYS Agricultural Districts

In 1971, New York State created a comprehensive agricultural district program. The NYS Agricultural Districts Law supports agriculture through several provisions:

- ◆ Agricultural assessments for land in active agricultural production;
- ◆ Limits on the taxation of farmland for certain municipal improvements;
- ◆ Limits on public utility taxes to the ½ acre of farm which is devoted to housing
- ◆ Requirement that state agency policies support farming;
- ◆ State review of local ordinances which affect agriculture;
- ◆ Limitations on the exercise of eminent domain and other public acquisitions;
- ◆ Limits 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; and
- ◆ Right to recover legal fees where farmer wins nuisance lawsuit.¹⁵

Agricultural districts are created by the county legislature upon petition by interested landowners, who must collectively own at least 500 acres (or 10%) of the land proposed for the district.¹⁶

NYS Tax Relief

To reduce the tax burden on state farmers, the New York Legislature enacted the 1996 Farmers' Protection and Farm Preservation Act. The

¹⁵ American Farmland Trust. Saving American Farmland: What Works, American Farmland Trust, 1997, pp. 198-201

¹⁶ Ferguson, Kirsten, Cosgrove, Jeremy and Teri Ptacek. Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York, American Farmland Trust, 1999, pp. 10.

law created a refundable income tax credit for school taxes paid by farmers. The program is fully funded by the state.

In addition, farm buildings and structures are also exempt from several provisions of the Real Property Tax Law:

- ♦ Section 483 exempts new and rebuilt farm buildings for ten years;
- ♦ Section 483-a entirely exempts certain agricultural structures;
- ♦ Section 483-c exempts temporary greenhouses; and
- ♦ A limited exemption is offered for the rehabilitation of historic barns.

The amount of the building exemption is determined by the increase in assessed value of the property because of the new construction; it is not based on actual construction costs.

NYS Farmland Protection Plan Development

In 1994, the state began to provide funding for the development of County agricultural and farmland protection plans. Approval of such plans enables counties to apply for federal and state funding for the purchase of farmland development rights. Erie County applied for and completed its Farmland Protection Plan entitled *Erie County Farms for the Future* as indicated below.

NYS Purchase of Development Rights Grants

In 1992, the New York State legislature adopted the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Programs, Article 25-AAA, to provide implementation grants for the purchase of development rights on farmland. Municipalities with approved agricultural and farmland protection plans were eligible for funding under the 75% state contribution/25% local contribution program. The state has provided funding for this program each year since 1996.

Erie County “Farms for the Future” Program

In 1996, Erie County, in cooperation with the Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, formerly the Erie County Agricultural District Board, adopted the *Farms for the Future Agricultural and Farmland Preservation and Protection Strategy*. The primary goals of the Farms for the Future strategy are:

- ♦ To protect agriculture and farmland using the resources available to allow the industry to be profitable and flourish;

- ♦ To preserve farmland and associated agricultural lands using techniques which assure that these lands are kept in that state as long as possible; and
- ♦ To secure the support of the community and governments through the education and promotion of agricultural as a neighbor and as a major economic contributor.¹⁷

Erie County 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 by 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. The law stipulates that farmers have the right to engage in generally accepted agricultural practices.

Through a disclosure requirement for all purchase and sales contracts for residential properties in Erie County, the law advises potential homebuyers of normal farming activities such as the operation of machinery and the application of pesticides and fertilizers.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Programs

Transfer Of Development Rights (TDR) Programs allow landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. TDR’s provide a means of shifting development from agricultural areas to areas designated for growth. Municipalities are empowered to authorize transfer of development rights by Town Law section 261-a and Village Law section 7-703.

¹⁷ Ibid, pp. vii.

In order for TDR programs to be effective communities must build consensus on how the program will be used to direct future growth and protect resources. Markets must also exist for the development rights and the higher density development that is produced. While this technique has not been used much in New York State because of its complex administration and lack of a proven track record, it has been used in the Town of Eden. Even though there is currently little or no TDR activity in the Town of Eden it has not been removed from the code.¹⁸

4.2 Natural Resources

Environmental resources cross political boundaries and affect land uses, development and quality of life. These include both land based (soils, wetlands) and water related resources (aquifers, watersheds).

This section addresses the following components of the natural environment in Brant and Farnham: geology, wetlands, floodplains, soils, topography, scenic vistas, groundwater and aquifers, watersheds, surface water, wildlife, woodlands, air quality, and hazardous waste. These features are integral components in the planning process and their careful documentation and consideration will allow Brant and Farnham to determine the type, scale and intensity of development that is most appropriate for the land.

4.2.1 Geology

Two types of surface bedrock exist within the Brant-Farnham study area. The Java-West Fall Group is present on the northwestern half and the Canadaway Group underlies the soils of the southeastern half of the study area. Both of these bedrock types were formed from lake sedimentation in the late Devonian Period approximately 300 million years ago. Because these bedrock types were formed from sedimentation, they are composed of predominantly shales, siltstones and sandstones.

4.2.2 Wetlands

Generally, wetlands are areas where water saturation is the primary factor that determines the types of soil, plant and animal development that can be sustained. Both the federal and the state governments regulate wetlands but the two entities have different criteria for determining what areas fall under their jurisdiction.

¹⁸ Ferguson, Kirsten, Cosgrove, Jeremy and Teri Ptacek. Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York, American Farmland Trust, 1999, p. 37

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is the state agency that has the primary responsibility for wetlands regulation. Through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), the federal government regulates wetlands in accordance with the Clean Waters Act. Federal and State defined wetlands account for 812 acres of the Brant-Farnham land area. The Brant-Farnham community has wetlands that run parallel to the three streams in the community: Muddy Creek, Delaware Creek and Big Sister Creek. Wetlands also exist in the lakefront area west of Route 5 in the Town of Brant.

4.2.3 Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines the floodplain in Erie County. The most commonly used measure is the 100-year floodplain, which is defined as the area of land that would be inundated by a flood having a 1% chance of occurring each year. These are usually low-lying areas adjacent to streams and rivers that provide space for excess water that the streams and rivers can't handle.¹⁹ Participation in the FEMA flood hazard program is optional to municipalities. The Town of Brant chooses not to participate in this program. Therefore, there are no officially recognized flood hazard areas within the Town of Brant.²⁰

Areas that have the potential for flooding are confined to the land immediately adjacent to the streams (within 200ft). The coastal area along Lake Erie is also prone to flooding due to stormwave action.

4.2.4 Soils

Soils are naturally occurring bodies at the surface of the earth. They are the products of the earth's weather conditions and processes that act on parent materials. Parent materials are the basic organic and mineral materials from which the soils are formed. 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
- ♦ Time

¹⁹ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Guiding Principles for countywide Land Use Planning, 1999

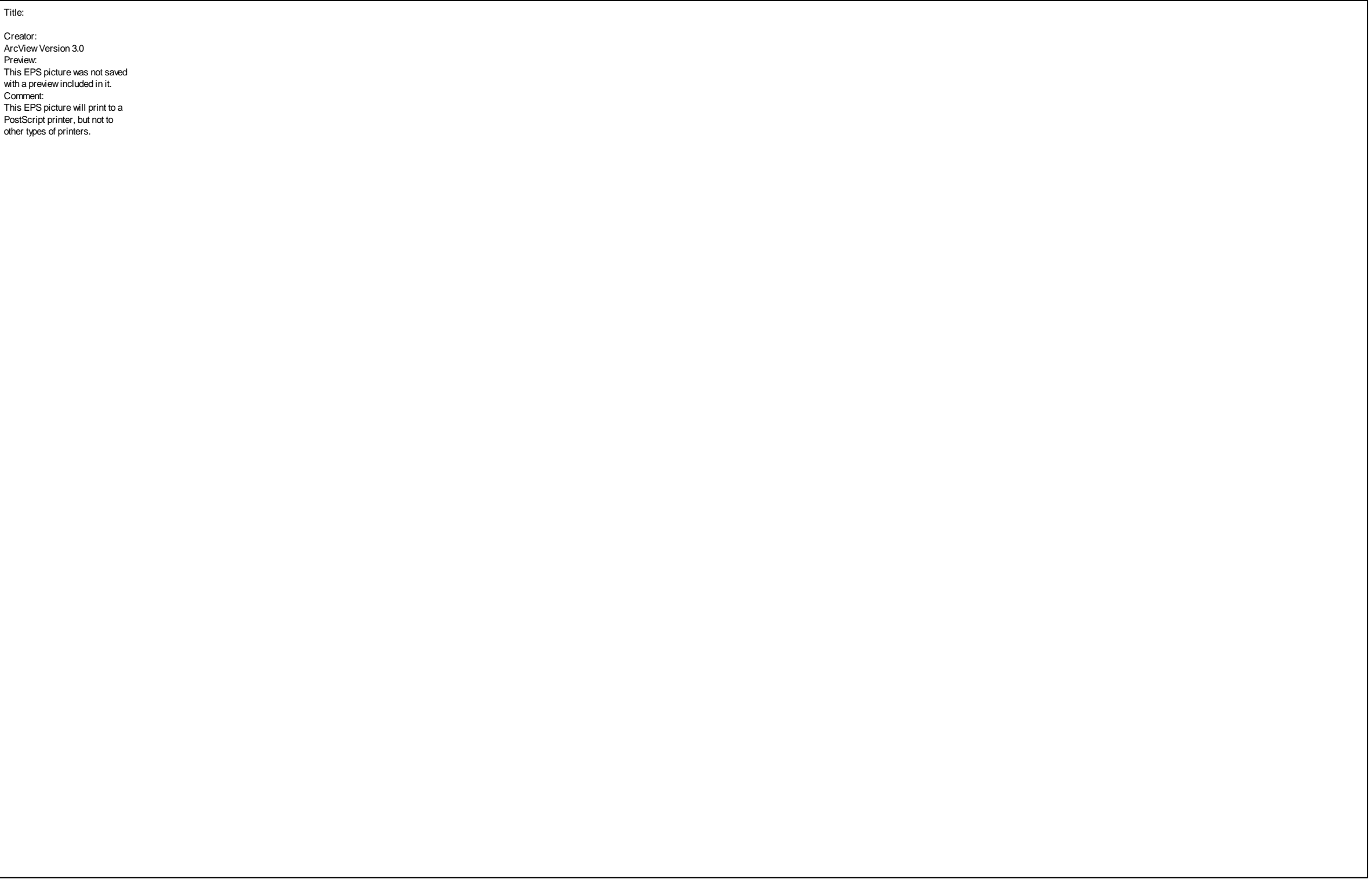
²⁰ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Telephone interview, January 2003

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Information regarding the soils of Erie County was developed by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service and was published in the 1986 Soil Survey of Erie County, New York. According to the General Soils map within the Soil Survey, the Town of Brant is composed of four different general soil map units. The characteristics of these general soils are discussed below. The map units are broad and generalized and should not be used for determining use capabilities on a site-specific basis.

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Figure 4-1 – Environmental Considerations
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other types of printers.

Blasdell-Farnham-Alton

The Blasdell-Farnham-Alton group of soils is dominant over the most of the eastern half of the Town of Brant. Blasdell soils, formed in glacial outwash deposits, are nearly level, deep, moderately well drained to somewhat excessively drained, medium textured soils. The soil has few limitations for urban uses and is well suited to most cultivated crops and hay crops.

Niagara-Canandaigua-Cosad

Niagara-Canandaigua-Cosad soils are located along the New York State Thruway corridor extending westward to the Village of Farnham along the southern boundary of the town. These soils are nearly level, deep, somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, medium textures soils on lowland plains. The soils were formed from former glacial lake sediments. Primary uses for these soils include residential, commercial, farming and woodland uses. The suitability of these soils for various uses is severely limited by seasonal wetness, moderately slow permeability and low soil strength. Moreover, because the soil has high silt content, frost may damage roads and dwellings without basements.

Darien-Remsen-Angola

Darien-Remsen-Angola soils are dominant in the northwest and north central areas of the Town of Brant. Soils within this group are characterized as dominantly nearly level to gently sloping, deep to moderately deep, somewhat poorly drained, medium to moderately fine textured soils that exist on uplands underlain by alkaline shale bedrock. These soils were formed from shaly glacial till at the fringe of upland plateaus. The slow movement of water through the subsoil, seasonal wetness and the clayey nature of these soils are the main limitations affecting most uses of these soils.

Volusia-Mardin-Erie

Soils of this group are primarily found in the southeast corner of the town. Volusia-Mardin-Erie soils are medium textured, deep soils with a variety of slopes and drainage patterns. The soils were formed on uplands from loamy glacial till derived mostly from siltstone, sandstone and shale. Soils of this group have a loamy, brittle subsurface that is low in porosity and content of clay and organic matter and high in silt and very fine sand. When dry, this subsurface acts like cement and inhibits the growth of soft roots. Areas that have been cleared of forests are mainly used for dairy farming.

4.2.5 Topography

The topography of an area plays a significant role in determining its development potential. Flat to gently rolling land (slopes of less than 5%) can be used for most forms of urban development and agricultural uses. Moderate slopes (5 to 15%) can support low-density residential development and many agricultural uses. Steep slopes (over 15%) are generally considered unsuitable for development because long-term structural integrity normally requires costly design and engineering work. However, while steep slopes constrain development they are useful for their recreational and scenic values.

Within the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham the topography is generally level. Approximately 85% of the area consists of gentle to rolling hills, less than 10% has moderate slopes and 5% steep slopes. Elevations in the Town of Brant range from 600 feet above sea level along Lake Erie to 900 feet above sea level in the southeast in the vicinity of Mile Strip Road and Mile Block Road. Steep slopes can be found along Mile Strip Road, Halley Road and Mile Block Road. There are no steep slopes in the Village. Elevations in the Village range from 620 feet above sea level in the northeast to 640 feet above sea level along Shaw Road.²¹

4.2.6 Scenic Vistas

Visual or scenic resources are important contributors to a region's overall quality of life and should therefore be identified and preserved. Within the Brant and Farnham study area beautiful scenery abounds along the waterfront. The portion of Evangola State Park that exists within the boundaries of the Town of Brant provides access to the waterfront and its accompanying views of Lake Erie.



A pretty view on Railroad Avenue in the Village.

Locations north and south of the beach area also provide scenic opportunities from 25 to 30 foot bluffs (cliffs or steep rock face over 10 feet)²²

²¹ Herbert H. Smith Associates, Town of Brant/Village of Farnham Comprehensive Plan, December 1973.

²² Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Town of Brant New York Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, April 1987

The Lotus Bay area of the waterfront extends from the southern boundary of the Evangola State Park at Farnham Point to Lotus Point, a distance of 5,000 feet. A natural embayment (shape resembling a bay) exists in this area that provides attractive vistas and has attracted residential development to the shoreline.²³

Scenic vistas are also available within the area of Brant that is east of Route 5, from points along Mile Strip Road and along Halley Road where steep slopes exist.

4.2.7 Groundwater and Aquifers

Water found underground in cracks and spaces in soil, sand and rocks is referred to as groundwater. Groundwater is stored in, and moves slowly through geological formations called aquifers. Groundwater supplies are replenished or recharged by rain and melting snow. Groundwater is an important resource that is used for drinking, recreation, industry and crop irrigation.

Areas that depend upon individual wells or public water systems based on well need to protect their ground water supply by ensuring that aquifers and recharge areas are protected from contamination. Potential contamination sources include improper storage or disposal of chemicals, runoff from commercial or industrial land uses, improper agricultural practices and poor maintenance of septic systems. A significant portion of the Town of Brant land area falls within the North Collins Aquifer and recharge. Groundwater wells are used throughout the Town of Brant, but their use is more prevalent in the western and southern portions.²⁴

4.2.8 Watersheds

According to the Environmental Protection Agency a watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into the same place. These natural drainage ways are important for their ability to maintain and possibly increase their capacity to handle storm waters. Development adjacent to streambeds can reduce their ability to handle runoff.

Both the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham are located in what Erie County refers to as the Big Sister Creek Watershed.²⁵ This designation refers to an area larger than the Brant-Farnham area. Within the Brant-Farnham area three watersheds exist: Muddy Creek, Delaware Creek and Big Sister Creek. All three creeks drain into Lake Erie.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ferguson, Kirsten, Cosgrove, Jeremy and Teri Ptacek. Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York, American Farmland Trust, 1999.

²⁵ Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning, December 1999.

4.2.9 Surface Water

Water above the surface of the land, such as lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, floodwater and runoff are referred to as surface water. Several surface water resources are located within the Brant/Farnham study area. The largest of which is Lake Erie, which borders the western edge of the Town of Brant for 2.5 miles. Other waterbodies include Big Sister, Delaware and Muddy Creeks, all of which drain into Lake Erie.

Surface water bodies in the study area have a variety of uses including: drinking water; residential, commercial and industrial uses; recreation; fishing; and irrigation and livestock watering. The area generally has an ample supply of water. Lake Erie supplies most of the public water to an increasing number of areas within Erie County. The development of large lot road frontage and irregular weather patterns of recent years have led to increased public pressure to expand public water districts. Brant recently added a water district for residential uses.²⁶

4.2.9.1 Stream Classifications

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation classifies surface water resources based upon water quality and their ability to sustain plant and animal life. The fresh surface water classifications range from A (highest) to D (lowest) with a sub-classification (T) denoting those streams that are capable of supporting trout. The streams classified from A to C (T) are “protected,” meaning a Department of Environmental Conservation permit is needed to disturb the bed or banks of the stream. Streams classified A (S) are state priority special waterbodies that are held to a higher standard and are best used for drinking water supply.²⁷ The classifications are further described below:

Class A – Class A waters are best used as a drinking water supply source, culinary or food processing purposes, primary and secondary contact recreation uses and fishing. The waters are suitable for fish propagation and survival.

Class B – Class B waters are best used as primary and secondary contact recreation uses and fishing. The waters are suitable for fish propagation and survival.

²⁶ Ferguson, Kirsten, Cosgrove, Jeremy and Teri Ptacek. Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York, American Farmland Trust, 1999.

²⁷ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Water, Telephone Interview February 2, 2003.

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Class C – Class C waters are best suited for fishing. These waters are suitable for fish propagation and survival, and may support recreation uses, but other factors may limit their use for these purposes.

Class D – Class D waters are best suited for fishing. These waters will not support fish propagation but are suitable for fish survival. These waters may support recreation uses, but other factors may limit their uses for these purposes.²⁸

The streams and creeks in the Brant-Farnham area are listed below along with their Department of Environmental Conservation classification:

**Table 4-1 – Stream Classifications
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

Water Body	Classification
Lake Eire	A (S)
Big Sister Creek (Mouth of Creek to Old Lake Shore Road)	B (T)
Big Sister Creek (Old Lake Shore Road to Village of Angola)	C (T)
Big Sister Creek (Village of Angola to Tributary 13)	C
Big Sister Creek (Tributary 13 to Tributary 21)	C (T)
Delaware Creek (Mouth of Creek to Route 5)	B (T)
Delaware Creek (Route 5 to Route 20)	C (T)
Delaware Creek (Route 20 to Source)	C
Muddy Creek (Mouth to Tributary A)	B
Muddy Creek (Tributary A to Source)	C

Source: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Water

4.2.9.2 Priority Water Bodies

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Water periodically publishes a list of surface waters that either cannot be fully used as a resource or have problems that can damage their environmental integrity. The Division of Water uses the Priority Waterbodies List in water management. Big Sister Creek is on the Priority Waterbodies List for aesthetics with a municipal pollutant source.

4.2.10 Wildlife

A comprehensive study of wildlife within the Brant-Farnham study area is not available; however there have been reported occurrences of the following mammals, amphibians and reptiles:

²⁸ 6NYCRR §701, <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/regs/701.htm>, accessed February 7, 2003

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Deer, Black Bear, Coyote, Fox, Rabbit, Squirrel, Common Snapping Turtle, Painted Turtle, Red-spotted Newt, Northern Dusky Salamander, Northern Redback Salamander, Northern Two-lined Salamander, Northern Brown Snake, Common Garter Snake, Eastern American Toad, Gray Treefrog, Northern Spring Peeper, Bullfrog, Green Frog, Wood Frog, and Northern Leopard Frog.²⁹ The Fowler's Toad, a rare species of toad that inhabits coastal wetlands, sand beaches and the mouths of coastal streams and is usually found in the southeastern portion of the state, has recently been identified in the Lake Shore Area. The DEC intends to identify its range along the coastline and obtain protection for its breeding habitats.³⁰

The NYS Breeding Bird Atlas is a comprehensive, statewide survey of breeding birds, which began in January 2000 and will continue through 2004, and shows their current distribution in the state. The Atlas 2000 Project has so far identified 70 species within the Brant-Farnham study area. Of those 70 species, 3 were defined as unprotected, 4 as game species, 3 as protected-special concern, and the remaining 60 were defined as protected.

Protected species, as defined by New York State ECL 11-0103, are all wild birds except those named as unprotected. Protected species may not be taken at any time unless they are also listed as a game species. Game species are defined as "big game", "small game" or "game birds". Some game species have seasons where they may be legally hunted and others may not be hunted or taken at any time in New York State.

Special concern species are native species that, as yet, have not been recognized as endangered or threatened but documented evidence exist relative to their continued welfare in New York State. The only designation that may be taken at any time without limit is unprotected, however, a license may be required.³¹

4.2.11 Woodlands

Areas with mature trees offer immeasurable benefits to the community. They support natural ecological systems, give shade and natural places for recreation and hiking, provide scenic beauty, and produce a natural buffer for development.

Within Brant and Farnham, wooded properties are interspersed among farmlands and residential areas. Extensive woodlands are also found within the boundaries of Evangola State Park. These areas contribute to the pastoral character of the

²⁹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Amphibian and Reptile Atlas 1990-1998 Data, Interim Report, <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/herp/cosnturt.gif>, accessed February 10, 2003.

³⁰ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Telephone Interview, February 3, 2003.

³¹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Breeding Bird Atlas 2000-2002, <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/apps/bba/results/index.cfm>, accessed February 10, 2003.

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community. As development occurs in the Brant and Farnham area, the preservation of woodland areas should be considered. Private woodlot inspections at 3 locations within the Town of Brant conducted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Lands and Forests from 1998 to 2002 found the following species:

Red Maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
White Ash	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>
Northern Red Oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>
American Beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
Black Tupelo	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>
Quaking Aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>
American Elm	<i>Ulmus americana</i>
Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>
Sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>
Wild Grapevine	<i>Vitis spp.</i>
Poison Ivy	<i>Rhus radicans</i>
Eastern Hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>
Yellow Birch	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>
Tulip Poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>
Sugar Maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>
Eastern White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>
Arrowwood	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>
Shagbark Hickory	<i>Carya ovata</i>
Bitternut Hickory	<i>Carya cordiformis</i>
American Basswood	<i>Tilia Americana</i>

Within Evangola State Park there are mature and successional silver maple ash swamps, successional northern hardwoods and mature beech-maple mesic forest. According to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, one rare plant is known to occur in the Park. In order to protect the plant, the Parks Department does not publish its identity or location within the Park.

4.2.12 Air Quality

The Brant-Farnham study area "air quality is in attainment for all criteria air pollutants."³² According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) AirData, Monitor Pollutant Standards Index (PSI) Report for 2001, in Erie County 73% of days had air quality that was rated good and 27% of the days were rated as moderate. The Pollutant Standards Index (PSI) or Air Quality Index (AQI), as it is was renamed in 2000, was developed by the EPA to provide "a consistent and easy to understand way of stating air pollutant concentrations and

³² Department of Environmental Conservation, Air quality Division, telephone Interview 1/31/03.

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associated health implications.” These indices evaluate the air pollutants that are regulated by the Clean Air Act.

4.2.13 Hazardous Waste

Superfund is a program administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to locate, investigate, and clean up the worst hazardous waste sites throughout the United States. Unless properly cleaned up or contained, hazardous wastes can potentially contaminate soil and water resources.

According to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS), one remediated hazardous site is located in the Town of Brant. The site, located on Wide Beach Road, is a 55-acre suburban housing development. The site was discovered in 1982. Before remediation polychlorinated biphenals (PCBs) were detected in the air, groundwater, sediments, soil and surface water. The site was added to the National Priorities List of Hazardous Waste Sites (NPL) in 1983. Emergency response actions and long-term remedial action that involved the excavation and treatment of contaminated soil and backfilling of excavated areas, were performed at the site by the federal government and as of August 30, 1994, the site has been deleted from the NPL.³³

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Petroleum Bulk Storage Program records five facilities within the Brant-Farnham study area. Three facilities have active tanks. The facilities and their current capacities are listed in the table below.

**Table 4-2 – Petroleum Bulk Storage Facilities
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

Site	Site Status	Total Active Tanks	Active Capacity
Farnham Radio Relay Station 285 Shaw Rd, Irving, NY	Under 1101 gal.	0	0
Genesee Leroy Stone Corp 10865 Southwestern Blvd, Irving, NY	Under 1101 gal.	0	0
Louis Catalano Farms 1622 Brant-North Collins Rd, Brant, NY	Under 1101 gal.	1	500 gals.
Pero Family Farms of NY 10834 Brant Reservation Rd, Brant, NY	Active	1	2000 gals.
Town of Brant Highway Garage 992 Brant-Farnham Rd, Brant, NY	Active	2	2000 gals.

Source: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

³³ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Superfund Information Systems, CERCLIS Hazardous Waste Sites, <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/cursites/c3ny/s0202151.htm>, accessed Jan 22, 2003.

The DEC Spills Database indicates that seven spills of hazardous materials have occurred in the Village of Farnham between 1987 and 2002. The sites were all cleaned and the cases were closed. Within the Town of Brant there were 77-recorded spills between 1984 and 2002. At 72 sites cleanup was completed and the cases were closed. Four cases are listed as inactive and one is still active. A case is listed as inactive if the level of contamination is only slight and cleanup has not been performed as yet, or cleanup was conducted but the site will never reach the standard established by the State.

4.3 Findings

The analysis of Agriculture and Natural Resources revealed the following:

- The Village of Farnham is one of 10 villages defined as Rural Service Centers in Erie County and the Town of Brant is considered a Rural Center of Local Significance.
- Agriculture has historically played a major role in Brant-Farnham area and still continues to play an important role.
- More than 90% of the soils in the Brant-Farnham area are potentially USDA prime farmland or soils of statewide importance.
- An estimated 6,474 acres of farmland in Brant are included in the Town's two agricultural districts; more than 40% (2,750) of which is rented land.
- A number of state, county and local programs exist to preserve agricultural land and support local agricultural operations.
- The Brant-Farnham community has wetlands and potential floodplains that primarily run parallel to Muddy, Delaware and Big Sister Creeks.
- The four major soil types in Brant-Farnham are: Blasdel-Farnham-Alton, Niagara-Canandaigua-Cosad, Darien-Remsen-Angola, and Volusia-Mardin-Erie.
- In general, land in Brant-Farnham is relatively level with a small percentage (5%) of the land having slopes of 15% or more.
- Brant-Farnham has an adequate supply of water and uses both ground and surface water sources.
- According to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS), one remediated hazardous site is located in the Town of Brant.

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5.0 Community and Cultural Resources

5.1 Educational Facilities

The Town of Brant and Village of Farnham are served by two different school districts. The dividing line between these two districts is roughly Morley Road. Residents on the west side of the town belong to the Evans-Brant (Lakeshore) School District. The high school is located at 8855 Erie Road in Angola. The Residents on the eastern third of the town attend the North Collins School District, which is located at 2045 School St in North Collins.

The Brant Elementary School is the only school facility located within the Town of Brant. The Brant Elementary School serves the students in grades K - 4 of Brant that belong to the Lakeshore School District. The school has one class for each grade level with about twenty students in each class. The school is equipped with an indoor and outdoor basketball court, gymnasium and a playground. In conjunction with the YMCA of Greater Buffalo-Southtowns Branch, the facility operates a before and after school program for children with working parents.

The two school systems that serve the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham have completely different characters. The following table summarizes enrollment and expenditure statistics for the two school districts and the state averages.

**Table 5-1 – Educational Assets
Lakeshore and North Collins School Districts**

School District	Lakeshore	North Collins	New York State
Enrollment ('00-'01)	3,578	731	
# of Teachers	255	62	
Student/Teacher Ratio	14.0 to 1	11.8 to 1	
Drop-out Rate	3.3	0.9	3.8
Public Expenditure per Pupil ('99-'00)	\$9,978	\$10,815	\$11,040

Source: New York State Department of Education

The Lakeshore School District is a significantly larger school system with 3,578 students enrolled in 2000-2001. The student to teacher ratio is 14- to-1. The North Collins School District is smaller, with 731 students enrolled and a teacher to student ratio of 11.8-to-1.

While the dropout rate in both school systems is less than the state average of 3.8%, the 0.9% dropout rate in the North Collins School District is much less than the 3.3% rate in the Lakeshore School District.

In the Lakeshore School District, public expenditure per student is more than \$800 less than that of the North Collins School District and more than \$1,000 per student less than the state average. Public expenditure per student for the North Collins School District is just slightly less than the state average. However, the state expenditure average is skewed by the higher cost of living in the New York Metropolitan Area.

5.2 Libraries

There are no public libraries within the Town of Brant or Village of Farnham. The closest Library facilities are located in the adjacent communities of Angola and North Collins. They are:

- Angola Public Library - 34 N. Main St, Angola
- North Collins Memorial Library - 2095 School St, North Collins

5.3 Parks

Parks provide a community with recreation space as well a place to go for relaxation and scenery. The amount and quality of the parks within a community has an influence on the quality of life. Parks can be a draw for residential development and raise the property values of existing residential areas. A park with a regional draw can also promote commercial development. The following is an inventory of the parks in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham.

5.3.1 Evangola State Park

Evangola State Park is a 733-acre park in the northwest corner of the Town of Brant. Over 75% of the park's land area is located in the Town of Brant. The park's main features are the beach and swimming area with lifeguards. In-line skating and frisbee golf are other popular summer activities in the park. In the winter, cross-county skiing, snowshoeing and snow-mobiling are popular recreation activities. The park has more than 100 campsites, many of them with electrical hook-ups. There are also facilities for picnicking including shelters, grills, tables and a rentable pavilion.

Figure 5-1 – Community Services
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

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Additional resources within the park include nature trails, bike paths, hunting, volleyball, basketball, baseball and playgrounds for kids. Admission into the park is \$6 dollars per car during the peak hours of the summer months. Entrance into the park is free after five o'clock and during the off-season.

5.3.2 Brant Town Park

Brant Town Park is a 37.4-acre facility located on Brant-Farnham Road. The park features a swimming pool and athletic fields for football, baseball basketball and tennis. The park offers rentable pavilions, shelters, and playground equipment. The park is the home of Lake Shore Youth Football and other youth programs for the Town of Brant, as well as the home field for the Brant and the Farnham Volunteer Fire Companies softball games.



Brant Town Park on Brant Farnham Road.

5.3.3 Steve J. Rauker Memorial Park

Steve Ranker Memorial Park is a 2.4-acre park owned by the Town of Brant. The park is located on Detroit Street in the Village Farnham. Facilities at the park include a baseball diamond and a tot-lot playground.

5.3.4 Memorial Park

Memorial Park, located on Brant-Farnham Road at Brant-Angola Road, is a 0.5-acre open space lot with a memorial stone.

5.4 Emergency Services

5.4.1 Police Service

The Town of Brant maintains a small police force that is staffed by one full-time employee and six part-time employees. The Brant Police Department is located on Brant-North Collins Road. The Town is also served by the New York State Police Troop A, based in Batavia, New York and the Erie County Sheriffs Department. The New York State Police or Erie County Sheriffs Department are dispatched by 911 emergency services when the Brant Police Department has no one on duty or needs additional assistance. The Village of Farnham is served by the Brant Police Department under the same conditions as the Town of Brant.

5.4.2 Fire Service

The Brant, Farnham and North Collins Fire Departments provide first aid medical care, and fire fighting services to the Town of Brant.

The Brant Fire Hall is located at 1235 Brant Farnham Road. The Brant Fire Department has approximately 40 volunteers and serves the area east of Southwestern Boulevard in the Town of Brant.

The Farnham Fire Department has about 30 volunteer members and operates out of the fire hall located at 526 Commercial Street in the Village of Farnham. The department's service area encompasses the area west of Southwestern Boulevard in the Town of Brant, including the Village of Farnham.

The North Collins Fire Department provides service to the area of Brant that lies east of Mile Block Road to the town line.

5.4.3 Ambulance Service

The Farnham Ambulance Service operates out of the Farnham Village Hall and provides ambulance service for the Village of Farnham and all of Brant west of Mile Block Road. The Town of Brant contracts with North Collins for ambulance service to the eastern portion of the Town from Mile Block Road to the town line. People in need of Medical treatment are taken to Lakeshore Hospital in Irving, New York. Mercy Flight takes extreme emergency care patients to hospitals in Buffalo.

5.4.4 Religious Congregations

Religious congregations in Town of Brant and Village of Farnham provide not only spiritual foundations for the residents, but are also a community bases that provide services benefiting the entire population. Congregations that provide weekly services in the Brant-Farnham area include:

- ◆ Saint Anthony's Roman Catholic Church
- ◆ Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church
- ◆ Holy Cross Lutheran Church

5.4.5 Cemeteries

Cemeteries are a place where people can go to reflect on those that passed on. A cemetery can provide scenic open space in a community and also have some historic value. Brant and Farnham have several cemeteries that vary in age and size including the following:

- ◆ Brant Cemetery
- ◆ Farnham Holy Cross Lutheran Cemetery
- ◆ Fuller Cemetery
- ◆ Holy Spirit Cemetery
- ◆ Holy Spirit Lutheran Cemetery
- ◆ Huson Cemetery
- ◆ Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery
- ◆ Shaw Cemetery
- ◆ St. Anthony's Cemetery

5.5 Historic Resources

The Brant-Farnham community has no properties or districts listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places. However there are four structures, one in Brant and three in Farnham, that are eligible for inclusion on the National Register for Historic Places according to the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. They are:

- Sprague-Albrich-Shoultz Farmhouse, a Greek Revival structure on the south side of NY 249/Commercial Street 100 feet east of US 20
- L.H. Schwartz Building, built in 1902, housed the first Village Hall on the upper floor, is located on the corner of Commercial Street and Railroad Avenue
- Lewis-Flouring-Bedka House at 489 Commercial Street, built circa 1870



Outdoor baker's oven – a remnant of Brant's past.

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- Current Farnham Village Hall and Fire Department located on 526 Commercial Street, built circa 1930

Additionally, there are several structures within the study area that have local historic significance including the following:

- Outdoor Baker's Oven located at the intersection of Brant-North Collins Road and Morley Road is the last of its kind within the community
- Former Quarters for Migrant Workers located next to the Outdoor Baker's Oven was used from the late 1800's to the 1960's. Other examples of this style of housing remain in other areas of the Town.
- The first Community Church in the Town of Brant located on Brant-North Collins Road. The building is located on the J.L. Catalano family farm and is currently being used as workshop
- The first Town Hall located on Brant-North Collins between Morley Road and Versailles Plank Road. The building is currently used as a residence
- Mosher House located at 10806 Brant-Reservation Road is one of the oldest buildings in the community and dates back to the early 1800's
- The first sawmill in the Town located on Brant-Reservation Road about a ¼ mile south of the Mosher House. It was moved and remodeled and is currently used as a storage facility for school buses
- The former Union Hotel (currently Pero's Restaurant) located next door to the Mosher House, was one of the first buildings in the Brant community and was used as a stage coach stop and is now vacant
- Several school houses including the first school house located at 10727 Brant-Angola Road, a two room school house on Mile Strip Road between Hammond Road and Brant-Reservation Road, a one room school house at Mile Strip Road and Versailles Plank Road and a one room school house on Brant-Farnham Road and Hammond Road.
- Bogdan Residence
- Pizzolanti's Farnham Hotel located at 516 Commercial Street

5.6 Findings

Highlights from the Community and Cultural Facilities analysis include the following:

- Brant and Farnham are service by two school districts: Lakeshore and North Collins
- The Lakeshore School District had about five times as many students as the North Collins School District
- In 1999-2000, public expenditure per pupil in the Lakeshore School District was less than that of the North Collins School District and the state average
- The drop out rate for both the Lakeshore School District and the North Collins District was less than the state average
- Residents of Brant and Farnham have access to four parks including the Evangola State Park
- The Town and Village are served by the Brant Police Force and receive supplemental service from the NYS Police and Erie County Sheriffs Department
- Both Brant and Farnham have volunteer fire departments
- There are several structures that are eligible for nomination to the State and National Historic Register within the Brant-Farnham area.

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6.0 Transportation

6.1 Transportation System

6.1.1 Multi-modal system overview

This chapter examines the multi-modal transportation system that exists within the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham, the condition and use of that system, the links between land uses and transportation facilities as well as examines the needs and opportunities for improvements to the Town's and Village's transportation system.

The street and roadway system is the most important element of the transportation system serving the Brant and Farnham community. It provides the necessary network for circulation about the Town and Village but more importantly, provides access to adjacent communities, the region, the state, as well as access to national and international destinations and markets.

While not holding any significant importance in terms of serving local rail passenger service needs but providing for some freight service needs of the community, railroads nonetheless have a significant impact by way of their physical presence on the roadway traffic circulation patterns throughout the Town and Village.

From a multi-modal perspective, the community is currently fortunate to have regularly scheduled commuter transit bus service available through the Town and Village providing regularly scheduled commuter connections between the community and destinations in downtown Buffalo to the north/east as well as scheduled bus service to the south/west to Dunkirk, Fredonia and Jamestown. In addition, specialized transportation service for eligible residents of the Town and Village is available through the Rural Transit Service program funded by Erie County.

Finally, provision for alternative modes of transportation are present in the Town and Village with the existence of a sidewalk system along NY Routes 5, 249 and other streets within the Village as well as an identified on-street bike route and recreational trail system along Lake Shore Road connecting the Town of Brant, Evangola State Park on the Lake Erie Shore with the Town of Evans and other communities to the north and destinations to the south of Brant.

The transportation system currently existing within or available to the residents of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham may be somewhat overlooked as an asset that is essential to the quality of life and economic prosperity of the Town and Village. While the Town and Village's 1971 Master Plan recognized that the general welfare of the Town and Village depends upon the adequacy, efficiency, safety and attractiveness of the existing pattern of street and highway facilities; the variety of transportation options available within the Town for businesses and residents may not be fully appreciated. The community has the potential to enhance its marketability and attractiveness given the array of transportation modal options currently available to the residents and businesses of the Town and Village, the location of the Town and Village in the region and state and, the close proximity of the local transportation network to good multi-modal transportation facilities that provide access to regional, state and international destinations for delivery of people, goods and services.

6.2 Vehicular System

6.2.1 Road Classification

The highway network in the Town and Village evolved from the development of State, County and Town and Village roads that link the urban and rural areas of the region. As with most Towns in the region, the roadway network of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham consists of streets and highways that are classified by various functional uses, by their ownership or maintenance responsibility (state, county or local governments), and by their funding eligibility.

All streets and highways are classified in terms of their functional importance. The functional class of a roadway is defined by the travel patterns and typical use of a roadway facility. Highways have two main functions, to provide mobility and to provide land access. Interstates and expressways provide a high degree of mobility, with access provided only at spaced interchanges to promote the high-speed, high volume characteristics of that facility type. Interstates, expressways, and major arterials provide circulation into and through the Brant and Farnham while minor arterials provide circulation within the Town. The regional and local collector streets provide primary access to land use. As the functional classification of a road drops from Interstate to Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Collector and then to Local, so does the corresponding importance of the type and, generally, a corresponding lower traffic volume is observed.

Figure 6-1 – Roadway Functional Classification, Bridge, and Culvert Locations
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham



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Roadways of primary importance traversing the Town generally in a north-south direction are CR 111 Lake Shore Road, NY Route 5 Erie Road, U.S. Route 20, I-90 NYS Thruway, CR 9 Brant Reservation/Angola Road, CR 41 Versailles Plank Road and CR 546 Mile Block Road. Roadways of importance traversing the Town and/or Village east and west are CR 491 Cain Road on the north Town Line, NY Route 249 Commercial Street/Brant-Farnham/North Collins Roads and, CR 93 Mile Strip Road. These roads directly connect with the roads in adjacent towns to the north (Evans) and east (North Collins) or with roads in the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation to the south of the Town of Brant.

Three major roadways that are state-owned and -maintained serve the Town and Village. U.S. Route 20, also known as Southwestern Boulevard, crosses the Town in a southwest-northeast direction east of the Village of Farnham and, being outside of the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Urban Area Boundary, is classified as a Rural Principal Arterial. This classification is due to the U.S touring route designation and the heavier utilization of this roadway as a truck route through the region.

NY Route 5, known as Erie Road, traverses the Town generally parallel but west of Route 20 crossing west of and through the northwest corner of the Village of Farnham. NY Route 5 is classified as a Rural Minor Arterial on the Federal Aid Functional Classification System reflecting this roadways somewhat lesser importance in terms of truck routing. U.S. Route 20 and NY Route 5, being Rural Principal or Minor Arterials respectively, carry a combined total traffic volume of greater than 12,000 vehicles per day. The nature of the design and function of these roadways provide for more direct access to the Brant and Farnham than the limited access NYS Thruway and thus provides the necessary interaction with the adjacent land uses. These two arterial roadways are, in fact, the main commercial corridors within the Town and Village as reflected in the currently adopted zoning law.



Route 249 – Commercial Street – through the Village.

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A third major state-owned highway facility crossing through the Town is the NY State Thruway I-90, a facility classified as a Rural Interstate by the Federal Aid Functional Class System. I-90 NYS Thruway is a limited access freeway with interchanges located approximately six miles to the north of the center of the Town (Eden-Angola Interchange No. 57A on Eden-Evans Center Road just east of U.S. Route 20) and another approximately four miles southwest of Brant (Silver Creek-Irving Interchange No. 58) located off U.S. Route 20/NY Route 5 in Irving.

The 31,000 vehicles per day traveling the I-90 NYS Thruway have little opportunity for interaction with the Town and Village requiring their exiting off this toll facility to access the Town. The design, function and usage of these three major roadways dictate the relative influence and impact they have on land uses and other activities in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham.

Two other NY State owned/maintained roads are located in the Town. The first being NY Route 249 (named Commercial Street within the Village of Farnham, Brant-Farnham Road east of the Village to U.S. Route 20 continuing by that name east to the intersection with Brant Reservation/Angola Road eastward from which it is known as North Collins Road) which traverses across the Town and Village in an east-west direction from NY Route 5 on the west to the east Town line eventually to connect with U.S Route 62 in the adjacent eastern Town of North Collins.

NY Route 249, known as Commercial Street in the Village of Farnham, serves as the "Main Street" of the Village. NY Route 249 extends along a somewhat residential corridor in the Village and Town to the Town Center located in the vicinity of the intersection of NY Route 249 and the CR 9 Brant Reservation Road then continues eastward to the eastern Town Line.

Another state owned/maintained roadway is the Evangola State Park Access Road extending from NY Route 5 westerly as a divided parkway type facility connecting with Lake Shore Road just east of the Park entrance. With its intersection with Lake Shore Road, this roadway serves more than merely an access to the State Park, it provides for connection to the north-south destinations accessed via Lake Shore Road to the north and south of the Town of Brant.

The following figure shows the Route Numbers and Jurisdiction of the roads in Brant and Farnham, along with the common road names.

With the exception of the Evangola State Park access road, the above-described roadways are designated on the regionally adopted (Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)) Federal Aid Highway System. Various Federal funds are available for transportation improvements for these facilities. In general, NY Route 5, U.S. Route 20 and NY Route 249 are eligible for "Surface Transportation Program" (STP) funds while I-90 NYS Thruway is eligible for "National Highway System" program funding. All funding programs are in accordance with the Federal Surface Transportation Act (TEA-21) funding program.

The State of New York, either through the NYSDOT, NYS Park, or the NYS Thruway Authority owns and maintains 17.0 centerline miles of roadway within the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham. The County of Erie owns and has maintenance responsibility for a significant number of roadways in the Town and Village. In all, nine roads, approximately 26.5 miles of roadway, are under the ownership and maintenance jurisdiction of Erie County. Five streets totaling approximately 2.0 miles of roadway are located within the Village of Farnham. Approximately 10 named non-State or -County jurisdictional roads outside the Village with a combined total mileage of approximately 13.5 miles are in the Town of Brant. Of these locally owned roadways or streets, County, Town or Village, are designated elements of the Federal Aid Highway System and, as such, are designated as "Local" facilities and not eligible for federal aid funds.

The public opinion survey conducted for the Master Plan identified truck traffic as a concern throughout the Town and Village. Much of that concern focused of truck traffic on the major highway facilities in the Town and Village including NY Route 5, NY Route 249 as well as the County owned Milestrip Road.

6.2.2 Designated Truck Route

Under federal legislation and subsequent NYS legislation, certain highways in the state and national network are designated to allow special dimension vehicles to operate. These highways are defined as "Qualifying and Access Highways". These vehicles are generally defined as semi-trailer trucks of various types and configurations; however, certain restrictions still apply to some vehicles. The NYSDOT Report of 2001 (Official Description of Designated Qualifying and Access Highways in NY State) lists three highways crossing the Town of Brant that are designated as Qualifying and Access Highways for Larger Dimension Vehicles to include: I-90 NYS Thruway, U.S Route 20 and NY Route 5. The entire length of these highways in Erie and Chautauqua Counties are so designated. In the absence of this special designation for roadways, all state highways are automatically designated as truck routes and do not require signing as such. Trucks of non-special dimension are allowed to operate on state and county roadways as allowed by regular state motor vehicle regulations.

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Relative to truck access, NYSDOT inspects all bridges regardless of ownership. Based on bridge conditions and ratings, bridges may have weight restrictions placed on them, which would restrict access to them and any associated roadways for certain truck classifications. State regulations allow municipalities to designate truck routes over local roads to guide trucks traveling through the municipality or prohibit truck access along certain municipally owned roadways under certain conditions. Trucks making deliveries are excluded from using the truck route. As part of their truck route system, the municipality can sign that part of the state highway within the municipality for continuity of their truck route but cannot prohibit trucks from access to the state highway system.

Figure 6-2 – Road Jurisdictions
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

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6.2.3 Travel Patterns

In the absence of an origin-destination travel survey being conducted, general travel patterns of residents or others for trips generated to/from Brant/Farnham were ascertained through the regional travel modeling database available through the GBNRTC. The basis for travel estimation for trips on the various links, or roadways, in the region is trips generated for individual traffic analysis zones (TAZs) developed to represent small geographic areas in the region. Three TAZs represent the entire geographic area of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham. Trips are generated for each TAZ based on U.S. Census data (1990 Census) specifically, figures for households, employment and auto ownership. Through the GBNRTC's modeling process, trips are generated that originate from the TAZs in Brant/Farnham and go to all the other TAZ destinations in the region, approximately 600 TAZs. The modeling process also produces trips that originate in the many other regional TAZs and have destinations within the TAZs representing Brant and Farnham.

Utilizing a trip end summary of trips originating in Brant/Farnham TAZs, a general estimation of the travel patterns of trips from, and through, the Town has been produced as shown in Figure 6.3a. The trips shown are for the trips originating in the Town during the morning peak period with destinations either within the Town or with destinations to other areas of the region. The assumption is that generally those trips originating in the Town in the AM to destinations out of Town will be return trips in the PM peak with destinations within the Town.

As shown, 15 percent of the AM trips stay within the Town; they originate within the Town and have trip destinations within the Town. Thirty-eight percent of the trips have AM destinations in the Town of Evans, the adjacent town to the north. Fifteen percent of the trips have destinations further north, to Buffalo or surrounding areas and another 11 percent of the Brant/Farnham trips have destinations towards the Town of Eden. Overall, nearly 65 percent of all the trips originating in the AM in Brant and Farnham have destinations north/north-east of the Town.

Originally assuming that similar travel patterns may exist from the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation immediately adjacent to the Town of Brant to the south, trips originating during the AM peak were evaluated through the GBNRTC model data to identify travel into or across the Town of Brant. The analysis showed (See Figure 6.3b) that only 15 percent of the trips originating on the Reservation potentially would cross the Town of Brant to destinations to the north of Brant. Another 2 percent had destinations within Brant. Somewhat surprising was that approximately 55 percent of the trips originating on the Reservation were destined to points east/south-east of the Reservation.

The first of the following figures shows the travel patterns of Brant, Farnham and the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation.

6.2.4 Traffic Characteristics

Since the Town of Brant/Village of Farnham Comprehensive Master Plan was completed in 1973, traffic volumes along the roadways within the Town of Brant have seen a mix of changes undoubtedly corresponding to changes in population within the Town and adjacent communities as well as the changing focus of certain roadways. Traffic counts for various roadways in the Brant and Farnham network were obtained from the most current highway traffic volume database available. Three agencies currently conduct and maintain traffic volume data for Brant and Farnham – NYSDOT, Erie County and the GBNRTC. The GBNRTC has for the past six years conducting 24-hour traffic counts for roadways under Erie County jurisdiction on a cycled scheduled, however, other than State highways, many traffic counts of roadways in the Town were taken in the 1980's. However, given the general decline in population in the Town and adjacent towns and, given rather stable travel patterns in the area with no significant new traffic generators – with the exception of retail gasoline sales on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation – current available traffic count data from the above sources were assumed to still be representative and acceptable; the latest available traffic count, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), data are illustrated in the figure and table below.

The second of the following figures shows the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) of the roads in the Brant and Farnham area, along with the locations of recent accidents along these roads.

Figure 6-3 – Travel Patterns
Town of Brant, Village of Farnham, Cattaraugus Indian Reservation

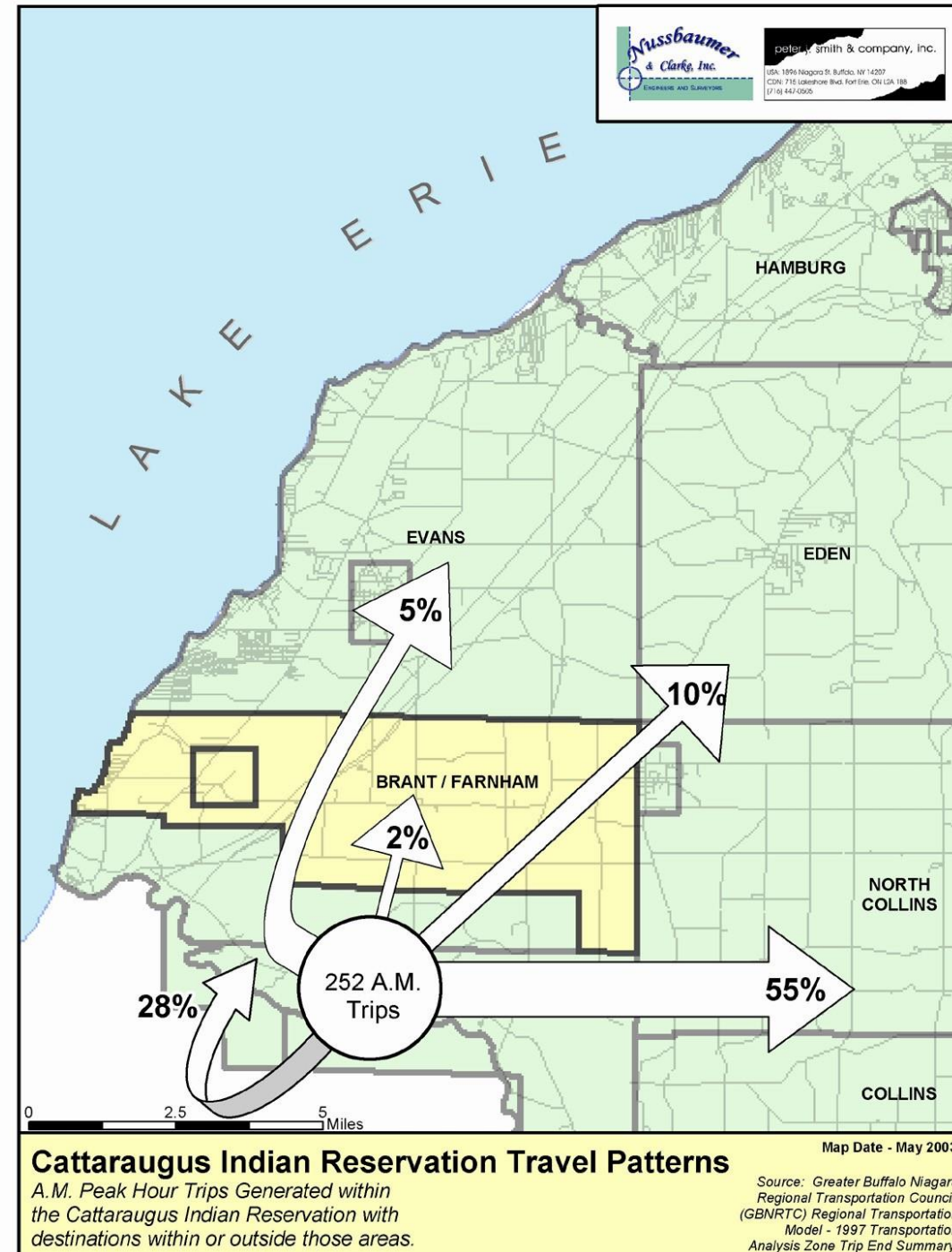
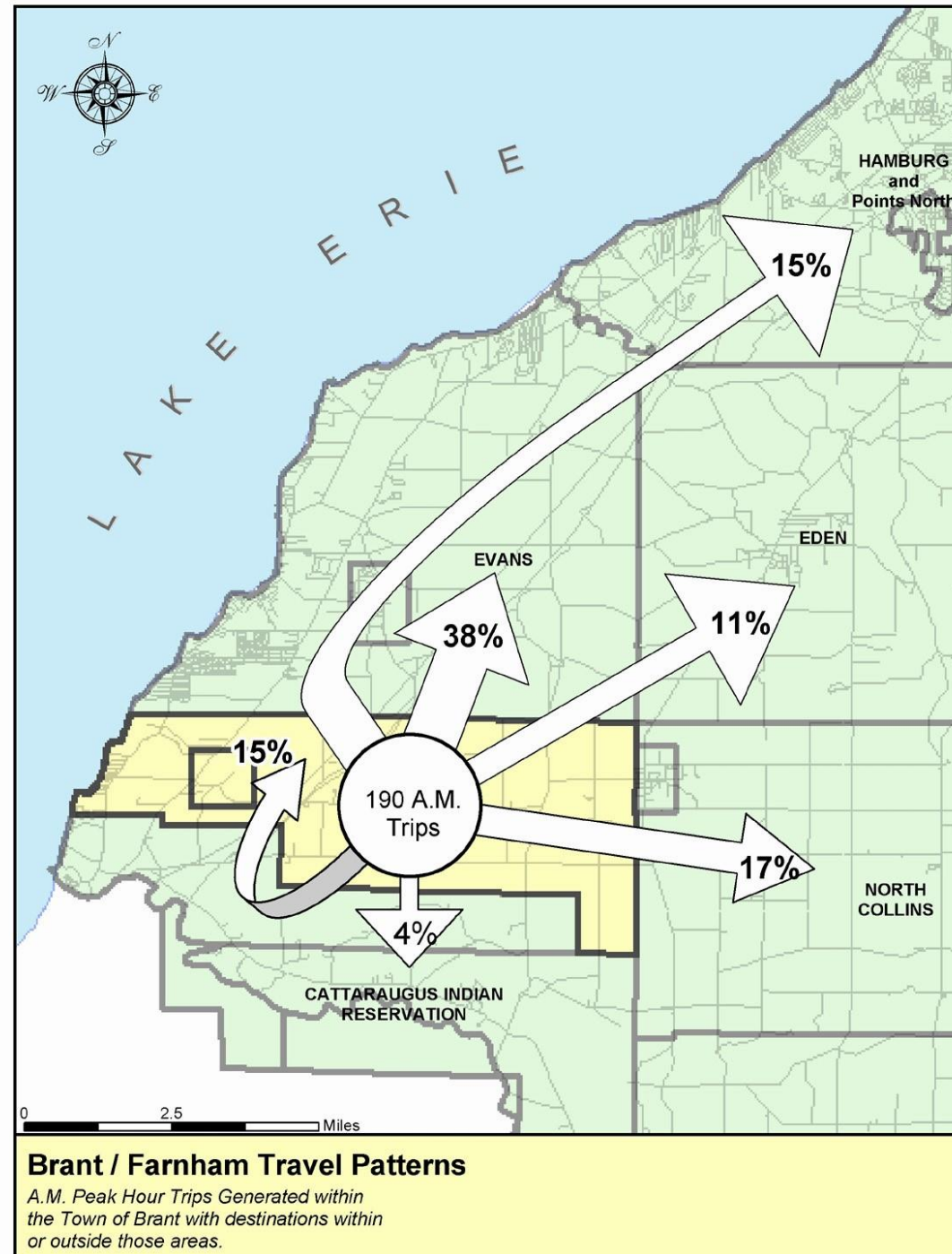


Figure 6-4 – Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) and Accidents
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham



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The three generally parallel state highways facilities traversing the Town and Village generally in a northeast-southwest direction in the western portion of the Town carry a significant volume of traffic through the Town as shown on the figure below. The highest traffic count for any roadway in the Town of Brant occurred on the limited access I-90 NYS Thruway where the AADT was determined to be 28,600 vehicles per day based on counts taken in 2001.



The NYS Thruway through the Town of Brant

The latest traffic volume counts available for NY Route 5 and U.S. Route 20 indicate that NY Route 5 Erie Road carries an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume of 6,300 to 7,200 vehicles (1999-2001) with US Route 20 experiencing AADT counts of 5,800 to 6,000 vehicles per day (2,000) along that roadway section within the Town of Brant. U.S. Route 20 and NY Route 5 experienced increases in traffic volumes based on volumes reported in 1970 and the recent traffic counts taken in the 1990's. The greatest increase in traffic volume was observed on NY Route 5 Erie Road through the Town from an estimated AADT of 2,300 in 1970 to a count of 6,300 to 7,200 AADT observed in 1999-2001. U.S Route 20 was shown to have a daily traffic volume of about 5,400 AADT in 1970 but only about 600 more vehicles per day, or 6,000 AADT as indicated by counts taken in 2000.

Over the nearly 20-year period from 1970 to 1999, NY Route 249, the main east-west state route through the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham saw traffic volumes increase from 900 to 1,100 AADT. County roadways saw a great mix of changes in traffic volumes with CR 111 Lake Shore Road, CR 93 Mile Strip Road and CR 9 Angola Road Brant/Reservation Road experiencing in the 1980's and 90's two to three times the volumes of traffic observed in the 1970's. However, most other County roadways in the Town saw either minimal increases in traffic volumes or, in fact, reductions in traffic volumes

The almost thirty percent decline in population in Brant between the 1970 and 2000 U.S. Census, significant population decline in the Town of North Collins and modest population increases in the Town of Evans to the north, resulted in changes in traffic volumes. Where relatively significant traffic volume increases were observed, these changes could be attributed mostly to the growing retail gasoline and other business trade on the Reservation and the use of roadways across the Town for access to the various outlets.

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**Table 6-1 – Traffic Volume Report
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

ROUTE NO	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	SECTION LENGTH	JURISDICTION	COUNT		ROAD SCORE 2001
					YEAR	AADT	
CR 9	ANGOLA - BRANT RD	RT 249 TO CAIN RD	1.50	LOCAL	1981	2300	8
CR 9	BRANT - RESERVATION RD	CATT IND RES TO RT 249	1.50	LOCAL	1981	2300	7
CR 492	HARDPAN RD	BRANT - FARNHAM TO CAIN RD	1.45	LOCAL	1982	100	7
CR 111	LAKESHORE RD	CATT IND RES TO LOTUS PT RD	0.70	LOCAL	1983	400	9
CR 111	LAKESHORE RD	LOTUS PT RD TO EVANS TOWN LINE	1.40	LOCAL	1991	1400	9
CR 34	LOTUS PT RD	RT 5 TO OLD LAKESHORE RD	1.40	LOCAL	1982	400	7
CR 546	MILE BLOCK RD	CATT IND RES TO MILESTRIP RD	1.50	LOCAL	1982	200	5
CR 546	MILE BLOCK RD	MILESTRIP RD TO RT 249	1.50	LOCAL	1982	300	7
CR 546	MILE BLOCK RD	RT 249 TO CAIN RD	1.00	LOCAL	1982	300	7
CR 93	MILESTRIP RD	CATT IND RES TO ANGOLA - BRANT RD	2.30	LOCAL	1984	700	9
CR 93	MILESTRIP RD	ANGOLA - BRANT RD TO MILE BLOCK RD	3.20	LOCAL	1983	100	9
CR 93	MILESTRIP RD	MILE BLOCK RD TO RT 62	0.90	LOCAL	1993	1500	4
CR 41	VERSAILLES PLANK RD	RT 249 TO CAIN RD	1.00	LOCAL	1982	500	7
CR 491	CAIN RD	RT 5 TO RT 20	2.10	LOCAL	1982	300	6
CR 491	CAIN RD	RT 20 TO EVANS TOWN LINE	0.29	LOCAL	1982	300	6
CR 491	CAIN RD	S MAIN TO VERSAILLES PLANK RD	2.25	LOCAL	1982	800	5
CR 491	CAIN RD	VERSAILLES PLANK RD TO N COLLINS TOWN LINE	1.49	LOCAL	1982	1600	5
90I	NYS THRUWAY	CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY LINE TO EDEN EVANS CTR	9.44	RURAL INTERSTATE	2001	28600	7
5	ERIE RD	RT 438 TO RT 249	2.04	RURAL MINOR ARTERIAL	1999	6200	7
5	ERIE RD	RT 249 TO EVANGOLA STATE PARK	0.67	RURAL MINOR ARTERIAL	2001	7200	UC
5	ERIE RD	EVANGOLA STATE PARK TO EVANS/BRANT TOWN LINE	0.73	RURAL MINOR ARTERIAL	2001	7000	UC
5	ERIE RD	EVANS/BRANT TOWN LINE TO ANGOLA LAKE SHORE RD	2.39	RURAL MINOR ARTERIAL	2001	7000	UC
20	SOUTHWESTERN BLVD	RT 438 TO RT 249	2.51	RURAL PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL	2000	6000	6
20	SOUTHWESTERN BLVD	RT 249 TO CR 9B S MAIN STREET	3.06	RURAL PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL	2000	5800	7
249	BRANT - FARNHAM RD	RT 5 TO RT 20	1.70	RURAL MAJOR COLLECTOR	1999	900	UC
249	BRANT - FARNHAM RD	RT 20 TO VERSAILLES RD	4.85	RURAL MAJOR COLLECTOR	2001	900	6
249	BRANT - FARNHAM RD	VERSAILLES RD TO RT 62 N COLLINS	1.62	RURAL MAJOR COLLECTOR	2001	1100	8

Sources: New York State Department of Transportation - 2001 Traffic Volume Report
Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council
Erie County Department of Public Works

Legend: UC - Under Construction

6.2.5 Level of Service (LOS)

Roadway and intersection Levels of Service (LOS) for roadway segments and intersections can be calculated through analytical procedures established for determining highway capacity. With regard to roadway segments, LOS is a qualitative measure that describes motorist satisfaction with factors influencing the degree of traffic congestion. These factors include travel time, speed, maneuverability, safety and delay. Levels range from “A” to “F” describing traffic operations with little or no delay and “F” describing conditions with substantial delay. Level of service “D” is perceived to introduce mobility concerns with LOS “E” or “F” defined as undesirable and deficient roadway capacity. LOS analysis can also be applied to intersections. While being somewhat a more detailed process, intersection analysis focuses more on delay being the primary evaluation factor.

Applying the procedures of the Transportation Research Board’s Highway Capacity Manual, the professional transportation industry’s standard procedure for traffic analysis, the GBNRTC developed tables (See table, below) of roadway traffic volume threshold values for the most deficient levels of service for roadway types of differing lane configurations. Comparing the roadway traffic count to the applicable LOS threshold level for a given segment of roadway will give a general assessment of the capacity and operating level of service of that particular roadway.

Assessing the various roadways in the Town of Brant/Village of Farnham roadway network, in terms of a roadway level of service and capacity to handle traffic volumes, revealed no roadway anywhere near a deficient level of service condition. The Town’s and Village’s highway network, from a capacity, congestion and level of service perspective, is adequate to handle existing traffic volumes.

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**Table 6-2 – Highway Capacity/Levels of Service Thresholds
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

TABLE A

GBNRTC (NFTC) HIGHWAY CAPACITY THRESHOLD VALUES								
(Based on the TRB Highway Capacity Manual (1984 Edition) and General Roadway Geometrics)								
Number of Lanes/ Roadway Type	Level of Service "D"			Level of Service "E"			Level of Service "F"	
	Minimum Volume/AADT	Maximum Volume/AADT	Peak Hr. LOS @ Min."D" Volume (2)	Minimum Volume/AADT	Maximum Volume/AADT	Peak Hr. LOS @ Min."E" Volume (2)	Minimum Volume/AADT	Peak Hr. LOS @ Min."F" Volume (2)
	2-way AADT	2-way AADT	(2-way total lane vol.)	2-way AADT	2-way AADT	(2-way total lane vol.)	2-way AADT	(2-way total lane vol.)
2 Lane Arterial	13500	15100	1350	15200	16800	1520	16900	1690
3 Lane Arterial (1)	17500	19100	1750	19200	20800	1920	20900	2090
4 Lane Arterial	26900	30200	3020	30300	33600	3030	33700	3370
5 Lane Arterial (1)	30900	37200	3720	34300	37600	3430	37700	3770
6 Lane Arterial	40300	45300	4530	45400	50400	4540	50500	5050
7 Lane Arterial (1)	44300	49300	4930	49400	54400	4940	54500	5450

Notes Table 2A:

Adopted and published by GBNRTC (NFTC) in November 1990 and criteria for the NFTC's 2010 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Values based on the 1984 Highway Capacity Manual and general roadway condition/geometric assumptions.

- (1) Center left turn lane assumed to carry an additional 4000 AADT for entire roadway section.
 (2) Two way peak hour traffic assumed to be 10 percent of AADT, Directional Split 40/60 percent

TABLE B

GBNRTC (NFTC) HIGHWAY CAPACITY THRESHOLD VALUES						
(Based on the TRB Highway Capacity Manual (1997 Edition) and General Roadway Geometrics)						
Number of Lanes/ Roadway Type	Level of Service "D"			Level of Service "E"		Level of Service "F"
				Minimum Volume/AADT	Maximum Volume/AADT	Peak Hr. LOS @ Min."E" Volume (2)
				2-way AADT	2-way AADT	(2-way total lane vol.)
2 Lane Arterial				16250		1625
3 Lane Arterial (1)				20650		2065
4 Lane Arterial				32500		3250
5 Lane Arterial (1)				36900		3690
6 Lane Arterial				48800		4880
7 Lane Arterial (1)				53500		5350

Notes Table 2B:

GBNRTC adopted a policy that established the transition from LOS "D" to LOS "E" as the roadway operating condition that would identify unsatisfactory operations and identify candidates for transportation improvements. Therefore, the Highway Capacity Threshold Value tables updated after adoption of the NFTC's 2010 Long Range Transportation Plan only updated the LOS "E" Threshold values.

The minimum volume value calculated for Level of Service "E" is defined as the "Capacity" of the roadway section. While the roadway may actually carry traffic volumes higher than the minimum "E" capacity volume, as the roadway traffic volume approaches "F" Level of Service roadway operating conditions that are extremely unstable and total breakdown of traffic flow and high delays will occur.

6.2.6 Roadway Traffic Safety

There are two systems that track accidents on roadways within the State; the Statewide Accident Surveillance System (SASS) for state highways and the Centralized Local Accident Surveillance System (CLASS) for local roads. Both systems were used to gather data for the Master Plan.

An accident history for the three-year period October 1, 1996 through September 30, 1999 was obtained from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), SASS system and the Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC), for the CLASS system. This three-year period was the most recent years that the two systems coincided. The number of accidents during this period are identified on roadway segments and intersections in a figure elsewhere in this study.

The New York State Department of Transportation is responsible for conducting safety studies on State highways through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). Through this program, NYSDOT is constantly seeking to identify portions of the State Highway System where the roadway displays unusual accident experience, and to apply cost-effective corrective measures.

The New York State Thruway Authority is responsible for conducting safety studies on the I-90, the County of Erie on County highways and the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham on local roads. NYSDOT is available to consult on intersections that may not be within its jurisdiction for localities with limited or no traffic engineering expertise.

The accident data diagram below identifies locations on the roadway network that may require further study. These are; Versailles Plank Road from the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation to Cain Road and the intersection of Mile Strip Road at Brant Reservation Road.

The Brant Police Chief has concerns with two intersections on Mile Strip Road. The first being the intersection with Brant Reservation Road and the second being the intersection with Versailles Plank Road. There are both right and left side posted stop signs at both intersections. Posting oversize stop signs on the right side of the road for increased target value may help. There is a crest vertical curve on Mile Strip Road just west of Versailles Plank Road which limits sight distance to the west. This intersection is not apparent to eastbound Mile Strip Road motorists.

Supplementing the intersection warning sign with an advisory speed is an option. However a flattening of the vertical curve would greatly improve sight distance. Although the County has improved signing at these locations, these additional suggestions may help. . The Town Highway Superintendent further voiced safety

concerns for Versailles Plank Road relative to vehicle speeds (allowable posted speeds and actual speeds of travel) and stop sign needs at Rte. 249 and Versailles Plank Road. Through interviews with the Seneca Nation Transportation Manager, concern was expressed regarding the speed of vehicles and lack of use of warning sirens by emergency vehicles utilizing Mile Strip Road through the Reservation to access Routes 20 and 5 often destined for the Lake Shore Community Hospital. This became a particular hazard at location of poor sight distance along Mile Strip Road.

There has been a history of fatal and personal injury accidents in the rural southtowns communities over the years, including in the Town of Brant. Traffic safety improvements can reduce the incidence of accidents where highway geometry, pavement conditions, signage, and poor sight distance are contributing factors. However, they cannot be expected to reduce accidents that are caused by inclement weather, environment, animals, high speeds, deliberate running of stop signs, impaired driving, poor judgment or vehicle failure.

In general, the public opinion survey conducted for this Master Plan confirmed many of the safety issues identified in the safety analysis. Speeding was the foremost safety issue mentioned by survey respondents along with segments of roadway along NY Route 249, Versailles Plank Road, Milestrip Road, Brant Reservation Road and certain intersections along these roadways.

6.2.7 Roadway Pavement Conditions

NYS DOT has adopted a procedure for “scoring” the pavement conditions of all highways owned or maintained by the State of New York. The GBNRTC has adopted the same system for assessing the condition of all the roadways that are part of the Federal Aid Highway System but are not part of the state highway network. In recent years, the Erie County Department of Public Works has likewise adopted the same road condition scoring system to assessing the condition of County owned roadways that are not part of the regional Federal Aid System. The GBNRTC scores highway condition every two years, with year 2001 being the most recent undertaking of the highway condition assessment. Erie County owned highways within the Town of Brant were assessed also in 2001.

As noted in an earlier section, the only highways in the Town of Brant/Village of Farnham that are part of the Federal Aid System are the State owned highways (NY Route 5, U.S. Route 20, NY Route 249 and I-90 NYS Thruway). Outside of those highways, Erie County owns many of the other roadways in the Town of Brant.

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As shown in the following table, the highway condition scoring system rates segments of roadways on a “1” to “10” score with a “1” defined as a roadway in poor condition and a “10” essentially being defined as a newly constructed/reconstructed roadway. The table below lists the most recent assessment of the condition of roadways within the Town of Brant/Village of Farnham. As shown, Erie County roadways, which are not Federally aided, exhibit a number of roadways rated in “fair” to “poor” condition while most were rated as being in “good” condition.

**Table 6-3 – Generalized Descriptions Of Condition Ratings
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

General Score Condition	Condition Rating Description Surface
10 Excellent	There are no visual derivations from a smooth surface. Pavement recently constructed, reconstructed, or overlaid within the last years.
9 Excellent	Pavement should have no crack or patches. Flexible pavement recently resurfaced within the past year or two. Overlay pavements may show evidence of some hairline reflection cracking. Rigid pavement joints function properly.
8 Good	Pavements give an excellent ride but show infrequent to occasional signs of surface deterioration. Flexible pavements begin to show very slight evidence of raveling, cracking, and wheel track wear. Rigid pavements begin to show very slight evidence of surface deterioration such as cracking, joint spalling, or scaling. Overlay pavements show evidence of very slight reflection cracking.
7 Good	Pavements give a good ride but show infrequent to occasional signs of surface deterioration. Flexible pavements show evidence of slight rutting, random cracking and some raveling. Rigid pavements show evidence of light rutting, random cracking and some raveling. Rigid pavements show evidence of slight joint spalling, scaling, or minor cracking. Overlay pavements show evidence of slight reflection cracking and multiple cracking at reflection cracks.
6 Fair	Riding quality is noticeably inferior to new pavements, showing infrequent to occasional signs of distress. Surface defects of flexible pavements may include moderate rutting, cracking, and raveling; patching is apparent. Overlay pavements show evidence of slight to moderate cracking and raveling along cracks.
5 Poor	Riding quality is noticeably inferior to new pavements but may be tolerable for high speed traffic. Pavements show occasional to frequent signs of distress. Surface defects of pavements are the same as under the 6 rating but are more severe.
4 Poor	Pavements have deteriorated to a point where resurfacing is required, showing occasional to frequent distress. Readability, even at slow speeds, is impaired. Surface defects on flexible pavements include severe rutting, cracking, raveling, and patching. Surface defects of rigid pavements include severe joint spalling, cracking, scaling and patching. Overlay pavements show evidence of severe surface delamination.
3 Poor	Pavements have deteriorated to a point where resurfacing is required immediately. Flexible pavements show evidence of severe and frequent scaling, joint spalling, faulting cracking, and patching. Rigid pavements show signs of frequent and severe joint cracking, and scaling.
2 Poor	Pavements are in extremely deteriorated condition and may require complete reconstruction. Motorists experience discomfort and travel speeds will decrease.
1 Poor	Pavements are in extremely deteriorated condition and are in need of immediate corrective action. There facilities are considered impassable at posted speeds.

Table 6-4 – GBNRTC Highway Pavement Condition Assessment
2001 Report

State Owned (Federal-Aid Eligible)

<u>Route</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Condition Score</u>
U.S. Route 20	Brant-Evans Town Line to Catt. Indian Reserv.	7-8 Good
NY Route 5	Brant-Evans Town Line to NY Route 249	7-8 Good
NY Route 5	NY Route 249 to U. S. Route 20 OLAP	6 Fair
NY Route 249	NY Route 5 – U.S. Route 20	9-10 Excellent
NY Route 249	U.S. Route 20 to Versailles Plank Road	6 Fair
NY Route 249	Versailles Plank Road to Brant-N. Collins Tn. Line	7-8 Good

Erie County Owned (Non Federal-Aid Eligible)

Lake Shore Road	Brant-Evans Tn. Line to Brant-Catt. Reserv. Ln.	9-10 Excellent
Lotus Point Road	Lake Shore Rd. to NY Route 5	7-8 Good
Cain Road	U.S. Route 20 to Brant-Angola Rd.	6 Fair
Cain Road	Brant-Angola Rd. to Versailles Plank Rd	1-5 Poor
Cain Road	Versailles Plank Road to NY Route 62	<i>Under Constr. 2002</i>
Hardpan Road	NY 249 to Cain Road	7-8 Good
Brant-Reserv. Road	Mile Strip Road to Cain Road	7-8 Good
Versailles Plank Road	NY 249 to Cain Road	7-8 Good
Mile Block Road	Mile Strip Road to Cain Road	7-8 Good
Mile Strip Road	Brant-Reserv. Line to Mile Block Road	9-10 Excellent
Mile Strip Road	Mile Block Road to Brant-N. Collins Town Line	<i>Resurfaced 2002</i>

Source: Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council

6.2.8 Bridge and Culvert Conditions

The table below illustrates the general location and condition of highway bridges and culverts located within the Town of Brant. All bridges and culverts are inspected by NYSDOT, regardless of ownership, on an annual basis. Structures that are determined to be severely deficient in structural rating are brought to the attention of bridge/culvert owners for action to be taken to include posting of weight restrictions, rehabilitation and/or closing of the facility from public use.

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**Table 6-5 – State And Local Road Bridge Report
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

LOC	BIN	HIGHWAY	CROSSING	GENERAL RECOMMENDATION
1	1001350	RT 5	MUDDY CREEK	7
2	1043290	RT 249	DELAWARE CREEK	4
3	1061120	RT 249	190 NYS THRUWAY	6
4	1061130	RT 249	BIG SISTER CREEK	7
5	2212890	HALLEY RD	BIG SISTER CREEK	6
6	2212900	ELLIS RD	DELAWARE CREEK	4
7	3327430	MILESTRIP RD	BIG SISTER CREEK	6
8	3327830	CAIN RD	BIG SISTER CREEK	5
9	3367890	ANGOLA-BRANT RD	DELAWARE CREEK	6
10	3367980	CAIN RD	DELAWARE CREEK	6
11	5512310	HARDPAN RD	190 NYS THRUWAY	6
12	7061102	RT 249	CSX RR	*
13	7061103	RT 249	CSX RR	*
14	7061104	RT 249	CSX RR	*
15	7061111	RT 249	N&S RR	*
16	7061112	RT 249	ABANDONED RR	*
A	CULVERT	ANGOLA-BRANT RD	TRIB BIG SISTER	4
B	CULVERT	MILESTRIP RD	TRIB MUDDY CREEK	3
C	CULVERT	MILESTRIP RD	TRIB MUDDY CREEK	3
D	CULVERT	MILESTRIP RD	TRIB DELAWARE CREEK	4
E	CULVERT	MILESTRIP RD	TRIB DELAWARE CREEK	5

Notes NYSDOT does not inspect RR bridges - no recommendations given
 Culvert data on County Roads only
 See narrative for description of seven classes for general recommendations

Source: NYSDOT - Buffalo Regional Office
 Erie County Department of Public Works - 2001 Erie County Road, Bridge & Culvert Report

The following is a narrative description for the seven classes for general recommendations to bridges and culverts in the table above:

- 1 *Very poor condition:* Deterioration is so extensive that partial or total collapse is imminent. There is little or no live load capacity, and the bridge may be closed. For the bridge to remain open to traffic, substantially reduced load posting and temporary shoring are necessary. Substructures may have settled, and be in danger of failing due to extensive undermining.

- 2 *Poor condition:* Most bridge components are in poor condition. Primary and secondary members are extensively deteriorated. The bridge can no longer safely carry original design loads. The bridge may still be open to traffic, but at a reduced load posting. Temporary shoring or bracing may be necessary. Substructures may be so badly deteriorated to require immediate repairs. Scour and undermining may be extensive enough to threaten the stability of the bridge.

- 3 *Major structural repairs required:* Considerable deterioration of some or all bridge components. The bridge may no longer be able to support original design loads. Load posting may be needed. There may be considerable section loss on primary and secondary members. Concrete components are spalled with rebar exposure over a large portion of the areas. Extensive footing undermining may have occurred.
- 4 *Structural repairs required:* Moderate deterioration of primaries, secondaries, and substructures has occurred, but bridge load capacity is not substantially reduced. Considerable reconditioning of secondary members, substructures, and other components may be needed. Primary members do not yet need extensive reconditioning. There may be some minor substructure undermining.
- 5 *Repairs required:* Primary members and substructures are in good condition and do not need major repairs. Bridge load capacity is not reduced, but other parts of the bridge (such as deck elements) may need extensive repairs. The bridge may require repainting because of corrosion starting on steel members. Scour may have exposed, but not undermined footings.
- 6 *Minor repairs required:* Only minor deterioration is present. Touch-up painting may be required or other minor repairs to secondary items. Minor bearing readjustments may be needed. There may be minor cracks or spalls in the substructures.
- 7 *Good condition:* The bridge is in new condition, without deterioration except perhaps minor flaking of the top coat of paint. No work is needed other than routine maintenance.

6.3 Public Transportation

Brant and Farnham are fortunate to be along major highway facilities that serve regional travel needs. As a result, the Town and Village residents benefit by having public transportation service available from two separate operations. The figure below shows the Bus and Bicycle Routes along the roads in Brant and Farnham.

6.3.1 Regional Transit Service

Regional transit service is provided by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's (NFTA) Metro Bus system, which provides public transit service basically along NY Route 5 Erie Road in the Town of Brant/Village of Farnham. A daily total of five round trip bus trips are made each day between the Buffalo CBD and the Seneca Nation Bingo facility with intermediate stops in Brant and Farnham. This transit route, called the Metro Bus Express #76 Lotus Bay route, travels from Buffalo along NY Route 5 diverting into the Village of Angola, back to Route 5 via Lake Street continuing to Lake Shore Road to Evangola State Park to Lotus Point Road, back to Route 5 then continues west on Route 5 terminating at the Seneca Nation Bingo facility. Two buses come out of Buffalo in the early morning, arriving in Farnham (Route 5 and Lotus Point Road) at 6:21 and 7:01 a.m. and returning to Buffalo from Farnham at 6:31 and 7:13 a.m., respectively.

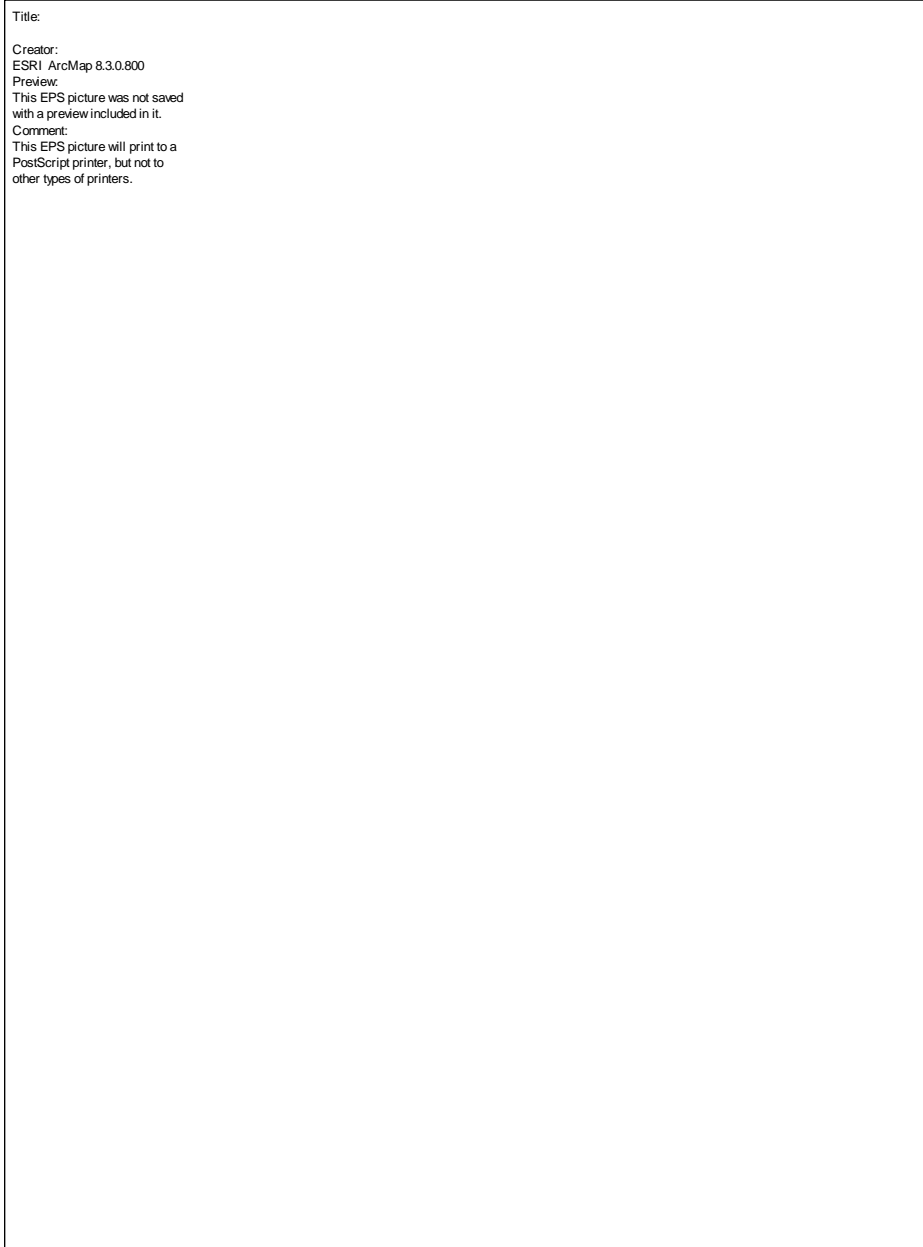
Three round trips originate in Buffalo on this route in the afternoon and early evening arriving in Farnham at 1:14, 5:52 and 6:33 p.m. and returning to Buffalo from Farnham 1:29, 6:05 and 7:00 p.m. According to transit ridership surveys conducted in the Spring of 2002 of the various routes in the NFTA Metro Bus System, the Express #76 Lotus Bay route carries a combined two-way daily ridership total of approximately 152 passengers (76 round trips) during the average weekday.

6.3.2 Intercity Commuter Transit Service

Intercity commuter transit service is provided by Coach USA (formerly D & F Transit and later Niagara Scenic) with trips between downtown Buffalo along Route 5 crossing through Brant and Farnham and continuing to Dunkirk, Fredonia and Jamestown. Five trips each day from each direction (Buffalo to Dunkirk/Jamestown and Dunkirk/Jamestown to Buffalo) cross through Brant and Farnham.

Trips to Buffalo from the Farnham and Angola area include two morning trips, at 7:30 and 10:00 a.m., and three afternoon/evening trips, at 12:30, 3:15 and 7:15 p.m. The trips to Buffalo through Farnham originate in Jamestown and Dunkirk and points west. Trips from Buffalo to Farnham and continuing to the west cross the Angola/Farnham area at 8:15 and 11:10 a.m. with three afternoon/evening trips at 2:15, 6:00 and 9:30 p.m.

**Figure 6-5 – Bus and Bicycle Routes
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**



Rural Transit Service, Inc.

Transportation for eligible residents of southern and rural Erie County is available to residents of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham. This is specialty van service arranged by appointment for shopping, human services, employment, and medical and health services. Eligible residents include those who live in the service area, who meet family size and income limits, age criteria, or are individuals with disabilities. This service operates 8 a.m. through 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

6.3.3 Rail Service

As recognized in the Brant and Farnham Master Plan of 1973, while railroads are an important physical aspect of both Brant and Farnham, they do not provide an important transportation network or economic function to the community. While rail service could then and now have some importance in terms of freight movement and associated economic development, the fact is that no facilities, such as rail sidings, exist in the Town to provide direct connection to rail service for freight.

The mainlines of two major rail operators pass through the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham essentially paralleling the highway Route 5, 20 and I-90. These rail operations are the “water level route” of CSX and Norfolk-Southern (N-S).

Not within the Town of Brant, but just a short distance to the east in the Town of North Collins is a freight service rail line (known as the “1246” line) owned by the Erie County IDA and leased to the Buffalo Southern rail line. This operation provides service between Buffalo and Gowanda and provides for freight shipping on-call as needed for businesses along the line with connections to other major rail operators. It operates several days per week and the rails and equipment are reported to be in good condition.

6.3.4 Air Service

The Buffalo-Niagara International Airport (BNIA), operated by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), is the primary commercial airport serving the Buffalo-Niagara Falls regional area. Located in the Town of Cheektowaga a short distance off the I-90 NYS Thruway, this major airport facility is less than an hour drive from Brant and Farnham.

6.3.5 Other Area Airport Facilities

No airports or landing facilities are located in the Town of Brant. Limited private or private public-use airports are located in adjacent Towns.

Angola Airport was a private public-use airport with a 3,280-foot paved runway located on Eden Evans Center Road in the Village of Angola. This airport facility has recently closed down operations and is currently for sale.

Evans Airways Airport is a private airport located four miles east of Angola in the Town of Evans. This facility has a 2,000-foot turf runway.

H & H Aviation Service, Inc. is a private heliport located six miles northeast of Forestville in the Town of Hanover.

Hamburg Airport is located on Heltz Road in Lakeview, Town of Hamburg. This is a private public-use airport with a 2,500-foot-long paved runway. Facilities at this airport include hangars, outside tie-down facilities, engine and frame maintenance, rental aircraft, fuel and supply sales, and flight instruction. This would be the closest public-use airport facility available to Brant/Farnham residents.

6.3.6 Bicycle Routes

The GBNRTC adopted a Niagara Frontier Bicycle Master Plan in 1998, which became an element of the overall GBNRTC 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan. The Bicycle Plan evaluated various roadways and other right-of-way in the region to identify a system of on-street and off-street routes and multi-use trails that could eventually establish a network of bicycle routes through and across the region. At the time of adoption of the Bike Plan, many of the bike facilities were proposed with hopes of someday securing funding for stand alone bike path projects and/or incorporation of bicycle facilities into the construction/reconstruction of roadways.

The GBNRTC Bicycle Master Plan and corresponding Bicycle Route Guide identified an on-street bicycle route through the Town of Brant. This route enters the Town from the Town of Evans on the north following Lake Shore Road, crossing Evangola State Park, east on Lotus Point Road to NY Route 5 (Erie Road) then continues south-west on Route 5 to Chautauqua County. This route is currently on the street. The segment of the route along Lake Shore Road was given a "Poor" rating due to insufficient pavement width. The segment of the route from Lake Shore Road along Lotus Point Road to NY Route 5 and southwest along NY Route 5 to Chautauqua County was given a "Good" rating.

The Town of Evans, to the north, has identified an extensive Bike/Hike Pathway route generally following Lake Shore Road. Federal funding has been secured through the Federal TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Program for funding (\$1,104,300) the portion of the Town of Evans Multi-use Pathway Bike/Pedestrian Trail along Old Lake Shore Road from Evans Town Park to Wendt Beach Park or portions of the identified route.

Planning continues for other bike/pedestrian pathways along other segments of this route as well as other areas of Evans. The Evans Pathway continues south to nearly the Evangola State Park property. Utilizing NY State Park funds, the Park will be funding a bikeway project through the Park with a connection to the Evans Town Bike Path with plans being developed for a bike/pedestrian pathway loop through the park. In addition, GBNRTC has indicated it will be meeting with Town of Brant officials in 2003 to seek input on a "Shoreline Trail" concept, an element of the GBNRTC's Lake-to-Lake Bikeway study.



Bike path near Evangola State Park.

6.3.7 Pedestrian System

The Village of Farnham has initiated a sidewalk construction program within the Village. This Village sidewalk program was supported by the re-construction of NY Route 5 and NY Route 249 Commercial Street, which provided for sidewalks along these routes within the Village as part of these recent projects.

6.3.8 Recreation Trail System

The designated Seaway Trail crosses the Town of Brant entering from the Town of Evans on the north on Lake Shore Road, crossing through Evangola State Park, continuing southwest on Lake Shore Road to Lotus Point Road, east to NY Route 5 than continuing southwest on NY Route 5 to the Reservation and continuing into Chautauqua County and points west. The "Bus Routes and Bicycle Routes" map highlights the Seaway Trail Route through Brant and Farnham.

6.4 Long Range Transportation System Planning

Regional transportation planning can have influences and impacts at the local Town and Village level. The Brant and Farnham Master Plan of 1973 discussed a Gowanda Expressway proposed by the Erie-Niagara Regional Planning Board's 1990's Trafficways Plan. This highway was to extend from the I-90 NYS Thruway at the Evans Center-Eden Road Interchange (under construction at that time) south to the Village of Gowanda. The Gowanda Expressway routing was proposed to cross south through the Town of Brant on a route between Mile Block Road and Versailles Plank Road. Due to recognized potentially severe disruption to vineyards, nursery lands and croplands, the Master Plan recommended that any Expressway route through Brant be located at the eastern edge of the Town.

The Erie Niagara Regional Planning Board's 1990 Trafficways Plan went mostly unimplemented and, in fact, that Board went out of business in the 1990's. Transportation planning in the region today is guided by the designated metropolitan planning organization, the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), which is responsible for multi-modal transportation planning. The GBNRTC has the responsibility of developing a multi-modal long range transportation plan for the Erie-Niagara County area. The first long range transportation plan formulated by the GBNRTC was adopted in December 1978 to address the regional transportation needs through 1985. It became the official transportation system plan for the Niagara Frontier superceding all other prior transportation plans. The Gowanda Expressway was not an adopted element of that 1978 plan and has not been considered in subsequent plans of the GBNRTC.

The GBNRTC adopted a 2010 Transportation System Plan for the Erie and Niagara region in 1994 with updates in 1995 and 1997. The current transportation system plan for the region is the 2025 Long-Range Plan for Erie and Niagara Counties adopted by the GBNRTC in January 2001. This Plan identifies a number of congestion relief/mobility, transit, access improvement and economic development projects mostly focused in the highly developed core and corridors of the region closest to the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls. In addition, the 2025 Plan allocated future transportation improvement funding to certain regional needs and categories. The Plan recognized the importance of infrastructure maintenance and, as such, allocated 70 percent of future funding to the system maintenance category. Remaining future funding was to be allocated to the categories of: transit improvements, capacity/mobility improvements, economic development, intersection improvement, safety, technology, quality of life and bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

While no specific transportation improvement projects were allocated specifically to the Town of Brant or Village of Farnham, the adopted policy of the GBNRTC's 2025 Plan of allocating future funding to categories such as system maintenance, economic development, intersection improvement, safety, quality of life and, bicycle and pedestrian improvements all suggest opportunities for Brant and Farnham to participate in funding of transportation improvements that can have direct and indirect benefit the community.

6.4.1 Other Comprehensive Planning Activities

The Town of Evans adopted a Comprehensive Plan in January 1999. That Plan identified a number of Town of Evans goals and how the Plan's Vision was to reinforce those goals. The Goal for Transportation (Goal #7) was for the Town to ensure an integrated transportation system to provide for the movement of residents, workers, visitors and goods in a safe and efficient manner. No new roadways were identified nor recommended by the Plan particularly any roadway that may connect to or impact the Town of Brant. NY Route 5, Erie Road, and US Route 20, Southwestern Boulevard, were confirmed by the Plan's Vision Blueprint to remain the major transportation routes through the Town.

The Seneca Nation's Cattaraugus Indian Reservation comprehensive master plan in place that specifically addresses transportation issues are of significant concern to the Nation that a Transportation Manager has been appointed. Currently, the Seneca Nation is seeking direct participation in the GBNRTC process through representation on the GBNRTC as a member agency. In discussions with the Transportation Manager, a number of transportation concerns were identified. The Nation and residents of the Cattaraugus Reservation are concerned with speed limits on NY Route 5 and U.S. Route 20 as they cross through the Reservation.

The Nation is in the process of requesting a speed study to be conducted by NYSDOT to support lowering posted speeds along these routes. Concern was expressed regarding the speed and lack of use of warning sirens by emergency vehicles utilizing Mile Strip Road through the Reservation to access Routes 20 and 5 often destined for the Lake Shore Community Hospital. Concern was expressed regarding perceived significant increases in traffic volumes along some roads entering the Reservation, particularly Versailles Plank Road; the growth was attributed to the significant growth in retail trade, particularly gasoline sales, on the Reservation. While residents of the Nation, as well as Brant and Farnham residents, have expressed concern regarding the impacts of locating a gambling casino on the Cattaraugus Reservation, no decision has yet been reached to, in fact, locate a casino on that Reservation.

6.4.2 Programmed Transportation Improvements

Transportation improvements in the Town and Village are undertaken by the government entity having ownership and maintenance jurisdiction over a roadway or other element of the transportation system. Capital programs are formulated to provide the funding in hopes of addressing as many of the transportation deficiencies and needs as possible.

Those facilities on the Federal-Aid Highway System, principally the State owned roadway facilities in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham, normally follow a certain mandated process to program transportation improvements. For the state system (NYSDOT or NYS Thruway owned facilities), the options for improvement funding are to try to secure funds through federal program sources and/or pay for improvement through the respective state programs/budget.

In this metropolitan area, as well as others across the state and nation, federal funds are programmed through an adopted five year transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is developed by the GBNRTC in this region, in cooperation with the NYSDOT and other GBNRTC member agencies. The TIP reflects regional capital improvement priorities and includes a multi-modal array of all the federally funded highway, transit bicycle, pedestrian and other transportation projects being considered for implementation over the short term duration of the TIP. The TIP is required by federal legislation to be derived from the region's adopted long range transportation plan and, therefore, the projects selected for the TIP for federal funding are guided by the goals and policies and priorities established by the long range plan.

The financial resources available to the responsible agency, County, Town or Village, limit transportation improvement needs, particularly highway improvements that are off the designated Federal-Aid Highway System.

NYSDOT has done a considerable amount of roadway improvements to their facilities in the past few years. NY Route 5 has seen resurfacing and/or complete reconstruction throughout the entire length of this highway through Brant and Farnham in 1997 and 2002 respectively. U.S Route 20 was last resurfaced in 1993. NY Route 249 has had reconstruction and/or resurfacing completed over nearly its entire length from NY Route 5 to NY Route 62 throughout the 1998 to 2000 time period with major reconstruction taking place on the Commercial Street section through the Village of Farnham in 2000.

NYSDOT has one project scheduled during 2003. This project is a bridge project (P.I.N. 5018.05) located on Rte.249 crossing Delaware Creek between Brant-Angola Road and Morley Cross Road. Construction is scheduled for 2003. As part of this NYSDOT project, Cain Road between Brant-Angola Road (Rte.323) and Versailles Plank Road will be resurfaced to serve as the official detour route. Outside the Town but perhaps causing some impacts, is the scheduled rehabilitation of the Routes 5 and 20 bridge over the Cattaraugus Creek between the Reservation and Chautauqua County currently programmed for construction in the year 2005.

Erie County is responsible for more than 25 miles of highways in the Town of Brant, and completed repaving of CR 34 Cain Road between Versailles Plank Road and NY Route 62 in North Collins in 2002 as well as Mile Strip Road between Brant Reservation Road and NY Route 62 that same year. As of this writing, the Erie County DPW re-paving/rehabilitation program for 2003 and future years is not fully defined and roadway pavement improvement projects in the County and Town of Brant have not been identified.

Erie County currently has on their program replacement of two culverts in the Town during the 2003 construction season. These structures are the culverts located on Angola Brant Road just south of Cain Road and a culvert on Mile Strip Road just west of Morley Cross Road. . With regard to future transportation needs, the Town Highway Superintendent indicated the need for funds to rehabilitate or reconstruct Town owned bridges on Ellis Road and Nordblum Road. Town owned roads were felt to be in fairly good condition through support through the State's Consolidated Highway Improvement Programs (CHIPS) funding program. The Village Highway Superintendent expressed concern regarding truck use of Church Street, a narrow road, for access to the one industry located at the end of this Village street.

6.5 Findings

The general characteristics of the transportation system within the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham are summarized below.

- The three major state owned and maintained roadways that serve the Brant-Farnham area are: U.S. Route 20, NY Route 5, and NY State Thruway I-90
- Modeling analysis of travel patterns for Brant and Farnham showed that 15% of AM trips originated and stayed within the Town, and almost 65% had destinations north/north east of the Town
- The greatest increase in traffic volume was observed on NY Route 5; Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) increased from 2,300 in 1970 to between 6,300 and 7,200 during 1999-2001
- Brant-Farnham roadways are adequate to handle existing traffic volumes

*Town of Brant and Village of Farnham
Master Plan*

- Further study of traffic safety may be required for Versailles Plank Road from Cattaraugus Indian Reservation to Cain Road, and the intersection of Mile Strip Road and Brant Reservation Road. The Brant Police Chief has concerns about the intersections of Mile Strip Road with Brant Reservation Road and Versailles Plank Road
- All bridges and culverts within the State are inspected by the NYSDOT. There are 16 bridges and 5 culverts located throughout Brant and Farnham
- Public transportation is provided by NFTA Metro Bus system (regional service), Coach USA (intercity commuter service) and Rural Transit Service, Inc
- The GBNRTC Bicycle Master Plan has identified an on-street bicycle route through the Town of Brant
- The Village of Farnham has initiated a sidewalk construction program

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7.0 Infrastructure

A supply of adequate water for the residents and businesses is a critical community need. The Village of Farnham and limited portions of the Town of Brant are served by public water and sanitary sewer systems.

7.1 Water Systems

7.1.1 Village of Farnham

The Village of Farnham currently owns and operates its own water system. The Village system is comprised of 3.5 miles of pipe and one (1) 150,000-gallon water storage tank. The Village of Farnham obtains its water from the Erie County Water Authority. Generally, the Farnham Water District consists of:

- All properties in the Village of Farnham
- Evangola State Park

According to the 1973 Brant – Farnham Master Plan, the Village of Farnham served approximately 125 users consuming 34,000 gallons of water per day (25,000 for domestic use, 9,000 gpd for agricultural use). The Village of Farnham received its water supply from the Village of Angola Water Treatment Plant. Water was transported to the storage tank on Route 5 in Farnham, from which it was distributed to residents. A well on Church Street was used as an emergency water source. This well is no longer active and has been disconnected from the public water system.

Currently, the Village of Farnham receives its water supply from an Erie County Water Authority Inter-Community water main that runs along Route 5 through the Village. The Village of Farnham stores its water in the elevated water tower located at the corner of Lotus Point Road and Route 5. This water storage tower has a capacity of 150,000 gallons. In 2003, the current water tower is scheduled for replacement with a new 200,000-gallon water tower. The project is being financed through the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

According to the Farnham Public Works Director, there are approximately 165 Farnham Village Water system customers. Average daily usage is 35,000 gallons per day.

Although the number of Farnham Water District customers increased by 40 users, the average daily water usage increased by only 1,000 gpd. The Village no longer monitors the type of water use, so a direct comparison of agricultural and domestic usage is unavailable. However, land use analysis indicates that agricultural land in the Village has decreased five-percent (5%) since 1973. One can generally conclude that agricultural users consume more water than domestic users. Therefore, the total amount of water usage can remain relatively constant over time, as an increase in domestic customers (and usage) is offset by the decrease in more intensive agricultural water consumption.

Daily usage increases during the summer months due to usage at Evangola State Park. All customers are metered. The system is considered to be in good condition, and has excess capacity for an increase in use. Property developers/owners are responsible for providing any needed waterline extensions to connect to the existing system.

7.1.2 Town of Brant

Generally, the Brant Water District consists of:

- Properties along Route 5 (Erie Blvd.), southwest of the Village of Farnham
- Properties along Lotus Point Road, between Route 5 and Lake Shore Road
- Properties along Lake Shore Road from Evangola State Park to the southern Town line.
- Properties along Route 249 (Brant-Farnham Road) between Farnham and Route 20 (Southwestern Blvd.)

The Town of Brant's water system was constructed in 1997-1998. The system is comprised of 4.8 miles of waterline. The water district is divided into two sections, one (1) to the east of the Village of Farnham, and the other section on the west side of the Village. The east section of Brant's system has approximately 20 connections, with the remaining connections to the west.

The Village of Farnham provides both supply and storage for the Town's system. Farnham purchases water in bulk from the Erie County Water Authority and sells it to the Town.

The Brant Water District supplies water to approximately 168 customers. Average daily usage is approximately 15,000 gallons per day. The average daily usage is lower in the Brant Water District because of the seasonal nature of many of the homes in the district. Average daily use increases during the summer months.

*Town of Brant and Village of Farnham
Master Plan*

Although the Brant Water District extends south of the Village of Farnham, properties along Railroad Avenue within the District are not connected to the public water supply and depend upon individual wells for fresh water. An engineering feasibility study determined that it would not be economically viable to extend the waterline from the Village system.

The figure below shows the district boundaries of the water districts in Brant and Farnham.

7.2 Type of Delivery Service

The serviced areas of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham receive their water via a bulk sales service agreement contracted through the Erie County Water Authority. Under a Bulk Sale Service Agreement, municipalities own the water system and are responsible for their operation, maintenance, improvement and replacement, as well as billings and customer collections.

7.2.1 General Water Service Statistics

Areas that do not receive water service depend upon drilled or dug wells for their water supply. Please refer to the Groundwater Section for a description on individual wells in Brant and Farnham. The table below lists water sources for housing units in Brant / Farnham.

Table 7-1 – Water Sources
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Brant	Farnham	Total
Total Housing Units	883	162	1045
Public system or private company	191	149	340
Individual Well			
<i>Drilled</i>	586	11	597
<i>Dug</i>	99	2	101
<i>Other Source</i>	7	0	7
Percent on Public Water	21.6%	92.0%	32.5%

Source – 1990 Census, US Census Bureau

*Note: The questions regarding water service were removed from the Census 2000 questionnaire, therefore not allowing direct data comparisons.

According to the 2000 Census there are 938 housing units in Brant and Farnham. Approximately 333 of these units are served by a public water system, according to the Public Works Director. This works out to approximately 35-percent of housing units that are serviced by a public water system.

7.2.2 Maintenance / Improvements / Concerns

There are no historical or reoccurring reports of any problems with regards to low water pressure in either district. Individual meters, as well as a meter to monitor the total usage of each water system measure water usage statistics. The Village of Farnham Director of Public Works is responsible for measuring and monitoring water usage by residents.

The Village of Farnham has expressed interest in converting to direct service (where the ECWA owns the assets and is responsible for their operation, maintenance, improvement and replacement). The ECWA estimates that \$37,000 in capital improvements are necessary in the Village system before it can become a direct service area.

The Town of Brant is interested in considering a lease management agreement with the ECWA. Under a lease management agreement, the ECWA leases the assets and is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the assets while the Town is responsible for the improvement and replacement of assets

Within the Town of Brant, there is some demand for expansion of water service north of the Village along Nordblum Drive and south of the Village along Maiden Lane Road. At the current time, however, the density does not exist in these areas to warrant the expense of expanding the service to these areas.

There is also demand to expand water service into the Town of Brant east of Southwestern Blvd, along Brant Farnham Road. An expansion of this kind in to the Town would likely take place as part of the Brant Water district (served by the Farnham District), as an extension of the existing Brant district. However, due to the change in elevation, such a project would require a pump station and water storage tank.

There is also demand for service near the intersection of Brant-Farnham Road and Brant Reservation Road. This expansion of water service into the Town of Brant may take place as part of efforts taken by the Southtowns Water Consortium.

Figure 7-1 – Water Service
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

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The Southtowns Water Consortium is a group of over 20 communities in southern Erie County that discuss water quality and access issues within their communities. Their goal is to study the financial and engineering costs of providing safe potable water to areas within the consortium. The Recently completed (March, 2003) "Southtowns Regional Water Planning Consortium Study" describes the feasibility and affordability of future water projects in the region³⁴.

7.2.3 Sanitary Sewer Resources

Like its complementary service, water, the primary distinction in sewer service delivery is between urban and rural areas. Urban sewer systems consist of networks of pipes that carry sewage from residential, commercial, and industrial facilities to treatment plants, where the sewage is treated before discharge into waterways. Because of the capital-intensive nature of sewer systems and the economies of scale associated with sewage treatment, urban systems typically serve areas larger than a single political jurisdiction.

Rural sewer systems commonly consist of septic tanks in which suspended solids sink to the tank bottom, eventually degrading into a harmless humus, which is periodically removed and disposed of in sewage treatment plants. Liquid effluent flows slowly from the tank into leaching fields where soil bacteria destroys the remaining organic material. In some cases, septic systems are operated by a municipality; in other cases, individual residents own and operate their own septic tanks.

7.2.3.1 Sanitary Sewer District Boundaries

There are currently two sewer districts in the Brant – Farnham area, the Brant Farnham Sewer District and the Lotus Bay Sewer District.

The Brant-Farnham Sewer District, established in February of 1987, includes the entire Village of Farnham and areas south, southwest and southeast of the Village to the north boundary line of the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation. The Lotus Bay Sewer District, established in June of 1976, is bounded by Lake Erie, Lake Shore Road, and the borders of the Cattaraugus Indian and the Town of Evans. The figure below shows the boundaries of the Sewer Districts.

³⁴ Southtowns Regional Water Planning Consortium Study prepared by R&D Engineering Inc. – March, 2003.

Service is not available along Lotus Pont Road, although the immediate areas to the east and west do receive service. Sewer service is also not available along Commercial Street outside of the Farnham-Brant Sewer District. The Sewer District service ends at this point due to a dip in the natural topography and the need to install an additional pump station in order to extend the service area. In the remainder of the Town of Brant, where houses are spaced so far apart that a sewer system would be too expensive to install, people rely on individual septic systems to dispose of wastewater.

7.2.3.2 Type of Service Agreement

The Brant Farnham and Lotus Bay Sewer Districts are served by an out-of-district agreement with Erie County Sewer District (ECSD) No. 2. Under the terms of the agreement, ECSD No. 2 provides all sewer services to the Town of Brant for operation, maintenance and treatment of sewage. The Town of Brant is responsible for any capital costs and the administration (billing, etc.) of its Sewer Districts. ECSD No. 2 includes the towns of Evans, southern Hamburg, Eden, and the Villages of Angola and North Collins; and is served by the county-owned and operated Big Sister Plant, located in Evans (8443 Old Lakeshore Road).

In July of 2002, the Town of Brant has requested that Erie County Sewer District No. 2 take over the Town's Sanitary Sewer Districts and extend its boundaries to include them. A consolidation of services will reduce administrative costs for both the Town and County Districts through the proposed extension of Sewer District No. 2 and the subsequent transfer of ownership of the Town Districts to ECSD No. 2.

Currently, there is a duplication of administration costs by both the Town and County. While ECSD No. 2 performs the operation and maintenance, it prepares a bill to the Town of Brant based on the parcels in the Town Districts. Then the Town must bill the parcels for the cost of the sewer service received from Sewer District No. 2. This results in a duplication of administration services.

On March 20, 2003, the Erie County Legislature approved the extension of ECSD #2 by adding the Brant-Farnham and Lotus Bay Districts subject to a 45-day permissive referendum.

The figure below shows the district boundaries of the two sewer districts in Brant and Farnham.

7.2.3.3 Service Statistics

Individual wastewater connections to the sewer system are made to either a gravity main or force main. Gravity main pipes are typically larger in diameter (usually 8") and are designed to allow for the free flow of wastewater down-gradient. Force mains are smaller in diameter (usually 3") and require pressure to move wastewater in the desired direction. If an individual connection to a force main is required, a 'low pressure grinder pump' must be installed to properly treat and pump the wastewater along the force main.

There are four pump stations within the Brant-Farnham area. Pump stations transport large amounts of wastewater towards the wastewater treatment plant through primary force-main pipes. The four pump stations in the Brant-Farnham area are described below:

The Brant-Farnham Pump Station is located in the Village of Farnham north of Commercial Street of between the two railroad lines. It serves all of the connections within the boundaries of the Brant-Farnham Sewer District. The pump station is fed by a series of 3" force mains and 8" gravity mains. These pipes generally run along roads and right-of-ways within the Town and Village. The station pumps the wastewater and transports it north through a 6" force main located along Route 5.

The remaining three pump stations serve the Lotus Point, Lotus Bay, and Evangola State Park areas. These are the Wide Beach Pump Station, the Lotus Bay Pump Station, and the Evangola Pump Station. These pump stations all pump sewage north through a 4" force main to the Shorecliff Pump Station, located in the Town of Evans. These pump stations are fed by 8" gravity mains. Unlike the other sewer system, the force and gravity mains are located behind the residences on Lake Shore Road before the shoreline (considered the front yard).

All wastewater from the Brant-Farnham area is treated at the Big Sister Plant in Evans. The Big Sister Plant has an average flow of 7.46 million gallons per day (gpd) and a rated capacity of 13 million gpd, leaving substantial excess capacity. During storms the plant may be forced to handle up to 30 million gpd. The table below lists sewer disposal data for housing units in Brant and Farnham.

*Town of Brant and Village of Farnham
Master Plan*

Table 7-2 – Sewer Disposal
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Brant	Farnham
Total Housing Units	883	162
Public Sewer	343	154
Septic Tank	537	8
Other Means	3	0
Percent on Public Sewer	38.8%	95.0%

Source – 1990 Census, US Census Bureau

*Note: The questions regarding sewer service were removed from the Census 2000 questionnaire, therefore not allowing direct data comparisons.

7.2.3.4 Cost of Service

Under the current contractual agreement between ECSD No. 2 and the Town of Brant, the average home in the Brant-Farnham and Lotus Bay Sewer Districts pay an annual sewer charge of \$413 and \$425 respectively. Upon formation of the extension to the ECSD No. 2 these costs are not expected to change, since the system of rates and charges would not be a change from the current agreement.

Currently, there is a \$400 per-home inspection charge and a \$2 permit fee due at the time of connection to the Town Sewer Districts. In addition, property owners must pay for the actual connection to the sewer line, an estimated \$1,500 to \$2,000 per home.

Figure 7-2 – Sewer Service
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

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7.2.3.5 Individual Sewer Infrastructure

In the remainder of the Town of Brant, where houses are spaced so far apart that a sewer system would be too expensive to install, people rely on individual septic systems to dispose of wastewater.

Septic systems require a permit from the Erie County Health Department and are inspected by both the Erie County Health Department and the Town Code Inspector. The application fee from the Health Department is \$150 and covers installation of both septic systems and wells (since both are usually installed at the same time).

The Erie County Health Department will perform a 'percolation test' at the proposed septic system area to determine the suitability of the soil. Depending upon local soil conditions, septic systems will be designed with either leach beds (gravel or sandy type soils) or sand filter beds (silt to clay soils). Seepage pits are required in areas where the soil is extremely porous.

Septic systems must be at least 100 feet from the nearest well location – they must be 250 feet from the nearest well if the septic system is a seepage pit.

7.3 Groundwater

Groundwater is found underground in cracks and spaces in soil, sand and rock. Groundwater is the major source of drinking water for citizens in the Western portions of the Town of Brant. The Village of Farnham and small surrounding portions of the Town of Brant are supplied with public water from the Erie County Water Authority.

Groundwater is threatened by a number of conditions. Groundwater can be contaminated by landfills, improperly maintained septic systems, leaking underground fuel tanks, an overpopulation of wildlife or abuse/overuse of fertilizers and pesticides. This is especially true in areas where soil material above the aquifer is permeable.

7.3.1 Water in Bedrock, Unconsolidated Deposits

Groundwater is either available from cracks and pores in the underlying bedrock, or from unconsolidated deposits (soil, sand, clay, and gravel) on top of the bedrock. Wells in Brant and Farnham do not depend on groundwater from the shale bedrock, but instead retrieve water from sand and gravel deposits on top of the shale.

According to the Erie-Niagara Basin Ground-Water Resources Report, prepared for the Erie-Niagara Basin Regional Water Resources Planning Board (1968), the bedrock beneath the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham consist mainly of Upper Devonian shale bedrock groups. Shale, because of its resistance to erosion, generally yields only small supplies of water to wells.

The unconsolidated deposits in Brant and Farnham consist of glacial sand and gravel deposits. The yields of wells in the sand and gravel deposits can vary greatly depending on the permeability and saturated thickness of the deposits and well construction. The sand and gravel deposits are the source of all groundwater in Brant and Farnham. Typically, groundwater was encountered at a depth of between 5 and 15 feet.

In Brant and Farnham, no wells in the *Erie-Niagara Basin Ground-Water Resources Report* penetrated down to the shale bedrock layer. Reported well depths ranged from 30 to 55 feet.

7.3.2 Individual Water Infrastructure – Wells

A majority of the residents of the Town of Brant receive water from individual wells. The Erie County Health Department requires an application to “Construct or Alter a Sewage Treatment System” for well installation. The Health Department will recommend a proper location for the well and/or septic system, as well as perform percolation tests (for septic systems) and water-testing (wells). The current application fee is \$150.

If water tests reveal that the water is safe for drinking, the Erie County Health Department informs the local Code Enforcement Officer, who issues a Certificate of Occupancy for the property. Wells must be installed by a NYS DEC certified well driller. A separate permit is not required from the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham.

All wells must be at least 100 feet from all nearby septic systems. This distance increases to 250 feet if the septic system is a seepage pit.

According to local well-drilling companies:³⁵

- Nearly all the wells in the Town and Village are drilled wells, with limited dug wells left
- Generally, well depths are deeper towards the eastern portion of Brant, and shallower near the lakeshore and Village of Farnham
- Most of the wells retrieve water from the gravel layer just above the fractured shale bedrock; some wells along Routes 20 and 5 are drilled into the shale to retrieve water
- Wells drilled north of the I-90 along Hardpan Road have typically encountered sandy-type soils, which have lower recharge rates than gravel and requires larger a larger diameter well (10" – 16") in order to retrieve an adequate amount of water
- Wells along Milestrip Road near Brant Reservation Road are typically 100-plus feet in depth, retrieving water from the gravel layer just above the shale. These wells do however, yield a high water volume.
- Wells along Mile Block Road south of Milestrip Road typically yield less water than average.
- There is no restriction on the amount of water that can be pumped from wells. This includes both residential and agricultural use wells. However, some wells do not yield enough water to support more than a typical single-family home.

7.4 Utilities

Phone Service

Local phone service to the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham is provided by Verizon Communications.

Cable and Internet Services

Through local phone service, dial-up Internet access is available through any number of dial-up internet service providers (AOL, Earthlink, etc.). DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) is a technology for bringing high-bandwidth information to homes and small businesses over ordinary telephone lines. In general, DSL high-speed Internet service for Brant and Farnham is available from Verizon's Angola service office. However, Verizon needs to check the customers' individual phone number to verify DSL availability.

³⁵ David Diefenbach Sales & Service and Ehmke Well Drillers

Adelphia Communications provides cable, digital cable, and high-speed cable internet services to the Brant / Farnham area.

Natural Gas Service

Natural Gas service is provided to a majority of the Town and Village by National Fuel Gas Company. Natural Gas is mainly supplied via a combination of six-inch and three-inch Medium Pressure Service Lines that extend underground along existing main roads. Generally, natural gas service is available:

- Throughout the entire Village of Farnham.
- Along Lakeshore Road through the Town of Brant
- Along Route 5 (Erie Road) through the Town of Brant / Farnham
- Along Brant-Farnham Road from Route 5 to just past Morley Road
- Along Brant-Angola / Brant-Farnham Road
- Along Ellis Road
- Along Milestrip Road from the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation to Morley Road

Natural gas lines do not extend along Southwestern Boulevard, Lotus Point Road, and roads east of Morley Road.

Where natural gas service is not available or financially prohibitive to install, residents rely on propane, electricity, kerosene, or wood to heat their homes.

The table below lists home heating fuel statistics for housing units in Brant and Farnham.

**Table 7-3 – Home Heating Fuel
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

	Brant	Farnham
Total Housing Units	710	115
Utility Gas	599	110
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	40	0
Fuel Oil, kerosene, etc.	29	0
Wood	23	5
Electricity	15	0
Other fuel	4	0
Percent on Utility Gas	84.4%	95.7%

Source – 2000 Census, US Census Bureau SF3 – Sample Data

Electric Service

Niagara Mohawk, a National Grid USA company, provides electric service to approximately 1.5 million customers throughout New York State, including the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham.

Mobile Phone (Cellular) Towers

There are currently five (5) mobile phone towers in the Town of Brant. These towers support antennas from multiple mobile phone service providers (co-locations). The towers are located at the following locations:

- On the south side of Shaw Road, between Lakeshore Road and Route 5 On the east side of Mile Block Road, between Milestrip Road and Halley Road.
- On the west side of Mile Block Road, south of Milestrip Road approximately one mile.
- On the south side of Cain Road east of Route 5, between the two railroad lines.
- On the east side of Hardpan Road, south of the bridge over Interstate 90.

Due to the locations of the towers, mobile phone service should generally be available throughout the Town. This is due in part because of the NYS Thruway's presence through the Town, since most mobile phone companies attempt to provide a continuous signal along highway corridors.

The Town of Brant encourages co-location of mobile phone antennas on existing towers. This somewhat reduces the need for additional towers. A zoning variance is required if the tower is to be above 100 feet tall.

7.5 Findings

The general characteristics of the Infrastructure in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham are summarized below.

- The Farnham Water District consists of all properties within the Village and Evangola State Park. The system is considered to be in good condition with excess capacity for increased use
- The Brant Water District consists of properties along Route 5, southwest of the Village of Farnham; properties along Lotus Point Road, between Route 5 and Lake Shore Road; properties along Lake Shore Road from Evangola State Park to the southern Town line; and properties along Route 249 between Farnham and Route 20
- According to the 1990 census, 21.6% of the Town and 92.0% of the Village received public water
- The Southtowns Regional Water Planning Consortium Study describes the feasibility and affordability of future water projects in southern Erie County.
- Expansion of water service to the Brant-Farnham Road and Brant-Reservation Road intersection may take place as part of efforts taken by the Southtowns Water Consortium
- The Brant-Farnham area is served by two sewer districts: the Brant-Farnham Sewer District and the Lotus Bay Sewer District
- The Brant-Farnham Sewer District includes the entire Village and areas south to the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation boundary line
- The Lotus Bay Sewer District is bounded by Lake Erie, Lake Shore Road, and the borders of the Cattaraugus Indian and the Town of Evans
- According to the 1990 census, 38.8% of the Town and 95.0% of the Village received public sewer service
- Utility gas is the primary source of home heat accounting for 84.4% and 95.7% of the housing units within the Town and Village respectively

8.0 Economy

8.1 Current Conditions

8.1.1 Employment and Income Conditions

8.1.1.1 Employment Characteristics

The nature and type of employment in a community depend on the education level in the community, the distribution of age groups in the population and other demographic characteristics described in this section. These characteristics ultimately influence the community's ability to generate income. Employment characteristics are also important to know when targeting commercial activity within a community.

8.1.1.2 Labor Force Characteristics

Labor force characteristics provide an assessment of the availability of workers within a community. A high unemployment rate is not necessarily indicative of a weak workforce. The Village of Farnham, with 8.6% of the workforce, has the highest rate of unemployment out of the comparable villages. Likewise, the Town of Brant, with 6.4% of its workforce, has the highest rate of unemployment among neighboring towns. Both of these rates are significantly different than the rate of unemployment in Erie County (7.3%).

The percentage of people not in the workforce is a reflection of older age groups and “stay-home” parents. With 38.6% and 39.2% of persons over the age of sixteen respectively, The Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant have a higher percentage of people not in the workforce than all of the comparison municipalities, including Erie County, which has 37.6% absent from the workforce.

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**Table 8-1 – Labor Force Status (Persons 16 Years or Older) 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Persons over 16	246	1,688	815	1,489	13,549	2,595	745,814
In Labor Force:	151	1,089	505	906	9,004	1,734	465,413
Percent in Labor Force Unemployed	8.6%	4.3%	1.2%	6.4%	5.4%	2.6%	7.3%
% Not in Labor Force	38.6%	35.5%	38.0%	39.2%	33.5%	33.2%	37.6%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

8.1.1.3 Industry of Employment

The most significant industries of employment in the Village of Farnham are retail trade (17.4%) and Education, Health and Social Services (17.4%). The latter is the dominant industry of employment in all of the communities as well as Erie County (25.6%). In the Town of Brant the second most dominant industry is manufacturing (15.9), as is the case in the remaining communities and Erie County (14.4%). The following table provides a summary of the industry of employment for each municipality.

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**Table 8-2 – Employment Sector (Employed 16 + Years) 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	0.0%	0.8%	1.4%	2.1%	0.6%	7.1%	0.3%
Construction	4.3%	5.2%	4.8%	5.5%	5.7%	5.9%	4.4%
Manufacturing	16.7%	17.1%	21.0%	15.9%	17.6%	16.9%	14.4%
Wholesale trade	2.2%	1.7%	5.8%	6.1%	3.5%	4.1%	4.3%
Retail trade	17.4%	7.6%	13.6%	12.1%	11.9%	11.8%	11.8%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	7.2%	5.4%	4.0%	6.7%	6.0%	5.0%	5.2%
Information	2.9%	3.2%	1.4%	1.2%	3.0%	0.9%	2.4%
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing:	4.3%	5.4%	5.6%	3.2%	6.5%	6.1%	6.7%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services:	1.4%	8.8%	5.2%	4.5%	6.6%	3.4%	8.0%
Educational, health and social services:	17.4%	25.3%	21.2%	23.3%	21.2%	24.3%	25.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services:	10.1%	7.4%	4.0%	7.1%	6.5%	5.1%	7.5%
Other services (except public administration)	10.1%	5.4%	4.6%	5.0%	4.9%	3.4%	4.5%
Public administration	5.8%	6.8%	7.2%	7.2%	6.2%	5.9%	4.8%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

8.1.1.4 Occupation

The occupation of employment reflects the quality of jobs within each community. In the Village of Farnham, the most prevalent occupations are service occupations (31.9%) and sales and office occupations (23.9%). These jobs tend to pay lower salaries. Production, transportation and material moving occupations are not far behind with 22.5% of the employment. In the Town of Brant, management and professional occupations are the most prevalent with 24.1% of the employment. These jobs tend to yield higher salaries. Although the most prevalent occupation within the Town of Brant, the percentage of employment in this occupation is less than that of the neighboring communities and Erie County (34.7%). Sales and office occupations account for the second most jobs in the Town of Brant. This pattern is consistent with the rest of the county. The table below is a summary of occupation of employment within each municipality.

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**Table 8-3 – Occupation (Employed Persons 16+ Years) 2000
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Management, professional, and related occupations:	7.2%	29.4%	24.8%	24.1%	29.0%	31.4%	34.7%
Service occupations:	31.9%	20.9%	15.8%	19.8%	15.7%	13.9%	15.6%
Sales and office occupations:	23.9%	22.8%	22.4%	23.1%	27.0%	18.2%	28.1%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.0%	0.8%	1.0%	0.7%	0.1%	1.8%	0.2%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations:	14.5%	10.0%	11.6%	11.6%	9.5%	15.3%	6.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	22.5%	16.1%	24.2%	20.8%	18.8%	19.5%	14.6%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

8.1.1.5 Income Characteristics

Income characteristics are an indicator of the financial stability of a community. They also suggest how much a community is able to pay for municipal services. It is important to examine a variety of income characteristics because no one statistic can accurately portray the economic character of a community.

8.1.1.6 Income Distribution

The per capita income for the Village of Farnham in 1999 was \$14,386. This level is much less than the Villages of Angola (\$17,598) and North Collins (\$16,528). All three of the towns had similar per capita income levels, with Brant having the highest at \$19,803. This figure is just slightly less than the county level of \$20,357.

Per Capita Income levels can often be distorted by a few individuals making a great deal of money. For this reason, the distribution of income and median income levels must be taken into account. The median household income level is the level at which an equal number of households earn more as those who earn less. The Village of Farnham has the lowest median household of the villages presented at \$35,000. However, Farnham also has the smallest percentage of people receiving less than \$25,000. The same pattern is true for the Town of Brant (median household income \$41,847) when compared to the other towns. Except for the Village of Farnham, all of these communities have a greater median household income than Erie County (\$38,567) and a smaller percentage of households receiving less than \$25,000 (32.8%).

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The table below presents the breakdown of income levels in the Village of Farnham, the Town of Brant and the comparison communities.

**Table 8-4 – Household Income Distribution (1999)
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Total Households	108	851	425	707	6,660	1,243	380,890
Less than \$25,000	29.6%	30.0%	31.3%	22.2%	25.5%	26.0%	32.8%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	42.6%	30.3%	36.2%	39.2%	32.0%	32.1%	29.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	24.1%	33.4%	28.5%	30.3%	34.2%	33.4%	28.7%
\$100,000 or more	3.7%	6.3%	4.0%	8.3%	8.3%	8.5%	9.4%
Median	\$35,000	\$40,050	\$38,750	\$41,847	\$43,142	\$43,781	\$38,567
Per Capita	\$14,386	\$17,598	\$16,528	\$19,803	\$19,122	\$19,253	\$20,357

Source: US Bureau of the Census

8.1.1.7 Income Sources

An analysis of income sources demonstrates the character of a community. In this analysis, the aggregate values of all income sources within each community were summarized. The aggregate value of each individual income source was then divided by the sum of all sources in order to obtain the proportion income obtained by each source. The table below illustrates the result of this analysis.

**Table 8-5 – Income Sources 1999
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Village of Farnham	Village of Angola	Village of North Collins	Town of Brant	Town of Evans	Town of North Collins	Erie County
Wage or Salary Income	66.7%	75.1%	76.9%	69.2%	79.2%	73.1%	72.8%
Self-Employment Income	8.9%	2.1%	1.5%	4.4%	2.5%	6.3%	4.2%
Interest, Dividends, or Net Rental Income	4.8%	4.3%	3.7%	12.0%	3.2%	4.5%	6.2%
Social Security Income	9.3%	7.9%	8.6%	7.7%	7.0%	7.8%	7.3%
Supplemental Security Income	1.0%	0.6%	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.7%
Public Assistance Income	0.9%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Retirement Income	5.8%	7.2%	6.9%	4.8%	5.6%	5.2%	6.3%
Other Types of Income	2.6%	2.7%	1.6%	1.2%	1.8%	2.3%	2.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

Real earnings sources (wage, salary and self-employment) combined are relatively similar among all of these municipalities, although the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant receive a smaller percentage from these income sources than the other communities. However, it should be pointed out that the Village of Farnham receives a significantly greater proportion of income from self-employment (8.9%) than the other communities. Another statistic that stands out from this analysis is the percent of income received from investment sources in the Town of Brant (12.0%). This figure is almost three times that of the neighboring communities and double that of the county. Income from investment sources is typically indicative of a wealthier segment of the population. The village of Farnham receives a significantly greater proportion of income through public assistance, which is usually a sign of a poorer segment. The village of Farnham also receives the greatest proportion of income, although not significantly, from Social Security (9.3%). The statistic would suggest that the village has a slightly larger retired segment of its population.

8.1.1.8 Poverty Status

Poverty status is a measure of an individual's ability to afford the basic minimum amount of goods and services. Poverty levels are based on household income, the number of individuals within the household and the cost of living in the area. The percentage of people below the poverty level in the Village of Farnham (7.7%) is less than that of the other villages and equivalent to the neighboring townships. With only 6.4% of its population below the poverty level, the Town of Brant has a lower poverty rate than its neighboring communities. All of these communities have a lower poverty rate than Erie County, which has 12.2% of its population below poverty level.

**Table 8-6 – Poverty Status (1999 Income)
Farnham, Brant and Region**

	Persons Below Poverty Level	Percent of Population
Village of Farnham	25	7.7%
Village of Angola	252	11.2%
Village of North Collins	99	9.3%
Town of Brant	121	6.4%
Town of Evans	1,221	7.0%
Town of North Collins	257	7.7%
Erie County	112,358	12.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

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8.1.2 Businesses and Business Activity

The Town and Village have several employers that comprise the employment base for the local economy. The table below provides a brief overview of employers, and the type of work they perform:

**Table 8-7 – Employers
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

Name of Business	Location	Type of Business
All Around the Yard	Brant Angola Rd., Brant	Landscaping
Arcara Auto	8567 Lake Shore Rd., Angola	Auto Sales
Brant Welding	10812 Southwestern Blvd., Irving	Welding
Brinkman/Way Agency	10900 Erie Rd., Irving	Insurance
Chiavetta's Catering & BBQ	Brant Angola Rd., Brant	Restaurant
Claddagh Commission	482 Detroit St., Farnham	Health/Social Services
Concord Nurseries Inc.	10175 Mile Block Rd., North Collins	Nursery
Daniel's Used Cars	Southwestern Blvd., Irving	Auto Sales
DM&K Enterprises	1007 Brant Farnham Rd., Irving	Manufacturing
Farnham Plumbing	Commercial St., Farnham	Plumbing
Financial Consulting	1273 Brant North Collins Rd., Brant	Financial
Gugino Lawn & Garden	Brant Reservation Rd., Brant	Retail Sales
Jim's Lawn Care	615 Commercial St., Farnham	Landscaping
K&H Industries	449 Church St., Farnham	Manufacturing
Lonesome Pine Riding Stable, Inc.	Commercial St., Farnham	Horse Stable
Mayflower Greenhouse	10408 Hammond Rd., Irving	Greenhouse
Our Family Market	11086 Brant Reservation Rd., Brant	Grocery
People Inc.	10475 Erie Rd., Farnham	Health/Social Services
Pero Farms	10834 Brant Reservation Rd., Brant	Farm
Pizzolanti's Restaurant	518 Commercial St., Farnham	Restaurant
Pro Shop	10623 Southwestern Blvd., Irving	Auto Repair
Renaldo's Sales & Service	1770 Mile Strip Rd., North Collins	Manufacturing
Reynolds Used Auto	Southwestern Blvd., Irving	Auto
Route 20 Auto Parts Inc.	10216 Southwestern Blvd., Irving	Auto
Southtowns Locksmith	10571 Brant Angola Rd., Brant	Retail Services
Turnbull's Nursery	10036 Versailles Plank Rd., North Collins	Nursery

Source: Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

In order to obtain up-to-date data on the business climate in Brant and Farnham, some of the area's employers were personally contacted for information pertaining to their company. This section is intended to provide insight into the types of businesses that operate within the Town and Village and the issues they face.

Chiavetta's Catering Services Inc.

Chiavetta's Catering Services Inc. was established in 1951. This family owned business is located on Brant Angola Road and has approximately 50 employees. Most of the employees are part-time food service handlers but there are about 10 full-time employees including administrators. Chiavetta's has a regionally customer base that includes four counties within the western New York area. The majority of its business is generated from churches and fire departments that sponsor barbecue chicken fundraisers and about 1/8 of its business comes from local take out retail. In general business is good and the company hopes to expand its clientele in Monroe County.

Concord Nurseries Inc.

Concord Nurseries is a family owned business, located at 10175 Mile Block Road, which has been in operation since 1907. The current owners, the Taylors, are the second family to own the business and they produce deciduous shrubs, trees and fruits that are shipped throughout the eastern portion of the United States and also into Canada. Business has generally been stable but has seen some decline in the last couple of years as the economy of the nation in general has declined. The nursery has approximately 45 full time employees and may add as many as an additional 40 part time employees as needed. Full time staff consists of administrators and skilled laborers while part timer are usually general laborers. The region provides good soil but the fall harvest season can be short. Obtaining a consistent and reliable agricultural work force is a challenge at times even when positions are advertised regionally.

North Collins Cylinder Gas Co., Inc.

Established in the 1940's the North Collins Cylinder Gas Co., Inc. provides propane and compressed gas to both residential and commercial customers. Located at 1770 Mile Strip Road, the business has 15 full time employees that are drivers, sales persons or service representatives. Overall the business trend is positive.

Renaldo Sales & Service Center Inc.

Renaldo Sales & Service Center Inc. is a family owned local business that manufactures farm equipment. Established in 1963 the business is located at 1770 Mile Strip Road and has both a regional and national customer base. There are 10 full time employees; most of whom are involved in the manufacturing of products. In general, business is growing.

DM&K Enterprises

DM&K Enterprises has been in business for approximately 25 years. Located at 1007 Brant Farnham Road the company provides commercial and residential landscaping and snow removal services. There are currently 1 full time and 1 part time employees who are usually supplemented by two additional persons during the peak summer months. The business is centrally located for its clientele but business has been declining in recent years and insurance costs are high.

People Inc.

People Inc., a non-profit regional organization with facilities from Grand Island to Silver Creek, operates a group home for developmentally disabled adult. The facility, at 10475 Erie Road, Farnham, NY, has been at its current location for approximately 9 years and houses 10 individuals. Staff consists of 13 full time and 5 part time employees. The home is located in a quiet area that is close to transportation and meets the needs of staff and residents. There are currently no plans for expansion at the site.

Claddagh Commission, Inc.

The Claddagh Commission, Inc. is a non-profit corporation that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities and to senior citizens. The organization operates facilities within the South Towns, including a group home at 482 Detroit Street in Farnham. The Detroit Street facility has been in existence for approximately 3 years and has 4 residents. Staff includes part time and full time direct care staff and a residence manager for an equivalent of 7 full time staff members. There are currently no plans for expansion at this site.

Pizzolanti's Restaurant

Pizzolanti's Restaurant has been owned and operated by Katherine Pizzolanti since 1969. The business was established in 1916, as the Pizzolanti Farnham Hotel, by her father in law. The restaurant has eight part-time employees. While business has been growing there are no plans for expansion, as the business is for sale. Ms. Pizzolanti is in her eighties and plans to retire soon.

8.1.3 Agricultural Industry

The U.S. Bureau of Census conducts an agricultural census every five years. The latest year published is 1997. The Agricultural Census is conducted on the County and ZIP Code level. However, much of the data is suppressed at the ZIP code level. Furthermore, the Town of Brant is not covered exclusively by a single or group of ZIP areas. For this reason the best available data on farm value and agricultural production is at the county level. The table below displays the area in farms, land value per acre and the value of agricultural production per acre in Erie County for the years 1997, 1992 and 1987. Dollar values used in the table have all been adjusted to 2002 dollars based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) value issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 8-8 – Agricultural Statistics-1997, 1992, 1987
Erie County

	1997	1992	1987
Farms (number)	973	995	1,201
Land in farms (acres)	143,234	145,679	166,121
Land Value/Acre	\$1,903	\$2,186	\$1,861
Value of Agricultural Products/Acre	\$626	\$627	\$577

The number of acres farmed in Erie County has decreased from 166,121 acres in 1987 to 143,234 acres in 1997. The value of an acre of farmland increased from \$1,861 in 1987 to \$2,186 in 1992. Between 1992 and 1997, the value of an acre of farmland decreased to \$1,903. The Agricultural production per acre of farmland increased from \$577 in 1987 to \$627 in 1992. Agricultural production per acre of farmland in 1997 was \$626.

The Town of Brant has 8,035 acres of agricultural land. If the 1997 land value and agricultural production per acre for Erie County is applied to the number of agricultural acres in the Town, an estimate for the total agricultural output and land value can be calculated. Using this formula, the Town of Brant produces an estimated \$4,632,229 of agricultural products annually. The value of agricultural land in the town is \$14,951,218.

8.2 Future Opportunities

Developing jobs and the economy of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham will have the double benefit of creating economic opportunity for the citizens of Brant and Farnham and of increasing the tax base of the communities to make more public works and community development projects possible as well as to lessen the tax burden on residential property owners. This section explores some of the avenues of economic opportunity that could be developed for the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham.

8.2.1 Central Business District Activity

The Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham presently feature two main downtowns, or Central Business Districts: the village of Farnham and the Hamlet of Brant. Each of these areas can develop a focus, theme and identity that would draw tourists and local residents.

8.2.1.1 Village of Farnham

In the Village of Farnham, among downtown features are residential activity churches; a restaurant, Pizzolanti's; the Village offices and Fire Department; and a Post Office Station. An insurance company that was located in the downtown recently moved to a new, more visible, location on Route 5. The Village is dominated by the former school building at the corner of Route 5 and Commercial Street.

The former school building has been the focus of discussion for many uses – most of them community based – which include possible community center, indoor recreation center, senior citizen residential facility and others. The building dominates a main corner gateway into the Village. From a visual standpoint, its current condition detracts from the Village and provides a strong disincentive for passers-by to stop. The building should be rehabilitated and reused or demolished to provide a development opportunity.

The Village is well located for the development of retail and services for vehicles going through on Route 5 as well as for campers in Evangola State Park. Although a gas and service station is not feasible because of the proximity of lower-cost fuel on the Seneca Indian Reservation just to the south of the Town, a grocery and camp store offering everything from food, ice and beverages to bait and tackle could be successful.

Within the Village itself, along Commercial Street, a pleasing and compact streetscape lends itself to additional retail development. Antiques and gifts, local nursery and farm products could draw shoppers and tourists from Route 5. It will be important that a critical mass of retail establishments be developed in order to assure the best possible chance for success.

8.2.1.2 Hamlet of Brant

In the Hamlet of Brant, retail type uses include a second postal station and a new, small grocery is about to open. Vacant commercial structures include a former restaurant building and an apartment building with vacant storefronts at street level. The Hamlet is dominated by residential uses.

The grocery is an excellent first step in building the downtown of the Hamlet. More economic activity will likely be attracted there if the building stock is improved and vacant buildings secured and stabilized or demolished to create development opportunities.

The Hamlet has a bigger challenge of attracting visitors than does the town because of its location away from a major roadway. However, with the right mix and quality of attractions, the Hamlet could become an “off the beaten path” magnet with unique retail establishments, and local products.

8.2.2 Economic Opportunities

Throughout the Town and Village, deferred maintenance of buildings is evidence of the difficult economic atmosphere in Brant and Farnham. Through a concentrated effort to create tourism, retail and commercial services as well as industrial development, economic opportunity can be developed in Brant and Farnham.

8.2.2.1 Tourism

The Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham have unique and interesting tourism potentials and momentum has been building for discovery, rehabilitation and interpretation of these resources. It is both a challenge and an opportunity that these resources are dispersed throughout the Town and Village. Gathering these artifacts and resources into thematically related tours – historic buildings, agricultural legacy, etc. – and explaining their local significance through the founding of a local history museum or interpretive center is one opportunity under discussion. Either the Hamlet of Brant or the Village of Farnham could house such a facility.

The Town has a very rich agricultural legacy that lends itself readily to the development of an agri-tourism hub in the Town. Celebration of the rich past – including reinventing the legendary Strawberry Festival –as well as development of new commercial opportunities related to current agricultural and nursery activities.

Because of the distance and lack of accessibility for the Town of Brant to the two nearest Thruway exits – Exit 57A Eden-Angola and Exit 58 Silver Creek-Irving-Gowanda – it is unlikely that Thruway-related development will spread to Brant in the form of hotels, convenience stores, restaurants and other related developments. However, it may be possible to take advantage of opportunities both at the exits and at the Angola Service Plaza on the Thruway to publicize tourism in Brant and Farnham.

8.2.2.2 Retail and Commercial Development

Although gas and service stations are not feasible, as discussed above, for development options for the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham, there are other commercial development opportunities that can be explored. Retail operations for local nurseries and caterers are chief among these. “Branding” Brant through the products of its agricultural facilities and building loyalty for these brands will help to bring shoppers who want to buy their goods from the source – instead of from resellers.

8.2.2.3 Industrial Development

The Town of Brant has one industrial area in its current land use classifications, as does the Village. If the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham wish to develop industrial uses within the Town and/or Village, they should assess their current zoning. The current zoning scheme preserves the Route 5 corridor for industrial uses. The Town and Village may want to discuss developing an industrial park in one central location – as opposed to along a corridor – and investing in infrastructure for the park, including roads, water, sewer and electricity.

The Town and Village could work with the county to put together a package of information to attract industrial development, including incentives, job training and other business development services. There are also industrial development incentives available through the New York State Empire Development Corp.

8.2.2.4 Seneca Nation Casino Development

The Seneca Nation of Indians has the option to open several gaming casinos in Western New York. The first of these, the Seneca-Niagara Casino opened New Years Eve 2002 in the City of Niagara Falls. The Nation has not yet determined the locations of two additional casinos. Casinos could be located on the Allegany Reservation, the Cattaraugus Reservation, the City of Buffalo or other locations in Western New York.

A casino located on the Cattaraugus Reservation adjacent to the Town of Brant could have significant impacts on the Town and the Village of Farnham. While much of the casino development and related services would be expected to take place on the Reservation, demands, non-the-less, can be expected on the Town and Village in terms of increased traffic on Town and Village roadways, demands for housing and related services and possible increased commercial and retail activities along the connecting roadways between the Town and Reservation.

Based on the experiences of two casinos located in Connecticut, it is clear that considerable prior up-front communication and planning between the casino developers and the surrounding communities is necessary to provide adequate transportation facilities and other public utilities are essential to support the casino operation.

The Town of Brant and Village of Farnham should initiate dialogue as soon as possible with Seneca Nation representatives as they consider the location of a possible casino and to identify the scope of casino plans in advance of construction. Potential impacts need to be identified as soon as possible in hopes of determining improvement actions necessary to minimize impacts. The Town and Village must negotiate for Nation participation in the funding necessary for infrastructure improvements that would minimize impacts on the Town and Village but also provide benefits to the Nation. Finally, Town and Village representatives should consider contacting and/or visiting towns in the areas around the Connecticut casinos to learn first hand the experiences and impacts of the casino developments in those areas.

8.3 Findings

Following are the significant findings of the analysis of employment characteristics. These are points that should be addressed through the formulation of policies and programs to serve local residents.

- Labor Force statistics show that a significantly higher portion of the residents of Brant and Farnham are not participating in the workforce as compared with their neighbors and Erie County
- As in Erie County and throughout the neighboring areas, the residents of the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham, the two dominant employment sectors are manufacturing and education, health and social services
- Residents of the Village of Farnham are employed in lower level occupations such as service, office and sales. Town of Brant residents are more likely to be managers

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- Although they have a lower educational attainment than the surrounding communities or Erie County as a whole, the residents of the Town of Brant have incomes that are generally equivalent to those of their neighbors and the county
- Residents of the Village of Farnham have lower incomes than their neighbors and the county as a whole
- Income and poverty data suggest that residents of the Village of Farnham and the Town of Brant are generally receiving their household incomes from real earnings sources (wages, etc.) and that fewer of them are below the poverty level as compared with their neighbors and Erie County
- Both the Hamlet of Brant and the Village of Farnham have the potential for the development of a focus, theme or identity to draw local and out of town shoppers
- While no location decision for a possible new casino has been determined by the Seneca Nation of Indians, it is crucial that the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham participate in that decision process to the extent possible to anticipate and mitigate negative impacts of such a development.

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9.0 Public Input

9.1 Vision Session

The Town of Brant/Village of Farnham Master Plan Steering Committee held a Vision Session as part of its kickoff meeting October 30, 2002. The purpose of this session was to give the committee an opportunity to identify major goals for the new plan and to identify issues and concerns. The consulting team used a workbook prepared for the session as a means of facilitating. The following Steering Committee members participated in the session:

Eugene Czyz, Committee Chair, Town Council Member
Martin Rosiek, Town Council Member
Leonard Pero, Chair, Town Planning Board
John Opalka, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
Tony Krtanjek, Village Trustee
Terry Caber, Mayor, Village of Farnham

Also Attending the session were:
Sam Chiavetta, Supervisor, Town of Brant
Tammy Czyz

The results of the Vision Session follow.

1. Without considering limitations of any kind, what do you think is the ideal future for the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham? In other words, in what ways (if any) would you like to see the community change over the next 20 years?

- Preservation of agricultural heritage and revival of agricultural activities.
- Development of an image as an Agri-Tourism community
- Protection of Historical interests
- Remain an agricultural district
- The two communities working together for economic development
- Provision of public water and sewer for residents and businesses in selected areas to control development and growth
- Provision of transportation for seniors
- Provision of amenities (local store etc.)
- Suggested commercial ventures-Bed and Breakfast on farms, Winery (to save grape industry), Cheese Factory, Scenic Tours involving the Village, Town and Seneca Nation.
- Reuse of structurally sound buildings

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- Increased commercial zones, business districts, and job opportunities
- Development of businesses or homes on vacant land in the Village, businesses on Route 5
- Use vacant land on lakefront for development/attraction (park, golf course)
- Develop linkages to surrounding areas
- Low taxes
- Protection of Agriculture and utilization of the Farmland Protection Plan
- Community Access facility on lakefront
- Properly maintained buildings

2. What are the specific limitations that could prevent this ideal vision from becoming a reality in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham?

- Lack of infrastructure (water, sewer, road capacity) to attract industry
- Too much infrastructure that attract the wrong type of development and ruins farmland.
- Insufficient planning to control type and location of commercial activities (mega mall, major subdivision, junkyards, smoke stack industry, billboards)
- Development in surrounding communities
- Lack of design guidelines to assure compatibility of new construction with existing structures in the Village.
- Downturn in national economy
- Population loss
- Lack of federal and state funding for projects
- Community apathy, polarization or political infighting
- Insufficient houses to make water/sewer affordable
- Inappropriate media coverage
- Lack of cohesive vision
- Lack of Code Enforcement
- Lack of revenue to educate community to get their cooperation
- Failure to consider regional actions
- Outsiders using land inappropriately, without permits
- Problems on the Reservation can negatively affect transportation if Seneca Nation closes roadway.

3. *In what ways are the futures of the Town and Brant and Village of Farnham tied together? How do they differ? Why? How are they connected to the Region?*

- Town and Village are tied in together in the future plans for tourism and industry development.
- Village has water and sewer and can provide town with water. Surrounding communities could also provide Town with water service. Brant shares other services (fire, police) with surrounding towns.
- Both communities are looking for economic growth
- The two communities have occupational and socioeconomic differences.
- The two communities have demonstrated regionalism in action and can do more.
- Village is seeking more growth than the town, and wishes to maintain its residential character while town wants to maintain rural character.
- Development of a community identity between lakefront, village and town.

9.2 Focus Groups

As part of the public input process for the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham Master Plan, three Focus Group issue-oriented sessions were held. The sessions were; Open Space and Recreation, Elected and Appointed Officials and Agriculture and Economic Development. The purpose of these sessions was to give members of the community identified by the Master Plan Steering Committee an opportunity to discuss their goals and concerns for the future of the community. The consulting team used workbooks prepared for the sessions as a means of facilitating. All three sessions were held November 21, 2002.

9.2.1 Open Space and Recreation Focus Group

Participants:

Raymond Dunkel, Town Resident
Cheryl Caldwell, Town Zoning Board
Gary Hubert, Evangola State Park
Terry Caber, Mayor, Village of Farnham

1. *What are the priorities for open space protection in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham? How can these priorities be achieved?*

- ◆ As lakefront property becomes available some should be purchased retained for public use-there's a limited amount and once sold lakefront access for local residents is lost
- ◆ There's no public access to beach without payment of a parking fee at Evangola State Park
- ◆ Agricultural status should be maintained in Brant
- ◆ Community parks need updating and additional recreational facilities – they don't attract many residents
- ◆ There's nothing to attract people driving through the Town and Village-no place to go to
- ◆ There's no need to change anything in the Village

2. What groups currently use the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham recreational facilities? Would additional facilities draw other groups? What facilities would they be?

- ◆ None, there are no facilities available
- ◆ Programs for students are usually held in Evans where they attend school (i.e. Girl Scouts) – Perhaps Town Park Building can be used for such things
- ◆ There's a senior center but unsure how much it is utilized
- ◆ Public buildings should be available for use by the public at times
- ◆ Football/Cheerleading Squad uses the town park; they don't have a designated practice location for winter months and use whatever school facility is available
- ◆ Soccer fields could attract travelling soccer leagues - Hotel accommodations would be needed to support these events
- ◆ Banquet facilities are needed
- ◆ Playground area is being worked on
- ◆ Potential indoor recreational facility being pursued
- ◆ Opportunities for Boy/Girls Clubs being examined
- ◆ Evangola State Park has a soccer field but it is not currently being maintained
- ◆ Students have ties to their schools and friends and schools have become activity centers rather than their neighborhoods
- ◆ A marina and golf course were discussed for Evangola State Park in the past

- ◆ Bike path should be continued

3. How can access to community recreational facilities be improved?

- ◆ Expand village playground (i.e. inclusion of fiberglass playground equipment)
- ◆ Provide boat launch site and facilities at Evangola State Park-There's good fishing in area
- ◆ Provide safe areas to walk, ride bikes, play ball etc.
- ◆ Provide expanded public transportation that go directly to recreational facilities
- ◆ Coordinate operating hours with hours when there's a demand for services
- ◆ Provide swim instruction, ice skating rink, hockey, roller blade and skate board facilities – would have to be monitored to ensure safety
- ◆ Partner Town and Village recreational programs
- ◆ Renovate Farnham School to provide indoor recreation site

9.2.2 Elected and Appointed Officials Focus Group

Participants:

Joe Gardyjan, Town Planning Board
Maggie White, Chair, Town Zoning Board
Rosalee Hill, Representative for County Legislator Jeanne Chase
Bob Saar, Village Zoning Board
Gary Brecker, Code Enforcement Officer
Neal Wilson, Town Planning Board
Sandra Brant, Chair, Town of Evans Planning Division
Terry Caber, Mayor, Village of Farnham

1. What steps should be taken to preserve the quality of life in the Town of Brant, the Village of Farnham and the communities that surround them?

- ◆ Preserve rural atmosphere
- ◆ No landfills
- ◆ Control Strip malls
- ◆ Do something with rundown properties (eyesores), improve maintenance

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- ♦ Attract “mom and pop” or convenience store
- ♦ A playground for kids
- ♦ Control kids on street; control youth problems
- ♦ Avoid thriving metropolis atmosphere; agriculture is the primary interest
- ♦ Use zoning to maintain country feel
- ♦ Encourage development of small businesses
- ♦ Keep police local because they know the residents and increase police service to 24 hrs (have 2 police cars, maybe one could be unmarked)
- ♦ An industrial park could help tax base
- ♦ Develop a winery, jelly factory etc.
- ♦ Develop tourism and stores but not a mall
- ♦ Take advantage of financial aid from County
- ♦ Keep community the way it is
- ♦ Eliminate littering along highway, make it a higher priority for the police
- ♦ Protect farmlands and streams
- ♦ Finances would allow 24 hr police service
- ♦ Stores have difficulty because they don’t have enough customers
- ♦ Avoid large increase in population it would also increase problems
- ♦ Incorporate goals and objectives of Farmland Protection Plan into Mater Plan
- ♦ Protect lake and streams from pollution
- ♦ Continue work on trail system
- ♦ Work with neighboring communities to achieve objectives
- ♦ Provide community facilities (i.e. recreation facilities, bike and walking paths)
- ♦ Promote economic development in certain areas
- ♦ Improve infrastructure (water, sewer, sidewalks)
- ♦ Need something to attract outsiders
- ♦ Limit number and location of rental properties to make neighborhoods less transient

2. How can the rural character of the communities be preserved and still contribute to efforts to expand the local tax base?

- ◆ Maintain agricultural areas and direct commercial activity to Route 5
- ◆ Need to make provisions for other commercial areas without infringing on heartland
- ◆ Enforce zoning codes
- ◆ Keep Route 5 for commercial uses and place industrial uses on Route 20
- ◆ Have to find right balance of economic development and rural character
- ◆ Determine the type of growth desired and show it in the Master Plan
- ◆ People want one stop shopping and don't support smaller shops
- ◆ Control number and location of rental properties
- ◆ Encourage support of businesses on Route 5 and Route 20 and avoid additional businesses to maintain open, uncluttered atmosphere
- ◆ Need to get young people interest in farming, they tend to leave the area
- ◆ Grape farming seems to be thriving
- ◆ Promote small farm businesses and sale of locally grown products
- ◆ Seek historic preservation funds for "downtown" revitalization
- ◆ Improved police protection

3. What role can you and your board play in helping the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham achieve the priorities of economic development and rural preservation?

- ◆ Provide variances for projects
- ◆ Follow code to ensure the right businesses are attracted and keep out undesirable businesses
- ◆ Provide information about funding sources from county and state
- ◆ Promote and support the area
- ◆ Explore all source for grants
- ◆ Encourage citizen involvement in local government
- ◆ Be aware of what's happening in surrounding communities

- ◆ Support Town functions and growth goals
- ◆ Enforce zoning regulations to keep out undesirable commercial activity and limit location of commercial activity
- ◆ Provide guidance to local businesses about information and funding sources
- ◆ Explore establishment of regional IDA to develop and market local communities
- ◆ Collaboration between Town and Village on issues
- ◆ Explore advantages of Empire Zone designation

9.2.3 Agriculture and Economic Development Focus Group

Participants:

Phil Pericak, Part time Farmer & Chiavetta's Catering

David Taylor, Concord Nurseries

Jozsef Gelencser, Gelencser Construction

David Phillips, Phillips Family Farm, Inc.

Marie Way, Fred Brinkman Agency

Peter Chiavetta, Chiavetta's Catering

1. How are agriculture and economic development connected in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham? In what ways do they compete?

- ◆ Most local businesses are in agriculture or agriculture related (i.e. farmers, truckers etc.)
- ◆ Agriculture zoning competes with/ limits other uses of the land
- ◆ -With the decrease in the value of land for agricultural uses there has to be some leeway in using the land for other purposes or agricultural zoning could hurt some families economically if all of the family's assets are tied up in the land
- ◆ Agriculture is a strong economic base in the area and should remain so but it impedes residential development – the two uses don't mix well
- ◆ Consumers of agricultural products don't understand what is involved in producing the products.
- ◆ Non-agricultural development should be limited on prime land and allowed on lower quality land
- ◆ Industrial development is needed in area to increase property values and increase home building

- ♦ Business are allowed on Route 5 and Route 20 but there hasn't been a demand for land for commercial uses – heavy traffic area and should be good for commercial uses
- ♦ There's enough space for both agriculture and economic development
- ♦ There hasn't been a problem getting a variance for other uses because of the size of the community
- ♦ Open land in Brant are not in areas appropriate for locating business

2. What types of economic development opportunities should be pursued for Brant and Farnham? Where should these developments be located?

- ♦ Avoid large industries
- ♦ Small entrepreneurial businesses would be good
- ♦ Small businesses would need to sell products outside the Town limits- not enough local population to support local retail
- ♦ A large industrial part should be targeted to help the tax base
- ♦ Large businesses mean large problems-increases in property value and people unable to stay in homes, increase in all types of pollution
- ♦ Large industrial development would mean loss of the beauty of area
- ♦ Small shops or a mini plaza with different types of stores on a main road in town or village to avoid having to travel 20 minutes for necessities
- ♦ Some economic development would be good but not so much that the character of the community would change
- ♦ Neighboring community might have higher taxes because of their focus on residential development and exclusion of industry-residential development has higher service costs
- ♦ Slower paced, close knit community atmosphere should be preserved
- ♦ People are more mobile and are willing to drive in order to get more shopping options-people want one stop shopping
- ♦ Convenience stores on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation have decreased the demand for local stores
- ♦ There's no gas station in Town and Village
- ♦ Small to mid-size business should be pursued (i.e. Flexivid in Angola)
- ♦ Steps should have been taken previously to attract more development
- ♦ Brant needs public water

- ◆ There should be more residential development in Farnham and in open areas that have needed infrastructure
- ◆ Businesses are needed to combat unemployment problem
- ◆ Convenience Store or Coffee Shop could service Evangola State Park attendees
- ◆ Jobs are available locally but local residents don't apply
- ◆ Higher paying non-agricultural jobs are needed
- ◆ Local young people not interested in agricultural jobs-hours are long, requires nights and weekends, work is hard and dirty
- ◆ Need legislative support for "Guest/Worker Programs" because foreigners are willing to work in agricultural field-need a reliable workforce for agricultural jobs
- ◆ There's a difference between what is needed economically from the land and what can be received if land is zoned for agriculture.

3. How could a better understanding of agriculture and the region's agricultural heritage benefit both farming and the economy in Brant and Farnham?

- ◆ If area residents understood agriculture and its benefit to the community perhaps more agriculturally generated funds would stay within the community-Money leaves the community when agribusinesses have to hire foreign workers
- ◆ Schools should educate youngsters about opportunities in agriculture
- ◆ The current cultural emphasis on technology destroys the agricultural heritage
- ◆ Children have sense of their agricultural heritage and can't be forced to stay on family farms
- ◆ People from urban environments enjoy visit farms and they have no idea what farming entails-even people living in rural areas don't know what is involved in farming unless they live on an active farm
- ◆ People perceive farming as too difficult but other industries also require long hours
- ◆ Farming has lost its appeal-not only locally but worldwide farms of all types are having difficulties
- ◆ Unreliable workforce is a major problem
- ◆ American consumers want low cost food
- ◆ Not enough consumers willing to pay premium for quality food products

- ♦ Local brand recognition takes a long time to develop

9.3 Community Survey

The participation of residents in the comprehensive plan is important, as decisions made upon the completion of the Plan will have a direct effect on the lives of the residents. A community survey was completed in the Town of Brant and the Village of Farnham in January of 2003. The survey was intended to measure public opinion with respect to various issues and conditions that exist within the communities. In addition, the survey was intended to provide residents with the opportunity to state their visions and goals for the future of the community. The survey questions were divided into the following sections: Community Identity, Recreational Activities, Housing, Community Services, Land Use Regulations, Growth and Development and Transportation.

The survey was distributed randomly to a total of 385 households, representing half of the number of households in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham. The surveys were proportional distributed based on the number of households in each of the communities. Thus, 327 surveys were sent to household in the Town of Brant and 58 surveys were sent to households in the village. An effort was also made to distribute the surveys proportional based on the whether the householder rented or owned. However, very few renting household responded to the survey.

A total of 124 surveys were returned, representing a response rate of 30.9% for the whole community. The response rate in the Town of Brant was 31.2% and 29.3% in the Village of Farnham. These response rates are generally considered good for a survey of this type. However, due to the small size of the community, the sample size created by the number of people who responded to survey exhibits a margin of error of $\pm 8\%$ with a confidence interval of 95%. Furthermore, the margin of error is based on a random sample. While the survey was randomly distributed, the sample collected by those that responded in not a random representation of the Town and Village. With all mail surveys, there is a certain degree of sample bias, in that a segment of the population chooses not to respond. People that do respond to this type of survey are generally believed to be better educated and/or politically motivated. It should also be considered that those that responded to the survey have demonstrated a greater interest in the future of the Town and Village.

Since the sample size for the village was too small to be considered statistically significant, the results were pooled together and represent the community as a whole. The percentages used in the following survey results were based on the number of people that responded to each question. Occasionally, a question was skipped by the respondent. Non-responses were eliminated from the pool of responses when calculating the percentages.

Community Identity

Of the 124 respondents, 39.0% feel that the Town of Brant should remain a rural community. Another 14.4% thought that agricultural growth should be encouraged. Slightly more than a quarter of the respondents would like to see commercial and industrial growth, while 20.3% want to encourage residential growth in the Town of Brant.

When asked about the direction of the Village of Farnham, nearly half of the respondents (48.7%) would like to encourage both residential and economic opportunities for the residents. Only 23.0% of the respondents favor the development of a central business district and 28.3 want the village to remain its residential character.

Most of the respondents (88.6%) believe that the community is a good place to live. None who responded to the survey strongly disagreed with this statement. However, 42.6% of the respondents were not happy with the present image of the community. Only 30.5% would like to see the community remain the same for over the next 20 years. More than three-fourths (75.8%) of the people who responded feel that the community should be promoted more.

The following table reflects public opinion of the communities' identity in the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham.

Table 9-1 – Community Identity Survey Responses
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Good place to live	34.1%	54.5%	4.9%	6.5%	0.0%
Happy with the present image of the communities	11.5%	32.8%	13.1%	34.4%	8.2%
Wish the community will remain the same for the next 20 years	14.0%	16.5%	6.6%	38.8%	24.0%
More should be done to promote the communities	32.5%	43.3%	11.7%	8.3%	4.2%

Community Services

Opinions are divided as to the level of community services available to the residents. Nearly half of the respondents (49.2%) think that the communities should consider developing more police services, while 37.7% disagree. Similarly, 43.8% would like to see expansion of fire and emergency services, while 33.8% disagree.

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Attitude towards the adequacy of water service is strongly driven by location. Almost half of the respondents (46.8%) feel that the water service is sufficient. However, 41.8% disagree, most of them strongly, that the water service is adequate. Clearly there are areas in the Town that lack or need improvement to water service. The majority of respondents (60.25) agree that the sanitary sewer system should be expanded to encourage future development.

The Town of Brant is served by two different school districts. The majority of respondents (70.7%) feel that the schools offer a good learning environment. Only 10.6% disagreed that the schools offered a good learning environment. Nearly all of the respondents did not reveal what district they belong to. Therefore, it is impossible to know if the school district had any effect on the response to this statement.

The table below presents the opinions of the residents concerning community services.

Table 9-2 – Community Services Survey Responses
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Consider developing more police services	19.7%	29.5%	13.1%	25.4%	12.3%
Fire protection & emergency rescue squads should consider expansion	11.6%	32.2%	22.3%	26.4%	7.4%
Water service is adequate	14.8%	32.0%	11.5%	18.0%	23.8%
Sanitary sewer should be expanded to encourage further development in the Town	24.8%	36.4%	15.7%	13.2%	9.9%
Schools offer a good learning environment	18.7%	52.0%	18.7%	6.5%	4.1%

Land Use Regulations

There is general agreement that land use regulations are needed to protect the different environments that exist within the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham. Although there were a large percentage of people that had no opinion on the subject, very few of the respondents expressed opposition to land use regulations. The majority of respondents (61.0%) agreed that stricter land use regulations should be developed and enforced to protect residential areas. 57.8% feel that open space should be better protected. More than half of the respondents (54.3%) also think that agricultural land should be better protected.

The following table reflects residents' responses to land use regulations.

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Table 9-3 – Land Use Regulations Survey Responses
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Stricter land use regulations should be developed & enforced to protect residential areas	38.2%	22.8%	18.7%	12.2%	8.1%
Agricultural lands in the Town of Brant should be better protected	25.9%	28.4%	32.8%	9.5%	3.4%
Open space and natural resources should be better protected	25.0%	32.8%	31.0%	9.5%	1.7%

Transportation

Of those that responded to the survey, 41.7% displayed some concern with the level of truck traffic. Only 33.3% did not see truck traffic as an issue. A majority of respondents (56.6%) believed that traffic safety problems existed in the Town/Village. Slightly more of the respondents (57.2%) are concerned about the safety at large road intersections. Only 26.6% believe that railroad crossings pose a safety hazard. Specific areas in which respondents have indicated traffic problems include Route 249, Versailles Plank Road, Mile Strip Road, Brant Reservation Road, Mile Block Road, Commercial Street, and Detroit Street among others.

More than half of the respondents (54.9%) think that additional bikeways and walkways should be developed in the Town and Village. Only 31.7% of respondents indicated the need for bus services to local facilities and special events. Almost an equal percentage (30.8%) did not believe these services were necessary, while 37.5% had no opinion.

The table below illustrates how residents responded to issues pertaining to transportation.

Table 9-4 – Transportation Survey Results
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Concerned with the level of truck traffic	20.0%	21.7%	25.0%	22.5%	10.8%
There are traffic safety problems	36.1%	20.5%	12.3%	24.6%	6.6%
Concerned about the safety of the large road intersections	31.1%	26.1%	16.0%	21.0%	5.9%
Concerned about the safety of rail crossings	8.3%	18.3%	38.3%	26.7%	8.3%
Additional bikeways and walkways should be developed	24.8%	30.1%	24.8%	8.8%	11.5%
There is a need for bus service to local facilities and special events	12.5%	19.2%	37.5%	23.3%	7.5%

Recreational Activities

Many of the respondents (44.7%) feel that there are enough parks and playgrounds in the community. However, many of the respondents think that there should be more youth programs and activities. More than half of the respondents (62.6%) agree that more recreational programs are needed to address the needs of the teens. 46.3% do not believe there are a wide variety of recreational activities for children.

When asked if there were adequate senior citizen's activities, 39.3% agreed. An equal number of respondents had no opinion, while 21.3% felt that the community needed more senior citizen activities. Almost half of the respondents (48.4%) think the community needs more structured activities, such as a golf course or a hockey rink. Only 27.5% disagree that these facilities are necessary.

Many of the respondents think that more can be done with existing resources in the community. Just about two-thirds of the respondents (64.5%) believe that the communities' cultural and historic assets should be promoted and developed into destinations. A majority of the respondents (62.9%) think that there should be greater public access to the waterfront.

Nearly half of the respondents (48.4%) think that a user fee should be required for municipally operated recreational facilities and programs. 29.6% are opposed to this proposal.

The table below presents the residents responses to recreational activities.

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**Table 9-5 – Recreational Activities Survey Responses
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
More neighborhood parks/playgrounds are needed	12.2%	15.4%	27.6%	25.2%	19.5%
Children have a wide variety of recreational activities	4.9%	25.2%	23.6%	26.0%	20.3%
Additional recreation programs are needed to address the needs of teens	25.2%	37.4%	20.3%	10.6%	6.5%
There are adequate senior citizen's activities available	9.0%	30.3%	39.3%	13.1%	8.2%
A user fee should be required for municipally operated recreational facilities and programs	14.8%	33.6%	22.1%	14.8%	14.8%
More structured activities are needed (e.g. golf course, hockey/skating rink)	16.7%	31.7%	24.2%	14.2%	13.3%
Our cultural and historic assets should be promoted and developed into destinations	14.9%	49.6%	24.0%	5.8%	5.8%
There should be greater public access to the lakefront	29.8%	33.1%	15.7%	10.7%	10.7%

Housing

A majority of the respondents (62.6%) feel that there should be additional subsidized senior citizen housing opportunities available in the community. Nearly half of the respondents (48.8%) had no opinion on the idea of encouraging 'high-end' residential development in order to diversify the population. 29.7% agree with this strategy, while 21.4% are against the idea. More of the respondents (41.8%) are in favor of more affordable housing than are opposed (27.0%). Many of the respondents (43.5%) agree with concentrating new housing developments in the Village and lakefront area in order to protect the rural character of the eastern portion of the Town. More than a quarter (26.6%) had no opinion towards the matter, while 29.8% disagreed.

The table below shows the responses of Brant and Farnham residents concerning housing.

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Table 9-6 – Housing Survey Responses
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Additional subsidized senior citizen housing opportunities should be available	20.3%	42.3%	16.3%	12.2%	8.9%
More affordable housing is needed	13.9%	27.9%	31.1%	17.2%	9.8%
High-end residential should be encouraged to diversify the population	7.4%	22.3%	48.8%	10.7%	10.7%
New housing development should be concentrated in the village and lakefront area to protect the rural character of the eastern portion of the Town	16.9%	26.6%	26.6%	13.7%	16.1%

Growth and Development

More than two-thirds (68.3%) of the residents who responded to the survey think that agriculture-oriented activities (i.e. agri-tourism, wineries, etc.) should be developed in order to stimulate the economy of the Town of Brant and Village of Farnham. Almost half of the respondents (45.3%) agree that more residential growth and development is needed in the community, while 34.2% disagree. Most of the respondents (63.0%) think that industrial development should be limited to specific areas.

The residents are divided on whether the community can support retail oriented businesses. While 39.5% think that the community cannot support such activity, 34.3% believe it can. Almost half of the respondents (46.3%) think tax incentives are required to attract new businesses. A majority of the respondents (66.1%) think that commercial development should be encouraged along heavily travel roads. 45.0% of the respondent would like to see large-scale retail development in the community, while 40.0% oppose such development.

The table below presents the responses of Brant and Farnham residents concerning growth and development.

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Table 9-7 – Growth and Development Survey Responses
Town of Brant and Village of Farnham

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
More residential growth and development is needed	17.1%	28.2%	20.5%	19.7%	14.5%
Agriculture-oriented activities (agri-tourism, winery etc.) should be developed to stimulate the economy	17.5%	50.8%	20.8%	9.2%	1.7%
Industrial growth should be limited to specific areas	17.6%	45.4%	22.7%	8.4%	5.9%
Require additional business/tax incentives to attract new businesses	11.8%	34.5%	29.4%	9.2%	15.1%
The community can support retail oriented businesses	4.2%	31.1%	25.2%	27.7%	11.8%
Commercial development (e.g. plazas, gas stations, restaurants) should be encouraged along heavily traveled roads such as Rt. 5	24.2%	41.9%	9.7%	12.1%	12.1%
Large scale development (e.g. Wal-mart) should be encouraged	19.2%	25.8%	15.0%	17.5%	22.5%

In addition to the matrix questions displayed in the previous table, the respondents were asked a few questions pertaining to the rate of growth and development and the direction of the community. Over the next ten years, 69.2% of respondents would like to see a slow rate of economic growth. Another 17.1% would like to see rapid economic growth, while 13.7% responded that they would not want any economic growth. Concerning the rate of residential growth, 43.4% would like to see the Town and Village grow at a rate between 3-5%, 23.8% preferred a growth rate between 1-2%, and 19.7% of the respondents would like to see the population grow at an annual rate greater than 6%.

About half of the respondents believe that the Town Brant and Village of Farnham should merge into one municipal entity. Another 34.5% think that selected services should be consolidated where appropriate. Only 15.1% of those who responded to the survey think that the two communities should remain separate entities.

Additional Comments

In addition to their answers on the survey itself, many residents took advantage of the opportunity to provide additional comments. They appear below.

Police protection needs to be addressed and should also be based upon rate of residential expansion. Industry should be encouraged but should be such that it is environmentally safe – NO DUMP IN BRANT!!!

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Get rid of the drug dealers in Farnham and have Brant Police do something more than drive around Farnham. Get a sheriff base in or around our area for better police protection – current police is terrible.

I think the code enforcement officer should enforce the law and get rid of all the junk in town, especially on our main roads.

More citizen participation!

All roads should be paved with same material. Not half stone, half paved because of the town/village line. Also, something needs to be done with the old Farnham School, like a recreation center for the youth of our town/village. The water and sewer needs to be available for every person in the town/village and do away with the wells.

What should be done is to get people to clean up their property along Route 20. It looks like one big junkyard as well as parts of Route 5. This town is a mess. Time to clean up and take down some buildings.

Brant and Farnham (should) have better working conditions.

Yeah – lower taxes, houses are assessed way too high for this area when we have nothing.

Some properties within the Village of Farnham especially, need a good cleaning up. Garbage, junk cars and litter everywhere. I think this brings down the value of your personal property. If you lived in other communities, you would clean up your property to standards or be fined so much per day. I don't see any of this being taken care of here.

Have 45 mph speed limit on Route 249 all the way to Route 20 from Brant.

Develop strict, enforced, land use regulations for any development. Also, areas and homes that are poorly maintained by forced to improve. Quality, tone and defined growth will improve tax base and communities.

Erie County Water Authority has said that they are willing to take over our water district as long as both Brant and Farnham are included. We do not need two separate districts. We could save a lot of money. If the Village were eliminated more money could be saved and there would be no need to overcharge the town residents for water. If anybody had any initiative at all on town board this would already be done. Also, there is no need for equipment for repairing water lines that are brand new. Eliminate the district and the Village. There is no need for duplicate services when nobody does anything anyway. Let's start saving to keep our taxes lower.

Should consider Erie County water lines.

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Improve intersections at Brant Reservation Road and Milestrip Road and Versailles Plank Road at Milestrip Road. Put some pressure on the County to repave Cain Road from Versailles Plank to Angola-Brant Road.

As much as I would like to see agricultural growth, I don't believe that it is possible with the economic climate being as it is.

NO garbage dump in Brant!

Water is needed as a priority!
Clean up and get rid of junkyards. Limit used car dealerships.

The Village of Farnham should either be expanded or eliminated and be known as Brant Village. Code enforcement officer should start enforcing the cleaning up of the community such as unlicensed vehicles on private property, rundown buildings, junkyard eyesores, etc. This is all very degrading for our community.

Please leave our waterfront alone, it is fine the way it is! So far history shows that growth is not needed in our community as other small towns are hurt by it. Please: Just leave us the way we are!

Stop the politics and work together. Examples: Lack of coordination on Farnham water project on Perry Street; maintenance of road on Perry $\frac{3}{4}$ of street (Farnham) different than $\frac{1}{4}$ of street (Brant). Poor policing in Farnham with known problems of theft. Too small of a community to have two separate governments, taxes, fire companies. Do something with old Farnham School –YMCA, tear down and make skateboarding, hockey, basketball area?

A strong working relationship between town and village, example police protection and highway and maintenance departments.

Please work on STOP SIGNS or lights at every cross road up and down Milestrip Road. Many people have died at every corner in accidents especially at Brant Reservation Road and Versailles Plank Road. We have asked for many years for this and have gotten no response. At least 20 people have been severely injured or died here in 20 years.

Sewers and water development

We need a teen center for the kids to have something to do in evenings and weekends. There is nothing here. A new playground in our area more exposed would be nice for the young ones. A community revitalization program would be good to help the ones of us who cannot afford a lot of things that need to be done on our homes. The Town should offer youths 16+ summer jobs for our community through a program that also include middle class as well as low class people. Everything always seems like the middle people make a dollar too much for our kids to get into different programs.

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It's time to control eyesores on Route 5&20. What people see in entering the Town of Brant isn't good. Consolidate police and highway departments to save money.

I moved to Brant for peace and quietness, please do not allow any developments within the farm or housing areas

Check the dead end streets and the flooding in pasture area. People filling in other people's ponds.

More "senior" opportunities

Encourage small businesses to develop especially on major roadways such as Route 5 and 20 and 249. Also, seek residential growth and offer tax incentives to lure a few large businesses into our township

Parents need to take control of teens who are unruly and destructive to the community

Cable TV and water along all of Route 249. Whatever is done, keep property taxes low! Number 1 priority!

Too many junkyards, people bringing junk cars, motor homes, boats, etc., onto their farm, land illegally listed as agricultural

Greater access to natural gas (e.g. Lotus Point Road). I realize this is a public utility not vended by municipalities; however, any influence the town might have in persuading the expansion of natural gas pipelines in the Village/Town should be explored/exploited.

The Town needs public water system.

Single-wide modular homes should be allowed with Town regulations. This would help the tax base.

Clean up the junkyards.

There are too many eyesores on residential and commercial properties. If this area is to grow and develop, we need to fix up and clean up and enforce codes.

Let us beautify Brant Four Corners by removing the huge stones in front of our park and install beautiful posts with a chain. Also, have bushes inside park removed or cut down somewhat so we can see inside park! We can't see monument.

Residents to upkeep property and homes better. Improve overall look without increasing taxes, code, ethics.

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Brant-Reservation Road and the Town of Brant needs town water, summer droughts hurt farmers and town water will solve this problem for agricultural growth. Many people run out of well water also.

I live on Cain Road near Versailles Plank. I pay taxes – but yet we do not have town water or are connected to the sewer lines. This is one problem that should be fixed. It is our right to have these two problems taken care of. It isn't fair to us – when everyone else has enough water come summertime and me and my neighbors have to buy water to survive.

Replace third assessor in Brant – no sole assessor!

If we are ever going to grow as a community, we need a much better corridor to downtown Buffalo from OLS (Old Lakeshore?) and 5 in particular – there are old railroad rights of way to use, there is most of the old steel property, etc., etc. Again, towns of Brant and Evans should be allowed to use Evangola State Park free of charge after all it is our land!!!

Leave things alone!

Our town, including the Village of Farnham, will have to start cleaning up homes and lots to improve our image. If I were to drive through the town, I would not be impressed by its looks! (Many, many places look like a junkyard.)

Eliminate top heavy administrative cost. Merger of the two municipalities is a must. Cut down trees on west side of Versailles Plank Road and Milestrip.

The Seneca Nation had expressed interest in building a casino adjacent to the Silver Creek Thruway exit. If the town does not plan for this possibility, the town will not be in the position to guide any growth/development spawned by this development.

No dumps or anything that will decrease the health and beauty of our area.

What about a decent grocery store, or a barbershop and the possibility of a restaurant for the public to go to. This would be for the population we already have.

No garbage dumps.

Make sure proper lighting and signs are at all intersections.

We need city (town/village) water

Water & sewer systems should be developed for areas of town east of Route 20.

Water, water, water. There maybe other growth.

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Leave the community as it is. Avoid major franchises (Wal-Mart, McDonald's, Rite Aid). I moved to this area (from Cheektowaga) to avoid the higher property tax and congestion.
Rural community!

On corner of Milestrip and Reservation, what accidents!!! How many more people have to be killed before we get a signal light there. How about getting the little tree cut down so people can see better there and not allowing people to plant crops so close to the road.

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