

R. Lamb

Town of Altona
Comprehensive Land Use Plan

1993

Prepared by:
Richard Lamb, SUNY Plattsburgh, advisor to the Town
and the Town of Altona Land Use Committee

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INTRODUCTION

This comprehensive land use plan is intended to serve as a guide for future growth and development in the Town of Altona. It describes the physical resources of the town, analyses growth trends, examines future needs, and sets forth policies designed to insure that growth will occur in an orderly manner and will be in the best interests of health, safety and general welfare of existing and future residents.

A comprehensive land use plan is an advisory document which does not carry the force of law, but which does serve the important function of establishing the rationale for land use regulations which may be adopted by the Town Board to implement the plan. According to New York State statutes, a zoning law must be based upon a "comprehensive plan." It is therefore intended that the recommendations and land use plan map contained in this document be used in formulating a zoning law for the Town of Altona.

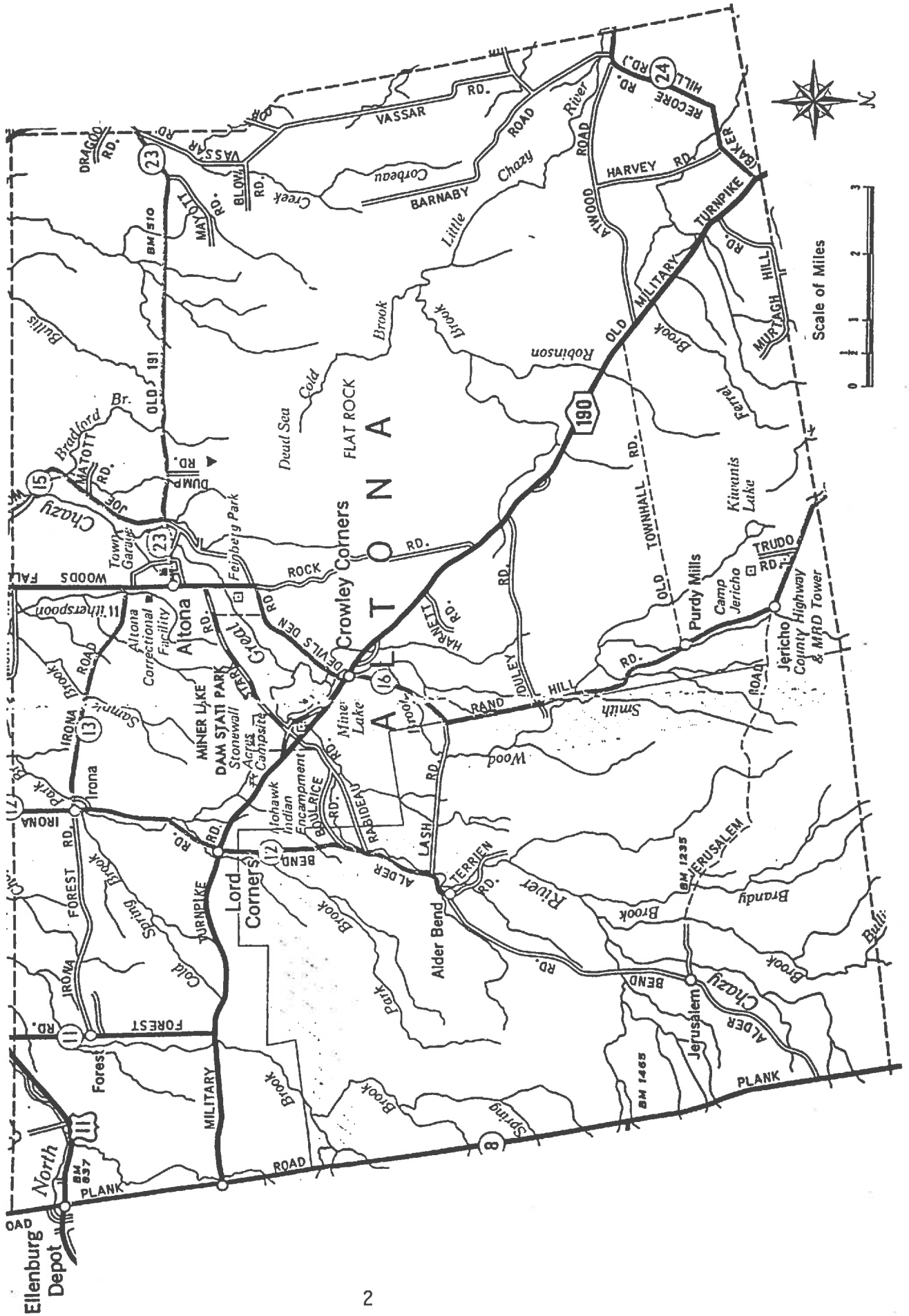
The land use plan and policy recommendations contained in this report reflect the views of the Town of Altona Land Use Committee, a group of seven citizens appointed by the Town Board to serve on a voluntary basis. Factual information and analyses contained herein were prepared by the author who served as a land use planning advisor to the town.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Citizen participation in the town land use planning process was encouraged in order that the plan and recommended land use law reflect the views and desires of town residents. A land use questionnaire survey was sent to all property owners in the Town of Altona during the winter of 1992-1993. Respondents to the survey favored the establishment of a local land use control law by a 3 to 1 margin. A Land Use Committee was appointed consisting of seven representative citizens, and an advisor was hired to work with the committee to develop a land use law. The committee met monthly beginning in March 1993 to prepare its recommendations. Meetings were announced in advance in the newspaper and were open to the public, and citizens were given the opportunity to express their views at the meetings. In addition, two public hearings were conducted to receive public input and feedback.

The final land use plan and land use control law are submitted to the Town Board for their action. The Town Board is not bound by the recommendations of the Land Use Committee, and may change the proposals presented herein as the result of further public input.

Map 1: Base Map



MAPS

Some of the maps referred to in this report were too large to include in the document, and are available separately. These include the following which were prepared at a scale of 1 inch = 2000 feet on plastic film:

- Town of Altona base map
- Streams and New York State Regulated Wetlands
- Generalized Land Use (1968 data)
- Generalized Soils
- Generalized Slopes

PART 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LAND USE

Altona is a sparsely populated rural town whose dominant land cover is forest. Although exact percentages are unavailable, forest appears to cover approximately 80 percent of the land surface, with agriculture occupying much of the remainder. Farms exist primarily in the northern and eastern portions of town, as well as along Route 190 which runs diagonally through the town's interior.

The only sizeable concentrated area of settlement is the hamlet of Altona. The remainder of town is lightly settled, especially lands within the Adirondack Blue Line. According to the 1990 census, 819 housing units existed in the town, 242 of which were mobile homes. Thus, about 30 percent of all housing units are mobile homes.

There is relatively little commercial development. By field count, there are only 17 commercial businesses in the town, plus some home businesses which are clearly operated on a part time basis. The only areas where commercial uses are concentrated are along Route 11 in the extreme northwestern corner of town, and within the hamlet of Altona.

There are no industrial uses, although a vacant industrial structure exists in the hamlet of Irona.

PROTECTED AND RESERVED LANDS

New York State owned lands exist both inside and outside the Adirondack Blue Line, but are relatively small in total area, occupying probably about 2 or 3 percent of the entire town. Forests on state lands inside the Blue Line are protected by the "forever wild" clause of the New York Constitution. Most of the state lands outside the blue line are reforestation areas.

A portion of the land area lying within the Town of Altona has been designated by the State of New York as a Mohawk Indian Reservation, known as Ganienkeh Territory. This area is not subject to town laws, and is excluded from this land use plan.

A sizeable portion of land in the eastern section of town belongs to the William H. Miner Foundation which uses the land for educational and research puposes. Much of this property consists of a "pine barrens" ecosystem which is recognized as a rare vegetative community. These lands should be therefore be considered as a unique natural resource.

SOILS

Soils within the Town of Altona vary a great deal from one area to another, ranging from soils which are very favorable for development to those which have severe limitations for development due to shallow depth to bedrock, high water table, wetness, or a slow percolation rate. Soil associations found in the town are shown on the following table, which is keyed to the generalized soils map which accompanies this report.

The most prevalent soil association is the Canaan Rock Outcrop (CRB) association, which dominates the northern half of the town. These soils pose problems due to shallow depth to bedrock. The dominant soil association in the southwestern quadrant of town is the Empeyville-Westbury (EWB) which has some limitations for development due to seasonal wetness and a slow percolation rate for septic leach fields. However, there are sizeable areas of town, including the hamlet of Altona, which are underlain by the Worth-Empeyville-Canaan (WECB) association which is generally favorable for development.

Because many of the soils have severe limitations for septic systems due to a shallow depth to bedrock, a slow percolation rate or seasonal wetness, it is recommended that development take place on lots larger than the minimum of 20,000 square feet suggested by the New York State Department of Health as the smallest size for rural lots served by on-lot leach fields. The 20,000 square feet lot assumes favorable soil conditions and that no limiting factors such as wetlands, streams or rock outcrops exist on the site. It also assumes that the building site, well and septic system are carefully planned in advance.

A minimum lot size of about 1 acre is recommended in rural portions of town in order in provide adequate room for a on-lot septic system, and to properly site the system. This lot size will also provide some protection to surrounding properties should a leach field fail.

SOIL INTERPRETATION FOR SELECTED USES, CLINTON COUNTY, N.Y.

Degree of Limitation					
Assoc. Symbol	Assoc. Name	Percent Slope	Percent of Assoc.	Homesites w/ basements	Septic Eff. Disposal
ALAC	Arnot-Lordstown Rock Outcrop	8-15	45	Severe depth to bedrock Severe depth to bedrock Severe depth to bedrock Severe depth to bedrock	Severe depth to bedrock Severe depth to bedrock Severe depth to bedrock Severe depth to bedrock
	Arnot		35		
	Lordstown		10		
	Rock Outcrop		10		
ANB	Other	0-8	55	Severe seasonal wetness Slight	Severe slow permeability Severe slow permeability
	Amenia-Nellis Amenia		35		
	Nellis		10		
ANB	Other	0-8	60	Slight Slight	Slight Slight
	Adams-Windsor Adams		30		
	Windsor Other		10		
CDB	Colton-Duane Colton	0-8	45	Slight Moderate Reasonal wetness	Slight Moderate Seasonal wetness
	Duane		35		
	Other		20		
CP	Carlisle-Palms Carlisle	0-2	45	Severe High water table Severe high water table	Severe High water table Severe high water table
	Palms		35		
	Other		20		
CRB	Canaan Rock Outcrop Canaan	0-8	50	Severe Depth to bedrock Severe Depth to bedrock	Severe Depth to bedrock Severe Depth to bedrock
	Rock Outcrop		30		
	Other		20		
CRC	Canaan Rock Outcrop Canaan	8-15	50	Severe Depth to bedrock Severe Depth to bedrock	Severe Depth to bedrock Severe Depth to bedrock
	Rock Outcrop		30		
	Other		20		
CRD	Canaan Rock Outcrop Canaan	15-35	50	Severe Depth to bedrock, Slope Severe Depth to bedrock, Slope	Severe Depth to bedrock Slope Severe Depth to bedrock Slope
	Rock Outcrop		30		
	Other		20		
DTB	Dannemora-Tughill Dannemora	0-8	60	Severe Seasonal wetness Severe Seasonal wetness	Severe Slow permeability Severe Seasonal Wetness
	Tughill		30		
	Other		10		
ENB	Empyville-Nestbury Empyville	0-8	55	Moderate Seasonal wetness Severe Seasonal wetness	Severe Slow permeability Severe Permeability & seasonal wetness
	Nestbury		35		
	Other		10		

SOIL INTERPRETATION FOR SELECTED USES, CLINTON COUNTY, N.Y.

Assoc. Symbol	Assoc. Name	Percent Slope	Degree of Limitation		
			Percent of Assoc.	Homesites w/ basements	Septic. Eff. Disposal
FBB	Fahey-Briggs	0-8	55	Moderate Seasonal wetness Slight	Moderate Slow permeability & seasonal wetness Slight
	Fahey		35		
	Briggs		10		
HC	Herson	8-15	65	Moderate Slope	Moderate Slope
	Other		35		
HCB	Hinckley-Colton	0-8	45	Slight	Slight
	Hinckley		35		
	Colton		20		
HCC	Hinckley-Colton	8-15	45	Moderate Slope	Moderate Slope
	Hinckley		35		
	Colton		20		
PSA	Podunk-Suncook	8-2	50	Severe Flood hazard	Severe Flood hazard
	Podunk		35		
	Suncook		15		
RSA	Rumney-Sacco	0-2	50	Severe Flood hazard	Severe Flood hazard
	Rumney		35		
	Sacco		15		
STB	Sun-Tuller	0-8	40	Severe Seasonal wetness	Severe Seasonal wetness
	Sun		40		
	Tuller		20		
SNA	Scarboro-Haumberg	0-3	45	Severe Seasonal wetness	Severe Seasonal wetness
	Scarboro		35		
	Haumberg		20		
NEB	North-Empeyville	0-8	55	Slight	Severe Slow permeability
	North		30		
	Empeyville		15		
NEC	North-Empeyville	8-15	55	Moderate Slope	Severe Slow permeability
	North		30		
	Empeyville		15		

SOIL INTERPRETATION FOR SELECTED USES, CLINTON COUNTY, N.Y.

Assoc. Symbol	Assoc. Name	Degree of Limitation			Septic Eff. Disposal
		Percent Slope	Percent of Assoc.	Homesites w/ basements	
WECS	Worth-Empeyville-Canaan	0-8			
	Worth		40	Slight	Severe Slow permeability
	Empeyville		30	Moderate Seasonal wetness	Severe Slow permeability, seasonal wetness
	Canaan Other		10 20	Severe Depth to bedrock	Severe Depth to bedrock
WECC	Worth-Empeyville-Canaan	8-15			
	Worth		45	Moderate Slope	Severe Slow permeability, Slope
	Empeyville		30	Moderate-Seasonal wetness, Slope	Severe, Slow permeability, Slope
	Canaan Other		10 5	Severe Depth to bedrock, Slope	Severe Depth to bedrock, Slope
WECD	Worth-Empeyville-Canaan	15-35			
	Worth		45	Severe Slope	Severe Slow permeability, Slope
	Empeyville		30	Severe Slope	Severe Slow permeability, Seasonal wetness
	Canaan Other		20 5	Severe Slope	Severe Depth to bedrock
WED	Worth-Empeyville	15-35			
	Worth		55	Severe, Slope	Severe Slow permeability, Slope
	Empeyville Other		30 15	Severe, Slope	Severe Slow permeability, Slope

According to detailed soil maps for the hamlet of Altona obtained from the Soil Conservation Service, soils within the hamlet area are generally favorable for development. The water table is relatively deep and the soils are of a sandy composition with rapid percolation rates. The major concern within the hamlet is possible contamination of the ground water supply due to pollutants percolating too rapidly and possibly reaching the ground water table. However, contamination of groundwater due to septic systems does not appear to be a concern because of the absence of any such problems in the past. A 20,000 square feet minimum lot size for residential development is therefore recommended within the hamlet area.

A gasoline spill or the release of a hazardous or toxic chemical in the hamlet area, though, could result in groundwater contamination due to rapid percolation through the sandy soil. It is therefore recommended that any businesses using hazardous chemicals, such as gasoline service stations, be carefully reviewed in order to minimize the risk of groundwater contamination which could effect the water supply of hamlet residents.

GEOLOGY

In much of the town a relatively thin soil layer lies directly on top of bedrock, most notably in the "Flat Rock" area. In some areas of town a layer of glacial till, a heavy claylike material deposited by glaciers, lies between the uppermost soil layer and the bedrock affording some protection of the groundwater supply from contamination. The exact depth of the till layer has not been mapped.

The underlying bedrock throughout the town is believed to be sandstone. (Source: Map of "Groundwater in New York, by Ralph C. Heath, State of New York Conservation Department Water Resources Commission, Bulletin GW-51, Albany, N.Y., 1964>>) The sandstone is believed to contain fissures, joints and fractures along which groundwater flows.

WETLANDS

Numerous state regulated wetlands exist within the town. (See large wetlands map which accompanies this report.) Outside the Adirondack Blue Line regulated wetlands are 12.4 or more acres in size, and a permit from the New York State (NYS DEC) Department of Environmental Conservation is needed to develop on them. Inside the Blue Line wetlands of 1 acre or more in size are regulated by the Adirondack Park Agency.

STREAMS

New York State classifies all streams and water bodies in the state as AA, A, B, C or D. All classes of streams except for class D require a permit from the NYS DEC for any activity which results in disturbance of their bed or banks, such as dredging, filling or alteration of a stream bank for building or development. However, the state's jurisdiction ends at the edge of the stream bank. Development or vegetative cutting which does not directly impinge on the bank of the stream is not regulated by the state.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

Some of the streams have floodplains associated with them which are designated as Flood Hazard Areas by the NYS DEC. Some of the wetlands are also designated Flood Hazard Areas. Development in designated flood hazard areas requires a permit from NYS DEC.

GROUNDWATER

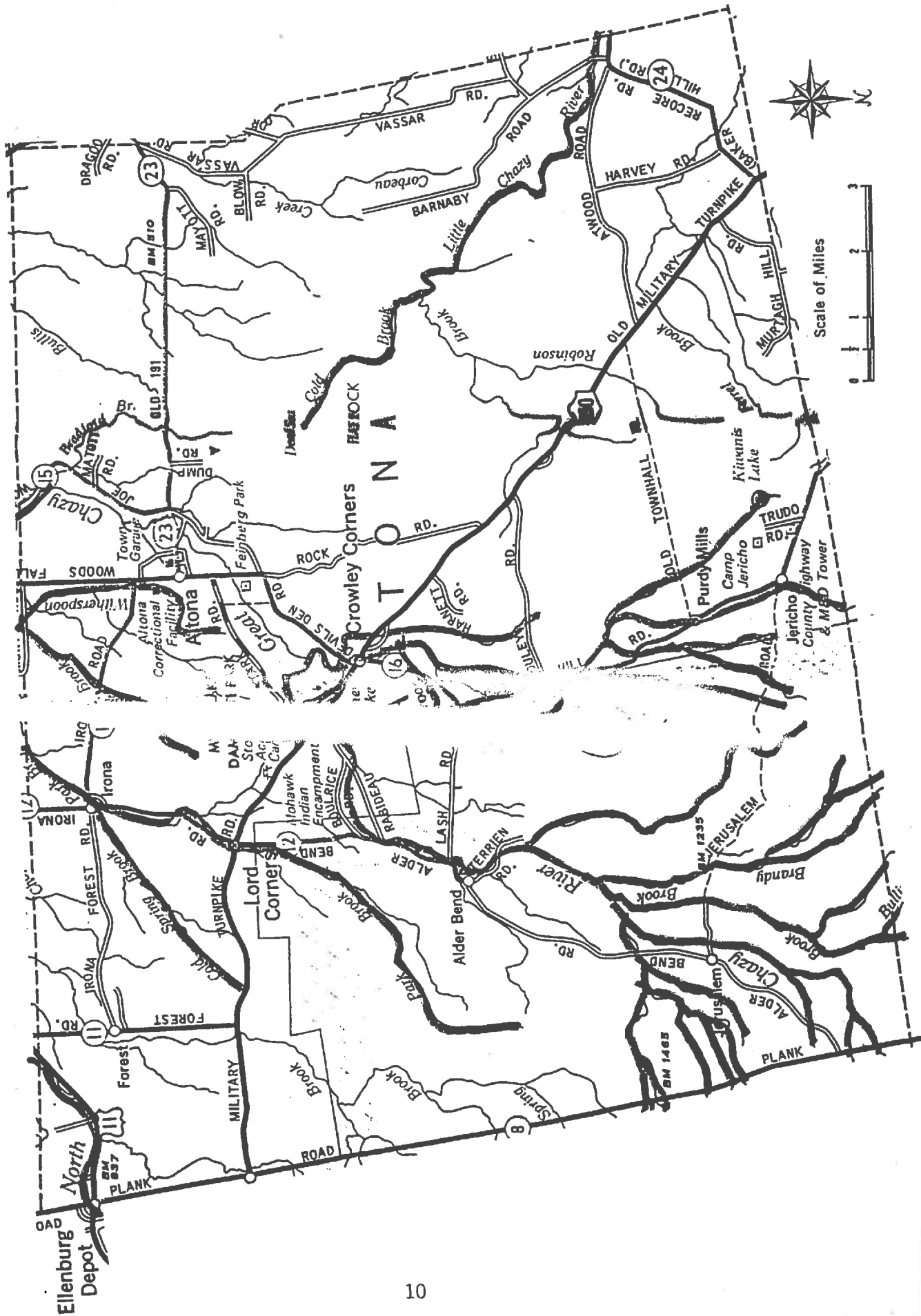
Groundwater may be obtained from tapping either unconsolidated surficial deposits or the underlying bedrock. Unconsolidated surficial deposits in the Town of Altona consist primarily of glacial till, with some areas of sand deposits. According to the Clinton County Comprehensive Water Supply Study (1972), ground water yields in till are low to moderate, ranging from 1 to 20 gallons per minute, while yield in sand deposits may be much greater. Yields in the sandstone bedrock range are highly variable. Most of the groundwater flow in the bedrock is thought to occur along faults, joints and fracture zones.

POTENTIAL FOR GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION

Areas of town most vulnerable to groundwater contamination are those characterized by a high groundwater table (such as near wetlands), a shallow depth to bedrock (such as occurs in the Flat Rock and similar areas), or sandy soils with a rapid percolation rate. Should pollutants enter the bedrock, they could disperse over wide areas through the joints and fracture zones found therein. It is possible that pollutants in Altona could enter the aquifer system of northern Clinton County and effect water supplies of towns to the east. According to the Clinton County Comprehensive Water Supply Study "the sandstone in the northern area (of the county) forms an artesian system which is recharged on the slopes of the Adirondack Mountains and is discharged to Lake Champlain and the lowlands on the east." (page 3-12)

The Town of Altona is therefore a poor location for waste disposal facilities and other activities which could introduce hazardous or toxic chemicals into the groundwater.

Map 2: Regulated Streams



HIGHWAYS

The Town of Altona contains three class of highways: state highways, county highways, and town highways.

State Routes 11 and 190 (Military Turnpike) are designed to serve long distance, high speed automobile and truck traffic, and are constructed to the highest design standards. They are classified as "heavy duty" highways, constructed so as to withstand substantial amounts of trucks and other heavy vehicles. State highways have a pavement width of at least 22 feet with 6 feet shoulders. Consequently, the best locations for industrial, warehousing or trucking businesses are found along these routes.

County highways generally carry a lower amount of traffic than state highways but a higher amount of traffic than town roads. They are designed as "light duty" highways, and are not constructed to withstand substantial amounts of traffic by heavy vehicles. Most county highways in the Town of Altona have a pavement width of 20 feet with shoulders ranging from 0 to 3 feet. County highways are suitable for retail and service businesses, but not for businesses requiring significant amounts of truck traffic.

Town highways carry the lowest traffic volumes and are constructed to the lowest design standards. While some town highways have been resurfaced with a 20 feet pavement width, they generally lack shoulders. Some town roads prohibit vehicles weighing over 5 tons, some have a gravel pavement, and still others are unimproved. Because of low traffic volumes they are poorly suited for commercial businesses.

New York State Town Law, Section 280(a) requires that in order to obtain a building permit from a town, any new structure must be accessible by means of a minimum 15 feet right-of-way from either (a) a public highway, or (b) a private road shown on a subdivision plat duly filed in the county clerk's office. The purpose of this law is to insure adequate access for emergency vehicles. It is therefore recommended that all new lots within the Town of Altona be required to have at least 15 feet of road frontage along a public highway or private road constructed to town specified standards.

Most new roads in the town will be short access roads constructed by land developers. The town may choose on a case by case basis whether or not to adopt such roads as public highways. Road construction standards are usually adopted by towns in order to inform developers of the minimum standards which will be acceptable. Roads within new residential subdivisions may be required to meet minimum town standards by a local adopted subdivision control law. Such a law insures that all new roads within the town will meet minimum standards in the event that they become public highways in the future.

DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

No community water or sewer system exists in the Town of Altona and none is contemplated for the future. To insure that a costly public sewerage system is not needed in the future, it is recommended that new development take place on lots large enough to avoid groundwater contamination problems.

POPULATION AND HOUSING TRENDS

According to the latest U.S. Census information, the Town of Altona experienced a substantial growth in housing units during the last decade. The total number of units increased by 129, representing an 15.8 percent growth rate. This rate was almost identical to Clinton County's 14.6 percent increase.

Table 2: 1980 to 1990 Population and Housing Trends in Comparison with Clinton County

	Total Population	Household Population (excludes prison)	Total Housing Units	Mobile Homes
1980	2077	2077	690	148
1990	2775	2148	819	242
Number Change	698	71	129	94
Percent Change	33.6%	3.4%	15.8%	63.5%
Percent Change, Clinton County	6.5%		14.6%	63.6%

About 73 percent of the increase in housing units during the 1980's was accounted for by mobile homes. Of the total 129 new units, 94 were mobile homes. (Mobile homes as reported in the census include both single-wides and double-wides.)

Total population increased from 2077 to 2775, but much of this increase reflects the prison population in the hamlet of Altona. Excluding the 627 inmates of the prison, household population grew by 71 persons, from 2077 persons in 1980 to 2148 in 1990. The number of housing units grew much faster than population because family size has become much smaller (which is a state and national trend).

Much of the recent growth has undoubtedly been due to younger families, i.e. young adults with young children, seeking affordable housing and a rural lifestyle. This is typical pattern for towns like Altona which are located on the fringe of a growing region such as Plattsburgh.

1990 Statistical Profile of the Town of Altona

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing, STF1

TOTAL POPULATION	2,775
SEX	
Male.....	1,719
Female.....	1,056
AGE	
Under 5 years.....	193
5 to 17 years.....	461
18 to 20 years.....	97
21 to 24 years.....	237
25 to 44 years.....	1,141
45 to 54 years.....	266
55 to 59 years.....	115
60 to 64 years.....	79
65 to 74 years.....	113
75 to 84 years.....	62
85 years and over.....	11
Median age.....	30.4
Under 18 years.....	654
Percent of total population.....	23.6
65 years and over.....	186
Percent of total population.....	6.7
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE	
Total households.....	735
Family households (families).....	583
Married-couple families.....	505
Percent of total households.....	68.7
Other family, male householder.....	32
Other family, female householder.....	46
Nonfamily households.....	152
Percent of total households.....	20.7
Householder living alone.....	125
Householder 65 years and over.....	67
Persons living in households.....	2,148
Persons per household.....	2.92
GROUP QUARTERS	
Persons living in group quarters.....	627
Institutionalized persons.....	627
Other persons in group quarters.....	0
RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN	
White.....	2,238
Black.....	400
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut.....	12
Asian or Pacific Islander.....	8
Other race.....	117
Hispanic origin (of any race).....	244

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	819
OCCUPANCY AND TENURE	
Occupied housing units	735
Owner occupied.....	617
Percent owner occupied.....	83.9
Renter occupied.....	118
Vacant housing units	84
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.....	40
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.8
Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	2.5
Persons per owner-occupied unit.....	2.96
Persons per renter-occupied unit.....	2.71
Units with over 1 person per room.....	37
UNITS IN STRUCTURE	
1-unit, detached.....	529
1-unit, attached.....	10
2 to 4 units.....	24
5 to 9 units.....	7
10 or more units.....	0
Mobile home, trailer, other.....	249
VALUE	
Specified owner-occupied units.....	279
Less than \$50,000.....	197
\$50,000 to \$99,000.....	75
\$100,000 to \$149,000.....	6
\$150,000 to \$199,999.....	1
\$200,000 to \$299,999.....	0
\$300,000 or more.....	0
Median (dollars).....	37,500
CONTRACT RENT	
Specified renter-occupied units paying cash rent.....	78
Less than \$250.....	52
\$250 to \$499.....	26
\$500 to \$749.....	0
\$750 to \$999.....	0
\$1,000 or more.....	0
Median (dollars).....	217

GROWTH PROJECTIONS

The following growth projection assumes that the Town of Altona will grow slightly faster during the next two decades than it did during the 1980's, experiencing an increase in housing units of 150 per decade from 1990 to 2010. The reason for the slight increase is that as land for development becomes scarcer and costlier closer to Plattsburgh, growth rates in outlying towns like Altona will tend to increase. The assumption of 150 new housing units is a conservative one, as the growth rate has the potential of being substantially higher. In the subsequent two decades, it is assumed that the growth rate will decline slightly to 130 new housing units per decade.

Projected population is calculated by assuming that the number of persons per household will remain at 2.62, the 1990 figure. Total population of the town would include the 600 plus inmate population at the prison in addition to the household population shown below.

Table 3: Past and Projected Household Population

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u># of Housing Units</u>	<u>Change, # of Housing Units</u>	<u>Pop. per Housing Unit</u>
1950	1711			
1960	1750			
1970	1852	489		3.79
1980	2077	690	201	3.01
1990	2148	819	129	2.62
2000	2539	969	150	2.62
2010	2932	1119	150	2.62
2020	3272	1249	130	2.62
2030	3613	1379	130	2.62

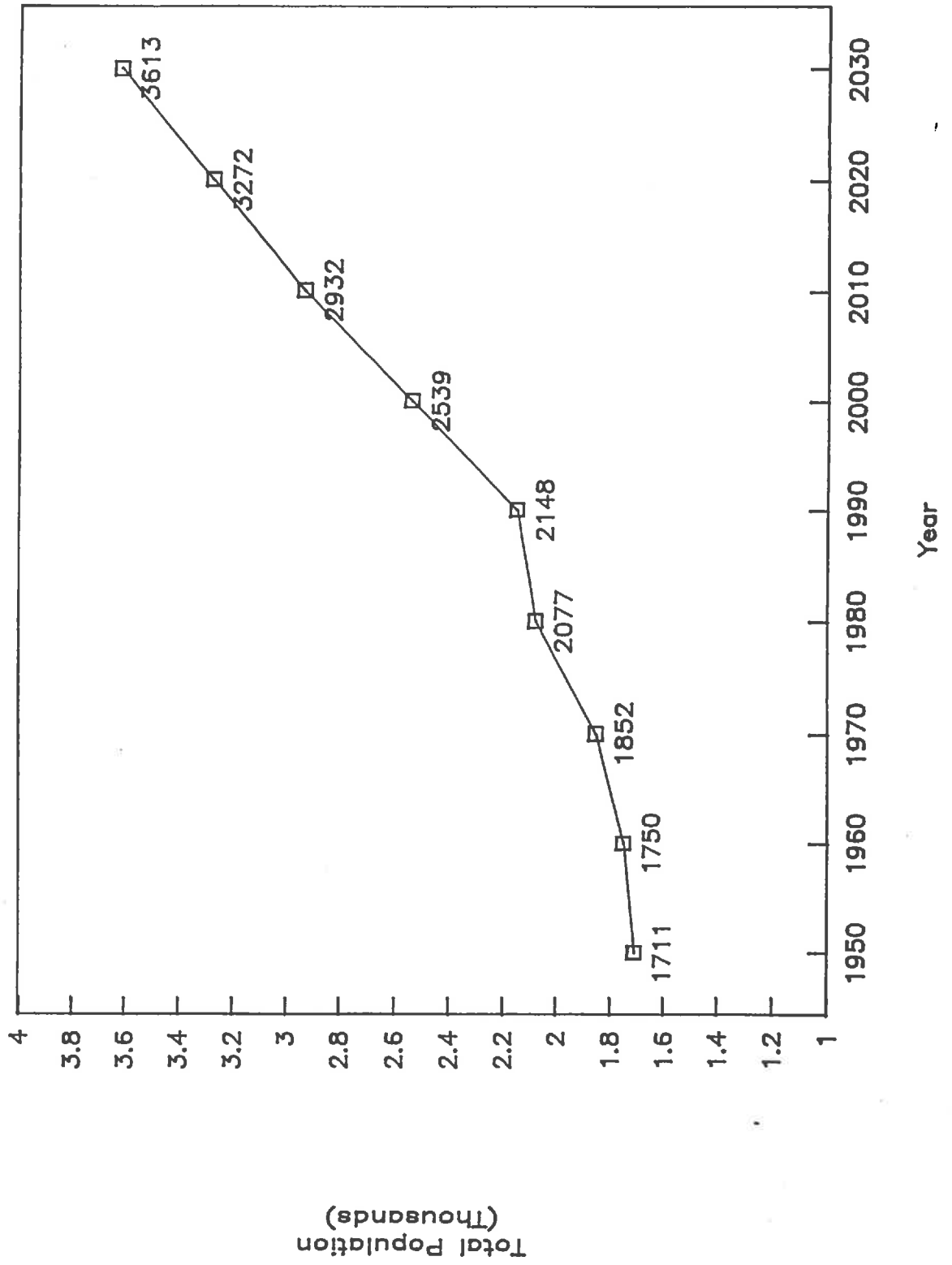
LOCATION AND CHARACTER OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

About 300 new housing units have located in the Town of Altona during the past two decades, the majority of which have been mobile homes. Commercial development, however, has been slight.

Residential development has been scattered and generally rather evenly distributed throughout the town, with the exception of the southwest quadrant within the Adirondack Blue Line which has attracted little development most likely because of its inaccessibility to employment and service centers together with the large lot requirements of the Adirondack Park Agency.

Past and Projected Population

Town of Altona



Although new conventional homes (as distinguished from mobile homes) have been constructed throughout the town, they tend to be concentrated in the southeast quadrant closest to Plattsburgh. This area could be termed a "suburban growth area," consisting of portions Vassar Road, Atwood Road, Recore Road, State Route 190, and the Rand Hill Road.

Commercial development has occurred along State Route 11 and within the hamlet of Altona. Home business have emerged in some rural locations. There has been no industrial development.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Median housing value in the Town of Altona was \$37,500, fourth lowest among Clinton County municipalities, and considerably lower than the county average of \$51,407. Median monthly contract rent was \$217 compared to \$317 for the county.

Table 4: Housing Value Comparison with Other Towns

<u>Town</u>	<u>1990 Median Housing Value</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Peru	\$75,400	1
Plattsburgh	\$73,200	2
Beekmantown	\$70,000	3
Schuyler Falls	\$64,500	4
Chazy	\$58,800	5
Champlain	\$58,400	6
Saranac	\$51,000	7
Mooers	\$48,800	8
Ausable	\$48,500	9
Black Brook	\$41,300	10
ALTONA *	<u>\$37,500</u>	11
Ellenburg	\$36,000	12
Dannemora	\$33,600	13
Clinton	\$23,700	14
Average for all towns =	\$51,407	

According to the 1990 U.S. census, 819 housing units existed within the Town of Altona, 735 of which were occupied units. Of the total housing units, 65 percent were conventional single family dwellings, 30 percent were mobile homes, and the remainder were two-family or multi-family dwellings. About 16 percent of all units were renter occupied, with the remainder owner occupied.

POTENTIAL FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The primary potential for growth in the Town of Altona is for residential development.

Much of the housing demand should continue to be for affordable units such as mobile homes or modular dwellings. This type of housing is frequently sought by young families seeking their first home. The Town of Altona is attractive not only because of its rural character and environmental qualities, but also because of relatively cheap and available land.

However, there will also be a demand for moderate and higher priced conventional housing as evidenced by some of the recent growth which has taken place within the town, primarily located in the areas closest to Plattsburgh. This type of housing is frequently sought by middle aged families with enough accumulated capital to afford such dwellings, and by retirees.

Demographic and housing data suggests that there is relatively little demand for multi-family type dwelling units in the Town of Altona with the exception of senior citizen housing. As in all areas of the state, there will be a significant increase in the 65 years and older population in the Town of Altona in the future.

POTENTIAL FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The potential for commercial and industrial development in the Town of Altona is limited. Commercial uses require a site near a population center and/or along a heavily traveled route. There are no sizeable population centers within the town, and those that do exist are not located on heavily traveled highways.

A few neighborhood type retail and service establishments may develop in the hamlet of Altona and along State Routes 190 and 11 to serve the growing population of the area, but these are likely to be smaller businesses. Most common are likely to be convenient marts, gas stations, auto repair shops, used automobile sales and a variety of businesses operated out of homes.

Because of the high traffic volume along State Route 11, and to a lesser extent along State Route 190, some types of larger retail and service businesses could develop in these locations. Being "heavy duty" highways, these routes also have some potential as industrial, trucking and warehousing sites, and could be attractive to firms seeking cheaper land than is available closer to Plattsburgh.

The prospects for future industrial development in the Town of Altona however, are low. Other towns in the region are more competitive in attracting industries because of the existence of water and sewer infrastructure, a larger labor force, the provision of industrial sites, and an active local area development corporation.

SUITABILITY FOR WASTE DISPOSAL

Waste disposal as discussed herein means any form of landfill, incineration or stockpiling of wastes, to include commercial incinerators, sewerage sludge disposal, landfills, junkyards or hazardous waste disposal sites.

Because of with its sparse population and relatively cheap land which is accessible by State Route 190, coupled with a past history of lack of local regulations, the Town of Altona could be viewed by private firms or governmental agencies as an desirable location for a waste disposal site. However, there are several reasons why the town is not suitable for waste disposal facilities.

About 30 percent (the exact percent is unavailable) of the town lies within the Adirondack Blue Line. Most of this is private land classified as being in the Resource Management category on the Adirondack Land Use and Development Plan map. Waste disposal is not listed as being a compatible use within Resource Management districts. Most of the remaining land within the Blue Line is state owned and classified as being in the Wild Forest category. The Adirondack Park as a whole has been recognized as a special natural environment and has been protected by state legislation. Therefore, waste disposal should not be permitted within the Adirondack Blue Line within the Town of Altona.

Outside the Blue Line other constraints limit the suitability of the land for waste disposal. Numerous streams and brooks are found within the town. There are many wetlands. Many of the soils are shallow to bedrock, the bedrock being fractured and jointed sandstone, and thus are very susceptible to groundwater contamination and the spread of such contamination. In other areas soils are sandy and are also susceptible to groundwater contamination due to a rapid percolation rate. Agricultural and residential uses tend to be located on the better soils within the town, and waste disposal is incompatible with these uses.

Moreover, it has been concluded that the future of the Town of Altona lies with its potential to develop as a rural residential community. Waste disposal is incompatible with residential uses, and the location of such facilities in the town would inconsistent with this vision of its future.

Considering all these factors, waste disposal should be severely limited within the Town of Altona. Hazardous and toxic waste disposal should be prohibited. Non-local solid wastes and demolition and construction debris disposal should be prohibited. Locally generated non-toxic wastes could be permitted if sites were carefully chosen and were subject to environmental review and public hearings.

AREA BY AREA LAND USE ANALYSIS

For purposes of this analysis the Town of Altona is divided into five areas: the Hamlet of Altona, State Route 190 (Military Turnpike), State Route 11, Rural Areas, and a "Suburban Growth Zone." Agriculture and forestry are omitted in the discussion of each area because it is assumed that these uses appropriate throughout the entire town.

Altona Hamlet

The hamlet of Altona is the community center, and consists principally of residential uses, but also contains neighborhood commercial type businesses and community facilities such as the post office, town hall, fire hall, and recreation park. It is underlain by soils which are believed to be generally suitable for development and for septic systems. However, due to the relatively rapid percolation rates found in the soils, there is the potential for groundwater contamination should a toxic spill occur, or if hazardous or toxic wastes are improperly disposed.

Because land uses are mixed together within the hamlet, it is recommended that a single hamlet district be created rather than creating separate commercial and residential districts. The hamlet district would permit a mixture of residential and retail and service type businesses such as currently exists. Commercial uses and industries which would not be compatible with residential uses or which could potentially pollute the groundwater supply used by residents of the hamlet, would not be permitted.

State Route 190 (Military Turnpike)

State Route 190 has some potential for commercial and industrial development, but as previously discussed such potential is limited. Business development along this route can be expected to be spotty in future years. There is also potential for residential development particularly in the southern portions of the route. For purposes of discussion, the Route 190 corridor is divided into three sections: a southern section, a middle section, and a northern section.

The southern section of the Route 190 corridor, from the Town of Beekmantown line north to Robinson, has considerable potential for residential development due to its proximity to

Plattsburgh, and could be included in the "Suburban Growth" zone, discussed below in this report. It is winding and hilly and is not ideal for commercial sites. Therefore, it is recommended that this section be designated for residential development and for smaller businesses which would be compatible with residential uses.

The middle section of the Route 190 corridor, from Robinson northward to Crowley Corners, contains good commercial sites but there are also several existing residences in the area, and there is some potential for future residential development. This area would therefore be suitable for mixed commercial and residential development, but larger businesses and industries would detract from its residential potential.

The northern section of Route 190 from Crowley Corners north and west to the town line contains good business sites and is sparsely populated. It would therefore be appropriately designated for industrial and commercial development, with residential uses permitted.

As in all rural areas of town, a minimum lot size of about one acre is recommended due to soil conditions and to maintain the rural character of the area.

State Route 11

State Route 11 is a heavily traveled route and already contains commercial establishments. Future development is constrained on the north side of the route by the North Branch of the Great Chazy River which runs close to the highway. To be consistent with its present use and future potential, land on the south side along State Route 11 should be designated for commercial and industrial development, with residential uses allowed. A minimum lot size of about 1 acre is recommended.

Rural Areas

Most of the Town of Altona can be described as a rural area consisting of scattered residential uses with occasional small business development and farms. It can be anticipated that much of the future development of the town will take place in a similar manner. Accordingly, these areas would be appropriately designated for mixed residential and small business use. A minimum lot size of about 1 acre is recommended in order to preserve the rural character and to provide for adequate septic systems on the poorer soils.

Because much of the past development has been in the form of mobile homes, and because of the anticipated demand for affordable housing within the Town of Altona, single-wide mobile homes would be an appropriate land use within most rural areas.

Suburban Growth Area

Much of the new conventional home (as distinguished from mobile home) development has occurred within the southeast section of town closest to Plattsburgh along portions Vassar Road, Atwood Road, Recore Road, State Route 190, and the Rand Hill Road. This section holds the most potential for growth as a residential, conventional home area in the future and could be designated as a residential district where land uses incompatible with conventional home development would not be permitted. Incompatible uses would include industrial, trucking and warehousing uses, certain commercial establishments, and single-wide mobile homes. Alternatively, this area could be designated for the same uses as permitted in other rural sections of town.

As in other rural areas, a minimum lot size of about 1 acre is recommended.

CITIZEN QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

A land use questionnaire survey was mailed to all property owners within the Town of Altona during the winter of 1992-93. A total of 524 completed surveys were returned, representing a rate of return of over 40 percent, which is considered a high rate of return for a mailed survey.

Tabulated results of the survey are contained in Appendix A of this report. A summary follows.

Respondents were generally in favor of growth, but wished at the same time to protect the environment and maintain the rural character of the town. People opposed junkyards, mobile home parks, and waste disposal areas locating in their section of town. A minimum lot size of 1 acre was favored.

Respondents favored the Town of Altona adopting some sort of land use control law by about a 3 to 1 margin.

PART 2: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE PLANNING GOALS

The following goals and objectives were adopted by the Town of Altona Land Use Committee.

1. Growth should be encouraged, but should be guided and controlled to a certain extent.
2. Residential development should be encouraged, but should be guided and controlled to a certain extent.
 - (a) Conventional home development should be encouraged throughout the town.
 - (b) Regulations should be adopted to guide the siting of mobile homes. Mobile home development should be permitted in much of the town.
3. Industrial and commercial development should be encouraged, but should be guided and controlled to a certain extent.

Certain types of commercial and industrial development should be prohibited in some areas.
4. Residential neighborhoods and property values should be protected.
 - (a) Certain certain types of land uses, such as junkyards, should be prohibited from some or all areas of town.
 - (b) A review procedure should be established whereby new non-residential development would require a public hearing and site plan review by a locally appointed Planning Board before it is approved. Small business should be exempt from this requirement.
 - (c) A 50 feet green space buffer should be provided between any new commercial or industrial use and any neighboring residential property line.
 - (d) Waste disposal areas should be located at least 500 feet from any residence.
 - (e) Standards should be established for new mobile home parks.
5. Desirable living environments should be created.
 - (a) New development should be set back a minimum distance from public roads and lot lines.

- (b) A minimum lot size for new development should be established.
6. Affordable housing should be available.
- (a) Single-wide mobile homes should be allowed throughout most of the town provided that certain standards are met.
 - (b) Mobile home parks should be allowed within much of the town provided that certain standards are met.
7. Sewerage should be properly treated.
- (a) All new development should be required to have a Clinton County Health Department approved septic system.
 - (b) A minimum lot size for new development should be established of sufficient size to install an adequate septic system.
8. The rural character of the town should be preserved.
- (a) A minimum lot size of about 1 acre should be established for new residential development.
9. Visual quality should be protected.
- (a) The keeping of junk in sight of public highways should be prohibited.
 - (b) New junkyards should be prohibited from locating anywhere in town.
 - (d) Regulations should be adopted to control flashing or blinking signs, and the size, height and placement of signs.
10. Waste disposal should be controlled.
- (a) The incineration of wastes should be prohibited throughout the town.
 - (b) Hazardous and medical waste disposal should be prohibited throughout the town.
 - (c) All forms of wastes generated outside the Town of Altona, including septage, commercial and industrial wastes, solid wastes, and demolition and construction debris should be prohibited from being disposed of anywhere within the Town of Altona.

- (d) The disposal of non-hazardous septage, commercial or industrial wastes, and demolition and construction debris generated within the Town of Altona should be permitted within some portions of town provided that regulations are adopted to protect surrounding properties.
11. Streams and Rivers should be protected.
- (a) A 50 feet buffer zone should be established along all watercourses where no building would be allowed.
 - (b) Vegetative cutting should be restricted along streams and rivers.
12. Groundwater should be protected.
- (a) The manufacture or disposal of hazardous wastes should be prohibited.
 - (b) Waste disposal should be controlled.
 - (c) New Junkyards should be prohibited in all areas of town.
 - (d) A case-by-case review procedure for new commercial and industrial development should be established in order for potential groundwater impacts to be dealt with.
 - (e) All new septic systems should be approved by the Clinton County Health Department.
13. The continuation of agriculture should be encouraged.
- (a) No regulations which would adversely affect farm operations should be adopted.
 - (b) Farm buildings should be exempt from certain regulations.
14. Through roads should be maintained as safe highways.
- (a) All new development should be provided with adequate off-road parking so that no vehicles are parked along public highways.
 - (b) Businesses which generate substantial amounts of truck traffic should be discouraged from locating on narrow, winding, or hazardous roads, particularly where there are significant amounts of residential development.

PROPOSED LAND USE DISTRICTS

In accordance with the information and analysis provided in this document as well as the desires of the citizens of the Town of Altona as expressed in the citizen questionnaire survey, and as a result of discussion among the Town of Altona Land Use Committee members, it is recommended that the Town of Altona be divided into the following land use districts for the purposes of planning for its future growth and development and for establishing a proposed zoning law. Should a zoning law be adopted by the Town, the zoning districts in said law may differ from those shown here as a result of changes and recommendations arising from public input and further analysis of information.

Hamlet H

The existing hamlet of Altona is designated as a Hamlet district. The Hamlet district is a mixed residential and neighborhood commercial district where uses of the type which currently exist would be permitted.

Single-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings would be permitted, as would single-wide mobile homes. Mobile home parks would not be allowed. Most retail and service businesses would be permitted. Some establishments such as taverns, campgrounds, farm equipment sales, and motor vehicle repair shops would not be allowed because they would be incompatible with residential uses. Industrial, trucking and warehousing would not be permitted.

Minimum lot size for single and two-family dwellings would be 20,000 square feet (about 1/2 acre), and for businesses it would be 40,000 square feet (about 1 acre).

Industrial/Commercial IC

State Route 11 and portions of State Route 190 (Military Turnpike) are designated as Industrial/Commercial districts.

These corridors are envisioned as having the best potential for industrial and commercial development due to their favorable highway access. A mixture of uses would be permitted, including industrial, trucking and warehousing, commercial development, and all forms of residential development including mobile homes and mobile home parks. The only prohibited uses would be those which would be prohibited throughout the entire town, such as junkyards, hazardous waste disposal, and all non-hazardous waste disposal generated outside the Town of Altona. Because this is a mixed use district a green space buffer would be required between business uses and neighboring residential development.

Minimum lot size for single and two-family dwellings and for commercial establishments would be 40,000 square feet (about 1 acre), and for industrial, trucking and warehousing businesses it would be 80,000 square feet (about 2 acres).

Rural Use RU

Most of the town of Altona is designated as a Rural Use district.

The Rural Use district is an area of scattered housing and small businesses interspersed with forest and farmland where development densities are low. All forms of residential use, including single-wide mobile homes and mobile home parks, would be allowed in Rural Use Districts. Businesses of the kind which typically exist in rural areas would be permitted, such as most retail and service establishments. Industrial, trucking and warehousing would also be permitted provided that they are located on roads suitable for truck traffic. Because this is a mixed use district a green space buffer would be required between business uses and neighboring residential development.

Minimum lot size for single and two-family dwellings and for commercial establishments would be 40,000 square feet (about 1 acre), and for industrial, trucking and warehousing businesses it would be 80,000 square feet (about 2 acres).

Residential R

An area in the southeastern section of town closest to Plattsburgh is designated as a Residential district.

The Residential district is reserved for future rural residential development of conventional homes and double-wide mobile homes. Single and two-family homes would be permitted, as would double-wide mobile homes, but single-wide mobile homes and mobile home parks would not be allowed. Small retail and service businesses would be permitted, but other commercial and industrial uses would not be allowed.

Minimum lot size for single and two-family dwellings and for commercial establishments would be 40,000 square feet.

COMPATIBLE USE CHART

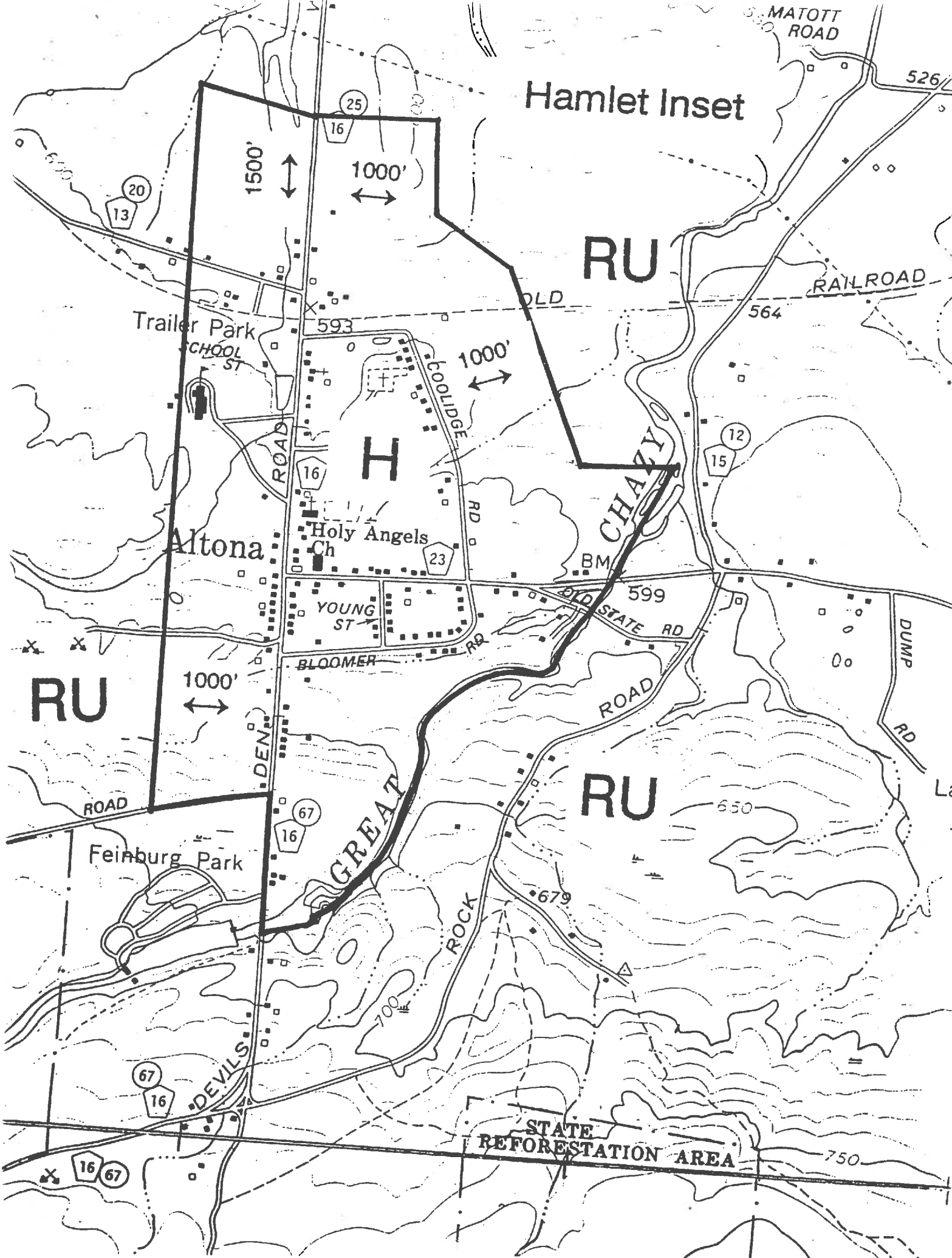
The following chart shows which land uses are considered to be compatible uses within each land use district. Blanks indicate that a use is not permitted. This chart was prepared by the Town of Altona Land Use Committee. Should a zoning law be adopted by the town, the permitted use chart in said law may differ from that shown here as a result of further public input and analysis of information.

Compatible Use Chart

x = Permitted
s = Permitted after Special Permit Approval
Blank or not listed = not permitted

	Zones:			
	IC	RU	H	R
	-----	-----	-----	-----
A. RESIDENTIAL USES				
One or two family dwelling	x	x	x	x
Multi-family dwelling	s	s	s	
Single-wide mobile home	x	x	x	
Mobile home park	s	s		
B. GENERAL USES				
Church	s	s	s	s
Membership club	s	s	s	
Public facility	s	s	s	
Essential use/service	s	s	s	
Non-profit recreation facility	s	s		
C. COMMERCIAL USES				
Small Business	s	s	s	s
Large retail	s		s	
Shopping center	s			
Motor vehicle sales and repair	s	s		
Lawn, garden or farm equipment	s	s		
Mobile home sales	s			
Feed store, farm supplies	s	s		
Produce sales	s	s	s	s
Nursery, florist, greenhouse	s	s	s	
Outdoor recreation	s	s		
Golf course and clubhouse	s	s		s
Campground, travel trailer park	s	s		
Indoor recreation (bowling, skating).....	s	s	s	
Truck stop	s			
Indoor theatre	s	s	s	
Motel, hotel, cabins	s	s		
Lodging house, bed and breakfast	s	s	s	
Restaurant	s	s	s	
Food or ice cream stand	s	s	s	
Launderette	s	s	s	
Personal service business (beauty shop, barber, tailor, similar businesses).....	s	s	s	
Professional or business office	s	s	s	
Bank	s	s	s	
Health care facility	s	s	s	
Private school	s	s	s	
Child care center	s	s	s	s

	IC	RU	H	R
Funeral home	S	S	S	
Tavern, bar, nightclub	S			
Gasoline and auto service station	S	S	S	
Motor vehicle repair/auto body shop	S	S		
Appliance repair shop	S	S	S	
Veternarian, animal hospital	S	S	S	
Kennels	S	S		
Well drilling or construction business ...	S	S		
Slaughterhouse	S			
Amusement Park	S			
Junk yard/scrap yard.....	prohibited in all zones			
Motorized vehicle race track	S	S		
Airport	S			
Unlisted commercial use				
INDUSTRIAL, TRUCKING AND WAREHOUSING USES				
Light Industrial Use	S	S		
Sawmill/Woodproducts manufacture, small ..	S	S		
Sawmill/Woodproducts manufacture, large ..	S			
Warehousing and distribution	S	S		
Trucking	S	S		
Fuel oil distribution	S	S		
Fertilizer manufacture and distribution ..	S			
Sand or gravel extraction	S	S		
Research and testing laboratory	S	S		
Machine shop	S	S		
Other industrial uses	S			
WASTE DISPOSAL				
Hazardous waste disposal	prohibited in all zones			
Non-hazardous waste disposal				
Generated within the Town of Altona	S	S		
Generated outside the Town of Altona ...	prohibited in all zones			
OTHER USES				
Agriculture, forestry	X	X	X	X
Cluster development	S	S	S	S
Accessory use	X	X	X	X



Hamlet Inset

RU

H

Altona

RU

RU

STATE REFORESTATION AREA

1500'

1000'

1000'

1000'

MATOTT ROAD

526

RAILROAD

564

Trailer Park

SCHOOL ST

COLLIDGE RD

16

Holy Angels Ch

23

YOUNG ST

BLOOMER RD

599

OLD STATE RD

ROAD

DUMP RD

RD

La

ROAD

Feinburg Park

GREAT

ROCK

650

679

700

750

67

16

DEVILS

67

16

16

67

CITIZEN QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Dear Resident of Altona:

The Town of Altona is considering the possibility of preparing a land use regulation which would guide future growth and development, and which would prevent certain undesirable land uses from locating in some or all parts of town. Such a regulation would apply only to new land uses - existing uses would be grandfathered.

The Town Board is seeking as much public input as possible, and urges you to complete a questionnaire. Even if you oppose a land use law it is important to return the questionnaire so that your opinion may be taken into account. Responses will be kept anonymous. There is no need to sign your name.

If the Town proceeds with the development of a land use law, there will be a committee appointed which will meet once a month to work on it. Committee meetings will be announced in the paper and will be open to the public. At least three public hearings will be held before any of their proposals become law.

For those who for one reason or another did not receive a questionnaire, they are available at the town hall.

Please return within two weeks. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Glenn Watts

Glenn Watts
Supervisor

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following goals for the future of Altona?

	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Blank
a. Growth should be encouraged.	(369)	(59)	(60)	15
b. Commercial and industrial development should be encouraged.	(331)	(112)	(56)	15
c. Commercial uses should be restricted in some areas.	(388)	(60)	(39)	13
d. The rural character of the town should be maintained.	(396)	(38)	(52)	14
e. Groundwater should be protected.	(450)	(13)	(20)	19
f. Visual quality should be protected by establishing regulations for junk and signs, and by other means.	(432)	(25)	(33)	14

2. Which of the following do you feel are appropriate new uses for the area of town in which you live?

	Favor	Oppose	Neutral	Blank
a. Major commercial uses (larger stores and businesses)	(215)	(178)	(99)	21
b. Smaller stores and businesses	(342)	(50)	(101)	26
c. Home occupations	(334)	(26)	(77)	24
d. Auto repair shops	(255)	(112)	(126)	7
e. Junk yards	(34)	(324)	(96)	23
f. Industrial uses	(137)	(192)	(107)	22
g. Single family homes	(422)	(20)	(41)	10
h. Mobile homes, single-wide	(257)	(115)	(99)	30
i. Mobile homes, double-wide	(309)	(74)	(98)	25
j. Mobile home parks	(23)	(213)	(97)	21
k. Open space and agriculture	(402)	(28)	(54)	21
l. Waste disposal area	(91)	(327)	(53)	
m. Others, specify	()	()	()	
	()	()	()	
	()	()	()	

See next page

3. What do you feel is an appropriate minimum lot size for new single family home development in the area in which you live? (check one)

- a. 110 20,000 square feet (about 1/2 acre)
- b. 174 1 acre
- c. 62 2 acres
- d. 33 5 acres
- e. 15 other, specify _____
- f. 87 there should be no minimum lot size established

Blank 24

4. Please check below if you are a farmer or other owner of a large amount of land in Altona.

- a. 47 farmer
- b. 139 other owner of more than 20 acres of developable land

Blank 313

5. Do you favor or oppose the establishment of a law which would:

	Favor	Oppose	Neutral	Blank
a. prohibit certain land uses from all or some sections of town?	(294)	(101)	(85)	24
b. require that certain new businesses be subject to a case-by-case review and a local public hearing before approval?	(318)	(70)	(43)	21
c. establish a minimum lot size for new development?	(335)	(86)	(66)	20
d. require that adequate septic systems be provided for all new development?	(435)	(26)	(15)	20

6. Do you favor or oppose some sort of local land use regulation in the Town of Altona?

- a. 187 strongly favor
- b. 155 favor
- c. 55 neutral
- d. 43 oppose
- e. 75 strongly oppose

Blank 11

COMMENTS: majority of comments:

- Favor:
1. Preserving wetlands & wildlife
 2. Non Polluting, low impact industries
 3. mobile home required to have cement pads
 4. Pet Shelters
 5. junk yards limited
 6. Public Beach at minor pond
 7. Hydropower
 8. Dog control - make it work
 9. Bike Path
 10. Leave everything as is
 11. Tree Farming
 12. Everyone maintain clear property

- Oppose:
1. medical burning
 2. water air pollution
 3. Prison expansion
 4. Landfill
 5. Indian Reservation

(Please return by January 22, 1993. Thank you.)

