

**SENECA COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
  
PHYSICAL INVENTORY  
AND  
OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS  
  
AND  
  
LAND USE REPORT**

**PREPARED FOR:**

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
PLANNING  
SENECA COUNTY NEW YORK**

**with funding through  
US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT**

**PREPARED BY:**

**PASSERO ASSOCIATES, P.C.  
MARKETECH ASSOCIATES  
THE PATHFINDERS**

**October 1995**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Seneca County is at the center of New York State and the Finger Lakes region. The county is bordered by two of the Finger Lakes:

- Seneca Lake forms the majority of the western boundary;
- Cayuga Lake forms the majority of the eastern boundary.

The county, roughly rectangular in shape, is 35 miles long and varies from 8 - 10 miles in width. The county covers 350 square miles, or 211,200 acres. There are two county seats. One is in the village of Waterloo and one is in the village of Ovid.

The main trading and retail centers are the villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls. Most of the industrial activity also occurs within these two villages. Geneva, Auburn and Ithaca are the larger neighboring cities which attract retail and industrial trade. Rochester and Syracuse are the nearest major metropolitan areas.

Approximately 18% of the county is forested, with most of the treed areas being scattered woodlots. The most extensive wooded areas are within the Montezuma Wildlife refuge, with approximately 1,600 acres of forest. This forest consists mainly of swamp woods which are not managed for timber.

About 10% of the total land area within the county is federally owned (20,500 acres). The federal lands are located within the Seneca Army Depot (10,900 acres), the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (6,431 acres) and the Finger Lakes Land Use Area (3,508 acres).

There are five State Parks within the county, equalling less than 1% of the total county land area.

## PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

Public water service is provided to Seneca County residents through thirteen individual water districts. These districts are permitted through the NY Department of Environmental Conservation and provide potable water for domestic, industrial and fire protection uses. The primary sources of water for distribution are Seneca and Cayuga Lakes.

### *Border City*

This district serves 375 customers within the towns of Border City and Fayette. The largest customer is NYSEG and the local school. The larger supply lines, which serve the village of Waterloo, provide water to this district.

The district was experiencing problems with pressures. A two phase program to correct the problem has been implemented. The first phase, completed during the summer of 1994 and the second phase scheduled for the summer of 1995, will correct the problems with delivering adequate pressure.

The system was originally constructed in 1920. The services within smaller residential developments require routine maintenance and repairs. The delivery mains are 8" and 10" water mains. Service laterals are 3/4". The district issues permits for connection, charges a tapping fee and inspects all construction and tapping of the system.

### *Fayette*

The Town of Fayette Water District #1 serves 33 residential customers. Water is supplied from a pump station in Waterloo. The system provides fire protection to the Waterloo Fire

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**  
**PHYSICAL INVENTORY** **PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

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Department.

The system is in good repair and was constructed in 1974. The watermain is a 12" distribution main with service laterals. The town supervisor issues permits for construction.

***Interlaken***

This district services the Village of Interlaken which includes 306 customers. The system provides fire protection for the Interlaken Fire Department.

The largest users are Gunblack Manufacturing and the school.

The system was constructed in 1932. The water source is wells located off Interlaken Beach Road. The water is pumped to a reservoir and then distributed to customers via a 12" water main. About 1000-2000 feet of main need to be replaced. The village permits and inspects additions and repairs to the system.

***Junius***

The district purchases water from the Waterloo district. Water is stored and re-chlorinated in a 480,000 gallon tank. The system then distributes water to customers. The system delivers water at 1,200 gallons per minute.

***Ovid***

The Ovid district serves the residents within the village of Ovid. Water is pumped from two sources, one source from wells and the other drawn from Seneca Lake. Water drawn from

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY  
PHYSICAL INVENTORY PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

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Seneca Lake is passed through a sand system filtration plant before delivery to customers.

The system is primarily 6" service mains and approvals for connection are through the village department of Public Works.

Pressure varies upon location within the town. Pressure is generally 35-40 psi. throughout the town with the poorest pressure at the school. This is attributed to the loss from backflow preventers.

A new water tower is being built which has a capacity for 475,000 gallons. The current tower holds 75,000 gallons.

The average daily rate of use is 70,000 gallons. The system has the capacity to deliver 200,000 gallons.

***Romulus and Willard Districts***

These districts are compiled of the Romulus Water District, Willard Water District and Willard Extension. About 220 total customers are served, with seventy-three (73) in the hamlet of Romulus, one hundred thirty-seven (137) in hamlet of Willard and seventeen (17) in Willard Extension. The largest customer in the hamlet of Romulus is the mobile home park, which is served off a single meter.

The Romulus Fire Department provides fire protection within the hamlet of Romulus with water supplied from the Romulus district.

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY  
PHYSICAL INVENTORY PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

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Water is supplied from two separate sources:

- The hamlet of Romulus is supplied through an 8" main from the Seneca Army Depot;
- The Willard Psychiatric Facility supplies the hamlet of Willard and Willard Extension through a 6" water main.

All water is supplied through gravity flow. Both systems maintain good pressure throughout the respective systems.

The town of Varick issues permits and performs inspection services for the Hamlet of Romulus. The hamlet of Willard issues permits and performs inspections within the hamlet of Willard and Willard Extension.

***Sampson State Park***

This district serves only the state park. Water is pumped from Seneca Lake into a 285,000 gallon tank. The park anticipates connecting to the Seneca Army Depot filtration system. The park currently has a variance for untreated surface water.

Usage ranges from summer highs of 80,000 gpd to winter lows of 10,000 gpd.

The system includes 12" transite pipe with services of 2" galvanized pipe

***Seneca Falls and West Seneca Falls***

This district includes the towns of Fayette, Seneca Falls, Canoga and the village of Seneca Falls. About 3300 customers are served through this district. The largest customers are Gould's Pumps and Seneca Mills. The Red Jacket and Seneca Falls Fire Departments provide fire protection services using water supplied from this district.



**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**  
**PHYSICAL INVENTORY** **PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

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Water is drawn from Cayuga Lake to Canoga, then pumped to two water towers located in the village of Seneca Falls. The only low pressure zone is along State Route 414, north of Routes 5 & 20.

The system varies with age and the district is on a five year plan to update all lines, including upgrading all mains to 8". The town of Seneca Falls is considering a new main along the Route 414 corridor, connecting with an existing main east of 414. This will complete a loop through the area and increase the available pressure to the West Seneca area.

***Seneca Army Depot***

The Seneca Army Depot includes the hamlet of Romulus within it's distribution network. There are approximately 240 customers within the hamlet.

The Depot pumps water from Seneca Lake into a 1,000,000 gallon reservoir located within the South Depot area. Water is distributed throughout the South and North Depot ares, including the warehouse district and ash dump areas . Water pressure is maintained at 60 psi. throughout the system and pressure should be further enhanced upon completion of a 250,000 gallon water tank replacement at the Romulus site.

The daily capacity varies from 120,000 to 160,000 gallons per day during the week, and, from 80,000 to 120,000 gallons per day during the weekend. The higher weekday amounts are attributed to the watering activities at the base ash dump.

The base fire department, Hamlet of Romulus and town of Varick obtain water from the system for fire fighting capabilities. There is a hydrant located on NY RTE. 96, in Kandaia, for fire fighting. This hydrant is used to fill pumper trucks under the Varick Fire

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY  
PHYSICAL INVENTORY PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

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Department.

***Varick***

The Varick Water District serves portions of the town of Varick and hamlet of Romulus. The district serves 61 residential customers, including two mobile home parks. The Romulus Fire Department uses the system for fire protection.

The source of water is the Seneca Army Depot. There are no apparent problems within the system, but, repairs may be necessary in the future. The bolts on the mains appear to be breaking.

The mains are 8" and the size of laterals is not know.

***Waterloo***

This is the largest water district within Seneca County. Service area includes the town and village of Waterloo and the Finger Lakes Outlet Center in the town of Junius. Water is also supplied to the districts covering Fayette, Border City, and Burgess Road. There are 8000 customers.

Water is drawn from Seneca Lake and pumped to storage tanks. The system is gravity fed, maintaining pressure through the district water towers. Supply starts at a 16" main which splits to two mains, a 12" main which travels down Routes 5 & 20 serving the Town and a 10" main which serves the village of Waterloo.

The town of Waterloo permits and performs inspection services.

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**  
**PHYSICAL INVENTORY** **PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

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***Willard Psychiatric Center***

This district incorporates the Willard Psychiatric Facility and supplies water to separate districts (Willard and Willard Extension) adjacent to the facility. Water is pumped from Seneca Lake into a water tank adjacent to the center's filtration plant . The service area includes the Willard facility, Buena Vista State Golf Course and the hamlet of Willard.

960,000 gallons are used on a daily basis. The village of Ovid Fire Department uses the water supply.

## PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER SYSTEMS

### *Seneca Army Depot*

Two treatment plants operate within the depot.

The South Depot has a 250,000 gpd system which services the hamlet of Romulus and the South Depot. Average daily capacity runs at approximately 180,000 gpd. The system runs at higher capacities after storm events. This signifies infiltration into the system.

This is a tertiary treatment system permitted for domestic waste. After waste is treated, water flows through a wetland and dissipates.

The North Depot facility has separate sanitary system with a daily capacity of 300,000 gpd. This system is currently off-line, but does maintain a current NYSDEC permit so the system can be reactivated at any time. This system serves only the North depot and does not serve areas off-base. The system is permitted for domestic waste.

### *Seneca District No.1*

This facility operates a 700,000 gpd tertiary treatment facility within the Willard Psychiatric Campus. This facility serves the Seneca Army Depot housing along the west shore of Seneca Lake, Sampson State Park, the hamlet of Willard and the villages of Ovid and Lodi.

The average daily flow through the plant is 300-500,000 gallons. This amount is less than before the Depot downsizing.

The treatment plant and services to all the locations off the Willard campus were

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**  
**OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS** **PUBLIC SANITARY SERVICE**

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constructed in 1982. The Willard Campus infrastructure dates from 1910.

Plans to upgrade are on hold pending the New York state budget and disposition of the Willard Campus. The pending renovation of the facility and conversion to drug rehabilitation center for non-violent felons is part of the pending \$8.6 million renovation.

***Village of Waterloo***

The village system was designed to a capacity of 1.2 million gallons and is licensed by the NYDEC for 800,000 gpd. The average daily flow through the plant is 700,000 gallons. There are no services extended beyond the village boundaries.

The plant was built in 1971 and the largest problem is infiltration. The lines within the center of Waterloo date from the early 1900's.

***Border City***

Border City is in the eighth year of a twenty year contract with the town of Geneva to use the town's treatment plant. All sewers in Border City flow gravity to the town of Geneva plant. The plant has a capacity of 4,000,000 gallons per day. The plant capacity is currently approximately 3,000,000 gallons per day.

***Village of Seneca Falls***

The village's system is licensed for 3.5 million gallons with an average daily flow of 1.2-1.4 million gallons. The plant serves the village of Seneca Falls, West Seneca, Bridgeport, the Chiropractic College and Cayuga State Park.

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The plant was constructed in 1970, Bridgeport and Cayuga State Park were added in 1982 and West Seneca was added in the mid 1970's. The village system dates from the early 1900's.

There are no problems with the system and there is plenty of excess capacity available for future use.

***Village of Interlaken***

The village is served with clay pipes, which are angereed out as part of routine maintenance. the system is gravity to the treatment plant. Originally built in 1963, the plant was rebuilt in 1988. The plant capacity is 100,000 gallons per day. Current use is approximately 50,000 gallons per day.

The system serves about 180 households and small commercial businesses.

***Junius***

A newly built package plant services the Finger Lakes Outlet Center. Built in 1994, the plant has a capacity of 50,000 gallons per day and currently operates at 22,000 gallons per day. The plant can be incrementally upgraded to handle 250,000 gallons per day.

The Finger Lakes Outlet Center is the only customer, to date, using this facility. The Outlet Center is currently constructing Phase II, which will approximately double the daily flow into the plant.

## PUBLIC UTILITIES

### Telephone Services

There are three local service telephone companies:

- *NYNEX;*
- *Trumansburg Home Telephone Company;*
- *Empire Telephone Company.*

#### NYNEX

NYNEX, with offices in Geneva, serves 12,500 customers within Seneca County. This phone company has fiber optic capabilities and provides this service to commercial customers upon request.

#### Trumansburg Home Telephone Company

Trumansburg Home Telephone Company serves customers within the town and village of Ovid, the village of Interlaken and town of Covert. The company has approximately 2900 customers within Seneca County. The company has state-of-the-art digital switching capacity to serve 150,000 access lines and currently is running at 43% of that capacity, through the entire company territory. Trumansburg Home Telephone offers video conferencing services at their headquarters in Phelps NY.

#### Empire Telephone Company

Empire Telephone serves the town and village of Lodi and has approximately 700 customers. The company has digital switching equipment and does not offers fiber optic cable capabilities.

## **Electric and Natural Gas**

Electric and natural gas services are provided through NY State Electric and Gas (NYSEG). Electric service is available throughout the entire county. Natural gas service is available north of the Varick/Fayette town line and within the town of Covert.



## NATURAL FEATURES

Seneca County, near the center of New York state and the Finger Lakes region, contains numerous natural features. Several are common to the entire county, while several are unique to specific locations within the county.

### *Topography*

The northern portion of the county, roughly north of the Seneca River, is composed of unique drumlin formations which run in a north-south direction. The distinct north-south pattern of drumlins lends a distinct character to the visual landscape, creating vistas with a limited range.

The southern portion of the county is composed of relatively flat central plain with slopes leading down to the adjacent lakes. The center of the county forms a drainage divide, roughly half the county drains to either Seneca or Cayuga Lakes. The relative flatness of the terrain and high points located within mid-county contribute to almost unlimited vistas of the surrounding area.

### *Wetlands*

Two jurisdictional forms of regulated wetlands are within Seneca County: State (NYDEC) and federal (USAC).

#### *State Regulated Wetlands*

State wetlands are regulated through the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC). These wetlands are a minimum of 12.5 acres in size and have associated adjacent areas 100' wide which are also regulated. The official state wetland maps

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**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **NATURAL FEATURES**

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are regulatory and a wetland is present if so indicated upon the official wetland inventory map.

***Federal Jurisdictional Wetlands***

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USAC) regulates federal jurisdictional wetlands. The USAC uses US Fish and Wildlife Maps to locate potential presence of federal wetlands. These maps are not regulatory and only indicate a strong potential for wetland presence upon delineation using the federal manual. Federal wetlands have no minimum size requirement and do not regulate an associated adjacent area.

The largest and most significant wetland in the county is the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. This wetland is regulated at both state and federal levels.

***Drainage***

The patterns for drainage vary with the location within the county. The northern portion of the county drains north-south. The southern portion of the county drains east and west.

***Finger Lakes***

Seneca and Cayuga Lakes are the most dominant natural features within the county. These lakes attract the most visitors, are the focus of most water related activities, contribute to the unique climate conducive to supporting grape production and the associated wineries and are the main source for drinking water within the county.

***Rivers and Canals***

The Seneca River connects the north end of Seneca Lake to the north end of Cayuga Lake.

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**  
**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **NATURAL FEATURES**

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The Seneca-Cayuga Canal, part of the river system, connects Seneca Lake to Cayuga Lake and then the Erie Canal system.

***Soils***

The county is underlain with limestone formations and limestone soils which are unique to this part of the state. This soil is ideal for production of crops, especially grape production.

## TRANSPORTATION

Seneca County is served by four forms of transportation: road, rail, air and water.

### ROADWAYS

The county has a hierarchy of road systems and road jurisdictions. Road classifications fall into interstate, state, county and town road categories.

#### *NY Thruway Authority*

The New York State Thruway (Interstate 90), a toll road, passes through the northern section of Seneca County. Exit 41, five miles north of the village of Seneca Falls on State Route 414, connects Seneca County with the interstate system. The Thruway serves access to Rochester and points west and Syracuse and points east.

#### *New York State Department of Transportation*

The state maintains about 160 miles of roadways throughout Seneca County.

- State Routes 96, 96A, 414 and 89 are the principle north-south routes.
- State Routes 318, 336 and 5 are the principle east-west routes.

The primary travel pattern of state routes through the county is north-south. East-west travel occurs within the northern third of the county and is hampered by the presence of the two finger lakes within the rest of the county.

#### *County, Town and Village Roads*

The county and towns maintain approximately 525 miles of roads, resulting in the

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**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **TRANSPORTATION**

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majority of road surfaces within the county. These roads generally connect between state routes and serve residential and industrial areas within the village centers.

## **RAIL**

The Finger Lakes Railway Corporation operates main line rail traffic. The regional office is in Geneva New York, which services customers in Seneca County. Tracks through Seneca County include the mainline, which basically parallels Route 5 & 20, and the Kendaia branch along the east side of Seneca Lake to the Seneca Army Depot. The rail company has passage rights over lines operated by other rail carriers.

Current rail customers are: Nutrite; The Seneca Army Depot; JS Blowers; Baillie Lumber. Daily service is available as required. Service to the Depot is "as needed".

Potential business has been identified within Seneca County. Potential business includes expanding service to present customers, former rail users and companies which have never used rail.

Finger Lakes Railway Corporation recommends two improvements in association with the Depot downsizing.

- The first is the rehabilitation of the Kendaia line to a class 2 line (speeds up to 25 mph). This track is currently a class 1 with maximum speeds of 10 mph.
- The second recommends construction of a road connection between 96 and 414 south of Waterloo to facilitate truck access from the Depot to the Thruway exit 41.

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**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **TRANSPORTATION**

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**AIR**

Seneca County is served by one public air facility, the Finger Lakes Air Field. This facility serves private, small engine aircraft. The field is south of the village of Seneca Falls and is operated through the county.

The airstrip at the Seneca Army Depot is currently operated by the Department of the Army as a military facility. A study was conducted considering a joint public/private use for the airfield. The facility has a 7,000 foot long runway and can accommodate private and military jet aircraft. The County needs to revisit the feasibility of using the airstrip as a public facility in light of the anticipated closure of the Seneca Army Depot

## EXISTING LAND USES

The county has three generalized land use categories: Government owned and/or operated (developed and undeveloped), agriculturally oriented and urban.

### ***GOVERNMENT OPERATED***

#### ***Seneca Army Depot***

The Seneca Army depot is the largest, single occupancy site within the county. With 11,000 acres, it occupies roughly 5% of the total land area within the county. The major portion of the property has been developed as a munitions depository for the Department of Defense. The depot contains:

- 180 sets of family quarters
- 450 person barracks complex
- 139 miles of road
- 42 miles of railroad track
- a 7,000 foot runway
- 927 structures, including 35 maintenance shops and a machine shop
- 1,332,796 gross square feet of ammunition storage
- 3,048,855 gross square feet of general supply/industrial plant equipment storage

In 1989, Seneca Depot was named to the EPA's National Priority List. The depot has 72 possible hazardous sites, 25 of which are being investigated for cleanup. Some of the remaining sites may require sampling and testing.

The North Depot area was excessed in 1992. The North Depot includes a bowling alley,

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**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **LAND USE**

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gymnasium, sewage treatment plant, office space and residential living space. Total available footage at the North Depot is in excess of 315,000 square feet.

***The Drug Treatment Center for New York (formerly the Willard Psychiatric Center)***

Located on the west side of Seneca Lake, the Willard site is 670 acres, first opened in 1860 as an agricultural college. The arrangement of structures, many dating from the 1870's, is currently undergoing an \$8.6 million renovation to convert the facility for a drug rehabilitation center for non-violent felons.

***Montezuma Wildlife Refuge and Hector Land Use Area***

Located at the north and south ends of the county, respectively, these areas are combinations of upland and wetland environments.

The Montezuma Wildlife Refuge forms the northeastern corner of Seneca County. This wildlife sanctuary has become an example of conservation practices and wildlife management working together. The site offers passive opportunities for observation of wild life and opportunities for sport hunting and fishing.

The Hector Land Use Area is scattered along the southern part of the county within the towns of Varick and Lodi. This area serves primarily as a conservation area.

***State Parks***

Four of the five state parks within the county are situated on the shore of one of the bordering finger lakes. Seneca Lake, Sampson and Lodi Point State Parks are on Seneca Lake, Cayuga Lake State Park is on its' namesake body of water. The fifth, Seneca Falls Urban Cultural Park is in the village of Seneca Falls and front the Seneca/Cayuga Canal.

All parks offer access to the waterfront: Seneca Lake, Samson and Cayuga Lakes have



**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**

**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **LAND USE**

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beach fronts; these three plus Lodi Point provide either public boat launches and/or marinas; Samson offers camping and is home of the Naval Maritime Museum. Seneca Falls Urban Cultural Park offers access to the Seneca/Cayuga Canal and plans anticipate development of a recreational harbor within the downtown area.

The Buena Vista Golf Course, immediately south of the Willard Psychiatric facility, is a public golf course operated through the New York State Parks system.

***AGRICULTURE ORIENTED***

The majority of land in Seneca County is used for agricultural purposes. Two distinct forms of agriculture are apparent within the county and are dependant on the location and topography of the county.

The first distinct form of agriculture is along the slopes leading toward the two bordering Finger Lakes. Grape vineyards and associated wineries are found along these slopes. The combination of limestone soils, proximity to water which moderates seasonal temperature extremes and the flow of colder air down the slopes create the unique microclimate conducive to grape growing and wine production.

The second distinct form is the flat areas in the southern portion and drumlins of the northern portions of the county. These areas are farmed in conventional manners with silage, soybeans and wheat the principal crops.

The agricultural areas have definite village centers catering to the surrounding land use. These centers are the villages of Ovid, Lodi and Interlaken.

***URBAN***

The urbanized area of Seneca County forms an east-west corridor paralleling the RTE. 5 &

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY**

**PHYSICAL ANALYSIS** **LAND USE**

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20 corridor. The principle centers are the villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls which are accessible to the Route 5 & 20 corridor, the main rail line for the Finger Lakes Rail Corporation, the Seneca-Cayuga canal and the New York State Thruway (I-90).

## SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS

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### OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The complexity of preparing an Economic Adjustment Strategy demands careful, up front research, inventory and analysis. This Opportunities and Constraints document outlines Seneca County's constraints and opportunities for four important factors: infrastructure, transportation networks, natural features and existing land uses. Studying the county, an attempt has been made to review and inventory not only the obvious short term inventory of opportunities and constraints, but also to view this inventory from a more comprehensive long range view.

This analysis of Seneca County's constraints and opportunities is intended to be thought provoking and open ended, not conclusive and final in content. Supplemental information and comments from the Redevelopment Advisory Council and Seneca County staff is encouraged.

The ultimate objective of this report is to assist the direction the economic adjustment strategy will take and design a checklist of items to be included for each feasible project defined through the strategy.

### INFRASTRUCTURES

#### *Public Water System*

##### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. The duplicity created through many small service areas and small customer base could create difficulty with funding district improvements, expansion of service and/or repairs.
- b. Water supplied from state and federal run facilities could impair delivery of service if the state or federal facility is closed. Assumption of operation and

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ownership costs would fall directly upon the dependant districts serviced through the particular facility.

### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The availability of water is unlimited, when compared to most regions of the country.
- b. The cost of water is relatively inexpensive compared to other regions of the country.
- c. The municipal suppliers of water have the capacity to expand service and incorporate new users within the systems.

### ***Public Sanitary Systems***

#### **1. Constraint and Negative Features**

- a. Many of the rural municipal systems are at or near capacity, requiring upgrading the facilities for additional flow.
- b. Sanitary services provided through federal (Seneca Army Depot) and state facilities (Willard) could impair delivery of service. Potential closure of these facilities would result in the local sanitary districts absorbing the costs. Assumption of operation and maintenance costs would fall directly on the rural sanitary sewer districts.

#### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The presence of sanitary service within a rural setting is an attractive feature for many incubator and fledgling businesses.
- b. The excess capacity available within the Seneca Falls and Waterloo sanitary systems are advantageous to businesses willing to locate near the major commercial, residential and transportation corridors.
- c. The available capacity at the Seneca Army North Depot is extremely attractive to industrial and commercial users.

## SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS

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### ***PUBLIC UTILITIES***

#### ***Natural Gas***

##### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. The southern portion of the county, except for the town of Covert, is not served through NYSEG for natural gas distribution.
- b. The Seneca Army Depot is not served by natural gas. Supplying natural gas to this facility requires major investment in pipeline construction to bring the current gas line in Fayette to the Depot.

##### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. Natural gas wells are common throughout the southern portion of the county.

#### ***Communications***

##### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. The county is divided into two area codes. This requires long distance charges when calling from one area code into the other.

##### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The county is well serviced with both local and long distance telephone services. The opportunity for expansion in service is available to all areas of the county.
- b. The local telephone companies have the ability to link commercial and residential customers to fiber optics and other communication technologies.
- c. The telephone system located within the Seneca Army Depot has the most sophisticated equipment in the area. This equipment and system will be available for inclusion into one of the adjacent telephone company areas as the base closure plan becomes implemented.

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY  
OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS**

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## **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**

### ***Roadways***

#### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. There is poor direct roadway linkage between the potential reuse facilities at the Seneca Army Depot and Exit 41 on the Thruway. Current linkage requires passing through the urban cores of either Waterloo or Seneca Falls.

#### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The county is well served with adequate roadway networks.

### ***Railways***

#### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. Many businesses have expressed interest in having a rail siding to serve their facility and have been unsuccessful in obtaining a siding.
- b. The rail line serving the Seneca Army Depot has a maximum safe speed rating of 10 - 20 miles per hour. Track repair would be required to initiate upgraded service to the Depot facilities.

#### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. Just-in-time delivery of materials and support equipment is justification for increased use of sidings and coordination with truck carriers.
- b. The Finger Lakes Rail Corporation is interested in serving the rail needs of the local businesses.

### ***Airports***

#### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. The current air strips at the Seneca Army Depot and the Finger Lakes Airport are under utilized from an economic development advantage.

## SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS

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- b. The Finger Lakes Airport is not accessible to any major highways or rail lines, a disadvantage in the just-in-time market.
- c. There is no identified FBO at the Depot airstrip.

### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The joint use of the Seneca Army Depot airstrip will establish this facility as an important link to economic activity in the county.
- b. The rail line access to the airstrip will assist with need for just-in-time delivery.
- c. The length of the landing facilities of the Depot airstrip is attractive to larger aircraft.

### ***Water Related Activities***

#### **1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. The Seneca-Cayuga Canal is under-utilized as a recreation resource.
- b. There is no coordinated waterfront development effort along either the Seneca or Cayuga waterfronts.

#### **2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The county is surrounded by water and water related features, such as: State Parks with public marinas and boat launch facilities, the Seneca - Cayuga Canal which passes through the heart of both Waterloo and Seneca Falls, the mainline of the Erie Canal, with lock 25, the open water channels through the Montezuma Wildlife Refuge.
- b. Numerous comprehensive studies and reports have been completed addressing the potential developments of the water related resources. These should be consulted and acted upon.

**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY  
OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS**

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**EXISTING LAND USES**

***Agricultural***

**1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. Lack of land use regulation or control allows dissimilar uses to appear, such as junk yards, within agricultural areas. This has a negative affect on the visual appearance of the area an impacts perception as a place to do business.
- b. Lack of land use control and regulations allows residential and nonresidential developments to occur without regard to loss of prime and unique soils best suited for agricultural use.

**2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The large amount of areas devoted to agricultural use provides an open and uncluttered appearance to the rural portions of the county.
- b. The openness of the county is attractive to businesses looking to located within a more rural atmosphere.
- c. The growth of the grape growing industry is an aesthetically pleasing pattern of vineyards, attractive to the tourism industry.
- d. The agricultural use of the land prevents erosion and loss of topsoil with accompanying siltation from being deposited into the adjacent lakes.

***Urban Cores***

**1. Constraints and Negative Features**

- a. The basic infrastructure within the two village centers is old and in need of repairs and modifications.
- b. Parking within the urban core is limited.
- c. There are conflicts between local, through and truck traffic within the village centers.



**SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY  
OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS**

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- d. The Seneca-Cayuga Canal, where it passes through the urban cores of Waterloo and Seneca Falls, is basically ignored as a resource.

**2. Opportunities and Positive Features**

- a. The Erie Canal Corridor Plan and subsequent authorization to declare Seneca Falls a "Canal Port" has allocated the expenditure in excess of \$7 million to strengthen the relationship between the village center and the canal.
- b. The quality of architecture within the villages should be enhanced and allowed to be a feature of the area.
- c. The highest concentration of historic, cultural, tourist support and attractions are within the village corridors. This should be strengthened as a tourism opportunity.
- d. The greatest opportunity for expansion of infrastructure is within the village corridors.

## **SENECA COUNTY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS**

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### **SUMMARY**

Seneca County has the ingredients necessary to formulate aggressive economic adjustment policies. The basic infrastructure is in place and facilities, such as the Seneca Army Depot, provide opportunities for real, dynamic growth opportunities.

The basic analysis of the physical infrastructure indicates the corridor between the Thruway and Routes 5 & 20 are best suited for future development. This area has the road, rail and air access to make it competitive with similar communities. This area has the sewer and water available to attract industrial and commercial operations to the county.

The village centers should dominate as the core service area for tourism and commercial developments. The two villages are within a short drive from all points within the county and should continue to serve as the focus of activity within the county.

The rural areas should remain predominantly agricultural. These areas do not have proximity to transportation networks or additional infrastructure to support large numbers of industrial and commercial enterprises. The rural towns should institute a form of land use control and guidance to maintain the visual quality of the region and protect the agricultural resources.



# **SENECA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## **LAND USE PLAN**

PREPARED FOR:

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
PLANNING  
SENECA COUNTY NEW YORK

with funding through  
US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT

PREPARED BY:

PASSERO ASSOCIATES, P.C.  
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THE PATHFINDERS

October 1995

# SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

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## **SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**

### **Introduction**

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The Seneca County Marketing Plan, prepared by Seneca County, sets the primary goal of increasing the number of existing and new companies doing business in Seneca County, and maximizing the potential for high value job development. A series of economic development strategies are developed to assist existing businesses to expand, attract new businesses and provide continuing training and educational opportunities for employees.

The land use and development process is one area of strategy which can further the economic development within the county. The process integrates the financial needs and marketing objectives of the Economic Development Strategy with proper land use guidelines. This allows the local municipalities to plan for economic development and growth while preserving their ability to determine the location and scale of the growth.

### **Land Use Process**

The land use process is an important component of the Seneca County Economic Development Strategy. Through this orderly process, Seneca County can identify land use needs and establish guidelines necessary for the local municipalities to meet those land use needs.

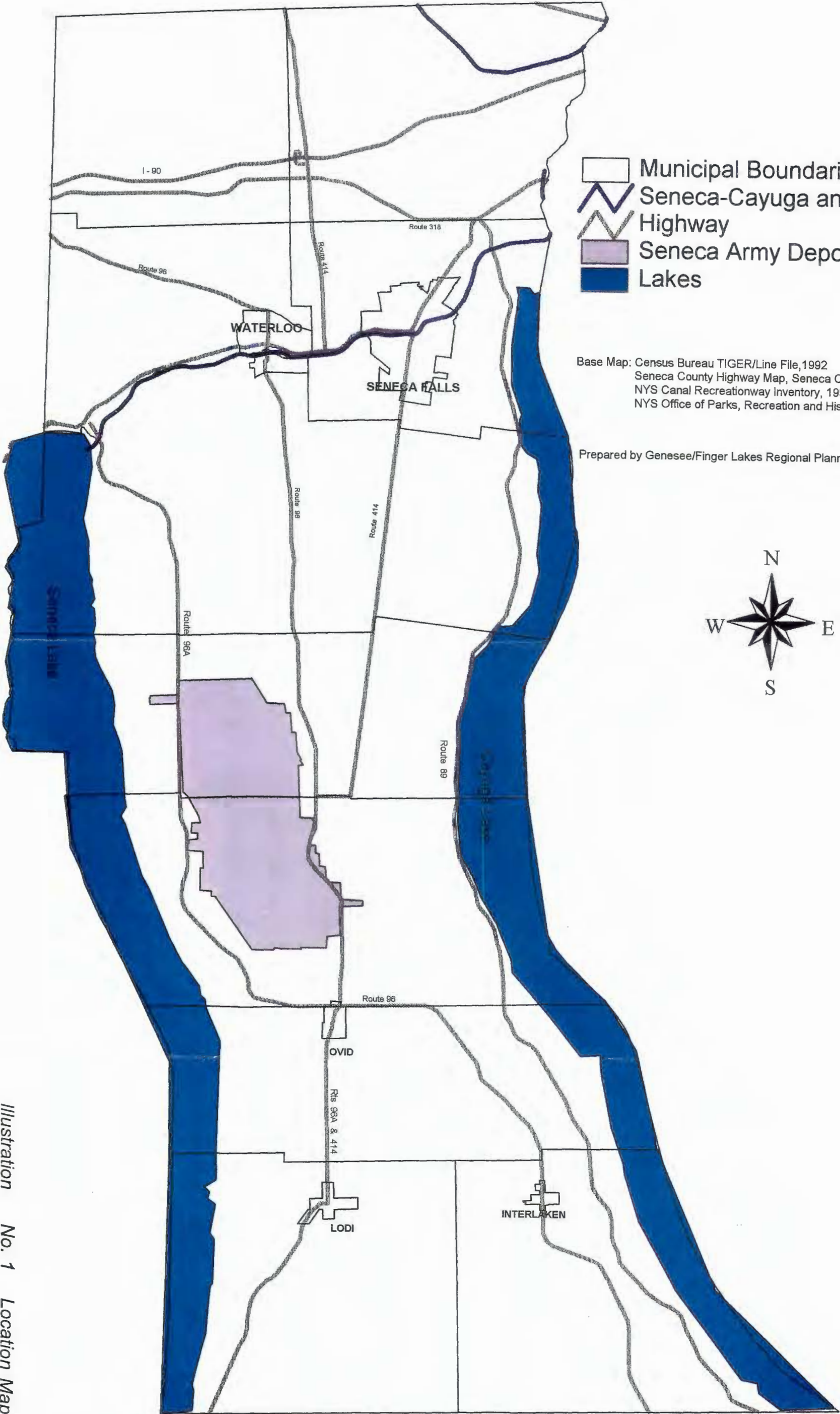
The Seneca County Land Use Plan provides guidelines from which the many communities within county may base individual land use and development regulations. The Land Use Plan establishes the parameters under which individual municipalities can react to such things as the excessing of the North Base at the Seneca Army Depot.

### **Location**

Seneca County is at center of New York State and the Finger Lakes region. The county, bordered with two of the Finger Lakes, Seneca Lake to the west ; Cayuga Lake to the east, is equidistant to the major metropolitan areas of Rochester and Syracuse. The county is also a neighbor to the smaller cities of Geneva, Auburn and Ithaca. (*see Illustration No.1*)

# SENECA COUNTY

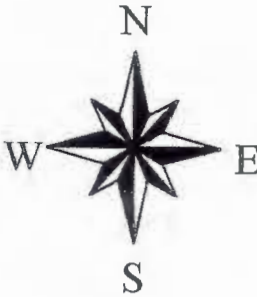
## New York



- Municipal Boundaries
- Seneca-Cayuga and Barge Canal
- Highway
- Seneca Army Depot
- Lakes

Base Map: Census Bureau TIGER/Line File, 1992  
Seneca County Highway Map, Seneca County Chamber of Commerce  
NYS Canal Recreationway Inventory, 1993  
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation, 1994

Prepared by Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, August, 1995



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Introduction

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#### **Governmental Structure**

Seneca County is comprised of nine incorporated towns and five incorporated villages. The towns are: Junius, Tyre, Waterloo, Seneca Falls, Fayette, Varick, Romulus, Ovid, Lodi and Covert. The villages are: Waterloo, Seneca Falls, Ovid, Lodi and Interlaken.

There are several unincorporated hamlets within the various towns, including the hamlets of Romulus (Romulus), Willard (Ovid) and Border City (Waterloo). (*see Illustration No.2*)

The towns and villages are represented at the county level through the Seneca County Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors is responsible for the governance of Seneca County.

#### **Transportation Access**

Seneca County is accessible by numerous state, federal and local roadways. The New York State Thruway (Interstate 90) makes the county accessible to all areas within the state.

Rail service is provided through the Finger Lakes Railroad. Commercial spurs provide access through the overall Finger Lake area with tie-in connectors to the Conrail systems.

Recreational boating access within the county is via the Seneca/Cayuga Branch of the New York State Erie Canal system. Also referred to as the Seneca River, the canal system provides access from Seneca to Cayuga Lakes and to the rest of the Erie Canal system.

Air travel is via private carriers based at the Finger Lakes airport, in the Village of Seneca Falls. Limited commercial traffic is available. Scheduled passenger and freight traffic is through the regional air facilities in Rochester, Syracuse and Ithaca.

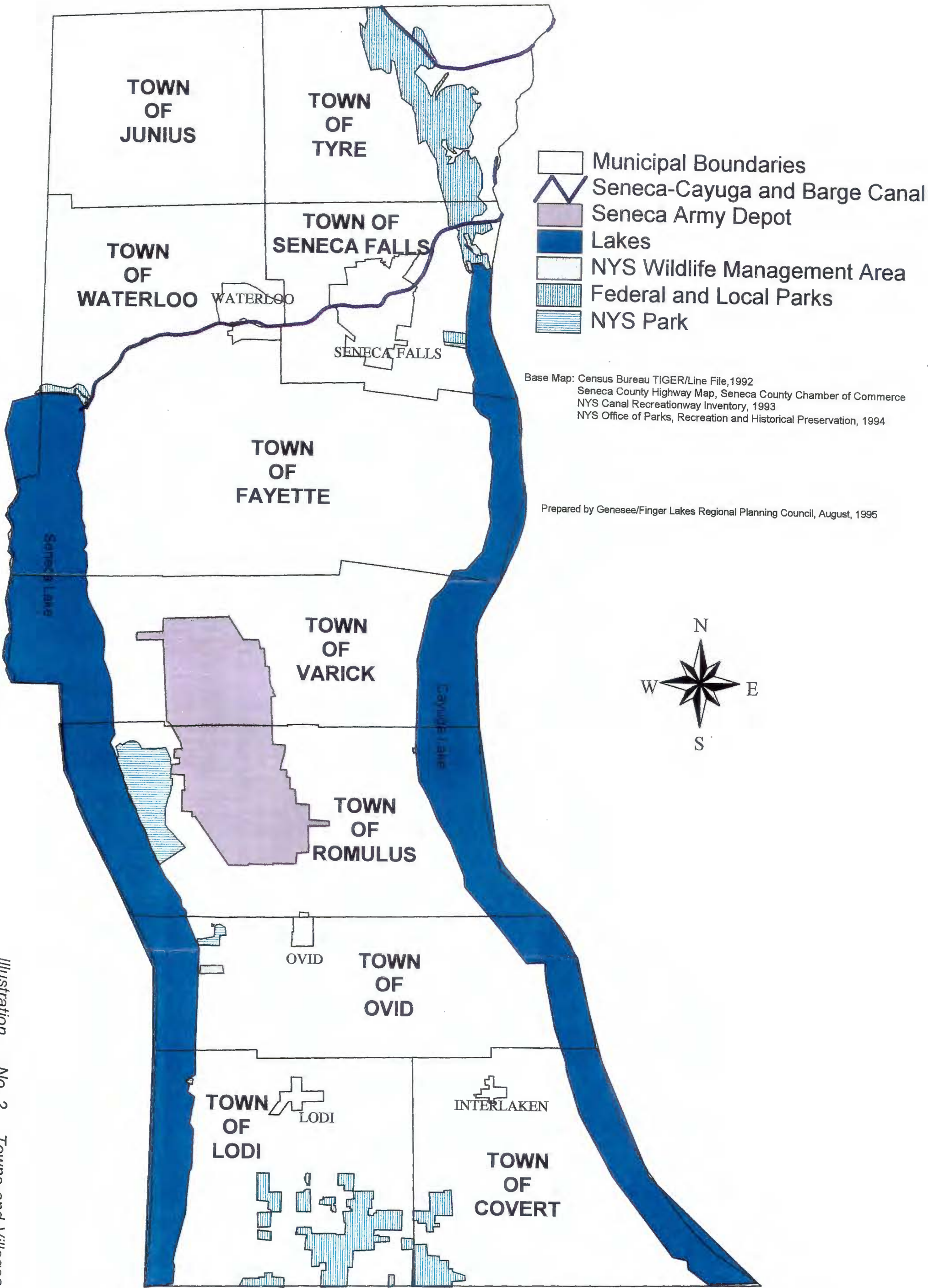
#### **Issues and Challenges Facing the County**

The Seneca County Land Use Plan responds, in part, to the Opportunities/Constraints Report



# TOWNS

## Seneca County, New York



# SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

## Introduction

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prepared to investigate the current conditions of the county infrastructure and environment.

*Opportunities include:*

### **Recreation opportunities**

State parks within the county attract hundreds of thousands of visitors per year. The attraction of the lakes brings additional visitors into the area for water based recreational activities. Proper land use within the county will continue to make the county an attractive area for tourist opportunities.

### **Visual Aesthetics**

Seneca County contains aesthetic and visual resources difficult to replicate elsewhere. The county, nestled between two finger lakes, has gently rolling hills and a rural atmosphere. The response of the many residents attending the public workshops welcomed the opportunity for development, but not at the cost of the visual and aesthetic quality of the county.

The county is fortunate to contain many older and some quite historic structures which add to the visual quality of the county. The overall federalist style of many older buildings reflects the period of settlement throughout the county.

The importance of the agricultural economy, which includes vineyards and row crops, is reflected in the backdrop of scenic pastoral landscapes. These are important to preserve as part of the visual resource within the county.

### **Historic Resources**

The county has a number of historic sites, with several dating to pre-settlement periods. These sites have local and national importance and should be maintained as part of the history of the county.

### **Undeveloped Land**

The majority of the county land area remains undeveloped, reflecting the county's rural nature. Much of the undeveloped land is agricultural. Within much of this agricultural land is a resource of soils extremely suitable for grape production.

Proper land use planning must account for preserving the agricultural industry.

### **Utilities**

#### *Sanitary Sewer Services*

The county has an unusually well developed network of sanitary sewer services,

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Introduction

---

considering the population and size of the county. This network within rural areas is the result of the presence of the Seneca Army Depot and the Willard Psychiatric Center.

This network will be an important influence in the willingness of industry to locate within Seneca County.

#### *Water Services*

Many county residents have access to public water. The water is distributed through various water districts. The source of a majority of the water is Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. The general quality of the potable water is good.

#### *Employment*

The combination of downsizing at the Seneca Army Depot, closing of Willard Psychiatric Center and the Phillips Plant have created a loss in the number of high value jobs within the county. Overall, the Seneca County unemployment rate has remained stable, but only as a result of an incremental increase of jobs. These jobs are generally lower value, non-career oriented with little or no benefits. This is leading to a serious under-employment trend within Seneca County.

### Major Opportunities

Seneca County is serviced through many independent sewer and water districts. The primarily rural nature of the county does not reflect the access smaller villages and rural communities have to sanitary sewer and water service. The county should establish a county-wide sewer district and water district. This would lower operational costs while improving service and conditions of the infrastructure.

The land use planning process within this document provides the guidelines to determine the location and degree of development which allows growth of high value jobs while maintaining the visual and aesthetic reasons residents choose to live in Seneca County.

## Historical Background

Much of the present land form within Seneca County was formed during the last ice age. The action of the retreating glaciers formed many of the surfaces within the county. Most of the soil materials and landforms were left as the glaciers melted 10,000 to 15,000 years ago. The northern third of the county is comprised of drumlins, formed as the glaciers retreated northward. Prehistoric Lake Newberry left the relatively rich deposits of soil within the glacial lake and till plains through central areas of the county. The flooded valley of Cayuga Lake has become the Montezuma Swamp.

The county derives its name from the Seneca Indian Tribe of the Iroquois Nation. Seneca and Cayuga tribes occupied present day Seneca County during the pre-revolutionary war era.

Before the first settlers arrived, Seneca County was densely forested.

- The southern area of the county, within the Appalachian Plain, was covered with a mixture of White Pine (*Pinus strobus*), hardwoods and hemlock (*Tsuga*). The dominant hardwoods were beech (*Fagus*), hard maples (*Acer*) and red oak (*Quercus rubra*). There were also black cherry (*Prunus*), hickory (*Carya*), hophornbeam (*Ostrya*), elm (*Ulmus*) and aspen (*Populus*).
- The northern areas of the county had less pine, hemlock and beech, with more basswood (*Tilia*), white ash (*Fraxinus*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), tulip tree (*Liriodendron*), black walnut (*Juglens nigra*) and black cherry (*Prunus*).

The marshes and swamps have had a continuous cover of cattails (*Typha*), rushes (*Juncus*), sedges (*Cyperus*), and swampgrasses.

In the latter part of the 1700's, the newly formed United States government and New York State obtained most of the New York indian lands through treaties after the revolutionary war. Present day Seneca County was included in the acquisition. Individual soldiers were awarded 600 acre lots as a form of compensation for service during the revolutionary war.

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Historical Background

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The first permanent settlers began arriving in 1789.

Seneca County was officially established on March 24, 1804 and by 1810, the county had a population of 16,609. The villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls became the leading centers for commerce, trade and industry.

Several historic events occurred in Seneca County.

- Seneca Falls was the location for the first Women's Rights Convention, in 1848. During the 1840's, county residents Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Amelia Bloomer were prominent leaders in the woman's suffrage movement. In 1969, the National Women's Hall of Fame was established in Seneca Falls to honor this memory. In 1982, the Women's Rights National Historic Park was dedicated in Seneca Falls.
- The Peter Whitmer Farm Home, south of Waterloo, designates the birthplace of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon).
- The Village of Waterloo celebrated the first community-wide recognition of Memorial Day on May 5, 1866. Waterloo is recognized as the birthplace of Memorial Day.

The 1990 census indicates Seneca County is essentially rural with a population of 33,683. The county does not have a principal city. The villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls, with 1990 populations of 7,357 and 5,096 respectively, continue as the centers for commerce, trade and industry.

The county is unique in having two county seats, Waterloo and Ovid. This is reflective of the long, narrow shape of the county and the progression of development from south to north. The courts were first held in Ovid, then in Waterloo. The dual seats have never been relinquished in favor of one seat.

Many smaller communities developed as centers of the agricultural community. These are the present day incorporated villages of Ovid, Lodi and Interlaken and the hamlets of

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Historical Background

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Romulus and Willard.

The majority of commerce and industry is concentrated along the Routes 5&20 corridor and in the villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls. Two exceptions are the Seneca Army Depot located adjacent to the hamlet of Romulus and the State of New York Drug Treatment Center (formerly the Willard Psychiatric Center), in the hamlet of Willard.

Employment within the county has traditionally been concentrated within a few large employers. The largest public sector, and overall, employers are the federal, state and local governments. The largest private sector employers are Goulds Pumps and Seneca Knitting Mills.

The North Base area of the Seneca Army Depot will be exsessed by the federal government through the Base Realignment and Closure procedure. The building and infrastructure facilities available within the Depot are important to Seneca County. These assets can be extremely attractive to relocating industrial and commercial users. The Depot offers future growth and development potential within Seneca County while maintaining the employment base and expanding employment opportunities.

Seneca County has never had a strong need for economic development, planning and implementation. Prior to the 1980's, sizable investments by private industry, New York State and the Federal Government provided this rural community of 33,000 people with a growing base of high-value, career-oriented jobs on a strong base of core manufacturing business. Actively planning for the future and economic development are not strong traditions within Seneca County. It is extremely important the economic adjustment strategy for the county, which includes this land use plan, be developed to strengthen the county's position within the marketplace for job development and growth.

## Existing Land Use

The manner in which individual property is used is one of the primary concerns in developing a land use plan. While many distinctive land uses were observed, agriculture is the most predominant use.

This section briefly characterizes land uses within the county.

### Coastal Management Program Areas

In 1981, the New York Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act was passed to address problems of coastal degradation and determine opportunities for development along the tidal and non-tidal coastlines of New York State.

The area of coverage was recently expanded to include Inland Waterways which connect directly, through other waterways, to coastal waters. This expansion includes Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, which are connected via the Erie Canal system to coastal waters.

The Inland Waterways Program assists waterfront communities in preparing Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs (LWRP). The LWRP is a mechanism available to communities to implement concepts and proposals such as appropriate overlay zones, Waterfront Development District legislation, Special Permit processes and other identified zoning.

Seneca County's two Coastal Management Areas include the full frontages along Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. The Coastal Management Areas have two distinct ownerships:

#### **1) Private ownership**

Permanent and seasonal homes constitute the predominant land use along the Seneca



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Existing Land Use

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and Cayuga Lake frontages. Private, undeveloped lakefront parcels, often are either too steep for development, sensitive to erosion, or under agricultural use.

#### **2) Public ownership**

New York State owned lands occupy the majority of public lake frontage.

The New York State ownership fronting on Seneca Lake includes Seneca Lake State Park, Samson State Park, New York State Drug Treatment Center in Willard and Lodi Point State Park.

The New York State ownership fronting on Cayuga Lake includes Cayuga Lake State Park.

The federal government ownership fronting on Seneca Lake includes the lakeside housing for the Seneca Army Depot and occupies about one-half mile of shoreline.

The federal government ownership fronting on Cayuga Lake includes a portion of the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, at the north end of Cayuga Lake.

The LWRP process results in land use guidelines and zoning legislation which help preserve water quality and plan for appropriate water base developments.

#### ***Lakeside Slopes***

The area adjacent to and behind lake front properties are the side slopes of the lakes. This topographic feature encircles the lakes, providing an unique micro-climate important to the development of grape vineyards and the Finger Lakes wine industry.

This area is distinctive with its' predominance of vineyards. The viticulture takes advantage of the high lime content soils and winter temperatures moderated by the combination of slopes and water. The cold air drains to the lower lake level and the warmer lake level air rises up the slopes. This climactic condition moderates the severe swings in temperature experienced within other areas.



### *Central Plains*

The area between the lakeside slopes, and south of the Seneca River, is generally level. A ridge continues through the central portion of the plain, dividing the watersheds between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. Conventional agriculture is the predominant form of land use within this area.

The farming communities of Lodi, Ovid and Interlaken are within the central plains. The town of Covert, in the southeastern-most part of the county has experienced the largest increase in residential development within the county. This is attributed to residential growth radiating from Tompkins County, adjacent to the town of Covert.

### *Seneca Falls/Waterloo Corridor*

The towns and villages of Seneca Falls and Waterloo represent the urbanized core of Seneca County. This corridor is the most intensely developed and densely populated portion of the county. This is the area of highest concentration of people, employment centers and cultural facilities.

Opportunities exist for expansion of commercial, residential and industrial uses within this corridor. The present infrastructure is capable of handling increased uses and demands for sewer, water and traffic services.

The communities of Seneca Falls and Waterloo have the majority of residential units. The county, according to the 1990 census, had 9488 single family detached units, 1958 mobile home units and 2868 attached units. Of this total:

- Waterloo (town and village) had a total of 5535 units;
- Seneca Falls (town and village) had a total of 7168 units.

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Existing Land Use

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The majority of county residents live in this corridor. This is also the area where the majority of employers and employment opportunities are concentrated. This corridor also includes the highest concentration of retail centers within the county.

#### *North County*

The towns of Junius and Tyre form the northern tier of the county. These towns represent two diverse land uses. The New York State Thruway (I-90) physically separates the southern third of these towns from the northern two-thirds and defines distinct separations in land use and development potential.

- South of the Thruway, the relatively agrarian land use is becoming increasingly commercial. The NY Rte 318 corridor, an east-west arterial, has great potential to develop into a commercial area trading on the proximity to the Thruway. This is evidenced by the recent opening of the Finger Lakes Outlet Center, approximately equidistant between exits 41 and 42 on the Thruway.

The infrastructure improvements installed as part of the Finger Lakes Outlet Center's development include sewer and water:

- Water availability will create development pressures along Rte 318, from the Finger Lakes Outlet Center east to Burgess Road.
- Sanitary sewer availability and expansion potential will create development pressures along Rte. 318 in the vicinity of the Finger Lakes Outlet Center east to Whiskey Hill Road.

The Finger Lakes Outlet Center, equidistant between Thruway exits 41 and 42, anticipates over 1.5 million visitors a year. The location plus number of anticipated visitors and available infrastructure will put pressure to construct related facilities within the Rte. 318 corridor.

- North of the Thruway, the land use is agricultural. The Thruway acts as a barrier, placing the northern two thirds of these towns beyond the development pressures experienced in the southern third.

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Existing Land Use

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#### *Seneca Army Depot*

The existing of facilities within the North Depot area of the Seneca Army Depot will have a significant impact on the development patterns within the central area of the county. The North Depot contains recreational and living facilities for the military stationed at the Depot. The North Base has a self-contained sewage treatment facility, water service (shared with the entire Depot), electric and steam systems, road and rail systems. Building facilities include a gymnasium, bowling alley, movie theater, 450 bed dormitory, cafeterias, day care and other ancillary structures which can be adapted for private uses.

The North Depot is isolated from major population centers within the county. This makes the reuse of facilities important in the land planning recommendations for the central county area.

#### *Drug Treatment Center for New York State (formerly Willard Psychiatric Center)*

This facility, scheduled to operate as a non-violent felon drug rehabilitation center for the New York Corrections Department, is a complex of buildings which includes an on-site wastewater treatment plant. The treatment plant which will continue to serve the residents of south Seneca County, including Samson State Park. The conversion to a rehabilitation center could create demand for affordable rental housing in the south county area.

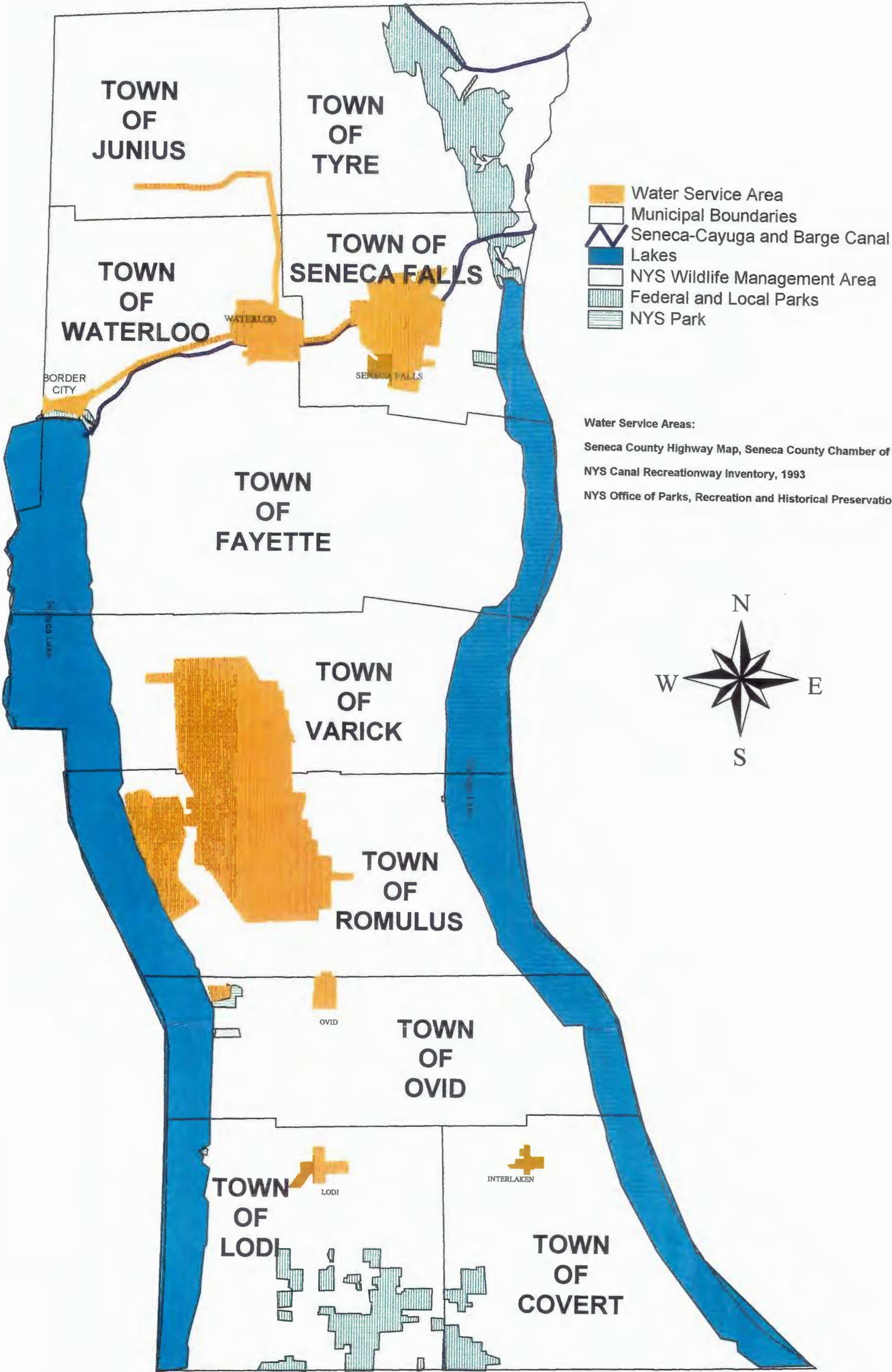
#### *Conclusion*

As Seneca County plans for the economic health of the region, important land planning issues need to be addressed, including:

- careful attention to the site design, layout, building design and location of new commercial and residential facilities to ensure minimum impacts on the environment;
- crafting of individual municipal zoning and land use guidelines which control location and placement of new development and ensure compatibility with the over municipal and community goals.

# WATER SERVICE AREAS

## Seneca County, New York



## County Infrastructure

### PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

Public water service is provided to Seneca County residents through thirteen individual water districts. These districts are permitted through the NY Department of Environmental Conservation and provide potable water for domestic, industrial and fire protection uses. The primary sources of water for distribution are Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. (see Illustration No. 12, Water Service Areas)

#### *Border City*

Border City serves 375 customers within the hamlet of Border City. The largest customers are NYSEG and the local school. The larger supply lines which serve the village of Waterloo, provide water to this district. The district was experiencing problems with pressures. A two phase program to correct the problem has been implemented. The first phase was completed during the summer of 1994 and the second phase is scheduled completion during the summer of 1995. This will correct the problems with delivering adequate pressure.

The system was originally constructed in 1920. The services within smaller residential developments require routine maintenance and repairs. The delivery mains are 8" and 10" water mains. Service laterals are 3/4".

The Border City Water District issues permits for connection, charges a tapping fee and inspects all construction and tapping of the system.

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURES**

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***Fayette***

The Town of Fayette Water District #1 serves 33 residential customers. Water is supplied from a pump station in Waterloo. The system provides fire protection to the Waterloo Fire Department.

The system is in good repair and was constructed in 1974. The watermain is a 12" distribution main with service laterals. The town supervisor issues permits for construction.

***Interlaken***

This district services the Village of Interlaken which includes 306 customers. The system provides fire protection for the Interlaken Fire Department. The largest users are Gunblack Manufacturing and the school.

The system was constructed in 1932. The water source is wells located off Interlaken Beach Road. The water is pumped to a reservoir and then distributed to customers via a 12" water main. About 1000-2000 feet of main need to be replaced. The village permits and inspects additions and repairs to the system.

***Junius***

The district purchases water from the Waterloo district. Water is stored and re-chlorinated in a 480,000 gallon tank. The system then distributes water to customers. The system delivers water at 1,200 gallons per minute.

***Ovid***

The Ovid district serves the residents within the Village of Ovid. Water is pumped from two sources, one source is from wells and the other is drawn from Seneca Lake. Water drawn from Seneca Lake is passed through a sand system filtration plant before delivery to

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURES**

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customers.

The distribution system consists primarily of 6" service mains and approvals for connection are through the Village of Ovid Department of Public Works.

Pressure varies upon location within the town. Pressure is generally 35-40 psi. throughout the town with the poorest pressure at the school. This is attributed to the loss from backflow preventers. A new water tower is being built which has a capacity for 475,000 gallons. The current tower holds 75,000 gallons. This tower is anticipated to help increase pressure within the system.

The average daily rate of use is 70,000 gallons. The system has the capacity to deliver 200,000 gallons.

***Romulus Water Service Area***

This service area is compiled of the Romulus Water District , with seventy-three (73) customers in the hamlet of Romulus. The largest customer is the mobile home park in Romulus, which is served off a single meter.

Water is supplied from through an 8" main from the Seneca Army Depot.

The Romulus Fire Department provides fire protection with water from this district. All water is supplied by gravity flow. The town of Varick issues permits and performs inspection services.

***Sampson State Park***

This district serves the state park. Water is pumped from Seneca Lake into a 285,000 gallon tank. The park anticipates connecting to the Seneca Army Depot filtration system.



**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURES**

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The park currently has a variance for untreated surface water.

Usage ranges from summer highs of 80,000 gpd to winter lows of 10,000 gpd.

The system includes 12" transite pipe with services of 2" galvanized pipe

***Seneca Falls***

This district includes portions of the town of Fayette, town of Seneca Falls, hamlet of Canoga and the village of Seneca Falls. About 3300 customers are served through this district. The largest customers are Gould's Pumps and Seneca Knitting Mills. The Red Jacket and Seneca Falls Fire Departments provide fire protection services using water supplied from this district.

Water is drawn from Cayuga Lake in the Hamlet Canoga, then pumped to two water towers located in the village of Seneca Falls. The only low pressure zone is along NY Rte 414, north of NY Rte 5 & US Rte 20.

The system varies with age and the district is on a five year plan to update all lines, including upgrading all mains to 8". The town of Seneca Falls is considering a new main along the Route 414 corridor, connecting with an existing main east of 414. This will complete a loop through the area and increase the available pressure to the West Seneca area.

***Seneca Army Depot***

The Seneca Army Depot supplies water the military facility as well as to the hamlet of Romulus and the Town of Varick.

The Depot pumps water from Seneca Lake into a 1,000,000 gallon reservoir. Water is distributed throughout the South and North Depot areas, including the warehouse district and



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ash dump areas . Water pressure is maintained at 60 psi. throughout the system and pressure should be further enhanced upon completion of a 250,000 gallon water tank replacement at the Romulus site.

The daily capacity varies from 120,000 to 160,000 gallons per day during the week, and, from 80,000 to 120,000 gallons per day during the weekend. The higher weekday amounts are attributed to the watering activities at the base ash dump.

The base fire department and hamlet of Romulus Fire department obtain water from the system for fire fighting capabilities. There is a hydrant located on NY Rte. 96 in Kandaia for fire fighting . This hydrant is used to fill pumper trucks within the Varick Fire Department.

***Varick***

The Varick Water District serves portions of the Town of Varick and the hamlet of Romulus. The district serves 61 residential customers, including two mobile home parks. The Romulus Fire Department uses the system for fire protection.

The source of water is the Seneca Army Depot. There are no apparent problems within the system, but, repairs may be necessary in the future. The bolts on the mains appear to be breaking. The mains are 8" and the size of laterals vary.

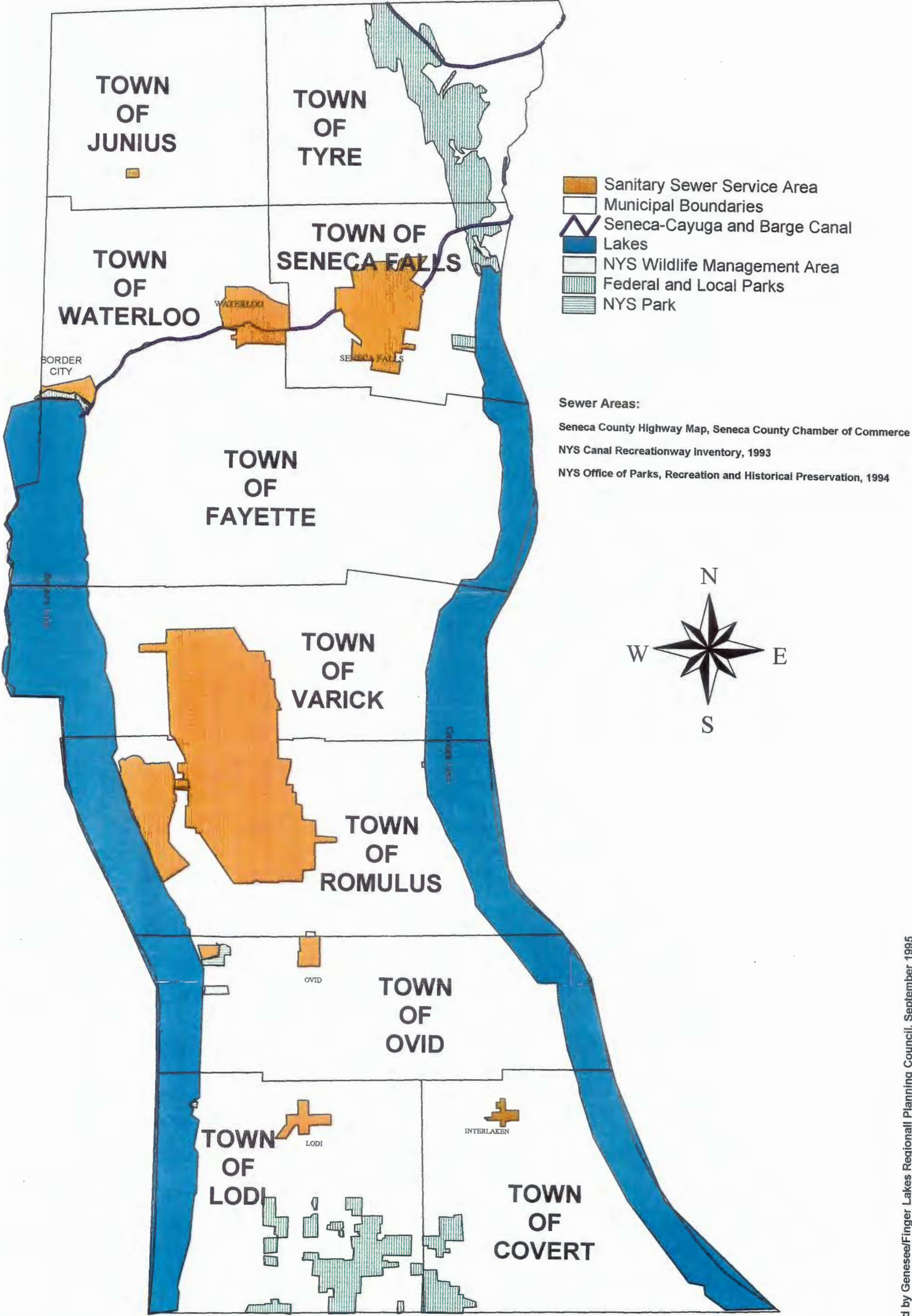
***Waterloo***

This is the largest water district within Seneca County. Service area includes the town and village of Waterloo, the Outlet Center in the town of Junius and portions of the town of Fayette and Border City. There are 8000 customers.

Water is drawn from Seneca Lake and pumped to storage tanks. The system is gravity fed,

# SANITARY SEWER SERVICE AREAS

## Seneca County, New York



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maintaining pressure through the district water towers. Supply starts at a 16" main which splits to two mains, a 12" main which travels down Routes 5 & 20 serving the Town and a 10" main which serves the village of Waterloo. The town of Waterloo permits and performs inspection services.

***Drug Treatment Center for the State of New York (former Willard Psychiatric Center)***

This district incorporates the Willard Facility and supplies water to separate districts adjacent to the facility. Water is pumped from Seneca Lake into a water tank adjacent to the center's filtration plant. The service area includes the Willard facility, Bona Vista State Park and the hamlet of Willard.

The daily usage is about 960,000 gallons. The Ovid Fire Department uses the water supply.

***Willard Water Service Area***

This district, located within the hamlet of Willard, consists of the Willard Water District and Willard Extension. A total of 154 customers are served, one hundred thirty-seven (137) in the hamlet of Willard and seventeen (17) in Willard Extension. The Drug Treatment Center for the State of New York (former Willard Psychiatric Facility) supplies the hamlet of Willard and Willard Extension through a 6" water main. All water is supplied by gravity flow.

**PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER SYSTEMS**

Seneca County is well served by sanitary sewer. The primarily rural nature of the county does not reflect the great availability the smaller villages and rural areas have to sanitary sewer service (see Illustration No. 13, Sanitary Sewer Service Areas)

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***Seneca Army Depot***

Two treatment plants operate within the depot.

- The South depot has a 250,000 gpd system which services the hamlet of Romulus and the South Depot. Average daily capacity runs at approximately 180,000 gpd. The system runs at higher capacities after storm events, signifying infiltration into the system.
- The North Base facility has a daily capacity of 300,000 gpd. This system is currently off-line. This system serves only the North depot and does not extend to areas off-base. This system is currently inactive, but does maintain a current permit so the system can be reactivated at any time.

Both systems are approved and constructed for domestic use.

***Seneca District No.1***

This facility consists of a 700,000 gpd tertiary treatment facility within the Drug Treatment Center for the State of New York ( former Willard Psychiatric Campus). This facility serves the Seneca Army Depot lakefront housing, Sampson Sate Park, the hamlet of Willard and the villages of Ovid and Lodi.

The average daily flow through the plant is 300-500,000 gallons. This amount is less than before the closing of the former Willard Psychiatric Campus and Seneca Army Depot's lakeside housing.

The treatment plant and services to all the locations off the Willard campus were constructed in 1982. The Willard Campus infrastructure dates from 1910. The pending renovation of the Willard facility and conversion to drug rehabilitation center for non-violent felons is part of the pending \$8.6 million renovation.

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***Village of Waterloo***

The village system was designed to a capacity of 1.2 million gallons and is licensed by the NYDEC for 800,000 gpd. The average daily flow through the plant is 700,000 gallons. There are no services extended beyond the village boundaries.

The plant was built in 1971 and the largest problem is infiltration. The lines within the center of Waterloo date from the early 1900's.

***Border City***

Border City is in the eighth year of a twenty year contract with the town of Geneva to use the town's treatment plant. All sewers in Border City flow by gravity to the town of Geneva plant. The plant has a capacity of 4,000,000 gallons per day. The plant capacity is currently approximately 3,000,000 gallons per day.

***Village of Seneca Falls***

This system is licensed for 3.5 million gallons with an average daily flow of 1.2-1.4 million gallons. The plant serves the village of Seneca Falls, hamlet of Bridgeport, the Chiropractic College and Cayuga State Park.

The plant was constructed in 1970, Bridgeport and Cayuga State Park were added in 1982 and West Seneca was added in the mid 1970's. The village system dates from the early 1900's.

There are no problems with the system and there is adequate excess capacity available for future use.

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***Village of Interlaken***

The village is served with clay pipes, which are angereed out as part of routine maintenance. the system is gravity fed to the treatment plant. Originally built in 1963, the plant was rebuilt in 1988. The plant capacity is 100,000 gallons per day. Current use is approximately 50,000 gallons per day.

The system serves about 180 households and small commercial businesses.

***Town of Junius***

A newly built package plant services the Finger Lakes Outlet Center. Built in 1994, the plant has a capacity of 50,000 gallons per day and currently operates at 22,000 gallons per day. The plant currently has excess capacity to support the anticipated second phase of construction at the Outlet Center.

The plant can be upgraded with additional modules for a maximum capacity of 250,000 gallons per day. The Finger Lakes Outlet Center is the only customer, to date, using this facility.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

### **Telephone Services**

There are three local service telephone companies:

- NYNEX;
- Trumansburg Home Telephone Company;
- Empire Telephone Company.

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- **NYNEX**

NYNEX, with offices in Geneva, serves 12,500 customers within Seneca County. This phone company has fiber optic capabilities and provides this service to commercial customers upon request.

- **Trumansburg Home Telephone Company**

Trumansburg Home Telephone Company serves customers within the town and village of Ovid, the village of Interlaken and town of Covert. The company has approximately 2900 customers within Seneca County. The company has state-of-the-art digital switching capacity to serve 150,000 access lines and currently is running at 43% of that capacity, through the entire company territory. Trumansburg Home Telephone offers video conferencing services at their headquarters in Phelps NY.

- **Empire Telephone Company**

Empire Telephone serves the town and village of Lodi and has approximately 700 customers. The company has digital switching equipment and does not offers fiber optic cable capabilities.

## **Electric and Natural Gas**

Electric and natural gas service is provided through NY State Electric and Gas (NYSEG). Electric service is available throughout the entire county. Gas service is available north of the Varick/Fayette town line and within the town of Covert.

Natural gas wells are common through out the central portion of the county. Many individual property owners supply their own needs for natural gas through the use of private on-site wells.

## TRANSPORTATION

Seneca County is served by four forms of transportation: *road, rail, air and water* (see Illustration No. 5, Transportation).

### ROADWAYS

The county has a hierarchy of road systems and road jurisdictions. Road classifications fall into *interstate, state, county and town road* categories.

- ***New York State Thruway Authority***

Interstate 90, a toll road, passes through the northern section of Seneca County. Exit 41, five miles north of the village of Seneca Falls on State Route 414, connects Seneca County with the interstate system. The Thruway serves access to Rochester and points west and Syracuse and points east.

- ***New York State Department of Transportation***

The state maintains about 160 miles of roadways throughout Seneca County. State Routes 96, 96A, 414 and 89 are the principle north-south routes. State Routes 318, 336 and 5 are the principle east-west routes.

The primary travel pattern of state routes through the county is north-south. East-west travel is hampered by the location of the lakes along the east and west borders of the county. The majority of east-west travel occurs within the northern portion of the county.

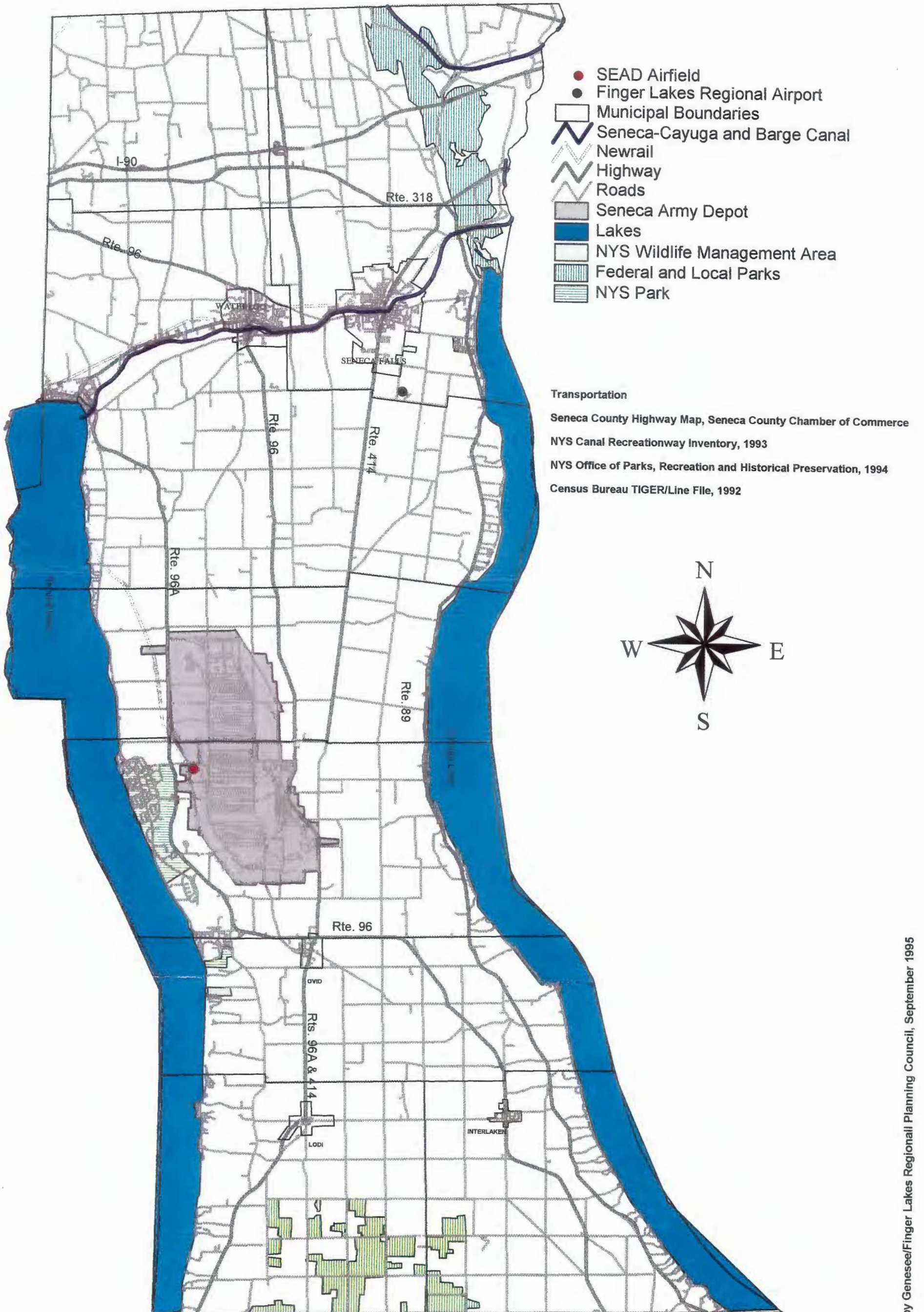
- ***County, Town and Village Roads***

Approximately 525 miles of county and town roads result in the majority of road surfaces within the county. These roads generally connect between the north-south state routes and serve residential area within the village centers.



# TRANSPORTATION

## Seneca County, New York



**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURES**

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**RAIL**

The Finger Lakes Railway Corporation operates main line rail traffic. The regional office is in Geneva New York, which services customers in Seneca County. Tracks through Seneca County include the mainline, which basically parallels Route 5 & 20, and the Kendaia branch along the east side of Seneca Lake to the Seneca Army Depot. The rail company has passage rights over lines operated by other rail carriers.

Current rail customers are: Nutrite; The Seneca Army Depot; JS Blowers; Baillie Lumber. Daily service is available as required. Service to the Depot is "as needed". Potential business, identified within Seneca County, includes expanding service to present customers, former rail users and companies which have never used rail.

Finger Lakes Railway Corporation recommends two improvements in association with the Depot downsizing. The first is the rehabilitation of the Kendaia line to a class 2 line (speeds up to 25 mph.). This track is currently a class 1 with maximum speeds of 10 mph. The second recommends construction of a road connection between 96 and 414 south of Waterloo to facilitate truck access from the Depot to the Thruway exit 41.

**AIR**

Seneca County is served by one public air facility, the Finger Lakes Air Field. This facility serves private, small engine aircraft. The field is south of the village of Seneca Falls and is operated through the county.

The airstrip at the Seneca Army Depot is currently operated by the Department of the Army as a military facility. A study was conducted considering a joint public/private use for the airfield. The facility has a 7,000 foot long runway and can accommodate private and military jet aircraft. The County needs to revisit the feasibility of using the airstrip as a public facility in light of the anticipated closure of the Seneca Army Depot

## Community Services Facilities

Seneca County offers many Community Services to the residents of the county. These services include:

- Education;
- Fire Protection;
- Police;
- Health Care;
- Recreational.

### Educational Facilities

#### Primary Education

Seneca County is served by four public school districts and a parochial school system. The total enrollment for all public school districts is 5,124 students (1990 Census). Each district is accredited through the New York State Department of Education, Board of Regents. Each school district is under direct administration by a locally elected school district superintendent school board.

The four public school districts are:

- Seneca Falls Central School District;
- Waterloo Central School District, including the recent absorption of the Border City School District;
- Romulus Central School District;
- South Seneca Central School District.

Each district provides K - 12 education, GED certificate programs and adult education programs. There is the capacity, within each district, to accept additional students.

Seneca County is served by two Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)

programs. These are special programs which provide a technical based education, versus the typical academic based education provided through the Central School Districts.

The two BOCES schools are:

- Wayne County - Finger Lakes BOCES, which covers north county;
- T-S-T BOCES which covers south county.

### **Secondary Education**

The Chiropractic College of New York is located in the village of Seneca Falls at the site of the former Eisenhower State College campus. This is the only secondary school within Seneca County.

Secondary educational needs are serviced outside the county:

- Associate degree programs are available through community colleges at Finger Lakes Community College in neighboring Ontario County, Auburn Community College in neighboring Cayuga County and Thompsons Community College in neighboring Thompsons County.
- Baccalaureate and advanced degrees are available at universities and four year colleges in the nearby metropolitan areas of Geneva, Ithaca, Rochester and Syracuse.

### **Fire Protection Services**

Fire protection services are being met through a network of volunteer and professional departments located throughout the county. Contacts with various officials throughout the county indicate coverage and response times are adequate and demand for future services can be addressed.



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Community Facilities

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The one concern within the community is the need for additional volunteers to staff the departments which rely on individuals to provide full, effective protection services.

#### **Police Services**

Police protection is offered at the local, county and state level.

The local police departments are equipped and operate within respective individual village borders. The remaining portions of the county are patrolled by the Seneca County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police.

#### **Health Care Facilities**

There is no hospital located within Seneca County.

Emergency treatment and services are available at Taylor-Brown Emergency Complex, in Waterloo. This facility treats medical emergencies and offers critical health care. The nearest full-service hospital to the north county area is in Geneva, approximately 9 miles from the Taylor-Brown Emergency Complex in Waterloo.

The south end of the county has major concerns for the lack of critical and emergency care facilities. The nearest full-service hospital to the south county area is in Ithaca, approximately a half-hour commute from areas within the south end of the county.

Ambulance services are provided through volunteer Emergency Medical Technician Units associated with the local fire departments.

## **Recreational Facilities**

### **State Parks**

There are five State Parks and one state operated golf course within the county (see Illustration No. 3, Parks). The parks are:

- Cayuga Lake State Park (188 acres);
- Seneca Lake State Park (141 acres);
- Sampson State Park (1552 acres);
- Lodi Point State Park (10.8 acres);
- Seneca Falls Urban Cultural Park
- Buena Vista Golf Course.

All parks offer access to the waterfront.

- Samson, Seneca Lake and Cayuga State Parks have public beaches;
- Samson State Park and Cayuga State Park have public marinas;
- Seneca Lake State Park, Samson State Park, Lodi Point State Park and Cayuga State Park provide public boat launch facilities;
- Samson State Park offers camping and is home of the Maritime Museum.
- Seneca Falls Urban Cultural Park offers pedestrian access to the Seneca/Cayuga Canal. Boating facilities are proposed as part of the Erie Canal Corridor Plan.

### **National Parks and Federal Open Space Lands**

#### **Women's Rights National Park**

The Women's Rights National Park is located within the village of Seneca Falls. This park is administered through the National Parks System and includes several sites and structures within the village and town of Seneca Falls. The main visitors and interpretive center is located in downtown Seneca Falls.

#### **Montezuma Wildlife Refuge**

The Montezuma Wildlife Refuge forms the northeastern corner of Seneca County.

This wildlife sanctuary has become the model for conservation practices and wildlife management working together. The site offers passive opportunities for observation of wild life and opportunities for sport hunting and fishing.

### **Finger Lakes National Forest**

The Finger Lakes National Forest, also referred to as the Hector Land Use Area, is scattered along the southern part of the county within the towns of Covert and Lodi. This area serves primarily as a conservation and hunting area.

## **Civic, Public and Government Facilities**

### ***Seneca Army Depot***

The Seneca Army depot is the largest, single occupancy site within the county. With 11,000 acres, it occupies roughly 5% of the total land area within the county. The major portion of the property has been developed as a munitions depository for the Department of Defense. The depot contains:

- 180 sets of family quarters
- 450 person barracks complex
- 139 miles of road
- 42 miles of railroad track
- 7,000 foot runway
- 927 structures, including 35 maintenance shops and a machine shop
- 1,332,796 gross square feet of ammunition storage
- 3,048,855 gross square feet of general supply/industrial plant equipment storage

In 1989, Seneca Depot was named to the EPA's National Priority List. The depot has 72 possible hazardous sites, 25 of which are being investigated for cleanup. Some of the

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Community Facilities

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remaining sites may require sampling and testing.

In 1992, the North Depot area was considered as excess property and operations within the North Depot area were terminated. The North Depot includes a bowling alley, gymnasium, sewage treatment plant, office space and residential living space. Total available square footage of building area within the North Depot is in excess of 315,000 square feet.

In 1995, the entire Seneca Army Depot was placed under the Base Closure and Realignment Act (BRAC). The entire facility is scheduled for complete closure by the end of the 1997 federal fiscal calendar year.

#### ***Drug Treatment Center for New York State (former Willard Psychiatric Center)***

Located on the west side of Seneca Lake, the 670 acre site was first opened in 1860 as an agricultural college. The arrangement of structures, many dating from the 1870's, is currently undergoing an \$8.6 million renovation to convert the facility to the Drug Treatment Center for New York, a rehabilitation center for non-violent felons.

#### ***County Seats***

Seneca County has the unique distinction of having two county seats, one in Waterloo and one in Ovid. The primary location of government activity is at the Waterloo location, on DiPronio Drive.

#### ***Villages***

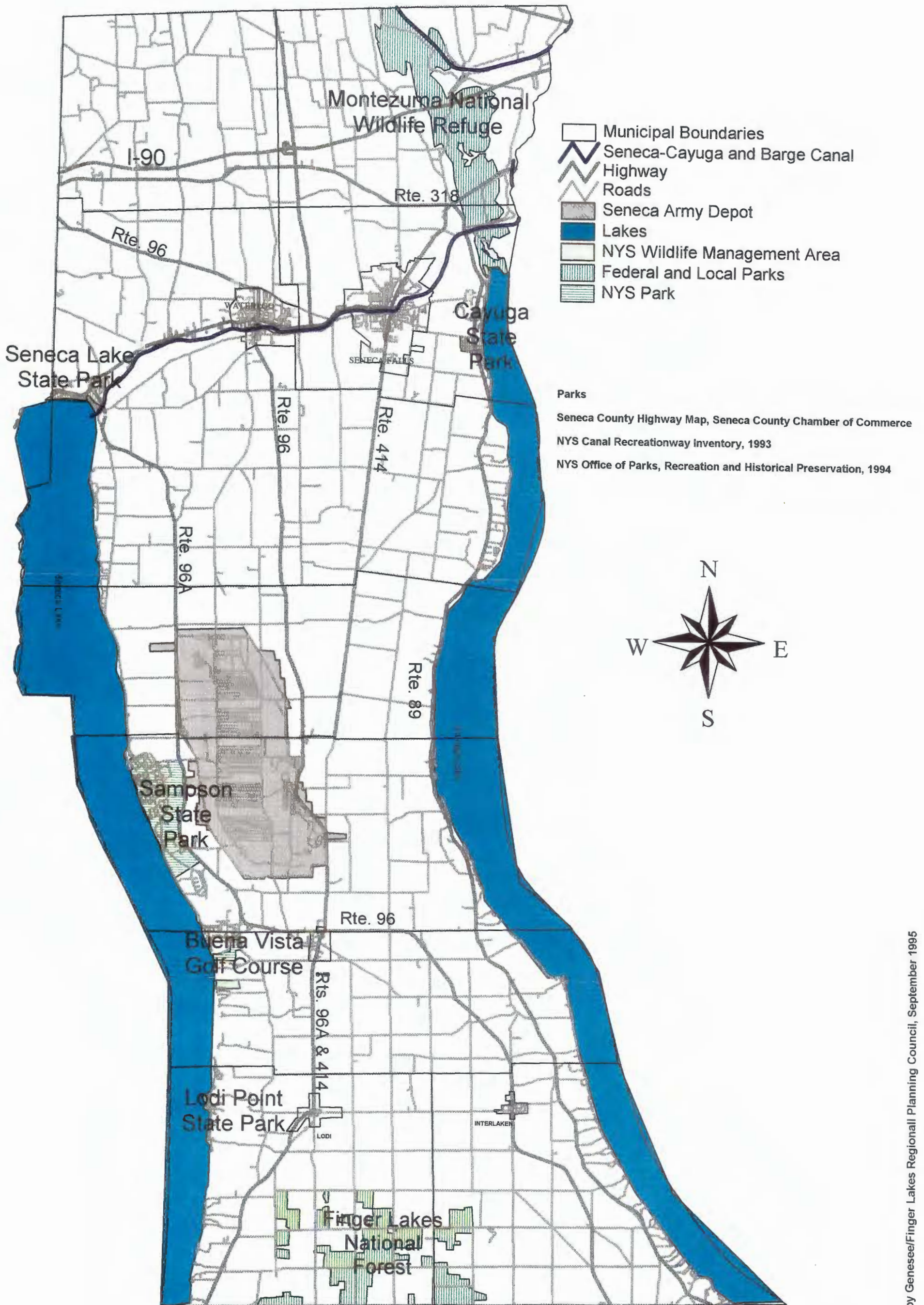
Cultural resources, such as public libraries, are concentrated in the larger villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls.

- The New York State Urban Cultural Park development and a portion of the Women's Rights National Park are located in downtown Seneca Falls.



# PARKS

## Seneca County, New York



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Inventory and Analysis

### Community Facilities

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Facilities are also located in the smaller villages and outlying areas, such as the Maritime Museum at Samsom State Park on NY Rte 96, about three miles north of the hamlet of Willard.

## **Cultural Resources**

Seneca County contains a variety of natural and visual resources which are deserving of protection and enhancement. These resources attract tourists to the area and are cited by residents as factors contributing to the quality of life in Seneca County.

### **Visual Resources**

#### **Waterfronts**

The lake fronts offer impressive views along their respective valleys. The views along Seneca and Cayuga Lakes begin along the mid-county ridge. Vistas into neighboring counties, across the open water, are impressive. Care should be taken to prevent blockage of these views and vistas.

Portions of the Seneca/Cayuga Canal can be seen from adjacent roadways while driving through the county. The most visible portion is within the village of Seneca Falls, along River Road in the towns of Waterloo and Seneca Falls and on Rte.89, at lock no.35.

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge offers varied views and vistas across the expanses of cattail marsh and wooded wetlands. The variety of flora and fauna adds to the striking vistas.

#### **Woodlots**

Approximately 18% of the county is forested, with most of the treed areas being scattered woodlots. The most extensive wooded areas are within the Montezuma Wildlife refuge, with approximately 1,600 acres of forest. This forest consists mainly of swamp woods which are not managed for timber. The Finger Lakes National Forest contains 550 acres of scattered woodlots managed for timber.

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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**Topography**

Seneca County contains areas of unique topographic features. The northern portion of the county, roughly north of the Seneca River, is composed of unique drumlin formations which run in a north-south direction. The distinct north-south pattern of drumlins lends a well-defined character to the visual landscape.

The southern portion of the county is composed of a relatively flat central plain with slopes leading down to the adjacent lakes. The relative flatness of the terrain and high points located within mid-county contribute to almost unlimited vistas of the surrounding area.

**Agriculture and Viticulture**

The pattern of agriculture and viticulture within the county adds to the rural panorama. The configuration of vineyards, fields and hedgerows combine into an impressive pastoral quilt. The variety of crops grown adds to the interest and quality of the views.

**Historic/Archeological Resources**

Seneca County has numerous sites of local and national interest:

- The New York State Urban Cultural Park, the Women's Rights National Park and the National Woman's Hall of Fame form a core of the historic sites within the village of Seneca Falls.
- The Peter Whitmer Farm, birthplace of the founder of the Mormon Church, is located mid-county and is nationally significant historic site.

The majority of historic sites include old homes and structures unique to Seneca County (see Illustration No. 6 and 7, Archeological Sensitivity).

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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**Historic Resources**

According to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), there are a number of historic sites of local interest within Seneca County. The NYSOPRHP inventory mapping indicates a predominance of historically significant sites located along the Seneca River and the Cayuga lakefront.

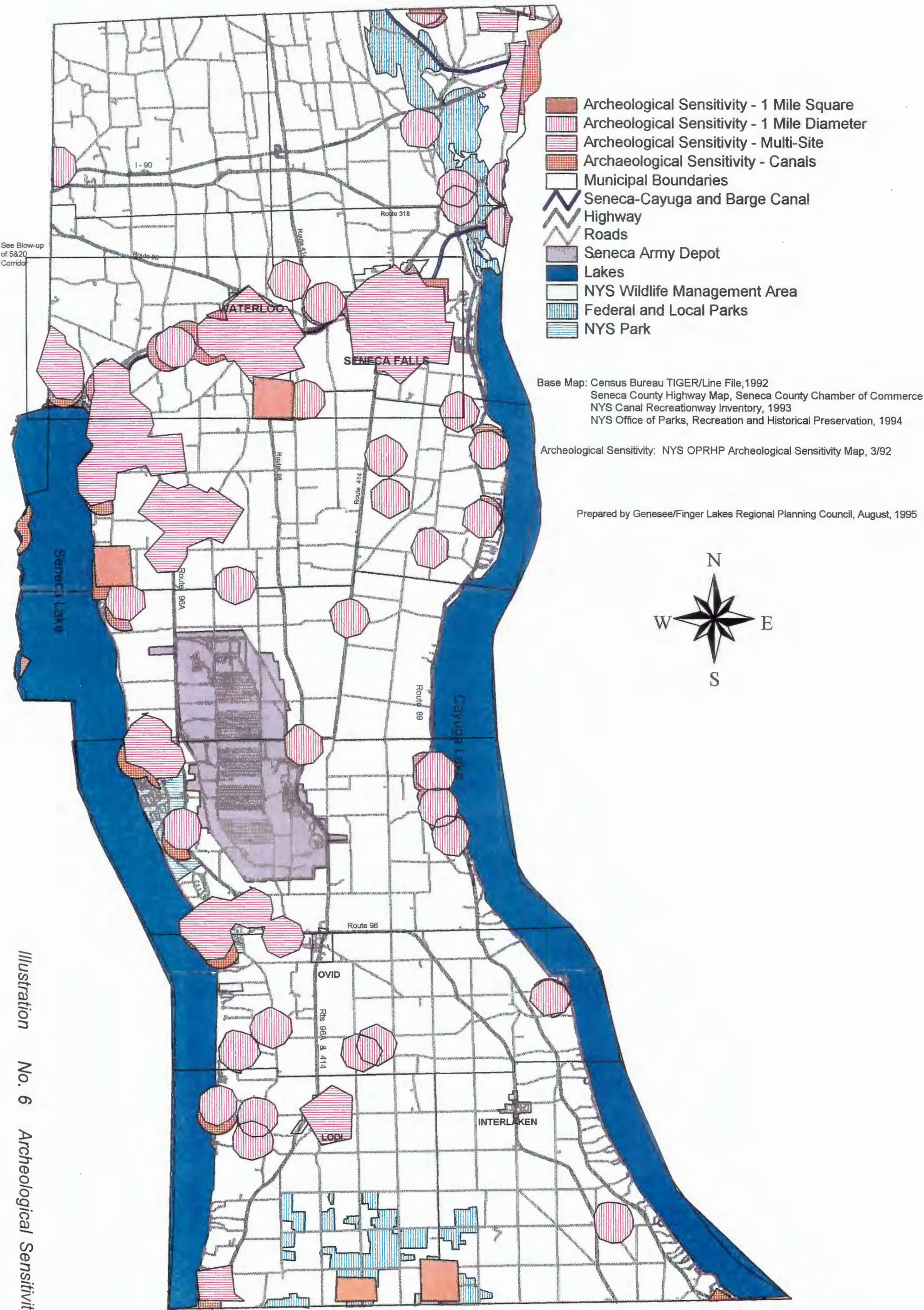
**Archeological Resources**

The NYSOPRHP mapping identifies numerous areas known to be highly probable as pre-historic sites. Areas known, or thought to contain significant prehistoric sites are located throughout Seneca County. The NYSOPRHP locates sensitive sites within a one mile radius of the supposed location. These one mile radii are to considered within the area of suspected sites and deserve special consideration when development proposals occur. Caution should be exercised when allowing new development to occur in these areas. Activities which could disturb or destroy any evidence of man's early occupation of the land should be allowed a thorough archeological investigation before disturbance.



# ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

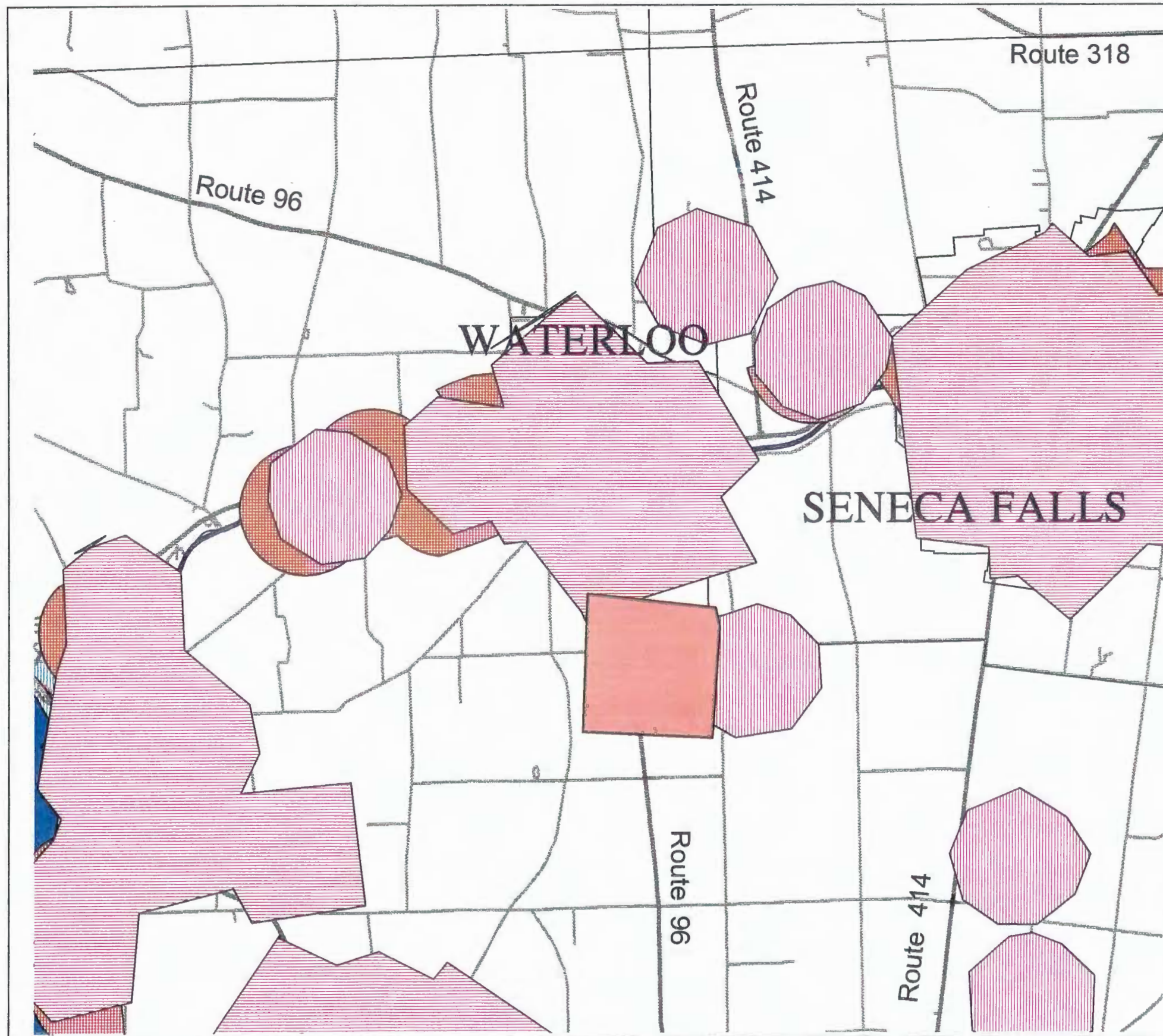
## Seneca County, New York





# ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

## 5 & 20 Corridor



- Archeological Sensitivity - 1 Mile Square
- Archeological Sensitivity - 1 Mile Diameter
- Archeological Sensitivity - Multi-Site
- Archeological Sensitivity - Canals
- Municipal Boundaries
- Seneca-Cayuga and Barge Canal
- Highway
- Roads
- Seneca Army Depot
- Lakes
- NYS Wildlife Management Area
- Federal and Local Parks
- NYS Park

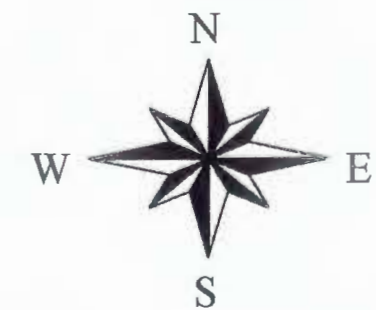


Illustration No. 7

Archeological Sensitivity, Rte. 5 & 20 Corridor

Base Map: Census Bureau TIGER/Line File, 1992

Archeological Sensitivity: NYS OPRHP Archeological Sensitivity Map, 3/92

Prepared by Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, August, 1995

## ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

This section includes a discussion of the environmental features within Seneca County. These features include the county's *physiology, geology, water resources, air resources, and terrestrial and aquatic ecologies.*

### Physiology

Seneca County is within two of the major physiographic provinces in New York State. North of Ovid comprises part of the **Erie-Ontario-Mohawk Plain** and south of Ovid, marked by the Portage Escarpment, is the **Southern New York section of the Appalachian Plateau.**

In the northwest part of the county are *Deltaic sandhills and plains.* This area is nearly level to rolling sandy soils. Part of a delta to pre-historic Lake Newberry, predecessor to Junius Pond and Seneca Lake, elevations range from 400-500 feet.

Junius Pond is unique in that it is a series of hydrological interdependent ponds which serves not only the municipal water needs of the Village of Lyons in adjacent Wayne County, but also contains species of an endangered plant (form of algae) and animal (species of bog turtle).

East of the Deltaic sandhills and plains is a belt of *drumlins and drumloid hills* which trench north and south. These hills have crests which range from 20 - 75' and are filled with glacial till and hard rocks from Canada and the Adirondacks.

East of the drumlins is the *Montezuma Swamp* consisting of drowned lands north of Cayuga Lake. This area consists of muck 2 - 8' thick and has extremely poor drainage. The area is host to large flocks of migratory birds, a wide diversity of wildlife and plant forms.



**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES**

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The *glacial lake plain* forms a band 5 - 6 miles wide along the Seneca River. This area is nearly level to gently rolling with poorly developed drainage patterns. Elevations within this area range from 400 - 600 feet.

South of the glacial lake plain is the *glacial till plain*. The relief is generally mild, with slopes bordering the lakes in the south part of the county generally steep. The drainage divide between the two lakes occurs within this area. Elevations range from 600 - 800 feet, with the elevation generally increasing from north to south.

The *Appalachian Plateau* is rolling upland dissected by small streams and drainage ways. This area includes the highest elevations within the county. Elevations range from 800 - 1000 feet.

## **Geology**

Seneca County is underlain by rock formations which cross the county in distinct belts. These formations are deeply buried under glacial drift in the northern part of the county, but are close to the surface or exposed in many places in the southern part. These geologic formations are described from the north to the south portions of the county, which also reflects the oldest to youngest formations.

### *Camillus Shale*

This is the oldest and most northerly formation in Seneca County. Portions of the surface layer contain dolomitic limestone. For the most part, Camillus shale is deeply buried.

### *Akron Dolomite*

An impure magnesium limestone which is dark colored when freshly broken, weathers to a light bluish gray. This formation, generally 25' thick, is usually deeply buried. An exposed formation is visible along portions of the south side of the Seneca River.

SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN  
INVENTORY and ANALYSIS ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

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Manlius Limestone

This formation consists of a thin bed composed of hard, dark blue layers. The formation is found in the vicinity of Waterloo.

Onondaga Limestone

This is an important belt within Seneca County. The belt crosses the county from west-northwest to east-southeast. The most extensive exposures occur south of the Seneca River. The formation is about 80' thick and is the most important limestone bed in New York State.

The limestone from this band is quarried for highway and industrial uses. This band also contributed most of the lime which occurs in the county soils formed in the overburden.

Marcellus and Skaneateles

The Marcellus Formation is about 50' thick, rich in iron sulfide and calcareous concentrations, very fissile and breaks readily into small fragments. The Skaneateles Formation is about 185' thick and overlays the Marcellus Formation.

These soft shales contribute to the dark color and heavy texture of the soils found roughly from Waterloo south to Ovid and south-east to Hayts Corners.

Ludlowville and Moscow Formations

These formations are hard, calcareous layers rich in coral and resistant to erosion. These formations are responsible for the falls and cascades in some of the ravines and gorges. This formation also contributes to the medium texture and shaly character of soils in this part of the county.

Tully Limestone

This material is brittle and readily breaks into fragments. It is exposed in many of the ravines and gullies.

Genesee Shale and West River Shale

This material overlays the Tully Limestone and contributes to the dark shale fragments and medium texture of local soils.

Cashagua Shale and Hatch Shale Formations

These formations contribute flagstones and medium texture materials to the soils in the southern part of the county.

Lower West Falls Group

These formations underlie the highest parts of the county, near the Schuyler border.

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES**

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## **WATER RESOURCES**

Seneca County contains a number of important and significant water resources. These include Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, the Seneca River, the Seneca/Waterloo Canal, the Erie Canal, Montezuma Wildlife Refuge, Junius Pond, wetlands and streams.

### Wetlands

State and federal classified wetlands are present within Seneca County. The integrity of these wetlands should be protected and encroachment, due to development, should be avoided.

All state wetlands are protected in accordance with 6NYCRR Part 663, the Freshwater Wetland Permit Requirements Regulations, and 6 NYCRR, Part 665, the Freshwater Wetlands Maps and Classifications Regulations. (see Illustration No. 4, Wetlands)

Disturbance either within a state regulated wetland or its' associated 100' adjacent area require permits from NY Department of Environmental Conservation.

Federal jurisdictional wetlands are protected through the Section 404 of the Clean Waters Act. Disturbances of more than one acre within a federal jurisdictional wetland require permitting through the US Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch.

### Streams

The numerous stream corridors could, under proper circumstances, provide opportunities for passive recreation while protecting wildlife habitats and stream water quality.

Flood zones exist along many of this county's streams, waterbodies and wetlands. Mitigating adverse effects of flooding upon new development encourages adoption of policies which restrict development within a flood zone.

The county currently administers a federal Flood Insurance Rate Program, which is administered through the local municipal level. This program establishes 100 year flood elevations and indicates areas which could become inundated during both 100 and 500 year storm events.

## **AIR RESOURCES**

Future residential and commercial development activity within the county is not expected to adversely impact air quality within the town.

Future industrial or utility projects which could involve adverse air emissions would be require review and permit from state and federal agencies with jurisdictional, in accordance with state and federal policy.

Traffic levels at major intersections within the county do not warrant monitoring pollutant levels. The volume of traffic anticipated does not approach thresholds for standards of emissions as established by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

## **TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC ECOLOGY**

Wooded areas account for approximately 18 percent (38,000 acres) of Seneca County. Wooded areas consist mainly of farm woodlots which average about 12 acres per farm.

The federal government owns about 20,800 acres within the county.

- The Seneca Army Depot (11,000 acres) contains about 2,200 acres of scattered woodlots which are harvested by private individuals through contracts with the Army.
- The Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (6,341 acres) contains about 1,600 acres of forest, which is mainly swamp woods. This forest is neither harvested, nor managed for timber.
- The Finger Lake Wildlife Area (3,508 acres) contains about 550 acres of scattered woodlots managed for timber.

Forests in Seneca County generally show rapid growth and superior form. The climate and

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**INVENTORY and ANALYSIS** **ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES**

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lime content of the soils favor fast growth. Species in well drained locations consist of Maple (Acer), Beech (Fagus), White Ash (Fraxinus), Basswood (Tilia) and Tulip Poplar (Liriodendron). These are all species of commercial value. Oak (Quercus) and Hickory (Carya) commonly grow on the steeper slopes of the drumlins.

## **WILDLIFE**

Wildlife is an important natural resource in Seneca County. The patterns of agriculture, woodlots, shrubbed and wooded wetlands contribute to the wildlife diversity.

The Lake Plains region, basically north of the Town of Lodi and Covert, has populations of ring-necked pheasants, cottontail rabbits, woodcocks, white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse and grey squirrels.

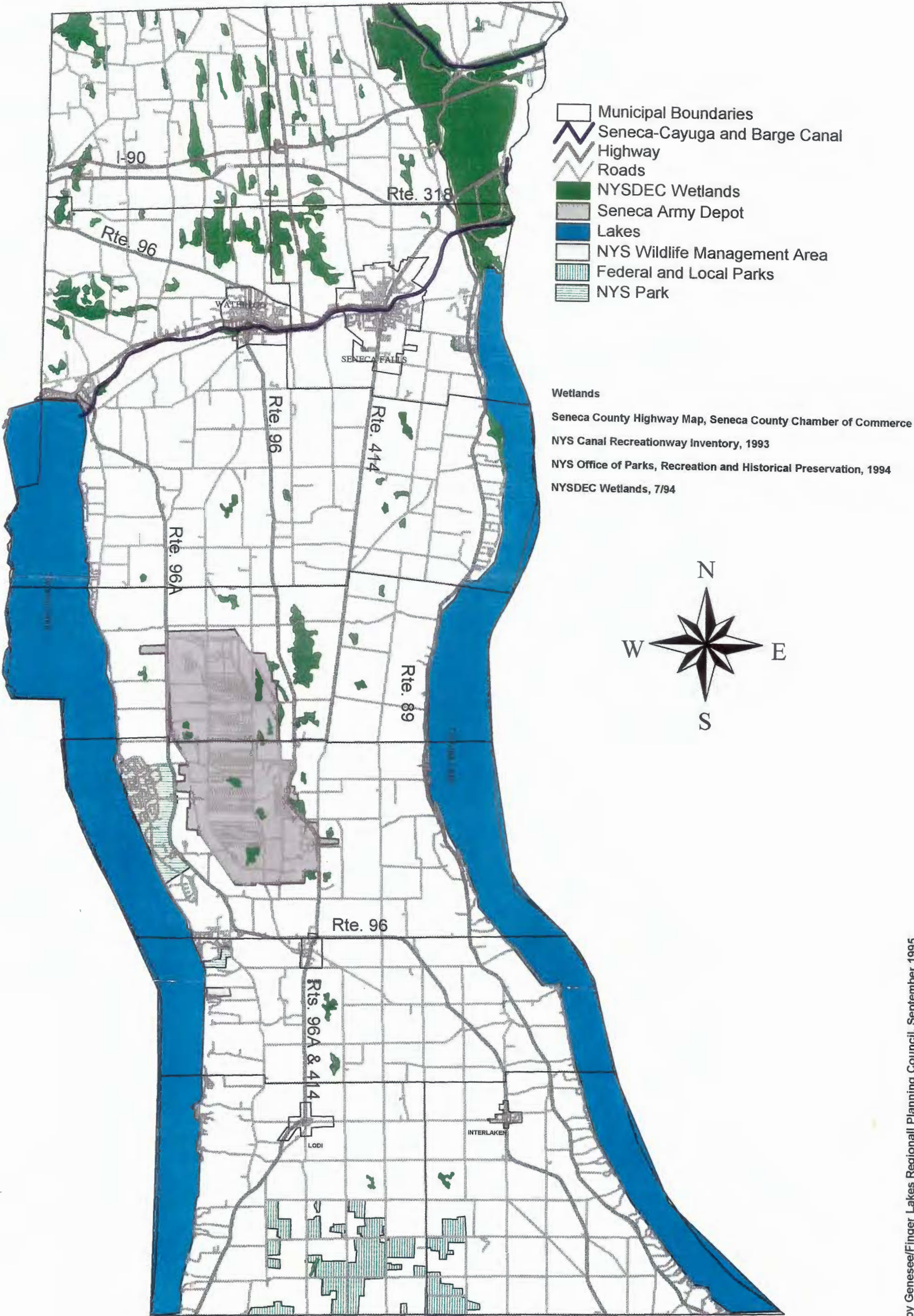
The Montezuma Wildlife Refuge is the key element which attributes to the large numbers of waterfowl found within the county. This area, with the adjoining lakes, is attractive to migrating geese and ducks.

The agricultural nature of the county contributes to the high population of deer within the county.



# WETLANDS

## Seneca County, New York



## **Demographic Characteristics**

### **Population**

The 1990 census indicated Seneca County had 33,683 residents. This is about the same as the 1980 population. Population projections indicate little or no change in future population totals.

The fastest growing area within the county is the town of Covert. Residential construction has brought new residents to this town at the southeast corner of the county. The proximity to Ithaca has resulted in an influx of "country gentlemen", commuters from Seneca County to Ithaca employment centers.

Approximately 87% of Seneca County's population (29,587 total persons) lives within the town and villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls.

### **Income**

Mean household income within Seneca County, in 1990, was \$ 37,518.00 (1990 Census). This was slightly below the state mean household income of \$ 38,791.00 (1990 Census). The increase in household income is expected to grow, but, without mitigation, will continue to be less than the state mean. This can be attributed to the loss of high value jobs related to closure and/or downsizing of several key employment centers.

### **Employment**

The workforce within Seneca County has traditionally been defined as manufacturing based. Due to recent closing and downsizing of key industries within the county, the employment base is making a transition to services based employment.

The percentage of Seneca County residents seeking employment outside of the county is increasing. This is in response to the trend toward under-employment and growth in low value jobs within the county. In 1990, the Seneca County work force totaled 15,562. This represented an annual growth of 166 jobs for Seneca County residents. Of this growth, two-thirds of the jobs (110) are created in Seneca County and one-third (50) are created outside of the county. The rate of growth in out-of-county jobs is exceeding in-county job growth. By the year 2005, if this trend continues, the in/out-of-county job split will show close to one of every two employed county residents traveling outside the county each day to work.

#### **Seneca County Marketing Plan**

The companion report to this document, Seneca County Comprehensive Plan: Marketing Plan, contains significant information about the business climate and attractiveness of Seneca County to new and existing businesses. The Marketing Plan suggests implementation strategies to promote business locations and growth within Seneca County.

This land use plan assists local municipalities by providing a format for suggesting ways to plan for impending growth and development.



## **Land Use Regulations**

### **Existing Land Use Plans**

Seneca County has a history of avoiding planning and land use regulations. This comprehensive plan is the first update since such a plan was prepared in the 1960's.

Several individual towns and villages within the county have adopted planning regulations and zoning ordinances, but, the county has never dealt comprehensively with county-wide land use issues and guidelines.

The current opportunity to deal with land use, on a county-wide basis, is a result of the downsizing at the Seneca Army Depot. The excessing of the North Base and potential closure of the entire facility brings a range of land use issues to bear within the local community. Preparation of guidelines for land use will assist local municipalities. Being prepared to deal with land use demands will help make the communities more professional in dealing with land use and site plan reviews and approvals.

### **Existing Zoning Ordinances**

The villages of Seneca Falls and Waterloo and towns of Seneca Falls, Waterloo and Tyre currently regulate land use through direction of comprehensive zoning ordinances. The rural towns of Varick and Fayette zone through building restrictions within flood plains. The town of Covert and the hamlet of Romulus have a land management ordinance. Several towns have development regulations which include specific issues such as development of mobile home parks. Some of the towns with zoning should revisit their respective ordinances and assure they are in line with current needs and development trends. The county should encourage local municipalities without zoning to adopt land use and zoning regulations and offer staff assistance in developing local ordinances.

## Land Use

The general land use categories identified within this section establish the framework from which individual towns and villages can strengthen, or create, their land use ordinances. (see Illustrations No. 8 and 9, Regulated Areas)

### Residential

The predominant type of housing within Seneca County is the single family, detached residential unit. This type of housing is expected to continue as the predominant and preferred type of housing.

Multi-family residential housing, which includes apartments and townhouses is the predominant form of rental housing within the county. This type of housing is expected to continue as the predominant type of rental housing.

Where infrastructure is available, each local municipality should determine the maximum density which meets the community goals for satisfying housing demand.

Where infrastructure is limited, or non-existent, local review agencies should rely on current New York State Health Department standards for septic and water separation, leach line to property line separation and septic to well separation. This will determine an appropriate lot size and density for single family and multi-family housing units. Generally, lots of five acres or greater are required under State Health Department regulations when no percolation is available.

Where adequate percolation is available, the only limiting factor to density should be the size of the septic system required and the minimum separations between habitable structures,

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### Land Use

### Definitions

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wells and external property lines.

#### **Light Industrial**

Light Industrial development includes office, research, light assembly/manufacturing and warehouse/distribution uses. These types of developments should be located near or adjacent to major highways and arterial to maximize access. They should also be located convenient to the source of infrastructure required to support the development.

#### **Commercial**

This is a general business category which applies primarily to retail and office usage. Commercial developments allow a broad range of retail, service and other commercial activities needed to serve the residents of the community.

#### **Agricultural**

Agricultural uses derive their profit from growing items for consumption.

Consumption items are food stuffs either for direct consumer consumption or, for sale as products used in processes which produce other saleable food commodities or products.

- Tourism Centers would be a commercial area within the county that would serve as the base from which tourists would be encouraged to spend time visiting the local attractions. Tourism Centers would be facilities designed to accommodate overnight guests with motel accommodations, restaurants, meeting facilities, local interpretive centers and information on area attractions.

Tourist Centers would optimally be located where infrastructure can support intense types of development. These locations would generally be areas throughout the county which include adequate sewer and water services, are accessible to major transportation routes and can service tourist needs. These centers would be capable of supporting a full four season tourist industry within the county.

### **Gateway Improvements**

These are aesthetic improvements recommended for the major vehicular entrances into Seneca County. Gateways would incorporate signage, plantings and a brief message welcoming visitors into the county.

The major gateways should be located at:

- Thruway exit 42 at Rte. 414;
- Rte. 318 at the Seneca/Ontario County Line;
- Rte. 5&20 at the east and west county lines;
- Rte. 414 at the Schuyler County line;
- Rte. 96 at the Tompkins County Line.

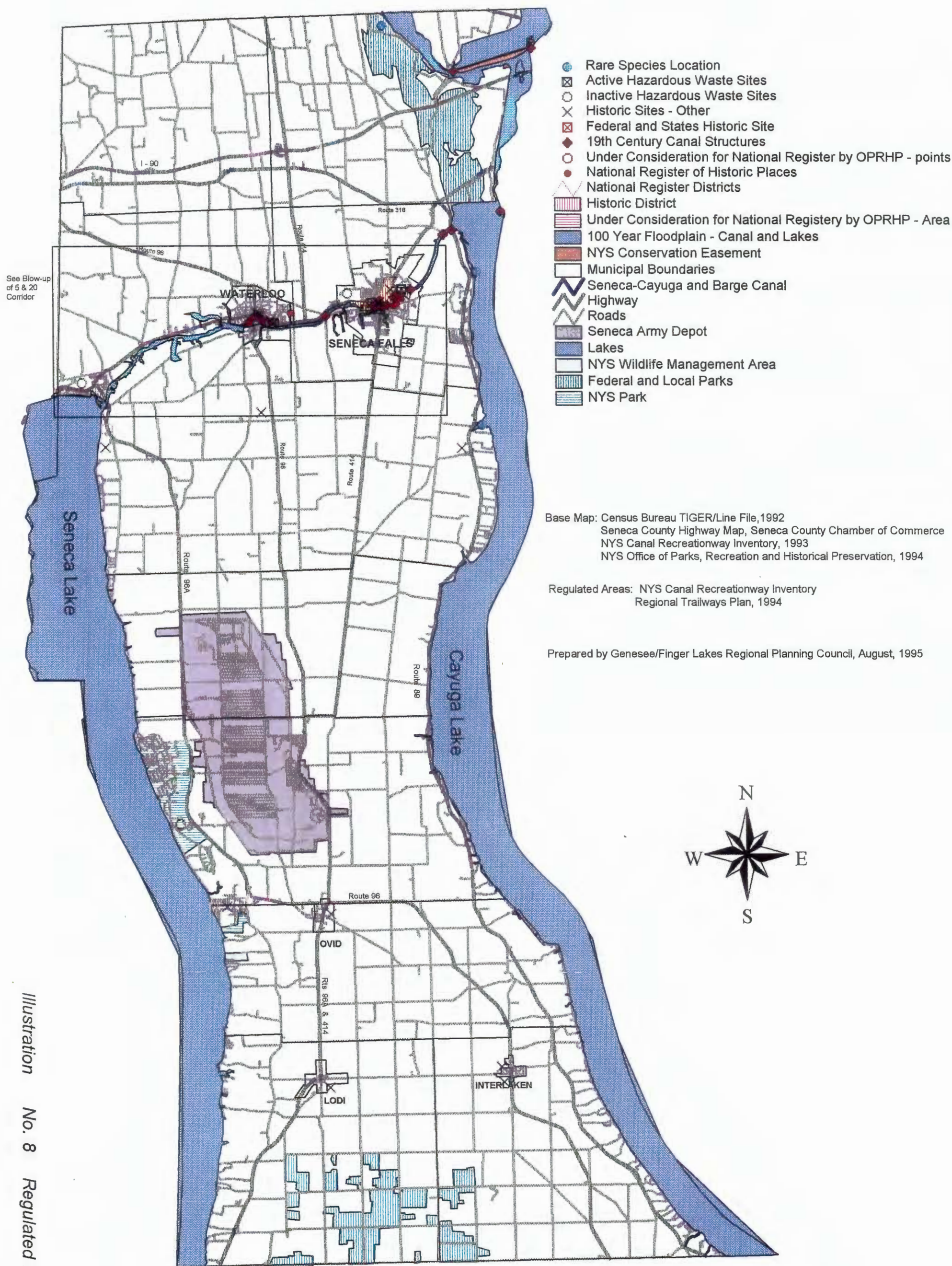
Information kiosks and a Seneca County information map showing local attractions could be located within specific gateway parking areas.

Major tourist attractions and events, such as the Finger Lakes Outlet Center and the Empire Farm Days, should also be treated as gateway opportunities into the county.



# REGULATED AREAS

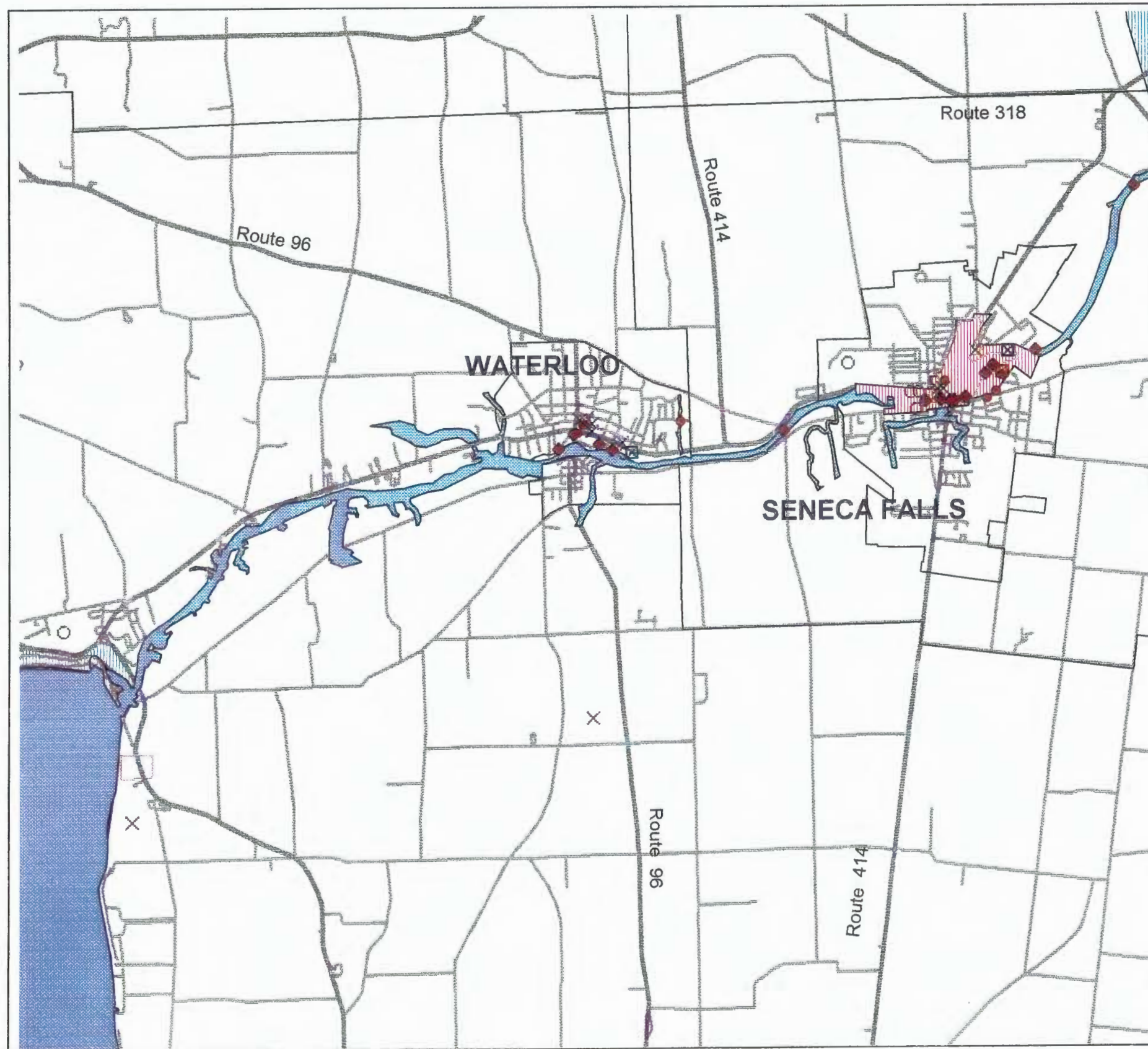
## Seneca County, New York





# REGULATED AREAS

## 5 & 20 Corridor



- Rare Species Location
- ⊠ Active Hazardous Waste Sites
- Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites
- × Historic Sites - Other
- ⊠ Federal and States Historic Site
- ◆ 19th Century Canal Structures
- Under Consideration for National Register by OPRHP - points
- National Register of Historic Places
- ▨ National Register Districts
- ▨ Historic District
- ▨ Under Consideration for National Registry by OPRHP - Area
- ▨ 100 Year Floodplain - Canal and Lakes
- ▨ NYS Conservation Easement
- ▨ Municipal Boundaries
- ▨ Seneca-Cayuga and Barge Canal
- ▨ Highway
- ▨ Roads
- ▨ Seneca Army Depot
- ▨ Lakes
- ▨ NYS Wildlife Management Area
- ▨ Federal and Local Parks
- ▨ NYS Park

Base Map: Census Bureau TIGER/Line File, 1992  
 Seneca County Highway Map, Seneca County Chamber of Commerce  
 NYS Canal Recreationway Inventory, 1993  
 NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation, 1994

Regulated Areas: NYS Canal Recreationway Inventory  
 Regional Trailways Plan, 1994

Prepared by Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, August, 1995

Illustration No. 9 Regulated Areas, Rte. 5 & 20 Corridor



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

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### **Land Development**

The Seneca County Land Use Plan includes ideas which result from public workshops, meetings with citizen leaders and county staff. Development of the Land Use Plan has been influenced with the knowledge of opportunities and limitations, linked to the physical environment and understanding of economic development strategies. (see Illustrations No. 10 and 11, Opportunities)

### **Environmental Constraints**

#### **Waterfront**

The development potential along the shorelines of Seneca and Cayuga Lakes is limited. The majority of shoreline land use is small, privately owned parcels. The largest potential area for development is the Willard facilities frontage on Seneca Lake. Additional public access to the waterfronts and preservation of the sensitive ecological systems found within the shore zones should influence future waterfront development.

#### **Stream Corridors and Flood Plains**

Seneca County has numerous streams and associated flood plains. Many are protected by New York State and local regulations. These stream corridors present opportunities for preservation of open space. At key locations, a long term goal of public acquisition could allow access, by the public, to these open space corridors.

#### **Wetlands**

In addition to the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and the Finger Lakes Land Use Area, the NY Department of Environmental Conservation and US Army Corps of Engineers regulate wetlands. Regulated wetlands should be available for inclusion within an open

## **SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS**

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space preservation programs. These areas, scattered throughout the county, are important as wildlife habitat. Their beneficial impact on water quality control areas can not be understated.

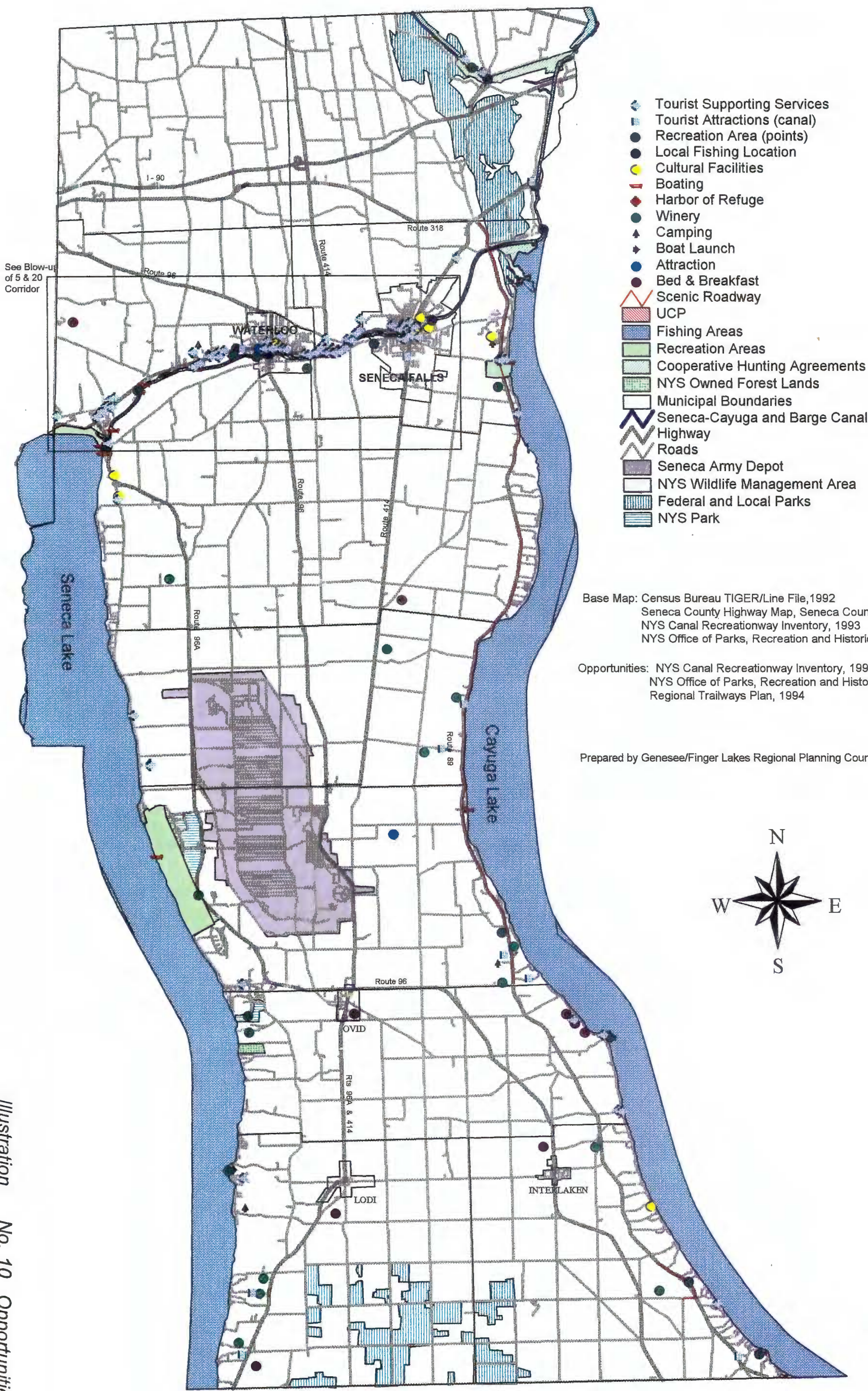
Local responsible municipalities should perform reviews of plans for all future uses and developments for the presence of on-site state and federal jurisdictional wetlands. These wetland areas should be respected and adjacent developments should not encroach upon these wetlands.

Good land planning and design incorporates jurisdictional wetlands into the site design.



# OPPORTUNITIES

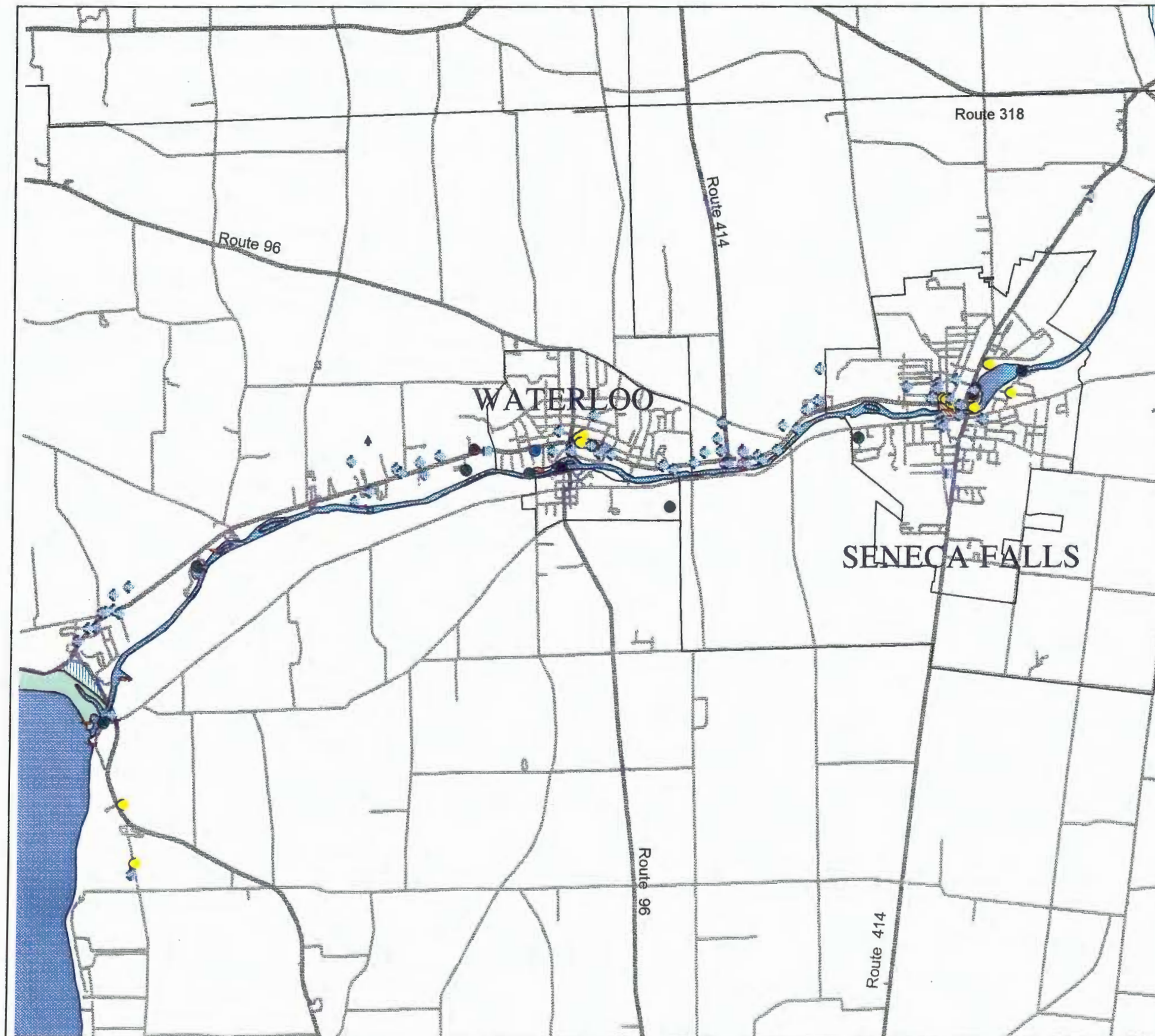
## Seneca County, New York





# OPPORTUNITIES

## 5 & 20 Corridor



- ◆ Tourist Supporting Services
- Tourist Attractions (canal)
- Recreation Area (points)
- Local Fishing Location
- Cultural Facilities
- Boating
- ◆ Harbor of Refuge
- Winery
- ◆ Camping
- ◆ Boat Launch
- Attraction
- Bed & Breakfast
- ▲ Scenic Roadway
- UCP
- Fishing Areas
- Recreation Areas
- Cooperative Hunting Agreements
- NYS Owned Forest Lands
- Municipal Boundaries
- Seneca-Cayuga and Barge Canal
- Highway
- Roads
- Seneca Army Depot
- NYS Wildlife Management Area
- Federal and Local Parks
- NYS Park



Base Map: Census Bureau TIGER/Line File, 1992  
 Seneca County Highway Map, Seneca County Chamber of Commerce  
 NYS Canal Recreationway Inventory, 1993  
 NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation, 1994

Opportunities: NYS Canal Recreationway Inventory, 1993  
 NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation  
 Regional Trailways Plan, 1994

*Illustration No. 11 Opportunities, Rte. 5 & 20 Corridor*

Prepared by Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, August, 1995

**SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN**  
**SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

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## **Summary of Major Issues**

### **Open Space Protection**

Seneca County residents, participating in the public workshops, expressed a major interest in maintaining the open space qualities of the Seneca County. As a mostly rural county, it was felt the scenic qualities which compose the open, rural, flavor of the county are the most important open space elements worth preserving.

A review of land types which should be kept open indicate woodlots and wetlands form an extremely important network worth the effort to preserve. State regulated (NYSDEC) wetlands are already identified and regulated under NYCRR, Part 607. Woodlot areas, which are important to the community, should be identified and mapped.

Identified woodlots and wetlands would be left in their natural state. Combining these areas with the currently regulated flood plains forms a natural pattern of open spaces throughout the county.

### **Farmland Protection**

The agricultural industry is important to Seneca County. It is important to preserve land necessary for agriculture to succeed. The expanse of agricultural fields throughout the central portion of the county, and the presence of the vineyards along the county's edges, present strong, pastoral views throughout the county. This asset is important to substantiating the quality of life and is an important component in the tourism industry.

Usage of New York State Agricultural Districts should be encouraged as a planning tool to further protect the predominantly agricultural areas from non-farm development pressures. The agricultural districts need to be worked into an overall local farmland/agricultural

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### SUMMARY OF ISSUES

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protection district within local zoning and land use ordinances. Such a protection district will encourage continuation of commercial agriculture and preserve the rural and open space character.

#### **Expansion of the Economic Base**

Seneca County has an unequalled opportunity to attract new businesses to the county. The availability of the North Base and potential for the entire Seneca Army Depot brings potential facilities on-line within the county with potential to generate many jobs and provide economic benefits to the county. The Depot's location, in mid-county, makes it accessible to a majority of residents within the county. This is a major advantage to development of the facilities towards job growth.

The current facilities within the North Base do not require conversion of rural fields into industrial and commercial facilities. The presence of existing infrastructure and utilities means resources can better be directed toward job formation and capitol investments.

Expansion of the economic base beyond the North Depot should concentrate within areas of existing sewer and water systems. New and expanding commercial ventures will be able to locate within areas capable of handling the industrial and commercial sewage and provide the necessary water.

#### **Visual Quality and Cultural Resource Protection**

Seneca County contains many visual and cultural resources worth protecting and preserving. These include views along the waterfronts, across the rural landscape, within the hamlets and villages and through the natural areas.

Local municipalities utilize the Long Environmental Assessment Form, Visual Resources Analysis, when reviewing proposed developments which have the potential to impact a view

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### SUMMARY OF ISSUES

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or vista. Recognizing the importance of views and cultural resources will help protect them for the enjoyment by future generations.

#### **Infrastructure Expansion**

In general, the population centers within Seneca County are adequately serviced by public water and sewer systems. The villages within the relatively agricultural south county have adequate services to meet current and anticipate commercial and developmental needs. Seneca Falls and Waterloo have excess capacities to meet their respective development needs.

Local municipalities can strategically influence growth in undeveloped areas by recommending areas with proper infrastructure be targeted for development before areas without proper infrastructure be allowed commercial and/or industrial growth.

#### **Government Services**

Most of the services provided through the local and county governments are adequate. As the county looks to the future, it will become more important to study ways of passing expenses along on a cost recovery basis. This could include greater reliance on user fees and, should state enabling legislation permit, development impact fees.

The Master Plan prepared for the county suggests implementation measures the county can undertake which will expand the economic base within the county. These measures, such as maintaining a quality labor force and making Seneca County a desirable place to locate and expand businesses, are ways which will allow the county's development potential to expand into the future.

## Recommended Implementation Strategies

### Land Use Guidelines

The land use guidelines should promote development of uses, patterns of development, development densities and development activities which reduce conflicts between various land uses. Proper implementation of land use guidelines, in the form of land use regulations and zoning will encourage positive investments in the form of new construction, restoration and improvement of existing structures. The towns and villages need to implement land use and zoning regulations which control and direct growth and development. As the communities work on these guidelines, they need to coordinate ordinances with the total county land use guidelines. This leads to the protection of important community land resources.

The county is unable to zone property and establish municipal development criteria. For this reason, no mapping attempt is made to specifically locate zoning and land use districts, but rather, describe the intended uses. This is purposely done to allow local municipalities the ability to discuss and decide the appropriate locations for uses within their respective jurisdictions.

These techniques which strike the balance between development and open space are presented here as land use guidelines which local municipalities may adopt as zoning legislation and land use guidelines. These techniques are presented with the understanding that change has to and will occur within Seneca County.

This change will result from two important factors:

- The need for the County to increase its' economic base through business expansion and new business development.



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### IMPLEMENTATION

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- The pending closure of the Seneca Army Depot, which will require a re-use plan. This re-use plan which will bring change to the mid-county area as facilities are converted from military to private sector use.

These land use guidelines are the blue prints for the land use portion of the economic development of the County. The next step in advancing the plan involves consensus building. These concepts must be continually shared with the broadest array of residents, businesses, government, institutional and private sector leaders.

The county's sanction of these technical guidelines enables further study of the specific resources requiring protection, refinement of stated goals and mechanisms to definitively control land use through regulation.

Techniques for achieving the balance between development and open space include:

- **Transfer of Development Rights** - Areas of unique natural, historical or environmental importance still have a development potential dictated by the zoning in force upon the property. An owner may be compensated for the development potential of the parcel, thereby preserving intact the uniqueness of the parcel. The development potential, or development rights, can be sold (transferred) to an owner of a similar zoned parcel, thereby increasing the development potential of a more appropriate and similarly zoned parcel. Once the development rights are sold (transferred), the parcel no longer has any development potential, saving the unique feature(s) from development pressure.
- **Incentive Zoning** - Incentive zoning allows more density than allowed conventionally in exchange for a benefit dedicated to the local municipality. The acceptable benefits (incentives) need to be identified by the local municipality prior to the use of incentive zoning. Preservation of open space areas are frequently cited by communities as an acceptable incentive.
- **Clustering** - This concept allows reduced lot areas to accommodate environmentally sensitive or unique portions of a site. Generally, the number of lots

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

### IMPLEMENTATION

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allowed within a clustered site can not exceed the number which could be achieved conventionally.

Current methods to preserve open space and agricultural lands are:

### **Agricultural Districts**

The State of New York Agricultural Districts Program helps preserve and protect farming and farm related uses from non-farm development pressures. This status encourages the continuation of commercial agriculture while preserving the open space and rural character of the county which has been identified as an important element within the perceived quality of life within the county.

Development of parcels within an agricultural district should be connected to some form of minimum open space requirement. This helps to preserve the predominantly agricultural use when development occurs. Preservation efforts to keep hedgerows intact and other details which convey the sense of open space should be incorporated into the approval process. Attention should be given to location of the structure, septic system and water source with attempts made to blend the development with the surrounding area.

Minimum lot sizes in agricultural areas not served with sewer and water should conform to New York State Health Department standards for minimum leach areas required relative to percolation rates, minimum setbacks of septic to property line, septic to well and septic to structure. These standards will dictate the ultimate density a site can support.

### **Overlay Districts**

Generally, an overlay district is a land use district which "floats" over conventional zoning districts. The Overlay District is applied when specific objectives relative to developing a



## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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particular parcel are required. Overlay districts are used to protect wetlands, steep slopes, soils unique for farming, woodlots or any combination of natural or man made features.

Overlay districts can play a vital role in Seneca County's development. The declaration of Overlay Districts can offer a flexible land use policy with specific overlays available within specific conditions, such as rural farmland, rural village, scenic areas and waterfront sites.

Overlay districts that the local municipalities have at their disposal are:

- **Viticulture Development Zone** - used within areas where the wine production is the primary development pattern. This zone would protect soils considered important to production of grapes for wine use and encourage development of additional acreage for grape production.
- **Wetland Protection Overlay** - used to protect regulated freshwater wetlands within the NYDEC and USAC jurisdiction.
- **Steep Slope Overlay** - used to protect slopes in excess of 15%; development within a prescribed distance from the toe and top of slope would not be permitted.
- **Flood plain Overlay District** - used to restrict habitable development within a 100 year flood plain; limit development of non-habitable development within a 100 year flood plain.
- **Waterfront Development Overlay District** - used within waterfront Coastal Management Areas with specific criteria for approval of development.
- **Canal Overlay District** - refer development within the Seneca - Cayuga Canal Corridor to the suggestions formulated in the Erie Canal Master Plan.

## SENECA COUNTY LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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county. This group, though autonomous by design, needs to be kept informed of the planning processes which are undertaken by both the towns and the county.

The Depot realignment and closure process represents a significant commitment of resources and energy to allow reuse and possible privatization of government facilities. This may overwhelm certain sectors of the Seneca County community. Depot planning needs to be integrated into the local planning process to mitigate any significant impacts to other commercial and industrial areas within the county.

### **Gateways**

The major gateways into the county are:

- Rte. 318 and the Finger Lakes Outlet Center;
- Routes 5 & 20, east and west ends of the county;
- Exit 41 of the Thruway;
- Rte. 414 south of the Thruway;
- Rte. 96, north and south ends of the county.

The major entrances into the county should be treated through a coordinated improvement program consisting of signage and appropriate landscaping. Civic groups could sponsor or underwrite costs associated with labor involved in establishing these gateways.

The Rte. 414 gateway involves special considerations. This is the preeminent entry into the Seneca County communities and for this reason, special considerations should be given for use, setbacks, parking location and landscape treatments of new and existing facilities. Special treatments should be given to the Seneca Meadows landfill. Attempts should be made to keep this emerging hillside as aesthetically pleasing as possible.