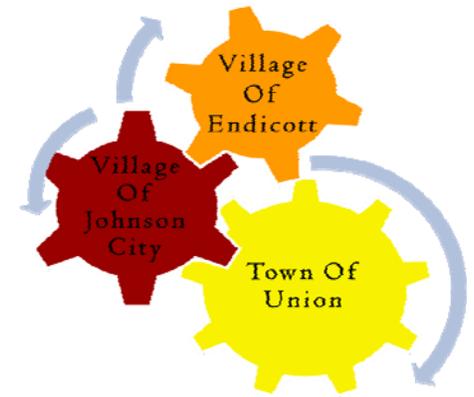


Technical Background Report



Existing Land Use

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Existing Land Use

Introduction

The purpose of the existing land use section is to provide an analysis of how land is currently being used in the Town of Union. This information will be used extensively in the later stages of the planning process, when recommendations are made to suggest how the land should be used in the future.

The existing land use information will also be valuable to other people involved in the development of the town. Transportation planners can utilize this data to determine the location of major traffic generators, market analysts can use the information to detect areas of high land value and to estimate markets for commercial and industrial sites; and the town can make extensive use of the existing land use maps in processing and analyzing zoning changes and subdivision proposals. Since it is imperative that an up to date and accurate record of land use be available for the previous reasons noted, it is important that this information be maintained and continually updated.

A detailed analysis of the acreage and present patterns of land use reveals the keys to past development trends and practices, many of which have led to today's land use problems. It is important that elected town and village officials, who have the ultimate responsibility for land use policies including zoning, and the general public are cognizant of these problems and their causes, so that similar problems can be avoided when considering future regulatory amendments.

Methodology

The main objective of this study is focused on the land, its characteristics, and the circumstances under which its original shape was modified. The size and number of parcels, the way in which they are used, and their geographic relationship within the community and the town/villages reflect the economic and social conditions of the area. Such patterns reflect a community's past and provide direction for its future.



The basic land use data discussed in this report was obtained from the Town of Union 2006 Real Property System (RPS) database. The initial land use information was obtained from the town's assessment records. The assessment records contain data on the use of land according to the state land use codes. Each parcel of land was classified and divided according to use and identified according to a color code.

The existing land use data is presented on a map and a table as well as in the text in order to facilitate the analysis of the existing conditions and to present the material in a concise manner. The existing land use map is available for inspection in the Town of Union Planning Department office. In preparing the existing land use survey the following land use classifications were used:

1. Residential Land

- a. *Single-family Residential* - Defined as single-family housing units, ranging from low density development in the northern portion of the town to the more intensive small lot development in Endwell, West Corners, and the urbanized portions of the villages.
- b. *Two-family Residential* - Composed mainly of two-family structures, both twins and duplexes. Some units included in this category were originally built as single-family units but were subsequently converted to two-family uses. This practice was fairly common, especially in the Village of Endicott.
- c. *Multi-family Residential* -- Composed mainly of apartment buildings, town houses, group housing, and single-family units converted into three or more dwelling units.
- d. *Mobile Homes and Mobile Home Park* - Composed of trailers and mobile homes on individual lots and Mobile Home parks.

2. Commercial Land

- a. *Retail/Office* - Defined as land which is occupied by retail and service establishments as well as professional offices. Small business concerns and professional services offered from a residential unit (e.g. home occupations) are shown as residential uses rather than commercial uses.
- b. *Highway Oriented* - Defined as retail establishments dependent upon a high volume of vehicular traffic and serving the needs of "quick stop" shopping and automobile servicing. Included in this category are: automobile sales and service facilities, fast food drive-through restaurants, "sit-down" restaurants, commercial recreation facilities, and hotels/motels.



c. *Shopping Center* – Typically represents a variety of stores, developed as a single planned unit, typically having large parking areas, and usually being under single ownership.

3. Industrial Land

Included in this category are both light and heavy industrial land, although there is actually very little of the latter in the town and villages as a percentage of total land use. This category includes land and buildings which are occupied by wholesaling, manufacturing, warehousing, processing, and research establishments.

4. Institutional Land

a. Institutional land use forms have been defined to include the following types of activities: educational (at all levels), governmental centers, services (such as post offices), firehouses, religious, and special uses (such as cemeteries).

5. Recreational Land

a. Included in this category are: municipal parks, playgrounds, playfields, private and semi-private recreation areas and centers, and flood control and other water related projects. School recreational facilities are included in the Institutional Land.

6. Utilities Land

a. Included in this category are land and buildings primarily devoted to the supplying of services such as: natural gas, electricity, sewage treatment, etc. Electrical rights-of-way have also been included where the acreage was considered to be substantial.

7. Agricultural/Vacant Land

a. Land that is not used for one of the previously described purposes has been depicted as Agricultural/Vacant. Very little land is actively in an agricultural use; therefore the category is predominantly vacant land. Railroad rights-of-way, highway and street rights-of-way, transmission line rights-of-way (small) and bodies of water were not separated from the Agricultural/Vacant Land.



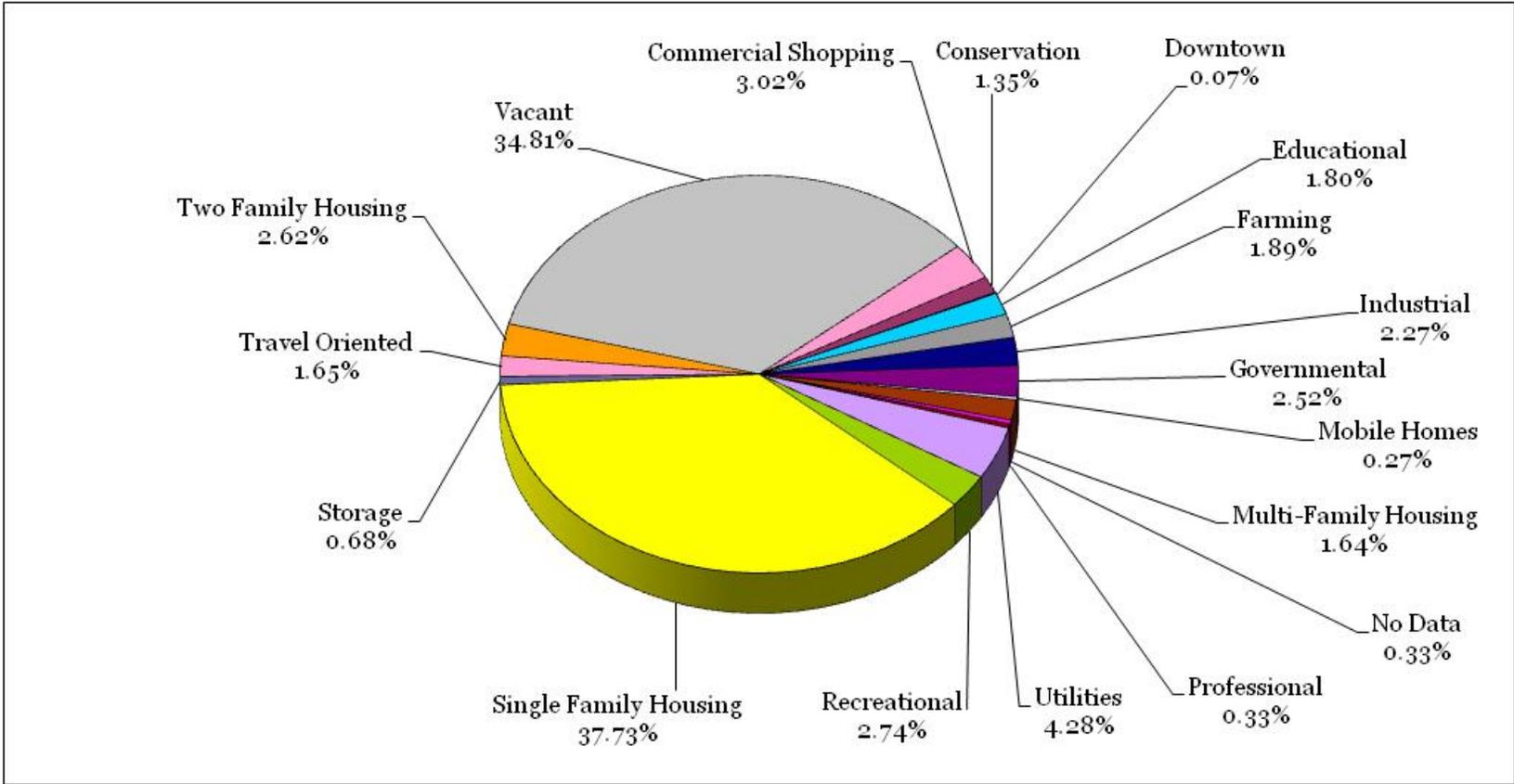
Table 1 ~ Existing Land Uses, By Acreage

Part-Town	Johnson City	Endicott	Total Town	ELU Category
369.37	185.96	66.02	621.36	Commercial Shopping
162.11	27.60	88.54	278.24	Conservation
0.32	4.71	10.34	15.36	Downtown
163.85	154.99	52.86	371.70	Educational
388.50	-	-	388.50	Farming
342.59	43.23	81.05	466.87	Industrial
205.39	256.46	57.74	519.59	Governmental
53.96	0.35	0.28	54.59	Mobile Homes
152.27	83.67	101.59	337.53	Multi-Family Housing
49.78	13.40	4.36	67.54	No Data
17.93	33.31	16.41	67.65	Professional
481.78	51.49	348.78	882.04	Utilities
414.83	17.73	132.35	564.91	Recreational
6,602.25	783.41	385.12	7,770.78	Single Family Housing
79.38	47.94	13.60	140.93	Storage
216.42	34.09	88.59	339.10	Travel Oriented
331.43	90.82	116.56	538.81	Two Family Housing
6,501.54	516.06	151.17	7,168.77	Vacant
16,533.69	2,345.21	1,715.37	20,594.27	TOTALS

Source: Town of Union Real Property Service (RPS) Database, 2006

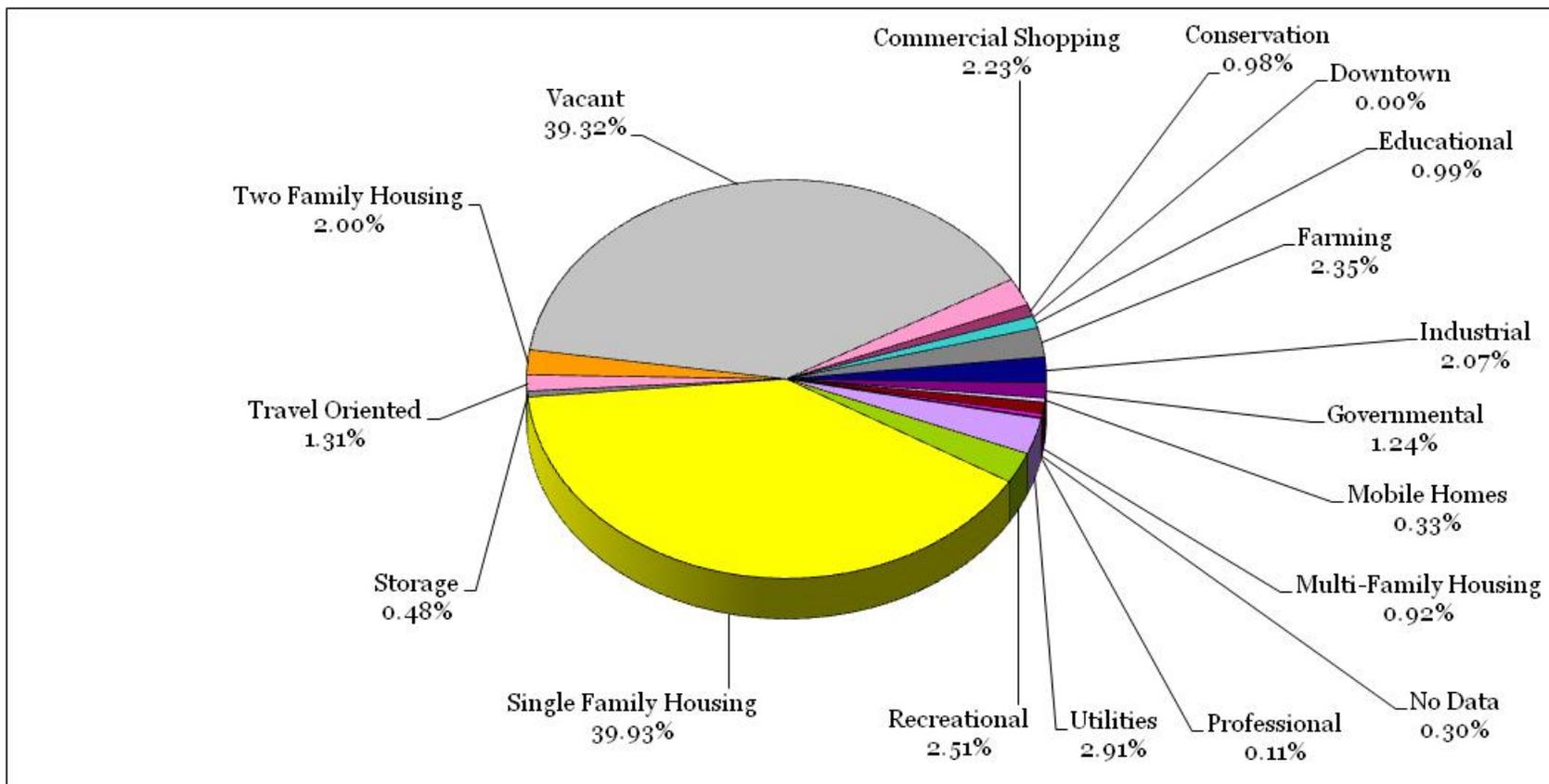


Town of Union, Including Villages, Existing Land Use 2006 RPS



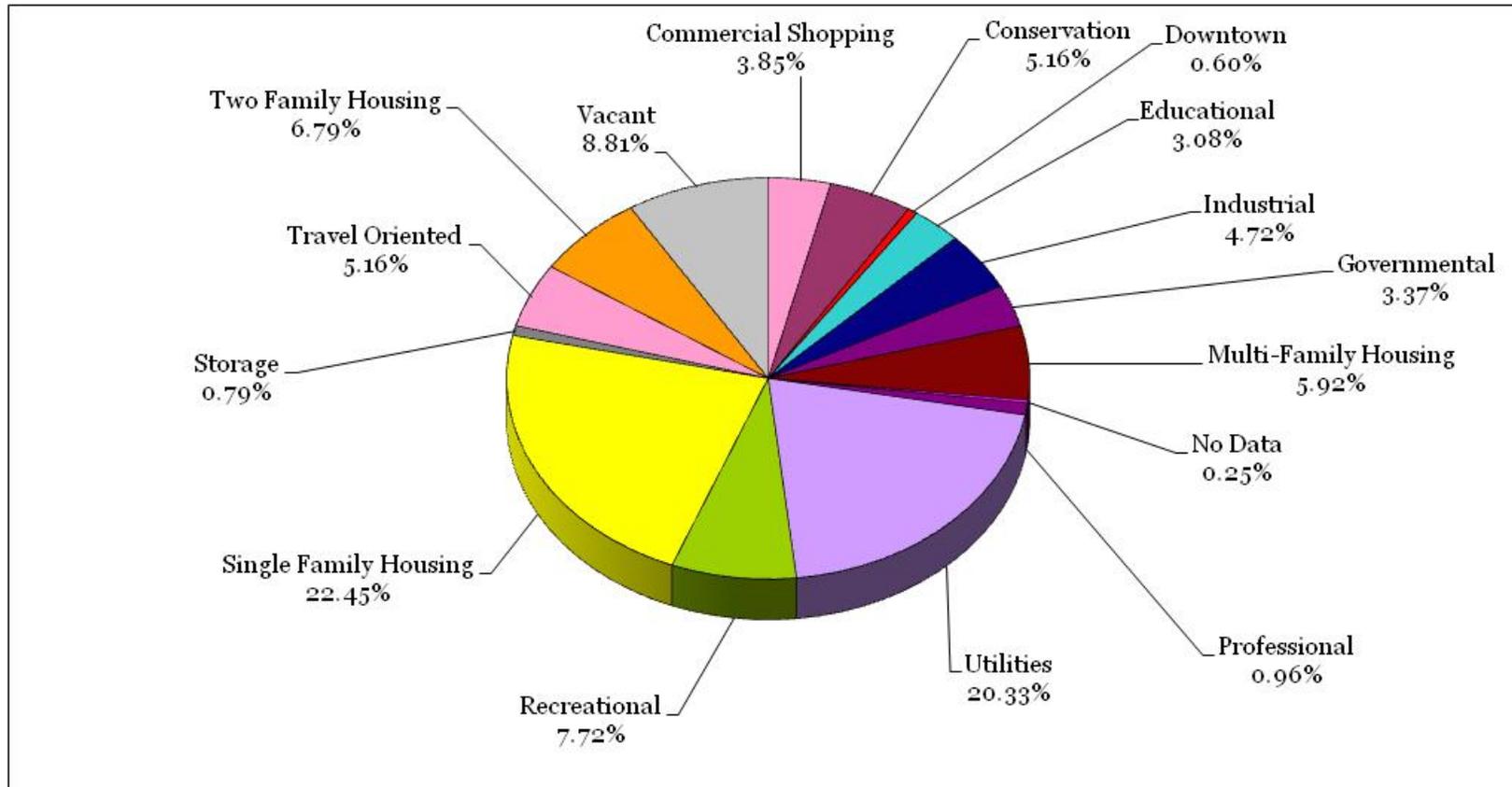


Part-Town Area 2006 Land Use



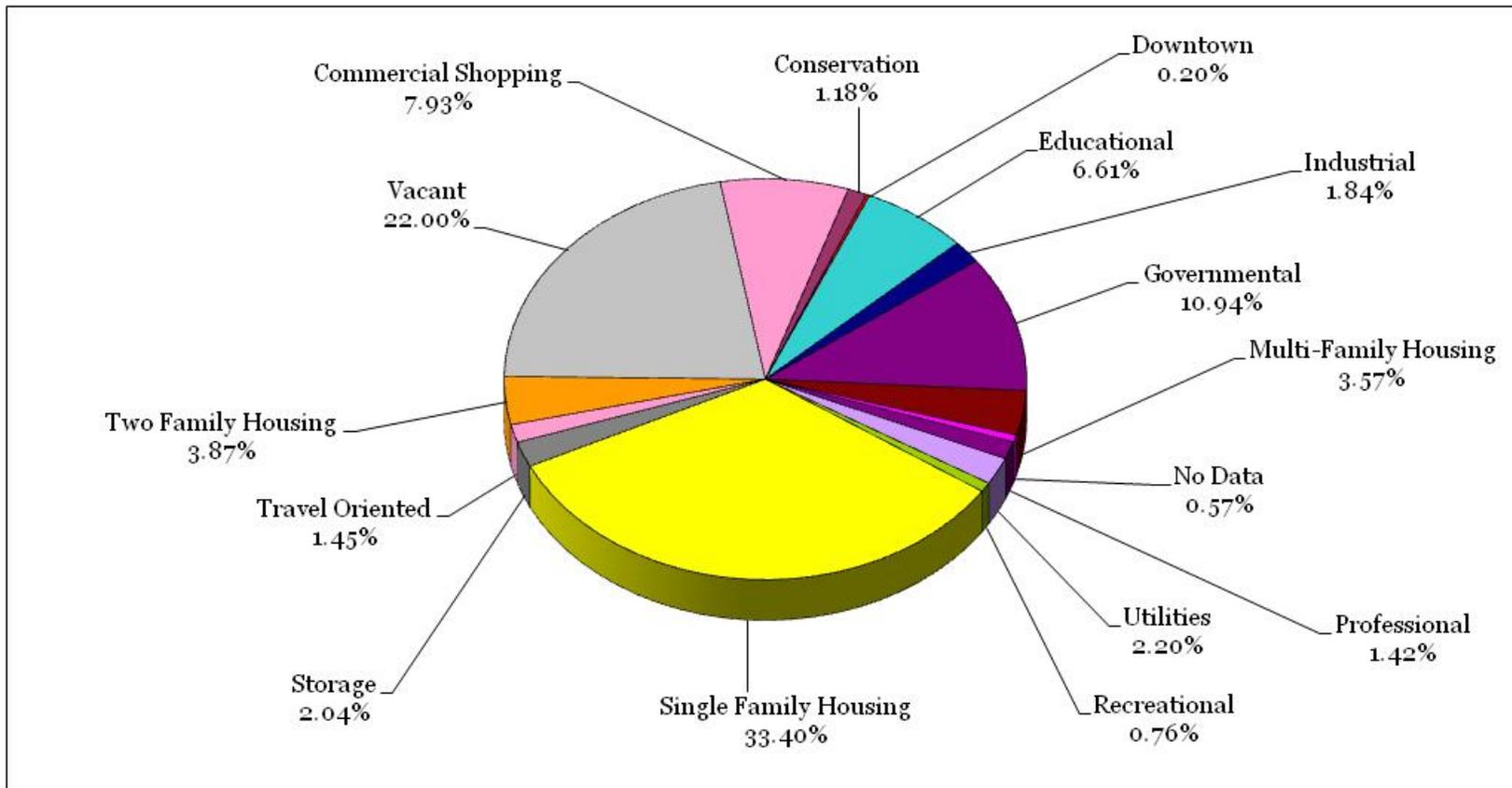


Village of Endicott Existing Land Use 2006





Village Of Johnson City Existing Land Use 2006





Introduction

This section considers the historic aspects of growth and investigated the constraints to development imposed by the natural features of the town. This section also considers the various land uses in considerable detail and analyzes development trends. This information not only serves to enhance the appreciation of the various land use characteristics prevailing throughout the town, but also serves as a guide to future planning activities that will be considered for implementation at a later stage of the Comprehensive Plan process.

Residential Land Use

There are approximately 8,701 acres of land in the Town of Union which are dedicated to residential use. Residential development accounts for 42 percent of the developed land and represents the predominant use of land in the town.

Recent Trends

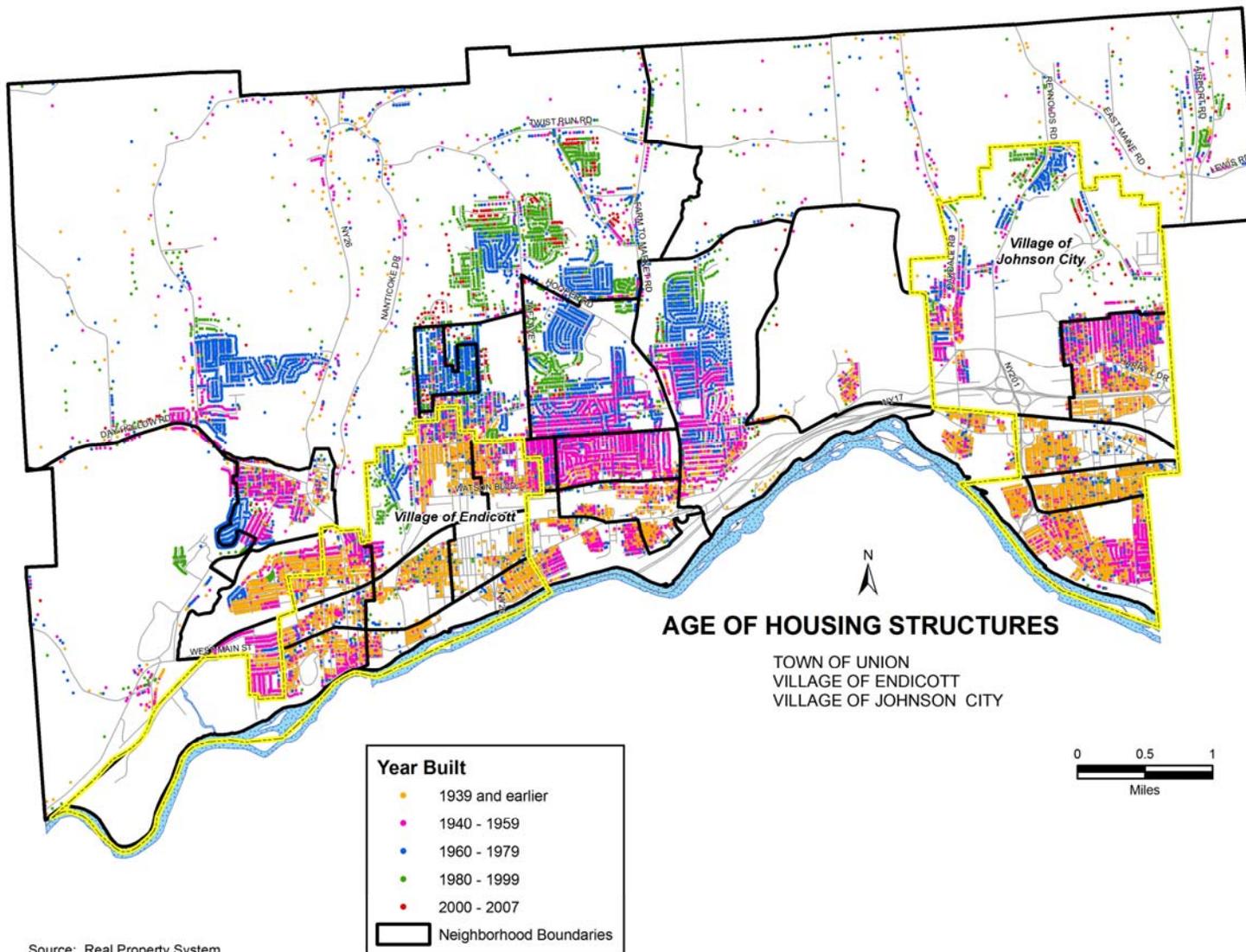
In order to have a more complete understanding of the residential patterns prevalent in the town today, it is necessary to examine town development in the recent past in greater detail than was done previously. Moreover, since most of the development in the past few decades has been automobile related and related to socio-economic situations, identifiable trends may be projected into the future to estimate on a reasonable and reliable basis the growth rates and patterns of residential land development for the coming decades.

The residential areas of the town can be divided into three basic types:

1. The urban areas of the two villages and the older urbanized sections of the part-town which developed as adjuncts to the villages or as hamlets, such as North Endicott, Endwell, and Union Center. These areas evolved over time with a mixture of residential types and age of structures, as well as with an encroachment of non-residential, often incompatible uses
2. The suburban areas, which saw their greatest growth during the 1950s and early 1960s. Areas such as Oakdale/Reynolds, North Endwell, and Hilltop, have experienced primarily single-family development, although some areas of the town and villages have seen the growth of large scale apartment development.



- 3. The rural areas of the town, primarily within the part-town section, which consist of older single-family units, farmhouses and outbuildings, and mobile homes.





Prior to 1950, substantial portions of the two villages and most of Westover, West Corners, West Endicott, North Endicott, Fairmont Park, Choconut Center, Union Center, and Endwell were already developed. The Endwell area however, still had a large amount of vacant land available. Much of the residential development that occurred throughout the town prior to 1950 was developed as single-family housing on small lots.

The Endwell area between Watson Boulevard and Smith Drive, was subdivided prior to 1950 although substantial development did not occur until the early 1950s. The period of 1950 through 1954 was a period of tremendous residential development. In comparison to the more than 1,000 building permits issued for single-family residences, there were only 29 permits issued for two-family units and 64 permits for apartment units, most of the latter being small buildings consisting of less than ten units. The first half of the 1950s also marked the beginning of the shift in population from the urban cores of the two villages and Binghamton to the more suburban-like setting that was rapidly developing in the part-town. This development pattern set the pattern of suburban single-family residential development that is still predominant.

The period 1955 through 1959 witnessed even more growth in the part-town, with more than 1,300 building permits issued, 97% of which were for single-family units. During this period, the area of growth shifted to central Endwell, east of Hooper Road and north of Lott Street, to the area between Smith and Columbia drives and to West Corners on Morlando and Anson roads. The growth of single-family units resulted in the ranch house being the predominant residential style. In terms of street pattern, the 1950s saw the rise of the curvilinear pattern for subdivisions. The curvilinear pattern, besides breaking up the monotonous grid pattern, also generated less traffic on the predominantly residential streets since easy access was limited

By 1960 the number of building permits issued annually had declined to the level of 1950, around 150 permits annually. The period 1960 through 1969 saw the first large step into contiguous development, the leapfrogging of development. The leapfrogging effect was due to the expansion of the public water and sewer systems and due to the fact that land on the periphery of the town was much less expensive and in larger parcels than the vacant land that was contiguous to developed areas. During the 1960s only 1,673 building permits were issued, just slightly more than the amount issued in each of the five year periods of the 1950s. There was also a noticeable increase in the number of two-family unit development during this period, especially in the Village of Endicott. The largest growth, though, still occurred in single-family units, with the development of Taft Heights, Park Manor, the Boswell Hill Road



area, and the area north of Pleasant Lane. The style of the new construction shifted from the small ranch homes of the 1950s to the larger raised ranch homes, split-level homes, and the varied types of expensive houses built in Hilltop.

During the late 1960s the development of apartment complexes such as the development of the JFK apartments in Park Manor and Squire Colony of Smith Drive began to accelerate. The multi-family development that occurred during this period was fostered by the rising cost of vacant land in the developed areas. The high cost of purchasing land in the developed areas precluded all but the most expensive single-family housing. Intensive use of the land in the form of apartment development was the only form of development that could absorb the high land costs. Related to the growth of apartment units and single-family expansion, the 1960s also saw the development of the suburban shopping centers in the outer reaches of the developing areas.

The growth during the 1970s showed a substantial decrease. Only 590 building permits were issued during the period 1970 through November of 1974. Of the 590 building permits issued, 515 were for single-family units, 65 were for two-family units and 10 were for multi-family units. The subdivision activity during this period indicates the types of development that were being contemplated. Several of the subdivisions were continuations of previous subdivisions, such as Taft Heights. During this period, there were also several proposals for apartment developments and one for a large mobile home park on Bean Hill Road. Most of these proposals were never constructed, although apartment construction continued with the development of the Mews on Glendale Drive and Regency Court on Newell Road. Several factors that were already apparent in the late 1960s were responsible for this trend. The increase in young families without children and elderly citizens whose children had grown and are no longer living with them became the prime users of the rental units. As stated before, the land values increased to the point where developers turned towards a more intensive use of land rather than single-family dwellings. Finally, construction costs and finance charges increased to the point where single-family housing for low and moderate prices had become cost prohibitive and apartment structures were the only alternative.

The location of increased residential development proposals and actual construction were generally centered in North Endwell, between Taft Avenue and Farm-to-Market Road and between Hooper Road and Twist Run Road. Related to this development, Park Manor Plaza was constructed to serve the needs of the new development in North Endwell.



Redevelopment Of Residential Areas

Over the years, despite the growth of residential development throughout the town, blight and deterioration have become apparent throughout certain portions of the town and villages in both the older urban areas and in the rural northern portion. As farming declined the fields were left fallow and the farmhouses and surrounding outbuildings were allowed to become run down. This is no doubt that due to a combination of the lower income of the people who live in these houses, the age of the residents, and certainly the quality of construction of the original buildings which make maintenance a more costly and frequent occurrence. The rural blight is now being touched by the construction of single-family residences and becomes very apparent when they actually border on each other.

Blight and deterioration has also become more apparent in the older urbanized areas of the town and villages.

Westover suffers from an aging housing stock and the introduction of peripheral commercial uses on predominantly residential streets. The area also suffers from locational problems due to its proximity to the Goudy Electric Station, BAE, and Route 17. Although a substantial number of the homes in Westover are in excellent shape, both structurally and in terms of maintenance, there are an increasing number of unmaintained units which lead to blight in the surrounding area. Some of these structures are of unsound original construction, although most have just deteriorated over the years from a lack of upkeep. Westover, like the adjacent westside of Johnson City is undergoing a population and housing transition. Most of the residents of the area are older and have become unable to maintain their older homes, due both to a lack of adequate funds as well as a lack of physical ability. As many of these older homes became available through attrition, the units were being purchased by investors and subdivided into rental apartments. Very often, it is the rental units owned by out of town landlords which are the least maintained. Although the legal conversion of units in and of itself is not an inherent problem, it is a symptom of the lessening desirability of an area for residential use.

Fairmont Park, in terms of location, should be a very attractive area for high quality residential development, considering its proximity to the IBM (now Traditions at the Glen) and the Binghamton golf courses. The area instead, not unlike Westover, is blighted, with well-maintained houses sprinkled with some poorly maintained units. Some of the problems in Fairmont Park are the



result of the poor infrastructure of the area, poorly paved streets, no curbing or sidewalks and small lots, many of which contain buildings of dubious original construction.

West Corners, especially the area east of Route 26, has problems peculiar to its location. Due primarily to the flooding problems along Nanticoke Creek, the area was developed with only few single-family homes with the balance consisting of mobile homes on small individual lots and also in a small mobile home park. The quality of the mobile home park is quite low: no paving, very crowded conditions, and no amenities. The single mobile homes on private lots are not much better. Most of the streets are poorly paved, some are unpaved, and all lack curbing, sidewalks, and other amenities. The large number of vacant lots, often filled with both manmade and natural debris, adds to the environmental problems of the area. The closing of the bridge across Nanticoke Creek and the removal of Route 26 from Carl Street to the Union Center-Maine Highway caused a further deterioration of the commercial uses along Carl Street, which in turn added to the further deterioration and blight in the area.

The blight and deterioration of the residential units on Airport Road are the result of an area being a conglomerate of some newer units, some farmhouses, and some poorly constructed units. Once again, the structural quality and maintenance varies from house to house, but the deterioration is very apparent throughout the little community. Many of the houses, including most of the farmhouses, were of dubious structural soundness when originally constructed. The small lots lack of adequate paving and curbing and the mixture and conversion of residential structures caused this area to be one of the most deteriorated in the town. The area also suffers since it is almost completely surrounded by industrial uses and is functionally cut off from most of the town's amenities, without the benefit of a rural bucolic setting.

Argonne Avenue in Endwell and Maple Street in West Endicott suffer due to the age of their residential structures, the proximity to industrial locations, and at least on Argonne Avenue, the lack of paving, curbing, and area maintenance. Both areas border residential areas that are well maintained, despite their apparent similarity of age. Therefore, the proximity of these streets to industrial uses and to the floodplains of the Susquehanna (Argonne Avenue only) River has led to their blighted condition.

The last blighted area to be discussed is the large area located between East Main Street and North Street on the south and Watson Boulevard on the north. This area suffers from an incompatible mixture of uses, ranging from single-family residential uses, some



well-maintained and some lacking upkeep, to an auto wrecking company and junkyard. The area is cut in half by railroad tracks, which in itself has probably had a blighting affect. The individual streets vary, in terms of maintenance, with a strong relationship to land use. Those streets with a compatible mixture, usually single and two-family residential uses do not have any sign of blight. Those streets that have a strongly incompatible mixture of uses, for example the automobile wrecking company and single-family residences have the worst blight and deterioration.

In summary, although there are many causes of blight and deterioration that are dependent on variables that change from location to location, it is evident from the previous descriptions that most of the blighted areas suffer because of an incompatible mixture of land uses, the encroachment of non-residential land uses into predominantly residential areas, and a lack of a sound infrastructure. There are numerous examples in the town and in the villages of neighborhoods of older residences that have not suffered from blight, therefore the age of the structures cannot be held as the primary cause of blight. The problems pointed out in this section as well as in other sections of this study and other portions of the Comprehensive Plan will be considered in both the Future Land Use Plan as well as in the implementation process.

Commercial Land Use

Only about 3.01 percent or 621 acres of the town's landscape is devoted to commercial land use. Commercial land use is the second smallest use of developed land, accounting for only 4.9 percent of the total developed land. Despite this small amount of commercial activity, this land use, by its very nature, is a major consideration in any study of existing land use. Commercial uses meet a very real need in providing goods and services required to support the population.



Commercial establishments are a viable source of income for many people. Their land use characteristics, such as appearance, location, and traffic generation have an impact on the town far greater than would be expected from a small land use.

Due to the proximity of the older established commercial districts in Endicott, Johnson City and Binghamton, the town has not developed as a commercial center.



The commercial enterprises in the town reflect the predominantly residential character of the town and its strong reliance on the villages and the city for most shopping needs.

Many of the commercial enterprises in the town are convenience stores, composed of supermarkets, drug stores, laundromats and dry cleaning stores, beauty salons and barbershops, and liquor stores. These businesses usually serve the surrounding residential neighborhood, many having developed in the older communities, such as Westover and West Corners.

The second largest group of commercial uses are automobile related commercial uses. The town has more service stations and auto parts suppliers than the individual villages. This is due to the greater number of highways in the town, including the long stretch of 17C, and also reflects the fact that the gasoline stations in the town are newer than the ones in the villages. The Endwell area has also acted as the frame area for the Village of Endicott. The value of land in the frame area historically has been less expensive than in the more intensely used commercial core of the village, and therefore, has attracted those commercial uses, such as automobile related and garden centers, which are of a marginal nature.

The third and fourth largest commercial categories are professional, financial and construction concerns within these broad categories, the largest groups are real estate agents, insurance brokers and construction companies. Since most of these concerns operate out of the owner's house, the large number of such concerns reflects the predominantly residential character of the town. For this analysis, the commercial land use discussion has been oriented to reflect three types of activity:

- ❖ retail/office;
- ❖ highway oriented;
- ❖ and shopping center

Retail/Office

Individual retail stores and offices are concentrated in the older urban areas of the town, located along the most heavily travelled roads: East and West Main streets, North Street, Watson Boulevard, Campville Road, Union Center-Maine Highway (West Corners and Union Center) and Main Street in Westover. The stores are typically individually owned and run by the owner. The structures



are often converted old residences (as on East Main Street in Endwell) or a new structure built on an empty lot in between old structures. In many cases a modern facade and/or a commercial facade has been superimposed on the building. The upper stories of these buildings are often still being used for residential use, usually rental apartments. Some of the upper stories are also used for professional offices, but this is a less frequent occurrence.

As stated previously, the majority of the retail/office uses are convenience stores and restaurants. Not all of the retail/office uses are concentrated. Many of the uses are located in spot commercial areas and often are in conflict with the surrounding land uses. The commercial uses most often in spot locations are the beauty and barber shops as well as laundromats and dry cleaning establishments. Worse mixtures occur, such as the location of a construction yard in a predominantly residential section of West Corners.

This mixed land use often catalyzes residential blight and deterioration, as pointed out in the residential section of this chapter. The blighted and deteriorated structures, which often are not trade related, detract from the commercial concentrations. The result of this spot commercial development is a quilt-like pattern of land use that is most apparent in Endwell, Westover, West Corners, and Campville Road.

With the evolution of the shopping center, these older concentrations of commercial activity are experiencing a decline. The lack of a modern supermarket, the difficulty in finding convenient parking, the general unattractive appearance and the competition from the shopping centers have induced shoppers away from these traditional areas. This can be readily seen in the decline of business activity on Carl Street in West Corners and on Main Street in Westover

Highway Oriented

Another type of commercial development is found in the form of strips along the major roads. These strips consist of automobile related facilities, drive-in food stands, motels, commercial recreation establishments, and gasoline stations. The roadside commercial development in many areas encroaches on the rights-of-way, contributes to traffic congestion, induces hazards, and often blocks scenic views. This is most apparent along 17C, Watson Boulevard, and the Union Center-Maine Highway.



The highway oriented commercial uses are often intermingled with non-commercial uses, such as residential and industrial uses. The highway oriented development is often viewed, especially by planners and others concerned with community development and appearance, as an undesirable form of land usage. Despite the undesirable characteristics associated with this type of development, it should be noted that highway oriented development does meet a viable need of the community by providing facilities which cater to the motoring public.

The clusters of highway oriented uses usually serve as a refuge for commercial uses which simply do not fit elsewhere. Included in this category are such activities as commercial recreation (bowling alleys, for example), retail outlets with large scale requirements (furniture stores, building supply outlets, and garden and nursery centers) and such miscellaneous uses as veterinarians and kennels.

The trapezoid-shaped area in Endwell, bounded by North and East Main streets from Nebraska Avenue west to the Endicott line has become a center for automobile sales, servicing, and related facilities. There are several automobile sales and rental facilities in close proximity in this area. There is little to no coordination of use or parking facilities between the contiguous highway oriented uses, each lot having its own parking facilities and curb cuts and often being a divergent use. The problem is most apparent along the George F. Highway (17C), where access from one commercial use to the next is at very best a tortuous excursion.

Shopping Center

The landscape of the town was incisively invaded on the 1950s and 1960s by the suburban shopping center. The shopping centers of the town are characterized by being designed and built as a unit, having large parking areas and being under single ownership. There are basically four different types of shopping centers in the town:

- ❖ Convenience type center
- ❖ Neighborhood shopping center
- ❖ Community shopping center
- ❖ Regional shopping center



The smallest type center, the convenience center, usually contains only a few stores of the convenience type. These centers front the major roads and their parking facilities are usually located in a strip along the front of the stores. The convenience type shopping centers were the first to be built in the town. There are two of these centers, Westover Plaza in Westover and the small center on Watson Boulevard and Avenue B. Both centers have ceased operating as convenience centers, since their market orientation has changed from convenience stores to serving the needs of industries and other commercial concerns.

The neighborhood shopping centers usually consist of a supermarket or a variety store and a number of convenience type stores. Examples of these centers are Endwell Plaza on East Main and North streets, West Corners Plaza on Day Hollow Road and Rt. 26 and the center on Country Club and Hooper roads. Some of these plazas are anchored by a supermarket and often drug stores, such as Rite-Aid at the Country Club Road center. Endwell Plaza has changed its orientation, serving less as a neighborhood center and more as a center for home appliances and hardware.

The community shopping center contains at least one junior department store and a supermarket, accompanied by a number of small convenience stores. There are only two examples of this type of center, River Plaza on the George F. Highway and Park Manor Plaza on Hooper Road. River Plaza no longer has a junior department store but now has a Home Depot while Park Manor no longer has Ames.

Summary

Very little land is devoted to commercial usage, 3.01 percent of the total land or 621 acres. Available evidence clearly indicates that while the traditional retail/office and highway oriented commercial activities are remaining relatively stable or declining slightly, the most dynamic expansion has been in shopping center usage. These relatively new highly specialized forms of commercial activities are most dynamic in their effect on land use as well as in terms of services which they offer. Standards for the design and for the service area of future commercial concentrations will be discussed in a subsequent report.



Industrial Land Use

As in the case with commercial forms of land use, industrial uses in the town occupy a relatively small proportion, 2.3 percent or 466 acres of the town's total landscape. Industrial uses are the smallest use of land in the town, accounting for only 3.7 percent of the total developed land area.

Industrial lands are very significant for many of the same reasons that commercial lands are important - they meet a vital economic need since they provide a source of employment for many, they provide essential products and services, and their land use characteristics, such as the traffic they generate and their location and appearance also make their impact on the town quite significant despite the fact that they represent only 466 acres.

Basically there are only fourteen major industrial concerns in the town. Many of the smaller industrial uses are shown on the existing land use map as commercial, even though they are basically industrial. This was due to the difficulty in distinguishing between small industries and commercial concerns that serve industries. Most of these small industries include construction companies, trucking firms, and the like.

Institutional Land Use

For purposes of this section, institutional land use forms have been defined to include the following types of activities:

- ❖ Educational (both public and private at all levels),
- ❖ Governmental centers,
- ❖ Services (such as post offices and firehouses)
- ❖ Religious and various special institutional uses such as cemeteries.

For institutional land uses, it is necessary to stress that the existing land use survey considered land usage rather than ownership. According to the data collected as a result of this study, about 4.3 percent or 890 acres of the total town land area is devoted to institutional land uses. Undoubtedly, institutions own additional lands, but if they are not used for institutional uses, they have not been included in the data and will not be included in this portion of the text.



Most institutional uses tend to provide services and facilities to the broad community. However, there are some which are clearly limited by a predetermined geographic boundary. This is particularly true of those facilities affiliated with governmental districts, such as firehouses and the public schools.

Institutional land uses have played, and will continue to play, an important role in the overall development of the town. In most communities, institutional land uses form a base around which development can occur. These institutional uses are extremely important to the overall development of the total community.

Institutional development and community growth are closely related. As a community grows, institutional facilities such as educational buildings must be expanded, churches and firehouses are built, and other facilities are required. In the future, as the town experiences increases in population and density, there will be an increased demand for institutional facilities. Moreover, the changing standards of institutions have also had an effect on land consumption. For example, public schools built prior to World War II were built on small sites such the former Westover Elementary School and the old Hooper School. These two examples should be contrasted with the school facilities on Farm-to-Market Road.

In addition to the example of educational facilities, numerous other institutional forms of land use have experienced changing site requirements. Due to the increasing reliance on the automobile as the primary means of travel, many institutions facilities require extensive parking facilities. This caused problems if there was an inadequate land available to accommodate parking. This in turn caused certain institutions to relocate to larger lots. In doing so, they frequently have altered the physical relationship between the facilities and the community they serve. For example, the Church of the Nazarenne on Nanticoke Avenue Endicott moved to a much larger site on the Union Center-Maine Highway due to the lack of adequate land for its parking requirements. Some of the institutions, such as churches, also have had to move to the town in order to follow their clients outward spread from the villages. The changing nature, locational characteristics, and site requirements of institutional activities should be recognized as having major consequences for the town. Many institutional uses tend to be focal points for the community in some respects, but from the physical standpoint their location has often been slighted. Comparatively little planning has been accomplished to provide the appropriate degree of integration of institutional uses into the community. The institutional facilities in the town are often located



on rather spacious settings and are of such architectural character that they should serve as landmarks. Despite this observation, their choice of location is rarely integrated with the developing community. Because of timing and land costs, institutions frequently must select a site from a number of otherwise leftover or undesirable parcels of land. The potential impact of the institutions as landmarks tends to be lost then. The new shopping centers usually become the landmarks for the surrounding community, rather than the institutional uses.

The following sections of this report will briefly consider each of the various significant institutional uses of the town. The community facilities, in terms of adequacy of facilities and services will be discussed in more, detail in the Community Facilities Plan for the town.

Educational Facilities

The nature of population growth, especially the large increase in the number of children during the 1950s and the 1960s has enlarged the number of school facilities. There are currently three school districts serving the town:

- ❖ Johnson City
- ❖ Maine-Endwell
- ❖ Union-Endicott

There are ten school facilities in the town, all but four having been built within the last two decades.

There are three elementary schools and one junior high school in the Union-Endicott School District. The elementary schools are located on Route 26, Paden Street, and Mills Avenue. The latter is an old school. The junior high school is located on the border of Endicott, with the yard backing onto Kentucky Avenue in the town. This school, too, is an older facility, with an intensive use of the small lot area.

The Maine-Endwell School District's facilities are all relatively new, with the exception of the Union Center Elementary School. The junior high school is located on Farm-to-Market Road as is the senior high school. Both, schools were built in the 1960s. The Homer



Brink Elementary school is located on Briar Lane, the Endwell Elementary School is located on Country Club Road the Union Center Elementary School is in Union Center. The expansion of schools in the Maine- Endwell School District reflects the residential growth that occurred during the 1950s and the 1960s in that area. The elementary schools located in Endwell are centrally located among the residential developments of that period. The junior and senior high schools are located in the center of the developing area of the town.

Public educational facilities have traditionally been viewed as a focal point of a community. Historically, one of the keystones in the development of a community is the provision of an elementary school so located as to maximize walking to the school from its service area. Under this concept, the service area would be synchronized with its neighborhood and size would be determined by the number of families required to support an elementary school. Unfortunately, there are few examples of the neighborhood school in the town serving as the focal point of the community they serve. The only schools that can be conceived of as being a focal point are the Union Center Elementary School, the Westover Elementary School and the George F. Johnson Elementary School in West Endicott.

There are a number of private parochial schools in the town. They are located on West Main Street in West Endicott, on Davis Avenue in Hooper, on Watson Boulevard in Endwell, and on Stonefield Road in North Endwell.

Governmental Centers

Included in this type of land use are the Town Hall and the highway garage. The Town Hall is the center for the judicial as well as administrative functions of the town. The Town Hall, unlike larger governmental structures in other places, has had no effect on nearby land use, in the sense of attracting interrelating land uses.

Community Services

The Post Office is located on Lawndale Street in Endwell. The location was centrally located, but the closing of Avenue B has made access from the southern portion of Endwell somewhat more difficult and inconvenient.



The New York State Motor Vehicle Bureau is located on Washington Avenue in the Village of Endicott. The offices are located in rented office space and provide the usual services to the area residents.

The town is divided into fire companies and fire protection districts. The fire companies have their houses, equipment, and volunteer personnel, while the protection districts have fire protection service on a contractual basis with one of the fire companies. The town is divided into six fire companies and two fire protection districts:

- ❖ West Corners;
- ❖ West Endicott;
- ❖ Union Center;
- ❖ Endwell;
- ❖ Choconut Center;
- ❖ East Maine (from the Town of Maine);
- ❖ North Endicott (Fire Protection from Endicott);
- ❖ Westover (Fire Protection from Johnson City)

The West Corners firehouse is on Day Hollow Road, West Endicott is on Campville Road, Union. Center is on Spring Street, Endwell's are on Chrysler Road, Country Club Road, and Davis Avenue, Choconut Center's is on Stella New Ireland Road and East Maine in Maine. Most of the above mentioned buildings are of fairly recent construction and although additional buildings are contemplated (Union Center Fire Company plans to build an additional firehouse on Upper Taft Avenue), the distribution should remain fairly much as it exists.

Religious Facilities

Many of the houses of worship located in the town are visual landmarks and tend to serve as a focal point of community activity. Church buildings range from very modern architectural expressions such as the Our Savior Lutheran Church on Hooper Road to plain, traditional older structures such as Westover Methodist Church on Dayton Street. Frequently the newer churches tend to be on



large sites and tend to serve as a visual change of pace to the sometimes monotonous architecture of residential and commercial areas.

Many important community activities are conducted in churches. In this respect they play a major role in the life of a community, beyond the religious connotations. Churches are perhaps second to educational facilities in their sensitivity to population shifts. Churches tend to follow their members as they move from place to place. It is not uncommon to find church structures whose affiliation has shifted or which is no longer in use because of a migration of membership. This has already occurred in other sections of the villages. On the other hand, areas of the town have been experiencing new church construction. Some of this entailed the formation of new congregations; others simply reflected the new buildings required to house a congregation which has shifted location.

A more noticeable religious facility on the existing land use map, although of less importance, are the church affiliated cemeteries. The cemeteries range in size from the large grouping of cemeteries on Newell Road to the small cemetery on Barnum Road.

Also affiliated with the churches are the church run parochial schools, such as the one on Stonefield Drive. These schools serve an area wider than the neighborhood, their impact being felt community wide.

Special Institutional Uses

There are a number of highly specialized land use forms that play a significant but perhaps subtle role in the community. Within this group, there is perhaps no more permanent land use than a cemetery. Because of its physical characteristics and legal entanglements, even super highway alignments tend to avoid encroaching upon cemeteries. In this respect, it is a most distinctive land use form. The cemeteries in the town, aside from the church affiliated ones, range in size from small family informal plots to the very large Riverside Cemetery on East Main Street. Many of the more rural church affiliated cemeteries have an almost rustic nature and contribute to the feeling of open space.



Another large institutional use is the Wyoming Conference Methodist Home for the Aged on Deyo Hill Road, adjacent to Johnson City. This institutional facility is situated on 4.2 acres. The impact, both in terms of its physical impact on the landscape as well as its impact on community services, has been dramatic.

Open Space, Recreational and Water Related facilities Land Use

Open space, recreational and water related facilities land include parks, playgrounds and playfields (not including school facilities), semi public parks and recreational areas, private; recreational areas, flood prevention control areas, flood levees, and water tanks. This category encompasses 4.1 percent of the total land or 847 acres.

The park system in the town is extensive, in terms of public parks. The town presently has seven park sites: the largest of which is Highland Park, which is over 50 acres in size. The public parks are:

- ❖ Highland Park on Hooper. Road;
- ❖ Glendale Park on Glendale Drive (and the smaller playfields south of the park);
- ❖ West Endicott Park;
- ❖ William Hill Park off of Onondaga street
- ❖ Struble Road Sports Facility watershed project,
- ❖ Taft Heights subdivision and the undeveloped site on Antoinette Drive
- ❖ Route 17C Sports Facility

The semi private and private recreational facilities far outnumber the acreage in public use. The largest recreational area is the former IBM Recreational Center on Watson Boulevard. This center once included golf courses, indoor recreational uses, as well as a track and field area. Much of the indoor facilities were severely damaged due to flooding and are no longer in use. The second largest area is the Binghamton Country Club on Robinson Hill Road. This facility is also a multipurpose facility offering a range of facilities besides golfing. Endwell Greens is a privately owned public golf course on Sally Piper Road. Pine Valley is a camping and picnic area on Boswell Hill Road.



The watershed and flood control projects, most of which occurred over the last ten years, entail a considerable amount of acreage. The Struble Road watershed project and to a degree the levees along the lower reaches of Naticoke Creek have taken on a multipurpose use as recreational areas. The various watershed projects, even those not used for multipurpose uses, serve as open space, breaking up development and often adding beauty to the surrounding area. The watershed and flood prevention facilities are located on Choconut Creek off Stella-New Ireland Road, East Maine Road, Struble Road, Watson Boulevard, Onondaga Street, Argonne Avenue, Taft Avenue, and north of June Street. There is further work planned for Naticoke Creek and along Day Hollow Creek.

Utilities Land Use

Approximately 4.3 percent of the total land area or 882 acres has been devoted to utility oriented land uses. Included in this category of land usage are: electric power stations, major transmission lines, and cellular towers. Not included in this category, but related are; the elongated ribbons of rights-of-way for the smaller electric transmission lines, telephone lines, gas lines, and other underground utility lines.

The major land uses in this category are the Goudy Station in Westover and the Oakdale distribution station on Robinson Hill Road. The transmission lines from the Oakdale Station traverse the town to both the east and the west in the northern portion of the town.

The utilities have a profound effect on the character of the landscape and upon the emerging community fabric. While the utility facilities do not themselves generate land uses they do exert influence on existing and projected land usages. Transmission lines affect the shape of land use patterns. The wide transmission right of way from the Oakdale Station in conjunction with the former IBM recreational complex effectively splits the town into two distinct parts. Due to the sheer height and width of the transmission lines, plus their basic unaesthetic character, utility lines and transmission centers act as a deterrent to development in adjacent properties.

The Goudy Electric Station, in particular, because of the huge piles of coal needed for the production of electricity, has a visual impact on the adjacent area. The residences that abut the station, on Avon Street and Taylor Street, can be expected to deteriorate



further due to their proximity to the station. As growth expands further into the town, and utilities are expanded, the proper location and integration of these facilities into the landscape will become even more important. The utilities are necessary to the development of the town since they provide essential public services, but they must be controlled as not to be detrimental to the development of the town.

Agricultural and Vacant Land use

Since there is little ongoing agriculture in the town, most of the land in this category is vacant and idle land. Vacant land, as the category implies, is land that is inactive and includes a wide variety of locations, from small vacant lots in the older urbanized areas of the town to large tracts of land where farming activities have ceased. From a town-wide perspective, the small vacant lot in the urbanized area is of comparatively little significance although its ultimate use is of considerable impact on the community. The vacant lots in the urbanized area can be viewed as a crude index of the individual neighborhoods' vitality and potential. On one hand, many vacant lots in an older area can be viewed as an indication of stagnation. In newer urbanizing areas, vacant lots can be viewed as providing the potential building sites for increased land use intensity in the coming years.

In all, 7,168 acres of the town or 34.8 percent of the total land are in this category (although the reader is reminded that this also includes road and railroad rights-of-way, water bodies, and small utility easements). The overwhelming preponderance of land in the northern portion of the town is in this category. By and large some of this land was used for agricultural purposes but now remains idle, reflecting both the suitability of the land for agriculture to the personal preference of the owner, although some reflect the speculation of further development and suburbanization.

In many instances the vacant lands are beginning to experience the first phases of reforestation in the form of scrub trees and other forms of permanent ground cover. If the lands remain vacant long enough, partially wooded areas will emerge as part of the natural process.

Much of this land is unsuitable for either development or agriculture due to either the slope or the soil type. Much of the sloped areas and the marshy areas along the creeks are wooded as discussed in the previous section on natural features.



There are many factors that have hampered development and have left vacant lots. North Endicott is a good example of an urbanized area that contains a large number of vacant lots. The fact that the area was subdivided into 40-foot lots, to some degree, has hampered development since the lot size is below current zoning requirements and current levels of acceptability. Many of the urban lots also prove to be less attractive to the potential developer since they are often intermixed with older residential uses of a variety of types as well as maintenance. In North Endicott, for example, the most recent development has taken place on the periphery of the area rather than on the small lots that remain vacant in the inner streets. Another factor is that these small lots are often owned separately, therefore accumulation of a sizable developable area is both time consuming and expensive; often more expensive than the use of raw land in less developed portions of the town.