

**Beautiful,  
Prosperous,  
Equitable,  
Connected,  
and Sustainable.**

**PART 2**

**City of Geneva's  
Comprehensive Plan  
and Community  
Decision-Making Guide**

**AUGUST 2016**

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**PART 2**

# **City of Geneva's Comprehensive Plan and Community Decision-Making Guide**

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# I. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

## A. Market Context

The status quo, politically, culturally, socio-economically, market-wise – these are the circumstances we face today and that our values require us as a community to tackle head on, in some cases working hard to reinforce, in others to change.

Geneva is a beautiful small city in a beautiful location. It has a comprehensive health system which provides local access to high quality care. A lovely downtown. Historic residential architecture. A private and thriving liberal arts college. A high performing high school. Great housing stocks for very affordable prices. A beloved farmer's market. Events at the Smith Opera House. A sense of community. The emergence of young entrepreneurs and the excitement they bring. By all predictive measures Geneva should be thriving.

Yet it isn't. Not really. Geneva is stuck in second gear. Two steps forward, one back. For all the community connection, there are still areas of isolation and segregation, for all of the open space, some of it is still experienced as closed and inaccessible, for all of the diversity, many people still feel differences are viewed as liabilities rather than opportunities. Geneva has not been able to find its way to a fully inclusive sense of not just toleration, but celebration. It has not been able to find its way to a critical mass of downtown commercial activity, business startups, or residential reinvestment. It all begs the 'why not' question. Geneva is not failing, in no way is that the case. But, Geneva should and could be doing much better.

- Geneva can and should be more beautiful. The entryways into Geneva are unsightly. Many homes lack for reinvestment. Many sidewalks are years late in repair. This affects confidence, undermines the value of real estate, contributes to a resident concern about the level of care being shown to them, and ultimately, compromises the city's fiscal strength.

- Geneva can and should be more prosperous. For four decades, the spending power of Geneva's families has slowly shrunk and the gap between the wealthy and the poor has grown. Geneva has become less affluent in real values and in relation to communities in the region that compete for businesses and residents. Current conditions have decreased local spending, affected the size, composition, and efficacy of our classrooms, decreased housing quality, and reduced the economic, social and political capacity of the city to creatively respond to challenges. This affects the quality of life for all residents.

- Geneva can and should be more equitable. In Ontario County, Geneva serves as the primary location for affordable housing for low-income workers. This limits choices for these households in terms of housing and employment while straining the fiscal resources of the City. Ensuring that low-income families have access to high quality affordable housing and employment opportunities within Geneva and the larger region is critical.

- Geneva can and should be more connected, civically as well as physically. It is important that the community come and work together on civic matters, and community collaboration is critical. Greater effort at outreach to engage and welcome all residents will be important. Geneva is a compact city, walkable from end to end, but with some suburbanizing and accessibility challenges that require attention.

- Geneva can and should be more environmentally and more fiscally sustainable. Ensuring that Geneva's environmental impacts are minimized is critical. So too is the imperative to have a strong fiscal capacity, so that priorities can be funded.

Why is it that while charming, Geneva isn't as beautiful as it could be? That while not in dire trouble, the city's fund balance is precarious? That while there aren't potholes everywhere, many roads could be in better shape? That while the housing market is historic, it is in substantial need of upgrade? At the heart of the "why is the Geneva market not truly vibrant" question is the reality of the city's current market context, which, in sum, is that Geneva doesn't do a good job of retaining and attracting middle income households enough of the time.

- First there is the problem of the county's middle income cohort being small to begin with and more oriented westward towards Rochester and its suburbs than towards Geneva.

- Additionally, Geneva is about 20 minutes too far for middle income families with two wage earners to commute, and that reduces market share.

- A related challenge is that those middle income families who might choose Geneva in spite of the commute can find superior alternate options – objectively superior in a handful of ways – throughout the Rochester region. In those cases, where housing costs a little more, the perception among middle income families is that they are getting a lot more, and thus more bang for their buck. It is also worth noting that they are willing to pay far more in property taxes than they might in Geneva. A median home in the Town of Perinton comes with a tax bill of almost \$7,000 per year, which is more than the vast majority of Geneva homeowners can expect to pay. High property taxes are not the reason middle class households avoid Geneva.

- Third is the problem that these middle income families – who today, by definition are educated two income households – aren't finding two jobs in Geneva, and so the complexity of the split commute lifestyle is a challenge not many are willing to undertake, so market share of potential households is small.

- Further related to this problem is the gap between the quality of the high school education available in Geneva and nearby municipalities. As good as public education in Geneva High School is with many unique, innovative educational opportunities, by measures of student achievement accessed by parents, student growth, and college

readiness, schools in Victor, Fairport, Canandaigua and even Penn Yan, Waterloo, and Seneca Falls are better, and in many cases far better.<sup>1</sup>

- And finally, for middle income families who can deal with the commute to a Rochester area job, and who are okay with Geneva's schools, the housing stocks are simply not appealing enough. In most cases the homes that families want feature two baths, and so Geneva's housing affordability reflects the discount for not having a second bath. Most Geneva homes require expensive energy efficiency improvements. In many cases, the upgrades that Geneva homes require impose enough of a combined financial and imputed set of costs that the simpler "math" is to just buy someplace other than Geneva.

All told, the "stuckness" of the Geneva market - retail, residential, and otherwise - is a reflection of Geneva not having enough middle income households - in numbers and percentages - to create the essential flywheel effect where middle income families demand and obtain what they seek, and in their allocation of demand, precipitate reinvestment in still more amenities that appeal to middle income households and that benefit all households. As critical as the fiscal impact of middle income families is on the city's budget, the core reason this matters is not financial at all.

Middle income households possess both the ability to make choices among many options in terms of where to live, and the ability and willingness to impose their will on the place they choose. In selecting Geneva but not someplace else, a middle income family has outsize influence. In many respects they dictate the rules of the game. If a middle income family wants an IB curriculum in the local school and there isn't one, they will move to the community that offers it if that's a priority for them. If they cannot afford the place that has what they want - whether it is a certain kind of house, a public amenity, a school curriculum - they will move to their second or third choice community and then impose their will on it, creating the IB program they want, getting the park they want, and so on. The combination of financial and social capital contained in these middle income cohorts - owing to their financial means and resulting mobility - is what moves a city's balance sheet into the stable column.

"Unsticking" the market will pave the way for the achievement of the city's long term goals. Put another way, the comprehensive plan will be successful in proportion to the size of the "middle" it is able to rebuild (help move up, retain, attract) during this document's planning horizon. A good comprehensive plan is more a reference guide and less an instruction manual. It does not provide answers. It provides direction. It is a values-based tool for making decisions over a long period of time where flexibility will be required and where choices - often difficult - will need to be made where the single biggest source of discomfort will be the opportunity cost inherent in such circumstances. Like every community, Geneva is operating in a "tightly strung economy"<sup>12</sup> where every decision to do something automatically and simultaneously results in a decision not to do something else or else raise taxes in order have cake and eat it too.

## People, Households and Families

The City of Geneva's population currently stands at 13,160, according to American Community Survey 5-Year estimates from 2014. While slightly below the number found during the 2010 Census (which considered Geneva's population to be 13,261), this figure represents a far slower rate of population loss than the city experienced in prior decades, particularly over the course of the 1970s. Between 1970 and 1980, the city lost 1,660 residents, far more than during the prior decade (the city's population declined by less than 500 between 1960 and 1970). In the decades since 1980, the city has continued to lose residents, but to a lesser and lesser degree with each subsequent decade: roughly 1,000 residents lost in the 1980s, roughly 500 residents lost in the 1990s, and roughly 350 residents lost between 2000 and 2010.

In 2000 the population of Geneva was 13,675, with roughly 5,945 households.

The stable population of the 2010s reflects good work underway. It also, though, represents a key opportunity to consider and plan for the best possible future for what is now a smaller Geneva. (The city has lost nearly one-quarter (24%) of its peak population, 17,286 in 1960.) It is also essential to understand the make-up of the current population, how that make-up may have changed over time, and how the new blend of residents' needs and wants may differ from those of residents in years past.

For one thing, families now make up a smaller share of all households than in years past. Between 2000 and 2014, the number of households in Geneva declined by 247, during this same stretch, the number of family households was down almost twice as much, by 450. While three-fifths (58%) of all households were family households in 2000, families accounted for just half (52%) of all households by 2014.

On the one hand, this reflects the presence of Geneva's large student population, the vast majority of whom live in non-family households. On the other, though, this could suggest that demand for housing and neighborhoods in Geneva among families is slipping.

Families who live in Geneva are also poorer today than they were in 2000, reflecting the fall-out effects of the Great Recession of the early 2000s. In 2014, Census estimates showed 17% of all Geneva families living below the poverty level, down from a high of nearly 20% in 2012 and up from under 14% in 2000. (During this same stretch, the poverty rate among individuals in Geneva was also up, from 17.5% in 2000 to over 25% by 2014. While the family poverty rate has declined significantly since 2012, this is not the case among individuals, the poverty rate among individuals in Geneva remains close to its 2012 high (of nearly 26%).)

Geneva's poverty rates - among individuals and among families - are both roughly two-and-a-half times as high as rates for the county as a whole. Across Ontario County (in 2014), 10.4% of individuals and 6.6% of families live below the poverty line. In those areas of Ontario County outside of the City of Geneva, these rates are even lower: 8.7% for individuals and 5.6% for families. Geneva's poverty rates - again,

among individuals and among families – are both roughly three times as high as rates in these non-city areas of the county.

Hidden in these figures is the fact that poverty is especially acute among children: over one-third (36%) of children under 18 and nearly two-in-five (40%) school-aged children (those between 5 and 17 years old) in Geneva live below the poverty level.

As the city's portion of poor individuals and families has climbed, the median income among city households and among city families have largely stagnated. In real terms, the median income among Geneva households barely budged between 2000 and 2014, rising by just \$652, or 1%. The median income among Geneva families was actually down nearly 7% (in real terms) during this same time period. It should be noted that rising poverty rates and a shrinking middle class are also national trends.

Between 2009 and 2014, while the median family income stayed the same, the breakdown of Geneva families in different income brackets shifted in two noteworthy ways. First, as poverty levels already indicated, the percentage of families at the lowest income levels (particularly those with incomes below \$20,000) rose. At the same time, the portion of families at the highest income levels (those with incomes above \$75,000) also rose. In contrast, middle-income levels (from \$35,000 to \$74,999) saw declines. These shifts occurred as the remainder of Ontario County experienced almost no change in its breakdown of families by income.

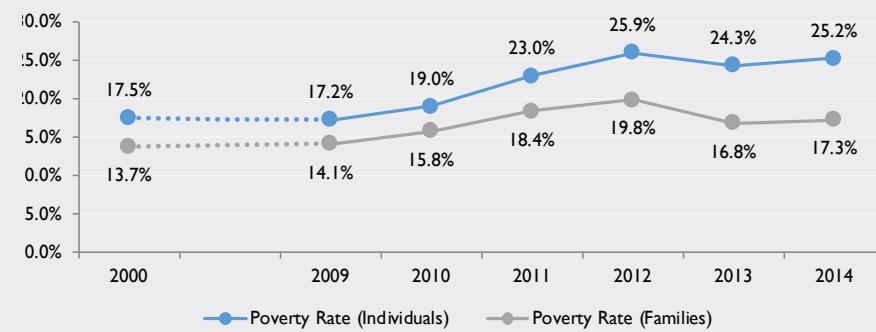
Geneva's current breakdown of families at different income level is most similar to that for Oswego. Geneva has more families at both the top and bottom than Cortland, for example, and more families at

## Population Trends in Geneva, 1950 to 2014



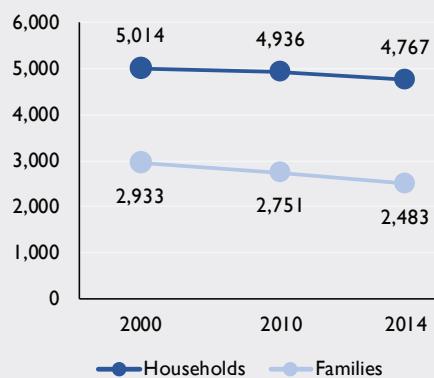
Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Poverty Rate Trends, 2000-2014



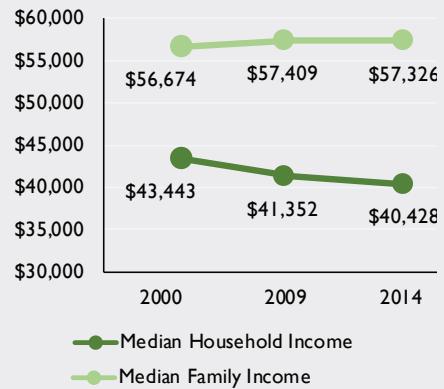
Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC

## Number of Households and Families in Geneva, 2000-2014



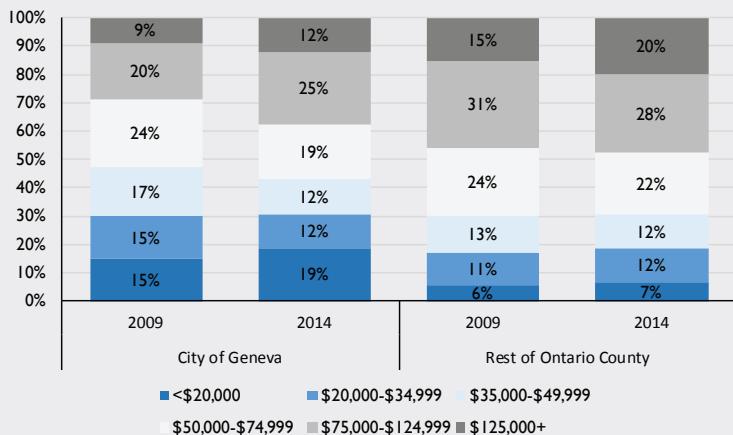
Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Median Household and Family Income in Geneva (in Constant Dollars), 2000-2014



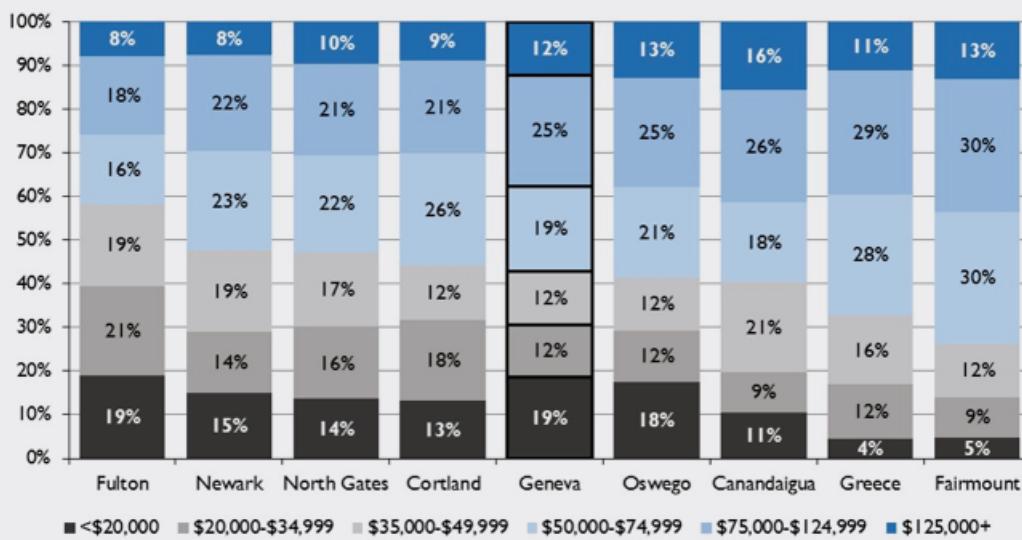
Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Family Income Breakdown in Geneva and Ontario County, 2009 vs. 2014



Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Family Income (Sorted Low to High by Median Family Income), 2014



Sources: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

the bottom but fewer at the top than Canandaigua.

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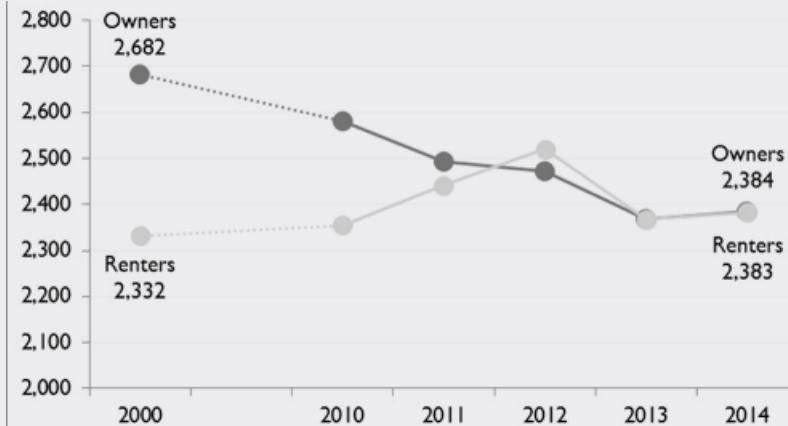
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## Housing Demand

Not only is there a shift in Geneva toward non-family households (as the number of family households declines faster than the number of households overall), there is a similar shift from owner households to renters. Between 2000 and 2014, the city's homeownership rate slipped from 53.5% to 50%, the number of owner households fell from 2,682 to 2,384 while the number of renter households ticked up slightly, from 2,332 to 2,383. (Renters even slightly outnumbered homeowners in Geneva during the worst of the recession.)

As the number of homeownership – and the overall demand for owner-occupied units – has declined, home values have stagnated and even fallen slightly. According to Census and American Community Survey

## Geneva Households by Tenure, 2000-2014



Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Median Value and Average Sale Price (in Current and Constant 2014 Dollars), 2009-2014

Year	City of Geneva			
	Current \$		Constant (2014) \$	
	Median Value	Average Sale Price	Median Value	Average Sale Price
2009	\$84,200	\$75,997	\$92,620	\$83,596
2010	\$84,900	\$80,010	\$92,541	\$87,211
2011	\$87,000	\$87,842	\$91,350	\$92,234
2012	\$86,400	\$80,890	\$88,992	\$83,316
2013	\$88,900	\$92,576	\$90,678	\$94,428
2014	\$88,800	\$90,203	\$88,800	\$90,203

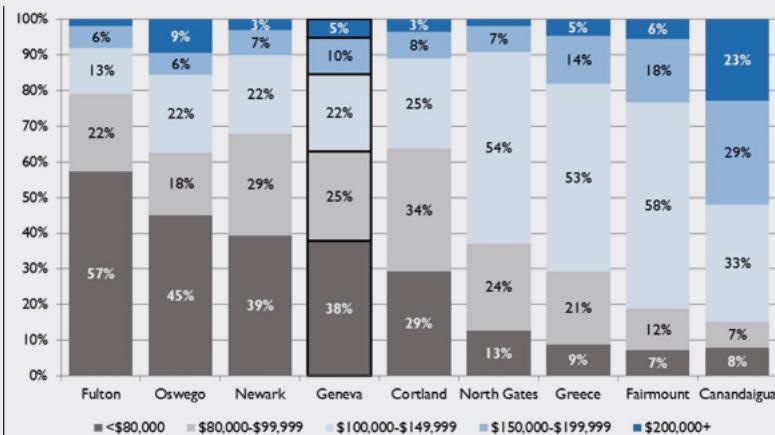
Sources: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Ontario County Assessor's Office, czbLLC.

## Median Value and Average Sale Price in Geneva (in Constant 2014 Dollars), 2009-2014



Sources: Census and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Value (Places Sorted by Median Value), 2014



Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

data, the median value of owner-occupied homes remained all but unchanged between 2009 and 2014 in current dollars, in real terms (constant 2014 dollars), the median value declined slightly. The average sale price of 1-, 2-, and 3-family properties followed similar patterns.

As of 2014, the value breakdown of owner-occupied units in Geneva most approximated that in nearby Oswego and Newark. Other neighboring communities, most notably Canandaigua, have significantly larger shares of higher-valued properties than Geneva.

Getting at why values are not appreciating and why homeownership rates are falling could provide important insights to the factors negatively influencing demand for housing and neighborhoods in Geneva, these factors require attention in accordance with the priorities and values described in this plan.

## Affordable Housing Gap Analysis, 2014

Owner Income	Affordable Cost	# of Households with Incomes...	# of Units Affordable to Incomes...	Gap	# of Households	# of Units
<\$35,000	<\$105,000	488	1,564	1,076	20%	66%
\$35,000-\$49,999	\$105,000-\$149,999	343	451	108	14%	19%
\$50,000-\$74,999	\$150,000-\$224,999	557	280	-277	23%	12%
\$75,000-\$99,999	\$225,000-\$299,999	389	49	-340	16%	2%
\$100,000-\$149,999	\$300,000-\$449,999	429	5	-424	18%	0%
\$150,000+	\$450,000+	178	35	-143	7%	1%
Total		2,384	2,384			

Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

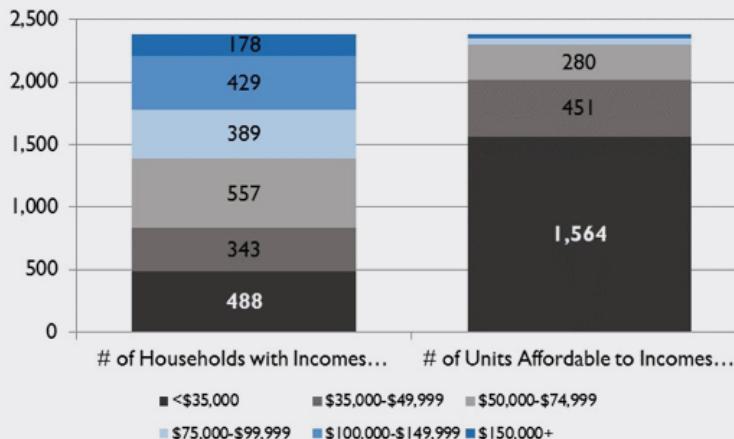
## Housing Supply and Gaps

Fully understanding the supply of housing is also critical, and a Gap Analysis illustrates the degree to which housing that is affordable is available to households at various income levels.

For owners, this analysis assumes that a household could afford a unit valued at a point equal to three times the household's income. (In other words, a household at a \$50,000 income is assumed to be able to afford a \$150,000 home.) As the following tables and charts show, Geneva's homeownership housing tends to be more affordable than most area households require. Two-thirds (66%) of the city's owner units are valued below \$105,000, the maximum purchase price for households with incomes below \$35,000, owner households at this income level account for just 20% of all owners and there are more than 1,000 fewer of them than available low-cost units. On the flip side, households with incomes at or above \$75,000 account for 41% of Geneva owners, but owner units valued at or above \$225,000 (what these households could afford) account for just 3% of Geneva's owner units.

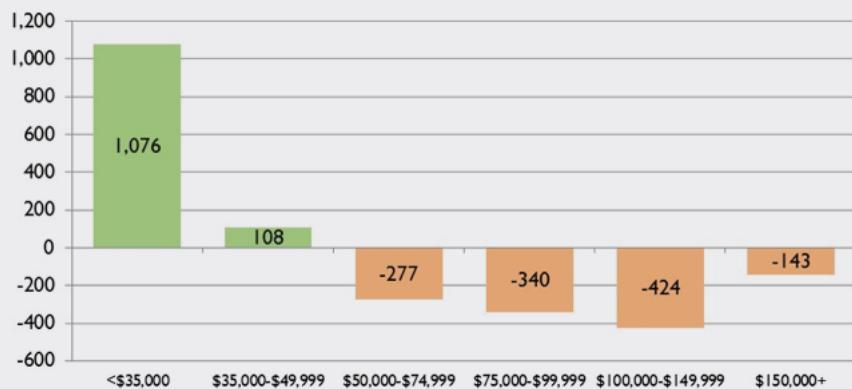
While there are over 1,000 more low-cost owner units the city's households need, there are large gaps in the number of units

## Owner Incomes vs. Owner Units Affordable to Households at Each Income, 2014



Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Gap between Owner Households and Owner Units for Households at Each Income Level, 2014



Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Gap between Owner Households and Owner Units for Households at Each Income Level, 2014

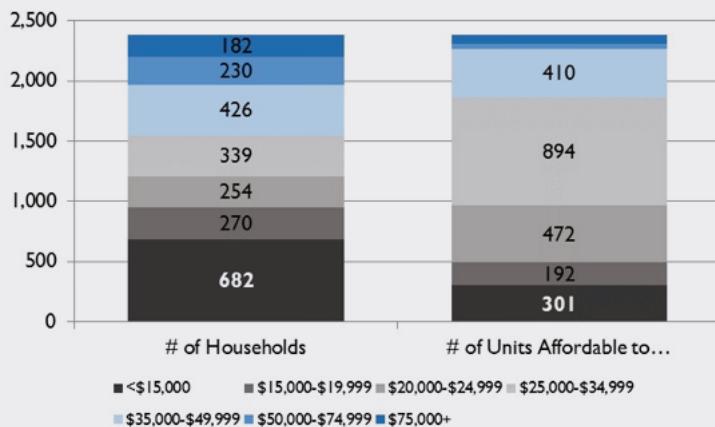
Renter Income	Affordable Cost	# of Households with Incomes...	# of Units Affordable to...	Gap	# of Households	# of Units
<\$15,000	<\$375	682	301	-381	29%	13%
\$15,000-\$19,999	\$375-\$499	270	192	-78	11%	8%
\$20,000-\$24,999	\$500-\$624	254	472	218	11%	20%
\$25,000-\$34,999	\$625-\$874	339	894	555	14%	38%
\$35,000-\$49,999	\$875-\$1,249	426	410	-16	18%	17%
\$50,000-\$74,999	\$1,250-\$1,874	230	37	-193	10%	2%
\$75,000+	\$1,875+	182	77	-105	8%	3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,383</b>	<b>2,383</b>			

Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

higher-income households could afford. This is not necessarily a call for the construction of more higher-cost units, greater investment in the existing stock by homeowners who can afford to make such investments is another – and important – way to address these gaps.

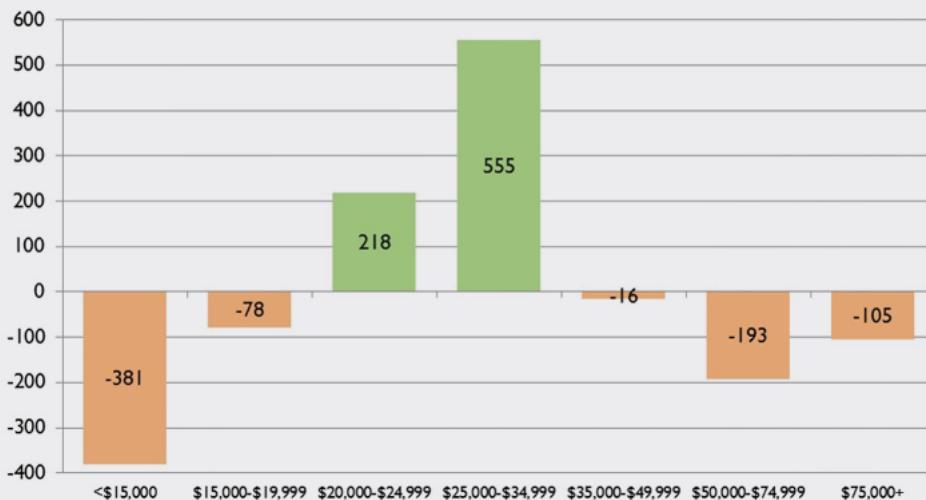
Among renters, Geneva's housing market accommodates households with incomes between \$20,000 and \$34,999 – there are nearly 800 more rental units affordable to these households than there are renter households at these income levels. (One-fourth (25%) of renter households have incomes within this range while 58% of rental units are affordable to this income range.) The largest gap is at the lowest rent levels: there are more than twice as many renter households with incomes below \$15,000 as there are rental units with gross rents below \$375 (a level that would cost a household at \$15,000 less than 30% of its income each month), 682 versus 301.

## Renter Incomes vs. Renter Units Affordable to Households at Each Income



Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Gap between Renter Households and Rentals for Households at Each Income Level, 2014



Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Neighborhood Conditions and Strength

Housing market conditions and trends are not uniform across the city but vary greatly between Geneva's neighborhoods.

Most neighborhoods saw slight population declines between 2000 and 2010 (the most recent year for which data is available at the Census Block level), with the exception of South Lake. A few experienced demographic shifts during this time: Castle Heights', East Lakeview's, Hildreth Hill's, and Historic North's populations all diversified. The number of abandoned housing units remained fairly unchanged in some neighborhoods but increased more substantially in others (like Downtown and Historic North).

Homeownership rates were up in Hildreth Hill and down in Founders Square and The Arbors. A smaller share of owners were over 65 years of age by 2010 in East Lakeview, Historic North, Lehigh Gardens and Western Gardens, the reverse was true in South Lake.

By 2010, over 80% of the housing units in Western Gardens and Castle Heights were owner-occupied, 11% were renter-occupied, and less than 5% were vacant. A smaller share but still over half of all units in The Arbors and Hildreth Hill were owner-occupied, larger shares of units were renter-occupied in these neighborhoods but a comparable share were vacant. In South Lake, Founders Square, Lehigh Gardens, Historic North, and East Lakeview, about 40% of all units were owner-occupied, roughly half were renter-occupied, and closer to 10% of all units were vacant. Most housing units in Historic South and Downtown are renter-occupied and nearly one-fifth are vacant.

The average sale price of 1-, 2-, and 3-family homes in more recent years (between 2005 and 2014) indicates that the city's neighborhoods fall into these four housing market strength clusters: Downtown and East Lakeview with averages in the \$40,000s, Lehigh Gardens, Historic North, and Hildreth Hill, with averages in the \$50,000s and \$60,000s, Founders Square, The Arbors and Western Gardens, with averages in the \$80,000s and \$90,000s, and Castle Heights, South Lake, and Historic South, with averages over \$100,000.

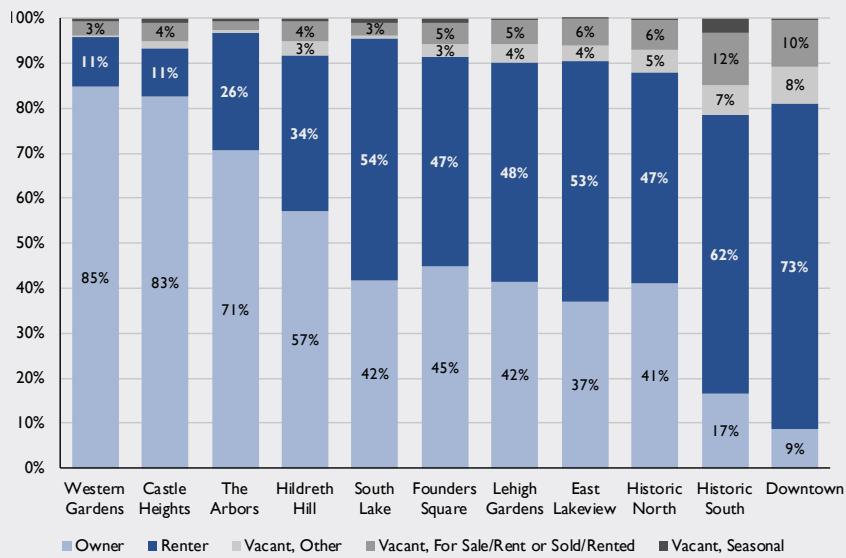


## Select Demographic and Housing Indicators by Neighborhood, 2000-2010

Indicator		Castle Heights	Downtown	East Lakeview	Founders Square	Hildreth Hill	Historic North	Historic South	South Lake	The Arbors	Lehigh Gardens	Western Gardens
Population	2000	1,228	1,184	1,822	905	1,698	1,449	515	2,138	654	1,093	953
	2010	1,149	1,034	1,771	872	1,638	1,467	505	2,249	602	1,057	912
	Change	-79	-150	-51	-33	-60	18	-10	111	-52	-36	-41
	% Ch.	-6.4%	-12.7%	-2.8%	-3.6%	-3.5%	1.2%	-1.9%	5.2%	-8.0%	-3.3%	-4.3%
% Non-Hisp. White	2000	95%	54%	53%	85%	84%	78%	83%	85%	89%	79%	93%
	2010	87%	55%	42%	81%	72%	65%	82%	81%	87%	75%	93%
Abandoned Units	2000	1	29	13	12	12	8	6	1	0	6	7
	2010	8	53	25	11	24	35	19	3	2	18	2
	Change	7	24	12	-1	12	27	13	2	2	12	-5
% Abandoned	2000	0.2%	4.2%	1.8%	2.9%	1.6%	1.2%	1.9%	0.3%	0.0%	1.4%	1.7%
	2010	1.5%	8.3%	3.5%	2.7%	3.4%	5.0%	6.6%	0.9%	0.6%	4.2%	0.5%
% Homeowner	2000	86%	12%	44%	55%	58%	49%	18%	49%	89%	48%	89%
	2010	88%	11%	41%	49%	62%	47%	21%	44%	73%	46%	89%
% of Owners 65+	2000	37%	43%	46%	30%	27%	37%	40%	36%	35%	30%	42%
	2010	36%	38%	32%	28%	28%	29%	40%	44%	37%	25%	33%

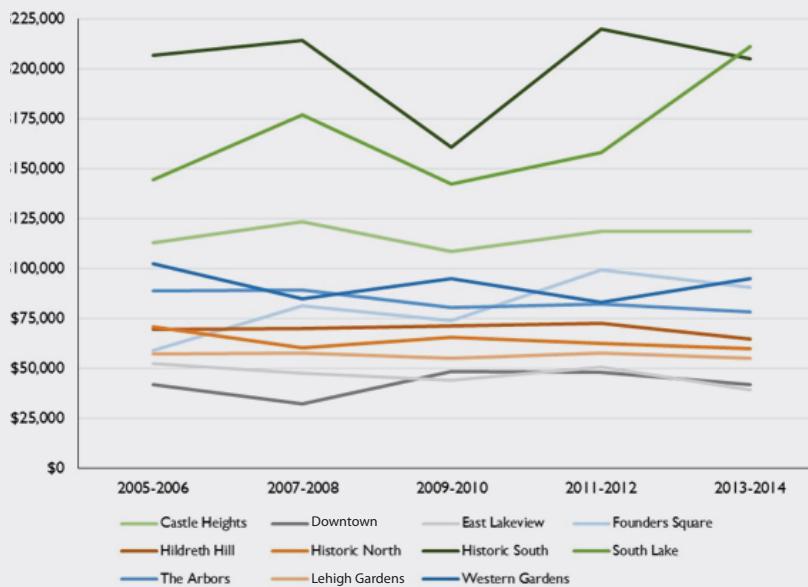
Sources: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, czbLLC.

## Occupancy and Status of Housing Units by Geneva Neighborhood, 2010



Sources: 2010 Census, czbLLC.

## Average Sale Price by Geneva Neighborhood, 2005-2014



Sources: Census, Ontario County Assessor's Office, czbLLC.

These prices are largely backed up by the housing conditions czb found when conducting property-by-property field surveys. Citywide, 3,297 residential properties were surveyed in 2015 and scored from 1 (excellent) to 5 (poor). Roughly one-in-ten properties fell at each of the extremes (receiving either a 1 or a 5), 28% were classified as being in good condition, 30% in average condition, and 20% in fair condition

It deserves mentioning again that just 39% of Geneva's residential housing stock was considered to be in good or excellent condition. The gap analysis, which found undervalued owner-occupied units, was capturing this from a different direction: that the majority (60%) of Geneva's housing units would benefit from additional investment, and Geneva homeowners largely have the capacity (the available income) to do so. Why they may not be willing to invest even though they are able to invest warrants further investigation and attention.

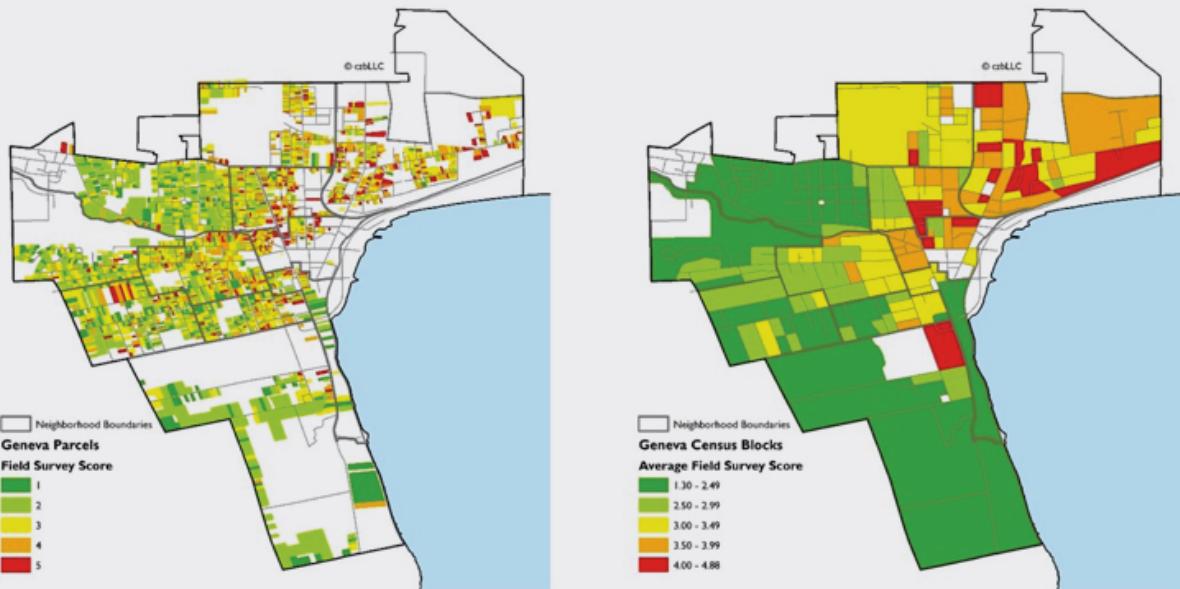
## Citywide Field Survey Results, 2015

Score	# of Surveys	% of Surveys
Excellent (1)	371	11.3%
Good (2)	923	28.0%
Average (3)	975	29.6%
Fair (4)	668	20.3%
Poor (5)	360	10.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,297</b>	

Source: czbLLC.

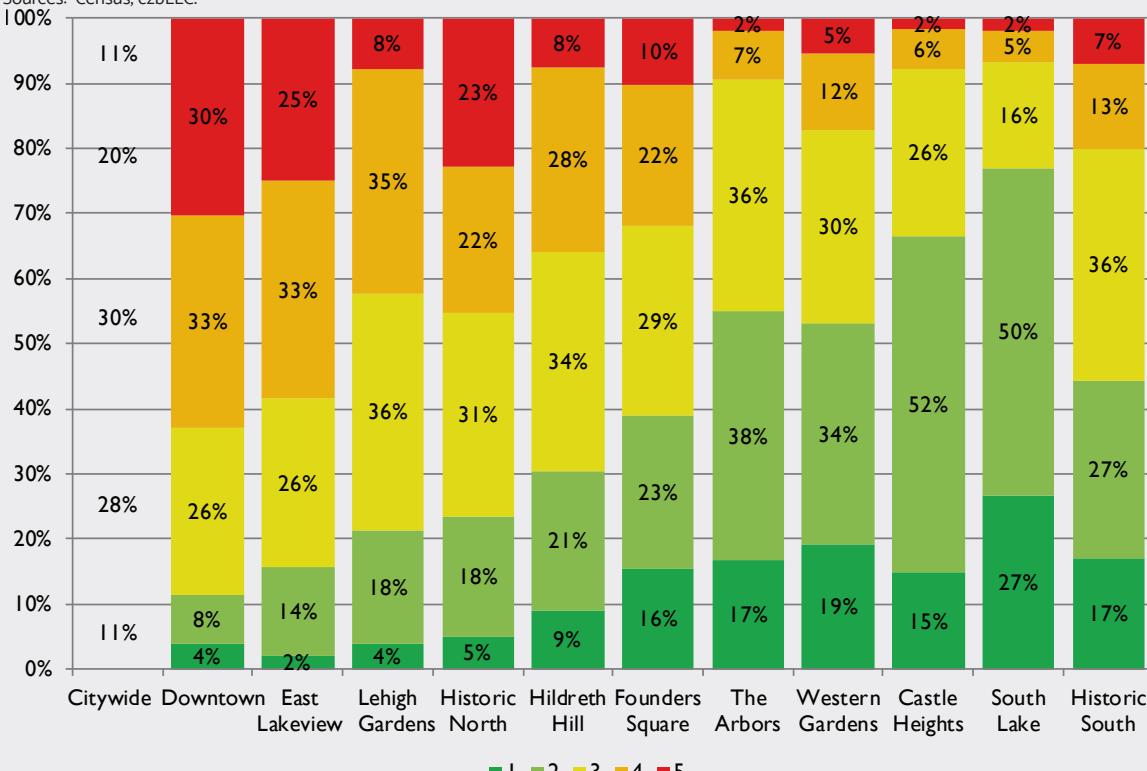
At the neighborhood level, housing conditions were highly correlated with sale prices. Sorting neighborhoods by their average sale price in recent years (from lowest to highest) illustrates this relationship: the lowest priced neighborhoods have the largest percentages of fair and poor buildings (far higher percentages than the city as a whole) while the highest priced neighborhoods have the largest percentages of good and excellent buildings (far higher percentages than the city as a whole. (Historic South is a notable outlier, the neighborhood's mix of high-value homeowner housing and high renter occupancy, though, makes it something of a unique case.)

Buildings in fair or poor condition are largely concentrated in the blocks surrounding downtown.



### Field Surveys by Geneva Neighborhood (Neighborhoods Sorted, High to Low, by Average Sale Price)

Sources: Census, czbLLC.



Sources: czbLLC

## B. Downtown Development

Downtown Geneva is home to more than 200 business entities with over 1,400 workers distributed over several business sectors. Its diverse uses give it economic stability – district workers are also district shoppers, and businesses sell services to support one another's operations. It also benefits from very close proximity to Hobart and William Smith College, Finger Lakes Community College, Cornell University's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Finger Lakes Health's Geneva General Hospital, and the waterfront. And, it benefits from a large, compact collection of handsome historic mixed-use buildings, giving downtown Geneva a distinctive visual identity unlike that of newer commercial centers. All of these give downtown Geneva the potential to achieve things that many other downtowns in communities of comparable size lack.

### Building Stock

Downtown Geneva, and the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to it contain hundreds of historic buildings that, collectively, illustrate and embody the community's evolution over the past 200-plus years. In fact, there are three historic districts here that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places – the downtown core itself, plus two adjacent neighborhoods

The South Main Street Historic District has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1974, making it the first of Geneva's three National Register-listed historic districts. The district is a mile long, encompassing Pulteney Park and Hobart and William Smith Colleges' original triangle, plus 142 "contributing" buildings (meaning that these buildings contribute positively to the architectural, historic, or cultural characteristics that, together, define the overall district). More than half of the district's buildings were built between 1825–1850, although some are considerably older, such as the Pulteney Apartments (40 Park Place), built originally in 1796 as the Powell Hotel. Many of the buildings in the South Main Street Historic District are used by Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and some (such as Geneva Hall and Trinity Hall) were listed individually on the National Register before the district itself was nominated for inclusion.

The Genesee Park Historic District, just north of the Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District and separated from it by just two blocks, was nominated to the National Register in 2002. It consists primarily of mid-to-late 19th and early 20th century Victorian houses, plus several churches (St. Peter's Church, the former North Presbyterian Church) and related rectories. There are about a dozen other historic buildings – mostly houses – on Genesee Street between the two historic districts that, while excluded from the Genesee Park Historic District because they have been extensively altered over the years, might nonetheless be eligible for individual listing on the National Register.

In 2014, the National Park Service approved a new historic district in Geneva – the Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District. This district focuses on the area bounded by Seneca, Exchange, Castle, and Main Streets, with extensions encompassing several buildings on Exchange Street north of Castle and south of Seneca. In addition to its National Register-listed historic districts, there are a number of buildings in and near downtown Geneva that have been listed individually on the National Register, including the Smith Opera House, the Farmers and Merchants Savings Bank (24-26 Linden Street), the US Post Office (67 Castle Street), and the Geneva Armory (300 South Main Street).

Why does the presence of these historic districts – and, in fact, the age or design of the district's buildings – matter?

- **They differentiate downtown Geneva from other places.** A shopper could walk into an enclosed shopping mall in Rochester or in Sacramento and see exactly the same businesses, selling the same merchandise, in the same type of building. Older downtowns and neighborhoods uniquely reflect the history, evolution, natural resources, cultures, values, and aspirations of their communities and, in this way, are different from every other downtown, neighborhood, or shopping center everywhere. This intrinsic differentiation can be translated into a distinctive marketing identity for Geneva's downtown and historic residential neighborhoods.

- **They are walkable.** Geneva's downtown and close-in residential neighborhoods are walkable – and, in fact, Geneva has one of the highest percentages of employed residents who walk to work in the region, state, and nation. And, this is not a new trend for Geneva: in 2000, 15.9 percent of Geneva's workers walked to work – compared with just 2.9 percent nationally. By 2013, this percentage had grown even more, to 17.5 percent.

**TABLE: Percent of employed workers 16 years of age or older for whom walking is the primary method of commuting to work.**

Area	2000	2013	% change
Geneva	15.9%	17.5%	+ 10.1%
Ontario County	4.0%	4.2%	+ 5.0%
Seneca County	3.1%	3.2%	+ 3.2%
New York State	6.2%	6.4%	+ 3.2%
USA	2.9%	2.8%	- 3.4%

This is, in large part, due to the fact that over the years Geneva has continued to actively use and reinvest in its downtown and central city neighborhoods rather than allowing too much auto-dependent development to take place. And, this suggests a strong preference for neighborhoods near commercial districts and for mixed-use buildings that provide housing above shops, restaurants, and offices.

- **They provide flexible, adaptable space for many different uses.**

Older commercial buildings have been adapted for countless uses over the years – and continue to do so.

- **Reusing and adapting older buildings for new uses is more environmentally friendly than building a new building.** And, doing so is vastly more environmentally friendly than demolishing an existing building and replacing it with a new one. The fact that Geneva has done a relatively good job at reusing older buildings and adapting them for new uses over the years is very much in line with the community's strong commitment to responsible environmental stewardship.

- **They provide powerful financial incentives for rehabilitation.**

The federal government provides an income tax credit equal to 20 percent of qualified expenses for rehabilitating income-generating buildings included in (or eligible to be included in) the National Register. New York State offers an automatic 20 percent state income tax credit to buildings receiving the federal credit if they are located in a Census tract in which the median family income is at or below the state family median income level. This means that owners of historic commercial buildings can recoup up to 40 percent of the costs of rehabilitating their buildings. And, the historic rehabilitation tax credits can be combined with other federal tax credits, such as New Markets tax credits and low-income housing tax credits.

- **They encourage creativity.** Urban sociologist Jane Jacobs once famously wrote, “Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings.” In fact, most of the business accelerators launched in the US in the past five years are located in old buildings. Some realtors in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, even launched a specialized real estate leasing firm – “Cool Space Locator” – to help knowledge-economy businesses find space in older buildings.

## Uses

We compiled two business inventories: one for Geneva as a whole, and one for the area within a one-quarter-mile radius of the Smith Opera House (so, reaching from roughly Bi-Centennial Park to the waterfront to the 1907 Bragdon House B&B to Finger Lakes Community College). For each inventory, we grouped businesses by industry (according to the North American Industry Classification System – NAICS) and tallied

the numbers of businesses and workers.

We found that, in all, there are 221 business entities, accounting for more than 20 percent of all business entities in Geneva. Approximately 1,480 people work within the downtown core – slightly more than one-tenth of all people employed within the city. Three industry groups account for almost half of the downtown's business entities:

- Retail trade (14.5 percent of all business entities)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services (14.0 percent)
- Public administration (14.5 percent)

By comparison, the three industries with the greatest numbers of businesses in the overall city are:

- Health care and social assistance (16.9 percent)
- Retail trade (14.9 percent)
- Other services, except public administration (13.8 percent)

There are several interesting things worth noting here:

- **Retail accounts for a slightly larger percentage of business entities in the city overall than in the downtown core (14.9 percent versus 14.5 percent).** But the comparison is much closer in Geneva than in most comparably-sized communities in the US. This suggests that retailing remains a solid component of downtown Geneva's economic foundation. Increasing the percentage of retail space downtown relative to that of the overall city will become increasingly important in balancing and strengthening the use of downtown buildings and spaces.

- **Retail accounts for only 14.5 percent of downtown Geneva's business entities.** It is a very common misperception that downtowns are largely retail in nature. However, in economically healthy downtowns, retail businesses and restaurants typically account for no more than 20-25 percent of all business entities. This suggests that, while retail is a solid component of downtown Geneva's overall business mix, it would still be prudent to increase its supply of retail businesses.

- **Downtown is where most of the community's professional, scientific, and technical services businesses are based.** This strongly suggests that the district is a crucial job incubator for the community and region.

- **A larger percentage of downtown businesses are restaurants and lodging facilities (“accommodation and food services”) than in the overall community.** Similarly, a larger percentage of downtown businesses are entertainment-related than in the city as a whole. These demonstrate the presence of a market foothold in dining and entertainment for downtown Geneva.

- **More people work in Geneva than live in Geneva.** Geneva's 2013 population was 13,199 – but more than 13,700 people work in Geneva. And, of Geneva's 13,199 residents, only 5,976 are employed workers 16 years of age or older. So, Geneva is attracting as many workers from outside the community as it has within the community. This has many implications and suggests many possibilities, including the possibilities of growing downtown commerce by shifting a greater proportion of its marketing and merchandising towards the city's population of daytime workers and providing housing and amenities appealing enough to in-commuting workers to persuade them to move to Geneva.

Area	2000	2013	% change
Geneva	31.8	28.9	- 9.1%
Ontario County	37.9	42.5	+ 12.1%
Seneca County	38.2	41.4	+ 8.4%
New York State	35.9	38.1	+ 6.1%
USA	35.3	37.3	+ 5.7%

**Median age of residents of Geneva, Ontario and Seneca Counties, and New York State in 2000 and 2013.**

The business inventory does not include residential uses. But it is worth noting that over 30 new market-rate apartments have been created in renovated upper-floor spaces in the core downtown area (mostly on Exchange and South Main Streets) in the past several years. Based on the rate at which these apartments have been rented, it appears that there is a strong appetite for them. According to anecdotal information, some of these new apartments (in older, historic buildings) are being rented by empty-nest couples. But the apartments are being rented at a faster clip by young professionals. Geneva's population is younger than that of many other communities – and is continuing to become younger. This is a remarkable trend – and an unusual one within the region. And, it bodes well for downtown Geneva's growth: nationally, Millennials and teens prefer shopping in, working in, and visiting older, authentic places to newer, homogenous places and prefer locally

owned businesses to national chains.

## Through Traffic

According to the New York Department of Transportation, an average of 9,534 vehicles travel down South Main Street between Park Avenue and Washington Street every day. Some of these vehicles undoubtedly represent people who work in downtown Geneva and/or who live in adjacent neighborhoods and who are therefore very familiar with the businesses and activities the district offers – but some undoubtedly represent a quasi-captive market of potential shoppers who are less familiar with the district and who could become customers.

Street	Cross-street	AADT
Main St	Castle St	9,534
Exchange St	E Castle St	5,180
Exchange St	E North St	6,921
S Exchange St	E Washington St	3,090

**Average annual daily traffic counts for several intersections in and near downtown Geneva.**

## Regional Retail Context

There are 1.5 million square feet of shopping mall and shopping center space within 15 miles of downtown Geneva. Within 30 miles, there are 4.2 million square feet. In addition, there are close to a million square feet of freestanding big-box stores and hundreds of thousands of square feet of freestanding fast food restaurants, grocery stores, and other freestanding retail shops. This is an enormous amount of commercial space, relative to the region's retail buying power. There are several potential implications:

- Continued retail growth within the region could dilute available retail buying power and therefore confound efforts to increase the percentage of retail businesses downtown.
- Continued growth of homogenous retail establishments – chain stores and restaurants that are available in many communities – could gradually erode the distinctive visual and marketing identity of the communities that host them. Assuming Geneva is able to sustain and perhaps accelerate development of independently owned businesses and to use its legacy of compact, walkable, mixed-use development as a template for future development, its distinctive position within the regional economy could become an even more valuable marketing tool.

## C. City Fiscal Matters

### Overview

While every level of government employs people in some way - snow plow drivers, analysts, secretaries, clerks, supervisors, teachers, sanitation works, firefighters, et cetera - government does not create jobs in the private sector except through contracting. This is important because jobs generate discretionary spending, and spending generates job creation. It is also important because employment and spending generate income and sales taxes. And because employment drives housing markets, it indirectly drives property tax revenue.

With these revenues - from income, sales, and property valuations - the public sector has the means to do what it is asked to do. At a minimum, this means salting and plowing, patching and paving, schooling, policing, and providing for the basic general welfare and health and safety of a community. When possible, local government has come to do more, and what "more" means is defined by what is possible within a voting community's desires on one hand, and willingness to pay for those appetites on the other.

The desire for public goods that fall into the category of being more amenity in nature than essential - parks, mature tree canopies, public art, community centers, job training programs, loans to stimulate economic development, grants for home improvement, and so on - always outstrips the willingness of the taxpayer to buy these services. This is for several reasons. One is that there is never unanimous agreement on what is essential and what is a luxury, or put another way, what is necessary to have and what is nice to have. Another is that even where there may be near unanimous agreement on what goes into the essential category, the rank ordering by priority rarely achieves a perfect consensus. Two parties might agree what things are essential, but almost never agree on what is "more essential" than the rest. In today's market context, this challenge becomes ever more acute as scarce dollars increasingly need to be allocated for what used to be commonly considered "extras" like trails and parks and bike lanes but which today are virtually non-negotiable "must haves" for communities to compete for households with choices. (Every dollar saved by not creating a trail or bike lane in Geneva gives an Ontario County household one more reason to depart for Pittsford.)

These are critical components of 21st Century comprehensive planning because many jurisdictions in America have come to believe that they are taxed too much, and whether or not that's the case, there's rightly a focus on what is being spent and to what end. Such considerations are the central domaine of sound comprehensive planning. Simultaneously, few communities are comprised of residents able to agree on what to cut to bring tax burdens down. The elderly don't tend to support schools, those in high rises don't have as much at stake with regard to snow plowing as others may.

These issues become magnified in weak market circumstances where either or both of the challenges of fewer households (meaning reduced

demand for housing) or households with lower average incomes (meaning reduced purchasing power) co-mingle to create a situation where the costs of providing the public services that are necessary or demanded is potentially unsustainable.

This is the case with Geneva which has slowly and steadily lost 3,500 people since 1960, or the rough equivalent of more than 1,000 households. On one hand, as household size has gotten smaller and jobs per household ratios have grown, Geneva has grown in economic potential. On the other, the infrastructure placed in service in the 1960s in support of a population nearing 20,000 carries with it maintenance expenses and capital improvement costs that add up, and which, in point of fact, Geneva long neglected.

It's in this context of a reduced middle income cohort, a smaller city population-wise, a poorer and more bottom heavy socio-economic profile, and a mounting problem of deferred attention to infrastructure (roads and parks most especially) and housing stock quality, that City Hall - the public sector - has a role. At center is the issue of how robust City Hall can afford to be financially, and the willingness of the community to pay the freight. Invariably, choices will need to be made. What's essential? What's not essential but so important to the community that the community will pay for it? And of course, not choosing is in fact making a choice, the very one past Geneva generations have made by default.

Analysis shows that many of Geneva's roads require costly attention to bring them up to a condition that's either new or close to new. To achieve a complete catch up on all of Geneva's streets would cost \$34.4M. Analysis also shows that to do the same for all of the city's parks would cost \$5.7M. And to bring all of the city's housing up to a minimally marketable standard would cost \$23.4M. Regardless of whether the buyer of needed upgrades is the public or private sector, or a combination of both, properly "catching" Geneva "up" is a \$63M proposition, in addition to the cost of appropriate annual maintenance and capital set asides. That Geneva is facing \$63M in "catch up" costs that it cannot possibly tackle all at once with a General Fund that is only \$16M a year means two things above all.

First, if any of the work of catching up is to be done, tradeoffs will have to be made where a dollar towards catching up on any one problem of deferred maintenance has the opportunity cost of not being applied to another problem. Second, the \$63M aggregate bill for overdue attention to important matters works out to about \$2M a year of can-kicking since JFK was elected. Each year since 1960 the city's population has both slightly declined and the nature of the local economy has slightly shifted from labor to knowledge, with an ever smaller middle.

Together this means that the fiscally responsible step forward for Geneva is to work on four fronts simultaneously and creatively.

1. To slowly dig out of the long deferred maintenance problem on the public infrastructure front (\$29M),
2. To annually pay what it costs to properly take care of what is new or near new today so it doesn't degrade unnecessarily (about \$2M a year over and above current levels of expenditure),
3. Both catch up and keep up in ways that stimulate the private sector to inch its way towards concluding that it - the private sector - is willing to make the roughly \$34M of investments in the housing stocks needed in the city's neighborhoods to be able to more ably compete in the region for the middle income families Geneva needs to retain and attract to stabilize the city, and
4. Invest in economic development by entering into partnerships on workforce development, enabling access to the housing market for low-income workers employed in Geneva, and encouraging (through tax incentives when affordable) long overdue business expansion and job creation in conjunction with on-going local and regional initiatives (Optics, photonics, imaging, agriculture and food production, technology).

With a \$15.97M General Fund, of which \$5.3M is for public safety, there's very little left over after debt service, public works, and administrative expenses, which have already been trimmed to the bone.

What this boils down to is the fact that unless revenues go up - achievable through many paths - tools for repositioning Geneva will have to operate at maximum effectiveness. The imperative to make wise choices with scarce dollars has never been more critical. The distance between Geneva and its Western/Central New York sister communities in terms of competitiveness is growing annually. Whatever it costs to catch up today, without a significant change in Geneva priorities, those costs will grow.

Today, Geneva is behind Canadaigua (both city and town), and far behind Penfield, Brighton, and Victor in terms of having the profile needed to be both able and willing to make the needed investments in private property and support tax-dollar funded investments in infrastructure.

If Geneva has one central task, it is to remain fiscally stable and become even more firmly planted fiscally. That means making choices with limited dollars, or growing the amount of dollars available, or both. In any case, if the dollars spent aren't specifically and robustly aimed at moving Geneva socioeconomically towards having an adult population of which at least 37.5% have a college degree, and in so doing raising the median family income to above \$75,000 (now at \$57,300), it is questionable how long the city can remain solvent.

#### Specifics

The City of Geneva will struggle to continue providing high quality programs, services, and facilities without transformational changes to financial structure. In four of the last five years, the General Fund

has been run at a substantial deficit, causing fund balances to drop dramatically. Property values and revenues are either growing too slowly or they are declining. Personnel costs are growing rapidly and are unsustainable if current conditions persist.

Property tax is a function of taxable assessed value and the property tax rate. For 2015, the property tax rate was \$17.88/\$1,000 of assessed value (\$47.31 inclusive of all taxing entities). The current total taxable assessed value is \$370,503,461. This resulted in a billable tax levy for 2015 of \$6,783,172. This remains the largest single revenue collected by the City.

From 2008 to 2014, City Council mandated no property tax rate increases, and in fact rolled back the rate by 3%. Property value growth is lagging. The last significant bump was 7% in 2008. The most recent general reassessment yielded a 2% average increase in property values. Organic property value growth is on the order of  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a percent each year. Nearly all organic growth is resulting from commercial development.

Taxable property values will likely remain largely flat for the analysis period:

2015	\$370,503,461
2016	\$371,429,720
2017	\$372,358,294
2018	\$373,289,190
2019	\$374,222,412

With values remaining flat, revenues at the current rate can be expected to do the same:

2015	\$6,783,172
2016	\$6,800,130
2017	\$6,817,130
2018	\$6,834,173
2019	\$6,851,258

\*Based on \$17.88/\$1,000

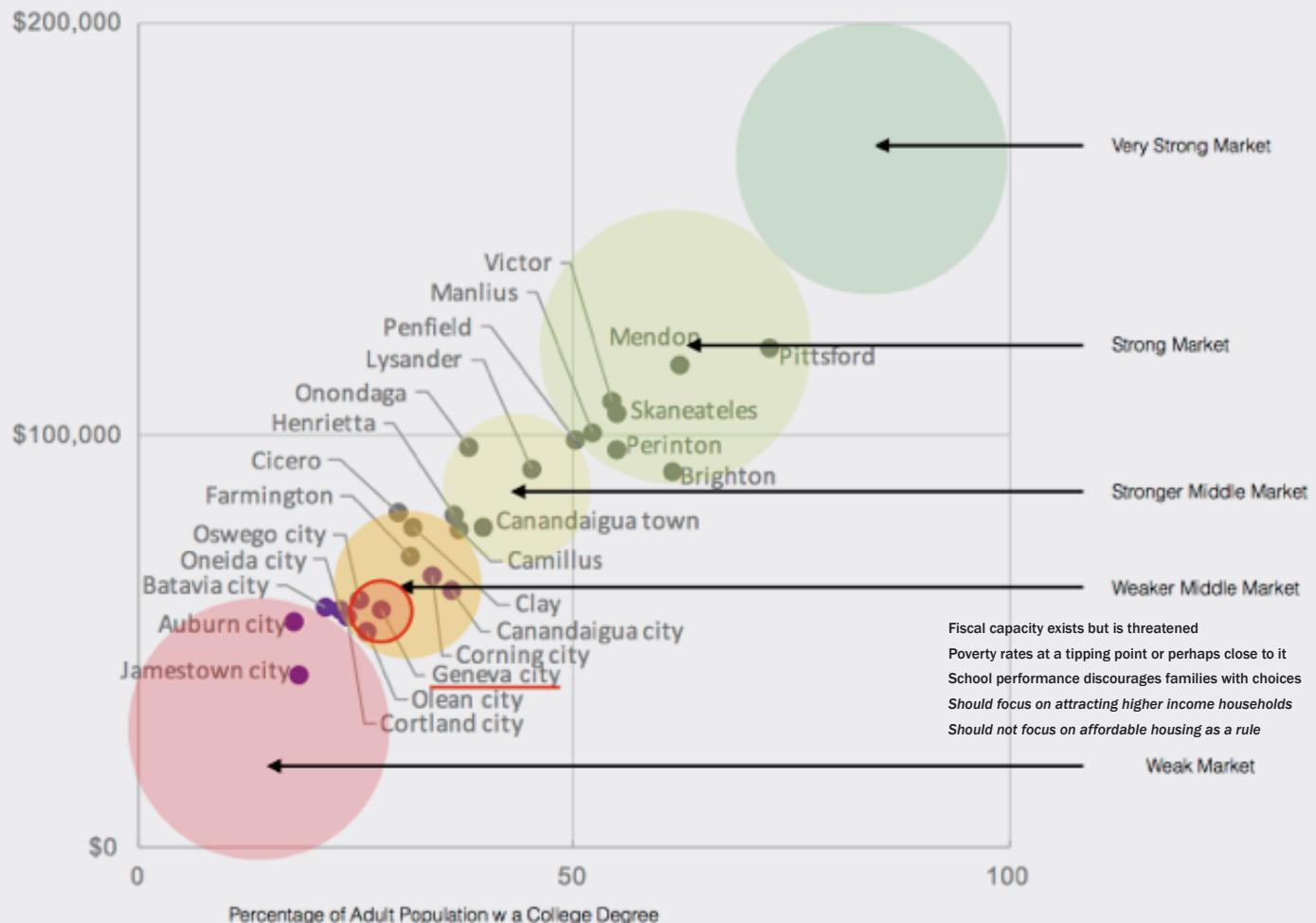
Council is constrained to a degree by the Property Tax Cap. Maxing out the cap, the following revenues are attainable:

2015	\$6,783,172
2016	\$6,935,793
2017	\$7,091,849
2018	\$7,251,415
2019	\$7,414,572

\*Based on \$17.88/\$1,000 in 2015, increasing 2% in each year

## Geneva and Peer Communities on a People-Based Spectrum of Market Strength

Median Family Income



Sales taxes are also part of the revenue equation. Ontario County collects a 3.5% tax on retail and other sales across the County. Under a 2008 sales tax distribution agreement, the City's share is calculated as a base payment of \$150,000/month plus other distributions that are made quarterly based on a formula of 90% of sales taxes retained after all County municipalities receive base payments. The remaining 10% are distributed according to relative total assessed value.

The Total Assessed Taxable Value for Ontario County is \$8,383,724,280. The City of Geneva maintains \$370,503,461 or 4.4% of the County's total assessed taxable value.

The Total Assessed Value for Ontario County is \$10,695,818,775. The City of Geneva maintains \$926,131,667 or 8.75% of the County's total assessed value.

Going forward, it is notable that sales tax collections have been volatile over the past five years, but are growing steadily. Best management practices suggest that forecasts should be conservative, objective, and reasonable. Revenues are finally recovering to 2008 levels, but forecasts should be cautious. Conservative forecasting suggests not exceeding a 2.5% per year growth in sales tax revenues:

2015	\$3,050,000
2016	\$3,126,250
2017	\$3,204,406
2018	\$3,284,516
2019	\$3,366,629

There is also the occupancy tax to consider. Occupancy Tax has experienced volatility since its inception in 2008. Early collections showed spectacular growth, which peaked in 2011-2012. Recent years have shown some decline due to a competitive market, with new rooms coming online just outside the City limits. New rooms have resulted in a downward pressure in rates, resulting in lower collections. At least one new property will come online inside the City in the next 24 months. Conservative forecasting suggests a modest recovery due to new properties inside the City. No significant growth is expected:

2015	\$200,000
2016	\$200,000
2017	\$204,000
2018	\$208,080
2019	\$212,242

It is often the recourse of struggling cities to look increasingly to state and federal sources for assistance. Cities in New York have been fortunate to preserve State Aid at pre-recession levels. Funds have not increased over the years, but have also not been reduced. No significant increases or decreases are predicted for the period of analysis.

Other revenues matter. At present, however, no other existing revenue collection effort shows any significant opportunity for growth. The City collects several dozen smaller revenues, that have been stable but not growing significantly in recent years. General fund balances have been depleted and cannot be relied upon for project or program development. Utility fund audits have been completed. No further future transfer adjustments are anticipated. Conservative forecasting suggests the following "other revenue" collections:

2015	\$3,391,205
2016	\$3,459,029
2017	\$3,528,209
2018	\$3,598,774
2019	\$3,670,749

Utilizing the "0% Property Tax growth option, the following is forecast for 2016:

Utilizing the "0% Property Tax growth option, the following is forecast for 2017:

Property Tax:	\$6,800,130
Sales Tax:	\$3,126,250
Occupancy Tax:	\$ 200,000
Other Taxes:	\$ 418,200
State Aid:	\$2,326,086
Other Revenue:	\$3,391,205
Total:	\$16,329,695

Utilizing the "0% Property Tax growth option, the following is forecast for 2018:

Property Tax:	\$6,817,130
Sales Tax:	\$3,204,406
Occupancy Tax:	\$204,000
Other Taxes:	\$426,564
State Aid:	\$2,326,086
Other Revenue:	\$3,391,205
Total:	\$16,506,395

Utilizing the “0% Property Tax growth option, the following is forecast for 2019:

Property Tax:	\$6,834,173
Sales Tax:	\$3,284,516
Occupancy Tax:	\$208,080
Other Taxes:	\$435,095
State Aid:	\$2,326,086
Other Revenue:	\$3,598,774
Total:	\$16,686,724

Without significant development or diversification and addition of new revenue sources, pressure will remain on the property tax rate.

Property Tax:	\$6,851,258
Sales Tax:	\$3,366,629
Occupancy Tax:	\$212,242
Other Taxes:	\$443,797
State Aid:	\$2,326,086
Other Revenue:	\$3,670,749
Total:	\$16,870,761

Property tax rollbacks appear far-fetched without expansion of other revenues. Further expansion of tourism can be an opportunity as it relates to addition of occupancy tax and sales taxes, but ultimately a transformational solution will be needed.

## D. Land Use and Zoning

### Land Use Analysis

The City of Geneva is home to diverse land uses. The most common land uses are residential and community service. Overall, the City of Geneva contains a diversity of land uses within short proximity to one another.

#### Residential

One-third of the land area of the City of Geneva is used for residential purposes. More specifically, 27.3% compromises single-family dwellings, while 5.7% is multi-family dwellings. With few exceptions, single-family dwellings are found in all areas of the city. The lands west of Main Street/Lochland Rd/SR 14 are overwhelmingly single-family dwellings. Although single-family land uses are more prevalent in the western portion, there are several multi-family, vacant, community service, and commercial properties in close proximity to these single-family homes. Multi-family homes are found clustered along the corridors of Genesee and South Main Street/ SR 14. The multi-family homes are generally located to the north and south of the downtown area. West of Main Street/ Lochland Rd/SR 14 there are scattered multi-family dwellings within the single-family residential area.

#### Community Services

Roughly one fifth of the City of Geneva includes educational, religious, governmental, and other community service uses. The Hobart and William Smith College, Cornell University, and the Geneva City School District (GCSD) constitute much of this category. Non-profit organizations and city government uses are also included in this category. The community service land uses are found throughout the City of Geneva. The largest areas are located around the Hobart and William Smith College campus and along West North Street in the northern section of the City.

#### Vacant

Although many consider the City of Geneva as densely populated and well utilized, 12.5% of the City is vacant. There are two prominent clusters of vacant property, north of East North Street and south of Jay Street near the southern portion of the City. The area north of East North Street generally includes vacant industrial land. The areas south of Jay Street include a few large parcels of residential vacant land adjacent to the Glenwood Cemetery. In the western side of the City there are several vacant residential parcels just east of Pre-Emption Road.

#### Commercial

Less than 10% of the properties in the City of Geneva are considered commercial. Some of these properties are mixed-use and contain

a residential use. The commercial areas are located in three major clusters. The downtown core contains much of the historic commercial properties. The second commercial cluster lies along Hamilton Street/SR 20. This commercial area generally includes auto-oriented and big-box commercial land uses.

#### Other Land Uses

Industrial land uses are clustered in the northeast section of the City north of North Street. Recreation and Entertainment uses are located sporadically throughout the city. Conservation and Parks uses are located east of Routes 5&20 along the lakefront as are Public Service, including the railroad right-of-way.

#### Zoning Analysis

The process of municipal zoning is intended to promote a high quality of life and the efficient use of land. Zoning districts and ordinances may protect the common good of a community, but may also hinder the efficient use of land. Thus, reviewing the efficacy and performance of zoning in the context of changing community needs can help to achieve the best outcome.

The City of Geneva Code is grouped by subject in chapters. Although the zoning ordinance is located in a large chapter at the end of the code, other land development regulations (e.g. subdivision regulations) are located in other areas of the code. For example, the keeping of animals in the AR district is specified in a separate chapter from the majority of the zoning code.

#### Districts

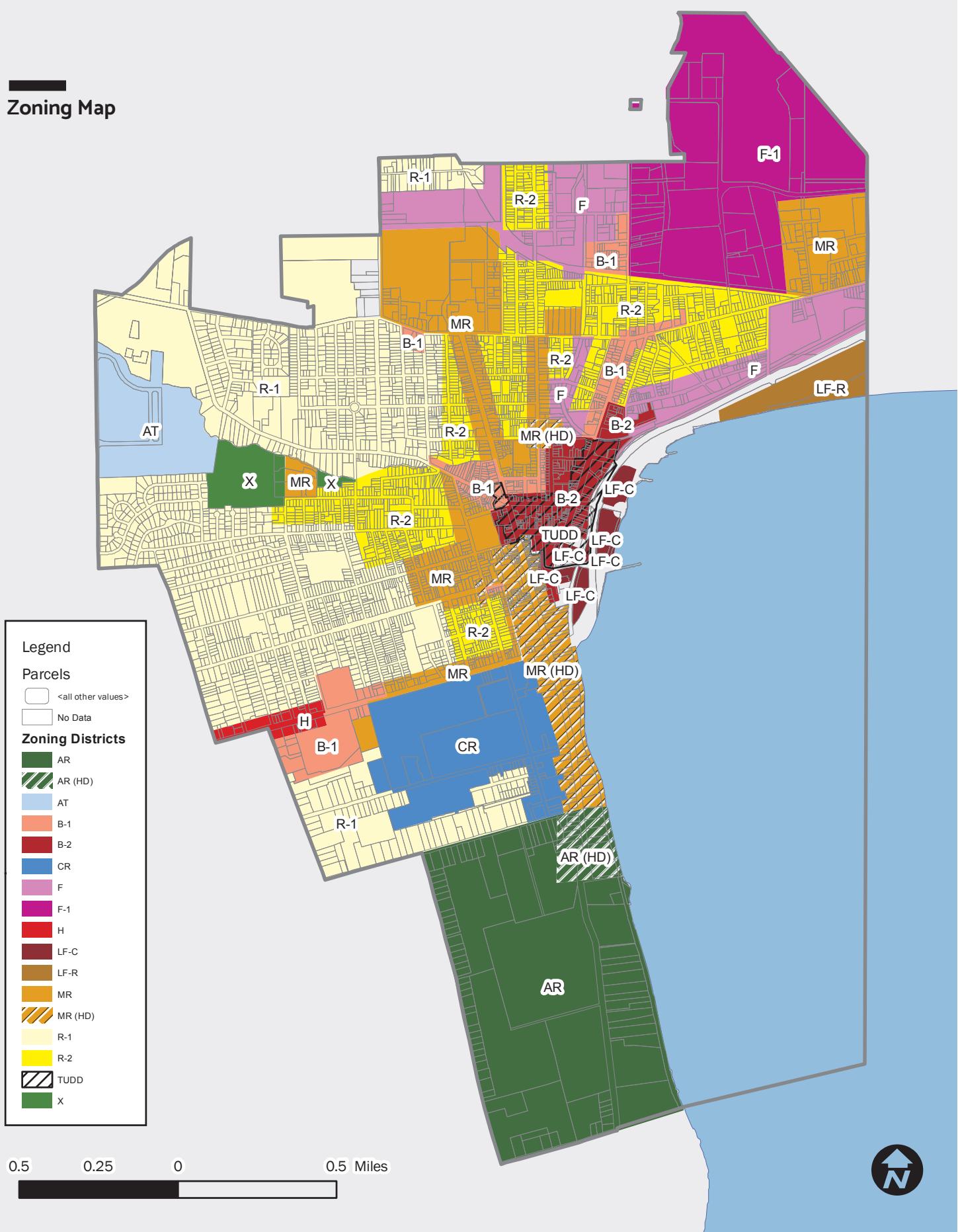
The zoning ordinance includes 16 districts, which are briefly described and shown below.

This analysis has evaluated each district, compared it to existing land uses, and identified specific opportunities for change. The intent of this information is to set the stage for a zoning code update to be completed after the adoption of the comprehensive plan. It should be used in conjunction with the land use recommendations as outlined in the Plan.

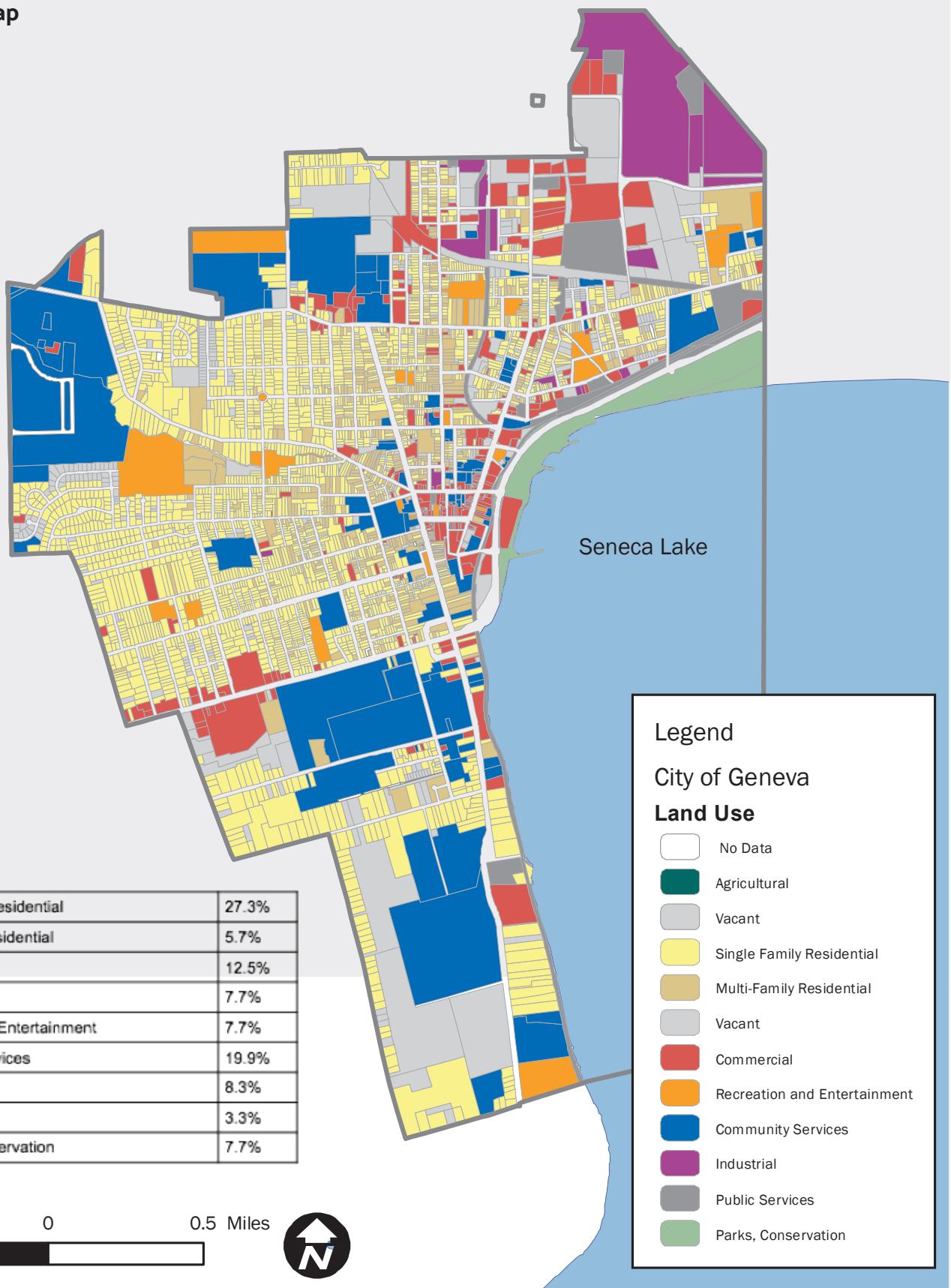
#### Agricultural Residential Use District (AR)

The Agricultural Residential Use District is a large district located at the southern end of the City of Geneva and along Seneca Lake. The district is intended to promote relatively large lot residential or agricultural uses. The AR district is the most restrictive of the four residential districts. The district permits the fewest uses by right, and requires single-family residential uses to have a minimum lot size of nearly half

## Zoning Map



## Land Use Map



an acre. For other permitted general uses, lots must be a minimum of 3 acres. One unique aspect of the AR district is that it is the only district that permits the keeping of certain domesticated animals common in agriculture. In addition to domestic pet animals, the keeping of following species are allowed:

- Chickens
- Ducks, geese, or fowl
- Cattle, horses, and sheep

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The land uses found in the AR district appear to contrast with the district name and intent. Currently, there are no major agricultural uses in the district. Furthermore, many of the larger parcels are classified as vacant. There may be demand for residential development in the AR district and a desire to protect and/or enhance the character of the Route 14 Corridor, which the AR district covers. For these reasons, the revisions to the current zoning should be considered.

In many ways, the current district makes creative use of property unnecessarily difficult. The City should consider allowing some general uses by permit in the AR District, including day nurseries (i.e. Day Care). Allowing more general uses would offer property owners more flexibility in the use of their property. Such uses should be in keeping with the residential character of the area. In addition, the 3-acre minimum area requirement should be lowered to allow for denser development. The prohibition of educational institutions and their incidental or accessory uses seems out of character for the AR district. This prohibition is unique among the residential districts. The City of Geneva should consider allowing these uses with a special use permit, similar to the R1, R2, and MR districts.

There is a need to preserve the open and natural characteristics of the Route 14 Corridor. An overlay district could be created on all property fronting the Route 14 Corridor between Jay Street and Route 14 south to the city line. This overlay district would be similar to the TUDD, in that the district would focus on design guidelines on development fronting the corridor. It would focus on consistent setbacks, maintaining and re-planting trees and landscaping in keeping with the natural character and maintaining historic buildings. Also, the overlay district would promote maintaining the important scenic views in the area.

#### **One-Family Residential Use District (R1)**

The One-Family Residential Use District is focused on promoting the character of single-family homes and residential neighborhoods in the City of Geneva. The district is generally located west of Main Street / NYS Route 14. It allows for detached one-family dwellings as the only permitted residential use. In addition, the district permits several general uses including agriculture, churches, and parks, which are common in residential areas. In regards to area and bulk

regulations, the district includes a 1/5-acre minimum area per family for residential and non-residential uses.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The R1 district covers much of the City of Geneva and the current land uses are consistent with the district. However, the permitting of hospitals does not seem to fit the character of the district and this use should be removed from the permitted uses. Although unlikely, the building of a hospital facility would include large increases in traffic and noise and appears to be at odds with the current character and purpose of the R1 district. The prohibition of home occupations is not in keeping with best zoning practices for residential areas. Home occupations should be allowed by right, given that they have the effect of residential uses (see home occupations section below).

#### **Two-Family Residential Use District (R2)**

The Two-Family Residential Use District is a zoning district located in a crescent shape around the core of the City of Geneva. The permitted uses and the uses requiring a permit are identical to the R1 district with two exceptions. The R2 district permits two-family dwellings and home occupations by right, whereas the R1 district prohibits these uses. Density control regulations for the R2 district are generally as restrictive as or slightly less restrictive than the R1 district. For example, the minimum allowed area per family and width at building lines are lower than R1, however, the lot coverage and structure height rules are the same as the R1.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

Current land use patterns are generally in keeping with the permitted uses in the R2 district and few of the parcels in the district are non-conforming uses. The R2 district regulations seem appropriate for the areas.

#### **Multiple-Family Residential Use District (MR)**

The Multiple-Family Residential Use District is a zoning district located along corridors and areas of transition between mixed-use areas and residential areas. The MR district is the most permissive of the four residential districts in the City of Geneva. The permitted residential and general uses (and those requiring a permit) are the same as the R2 district with a few important exceptions:

- Multi-family dwellings
- Lodges, fraternities and sororities
- Health-services and clinics
- Day nurseries (i.e. Day Care Facility)
- Nursing or convalescent homes
- Professional offices

Much of the MR district consists of residential uses. The MR district allows for three or more dwelling units on a single lot with lower minimum density controls than other districts (e.g. setbacks, total building lot area coverage etc). A large portion of the MR district is overlaid with the H-R district.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

Land use in the MR district includes historic attached residential buildings and other multi-family residential buildings along corridors. The MR district regulations seem appropriate for the area.

#### **Business Use District (B1)**

The Business 1 District includes parcels along major corridors (e.g. Route 14/Main St or Routes 5&20/ Hamilton St) and small groups of parcels near intersections of these roadways. The B1 district prohibits all residential uses, however, it allows all general and accessory uses found in the Multiple-Family Residential Use District with one exception. The B1 district permits the “public utilities.”

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

Uses in the B1 district are primarily residential (not permitted) and commercial uses. The B1 district covers three major clusters of parcels located relatively far from one another. The B1 district parcels along Castle Street, Dorchester Avenue, and North Main Streets contain many residential uses. These uses are not permitted in the district and may be non-conforming or the properties have been issued a variance from the B1 use regulations. If the community does not wish to maintain the B1 district regulations on such properties, an alternative to a rezoning would be to amend the B1 district to allow residential uses. One cluster of the B1 district includes strip-center retail along Routes 5&20. These regulations appear to be appropriate for such areas.

#### **Business 2 District (B2)**

The Business 2 District covers the historic core of the City of Geneva. The Business 2 District permits mixed-use development allowing a variety of first-floor uses with upper-story apartment on the same premises. Much of the Business 2 District is overlayed with the Traditional Urban Design District (TUDD), meaning that much of the B2 parcels must also conform to TUDD regulations.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

Since 2007, The B2 District does not list any regulations for the minimum rear yard dimensions (the area in Schedule 2 is blank). The B2 district should have no minimum for a rear yard, as the B2 district should support zero lot-line development. This standard is consistent with the district intent to allow traditional buildings.

#### **Highway Users Use District (H)**

The Highway Users Use District covers a brief portion of the Routes 5&20 corridor along the western edge of the City of Geneva. The H District is intended to regulate business along the commercial route that protect against nuisances in the adjacent R1 residence district.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The land uses for the H district seems to generally conform to the permitted uses with little non-conforming uses. However, the district should allow the same business uses as the B1 and B2 districts provided that the density control schedule restrictions can be met. The district prohibits the following uses also permitted in the other business districts:

- Boardinghouses (by permit)
- Funeral homes
- Laundries, commercial or dry-cleaning plants
- Theaters or concert halls
- Transportation terminal facilities
- Veterinarian offices and animal hospitals
- Wholesale businesses, trades or services not otherwise specifically mentioned in Schedule I

The location of the H district is adjacent to the R1 District north of Routes 5&20. The bulk regulations do not have a minimum rear yard requirement, which may be problematic for future development in the H district. Adjacent residences may not have sufficient buffering, green space, or landscaping between their property and the neighbors property. The zoning code should require a minimum rear yard of 35 feet to ensure proper buffering. If this requirement is deemed as burdensome landscaping requirements that permit shorter buffers yet screen the property should be created to buffer the different uses.

#### **Open Spaces Use District (X)**

The Open Spaces Use District includes parcels of the city include publicly-owned parcels of parks or open space. The district allows for parks, playgrounds, and similar recreational uses.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The X district contains only two parcels, (a publicly owned park and vacant land) therefore the land use is consistent with the district. If the community wishes to maintain other open areas (e.g. Lakefront Park, currently zoned as LF-R) the X district could be expanded.

#### **Industrial Use District (F)**

The Industrial Use District (F) is located in three separate clusters in the Geneva. The purpose of the Industrial Use District is to promote light industrial uses in the City of Geneva. However, the F district is the

most permissive district in the City of Geneva. The F district allows one residential and several general, business, and light industrial uses.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The land use of the Industrial Use (F) district appears to contain a lot of vacant and commercial uses. There may be an opportunity to change the zoning to encourage development in these areas. The permissive nature of the F district offers the community both potential benefits and conflicts. For example, the property owners in the district have more freedom over how they will utilize their property, however, the conflicts between residential and industrial uses may arise, such as excessive noise or smell. The city should weigh the costs and benefits of the current zoning and determine if some of the F district should be rezoned to R2 or other changes should be made based on past performance.

Because some residential use is permitted through the upper-story apartments, home occupations should also be permitted in the F district to support small business growth. The F district could be renamed to reflect the flexibility of the area, as the name should convey more than the permitted industrial uses.

#### **Industrial Use District (F1)**

The Industrial Use District (F1) includes the northeast area of the City, generally the properties along Forge and Doran Avenues. The F-1 District is very similar to the F district since it permits the same business and light industrial uses. However, the F1 district is slightly more restrictive. No residential uses are permitted, and the district prohibits three general uses which are allowed in the F district. The F1 district is the only district allowing adult uses with a permit.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The land use in the F1 district contains diverse land uses but includes some large vacant parcels. Most of the development is light industrial, commercial, or vacant. The F1 district should be maintained to provide regulations for new development.

#### **College-Residential District (C-R)**

Adopted in 2001, the College-Residential District (C-R) is designed to balance the needs of Hobart and William Smith Colleges (and its affiliated organizations) with the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. The district allows for a large amount of permitted uses by right, including cafeterias, athletic facilities, dormitories, and other uses typical of college campuses. The district includes parcels owned by Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The district regulations and land use seem to be appropriate for the welfare of the community.

#### **Historic-Residential District (H-R)**

Adopted in 1969, the purpose of the historic zoning district is to designate and protect 20 historic buildings or structures. The district is overlaid on the Multiple-Family Residential Use District (MR) along Main Street / Route 14 and its regulations must be followed in addition to those of the MR district.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The City of Geneva should consider whether other properties should be included in the historic-designated structures. If other properties have been added to the national register since the 1990 amendment or if the historic commission deems other properties appropriate for inclusion such properties could be included in the zoning code.

#### **Lakefront Commercial (LF-C)**

The Lakefront Residential Planned Unit development district is a zoning district covering large waterfront parcels between Routes 5&20 and Seneca Lake. The intent of the district is to provide for mixed-use projects that will meet the city's goals for waterfront development.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The land use in the Lakefront Commercial District is a mix of a large lakefront hotel and vacant land. The development of the waterfront land is very important to the City of Geneva and must be sensitively approached. Generally, the future zoning changes for this area should respect the findings of the City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Lakefront Residential (LF-R)**

The Lakefront Residential Planned Unit development district includes Lakefront Park, a large parcel on the north side of Seneca Lake between the shore and Routes 5&20.

#### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The park use of the LF-R district is not consistent with the permitted uses. If current zoning remains, future development should maintain public access to the water. The City of Geneva should utilize the comprehensive plan process to determine the future vision for this very important area. If the process determines that the parcel should remain a public park the area should be rezoned to Open Spaces Uses (X) District.

#### **Agricultural Technology District (AT)**

Adopted in 2002, the Agricultural Technology District (AT) is intended to provide for a framework for the development of a business park as part of the Cornell Cooperative Extension. The

Agricultural Technology District is a hybrid zoning code which implements elements of Form-Based Zoning with Euclidean Zoning.

### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

After more than a decade since the passing of the AT laws, the area remains largely vacant or open space. Because the area has not developed as intended by the language of the code a change to the zoning district or should be considered. The City of Geneva should consider rezoning part or all of this area to the One-Family Residence Use District (R1) or Industrial Use District (F) depending on the perceived demand for land and the community vision. Further, the necessity of the district should be re-evaluated and if the City believes it is not necessary the AT district should be repealed.

### **Traditional Urban Design District Overlay (TUDD)**

Implemented in 2007, the purpose of the TUDD overlay is to conserve the existing unique assets of Geneva's historic urban center and to encourage new development that enhances the traditional urban design and character of its downtown. The TUDD was implemented to promote the goals of the City's master plan. The district covers much of the Business 2 district encompassing the historic, mixed-use core of the City of Geneva. The TUDD is unique among the other districts in that it includes detailed design guidelines in regard to building composition, signs, and building location. Currently, the code explicitly states the design guidelines are not a requirement. The TUDD makes no minimum parking requirement.

### **Performance and Opportunities for Change**

The design guidelines included in the TUDD are necessary. Rather than offering the design principles as mere guidelines these design elements should become requirements. Promoting a traditional urban streetscape, zero-lot line development, and transparent first floors are necessary to achieve walkability. Any changes to the TUDD should not include minimum parking requirements nor encourage the incidental use of parcels for off-street parking.

### **General Recommendations**

#### **Minimum Parking Requirements (§350-25A)**

Minimum off-street parking requirements are included in the zoning ordinance and are applicable to all land uses or districts. Nearly all permitted uses are required to provide off-street parking. Uses in the Business 2 District are permitted to not provide off-street parking on-site in certain circumstances by using parking spaces in publicly-owned parking lots.

The 2010 City of Geneva Downtown / Lakefront Connectivity Study recommended that shared parking arrangements be formally recognized. In the future, shared parking agreements should become a new option for owners to comply with parking requirements. The City

should create a sample contract for parking agreements for owners to enter into shared parking agreements. If approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals, the shared parking agreement could count toward fulfilling parking requirements for both owners.

Minimum parking requirements should be in accordance with smart growth policies and modern parking requirements, which seek to provide options to property owners rather than merely mandating a high number of off-street parking spaces in hopes of deterring illegal parking. To fulfill parking needs in the TUDD or B2 District, on-street parking should be priced as to maintain approximately 85% occupancy or be free.

Bicycle parking should be required for new developments in the B2 district. If a street receives major improvements and public bicycle parking is installed, the City should allow new development to count on-street bike parking toward the required bike parking.

### **Industrial Uses and Prohibitions (§350-26)**

Industrial uses are prohibited (even those allowed by right or through special permit) if 'the application or adaptation of such use is or shall become or cause a nuisance.' (A2-c) This prohibition is very broad and has the potential to burden future industrial district uses. The contextual definition of 'nuisance' should appear here, or by referring to an earlier definition in the zoning chapter. The general welfare of the community can be protected by maintaining the standards determined in 'Schedule II, Prohibited Industrial Uses' and other existing local, state, and federal laws limiting industrial uses.

In Schedule II, 'Prohibited Industrial Uses', the code lists 49 prohibited industrial uses including production of specific chemicals or consumer items. These prohibitions should be reviewed for their appropriateness with contemporary practices. For example, the prohibition against ammonia manufacture may be important to maintain the safety of the City, however, prohibitions against brewing or distilling of liquors or pickle and sauerkraut manufacturing may be burdensome to businesses and hurt economic development. In recent years the local food economy has grown in the Finger Lakes region. Recognizing the need for economic development, the City of Geneva should craft industrial zoning regulations that balance the community welfare with the ability of businesses to locate in Geneva. Many small communities have welcomed food manufacturing with little to no negative community impact.

### **Home Occupation Prohibitions and Nuisances**

Both the AR and R1 Districts prohibit home occupations creating unnecessary barriers to achieving more efficient use of property. Although prohibiting home occupations may promote the general welfare of the community it increases barriers to entrepreneurship and significantly limits the use of residential property. Private residences often serve as modern day business incubators and may grow into large organizations, which benefit their communities.

If a home occupation has the same impact as a residential use, it should be permitted by right in the AR District and R1 districts. If the City of Geneva considers the full permission of home occupations as degrading the welfare of the community, a home occupations permit could be created as a compromise. A Home Occupation Permit could offer the City more control over limiting adverse impacts of such uses. An application for the permit could include the following elements found in other communities:

- A floor plan of the dwelling identifying the area of a home occupation
- An application providing general information
- An signed affidavit

The code should recognize that many modern home occupations are less than or equally a nuisance as many legal common residential uses. In regard to sound, operation of lawn care equipment or motor vehicles create more of a nuisance than the use of a computer, telephone, or other office equipment typical of home occupations. Generally, if a home occupation has the same environmental impact as a residential use it should be permitted by right in all residential districts.

If the community believes the prohibition against home occupations in some districts should remain then 'nuisance' should be better qualitatively or quantitatively defined to the best extent possible. The code enforcement officials could be better equipped to monitor and enforce the code if the rules were better defined. The code should clearly describe the type of noise, signage, lighting, or other effects of a home occupation which constitute a nuisance. For example, the term 'nuisance' could be defined the same as found in §350-24B.

### **Home Occupations (§350-2)**

Defined in 1974, the term 'Home Occupation' should be redefined in the Geneva Zoning Code. The jobs and activities listed in the code do not reflect most people currently employed at home or who wish to do so. The new definition must acknowledge 21st century changes in the workplace recognizing the necessity of teleworking in the contemporary office. Generally, a home occupation use should be defined as any use fitting all of the following criteria:

1. The use is conducted on behalf of a sole proprietorship, corporation, or other business entity or non-profit organization
2. The use is accessory (i.e. it uses no more than 25% of the premises)
3. The use and its effects are not a nuisance

### **Prohibitions Contrary to New York State Court Rulings (§350-31)**

Although the City of Geneva has broad powers to enact zoning ordinances, the State of New York Court ruled in *Town of Pompey v. Parker* a 'zoning ordinance which absolutely excludes the

establishment of a mobile home within its boundaries would be unconstitutional because of the unreasonableness of the restrictions imposed'. Therefore, the City of Geneva should remove the comprehensive prohibition against mobile homes and determine whether any other comprehensive prohibitions are valid under state court rulings. Generally, zoning ordinances must have reasonable restrictions and not totally prohibit legal uses of land. Other general prohibitions listed in the code include:

- auto wrecking yards
- junkyards
- drive-in theaters
- slaughterhouses

### **Minimum Area Regulations of Upper-Story Apartments (§ 350-2)**

Historically, upper-story apartments were an important form of housing in Geneva. Currently, this use is allowed in the B2 district, an area covering the downtown core with many multi-story buildings. The zoning code defines such upper-story apartments with a minimum floor area. The code implies that if a dwelling were to be smaller than these minimums then the use is prohibited. The minimums include:

- 500 square feet for a one-bedroom unit or studio unit
- 1,000 square feet for a two-bedroom unit
- 1,500 square feet for a three-bedroom unit

Recent demographic changes indicate a need for affordable rental housing for one and two-person households. Generally, demographic shifts occurring within young adults and seniors have increased the number of people living alone and those who wish to live in historic city centers. One way to meet the need of these groups and promote economic development is to reduce or remove these apartment area minimums. Often called 'micro-apartments', many cities have permitted the development of apartments units smaller than 500 square feet. While an apartment less than 500 square feet may seem unreasonably small to some, innovations in interior design and creative uses of space can deliver all the living needs a single person requires in a small space. Minimum regulations for two and three bedroom apartments should also be reviewed. Regardless of the zoning law, the enforcement of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code will provide a basic level of safety and livability in all dwelling units.

### **Accessory Uses in Residential Districts**

#### **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**

The multiple residences (MR) and the MR (HD) districts may be appropriate for development of ADUs. An accessory dwelling unit (i.e. Granny Flat, Secondary Unit) is an additional dwelling unit located on the same parcel as a principal dwelling unit. Many ADUs share their size and lot location with double bay detached garages, yet feature the attractive design elements seen in regular single-family homes. These dwelling units are often the size of a studio or one-bedroom apartment.

ADUs can benefit many different groups and interests in cities, such as:

- Providing Affordable and Senior Housing – ADUs can offer seniors the ability to age in place or students to live off campus.
- Providing Income- Property owners may earn more money from rental income of the ADU and benefit from the increased value of their property.
- Relatively Low Neighborhood Impacts – When compared with other new housing ADU development has a relatively minor community impact on traffic or noise.

The building of ADUs should be allowed by special permit. The permit process would verify that all area requirements are met. Some cities have stipulated that an ADU may only be built by owner-occupants or they may only be inhabited by family members or those employed by the owner. These and other nuances should be explored by the community to achieve the optimum result. Overall, allowing ADUs in certain residential districts can promote the efficient use of property while balancing the needs of the community.

### **Districts and Mixed-Uses**

Currently, the B2 district allows for mixed-use by right in the historic city core. The 2007 TUDD Overlay District encourages diverse uses in the core area and the development of new buildings designed for mixed-use. However, the TUDD fails to require this type of development stating that it is merely a guideline. The City of Geneva should amend the TUDD to make the guidelines requirements. This bold change will mean that Geneva's regulatory framework will support its vision of a 'uniquely urban' community.

### **Animal Regulations**

Once a common practice in cities, over the past 75 years animal husbandry has often become illegal in cities and villages. In recent years, some communities have begun to reverse this trend. Recognizing the economic benefits of raising local food, many cities have begun to allow the reasonable keeping of animals in residential districts.

Ch.77 Article 1 of the City of Geneva Code includes rules on the keeping of animals. The animal keeping uses could be added to 'Schedule 1, Permitted Uses' to ensure that people do not miss these rules, as the article refers to the Agricultural District (AR). Overall, the animal regulations should allow for the keeping of animals in the R1 and AR districts so long as the practice is not a nuisance and area regulations are met. Area regulations for each animal should be defined to promote adequate space in such districts. Just as the code allows for a system of safeguards against reckless dog ownership (§ 77-22), such a process should be opened up to include other animals. Individual animal caretakers and property owners should be responsible to ensure that animal care uses do not become a nuisance to neighbors.

If these practices become a nuisance, a system very similar to the dog regulations could be used. Written complaints, actions, and fines could apply to all forms of animal ownership, rather than only to dogs.

### **Beekeeping**

Since 1968, the code has fully prohibited beekeeping. Although the code defines beekeeping as a nuisance, the practice can be conducted in a safe manner and produce valuable food products. Following many other cities, Geneva should allow beekeeping in the R1 and AR districts by right. Regulations or fines encouraging responsible beekeeping can be created to limit potential problems of aggressive bees.

## E. Current Sustainability Practices and Benchmarks

Sustainability is defined by a community's ability to meet its existing environmental, economic, and social equity needs without impacting future generations' abilities to meet their needs. One of the marks of Geneva's progressive nature is the City's philosophy of sustainability as demonstrated through this plan's vision statement as well as a variety of economic, social and environmental actions and policies. These include the following:

**Climate Smart Communities Program.** CSC is a network of communities in New York that are committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improving resiliency. To become a CSC, a municipality must make a public commitment to reduce greenhouse gases and then set goals and create a plan for climate action. Geneva is in the nascent phase of the program having passed a resolution adoption of the CSC pledge in 2015 and subsequently creating a task force to focus on CSC issues and goals. The City has also completed a GHG emissions inventory as a baseline for goal setting and a climate action plan.

**Cleaner, Greener Communities.** This Comprehensive Plan is funded in part by the NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities program, the focus of which is to reduce greenhouse gases. By definition, therefore, this plan defining the city's vision and priorities is rooted in a commitment to sustainability. At the outset of the project, the City developed a Project Benefit Metrics Report (PBMR) providing an overview of the potential future and/or long term transformation benefits of the comprehensive plan. The metrics were drawn from statewide and regional sets of priorities such as natural gas savings and reduction of vehicle miles traveled. The PBMR anticipates benefits in energy savings in 5, 15 and 30 year time frames.

**Energy Audit.** Geneva completed an energy audit in 2010 with the intention of decreasing community energy use. The audit includes baseline information about the energy use in local government buildings. Subsequently, the City upgraded interior lighting, the building envelope, water/wastewater treatment facilities and HVAC, and installed water-efficient fixtures and a building energy management system. The City has also established a financing mechanism for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in government-owned buildings.

Other sustainable practices include the provision of recycling bins in public places and at events, the adoption of a renewable energy ordinance and development of a local tree planting program.

## F. Economic Development Initiatives

The City is an integral player in the regional economy due to its historic downtown, location at the crossroads of major roadways, increasing prominence as a tourism hub and function as the largest city in Ontario County and home to many social services. The City is developing its own Economic Development Strategy that dovetails with that of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC), a nine-county area through which NYS grants are applied for and distributed as part of Governor Cuomo's funding process. While the regional strategy provides a vision and guidelines through which municipalities can apply for grants—including the grant to fund this Comprehensive Plan—the local strategy would outline how to promote Geneva specifically, to diversify the City's economy and foster economic opportunities for future generations to stay in Geneva.

The local and regional economic overview includes the following plans.

### **Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Strategy (2011).**

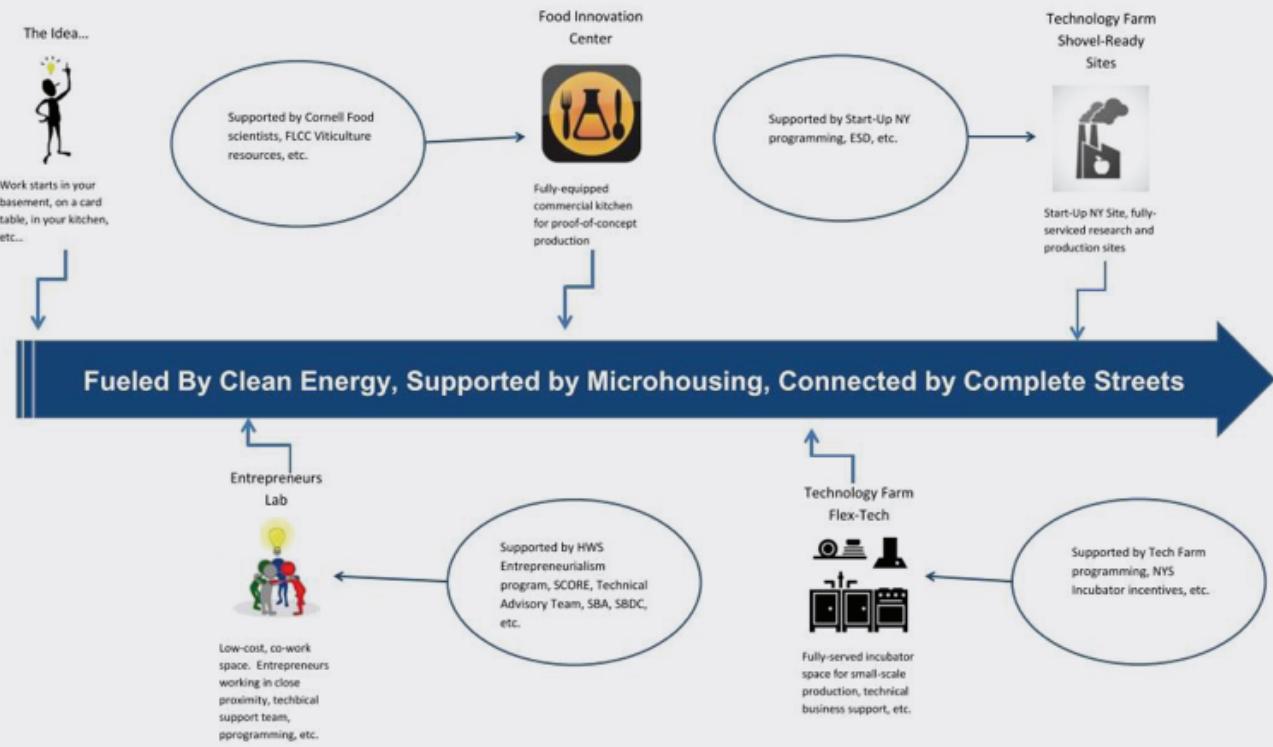
The goals of the regional strategy are to grow jobs, increase regional wealth, drive private investment and reduce poverty. The strategy identifies Geneva as a potential hub for tourism and agriculture (building upon efforts in recent years such as the Lakefront Development Strategy.) In 2014, the Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park in Geneva was awarded a \$375,000 grant to support marketing and capital improvements.

**Upstate Revitalization Initiative (2015).** As part of Governor Cuomo's funding strategy, the FLREDC was selected for a \$500 million investment that aligns with the FLREDC Strategy, above. The funding, which is intended for job creation throughout the region, will be distributed as \$100 million per year from 2016-2020 via a selection process overseen by FLREDC. The City's Innovation District concept, described below, is included in this plan.

**Local strategies.** The City is promoting several concepts, including the Innovation District, Site-Based Marketing and general Citywide marketing, microenterprise and placemaking. The Innovation District concept would promote the clustering of anchor institutions and companies with small firms, start-ups, incubators and accelerators. Geneva is fortunate to have innovation "drivers" including Cornell University (College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the NYS Agriculture Experiment Station), Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Finger Lakes Community College to provide academic, research and development resources that contribute to the local economy. In concert with these innovation drivers, innovation cultivators such as the Technology Farm, Food Innovation Center and Geneva Entrepreneurs Lab provide physical spaces for entrepreneurship, which lower the cost of entry for new ideas. Finally, Geneva's physical attributes such as its compact form and thriving downtown will contribute to the success of the City's Innovation Districts as envisioned in the "Finger Lakes Food and Beverage Innovation District" continuum.

# Innovation Continuum

Finger Lakes Food and Beverage Innovation District



The City's Site-Based Marketing Concept would involve working with partners such as the Technology Farm, Geneva Industrial Park, Geneva Enterprise Development Center, Exchange South (proposed downtown entertainment district) and the Geneva Gateway, a 2-acre commercial redevelopment site owned by the City, IDA and LDC. The City and its partners would market these sites for expansion, retention and attraction. The FLREDC identifies the Technology Farm as a strategic site with 60 acres of shovel-ready sites. It is also included in the Cornell StartUP NY plan, which offers tax incentives for new businesses. The Industrial Park is owned by the City, Geneva IDA and Ontario County IDA. With ready access to I-90, the park includes 40 acres of shovel-ready land and is fully serviced. Exchange South is at the southern edge of downtown and includes a mix of public and privately-owned property. The area includes opportunities for infill and adaptive reuse and has been identified as an ideal location for student housing, entertainment venues, restaurants, retail and/or a hotel. The Geneva Gateway was identified in the Brownfield Opportunity Area study as a key intersection and could be rezoned and marketed for mixed-use redevelopment.

Other local priorities include a new website, social media expansion and continued investment on the lakefront and downtown revitalization.

## G. Relevant Strategies in Existing Planning Documents

The City of Geneva has developed several plans and studies to help guide desired physical, social, and economic development in the City. These planning efforts cover diverse subjects, from business development to environmental protection, and many of the findings and recommendations in these plans help inform the current comprehensive plan.

### 1997 Master Plan

The 1997 Master Plan set a broad vision for the future of the City. The Plan stressed the importance of developing the City as a quality Finger Lakes tourism destination with a strong downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Plan developed policies regarding the development of the lakefront, revitalization of downtown, and recreational opportunities. These policies had been included in prior planning documents and remain the backbone of City policies. General community goals were created from this process for five focus areas including Downtown, Commercial Development, Recreation, Lakefront, and Transportation. It also called for the development of the Traditional Urban Design District (TUDD) in the downtown and the implementation of design standards and guidelines for the commercial areas. The TUDD was developed and is in place today.

The following Master Plan recommendations are relevant to the current Comprehensive Plan:

#### 1. Land Use & Zoning

- a. **Downtown** - Take action to maintain and build on the strengths of downtown. In large downtown buildings, encourage upper-floor residential uses and other niche housing. The City should support private projects aimed at celebrating the unique assets of the City. Design standards, streetscape improvements, and walkability are fundamental to downtown and the connection to the waterfront.
- b. **Commercial Arterials** - Promote community values and reduce visual clutter through quality regulations for urban design, signs, and land use.
- c. **Industrial and Institutional Districts** - Review the utilization of industrial property and take measures to promote the highest and best use of it. Economic development, rezoning, and planning efforts should be considered for underutilized or vacant former industrial property.
- d. **Neighborhoods** - Utilize zoning adjustments to reduce blighting conditions in stable, single-family neighborhoods. Other considerations of the neighborhood recommendations include:

- i. Development of neighborhood centers
- ii. Affordable and senior housing
- iii. Buffers between residential and non-residential uses
- iv. Promotion of sidewalk maintenance and home occupations

- e. **Recreation & Open Space** - Promote the development of a trail system linking parks and other destinations. Improve existing parks and expand recreational programming.
- f. **Lakefront** - Through planning and regulatory tools, ensure the lakefront is a beautiful, walkable area with water-dependent uses that provide economic and recreational opportunities.
2. **Environmental Resources** - Protect water quality, steep slopes and shorelines by limiting development in select areas, working on environmental projects and developing overlay districts.
3. **Transportation & Infrastructure** - Seek to minimize the negative impact of truck traffic on residential neighborhoods. Improve walkability through crossing adjustments, traffic calming and requiring sidewalks in new development. Ensure that parking lots are screened with attractive materials.
4. **Historic, Cultural & Tourism Resources** - Protect and develop historic and cultural resources through strategic partnerships and project facilitation.
5. **Intergovernmental Issues** - Consider the edges of the City through coordination with the Towns of Geneva and Waterloo.

### 1997 Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

Completed in conjunction with the Master Plan, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) continues to provide specific guidance on the types of land uses and their respective impacts permitted within four primary areas along the waterfront. The following LWRP policies and objectives are relevant to the current Comprehensive Plan:

1. **Pattern of Waterfront Development** - Develop new uses, programs, and adjustments to existing facilities to transform the waterfront into a recreational and tourism destination. Develop site plan standards to guide waterfront development.
2. **Water-Dependent Uses** - Encourage water-dependant uses and ensure that facilities and regulations are consistent with such uses. Waterfront parks and trails are important water-enhanced uses that must form a connection to downtown.
3. **Environmental Resource Protection** - Limit development in select waterfront areas and undertake shoreline stabilization and dredging projects. The Plan called for the development of an overlay protection district to protect steeps slopes and review of regulations in the Planned Unit Development District (PUD).
4. **Public Access & Recreational Opportunities** - Ensure that the lakefront is pedestrian-friendly and connected to downtown by promoting traffic-calming and crossing improvements to Routes 5 & 20, developing trails and sidewalks and developing and enforcing design standards.
5. **Historic Preservation** - Develop a local list of historic landmark buildings and coordinate with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP). Local regulatory procedures and design guidelines can play a role in historic preservation.

**6. Visual Quality** – Protect the overall scenic quality of the waterfront through the use of site plan standards and conservation of views and vistas.

**7. Water Resources** – Undertake water surface zoning regulations including speed, noise, and uses within 1,500 feet of the shoreline. Sustain water resource quality by following best practices in stormwater management and material disposal.

#### **2008 Geneva Business Improvement District Downtown Business Development Strategy**

The 2008 Business Development Strategy is a detailed initiative aimed at strengthening the performance of Geneva's historic downtown core. It identifies opportunities to increase the number of tenants, reduce the vacancy rate, and increase the profitability of tenants in downtown. It looks to reduce confusion regarding the role of stakeholders involved in Downtown development, which includes the City, the Business Improvement District (BID), and the Chamber of Commerce. The Strategy includes the use of visioning, market research, and detailed implementation. It also developed implementation models that identified the roles and responsibilities of local stakeholder groups.

The following portions of the document are relevant to the current Plan:

- Stakeholders stated that the limits on upper-story apartment development was an issue in the downtown.
- The streetscape and land use improvements to the lakefront and downtown were identified as fundamental to the economic health of the downtown.

#### **2008 The Neighborhoods of Geneva Study**

The 2008 Neighborhoods Study focused on identifying how Geneva neighborhoods can be strengthened and become more competitive in the real estate market. The Study focused primarily on housing. Unlike other plans, it stressed using recommended principles to make decisions. It acknowledged the value of “guided improvisation”, which provides the freedom of residents and the City to adjust the recommendations of the report to fit unique conditions. The Study also stressed that improvements should prioritize neighborhoods with the most potential for improvement rather than only neighborhoods in the poorest condition. The Plan’s analysis included both qualitative (e.g. resident interviews) and quantitative (e.g. real estate data) research methods to drive recommendations. The following eight general steps were identified to forestall the cycle of neighborhood disinvestment:

1. Neighborhood Identity & Pride Initiatives
2. Targeted Rehabilitation Lending Programs
3. Targeted Homebuying Initiatives
4. Selected Demolition Efforts
5. Code Compliance Outreach
6. Residential Involvement Initiatives

#### **7. Special Projects on Signature Blocks**

#### **8. Historic Property Initiatives**

Following these general steps, the Plan discussed neighborhood-specific recommendations. The Plan recommended that the first priority neighborhoods included Western View (now Western Gardens) and Upper West (now Hildreth Hill). It found that the City’s limited investment resources would be most leveraged in these areas. The Study led to the development of the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center, a hub of technical assistance for all neighborhood needs.

#### **2010 Lakefront/Downtown Connectivity Study**

The Lakefront/Downtown Connectivity Study aimed to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel between the lakefront and downtown across NYS Routes 5&20. It focused on public participation and design to create physical improvements that would transform a segment of Routes 5&20 from a barrier to a pedestrian and bicycle friendly connection.

The Study made two major alternative recommendations one to enhance the current roadway and another to create a more thorough reconfiguration of the roadway. Both recommendations included development of roundabout(s) and improvement of sidewalks and crosswalks. The Study emphasized the need for the City to coordinate with the State’s Department of Transportation and to pursue federal grant funds to implement the recommendations.

The following recommendations are relevant to the Comprehensive Plan:

- 1. General Improvements** – Undertake improvement of the pedestrian experience, the development of a wayfinding system, the installation of public art and traffic signal changes.
- 2. Planning & Regulatory Provisions** – Improve the Lakefront Planned Unit Development District and other zoning code changes to promote walkability.
- 3. Enhancements and Reconfiguration of Routes 5&20** – Consider the best course of action for future improvements to the road segment. Major infrastructure changes include the installation of a landscaped center median, the removal of right turn lanes, and the development of a multi-use trail connection.

#### **2011 City of Geneva Economic Development Strategy**

The 2011 Economic Development Strategy took an in-depth look at the strengths and weaknesses of the City’s economic status. The Strategy developed dozens of recommendations across 11 categories and compared the economy of other communities to Geneva. It found that Geneva has unique challenges and strengths. These characteristics included the City’s weak labor force and the opportunity to promote the lakefront and its historic downtown.

The Strategy prioritized the following recommendations:

- Update the Economic Development Vision and Action Plan with the findings of the Economic Development Strategy

- Identify and define the roles of the City's stakeholders
- Work to implement the major initiatives including
  - Downtown mixed-use redevelopment
  - Expansion of the Tech Farm
  - Arts and cultural resources

The following general objectives pervade the Plan and are most relevant to the current Comprehensive Plan:

- Tourism – Increase the year-round tourism-oriented programming, marketing, and attractions.
- Lakefront – Make physical improvements and increase locally-sponsored programming.
- Neighborhoods – Promote citizen empowerment and wayfinding signage to reinforce a sense-of-place.

#### 2012 Waterfront Infrastructure Feasibility Study

The Waterfront Infrastructure Feasibility Study developed a vision for physical enhancements to the lakefront and a detailed implementation strategy including phasing, permitting, and cost estimates. The Study included the following major infrastructure items:

1. Long Pier Extension
2. Castle Street promenade
3. Boardwalk and pier
4. Castle Creek revitalization
5. Beach development
6. Shoreline stabilization
7. Boat launch

The continuing development of the lakefront is important to the City and its residents. The recommendations are supported in this Comprehensive Plan.

and undergo plans for property maintenance, selective demolition, and reuse.

- **Open Space & Connectivity** – Develop plans for increasing pedestrian connections across NYS Routes 5&20 and planning and programming for parks and the Foundry Site.

#### 2013 Finger Lakes Regional Sustainability Plan

Focusing on the five-county region, the 2013 Finger Lakes Sustainability Plan was a comprehensive strategy for the promotion of sustainability and economic development. Administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the sustainability plan forms the basis of many future funding opportunities.

The Geneva Comprehensive Plan and the Sustainability Plan have a direct relationship. The planning process itself is one step toward fulfilling a governance target to increase the number of communities with current comprehensive plans. Other more specific goals most relevant to the Geneva Comprehensive Plan include:

- **Land Use & Livability** – Increase the sustainability and livability of the Finger Lakes region by revitalizing the region's traditional centers, concentrating development in areas with existing infrastructure and services, and protecting undeveloped lands from urban encroachment.
- **Water Management** – Improve and protect the water environment with respect to quality, quantity and availability, promote and understand the value of our water reservoirs, watercourses and built infrastructure, maximize the social, economic and ecological potential of our water resources toward equitable sharing of their benefits for both the short and long terms.
- **Transportation** – Provide an equitable transportation system that ensures safety, maximizes efficiency, addresses disaster resiliency, provides mode choice and reduces dependence on fossil fuels.

#### 2013 North End Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination

The City developed a Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination for the north end neighborhoods. Historically, this area included high-impact, pollution-generating land uses, which created long-lasting environmental issues. The study area covered the northeast section of the City and includes the areas surrounding the intersection of North Exchange and East North Streets.

The following is a summary of the Plan's recommendations relevant to the Comprehensive Plan:

- **Economic Development** – Advocate for redevelopment of industrial sites and implement zoning changes aimed at increasing the certainty of the development process.
- **Neighborhood Quality-of-life** – Implement streetscape improvements, develop North and Exchange neighborhood center,

## II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

A Steering committee of 25 members representing residents, community organizations, businesses and County Planning staff met almost monthly starting in February 2015 to guide the development of this comprehensive plan. Homework assignments encouraged committee members to engage the community in small groups for feedback. Community members' attendance varied at meetings with the most active involvement coming during a presentation about Downtown Geneva by Kennedy Smith and the playing of a trade-off game in June 2015 to identify priorities.

The following represent the key public engagement tools employed during this project:

**Project Website:** The comprehensive plan had a website with information on the steering committee, meeting minutes, existing Geneva plans and documents, the survey, and sample comprehensive plans.

**Survey:** A survey was completed by 675 people and was available in English and Spanish through online and paper versions. Promotion of the survey consisted of a website presence on City and school district websites, the City's Constant Contact e-mail blast (1,300 people), a water bill insert, social media posts, local media awareness, radio ads, paper copies available at multiple locations, and steering committee outreach. Paper copies were available at the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center, City Hall, Geneva Public Library, the YMCA, two Spanish restaurants, and the Geneva Housing Authority's office and four apartment properties. The steering committee made personal visits to churches, Salvation Army, the Community Lunch program and two high school classes.

**Community Information Session:** Held on November 12, 2015, this meeting gave an overview of the planning process, reviewed the community analysis, preliminary survey results, and sustainability and smart growth principles.

**Community Dialogue:** The steering committee worked with a grass-roots group called the Tools for Social Change to develop "The Big Talk in the Little City" dialogues. The talks engaged residents in a collective dialogue through a series of four open-ended questions:

- What public spaces make Geneva feel like home? What public spaces do you use, and which do you avoid?
- What is, or has been, a major housing issue in your time living in Geneva? Or, if you only work in Geneva, what influenced your decision to live elsewhere?
- Tell us about your work experiences in Geneva. What is the story of you and Geneva in terms of work?
- If you woke up tomorrow and Geneva had the most vibrant commercial spaces you can image, what would be the same and what would be different?

The Big Talk consisted of 14 different community dialogues (22 hours and 13 minutes in total) in twelve different locations with over 120 participants and 30 trained volunteers. Almost half of the participants were Hispanic and/or black (including mixed race), and over 2/3 of the participants were women. Two of the dialogues engaged Spanish-speaking residents, with one talk conducted entirely in Spanish and the other conducted bilingually. The dialogues were transcribed and a Hobart and William Smith Colleges professor conducted an analysis.

**Draft plan presentations:** Plan presentation are scheduled to occur in May to City Council, the City Planning Board and the community. The draft plan will be available on the website and hard copies throughout the City. Feedback will be taken for one month. The public hearing will be on June 1, 2016.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>(NYSED/IRS ELA and MA results, Great Schools, School Digger, et al).

<sup>2</sup> In The Blind Side, author Michael Lewis described a professional football field, wherein the strategic deployment of players always comes at some cost: "An NFL football field is a tightly strung economy. Everything on it comes at a price. Take away from one place and you give to another. Three men blocking [Lawrence] Taylor meant two Giants with no one to block them."

# III. PROJECT BENEFIT METRICS REPORT



## Project Benefits Metrics Report

### Section 1: Benefits Overview

The benefit metrics report is for the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Geneva in Ontario County, New York. The following values drive this plan:

- That we are stewards of our special natural setting.
- That our “uniquely urban” character and sense of community are at the core of who we are.
- That our multi-cultural heritage is a point of pride.
- That our arts, architectural and recreational assets are important to us.
- That it is important to keep our economy strong.

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan will signal the commitment of the City to pursue initiatives that build a sustainable land use pattern, a strong housing market and healthy lifestyles for residents.

Initiatives also encourage the municipality and property owners to reduce energy and solid waste consumption through providing options for alternative energy usage; solid waste diversion; and alternative transportation amenities. The plan is oriented toward the goals of the Cleaner, Greener Communities program in that it will encourage initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It also strives to trigger market forces by rebuilding the middle market from both current and potential residents while promoting social equity. These are the primary themes that emerged through the City's comprehensive planning process.

### Section 2: Expected Annual Benefits by Close of CGC Project Period

N/A

### Section 3: Potential for Future and/or Long Term Transformational Benefits

Section 3: Future and Long Term Transformation Benefits				
Type	Metric	by 5 years	by 15 Years	by 30 Years
RPM	GHG Emissions Savings /year	6,577 MTCDE / year	19,263 MTCDE / year	38,587 MTCDE / year
RPM	Total Conventional Energy Savings	87,503 MMBTU	255,737 MMBTU	512,259 MMBTU
RPM	Natural Gas Savings	673,444 therms / year	2,023,258 therms / year	4,049,198 therms / year
RPM	Grid Electricity Savings	3,346,646 KWh / year	10,330,171 KWh / year	20,678,876 KWh / year
RPM	Gasoline Savings	71,520 gallons / year	158,941 gallons / year	321,562 gallons / year
SCM	Vehicle-Miles-Travelled reduced	1,530,536 miles / year	3,401,345 miles / year	6,881,430 miles / year
SCM	Solid Waste Diverted	23,818 tons / year	41,642 tons / year	68,378 tons / year



<b>RPM</b>	Conventional Energy Cost Savings	\$ 3,444,571	\$ 28,322,040	\$ 110,739,960
<b>RPM</b>	Permanent Jobs Created	136	273	636
<b>RPM</b>	NYSERDA CGC Investment (funding requested)	\$50,000	NA	NA
<b>RPM</b>	Investment by Others	\$40,000	TBA	TBA

#### Methods and Assumptions

**Metric 1. GHG Emission Savings:** This report includes GHG emission savings from saved electricity, natural gas, and gasoline (Metrics 3,4, and 5). We use the total annual savings in MWh, Therms, and Gallons as a basis for emission savings. The EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator allows for easy calculation of tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.

Data Source:

- EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html>

**Metric 2. Total Conventional Energy Savings:** This report includes energy savings from residential and non-residential properties and from vehicles. We base the residential estimate on average energy consumption estimates for single-family and multi-family homes by the US Energy Information Administration. A multi-family home uses 34.7 million Btu less in total energy than a single-family home. The final Comprehensive Plan encourages higher-density mixed-use infill development with mixed-income housing, particularly in Downtown Geneva. Implementing these policies leads to an estimated change of 0.5% total residential units from single-family to multi-family. This number includes actual conversions (apartment buildings replacing single-family homes) and newly constructed units based on population projections and stable household sizes.

The non-residential energy savings include savings in electricity and natural gas consumption (Metrics 3 and 4). Converting MWh and Therms into Btu allows for comparison with residential values. For vehicles, we use gasoline savings as a measure for energy savings. Converting gallons of gasoline into Btu allows us for comparison with residential and non-residential property numbers.

**Metric 3. Natural Gas Savings:** NYSEG provides 2013 natural gas use numbers for the City of Geneva that serve as the baseline for calculations. This report includes natural gas savings from residential and non-residential properties. For savings from residential properties, the Comprehensive Plan and other documents such as the City's Site-Based Marketing Concept encourage mixed-income infill development, which would lead to higher densities and an increasing share of multi-family properties. Multi-family units use 27% less electricity on average than single-family units. Again, this PBMR assumes that every year, 0.5% total residential units will change from single-family to multi-family. This number



includes actual conversions (apartment buildings replacing single-family homes) and newly constructed units based on population projections.

For savings in non-residential properties, the City encourages increased energy efficiency through recommendations in a 2010 energy audit and the Plan's promotion of a Building Renovation Task Force. This PBMR assumes that future non-residential development will reach energy efficiency standards comparable to LEED standards; research demonstrates that LEED buildings are 24% more efficient when compared to conventional buildings. Typically, government agencies and insurance companies estimate a useful life for new constructed buildings to be 50 years. Accordingly, this report assumes that every year new construction will replace 2% of the non-residential stock and that this new construction fulfills the stricter efficiency standards.

#### Data Sources:

- Cornell PAD Population Projections: <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/counties/projections.cfm>
- US Census 2009 – 2013 ACS 5-year estimates:  
[http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data\\_documentation/2013\\_release/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/2013_release/)
- New Buildings Institute (2008): Green Building Performance Evaluation.  
[http://newbuildings.org/sites/default/files/MeasuredResultsFromLEED-NC\\_TurnerACEEE2008.pdf](http://newbuildings.org/sites/default/files/MeasuredResultsFromLEED-NC_TurnerACEEE2008.pdf)
- US EIA Residential Energy Consumption Survey:  
<http://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/about.cfm>
- NYSEG Account information City of Geneva

**Metric 4. Grid Electricity Savings:** NYSEG provides 2013 electricity use numbers for the City of Geneva that serve as the baseline for calculations. This report includes electricity savings from residential and non-residential properties. The Comprehensive Plan encourages infill development, which would lead to higher densities and an increasing share of quality multi-family, mixed-income housing units. Multi-family units use 27% less electricity on average than single-family units. We assume that every year, 0.5% total residential units will change from single-family to multi-family. This number includes actual conversions (apartment buildings replacing single-family homes) and newly constructed units based on population projections.

For savings in non-residential properties, the City encourages energy efficiencies through recommendations in the 2010 energy audit and the Plan's promotion of a Building Renovation Task Force. This PBMR assumes that future non-residential development will reach energy efficiency standards comparable to LEED standards; 24% lower than conventional buildings. Typically, government agencies and insurance companies estimate a useful life for new constructed buildings to be 50 years. Accordingly, this report assumes that every year new construction will replace 2% of the non-residential stock and that this new construction fulfills the stricter efficiency standards.

#### Data Sources:

- Cornell PAD Population Projections: <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/counties/projections.cfm>
- US Census 2009 – 2013 ACS 5-year estimates:  
[http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data\\_documentation/2013\\_release/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/2013_release/)
- New Buildings Institute (2008): Green Building Performance Evaluation.  
[http://newbuildings.org/sites/default/files/MeasuredResultsFromLEED-NC\\_TurnerACEEE2008.pdf](http://newbuildings.org/sites/default/files/MeasuredResultsFromLEED-NC_TurnerACEEE2008.pdf)
- US EIA Residential Energy Consumption Survey:  
<http://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/about.cfm>
- NYSEG Account information City of Geneva

#### **Metric 5. Gasoline Savings:**

The Federal Highway Administration estimates the average fuel economy of light duty vehicles at 21.4 mpg. To allow for easier computation, the PBMR maintains this estimate for the 30-year time horizon. Using this value and applying it to the total amount of vehicle-miles-travelled reduced (Metric 6), we can calculate the gasoline savings in gallons.

#### Data Sources:

- Cornell PAD Population Projections: <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/counties/projections.cfm>
- FHWA Fuel Economy Statistics: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2011/vm1.cfm>

**Metric 6. Vehicle-Miles-Travelled Reduced:** The Finger Lakes Regional Sustainability Plan provides a current vehicle-miles-travelled (VMT) estimate that serves as a baseline number. The implementation of the City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan would lead to more compact and mixed-use development patterns, as well as a focus on development of existing corridors. Case studies show that a focus on infill development reduces VMT by around 4%. Since the Comprehensive Plan affects the built form gradually over time, we assume Geneva can reach this 4% reduction for the 30-year horizon, 2% for the 15-year horizon, and 1% for the 5-year horizon.

In addition, Geneva aims to install bicycle infrastructure and encourage biking as a transportation alternative to driving. Currently, only two cities in Upstate New York are bike-friendly communities as designated by the League of American Cyclists: Buffalo and Rochester. The PBMR assumes that Geneva can increase their bike-commuting share to the average of Buffalo and Rochester's current share within the 15-year horizon and improve the share at the same linear rate for the 30-year horizon. This would raise the modal share of biking from currently 0.55% to 1.75% in 30 years. The total decrease in VMT is the sum of the increase in biking and the impact of denser infill development.

Data Sources:

- Cornell PAD Population Projections: <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/counties/projections.cfm>
- US Census 2009 – 2013 ACS 5-year estimates:  
[http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data\\_documentation/2013\\_release/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/2013_release/)
- EPA (2007): Measuring the Air Quality and Transportation Impacts of Infill Development.  
[http://epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/transp\\_impacts\\_infill.pdf](http://epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/transp_impacts_infill.pdf)

**Metric 7: Solid Waste Diverted:**

The Ontario County Solid Waste Management Plan shows that Geneva currently diverts 11.5% of their solid waste from landfills, about 15,000 tons annually. The City assumes additional potential of about 9,000 tons within the next three years. The PBMR assumes that Geneva could accomplish this goal within the 5-year horizon and maintain this pace at a linear growth rate of 9,000 per 5-year interval.

Data Sources:

- Ontario County Solid Waste Management Plan:  
<http://www.co.ontario.ny.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/837>
- City of Geneva Engineering

**Metric 8. Conventional Energy Cost Savings:**

This report estimates conventional energy savings for electricity, for natural gas, and for gasoline (Metrics 3, 4, and 5). NYSERDA provides energy prices for the Upstate region. The PBMR uses the past 12 months of data available and created an average price to eliminate seasonal influences. For electricity and natural gas the report used the monthly data for February 2014 – January 2015. For gasoline, the analysis utilizes monthly data for April 2014 – March 2015. Residential, commercial, and industrial customers pay different rates for natural gas and electricity. For these two measures, the analysis created a weighted average price using the current usage of residential, commercial, and industrial customers in Geneva. The energy savings estimated in Metrics 3, 4 and 5 multiplied by this average unit price provides the conventional energy cost savings.

The total conventional energy cost savings are the accumulated savings up to the time horizon. The 30-year number describes all savings occurring in the 30 years to that date. All values are in 2014-dollar values; this report does not use different dollar time values.

Data sources:

- NYSERDA energy prices: <http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Cleantech-and-Innovation/Energy-Prices/>

#### **Metric 9. Permanent Jobs Created:**

Although it is difficult to foresee the extent to which the business community will respond to the goals and actions of the Comprehensive Plan, it is possible to estimate the number of full-time jobs that could be created based on infill office development and buildout of the industrial parks. Based on the potential manufacturing space in the Tech Farm and Industrial Park of up to 350,000 square feet, assuming that the buildout would create 1 job per 550 square feet of manufacturing area, the project could result in up to 636 new jobs. This is a conservative estimates from Nelson, Arthur C. 2004 planner's estimating guide.

#### **Metric 10. NYSERDA CGC Investment:**

This metric describes the grant money awarded to the City of Geneva.

#### **Metric 11. Investment by Others:**

This metric currently describes the additional matching investment by the City of Geneva (\$20,000), the Geneva Local Development Corporation (\$10,000), and the Geneva Industrial Development Agency (\$10,000). Once the City adopts the Comprehensive Plan, we expect additional investment in the form of future grants and private sector activity.

### **Section 4: Projected Impact on Regional and Local Sustainability Indicators**

Section 4: Potential to Impact Regional and Local Sustainability Indicators				
	Indicator	In RSP?	Baseline (if known)	Brief one-line description of impact
Energy	Regional energy consumption per capita	Yes	186 MMBtu (2010 regional)	Decrease by 37 MMBTU
	Total installed renewable energy	Yes	3,495,768 MMBtu (2010 regionally)	Increase through education initiatives and municipal investments
Transportation	Total percentage of people commuting via walking, biking, transit and carpooling	Yes	15% (2010 regionally)	Increase to 20%
	Vehicles miles traveled per capita	Yes	9,472 (2010 regionally)	Decrease by 5%
Land Use and Livable Communities	Rate of poverty in population centers	Yes	22% (2010 regionally)	Decrease by increasing access to jobs through transportation and land use policies
	Proportion of residents living in existing population centers	Yes	36% (2010 regionally)	Maintain by making Geneva a desirable place to live in
Materials and Waste	Solid waste diverted (not landfilled)	Yes	Data not available	Increase current levels fourfold



Management	or exported) (per capita)			
Economic Development	Housing + Transportation Affordability Index	Yes	52% (2010 regionally)	Decrease by reducing transportation cost.

#### **Indicator 1. Regional Energy Consumption per Capita:**

In Section 3, Metric 2, this report provided the total energy savings for a 30-year time horizon. The projected 7,995,200 MMBTU are a cumulative value for 30 years. The value for the 30<sup>th</sup> year only is 516,547 MMBTU.

Cornell PAD predicts moderate population growth for Ontario County, resulting in a population of 115,709 in 2040. We use this value as the 30-year-horizon population. To predict the 30-year-horizon population for the City of Geneva, we calculate the growth rate for the county and apply that number to the Geneva base population, resulting in 13,998 residents. The total energy savings divided by the 30-year-horizon population is 36.9 MMBTU per capita.

#### **Indicator 2. Total installed renewable energy:**

The City of Geneva plans to increase the amount of total installed renewable energy. Through the Comprehensive Plan, the City states its commitment to the environment and renewal energy in particular.

As part of its 2010 energy audit, the City documented baseline information about energy use in local government buildings. The City made improvements to make its buildings more energy efficient at that time and also established a financing mechanism for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in public buildings.

#### **Indicator 3. Total percentage of people commuting via walking, biking, transit and carpooling:**

In Section 3, Metric 6, this report provides an estimate for reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). We predict total VMT savings of 5.2%; 4% through changes in land use patterns and 1.2% through expanding bike infrastructure. An increase in using alternative transportation modes of about 5 percentage points would increase the percentage of people commuting via walking, biking, transit, and carpooling to about 20%.

#### **Indicator 4. Vehicle miles traveled per capita:**

In Section 3, Metric 6, this report provides an estimate for total savings in VMT. The 6,881,430 miles divided by a 30-year-horizon population of 13,998 (see Indicator 1) would lead to savings of 492 miles per capita or a decrease by 5%.

#### **Indicator 5. Rate of poverty in population centers:**

Research shows that job access is a strong factor of poverty. The Spatial-Mismatch hypothesis argues that in places where job opportunities are close to high-poverty neighborhoods, poor residents can improve their situation easier and poverty rates remain lower. The City's Comprehensive Plan encourages economic development in already developed areas using infill and mixed-use strategies. In addition, the City plans to extend bicycle infrastructure, improving low-cost access to job opportunities. Therefore, this report anticipates a decrease in the overall poverty rate.

Data Source:

- Teitz, M. & Chapple, K. (1998): The Causes of Inner City Poverty: Eight Hypotheses in Search of Reality. In: *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*. Volume 3, Number 3. <http://www.huduser.org/periodicals/cityscpe/vol3num3/article3.pdf>

#### **Indicator 6. Proportion of residents living in existing population centers:**

In past decades, the Finger Lakes Region experienced growth predominately in its rural and suburban areas. The Comprehensive Plan aspires to position Geneva as an economically successful and desirable community that attracts new residents. If Geneva is an attractive urban alternative, it will help stabilize the region's proportion of residents living in existing population centers.

#### **Indicator 7. Solid waste diverted (not landfilled or exported) (per capita):**

Currently, the City of Geneva diverts 11.5% of its solid waste from landfills. In Section 3, Metric 7, this report assumes the City will increase that rate fourfold to a total value of 68,378 tons per year. For a 30-year-horizon population of 13,998 residents, we project a reduction of 4.9 tons of solid waste per capita per year.

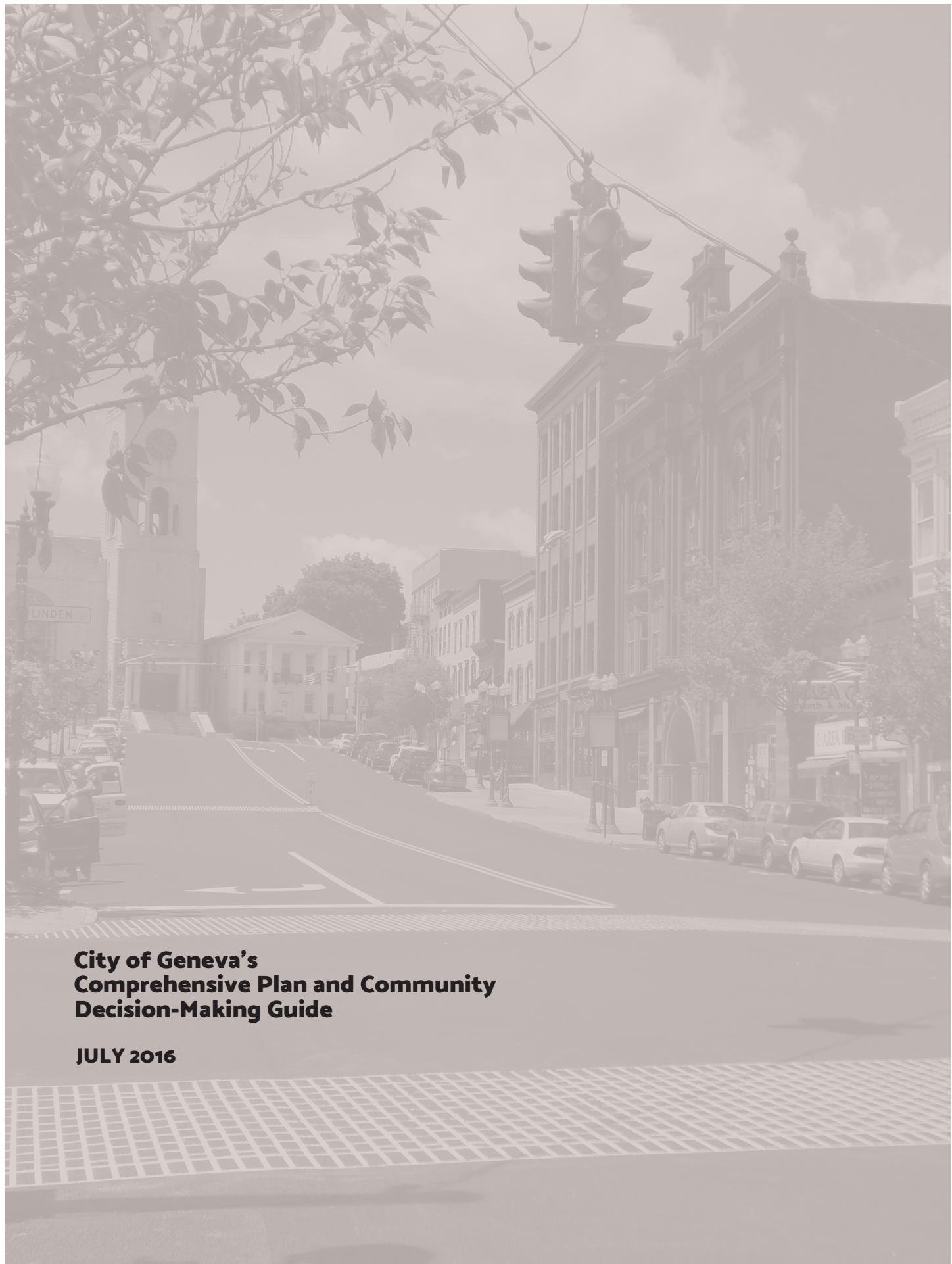
#### **Indicator 8. Housing + Transportation Affordability Index:**

In Section 3, Metric 6, this report assumes a reduction in vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) by about 5.2%. The AAA assumes an average cost of 59.2 cents per mile for an average-sized sedan. Using the baseline value of 9,472 VMT per capita, a 5.2% reduction leads to transportation savings of \$292 per capita.

The impact of changes in land use patterns is difficult to foresee. On the one hand, encouraging infill development will lead to more residents living in apartment buildings, which typically have a lower utility cost. On the other hand, infill development is about 30% more expensive to build than comparable development in greenfield locations.

Data Sources:

- AAA Cost of Driving study results:  
<http://www.huduser.org/periodicals/cityscpe/vol3num3/article3.pdf>
- The Center for Livable Communities. A Local Government Commission Initiative (2001): A Policymaker's Guide to Infill Development.  
[http://lgc.org/wordpress/docs/freepub/community\\_design/guides/blc\\_infill\\_dev\\_guidebook\\_2001.pdf](http://lgc.org/wordpress/docs/freepub/community_design/guides/blc_infill_dev_guidebook_2001.pdf)
- US EIA Residential Energy Consumption Survey:  
<http://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/about.cfm>



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Comprehensive Plan and Community  
Decision-Making Guide**

**JULY 2016**