

The Village of

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1853

MARCELLUS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2007

Village of Marcellus Comprehensive Plan

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The Village of Marcellus would like to thank the members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee, Planning Board and Board of Trustees who dedicated their time, talent and love for the village to facilitate the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan.

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Executive Summary

Nestled in the beautiful valley of Nine Mile Creek, Marcellus Village has evolved from a farming and mill community into a quaint small village that serves as a bedroom community to the larger metropolitan area. Adventurous individuals began to settle at the crossroads of two major transportation routes, Nine Mile Creek and the Great Genessee Road (or Seneca Turnpike). Over time this settlement grew in response to the hydroelectric power generated by Nine Mile Creek. The local waterpower stimulated the development of a variety of mills (grist, barley, woolen), which dominated the initial industries that contributed to the growth of the settlement near the Creek. Marcellus was officially incorporated into a village on June 4 1853, and is over 150 years old.

In the recent past the village has experienced growth pressures that threaten the character and “small village life style”. In an effort to effectively manage its future growth and development, village officials determined that a comprehensive plan was necessary.

The former Mayor, Fred Eisenberg initiated the village’s comprehensive planning process in 2005 by establishing a comprehensive planning committee (CPC). The CPC is a representational body of community representatives for the village. For one year the CPC met regularly to discuss issues relative to the village’s past history, present conditions, and future potential. In 2006 the CPC and village representatives agreed to retain the professional planning consultant team of EDR and Busa Architecture and Planning to assist the CPC in its comprehensive planning endeavors and specifically to complete the village’s first comprehensive plan.

At this stage in the planning process the CPC wanted to invite all community members to participate. The CPC wanted to provide a forum for community members to voice their concerns, ideas, and opinions. A public visioning workshop was held during the summer of 2006, during which opinion, concerns, and ideas were solicited and recorded. Additional presentations were made to the Marcellus Chamber of Commerce and Marcellus Historical Society. With input from the community, the CPC then developed the community vision statement with supporting community goals and objectives.

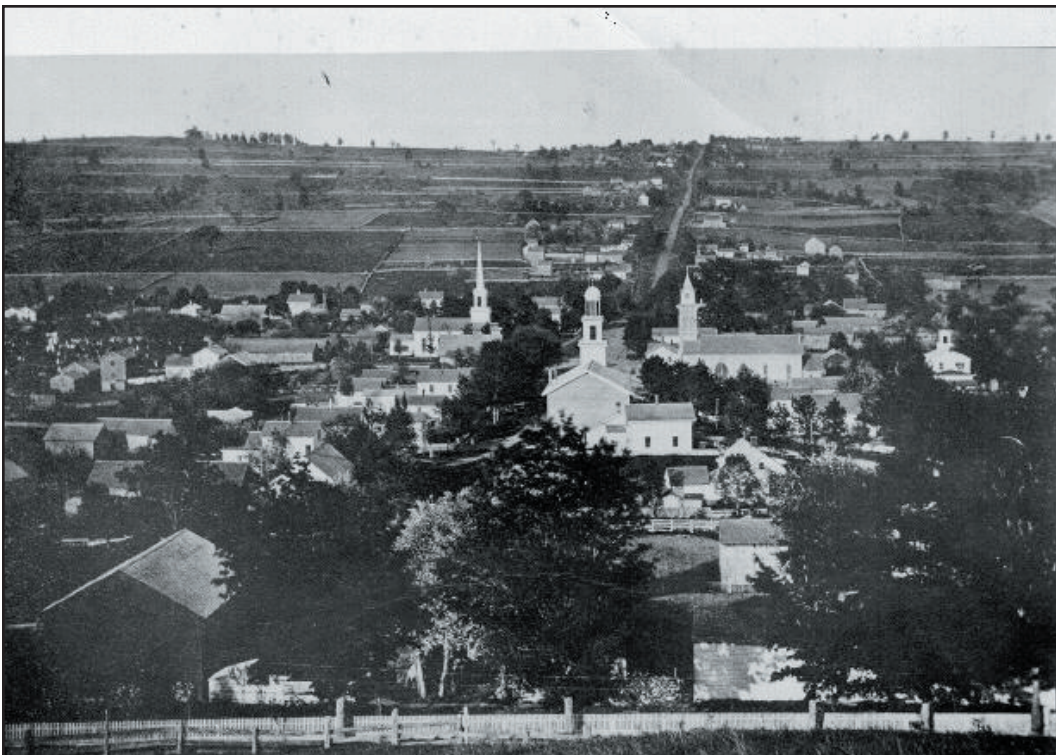
Subsequent to the community participation efforts, the CPC and planning consultants developed this Plan, which is organized into three parts. The first part includes historic background information regarding the village itself, a discussion of the comprehensive planning process, the community vision statement; and the community goals and objectives. This sets the stage for the second part, which consists of the Plan Recommendations with implementation strategies and detailed action steps assigned to the responsible village board. The third part includes a discussion of the many community resources that influence the complex fabric of the Village of Marcellus. This inventory includes the land uses and zoning districts, a general understanding of the village economy, transportation network, historic and cultural resources, and natural features. After identifying these resources, Marcellus’ current condition was assessed. This process highlighted the community’s weaknesses that warrant

attention, assets that deserve protection, and opportunities to be realized. These issues are discussed in the Plan as recommendations with detailed action steps for village officials to follow in their effort to realize the many Plan recommendations.

It is anticipated that this Plan will be presented by the CPC to the Village Board of Trustees for adoption as the official village comprehensive plan. After adoption of this Plan the village officials should then address the recommendations to revise portions of the local zoning regulations to ensure that all village officials have an effective set of local land use regulatory controls to proactively manage future growth for the Village of Marcellus while protecting its “quaint, small village” life style.

Marcellus Vision Statement

The Village of Marcellus will strive to preserve its unique character, protect its sensitive environmental resources and build upon its cultural history while promoting a sustainable economy that will enhance the quality of life for all residents and business owners.



Part I Community Planning Process

1. Introduction

The Village of Marcellus, like so many other small communities in New York State, is facing important decisions today that will impact its future for years to come. The purpose of this plan is to act as a blue print to guide our future land use and community decisions.

Community planning efforts have shaped our community into what it is today. Preceding this plan are a number of earlier studies, including the General Development Plan of 1975, a 1995 report from the SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry entitled *Your Town, Designing Its Future* and a 1998 publication prepared by the same team at the SUNY College of ESF entitled *Village Center Design Guidelines*. It also recognizes the efforts of some of earlier planners including Jack Cummings, Bernard Reagan and Martin Sennett, whose earlier vision for the Village is reflected in this document.

The Village Board facilitated a series of Main Street Revitalization Meetings with the public from 1999 to 2002. In 2004, a design team from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University conducted additional studies and provided recommendations for the development of a Master Plan for the Village. In 2005, the Village Board, appointed a Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) to develop this Plan. While the Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations for the Village of Marcellus, there can be no doubt that the Town of Marcellus and the Marcellus Central School District in particular, will be affected and impacted by the Plan's implementation. For this reason in particular, the CPC's membership consists of individuals who are representative of all stakeholders in the community – village residents, merchants, and business owners. The Plan, then, represents a conscious effort of cooperative participation by all segments of Marcellus, recognizing that we are, in reality, residents of one community.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the Village of Marcellus.

A. History

The Village of Marcellus, located in a picturesque valley in the Town of Marcellus, is one of 15 villages in Onondaga County. Situated between the cities of Syracuse and Auburn and a few miles from Otisco and Skaneateles Lakes, Marcellus was incorporated as a Village on June 4, 1853 and in 2003 celebrated its 150th anniversary. The Village is part of the Town of Marcellus, one of the original five towns of Onondaga County, with its history dating back over 200 years, to 1794.

Like most communities, Marcellus developed at the crossroads of two major transportation routes, Nine Mile Creek and Seneca Turnpike, at one time called the Great Genesee Road. The waterpower provided by Nine Mile Creek, an outlet of Otisco Lake, attracted a variety of individuals who built a number of mills (grist, saw, barley, and woolen) on the creek and the products of these mills attracted even more individuals to the valley to work in the mills, as well as provide other services for neighboring farmers.

Seneca Turnpike, an outgrowth of the Great Native American Trail that stretched across the State of New York, was a major highway in New York for people and products moving west. The original trail was practically a straight line through what would become Marcellus Village, but in 1802, when the (Seneca) Turnpike was laid out by New York State for improvement, the road-bed was changed to its present location on its way west out of the Village in order to avoid the steep climb.

Stagecoach lines operating on the turnpike would help the area, particularly the valley of the Nine Mile, to develop as a trading and manufacturing center. There were a number of business establishments on the Turnpike, including the famous Alvord House, built in 1815

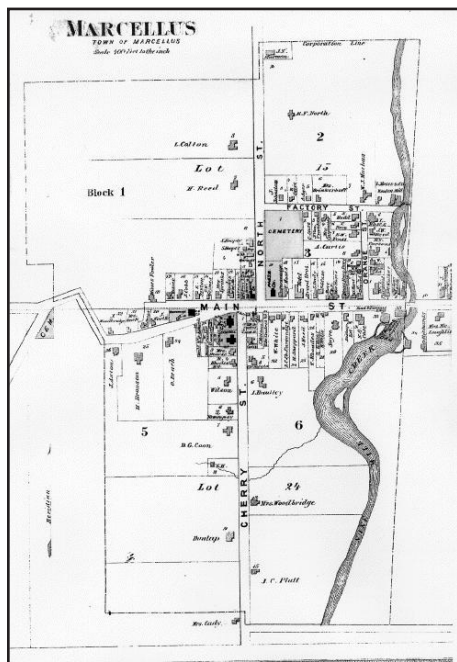


Figure 2: 1874 map of the Village of Marcellus.

and located strategically in the valley for servicing those who traveled the highway. During its first thirty years of existence, Marcellus would continue to attract people and industries at a rather steady pace, and as these numbers increased, more people tended to concentrate in the valley that would become the Village of Marcellus. The population of the area tended to decline during the 1830s and 1840s, but then, beginning about 1850, new businesses came to town, churches were built or rebuilt, new homes constructed and factories offered employment to local residents. As this expansion increased, inhabitants of the valley increased in number, living closer and closer together, in contrast to their rural neighbors, and they began to realize the need for some sort of organization. It was out of this urgency that the Village would be incorporated in 1853. The original corporation of the village consisted of a little

over 282 acres of land, about 2/3's the present size of the Village. The eastern and western boundaries of the Village have changed little since 1853. Nine Mile Creek is basically the eastern boundary of the village, and the hills called the Lime Ledge mark off the western edge. On the north, the village line originally ended where, Driver Middle School now begins. A 1906 annexation added about 70 acres to the northern boundary of the Village including what is commonly referred to today as Scotch Hill or the Marcellus Knolls. On the south, an annexation in 1978 added about 6 acres of land to that boundary. In front of the Methodist Church, across from the Village Office, a space of green marks the village commons and its history. It was a gathering place for pioneers, many moving west on this very road, and it remains the heart of the village today.



Figure 3: Village Green in 1975.

There can be little doubt that the Marcellus community will change in the years to come and the purpose for this planning effort is to proactively plan for those changes. This Plan presents an opportunity for the community to express its vision for the future and to provide guidance on how to direct and shape growth as well as preserve what it values most.

B. Prior Planning Initiatives

This Comprehensive Plan involved several steps taken by members of the CPC. Various members made a thorough review of existing conditions in the village, identified current and anticipated problems, evaluated possible future changes and development alternatives, established planning goals and development policy, and recommended actions that could be taken to move the community towards those planning goals.

The Plan addresses several components that influence village life and are important to the residents, merchants, and visitors to the Village of Marcellus, now and in the future. These components include land use and zoning, transportation (includes traffic circulation, connectivity, and parking), cultural and historic resources (includes community character), parks and recreation, economic development, housing, parks and natural resources, and community services.

This Plan includes recommendations with implementation strategies and action steps. The Village is committed to achieving the community goals as stated in this Plan through use of available land development regulations, environmental review techniques, capital improvement

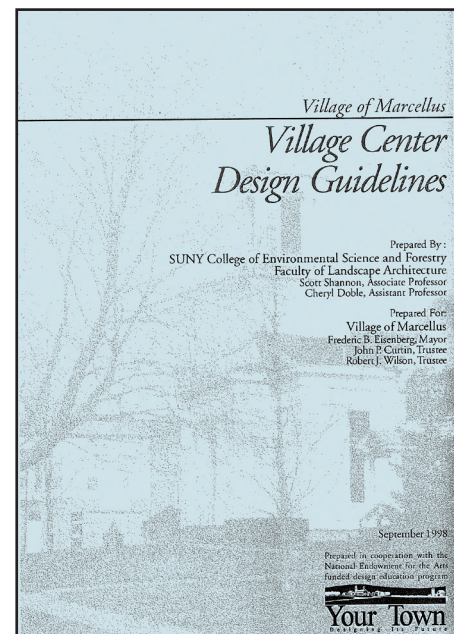


Figure 4: Front cover of SUNY–ESF design guidelines.

programming and other measures as necessary to accomplish this end.

Knowing that our community will change, it is important that the Village Trustees and the Planning Board review and revise the Comprehensive Plan every five years to reflect the changes in conditions and future opportunities. Just as we are revisiting the plans from 1975 and 1998, so too the residents, business owners, and officials of the Village of Marcellus should revisit this Plan every five years and make the appropriate modifications that might be deemed necessary at that time. This document should be a living blueprint that will continue to meet the needs of those who will one day live and work and raise families in the valley of Nine Mile Creek.

C. Community Outreach and Participation

A public visioning meeting was facilitated by the CPC and planning consultants EDR and Busa Architecture and Planning on August 17, 2006 that culminated with an analysis and priority rating of the community's strengths and weaknesses. Participants were invited to discuss the village's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Subsequent to the discussion, all participants were given three red dots for the purpose of prioritizing the issues of concern for the village. Participants were encouraged to place their dots next to the issues(s) that, in their opinion, warrant immediate attention. An additional informational session was presented to the Marcellus Chamber of Commerce and one was presented to the local historical society. In both cases the concerns voiced reflected those mentioned during the community wide meeting.

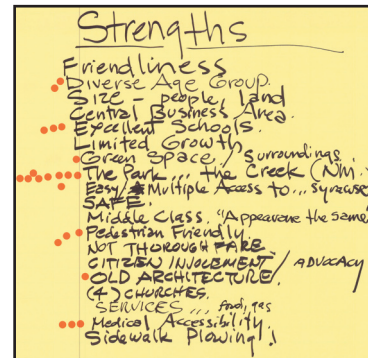


Figure 5a: Community SWOT (strengths) analysis sheet.

A review of the priority ratings revealed that there is great pride among the community residents and business owners (see Figure 5a). The identified top strengths of the village are its historic charm, natural resources such as Nine-Mile Creek, its compact (walk-able) layout and the strong communion between local residents. Some identified weaknesses are aging infrastructure, the lack of a community center for residents of all ages, and lack of a central public gathering place for community events. The community would like to realize

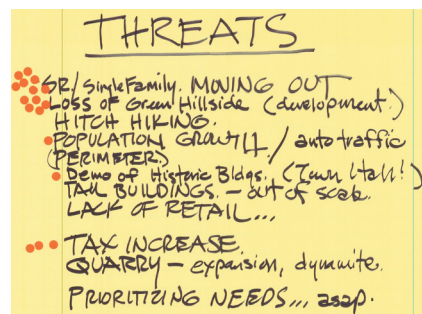


Figure 5b: Community SWOT (threats) analysis sheet.

the opportunity to establish alternative housing options for seniors so they have the option to downsize from their single-family home to another smaller home in the village. Another identified opportunity for the village is a new town hall centrally located in the business district along with initiatives that support growth in the business community.

The identified threats to the village actually affect the overall quality of life for all villagers (see, Figure 5b). The loss of senior citizens from the village as they transition

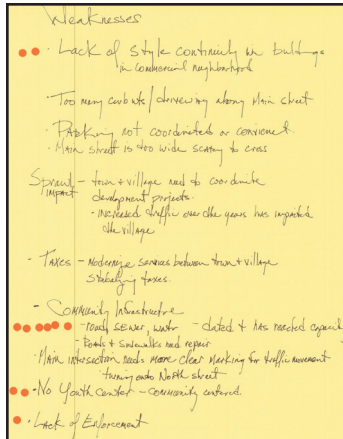


Figure 5c: Community SWOT (weaknesses) analysis sheet.

into retirement homes located elsewhere impacts the multi-generational fabric of community. Additionally, there is concern over the continued erosion on the hillsides on the outside edge of the village, which is caused by development on the hills. Finally, there is growing concern over the potential increase in significant impacts generated from the expansion of the local mining operation. Currently, the village experiences significant truck traffic related to the mining operation. Unfortunately, some of these threats are not within the direct control of the village residents or governing officials. The solution will most definitely reside in inter-municipal cooperation between the town and village.

The community is very enthusiastic about its potential future and understands the need for community involvement to protect its valuable assets, address its few weaknesses, and to realize some of the great opportunities that await it. The community's input during this visioning session significantly contributed to the vision statement that acts like a lighthouse guiding village officials in the various land development decisions. This community input also contributed to the crafting of the following vision statement and community goals.

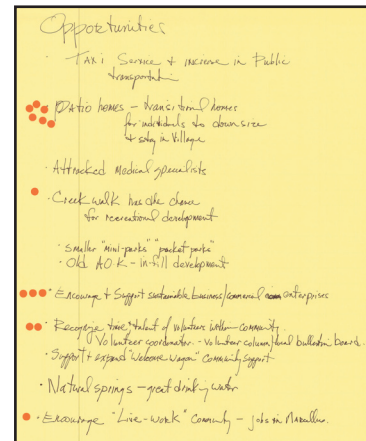


Figure 5d: Community SWOT (opportunities) analysis sheet.

Marcellus Vision Statement

The Village of Marcellus will strive to preserve its unique character, protect its sensitive environmental resources and build upon its cultural history while promoting a sustainable economy that will enhance the quality of life for all residents and business owners.

D. Community Goals

In response to the community's collective comments, the following community goals were created. In general, the village subscribes to smart growth, livable communities, and sustainable economy. To achieve this the village promotes the following community goals

i. Land Use

Goal 1:

Enhance the Village Center to serve as the cultural, social and historical center of the village.

Objectives:

1. Amend the zoning code to effectively manage future development and redevelopment, especially in the Village Center.
2. Develop and adopt design guidelines for all new development and renovation, alteration, or rehabilitation of existing structures and commercial buildings.
3. Require design and site plan review for all new and re-development including the demolition of existing structures to maintain or enhance the established character of the village.
4. Encourage the renovation, redevelopment (including infill), and reuse of existing structures. They should be appropriately scaled, of high-quality design that adds to the high-quality Village Center environment.
5. Preserve and protect historic architecture and landscapes.
6. Develop a facade improvement program for buildings in the Village Center.

Goal 2:

Maintain the existing residential neighborhoods characterized by high quality housing in a moderately dense urban village setting.

Objectives:

1. Protect and preserve existing residential neighborhoods, by adopting residential design and construction standards to be equitably applied.
2. Ensure that, within village neighborhoods, all new development responds to existing development with compatible land uses, densities, and architectural details.
3. Encourage the maintenance of residential properties.
4. Support appropriately located single family cluster residential housing, condominiums and senior housing consistent with the underlying zoning regulations. Discourage the development of generic apartment complexes.
5. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to reflect preferred residential character.

Goal 3:

Promote the design and development of new growth areas to be consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Objectives:

1. Confirm that all new development in each neighborhood will respect and complement existing surroundings through site plan review.
2. Encourage targeted types of development to locate in preferred areas in and around the village.
3. Encourage development of senior housing near Village Center.

4. Encourage development of cluster housing and condominiums in appropriate locations.
5. Ensure that street and pathway connections link existing Village neighborhoods.
6. Maintain and enhance village streetscapes and pedestrian paths.
7. Confirm that all new development will not exceed the capacity of utilities and village services.
8. Make sure that future development includes pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

ii. Housing

Goal 1:

Support the establishment of affordable housing that is different from the existing stock.

Objectives:

1. Support the development of single-story owner-occupied housing.
2. Support the establishment of alternative housing options that accommodate senior citizens and young professionals.

Goal 2:

Encourage and support the maintenance and enhancement of older residential properties.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate the establishment of a housing infrastructure improvement loan.
2. Seek grant funds to financially support a facade improvement program for residential structures.

Goal 3:

Support the enforcement of building and fire codes and local zoning regulations with the focus of encouraging landlords to properly maintain rental property.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the Code Enforcement Officer to appropriately exercise his authority to enforce the local zoning regulations and New York State building and fire code.
2. Encourage all property owners to make improvements to rental property as needed.
3. Adopt an inspection policy for multi-family houses to be paid for by an appropriate fee levied on multi-family residential properties.

iii. Economic development

Goal 1:

Maintain in the Village Center, a vibrant mix of the traditional “uptown” business anchors (bank, pharmacy, hardware, post office, grocery store), the community institutions (such as churches, library, village, and town halls), retail stores, restaurants and bars, professional offices and residential.

Objectives:

1. Encourage commercial development inside the Village Center.
2. Promote the efforts of business people, service organizations, government officials to engage in activities that support and promote the goals expressed in this Plan.
3. Encourage multiple and diverse uses in the village center.
4. Increase residential uses in the Village Center, including apartments on the second and third floors.
5. Facilitate efforts to update the quality of internet (wireless or broadband) communications infrastructure

Goal 2:

Maintain the economic lifestyle of a small village.

Objectives:

1. Maintain safe pedestrian access from all neighborhoods to the Village Center.
2. Encourage small to moderately sized businesses in the Village Center.
3. Market the Village Center as a desirable retail center for unique specialty shops.
4. Encourage businesses to have extended hours into the evening to accommodate the residents who work outside of the village during the day.
5. Encourage local government, service groups and businesses to participate in economic promotions such as the Empire Zone Program.

Goal 3:

Encourage the boundaries of the Village center to remain as is.

Objectives:

1. Protect the integrity of residential houses that are adjacent to the Village Center by encouraging quality design of the commercial properties.
2. Avoid the slow “creeping” of business along North and South streets by encouraging new businesses to locate in the Village Center.
3. Recognize the existing cluster of businesses on South Street as a small satellite business center.

Goal 4:

Improve parking in the Village Center without negatively impacting the pedestrian friendly environment.

Objectives:

1. Maintain safe on-street parking for shoppers and visitors.
2. Encourage the use of public parking lots located within or near the Village Center.
3. Facilitate shared parking arrangements between private businesses and the village.

iv. Transportation

Goal 1:

Promote pedestrian safety and increase or establish pedestrian orientation on all village streets and, in particular, the four main thoroughfares traversing the village.

Objectives:

1. Maintain on-street parallel parking.
2. Replace 90-degree perpendicular parking on all main streets with on-street parallel parking.
3. Encourage vehicular speed and movement appropriate to village scale.
4. Encourage people to park and walk to multiple destinations.

Goal 2:

Improve parking capacity and options in the Village Center, which would help to increase pedestrian convenience.

Objectives:

1. Maintain as much on-street parallel parking as possible, while improving access and clarity (by defining and articulating parking zones with curbs and pavement striping).
2. Explore opportunities for expanded off-street parking behind buildings, that front Main Street.
3. Design all public places to be accessible to all people regardless of ability level.

Goal 3:

Preserve and enhance the village's streetscapes.

Objectives:

1. Define clear street edges and intersections by creating consistent curb lines along all village streets.
2. Minimize the number of driveway cuts and other potential obstructions on the village streets.

3. Keep neighborhood streets narrow and tree-lined, with on street parking to discourage fast traffic.
4. Visually enclose and define the street edge through street tree plantings.
5. Maintain the residential character of all secondary streets in the village.
6. Improve pedestrian connectivity throughout the village.

v. Parks & Natural Resources

Goal 1:

Protect the natural resources in the village.

Objectives:

1. Protect and preserve village open spaces, trees, mature vegetation and the Nine Mile Creek corridor.
2. Limit new impervious surface areas in the 100-year floodplain area adjacent to Nine Mile Creek.
3. Investigate if further savings can be realized through bulk purchase of natural gas and/or electrical energy.
4. Investigate any benefits to be had from local generation of hydroelectric power utilizing Nine Mile Creek.
5. Investigate any benefits to be had from the development of alternative sources of energy.
6. Identify and remediate any threats to the air quality of the community, such as radon and diesel fumes.
7. Abate noise pollution wherever possible.
8. Create zoning standards that permanently protect environmental corridor features such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands and similar environmentally sensitive features.
9. Require site plans to identify all environmental corridor features that are located on the development site.
10. Identify natural features in and around the village that are of specific and special value to residents.
11. Use design guidelines to ensure that future developments and redevelopments do not detract from the natural beauty of the village.
12. Discourage future development on sites with slopes in excess of 12 percent

Goal 2:

Protect water quality and quantity through regulation of existing and potential sources of

contamination.

Objectives:

1. Identify and remediate any environmentally compromised sites that may be contributing to pollution of the Village's ground and/or surface water.
2. Work closely with surrounding municipalities and communities to minimize adverse effects on Village ground and surface water.
3. Meet and, where possible, exceed New York State Department of Environmental Conservation standards for control of soil erosion.
4. Adopt and enforce Erosion Control and Storm water ordinances.

Goal 3:

Encourage the protection of open spaces.

Objectives:

1. Preserve and enhance the natural features of Marcellus Park.
2. Establish the primary entry roadways to the village as "Greenway Corridors".
3. Consider the potential effect of cluster housing or performance subdivisions in new development to create open space whenever possible.

Goal 4:

Enhance the natural and built environment with appropriate landscaping to establish visual connectivity and community identity and provide environmental and scenic benefits.

Objectives:

1. Establish the Village of Marcellus as a "Green Community" in which a balance between sustainable use of resources and economic vitality is achieved. One tangible result of this objective will be pursuit of alternatives to fossil fuels as a source of energy for Village vehicles.
2. Protect and enhance unique viewsheds within the Village and work with the Town of Marcellus to protect gateways to the Village.
3. Enhance the commercial and residential edges of the Village with generous landscaping.
4. Expand the quantity and quality of trees within the Village.

vi. Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal 1:

Protect and enhance the historic character of the Village.

Objectives:

1. Establish an Architectural Review Board that will provide advice and recommendation to the Village Planning Board about architecturally and historically significant structures, corridors and neighborhoods in the Village, as defined by and identified in an updated historic resources survey.
2. Update inventory of historic places.
3. Amend site plan review to include the review of architecturally and historically significant structures, historic corridors and neighborhoods. Apply architectural standards to new construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings through site plan review.
4. Encourage property owners to restore architectural details of individual buildings.
5. Encourage the use of designs for auxiliary features such as signs, lighting, street furniture, and other amenities that are complimentary to the overall historic character of the Village.
6. Suggest a locally compatible and appropriate palette of design elements and materials for streetscape improvements and amenities such as paving, seating, lighting, etc

Goal 2:

Enhance and maintain the aesthetic appeal of the village.

Objectives:

1. Develop and implement design guidelines.
2. Encourage the continued maintenance of the green open space at the center of the Village.
3. Enhance gateway approaches to the Village and other public gathering places with regular landscaping and appropriately well designed signs.
4. Replace Village-owned diseased or dead trees with new ones.
5. Extend and improve sidewalks and street curbing in those areas where it is presently lacking.
6. Promote the use of historic light poles in the Village Center and the burying of all utilities (including lighting) underground.
7. All exterior lighting should be at a pedestrian scale with reduced nighttime glare.

vii. Community Services

Goal 1:

Maintain the existing facilities and address necessary upgrades and improvements.

Objectives:

1. Upgrade the Village water supply to meet Onondaga County Health Department standards.
2. Maintain and improve wastewater treatment facility and related infrastructure.
3. Maintain and improve sidewalks, community entrances or gateways, and other public spaces.
4. The Village will continue to pursue improvements to the storm water management system.
5. Continue to maintain and correct deficiencies in existing utilities and facilities in a timely and efficient manner.
6. Review opportunities to improve solid waste removal for the Village.
7. Consider opportunities for intergovernmental sharing of municipal services.

Goal 2:

Provide a mechanism to adequately fund public facilities serving desirable growth without placing undue burden upon Village taxpayers.

Objectives:

1. Establish an “impact fee system” to fund necessary upgrades to community infrastructure.
2. Develop a strategic financial plan for infrastructure upgrades and improvements.

Goal 3:

Develop and maintain an inventory of all Village property.

Objectives:

1. The Village should conduct an inventory of and adopt a replacement and maintenance program for its furniture, fixtures, vehicles and equipment. The Village should also adopt a 5-year capital improvement program for its facilities.
2. The Village should assess the value of and adopt a maintenance program for its buildings and grounds including the Village Hall, DPW Garage, Sewage Treatment Plant, Village Annex, Reservoir and other real estate owned by the Village.
3. The Village should also ensure that the lessee properly maintains the Village-owned Fire Department building on Slate Hill Road and that the building and grounds are annually inspected by the Village Code Enforcement Officer and/or its designee.

Goal 4:

Promote compatibility and interactive dialogue between the different public institutions (school, town, village, churches, library, museum) located within or immediately adjacent to the Village, with special consideration to associated land uses within the Village.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the Village, Town, and School District to work cooperatively to resolve issues of mutual concern.
2. Work cooperatively to improve existing cultural, educational and recreational facilities and support programs provided for local residents such as, the Historical Museum, Library, Ecumenical Food Pantry, and Youth Center.
3. Make maximum use of Federal and State grant programs to supplement funding from local sources for recreational, cultural and educational facilities and activities.
4. Maximize the use of institutional buildings as community meeting space. For example the Fire Hall, Marcellus Free Library, Church Halls, Village Hall, Town Hall.

Goal 5:

Provide opportunities for community members to gather and socialize.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the establishment of a Community Center that is open to all residents, merchants, and visitors.
2. Continue and enhance the community events program.

PART II Recommendations and Implementation Strategies

1. Introduction

The following recommendations are submitted in light of the current conditions within the village, the community's vision statement, and its goals and objectives. Specific implementation strategies and action steps necessary to achieve the recommendations are set forth in a matrix which follows each section.

A. Land Use

Land Use and Zoning

The village is divided into the following eight zoning districts:

- Residential "A"
- Residential "B"
- Residential "C"
- Residential "D"
- Residential "E"
- Village Center
- Commercial
- Open Land

For the most part the existing land uses in the village correspond with the respective zoning districts (see Figure 6). However, the village has its share of nonconforming uses, underutilized properties and undeveloped parcels. There are a few underutilized properties that warrant a detailed review by the village officials for alternative land uses to realize potential reuse opportunities. Underutilized or vacant properties in the Village Center should be addressed through efforts to stimulate economic growth. In this respect, a mixture of uses (including residential which is currently allowed) should be strongly encouraged in the Village Center District. In multistoried buildings, the first floors should house retail, restaurant, specialty shops, personal service businesses, and professional offices with retail, residential units, or professional offices on the upper floors. Over time this would establish Marcellus as a live-work village, not just a bedroom community.

Future development should reflect the village's existing land use patterns. Essentially the village consists of a compact, well-defined commercial core with a diverse mixture of residential uses radiating out to the edges (see Figure 6). Nine Mile Creek and surrounding parkland define the eastern edge with forested hillsides on the western edge. It is recommended that all undeveloped or re-developed properties be required to react to and compliment the surrounding neighborhood character. Additionally, the small, compact size of the village warrants encouraging all future commercial retail, business, and professional uses to locate in the Village Center. However, existing businesses currently located outside the Village Center

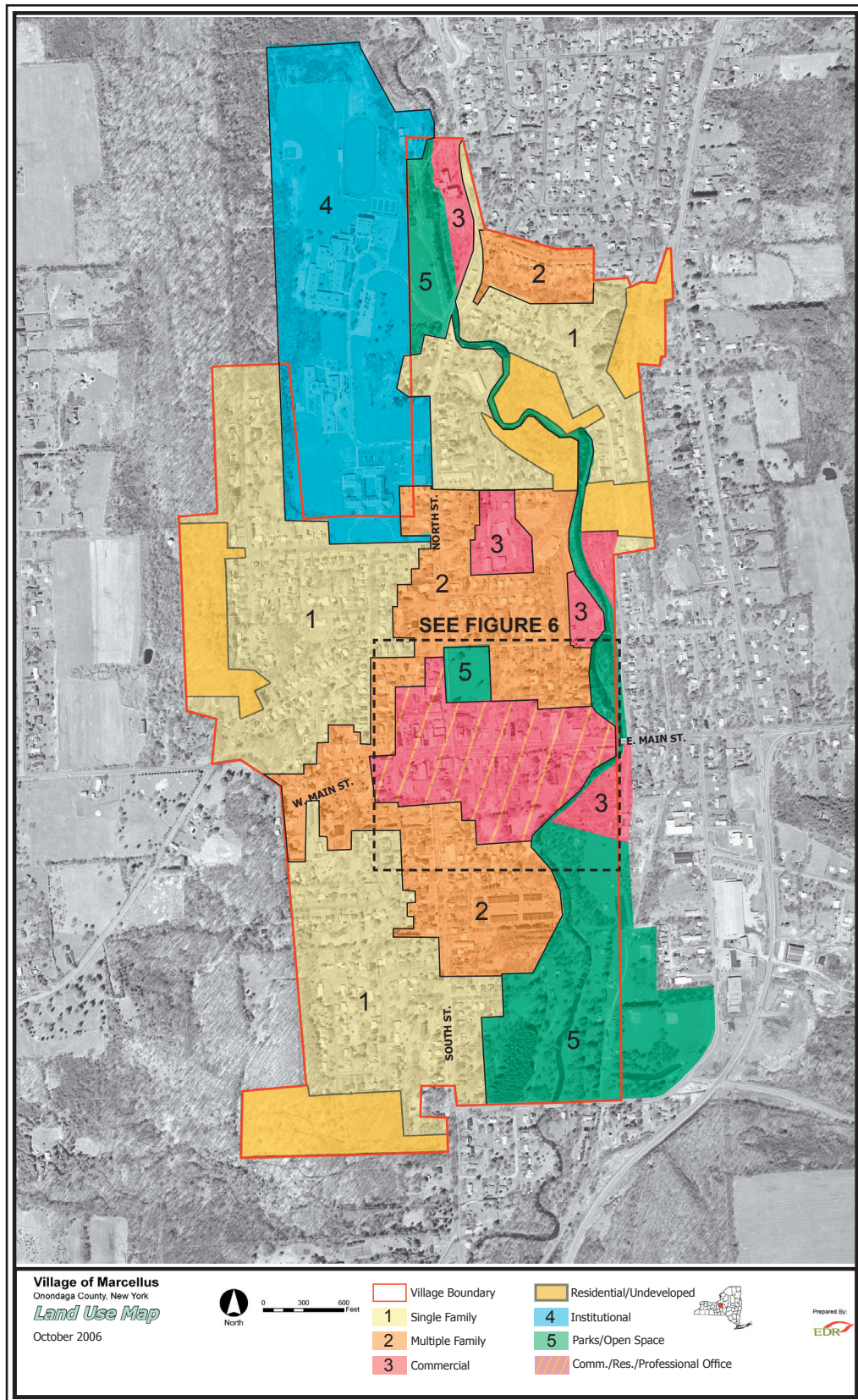


Figure 6: Village of Marcellus, Village Center District land use map.

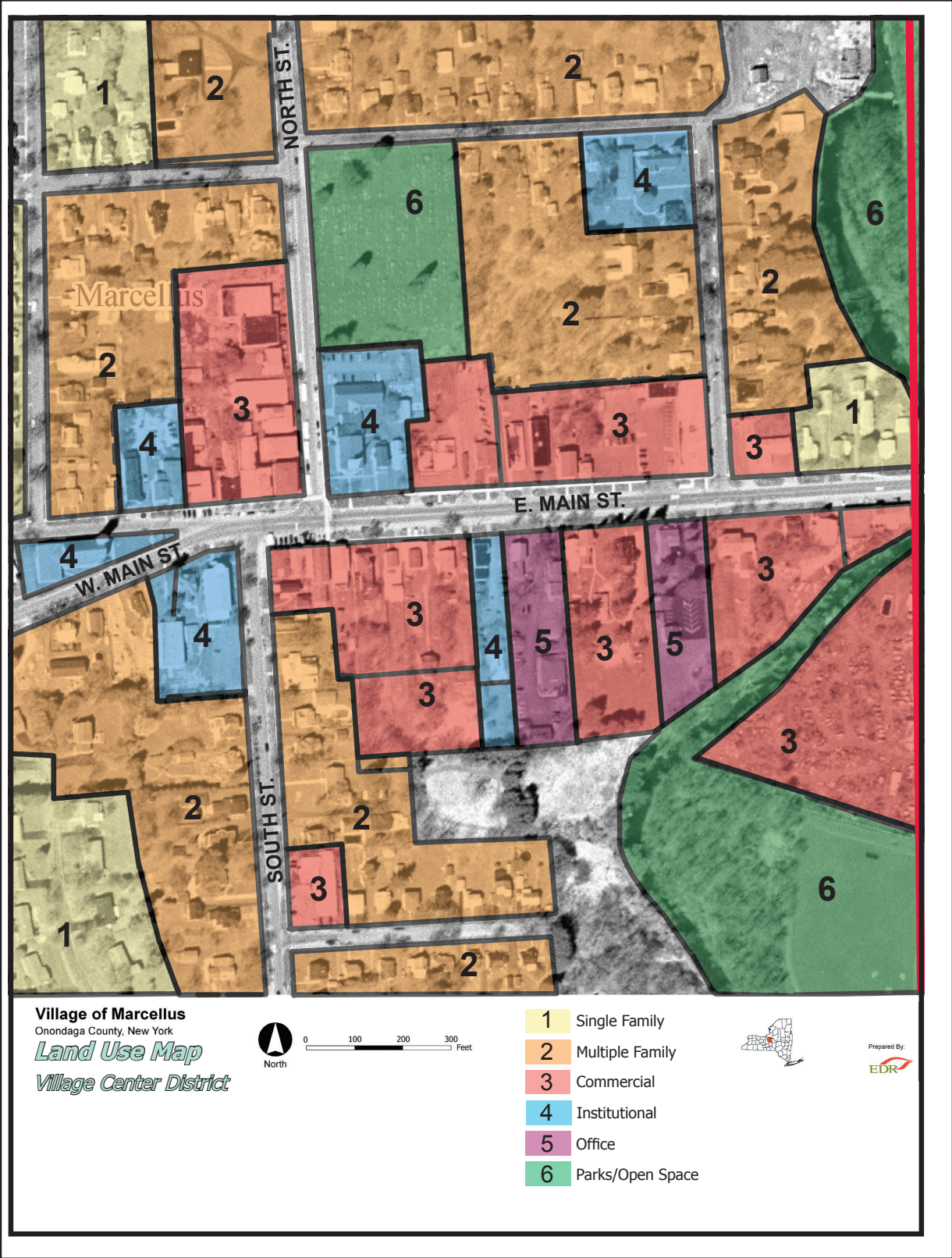


Figure 7: Village of Marcellus, Village Center District land use map.

should be allowed to continue.

There are a few parcels of undeveloped land zoned Residential “A”, which allows single-family residential use. If developed, these parcels should be used for single-family residential purposes, in a manner that conforms to the surrounding neighborhoods (see Figure 7). Additionally, there is an undeveloped parcel zoned Village Center, which is located behind the Town Hall. This parcel is effectively a “transition parcel”. It forms the southern and western edges of the village center and the northern edge of the adjacent single-family residential neighborhood with Nine Mile Creek along its eastern side (see Figure 8). Development of this land should be sensitive to the character and density of the residential neighborhood while interfacing with the commercial atmosphere in the village center. Furthermore, the strong potential for pedestrian connections to Bradley Street and Marcellus Park along Nine Mile Creek should not be overlooked.

Despite the current pattern of land uses in the village, the zoning regulations should be amended to effectively promote the smart growth policies and goals embraced by the village. For example, some sections of the code can be consolidated to eliminate redundancies and promote consistency in application while some zoning districts should be expanded upon. The many residential districts in particular should be reviewed and reconsidered in light of the current demographic trends. The village should also adopt commercial design and development standards to effectively maintain the established “Main Street” character of the Village Center while promoting economic growth. For initial guidance, the village can adopt the 1998 Village Center Design Guidelines prepared by SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. The village should also consider adopting a historic preservation ordinance that will effectively preserve the many homes and other structures with historic significance.

With respect to land use and development, one of the threats to the village lies just outside of its management and control. The village is bordered to the west and south by undeveloped property that is regulated by the Town of Marcellus. Future land use decisions involving these properties reside with the town and all decisions should be mutually beneficial to both communities to strengthen the quality of life for all village and town residents. It is recommended that the village continue its efforts to foster a cooperative working relationship with the town to effectively address these issues.

The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.



Figure 8: Village of Marcellus, Village Center District opportunities and constraints diagram.

Land Use and Zoning Regulations				
Implementation Strategies & Action Steps	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
1. Promote residential land use in the Village Center.				
Action Steps				
1. Encourage residential uses on the upper floors of existing multistoried buildings in the Village Center.			X	Planning Board
2. Strengthen the distinct character of the Village Center.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish a defined edge to the Village Center along North and South Streets.			X	Planning Board
2. Encourage new commercial businesses to locate in the Village Center.			X	Planning Board
3. Promote the Village Center as the "commercial heart" of the village.			X	Board of Trustees
3. Creatively address reuse of existing industrial/commercial sites.				
Action Steps				
1. Require new development to include structural characteristics that compliment surrounding neighborhood.			X	Planning Board
2. Encourage new uses that compliment the existing land uses in the village.	X			Planning Board
4. Review the many residential zoning districts in light of actual residential use and future need.				
Action Steps				
1. Assess the future need for residential land uses within the village.	X			Planning Board
2. Revise village zoning code to accommodate and manage future residential growth.	X			Planning Board
5. Amend village zoning code to encourage smart growth goals and policies				
Action Steps				
1. Adopt design and development standards for the Village Center. Consider establishing a form-based code overlay district for the Village Center.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
2. Amend zoning regulations to include mandatory site plan review for all new development, renovations, and alterations of any existing property within the village.	X			Planning Board
3. Adopt lighting standards that reflect pedestrian scale lighting, reduce glare and potential light pollution.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
4. Amend village subdivision regulations to coordinate with new site plan review process and include specific standards that address exterior lighting, streetscape, street connectivity, site layout building disposition, etc..	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
5. Review and revise zoning regulations regarding multi-family residential properties to require adequate property maintenance, parking, and screening of ancillary uses.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees

B. Housing

Today, the Village of Marcellus is more like a bedroom community, serving the larger metropolitan area of Syracuse, NY. There are 785 occupied housing units, but only 412 or 52.5% are owner-occupied. Renter-occupied housing units comprise almost 48% of the housing units in the Village. The increase in rental units is the result of an increase in the number of built apartments and the increase in the conversion of single-family houses into multi-family units. The consequence of this trend is the increasing density in some neighborhoods and subsequent wear and tear on the property.

Although the village does have a high occupancy rate, it is extremely important that the multi-family rental units are adequately managed through strict enforcement of code requirements to reduce the potential degradation of property resulting from the more dense use. Furthermore, to effectively manage the increase in use, the village should assess its code requirements that address ancillary uses for multi-family dwellings, such as parking, trash containment and pick up, signage, etc. to ensure adequate regulatory measures are available to the code enforcement officer. The village could also consider enacting a rental law that addresses these issues.

During the visioning workshop the community members indicated an interest in alternative housing units for senior citizens. Many senior residents would like to downsize from their existing homes to reduce house maintenance and responsibilities but remain living in the village. An alternative housing type that effectively accommodates this request is medium to small one-story homes. This type of alternative housing should be encouraged in the village in the appropriate location(s).

It is noted that over 40% of the houses in the village were built in 1939 or earlier. Due to the age of the housing stock, it is recommended that the village facilitate a housing improvement initiative. The intent is to assist private property owners in financing the necessary improvements to their homes. By enforcing New York State building codes and local zoning regulations the village will encourage absentee property owners to take pride in maintenance of their property.

It is noted that the number of renter-occupied units in the village is above the national average. Although, the village has effectively managed this higher volume of rental units, it is recommended that the socioeconomic and aesthetic impacts of additional rental units be understood when addressing future housing development.

The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Housing				
Implementation Strategies & Action Steps	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
1. Encourage the development of alternative housing options to meet current and future housing demands.				
Action Steps				
1. Assess demographics of region to determine market demand/needs for senior housing units.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
2. Support efforts to obtain funding for housing improvements.				
Action Steps				
1. Facilitate the establishment of a low-interest loan program to help finance capital improvements to low income private homes.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Seek federal and state grants for housing improvement programs.		X		Board of Trustees
3. Encourage property owners to maintain quality rental units.				Board of Trustees
Action Steps				
1. Require property owners to submit proof of certificate of occupancy upon change in tenants.	X		X	Planning Board & Code Enforcement Officer
2. Investigate the implementation of a rental law.	X		X	Planning Board & Code Enforcement Officer



Figure 9: Single-family home located on South Street.

C. Economic Development

The economy of a village includes the local commercial economy as well as the fiscal profile of the municipality. It is important to understand the health of the local commerce as well as the health of the local budget.

Historically, the Village was home to various mills (wool, paper, grist, barley) many of which were located along nine-mile creek. Eventually, this economic base faded and today the village is essentially a bedroom community within commuting distance to the greater Syracuse Metropolitan Area. Over the past two decades the business climate in the village has basically survived but not flourished. It is important that village officials work closely with the local chamber of commerce to establish a sustainable economy for the village. This necessitates supporting the existing businesses while encouraging economic growth. Some businesses have realized the economic benefits of the Onondaga County Empire Zone program and as such continue to contribute to the community's economy.

Even with the employment opportunities in the village, most employed residents commute outside of the village for work. It is noted that of the 977 employed village residents approximately 29% work in educational, health or social services industries, while 12.9%



Figure 10: *Village Center businesses.*

work in retail trade. The largest employer of village residents is the Marcellus Central School System, which is located just outside of the village (New York State Department of Labor).

The current September 2006 unemployment rate for the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area is 4.3%, a decrease of 0.1% from the previous month. Although this is lower than the 2005 September 4.6%, it is higher than the 4.2% unemployment rate

for New York State. In 2000 the village had over 96% of its labor force employed, with 2.7% unemployed (United States Census, 2000). This statistic illustrates the healthy employment status of the local community.

For economic security and sustainability the village should foster an increase in the diversity of employment options as well as other revenue sources for its local businesses. There are many challenges to achieving this, as Marcellus is not conveniently located near the New York State Thruway (a convenient high speed transportation network), and there is significant competition nearby for tourists. The village should consider tapping into the emerging trend in home-based professions (with little to no impact on neighborhoods or traffic patterns),

which have become more possible due to the technological advancements in communication. With universal use of the World Wide Web in all aspects of business and commerce, the convenience of working from home has become an attainable option for many.

One contemporary infrastructure improvement that could help stimulate economic growth for residents at all income levels is the establishment of wireless communication system throughout the Village Center. This can be realized through a public/private “technology initiative” facilitated by village officials with the focus of supporting local businesses while inviting new businesses that want fast, reliable Internet service. Wi-Fi opportunities are rapidly becoming an expectation in the business world. Having a wireless network in place coupled with manageable commuting distances to larger metropolitan areas, provides real incentives to those with an entrepreneurial mindset. Marcellus could fashion a work-live environment that is facilitated through the development of a reliable wireless communication infrastructure.

Recreational and heritage tourism is another potential economic opportunity that could be harnessed by the village. The village, surrounded by diverse natural features, is fortunate to have a heritage of local and regional importance. These are local assets with economic value. The interest in recreational activities is increasing in light of the health benefits associated with staying physically active. The combined setting of rolling hillsides with Nine Mile Creek cutting through the valley surrounded by open countryside lends itself to recreational biking, running, and walking opportunities. The village could sponsor recreational events to promote healthy lifestyles while living in Marcellus.

With respect to the health of the village’s financial structure there has been modest change in the village budget over the past several years. The village is clearly utilizing the existing revenue sources to cover expenses. However, there has been minimal additional revenue, thus leaving minimal opportunity to incur additional expense associated with repairing and improving local village infrastructure and facilities.

A review of the specific fund categories for the village budget reveals where the majority of village revenues are being spent. The village’s general fund expenses for 2004-05 accounted for 63% of the total expenses, whereas the water expenses accounted for 12% and the sewer expenses accounted for 25%. This ratio has been similar for last two budget years: general fund expenses were 61%, water fund expenses were 11%, and the sewer fund expenses were 27% of the total expenses for the village (see Table 1). It is noted that village debt load has not changed much over the years. Last year the village consolidated some of its debt structure. Additionally, the village taxes have not been raised for the last two years and fall below the tax rate for other villages of similar size in the county.

Table 1: Village of Marcellus Budget

	Appropriations	Estimated Revenue	Unexpended Fund Balance	Amount to be raised by tax
2004-05 Budget Year				
General Fund	\$843,800.00	\$527,700.00	0.0	\$316,100
Water Fund	\$158,100	\$156,400.00	\$1,700	0.0
Sewer Fund	\$347,100	\$330,200.00	\$16,900.00	0.0
Total	1,349,000	\$1,014,300.0	\$18,600.00	\$316,100
2005-06 Budget Year				
General Fund	\$840,700.00	\$591,000	\$24,100.00	\$225,600
Water Fund	\$155,000	\$155,000	0.0	0.0
Sewer Fund	\$374,800	\$370,900	\$3,900.00	0.0
Total	\$1,370,500	\$1,116,900	\$28,000.00	\$225,600.00
2006-07 Budget Years				
General Fund	\$851,100	\$579,400.00	\$11,900	\$259,800.00
Water Fund	\$164,300	\$149,500.00	\$14,800	0.0
Sewer Fund	\$377,700	\$377,400.00	\$300	0.0
Total	\$1,393,100	\$1,106,300.0	\$27,000.00	\$259,800.00

Source: Village of Marcellus, New York 2006

Only a few “new construction” building permits have been issued in the village since 2002 (see Table 2). The number of building permits for construction other than new construction steadily increased from 2001 to 2004 and then dropped off by 10 permits in 2005. This suggests that active development in the village over the last five years has been in the form of renovations and additions. This economic indicator reflects the modest growth recently experienced by the village.

Table 2: Village of Marcellus Building Permits

Village of Marcellus Building Permits		
Calendar Year	New Construction	Other
2001	4	51
2002	5	33
2003	1	50
2004	2	63
2005	2	53

(Source: Village of Marcellus)

Real growth in the local economy will require parallel efforts to maintain and improve the physical environment of the business district while promoting commercial growth. The local business community must address capital improvement issues such as commercial façade

revitalization or improved parking. To support the local business community the village should investigate the efficacy of a business improvement district for the Village Center. The goal is to establish a sustainable financial structure that supports the business community and its need to improve and maintain its physical surroundings. In 2005 the village received Main Street Grant funds, which are being used to assist local businesses in façade improvements. This type of financial support will help the village realize economic growth while strengthening the local character.

Future economic growth will require adequate parking options, local zoning regulations that support new and re-development opportunities through a clear and concise regulatory process, and a strong marketing effort that promotes the many qualities of the village. The village should prepare a master-parking plan for the village center. This plan should address shared parking opportunities and future expansion opportunities for additional parking if and when necessary. The local zoning regulations should be revised to encourage the preferred development patterns. These recommendations are discussed in the land use subsection of this Plan. Future promotional marketing efforts for the village should include Internet links to other appropriate websites.

Even though many economic opportunities await the village some action must be taken by the village representatives to realize these opportunities. The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Village of Marcellus Comprehensive Plan

Economic Development				
Implementation Strategies & Action Steps	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
1. Facilitate the improvement of communications infrastructure to establish reliable internet communication opportunities in the village.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish a communication technology committee (CTC) with the responsibility of facilitating the establishment of advanced broadband and wireless services available to all local businesses and professionals.		X		Board of Trustees
2. The CTC should establish contact with New York State Department of Technology and seek funding support for improvements to the village's communication infrastructure.	X			Board of Trustees & Communications Technology Committee
2. Facilitate the development of a business improvement district for businesses in the Village Center.				
Action Steps				
1. Collaborate with the local Marcellus and Onondaga County Chambers of Commerce to determine the size and configuration of the business improvement district.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Adopt a local law that sets forth the regulations for the business improvement district.	X			Board of Trustees
3. Encourage the development of overnight accommodations located in the Village Center.				
Action Steps				
1. Identify and market existing buildings available for adaptive reuse or underdeveloped parcels adequate for such use.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Advertise the need for a lodging business to locate in the village.		X		Board of Trustees
4. Facilitate the development of a strategic economic development plan for the village.				Board of Trustees
Action Steps				
1. Form an economic development committee (EDC) with the responsibility of developing an economic development plan.		X		Board of Trustees
2. The EDC should utilize local and regional resources such as the chamber of commerce and the Central New York Regional Planning Board when developing the Plan.		X		Economic Development Committee
3. Establish a process by which the Economic Development Plan is reviewed and revised every five years.			X	Planning Board
5. Establish standards for "infill development" and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.				
Action Steps				
1. Revise zoning code to include new development standards to be included in form-based code overlay district. (See recommendations for community character)	X			Planning Board
6. Promote the Village and encourage growth in recreational and heritage tourism industries.				
Action Steps				
1. Promote the website for the village and include links to other web sites for national, regional and local connections.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Establish a self-guided cultural/recreational walking/biking tour of the village and surrounding parks.			X	Board of Trustees & Planning Board
3. Create a brochure that includes a map of the village with highlights of historically significant buildings, markers, etc. Include a cultural treasure hunt for school-age children.		X		Board of Trustees & Planning Board
4. Place brochures promoting the village of Marcellus at strategic locations for tourists and visitors. Link the village website to the website of popular destinations.			X	Board of Trustees & Planning Board
7. Facilitate the development of a music and arts festival.		X		
Action Steps				
1. Contact artists guilds and invite participants to collaborate in the establishment of an art competition to take place during the festival.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Schedule a concert with local, regional and national musicians.		X		Board of Trustees

D. Transportation

Vehicular Traffic

The village faces typical traffic-related issues that most communities face. The village wants to “slow down” vehicular traffic, reduce the impacts generated from truck traffic, reduce traffic congestion, and promote safe pedestrian access. The village has one Main Street with a central intersection that is multi-functional. Main Street is the center of the business district and as such, pedestrian activity is encouraged. However, two arterial roadways essentially bifurcate the village. East and West Main Street or Seneca Turnpike intersects with North and South Streets. The central intersection is the center of the village and is a pivotal intersection for regional travelers en route to another destination.



Figure 11: *View of Main Street.*

Trucks, vans, and cars use Seneca Turnpike or Main Street primarily during the day. Many of these vehicles are just passing through. Considerable truck traffic is generated from a quarry and asphalt plant located northwest of the village. The village is affected by truck related impacts such as noise, air pollution and congestion.

The fact is that Marcellus’ downtown core (locally referred to as “uptown”), which is compact, is in the “bull’s eye” of the conflict between moving traffic and pedestrian

activities. From the village perspective, Main Street and South and North Streets are where pedestrian and tourists’ activities take precedence over moving traffic. It is important that future roadway improvements do not cause or allow vehicular traffic to dominate this vital multi-function corridor. The village can’t redistribute the regional truck traffic but it can monitor traffic circulation through the village. This can be achieved with various traffic calming elements such as rumble strips located near the entrance to the village on Seneca Turnpike, on street parking, and identified pedestrian crosswalks. The challenge that the village faces is to continually balance the village’s walkability with the need for and existence of vehicular traffic.

The village recently completed infrastructure and streetscape improvements along South Street. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is engaged in infrastructure improvements to North Street that include, granite curbing, storm water drainage, safe pedestrian and bicycle access lanes. This work is expected to be completed in 2009. During construction the suggested replacement of front yard parking with on street parking and streetscape improvements along portions of North Street should be implemented.

Pedestrian Traffic

The compact nature of this village makes it a walkable community. Although infrastructure improvements and additions would improve the village, pedestrian and bicycle access already exists throughout the village. This encourages parents, students, and visitors to walk or bike to the schools, downtown businesses, the library, or Marcellus Park for work, recreation, and exercise. The improvement of pedestrian connections with sidewalks, paths, and bicycle lanes, is another important element that enhances the village quality of life by providing connectivity throughout.

There are some intersections wherein pedestrian safety is jeopardized. In the Village Center this is true at the intersection of Main, North and South Streets, and at the intersection of Main and Orange Streets. Pedestrian safety can be improved, using a combination of tactics, including the use of striped crosswalks, and pedestrian yield signs alerting the motoring traffic to potential pedestrian activity. It is recommended that streetscape improvements are made whenever possible to enhance the pedestrian experience.

The other intersections that deserve sharp focus regarding pedestrian safety are the intersections directly connected to a school and used by students to walk or bike to school. These include the intersections of Second Street, First Street, and North Street at Reed Parkway and North Street at the entrances to the High School/Middle School campus.

In all respects, pedestrian movement throughout the village should take precedent over vehicular traffic, but not to its exclusion. The pedestrian connections between residential neighborhoods and the downtown core are limited due to the natural features that define the village. Many of the residential streets are not connected because of restrictive landforms such as the steep hillsides on the western edge or Nine Mile Creek on the eastern edge. Neighborhoods in which the streets are interconnected have multiple travel options through the neighborhood. Whenever possible, the existing pedestrian connectivity should be improved with connections to pedestrian trails or pathways. The pedestrian trail along Nine Mile Creek should connect with sidewalks that lead to the Village Center, Marcellus Park, and the Marcellus School Campus. This would allow residents the opportunity to walk to any location in the village without having to negotiate local car traffic for adequate walking space. All new residential subdivisions should include multiple pedestrian entry points, if possible.

Parking

The village faces parking concerns common to most villages. Its concern regards adequate, convenient parking in the central business district, which in this case is the Village Center. In the Village Center there is on-street parking, two municipal lots and multiple private lots. The concern is the convenience and adequacy of the parking supply for the downtown business district. The village owns and manages the municipal parking lots located behind the village offices on Slocombe Avenue and on the south side of West Main Street, adjacent to St. Francis Xavier Church. These municipal lots are located in the western end of the

Village Center and fall within minimal to medium walking distances to most of the businesses. However, these lots are a far distance for those businesses located at the eastern end of the Village Center. The on-street parking spaces along East Main Street, North Street, and Slocombe Avenue are most convenient to the businesses and more frequently used than the several private parking lots adjacent to or behind the specific businesses.

Perception of parking shortages may be more serious than what is actually available. The supply of parking could be adequate for the average daily demand. However, many of these parking places may be considered inconvenient and or unsafe. Communication of the number and location of spaces is critical to encourage full efficient use of what is available. Additionally, there are opportunities for shared parking arrangements. Specifically, there are a few parking lots conveniently located in the village center that could be improved and function on a shared use basis. The specific locations are indicated on the opportunities map for the Village Center (see Figure 8). With respect to the parking lots behind the buildings on the north side of Main Street, between its intersections with North Street and Orange Street, the Village has been involved in a series of on-going meetings with area merchants and civic leaders in an attempt to establish a new parking program. It is recommended that the village continue to facilitate discussions to establish a shared parking program that would benefit the entire business district.

Parking needs that may spike for special events should not dictate the total number of permanent parking spaces for the community. It is understood that parking requirements can



Figure 12: *Sketch for alternative parking scenario on Main Street.*

temporarily peak or otherwise be impacted by special events or seasonal conditions. In such a situation, a shared-use agreement between the village and local private businesses would help the village meet the temporary change in parking needs. This type of flexible approach relieves the village of the financial and managerial burden associated with extra parking lots and reduces the need to dedicate more valuable land just for parking.

Structural improvements to some on-street parking should be considered. First, a consolidation of the number of driveways on Main Street, through driveway sharing, would increase the curb space available for on-street parking. This would also improve traffic flow in general. Second, there are three locations in the village where angled parking is allowed. The first location is on the south side of Main Street just east of South Street (see Figure 8). Parking along this section of Main Street has historically been at a 90-degree angle with cars parking head first towards the sidewalk. This type of on-street parking creates safety concerns and doesn't efficiently work at this location. It is recommended that the village replace this angled parking with on-street parallel parking. This will allow the village to improve the streetscape, which in turn will improve the visual appeal of this corner (see Main Street Sketch, Figure 12). The other location where cars are allowed to pull in and park perpendicular in front of the buildings is on the west side of North Street, just north of Main Street. Again, replacing the "head in" parking with on-street parallel parking with streetscape improvements will reconnect the sidewalk for pedestrians and could enhance the overall experience of the patrons of the local merchants (see Figure 13, Sketch of North Street). The third area for angled parking is on the south side of Main Street. This should be eliminated with improvements to the streetscape.

The fact remains, as economic growth occurs so will the demand for more parking. The development of a master plan for parking in the village center would help the village maintain an objective understanding of parking supply versus demand. This will help village officials



Figure 13: *Sketch of parking scenario on North Street.*

understand when additional parking will be necessary to accommodate new growth.

Parking is also of some concern in some of the residential neighborhoods as the number of cars per household has increased over the years. The traditionally smaller residential lots can't accommodate the extra vehicles, and consequently many residents have to park either on the sidewalk or front lawn. This same condition is occurring at the multi-family houses and is not only unsightly but is causing an erosion of the sidewalk and curbs in many areas. This trend can be resolved through stricter regulations prohibiting front-yard parking for residential properties and consistent enforcement of the rules.

The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Transportation Circulation & Parking				
Implementation Strategies & Action Plan	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation				
1. Maintain traffic calming elements along Main Street, North Street and South Street.				
Action Steps				
1. Maintain on-street parking on Main Street, North Street and South Street.			X	Board of Trustees
2. Establish crosswalk striping at the intersections of Main & North Streets, Main and South Streets, Main and Orange Streets.			X	Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works
3. Score Main Street at the village borders with rumble strips to alert motorists of transition in traffic pattern and speed.		X		Board of Trustees
4. Maintain and improve vehicular movements through the "four corners" with effective signage.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Maintain and improve transportation network in the village.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish connections with East Main Street whenever possible.		X		Board of Trustees & Planning Board
2. Include review of traffic circulation impacts during mandatory site plan review.	X			Planning Board
3. Amend subdivision regulations to include multiple entry points, if possible, for new subdivisions.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
3. Support alternative modes of transportation by encouraging use of pedestrian and bicycle paths/trails.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish pedestrian connection between Bradley Street and East Main Street through Nine Mile Creek path.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Improve pedestrian connections throughout the village.		X		Board of Trustees
3. Develop Nine Mile Creek pathway connections with Park Street, Bradley Street, East Main Street, Maple Street, Chrisler Street, Paul Street and Orchard Street.		X		Board of Trustees
4. Develop a five year infrastructure improvement plan.				
Action Steps				
1. Inventory all streets, roadways, sidewalks and their existing condition.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Prioritize necessary infrastructure improvements.		X		Board of Trustees
3. Establish pavement management plan.		X		Board of Trustees
5. Monitor the completion of NYSDOT infrastructure improvements to North Street.				
Action Steps				
1. Discuss design details with NYSDOT with specific attention to pedestrian connections, streetscape including lighting and trees.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Maintain consistent communication with NYSDOT to receive periodic project updates.	X			Planning Board
Parking				
6. Develop a parking master plan for the village.				
Action Steps				
1. Itemize each parking space by property owner, frequency of use, convenience to destination establishment, and overall condition (lighting, surface condition, striping etc.).		X		Planning Board
2. Determine actual parking spaces needed by local businesses, commercial retail, restaurant and residence.		X		Planning Board
3. Develop distribution system of current spaces and project future expansion options if necessary.		X		Planning Board
4. Amend parking requirements set forth in local zoning code for commercial districts to consider shared parking program when determining minimum parking spaces for a specific use.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
5. Establish an annual monitoring system by which the village can monitor its parking needs.	X			Planning Board
7. Facilitate the establishment of shared parking agreements.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish program whereby different businesses share the same parking facility to facilitate an efficient use of parking space.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Establish parking agreements with local businesses to accommodate parking for special events.		X		Board of Trustees
3. Improve pedestrian connections between parking and destination establishments.	X			Board of Trustees
8. Amend parking standards set forth in zoning regulations for village center.				
Action Steps				
1. Review current minimum parking regulations and amend them to allow a more flexible approach to resolving parking needs.	X			Planning Board & Board of Trustees
9. Enforce parking requirements for residential units.				
Action Steps				
1. Review current minimum parking requirements for multi-family residential units.	X			Planning Board
2. Enforce minimum parking space requirement per rental unit.	X			Code Enforcement Officer

E. Parks and Natural Resources

The village must seek to balance competing demands between preservation and development in both the short and long term. The environmental fate of the Village of Marcellus is inextricably linked with that of the surrounding Town of Marcellus and, on a larger scale, with that of Onondaga County. Thus, it is important for the village to effectively manage its natural resources for the betterment of the local and regional community.

Nine Mile Creek is the predominant natural resource that has influenced the community's heritage. In the early years the village commerce was directly connected to the creek and the hydropower it provided. Although, the creek no longer directly contributes to the commerce in the area, it nevertheless has significant economic and cultural value for Marcellus. As such, the village should facilitate the protection of water that flows into Nine Mile Creek by seeking opportunities to review future development projects that may impact the portion of the Creek in its jurisdiction.

Marcellus Park, which is partially located within the village, is a significant asset to the village and all villagers have access to it, however, it is owned and maintained by the town. A community centered group, known as Friends of Marcellus Park contribute significantly to the maintenance and improvement of the park. Another nearby asset that has significant value to the community but is not owned or managed by



Figure 14: *Nine Mile Creek.*

the village is the Centers for Nature Education at Baltimore Woods. This nature preserve is located south of the village and consists of approximately 180 acres with nine trails open to the public everyday.

The village does own much of the land surrounding Nine Mile Creek and is in the process of designing and building a Creek Walk as a linear Park for use and enjoyment by walkers, joggers, and bikers. The anticipated Creek Walk will connect with some residential neighborhoods and the Village Center, completing a comprehensive pedestrian connection that accesses all major locations in the village. The Marcellus Historical Society is also planning to erect historic outlooks along the Creek Walk.

Village residents also have access to many playgrounds and athletic fields owned and maintained by the Marcellus Central School District. What initially appears to be a "Village Green" at the point where Main Street intersects with South Street is actually the front lawn to the Marcellus United Methodist Church. This lawn area provides a focal point where the

main connectors in the village meet. This area includes a Veterans Monument, erected in 1926, which serves as a focus point for community events. The maintenance of this triangular



Figure 15: *Marcellus Park and Nine Mile Creek.*

lawn area, as well as the exiting gateways and pocket parks and green space is encouraged. All pedestrian connections to parks and playgrounds should be continuously maintained and improved when possible.

In an effort to protect its natural resources, the village should protect the undeveloped land located along the western and northern edges of the village.

Steep slopes, natural springs, and old growth forest with maple, oak and beech trees define the village's western edge. The steep slopes are vulnerable to soil erosion when developed and stripped of vegetative cover. Also, the natural springs can result in flooding of existing properties downstream if not adequately addressed when new development occurs. The undeveloped "green belt" that hugs the western border acts as a natural edge between the village and town of Marcellus. Nine Mile Creek is the natural feature along the eastern edge and should be protected from future development. Adequate protection of these natural resources through conservation efforts will help the village maintain the quaint charm that has influenced the quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors.

The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Parks & Natural Resources				
Implementation Strategies & Action Steps	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
1. Establish a recreational trail along Nine Mile Creek that connects with the Village Center and Marcellus Park.				
Action Steps				
1. The Creek Walk should connect with certain sidewalks throughout the Nine Mile Creek corridor to establish the preferred route for pedestrians & bicyclists.		X		Planning Board
2. Establish a signage system for the recreational corridor.		X		Planning Board
2. Maintain the open green space in the center of Main Street.				
Action Steps				
1. The village should encourage the maintenance of this triangular space as open green space in the heart of the Village Center.		X		Board of Trustees & Planning Board
2. The Village should consider establishing a village marquee for community announcements.		X		Board of Trustees & Planning Board
3. The village should identify and protect viewsheds that have cultural, social, aesthetic or historical value.				
Action Steps				
1. Site plan review should identify standards for the identification and protection of viewsheds.	X			Board of Trustees & Planning Board
4. Monitor the quality of stormwater that runs into Nine Mile Creek.				
Action Steps				
1. Facilitate a regional approach to monitoring the quality of stormwater runoff within the Nine Mile Creek watershed.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Improve stormwater drainage throughout the village to avoid stormwater infiltration into the sewer system.		X		Board of Trustees
5. Facilitate the protection of the woodlands and steep slopes on the western edge of the village.				
Action Steps				
1. Research the opportunity to establish a conservation easement or "greenbelt" along the western edge of the village.	X			Board of Trustees & Planning Board

F. Historic and Cultural Resources

Community Character

Environmental setting, historic architecture and the essential form and layout of the built environment influence community character. The community of Marcellus is defined by its location in the valley of Nine Mile Creek, the two regional arterials that divide the village from east to west and north to south, and a built form that defines a compact urban environment with architectural highlights sprinkled throughout.

The character of the village is an important asset worth protecting and promoting. This is accomplished through the preservation of significant architecture, regulation of built form, and enhancement of civic places and the public realm with elements such as trees, sidewalks,



Figure 16: Custom streetlight and banner.

street furniture, planters, etc. The Village promotes its street identification with the use of elevated, rectangular, wooden planters, each labeled with the name of the street in bold letters. The Village Highway Department and civic-minded citizens and organizations help to maintain the planters.

A uniform street lighting system for the Village Center would help enhance the village image, as would the addition of distinct street furniture and specialty paving at major intersections. Many of the buildings in the Village Center were built over a century ago and are now prime candidates for renovation. In addition, there is a need to establish universal access to all public places in the Village Center. There is a need to create a universal design of ramps, handrails and signage as well as to eliminate a number of curb cuts in the Village Center, particularly for the older buildings on the north side of West Main Street.

For the most part along many secondary streets that define the residential neighborhoods, evenly spaced, multi-story homes address the street, with broad covered porches providing a sense of entry and arrival for the pedestrian. Homes are generally set back from the street with a small front yard between the home and the public sidewalk. In many areas, large canopy trees line the curb and provide enclosure and shade to the street. Over time, however, some of this character has been compromised and is now in danger of being lost, as the trees have been lost to disease. Because the street edges are not clearly defined by granite or concrete curbing, many of these secondary roads have steadily crept towards the public sidewalk and what had once been a grassy yard is now reduced to gravel and on street parking. This situation is a

threat to the community character and compromises pedestrian safety. Continued effort to monitor, maintain and replace village owned trees is recommended.

Maintaining the community character can be achieved by promoting a sustainable urban village that is pedestrian centered in form and function, protecting the village's natural resources, and preserving the urban form and architectural styles of historic or artistic significance. The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Marcellus has many structures, sites, and artifacts of historic and cultural significance. The protection and preservation of these resources is important to the community as a whole. The village has a very active Historical Society that provides a wealth of knowledge of the village's



Figure 17: Historic structure within the Village of Marcellus.

heritage and folklore and is currently the keeper of the local history. The Historical society museum was located for over 30 years in the village municipal building, which was the old firehouse. Through the generosity of Lewis and Alma Steadman, the property at 18 North Street was donated to the Marcellus Historical Society for its use as a home and to house its extensive collection of Marcellus history artifacts.

The development of a historic preservation plan would provide the needed focus and format for the village to guide it in its efforts. Such a plan would include a comprehensive inventory of the structures, sites and artifacts of significant historical and/or cultural value, the identification of a process by which the village can actively protect and preserve these assets, and a program by which the local historians can educate other residents, visitors and tourists of the village's many cultural and historical assets. Village officials and historians should discuss the efficacy of adopting a local preservation law and establishing a historic preservation district within the village. Although a local ordinance would definitely support efforts in preserving the local architecture of historical significance, if not tailored to fit the specific needs and conditions of the local village, it can become onerous on the owners of historic properties.

The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Historic and Cultural Resources				
Implementation Strategies & Action Steps	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
1. Develop a historic preservation plan.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish a Historic Preservation Commission.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Inventory all historic places, structures and artifacts.		X		Planning Board & Board of Trustees
3. Consider establishing a local historic preservation district.		X		Planning Board & Board of Trustees
4. Identify architectural details unique to historic architecture in Marcellus.		X		Planning Board & Board of Trustees
5. Work with Historic Preservation Commission to determine the use of a local historic preservation law.		X		Planning Board
2. Establish a tree maintenance program.				
Action Steps				
1. Establish a Tree Commission with the responsibility of developing and managing a village tree program.	X			Board of Trustees
2. Establish a tree maintenance and replacement plan.		X		Board of Trustees & Tree Commission
3. Establish design standards for "infill development" and adaptive reuse of existing buildings in Village Center District.				
Action Steps				
1. Revise zoning code to include design standards to apply to Village Center District.	X			Planning Board
4. Establish and maintain adequate and aesthetically appealing streetscape lighting.				
Action Steps				
1. Maintain the custom street lighting in the Village Center.			X	Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works
2. Continue the custom street lighting along North Street and South Street when possible.		X		Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works
3. Protect the Village from excessive light pollution with exterior lighting standards. Amend standard in the zoning regulations.	X			Planning Board
5. Enhance village streetscapes.				
Action Steps				
1. Develop streetscape improvement plan to identify and prioritize necessary streetscape improvements.		X		Planning Board & Department of Public Works
2. Maintain the Marcellus banners and historic light poles.		X		Department of Public Works
6. Establish a signage system for the village.				
Action Steps				
1. Inventory and assess all directional and informational signage within the village.		X		Planning Board & Department of Public Works
2. Design signage system that will reduce sign clutter, reduce scale of highway signs, and provide adequate direction and information.		X		Board of Trustees & Planning Board

G. Community Services

The village has the task of maintaining a water treatment facility and a wastewater treatment facility and their related infrastructure. Both facilities are in immediate need of serious attention. The village obtains its water from the Rockwell reservoir and has been mandated by the New York State Department of Health to provide filtration of this water or seek its water supply from an alternative reliable source. Unable to afford the cost of filtration, the village's objective is to purchase water from Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA). To accomplish this additional infrastructure must be constructed to complete the connection



Figure 17: *Rockwell Reservoir.*

from OCWA's system to the village. To protect the health of the village residents the switch in the municipal water source should take place as soon as possible.

All village residents and businesses are required to connect to the municipal wastewater system and this should continue to be encouraged. Also, many town residents are serviced by this system. There are two immediate concerns facing the village. First, the wastewater treatment facility is near capacity, which impacts the amount of growth the village

can sustain without investing in significant improvements to the municipal wastewater facility. The second concern is the volume of storm water infiltration into the sewer infrastructure due to cracks and breaks in the various pipes. This results in leakage of storm water into the sewer system, which can cause the treatment facility to surpass its approved discharge rate and may result in excessive overflow into Nine Mile Creek. The repairs necessary to correct this problem are many and costly. To effectively plan for future growth the village should develop an infrastructure maintenance and capital improvement plan to identify the required improvements, associated costs, and future expansion needs of the community.

The village also has the responsibility of maintaining the local roads and sidewalks, many of which are in need of repair or replacement. Repairs and replacements are made on an as needed basis. A full assessment of the existing conditions with a strategic plan for future necessary capital improvement projects would assist the village in budgeting for the future.

Although official village business occurs at the village offices, the building itself is not considered the village center where community activities are held. Village residents voiced a desire for the establishment of a "community center" where events can take place for residents of all ages. The many implementation strategies and action steps necessary to carry out the above recommendations are stated in the following matrix.

Community Service				
Implementation Strategies & Action Steps	Short Term Action 1 - 18 months	Long Term Action 2-10 years	Continuous Action	Responsible Board
1. Develop a wastewater infrastructure maintenance and capital improvement plan.				
Action Steps				
1. Inventory and analyze the conditions of the wastewater treatment facility and associated infrastructure.	X			Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works
2. Determine capacity levels in relation to commercial or residential growth for the village.	X			Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works
2. Continue with and enhance community events programs.				
Action Steps				
1. The village should consider sponsoring at least one recreational or cultural event during each season.			X	Board of Trustees
2. Establish an Events Committee with the responsibility of organizing community events.			X	Events Committee
3. Assess the needs of local youth and assess adequacy of programs available to them.				
Action Steps				
1. Parks commission should coordinate with other non village recreational program representatives to adequately assess overall recreational needs for villagers.	X			Parks Commission
2. Establish an assessment program to review local recreational needs/demands in light of available parkland and recreational fields.	X			Parks Commission
3. Parks commission should coordinate efforts with the village department of public works to ensure adequate maintenance of recreational facilities.			X	Parks Commission & DPW
4. Develop a strategic plan regarding municipal water service.				
Action Steps				
1. Assess the opportunity to obtain water from Onondaga County water Authority.		X		Board of Trustees
2. Determine financial costs associated with abandoning Rockwell Reservoir.		X		Board of Trustees
3. Establish length of time necessary to convert from independent reservoir to OCWA water.		X		Board of Trustees
5. Establish a sidewalk and street maintenance and improvement plan.				
Action Steps				
1. Inventory all sidewalks in village with condition assessment and connectivity needs.		X		Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works
2. Determine costs associated with necessary maintenance and improvements with time schedule.		X		Board of Trustees & Department of Public Works

Part III – Community Resources

1. Introduction

To best plan for future growth there should be an understanding of the existing conditions of the various attributes within the community. This section sets forth the resources that contribute to the complex fabric that defines Marcellus.

A. Land Use

The Village of Marcellus, which once served as a commercial center for much of the rural population of the Town of Marcellus, is now more like a bedroom community, serving the larger metropolitan area of Syracuse, New York. It has a population at present of less than 2,000 inhabitants and has experienced modest growth since 1950. There is limited space for residential development in the Village of Marcellus and little desire for annexation. The trend for Marcellus is to develop planning programs to structure future development of land that already exists in the Village rather than annex more land into the corporation limits.

Within the Village of Marcellus, land use is a mix of residential, commercial, recreational and institutional; the latter meant to include governmental, service, charitable and religious use. There is little if any industrial land use in the Village of Marcellus at present. Zoning regulations for the Village of Marcellus were established by local statute in 1972. Areas in the Village of Marcellus have been zoned in the following categories:

- Residential "A" (Single Family)
- Residential "B" (Two Family)
- Residential "C" (Multi Family)
- Residential "D" (Multiple Dwelling)
- Residential "E" (Senior Citizen)
- Village Center
- Commercial
- Open Land

The local municipal code also includes subdivision regulations, a sign ordinance and other land use regulations.

Most of the Village of Marcellus is already developed. Main, North and South Streets bifurcate the Village and it is along these highways that the commercial and institutional centers of the community are concentrated. There are also pockets of residential land use, including apartment dwellings. Surrounding the Village Center, on all sides, are the residential centers. They contain a variety of housing types, sizes and quality enabling the Village of Marcellus to retain a diverse and vital socio-economic mix (See Figure 6). Most of the architecture is

traditional in character and naturally complements the sense of place that Marcellus has managed to retain. Two senior housing units and Scotch Hill are located in the northeast section of the village. The Northwest and southwest sections are virtually all residential, and primarily single-family. The southeast section of the village includes some residential, some commercial, and the largest apartment complex in the village.

There are pockets of undeveloped land in the Village, but much of it will remain open land because of the topography and/or difficult road access. The availability of public water and sewer will significantly influence future growth. There is also the desire to maintain public open spaces as a part of a traditional village community. Also, there are several tracts of land that are underutilized and/or idle. They offer opportunities for development in the future.

B. Population and Housing

i. Demographic trends

According to the 2000 Federal census, the Village of Marcellus had a population of 1,826, slightly less than the 1990 population. There has been little significant growth in population since 1970 and there is little room for new housing developments in the Village unless more land is annexed.

Table 3: Village of Marcellus population

Source: United States Census Bureau; Office of the New York State Census and the

Year	Population	Year	Population	Year	Population
1855	380	1898	600	1940	1112
1860	----	1900	589	1950	1382
1865	418	1905	671	1960	1697
1870	428	1910	917	1970	2017
1875	439	1915	991	1980	1870
1880	489	1920	989	1990	1840
1890	563	1925	1110	2000	1826
1892	595	1930	1083	2006	---

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According to the same 2000 census, the population is overwhelmingly white (99%), females (53%) outnumber males (47%) and the median age is 36.7 years. Those over the age of 65 comprise 16% of the population while those under the age of 18 make up 27% of the population. Approximately 91.4% of the adult residents in Marcellus have attained a high school education or higher and 35.4% have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 24.4% of adults in the United States.

ii. Housing trends

The housing options in Marcellus vary from single-family detached units to multi-unit apartment complexes. Interestingly, Marcellus has an above average percentage of rental units compared to owner-occupied units. Of the total number of occupied housing units, 52.5% are owner-occupied and 47.5% are renter-occupied, with 6.3% vacant. Even though the percentage of rental units is higher than average, according to the 2000 census, the village's occupancy rate is also higher than the national average with 93.7% of the total housing units occupied, when the national average is only 91%.

The majority of the existing housing stock is over sixty years old. Approximately 42% of the houses were built in 1939 or before. Less than 10% of the houses were built after 1979. This reflects the age of the historic character that visually dominates the residential neighborhoods. Interestingly, the majority of undeveloped land in the village is zoned for residential use (see Figure 6).

Over the last 10 years the majority of single-family detached housing development has occurred immediately outside of the village in the Town of Marcellus. The more recent residential construction in the village has been to accommodate the senior population, in the form of senior living facilities.

B. Economic Development

The Village of Marcellus was once a town whose mills (wool, paper, grist, barley, etc.) employed many people who walked to work and lived in the general vicinity. "Advancing technology and structural changes in our regional and national economy have caused most of Marcellus' milling and manufacturing to cease over the past 50 years" (Heffernan). Today, the Village is largely a bedroom community and the largest employer in the area is the local school district, most of whose employees do not live in the Village of Marcellus. People who live in Marcellus generally do not work in Marcellus but they use the main roads as an egress to jobs in Syracuse and other communities. Those who work in the Village do so in local shops and offices and most travel into the Village using the main roads and park their vehicles in the Village for the day.

Within the Village itself, the largest employers are concentrated in the Village Center. Many of these businesses are not retail, as we know the term, but service industries (funeral homes, financial institutions, insurance and real estate offices - sometimes referred to as FIRE) that generate little retail traffic. The employees of these service industries, however, patronize the local shops and businesses at various times of the day providing a boost to the local economy.

Some economic trends that have occurred over the last ten years have caused the local economy to adapt and offer some hope for strengthening the economy of the Village. The traditional business anchors of the Village Center are still in evidence (bank, pharmacy, hardware, post office, grocery store), as are the public buildings (churches, library, village

and town halls), which also serve as “uptown” anchors. However, there has also been a trend in recent years towards specialty shops, prepared food stores, and personal services in the Village. These new stores need to be encouraged and new ones must be attracted if the economy of the Village is to be sustained.

An emerging trend for an improved quality of life has attracted some business owners and employees to the lifestyle of a small village. Widespread use of the internet for communication and on-line buying has promoted this capability. A related trend is for people, both self-employed and employees, to work at home – in an environment that is satisfying.

There has also been a growth in child-care services in the Village, as more and more parents have found it necessary or desirable to work outside the home. This has caused nursery schools to expand their services (pre-school and after-school), and a growth in the number of day-care facilities in the Village – almost a cottage industry in recent years. The nearness of the Village to the school campus has been a factor in this growth as well as the fact that there has been a growth in the number of young families that have moved into the area in recent years.

C. Transportation

The Village of Marcellus once a town whose mills employed a great many people who lived in the village. Over the years the direction of the commuting employee shifted and today, the Village is largely a bedroom community with the majority of residents commuting elsewhere for employment. The 2000 Census data indicates that 93% of the 956 of the employed citizens who reside in the Village commute to jobs outside of the Village. Those who do work in the Village, do so in local shops and offices and travel into the Village using the main roads. Most of these businesses are service industries, such as funeral homes, insurance and real estate offices, etc.

The Year 2000 census data also reveals that 89% of the 956 Village residents who work drove to their jobs alone (775) or carpooled (82). The next most common means of commutation is walking at 8% (75 people). Public transportation users and those who work at home account for the balance of workers at approximately 3%. Public transportation is provided by the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro), which operates a bus route that connects residents with the City of Syracuse to the east and Skaneateles and Auburn to the west. This, the local transportation network is frequently used by local drivers.

This fact is juxtaposed against one of the most important factors contributing to the quality of life enjoyed by village residents; that is the walkability of the village. Marcellus is a community where one can meet most daily needs on foot and where walking is an interesting, enjoyable and generally safe activity. While the automobile dominates as the transportation mode of choice for many people, it is not an absolute necessity for those who live in the Village. Much of the Village’s rare appeal is due to the ability of people to walk to work, shopping, recreational facilities, doctors’ appointments and consequently meet each other informally on

the street. This quality is one that will not be compromised and one that the Village will seek to enhance at every opportunity.

This Plan endorses the promotion of the existing pedestrian friendly environment, and the preservation of this small village's heritage that is slowly eroding from much of the American landscape. Nevertheless, in Marcellus the transportation facilities are shared by more than one mode (i.e., cars, bicycles, walkers), and even though it is important to improve facilities for all modes, it is recommended that the village strive to ensure pedestrian activities will never be severely overshadowed by vehicular movement.

D. Parks and Natural Resources

The village, nestled in the valley, is bordered by rolling hills to the east and west with Nine Mile Creek flowing south along its eastern border. The hills to the west are forested with hardwoods. One of the village's most prominent natural resource is its natural setting.

Glacial action was the dominant force that shaped Marcellus' landforms and geology. Steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock and low bearing capacity are all constraints to development in the Town and Village of Marcellus. Potential erosion on steep slopes and saturated soils in floodplain areas has constrained development in the area. Marcellus has always faced difficult decisions when a natural resource with development potential is also a limited resource, which should be conserved.

Much of Marcellus is covered with till which is made up of a mixture of sand, silt, clay, and stones that is rarely stratified. The thickness of till varies. The location of till and proximity to bedrock should influence development decisions, as extension of water and sewer lines can be prohibitively costly. Shallow depth to bedrock can cause private septic sewage systems to contaminate groundwater and Nine Mile Creek. Glacial marine silts and clays have relatively low bearing capacity and cannot support heavy structures. Construction on silts and clays on steep slopes may be unstable and silts and clays have poor drainage.

The relatively high elevations surrounding and, in places, within the Village of Marcellus place constraints on development. Slope gradient influences the retention and movement of water, potential for slippage and accelerated erosion. On steep slopes, preparing construction sites, building roads, and installing underground utilities all require special design considerations, more grading and filling, and better erosion control. Storm water management becomes more difficult and road maintenance and snow removal costs rise.

All groundwater originating on the hills to the east and west of the Village of Marcellus ultimately flows to Nine Mile Creek. Since Village homeowners are down gradient of most groundwater contamination sources (landfills, agriculture, gas stations and other petroleum storage facilities, industrial facilities, individual septic systems), they face the greatest risk from groundwater contamination. The village should actively monitor the quality of groundwater that flows into Nine Mile Creek, as it is the primary water resource and recreation resource in the village.

Nine Mile Creek flows north through Marcellus Park. This is the only park in the village and is owned and maintained by the Town of Marcellus. Other playgrounds and athletic fields in or near the village belong to the Marcellus school district. These also are available to village residents for use and enjoyment. As the village does not have parkland under its jurisdiction, it does not operate a recreational program. All villagers, as taxpayers of the town and village, are eligible to participate in the recreational programs run by the Town of Marcellus.

E. Historic and Cultural Resources

The Village of Marcellus was founded over 150 years ago and has experienced over a century of environmental and cultural impacts. Many environmentalists and historians have described the natural features that shaped Marcellus. In essence, the abundance of natural resources in the area attracted the first settlers. In particular are the following descriptions:

The surface of the Town of Marcellus, of which the Village of Marcellus is a part, “ . . . is a rolling upland, broken by the deep valley of the Nine Mile Creek, which extends north and south through the center. The declivities bordering upon this creek are steep, and rise from two to five hundred feet in altitude. The falls, of which there are several, furnish a large amount of waterpower. Lime and gypsum are abundant. The soil is generally a deep, black loam, formed by the decomposition of the Marcellus shale, intermixed to some extent with clay, and is among the richest and most valuable for agricultural purposes. Nine Mile Creek is the principal and only stream of significance in the town. It begins at the outlet of Otisco Lake, and passes through the town from south to north. It received its name from the fact that it is nine miles from Onondaga Hollow which at the time the first settlements were made at the Creek was the nearest settlement on the east” (Clayton 283). “The early settlers found the territory . . . a dense wilderness, with heavy timber, and very little undergrowth on the uplands, where they first hewed out their habitations. In the valley of the creek, however, were hemlock forests, with underbrush, wild grape vines, etc., rendering it difficult to clear the land for cultivation . . . when once cleared, the soil . . . proved to be among the richest and most valuable for agricultural purposes in Central New York” (Bruce 633).

These physical characteristics attracted more and more settlers, farmers, to the area and the waterpower supplied by Nine Mile Creek, “affording along its course numerous valuable mill privileges . . . ” (Bruce 633), enabled the community to develop. Across the valley of the Nine Mile were a number of established Indian trails, linking Indian villages with major waterways, as well as hunting and fishing grounds and settlements . . . Indian trails often followed earlier trails created by deer and other animals. They typically followed easy grades, wound around hills and other obstructions, and forged rivers and streams at shallow crossings. When possible, these trails followed streams and rivers, which provided escape routes and drinking water. In open areas, the trails offered views of the surrounding areas so that animals

could see if enemies were near. Indians followed these animal routes for the same reasons, and . . . settlers would soon do the same” (Wisconsin Historical Society).

The pioneers who first came to Marcellus, and those who followed them, generally found their way into this region by the great central trail of the Iroquois, which crossed the valley of the Nine Mile on its way west. They widened the trail into a road suitable for ox carts and wagons and it eventually became known as the Great Genesee Road, later known as Seneca Turnpike, or Main Street in Marcellus. As previously described, over the years the various residential neighborhoods and the downtown Village Center were formed by cultural influences. It is these historic and cultural resources that warrant preservation and protection, such as the, Village Hall, Town Hall, library, St. John’s Episcopal Church, St. Francis Xavier Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church and other structures with historic significance.

F. Community Services

The Village of Marcellus either provides or is involved in the provision of many public services to the residents of the community. Those services include public water, public sewer, electrical and natural gas, police services, fire protection, education and waste disposal. A variety of means are employed to administer services. Some services are provided directly through the Village Public Works Department. The Village Police Department is staffed by paid professionals, with one full-time police officer, supplemented by 11 part-time officers. The Village contracts, on an annual basis, for building code and zoning enforcement through Life Safety Consultants Co., which is based in Cortland, N.Y. A building inspector is on site in the Village once a week.

The Village of Marcellus is part of the Town of Marcellus Fire District. Marcellus Area Volunteer Emergency Service (MAVES) was incorporated under the Village of Marcellus in 1996. The organization has since become independent, holding its first independent elections in 2004. Ambulance and medical services are provided by both volunteers and paid emergency medical technicians. MAVES is made up of a combination of paid and volunteer staff consisting of 3 full-time and 5 part-time paramedics, with a total of 23 volunteers. The emergency services provided are basic life support and transportation in an ambulance and advanced life support in the medicar. MAVES serves the town and village of Marcellus and provides mutual aid service to Howlett Hill, Navarino, Otisco, Shepards Settlement, and Skaneateles. The nearest hospital is Community General Hospital, about ten miles east. Public transportation is provided by CENTRO, the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority.

The Village Public Works Department, is responsible for maintaining village roads and sidewalks, including snow plowing; fleet repair and management, maintenance of signs, various buildings and other village-owned assets. The village DPW also coordinates infrastructure repair with other utilities. Solid waste in the village is collected under a municipal

contract with a private contractor.

Located in an expanded historic house in the center of the Village of Marcellus, the Marcellus Free Library services a population of close to 7,000 and circulates approximately 55,000 items per year. The library was founded in 1913 with a small donation of 215 books and has grown to a collection of 30,000 items. The Marcellus Library is accessible to residents of the Town, Village, and County, is governed by an independent Board and is financially supported, in part, by the village. The Marcellus Library is part of the Onondaga County Public Library System and receives support from the Village and the Town of Marcellus as well as the Marcellus Central School District.

The Marcellus Central School District covers the Village of Marcellus, as well as the Town of Marcellus and parts of the Towns of Skaneateles, Camillus, Onondaga, Otisco and Spafford. The current school enrollment is approximately 2200 students and it is projected to remain at that student population for a while. The School District contracts with the Village for public water and sewer as none of the school buildings (elementary, middle, high) lie within the Village limits. Additionally, the Village provides a resource officer at the high school, and a crossing guard for school children at school crosswalks.

Village Water

The entire Village of Marcellus is currently served by a Village-owned and operated water system. The village has been obtaining its water since 1908 from a natural spring source, Rockwell Springs. The Rockwell Reservoir holding capacity is approximately 1.2 million gallons of water. In 1949-50 the village developed a 250,000-gallon storage tank above Highland Drive west of the village to increase the overall storage capacity for the village. Since the 1950's the village has had access to Onondaga County Water Authority's (OCWA) booster pump station on North Street as a supplemental source of water when necessary. The village's use of the Marcellus booster pump station has regularly increased over the years.

According to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) the water supply at Rockwell Springs is "ground water under the influence of surface water". Consequently, in 2003, NYSDOH and Onondaga County Health Department (OCHD) directed the Village of Marcellus to implement a plan to filter the water it receives from the Rockwell Reservoir, or to implement an alternate plan to protect the community from the threat of water-borne diseases. Unable to afford the cost of filtration, the Village has been forced to search for an alternative procedure. Following an engineering study, the Village Board of Trustees has adopted an objective to abandon Rockwell Reservoir and to purchase water from OCWA. Purchasing water from OCWA is a plan acceptable to the NYSDOH as OCWA water is filtered. As this Comprehensive Plan is being formulated, the cost to implement this solution is unknown. However, it is known that OCWA water contains less minerals and sediment than water derived from the Rockwell Reservoir, therefore, any water rate increase will be partially offset as residents will no longer need costly water filtration systems and hot water heaters, water

softeners and clothes will last longer.

Village Sewer

Current law in the Village of Marcellus requires that all residents and businesses be tied into the Village sewage treatment facility. The Village shall work with residences and/or businesses to ensure connection. The Marcellus School District is serviced by the village wastewater treatment system. Current capacity limitations of the Village's wastewater treatment plant impose constraints on new development in the Village and contiguous areas in the Town of Marcellus. The wastewater facility has the capacity to discharge water at 304,000 MGD (80% of 380,000 MGD). It currently discharges at a monthly average of 226,000 MGD. In the near future, these constraints could adversely affect further expansion of the Marcellus school campus should population growth continue and/or accelerate in municipalities that contribute students to the system.

Sources

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Funding Sources

The following is a list of potential federal, state and local funding sources with identification of various programs.

- New York State and U.S. Departments of Transportation – The following Federal and State Transportation Funding Programs provide grants to local governments for projects involving various modes of transportation (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycles etc).
 - Surface Transportation Program (STP);
 - Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP);
 - CHIPS and Multi-Modal monies;
 - Highway Bridge Repair and Replacement (HBRR);
 - Railroad/Highway At-Grade Crossing Program;
 - Recreation Trails Program (RTP);
- Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) – The SMTC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Syracuse metropolitan region. It will facilitate federally funded transportation projects.
 - Federal Surface Transportation Act (TEA-21, ISTEA) – Multi-modal transportation funds.
 - Federal Aid Highway Program – Bicycle and pedestrian projects.
 - Storm water and Flooding – Storm water, wastewater, and floodplain management efforts. US Army Corps of Engineers, the US Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service, and New York State Department of Conservation are points of contact.
- Empire Opportunity Fund and Main Street New York Programs to Support Major Job-Creating Projects - The Empire Opportunity Fund and Main Street New York programs will support major economic development projects throughout the State. Empire Opportunity Fund projects must fall within three designated categories, which include the development of industrial facilities, business parks and incubators; downtown and rural retail and commercial projects; and enhancements to tourism destinations.
- Main Street New York Downtown Development Initiative Program - Main Street Program projects include: renovation and rehabilitation of commercial or mixed use buildings or demolition of abandoned or substandard buildings or structures; main street restoration including sidewalk construction; tourist development projects; preservation of historic structures; parking enhancements; street lighting; municipal park improvements including the construction of public restrooms and beautification projects including the planting of trees and shrubs.
- The New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond –

- Safe Drinking Water Fund (Title 2),
- The clean Water Fund (Title 3), and the
- Municipal Environmental Restoration Project Fund (Title 5).
- The New York State Environmental Protection Fund – Created in 1993, the New York State Environmental Protection Fund provides mechanisms for open space conservation and land acquisition.
- The New York State Department of State (NYSDOS), Division of Coastal Resources
 - Quality Communities Grant Program
 - Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
 - **Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program** is designed to assist communities foster redevelopment and return dormant and blighted land into productive and catalytic areas while restoring environmental quality. This program provides municipalities and community-based organizations with resources to address local brownfields providing area-wide brownfield redevelopment planning, access to expert environmental and economic analysis, and environmental site assessment for strategic redevelopment parcels.
- New York State Council on The Arts - The Folk Arts Program is devoted to perpetuating New York State's living cultural heritage of folk arts. Its primary purpose is to support traditions practiced within communities. It also supports programming that enables general audiences to experience traditional arts from New York State as well as cultures elsewhere in the world
- United States Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration:
 - Economic Development Assistance Program,
 - National Technical Assistance Program;
 - Research and Evaluation Program,
 - National Technical Assistance Program.
- Bikes Belong Coalition - The Bikes Belong Coalition welcomes grant applications from organizations and agencies within the United States that are committed to putting more people on bicycles more often.