

TOWN OF MARILLA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK



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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This document is the Comprehensive Plan Update for the Town of Marilla. The Town prepared the original Comprehensive Plan in 1982, which was updated in 1998 when the Town Board requested that the Planning Board perform a substantial update of the original Plan to reflect the Town's current planning policies. Since that time, the Town has maintained its rural and agricultural character and current views and policies for future land use planning and management have necessitated this update of the Comprehensive Plan.

This Comprehensive Plan Update examines and, where necessary, redefines the community's vision for the Town of Marilla to provide the framework for achieving the community's goals and objectives. This Plan is designed to be used as a tool for reviewing proposed projects and as a guide for managing future land use and development in the Town. The Plan should be viewed as an expression of the desires of, local citizens, Town officials and others for the future of the community.

Comprehensive planning activities play an important role in the continued development of a community. The planning process is organized in a manner that enables a community to identify its needs and establish goals and objectives for future land use management. Implementation of a comprehensive plan can enable a community to achieve meaningful and desired change in a steady, incremental manner. The recommendations and policies of a Comprehensive Plan should be evaluated on a regular basis and amended as necessary to reflect changing desires and needs as the community grows.

The Comprehensive Plan Update is the culmination of a review process by the Town Planning Board, with input from the general public and the Town Board, which was started in 2015. This Comprehensive Plan update has been accepted by the Marilla Planning Board and approved by the Town Board for use in guiding long-range land use and development. While the Plan depicts anticipated land uses and the future vision for the Town, it is not meant to indicate current use or zoning. It is a guide for future actions in the community.





1.1 History and Background of the Community

The Town of Marilla is centrally located on the eastern border of Erie County, with the Town of Alden on the north, Town of Elma on the west, and Town of Wales on the south. The Town encompasses 27.5 square miles in area. This portion of the County was first settled around 1827; the land where Marilla is situated was originally part of the Buffalo Creek Reservation. The Porterville hamlet area first saw settlement around 1832. General settlement in the Town began shortly after the third Treaty of Buffalo Creek (part of the U.S. Removal of Indians program) as finalized in 1842. This treaty allowed the Ogden Land Company to purchase the Buffalo Creek Reservation from the Seneca Nation. The land company was, in turn, to sell these lands to settlers for development. A more specific history, as provided by Hubert Kutter, the Town Historian, is as follows:

On the second day of December 1853, a new town was formed by an act of the Erie County Board of Supervisors. It comprised all of the old Buffalo Creek Indian Reservation within the limits of Alden and Wales, except the mile and a half strip on the north side which was sold off previously. A settlement had grown upon the east line of the tract first sold, which in its early days, went by the name of “Shanty Town”, the inhabitants being largely devoted to the manufacture of shingles. When the rest of the reservation was sold about 1842, the hamlet began to assume the appearance of a village. Niles Carpenter had built a store there about 1847 and afterwards he also built a tavern nearby. When the new town was organized in 1854, the chief settlement soon took the name of “Marilla”, deriving its name from a much beloved school teacher named Marilla Rogers who was the wife of John C. Rogers of Alden.

The first supervisor elected after the formation of the town in 1854 was Jesse Bartoo. Most of the present Town of Marilla was included on the tract purchased from the local Indians, the Senecas. The excellent soil in the town aided in its quick settlement as soon as the land was for sale. Jeremiah and George W. Carpenter operated farms near the site of the main settlement in 1829 and 1830. Jesse Bartoo had settled still earlier, near what is now known as “Porterville”, which formerly was known as “Bartoo’s Mills”.





In 1851, Harrison T. Foster with partner Charles Walker built a second store in the village. This however was closed in 1854. In 1855, Mr. Foster formed a partnership with Jefferson H. Brooks under the name of Brooks and Foster. This was continued until 1865 when Mr. Foster bought out Mr. Brooks's interest and formed a business with Henry D. Harrington, under the name of H.T. Foster and Company. This business later became known as the "G. C. Monchow and Company", which was operated for many years by the Gustave Monchow family and their heirs. The business was purchased by the Gingerich Family in 1979 and operated as the "Marilla General Store". This business is currently in operation as "The Marilla Country Store" owned by Sandra and Paul Grunzweig.

The Marilla Township is about 5 miles wide by 6 miles long and has 17,208 acres of land. A weekly newspaper called "The Marilla Record" was first published on Friday, February 2, 1883. The editor and publisher was Fred C. Webb. Also, a monthly magazine called "Poultry, Garden and Fruits" was edited and published by Harvey Blackman.

A large creamery operated by Adams and Shearing was located at the corner of West Avenue and Bullis Road. One of the owners of this business, Harry Shearing, was also a Marilla Town Supervisor. There was once an ice cream parlor, a shoe shop, and millinery shop on the west side of Two Rod Road. In 1865, a large fire destroyed most of the businesses, which included the sawmill, flourmill, hardware and grocery stores, and a tavern. In 1866, the Town center area was rebuilt, adding a blacksmith shop, wagon shop, and grocery store. Marilla also had at one time, an apple evaporator business, a butcher shop, and a photography shop. The mail was once carried to this tiny town by a stage route, operating between Elma Station and Marilla. There was also a stage route that was operated by F.C. White between Marilla and the Erie Railroad in the Town of Alden.

A Marilla Business Directory of the 1880's included the following: H.T. Foster, General Merchants; J.H.Brooks, General Merchants; Solan A. Goff, Practical Jeweler; Peter Petz, Blacksmith and Horse-shoeing; John M. Fields, Boot and Shoemaker; J.P. Sullivan, Wagon and Carriage Maker; I.G. Wheeler and A.J.Brooks, Physicians and Surgeons; Abram Beamis, Hardware, Coffins and Caskets; J.S. Newland,





Carpenter and Builder; Ellery E. Dennison, Harness Maker; R. G. Willis, Proprietor, “The Willis House”; William Swyers, Proprietor, “The Swyers House”; Adam Bachmann, Proprietor, “The Spring Hotel”; Harrington and Eldridge, Owners, “The Marilla Flour Mills”.

With the advent of the country's industrial revolution and the invention of the horseless carriage, many residents relocated out of Marilla to the rapidly growing industrial community of Buffalo, located 15 miles away. This trend continued until the late 1930's, when the population began to shift away from the crowded urban area and into the suburbs and rural and peaceful countryside of Marilla. In 1937, the Town experienced the worst flooding on record, which did considerable damage to crops. The current population of Marilla is estimated at approximately 5,345 (2015), and while farming is a large part of the town's industry, there are fewer farmers now that operate larger farms.

As shown in the table, incentives for new single-family housing construction caused by the coming of age of the "post-war baby boom" resulted in a substantial increase in the Town's population. The industrial expansion of Erie County, combined with increased mobility of the private automobile and cheap gasoline prices that occurred after 1950, created a significant increase in the non-farm residential development of the Town, particularly in the 1970's and 1980's. The rural "country atmosphere" served as an inducement for people to relocate to the area. All of these factors contributed to an acceleration of scattered non-farm residential development and attendant land speculation activities.

1.2 Planning and Land Use Management Considerations

Policies, plans, and capital improvements instituted by higher levels of government often play a significant role in shaping the future development of local communities. An understanding of how actions by federal, state, and county governments may influence the development of Marilla is essential to the establishment of sound local policy.





TABLE 1: HISTORICAL POPULATION		
Census	Population	% +/-
1860	1,596	--
1870	1,804	13.0
1880	1,825	1.2
1890	1,590	-12.9
1900	1,441	-9.4
1910	1,382	-4.1
1920	1,237	-10.5
1930	1,282	3.6
1940	1,364	6.4
1950	1,482	8.7
1960	2,252	5.2
1970	3,250	44.3
1980	4,861	49.6
1990	5,250	8.0
2000	5,709	8.7
2010	5,327	-6.7
2015 (est.)	5,345	0.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

1.2.1 Federal and State

Legislation and policy established by the Federal and State governments have recognized the protection of the natural environment as a major priority. Local policies and actions to protect viable farmlands and farming operations, wetlands, floodplains, water resources, and other environmentally





sensitive areas were strongly supported by Federal and State agencies. Support of agricultural districts, soil erosion control programs, and local land use control programs that foster preservation of the Town's prime farmlands have influenced land use policies in the Town of Marilla.

Federal and State aid programs have placed increased emphasis on conformance with County and regional plans as a prerequisite for funding of local projects or programs. As most communities are dependent on such aid for major capital improvements, local priorities and needs may be sacrificed or deferred to maintain eligibility for funding. State and Federal program funding policies of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have mandated that program managers evaluate funding proposals to determine if such projects would contribute to the early retirement of farmland. If such a determination is made, only those projects that would correct an existing environmental and/or health problem are to be funded.

1.2.2 County and Regional

There are a number of County and regional plans that provide guidance or lend focus to planning and land use in the Town of Marilla. These include:

- The Framework for Regional Growth for Erie and Niagara Counties
- Erie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan
- Erie County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- One Region Forward – A New Way to Plan for Buffalo Niagara (GBNRTC)
- Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan
- Western New York Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan

The Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Western Regional Office, support the planning principle that Marilla should manage growth and protect its





prime farmlands and foster farming operations as an essential component of the areas overall economic development program. In order to accomplish this objective, and to provide opportunities for future growth consistent with local desires and market forces, the Town of Marilla Comprehensive Plan builds upon existing land use patterns, available transportation facilities, and the potential for providing/enhancing utility services, as managed or regulated by these regional agencies.

Furthermore, existing natural resources - prime agricultural areas, soils with limited permeability, wetlands, and steeply sloped areas - have been identified to insure their protection from the effects of future development. In keeping with this concept, the Town of Marilla Comprehensive Plan recommends that the major share of Marilla's future residential development should occur in areas that are zoned R-R Rural Residential, which have experienced a considerable amount of new residential construction in recent decades.

Although none of the agencies cited above have direct land use regulatory powers, they can influence development activities within the Town. Therefore, Town officials and Planning Board members should be cognizant of the regional plans and development policies that have been designed and/or adopted by these agencies in order to ensure that land management and planning decisions in the Town of Marilla are consistent with, and supported by, the programs and policies at other levels of government.

1.2.3 Local Responsibility

Although programs and funding actions by higher levels of government may influence future growth within Marilla, the principal responsibility for controlling land development within New York State has been delegated to local governments (cities, towns, and villages). If the town is to take this responsibility seriously it must, at a minimum: establish policies for guiding future growth; develop a general physical design plan for the community that incorporates these policies and recognizes the importance of the PACE Program and the adopted Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan; and adopt the necessary zoning, subdivision regulations, and other regulations necessary to carry out the





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strategies set forth in plan. These tools and strategies must be developed in concert with the desires of residents and property owners, and should be discussed with State and County officials, prior to adoption. Local official and Planning Board members should utilize these tools and strategies as part of their decision-making responsibilities. Through the implementation of such a process, the Town can have a positive influence on future growth and development.





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SECTION 2

PURPOSES OF PLANNING

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SECTION 2: PURPOSES OF PLANNING

2.1 Reasons for Preparing a Comprehensive Plan

New York State Town Law §272-a authorizes local municipalities to develop and adopt a Comprehensive Plan to help promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the community, with due consideration given to the needs of the people of the community. The Laws state that:

“Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a town or village 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 the citizens.”

“The Comprehensive Plan fosters cooperation among governmental agencies planning and implementing capital projects and municipalities that may be directly affected thereby.”

The Town Marilla originally developed the Comprehensive Plan in 1982. Recognizing that this plan was outdated and no longer effectively addressed the issues and opportunities of the community, the Town chose to undertake the preparation of an update to the Comprehensive Plan in 1998. Recognizing that the Comprehensive Plan is the most important document for managing the physical growth of the area and maintaining the rural character of the community, the Town Board has authorized another update to the Plan.

There are many concrete benefits of a Comprehensive Plan. One critical benefit relates to the Town’s zoning authority. Municipalities are given the power to regulate land uses within the community, but these decisions should be based on sound planning principles and developed through a process that represents a consensus of the community. The process of developing a Comprehensive Plan provides a rational basis for decisions regarding zoning and other land use regulations. This helps ensure better decision making, while providing the Town with a powerful tool to help direct growth in a manner and intensity that meets the community’s vision for the future.





A comprehensive plan can help guide continuing planning activities in the Town in the following ways:

1. By providing direction for dealing with minor problems so that they do not become major problems in the long-range future.
2. By limiting the impact of changes that can be foreseen and could occur in the future.
3. By shaping new development to fit the community's needs and desires.
4. By guiding both public and private actions to save money, time, and effort.
5. By providing continuity of future programs for community improvement.
6. By providing a unifying vision for the efforts of all community interests.

A Comprehensive Plan provides a vision for the community's future and establishes goals and objectives that guide long-term growth, reflecting the principles and concepts that a community feels will enhance the character and quality of life therein. Hence, a Comprehensive Plan helps to guide local officials, who can reference the established vision and the goals and objectives, when making land use decisions. These elements of the Plan have an influence on other levels of government. All County, State or Federal governmental agencies that propose capital projects that could affect lands in the Town of Marilla must take the Comprehensive Plan into consideration as part of their own decision-making processes.

The Comprehensive Plan Update, developed with the support and input from both municipal officials and the general public, acts as a standard for ensuring that the Town's land use regulations are built on a solid foundation and represent a consensus of the community. It demonstrates the cooperation and commitment of the community, which is beneficial for seeking governmental grants and other assistance. In short, the Comprehensive Plan Update provides the Town of Marilla with an effective tool for shaping its future and influencing local actions, as well as the actions of County, State and Federal agencies, helping to ensure that the future vision for the Town is achieved.

2.2 How the Comprehensive Plan is Utilized

New York State does not dictate what form a Comprehensive Plan must take, but suggests that it consist of written and graphic materials, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports,





and other descriptive materials that identify the goals, objectives, and recommendations that the Town wishes to set forth to attain its vision for the future. It should examine the environmental, demographic, physical, and developmental aspects of the Town, as well as the regulatory setting that guides these factors.

While municipalities are given the power to regulate land uses within their communities, these decisions should be based on sound planning principles, and must not be arbitrary or capricious. Town Law generally indicates that municipal planning, zoning, capital budgeting, and other land use regulation decisions made by the Town should be done so in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. A Comprehensive Plan provides an accessible and clear guide for entities seeking to undertake an action or project in their community. It also provides greater leverage on land use and planning related activities and programs that are instituted by other governmental authorities, such as State or County agencies, who are required to take local plans into consideration when proposing to undertake capital projects in local communities.

The Comprehensive Plan should address the issues and concerns specific to the Town of Marilla based on input from local residents and stakeholders, gathered through a variety of forums. The Plan provides a vision for the Town and reflects the principals and concepts that the community feels will enhance and protect its character and quality of life.

The goals and objectives, recommendations, and implementation strategy included in the Marilla Comprehensive Plan are designed to address the issues and concerns that are unique to the community. This Plan demonstrates the commitment of the Town, which lends strong support for grant funding opportunities. The Comprehensive Plan provides an assessment of where the Town is and has been, it identifies where the Town would like to be in the future, and includes recommendations and strategies to attain this vision.

When adopted, the Town should begin to implement the Plan by amending any land use regulations, as required, to conform to the Comprehensive Plan and consider the Plan in all of the land use making decisions (site plans, subdivisions and zoning actions) and capital budgeting actions. Copies of the





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completed Comprehensive Plan must be filed with County and State agencies and must be utilized by those agencies in planning projects and actions that could affect the community. The Town should actively utilize the Plan (in conjunction with the adopted Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan) as a tool, resource and guide for all future land use decisions in an effort to achieve the vision for the future of Marilla.





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SECTION 3

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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SECTION 3: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS (Map 1)

An understanding of the existing physical, social, and economic resources is important in determining the cause of problems which may exist in a community and to identify policies and actions necessary to prevent future conflicts. A detailed analysis of physical features and environmental conditions within the Town of Marilla has been accomplished. This analysis was undertaken to identify the potential of various areas in the town to support development and to provide the basis for a future land use plan, which is environmentally sound. The maps that were prepared to provide the basis for this analysis can be found in at the end of this section.

The Town of Marilla encompasses approximately 27.5 square miles (17,622 acres) of land area in the east central portion of Erie County (see Map 1). The land form is characterized by steep slopes and hills in the southern portion of town that transcend to gently undulating and nearly level lands in the central and northern portions of town. The steep slopes in the southern portion occur along the banks of Buffalo Creek and frame the hamlet area of Porterville adding great scenic value to this area of the community.

3.1.1 Natural Features (Maps 2 – 8)

The predominant soils series include Blasdell-Farnham, Darien, Orchard Park, Manlius, and Alton-Palmyra-Phelps. These soils range from moderate to very slow permeability below a depth of 11-inches and most have a seasonally high-water table that measures between 12 to 2 feet below the surface. These types of soils have moderate to severe constraints related to the use of private septic systems and wells. Although these limitations to development are apparent, the topsoils have been extensively classified as prime and unique soils for farmland by the Erie County Natural Resources Conservation Service. (Soils and geology are shown on Maps 2, 3 and 4).





High quality agricultural soils include those soil types designated by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) as “prime,” “prime when drained” and “other soils of statewide importance. These high-quality soils occupy a total of 14,629 acres in the Town of Marilla and comprise 77% of the Town’s total land area (Map 5). A total of 5,560 acres (38%) of the high-quality farm soils in the Town are actively farmed. The remainder have been developed or are undeveloped wooded lands in the northern portion of the Town is nearly level and gently undulating; steep slopes and hills are common in the southern portion of the Town.

**TABLE 2
AGRICULTURAL SOILS**

Agricultural Soils Classification (from USDA)	Town wide (includes developed, wooded and fallow land)		Active Farmland Only (cropland, pasture, other open)	
	Acres	%	Acres	%
Prime farmland	5,631	32.0%	2,655	45.3%
Farmland of statewide importance	4,920	27.9%	1,571	26.8%
Prime farmland if drained	4,078	23.1%	1,334	22.7%
Total high quality agricultural	14,629	83.0%	5,560	94.8%
Other soils (includes water)	2,993	17.9%	307	5.2%
Total:	17,622	100.0%	5,867	100.0%

Source: Marilla Agricultural and Farmland Protection, 2013.

Creek corridors in Marilla include Buffalo Creek, which flows through the southwestern portion of the town; Cayuga Creek, which extends through the northeast corner of the Town; and Little Buffalo Creek, which runs diagonally through the Town, with several tributaries that extend to the east. These creeks are part of the Cayuga Creek watershed, which covers about 75% of the Town (Map 6). The remaining portion of the Town drains to the Buffalo Creek watershed. Both watersheds drain to the Buffalo River.





Wetlands (swamps, marshes and similar areas) are low-lying areas saturated by surface or ground water for extended periods of time sufficient to support distinctive vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands serve as natural habitat for many species of plants and animals and absorb the forces of flooding to prevent loss of upland soils. In New York, wetlands are divided into two categories, those regulated by the NYSDEC, and those designated and regulated by the US Army Corps. of Engineers and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. A wetland can also be regulated by New York State and the federal government concurrently. There are areas of both State and federal freshwater wetlands scattered throughout the Town, as shown on Map 7.

Floodplains, or Special Flood Hazard Areas, are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as areas determined to experience a 0.1% chance of flooding during a 100-year storm event, when excessive precipitation would cause creeks and rivers to overflow their banks. The three creek corridors that flow through the Town are fringed by areas designated as 100-year flood zones (See Map 8). Development in floodplains is regulated pursuant to Chapter 559 of the Town Code.

3.1.2 Demographic Data

The population of the Town has grown steadily, almost tripling in size from 1,497 persons in 1950 to an estimated 5,345 in 2015. The total number of housing units in Marilla more than doubled, increasing from 948 dwelling units in 1970 to 2,164 dwelling units in 2010. While the population decreased between 2000 and 2010, the number of housing units increased. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of housing units increased by 129 units, whereas the population declined by 382 persons during that same timeframe. While the population of the Town is relatively stable, over the next twenty years it is expected to grow, but at a much slower rate. Estimates for 2016 population (the most current year available from the U.S. Census Bureau) indicated an expected population of 5,365 persons, which is a very slight increase over the 2015 estimate of 5,345 persons.





Data estimates for 2011 – 2015 showed an average household size of 2.67 persons per household. The rate of owner occupancy was 93.9%, with a median home value of \$184,300. The median income was \$81,432, with an overall poverty rate of 4.1%. In addition, the average age of Marilla residents has increased from 38.6 years old in 2000 to 45.3 in 2010. The trend toward smaller households and an aging population is happening nationwide and is expected to continue.

3.1.3 Existing Land Use (Map 9)

Land use in the Town includes a mix of agricultural, residential, commercial and civic uses. Map 9 illustrates land use in the Town, with emphasis on agriculture, which is the predominant land use. There is also a limited amount of land in industrial use. The Marilla Town center area, which is located around the intersection of Two Rod Road and Bullis Road, serves as the population and service center to residents of the Town, with the hamlet area of Porterville serving as a neighborhood residential center. Residences are primarily located in Marilla Town center and Porterville hamlet, and in isolated residential subdivisions that are dispersed throughout the central and northern portions of the Town, located within larger rural-agricultural areas.

There are three mobile home parks. One mobile home park - Bush Gardens - is located in the northeastern area, while the other two - Hillside Estates and Log Cabin Mobile Home Parks - are located in the southwestern area along the Elma-Marilla Town Line. Nearly all of the business and employment activities in the town are concentrated in or near the Marilla Town center. The Town's governmental offices, highway facilities, library, elementary school, and fire hall are also located within Marilla Town center. Businesses in the Town are located in the Marilla Center area, and along Clinton Street.





**TABLE 3
EXISTING LAND USE**

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Agricultural	11,057	63.0
Residential	856	4.5
Forest/Brush/Meadow	7,196	30.5
Outdoor Recreation	213	1.0
Surface Water/Wetlands	112	less than 1
Industrial	51	less than 1
Commercial	37	less than 1
Public /Semi-Public	16	less than 1
Total	17,622	

3.1.4 Zoning (Map 10)

Within the Town of Marilla, land use is regulated by the Zoning Law (Chapter 700 of the Marilla Town Code). Zoning in the Town includes eight district classifications (see Map 10), which include: A – Agricultural, R-R – Rural Residential, M-D – Medium Density Residential, M-H – Manufactured Home Park, B – Business, B-1 – Restricted Business, I – Industrial, and C-O – Conservation Overlay. Nearly all (93%) of the actively farmed land in the Town is zoned A-Agricultural. A total of 314 acres is zoned RR Rural Residential and less than 100 acres are zoned for commercial uses (B or B-1.)

Zoning regulations include provisions for the preservation of natural features and the application process for building permits and special use permits. Special permits may be granted for motor vehicle service stations and public garages, home occupations or home professional occupations, private airstrips, camping grounds, not-for-profit public and semi-public uses and buildings, kennels, rooming houses, wind energy systems, and stables or riding academies. Supplementary regulation govern off-street parking and loading, signage and billboards, highway access and private swimming pools. There are also miscellaneous regulations for amusement arcades and games, gas wells, manufactured housing





and golf courses. The Zoning Law establishes height and bulk regulations for each district, site development standards, and provisions for addressing violations and penalties for offenses.

3.1.5 Agriculture

The predominant land use in the Town is agriculture. Almost the entire area of the Town is included in Agricultural District No.5. Small and large farms contribute to the rural, agricultural character of the Town. Of the 17,622 acres in the Town, 11,057 acres (63%) are in parcels that are used in part for agricultural production. Farms in the Town include large commercial farms, as well as smaller part-time operations. These farms produce dairy products, raise cattle and other livestock, and grow field crops such as corn and soybeans. Two farms specialize in horse breeding and boarding. Most of the parcels with active farmland also include buildings, as well as forested land or hillsides that are not actively farmed.

Farms in and around the Town of Marilla generate revenue each year through the production and sales of farm products and support the regional economy through purchase of supplies and services. Opportunities relating to farming and agricultural production, agri-tourism, agricultural support businesses, and distribution and processing are key to the Town's long-term economic development.

In support of the importance of agriculture in Marilla, the Town Board adopted a "Right to Farm" local law in 1997. This Law states that reasonable agricultural practices are not to be considered public or private nuisances and appoints the Conservation Advisory Board to act as a grievance committee to address disputes that cannot be resolved by the parties alone and are not addressed by other Town laws or regulations.

Beginning in the late 1990s, recognizing the need to protect agricultural lands, the Town of Marilla began to identify parcels for potential permanent protection through voluntary conservation easements. Between 1999 and 2008, the Town established a Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements





(PACE) program. This program was funded initially through New York State's Department of Agriculture and Market's Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Program, commonly known as Purchase of Development Rights. As of 2012, the Town had facilitated the acquisition of permanent conservation easements on 17 parcels and 743 acres of farmland. The Western New York Land Conservancy holds and monitors these conservation easements, which limit development on the protected parcels.

In 2013, the Town Board adopted the Town of Marilla Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. This plan provides a thorough understanding of agricultural and farming practices in the Town and sets forth policies and provisions for the protection and continued operation of agricultural activities in the community.

3.1.6 Public Facilities and Services (Map 11)

Most of the Town of Marilla is serviced with public water. There are currently five (5) existing water districts in the Town of Marilla. Water District 1 is served by the Town of Elma Water Department; Water Districts 2, 3, 4 & 5 are all served by the Erie County Water Authority, which leases the infrastructure and manages customer service, billing, meter reading and maintenance. The Erie County Water Authority is also responsible for capital improvements. Map 11 indicates the areas served by municipal water service in the Town. Water Districts are generally concentrated in the western and northern portions of the Town and are located to provide municipal water service to the highest density of the Town's population. The areas that do not have public water service are located in the south and southeastern portions of the Town where residents are reliant upon on-site, individual wells, and it is unlikely that public water supply will ever be provided to these areas, as the existing water distribution system limits the potential for such extension. The single pump station and water storage tank that serve the Town's water districts do not have excess capacity. Expanding service to additional areas would require considerable capital investment in a new pump station and storage tank.





There is no public sanitary sewer service in the Town of Marilla, and there are no plans to extend public sewers into the Town in the future. The Erie and Niagara County Framework for Regional Growth designates Marilla as a “Rural Area” where conservation strategies generally take precedence over plans for development and public investment. In accordance with this regional plan, County investments for the extension of public water and sewer services are to be focused in areas where growth and development are most appropriate (existing urban areas).

3.1.7 Transportation Infrastructure (Map 12)

Roadways are the only means for transportation in the Town of Marilla. There are no public transportation services in the Town; the closest bus lines are in the Town of Elma, to the west. There is also no commercial or passenger rail lines running through the Town. The Rural Transit Service is a not-for-profit transportation services that assists senior citizens, low and moderate-income individuals and the disabled. This service will transport eligible Town residents to medical appointments, work places, grocery stores, and other necessary places that they may not otherwise be able to get to. The jurisdictional responsibilities for the maintenance of highways in the Town of Marilla include:

State Highways	11 miles
County Highways	48 miles
Town Highways	<u>14 miles</u>
Total	73 miles

Table 3 illustrates the functional highway classification system for the Town of Marilla.

3.1.8 Highway and Sanitation Services

The Marilla Highway Department is responsible for the 13.6 miles of Town roads. This includes sweeping, mowing, snow plowing, and any maintenance of these roads. The department also snow plows about 48 miles of Erie County roadways. The Highway Superintendent oversees the Sanitation





Department, the Town Park, and all Town buildings. The department currently employs six full-time employees and several seasonal, part-time employees. The Town currently has two sanitation trucks in use for garbage collection, and three trucks that are used for snow removal on Town and County roads.

**TABLE 4
FUNCTIONAL ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

Classifications	Roadways
<i>Major Collector:</i>	Clinton Street (SR 354)
Carries through traffic at relatively high speeds for longer distances	Two Rod Road (CR 547)
	Four Rod Road (CR 356) – north of Clinton Street
	Jamison Road (CR 574)
	Exchange Street (CR 578)
<i>Minor Collector:</i>	Bullis Road (CR 331)
Connects remote rural areas with higher order roadways, handling shorter trips with less volume	Four Rod Road (CR 356) – south of Clinton Street
	Porterville Road (CR 6)
	Liberia Road (CR 402)
<i>Local Collector:</i>	Town Line Road (CR 335)
Collects traffic from a limited number of local roads and provides connections to higher order roadways	Williston Road (CR 349/16)
	Coleman Road
	East Avenue
<i>Local Streets/Roads:</i>	All others (Town jurisdiction)
Carries traffic to adjacent lands at lower volumes and speed, with limited through traffic	

Source: GBNRTC, 2017.

Garbage collections are managed at a transfer station, where they are hauled away by the Town’s municipal waste contractor. The Town also operates a recycling center, which is located on Eastwood Road, east of Marilla Town Park. This center is open to Town residents and accepts glass, mixed paper products/newspaper, plastic with specified recycling emblems, various metals, cardboard/ chipboard, and tin and aluminum cans. Glass and plastic containers must be rinsed clean and have covers/caps and rings removed. Motor oil and vehicle batteries are accepted, as well as yard waste,





brush and tree limbs. A full list of materials that can be recycled, along with materials that are not accepted at the center, is posted on the Town's website. The Town also participates in an electronics recycling program. Electronic items will be picked up at curbside or can be taken to the recycling



center, including computers and computer equipment/accessories, fax machines, scanners, TVs and monitors, cable and satellite boxes, cell phones, VCRs and DVRs, and music playing devices.

3.1.9 Community Services (Map 13)

Community services in the Town of Marilla are located in Marilla Town center, in the vicinity of Two Rod Road and Bullis Road. The Town Hall, Marilla Community Center and Post Office are located on the west side of Two Rod Road, south of Bullis Road.

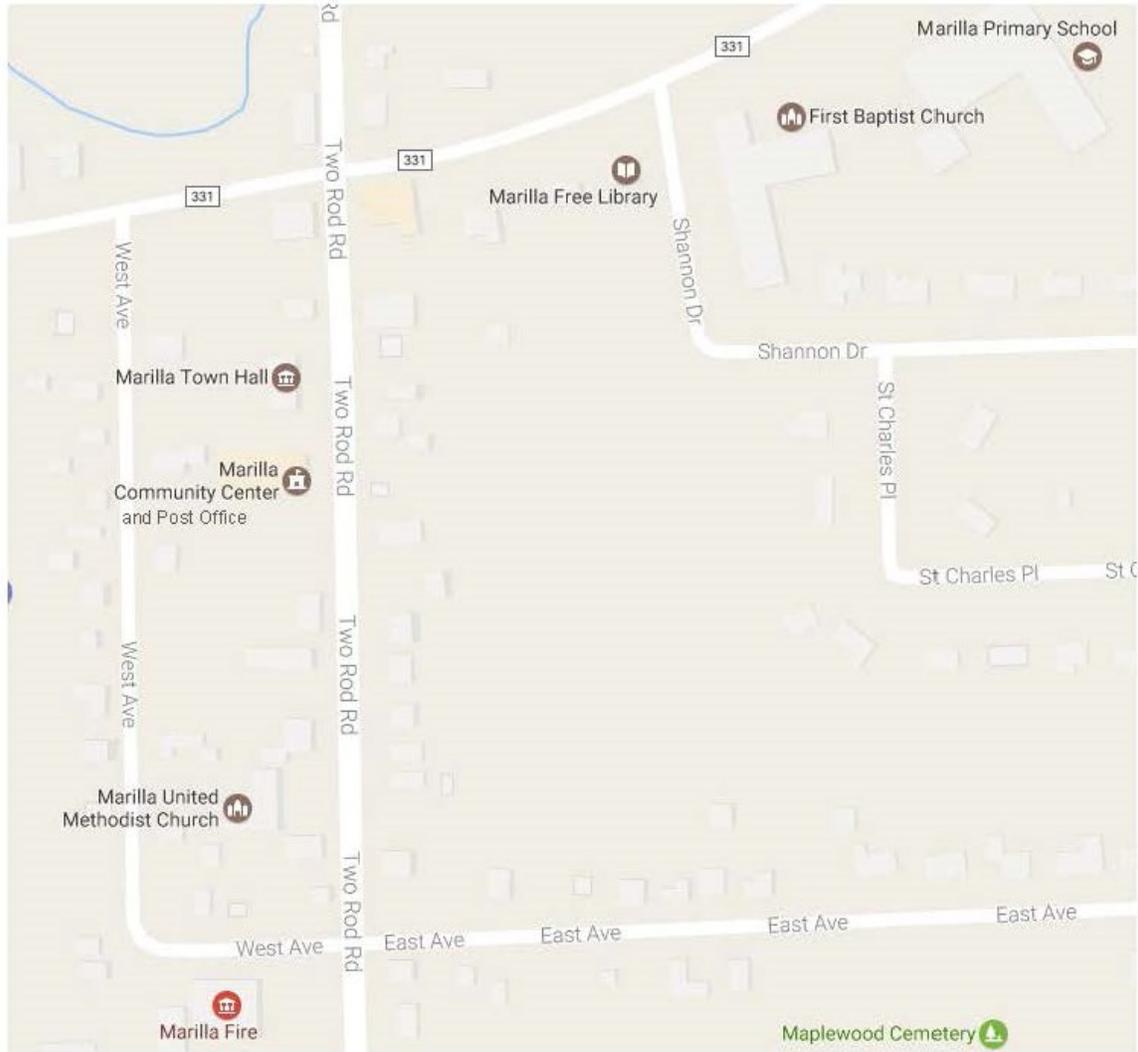


The Community Center is available for use as a meeting location by senior citizens organizations, youth groups or any other not-for-profit groups in Marilla. Scheduling must be done through the Town Clerk's Office. All primary and general elections are held at the Community Center.





Figure 1: Community Services in Marilla Town Center



Fire protection is provided by the Marilla Volunteer Fire Department. The fire hall, located on West Avenue, serves as the local base of fire protection. The Marilla Fire Department has its own ambulance. Emergency medical services are available on an as needed basis. Police protection and town-wide patrol services are provided by the Erie County Sheriff's Department Road Patrol and the New York State Police, who both operate out of the Elma substation.





The Marilla Historical Society is a non-profit organization devoted to the collection and preservation of artifacts relating to the history of the Town of Marilla. The Society maintains a Historical Museum, which is located in Marilla Community Center. It also maintains the Cal Doucette Civil War Library, the historic Roloff House at 1739 West Avenue, and the Marilla Log Cabin at the same location.

3.1.10 Public Schools and Library Services

There are two central school districts (see Figure 1) that offer educational instruction for residents of the Town. They are: The Iroquois Central School District, which services the central and southern portions of Marilla with a high school, intermediate/middle school and three elementary (primary) schools, one of which is located on Bullis Road, in the Town of Marilla; and the Alden Central School District, which services the northern portion of the Town with a high school, middle school, intermediate school and elementary school. The Marilla Free Library, which is part of the Buffalo and Erie County Library system, is located on Bullis Road. In addition to the book collection, the library offers a meeting room, computer access and a copy machine.



3.1.11 Parks and Recreation

There are two Town park facilities in Marilla. They include the Marilla Veterans Memorial, which is located at the corner of West Avenue and Bullis Road and is accessible from Town Hall; and Marilla





Town Park, located on Three Rod Road. The Veterans Memorial Park includes a gazebo and parking area. Marilla Town Park is located on the western portion of an approximately 83-acre Town owned property, which is bisected by a tributary of Little Buffalo Creek. The park offers picnic shelters and a gazebo, a playground, basketball and tennis courts and playfields. It also includes two small ponds, which are popular for catch and release fishing. This property also includes two soccer fields that are located to the east along Eastwood Road, adjacent to the Town's recycling center.



3.2 FINDINGS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

Precise forecasting of future growth and land use is difficult. The discussion of trends in this section is not intended to provide precise forecasts, but rather a general indication of the potential for future growth and development based upon the continuation of existing policies.

3.2.1 Growth

The Town of Marilla has grown considerably since the 1950's, nearly tripling in population. By 2000, the Town reached a population of 5,709 persons, but has since lost population; the 2015 population estimate is 5,345 persons. This decrease in population growth is representative of a larger scale population decrease in Western New York. Some communities, primarily the City of Buffalo and some first ring suburban towns, have experienced a net decrease in population. The number of





housing units in the Town also increased from 948 units in 1970 to 2,164 units in 2010. Growing at a rate of between 300 and 400 units per decade. However, this growth has slowed in relation to the overall declining population growth. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of housing units only increased by 129 units. Population also declined by 382 persons during that same period. While the Town is still growing, the rate of growth has decreased; this is a trend that is expected to continue for both population and housing.

The Town has made a commitment to agricultural preservation and has zoning regulations in place to control population growth and housing development. For the most part, zoning in the Town promotes low-density land use, with medium density growth planned for the Marilla Town center area, Porterville hamlet and the northwestern corner of the Town.

The actual size and composition of future population and household characteristics are also variable. The most notable factors influencing future growth include regional growth policies, State and regional employment conditions, interest rates, energy availability and individual family lifestyles. While Marilla is a rural community that is attractively located within the region, it could experience growth that exceeds County and area-wide averages; however, regional growth patterns and policies for infrastructure management and extensions are limiting factors. Therefore, rather than attempting to define specific population targets, the Town's planning efforts are directed toward identifying those areas that are suitable for and capable of sustaining new development and establishing /strengthening land use guidance and a regulatory structure to direct growth to these areas. Areas that are environmentally sensitive and cannot support growth, or are classified as prime agricultural production lands, are proposed for protected from future development. This is strongly supported by the Town's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, which was adopted in 2013.

3.2.2 Energy

In general, future energy policy lies outside of the jurisdictional impact of a rural municipality. The





most effective measures that the Town could implement for energy conservation would be the development of land use regulations that encourage orderly compact development and the use of alternative energy systems. The Town of Marilla recognizes that solar and wind energy are clean, readily available sources of renewable energy and that there is growing desire on the part of Town residents, farmers and others to employ alternative energy systems, as well as the need to properly site these systems within the boundaries of the Town. Therefore, the Town has taken steps to adopt local legislation to regulate alternative energy systems. These regulations are designed to protect land uses in the community; protect the health, safety and general welfare of citizens; preserve the overall beauty and character of the Town; and promote effective and efficient use of renewable energy resources.

3.2.3 Government

The rapidly escalating cost of providing services at all levels of government has resulted in a re-evaluation of priorities and merits of many of its programs. Similarly, State and County agencies are under pressure to bring the cost of government under control. Regional planning, as evidenced by the policies set forth in the Erie Niagara Framework for Regional Growth, has shifted away from the support of suburban sprawl to policies that manage growth and discourage infrastructure expansion. In many instances, major projects have been deferred indefinitely or the responsibility for implementation returned to local governments.

In the future, the State and Federal governments will provide guidelines to assist local and county governments to carry out priority projects. An example of this trend is the move toward "Block Grants." Under block grant programs, the Federal government will continue to provide funds for general program categories such as health, social services, or community development, which are favored for low and moderate-income areas and segments of the population. The County would then be responsible for deciding exactly how such funds should be spent. In addition, the Clean Water Act provided a mechanism for funding projects that will have a substantial impact on improving surface and groundwater water quality and protecting watersheds.





3.2.4 Public Facilities and Services

As previously mentioned, there are currently five existing water districts in the Town of Marilla. These extensions of the Erie County Water Authority system from the Town of Elma provide for domestic water supplies and fire protection. As most of the population is already serviced with municipal water, and topography is a constraint, future extensions of the existing system are unlikely.

There are no plans for the extension of sanitary sewer service into the Town of Marilla. The Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth plan considers Marilla as a rural community and does not support sewer extensions. As Erie County owns and manages the system, the costs associated with future extensions are not feasible. Nor could the Town take on the fiscal burdens of building and managing local sewer infrastructure. It is also important to note that public sewer incentivizes residential growth at densities that are not in line with the preservation of rural community character. Such growth is not supported by the Town and would be detrimental to agricultural preservation, which is key to maintaining the rural character, as well as the economy of the community.

3.2.5 Agriculture

Large areas of Marilla are recommended to remain rural or in agricultural use. Farmland land uses and rural areas contribute significantly to the economic well-being of a community, as well as an entire region. Agricultural and rural areas serve to maintain economic stability, are a desirable scenic element in the local environment, and help to maintain an ecological balance. It is important that high quality agricultural soils, which have been determined to be extremely valuable for agricultural protection, be protected and continued for farming use. Once land has been taken out of production and these soils are disturbed, the potential for reversion to agricultural use is very limited.

The most significant threat to farmland and the preservation of rural character in the Town of Marilla is residential development. Residential development along existing roadways and in new subdivisions





can result in the conversion of important agricultural lands. Farms that are susceptible to conversion to other uses may be a higher priority for conservation than other farms. Pressure for conversion may take the form of scattered residential development, residential subdivisions or other development and may be stimulated by infrastructure extensions or nearby development. The extent of development pressure should be a consideration in the evaluation of farm parcels for long-term protection. Continued growth in residential development – even at a modest pace of 150 new homes per decade – could have significant impacts on farmland and farming if it is not managed effectively.

The Town’s zoning regulations limit the development of residential subdivisions in the A-Agricultural District to a total of three new lots (four including the parent parcel) within any five-year period. While this provision slows development, agricultural land continues to be vulnerable to conversion to residential development. The subdivision of prime farmland into building lots threatens to reduce the amount of prime and important soils available for agricultural production. The Town may be able to encourage landowners to design future subdivisions in a manner that utilizes the marginal land for building lots and sets aside the most productive land for continued agricultural production. This could be accomplished through design regulations that warrant land conservation. The Town of Marilla Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan more specifically addresses these concerns.





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SECTION 4

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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SECTION 4: GOALS AND POLICIES

4.1 Introduction

The Goals and policy objectives of a Comprehensive Plan set forth a shared vision for the Town's future. They represent the values and priorities of the community and serve as a guide for evaluating future land use and planning decisions. The shared vision articulated in the goals provides guidance for decision makers at the local, County and State levels. The goals are general in nature, so they can remain relevant over the long-term. These goals form the foundation for the community's vision for the future, as well as for the recommendations and specific actions that the Town will implement to achieve it.

Any planning action or recommendation should be based upon the locally determined goals and policies. While goals provide a sense of direction for the community, policy objectives provide the foundation for implementing ordinances and programs and are designed to guide public actions. This section of the comprehensive plan sets forth a series of goals and policy objectives for the Town of Marilla and serves as a basis for the establishment of specific comprehensive plan recommendations. In order to provide a comprehensive statement for future direction, goals and policies have been delineated for the areas of land use and development, agriculture, open space, conservation and recreation, transportation, and community facilities and services. This portion of the plan is intended to provide a statement of town policies suitable to guide the Town Board and its advisory bodies in making the day-to-day decisions affecting future growth and development and the administration of town programs.

The goals and policies statements included herein are intended to provide direction and guidance to Town decision-makers, other governmental agencies and developers. As a major element in the Town's on-going planning process, the policy objectives provide a workable framework to guide the development of short-range town programs, including capital improvements. Using the goals and policy objectives, developers can determine, in advance, whether specific potential proposals for land development are consistent with the Town's vision for future land use. Similarly, other government agencies can easily assess the





Town's planning objectives with respect to the consistency of their proposed plans and programs in the Town. In the future, based on the achievement of recommendations and action strategies, it may be desirable to modify these goals and policies to conform to new or changing community trends and needs. It is the responsibility of the Town Planning Board and Town Board to recognize changing conditions and development trends, which may necessitate the future revision of the comprehensive plan.

4.2 Goals and Policy Objectives

GOAL 1: Protect lands and resources critical to the long-term success and sustainability of agriculture to enhance and expand the agricultural economy of the Town

Marilla has a long history of farming and agricultural use. Farming in the Town includes large farms that produce dairy, livestock and nursery products, as well as equine operations and vegetable farms. These farms contribute to the local and regional economy and the rural character of the Town. The following objectives support the protection of agricultural resources in the Town:

- Promote diverse agricultural production that supports the business of farming as part of a thriving regional food system, which is in harmony with the community at large.
- Encourage farm related business as a secondary interest and means of support for farmers.
- Protect the viability of the Town's agricultural economy, ensure sufficient areas of high quality farmland, and encourage the protection of prime farm soils and productive agricultural lands to support the agricultural industry.
- Promote organic farming and other methods as a viable form of sustainable agriculture.
- Foster agriculture through the adoption and administration of land use regulations and procedures





that protect and support agricultural production, activities and operations within the Town.

- Permit commercial and industrial land uses in agricultural areas only where such uses would not be detrimental to, or replace, agricultural and farming operations.
- Limit residential development in agricultural areas and direct growth to areas not in conflict with existing agricultural operations in order to minimize potential disruption to farming operations.
- Support State and County programs that foster agricultural growth as part of the region's economic development.
- Encourage the State and County to renew and sustain the existing agricultural districts formed under the New York State Agricultural Districts Law.
- Limit the placement of utilities, services, and other land uses that would encourage or incentivize growth and development in areas of the Town zoned for agriculture.
- Promote the sale of local products by encouraging a farmer's market and farm stands, consumption and utilization of locally grown farm products.
- Promote support for local farms and farm practices and public education about the benefits of agriculture to the community.
- Ensure that farmers, farmland owners, farmland neighbors and residents have access to information about the contributions of agriculture locally, and to the regional economy.





GOAL 2: Preserve and protect the rural character and quality of life in the Town

The Town of Marilla is a rural community with two defined hamlets and development scattered throughout the countryside. Elements of the community that contribute to this rural character include low density residential development, lands used for farming and agriculture, open fields, and forested lands. The following objectives support the protection of the quality of life and rural character of the Town:

- Manage growth in the Town to ensure that development occurs at an appropriate scale, style and pace and in locations that are suitable for the type of development being proposed.
- Ensure new development is reasonably compatible with adjacent land uses.
- New development should be located in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts to viable farmland, farm soils and farming activity.
- Maintain and protect the existing high quality of life and small-town identity of Marilla.
- Encourage non-traditional styles of development, such as cluster subdivisions, in residentially zoned areas in order to foster efficient use of land and farmland protection.
- Control the aesthetic character of commercial development with appropriate architectural, landscaping and setback standards and manage the size and scale of commercial development in a manner that is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.





GOAL 3: Maintain and enhance the vitality of neighborhoods and housing in the Town and encourage diversity of the housing stock to meet the needs of all residents

As the population of the Town changes over time and the economic conditions vary, the housing stock should be diversified to accommodate the changing needs of the community. The following objectives support the maintenance and enhancement of local neighborhoods and encourage diversity of housing throughout the Town:

- Support the preservation of sound residential development and the elimination of blight and/or deteriorated building conditions.
- Encourage the development of housing in a manner that discourages sprawl and enables residents to use existing services and infrastructure efficiently.
- Meet the housing needs of the community by encouraging a variety of choices in new housing and the maintenance and improvement of existing housing.
- Adhere to policies, codes and guidelines to ensure the development of quality living areas through the use of good site planning practices
- Encourage a housing mix that will provide adequate and affordable housing for all age groups and incomes.
- Maintain the integrity of rural residential areas by encouraging uses that are compatible with Marilla's right to farm legislation and the Marilla Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.
- Strengthen Marilla's "community center" by reinforcing existing services and amenities and by encouraging the establishment of additional community facilities and activities.





- Limit new residential development in environmentally sensitive areas, including areas subject to natural flooding, erosion, wetlands, steeply sloped areas, and other unsuitable locations.
- Strive to make Marilla a quality community through sustainable development practices, resource conservation and community education.

GOAL 4: Support smart, sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities

Economic development should be promoted to diversify the Town’s economy, provide jobs, and increase the Town’s tax base. Local businesses should be supported and protected. Agricultural operations are also an important part of the economy of the Town. The Town should encourage further economic development through the following objectives.

- Encourage the development and maintenance of commercial uses and facilities that serve the needs of residents.
- Encourage commercial uses in areas closer to Marilla Center to promote walkability and connectivity and to support the area as the Town’s activity center.
- Support the adaptive reuse and redevelopment of existing vacant buildings.
- Stabilize and improve existing commercial areas through the encouragement of building renovation, parking and access improvements, and landscaping in order to minimize potential traffic hazards and to upgrade the general attractiveness of such areas.
- Promote the establishment of small-scale businesses in appropriate areas that maintain the quality of life in the community.





- Limit commercial uses in residential areas to home occupations that comply with Town regulations and do not diminish the residential character of the property and surrounding area.
- Discourage strip commercial development along the major roads in the town.
- Require adequate landscape screening and separation between residential and commercial uses to minimize land use conflicts and achieve high visual appeal.

GOAL 5: Promote a safe and efficient roadway system in the Town

A well-maintained roadway system is important for public health and safety. The following objectives support a safe and efficient roadway system in the Town:

- Encourage a roadway system that is adequate to accommodate land uses efficiently and is safe for all users.
- Work with the County and State to ensure proper maintenance of roadway infrastructure in the Town.
- Minimize, to the extent feasible and in accordance with the Town Subdivision Law, the number of individual access drives to highways in order to maintain their safety and traffic-carrying capacity by requiring the use of such measures as loop roads for residential development and shared driveways and cross access for commercial uses.





GOAL 6: Support the preservation of important environmental features and the quality of public open space and recreational facilities

The Town of Marilla has numerous natural resources that are deemed important to the community and should be protected. There are a number of creeks and streams, wetlands and floodplain areas that are vital to the environmental quality and resiliency of the community. The following objectives support the protection of natural habitats and other environmental resources throughout the Town.

- Protect the community's important environmental resources (aquifers, wetlands, and floodplains) from the potential adverse effects of development.
- Participate in State and County-sponsored watershed protection programs that affect resources in the Town.
- Encourage public education to promote maintenance of septic systems.
- Encourage a readily accessible program of recreation and facilities for persons of all ages, income levels, and cultural backgrounds in the town.
- Coordinate drainage planning efforts with those of neighboring towns that include the same drainage basins as the Town of Marilla and carefully evaluate the effects on drainage of all proposals for development.
- Require developers to dedicate easements along creeks and other major drainageways to allow for their maintenance and to reduce the risk of flood damages.
- Require, as a condition for development approval, the application of effective measures to minimize erosion, sedimentation, and drainage problems both during and after construction.





- Maintain wetland areas in their natural state by discouraging drainage, filling, and development in these areas, unless it is demonstrated that each of the following two conditions is met:
 - Discourage development within flood hazard areas so that it meets the requirements of the Federal Flood Insurance program and so that it will be resistant to flood damages, will not restrict the flow of flood waters, and will not increase flood hazards.
 - Support improvements to the Town park to enhance user opportunities and enjoyment, such as a walking trail.

GOAL 7: Promote coordinated, high quality, well maintained and cost-effective facilities and services required by residents and businesses in the Town

The Town of Marilla should strive to offer the highest quality and most cost-effective services possible.

The following objectives support the provision of cost effective facilities and services in the Town:

- Establish a program for capital improvements that will allow for needed upgrades to be undertaken in a cost-effective manner.
- Implement an ongoing program to insure adequate maintenance, repair, and replacement of existing town lands, buildings, equipment, roads, and drainage facilities.
- Encourage the ECWA to consider the costs/benefits of expanding the public water system to remaining areas of the Town where such service is needed.
- Work closely with County and State officials to ensure that decisions that relate to improvements to County and State highways within the Town take local concerns into consideration.





- Keep abreast of various state and/or federal grant programs as potential sources of revenues to help defray the cost of needed public improvements to local taxpayers.
- Participate in the planning and development of cooperative programs that maximize the availability of public services to residents without placing an undue burden on taxpayers.
- Support programs to provide quality public safety services (police, fire, and emergency medical services) to ensure protection for residents and their property at optimum levels and foster improved communication linkages between public safety providers and the community.

GOAL 8: Enhance the efficiency and efficacy of Town government and planning and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies

The Town of Marilla should strive to operate efficiently and interact with surrounding communities to promote cost savings. The following objectives support the efficiency of government in the Town:

- Identify policies and adopt best practices to maintain the Town of Marilla as a safe, prosperous and sustainable community.
- Encourage service providers to undertake infrastructure construction or maintenance projects in a holistic manner rather than one project or utility at a time in any given location.
- Encourage strategic and cost-effective maintenance and replacement of municipal facilities and equipment.
- Keep abreast of, and be responsive to, Federal and State regulations and grant opportunities that could benefit the Town.





- Participate in regional planning efforts to ensure that Town goals and objectives recognize and reflect regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Investigate areas where shared services and/or costs between the Town and surrounding communities may be appropriate and to mutual benefit.
- Maintain a high level of collaboration and coordination with the school districts, adjacent communities and other levels of government.

GOAL 9: Promote energy efficiency and conservation and the use of renewable energy resources and systems

The use of renewable resources for energy generation and energy efficiency is the way of the future and should be promoted throughout the community. The following objectives support energy efficiency and conservation in the Town:

- Encourage the utilization and installation of renewable energy systems, such as solar, wind and geothermal in new and existing developments.
- Promote education on energy conservation and alternative energy systems.
- Consider the implementation of energy efficiency programs and practices, and the use of renewable sources of energy for municipal facilities and operations.





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SECTION 5

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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SECTION 5: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals and policy objectives defined in the previous section of this report provide essential guidelines to assist the Town in making decisions relative to future land use and public investments. These goals can be translated into a suggested physical development pattern to establish a basis for future growth and development in the Town.

5.1 Critical Themes and Key Findings

Marilla is a rural, farming community. Elements of the community that contribute to this rural character and heritage include low density residential development, open fields, forested lands and agricultural activity. Farming has been a longstanding land use and activity in the Town of Marilla since the early settlement of the community. In 2013, the Town of Marilla adopted an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan that supports the importance of agriculture and outlines recommendations as a means of better managing future growth and development in the community. This Comprehensive Plan Update recognizes the importance of farming in the Town and sets forth specific goals and recommendations for agricultural protection and use sustainability, preservation of rural character, vital neighborhoods and diversity of the housing stock, well planned economic development, safe and efficient transportation, environment protection, quality community services and energy efficiency. In developing this Comprehensive Plan Update, an assessment of existing conditions and trends in the Town was undertaken. This assessment revealed the following:

A thorough analysis of the Inventory of Existing Conditions found in Section 3.0 and consultation with the Marilla Planning Board (who acted in the capacity of a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee) has resulted in the development of the following critical themes and key findings. These themes and findings present existing and future issues within the Town and aid in the identification of opportunities that the Town can build upon to help achieve its goals and objectives, as well as constraints that can hold the Town back from achieving its vision for the future.





- The population of the Town is stable, and the number of dwelling units has increased, keeping pace with population growth. There are no large population increases projected in the future.
- The Town is rural in nature, with agriculture and rural (large-lot) residential uses and extensive areas of open space comprising most of the Town.
- Residences are located primarily in the Town center area and the hamlet of Porterville (in the southern portion of the Town), as well as in a number of residential subdivisions and manufactured home parks. Businesses in the Town are located in the Town center and along Clinton Street; this development pattern should be continued in these areas.
- Future residential development should be focused in and around the Town center and Porterville hamlet, with rural residential development continuing throughout the remainder of the Town.
- Many community services, including the Town Hall, Highway Department, post office, elementary school, churches and a public library are located in the Town center.
- State highways include NYS Route 354 (Clinton Street); most other roadways in the Town are under Erie County jurisdiction.
- Agriculture is the primary land use (63%), followed by open space (30.5%), residential (4.5%) and commercial and other uses (2%).
- There is extensive public support for the preservation of the rural character of the Town.
- Zoning in the Town is consistent with existing land use.
- Agriculture is a large industry in the Town, generating valuable tax revenue while requiring minimal public services, making it the most cost-effective land use.





- The Town borders the Town of Bennington in Wyoming County to the east, the Town of Alden to the north, the Town of Elma to the west, and the Town of Wales to the south, which are all communities where agriculture is a significant component of the community character and local economy. Agricultural protection efforts should be coordinated with these communities.
- Redevelopment of vacant storefronts/commercial properties and the upkeep of property should be a priority in the Town to enhance and protect community character.
- There are many deep properties throughout the Town. Creative measures are needed to ensure that these areas are developed in a manner that maintains the rural character of the community and recognizes infrastructure constraints, but also allows for an economic return for these lands.
- Cluster residential subdivisions or conservation subdivisions offer alternative housing options and a way to protect sensitive resources and preserve rural character. Such development should be utilized to protect the rural character of the Town and integrate backlands into the development and move beyond frontage lot development patterns.
- The Town is included in a designated “rural area” as a part of the planning policy area in the Framework for Regional Growth (due to the lack of public infrastructure, large blocks of contiguous farmland and forest, and compact areas of residential and commercial land use). Rural areas are considered places where conservation strategies should generally take precedence over plans for development and public investment.
- Numerous areas of prime farmland soils exist throughout the east, northeast, central and southeastern portions of the Town. Protection of the important farmland soils in these areas is important for continued and expanded agricultural activity in the Town.
- Watershed and water quality protection are important for the Buffalo Creek, Cayuga Creek and Little Buffalo Creek corridors, which extend through the Town.





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- A large unconsolidated groundwater aquifer extends through the east and central portions of the Town. Developed areas within Marilla Town Center and the hamlet of Porterville are located atop this aquifer. Future development and current land use activities should be considerate of this important resource.
- There are numerous Federal and State jurisdictional wetlands and regulated floodplains located throughout the Town, primarily near creek corridors.
- Drainage corridors and patterns should be recognized to protect against the potential for increased flooding (changes to drainage patterns through development), particularly in the vicinity of the creek corridors.
- Most of the roads throughout the Town are in good condition and capable of handling additional traffic without sacrificing safety and level of service.
- Public water has been installed throughout most of the Town, with no further water district expansions planned.
- There is no public sanitary sewer service and all developed lands utilize on-site septic systems for wastewater disposal.
- Residents in the Town of Marilla must pay County taxes, school taxes and special district property taxes; these are significant costs for residents and farmers, in particular.
- The Marilla Comprehensive Plan and its implementation should consider and, as necessary, be coordinated with surrounding communities to ensure that consistent planning occurs across municipal boundaries (such as Comprehensive Plan updates, zoning changes, etc.).
- The Town should coordinate planning efforts with the Erie County Department of Environment





and Planning to ensure common goals, and compatible development and investment policies.

- The expenditure of public funds often provides an inducement for private investments. By timing proposed expenditures consistent with comprehensive plan objectives, the town can act positively to achieve its development goals.

5.2 Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The following (see Figure 2) analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) was prepared using the comments and other input gathered from discussions with Planning Board and the findings of the analysis of existing conditions. This SWOT analysis identifies what are considered to be the strengths and weaknesses that affect the Town of Marilla (internal factors over which you generally have some measure of control), and the opportunities and threats that come from outside the community (external factors over which you have little or no control). This analysis is useful in helping to identify strategies for helping the Town achieve its goals and objectives for the future.

5.3 Future Land Use and Recommendations (Map 14)

The analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats provides a clearer picture of the direction that should be taken to help the Town of Marilla achieve the goals and objectives for the future. To portray the overall vision for the community, a Vision Map for Future Land Use (Map 14) was created to illustrate the general framework for future land use in the Town. This map is not a zoning map and does not depict existing or proposed zoning districts. It is designed to provide guidance on long-term decision making with respect to future land use and zoning changes.

Map 14 illustrates the Town's desire to remain a rural, agricultural community, with much of land area reserved for this purpose. Residential use, particularly higher density residential development, is encouraged in and around Marilla Town Center, Porterville Hamlet and in the northwest area of the





FIGURE 2: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<p><i>Rural bedroom community atmosphere</i></p> <p><i>Town center possesses quaint character and charm</i></p> <p><i>Abundant open space</i></p> <p><i>Agricultural uses that add character</i></p> <p><i>The creek corridors</i></p> <p><i>Strong community support and commitment</i></p> <p><i>Prime farm soils / well established agricultural districts</i></p> <p><i>Community support for agriculture</i></p> <p><i>Limited development pressure</i></p> <p><i>Few farmer/neighbor conflicts</i></p> <p><i>Interest in utilizing alternative energy sources</i></p> <p><i>Marilla Town Park</i></p> <p><i>Public Library and other “anchors” in Town Center</i></p>	<p><i>Absence of a farmer’s market.</i></p> <p><i>Unwillingness on the part of the next generation to continue farming as a career</i></p> <p><i>Some agricultural land not in use</i></p> <p><i>Lack of identity and need to establish a stronger sense of place for the Town center</i></p> <p><i>Commercial district does not have a lot of demand for new development</i></p> <p><i>Abandoned structures in the Town Center</i></p> <p><i>Lack of a business plan for revitalizing the Town center</i></p> <p><i>There is limited infrastructure and utility services in the Town center (cable, Wi-Fi, etc.)</i></p>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<p><i>Market trends, particularly for agriculture</i></p> <p><i>Technical assistance available from the County</i></p> <p><i>Well maintained State and County Road</i></p>	<p><i>Long-term urban sprawl / Expanding growth in adjacent Towns to the west</i></p> <p><i>Inconsistent development styles that can change the character of the area</i></p> <p><i>Local businesses must compete with venues outside Marilla (local and on-line)</i></p> <p><i>Immigration</i></p>

Town. Commercial activity is desired in Marilla Town Center, along Clinton Street in the northwest portion of the Town, and near Porterville Hamlet, as shown on the map.





As outlined below, this section of the Comprehensive Plan outlines specific recommendations that, when implemented, will help to guide the Town of Marilla towards realizing its vision and achieving the goals and objectives identified in Section 4.0. The development of recommendations for the Plan is based on the inventory information, the findings, and an assessment of the community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). These recommendations are organized around the goals and objections for the community and are intended to provide guidance on how the Town can move toward achieving the vision for the community. This section is best thought of as a “tool box” of actions for possible use by the Town; these recommendations represent things that could be done to improve the community. The Implementation section of the Plan prioritizes the recommendations and lends direction on how to make the recommendations a reality.

Section 4.0 of the Comprehensive Plan identifies nine Town-wide goals of the Town of Marilla. For each goal, specific recommendations were developed to guide the Town toward it achievement, as follows:

Goal 1: Protect Lands and Resources Critical to the Long-Term Success and Sustainability of Agriculture to Enhance and Expand the Agricultural Economy of the Town

Goal 2:

Preserve and Protect the Rural Character and Quality of Life of the Town

1. Utilize the Planning Board to assist with implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and to reevaluate the Plan every 5 to 10 years or so and update, as necessary, to conform to changing conditions and to ensure that action items recommended in the Plan are achieving the goals and objectives.
2. Implement the recommendations of the adopted Town of Marilla Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.
3. Ensure that properties that have the potential to operate as viable farmland are included in the State-Designated Agricultural Districts and identify other viable areas of farmland that should also be included.
4. Consider the adoption of rural design guidelines and conservation subdivision and open development area regulations to ensure that the development of residential and other buildings, the removal of





vegetation, and/or grading of lands is undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the rural character of the area and preserves resources valuable to the Town.

5. Continue to support local agriculture by promoting the sale of locally grown produce at the local farmers market, festivals, restaurants, wholesalers, and schools.
6. Consider design standards to ensure that the aesthetics of new development in the Clinton Street business area is in keeping with the rural character of the community.
7. Ensure that new development and redevelopment in Marilla Town Center and Porterville hamlets maintains rural and historic character.

Goal 3: Maintain and Enhance the Vitality of Neighborhoods and Housing in the Town and Encourage Diversity of the Housing Stock to Meet the Needs of All Residents

1. Increase the density of residential development within the Marilla Town Center and Porterville Hamlet areas (without harming the rural character of these areas - - utilize hamlet and rural development guidelines).
2. Encourage maintenance of the housing stock to ensure continued quality in residential areas.
3. Locate senior and multi-family housing within the Marilla Town Center area to provide opportunities for housing for seniors and to take advantage of the proximity to amenities and services.
4. Consider different styles of single-family housing that address the needs of all segments of the population (e.g., conservation subdivisions in the rural residential area, senior housing, accessory living units, etc.).

***Goal 4:
Support Smart, Sustainable and Well-Planned Economic Development Opportunities***

1. Pursue development opportunities throughout the Town, particularly along Clinton Street and in Marilla Town Center and coordinate efforts.
2. Explore incentives and programs to help revitalize the hamlets and encourage development along Clinton Street and in other appropriate areas in the Town.





3. Ensure sufficient screening/ buffering of commercial uses from adjacent non-commercial uses.
4. Promote the sale of locally grown produce and other agricultural products to support the agricultural industry in the Town.

Goal 5: Promote a Safe and Efficient Roadway System in the Town

1. Work with County and State transportation officials to address identified transportation problem areas throughout the Town.
2. Adopt rural roadway design guidelines / standards for various roadways throughout the Town to preserve their rural character (context sensitive design).
3. Manage highway access along the section of Clinton Street where commercial development is permitted, including limiting curb cuts, sufficient driveway spacing, cross-access, and shared drives to improve traffic flow and safety.

Goal 6: Support the Preservation of Important Environmental Features and the Quality of Public Open Space and Recreational Facilities

1. Consider adding the locations of existing unconsolidated groundwater aquifer to the Conservation Overlay District Map to help protect important ground water resources.
2. Encourage the use of conservation farming techniques that protect sensitive resources.
3. Encourage organic farming practices that promote sustainable use of farmland.
4. Consider opportunities for additional parks and recreational facilities that would benefit the residents of the Town.
5. Promote educational programs, efforts and opportunities that address water quality issues and practices to protect local surface and groundwater supplies.
6. Encourage efforts that minimize non-point source pollution.





Goal 7: Promote Coordinated, High Quality, Well Maintained and Cost-Effective Facilities and Services Required by Residents and Businesses in the Town

Goal 8: Enhance the Efficiency and Efficacy of Town Government and Planning and Strive to Improve Interaction with Other Communities and Agencies

1. Identify opportunities for shared municipal services and facilities and actively pursue resources for the study and implementation of shared services.
2. Encourage the Marilla Fire Company to continue operation and expand their efforts to coordinate and share services and/or equipment.
3. Coordinate municipal planning efforts with neighboring municipalities.
4. Support and enhance continued senior services offered by the Town to retain and nurture the senior citizen population base of the Town.

Goal 9: Promote Energy Efficiency and Conservation and the Use of Renewable Energy Resources

1. Pursue grant money from NYSERDA for retrofit of municipal vehicles and facilities to alternative energy sources.

5.4 Development Areas

The Comprehensive Plan depicts two major development areas centered around Marilla Town Center and Porterville hamlet. It is recommended that future growth take place within or adjacent to them. By encouraging future growth to occur in these areas, the Town of Marilla should realize the following benefits:





- The disruption of prime agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands will be minimized.
- Public services could be delivered on a cost-effective basis.
- Compact development could increase the potential to implement lower cost innovative sanitary sewer facilities in the long-term future.
- Transportation facilities are in place and are adequate to support new development (Routes 354, 358 and Bullis and Jamison Roads).
- The opportunity to support existing, as well as the potential for new business and service uses, would be increased.
- A stronger sense of community can more readily be established.

5.4.1 Marilla Town Center

This area is the largest of the two developed areas in the Town and serves as the social, economic, and governmental center of the community. Efforts should focus on the preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings and uses, the provision of additional off-street parking, and the adoption of land use controls that would permit new growth to occur without conflicting with existing uses. New investments that would reinforce Marilla as the center of local activity should be encouraged, while actions that would diminish the areas status as a healthy and functional center should be discouraged.

Residential areas should include a variety of housing types (single-family dwellings, duplexes, and townhouses) adequate to provide housing for families of different sizes and income groups. While a majority of the residents will occupy single-family dwellings, reflecting a nationwide desire to





own a home, trends indicate that the elderly, young couples and single persons will continue the demand for a variety of housing types. The need for alternative housing choices has increased in recent years due to smaller households, an aging population, and changing lifestyles. As such, opportunities should be provided to enable owners of larger dwellings to reconfigure such buildings into rental units to serve the needs of smaller households. Care will have to be taken to ensure that adequate off-street parking is provided and that such conversions do not exert a negative impact on adjacent properties.

Residential densities within this area may range from single-family dwelling units to multi-family dwellings and townhouse developments in appropriately zoned areas. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that sites proposed for multi-family use can support such higher density development. Furthermore, one type or style of residential use should not be permitted to saturate the community center.

The attraction of limited scale commercial development should be encouraged within the Hamlet of Marilla Center. A variety of establishments providing everyday goods and services (for example a food store, barber shop, drug store, liquor store, etc.) would be the most appropriate types of commercial uses in the community center. Such development would reinforce the concept of Marilla as the center of town and serve as a convenience to residents.

Convenience commercial development may occur on individual lots within the Town center area (Bullis and Two Road Roads and West Avenue, which are particularly attractive for such uses) or at the intersections of Two Rod Road with Jamison Road and Two Rod Road with Clinton Street. As a plaza normally requires at least five acres of land with good highway access, it is unlikely that such a development would occur within Marilla Center. Although the Clinton Street site is very close to Marilla, the Jamison Road location could serve residents of the Porterville area, as well as Marilla. Both locations have good highway access and may attract consumers from other towns as they travel through the Town of Marilla.





Commercial development should be limited to meet the convenience retail and service needs of area residents. This plan does not recommend general commercial areas that provide for a much broader range of business establishments (e.g., motels, automobiles, large appliance outlets, theaters, etc.) as such uses would be inconsistent with the character of Marilla and local planning objectives.

Although the Town of Marilla has limited potential for industrial development, the town should not overlook opportunities to retain its existing employers and attract new jobs. Small light industrial uses that are not labor intensive or dependent upon public utilities could be compatible within or adjacent to Marilla Center. As an example, a location along either Jamison Road or Clinton Street would be suitable for warehousing, storage, goods movement and support services for agriculture. New economic activities would help absorb the burden of higher public service costs and provide additional employment to serve an increasing percentage of two-income households.

Commercial and industrial uses are important to create a community center atmosphere. In order to achieve this objective such uses must be provided in a manner which minimizes potential impacts on adjacent land uses and public services. These impacts can be controlled by development regulations that impose strict standards governing off-street parking, buffering, lighting, and other potential nuisances. The Town's existing land use controls should be evaluated, and modifications enacted to achieve required levels of control for such uses.

5.4.2 Porterville Hamlet

This hamlet area is defined as a growth node in the comprehensive plan. The types and densities of residential uses proposed for Marilla Town Center would also be appropriate in Porterville. Porterville is envisioned as a residential neighborhood. Small retail convenience outlets would be consistent with this objective. Development regulations that would increase the attractiveness of





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this area for residential development should be enacted. Large-scale commercial uses and other non-residential development that would be inconsistent with this objective or detract from the character of the area should be discouraged.





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SECTION 6

IMPLEMENTATION

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SECTION 6: IMPLEMENTATION

The Town of Marilla understands that local planning is an on-going process. The preparation of the Town of Marilla Comprehensive Plan update is only a first step. This plan outlines the preferred vision for the Town of Marilla and establishes recommendations for how to achieve that vision. Putting the recommendations into action requires continued work that must occur after the adoption of the Plan. It is strongly recommended that the Town adopt this Plan. By adopting the Comprehensive Plan update, the Town Board has demonstrated their commitment for managing the future of the Marilla community and ensuring stronger compliance with, and use of, the Plan by other municipal agencies.

An effective Comprehensive Plan establishes a process that ensures that the document remains relevant and is continually updated. The Plan, itself, is a roadmap to an actual end product, which is an improved and better community. The Comprehensive Plan cannot be considered a success unless its provisions and recommendations are acknowledged and implemented. Therefore, this section of the Plan outlines an implementation strategy for accomplishing the recommendations contained herein, thereby moving the Town toward achieving its goals.

The recommendations and priorities set forth in Section 5.0 and outlined in this strategy were developed throughout the planning process based on comments and concerns of the Planning Board and other Town officials involved in the process and by applying general planning principles. This implementation strategy reflects current circumstances and current priorities. However, as local conditions change, or as certain elements of this strategy are accomplished, the Town should revisit the priorities to reassess their continued applicability and/or the timing for completing certain actions.

This implementation strategy is set forth in a table (Figure 3) that summarizes and organizes the various recommendations identified in this Plan to help guide the Town in achieving its goals.





Each item contained in Figure 3 also has been assigned a recommended priority ranking of high, medium or low. High priority items are considered to have the greatest importance or urgency and are vital for achieving the goals of the Town. While it may take longer to accomplish some of these items, it is recommended that initial steps be commenced in the near term, after adoption of the Plan, to begin to put the plan into action. Items with medium and low priority rankings are typically those that the Town can address as future actions.

Actions are also categorized based on a time frame, as Immediate, Mid-Term, Long-Term Actions, and On-Going actions. Immediate Actions are those recommendations that would be carried out within the first one to two years after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update. These actions are considered the most important and could impact the success of other recommendations. Mid-term Actions would generally be addressed within 3 to 5 years from the adoption of the Plan and are typically recommendations that are related to some of the more important issues. Long-Term Actions are typically those that would take longer to implement due to their cost, extent of planning involved, or because they are not as critical as other recommended actions. On-Going Actions are recommendations that don't necessarily have a timeframe or targeted completion date and would be undertaken on an on-going basis.

The Implementation Table identifies the type of action that should be undertaken by the Town including: *legislative* actions that require passage of a Local Law or other action by the Town Board; *regulatory* actions that may require amendments or revisions to the Town Code or the creation of new land use regulations; *administrative* actions that are typically clerical work to be completed by the Town Clerk; *procedural* actions that often involve a resolution for creating an advisory board or appointing committee members; *planning* actions that require planning-related work by the Town or other boards and agencies; *education* actions that require the education of the Town representatives or residents by other agencies; or *research* actions that require the Town or another agency to look further into a topic.

The Implementation Table also identifies which responsible party or parties should take the lead or be involved with implementing a particular recommendation. The Town Board and Planning Board would be





involved in the majority of recommended actions. Additional comments are added, when applicable, in the Comments column and can include more specific ideas or information on funding and grant opportunities for the respective recommendation.

Basically, the following Implementation Table and the actions it contains comprise a “Tool Box” of recommendations to be utilized by the Town to achieve the future vision and respond to changes in the community. Although they have been scheduled for action and ranked in terms of priority, this has been done so as a guide; it is up to the Town to decide which implementation measures should be undertaken at any given time. Based on current circumstances, it could be determined that certain longer-term or low priority items could be accomplished in advance of an immediate, higher priority item that is more complex or costly. For example, should funding become available for a particular action, the Town may choose to reassign it as a higher priority, that would be undertaken in the immediate future in order to take advantage of the funding opportunity. Therefore, the Town may wish to pursue a lower priority action that could be more readily completed, while working to institute larger high priority actions over a long term. Hence, the timeframes and priority rankings of implementation actions should be viewed with flexibility. The idea is that the Town should be continually striving to implement the Comprehensive Plan, monitoring progress and re-prioritizing actions, as necessary, as it moves forward.

To help with the process of monitoring and prioritizing implementation actions on an ongoing basis, it is recommended that the Town maintain the use of the Planning Board as the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (or establish a new committee) to help keep the Comprehensive Plan an active document. As a recommending body to the Town Board, this entity would monitor progress, encourage continued momentum and recommend adjustments to the implementation strategy and priority of actions, over time, as circumstances dictate.





**Figure 3:
Implementation of Comprehensive Plan Recommendations**

Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Adopt the Comprehensive Plan Update	High	Legislative	Immediate	Town Board	Requires that land use, zoning and capital improvement actions comply with the Plan
Continue to Utilize the Planning Board as the Comprehensive Plan Committee for implementation of the Plan	High	Procedural	On-going	Town Board Planning Board	To monitor the progress of implementation actions and success of the Plan, and offer recommendations for reprioritization of implementation items
Posting of adopted Comprehensive Plan on the Town's website	High	Administrative	Immediate	Town Clerk	Make the plan available to the public
Distribute Copies of the Plan (Boards, Departments, Erie County, etc.)	High	Administrative	Immediate	Town Clerk	To ensure familiarity with, and use of, the Plan by Town and other municipal agencies
Establish a budget for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan	High	Administrative	Annually	Town Board	Allows for continued implementation of recommended actions, based on the budget
Implement the recommendations of the Marilla Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan	High	Regulatory	Immediate	Town Board Planning Board Conservation Advisory Board	Enhance the opportunities for growth of agriculture and agricultural businesses, consistent with Goal #1





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Continue to work with Erie County to re-evaluate the Town's Agricultural Districts	High	Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Erie County NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets Conservation Advisory Board	Continue to work with Erie County to re-evaluate the Town's Agricultural Districts to ensure that all viable farmland is included in the districts and to help ensure that existing farmland remains in the districts
Work to provide agri-entrepreneurship programs, as needed	Medium	Education	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Cornell Cooperative Extension NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets	Agri-entrepreneurship programs provide farmers with education on business plans, management, financing, marketing, and operations
Encourage the use of sustainable/conservation farming techniques	Medium	Education	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Cooperative Extension Conservation Advisory Board	Such practices help sustain the quality of prime farm soils and promote good land use practices
Ensure that new development in Marilla Town Center and Porterville hamlet maintains rural and historic character	High	Planning Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Planning Board	Preserve small-scale, historic and traditional character of these areas





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Adopt rural development guidelines and conservation subdivision regulations	High	Regulatory	Immediate	Town Board Planning Board	Maintains rural character, open space and agricultural land/businesses
Adopt design standards for the section of Clinton Street that is zoned for business to improve aesthetics and visual quality (could use an overlay district)	High	Planning Regulatory	Immediate	Town Board Planning Board Code Enforcement Officer	Improve landscaping, lighting, signage, screening/buffering, etc. to improve community character
Maintain quality housing stock through active Code enforcement	High	Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Building Dept.	Enhance community character and address issues of blight
Evaluate adoption of a local Property Maintenance Law	Medium	Regulatory	Mid-term	Town Board Planning Board Building Dept.	Enhance community character and address issues of blight
Locate senior and multi-family housing (denser residential development) in the Marilla Town Center and Porterville hamlets	Medium	Planning	On-going	Town Board Planning Board	Consistent with smart growth policies; promotes connectivity and walkability





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Coordinate with the Erie County IDA to identify and pursue development opportunities throughout the Town	Medium	Planning Research Education	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Erie County IDA	Focus efforts on Marilla Town Center and Clinton Street.
Continue to post business listings on the Town's website	High	Administrative	On-going	Town Clerk	To promote local business
Utilize incentives, such as PILOT, an enhanced 485(b) program, Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG) or Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) to promote development in the Town Center and along Clinton Street	High	Planning	On-going	Town Board Tax Assessor Erie County IDA	These techniques are vital for achieving revitalization in the hamlets and providing exemptions or other incentives for business development
Support local agricultural activity by promoting the sale of locally grown products at local farmers markets, festivals, restaurants, wholesalers, and schools/ colleges	High	Education Planning	On-going	Town Board Erie County School Districts Local businesses Conservation Advisory Board	Provides support to local farmers and other agricultural entities; also helps to market the area.





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Adopt a local law that authorizes commercial, business or industrial Real Property Tax exemption, pursuant to NYS Real Property Tax Law, Section 485(b) to incentivize business development	Medium	Regulatory	Mid-term	Town Board Tax Assessor	Provides real property tax exemptions to commercial, business and industrial property owners who make improvements to buildings in targeted areas
Require access management along the section of Clinton Street that is zoned for business	High	Planning Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Planning Board	Control highway access, curb cuts; require cross access, etc. to improve highway operations and public safety
Work with County and State transportation officials to identify and remedy problem intersections and roadways	High	Planning	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Town Highway Superintendent Erie County Highway Dept.	Must coordinate such activity to achieve change; use Comprehensive Plan to support recommendations
Consider opportunities for additional parks and recreational facilities and activities	Medium	Planning	On-going	Planning Board Conservation Advisory Commission	Increase in beneficial public services to residents for active and passive enjoyment





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Adopt rural roadway design guidelines and standards (ensure subdivision regulations promote rural roadway character)	Medium	Regulatory	Mid-term	Town Board Town Highway Superintendent Town Engineer	Aimed at maintaining the rural character of local roads and making sure new roads in subdivisions are not too wide and are connected
Identify / establish opportunities for future and improved public access to local creek corridors for passive recreational use	Low	Planning Legislative	Mid – Long Term	Town Board Planning Board Conservation Advisory Commission	Seek permanent access easements or purchase of land and riparian buffers
Include groundwater aquifer as a part of the Conservation Overlay District	High	Regulatory	Immediate	Town Board Planning Board Conservation Advisory Commission	Focus on protection of important groundwater resources
Promote public education programs and other efforts to minimize non-point source pollution and reduce runoff	Medium	Education Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Planning Board Conservation Advisory Board Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District Cooperative Extension	Essential for the protection of surface and groundwater quality





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Revise the Town Subdivision Regulations to require testing of soils in areas without public water service and/or public sanitary sewer service to identify problematic soils	Medium	Regulatory	Mid-term	Town Board Planning Board Erie County Health Dept.	Reduces the likelihood that septic systems will fail and helps to protect groundwater resources
Promote programs to identify and mitigate failing septic systems and explore potential funding opportunities to assist residents with corrective actions	High	Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Building Dept. NYSDEC Erie County Health Dept. Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District Conservation Advisory Board	Important for the protection of surface and groundwater quality and the protection of public health
Promote educational opportunities to help residents understand the importance of groundwater protection and septic system maintenance	High	Planning Education	On-going	Town Board Erie County Dept. of Environment and Planning NYSDEC Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District Conservation Advisory Board	Protection of the quality of the groundwater aquifers is essential for potable water supply and septic maintenance can help to avoid long-term costs to residents





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Promote organic and alternative farming practices.	Medium	Education	On-going	Town Board Conservation Advisory Board Erie County Cooperative Extension	Promotes sustainable land use practice
Identify opportunities for shared municipal services and facilities	High	Planning Research Regulatory	On-going	Town Board Planning Board	Work with the surrounding Towns and School Districts, and Erie County; can result in municipal cost savings
Coordinate municipal planning efforts with neighboring municipalities	Medium	Planning	On-going	Town Board Planning Board	Ensures the planning efforts near municipal boundaries are consistent, compliant and seamless
Encourage the local fire company to continue and expand their efforts to coordinate and share services and equipment	Medium	Planning Research	On-going	Fire Companies Town Board	Results in efficiency of service and cost savings
Support and enhance continued provision of senior services to retain and nurture the senior citizen population base and families	Medium	Planning Education	On-going	Town Board Planning Board New York State Office for the Aging Erie County Dept. of Social Services	Helps to address the growing needs of the elderly to make their life easier in the community





Action	Priority	Type of Action	Time Frame	Responsible Parties/ Participants	Comments
Pursue NYSERDA funding and incentives to retrofit municipal vehicles and facilities for alternative energy.	Medium	Research Planning	On-going	Town Board	Promotes cost savings and energy efficiency

** Additional actions can and will be added to this listing as deemed necessary.

