IV. County Land Use Policies and Programs

This section summarizes existing land use policies and programs at the county level, and how they can be employed to protect and conserve viable agricultural lands and businesses. Below is a description of the Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 5 and the protections it offers farmers. A discussion of the County Farmland Protection Program and its components, including the suitability index tool used to help determine which farmland is most in need of protection and a discussion of the preservation method known as the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), is also included. The last section summarizes the 1996 Cayuga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, which this plan was built from.

Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 5

In 1973, Cayuga County became one of the first in the state to create an agricultural district under Article 25AA of New York State Agriculture and Markets Law. Five additional districts were later created. In 2013, due to cumbersome overlapping review processes for the six districts, they were consolidated into a single district, Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 5 (Map 4-1).

The consolidated Agricultural District contains 15,283 parcels and 361,588 acres, 64% of which is active viable agricultural land. Approximately 82% of the total land area in the county is within the Agricultural District. Land owners can choose to add their property to the District during the annual inclusion period, which confers certain benefits and protections to farmland. For example, the Agricultural Districts Law requires that state agencies, municipal governments and public benefit agencies avoid or minimize adverse impacts to farm operations in the agricultural district when pursuing projects that involve the acquisition of farmland or that advance public funds for certain construction activities. Under the New York State Right-to-Farm Law, agricultural activities on parcels within the District are protected from unreasonably restrictive local laws and from private nuisance lawsuits involving agricultural practices. Landowners can choose to remove their property from the District during the review process that takes place once every eight years.

County Farmland Protection Program

Since its inception in 2001, the Cayuga County Farmland Protection Program has secured funding to protect a total of 7,232 acres of active farmland in the Towns of Fleming, Scipio, Springport, and Aurelius through the purchase of development rights. Also, a PDR project in Onondaga County succeeded in protecting acreage in the Town of Cato (Map 4-2). PDR places a deed restriction, known as a conservation easement, on productive farmland after the property owner voluntarily sells his or her right to develop that land for non-agricultural uses. Farmers who choose to participate in this type of program are financially compensated for their development rights and help ensure that their land will be available to future generations of farmers regardless of future ownership.

When land owners choose to sell or donate their development rights they retain all other rights of ownership and can continue to farm their land or lease it to others. Farmland that is protected in this way can be passed on to family members or sold, but subsequent owners are required to follow the terms of the agreement just like any other deed restriction.

Funding for the County Farmland Protection Program has come from the NYSDAM Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG) program through the state's Environmental Protection Fund. The FPIG program assesses the relative suitability of agricultural parcels for protection by identifying and ranking parcels based on a list of criteria, which address three main priorities: 1) the viability of the agricultural land, 2) the degree of development pressure on the land, and 3) the potential of the land to act as a buffer to significant natural public resources. In 2014, the county developed its own evaluation criteria to maximize county program efforts in protecting the highest quality farmland that is most at risk of conversion to other land uses (see below for more information).

In 2014, after not funding any new applications for six years due to a backlog of projects, NYSDAM issued a request for applications for PDR projects under a redesigned FPIG program. The new program requires that the applicant, such as a town, county, soil and water conservation district or land trust, also act as the conservation easement holder and limits the number of farms that can be assisted by each applicant to four. This new structure, in combination with past limitations of the program that have not been addressed at the state level, creates challenges that must be considered in the context of Cayuga County's Farmland Protection Program. First, farmers and county officials have expressed the need for capacity building support for area land trusts, such as the New York Agricultural Land Trust (NYALT), in managing the complex PDR project transactions. Second, there are considerations that must be addressed in determining how local governments, whether it be a town or the county, can hold an easement in perpetuity and be responsible for monitoring property owner compliance. These considerations include the political difficulty of challenging a landowner who may be violating an easement and the logistical and financial challenge of committing staff support to monitor the easements in perpetuity. Last, the FPIG program currently accepts applications for properties without requiring an appraisal of their development value. This has created frustration in the community over inaccurate estimates of grant awards and can slow the process down or even derail projects.

Cayuga County's 2008 Farmland Protection Suitability Rankings

Figure 4-1 visualizes agricultural parcels ranked according to their suitability for protection based on the FPIG program funding criteria used from 2001 to 2008 (Table 4-1). This analysis somewhat mirrors the agricultural value of soils (Map 3-4) but took an overly simplistic view of the diversity of quality agricultural soils found throughout the county and failed to capture a great deal of the most vulnerable farmland in Cayuga County. The result of the 2008 analysis is that the parcels deemed most suitable for protection almost exclusively reside in the southwestern portion of the county, with a small cluster of parcels in the Towns of Owasco and Niles. This analysis failed to

Table 4-1: Criteria used to determine farmland most suitable for protection

2008 Criteria	2014 Criteria
Agricultural Value of Soils	Agricultural Value of Soils
Parcel size	Parcel size
Percent of parcel in agricultural production	Percent of parcel in agricultural production
Linear feet of road frontage per acre	Linear feet of road frontage per acre
Proximity to public water lines	**Proximity to public water district**
Proximity to public sewer district	Proximity to public sewer district
Within watershed of Cayuga, Owasco or Skaneateles Lakes	Within watershed of Cayuga, Owasco or Skaneateles Lakes
Linear feet of lake and stream frontage	**Linear feet of lake and stream frontage per acre**
Proximity to wetlands	Proximity to wetlands
Proximity to public park lands	**Proximity to all protected natural and park lands**
Proximity to protected farmland	Proximity to protected farmland
Proximity to other farmland	Proximity to other farmland
Within the Agricultural District	Within the Agricultural District
	Proximity to major population centers
	Proximity to Interstate 90 access points
	Parcel density
	Subdivision density

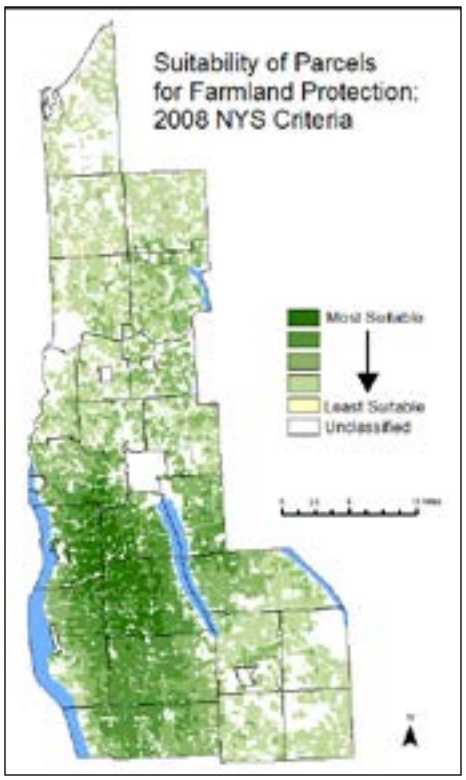
Note: Differences between the two criteria are indicated with bold text in the right column.

recognize the somewhat greater development pressures that some agricultural lands face in the central and northern areas of the county due to changing land use patterns such as the increased commercial and residential development near Auburn and Interstate 90, and increased pressures that may be felt by agricultural lands near villages and in water districts.

Cayuga County's 2014 Farmland Protection Suitability Rankings

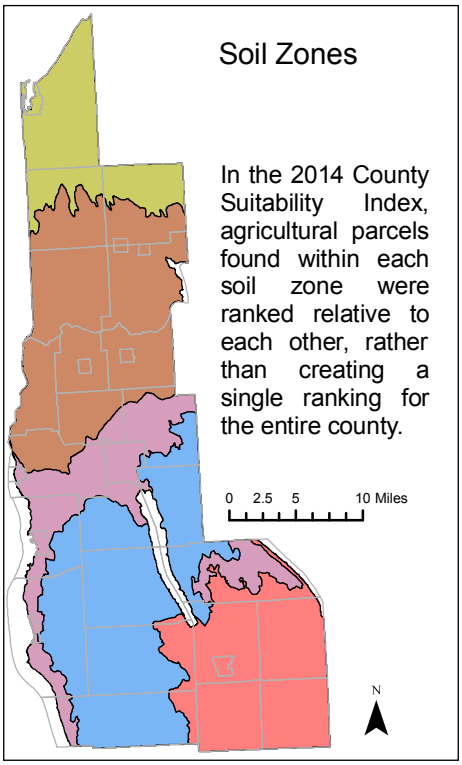
There are two primary reasons why the criteria used to rank the suitability of agricultural parcels were revised. First, the 2008 criteria heavily weighted the agricultural value of soils. However, viable farmland is found throughout the variations in soils present in the county; this one measurement does not necessarily predict the viability of agricultural production on a given parcel of land. The county's variable topography and wide variety of soil types – and the large variation in viable agricultural practices that can be employed on those different soil types – created a situation where viable profitable farms on soils that were valued lower were compared unfavorably to viable profitable farms on soils that were valued higher. This inequity in the criteria was recognized by the county's farming community, the County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board and the County Department of Planning and Economic Development alike. The revised criteria addresses this issue by identifying five generalized soil zones with similar characteristics that exist within the county (Figure 4-2). All parcels within each zone were then ranked relative to each other, rather than creating a single ranking for the entire county where viable farmland with drastically different soil characteristics are judged side by side.

Figure 4-1



Second, the 2008 criteria inadequately accounted for development pressures. There are low but steady development pressures near the

Figure 4-2

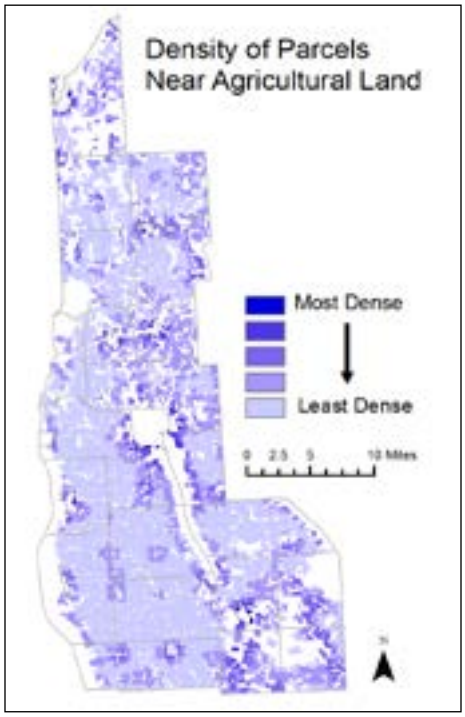


villages, the City of Auburn and along major transportation corridors, which can be seen in the densities of parcels throughout the county (Figure 4-3) and distribution of subdivisions between 2003 and 2013 (Figure 4-4). Figure 4-4 shows that subdivision activity was most concentrated in or near the Villages of Fair Haven, Weedsport and Moravia, and in or near the City of Auburn. Other "hot spots" include the State Route 38 corridor north and south of Moravia, the Town of Sennett, and the area surrounding the Villages of Cato and Meridian. The availability of water and sewer infrastructure has increased dramatically in the past few decades and continues to rise, creating a potential market for residential development (Figure 4-5 and Figure 4-6, respectively) and placing agricultural lands in and near those districts at greater risk of conversion.

These elements – and others – were given a weighted ranking (Table 4-2), which were then applied to each parcel and combined to produce the final suitability index for the county, visualized in Map 4-3. For details on how the data were analyzed to create the new Farmland Protection Suitability Map please see Appendix B.

It is important to note that this suitability index is designed to identify parcels that are the most agriculturally productive, the most at risk of conversion to non-agricultural uses, and that can also serve as protective buffers for important natural resources. ***A low ranking in this index does not necessarily mean that a parcel is unsuitable for farming or that it is suitable for development; it merely means that there may be other agricultural parcels that are more at risk of conversion and/or are more suitable as buffers to natural resources.***

Figure 4-3



The analysis should be updated periodically, as needed. Cayuga County farms interested in participating in future FPIG funding rounds should reference the latest version of the suitability index.

Benefits of Agricultural Land Protection

Table 4-2: Calculated weights for each variable in the 2014 Suitability Analysis

Weight	Variable
1.00	Proximity to protected natural lands
1.06	Proximity to farmland that is protected through PDR or in the process of being protected
1.09	Within the watershed of a surface public drinking water source
1.47	Within the Cayuga County Consolidated Ag. District No. 5
2.21	Agricultural value of soils
2.51	Percent of parcel available for agriculture
3.62	Size of the parcel
3.72	Linear feet of road frontage per acre
3.77	Proximity to public sewer districts
3.90	Percentage of surrounding land that is also farmland
3.95	Density of parcels
4.69	Linear feet of stream and lake frontage per acre
4.77	Proximity to wetlands
4.85	Proximity to public water districts
6.31	Density of subdivisions between 2003 and 2013
6.88	Proximity to US Interstate 90 access points
8.38	Proximity to major economic centers

The parcels identified as most suitable for protection in the 2014 Suitability Index, colored dark green in Map 4-3, make up 8.7% of the county's total land area and 12.7% of the total acreage of agricultural land included in the analysis. These parcels contribute to supporting local families and farm businesses by generating income through production activities and by providing a solid customer base for the county's agricultural support industries. If these highest priority parcels were lost to conversion, the economic viability of agriculture in the county would be significantly weakened by not only eroding family incomes and shrinking the number of farm jobs but also by weakening the support industries that require a strong farming base to stay in business (see Section I for more information about farm employment and support businesses).

The suitability analysis necessarily accounts for conversion pressures felt by agricultural parcels from residential and commercial development. This bears out in the locations of the parcels identified as the highest priorities for protection, which are largely found surrounding the City of Auburn and the Villages of Port Byron, Weedsport, Moravia and Fair Haven, and in close proximity to water districts, sewer districts, major population centers and Thruway access; recent parcel subdivision activity; and areas of highest parcel density. Protecting these parcels would slow the rate of conversion in these areas and help keep development from spreading even farther from the population centers while redirecting development into areas where it is more appropriate, such as within village and city limits. Gradually, growth boundaries would form promoting the establishment of a development pattern that is supportive of the goals and objectives of most local town and village comprehensive plans and master plans, which emphasize the preservation of rural character and open spaces. These policy documents typically address this goal by placing a high priority on the preservation of agricultural lands. Failing to protect the highest ranking parcels from conversion would leave development pressures unconstrained so that development would likely continue to consume farmland in these areas, albeit at a slow rate, and contribute to sprawl by generating conversion pressure further and further away from the city and villages.

The parcels identified as being most suitable for protection also tend to be most suitable for maximizing the collective enjoyment and appreciation of agricultural open spaces. Because of their close proximity to the most densely populated areas of the county, these open spaces are readily accessible to the many county residents living in and near the city and villages.

Figure 4-4

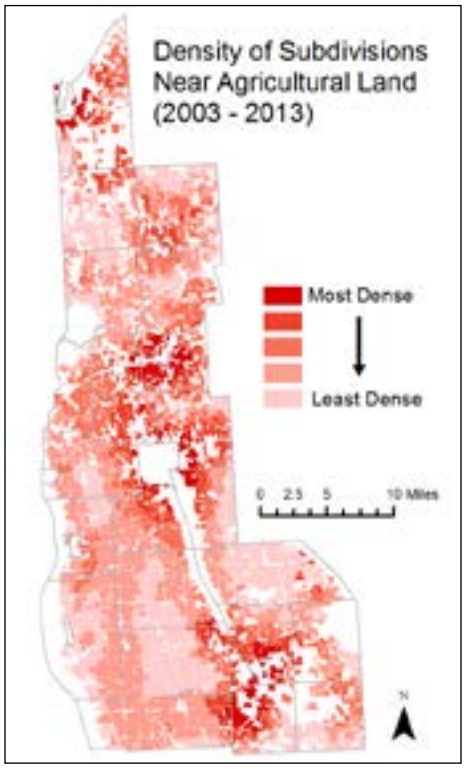
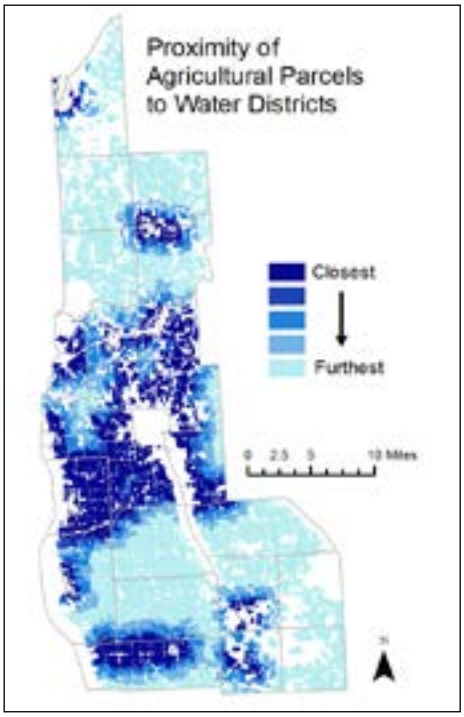


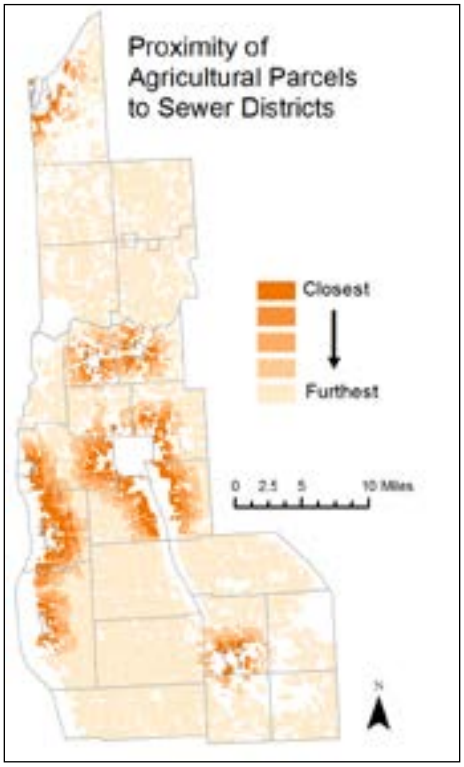
Figure 4-5



Modified PDR, Leasing Development Rights (LDR) and Transferring Development Rights (TDR)

In certain circumstances there are limitations to how effective PDR can be in preserving farmland. One major limitation of PDR in its most basic form is that it does not require that protected farmland be actively farmed. Instead, a farmer could "cash out" by selling his or her development rights on the land, then take the land out of production or sell the land to a new owner who does not keep the land in production. While this is not known to have occurred in Cayuga County, it is a concern that was voiced several times in public meetings. Other New

Figure 4-6



York communities have experienced this problem and have addressed it by inserting provisions into PDR transactions that require that lands protected under PDR continue to be actively farmed.

The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and the Lease of Development Rights (LDR) are other direct farmland protection strategies employed in other communities in New York State. In TDR programs, communities can direct intensive development away from designated areas where it is deemed inappropriate (such as an agricultural area), and to other designated areas where it is more desirable (such as a city or village). In essence, TDR allows agricultural landowners in certain areas to sell the development rights of their land to an urban landowner, who can then use those development rights to build more densely than would otherwise be permitted.

LDR programs reduce property tax assessments on farmland in exchange for term deed restrictions that prohibit development. These programs may appeal to part-time and small-acreage farmers that may not be able to benefit from other existing tax reduction strategies. While LDR does not permanently protect farmland, it can help stabilize a community experiencing rapid change and give the local municipality time to develop more permanent protection strategies. In some New York State communities LDR is used to retain farmland and open spaces that serve as buffers between farms and nearby residences, particularly in communities experiencing sudden and severe development pressures.

While certain areas of Cayuga County do experience some development pressure, based on CCPED analysis these pressures are not high enough at this time to support a successful TDR or LDR program at either the county-wide or local levels. CCPED will, however, continue to take the lead role in providing training and educational opportunities to local municipalities on all available farmland protection tools – from zoning to conservation subdivision regulations to TDR, LDR and PDR programs – that are appropriate for each local community. Both TDR and LDR were discussed briefly by participants in public meetings, with a mix of approval and disapproval.

1996 County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan

The 1996 Cayuga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan was the second plan of its kind adopted in New York State. The document focused primarily on farmland preservation and included an analysis of development pressures characterized by population shifts from urban to rural areas, rates of out-commuting, new lot formations, and declines in acreage in production and in numbers of farms in the county. The plan's policy recommendations distinguished between the degree of non-farm development pressures that may impact just an individual farm or two, and pressures that may impact an entire town or area of the county.

The plan very generally outlined three regions of the county containing farmland that warrants protection from non-farm development on an area-wide basis, namely, the southwest including the Towns of Aurelius, Springport, Ledyard, Scipio, Venice, and Genoa; the eastern

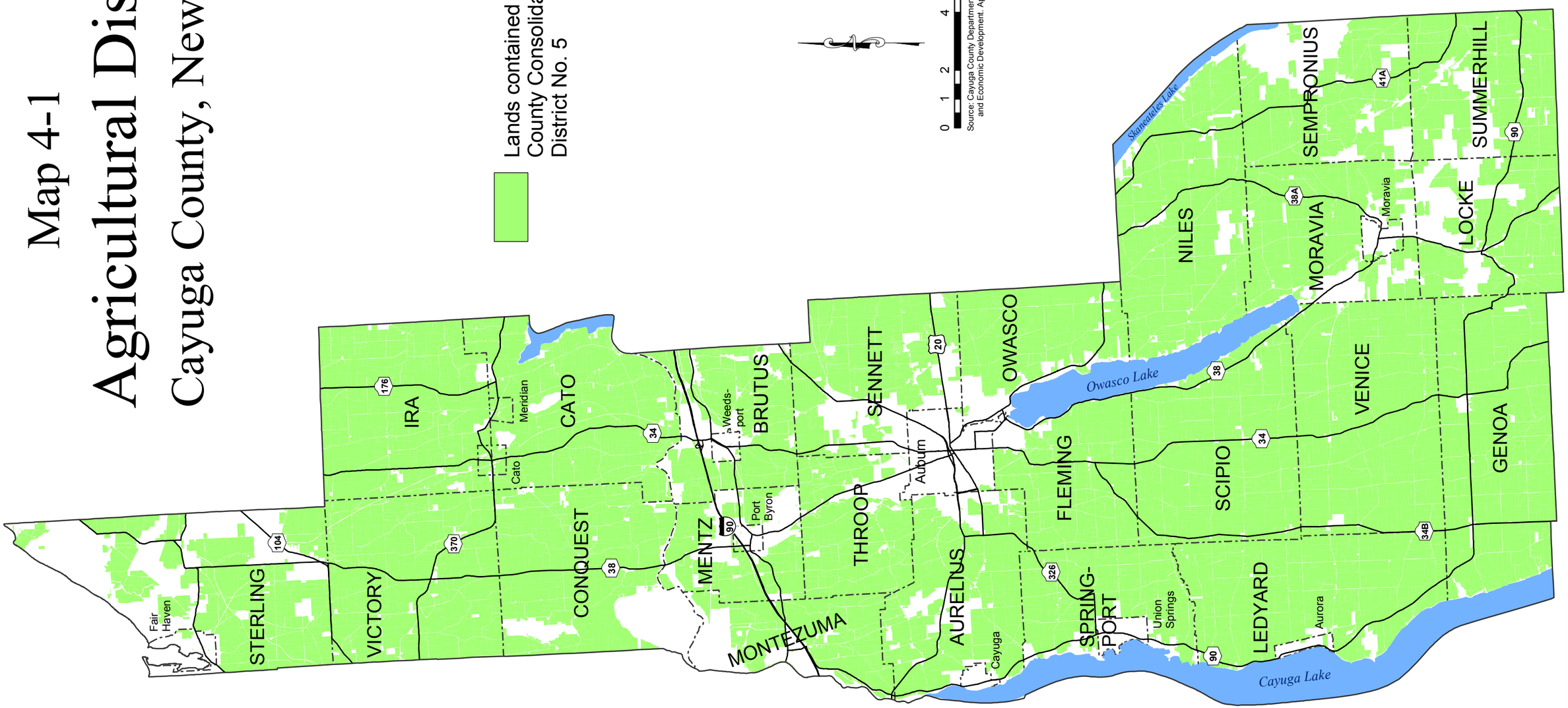
portion of the Town of Owasco and the northern half of the Town of Niles; and the northwestern portion of the county contained within the Towns of Conquest and Victory. In these designated critical areas, the plan advised in general terms that localities may want to consider strong pro-agriculture land use regulations and severe limitations on the expansion of public infrastructure such as water and sewer systems and expanded road networks. The plan also advised that county industrial development agencies avoid new development in these areas unless associated with agriculture. The plan went on to summarize ten open-ended policy recommendations ranging from employing State Agriculture and Markets Law in order to protect individual farms or important areas, to encouraging farmers to develop "Whole Farm Plans," to tracking subdivision rates in Agricultural Districts.

Expanding on the original document, this Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan largely bases its substantive and more detailed recommendations and implementation strategy on input from county farmers, support businesses and service providers. Its scope is expanded from the original plan's focus on farmland protection to also address trends in the local agricultural economy and the ways in which our communities, farmers, support businesses and service providers can bolster this vital economic sector.

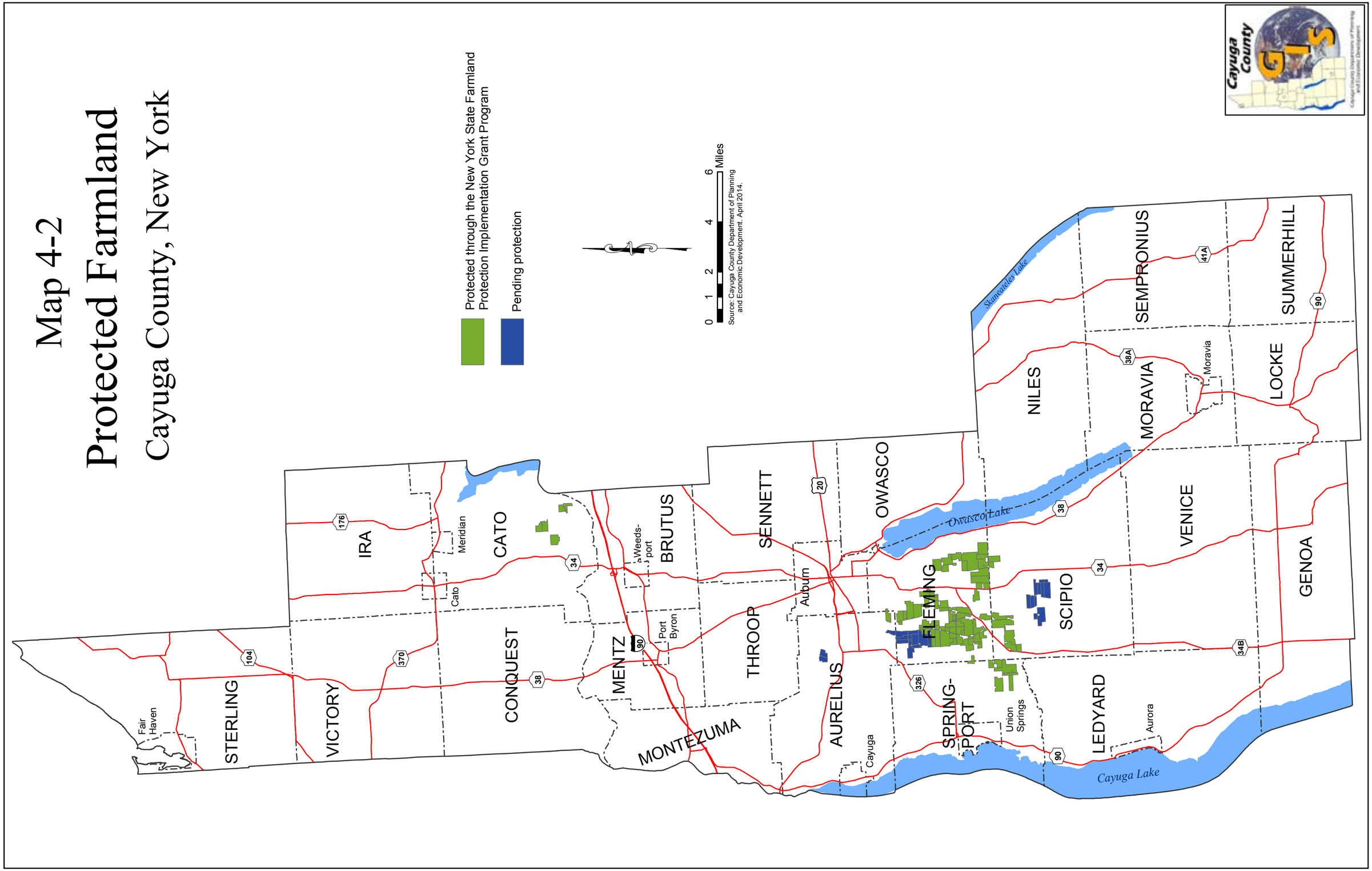
Cayuga Milk Ingredients Milk Plant in the Town of Aurelius

Horning's Produce in the Town of Victory

Map 4-1
Agricultural District
Cayuga County, New York



Map 4-2
Protected Farmland
Cayuga County, New York



Map 4-3

Suitability of Parcels for Farmland Protection: 2014 County Criteria

Cayuga County, New York

Farmland Protection Suitability

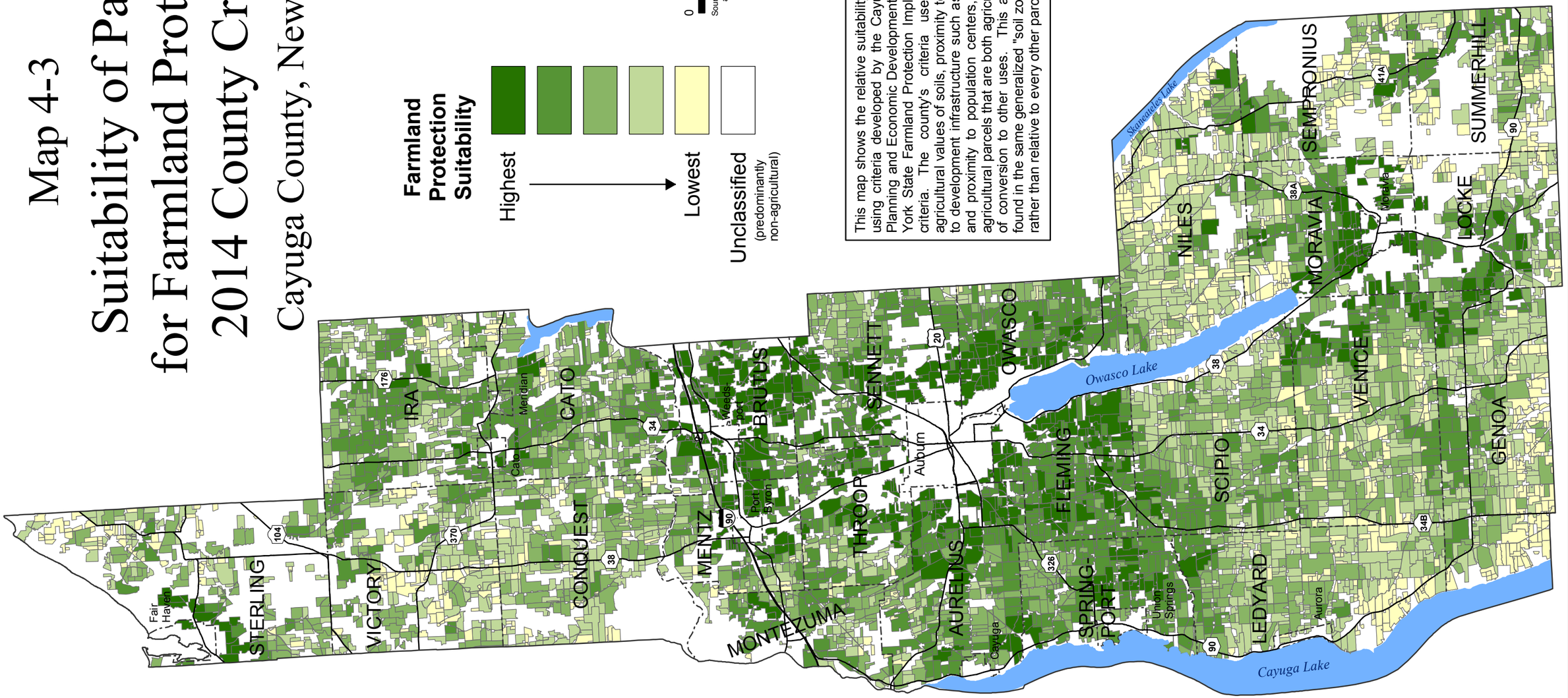
Highest → Lowest

Unclassified (predominantly non-agricultural)

0 1 2 4 6 Miles

Source: Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development. April 2014.

This map shows the relative suitability of farmland for protection using criteria developed by the Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development, based in part on the New York State Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Program criteria. The county's criteria uses a combination of the agricultural values of soils, proximity to protected lands, proximity to development infrastructure such as roads and water districts, and proximity to population centers, among others, to identify agricultural parcels that are both agriculturally valuable and at risk of conversion to other uses. This analysis also ranks parcels found in the same generalized "soil zones" relative to one another rather than relative to every other parcel in the county.



V. Municipal Land Use Policies

Each of the twenty-three towns, seven of the nine villages (excluding the Villages of Cayuga and Union Springs), and the City of Auburn contain active farmland within the Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 5. However, how agriculture-related uses are treated within these municipalities varies greatly. As of the adoption of this agriculture plan, 20 out of the 23 towns in the county have adopted a comprehensive plan; all but one contain language that indicates that the community values and actively supports agriculture, either with public education and outreach or through protective land use policies. Four of the towns – Aurelius, Brutus, Cato and Ira – have created stand-alone agriculture and farmland protection plans that lay out their own town-specific implementation strategies on how to protect their active farmland from detrimental land use patterns, and maintain and develop a vibrant production-based economy by supporting their existing agriculture-related businesses and allowing new ones to flourish (see Appendix C for a list of policy documents, regulations, and ordinances pertinent to agriculture for each town and Appendix E for more on how your town can support farmers.).

This section summarizes components of zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances that can help towns to both avoid creating negative impacts on farms and provide effective protection from harmful land use patterns. Three county transects were selected to illustrate how land use policy considerations may change depending on existing and anticipated future land use patterns.

Farm-Friendly Land Use Policies

While there are still many farms that focus on one type of production such as milk production or field crops, the diversification of farm business models is a national as well as local trend. Many Cayuga County farmers seek to create business models that combine the primary agricultural production use of their farms with accessory uses such as small-scale processing facilities to create value-added products, direct-to-consumer retail components and agri-tourism activities. Recognizing that these associated activities are integral components to successful agricultural operations and ensuring that these activities are accommodated in the same manner as any other customary agricultural activity, is essential to sustaining a healthy agricultural economy.

Although local land use regulations may appear at first glance to have little or no negative impacts on farming, they can easily result in unintentionally burdensome restrictions on farmers or in development patterns that threaten the viability of agriculture in the long term. It is important to consider both the positive and negative impacts that land use decisions can have on the full range of agricultural practices. If applied, the "farm-friendly" provisions below can do a lot to maintain and bolster a healthy local agricultural economy for all types of farm-related activities.

Components of Farm-Friendly Zoning Regulations

- Designate one or more zoning districts where agriculture is the stated primary use and restrict non-compatible uses such as multiple-family dwelling structures, medium or high residential densities and planned development districts.
- In low density residential and agriculture-residential zoning districts where agriculture is not the primary use (but is present and appropriate) allow agricultural activities to take place. Require that buffer zones or landscape screenings between new uses and existing farmland be employed to minimize conflicts between incompatible uses.
- Allow a wide variety of accessory uses that are related to the farm operation such as road side stands, tasting rooms, u-picks, CSA's, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, seasonal events, school programs, weddings and parties, farm stores (as an on-farm accessory operation), bakeries, farm restaurants and farm stays (bed and breakfast operations on an active farm).
- Allow a wide variety of agriculture-related support businesses such as permanent or seasonal farm markets (as a stand-alone operation), slaughterhouses and food processing facilities, equipment sales and maintenance services in agricultural zones.
- Allow for both permanent and temporary off-site signs to attract and direct customers to farms.
- Allow farm stands and farm stores, etc. to sell products grown, raised or processed by other operations in addition to those produced on-site.
- Allow home-occupation businesses that are compatible with agriculture such as equipment repair.

Components of Farm-Friendly Site Plan Regulations

- Standards should be flexible to allow for an appropriate amount of oversight and review for a wide variety of uses, depending on the level of impact. For example, while a farm stand and a grocery store are both food retail outlets, they have different levels of impact and therefore should have different review requirements.
- Ensure that new development is sited on each parcel in a way that minimizes the loss of prime farmland. For example, discourage building a house in the middle of an agricultural parcel and instead encourage that it be built in a corner.
- Allow for on-street parking in low-traffic areas and expanded business hours for seasonal and low-impact agricultural businesses such as u-picks and Christmas tree farms.

Components of Farm-Friendly Subdivision Regulations

- Ensure that newly configured agricultural land has adequate road access.
- Ensure that the most valuable or productive agricultural lands are kept intact to the extent possible.
- Employ clustered subdivision patterns to ensure as much open space as possible will be preserved, and allow agricultural uses on that open space.

Components of Other Farm-Friendly Policies

- Limit expansion of public infrastructure such as water and sewer districts and roads into prime farmland areas.
- Impose lateral restrictions on public water pipes in agricultural areas to limit development pressure on farmland.
- Coordinate road, ditch, and culvert work with farmers to ensure proper drainage of farm fields is maintained and tile damage is avoided.
- Encourage in-fill development in villages, hamlets and the city of Auburn rather than building new development on agricultural or natural lands outside of more densely populated areas.

Farm-Friendly Audits

Many public participants perceived a lack of adequate farmer representation on many local government boards and committees. With a smaller number of farm families in the county now than in the past, it may become more challenging to maintain farmer representation on town boards, planning boards, and zoning boards of appeals. This struggle to maintain farmer leadership at the local level can eventually lead to municipal policies (such as a comprehensive plan) and laws (such as zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances) that are unintentionally problematic for farmers. While towns and villages are not required to enact land use laws at all, for those that choose to do so, it is in the interest of the entire community to ensure that they do not unnecessarily burden farmers.

A detailed analysis of the impacts of land use laws on agricultural practices is called a "farm-friendly audit." A typical farm-friendly audit analyzes a local municipality's zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances to determine the degree that the laws assist or deter a wide variety of farm-related uses. This type of analysis can also provide suggested improvements to better protect agricultural activities and valuable farmland from incompatible land uses. Included in Appendix C are farm-friendly audits of four towns in Cayuga County: Fleming, Owasco, Moravia and Victory. For more information about farm-friendly audits, please see Appendix C.

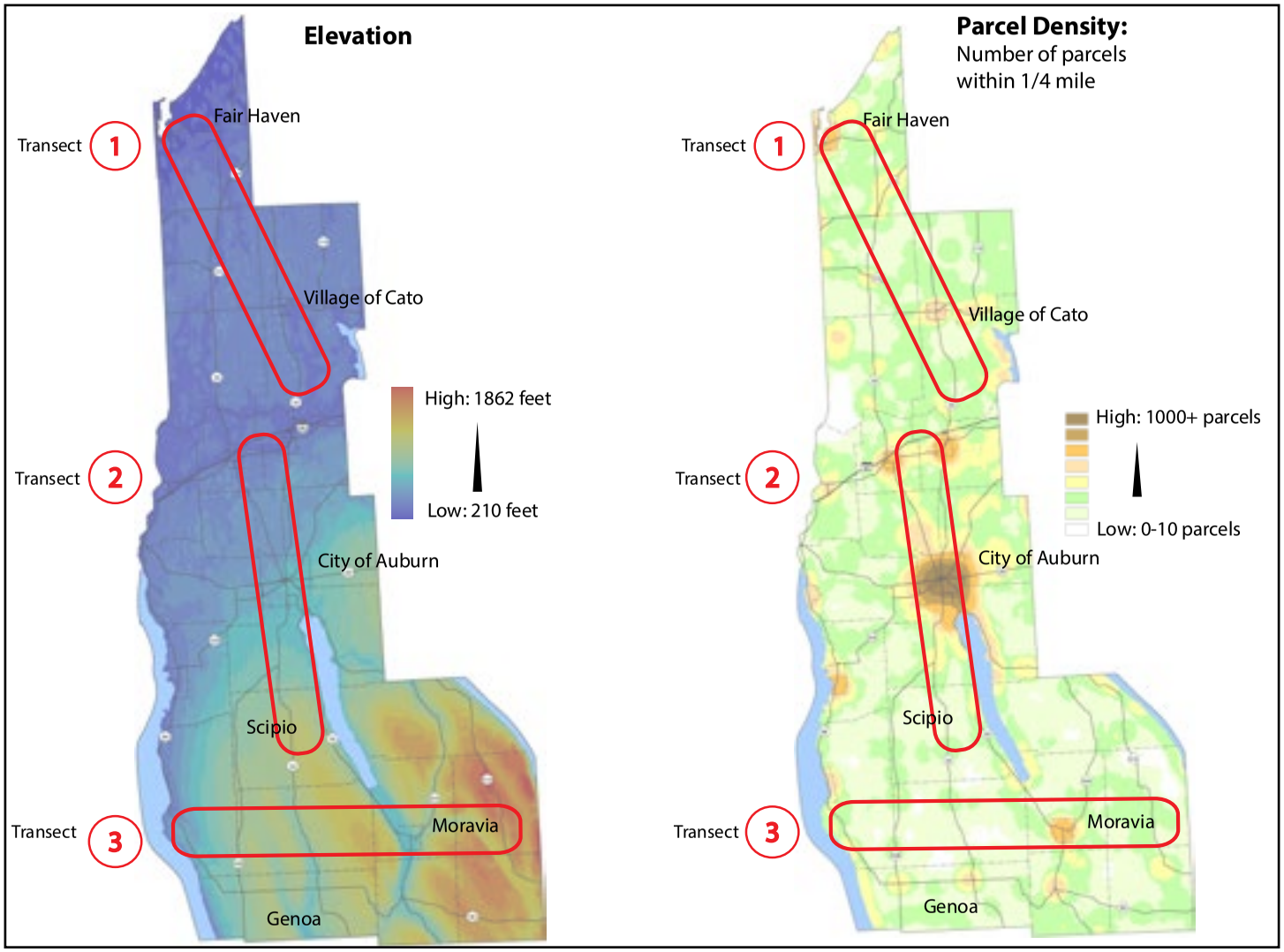
Cost of Community Services Studies

While it is true that an acre of land with a house on it generates more total revenue than an acre of cropland, it tells us little about the cost of providing services to each of those parcels and whether the tax revenue generated by each of those land types actually covers the costs incurred. A Cost of Community Services (COCS) study takes a snapshot in time of the costs required to support the various existing land uses within a community -- such as residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural -- and calculates whether each type of land use generates more, less, or the same amount of revenue than what is required to support that land use through infrastructure and services such as roads, water and sewer lines, schools, and fire departments. These studies often show that, contrary to commonly held beliefs, residential development is a net fiscal loss to communities, while agricultural lands and open spaces can lead to a net fiscal benefit to the municipality (see Appendix E).

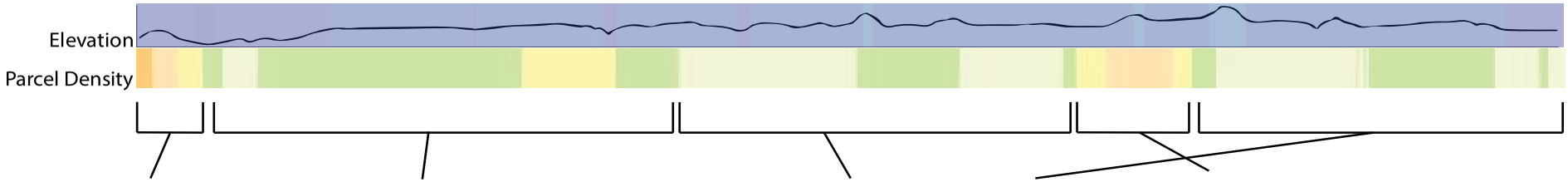
Agricultural Transects: A Planning Tool

Cayuga County's environmental diversity in terms of topography and soils has led to a diversity of viable agricultural and non-agricultural uses. When developing land use policies, it is important to consider these variations and to create policies and laws that are appropriate. Transects, or cross sections, are a useful tool to conceptualize the diversity of land uses throughout the county and how the various land uses gradually, or abruptly, change from one to another.

Several cross sections of the county were chosen to conceptualize the various land uses found throughout the county and how land use policies and development patterns may impact agriculture over time. Each cross section schematic includes a summary and visual example of the major land uses found in the segments along that transect, and highlights land use policy considerations pertinent to each. These transects can be used by communities to conceptualize their local land use policies and development patterns, and how they may impact agriculture.



Transect 1



Village of Fair Haven & Surroundings

Dominant Landscape
Medium density residential, commercial, civic development surrounded by forest, wetland and agricultural land. Active agricultural lands within Village limits.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Restaurants that use local ingredients, retail outlets that sell locally produced foods. Cash crops and specialty crops, winery.

Limitations
Wetlands and variable soils make large-scale agriculture difficult.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Water district expansion, new residential development and development pressure from tourist activities may result in parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The potential negative impact of sign ordinances on farm accessory activities such as roadside stands, u-picks and farm markets.
- The benefits of allowing a wide array of accessory uses and off-site support businesses on the viability of farm operations.

Dominated by Natural Lands

Dominant Landscape
Forest and other natural lands with few relatively small agricultural areas. Low density residential with areas of moderate density residential.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Cash crops, dairy and livestock.

Limitations
Wetlands and variable soils make large-scale agriculture difficult.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Subdivisions and new residential development may result in parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The benefits of allowing a wide array of accessory uses on the viability of farm operations.

Drumlin Cropland & Forest

Dominant Landscape
Cropland and forest with drumlin hills. Pockets of medium density residential.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Diverse agricultural production: fruits, vegetables, nurseries, honey, cash crops, dairy and livestock.

Limitations
Drumlins and narrow valleys alternate to create areas that can be either too dry or too wet for crops. Hilly terrain can also make larger scale production difficult.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Subdivisions and new residential development may result in parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The potential negative impact of sign ordinances on farm accessory activities such as roadside stands, u-picks and farm markets.
- The benefits of allowing a wide array of accessory uses on the viability of farm operations.

Village of Cato & Surroundings

Dominant Landscape
Medium density residential, commercial and civic development. Active agricultural lands within Village limits.

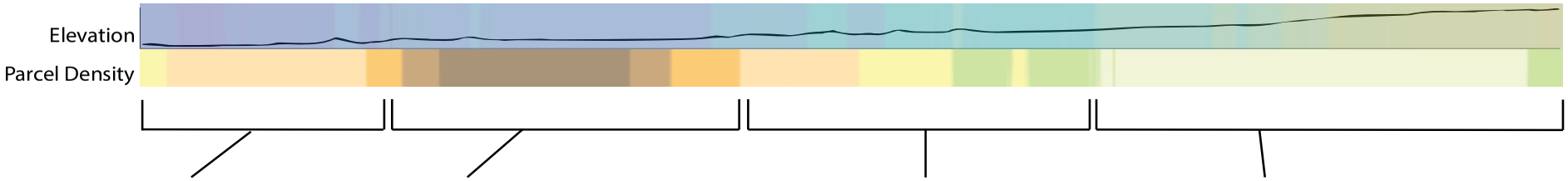
Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Specialty crops, roadside stands and cash crops.

Limitations
Competition for space with other Village land uses such as homes and businesses.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Local comprehensive plan and agriculture and farmland protection plan call for increased development within the Village to protect agricultural lands in the towns of Cato and Ira.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The potential negative impact of sign ordinances on farm accessory activities such as roadside stands, u-picks and farm markets.

Transect 2



Port Byron - Auburn Corridor

Dominant Landscape
Fractured pattern of agricultural lands with moderate to medium density residential, commercial and industrial uses interspersed with farmland, forested land and drumlins.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Specialty crops, cash crops, dairy and livestock. Agricultural support businesses.

Limitations
While less pronounced than areas north of Port Byron, drumlins and narrow valleys persist in making larger scale production difficult.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Residential and commercial development contributes to a fragmented distribution of agricultural land. Subdivisions and new residential development may result in parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.
- The importance of preventing use conflicts between farm activities and other incompatible activities.

City of Auburn & Surroundings

Dominant Landscape
High density residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Commercial greenhouse production, community gardens, farmers' market, restaurants that use local ingredients, retail outlets that sell locally produced foods, agricultural support businesses.

Limitations
High density development makes most commercial agricultural production impossible.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Agricultural uses compete with non-agricultural uses for space. Close proximity of agricultural uses to residential and commercial uses may lead to neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The importance of preventing use conflicts between farm activities and other incompatible activities.
- The need to ensure that agricultural production activities may continue within city limits.
- The benefits of in-fill development versus encroachment into agricultural lands beyond the urbanized area.

Suburban and Lake Shore Residential

Dominant Landscape
Medium density residential and active farmland.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Specialty crops, cash crops

Limitations
Periodic droughts and floods can damage crops and infrastructure.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Medium density residential development on agriculturally productive lands and along lake shore. Subdivisions and new residential development may result in parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.
- The importance of preventing use conflicts between farm activities and other incompatible activities.
- The benefits of allowing a wide array of accessory uses on the viability of farm operations.

Cropland and Large Farms

Dominant Landscape
Large, contiguous blocks of farm fields on rolling hills, large dairy farms.

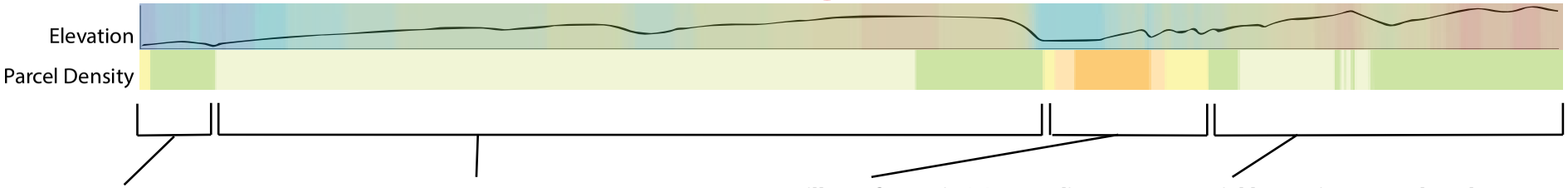
Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Dairy, cash crops, and livestock operations with comparatively large physical footprints. Some specialty crop production.

Limitations
Periodic droughts and floods can damage crops and infrastructure.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Large residential parcel sizes can consume farmland.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.

Transect 3



Lake Shore Residential and Tourism

Dominant Landscape
Low to moderate residential densities with lake access or lake views, tourism businesses, cash crops, forested land.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Wineries and other agri-tourism businesses, cash crops.

Limitations
Steeper slopes near lakeshore may make cultivation more challenging.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Development pressures from tourism industry, residential uses.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.
- The importance of preventing use conflicts between farm activities and other incompatible activities.
- The benefits of allowing a wide array of accessory uses on the viability of farm operations.

Cropland and Large Farms

Dominant Landscape
Large, contiguous blocks of farm fields on rolling hills, punctuated by large dairy farms and hamlets.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Cash crops, dairy, livestock, specialty crops.

Limitations
Periodic droughts and floods can damage crops and infrastructure.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Large residential parcel sizes can consume farmland.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.

Village of Moravia & Surroundings

Dominant Landscape
Medium density residential, commercial, industrial uses.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Farmers' market, agricultural support businesses.

Limitations
Medium density development limits the areas suitable for commercial agricultural production within Village limits.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Slow encroachment of moderate to medium density residential and commercial development to the south and east of the Village may lead to parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The potential negative impact of sign ordinances on farm accessory activities such as roadside stands, u-picks and farm markets.
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.
- The benefits of in-fill development versus encroachment into agricultural lands beyond urbanized areas.

Variable Terrain, Forested Land

Dominant Landscape
Steep slopes and higher elevations. Forested land, timber and Christmas tree stands, with some cropland.

Dominant Agriculture-Related Activities
Timber, Christmas trees, cash crops.

Limitations
Steep, variable terrain limits larger scale production.

Potential Impacts of Development on Agriculture
Slow encroachment of moderate density residential and commercial development may lead to parcels that are inefficient to farm and may create neighbor conflicts.

Land Use Policy Considerations
- The need for farmland conservation in subdivisions and development projects.
- Forest and steep slope preservation to protect natural resources.

Big 6 Picnic advertizement in the Town of Aurelius