



GUILDERLAND HAMLET NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



Prepared for:

Town of Guilderland

Capital District Transportation Committee

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Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan Is...

This community planning effort addresses land use, design, and transportation issues for the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood. It is intended that through this planning process, consensus will be established on the community's long-term vision and a strategy for enhancement of the neighborhood will be set in motion. The project is an implementation action recommended in the town's 2001 Comprehensive Plan. As described in the Comprehensive Plan (page IV-8), the objective is to create a neighborhood Master Plan that addresses access management, pedestrian facilities, streetscape improvements, natural/scenic topographic features, environmental features, architectural/site design and mixed uses.

The project was funded by the Town of Guilderland with the assistance of a grant from the Capital District Transportation Committee's Linkage planning program. A diverse group of stakeholders was designated as an advisory committee to oversee development of the plan and management of consultants during the study period. The committee included representatives from the Town of Guilderland Planning Department, Planning Board, Economic Development, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the New York State Department of Transportation, and the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Association.

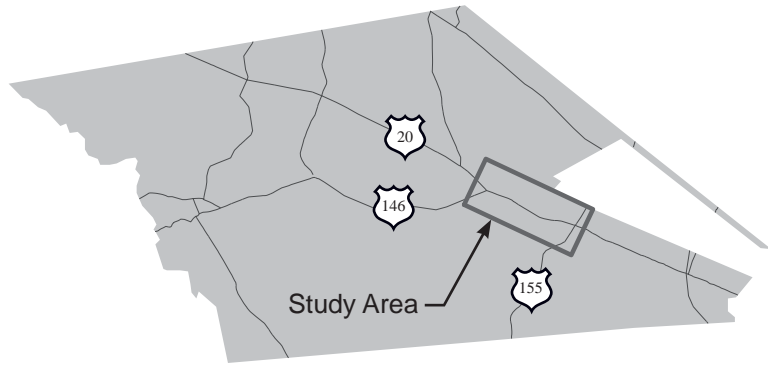
In addition to the participation of the advisory committee, general community involvement was achieved through two public outreach sessions. At the first session, held on May 4th, 2006, consultants presented a vision for the future and concepts for re-development and enhancement of the area. During the 2 and 1/2 hour workshop participants "rolled up their sleeves" and discussed trail and road connections, land uses, and concepts for development and conservation within the hamlet. At the second public outreach event, held on October 19th, consultants presented the draft recommendations and listened to comments and suggestions from participants to improve the plan.



Participants at the draft plan presentation at the Guilderland Elementary School in October, 2006

The Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan Study Area Is...

The Guilderland Hamlet study area covers a large section of town between Route 155 in the east and Route 146 to the west. The hamlet is bisected by New York State Route 20 (Western Turnpike) which was originally the primary connection between Albany and the towns and villages of central New York. Today, Route 20 is a busy, mixed-use corridor serving as an east-west commuter route tying Guilderland and western Albany County to the City of Albany.



Study Area Location within the Town of Guilderland, NY.

There are a number of important civic and cultural resources located within the hamlet including schools, the library, Guilderland Fire Station, the YMCA, and several historic structures which help establish the hamlet as an important community center. In addition, two golf courses, active farmland properties, and a variety of parks and open space including the Pine Bush Preserve provide a break in the urbanized landscape and contribute to the unique character of the hamlet.



Guilderland Fire Station on Route 20 in the study area

East of the study area, Route 20 is a highly developed mix of strip malls, offices, small commercial shops, and larger retail complexes, including Crossgates Mall. To the west of the hamlet, this main thoroughfare is less intensely developed and characterized by a mix of small- and medium-scale commercial establishments. The western edge of the study area (vicinity of Route 20 and Route 146) can loosely be considered the beginning of "rural Guilderland" – particularly along Route 146 traveling towards Altamont. This plan and the neighborhood vision statement recognize the important role that the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood plays as Route 20 transitions from an urban to rural character.

2. GUILDERLAND HAMLET VISION

A vision statement is a consensus-building tool used to represent a community's desired or utopian goals for the future. The vision is also more tangibly used to guide the development of specific planning strategies and recommendations as well as to measure implementation and overall program effectiveness.

The Guilderland Hamlet Vision is based on an accumulation of the entire planning process, including public outreach and workshops, advisory committee discussions, a review and analysis of existing conditions and trends, interviews with staff, landowners, and key stakeholders, and consultant synthesis of ideas and information. The vision statement and associated vision map represent a summary of plan concepts for the hamlet and a target by which to measure implementation and success.

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Vision

The Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood is a true community center for the town and includes the diverse elements of history, cultural and civic resources, pedestrian linkages, a comprehensive green infrastructure system, commerce, and pleasant residential neighborhoods.

The neighborhood's history is celebrated through continued identification and sensitive reuse of historic resources, development that corresponds to the area's context and design precedent, and landscaping and streetscape elements that enhance the built environment.

The hamlet is strengthened by a diversity of community resources and amenities, including the Library, schools and town parks, YMCA, and range of housing and employment opportunities.

A "green infrastructure" network is recognized and provides an interconnected system of open space, agriculture, and recreation. The backbone of this system is made up of the town parks and athletic fields, the Normanskill and Kaikout Kill, the hamlet's unique topography, its active farm operations, and the Pine Bush Preserve.

These and other area resources are connected by a system of linkages including sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use trails, foot paths, and

bicycle lanes that provide for a safe bicycle and pedestrian network for the community.

Automobile travel in the hamlet is improved through inter-connections, while traffic calming and access management strategies limit conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians and improve overall safety.

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Plan – Vision Map:

The vision map summarizes plan’s primary elements and recommendations related to the Green Infrastructure Network, Connectivity, and Placemaking within the Hamlet. The graphic highlights the main principles and concepts used in guiding recommendations and strategies in this plan. While specific actions for implementation are detailed throughout the plan, this image presents a conceptual summary of connectivity, conservation and placemaking – the three elements comprising the vision graphic.

- Green Infrastructure Network: Interconnected system of natural resources, streams and creeks, parks, agricultural areas, and preserves.
- Connectivity and Linkages: Network of bicycle and pedestrian amenities.
- Character Areas: Opportunities for placemaking, development and re-development tied together by a consistent hamlet theme.

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan Vision Map

Green Infrastructure Network

Interconnected system of natural resources, streams and creeks, parks, agricultural areas, and preserves

Connectivity and Linkages

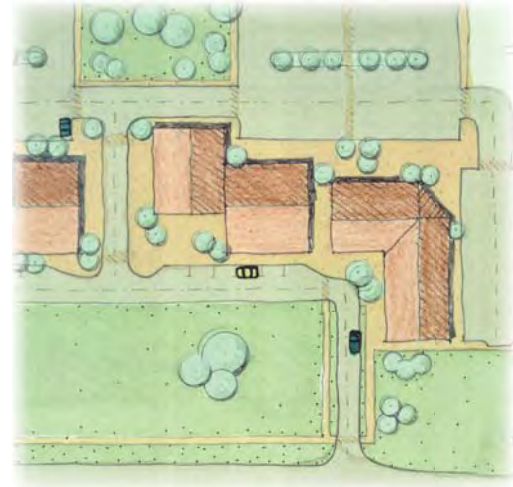
Network of bicycle and pedestrian amenities

Character Areas

Opportunities for placemaking, development and re-development tied together by a consistent hamlet theme



POTENTIAL WILLOW STREET INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS



POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT IN WESTERN GATEWAY AREA



Pine Bush Preserve

Agriculture

Hunger Kill

Kaikou Kill

WESTERN GATEWAY

HISTORIC HAMLET

Guilderland Elementary School

Prospect Hill Cemetery

EASTERN GATEWAY

Library

CENTRAL HAMLET

YMCA

Hiawatha Golf Course

Guilderland Middle School

Town Golf Course

Agriculture

Tawasentha Park

Normans Kill

NOTT ROAD

Nott Road Park

FOUNDRY ROAD

WINDING BROOK ROAD

ROUTE 155

ROUTE 20

ROUTE 146

3. LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This section of the report provides recommendations and detail for Land Use and Transportation/Mobility components of the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood.

Strategies detail concepts related to enhancing the hamlet in terms of:

- linkages and connectivity for automobiles and non-motorized travel;
- roadway safety, streetscape, and landscaping;
- desired land uses;
- design concepts and characteristics
- environmental protection and conservation; and
- re-use and re-development opportunities.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Character Areas:

In order to discuss and analyze the study area in more detail, the hamlet was broken down into four conceptual segments related to changes in character along Route 20 – the Eastern Gateway, Central Hamlet, Historic Guilderland, and the Western Gateway. General issues and recommendations related to overall character, transportation and pedestrian amenities, land use and development trends, and design for each segment are briefly described in the following pages.

The graphic below is a conceptualization of the different character areas in the hamlet. The eastern gateway is in the vicinity of Route 20 and 155; central gateway is near Winding Brook Drive; historic hamlet is at Willow Street; and the western gateway is the vicinity of Route 146 and Route 20.



EASTERN GATEWAY

Existing Conditions

The intersection of Route 20 and Route 155 (New Karner Road) serves as the eastern edge of the study area and entrance to the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood. The Eastern Gateway is the most intensely developed section of the hamlet and includes the Star Plaza, 20 Mall and Price Chopper, the recently constructed Walgreen's, as well as large residential developments (Regency Park Apartments and Brandywine Apartments). Overall, there are limited options for new construction as most of the land in the Eastern Gateway is already developed. However, as the Walgreen's project demonstrates, there may be opportunities for re-development and infill. (The Walgreen's replaced five smaller structures that had been converted from residential to small commercial operations.)



Recent development in the Eastern Gateway.

Overall, the Eastern Gateway suffers from a lack of pedestrian resources and amenities and an excess of “hardscape.” There are only a few properties with sidewalks, most of which do not connect to adjacent lots, nor are they part of an overall system. Further, the



“Hardscape” in the Eastern Gateway.

level of pavement, including parking lots and maintenance strips without landscaping, contributes to an unpleasant hamlet gateway and a poor pedestrian environment. *Note: the Planning Board is requiring enhanced landscaping and sidewalks for all projects that pass through the site planning process. This will help to soften the gateway hardscape and improve the pedestrian resources here.*

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan

Recommendations

Future development at the Eastern Gateway should be consistent with the overall Guilderland Hamlet concept – tying into the area’s history and the overall neighborhood vision. As the Eastern Gateway is generally built-out, the majority of future development will be in the form of re-use and renewal (such as the Walgreen’s example), and major change or enhancement of this area will require significant private investment.

- No major land use changes are recommended at this time. However, if significant re-development of the shopping centers along Route 20 occurs or is proposed, there is the potential to establish a traditional “hamlet-style” pattern. For example, the Glass Works Village PUD concept could be used as a model for this type of re-use.
- In the absence of major renewal or re-development project, the town Planning Board should continue to work with property owners looking to expand or modify existing sites, and encourage enhanced landscaping and pedestrian amenities along Route 20 consistent with this plan (*please see the transportation section for specific sidewalk and landscaping recommendations*).

CENTRAL HAMLET: CIVIC AND COMMUNITY CENTER

Existing Conditions

Along Route 20 to the west, the character of the neighborhood slowly changes from suburban strip to a more open and wooded environment. At Winding Brook Drive, there is a cluster of community and civic amenities including the YMCA, Guilderland Library, Guilderland Elementary School, the Pine Bush Preserve and Nott Road Town Park, health/medical buildings associated with Mercy Care and SPARC and the Fairwood Apartments to the south. In general, these land uses are spread out in a suburban pattern and not well-connected internally for pedestrians or to surrounding neighborhoods. (*Note: transportation elements related to this area are discussed in the transportation section of the report.*)



YMCA on Winding Brook Drive in the Central Hamlet.

Proposals already approved, such as the assisted living facility on Mercy Care Lane (approved for approximately 80 beds), or currently under review (Glass Works Village PUD) will alter the existing character of this area and Winding Brook Drive in particular. While the Central Hamlet will become more intensely developed on the south side of Route 20, these projects present an excellent opportunity to tie together the various community amenities and establish a model for “hamlet-style” development for the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood and other areas of town. The proposed Glass Works project, currently in the town’s preliminary review stages, is based in the principles of the New Urbanism and would include over 200 residential units and approximately 200,000 square feet of commercial space in a traditional hamlet pattern. The project would serve as a link between the Library, YMCA, elementary school and other civic resources and enhance the overall walkability of the area.

Recommendations

The town should continue working with landowners and developers to take advantage of existing resources, planned improvements, and future development to establish a genuine community center for the hamlet and the town. The Central Hamlet is already home to a number of important community resources – the library, schools, YMCA, Pine Bush Preserve – and future development should serve to connect these elements, creating a walkable, community center for the hamlet. Land use recommendations include:

- Maintain the existing land use pattern of LB and BN-RP use types. For example, do not allow auto-related uses such as gas stations or other uses that would detract from a walkable, traditional hamlet (e.g., industrial, big-box centers, self-storage, etc.).
- Ensure that future development is reflective of the style and patterns of the Historic Guilderland Hamlet.
- Consider ways to utilize the Glass Works Village PUD as a model for future development in the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood. Development adjacent or nearby to the Glass Works site should adhere to the standards and quality set out for this proposed new hamlet and town center.
- Connectivity will be the key to successful establishment of a great place – throughout the study area – but particularly within the central hamlet area of Winding Brook and Mercy Care Lane. The town should promote multi-modal connectivity through a network of sidewalks, trails, and multi-use paths that link neighborhoods to community resources and shopping areas.
- Maintain and expand public and private open spaces in the central hamlet. Continue to reach out to property owners interested in conservation,

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan

including the Hiawatha Golf Course and the various active farmland properties in the neighborhood.

- Utilize the town's open space zoning district/ designation to recognize the various, existing open areas already within the hamlet. There are a number of parcels along the north side of Route 20 which have been purchased by the Nature Conservancy for inclusion within the Pine Bush Preserve. However, the zoning remains residential (R-15 and R-40). While the parcels are restricted by conservation easements and protections associated with the preserve, designation as open space on the zoning map would give an additional layer of protection and local recognition. Further, identifying these lands on the map would help property owners in the vicinity understand the town's land use pattern and the future development potential of the area. Overall, this would provide a level of certainty and coordination between the zoning ordinance and map and the various conservation efforts being undertaken within the town.

In the future, as the town acquires land for conservation or parkland, the open space designation could be utilized to recognize the desired future use of the property. Further, with some simple modifications, the district could be expanded to recognize other quasi-open space resources such as public schools and municipal facilities such as the Guilderland Elementary School and the Knott Road Sewage Treatment Plant

The Recommended Land Use Map highlights specific parcels for designation as Open Space (per the town's zoning ordinance) as well as the community service/public facility lands. Note, these "quasi-open space" parcels are listed as Community Service (CS). This designation could be established as a new zoning district or the existing OS district could be expanded to include municipal or public education facilities.

Town of Guilderland

HISTORIC HAMILTON: GUILDERLAND'S HISTORIC RENAISSANCE

Existing Conditions

The historic Guilderland Hamlet, originally known as Hamilton, is located to the west in the general vicinity of the intersection of Willow/Foundry and Route 20. The hamlet was developed in the late 1700s around the Glass Works facility which took advantage of the water power from the Hunger Kill and the area's abundant sand and wood resources to make glass products.

Several nationally-designated historic structures and sites are found along Route 20 here, including the John Schoolcraft House and the Hamilton Union Church and Rectory, Rose Hill, as well as the Albany Glass Works Site on Foundry Road.

The area has a traditional layout and built form that is reminiscent of hamlets and villages developed early in the town's history. Characteristics of this style include generally small structures (compared with today's homes and commercial buildings) located close to the roadway laid out over a grid-like street pattern. The single-family homes along Willow, Hamilton, and Schoolcraft Streets make up a pleasant residential neighborhood. However, residents have decried the amount of thru-traffic along Willow Street as well as the limited amount of pedestrian amenities and facilities in the area (there are no sidewalks connecting the neighborhood internally or along Route 20).

A number of the structures directly along Route 20 in the Historic Hamlet, particularly on the south side of the road, are under-utilized, ill-maintained, and generally do not



Historic view of Route 20 in "Hamilton" now known as Guilderland Hamlet.



Existing character of Route 20 in the Guilderland Hamlet near Willow Street.

contribute to the historic qualities of the hamlet. Furthermore, heavy traffic volumes along Route 20, zoning regulations, environmental constraints and shallow lots limit opportunities for re-use, expansion, or enhancement of these properties.

Recommendations

The Historic Hamlet is an important element of what makes Guilderland a special and unique place. From the area's historic buildings and sites such as the Schoolcraft House, the pleasant residential neighborhood along Willow, Schoolcraft, and Hamilton Streets, to the surrounding agricultural lands, creeks, and preserves, the hamlet represents a special pattern and style of development. The neighborhood's basic characteristics – interconnectivity, walkable streets, and mixed uses – are commonly-stated principles of good design among planning professionals and can be a model for development elsewhere in the hamlet and town. Primary land use recommendations for the Historic Hamlet include:

- In general, re-use and renewal should be consistent with the existing traditional neighborhood pattern, scale, and design concept.
- Establish a traditional neighborhood / hamlet zoning district. The area and bulk regulations for the LB and BN-RP districts are typical suburban standards and restrict hamlet-style development. A new zoning district should be established to encourage new development that is consistent with traditional neighborhoods. Specific elements could include smaller setbacks to the road, minimized parking requirements, parking allocated to the rear of structures, and design standards. In addition, the commercial zoning area could be expanded to the south along Foundry and west along Route 20.
- In general, new residential uses should not be located directly along the Route 20 roadside.
- Maintain the surrounding area as a greenbelt. Currently, the neighborhood is surrounded by the Pine Bush Preserve to the east and north, and the Hunger Kill, and farmland/agricultural uses to the south and west. The town should consider conservation alternatives for the farm just south of the intersection along Foundry Road (adjacent to the town's golf course). In addition residents expressed a desire to see the Glass Pond restored.



Historic Schoolcraft House built circa 1840.

WESTERN GATEWAY: TRANSITION TO RURAL GUILDERLAND

Existing Conditions

The western gateway serves as a transition to and from rural Guilderland, and includes a mix of medium scaled commercial structures (a few of which are currently vacant), undeveloped properties, the town-owned Western Turnpike Golf Course, farmland, and some small-scale retail.



Gade Farm retail store in the Western Gateway.

The intersection of Route 20 and Route 146 serves as the western boundary of the study area and is characterized by some low density commercial operations (Stewart's and Valvoline Oil Change shop), and the Gade Farm and farm stand. A vacant parcel is located on the south-east side of the intersection and is often used as an informal parking lot for trucks. Further to the south along Route 146 the Tawasentha Town Park provides active and passive recreation opportunities such as tennis, basketball, walking trails, and picnic areas. Primary issues facing the western gateway are:

- o encouraging renewal and reuse of the under-utilized and abandoned structures and lots;
- o ensuring coordinated development of roadside properties;
- o retaining "a sense of transition" to rural Guilderland; and
- o establishing pedestrian connections to the rest of the hamlet and community resources in the area.

Recommendations

Promote re-development of this area that recognizes the change in western Guilderland's character. Recommendations and alternatives to encourage the re-use of these areas:

- Expand the depth of commercial zoning along the north side of Route 20. For most of these parcels, the depth of the commercial



Redevelopment of the former Bumblebee Diner site should be coordinated with surrounding properties.

zoning boundary from the street is approximately 250 feet. In some cases, where lots are deeper and not encumbered by significant constraints, expansion of the commercial districts could allow for a more feasible re-development project and bigger investment.

- Ensure that future development in this area is coordinated to enhance safety (e.g., shared access roads) and to reflect a high quality of design (e.g., consistent landscaping and signage, architectural styles, etc.) reflective of the Country Hamlet concept.
- Work with property owners to identify ways to maintain and promote the agricultural operations in this area of the hamlet.
- Consider the south-east corner lot at the intersection of 146 and Route 20 for integration into the golf course, landscaped open space, or for improvements to the intersection as a roundabout (see transportation recommendations for this area).

General Zoning Recommendations for Route 20 and the Hamlet

The recommended Land Use Plan summarizes the land use recommendations for each character area, as well as the major planning and zoning recommendations. The map can be used by the town to guide local policy related to growth and development in the hamlet. In general, these concepts are framed by the following objectives:

- recognize and assess the existing patterns of development;
- establish a long-term land use plan and associated zoning recommendations;
- recognize existing and potential conservation resources;
- promote re-development and re-use of under-utilized sites; and
- ensure that future development is consistent with the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Vision

Maintain General Zoning Scheme for Hamlet:

The existing land use pattern and overall zoning scheme within the hamlet is appropriate and should be maintained. Major, large-scale retail and service outlets are located at the eastern gateway in the vicinity of the 20 Mall (Price Chopper, three large chain drug stores, Gold's Gym, etc). To the west along Route 20, the central and historic sections of the hamlet are at a smaller scale, and in many cases, reflective of the style of development typical of the earlier history of the town. In these areas, the use-types associated with the LB and BN-RP districts provide for an appropriate diversity of commercial operations.

Recognize the unique characteristics of each area of the neighborhood:

The existing conditions, land characteristics, historic development patterns, and vision for each character area should be recognized in the zoning ordinance. In particular, zoning requirements for the Historic Hamlet (Willow/Foundry/Route 20) should be updated to reflect the desired vision for this area through creation of a traditional hamlet zone.

Maintain natural breaks

Due to the amount of sensitive environmental areas and resources such as the area's numerous creeks and ravines, proximity to the Pine Bush Preserve, and location of town park resources, a significant portion of the hamlet will remain undeveloped. These undeveloped areas provide pleasant breaks in the urbanized landscape and opportunities for passive and active recreation, as well as numerous ecological benefits.



Breaks in development, such as between Hamilton Street and the Wester Gateway contribute to the quality of the area.

The town's regulations protecting stream corridors (100') and steep slope areas and ravines (angle of repose) have proven to be effective tools in maintaining these resources.

Modernize Commercial Zoning Districts

As mentioned previously, with the exception of the Historic Hamlet area, the overall commercial zoning pattern (the LB, BN-RP, and GB zoning districts) should be maintained and the existing districts do not require major modifications. However, the districts were created a number of years ago and should be reviewed and updated to reflect modern use types and area requirements. There are a number of "administrative-type" modifications that would help simplify and clarify the town's LB, BN-RP and GB zoning districts. Recommendations are described in the bullets below.

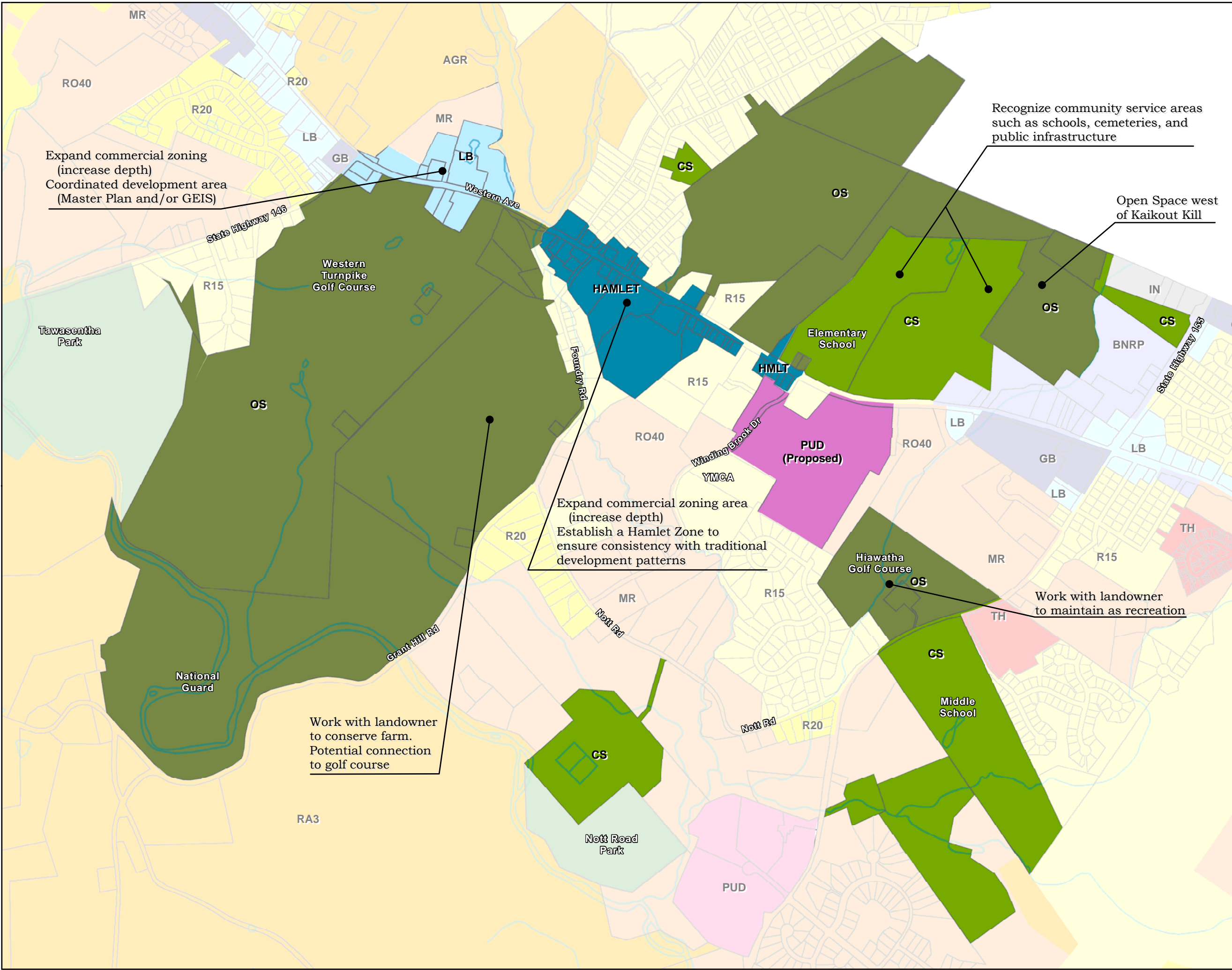
- Establish broad, but well-defined use types rather than listing individual businesses. For example, within the BNRP, there are a number of office-type uses listed (attorney offices, veterinary offices, medical offices, etc. which could be consolidated under one definition "General Office."

Sample definition for General Office: Provide direct services to consumers such as insurance agencies, real estate offices, travel agencies and similar businesses. In addition, this includes attorneys and other professional office uses such as architects, engineers, planners and other similar types of executive or professional establishments. This use does not include banks or warehouse or storage areas.

- Conduct a general clean-up of the commercial districts.
 - o Re-visit setback and parking standards. Specifically, the Planning Board should be empowered to minimize parking lot surface area and require or incentivize pervious paving techniques.
 - o Eliminate duplicate references. For example, all BN-RP uses are allowed in the LB district. Uses that are specifically listed within the BN-RP district do not have to be listed again in the LB and can be removed (e.g., Barber and beauty shops).
 - o Revisit specific use types and establish definitions or eliminate them altogether. Some uses may no longer have relevance and should be removed or defined for clarity. Specific examples include:
 - *mail order sales* (BN-RP District use #13);
 - *convenient food stores, new shops and drug stores* (LB district use #5);
 - *Special requirements for inns* (LB District, section J). The use classification for “inn” does not exist within the LB district. If “inn” is an appropriate use with special conditions, it should be listed in the use table. If it is not appropriate for the LB district, these conditions should be removed or moved to a district where the use type “inn” is allowed.

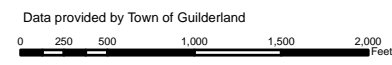


Guilderland Hamlet Proposed Land Use Plan & Zoning Recommendations



ZONING DISTRICTS New/Revised

- Hamlet (HMLT)
- LB
- CS: Community Service
- OS: Open Space
- PUD (Proposed)



TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This section of the report describes recommended enhancements to the hamlet's transportation system. Strategies focus on promoting "connectivity" for both motorized and non-motorized travel, linking neighborhoods with community resources such as parks and commercial areas, and enhancing the overall safety and quality of the transportation system. Recommendations are summarized on the Transportation Improvement Concepts Map at the end of this section.

U.S. Route 20 (Western Avenue) is a principal arterial extending in an east-west direction through the Guilderland Hamlet area connecting the City of Albany and points east, with Schenectady County to the west and beyond.

Within the Hamlet, Route 20 provides two travel lanes in each direction and accommodates approximately 30,000 vehicles per day. The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour. The function of this facility as an arterial needs to be balanced with the character of the area and the need for improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations within the Hamlet.

At present, the nearly 2-mile stretch of Route 20 between Route 146 and Route 155 lacks sidewalks, with the exception of a few short segments near the library, west of Route 155, and east of Hamilton Street. There are good pedestrian accommodations outside the study area with a continuous sidewalk system along Route 20 in both directions. One of the primary transportation needs within the Guilderland Hamlet area is the provision of a continuous sidewalk along Route 20, with ample provisions for pedestrian crossings at major intersections.

While Route 20 is designated as State Bike Route 5, provisions for bicyclists vary throughout the corridor. For example, some sections, such as the south side of Route 20 west of Foundry Road, have little shoulder with the curb in close proximity to the travel lane. Other sections provide shoulders of variable width, "shared roadway" bicycle signs, and some dedicated bicycle lanes. Bike lanes exist along the north side of Route 20 west of the 20 Mall and along the south side of Route 20 east of Foundry Road.



State Bike Route 5 along Route 20 through Guilderland.

Beyond the Route 20 corridor, Willow Street and Foundry Road function as collector facilities channeling traffic from nearby neighborhoods to and from Route 20. Roadside development is residential and no pedestrian accommodations are provided. The daily traffic volumes on Foundry Road are approximately 1600 vehicles per day. Willow Street volumes are estimated to be on the order of 3500 vehicles per day. The traffic volumes, lack of sidewalks and residential density along Willow Street are in conflict, and improved pedestrian accommodations are needed. The recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle connections, intersection improvements, and roadway improvements within the study area are described below. A discussion of estimated costs is included at the end of this section.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CONNECTIONS

Recommendations for non-motorized connectivity in this plan are based on the Pathways Master Plan prepared by the Guilderland Pathways Committee (Sept. 2005). Additional public outreach, field research, and analysis was conducted to refine these strategies, consider alternatives, feasibility issues, and develop cost estimates.

Sidewalks

The highest priority for pedestrian connectivity in the study is to construct sidewalks along Route 20. Short sections of sidewalk exist on Route 20 near the library, west of Route 155, and east of Hamilton Street. However, the majority of Route 20 within the study area lacks a safe pedestrian walkway. Field evaluations of Route 20 indicate that a sidewalk is feasible on the southern side of the road for the entire length of the corridor. On the north side of the road, a sidewalk



The area in front of the library is on of the few spots along Route 20 with sidewalks.



Willow Street is a busy connection to Route 20 in need of pedestrian facilities.

should be constructed from Route 146 to the “Bumblebee” area and from Willow Street to Winding Brook Drive. Providing sidewalks on the remaining sections on the north side of the road is considered less feasible due to water and steep slopes. The recommended sidewalk sections, along with safe pedestrian crossing accommodations, will connect the primary pedestrian destinations within the corridor.

The other high priority location for a new sidewalk is along one side of Willow Street. The lack of sidewalks, combined with moderate traffic volumes and narrow right-of-way create an unsafe condition for pedestrians. Willow Street provides access to a number of residential streets as well as the Albany Pine Bush, making this a highly desirable location for a sidewalk. Due to the narrow right-of-way and the location of homes close to the road, a sidewalk is recommended only on the west side of Willow Street. During public outreach sessions, residents expressed concern with the impacts of sidewalks to the front yard areas of homes, maintenance including snow clearing, and liability. Workshop participants suggested a survey of property owners be conducted to determine the desirability of sidewalks along Willow Street.

Sidewalks are also recommended on both sides of Winding Brook Drive from Route 20 to the YMCA and along the east side of Route 146 from Route 20 to Tawasentha Park. The total length of proposed sidewalks is approximately five miles.

Footpaths and multiuse paths

Footpaths and multiuse paths are also recommended to increase connectivity throughout the study area. Footpaths are recommended along the northern edge of the public golf course connecting Route 146 to Foundry Road and along the Normans Kill from Tawasentha Park to Nott Road Park. Footpaths could also connect the Pine Bush to Route 20 and to the Willow Street area. The footpaths will provide off-road connections only for pedestrians, while multiuse paths are paved and accommodate “wheeled” uses such as bicyclists, in-line skates, and strollers. Multiuse paths are recommended along Winding Brook Drive from Nott Road to the YMCA, and along Nott Road from Route 155 to Winding Brook Drive (providing access to Nott Road Park).

The total length of proposed multiuse paths is approximately 1.5 miles. The total length of proposed footpaths is approximately 6 miles.

Bicycle accommodations

Route 20 is a designated bike route; however, the bike route designation is only a wayfinding device and does not require that the roadway have bike lanes. A majority of the roadway is sufficient to accommodate bicyclists based on the existing roadway section with the exception of the section on Route 20 between the Hunger Kill ravine and Willow Street, where a widening might be required.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

As development occurs within the corridor, efforts should be made to concentrate access to Route 20 at primary intersections rather than individual driveways for each business. The primary intersections should also provide safe opportunities for pedestrians to cross Route 20. Five primary intersections are recognized within the study area:

- Route 20/Route 146
- Route 20/Bumblebee site access
- Route 20/Willow Street/Foundry Road
- Route 20/Winding Brook Drive
- Route 20/Route 155

Cooperation among landowners will be necessary in order to provide shared access to Route 20 at these primary intersections. Pedestrian accommodations may include high-visibility crosswalks and countdown timers at signalized intersections. All of these primary intersections, except for the “Bumblebee area,” are existing signalized intersections.

Specific concerns were expressed by the committee and the public at the Route 20/Route 146, Route 20/Willow Street, and Route 20/Bumblebee site access locations. Recommendations for these locations are described in the following text.



Residents expressed concern about the safety of the intersection of Route 20 and Willow Street for both pedestrians and automobiles (particularly those making left hand turns).

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Route 20/Route 146 intersection

A roundabout at the Route 20/Route 146 intersection was suggested by residents and by committee members, and was analyzed as both a signalized intersection and a roundabout with year 2004 and future 2026 traffic volumes for the AM and PM peak hours. Build-year 2026 traffic forecasts were obtained from the CDTC STEP model for a “moderate growth” scenario. The resulting 2026 traffic volumes represent growth of approximately 0.7 percent per year for 22 years. The possibility of additional traffic growth at the Guilderland Industrial Park could also be considered.

The analysis shows that the roundabout alternative improves overall operations as compared to the traffic signal alternative by approximately 58 seconds per vehicle during the AM peak hour and 16 seconds per vehicle during the PM peak hour under the future 2026 traffic conditions. This is a significant operational benefit, particularly during the AM peak hour. Additionally, roundabouts provide safety benefits to drivers by reducing the number of potential conflict points. Pedestrians are accommodated by crosswalks and refuge islands on the approaches to the roundabout. Finally, a roundabout with streetscaping and an attractive center island treatment would create a gateway to the Guilderland Hamlet area from the west.



Roundabout concept at Route 20/Route 146.

Table 1 – Level of Service Summary, Route 20/Route 146

Intersection Approach	Control	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
		Existing 2004	Build 2026	Existing 2004	Build 2026
Route 20/Route 146	S				
Route 20 EB	T	D (43.5)	E (69.7)	C (32.6)	C (33.1)
	R	A (7.6)	A (8.2)	A (8.2)	A (8.4)
Route 146 NB	L	D (35.1)	D (35.7)	D (37.6)	D (44.1)
	R	C (27.5)	D (32.6)	B (15.3)	C (20.7)
Route 20 WB	L	D (52.1)	F (191)	C (31.0)	D (45.9)
	T	A (8.1)	A (8.2)	B (11.7)	B (12.1)
Overall		C (33.2)	E (70.8)	C (21.0)	C (25.1)
Route 20/Route 146	R				
Route 20 EB	TR	A (5.6)	A (8.0)	A (5.0)	A (5.0)
Route 146 NB	LR	B (14.6)	C (30.2)	A (6.8)	A (9.8)
Route 20 WB	LT	A (4.4)	A (5.0)	A (8.0)	B (11.6)
Overall		A (7.9)	B (12.7)	A (6.8)	A (9.6)

Key: X (Y.Y) = Level of Service (Delay, seconds per vehicle)

NB, SB, EB, WB = Northbound, Southbound, Eastbound, Westbound, intersection approaches

LTR = Left-turn, through, and/or right-turn movements

S = Signalized

R = Roundabout

Note: 2 seconds were added to each approach under the roundabout condition to account for start-up lost time associated with a traffic signal.

Route 20/Willow Street/Foundry Road intersection

Currently, the eastbound and westbound approaches on Route 20 at the Willow Street/Foundry Road intersection consist of a shared left-turn/through lane and a shared through/right-turn lane. Therefore, a motorist waiting to complete a left turn at this intersection must stop in the through travel lane. Residents of the area have expressed concerns about this situation, feeling that through vehicles on Route 20, especially approaching from the west, travel at high speeds and do not expect a vehicle to be stopped at this intersection when the signal indication is green.

Exclusive left-turn lanes on Route 20 at this intersection would remove left-turning vehicles from the through travel lanes and increase capacity as well as driver comfort and safety at this intersection. The intersection was analyzed with and without the left-turn lanes using the existing 2006 turning movement volumes. The analysis indicates that the left turn lanes on Route 20 will operate

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan

well and that the addition of the turn lanes will benefit the overall operation of the Route 20/Willow Street/Foundry Road intersection. Some property acquisition may be required. The planning level cost estimate for complete intersection reconstruction is \$1.5 to \$2M.

Table 2 – Level of Service Summary, Route 20/Willow Street/Foundry Road

Intersection Approach		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
		2006 traffic volumes		2006 traffic volumes	
		Existing geometry	with EB & WB left turn lanes	Existing geometry	with EB & WB left turn lanes
Route 20/Willow Street/Foundry Road	S				
Route 20 EB L		---	A (7.9)	---	A (5.8)
(L)TR		D (41.9)	C (27.5)	A (7.2)	A (6.7)
Route 20 WB L		---	A (8.6)	---	A (4.8)
(L)TR		B (10.2)	A (9.8)	C (26.6)	B (19.1)
Foundry Road NB LTR		C (29.5)	C (29.5)	C (33.5)	C (33.5)
Willow Street SB LTR		D (51.5)	D (51.5)	D (35.9)	D (35.9)
Overall		D (35.1)	C (25.5)	C (21.3)	B (16.4)

Key: X (Y.Y) = Level of Service (Delay, seconds per vehicle)

NB, SB, EB, WB = Northbound, Southbound, Eastbound, Westbound, intersection approaches

LTR = Left-turn, through, and/or right-turn movements

S = Signalized

--- = not applicable

Western Gateway (Bumblebee Vicinity) site access

Access to the parcels on the north side of Route 20 in the vicinity of the vacant Bumblebee building should be consolidated at a single intersection, preferably just to the east of the Bumblebee parcel. Ideally, the golf course access on the south side of Route 20 would be relocated to this intersection as well. The type of intersection to be established at this location (signalized, unsignalized or roundabout) will depend on the future use of the site. If it is determined that a traffic signal or roundabout is not appropriate at this location, pedestrians could be accommodated by a median with pedestrian refuge or a mid-block pedestrian-activated signal. Furthermore, the provision of left-turn lanes at this location would provide a safety benefit to motorists; this improvement should be coordinated with the owners of all of the properties that would gain access to the new intersection.



Route 20 in the Western Gateway (looking east).

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

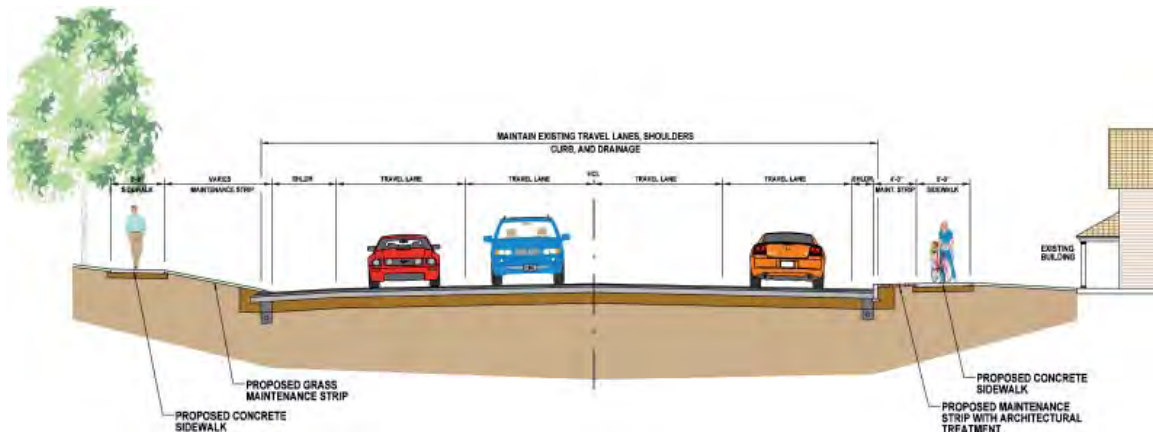
Route 20

As discussed above, sidewalks are recommended along most of Route 20 within the study area. The existing right-of-way varies within this corridor, as do the physical constraints outside of the right-of-way. The table on the following page summarizes the physical constraints and recommendations for sidewalk segments within the corridor based on field observations. In accordance with NYSDOT guidance, sidewalk segments must be constructed so that they have a *logical terminus*, such as a major intersection or significant land use.

Table 3 –Recommendations by Segment for Sidewalks on Route 20

Logical Termini			Constraints	Recommendations
From	To			
Route 146		3100 feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water on north side at Hunger Kill ravine • Existing embankment on south side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct sidewalk on south side for entire length and on north side west of Bumblebee (once site is redeveloped) • Maintain existing drainage, shoulder and curb • Some grading on south side • Construct sidewalk on existing embankment at Hunger Kill Ravine • Improve maintenance strip on ravine section • May need short retaining wall between ravine and Foundry Road
Foundry Road/ Willow Street		3000 feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow right-of-way in hamlet center • Ravine on both sides east of hamlet center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct sidewalk on both sides • Maintain existing drainage • New curb on south side • No maintenance strip west of ravine • Some grading on north side • Embankment needed at ravine • Improve maintenance strip east of ravine
Winding Brook Drive	20 Mall	2000 feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep slope on north side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct sidewalk on south side only • Maintain existing curb and drainage • Grass maintenance strip
20 Mall	Route 155	1900 feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep slope on north side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct sidewalk on south side • Maintain existing drainage • Improve maintenance strip • Some grading

Where the physical constraints allow, an improved maintenance strip with architectural treatment is recommended. In other areas, a grass maintenance strip is recommended. The graphics on the following page illustrate the proposed sidewalk treatments on Route 20.



Proposed typical section, Route 20 from ravine to library.



Existing view of Route 20 just west of the library (left) and simulated view of same location with continuous sidewalk and improved maintenance strip (right).

Additional vehicle connections

Three opportunities for additional vehicle connections were identified within the corridor. The existing road connection from Mercy Care Lane and Winding Brook Drive should be upgraded to Town standards and opened to through traffic. In addition, the proposed Glass Works Village PUD should be connected to Mercy Care Lane along the existing right-of-way behind the library. These connections would tie the library and other facilities here to the planned roundabout and traffic light at Winding Brook Drive, providing a safe exit for motorists looking to travel west on Route 20.

There is also an existing vehicle connection behind the fire house on the north side of Route 20 between Willow Street and Schoolcraft Street. Currently, through traffic is prohibited from this roadway, but opening it to through traffic would allow traffic to/from Schoolcraft Street to utilize the traffic signal at Willow Street.

COST ESTIMATES

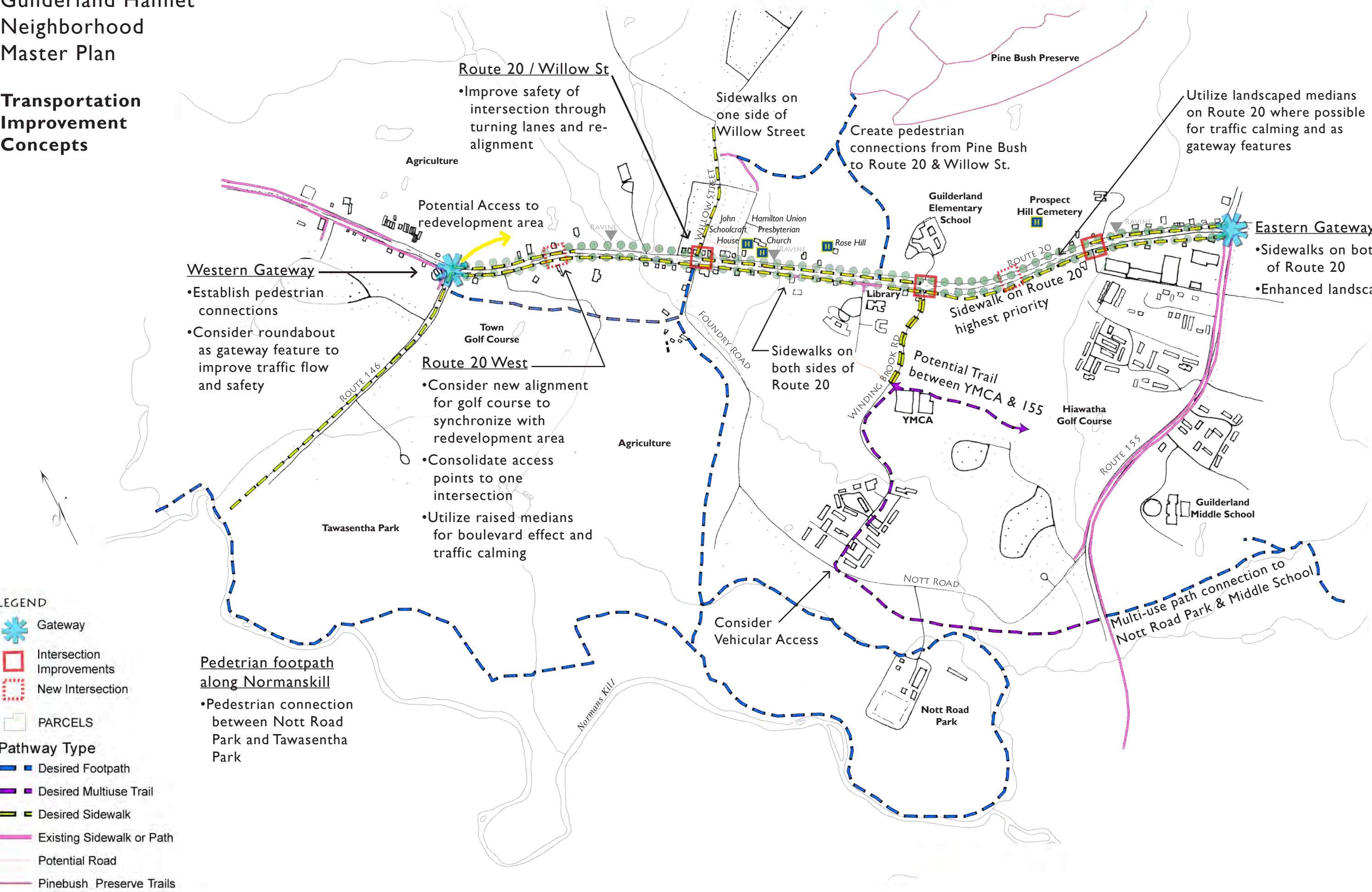
Cost estimates were developed for the sidewalks and multiuse paths that are recommended for the corridor. Items such as embankments, retaining walls, and new closed drainage can significantly increase the cost of individual segments. Aesthetic treatments, such as brick pavers in the maintenance strips, also increase costs significantly. The final cost of sidewalks/multiuse paths will also be influenced by the process through which they are constructed. Public projects advanced through NYSDOT with Federal funding will be more costly while projects achieved through developer-funded mitigation will be less costly. Based on these factors, the opinion of probable costs ranges significantly for the various sidewalk and multi-use path segments recommended in this plan, from a low of approximately \$80 per linear foot to high of over \$350 per linear foot.

Table 4 – Opinion of Probable Cost for Sidewalks and Multi-Use Paths by Segment

			QUANTITIES/SEGMENT																TOTAL QUANTITY	TOTAL COST		
ITEM DESCRIPTION	UNITS	PRICE	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		not including footpaths	not including footpaths
			Route 20 from 146 to Willow Street		Route 20 from Willow Street to Winding Brook		Route 20 from Winding Brook to Devonshire Drive		Route 20 from Devonshire Drive to Route 155		Route 146 from Route 20 to Tawasentha Park		Willow Street from Route 20 to Siver Road		Winding Brook Dr from Nott Road to YMCA		Nott Road from Winding Brook Dr. to Route 155		Footpaths			
Linear Feet of Sidewalk			4600		5600		2000		1900		4000		2000		3000		3700		33000		26800	
CLEARING AND GRUBBING	AC	\$12,000.00		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	1.87	\$22,440	10	\$120,000	1.87	\$22,440
MULCH	SY	\$1.00		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	33000	\$33,000		
UNCLASSIFIED EXCAVATION AND DISPOSAL	CY	\$20.00	100	\$2,000	1300	\$26,000	100	\$2,000	500	\$10,000	500	\$10,000		\$0	4000	\$80,000		\$0		\$0	6500	\$130,000
EMBANKMENT IN PLACE	CY	\$16.00		\$0	10000	\$160,000	1500	\$24,000		\$0	3000	\$48,000		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	14500	\$232,000
SMOOTH INTERIOR CORR. POLY. PIPE, 600 mm DIA	LF	\$80.00		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	2000	\$160,000		\$0		\$0		\$0	2000	\$160,000
TYPE F DRAINAGE STRUCTURE FOR TYPE F1 FRAME AND GRATE	EA	\$5,000.00		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	12	\$60,000		\$0		\$0		\$0	12	\$60,000
CAST-IN-PLACE CONCRETE CURB, TYPE VF150	LF	\$40.00		\$0	950	\$38,000		\$0		\$0		\$0	2000	\$80,000		\$0		\$0		\$0	2950	\$118,000
RETAINING WALLS	SY	\$500.00	300	\$150,000		\$0		\$0	100	\$50,000		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	400	\$200,000
TOP SOIL AND SEED (GRADING)	SY	\$1.00	2800	\$2,800	2000	\$2,000	500	\$500	1200	\$1,200	2700	\$2,700		\$0	4000	\$4,000	4200	\$4,200		\$0	17400	\$17,400
TOP SOIL AND SEED (GRASS MAINTENANCE STRIP)	SY	\$1.00		\$0		\$0	300	\$300		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	300	\$300
BRICK PAVED SIDEWALKS AND DRIVEWAYS	SY	\$210.00	200	\$42,000	1090	\$228,900	0	\$0	1000	\$210,000		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	2290	\$480,900
SIDEWALK	SF	\$5.00	23000	\$115,000	28000	\$140,000	10000	\$50,000	9500	\$47,500	20000	\$100,000	10000	\$50,000		\$0		\$0		\$0	100500	\$502,500
MULTI-USE PATH	SY	\$25.00		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0	3700	\$92,500	4600	\$115,000		\$0	8300	\$207,500
MISCELLANEOUS (DRAINAGE, ETC.)	LS	\$20,000.00	1	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	1	\$20,000		\$0	1	\$20,000		\$0		\$0		\$0	2	\$40,000	4	\$80,000
TOTAL COST PER SEGMENT			\$331,800		\$614,900		\$96,800		\$318,700		\$180,700		\$350,000		\$176,500		\$141,640		\$193,000			\$2,211,040
UTILITY POLE RELOCATION (ASSUMED)					5 \$50,000.00						5 \$50,000											
PROJECT SUB TOTAL:			\$331,800		\$664,900		\$96,800		\$318,700		\$180,700		\$400,000		\$176,500		\$141,640		\$193,000		\$2,211,040	
CONTINGENCY (20%)			\$66,360		\$132,980		\$19,360		\$63,740		\$36,140		\$80,000		\$35,300		\$28,328		\$38,600		\$442,208	
MAINT.AND PROT. OF TRAFFIC (5%)			\$16,590		\$33,245		\$4,840		\$15,935		\$9,035		\$20,000		\$8,825		\$7,082		\$9,650		\$110,552	
SURVEY AND STAKEOUT (4%)			\$13,272		\$26,596		\$3,872		\$12,748		\$7,228		\$16,000		\$7,060		\$5,666		\$7,720		\$88,442	
DESIGN ENGINEERING (15%)			\$49,770		\$99,735		\$14,520		\$47,805		\$27,105		\$60,000		\$26,475		\$21,246		\$28,950		\$221,104	
CTION AND CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION (10%)			\$33,180		\$66,490		\$9,680		\$31,870		\$18,070		\$40,000		\$17,650		\$14,164		\$19,300		\$221,104	
SWPP & EROSION CONTROL (7%)			\$23,226		\$46,543		\$6,776		\$22,309		\$12,649		\$28,000		\$12,355		\$9,915		\$13,510		\$33,166	
LEGAL/ADMIN (3%)			\$9,954		\$19,947		\$2,904		\$9,561		\$5,421		\$12,000		\$5,295		\$4,249		\$5,790		\$44,221	
SUBTOTAL			\$544,152		\$1,090,436		\$158,752		\$522,668		\$296,348		\$656,000		\$289,460		\$232,290		\$316,520		\$3,371,836	
MOBILIZATION (4%)			\$21,766		\$43,617		\$6,350		\$20,907		\$11,854		\$26,240		\$11,578		\$9,292		\$12,661		\$134,873	
Escalation (20%)			\$113,184		\$226,811		\$33,020		\$108,715		\$61,640		\$136,448		\$60,208		\$48,316		\$65,836		\$701,342	
OVERALL COST			\$679,102		\$1,134,053		\$165,102		\$543,575		\$308,202		\$682,240		\$301,038		\$241,581		\$329,181		\$3,506,709	
Cost per LF			\$147.63		\$202.51		\$82.55		\$286.09		\$77.05		\$341.12		\$100.35		\$65.29		\$9.98		\$130.85	

Guilderland Hamlet
Neighborhood
Master Plan

Transportation
Improvement
Concepts



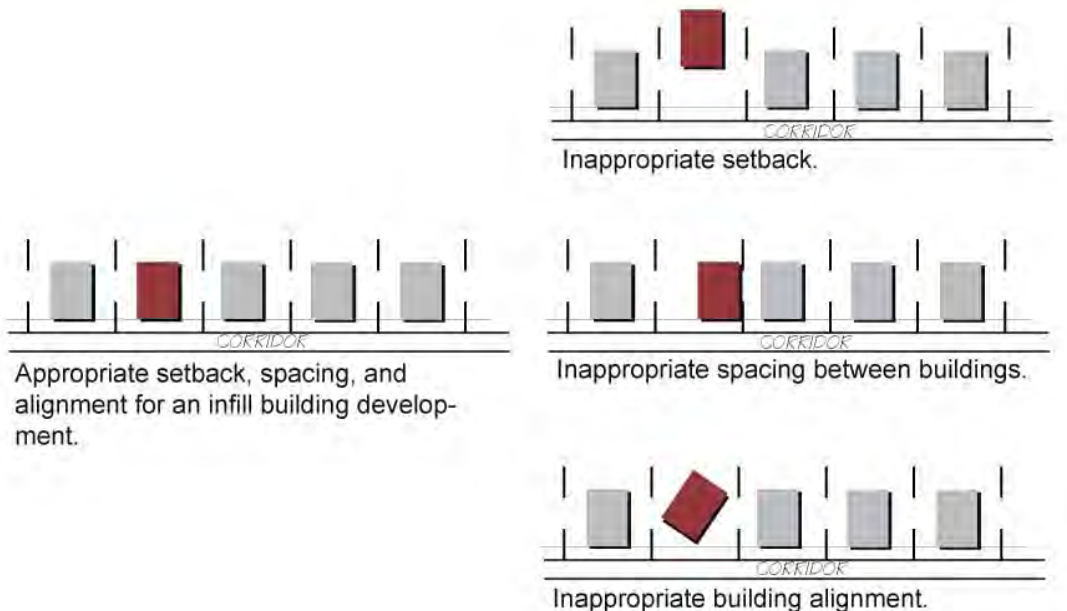
4. DESIGN GUIDELINES

The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidance for new development, conversions, and renovations within the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood. Private and public projects undertaken within the hamlet should address the principles and standards of this chapter with the Planning Board during site plan review. The guidelines discuss broad site planning principles related to overall layout; access; parking; pedestrian circulation; landscaping; natural / ecological site design; architectural; and signage.

The town should consider formalizing these standards, or a version thereof, through adoption of the plan and/or creation of an overlay district (or similar mechanism) mandating adherence to the guidelines.

GENERAL SITE LAYOUT

As the majority of land within the hamlet is already developed or adjacent to pre-existing structures, development will occur predominantly through infill. In many cases, new development must be sensitive to existing conditions and traditional patterns of development, particularly where historic structures are present. This situation is found within the historic hamlet (Willow Street area) of Guilderland. When new development occurs there it is important to maintain consistent architectural character along with setbacks, spacing, and alignment between the new building and the existing.

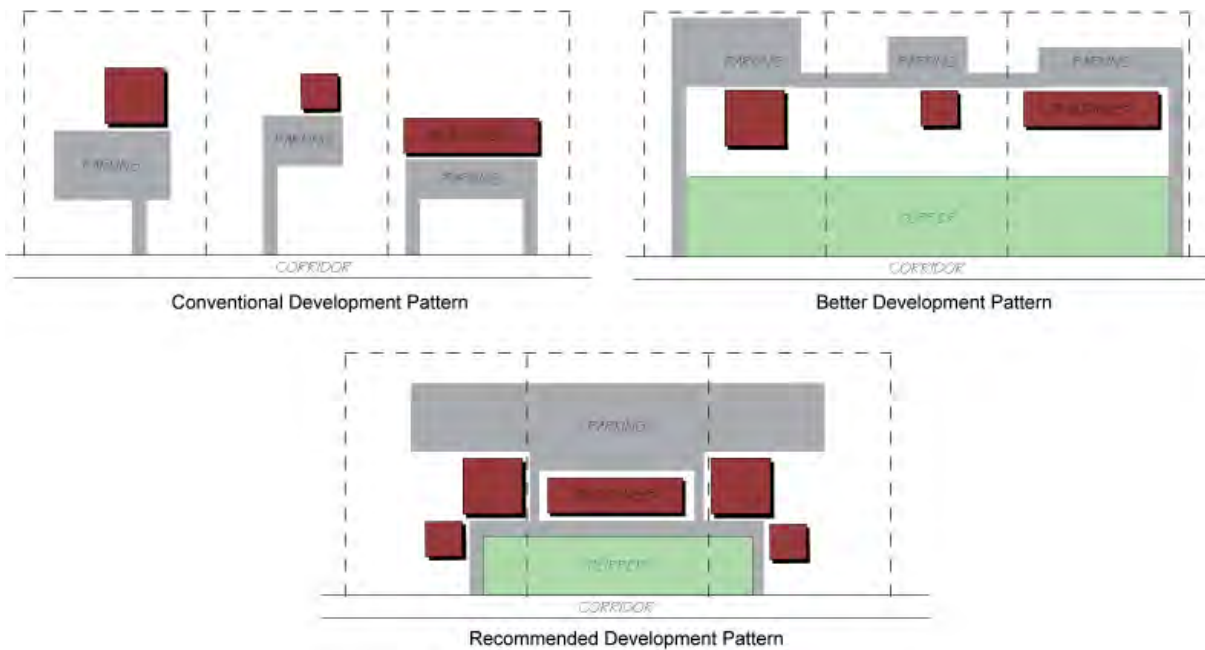


Maintain consistent setbacks, spacing, and alignment for infill development.

Town of Guilderland

Where one large or several adjacent parcels allow for a more significant development, the town should encourage flexibility and cooperation between landowners of adjacent parcels so that the buildings, parking lot(s) and open space may relate to one another in such a way as to create the feeling of one unified development. This type of new development would be particularly appropriate for renewal of underutilized sites towards the western gateway end of the Route 20 corridor.

In general, the layout for new or infill development should correspond with existing buildings, roads, and road intersections. Existing intersections should be used as access points to new development where possible, and new buildings should relate to existing buildings to create a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment.



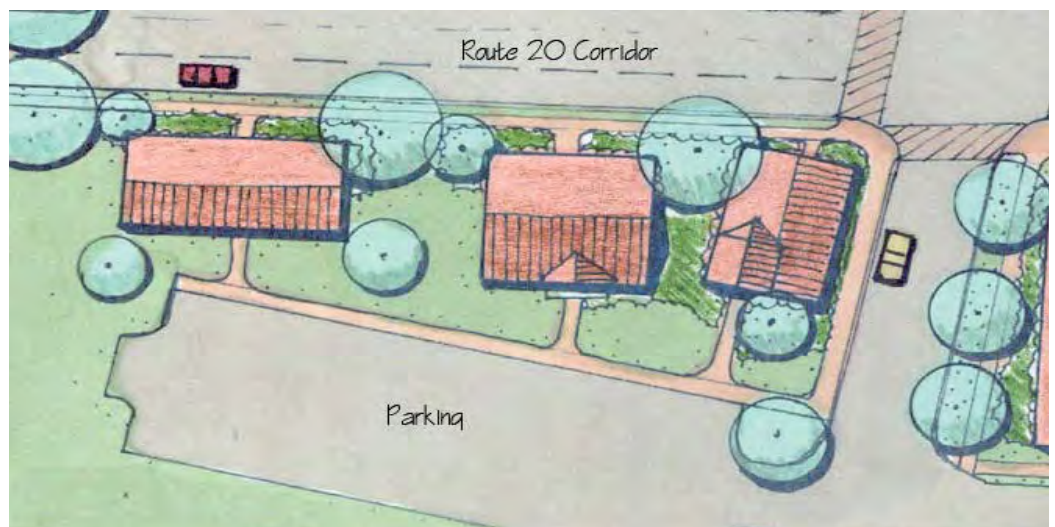
Buildings, parking lot(s) and open space should relate to one another in such a way as to create the feeling of one unified development.

PARKING

Parking should be secondary to the buildings and pedestrian system. It should be located behind, or occasionally along the side of commercial structures, and visually screened from the road to create a more interesting streetscape. Generally, smaller, well-connected parking areas are preferred. Creating additional (side/back) entrances to buildings will render side and back parking lots more attractive to customers. 'Backyard' development such as utilities, dumpsters, service areas and parking should respect adjacent residential uses. Shared and long term parking should be encouraged between adjacent and nearby users.

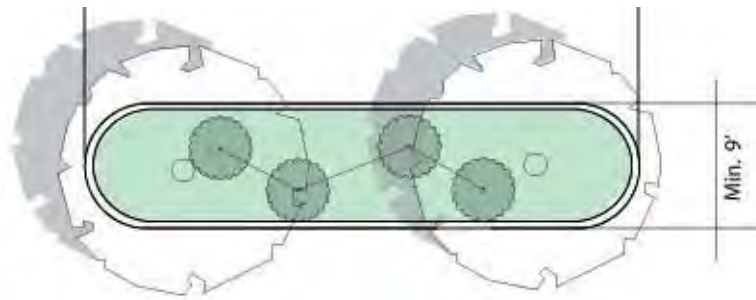


Locate parking behind buildings.

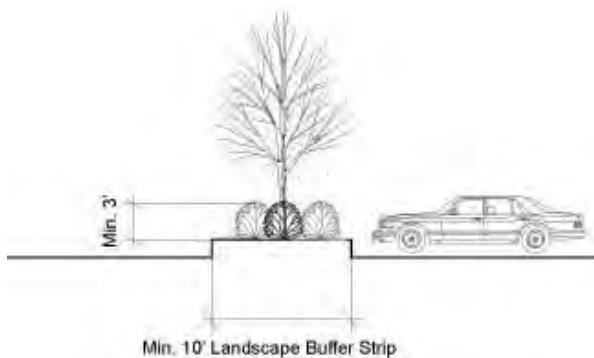


Sensible divisions of the parking field help humanize the landscape. By adding walks and plantings, the journey to and from the car is more pleasant, the pavement is shaded during hot weather, and much needed visual relief and softening of the “hardscape” is provided. Plant materials can be selected so that important views to the buildings are not obscured and the circulation pattern can be easily discerned. Connections to the adjoining commercial sites are suggested. In summary:

- ☐ **Provide parking behind structures – minimize or eliminate parking between the roadside and structures.**
- ☐ **Allow for and encourage shared parking – allow for reduced parking areas where uses are appropriate.**
- ☐ **Provide trees to shade parking areas and walkways to structures**
- ☐ **Provide landscaped medians and islands to visually break up and define parking areas**



Parking lot island, recommended dimensions and plantings.



Provide visual landscape buffers around and through parking lots.

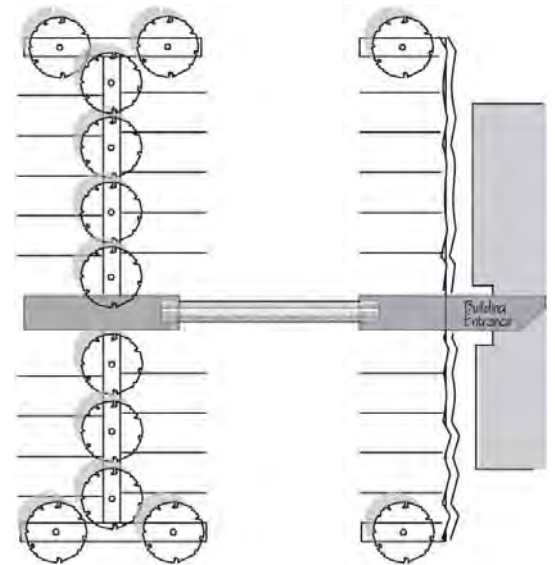
ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

In order to create safe and comfortable circulation for pedestrians, it is necessary to minimize the interaction between cars and people, and to provide clear crossing areas where they must come together. Limiting the number of entry points to a development increases the amount of uninterrupted sidewalk along the front of a development, thereby decreasing pedestrian crossings, and creating a relationship between buildings. This improved relationship makes providing pedestrian connections between adjacent commercial developments easier and more natural. In summary:

- ☐ Provide automobile connections to adjacent lots and developments through shared access roads, linked parking, etc.
- ☐ Provide pedestrian connections between adjacent commercial developments through sidewalks, multi-use paths, etc.
- ☐ Minimize entry points and curb cuts
- ☐ Establish a pleasant, walkable environment for pedestrians through landscaped sidewalks and multi-use trails.
- ☐ Utilize a consistent theme of street trees, other landscaping elements, and pedestrian amenities to provide a unified streetscape.
- ☐ Provide internal pedestrian connections (on site, from parking lots, to adjacent lots, etc.) through pedestrian walkways, and access to and around development



Pleasant, walkable internal pedestrian connections.



Use paving patterns to provide obvious pedestrian connections through and across parking lots.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be designed to provide several functions, including softening and framing building structures, highlighting building and vehicle entrances, defining pedestrian movement, and screening undesirable views. Landscaping may also be used to provide visual cues about location. For example, in Guilderland along the Route 20 corridor, several character areas have been identified in this plan. Those character areas can be expressed visually in the landscape by using consistent plantings (known as a plant signature) and hardscape throughout that area, but which is unique to each area.

In addition, active and attractive pedestrian-oriented open spaces should be created. In existing commercial strips, thoughtful expansion of green space and planting areas can improve the aesthetic of the site. In new projects, open space should be an integral component of the design scheme, rather than a remnant of the development process. The planting of street trees should be encouraged to shade and enclose the street and to define the edge of the public realm and private space. Existing specimen trees should be used to the extent feasible. Landscaping of parking areas provides visual relief, shade and buffers to adjoining uses. Trees, shrubs, flowers, and ground cover should each be used as appropriate. Large areas of asphalt should be divided into smaller units through the use of landscaped medians and islands. In summary:

- ☐ **Provide landscaping that complements the building and highlights access points**
- ☐ **Provide landscaped buffers to visually screen parking lots**
- ☐ **Maintain consistent themes throughout each character area by utilizing plant signatures and hardscape materials**
- ☐ **Minimize the use of invasive species of trees, shrubs, and flowers for landscaping and renovation. Instead utilize plant species native to the area to the greatest extent practicable.**



A landscaped sidewalk highlighting pedestrian movement and providing shade.

Eastern Gateway Area



Arranged mounds of colorful perennials



Evenly spaced street trees

Central Hamlet



Shrub groupings with perennial accents



Evenly spaced street trees

Historic Hamlet



Colorful planter boxes



Evenly spaced street trees

Western Gateway Area



Post and Rail Fence

Ornamental Grasses



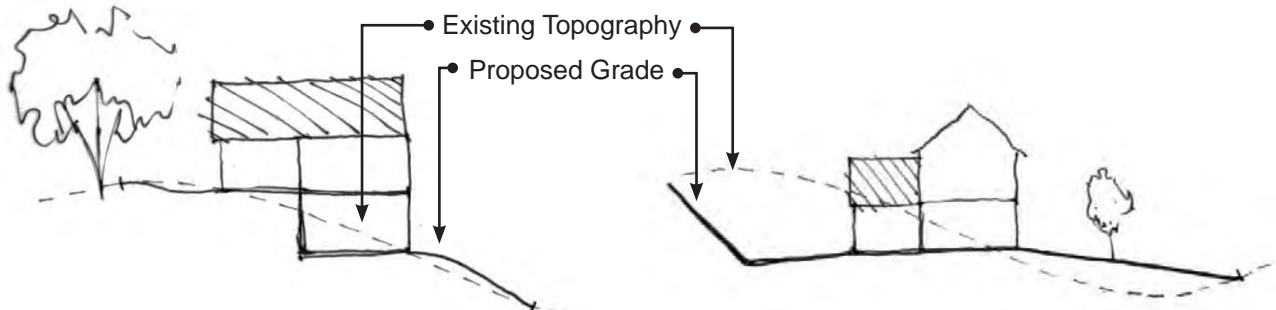
Tree groupings

Plant signature suggestions for Guilderland Route 20 corridor character areas.

NATURAL SITE DESIGN

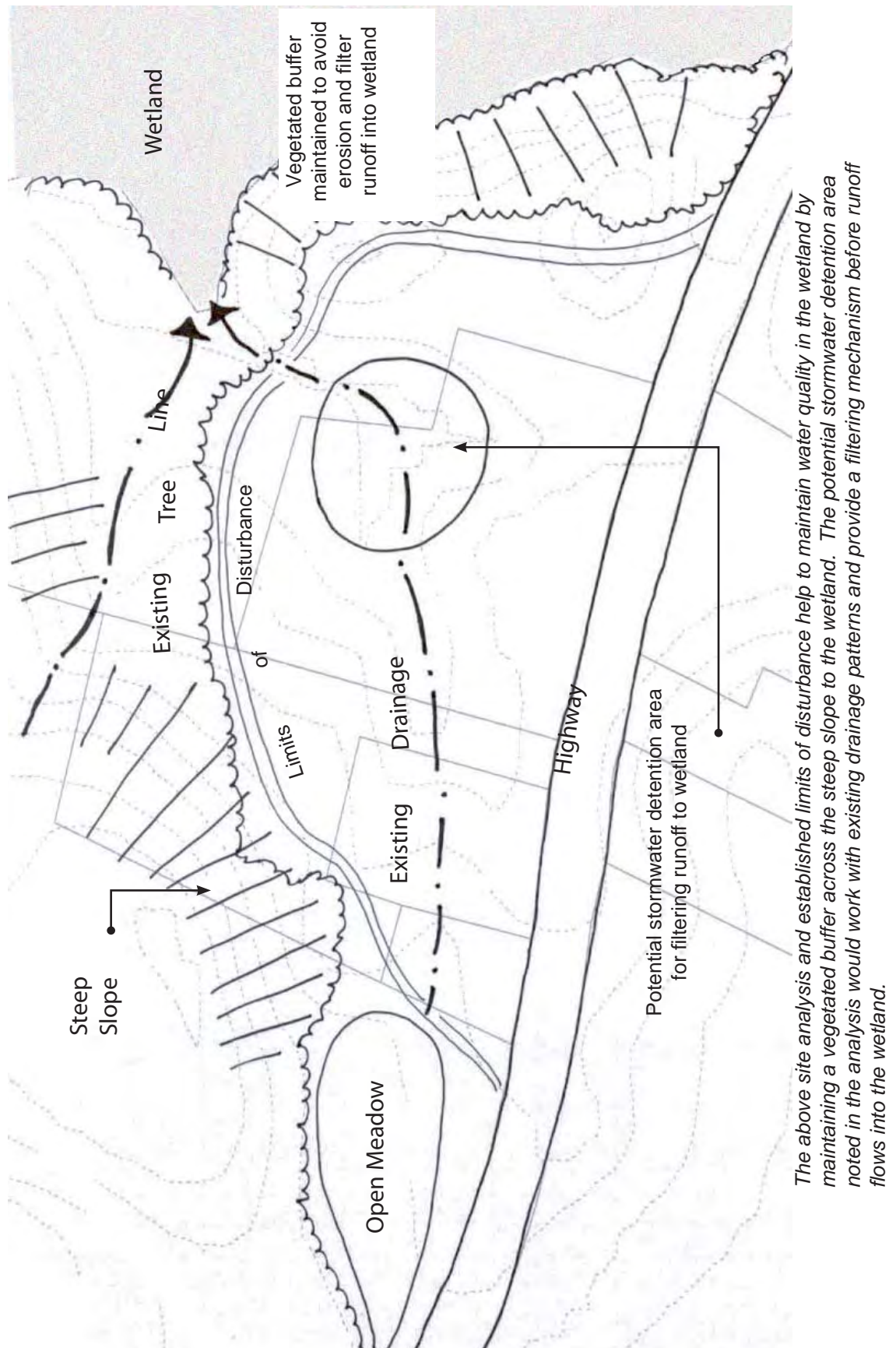
Site design should recognize and respect the site's natural features, creating a balance between the program of the new development and the environmental impact. By recognizing and building with the existing topography, it becomes possible to integrate storm water management into the design, lessen the amount of grading and erosion, and thereby lessen the environmental impact to surrounding areas. In addition, by incorporating the site's natural features into the site design, it becomes possible to create a more aesthetically relevant place which fits into its context.

- ☐ **Recognize each site's natural features (wetlands, views, existing trees, topography, etc.), and incorporate them into the planning and design of the site.**
- ☐ **Integrate storm water management into site design through low impact development strategies.**



Desirable: Existing topography is respected and the change to it limited. The structure blends into its site, mature tree can remain.

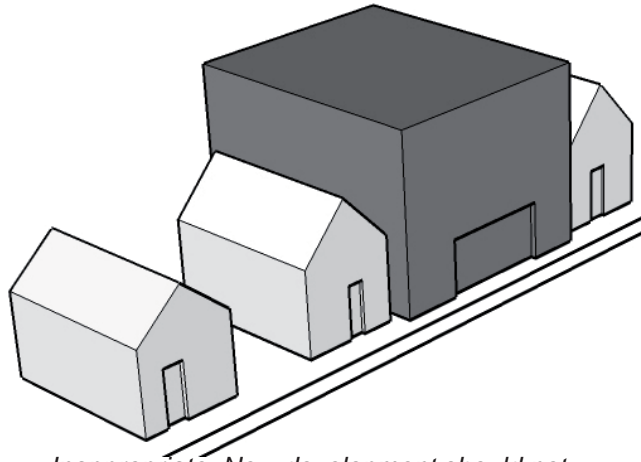
Undesirable: Site denuded and regraded to accommodate structure, mature tree must be removed and replaced by young tree.



ARCHITECTURAL

Architectural Design

Building design should creatively reflect traditional elements of the character area. Diversity that is in tune with the massing, proportion, decorative design elements, and street relationships of nearby buildings, should be encouraged. Clusters of buildings with internal open spaces are desired, rather than single buildings separated by vast expanses of parking lots. Old and new structures should appear as a comprehensive sequence in size and shape. Architectural detailing can be used to create variety and interest on new buildings.



Inappropriate: New development should not dramatically conflict with the scale and character of adjacent "contributing" structures.

Flat roof with no variation No landscaping



Undesirable architecture.

Celebrated entryway Gabled roof with variations Landscaping with pedestrian walkways



Desirable architecture.

Building Mass

In the central and historic hamlet areas, buildings should be located close to the sidewalk, along the street, to form a strong architectural and visual group by complementing each other. A small setback for plantings or entry feature would also be appropriate. This will allow screening of rear parking and vacant spaces, and make the store fronts more pedestrian friendly.

Roof Lines

A variety of roof types, heights and gable orientations in proportion to the volume of the building should be incorporated. Extensive use of very steep, or flat or very low pitched roofs should generally be avoided. Sloping roofs can be broken up by the use of dormers and gables to give the facade more visual prominence.

- ☐ **Build at a scale that makes sense for the Guilderland Hamlet**
- ☐ **Avoid, within the same development, sharp contrasts in building styles, colors, or materials**
- ☐ **Use building materials and architecture which project a high-quality image**
- ☐ **Incorporate building facades that fit into the community and promote pedestrian scale and aesthetics. For example: No blank walls; Celebrate entranceways; Celebrate the public realm – façade facing roadside, façade facing parking lots**

SIGNS

Visual communications or signs as design elements are important for maintaining a desirable community character. Signs should be at a scale appropriate to the use and volume of the facility. Retail commercial uses require a greater signage level than office or other limited use commercial facilities. Signs can help unify a commercial district or corridor, and create a positive image regarding the goods and services available there. Signage must be managed to avoid visual blight and to provide a fair and competitive economic environment. Commercial buildings can be designed with dignity to grace the public realm. Buildings or their architectural treatments should not, however, be so garish in line, color, or effect, so as to constitute a sign in themselves. Tasteful building design and appropriate signage can provide an important role in identifying a business, while contributing positively to community character.

- ☐ Discourage using buildings as signs.
- ☐ Discourage internally lit signs.



Desirable: A well designed sign that complements its surroundings.



Undesirable: A large, internally lit sign.



Desirable: A gas station building not used as a sign.



undesirable: A gas station building and canopy used as a sign.

APPLICATION OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

To illustrate many of the preceding design guidelines, two graphics have been produced demonstrating conceptual alternative development scenarios for the Route 20 corridor through Guilderland.

The first graphic (Figure 1) shows one possible layout for a commercial development along Route 20 based on existing conditions at the western gateway character area. While the graphic demonstrates many of the design guideline principles discussed in this section (e.g., parking location, landscaping, etc.), it also reflects the overall planning vision statement and recommendations for this character area. Some of these components include a reflection of the transition to rural Guilderland, integrated open space, and pedestrian connectivity. The second graphic (Figure 2) shows a conceptual layout for the Historic Hamlet area of the neighborhood (essentially Willow/Foundry and Route 20). (Please see the graphics on the following pages)

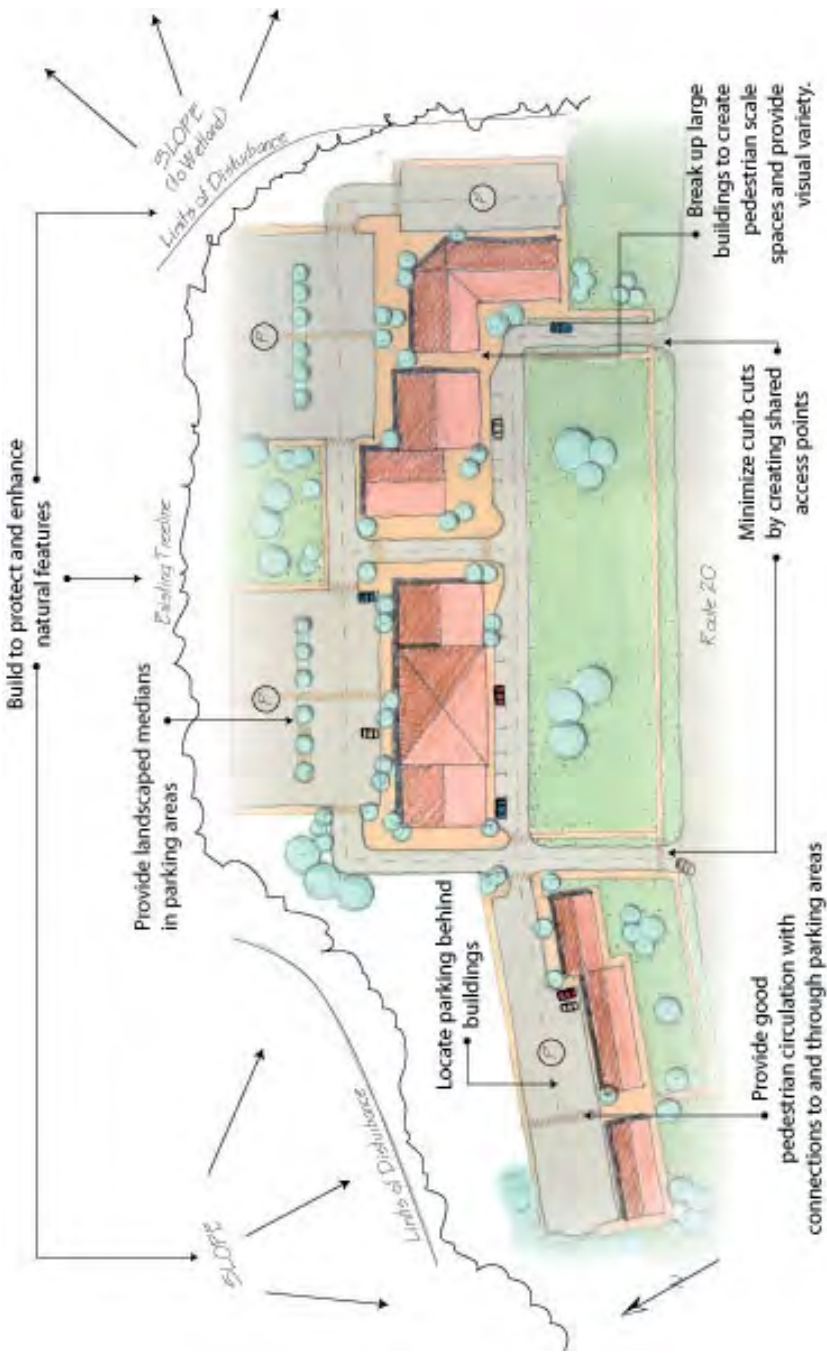


Figure 1. Conceptual development plan for the western gateway end of the Route 20 corridor.



Perspective drawing of Figure 1 looking northeast along Route 20.

- Incorporate gabled roofs, windows, height variety, and setback variety to create pleasant pedestrian spaces
- Provide open space with tree groupings to help maintain rural character
- Create lighted and landscaped pedestrian walkways and connections

Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan

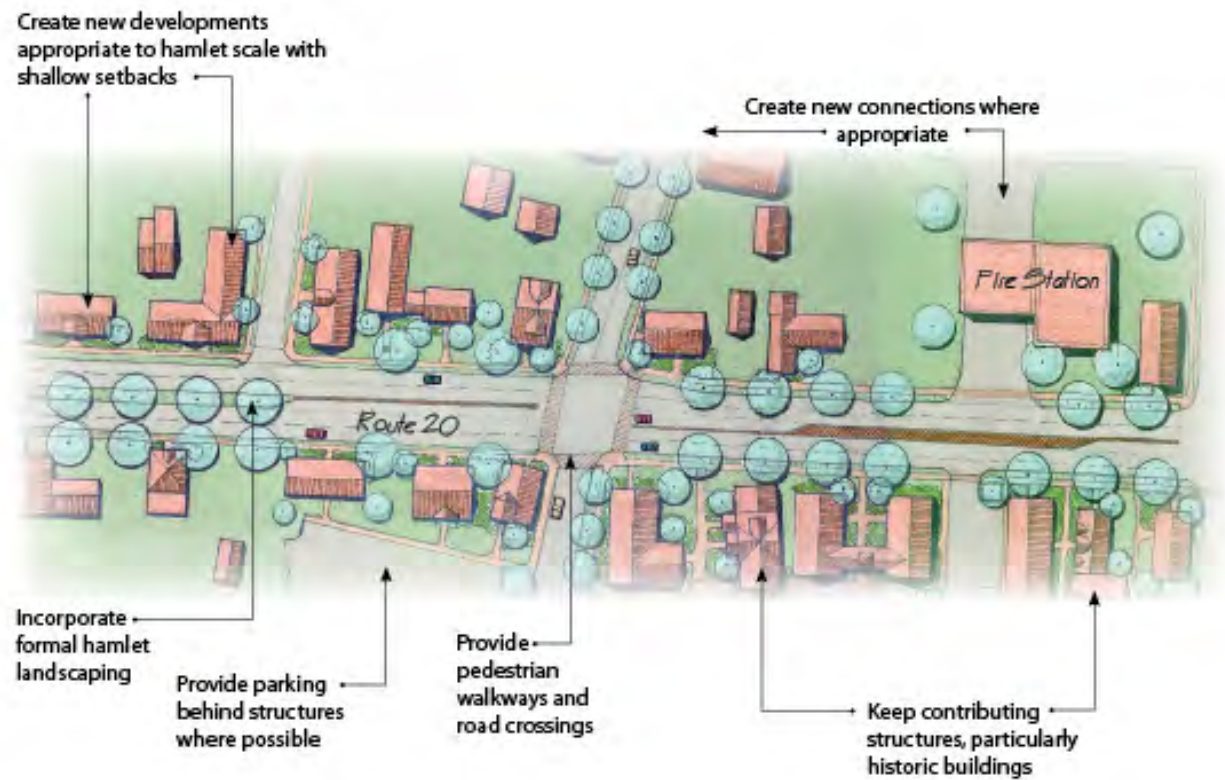


Figure 2. Conceptual plan for the Historic Hamlet area of the Route 20 corridor.

Allow only appropriate signs that complement the architecture and surroundings

Provide landscaping elements such as lighting, plant materials, and benches throughout the hamlet

Provide bike paths and connections to and through the hamlet where possible



Perspective drawing illustrating potential character of the Historic Hamlet area of the Route 20 corridor.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Guilderland Hamlet is a special and unique place in the town, and occupies an important role as a community center. This importance can be seen in the area's diversity of shops, residential neighborhoods, community facilities, parks, farms and open space as well as the history of the "village of Hamilton" and the Great Western Turnpike. This plan provides strategies and recommendations for enhancing these resources and the Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood overall, focusing on land use and transportation issues and opportunities. Primary recommendations include:

- Maintain and formalize a "green infrastructure" network of parks, preserves, farms, ecological resources, and open space. This network includes a diverse set of green infrastructure resources such as the Tawasentha Park, Gade Farm, Nott Road Park, Hiawatha Golf Course, Western Turnpike Golf Course, the elementary and middle schools, and the Pine Bush Preserve.
- Link these resources through a safe, non-motorized transportation network. An overall connectivity plan is presented that links neighborhoods with green infrastructure resources, community facilities, and shopping / commercial areas.
- Improve pedestrian resources along Route 20. In addition to being an important automobile commuter route and commercial corridor, Western Turnpike connects residents, neighborhoods, schools, and community facilities. The pedestrian environment along Route 20 should be enhanced to include sidewalks from the eastern edge at Route 155 to the Western Gateway and 146.



- Update zoning and land development regulations. The general land use plan is appropriate for the corridor. Larger commercial operations are located at the Eastern Gateway with smaller, neighborhood-scale shopping and professional businesses to the east as the roadway transitions towards “rural Guilderland.” Some recommended modifications include: the use of design guidelines; increased landscaping requirements, particularly for parking and roadside areas; and creation of a Hamlet District to recognize the unique qualities of the Historic Hamlet area (village of Hamilton) at Willow Street and Route 20.
- Formalize the use of Design Guidelines. Design guidelines can be utilized a number of ways to enhance development, infill, and change in the hamlet.

Add an overlay district: Recognize and establish the Guilderland Hamlet Design Overlay in town zoning ordinance. The overlay provides the flexibility of a district to refine concepts specifically for the Hamlet.

Add additional requirements within Certain Commercial Districts: For example, all commercial development within the BNRP and LB districts would adhere to these guidelines (this would be similar to the administration procedures of the town’s §280-29 Access Management, an additional regulation referenced in specific districts where these standards apply).

Internal or External to the Ordinance: In either case, the guidelines could be directly within the zoning ordinance, or as an outside document, for use by planning board and applicants during site plan and project review.

- a. Internal: Include design guidelines as a chapter directly within the zoning (§280-38). This provides stronger footing for enforcing the guidelines, but could limit the flexibility of their use. Nevertheless, some flexibility could be built into the guidelines (e.g., planning board may use judgment).
- b. External: Applicants and the Planning Board would refer to the guidelines during site plan review. The guidelines would serve as a reference piece (similar to Rural Guilderland Guidelines) which could be provided to applicants with projects in the hamlet.

- Continue public outreach. As with any planning project, this plan represents an ongoing process that will continue beyond final plan adoption. Implementation will include a number of short- and long-term

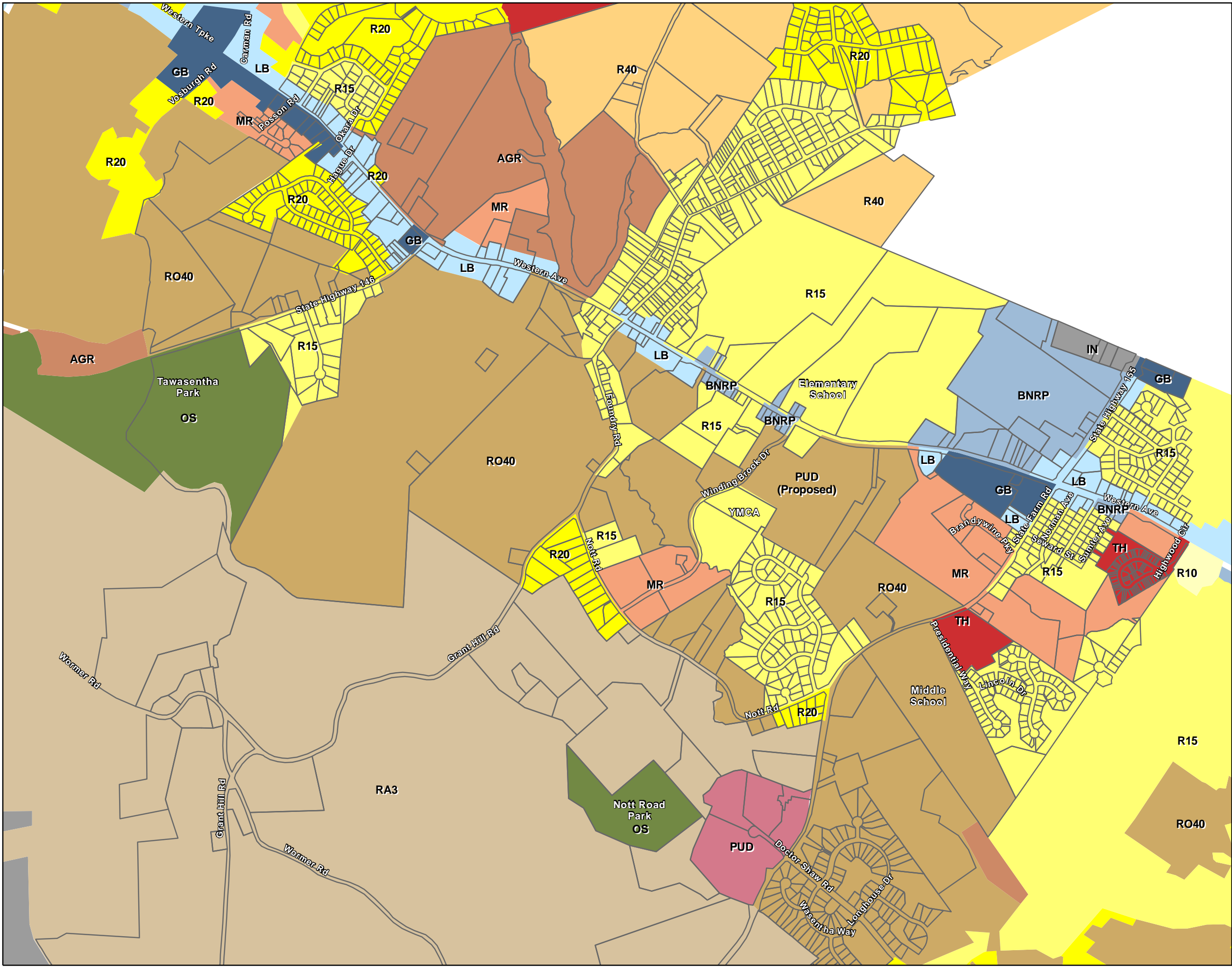
Guilderland Hamlet Neighborhood Master Plan

strategies and projects related to zoning, infrastructure, and conservation. However, continued community outreach should also play an ongoing role. Public participation through informational meetings, surveys, and workshops will ensure that the consensus built during this process is maintained and that implementation can be flexible to meet changing concerns, issues, and opportunities.





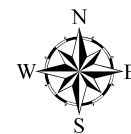
**Guilderland Hamlet
Zoning Classifications**



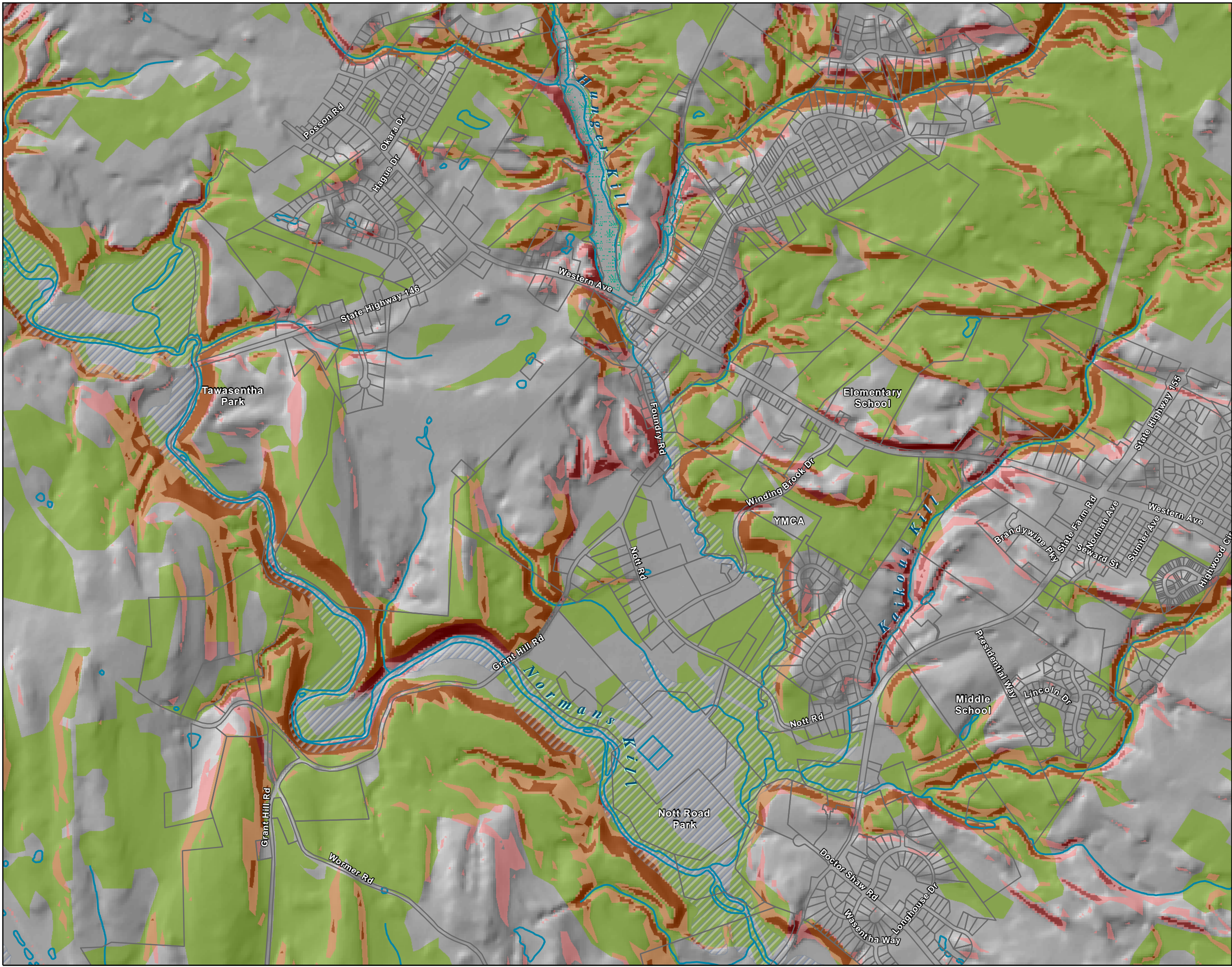
ZONING

- AGR
- BNRP
- GB
- IN
- LB
- MR
- OS
- PUD
- RA3
- R10
- R15
- R20
- R40
- RO40
- TH

Data provided by Town of Guilderland
SCALE: 1:15,840 (1" = 1/4 Mile)



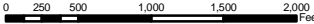
**Guilderland Hamlet
Natural Features**



Legend

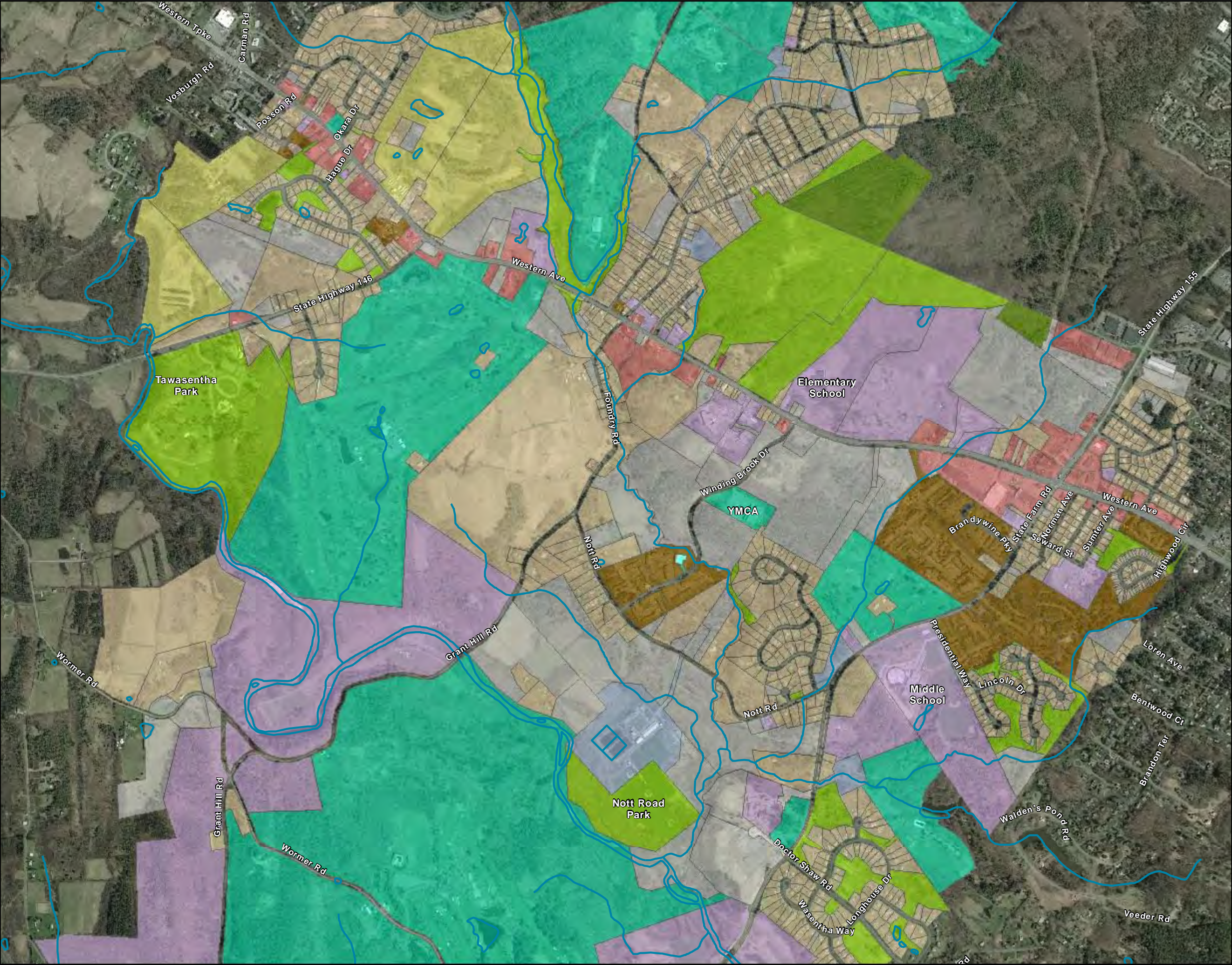
- USGS Mapped Streams
- DEC Wetlands
- 100-year flood zone
- Forest
- Percent Slope**
 - >15%
 - >25%

Base map: 2004 Orthophotography - NYSGIS Clearinghouse
Other data provided by Town of Guilderland
SCALE: 1:15,840 (1" = 1/4 Mile)





Guilderland Hamlet
Land Use Classifications



LEGEND

LAND USE CATEGORY

- UNCLASSIFIED
- AGRICULTURE
- APARTMENTS/M.H. PARK
- COMMERCIAL
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- PARKS & CONSERVATION
- PRIVATE FOREST
- RECREATION
- RESIDENTIAL
- SERVICES
- VACANT
- USGS Streams

Base map: 2004 Orthophotography - NYSGIS Clearinghouse
Other data provided by Town of Guilderland
SCALE: 1:15,840 (1" = 1/4 Mile)

