



Parks and Recreation (PR)

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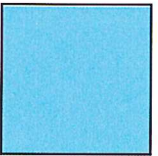
The Parks and Recreation designation consists of recreational areas and parkland owned by the public (State, City and School District). This designation includes a mix of recreational and cultural uses that support recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. This designation is characterized by a combination of buildings and uses supportive of active and passive recreation, recreational tourism, and open space. These areas should incorporate bicycle and pedestrian connections to the surrounding community.



Institutional (INST)

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The Institutional designation includes areas that provide services such as religious, educational, health, cultural and tourism.



Equine and Related Facilities (EQ)

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The Equine and Related Facilities designation includes areas utilized by the equine industry and supporting facilities. Such areas include, but are not limited to, the thoroughbred race track, harness track, stables, racing museum, sales barns, parking and feed stores. This designation represents a significant contribution to the City's tourism economy.

This designation is also envisioned to allow for supporting facilities such as employee housing and businesses that are essential to the equine industry's sustainability and future success in the City. Uses and design within this designation must be sensitive to the surrounding neighborhoods.



Specialty Mixed Use - Park (SP)

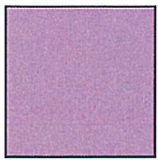
Specialty Mixed Use - Park (SP)

The Specialty Mixed Use - Park designation allows for a mix of commercial and residential uses that are complementary to the Downtown Core and Complementary Core and that do not negatively impact the focus on maintaining the distinctive rural character of the City ~~in the~~ area adjacent to the Saratoga Spa State Park – a National Historic Landmark ~~Property~~.

Future growth in this area should be designed and sited as a campus-like setting to create a distinctive gateway that complements the beauty of

the adjacent Spa State Park. Bicycle and pedestrian connections to the Spa State Park and adjacent uses should be provided.

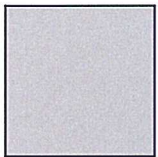
~~The uses within this designation are complementary to the Downtown Core and Complementary Core. Some residential uses may be appropriate as well.~~ This designation may lend itself to support research and development, creative economy workplaces, “green and clean” technology businesses, and other low impact tenants low to moderate intensity uses that do not negatively impact this critical gateway to the City.



Specialty Mixed Use - Gateway (SG)

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The Specialty Mixed Use - Gateway designation allows for a variety of low to moderate intensity uses that focus on maintaining a distinctive entrance to the City. The goal for the commercial gateways is not to foster more intense or dense land use development, but rather to improve the physical appearance and attractiveness of the commercial uses. These uses are primarily commercial in nature and are complementary to the Downtown Core and Complementary Core. This designation is characterized largely by automobile access yet with aesthetically pleasing buildings and landscaping along the street with parking in the rear.



Industrial (IND)

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The Industrial designation includes areas of light to heavy industrial uses to support economic growth and provide a strong tax base for the City. Adjacent residential neighborhoods should be adequately buffered from the Industrial uses. Additional buffering and screening may be required to enhance public rights-of-way and ensure land use compatibility.

Looking forward, this designation will allow for research and development, “green and clean” technologies, and semiconductor, computer hardware, software and related technological, administrative, sales, and engineering facilities. These areas will support a variety of quality jobs, generate revenue, and provide services that strengthen the local and regional economies.

Country Overlay Map

The balance between the “city” and the “country” is fundamental to the general health, welfare and economic viability of the community. This has been reiterated by the community time and time again. Therefore, this plan sets out to reinforce the “country” within the City’s jurisdiction through a Country Overlay Map. Since the development of the towns surrounding Saratoga Springs is indeed beyond the City’s control, the City must take proactive measures to preserve the greenbelt surrounding the urban core.

The map of the Country Overlay Area illustrates the open spaces that remain and that are important to be considered in the preservation of city character. The Country Overlay map does not put any restrictions or additional requirements in place, but serves an illustrative purpose only. The Country Overlay Map is also intended to provide support for existing overlay design requirements such as the City’s Gateway Overlay districts, which protect the character of the City’s important gateways.

The Country Overlay Area depicts a desired “greenbelt” around the urban core which defines and shapes the “Country” in the “City in the Country” vision of this comprehensive plan. The map illustrates the diverse public and privately-owned open space resources that collectively convey a sense of the traditional settlement pattern – a dense urban core with a well defined edge surrounded by open lands – that characterizes the historic settlement pattern of Saratoga Springs.

The Country Overlay Area includes:

- Private recreational lands and institutional open space resources such as the Saratoga National Golf Course, Yaddo, and the racetracks
- Public recreational lands including the Saratoga Spa State Park
- Wetlands and stream corridors
- Rural and scenic viewsheds
- Linkages to provide natural corridors for wildlife, to accommodate the City’s growing trail and recreational system, and to promote greater accessibility to existing areas
- Farmland, including lower West Avenue, outer Lake Avenue, and the northwest agricultural area of the City.

Within the Country Overlay Area, the enhancement of natural resources and the open space values present on a site, along with development

tools to effect this enhancement, should be added as items to be considered by the Boards when evaluating development proposals. This evaluation will consider the balance between an activity's positive contributions to the City and the potential negative effects on natural resources and open space character.

The intent of this section is not to prohibit or permit any land use activity but instead is to reaffirm that open space values be taken into consideration in development proposals within the Country Overlay Area or in adopting any zoning amendments for areas included in the Country Overlay Area.

Incentive Zoning Supporting Public Purpose

Section 81-D of the NYS General City Law sets forth the conditions under which cities can enact incentive zoning. Saratoga Springs already has density bonuses for affordable housing and publicly accessible open space in several zoning districts. This legislation requires the density incentives to be consistent with the municipality's Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, public purpose density bonuses permitted by Section 81-D would be able to exceed the residential density caps in each of the land use categories.

Legitimate Public Interest in Protecting the Greenbelt

The City's Conservation Development District and Country Overlay Area, which constitutes the greenbelt, serves the following key legitimate City interests and important governmental objectives:

1. Environmental benefits: Natural features are valuable as part of a community's character, scenery, and wildlife habitat, as well as the area's quality of life. The ecological integrity of the City's natural resources, including groundwater, streams and wetlands, trees and woodlands, steep slopes, vegetated wildlife habitat, and areas rich in biodiversity must be maintained and protected, even as development occurs. The ecosystem services provided in the greenbelt include water and air purification, storm water runoff management, maintaining hydrological cycles, crop pollination, and nutrient dispersal and cycling. Actions to minimize impacts to these functions should be put in place to protect the City's natural resources. The City's legitimate interest in these natural resources has been well-documented in the 2001 Open Space Plan and the Saratoga County

Green Infrastructure Plan. With conservation as the core development principle in this area, the community is assured that development in this area works alongside conservation values.

2. Economic benefits and unique community character: Natural features are valuable as part of a community's character, scenery as well as the area's quality of life. The City has a long history as a destination for tourism, attracted by spring waters, Victorian architecture, amenities of a compact downtown and the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape and water bodies. The greenbelt is a significant contributor to the City's tourism economy by providing scenic viewsheds and recreational opportunities. The greenbelt also continues to reinforce the traditional human development pattern that preserves the unique "City in the Country" character of the community. The low intensity development that has occurred in the conservation development district support the character of the community as a whole. Conservation-based development can generate a reasonable return on investment for developers in this area. In addition, conservation-based development provides citizens with access to open space which encourages healthy lifestyles.
3. Climate change mitigation and adaptation: The greenbelt plays an important function in mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change, including carbon sequestration. The lands in the greenbelt area absorb and retain water, protecting against flooding, which is projected to increase due to more intense and more frequent storms resulting from a warming atmosphere. Open lands and wetlands in the greenbelt also serve to naturally treat and infiltrate stormwater runoff before it enters groundwater or surface water bodies.

Enhanced Land Use Review Process

In order to encourage development that looks to the long-term sustainability of the City, the regulatory and project review process should be clear and streamlined. This will help encourage investment in the City by reducing time delays and extraordinary costs to both the project sponsors and the City.

Recommended Actions to Enhance the Land Use Review Process

- 4.1-1 Review and evaluate the City's zoning ordinance to ensure consistency with this updated Comprehensive Plan.
- 4.1-2 Continue enforcing Existing Land Use Regulations - The City should focus resources to enforce existing zoning and other land use regulations. Enforcement should be consistent, equitable and swift.
- 4.1-3 Enhance Development Review and Approval Informational Materials - The City needs to provide applicants with an easily understood guide booklet to its review processes, including submittal requirements and time frames for each step. Similarly, application and informational materials should be streamlined and simplified.
- 4.1-4 Illustrate Zoning Standards Graphically - Greater use of design examples and guideline graphics will help the public and applicants visualize the desired development.
- 4.1-5 Initiate Earlier Development Review by City Departments - To expedite the development review process and encourage better coordination within the often complex framework of the commission form of government, this Plan recommends. City departments should respond to developer inquiries early in the application process. Efforts to develop and coordinate development policies among departments should be encouraged.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulations

Significant decisions and actions affecting the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the state and its communities are made by local governments. In Saratoga Springs, the City Council is the legislative body with the authority to modify the City's comprehensive plan and land use regulations.

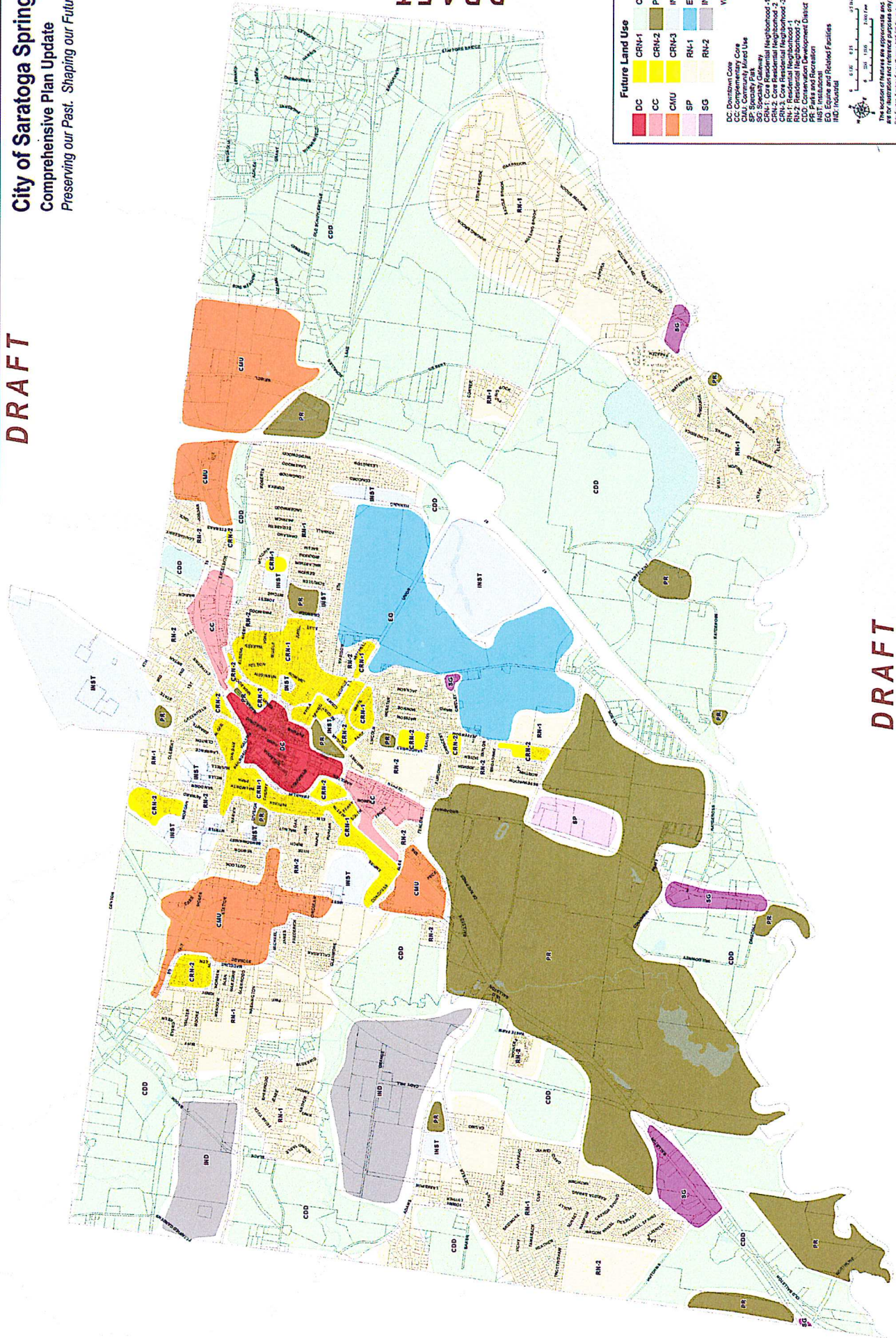
Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a city government is the authority and responsibility to undertake city comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens. This is outlined in General City Law 28-a2(a,b). Pursuant to General City Law 28-a12(a), all city land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan.

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City of Saratoga Springs
Comprehensive Plan Update
Preserving our Past. Shaping our Future.

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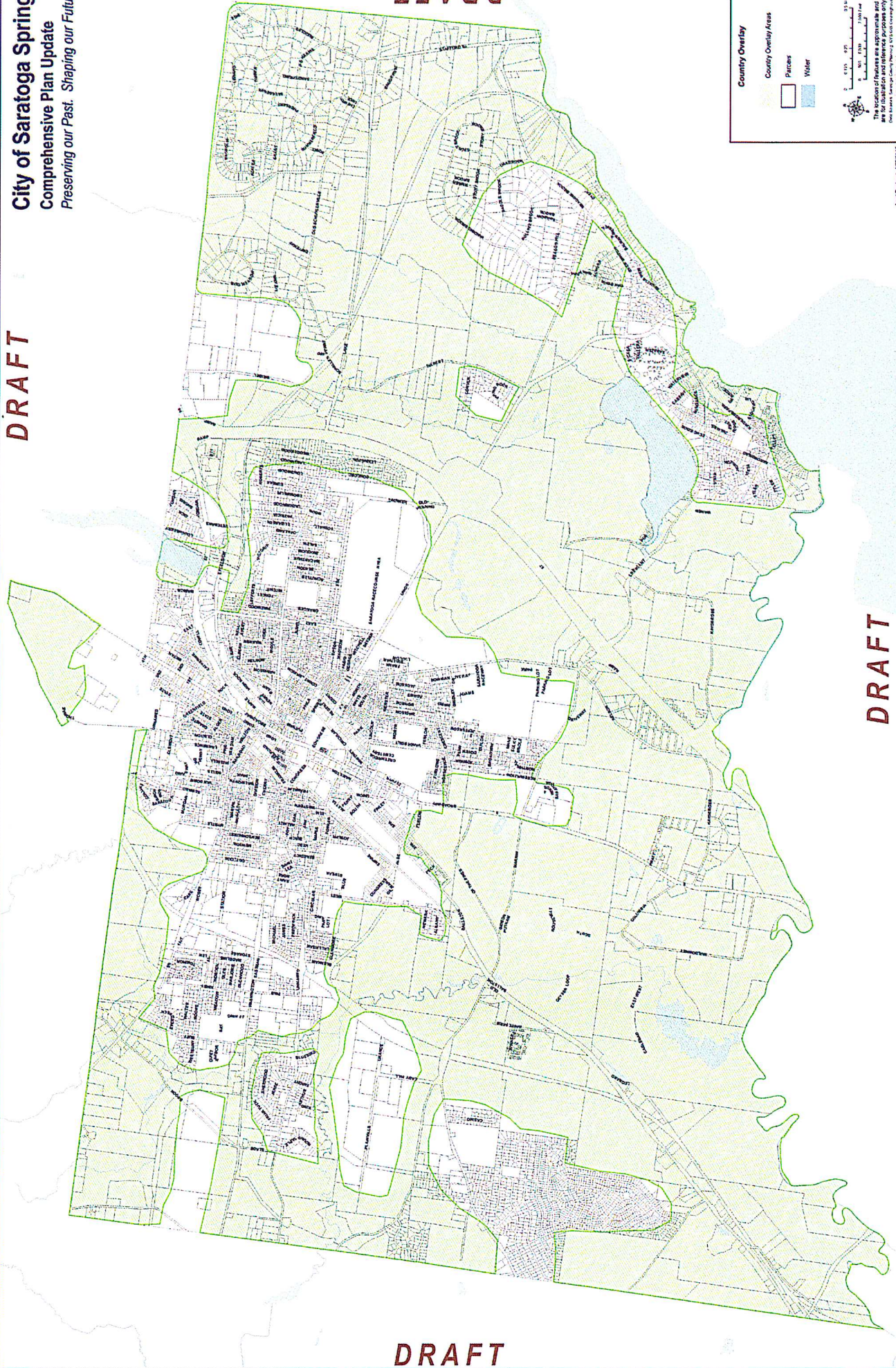
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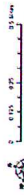
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County Overlay

County Overlay Areas

Parcels

Water



The location of features are approximate and are for illustration and reference purposes only.
Last Revised: 6/27/2015

Implementation

~~DISCLAIMER: THE FOLLOWING IS A DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE. IT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE FINAL AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.~~

The adoption of this Comprehensive Plan Update is the first step in the implementation process. This Plan is the result of considerable effort on the part of the City of Saratoga Springs and its City Council, the Office of Planning and Economic Development, Comprehensive Plan Committee volunteers, residents, business owners and concerned citizens. An active implementation process will be necessary for the Plan to have a lasting impact. Working with a range of public, private and non-profit implementation partners, the City can accomplish many of the recommended actions and continue striving toward its vision.

This plan has many stakeholders. The nearly 250 individual action items in the Plan can be implemented by a variety of stakeholders within the community. These include entities from the private, non-profit and public sectors. Some actions can be implemented by a single entity; others will require collaboration.

The vast majority of the recommended action items are independent of other action items. These actions can be carried out whenever the individual entities have the energy, funding or “window of opportunity”. The timing for their implementation is not at all that critical. It is certainly the objective of this Plan that the vast majority of the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan be implemented within the next ten years.

Within this Plan there are some minor adjustments to the policies relating to future land uses. There are some small changes in the recommended types of land uses, as well as some modification in location and intensity. Since existing land use ordinances and zoning regulation must be in conformance with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, it is a priority for the City of Saratoga Springs to enact some changes to bring regulations into compliance with the

new policies. It is fortunate that the City recently received grant funding to help accomplish this task.

