

*Town of Ira
Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan*



Acknowledgements

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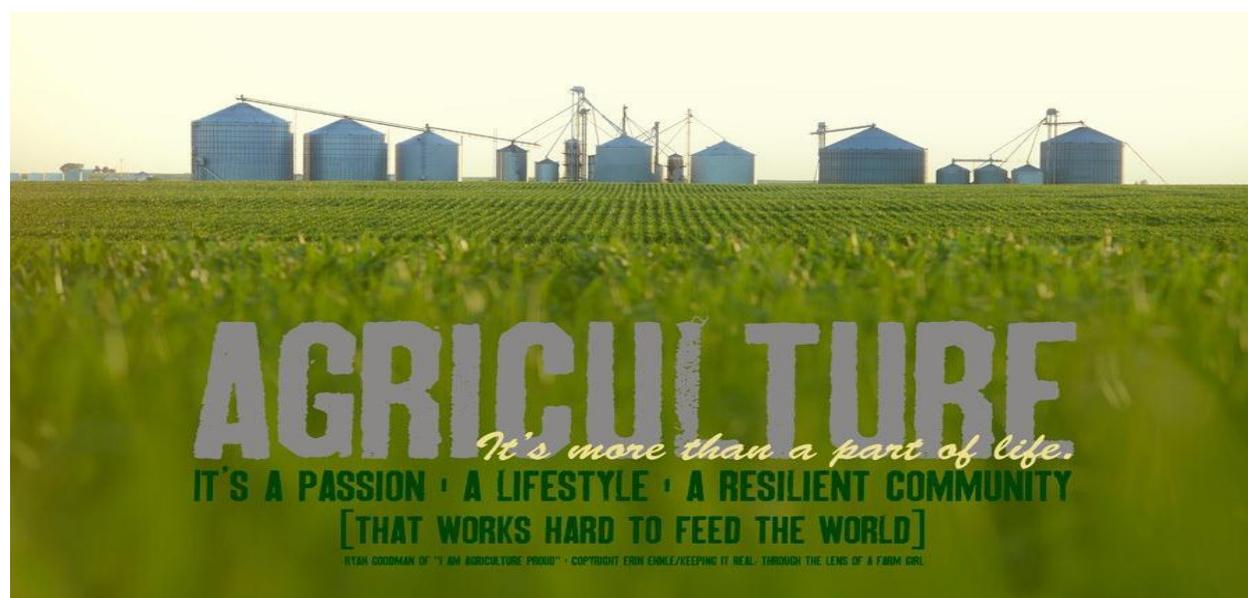
Residents of the Town of Ira

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Preface

The Town of Ira Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan is the result of a community planning effort nearly six years in the making; starting with the development of a Joint Comprehensive Plan with the Town of Cato in 2008. The Town of Ira and the Town of Cato then applied in 2009 to NYS Agriculture and Markets for funding to create a Joint Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. Unfortunately, funding was available for only one community and in 2010 the Town of Cato adopted its own Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. Members of the Ira community were involved in that planning effort much in the same way they were instrumental in the development of the Joint Comprehensive Plan. Funding was once again available from NYS in 2012, and this time the Town of Ira received a grant to develop their own Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. During the years since the Town of Ira had last applied for funding to create this plan, farming activities have thrived in the Town, and farmers have been able to either purchase or lease much of the available agricultural land in the community. Despite this trend, Town leaders recognized that without a plan and strategy in place when commodity prices begin to fall and farmers no longer have the ability to purchase or lease lands to expand their operations, it would be too late to start thinking about what they could do to conserve and protect their farming community. With this document, the Town will be positioned to help farmers and agri-businesses set themselves up for success despite a future downturn in the agricultural economy. It is the hope of community leaders that this document will serve as a guide to help bolster the agricultural economy of the Town, of which a large portion of the community relies on, and create an enhanced farm-friendly environment while still maintaining individual property rights.

The intent of this document is to support agricultural activities and farmers; work with property owners to encourage them to develop and subdivide “smartly” by preserving access to as much farmland as possible while still maintaining their property rights; and to educate the non-farming public about the importance of farming not only in this community but in our region and state as well. Currently, the State’s Right-to-Farm Law applies to parcels in the Town which are in the County’s Agricultural District. In order to further emphasize the importance of agriculture in Ira, a Town wide Right-to-Farm Law which will apply to every parcel in the Town regardless if they are covered by the State’s Law or not is a key recommendation of this plan. The Town Board, the Planning Board nor the Zoning Board of Appeals will not as a result of this plan create any local law to permanently protect or conserve a property owner’s land for farming without their consent. Any and all permanent protections of agricultural lands will be initiated by the property owner his/herself and the Town may provide assistance to said property owner if requested.

The Town of Ira Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan **is not** a Town Law. This document will provide guidance to Town Officials when laws and regulations are updated over time with regards to the needs of the agricultural community. As with the Comprehensive Plan, this document is not meant to be static, but rather evolve and be updated over time with the help of the Town’s Agricultural Advisory Committee as the needs of farmers, trends in the agricultural industry, and development pressures change. This document should also be used as guidance and inspiration for the community to create programs and activities which can improve the agricultural economy in the Town and encourage landowners to think about the future of farming in this community.

Town of Ira Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan: Implementation Matrix

| Objective | | Responsibility | Funding Resources | Priority |
|-----------|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| G1:01 | Establish a Town of Ira Agricultural Advisory Committee to be responsible for implementing and maintaining the Town's Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan. This Committee will also advise the Town Board, the Town Planning Board, and the Town Zoning Board of Appeals as necessary regarding agricultural and farming issues in the Town. | Town Board | Town Funds | Short-Term (Year 1) |
| G1:03 | The Town Planning Board will discourage the fragmentation of currently active and potentially active farmland for other land uses; encourage development on lands within close proximity to the villages during the process of reviewing subdivisions and site plans proposed within the community; and develop a list of farm-friendly development suggestions for property owners to consider when subdividing their property. | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Short-Term (Year 1 then Continuous) |
| G4:01 | Work with landowners and developers to ensure that new development does not impede a farmer's access to land. | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Short-Term (Year 1 then Continuous) |
| G1:04 | Utilize the Farmland Protection Suitability Map to identify parcels which should be conserved through the standard development review process (an application for clustering or incentive zoning); or through the purchase or donation of development rights. | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Short-Term (Year 1 then Continuous) |
| G5:04 | Provide training opportunities for Town officials and the Town assessor about the proper assessment of farm structures and the range of tax abatement measures available for farms and forest owners, including options or local measures. Promote agricultural assessments for all eligible landowners. | Town Board (Work with CCPED to provide training to Board members; and with Cayuga County Office of Real Property Services & NYS Department of Taxation and Finance to provide training and continued education for Town Assessor.) | Town funds | Short-Term (Year 1 and then Annually) |
| G3:02 | To keep local farms farming, encourage local farmers to work with agencies like Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Farm Bureau and NY Farm Link to develop a farm succession plan for the transfer of their agricultural business after their retirement. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (for printing and marketing) | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G3:01 | Encourage individuals in the community to take advantage of the New York Beginning Farmer Loan Program and other grant and loan programs designed to help foster new farming opportunities such as helping first time farmers purchase farmland and equipment. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Account Pilot Program (BFRIDA); USDA Downpayment Farm Ownership Loan Program (DFOWL); Town funds (for printing and marketing) | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G3:03 | Encourage local farmers to take advantage of the Pride of New York program and branding. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (for printing and marketing) | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G2:02 | Establish a local Farmers' Market. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program Grant; USDA Community Facilities Program | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G2:01 | Highlight the agricultural heritage of the Town by encouraging and coordinating local farmers to provide entertainment and on-farm educational programs. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (for marketing) | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G2:03 | Develop a voluntary guide to local farms and a list of active growers- publish both on the Town's website and provide copies for residents and visitors at Town Hall. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G6:04 | Establish an "Old Home Days" and/or a Harvest festival and parade to showcase the history and the future of agriculture in the Town. Encourage local farmers; value added producers; and agritourism businesses to participate. | Agricultural Advisory Committee, Town Board and Town Historian | Town funds and/or School District's funds (possible Harvest Festival at and hosted by the school; work with the Cayuga County Office of Tourism) | Short-Term (1-3 Years) |
| G5:01 | Adopt a Town of Ira Right-to-Farm law to emphasize the importance of farming to the community and to inform land owners that sound agricultural practices are welcomed and encouraged in the Town. | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G4:04 | Create a supportive environment for agriculture and farming by addressing the inconsistencies in the Town's Zoning Law as identified in the farm-friendly audit found in the appendix of this plan; and by adopting the definitions of agriculture and farmland from the Vision of this plan into the Town's Zoning Law. | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G4:05 | Update the Town's Zoning Law to provide a clear purpose statement for the Agricultural/Residential District (AR) where agricultural uses are the preferred land use; incorporating language from the Town's adopted Right-to-Farm Law (see Goal No. 5, Objective No. 1). | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |

Key: G1=Goal #1 O1=Objective #1 (for that goal). See page 19 for a detailed list of goals.

| Objective | | Responsibility | Funding Resources | Priority |
|-----------|--|---|---|---|
| G4:03 | Develop regulations for cluster (open space) subdivisions and/or incentive zoning to encourage development away from farmland. | Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G6:02 | Develop and place signage along the Town borders which publicly supports agriculture and identifies the Town of Ira as a Farm-Friendly Community where Right-to-Farm regulations are in place. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (work with Cayuga County Office of Tourism and NYS DOT) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G3:04 | Encourage new commerce, including progressive energy development, which relies on agriculture and supports agricultural production. | Town Board | USDA Rural Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program; Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA) | Mid to Long-Term (3-10 Years) |
| G3:05 | Promote agricultural processing facilities and small niche processing facilities to improve the presence of compatible industry and agricultural businesses. | Town Board | NYS Ag & Markets Farm to Factory Program; Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA) | Mid to Long-Term (3-10 Years) |
| G3:06 | Foster and encourage new businesses which can support agritourism and environmental education. | Town Board | USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant; USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant; | Mid to Long-Term (3-10 Years) |
| G5:02 | Upgrade road infrastructure to accommodate farming equipment and to mitigate any current or future wear problems on the roadways. Work with farmers to locate and upgrade access drives to farm fields as part of road maintenance projects. | Town Board | Town funds; Cayuga County Highway Department funds; New York State DOT funds/grants | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G5:03 | Coordinate with the County Highway Department and New York State DOT to upgrade and install drainage infrastructure along roadways to help alleviate drainage issues between farm properties and neighboring properties. Work with farmers to identify existing drainage infrastructure and current issues with the drainage system located in public right-of-ways. Work to coordinate legal agreements between property owners and local farmers who wish to establish shared drainage easements to improve the drainage of adjacent fields. | Town Board | Town funds; Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District; Cayuga County Highway Department; New York State DOT | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G2:05 | Work with local businesses and organizations to develop a scholarship fund to assist local farmers seeking to attend agricultural and leadership workshops and programs. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Town funds (Board member and staff time) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years)** **To go hand in hand with Goal #2 Objective #4. |
| G2:04 | Encourage local farmers to participate in leadership and agricultural education programs such as the LEAD New York program, in order to promote leadership and innovation for the continued success of agriculture in the Town and the Region. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Designated Scholarship fund*. *The result of Goal #2 Objective #5. | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G6:03 | Work with the Cato-Meridian School District to develop a mentoring program to introduce students to working farms and teach them about the benefits of and need for local farming. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | USDA Farm to School Grants Program; NYS Ag & Markets Farm to School Program | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G6:05 | Encourage local farmers to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure farming practices help protect local surface and ground water quality. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | USDA Agricultural Management Assistance Program; Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District; Town funds (for marketing) | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G4:02 | Adopt the "Guidelines for Agricultural Mitigation for Wind Power Projects" developed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to manage the location of wind generators so that they are away from active farmland or located towards the edge of fields and tillage acreage; and adopt similar language for cellular towers. | Town Planning Board and Town Board | Town funds | Mid-Term (3-5 Years) |
| G1:02 | Work with local members of the agricultural community to encourage individual farmers to secure funding for farmland protection. | Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board | Private funds from land owners; American Farmland Trust; Finger Lakes Land Trust; USDA Conservation Loan and Loan Guarantee Program; USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program; New York State Conservation Easement Tax Credit; and the Federal Conservation Easement Tax Incentive Program | Long-Term (5-10 Years) |
| G6:01 | Conduct a feasibility study for utilizing the New York State Scenic Byways Program to promote agritourism along State Routes 176, 370 and 34. | Town Board | New York State Scenic Byways Program (80% reimbursable grant); Town funds (hire a consultant and work with the Cayuga County Office of Tourism) | Long-Term (5-10 Years) |
| G1:05 | Ensure that any future infrastructure planning efforts address the constraints imposed by the New York State Agricultural District Program (i.e. imposing lateral restrictions on water lines). | Town Board | Town funds; New York State Drinking Water State Revolving Fund | Long-Term (5-10 Years) |

Key: G1=Goal #1 O1=Objective #1 (for that goal). See page 19 for a detailed list of goals.

Introduction

Agriculture has been the heart and soul of Ira, New York since the Town was founded on March 16, 1821. The community has a rich history in farming starting with small family homesteads leading to several agricultural industries which processed and shipped everything from tobacco, eggs, milk, cheese and nutritional bars over the past 192 years. While the intensity of production of value added agricultural products has waned over the years, farming is still the largest land use in Ira, covering over 72% of the total acreage in the Town. The importance that the Town places on agriculture was made evident during the joint Comprehensive Planning process for the Town of Cato and the Town of Ira. The plan identifies “the preservation of active farmland and rural character” as one of the primary goals for the Town. Another goal of the Comprehensive Plan for Ira is the maintenance of “the viability of agriculture within the community as an integral part of the local economy and an important land use activity to sustain future generations.”

“Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to it's liberty and interests by the most lasting bands.”

~Thomas Jefferson



There are several land use trends and economic conditions which have led to the need for farmland protection strategies in Ira including: 1) an 11% increase in population from 1990 to 2010; 2) single-family residential development pressure on farmlands adjacent to the Town limits from the neighboring Town of Lysander; 3) highway and bridge improvements which have resulted in a shorter commute to the City of Syracuse which has made the Town more attractive for development; 4) the lack of clear land use policies addressing the fragmentation of farmland; 5) development of lands critical to surface and groundwater supplies which the local farming industry relies upon; and 6) the unique nature of the Town's topography which is typified by glacial drumlins and complicates efforts to preserve large tracks of contiguous farmland.

A key strategy for determining the focus for the goals and objectives of this plan was to perform a "Farm-Friendly Audit" on the Town's existing Zoning Code, Local Laws and Regulations as well as previous planning efforts. Table 1 below highlights some of the findings from this exercise with regards to the Town's Zoning Law and other Local Laws. The complete audit, which also includes a review of the Joint Comprehensive Plan, is included in the appendix beginning on page 40. This Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan takes the Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies of the Comprehensive Plan, as it relates to agriculture and farming, a step further by developing an actionable plan to preserve not only farmland but the identity of the Town of Ira as a thriving farming community for generations to come.

*"Agriculture not only gives riches to a nation, but the only riches she can call her own."
~Samuel Johnson*

| Highlights from the Farm-Friendly Audit of the Town Zoning Code | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Areas of Conflict | | Areas Supporting Agriculture | |
| §400,A,2,a & §1000,B | Regulations for commercial activity on farms conflicts with the definition of a Farm and Garden Retail Stand. | §801,A,3 | Signs are permitted for commercial sales on agricultural parcels. |
| §1000,B | Definition of a Farm- the acreage requirement conflicts with NYSDAM which does not have the same limitations | §802,B | Height limitations do not apply to farm structures. |
| §400,A,2,b §400,A,2,c & §400,A,4 | Pertaining to farming operations and setbacks- these requirements could be burdensome to farmers and they conflict with the exemption in §401,B. | §904,A | All applications requiring review and approval by the Town Board, Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals must include an Agricultural Data Statement. |
| §400,A,7 & §400,A,8,b | Storage structures and junk-placing a limit on what can be used for storage on a farm as well as the number of inoperable vehicles conflicts with NYSDAM policies which state that farmers should be allowed to utilize anything necessary (unless hazardous to public health, safety and welfare) to further their agricultural operations. | §5 of the Noise Law | Agricultural Practices are Exempt |

Table 1



Agricultural Operations in Ira

The number of farms and farming operation types has remained fairly level over the past 15 years¹. The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts an agricultural census every five years when the number and types of farming operations across the country is collected. Table 2 shows the modest change in the farming culture in Ira between 1997 and 2007 (2012 data is not yet available) as reported to the USDA NASS through their census process.

| Operation Type | 1997 | 2002 | 2007 |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Cattle | 7 | 9 | 5 |
| Crops | 18 | 15 | 16 |
| Dairy | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| Livestock | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Vegetables | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Total Farms | 28 | 24 | 26 |

Table 2



"Bring diversity back to agriculture. That's what made it work in the first place."

~David R. Brower

In the Town of Ira, there are a total of 87 farm operations currently utilizing a total of 345 parcels for agricultural production. Of these parcels, 110 are rented in whole or in part to local farmers. The remaining 235 parcels (10529.21 acres) are owned and operated by local farmers. In January 2013, during the Cayuga County Agricultural District Consolidation process, 56% of the farmers in Ira responded to an Agricultural District Review Sheet which requested data on the location, size and type of farm operations on both farmer owned properties and land rented from others. Analysis of these data along with personal interviews, the personal knowledge of members of the Town of Ira Agricultural Planning Committee, and a visual survey of the Town has resulted in the preparation of the following table and map which represents a snapshot in time of the current agricultural climate in Ira.



1. The United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA NASS) conducts a Census of Agriculture every five years. The data is reported for a number of geography levels including national, state, county and zip code levels. Zip code level data is the most appropriate level to use when looking at agricultural trends in the Town of Ira. Throughout the Town there are four zip codes: 13207 (Baldwinsville), 13074 (Hannibal), 13033 (Cato) and 13111 (Martville). The fact that none of the four zip codes are exclusively in the town poses a challenge – what part of the data that is reported in the zip code is in the Town of Ira? In order to deal with this challenge the data for each zip code was normalized using population. That is, to normalize using population the numbers reported for each zip code were multiplied by the ratio of Ira residents in the zip code to the total population in the zip code. This method was used to report town-scale data from the USDA NASS Census of Agriculture.



| Current Farm Operation Types in Ira ² | | |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| Operation Type | # of Farms* | # of Parcels |
| Agricultural** | 30 | 34 |
| Apiary | 1 | 1 |
| Cash Crops | 25 | 109 |
| Christmas Trees | 1 | 1 |
| Dairy | 12 | 95 |
| Hay | 10 | 58 |
| Horse Farm | 7 | 8 |
| Livestock | 11 | 48 |
| Lumber | 1 | 2 |
| Orchard | 4 | 9 |
| Poultry | 7 | 10 |
| Vegetables | 10 | 13 |
| Vineyard | 1 | 2 |
| Total: | 120 | 390 |

Table 3

"Life on a farm is a school of patience; you can't hurry the crops or make an ox in two days."

~Henri Alain

*Many farms are engaged in more than one operation type and therefore the totals for each category add up to more than the 87 farms and the 235 parcels (10,529.21 acres) owned and operated by local farmers in the Town of Ira.

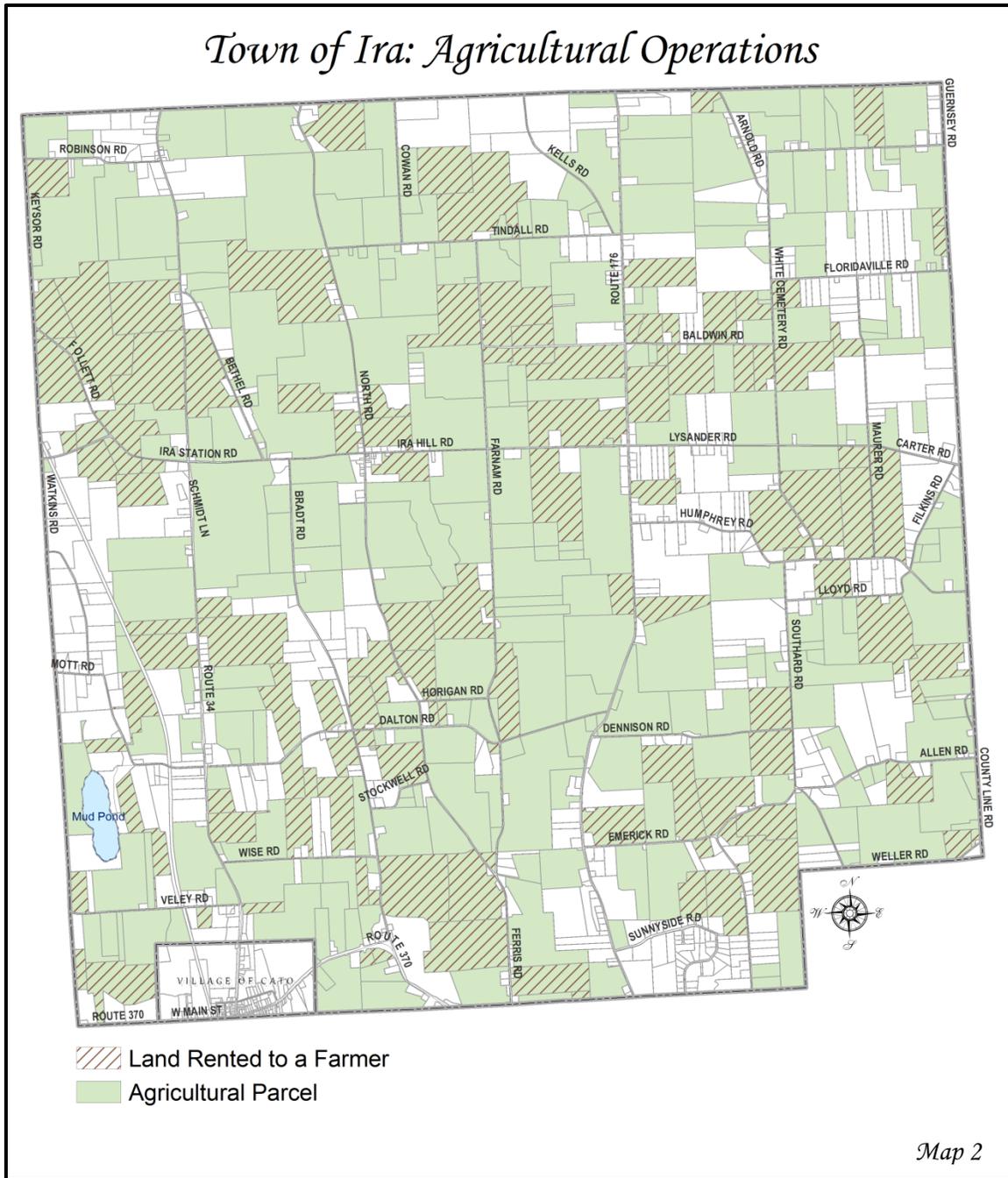
**Specific farming activity unknown.



2. Data was collected from the Agricultural District Review Sheets returned to the Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development (CCPED) between January 30, 2013 and March 1, 2013; from personal interviews of farmers conducted by Kari Terwilliger from CCPED between June 19, 2013 and August 1, 2013; a visual "windshield" survey of the Town; and information provided by the Town of Ira Agricultural Planning Committee.



The map below (Map 2) depicts the location of current active farmland (both owned and operated by local farmers and lands owned by non-farmers which are rented to local farmers) in the Town of Ira. As previously mentioned, farmland in Ira is already somewhat fragmented and farmers needing additional lands to raise livestock and crops often have to travel several miles between their primary farm location and the rest of their owned or rented parcels.



Farmland Protection Suitability Analysis

Farmland protection suitability analysis is one tool typically used to determine, objectively, which agricultural lands in a community should be protected. This analysis is most often used to evaluate applications for Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs. There have been few applicants for the Cayuga County PDR program in the past for parcels in the Town of Ira; and none were approved. A PDR program, either in coordination with the Cayuga County program or instituted by the Town of Ira, may become appealing to some property owners in the future as the agricultural industry evolves. The suitability analysis for PDR is also useful as a guide for other farmland protection programs and policies.

It is this analysis, along with recommendations from the joint Comprehensive Plan, which have helped shape the Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies of this Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan. It will also guide the Town of Ira Agricultural Advisory Committee as they pursue adoption and completion of these strategies. The final suitability map highlights the current agricultural parcels, which in the areas described below, scored the highest and therefore can be considered to be some of the most viable and productive agricultural lands in the Town.

There are several factors in the farmland protection suitability analysis which combine to ultimately create a composite index of weighted scores based on the series of land attributes described below. Each agricultural parcel in Ira has received a score from 0-100, with 100 being the most suitable for protection. A complete listing of index values can be found in the appendix of this plan. The five criteria used to determine suitability index values are:

- Proximity to the following natural resources
 - * Mud Pond
 - * Streams
 - * Aquifers
 - * Wetlands
- Proximity to protected farmland (PDR parcels)
- Parcel size
- Percentage of the parcel in agricultural use
- Quality of soils for agricultural production on the parcel

"The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale, and pays the freight both ways."

~John F. Kennedy

These same criteria are the criteria from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Program (FPIG) which provides grants to help fund the purchase of development rights.

The first step in conducting a farmland protection suitability analysis is to identify and refine specifically which parcels will be analyzed. For the Town of Ira, all parcels which met the following criteria were chosen:

- Received and Agricultural Tax Exemption in either 2012 or 2013
- 100 Series and 241 property tax classification codes
- Identified as being farmed on returned Agricultural District Review Sheets
- Identified as being farmed by the Ira Agricultural Planning Committee
- Appeared to be tilled or under cultivation on the 2011 orthographic aerial imagery



Agricultural Parcels

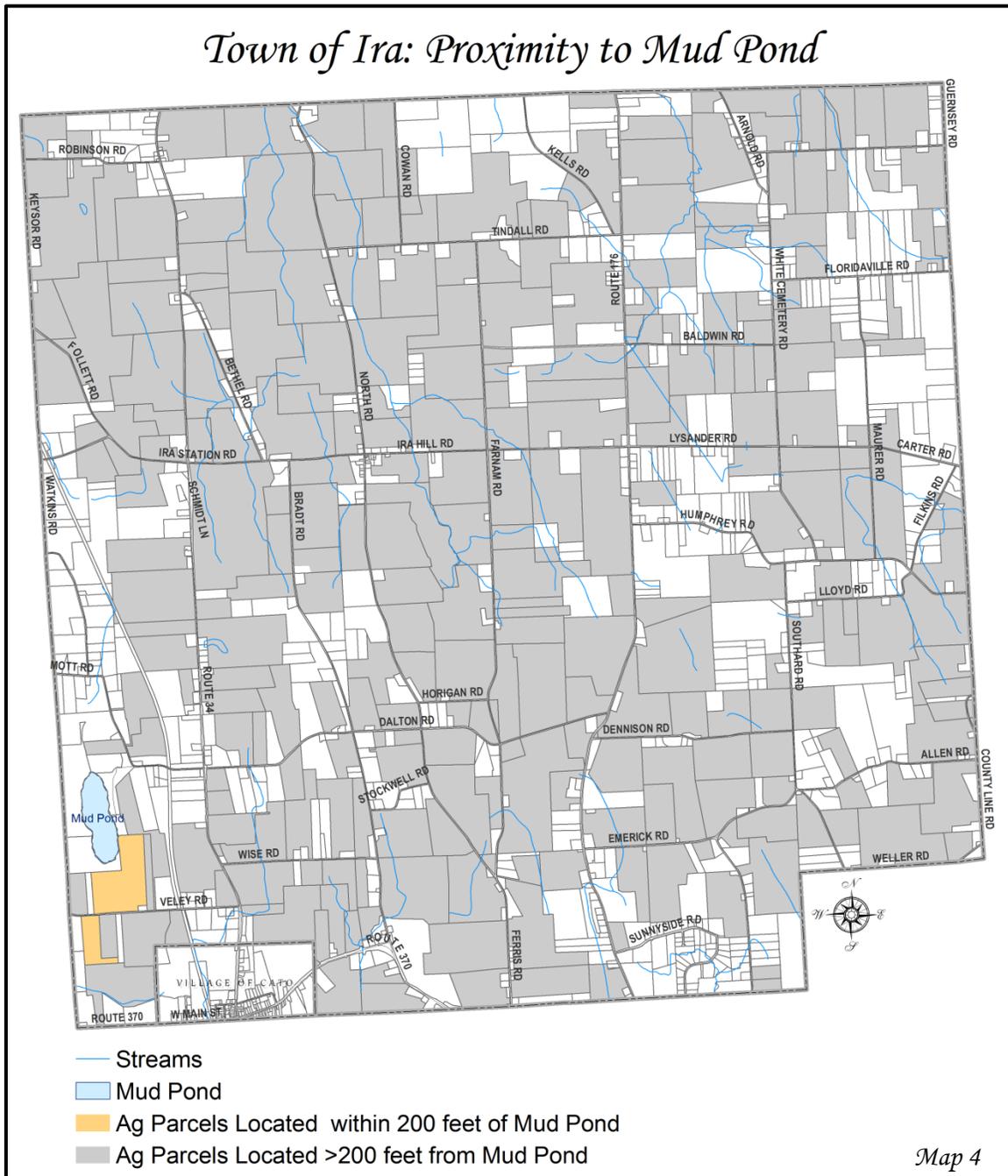
From this extensive list, all parcels which were less than 10 acres in area and more than 50 feet from a road were eliminated from the analysis. Map 3 shows the 245 remaining Agricultural parcels totaling 14,796.04 acres which, prior to any further analysis, appear to have the greatest potential for development pressure: large parcels with road frontage.

"In no other country do so few people produce so much food, to feed so many, at such reasonable prices."
~President Dwight D. Eisenhower

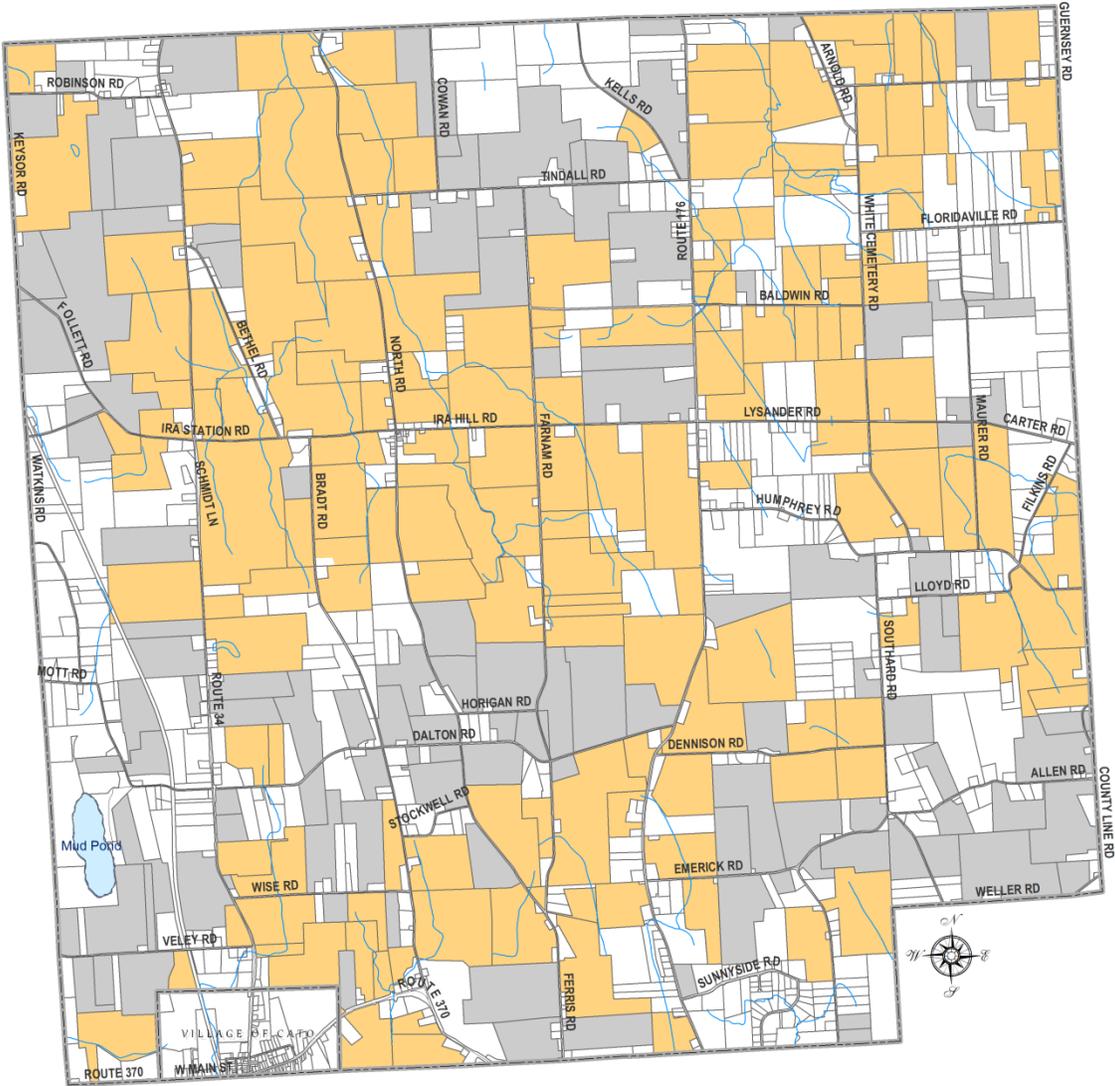


Criteria 1: Proximity to Natural Resources (5% Weight)

There are four factors in determining the weighted index value for an agricultural parcel's proximity to natural resources. All parcels which are located within 200 feet of Mud Pond, streams, aquifers and wetlands were selected. A 0-100 scale was then applied to each parcel. For example, a parcel which is not within 200 feet of any of the four resources scored a 0 while a parcel which is within 200 feet of three of the resources scored a 75. Maps 4 through 7 illustrate this analysis.



Town of Ira: Proximity to a Stream

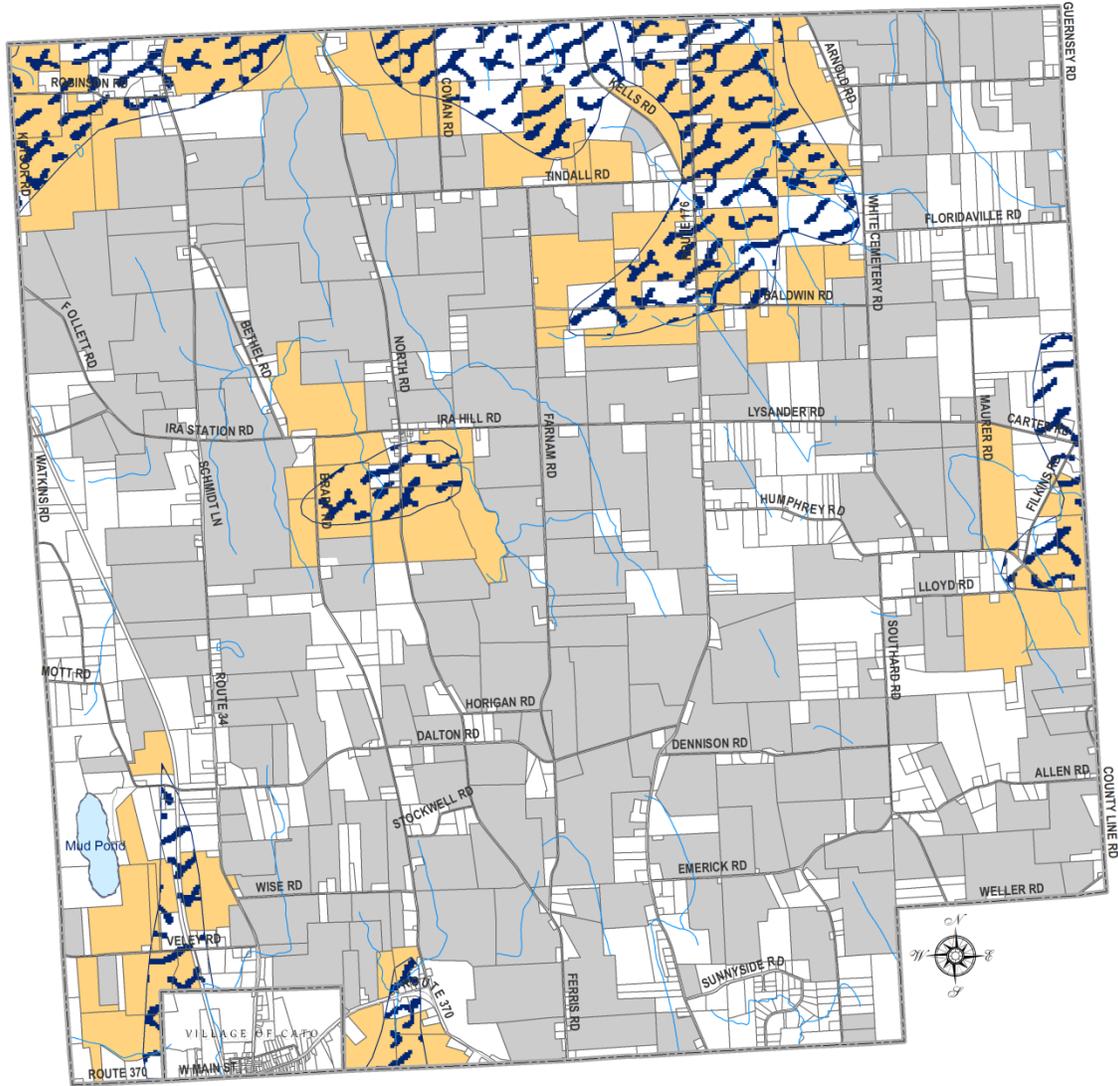


- Streams
- Ag Parcels Located within 200 feet of a Stream
- Ag Parcels Located >200 feet from a Stream

Map 5



Town of Ira: Proximity to Aquifers

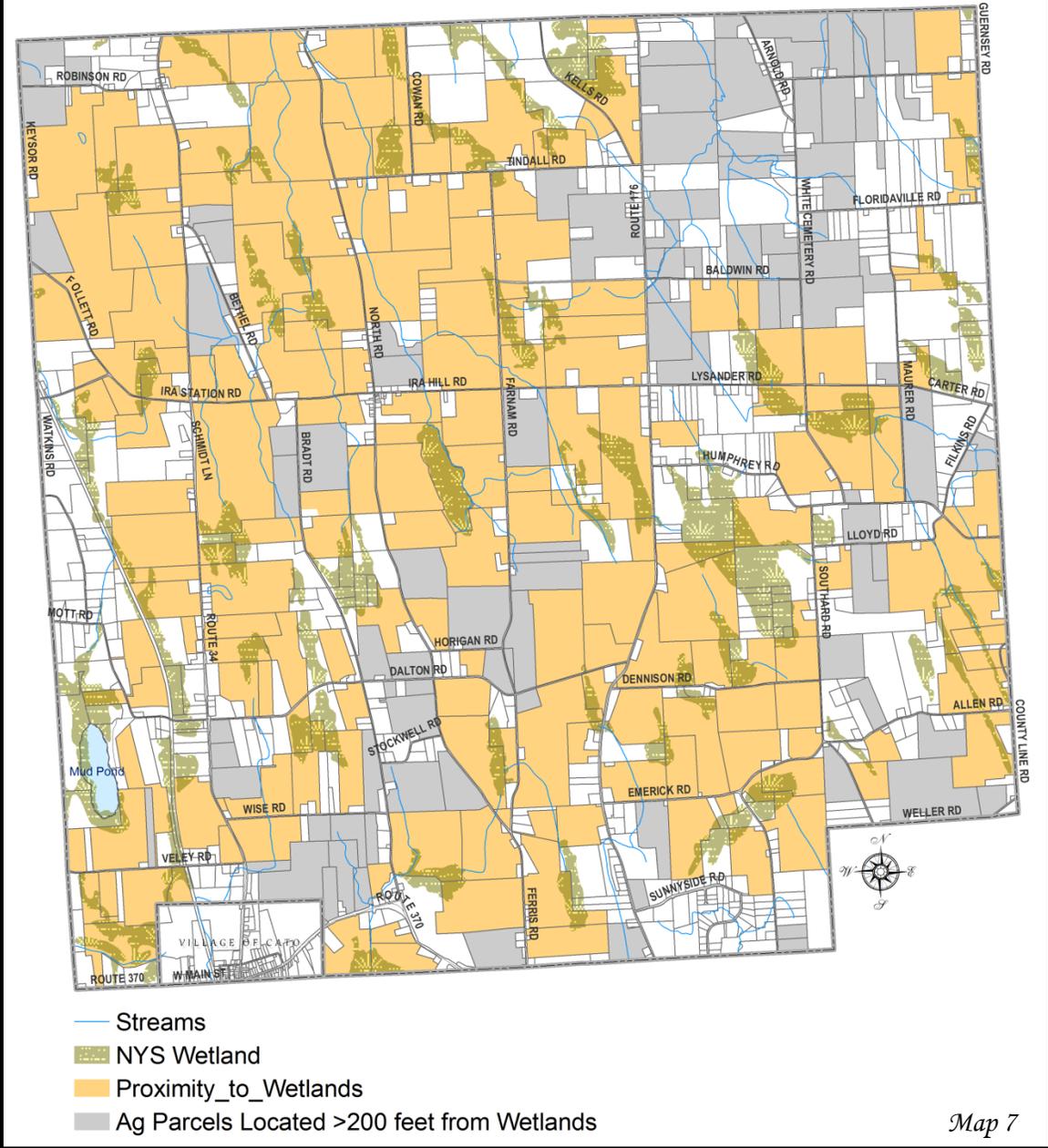


-  Streams
-  Unconsolidated Aquifer
-  Ag Parcels Located within 200 feet of an Aquifer
-  Ag Parcels Located >200 feet from an Aquifer

Map 6

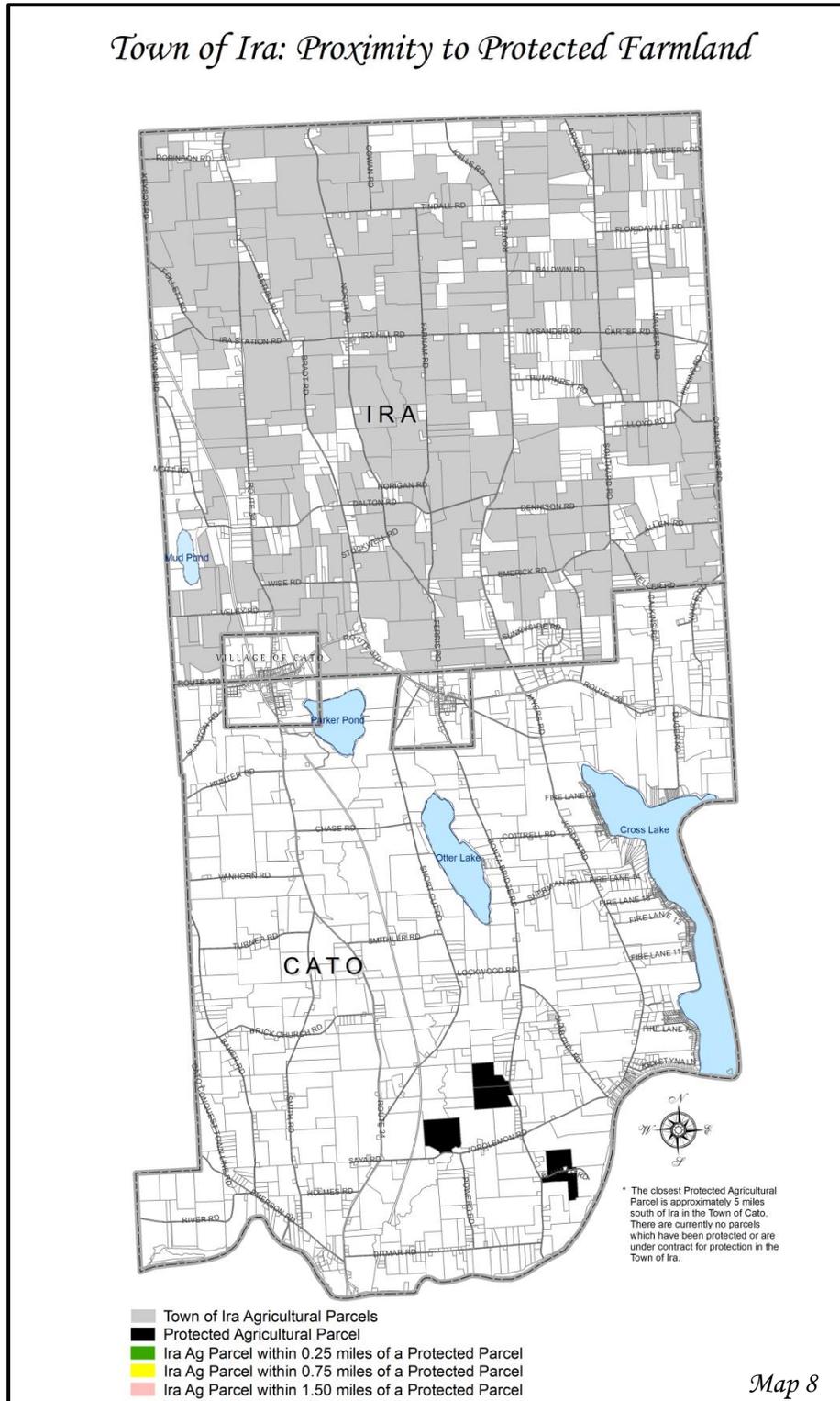


Town of Ira: Proximity to Wetlands



Criteria 2: Proximity to Protected Farmland (10% Weight)

Currently the Town of Ira has no parcels which have been permanently protected through a PDR program. The closest protected parcels are in the Town of Cato as shown on Map 8 below. Therefore, all parcels received a score of zero for this analysis criteria.



Criteria 3: Parcel Size (15% Weight)

For the two most prevalent types of agriculture in Ira, dairies and cash crops, larger contiguous parcels of land are preferred for successful operation by farmers over smaller fragmented ones. The size, in acres, of each agricultural parcel was calculated using GIS software. The parcels were then grouped into categories with the largest 20% of the parcels in the highest category (Map 9).



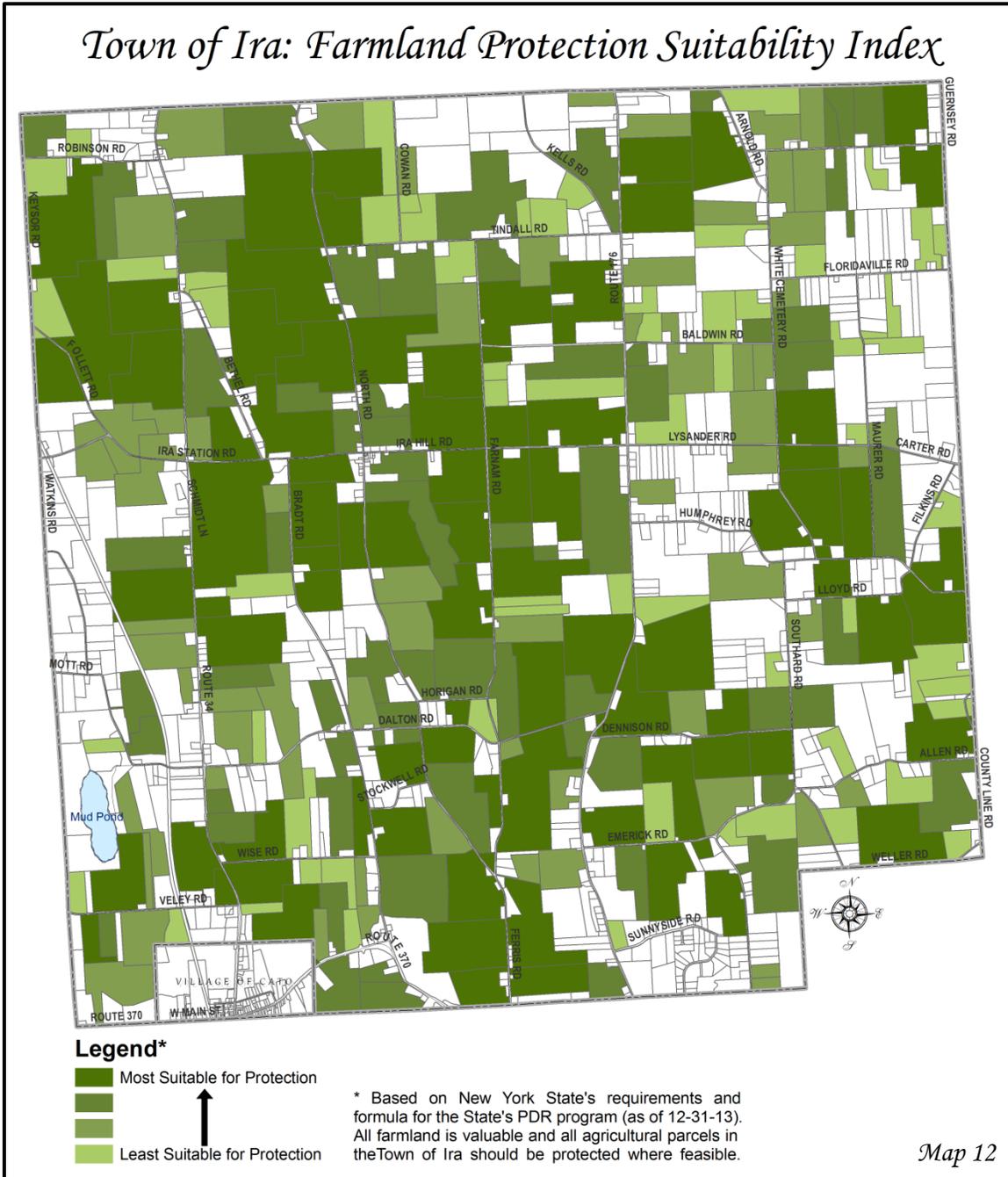
Criteria 5: Quality of Soils for Agricultural Production in the Parcel (45% Weight)

As previously stated, there are several different soil types and soil conditions across the Town of Ira. Some of these soils, as indicated by their Agricultural Assessment Value, are more productive than others. For this analysis the attributes of each soil type on a parcel were identified and the acreage of each soil type was calculated. Then the agricultural assessment values for each parcel were calculated by multiplying the acreage of each soil type by the corresponding assessment value of each soil type and adding together the resulting values. The data was then classified into categories and Map 11 shows the productivity of the soils on each parcel with the highest 10% of the values being the most productive.



Farmland Protection Suitability Index

The final Farmland Protection Suitability Index (Map 12) classifies the agricultural parcels in Ira on a scale of most suitable for protection to least suitable for protection. Of the 245 parcels and 14,796.04 acres analyzed, 61 parcels totaling 7,029.29 acres received the highest suitability scores and therefore were determined to be the most suitable for protection. These top scoring parcels make up 48% of the total agricultural acreage analyzed for farmland protection. Only 1,693.99 acres (11%) received the lowest suitability scores (the lightest shading on the map). It is the intention that this map will be used as a guide, but not necessarily the only tool, in determining future land use decisions and how agriculture and farming will be protected in the Town of Ira.



Vision for the Future of Agriculture in the Town of Ira

The Town of Ira regards agriculture as the highest and best use of land in the Town. Agriculture has historically been the largest and most important industry in the Town and will continue to be in the future. The Town of Ira will proactively support agriculture by working to retain valuable farmland and support the vibrant farming community by providing opportunities for agricultural businesses to develop and grow. The strength of the farming community will continue to enhance the lives of the residents in the Town.

Definitions of Agriculture & Farmland

Agriculture in the Town of Ira is:

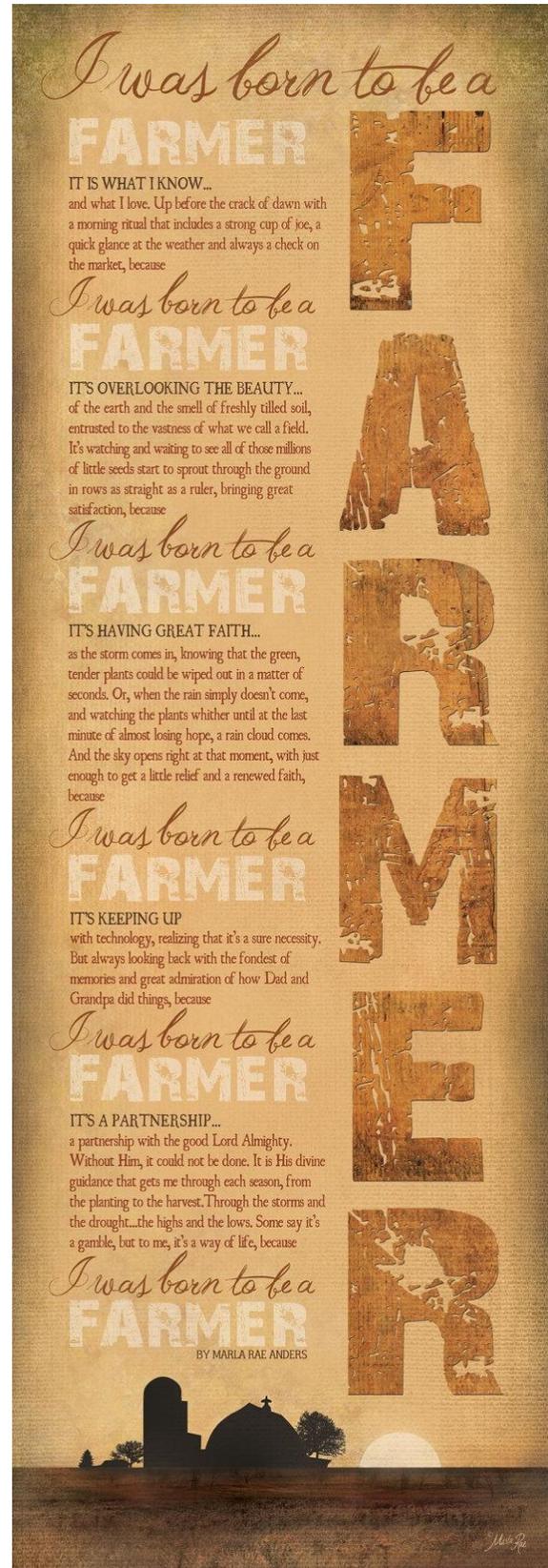
The use of land and local resources for the production of food, fiber, fuel and for agritourism activities including but not limited to: the raising, harvesting, and selling of crops; or feeding (including grazing), breeding, managing, selling, or producing livestock, poultry, fur-bearing animals or honeybees; or by dairying and the sale of dairy products; or by any other aquacultural, floricultural, horticultural, silvicultural or viticultural use; by animal husbandry, agricultural support industries, or by any combination thereof. It also includes the use of land for the primary purpose of stabling or training equines including, but not limited to, providing riding lessons, training clinics and schooling shows.

Farmland in the Town of Ira is:

Land which is currently used for crop production, pasture, farmstead, field drainage and irrigation infrastructure, or conservation; and land which is not currently in use for but, is suitable for these purposes in the future. For example, idle farmland.

Agricultural Practices in the Town of Ira are:

Those practices necessary for the on-farm production, preparation and marketing of agricultural commodities. Examples of such practices include, but are not limited to, operation of farm equipment, proper use of agricultural chemicals and other crop production methods, and construction and use of farm structures.



Goals for Farmland Conservation and Protection

The Town of Ira has identified six main goals for farmland protection in the Town. These goals are expanded upon in the next section with detailed objectives and implementation strategies.

- 1. The Town of Ira will work to conserve and protect agricultural lands currently in operation as well as idle farmland for future generations.*
- 2. The Town of Ira will reaffirm its rich agricultural heritage by strengthening its identity as an agricultural community, engaging the non-farming community to support its local farms, and by becoming an example of agricultural excellence to municipalities across New York State.*
- 3. The Town of Ira will support future economic opportunities in the Town which will arise from increased agricultural production, value-added production, agritourism and other agricultural related businesses.*
- 4. The Town of Ira will ensure that local regulations and permit procedures are in line with New York State Agriculture and Markets Law and are supportive and protective of agricultural activities.*
- 5. The Town of Ira will protect and maintain the attractiveness and unique rural character of the community by establishing itself as a Farm-Friendly Town.*
- 6. The Town of Ira will promote an increased awareness of the significance that agriculture and farming have in the daily lives of its residents.*

TOP 10 BEST PARTS OF BEING A FARMER:

10. Feeding the World

American farmers ship more than \$100 Billion of their crops and products around the world.

9. Harvest

The indescribable feeling of bringing in the fruits of your labor.

8. Security

Knowing that agriculture is the one industry that will never go away.

7. Working Outside

The feeling of the air, sun, rain, snow and the earth beneath your feet.

6. Being Your Own Boss

Working on my own schedule, following my passion, and increased family time.

5. Community

Working with some of the friendliest people and most supportive communities in the world.

4. Working with Animals

and driving tractors.

3. Getting Messy

Getting dirt under your fingernails and stuck to every bead of sweat on your brow...and knowing that you put in a hard day of work.

2. Family

Working with family day in and day out and raising a family on the farm.

1. Land

Caring for the land and taking on responsibility for one of our most precious resources.

www.americasfarmers.com



Objectives and Implementation Strategies

GOAL # 1: *The Town of Ira will work to conserve and protect agricultural lands currently in operation as well as idle farmland for future generations.*

1. Establish a Town of Ira Agricultural Advisory Committee to be responsible for implementing and maintaining the Town's Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan. This Committee will also advise the Town Board, the Town Planning Board, and the Town Zoning Board of Appeals as necessary regarding agricultural and farming issues in the Town.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds

Priority- Short-Term (Year 1)

2. Work with local members of the agricultural community to encourage individual farmers to secure funding for farmland protection.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Private funds from land owners; American Farmland Trust; Finger Lakes Land Trust; USDA Conservation Loan and Loan Guarantee Program; USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program; New York State Conservation Easement Tax Credit; and the Federal Conservation Easement Tax Incentive Program

Priority- Long-Term (5-10 Years)

3. The Town Planning Board will discourage the fragmentation of currently active and potentially active farmland for other land uses; encourage development on lands within close proximity to the villages during the process of reviewing subdivisions and site plans proposed within the community; and develop a list of farm-friendly development suggestions for property owners to consider when subdividing their property.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Short-Term (Year 1 then Continuous)

4. Utilize the Farmland Protection Suitability Map to identify parcels which should be conserved through the standard development review process (an application for clustering or incentive zoning); or through the purchase or donation of development rights.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Short-Term (Year 1 then Continuous)

5. Ensure that any future infrastructure planning efforts address the constraints imposed by the New York State Agricultural District Program (i.e. imposing lateral restrictions on water lines).

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds; New York State Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

Priority- Long-Term (5-10 Years)

"The land too poor for any other crop, is best for raising men."

~R. Pocock

"If a farm comes up for sale it should be sold as a farm and you shouldn't be able to subdivide it; or allow only a small section to be used for development. Keep established farms farming."

~Town of Ira Farmer

"Good agricultural soils should be preserved so that future generations can cash crop, or dairy, or berry. Because once you build a house on it, you've lost it."

~Town of Ira Farmer

"Institute a Main Street Redevelopment Program to incentivize infill and development in the Villages and Hamlets and keep development away from farms."

~Town of Ira Resident



GOAL # 2: *The Town of Ira will reaffirm its rich agricultural heritage by strengthening its identity as an agricultural community, engaging the non-farming community to support its local farms, and by becoming an example of agricultural excellence to municipalities across New York State.*

"The first farmer was the first man. All historic nobility rests on the possession and use of land."
~Ralph Waldo Emerson

1. Highlight the agricultural heritage of the Town by encouraging and coordinating local farmers to provide entertainment and on-farm educational programs.

Implementation:
Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board
Funding Resources- Town funds (for marketing)
Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

2. Establish a local Farmers' Market.

Implementation:
Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board
Funding Resources- USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program Grant; USDA Community Facilities Program
Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

"I know of no pursuit in which more real and important services can be rendered to any country than by improving its agriculture, its breed of useful animals, and other branches of a husbandman's cares."
~George Washington

3. Develop a voluntary guide to local farms and a list of active growers-publish both on the Town's website and provide copies for residents and visitors at Town Hall.

Implementation:
Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board
Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)
Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

4. Encourage local farmers to participate in leadership and agricultural education programs such as the LEAD New York program, in order to promote leadership and innovation for the continued success of agriculture in the Town and the Region.

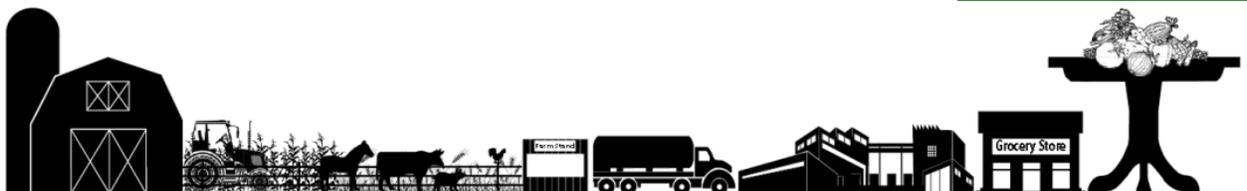
"Agriculture equals feeding people."
~Town of Ira Farmer

Implementation:
Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board
Funding Resources- Designated Scholarship fund*.
Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)
*The result of Objective #5 below.

5. Work with local businesses and organizations to develop a scholarship fund to assist local farmers seeking to attend agricultural and leadership workshops and programs.

Implementation:
Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board
Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)
Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)**
**To go hand in hand with Objective #4 above.

"I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words, but of deeds - in achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years."
~E.M. Tiffany



GOAL # 3: *The Town of Ira will support future economic opportunities in the Town which will arise from increased agricultural production, value-added production, agritourism and other agricultural related businesses.*

"Agriculture means a lot to me, it's important. I like living in farm country in a rural area with rural character."
~Town of Ira Farmer

1. Encourage individuals in the community to take advantage of the New York Beginning Farmer Loan Program and other grant and loan programs designed to help foster new farming opportunities such as helping first time farmers purchase farmland and equipment.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Account Pilot Program (BFRIDA); USDA Downpayment Farm Ownership Loan Program (DFOWL); Town funds (for printing and marketing)

Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

2. To keep local farms farming, encourage local farmers to work with agencies like Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Farm Bureau and NY Farm Link to develop a farm succession plan for the transfer of their agricultural business after their retirement.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (for printing and marketing)

Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

3. Encourage local farmers to take advantage of the Pride of New York program and branding.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (for printing and marketing)

Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

"I don't consider myself to be a farmer. I'm a gardener on steroids."
~Town of Ira Farmer

4. Encourage new commerce, including progressive energy development, which relies on agriculture and supports agricultural production.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- USDA Rural Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program; Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA)

Priority- Mid to Long-Term (3-10 Years)

5. Promote agricultural processing facilities and small niche processing facilities to improve the presence of compatible industry and agricultural businesses.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- NYS Ag & Markets Farm to Factory Program; Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA)

Priority- Mid to Long-Term (3-10 Years)

6. Foster and encourage new businesses which can support agritourism and environmental education.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant; USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant;

Priority- Mid to Long-Term (3-10 Years)

"Prosperous farmers mean more employment, more prosperity for the workers and the business men of every industrial area in the whole country."
~Franklin D. Roosevelt



GOAL # 4: *The Town of Ira will ensure that local regulations and permit procedures are in line with New York State Agriculture and Markets Law and are supportive and protective of agricultural activities.*

1. Work with landowners and developers to ensure that new development does not impede a farmer's access to land.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Short-Term (Year 1 then Continuous)

2. Adopt the "Guidelines for Agricultural Mitigation for Wind Power Projects" developed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to manage the location of wind generators so that they are away from active farmland or located towards the edge of fields and tillage acreage; and adopt similar language for cellular towers.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board and Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

3. Develop regulations for cluster (open space) subdivisions and/or incentive zoning to encourage development away from farmland.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

4. Create a supportive environment for agriculture and farming by addressing the inconsistencies in the Town's Zoning Law as identified in the farm-friendly audit found in the appendix of this plan; and by adopting the definitions of agriculture and farmland from the Vision of this plan into the Town's Zoning Law.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

5. Update the Town's Zoning Law to provide a clear purpose statement for the Agricultural/Residential District (AR) where agricultural uses are the preferred land use; incorporating language from the Town's adopted Right-to-Farm Law (see Goal No. 5, Objective No. 1).

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

"I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as they are chiefly agricultural."

~Thomas Jefferson

"Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

~William Jennings Bryan

"Make it easier for farmers to farm by limiting new housing and encouraging farms to stay farms."

~Town of Ira Farmer



GOAL # 5: *The Town of Ira will protect and maintain the attractiveness and unique rural character of the community by establishing itself as a Farm-Friendly Town.*

1. Adopt a Town of Ira Right-to-Farm law to emphasize the importance of farming to the community and to inform land owners that sound agricultural practices are welcomed and encouraged in the Town.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Planning Board, Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (Board member and staff time)

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

2. Upgrade road infrastructure to accommodate farming equipment and to mitigate any current or future wear problems on the roadways. Work with farmers to locate and upgrade access drives to farm fields as part of road maintenance projects.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds; Cayuga County Highway Department funds; New York State DOT funds/grants

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

3. Coordinate with the County Highway Department and New York State DOT to upgrade and install drainage infrastructure along roadways to help alleviate drainage issues between farm properties and neighboring properties. Work with farmers to identify existing drainage infrastructure and current issues with the drainage system located in public right-of-ways. Work to coordinate legal agreements between property owners and local farmers who wish to establish shared drainage easements to improve the drainage of adjacent fields.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds; Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District; Cayuga County Highway Department; New York State DOT

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

4. Provide training opportunities for Town officials and the Town assessor about the proper assessment of farm structures and the range of tax abatement measures available for farms and forest owners, including options or local measures. Promote agricultural assessments for all eligible landowners.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board (Work with CCPED to provide training to Board members; and with Cayuga County Office of Real Property Services & NYS Department of Taxation and Finance to provide training and continued education for Town Assessor.)

Funding Resources- Town funds

Priority- Short-Term (Year 1 and then Annually)

"In fact, because of their connection to the land, farmers do more to protect and preserve our environment than almost anyone else. They are some of the best environmentalists around."

~Ike Skelton

"People accept this as a farming community and an agricultural community."

~Town of Ira Farmer

"Why should conservationists have a positive interest in... farming? There are lots of reasons, but the plainest is: Conservationists eat."

~Wendell Berry



GOAL # 6: *The Town of Ira will promote an increased awareness of the significance that agriculture and farming have in the daily lives of its residents.*

1. Conduct a feasibility study for utilizing the New York State Scenic Byways Program to promote agritourism along State Routes 176, 370 and 34.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Town Board

Funding Resources- New York State Scenic Byways Program (80% reimbursable grant); Town funds (hire a consultant and work with the Cayuga County Office of Tourism)

Priority- Long-Term (5-10 Years)

2. Develop and place signage along the Town borders which publicly supports agriculture and identifies the Town of Ira as a Farm-Friendly Community where Right-to-Farm regulations are in place.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- Town funds (work with Cayuga County Office of Tourism and NYS DOT)

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

3. Work with the Cato-Meridian School District to develop a mentoring program to introduce students to working farms and teach them about the benefits of and need for local farming.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- USDA Farm to School Grants Program; NYS Ag & Markets Farm to School Program

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

4. Establish an "Old Home Days" and/or a Harvest festival and parade to showcase the history and the future of agriculture in the Town. Encourage local farmers; value added producers; and agritourism businesses to participate.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee, Town Board and Town Historian

Funding Resources- Town funds and/or School District's funds (possible Harvest Festival at and hosted by the school; work with the Cayuga County Office of Tourism)

Priority- Short-Term (1-3 Years)

5. Encourage local farmers to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure farming practices help protect local surface and ground water quality.

Implementation:

Responsibility- Agricultural Advisory Committee & Town Board

Funding Resources- USDA Agricultural Management Assistance Program; Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District; Town funds (for marketing)

Priority- Mid-Term (3-5 Years)

"I rent my property to farmers and log the woods. It's in my blood. If my family farm was still running when I was a kid, that's what I would be doing."

~Town of Ira Resident

"I grew up with farming, it's in my blood. If I had to sell I would probably cry."

~Town of Ira Farmer

"Family, work, familiarity. Listen, if I had a magic wand and I could make myself really be happy, I'd zap me onto a farm. And I know nothing about farming."

~Scott Baio



AGRICULTURE
is the nation's
LARGEST
EMPLOYER
with more than **23**
[that's 17% of
the civilian
workforce] **MILLION**
JOBS
involved in some facet of
AMERICAN AGRICULTURE.
Fact source: National FFA Organization Copyright Erin Ehle/Keeping it Real: Through the Lens of a Farm Girl



Inventory and Analysis

History of Agriculture in Ira

The Town of Ira was once the hunting grounds of the Iroquois Indians. The land was full of drumlins, swamps and thousands of mostly hardwood trees (maple, black walnut, chestnut, ash and oaks). This land was divided up into military tracts for the Revolutionary War Soldiers. Many of the soldiers never came to the area but rather sold or traded their land for other goods or money. Most pioneers came by ox cart but a few came by horse and wagon. They set to work clearing the land and erecting rough cabins and sheds for shelter for themselves, their family and their livestock. With the increase in land values and hard work the farms of these early settlers thrived between 1830 and 1845. The early settlers purchased their land at 6-7 dollars an acre, but by 1875 it had increased to about 76 dollars an acre.

It took about ten years to tame the great forests. Wheat, corn and oats were grown at first on stump lots from where the trees had been cleared. Over time these areas became tamed fields. All grain in these early days had to be broadcast by hand with the farmer making many trips back and forth across the fields. In the late 1800's farmers began to expand their crops by planting barley, rye, buckwheat and potatoes. Tobacco was also raised in large quantities from the years 1870-1890. There are still a few barns in the Town today where tobacco was hung for drying. From the first settlements in the town every rural home had a large vegetable garden of peas, beans, pumpkins, squash, turnips, carrots and beets. Nearly all of the food on the farmer's table came from their own farm. Flax was also grown to provide linen clothing for the family. Despite the early diversification, wheat was the main cash crop for the early settlers and their harvest was taken by ox cart or horse and wagon to Jordan or Weedsport to be shipped on the Erie Canal to New York City. After the near extinction of wheat due to the improper management of the soil, the Hessian Fly, a fungus disease, and stem rust farmers started to rotate their crops, fertilizing their fields with manure, and introduced a heartier winter wheat. After 1860 wheat lost its importance. Corn became very easy to grow and the land didn't need to be fitted as it did for wheat. Corn was used to feed the farm animals and the farm family. Corn is still a big crop for the Town of Ira today.

Early dairy herds ranged from 9-10 cows. They were generally Guernsey or Jersey breeds. The early settlers made butter and cheese at home and gave the skim milk and swill to the growing calves and pigs. Later in the 19th-century, butter and cheese factories were built in the Town. Dairies became larger in the 1880's, the result of the new railroad which made it easier to ship their milk. Most farmers had oxen which were cheaper than horses, because horses were more expensive to buy, feed, raise and keep. They were slower than horses but were well suited for various farming operations such as plowing and lumbering. Oxen were less susceptible to disease and lived longer. When the oxen were no longer useful for labor they became food. Oxen hide was extremely valuable and the horns made good gun powder and ammunition containers. The first farm implements were crude and made by the farmer or by a blacksmith. The first reaper was not brought to the area until the late 1870's. Threshing was done on the barn floor by crude machines which ran by horse or oxen power. The steam engines, which ran threshing machines, came much later. These machines were so expensive that they were not owned by individual farmers but were shared by the farming community and would travel from one farm to the next working the fields.

The Cayuga County Farm Bureau came into existence around WWI. At this time the principle output was fluid milk. Many farm children grew up and moved into Auburn for factory jobs. Around 1929 with the stock market crash, farm families were back on the rise as children lost their jobs and moved back home. During WWII, people moved back to the cities for jobs, but when the war was over most people did not come back to the farms as they did before. Today, there are not as many farmers, but the farms are larger and each farmer owns most of the equipment needed to run their own farm and they do their own harvesting. The crops being raised are mostly soybeans, corn and hay.

Courtesy of Mrs. Susan Conn, Town of Ira Historian



The following are excerpts from the 1868 Cayuga County Directory for Ira, which listed the names of the residents and their occupations.

BETHEL CORNERS—IRA. 175

IRA.

The post office addresses of the residents of this town are *Bethel Corners* and *Ira*, in the town; *Cato* and *Meridian*, in adjoining towns; *Lysander*, Onondaga County, and *Bowen's Corners* and *South Hannibal*, Oswego County.

BETHEL CORNERS.

ANDREWS, GEO. B., tanner and farmer 175.
 Andrews, Geo. B. Jr., tanner.
 Bishop, Wm. F., (Victory,) farmer 194.
 Blesing, David, farmer 40.
 Carman, Richard, farmer 127.
 Cooper, Erasmus D., (Victory,) machinist, farmer 74.
 FOLLETT, JAMES, farmer 216.
 Follett, William, farmer 135.
 Harmon, David, (Harmon & Son.)
 Harmon, Rees, (Harmon & Son.)
 Harmon & Son, (Rees and David,) farmers 87.
 HARMON, WINSLOW L., farmer 85.
 Hatchling, Peter, (Victory,) farmer 101.
 Hatchling, Wm. H., (Victory,) farmer 50.
 HOLCOMB, EDWIN C., grocer and post-master.
 Lindsley, Jos. B., retired farmer.
 O'Brien, Daniel, farmer 40.
 Showers, Nathaniel, farmer 72.
 Sturge, John, farmer 90.
 TERWILLIGER, JOHN, (Victory,) farmer 50.
 Titus, Simeon C., blacksmith and farmer 42.
 Wands, Thos. B., retired farmer.
 WELTY, HENRY D., farmer 75.
 Welty, Mathias K., farmer 72.

IRA.

BAIRD, ADONIAH, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 252.
 Baldwin Bros., (Geo. Hiram W. and John H.,) farmers 78.
 Baldwin, David, Sr., (Baldwin & Son.)
 Baldwin, David, Jr., (Baldwin & Son.)
 Baldwin, Eliza Ann Mrs., farmer 88.
 Baldwin, Geo., (Baldwin Bros.)
 BALDWIN, HARVEY S., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 92.
 Baldwin, Henry D., (P. O. address Bowen's Corners, Oswego Co.,) farmer 27.
 Baldwin, Hiram W., (Baldwin Bros.)
 Baldwin, John H., (Baldwin Bros.)
 Baldwin, Philo, farmer leases 113.
 Baldwin, Smith, farmer 21.
 Baldwin & Son, (David Sr. and David Jr.) farmers 62.
 BENTON, CHAS. D., farmer 180.
 BENTON, HEMAN, farmer 128.
 BIRCH, BARTLETT, farmer 56.
 Blake, Emeline Mrs., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 46.
 Blake, John, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 20.
 BLAKE, JOHN SR., farmer 94.
 Bowers, Sarah Mrs., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 73.
 BRACKETT, FRANKLIN, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 100.
 BRACKETT, JAS. H., farmer 112.
 Brackett, Truman F., farmer 68.
 BRADT, WM. J., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 130.
 Burgbaird, Zachariah, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 25.
 Byram, Lyman, shingle maker.
 CADWELL, EPHRAIM W., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 90.
 Cady, Jas. N., (Victory,) farmer leases 101.
 CARKNET, GEO. J., farmer 64.
 Carnross, Margaret Mrs., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 190.
 CARTER, AMOS, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 50.
 Carter, Randolph W., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 112.
 CARTER, WOODARD B., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 150.
 Chase, Lewis, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 73.
 Clark, Ezra, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 7.
 COLE, NATHANIEL B., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 64½.
 Conover, John, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) saw mill and farmer 10.
 Conrad, Henry, farmer 83.
 Cook, Darins T., boot and shoe shop.
 Cook, William, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 3.
 Countryman, Jacob, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) poultry dealer.

IRA. 177

Cowan, Henry H., farmer 100.
 CROSBIE, JOHN W., wagon, blacksmith and cabinet shop.
 Crosslet, Hiram D., wagon and blacksmith shop.
 CROSBETT, JOHN D., blacksmith.
 Culver Bros., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) (William and John A.,) farmers 200.
 Culver, John A., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) (Culver Bros.)
 CULVER, WILLIAM, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) (Culver Bros.)
 Curtis, Birdy, farmer 58.
 DARATT, JAS. H., prop. Ira Hotel.
 De Forest, David, farmer 50.
 DENICK, JAMES, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 102.
 Dennett, Andrew C., (Victory,) farmer 50.
 Donnett, Henry R., (Victory,) farmer 60.
 Detrich, Casper, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 40.
 Dowe, Chas., (P. O. address Bowen's Corners, Oswego Co.,) farmer 15.
 Dickinson, David, farmer 50.
 Dings, Henry, farmer 50.
 Donlon, John, farmer 14.
 Doud, Jas. T., farmer 50.
 Downs, Henry L., (S. M. & H. L. Downs,) postmaster.
 Downs, Simeon M., (S. M. & H. L. Downs,) farmer 90.
 Downs, S. M. & H. L., (Simeon M. and Henry L.,) general merchants.
 Durkee, Andrew, (Finney & Durkee.)
 DURKEE, AVERY, farmer 1.
 Earl, Asabel D., farmer 64.
 Ells, Wm., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 86.
 Farnum, Ebenezer, farmer 84.
 FAXON, EBEN R., farmer 47.
 Flint, Cornelius, farmer 131.
 Follett, Isaac, farmer 138.
 FOLLETT, JAMES, (Sturge, Squires & Follett.)
 FOOT, WM., farmer 128.
 Furbish, Milton, farmer 50.
 Gifford, Reuben, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 86.
 Gillet, Wm., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 85.
 Goodell, Jas. M., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 24.
 Goodrich, Aaron, farmer 29.
 Goodrich, Clarissa Mrs., farmer 25.
 GOODRICH, JOEL E., farmer 12.
 Green, Allen, farmer 95.
 Green, Smith T., farmer 100.
 Greis, Henry, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 108.
 Guernsey, Silas, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) cooper and farmer 25.
 Hallay, Michael, farmer 100.
 HAMMOND, HARRY, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) retired farmer.
 HARRIS, EDWIN, (Victory,) farmer 160.
 HART, THOMPSON T., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 100.
 Harvey, Henry, blacksmith and farmer 5.
 Harvie, John, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer leases 138.
 Hawkins, Rufus, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) boot and shoe shop.
 HEATH, SELDON D., boot and shoe shop.
 HEDGES, DAVID T., farmer 177.
 Hoag Bros., (Myron and Valentine,) farmer 108.
 Hoag, Myron, (Hoag Bros.)
 Hoag, Valentine, (Hoag Bros.)
 Hodge, Geo. B., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 25.
 Hoffman, William, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) (Northrop & Hoffman.)
 Hogans, — Rev., (P. O. address Wolcott, Wayne Co.,) M. E. clergyman and farmer 128.
 Hudson, Orville, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 2.
 HUGGINS, EDWIN R., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) lawyer and farmer 138.
 HULBERT, JOHN S., farmer 58.
 Hulet, Gertrude M. B., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 54.
 HULL, HENRY, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 50.
 HUYCK, JACOB, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) carpenter and farmer 22.
 IRA HOTEL, Jas. H. Daratt, prop. James, Lyman, farmer 100.
 Jenkins, Francis, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 52.
 JOHNSON, JOHN, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 83.
 King, Onadiah, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 47.
 Lee, Mary Mrs., farmer 6.
 Littlefield, Geo., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 47.
 LIVINGSTON, ALFRED Z., farmer leases 55.
 Livingston, John, carpenter.
 Livingston, John, farmer 55.
 Marvin, David, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 68.
 Matson, Augustine, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer leases 58.
 MATSON, WM. T., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) justice of the peace, lawyer and farmer 114.
 McIntosh, John, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer leases 150.
 Merrill, James, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 150.
 Miller, Geo. W., lawyer.
 MONROE, DAVID, M. D., physician.
 Montgomery, Mary A. Mrs., milliner.
 MOON, CHARLES, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 95.
 Morris, Clark, farmer 30.
 Nichols, Alvah N., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 30.
 Northrop, Chas. W., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) carpenter.
 Northrop, David, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) (Northrop & Hoffman,) farmers 88.
 Northrop & Hoffman, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) (David Northrop and William Hoffman,) farmers 88.
 Osborn, Alanson B., farmer 48.
 OSBORN, ISAAC H., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 100.
 Oswell, Jacob, farmer 50.
 PALMER, GUEF N., farmer 173.
 Palmer, Jairo, farmer 107.
 PEIRCE, STEPHEN, farmer 125.

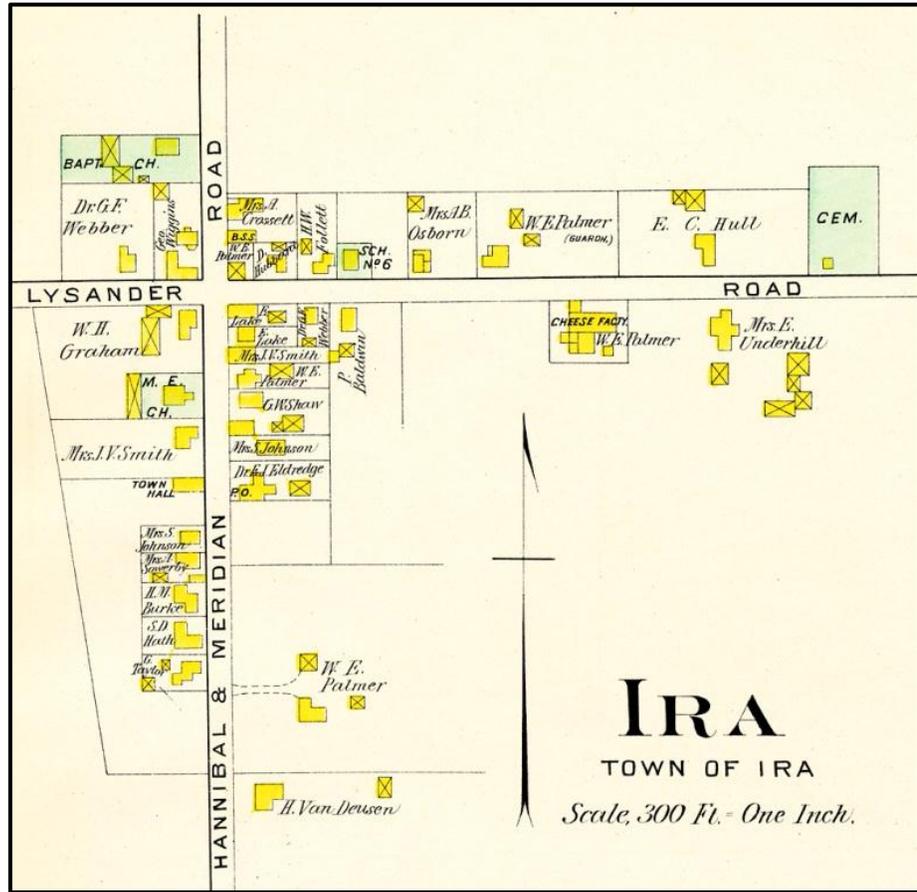
178 IRA—AURORA.

PERINE, FRANCIS H., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) saw mill and carpenter and joiner.
 Perine, Henry, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 25.
 Perine, R. Morton, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 75.
 Perine, Thomas K., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 60.
 Perkins, David, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 78.
 Perkins, Francis, farmer 80.
 PHELPS, CHAUNCEY, farmer 191.
 PHELPS, CLAYTON G., lime kiln and farmer 55.
 PHELPS, DWIGHT, farmer 130.
 PHELPS, JOHN, farmer 160.
 Phelps, Newton S., farmer leases 63.
 Phelps, Samuel, farmer 53.
 Phelps, Sarah S., farmer 63.
 Phillips, Abraham, farmer 30.
 Pierce, Daniel, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 130.
 Pierce, Ephraim, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 50.
 Pierce, Sarah M. Mrs., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer leases 130.
 Pinney, Calvin, (Finney & Durkee.)
 Pinney & Durkee, (Calvin Pinney and Andrew Durkee,) farmers 113.
 Preston, Henry C., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 53.
 Pulsipher, Dewitt C., farmer 70.
 Seaton, Philip, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 43.
 Sheldon, Henry, farmer 61.
 Showers, Wolcott W., farmer 96.
 Shultz, John, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 3.
 Slocum, Jas. W., farmer 280.
 SMITH, LORENZO, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 50.
 SOWBARY, ABELIA M., farmer 175.
 SPAFFORD, JOHN, farmer 93.
 Spafford, Solomon, farmer 56.
 Spickaman, John, veterinary surgeon.
 SQUIRES, IRVIN, (Sturge, Squires and Follett,) farmer 137.
 Stamp, Frederick, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 50.
 Storr, Mathew, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer leases 73.
 Strickland, Hiram, farmer 40.
 STURGE, SAMUEL, (Sturge, Squires and Follett.)
 STURGE, SQUIRES & FOLLETT, (Samuel Sturge, Irvin Squires and Jas. Follett,) stearn saw.
 Stuthard, Thomas, farmer 30.
 TALMAGE, RANSFORD, farmer 89.
 TAYLOR, GEO., farmer 100.
 Teller, Eliza H., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 754.
 Teller, Piero, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 25.
 Terpening, Ephraim, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 2.
 TERPENING, ISAAC, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 100.
 Terpening, Jame, farmer 331.
 Terpening, Jas. L., carpenter and farmer 13.
 Terpening, Samuel, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 97.
 Terpening, Solomon, farmer 88.
 Terpening, Wallace, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 100.
 Terwilliger, Richard, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 100.
 TOWNSEND, JUSTICE, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 400.
 Upon, Lawrence, (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 174.
 Van Auker, Thos., farmer 100.
 Van Dusen, Henry, farmer 56.
 Van Dusen, Mark, farmer 63.
 Ward, Israel H., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 45.
 Wells, Sanford, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 50.
 WELLS, WM., farmer 9.
 WELLS, WM. W., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 100.
 White, Gregory, (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 191.
 WHITE, HORACE G., (P. O. address South Hannibal, Oswego Co.,) farmer 168.
 Wise, Geo., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 6.
 Williams, Henry J., (P. O. address Lysander, Onondaga Co.,) farmer 2.
 Wood, Hiram J., general merchant.
 Wormuth, Jacob, farmer 105.
 Wormuth, Levi, farmer 207.
 WORMUTH, MORIAH MRS., farmer 85.



The map to the right shows the locations of houses and businesses, including a cheese factory, in the Town of Ira from 1904 (the center of which is now the Hamlet of Ira).

The image below is a comparison chart of the agricultural production in Cayuga County between 1845 and 1850. This same information was not available specifically for Ira however; the population chart from 1850 together with the directory on page 26 provides an indication of the possible distribution of agricultural activities in Ira during that time period.



COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE AGRICULTURE CONDITION
of the County of Cayuga
in 1850 and 1845.

| | 1850 | 1845 | Increase | Decrease |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| Improved Acres | 298 633 | 295 651 | 2 982 | |
| Unimproved acres | 998 | | | |
| Horses | 12 503 | 13 932 | | 1 429 |
| Cows | 18 113 | 19 715 | | 1 602 |
| Oxen | 3 428 | 2 554 | | 2 208 |
| Other Cattle | 19 905 | | | |
| Sheep | 122 446 | 175 148 | | 52 702 |
| Swine | 28 769 | 43 546 | | 14 777 |
| Wheat Bushels of | 468 730 | 652 896 | | 184 166 |
| Barley " " | 303 953 | 143 516 | 160 437 | |
| Oats " " | 735 441 | 652 281 | 83 160 | |
| Rye " " | 29 695 | 4 415 | 25 280 | |
| Indian Corn | 704 954 | 479 151 | 225 803 | |
| Peas & Beans " " | 5 691 | 6 027 | | 54 587 |
| Buckwheat " " | 46 784 | 74 066 | | 27 282 |
| Potatoes " " | 281 602 | 536 033 | | 255 241 |
| Hay tons of | 72 590 | | | |
| Bitter lbs | 167 315 | 169 676 | | 23 449 |
| Cheese " " | 21 743 | 39 400 | | 176 588 |
| Cloverseed Bushels | 2 545 | | | |
| Other grass seed | 167 8 | | | |
| Flax lbs of | 10 761 | 139 126 | | 128 365 |
| Flaxseed Bush | 1 324 | | | |
| Hops lbs of | 1 442 | | | |
| Wool | 367 085 | 412 667 | | 45 582 |
| Mappie Sugar | 109 048 | | | |
| Molasses Gallon | 410 | | | |
| Beeswax & Honey lbs | 34 618 | | | |
| Domestic Fabrics \$ | 23 117 | 85 546 | | 62 429 |
| Animals slaughtered | \$350 676 | | | |
| Population | 55 489 | 49 663 | 5 826 | |

POPULATION &c. OF CAYUGA CO. N.Y.
on the 1st of June 1850.
7th Census.

| Towns. | Population. | | Dwellings | Families | Deaths |
|--------------|---------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| | White | Colored | | | |
| AUBURN | 1,297 | 251 | 1,217 | 1,465 | 142 |
| AURELIUS | 2,810 | 21 | 424 | 451 | 43 |
| BRUTUS | 2,994 | 52 | 445 | 577 | 54 |
| CATO | 2,247 | - | 386 | 409 | 28 |
| CONQUEST | 1,863 | - | 339 | 348 | 17 |
| FLEMING | 1,193 | - | 225 | 228 | 16 |
| GENOA | 2,493 | 10 | 448 | 457 | 19 |
| IRA | 2,109 | 1 | 388 | 410 | 26 |
| LEDYARD | 1,966 | 77 | 374 | 412 | 22 |
| LOCKE | 1,478 | - | 279 | 285 | 17 |
| MENTZ | 5,213 | 26 | 940 | 1,013 | 50 |
| MORAVIA | 1,873 | 3 | 349 | 360 | 20 |
| NILES | 2,039 | 14 | 373 | 390 | 17 |
| OWASCO | 1,242 | 12 | 206 | 220 | 20 |
| SCIPIO | 2,117 | 20 | 375 | 393 | 24 |
| SEMPRONIUS | 1,265 | 1 | 237 | 243 | 19 |
| SENNET | 23 30 | 17 | 342 | 393 | 44 |
| SPRINGPORT | 2,027 | 14 | 348 | 371 | 28 |
| STEBLING | 2,803 | 5 | 533 | 549 | 73 |
| SUMMER HILL | 12 51 | - | 252 | 256 | 17 |
| VENICE | 2,010 | 18 | 371 | 384 | 18 |
| VICTORY | 2,297 | 1 | 408 | 424 | 28 |
| TOTAL | 54,917 | 543 | 9,259 | 9,978 | 736 |



Current Demographics and Trends

The Town of Ira has seen a surge in population growth over the last two decades, with a 21.9% increase in population between 1990 and 2000, and an 11% increase overall between 1990 and 2010. While the population growth has slowed somewhat since 2000, continued development pressures in neighboring communities will put residential development pressure on the Town in the future. As of 2010, there were 2,206 people living in the Town; the median age of residents was 41; 75% of the population was over the age of 18; and 10.7% of the population was 65 and over.

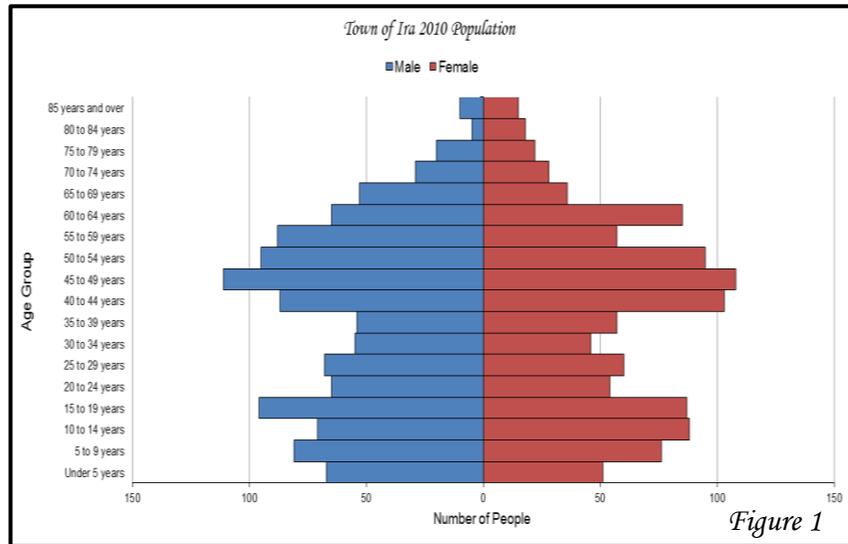
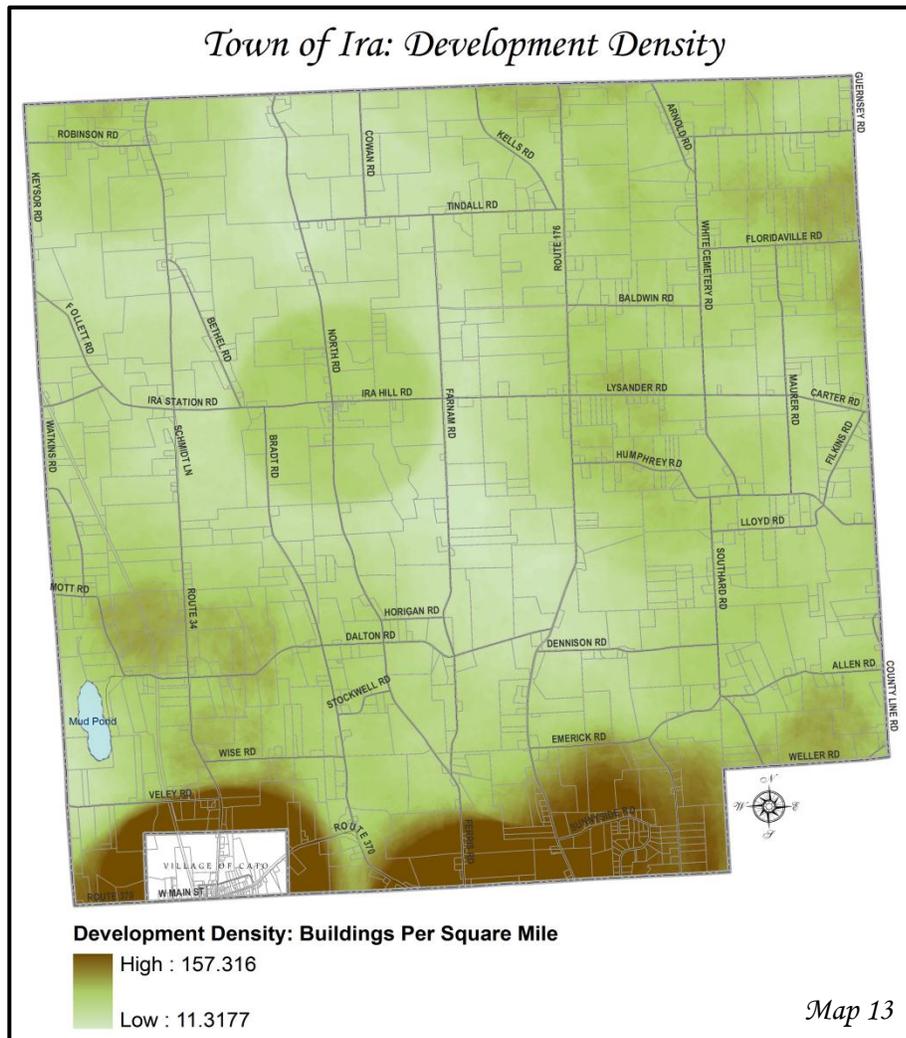


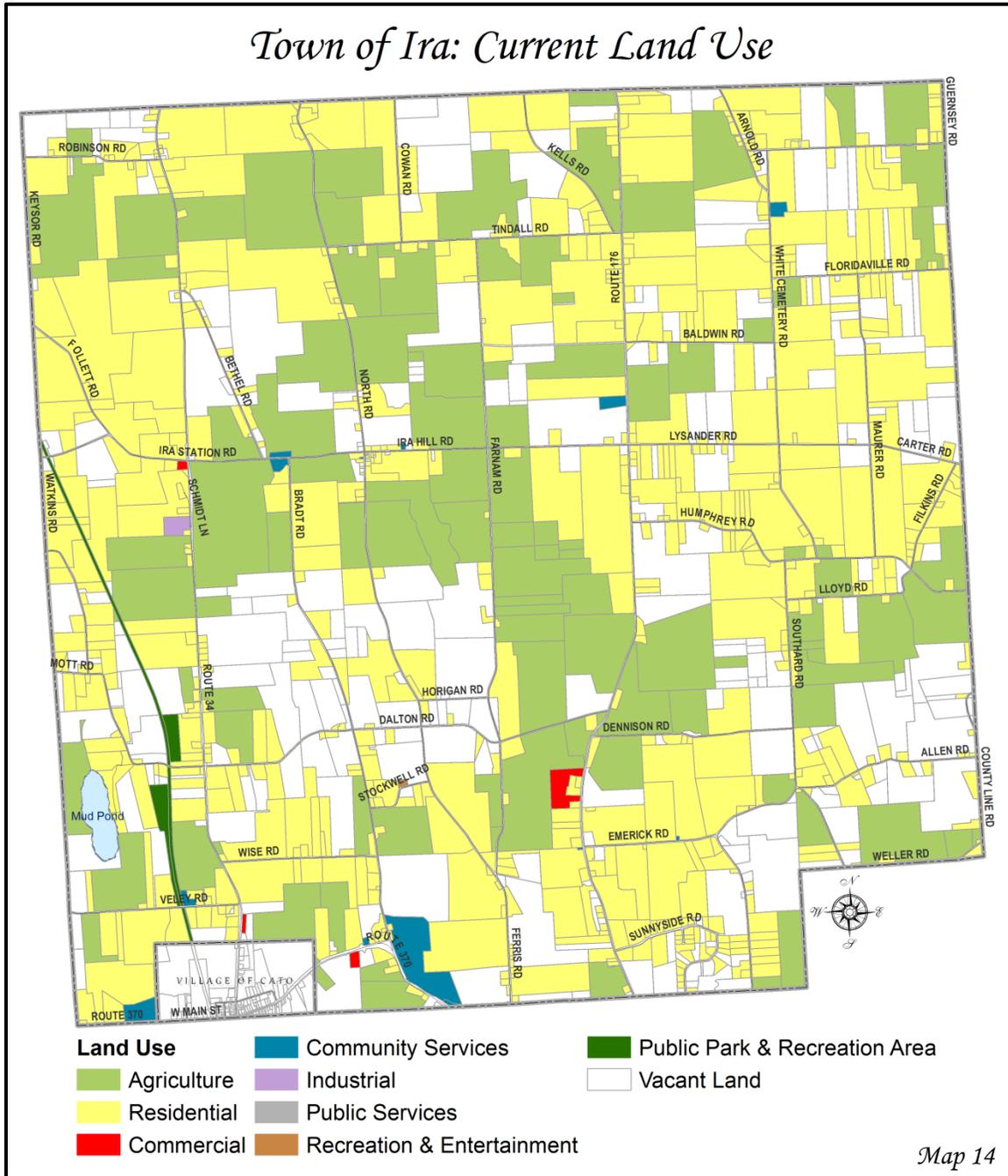
Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the population from 2010. In 2010 the Town of Ira had a total of 818 households, 598 of which were family households, with an average household size of 2.70 and an average family size of 3.08.

While construction has slowed over the past five years as it has in the rest of the country, permits are still being issued for new development in the Town. Despite the issuance of 15 new single-family residential building permits and 5 new commercial building permits between 2008 and 2013, there have been 13 permits issued for new agricultural buildings, which is an encouraging trend for the farming community. Map 13 illustrates the current density of development in Ira. The darkest shading represents the highest concentration of buildings per square mile.



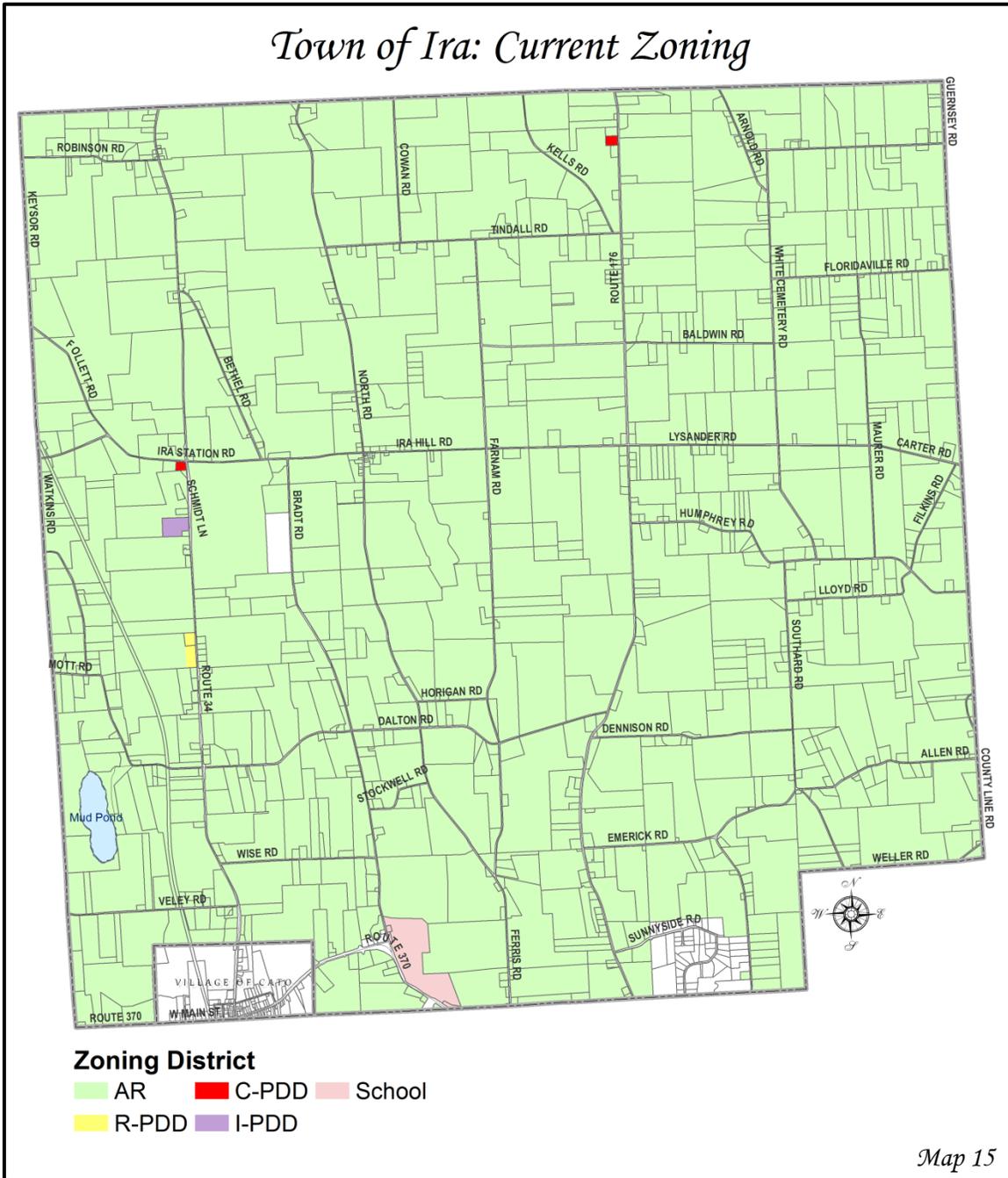
Current Land Use and Zoning

The Town of Ira Land Use and Zoning maps are indicative of how dominate agriculture is in the Town as a land use. Map 14 below shows that the vast majority of the land in Ira is either used for agricultural or residential purposes, or is vacant land (as determined by 2013 tax assessor codes).



These land uses are consistent with the Town's Zoning Code. While the code established only one zoning district, AR— Agriculture/Residential, it provides for the creation of residential, commercial and industrial planned development districts. The Planned Development Districts which have been created are few in number, as can be seen in Map 15 below.

Town of Ira: Current Zoning



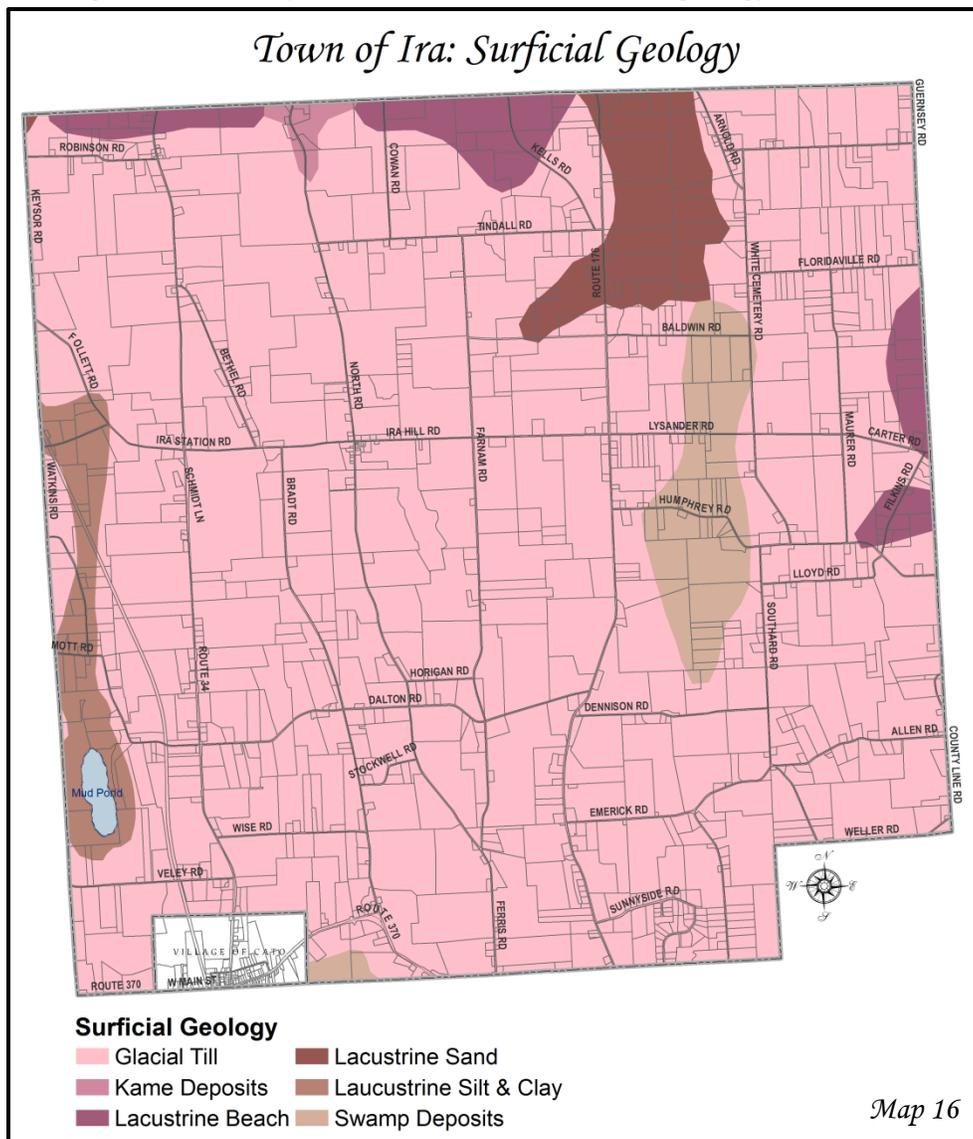
Natural Environment

There are many elements in the natural environment which can help to identify key areas and lands in Ira where agriculture and farming should be preserved and protected. Analysis in the following environmental areas was one crucial element in determining those areas best suited for agricultural protection in the Town.

Surficial Geology

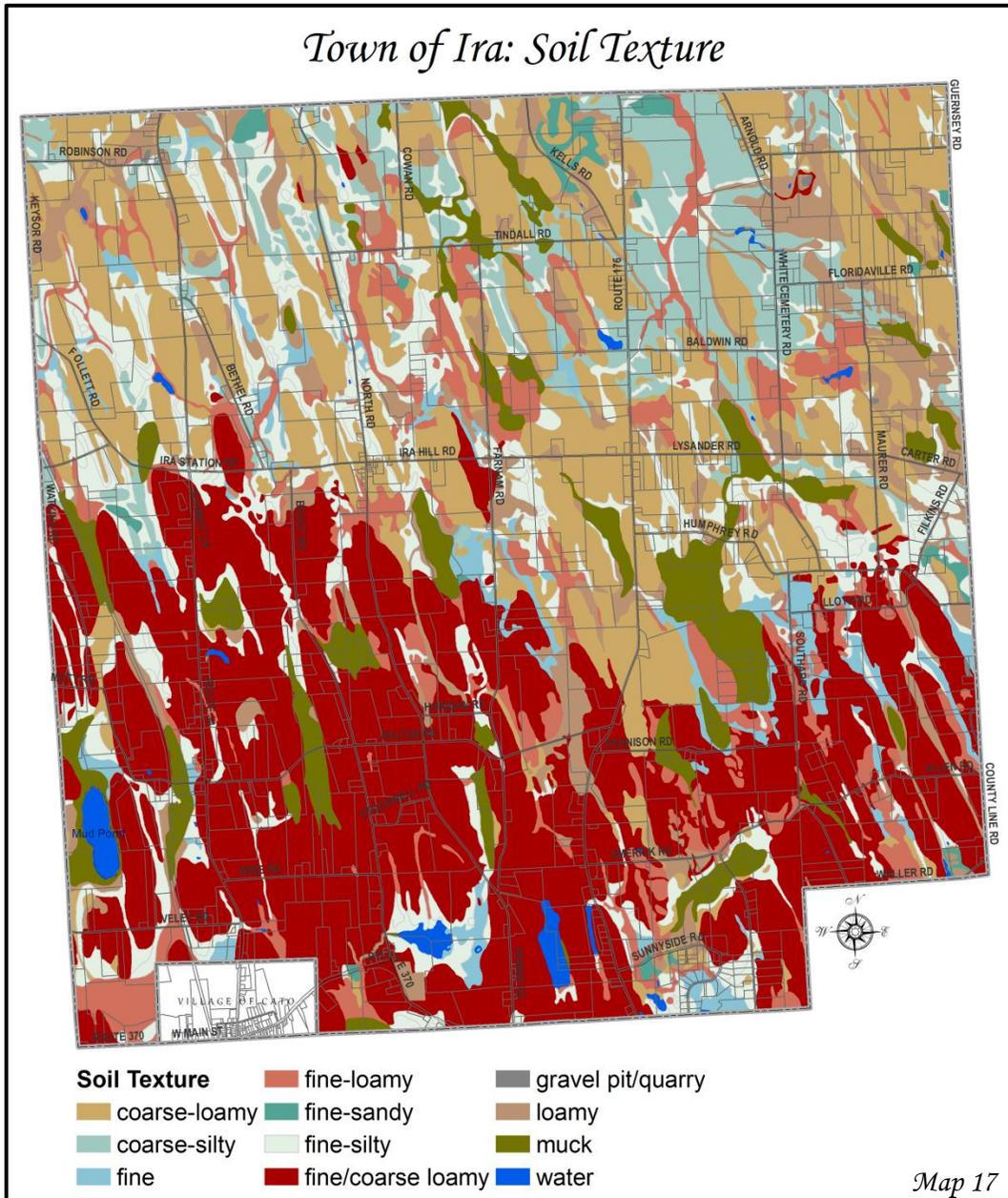
The predominant type of surficial geology, the material between the soil and bedrock, in Ira is glacial till which was deposited during the Wisconsin Glaciation over 13,000 years ago. This till consists of poorly sorted rock, gravel and sand, often mounded in elongated hills, or drumlins, which are predominant features of the landscape in the Town of Ira and surrounding communities.

How well water drains and where groundwater flows and accumulates is determined, to a large extent, by surficial geology. Groundwater tends to accumulate in gravely and sandy surficial geological deposits which serve as key indicators of where aquifers may be located. The protection of aquifers and aquifer recharge areas is crucial in rural farming communities like Ira where both farmers and residents are dependent on groundwater. Map 16 below identifies the surficial geology in the Town of Ira.



Soils

As seen in Map 17 below, the most prevalent soil types in Ira are the Ontario Series (25%), the Sodus Series (12%), the Niagara Series (7%), and the Williamson Series (7%). The Ontario Series are generally deep or very deep, well drained soils formed in till which is strongly influenced by limestone and sandstone³. These soils are largely found in upland till plains and drumlins; and on average support a growing season of 150 to 200 days. The Sodus Series are generally deep, well drained soils formed on uplands; and on average support a growing season of 120 to 180 days. The Niagara Series are very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils formed in lake plains and valleys; which on average support a growing season of 130 to 200 days. Lastly, the Williamson Series are deep, moderately well drained soils formed on lake plains and uplands; which on average support a growing season of 140 to 180 days. It is no surprise based on the general soil conditions in the Town that farming has been the major industry and land use since the Town was formed in 1821.



3. The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) maintains the official soils series descriptions and data for soil classification types across the United States. Description information from: [<https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/osdname.asp>].



Prime Agricultural Soils

The following map (Map 18) identifies the soils in Ira which the USDA considers to be either Prime Farmland Soils, Soils of Statewide Importance, or areas which would be considered prime farmland if it were drained of water. The USDA Prime Farmland areas have soils which have the best combination of chemical and physical factors to produce food and fiber. Farmland of Statewide Importance, while not as productive as Prime Farmland, will produce good to fair yields if managed properly. In Ira, 34% of the soils are considered USDA Prime Soils, 17% are Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 10% of the soils in Ira are considered Prime Farmland if Drained. These three categories combined cover 61% of the soils in the Town of Ira.



Once Prime Farmland is lost to development it is lost forever. Identifying where these areas are in Ira will help the land use decision makers in the Town protect and preserve this vital resource by steering development away from Prime Farmland.

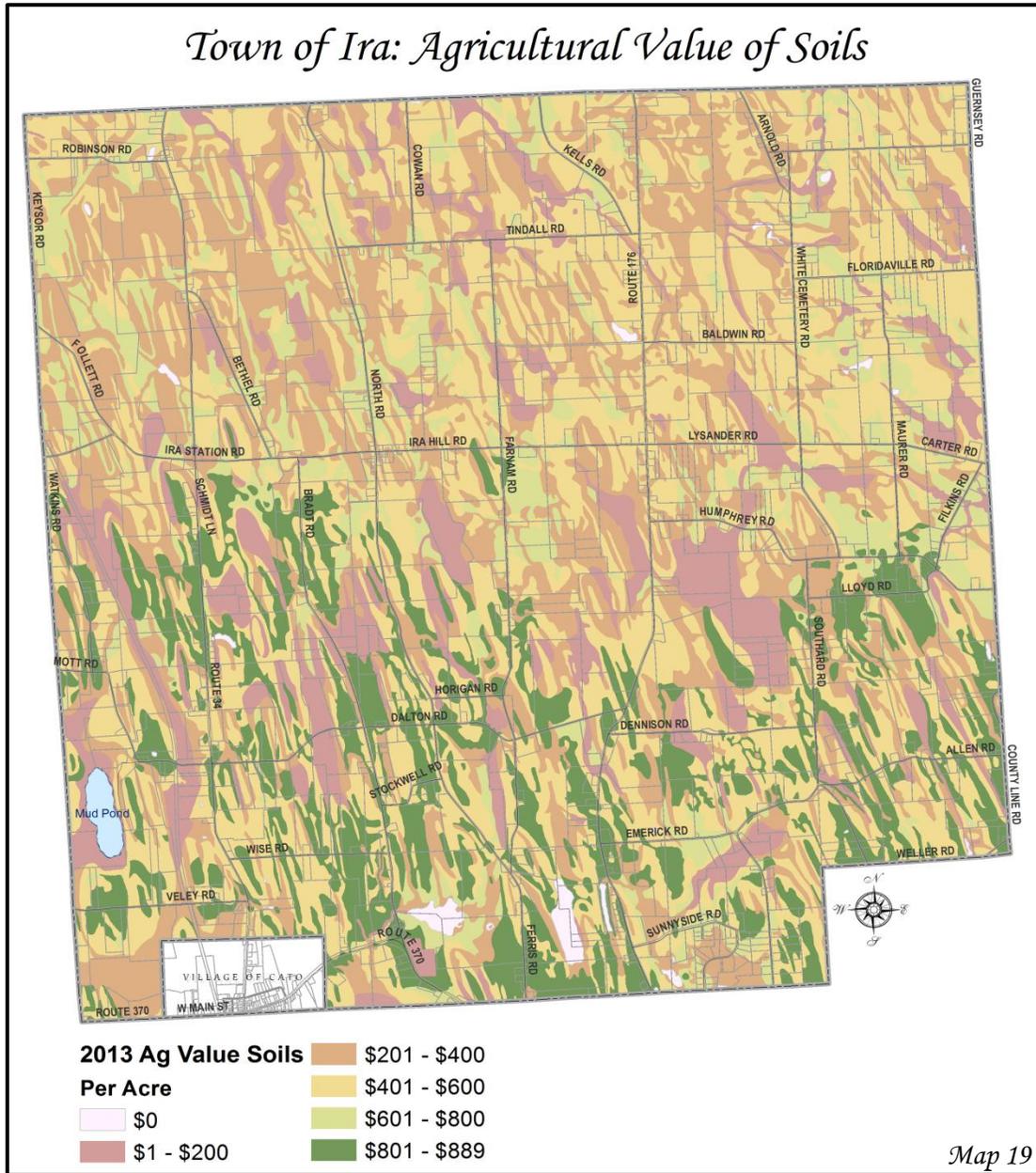


Agricultural Assessment Value of Soils

Another factor in determining the suitability of land for agricultural protection is the agricultural tax assessment value of the soils. The agricultural assessment value of a parcel is based on the productivity of the different soil types found on the parcel. These assessment values are calculated and published as a per acre dollar amount in ten categories. Table 4 and Map 19 below illustrate the distribution of agricultural assessment values of soils across the Town.

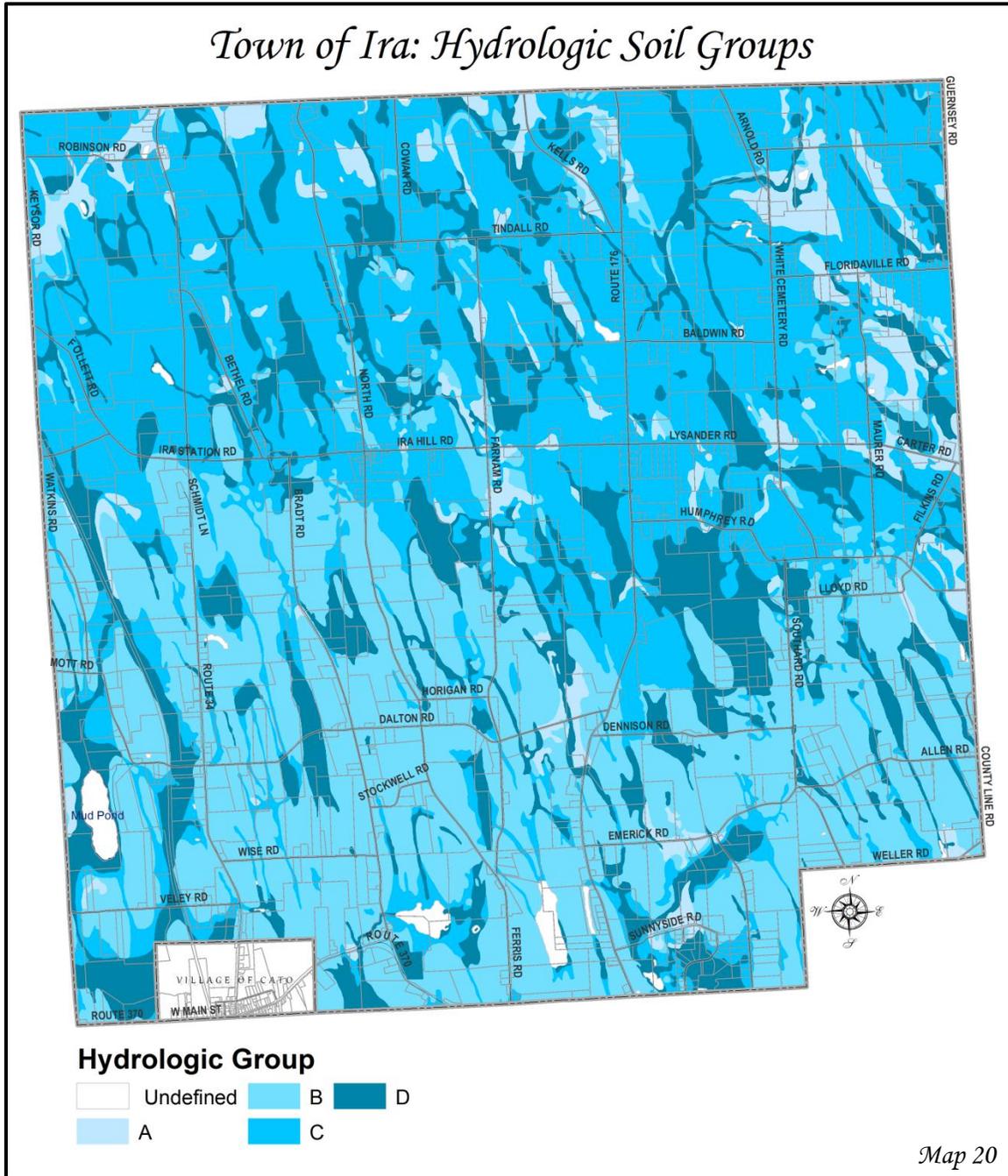
| 2013 Value Per Acre | Total Acres | % of the Town |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 0 | 184.71 | 1% |
| 50 | 1,906.27 | 9% |
| 160 | 455.86 | 2% |
| 260 | 1,936.40 | 9% |
| 370 | 4,029.78 | 18% |
| 470 | 1,638.67 | 7% |
| 579 | 6,459.06 | 30% |
| 679 | 1,813.68 | 8% |
| 789 | 509.01 | 2% |
| 889 | 3,037.33 | 4% |

Table 4



Hydrologic Soil Groups

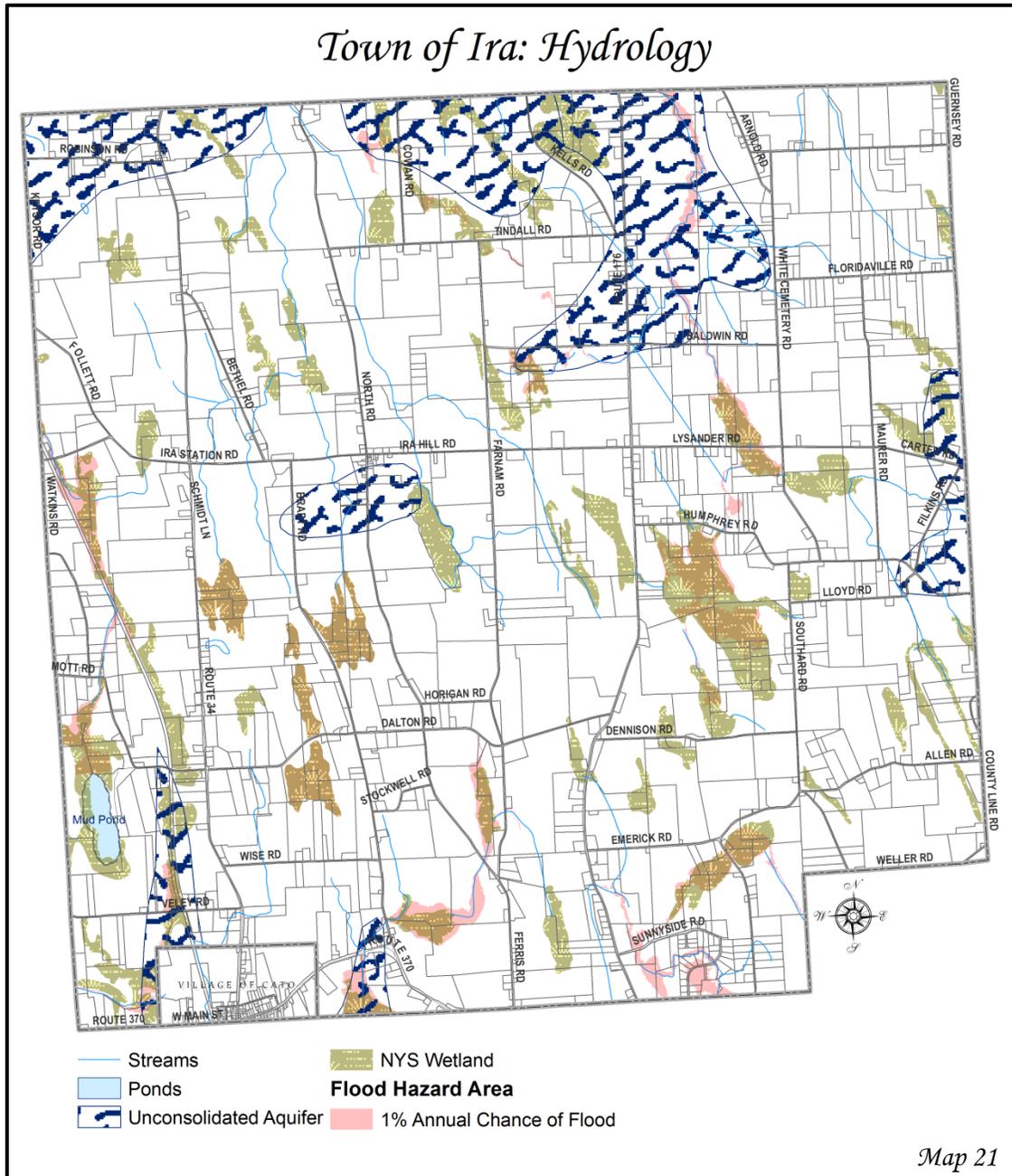
Where Surficial Geology indicates subsoil attributes, the locations of aquifers for example, Hydrologic Soil Groups can help identify the differences in the ability of soils to drain water. Water is better able to infiltrate soils with a higher sand and sandy loam content than it can in clay soils which are more readily saturated and therefore create higher runoff conditions. On the Hydrologic Soil Map below (Map 20), Group A soils, which are the best drained, are indicated by the lightest shade of blue. Group D soils with their high clay content and low water infiltration rates are the most likely to retain water and generate runoff. This information should be considered by the Town's land use decision makers when approving future development plans.



Hydrology

Surface hydrological features in Ira, which include streams, ponds, wetlands and floodplains, are another important factor in farmland protection. Farmland, if managed properly, can help to protect these environmentally sensitive features. The management and protection of streams, ponds and wetlands which help recharge natural aquifers and groundwater supplies is important for the stability and longevity of not only the farms in Ira but the entire community which depends on clean drinking water.

Development in floodplains can lead to serious erosion and flooding issues which can have a ripple effect throughout the community. Protecting these environmentally sensitive areas and permitting only low impact appropriate development will aid in protecting farmland, wildlife habitats and the water resources of the Town. Map 21 below shows the location of hydrological features in the Town of Ira.

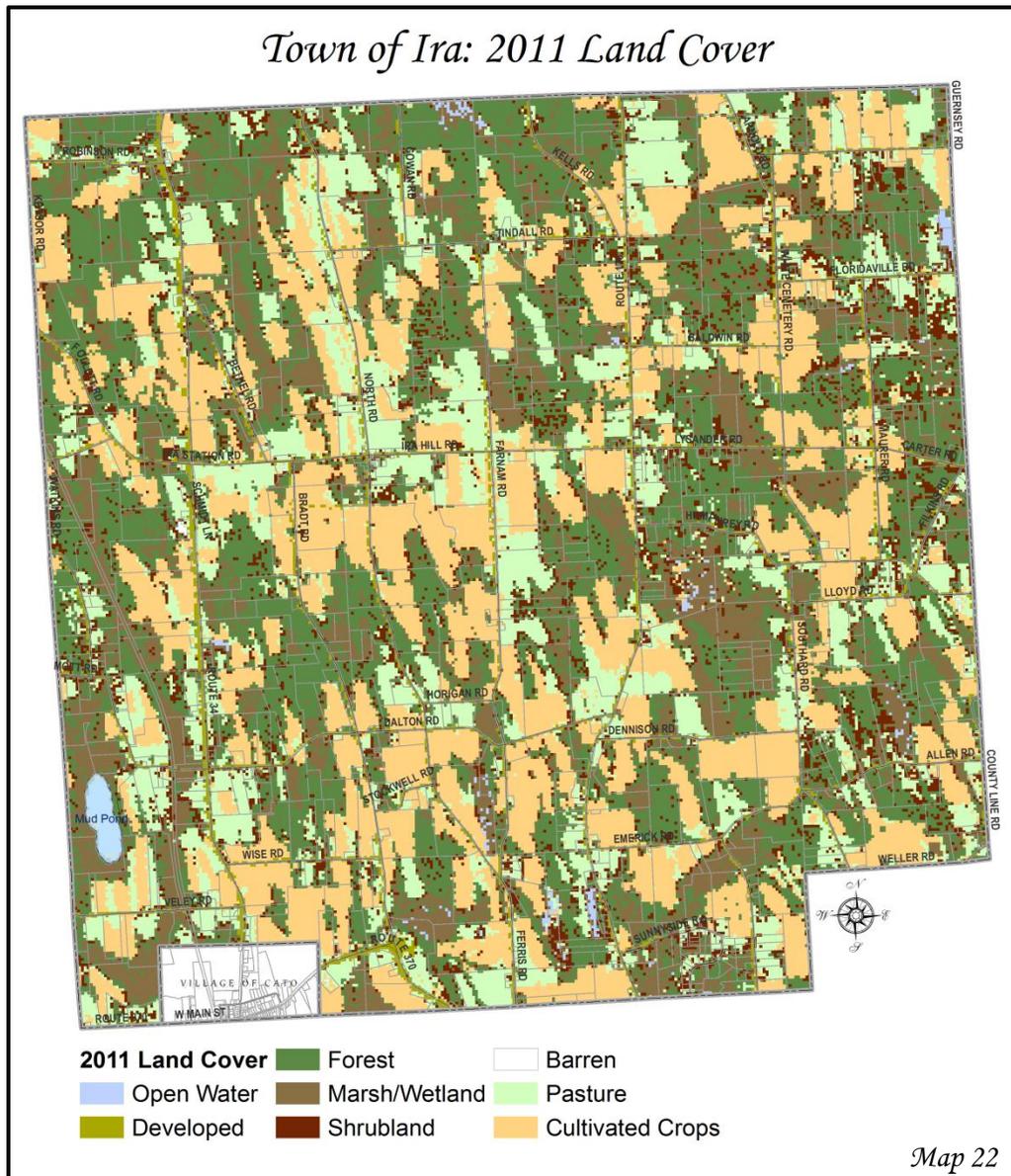


Land Cover

A comparison of data, recorded by earth observation satellites in 2001, 2006, and 2011 and distributed by the USDA and the USGS, indicated a slight change in land cover conditions in the Town of Ira during that 10 year period. Most notably, there has been a 14% loss in pasture land, a 10% gain in forest, and a 3% gain in cultivated crops. Land coverage by developed land has remained constant since 2001. Map 22 illustrates the land coverage conditions and types from 2011 in Ira, and the change in land cover from 2001 to 2011 is shown in Table 5.

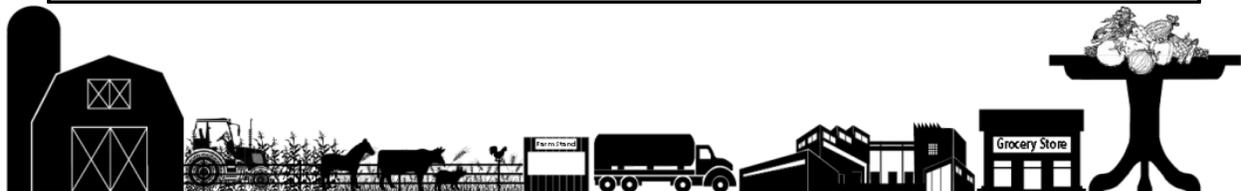
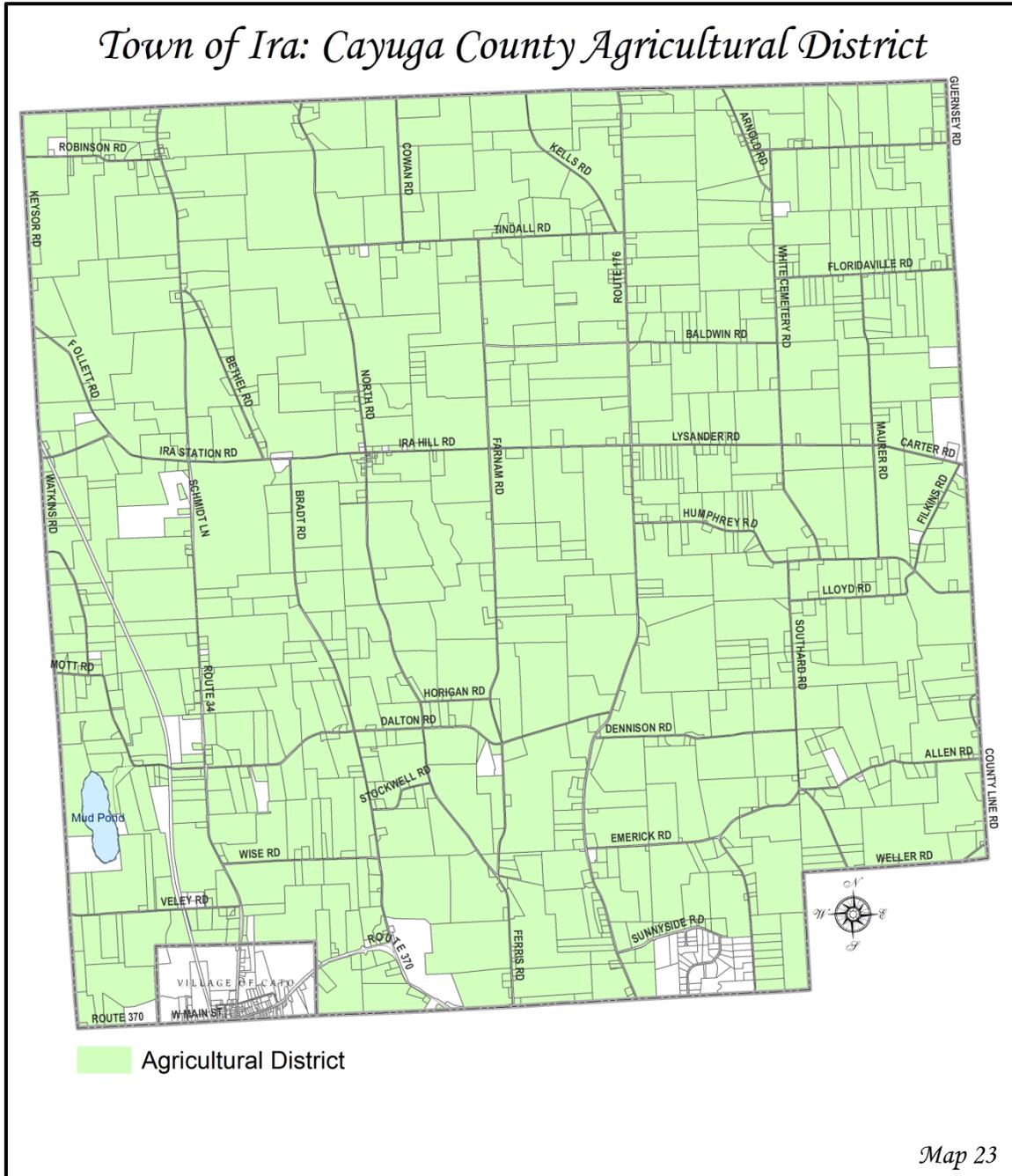
| Land Cover | 2001 % Cover | 2011 % Cover | % Change |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Open Water | >1% | >1% | None |
| Developed | 3% | 3% | None |
| Forest | 19% | 29% | + 10% |
| Marsh/Wetland | 15% | 15% | None |
| Shrubland | 8% | 9% | + 1% |
| Barren | >1% | >1% | None |
| Pasture | 31% | 17% | - 14% |
| Cultivated Crops | 24% | 27% | + 3% |

Table 5



Cayuga County Agricultural District

Over 96% of the Town of Ira is located in Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District #5 which provides some protections for farming under New York State's Right-to-Farm Law through the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets. One benefit from being in an Agricultural District is the expedited process for receiving various tax exemptions on active agricultural parcels. In 2013, 196 (16%) of the parcels in Ira received an Agricultural Tax Exemption for their qualifying agricultural operations. In addition, there were 12 properties which received an Agricultural Building Tax Exemption. Despite the prevalence of farming in the Town, there was only a 24% (\$4,969,111) reduction in the taxable value overall as a result of these tax exemptions. Map 23 shows the boundaries of the County Agricultural District within the Town of Ira.



Farm-Friendly Audit

In addition to the analysis of individual agricultural parcels and their suitability for farmland protection, the current land use laws and regulations as well as prior planning initiatives in the Town of Ira were evaluated based on how “Farm-Friendly” they are. That is to say, are there Town laws or regulations which conflict with the New York State Right-to-Farm Law or with New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets (NYSDAM) definitions or regulations? As to be expected with a strong farming community like Ira, there were very few instances where the language in the Town’s Zoning Code either conflicted with NYSDAM or with other regulations in the Zoning Code as it pertains to agriculture and farming. The following is a list of the areas in the Town’s Zoning Code which should be modified or clarified to eliminate any potential conflict with the sustainability and growth of farming operations in the Town of Ira.

- §400,A,2,a: “No retail or commercial activity shall take place other than the storage, processing and sale of farm products actually produced on the premises”. **This regulation conflicts with §1000,B: “FARM AND GARDEN RETAIL STAND– A structure solely [for] the sale of agricultural produce, at least fifty percent (50%) of which is produced by the seller”.**
- §1000,B: “FARM– A parcel of land five (5) or more acres in size used principally in the raising or production of agricultural products and the necessary farm structures and storage of equipment used on premises”. **NYSDAM does not put a minimum lot size in their definition. There is only a minimum lot size for the purpose of qualifying for an Agricultural Tax Exemption. The Town’s definition does not include the marketing of products or a reference to agriculture as being a commercial enterprise like the NYSDAM definition of “Farm Operation” does. The Town should update this section with the new definitions of agriculture and farmland found in this plan.**
- §400,A,2,b: “The storage of manure or other extraordinary odor or dust-producing use shall not take place within one hundred (100) feet of the nearest lot line” ; §400,A,2,c: “No farm stock, horses or other animals other than household pets shall be kept in a building any part of which is closer to the nearest lot line than one hundred (100) feet. No garbage or refuse other than spent grain shall be used for feed other than that actually produced on the premises”; and §400,A,4: “Unattached accessory structures including but not limited to non-commercial greenhouse, tool shed, private garage or swimming pool shall be erected only in accordance with the following restrictions. No accessory structure is located closer than thirty (30) feet to the side or rear lot lines”. **These three regulations on farms could be overly burdensome to a farmer operating on a smaller lot especially considering that according to §400,A,2,d Farms are exempt from (§401 B) which contains the setback requirements for non-residential structures. The impact of these setback requirements and the conflict with the exemption to §401,B and the limitations on what can be used as feed, requiring that it must be produced on premises, should be evaluated for the future of farming opportunities in the Town.**
- §400,A,3: “Ponds: Under a million gallons of impoundment, permits are required by the Town of Ira and may require permits from other agencies.” **Consideration should be made as to how onerous this requirement would be for farmer who needs to install an irrigation pond on their property, or for someone wishing to install a small pond to attract insects and wildlife for natural pollination of their crops.**
- §400,A,7: “School buses can not be used as storage structures” and §400,A,8,b: “Junk as defined in this part is not permitted” “Two (2) or more inoperable unlicensed or unregistered motor vehicles”. **There is not a definition of Storage Structure in the zoning code and therefore it is unclear what type of use of a school bus would not be permitted by farmers. For example, some farmers use old school buses as transportable chicken coops. NYSDAM does not encourage the development of junk yards on farms, but does recognize that farmers need to have some extra equipment around for parts and does encourage farmers to use any structure or equipment which can further their production or business including school buses. Definitions for storage structure, farm use and motor vehicles (including/excluding farm equipment) should be considered.**
- §800,A: Parking. **Based on the requirements set forth in this section, the number of off-street parking spaces required at a minimum for a farm which has: a house; an office for the farm business; a farm stand or commercial greenhouse; and any number of accessory uses (i.e. barns) would be nine (9). An investigation into the impact of requiring off-street parking spaces for farms regardless of whether or not they have a commercial operation open to the public should be conducted and the parking requirements for farms should be evaluated.**



- §800,D: “No commercial motor vehicle, machinery or equipment shall be parked or stored out of doors in residential districts except in the side or rear yard and no closer than five (5) feet from the side or rear property lines.” **The Town does not have an exclusive residential district and restricting where a piece of agricultural equipment can be parked on a property conflicts with the intent of New York State’s Right-to-Farm Law and the ability of a farmer to place their equipment where they need it to be, which often is the “front yard” of a property (since that is most often where road access is for a field).**
- §801: Signs. **This section of the zoning code needs some clarification. It is not clear whether farms are precluded from putting a sign on a barn or other structure which identifies the name of the farm, of any size. Subsection A only addresses freestanding signs. It is unclear whether the Town intends to only regulate the size and placement of individual signs or the total square footage of signage allowed per parcel. Some clarification of sign regulations as it pertains to agricultural properties is needed.**

The intent of the Farm-Friendly audit of the Town’s Zoning regulations is not only to identify those areas needing improvement, but to highlight the areas of the code which are supporting agriculture in Ira. The following is a list of sections of the Town’s Zoning Code and other municipal laws which are considered “Farm-Friendly” and in support of farming operations in the Town.

Zoning Law

- §801,A,3: Signs in the Agricultural/Residential (AR) district are permitted “...for the sale of products grown or produced on the premises...” **This regulation supports farming by allowing farmers to put up signage at the roadside or on a farmstand in order to sell their produce.**
- §802,B: “The height limitations of this Law shall not apply to: Farm structures...water tanks and necessary appurtenances usually carried above roof levels.” **This regulation supports farming by exempting farms structures from height limitations.**
- §904,A: “ Any application for a special use permit, site plan approval, use variance, or subdivision approval requiring municipal review and approval by the Town Board, Planning Board, or Zoning Board of Appeals pursuant to this Article, that would occur on property within an agricultural district containing a farm operation or on property with boundaries within five hundred feet of a farm operation located in an agricultural district shall include an agricultural data statement”. **The requirement of submitting an Agricultural Data Statement with a development plan or permit application is consistent with NYS Ag & Markets Law.**

Noise Law

- §5: Exceptions to Regulations- “These levels shall not apply to noise emitted by or related to Agricultural Practices”. **This regulation supports farming by exempting farms from the noise law.**

Subdivision Regulations

- §3,B,4,b: Minor Subdivision– the proposal may be determined to be a minor subdivision if “the proposal presents no apparent impediments to the continuation of viable agricultural activity when the proposal is located within a portion of the Town of Ira included in an Agricultural District established under NYS Agriculture and Markets Law”. **This section gives the Planning Board and Town Board some discretion over the major and minor subdivision application process, in determining which procedure to follow, if viable agricultural land is involved in the subdivision request.**
- §7,D,1: Drainage- “All subdivision proposals shall demonstrate by narrative and drawings that the proposed project when complete will not result in a greater quantity or rate of storm water runoff (drainage) from the site than occurred prior to development, nor change the quality of such runoff.” **This provision protects all properties in the Town, but more importantly prevents new development from affecting the natural drainage patterns of adjacent or downstream agricultural lands.**
- §8,C: Cluster Development- “In conjunction with approval of a subdivision plat the Planning Board may modify provisions of the zoning law, except those related to use, so as to achieve flexibility of design and development in order to promote the most appropriate use of land, facilitate the adequate and efficient provision of streets and utilities, and preserve natural and scenic qualities.” **This section should also mention the preservation of viable agricultural land.**



The final component of the Farm-Friendly audit was to review previous planning efforts. The most recent relevant planning effort was the 2008 Joint Comprehensive Plan between the Town of Cato and the Town of Ira. One of the primary objectives of the Comprehensive Plan is the preservation of active farmland and the rural character of the community. The plan also states that “The Towns of Ira and Cato will strive to maintain the viability of agriculture within the community as an integral part of the local economy and an important land use activity to sustain future generations”. There are many objectives and implementation strategies in the Comprehensive Plan for agricultural protection. Excerpts from the objectives and their corresponding implementation strategies for the protection of agriculture in the community are listed below. Items which are bolded have been included in the goals and objectives for this plan.

- **Encourage local farmers to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure farming practices help protect local surface and ground water quality.**
 - ✓ Try to avoid strip development along major roads which will lead to the fragmentation of farmland.
 - ✓ Use smart growth practices to decrease the development pressure on agricultural lands.
- **Highlight the agricultural heritage of the Town through encouraging on-farm educational programs and agricultural tourism (e.g., harvest festivals, horseback riding, and local events).**
 - ✓ Encourage local farmers to utilize the New York State Barns Restoration and Preservation Program on a voluntary basis.
 - ✓ **Highlight local farms for agricultural commerce opportunities.**
 - ✓ **Coordinate local farmers to provide entertainment and on-farm learning within the community.**
- Adjust land use policy to target infrastructure improvements within projected growth areas and away from agricultural areas with large lots that actively engage in productive agricultural operations.
- **Plan for future wastewater infrastructure in a manner that minimizes future maintenance costs to local taxpayers and discourages unplanned growth into actively operating agricultural areas.**
- **Consider the New York State Scenic Byways Program for State Routes 370 and 34.**
 - ✓ Strategies in the plan relate to agricultural tourism and improved awareness of recreational opportunities, Routes 370 and 34 offer an excellent opportunity as Scenic Byways. A byway is organized around at least one theme. A theme is based on related resources...resources can be things like...farms.
- Promote wind technology that enhances agricultural viability and profitability throughout the agricultural zoning district.
- Manage the location of wind generators and cellular towers so they are away from active farmland or toward the edge of fields and tillable acreage.
 - ✓ Recommend that the Town **adopt “Guidelines for Agricultural Mitigation for Wind Power Projects” developed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.**
 - ✓ Require cellular towers to co-locate or locate on a subdivided parcel with road access.



- **Promote open space or cluster subdivisions to help protect the rural character of the community and to maintain open space to preserve rural character and farmland.**
- Discourage major residential subdivisions from encroaching into agricultural areas.
 - ✓ Encouraging clustering provisions on lands within close proximity to the villages will minimize encroachment upon agricultural areas.
 - ✓ Industrial and commercial uses (including agriculture) should be buffered from residential areas with vegetative buffers and open space.
 - ✓ Accommodate the need for farm worker housing and utilize Special Use Permits.
- Encourage farming and agricultural commerce as a means to preserve rural character and open space.
- Ensure agriculture to continue as the primary economic activity in the community.
- Treat farming as a business enterprise and as the primary land use in the community.
- Encourage a supportive business climate for agricultural commerce.
- Support clean energy technology and cooperation with business that provides new paradigms to improve the economic viability of farming in the community (for example: bio-fuel support, waste to energy production and nutrient recycling).
- **Develop consistency in local land use procedures that addresses agriculture.**
- **The Town Planning Board will discourage fragmentation of currently active and potentially active farmland for other land uses.**
- **Strive to maintain the most productive agricultural land for future generations.**
- **Work with local members of the agricultural community to encourage individual farmers to secure funding for farmland protection and open space conservation.**
- Encourage sound farming practices in accordance with the guidelines of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Best Management Practices (BMP) to include:
 - ✓ Natural resource protection
 - ✓ Runoff and erosion control
 - ✓ Organic farming
 - ✓ Open space protection
 - ✓ Nutrient management
- Provide a climate where businesses, particularly locally owned operations, can benefit from the Town's agricultural heritage.
- Discourage commercial or industrial activity that does not compliment agricultural infrastructure or operations from locating in the agricultural zoning district and encourage those activities in areas adjacent to the Village.
- Promote business development that supports and/or is supported by agriculture in the community.



- Foster an economic climate that supports and promotes the expansion of agri-tourism.
- Provide incentives for specialty farms, hobby farms and self sufficiency farms and encourage agriculture that is compatible with residential development (i.e., farm stands, nurseries, local product outlets) in residential areas.
 - ✓ **Form an Agricultural Advisory Committee.**
 - ✓ **The Local Planning Board should strive to reduce potential future development pressures on viable farmland during the process of reviewing subdivisions and site plans proposed within the community.**
 - ✓ Allow farming in all zoning districts within the community.
 - ✓ Require that buffer zones between land uses are not burdensome to farming.
 - ✓ **Ensure that new development does not impede the farmer's access to land.**
 - ✓ Flexibility should be incorporated into review procedures for agricultural businesses.
 - ✓ Require full disclosure to developers and owners of new projects.
 - ✓ Encourage development to occur in a way that does not erode the viability of farming.
 - ✓ Implement percentage requirements for the subdivision of large lots with large expanses of road frontage.
- **Encourage new commerce, including progressive energy development that relies on agriculture and supports agricultural production.**
- Favor new business that is related to green technology or clean technology, particularly enterprise that can complement agricultural commerce and the rural character of the area.
- **Promote agricultural processing facilities and small niche processing facilities to improve the presence of compatible industry and business.**
- **Engage the Cato-Meridian School District to develop a mentoring program to introduce students to working farms and environmental stewardship.**
- **Foster and encourage new business that can support agri-tourism and environmental education** as well as improve the business climate for local recreation related business.
 - ✓ Identify land areas in close proximity to existing or anticipated water infrastructure that can reasonably be facilitated by future infrastructure improvements.
 - ↳ Limiting potential water and sewer extensions to areas within close proximity to the village will help to preserve agricultural and open space areas of the Town.
 - ✓ Establish a local strategic planning committee.
 - ↳ Having a group that is continually engaged in the promotion of the Town and Village will allow local officials to be ready and knowledgeable about future trends and growth management practices affecting its land, agriculture, and the economy.



Public Outreach

The Town of Ira Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan development process began with a public kick-off meeting. In preparation for that meeting the Town published a public notice in local newspapers and posted a copy at the Town Hall to inform residents about the plan, the kick-off meeting, and the process the Town would undertake in order to develop the plan. The Town also mailed personal invitations to over 25 local farmers in the Town encouraging them to consider joining the Town of Ira Agricultural Planning Committee which was ultimately responsible for the development of this plan.

Personal interviews were conducted during the early phases of developing this plan in order to gain valuable information from both farmers and non-farmer residents in the Town of Ira. Interviewees were asked about their perspective on agriculture, what it means to them and what it means to the town, as well as their ideas for protecting agricultural land in the Town. Below is a selection of responses given for the question “What does agriculture mean to you, and how would you define it?”, as well as specific suggestions for what some of the goals of this plan should be. The responses from these interviews, organized into areas of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Treats (SWOT) to agriculture in the Town were compiled and also included below.

The Town published public notices in local papers, put notices on their Town website, and mailed invitations to interviewees to invite the public to attend the Agricultural Planning Committee meetings where the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies were discussed. These same methods were used to encourage public participation during the two Public Hearings held by the Town Agricultural Planning Committee. In addition, for the February 6, 2014 Public Hearing on the Full Draft Plan, the Town mailed postcards to the residents and property owners in the Town informing them of the meeting and encouraging them to attend; Committee members posted flyers at area business inviting people to attend the meeting; the draft plan was available on the Town website; and printed copies of the draft plan were available free of charge to residents at Town Hall. A public meeting was held in March by the Cayuga County Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board to review and comment on the draft plan. The Town Board held a final Public Hearing in April to once again hear from residents on the draft plan and to formally adopt the plan. At all of these meetings residents were encouraged to provide feedback on the draft protection plan.

What Does Agriculture Mean to You, and How Would You Define It?

- Without local farmers you get large corporations taking over large areas of land who don't have a vested interest in the community. I would like to see more support for small scale farms and family farms.
- I grew up with farming, it's in my blood. If I had to sell I would probably cry. Agriculture = feeding people.
- Agriculture is something we do in this state and if farmers can make money at it then I'm in favor of supporting farmers and farms at the Town level. If ethanol can make farmers money and it keeps their farms going, then I am in support of that too.
- Agriculture means a lot to me, it's important. I like living in farm country in an area with rural character. Agriculture is land that someone is making a living off of by farming.
- We need Agriculture and Farming to feed the people, without it we'd all be hungry.
- I rent my property to farmers and log the woods. It's in my blood. If my family farm was still running when I was a kid, that's what I would be doing.



Specific Suggestions of Goals for the Plan

- If a farm comes up for sale it should be sold as a farm and you shouldn't be able to subdivide it; or allow only a small section to be used for development. Keep established farms farming.
- The Town should partner with the County and/or State for a PDR program to buy the development rights.
- Unless the assessment on a building lot is at least \$150,000, you are costing your neighbor money with services, taxes won't cover it. I'll pay my fair share, but they don't know what their share is. The Town should make it as easy and cheap as possible for land to stay in agriculture and as difficult and expensive as possible to convert it to housing.
- Institute a Main Street Redevelopment Program to incentivize infill and development in the Villages and Hamlets and keep development pressure away from farms.
- Make it easier for farmers to farm by limiting new housing and encouraging farms to stay farms, only sell land to other farmers if they need or want to sell it.
- Limit future water and/or sewer lines to areas like Misty Meadows and the Villages.
- Make it where there are areas you can't build. PDR...not sure about it but an LDR might work better. It'd be nice to see something like that.
- Save the best agricultural land based on soils, slope, etc.; and save wood lots and space for wildlife and hunting too. Agriculture is also the harvesting of trees too and not just a form of clear cutting.
- Love to see regulations put in place so farmland is not randomly sold off and developed without restricting selective development. No conversion of good farmland just to residential.
- Keep the Town of Ira an agricultural community.
- Farms should be able to cut off a couple lots for family or worker housing but not 15+ lots for a new subdivision.



Results of Interviews: SWOT Analysis of the Current State of Agriculture in Ira

Strengths

Farming looks viable and I would like farming to continue in the Town.

People are doing fine with farming.

The Town has done a good job to protect farmland so far.

More land is being rented by farmers than is owned by farmers which could be either a strength or a weakness if someone wants more money for rent when commodity prices go down.

Ira *is* an Agricultural community!

Agriculture is an asset to the Town of Ira.

Agricultural tax exemptions for farmers.

No real farmer and non-farmer neighbor relation issues.

People accept this as a farming community and an agricultural community.

The people doing agriculture are good wholesome people.

Most of the available land in the Town has been bought up by farmers over the past 5 years.

Weaknesses

I worry about farmers clearing big patches of trees to gain just a few acres. This is not what I would do.

Agriculture has become a bigger business so there will be fewer people farming on the same land. More land will be bought up and the consolidation of farms will continue.

Farm equipment is getting bigger and heavier and the roads are changing a lot in order to support the traffic of this new equipment.

There aren't enough active dairy farms currently to attract dairy support business.

There is no longer a local vet for farm animals.

Machinery dealers are no longer local except for a few private repair shops.

There have been very few new farms in the past 50 years, everything else is just consolidation. Some available land has been bought up by farmers, but everyone wants housing and more business and they are using good farmland to get it.

Property is being cleared and hedge rows are being cut back to gain a few acres...acres that haven't been cleared in years.

There has been a bit of a decline in agriculture in the Town with milk prices dropping and climate change.

I have seen people purchase 25 acres and put a house in the middle of a field, then leave and sell two years later.

Houses were built in the middle of fields, wasting good farmland, before the price of corn went up a few years ago.



Opportunities

The Town should give money to dairy farmers because they are the most underappreciated farmers in the whole world. If the Town had grant money available for local farmers I would like to see it go to dairy farmers.

I would like to see thriving family farms.

There is an opportunity to encourage and support more niche operations.

Good agricultural soils should be preserved so that future generations can cash crop, or dairy, or berry. Because once you build a house on it, you've lost it.

Cash crops are the future of agriculture in the Town.

The Town should try to get Nutrition Bar going again, help to save this business.

The Town needs to clean up derelict properties and encourage the replacement of old falling down abandoned homes with new ones instead of building on a field.

Strongly in favor of adding a Right-to-Farm law.

Prevent people from buying a huge track of land that was a farm field and putting a house in the middle of it, letting the rest of the land go to waste (not to be farmed anymore).

The position of a water district is key for preservation of farmland. The more expensive you can make a building lot, the higher quality house you'll get on it. If you have public water you'll have a better quality housing development.

Farmland protection is important because I don't want to see chain developments or new subdivisions.

Farm-friendly zoning is a good idea to free up some red tape to do some more commercial agricultural activities.

Subdivisions should be developed away from suitable farmland.

I would like to see more Mennonites farming in the community.

Threats

It is obvious that farms have been consolidated. There were more people farming on the same area of land 25 years ago.

The Town has gone from 90% of the residents being farmers down to 2% over a few short generations.

New York State is the biggest threat to farming. I can't use good chemicals on the trees without an applicators license, but if I get it then the State can come inspect me anytime they want to an fines start at \$1,000.00. I don't make enough money to risk that kind of fine.

Global warming could change the face of farming.

A real threat to the viability of farming is development, but the Town has done ok with controlling it so far.

Small farms are the best training grounds for new farmers but with fewer farms in operation in the future, we will see kids going to trade schools to learn how to operate farm equipment.

Consolidation of farmland will continue and will produce either a large dairy or a large cash crop farm.

Farming will continue to be more competitive and cutthroat as farmers are trying to gain more land. There are fewer and fewer of us to do it (farm). There are no young farmers interested.

Housing- neighboring towns have become bedroom communities. People who were raised on a farm could, after WWII, go to Syracuse to make a good living and afford to live outside of the city.

There is no industry or magnet to draw anyone to move to Ira. We will probably continue to house our own people (children) but where are they going to live? The new housing that we will see will be low budget housing.

Housing is causing the conversion of farms.



Farmland Protection Suitability Index

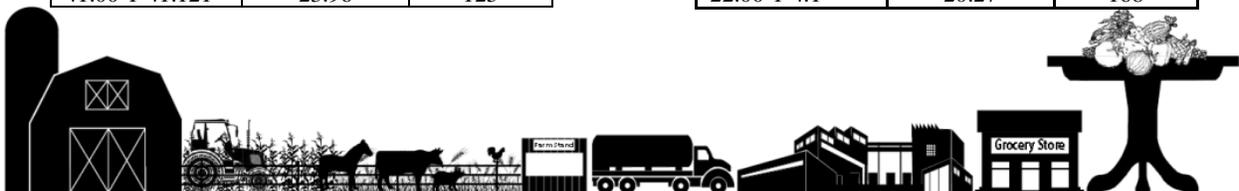
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| 40.00-1-41.1 | 56.09 | 5 |
| 27.00-1-37.1 | 53.41 | 6 |
| 34.00-1-56.1 | 51.28 | 7 |
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| 45.00-1-3.21 | 46.28 | 11 |
| 33.00-1-32 | 45.70 | 12 |
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| 41.00-1-55.2 | 41.60 | 21 |
| 40.00-1-37.111 | 40.77 | 22 |
| 34.00-1-28 | 39.74 | 23 |
| 27.00-1-38 | 39.51 | 24 |
| 46.00-1-1.1 | 38.93 | 25 |
| 41.00-1-31.3 | 38.73 | 26 |
| 29.00-1-3.1 | 38.28 | 27 |
| 46.00-1-38 | 37.94 | 28 |
| 34.00-1-61.11 | 37.91 | 29 |
| 29.00-1-2 | 37.76 | 30 |
| 41.00-1-21 | 37.73 | 31 |
| 41.00-1-32 | 37.58 | 32 |
| 27.00-1-34.12 | 37.10 | 33 |
| 40.00-1-23.7 | 36.91 | 34 |
| 35.00-1-7.1 | 36.84 | 35 |
| 46.00-1-16.111 | 36.81 | 36 |
| 46.00-1-51.1 | 36.08 | 37 |
| 35.00-1-21.1 | 36.04 | 38 |
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| 29.00-1-26 | 34.82 | 41 |

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| 46.00-1-15 | 31.77 | 65 |
| 40.00-1-44.1 | 31.75 | 66 |
| 34.00-1-25.1 | 31.53 | 67 |
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| 34.00-1-30 | 30.68 | 73 |
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| 34.00-1-53.211 | 30.19 | 75 |
| 46.00-1-4.116 | 30.14 | 76 |
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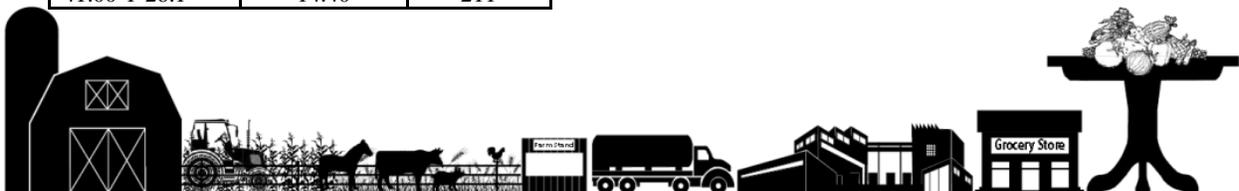
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| 29.00-1-42 | 26.41 | 107 |
| 46.00-1-41.11 | 26.30 | 108 |
| 29.00-1-36 | 26.19 | 109 |
| 34.00-1-13 | 26.17 | 110 |
| 46.00-1-26.11 | 26.17 | 111 |
| 39.00-1-13.4 | 26.01 | 112 |
| 46.00-1-2.12 | 25.97 | 113 |
| 27.00-1-20.11 | 25.79 | 114 |
| 27.00-1-24.1 | 25.72 | 115 |
| 27.00-1-31.1 | 25.71 | 116 |
| 23.00-1-9.11 | 25.62 | 117 |
| 23.00-1-14.4 | 25.32 | 118 |
| 41.00-1-15 | 25.28 | 119 |
| 33.00-1-31.22 | 25.10 | 120 |
| 28.00-1-21.12 | 25.06 | 121 |
| 28.00-1-18.2 | 24.91 | 122 |
| 40.00-1-28.1 | 24.64 | 123 |
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| Tax ID # | Suitability Index Score | Rank |
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| 33.00-1-7.12 | 23.58 | 127 |
| 47.00-1-12.1 | 23.57 | 128 |
| 46.00-1-17.4 | 23.41 | 129 |
| 23.00-1-6.1 | 23.34 | 130 |
| 34.00-1-55.11 | 23.11 | 131 |
| 22.00-1-3.1 | 23.03 | 132 |
| 39.00-1-43.7 | 23.02 | 133 |
| 28.00-1-17 | 22.75 | 134 |
| 27.00-1-19.1 | 22.65 | 135 |
| 40.00-1-45.11 | 22.60 | 136 |
| 39.00-1-43.126 | 22.55 | 137 |
| 41.00-1-18.111 | 22.47 | 138 |
| 29.00-1-34.112 | 22.42 | 139 |
| 27.00-1-30 | 22.36 | 140 |
| 39.00-1-6.1 | 22.14 | 141 |
| 29.00-1-25.21 | 22.12 | 142 |
| 35.00-1-43.111 | 22.07 | 143 |
| 45.00-1-6.4 | 21.97 | 144 |
| 34.00-1-74 | 21.91 | 145 |
| 40.00-1-21.2 | 21.84 | 146 |
| 23.00-1-12.111 | 21.77 | 147 |
| 46.00-1-2.112 | 21.73 | 148 |
| 29.00-1-38.1 | 21.73 | 149 |
| 45.00-1-19 | 21.68 | 150 |
| 39.00-1-14.3 | 21.63 | 151 |
| 33.00-1-23.111 | 21.55 | 152 |
| 45.00-1-5 | 21.54 | 153 |
| 33.00-1-7.116 | 21.51 | 154 |
| 29.00-1-20.121 | 21.49 | 155 |
| 23.00-1-13 | 21.29 | 156 |
| 40.00-1-38.2 | 21.14 | 157 |
| 29.00-1-39.111 | 21.11 | 158 |
| 35.00-1-8.11 | 21.10 | 159 |
| 39.00-1-42.11 | 21.07 | 160 |
| 33.00-1-15 | 20.94 | 161 |
| 35.00-1-29.6 | 20.81 | 162 |
| 45.00-1-24.12 | 20.76 | 163 |
| 29.00-1-34.21 | 20.71 | 164 |
| 29.00-1-39.121 | 20.60 | 165 |
| 46.00-1-21.12 | 20.52 | 166 |
| 33.00-1-7.2 | 20.46 | 167 |
| 22.00-1-4.1 | 20.27 | 168 |



| Tax ID # | Suitability Index Score | Rank |
|----------------|-------------------------|------|
| 46.00-1-4.113 | 20.27 | 169 |
| 29.00-1-8.11 | 20.21 | 170 |
| 47.00-1-13.5 | 20.11 | 171 |
| 35.00-1-6 | 19.93 | 172 |
| 29.00-1-20.6 | 19.73 | 173 |
| 46.00-1-14.21 | 19.68 | 174 |
| 28.00-1-32 | 19.63 | 175 |
| 41.00-1-47.1 | 19.58 | 176 |
| 40.00-1-13 | 19.32 | 177 |
| 39.00-1-7.1 | 19.31 | 178 |
| 35.00-1-9.111 | 19.28 | 179 |
| 41.00-1-60.211 | 19.28 | 180 |
| 22.00-1-11 | 19.24 | 181 |
| 29.00-1-7.1 | 19.22 | 182 |
| 29.00-1-32 | 18.92 | 183 |
| 23.00-1-9.2 | 18.83 | 184 |
| 41.00-1-25 | 18.82 | 185 |
| 35.00-1-3 | 18.80 | 186 |
| 46.00-1-4.12 | 18.75 | 187 |
| 27.00-1-33.2 | 18.46 | 188 |
| 35.00-1-8.3 | 18.34 | 189 |
| 41.00-1-24.1 | 18.22 | 190 |
| 41.00-1-30.111 | 18.18 | 191 |
| 29.00-1-15.11 | 17.76 | 192 |
| 29.00-1-45.121 | 17.70 | 193 |
| 28.00-1-7.11 | 17.63 | 194 |
| 28.00-1-2.21 | 17.56 | 195 |
| 34.00-1-22 | 17.47 | 196 |
| 29.00-1-20.112 | 17.38 | 197 |
| 29.00-1-40.3 | 17.33 | 198 |
| 41.00-1-13.121 | 16.84 | 199 |
| 29.00-1-34.4 | 16.33 | 200 |
| 46.00-1-56.2 | 15.73 | 201 |
| 29.00-1-39.4 | 15.49 | 202 |
| 29.00-1-33.111 | 15.35 | 203 |
| 22.00-1-4.2 | 15.28 | 204 |
| 29.00-1-45.113 | 15.23 | 205 |
| 41.00-1-60.12 | 15.19 | 206 |
| 33.00-1-35 | 15.12 | 207 |
| 45.00-1-15.12 | 14.72 | 208 |
| 29.00-1-25.11 | 14.52 | 209 |
| 28.00-1-19.111 | 14.48 | 210 |
| 41.00-1-26.1 | 14.40 | 211 |

| Tax ID # | Suitability Index Score | Rank |
|----------------|-------------------------|------|
| 28.00-1-2.22 | 13.87 | 212 |
| 45.00-1-18 | 13.76 | 213 |
| 28.00-1-11.11 | 13.68 | 214 |
| 41.00-1-51.111 | 13.65 | 215 |
| 27.00-1-42.113 | 13.63 | 216 |
| 29.00-1-39.21 | 13.58 | 217 |
| 28.00-1-2.12 | 13.55 | 218 |
| 40.00-1-35.11 | 13.26 | 219 |
| 27.00-1-28 | 13.07 | 220 |
| 28.00-1-7.12 | 12.98 | 221 |
| 27.00-1-36 | 12.97 | 222 |
| 40.00-1-36.231 | 12.90 | 223 |
| 27.00-1-42.6 | 12.87 | 224 |
| 35.00-1-15 | 12.61 | 225 |
| 41.00-1-43 | 12.00 | 226 |
| 41.00-1-1.112 | 11.86 | 227 |
| 39.00-1-43.13 | 11.60 | 228 |
| 41.00-1-55.1 | 11.56 | 229 |
| 41.00-1-37 | 11.38 | 230 |
| 34.00-1-68 | 11.26 | 231 |
| 41.00-1-19.1 | 10.85 | 232 |
| 29.00-1-48.21 | 10.00 | 233 |
| 27.00-1-2 | 9.62 | 234 |
| 34.00-1-71 | 9.17 | 235 |
| 34.00-1-72 | 9.04 | 236 |
| 46.00-1-4.118 | 8.30 | 237 |
| 39.00-1-18.4 | 5.46 | 238 |
| 29.00-1-9.112 | 5.23 | 239 |
| 41.00-1-41.2 | 5.16 | 240 |
| 34.00-1-18 | 4.32 | 241 |
| 45.00-1-1 | 4.19 | 242 |
| 40.00-1-23.2 | 3.23 | 243 |
| 29.00-1-11.1 | 2.80 | 244 |
| 34.00-1-17 | 2.48 | 245 |



Town of Ira Right-to-Farm Law (Draft)

Title:

This chapter shall be known as the “Right-to-Farm Law of the Town of Ira”.

Purpose and Intent:

- A. The Ira Town Board finds, declares and determines that agriculture is vital to the Town of Ira because agriculture is an essential enterprise and an important industry that enhances the economic base, natural environment and quality of life in the Town. In addition, agriculture provides locally produced fresh commodities and agricultural land does not increase the demand for services provided by local governments.
- B. The Town Board further declares that it shall be the policy of the Town to encourage agriculture and foster understanding by all residents of the necessary day-to-day operations involved in farming so as to encourage cooperation with those practices.
- C. It is the general purpose and intent of this law to maintain and preserve the rural traditions and character of the Town, to permit the continuation of agricultural practices, to protect the existence and operation of farms, and to encourage the initiation and expansion of farms and agri-businesses.
- D. In order to maintain a viable farming economy in the Town of Ira, it is necessary to limit the circumstances under which farming might be deemed to be a nuisance and to allow agricultural practices inherent to, and necessary for, the business of farming to be able to proceed, and to be undertaken free of unreasonable and unwarranted interference or restriction.

Definitions:

1. **Agriculture:** The use of land and local resources for the production of food, fiber, fuel and for agritourism activities including but not limited to: the raising, harvesting, and selling of crops; or feeding (including grazing), breeding, managing, selling, or producing livestock, poultry, fur-bearing animals or honeybees; or by dairying and the sale of dairy products; or by any other aquacultural, floricultural, horticultural, silvicultural or viticultural use; by animal husbandry, agricultural support industries, or by any combination thereof. It also includes the use of land for the primary purpose of stabling or training equines including, but not limited to, providing riding lessons, training clinics and schooling shows.
2. **Farmland:** Land which is currently used for crop production, pasture, farmstead, field drainage and irrigation infrastructure, or conservation; and land which is not currently in use for but is suitable for these purposes in the future. For example; idle farmland.
3. **Agricultural Practices:** Those practices necessary for the on-farm production, preparation and marketing of agricultural commodities. Examples of such practices include, but are not limited to, operation of farm equipment, proper use of agricultural chemicals and other crop production methods, and construction and use of farm structures.

Right-to-Farm Declaration:

- A. Farmers, as well as those employed, retained or otherwise authorized to act on behalf of farmers, may lawfully engage in agricultural practices within this Town at all times and all such locations as are reasonably necessary to conduct the business of agriculture. For any agricultural practice, in determining the reasonableness of the time, place and methodology of such practice, due weight and consideration shall be given to both traditional customs and



procedures in the farming industry as well as to advances resulting from increased knowledge, research, and improved technologies. Agricultural practices conducted on farmland shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance if such agricultural practices are:

1. Reasonable and necessary to the particular farm or farm operation
 2. Conducted in a manner that is not negligent or reckless
 3. Conducted in conformity with generally accepted and sound agricultural practices
 4. Conducted in conformity with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations
 5. Conducted in a manner that does not constitute a threat to public health and safety or cause injury to the health or safety of any person, and
 6. Conducted in a manner that does not reasonably obstruct the free passage or use of navigable waters or public roadways.
- B. Nothing in this Local Law shall be construed to prohibit an aggrieved party from recovering damages for bodily injury or wrongful death due to a failure to follow sound agricultural practice, as outlined in this section.

Notification to Real Estate Buyers:

- A. In order to promote harmony between farmers and their neighbors, the Town requires land holders and/or their agents and assigns to comply with section 310 of Article 25AA of New York State Agriculture and Markets Law, and provide notice to prospective purchasers and occupants as follows: "It is the policy of this state and this community to conserve, protect, and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food and other products, and also for its natural and ecological value. This notice is to inform prospective residents that the property they are about to acquire lies partially or wholly within an agricultural district, or partially or wholly adjacent to areas where farm operations take place, and that farming activities occur within the district and within these other areas. Such farming activities might include, but not be limited to, activities that cause noise, dust and odors." This notice shall be provided to prospective purchasers of property within an agricultural district or on property with boundaries within 500 feet of an agricultural district or a farm operation that might be located outside a designated agricultural district. A copy of this notice shall be included by the seller or seller's agent as an addendum to the purchase and sale contract at the time an offer to purchase is made.

Severability Clause:

- A. If any or part of this Local Law is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the remainder of this Local Law. The Town hereby declares that it would have passed this Local Law and each section and subsection thereof, irrespective of the fact they any one or more of these sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases may be declared unconstitutional or invalid.

Precedence:

- A. This Local Law and its provisions are in addition to all other applicable laws, rules and regulations.



Model Lateral Restriction Law

MODEL LATERAL RESTRICTIONS RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the **[governing body of municipality]** has created the **[name of water district]** pursuant to Town Law for the express purpose of providing public water supply to residents along **[geographic extent of water district]**; and

WHEREAS, part of the land area within **[name of water district]** is also within **[name of Agricultural District]** and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has filed a Notice of Intent to Undertake an Action Within an Agricultural District to evaluate the impact of providing a source of public water supply within this area on lands within **[name of Agricultural District]**; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (“Department”) has expressed concern about the potential adverse impact that said public water supply is likely to have on agriculture within the Agricultural District,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board, in recognition of the concerns that have been raised, hereby resolves to adopt the “Lateral Restriction - Conditions on Future Service” specified by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets as follows:

MODEL Lateral Restriction - Conditions on Future Service Law

The **[municipality]** imposes the following conditions, as warranted or recommended on the management of water/sewer lines located along **[location]** within an agricultural district:

(1) The only land and/or structures which will be allowed to connect to the proposed waterline or sewer within an agricultural district will be existing structures at the time of construction, further agricultural structures, and land and structures that have already been approved for development by the **[municipality]** prior to the filing of the Final Notice of Intent by the **[municipality]**.

Land and structures that have been approved for development refer to those properties/structures that have been brought before the **[municipality]** where approval (e.g., subdivision, site plan, and special permit) is needed to move forward with project plans and the **[municipality]** has approved the action. If no local approval is required for the subdivision of land and/or the construction of structures, the **[municipality]** accepts the limitation under Public Health Law §1115 that defines a “subdivision,” in part, as “any tract of land which is divided into five or more parcels.” Water and/or sewer service will not be extended to the fifth and subsequent parcels where no local approval is required and the land is located within a county adopted, State certified agricultural district.

(2) If a significant hardship can be shown by an existing resident, the lateral restriction to the resident’s property may be removed by the **[municipality]** upon approval by the Department. It is the responsibility of the resident landowner to demonstrate that a hardship exists relative to his or her existing water supply or septic system and clearly demonstrate the need for public water or sewer service. The **[municipality]** shall develop a hardship application to be filed with the **[municipality]**, approved by the County Department of Health, and agreed to by the Department.

(3) If it can be demonstrated to the Department’s satisfaction that the landowner requested the county to remove his or her land from an agricultural district at the time of district review and the county legislative body refused to do so, lateral restrictions may be removed by the **[municipality]** if the Department determines that the removal of the restriction for the subject parcel(s) would not have an unreasonably adverse effect on the agricultural district.

(4) If land is removed from a county adopted, State certified agricultural district and the district has been reviewed by the county legislative body and certified by the Commissioner for modification, lateral restrictions imposed by the **[municipality]** are no longer in effect for the parcels of land that have been removed from the agricultural district.

(5) Hydrants and valve boxes must not be placed directly in agricultural fields.

The restriction on hookups would apply to non-agricultural structures for as long as the property is located within an Agricultural District.

