



# VILLAGE OF NORTH SYRACUSE

Comprehensive Plan 2045

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North Syracuse, New York

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# 1

## *Introduction*

### Why Plan for the Future?

A comprehensive plan, once adopted, serves as a legal document representing a collective vision for the future growth and development of the village. It represents a consensus among the village administration, village residents, village merchants and all other associated stakeholders. An adopted comprehensive plan requires the village administration, as well as other government agencies, to utilize the plan as an important tool to guide decisions about development and growth within the Village.

An adopted comprehensive plan also requires that land use and land use regulations be in accordance with the plan. To this effect, the plan provides the Village with appropriate guidance to review future projects as well as the essential background information and justification for amending the Village zoning ordinance or proposing other actions. The Plan provides guidance for developers and other project applicants and sponsors regarding where and how their projects can be developed. The Plan can also be used to help the Village facilitate the site plan review process and help with the detection of potential conflicts regarding proposed land use.

The Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan will serve as a guiding document for the Village of the North Syracuse and provide a vision for the next 20 years of the village. The plan should be reviewed after 10 years, to assess assumptions of growth and change within the greater region that molded the plan. This plan should be updated after 20 years to continue the village's road to the future.

### Public Participation and Civic Involvement

The Village of North Syracuse public participation process has involved the establishment of an Advisory Committee of residents who attended regular meetings during 2025 to assist with the guidance and preparation of this plan. The Advisory Committee provided guidance throughout the public participation process, ensuring that local residents and business owners had the opportunity to voice their opinion about the future development of the Village as well as what should be addressed within the comprehensive plan. As a result, the public participation process included a variety of methods to gather public opinion, including an in-person engagement session, a public hearing, and an email address posted on the Village website that allowed residents to ask questions and provide feedback.

### Legislative Authority

The New York State Legislature under Village Law Section 7-722 entitled Village Comprehensive Plan has granted villages within New York State with the authority to conduct and adopt a comprehensive plan and regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens. According to Village Law, "A 'village comprehensive plan' means the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited

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to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices, and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the village.”

## SEQR Compliance

A village comprehensive plan, as well as any amendment thereto, is subject to the provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) under Article Eight (8) of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations. The adoption of the comprehensive plan by the Village Board is considered a Type 1 action subject to review under 6 NYCRR 617. In addition, a comprehensive plan may be designed to also serve as, or be accompanied by, a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) pursuant to SEQRA statute and regulations.

The Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2025 has been prepared in a standard negative declaration format with SEQRA requirements.

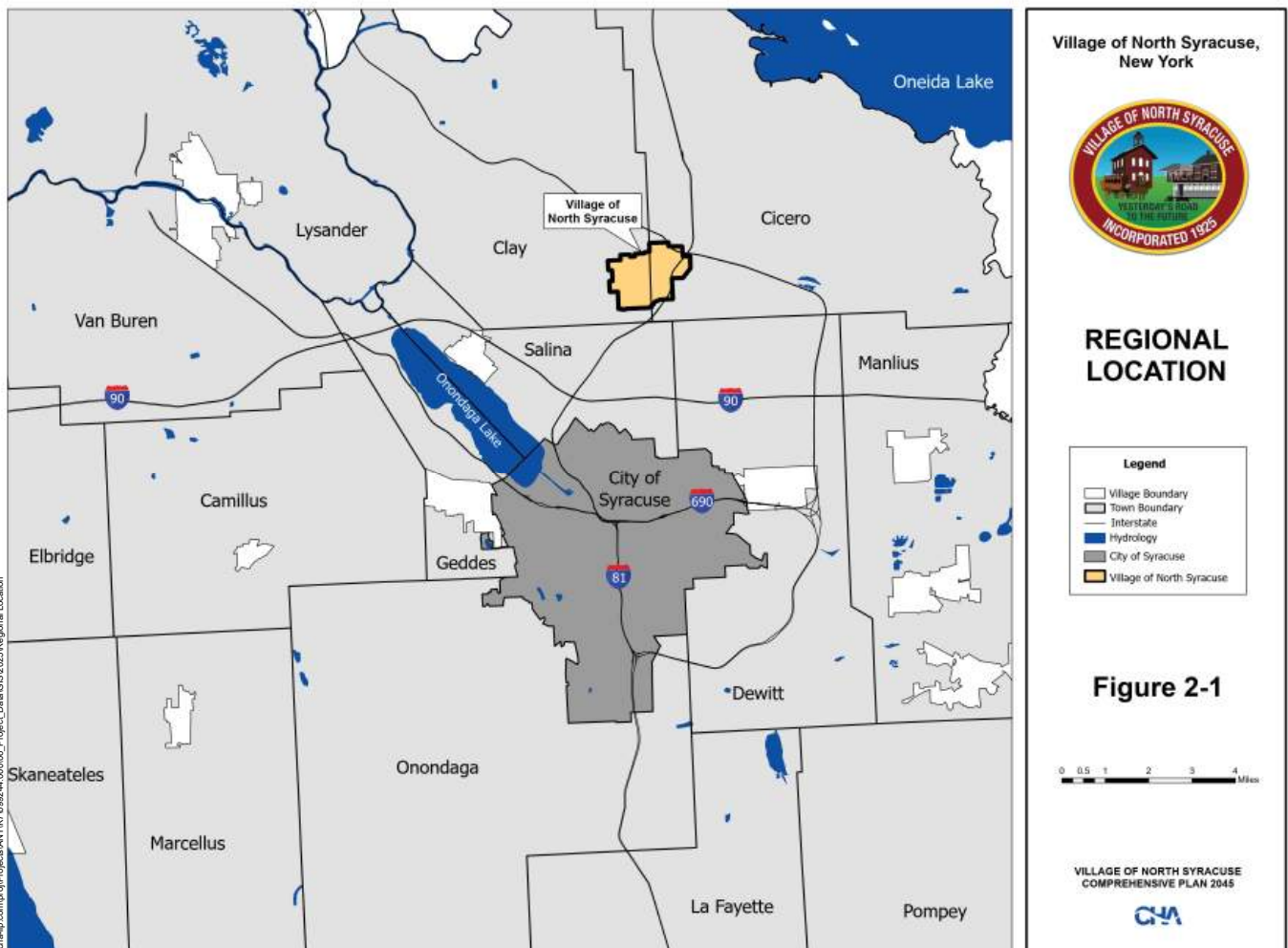
# 2

## *Existing Conditions*

### Regional Background

#### Location

The Village of North Syracuse is located in Onondaga County. As illustrated in Figure 2-1, the Town of Cicero and the Town of Clay bisect the Village of North Syracuse. The Village is located approximately seven miles north of the City of Syracuse, the urban center from which the Village received its name. Oneida lake lies to the North of the village, and Onondaga Lake lies to its southwest.



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## History

Before the Village of North Syracuse was settled by Europeans, the area was inhabited by the Onondaga Native Americans. The Onondaga Nation lies in the middle of the Haudenosaunee territory and was referred to as the Capital nation within the Haudenosaunee territory, as this was where Chiefs would gather for Grand Councils. During this time, the land that is now Main Street served as part of a Native American footpath that extended from Pennsylvania to the St. Lawrence River, sometimes called the “Thousand Island Trail.”

European settlers first came to the region in the early nineteenth century, and written records indicate that James Millard first settled the area adjacent to the present-day Village in 1810. By 1826, the settlement became known as Podunk, the first name for the Village of North Syracuse. As more Europeans settled the area, the Native American footpath was widened and eventually utilized to transport salt from Onondaga Lake to the Town of Brewerton as the Onondaga Lake Salt Industry developed. The Salt Road, as it became known, served as an important transportation corridor.

In 1844, seasonal conditions prevented the Salt Road from being utilized year-round, so plans were made to create the nation’s first plank road. In July 1846, the Salina and Central Square Plank Road Company finished the 16½-mile road at a cost of \$23,000. Following the growth of the Plank Road, the village of Podunk became known as Centerville in 1896.



Plank Road

The “Plank Road” helped to enhance the region’s economy and was in use until the early twentieth century when the first trolley lines were completed. The trolley lines helped to spur new growth within Centerville and the region north of the City of Syracuse. In November 1925, Centerville was officially incorporated as a Village and given the name “North Syracuse.” As the Village grew, it continued to develop along a major transportation route lined with small businesses surrounded by neighborhoods.

The village was the first village in New York State to establish a fire district, and its Volunteer Fire Department was started in 1913.

The Village also contains some of the oldest trees in Onondaga County. The Wizard of Oz Memorial Oak Grove, located behind the North Syracuse Junior High School running track, is an old growth oak forest that likely served as the inspiration for L. Frank Baum’s famous Great Forest of Oz in his book and subsequent motion picture, The Wizard of Oz. Baum grew up nearby in Mattydale and often played in the grove as a child. As a result, many local residents speculate that the Great Forest of Oz was modeled after North Syracuse’s Oak Grove Forest.

## Metropolitan Area Overview

The Village of North Syracuse is located in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area, which is situated in Central New York, South of Lake Ontario, and includes Onondaga, Oswego, and Madison Counties. There is an estimated population of 650,000 people within the Syracuse Metropolitan Area. The Village of North Syracuse is located within Onondaga County, north of the City of Syracuse.

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The Syracuse Metropolitan Area has seen little increase in population or employment in the past few decades. Like many areas in Upstate New York, the economy of the Syracuse Metro Area was historically centered on manufacturing, with companies such as Carrier, General Electric, and Lockheed Martin serving as key employers. Although manufacturing remains important, in recent decades the service sector has emerged as the region's primary source of job creation. In particular, education and healthcare industries have increased, with SUNY Upstate Medical Center and Syracuse University now serving as the area's largest employers. Other key employers in the area are St. Josephs Health, National Grid, and Crouse Hospital.

In October 2022, Micron Technology Inc, one of the nation's leading semiconductor manufacturing companies, announced its plans to invest \$100 billion in building a manufacturing Megafab facility in the Town of Clay, representing the largest private investment ever made in New York State history. This facility is projected to create nearly 50,000 jobs in New York, 9,000 of these jobs directly at the facility and over 40,000 community jobs to support the facility. This project will stimulate the growth of the Syracuse Metro area, potentially including the Village of North Syracuse, supporting the economy, providing jobs, and drawing in thousands of workers and residents. The population of Onondaga County is projected to increase by 25% over the next 20 years as a result of the Micron facility. The Village of North Syracuse may see a growing demand for housing and accommodations, retail, and mixed-use development in the next 20 years as a ripple effect of the Micron Project.

## Metropolitan Plans & Documents

There have been several regional planning documents created in the past decade that are significant to understanding the role of the Village of North Syracuse within the metropolitan area. These plans were reviewed and consulted during the preparation of the village's comprehensive plan. In 2013, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) created the Bicycle Commuter Corridor Study, which analyzed existing bicycle infrastructure in the area and identified key recommendations for future bicycle infrastructure to support a connected and accessible bike system. In 2023 Onondaga County adopted Plan Onondaga, the County Comprehensive Plan. This plan included a county-wide profile, community engagement, key themes, and an implementation plan for future planning efforts within the county. In 2024, the county completed Housing Onondaga: Onondaga County Housing Needs Assessment, which assessed the existing housing market in the county and provided guidance for future strategic development.

## Existing Village Plans

There are also several existing planning documents specific to the Village of North Syracuse which were consulted during the preparation of the Village Comprehensive Plan. The Village of North Syracuse Parks Master Plan was prepared in 2006 and provides an in-depth evaluation of each park within the village, along with recommendations for future park improvements. The Village Center Master Plan was prepared in 2012 and outlines issues and opportunities of the Village Center, as well as an implementation plan for future development. In 2016, The Village of North Syracuse Complete Streets and Re-Greening Plan was published, which analyzed what a Complete Streets Policy, an approach to planning streets that enables safe access for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists, would look like within the Village. The plan outlined existing issues with street safety and future goals and recommendations for implementing a Complete Streets Policy. Although some of these plans are now somewhat outdated, they served as a reference to help understand and compare past, current, and recommended conditions of the village.

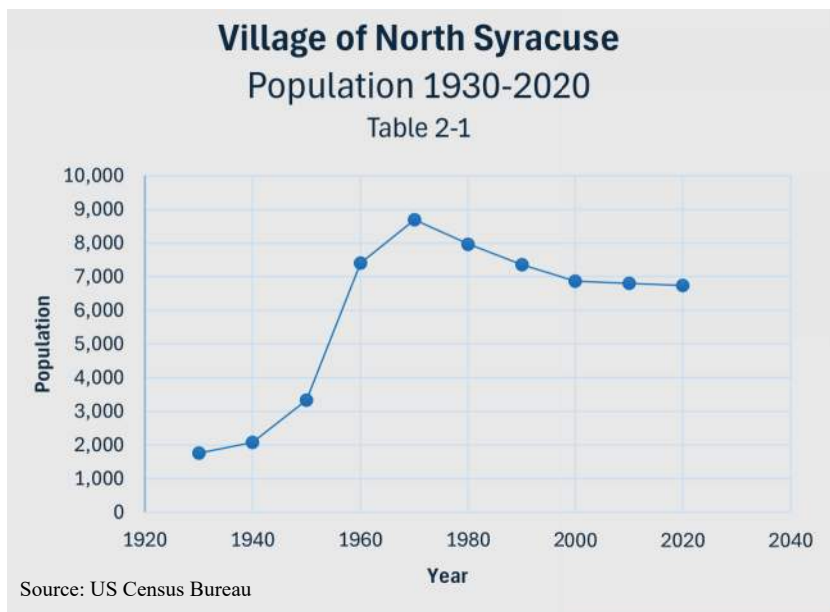
## Population Characteristics

Data was collected from the United States Census Bureau and analyzed in order to identify trends that have occurred within the Village during the past several decades. Where appropriate, trends occurring within the Village have been compared with trends occurring within Onondaga County for the same time periods.

### Overall Population Trends

As illustrated in Table 2-1, the Village of North Syracuse experienced a steady growth in its population from its incorporation as a Village in 1925. The population rose to 1,766 people in 1930, and nearly doubled by 1950 with 3,337 residents. The fastest rate of population growth was during the decade following World War II.

In the decade following WWII, the wide-scale use of the automobile and the Nation's new housing policies provided incentives for homeownership. These factors contributed to the Village's rapid development as a "bedroom community", or commuter town, following the Second World War increasing the Village's population to 7,412 in 1960. This represented a 122 percent increase that more than doubled the Village's population during the post-war decade.



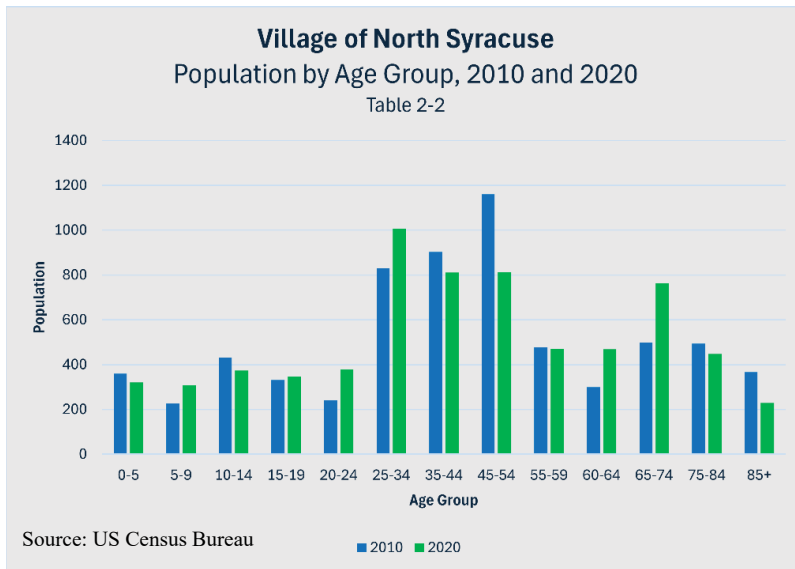
Ten years later, in 1970, the Village achieved its peak population of 8,687 people. However, rapid suburban development in the surrounding towns began to pull residents from the Village into the newer, more modern communities. This has resulted in the Village experiencing a gradual loss of population since 1970. As illustrated in Table 2-1, the Village had experienced a loss of 717 people by 1980. The following decade saw a continued decline, with a loss of 608 people in 1990 and a loss of 501 people in 2000 leaving the population at 6,862 people. In the past two decades, this decline in population has continued, however at a lesser rate, with a loss of 135 people over a 20-year period, only about a 2 percent decrease in population.

In comparison, Onondaga County has grown slightly within the past two decades, experiencing a 3.9 percent increase from 2000-2020. This county-wide trend, along with the flattening out of the village population within the past two decades, indicates that the village population has opportunity to grow within the next few decades.

### Population Breakdown

A basic age analysis of residents in the Village of North Syracuse illustrates a normal distribution of various age groups. Age distribution is important to take into consideration because the overabundance or lack of one age group can affect other aspects of the community's "health" such as demand on schools, labor force, housing, and services. As illustrated in Table 2-2, from 2010 to 2020 the Village of North Syracuse experienced a notable loss in the number of its middle-aged residents between 35-54, and an increase in its residents between 60-74. These trends indicate that the Village of North Syracuse is experiencing an aging population, a pattern consistent with many communities across Onondaga County that has been evident since 1990. However, as older residents

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transition from single-family homes to senior housing, additional housing stock will become available, creating opportunities to attract younger households. Early signs of this transition are already visible: the Village has seen a decline in residents aged 75 and older and a corresponding increase in adults aged 20 to 34, suggesting that younger generations are moving into the community at a growing rate.

A racial analysis of the village illustrates that the racial composition is relatively homogeneous, with nearly 86 percent of the Village's population as white according to the 2020 US Census Bureau. The population of the village has become more diverse in the past decade. In

2010, 94 percent of residents were white, 2.3 percent were Black/African American, 0.72 percent were Asian, and 1.7 percent identified as two or more races. In 2020, 86 percent of the population was white, 2.7 percent were Black/African American, 1.3 percent were Asian, and over 8 percent of the population identified as two or more races.

## Housing Characteristics

The following housing profile includes an inventory and analysis of the types of housing units, the value of single-family homes, trends involving the cost of rent within the Village, a breakdown of residential units by tenure, and a brief synopsis involving the age of homes within the Village.

### Housing and Households

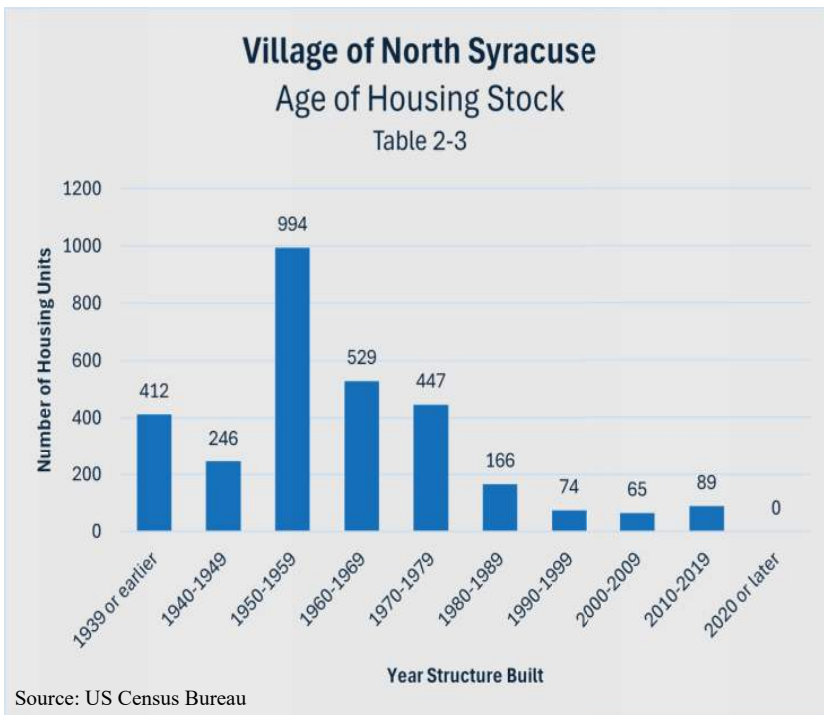


As with many Villages within Onondaga County, the majority of North Syracuse's build-out land consists of residential properties. The Village of North Syracuse had 3,366 housing units (a single housing structure in which people are living) in 2020, which represents an increase of 165 units from 2010. Almost 95 percent of the 3,366 housing units were occupied in 2020; and 39 percent of all housing units were rental properties. The ratio of rental properties to owner-occupied properties is similar to those that exist at the County level, with 37.8% of all housing in Onondaga County being renter-occupied as of 2020. Data trends, however, indicate that the number of owner-occupied housing units is decreasing, while

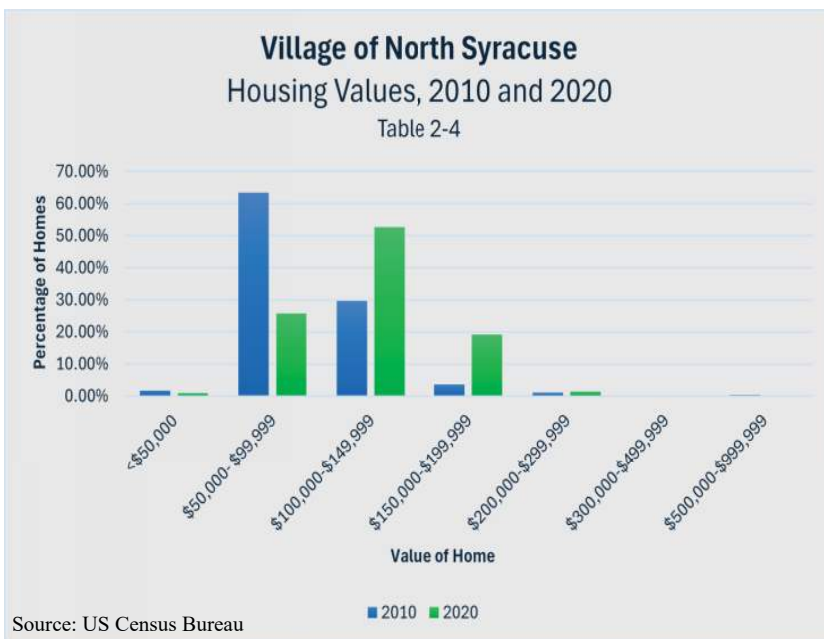
the number of rental-occupied housing units is increasing, both county-wide and within the village.

Many of the homes in the Village are "young" when compared to homes in other villages in Onondaga County. Many surrounding towns and villages have a very old and more historic housing stock, with 27% of the homes in Onondaga county being built before 1939. As illustrated in Table 2-3, only a small percentage of homes were built in the village during that time period, with approximately 78 percent of North Syracuse's housing stock was built after 1950.

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The Village of North Syracuse has both a young housing stock as well as one that is considered to be affordable when compared to the average cost of housing within Onondaga County. In 2020, the median house value in Onondaga County was \$148,100. The median house value in the village of North Syracuse in 2020 was \$117,400, about 31,000 less than that of the overall county. As illustrated in Table 2-4, more than 26 percent of the homes within North Syracuse were valued less than \$100,000 dollars in 2020. Approximately 53 percent of the homes were valued between \$100,000 and \$149,999 and 19 percent were valued between 150,000 and \$199,999. Only 1.4 percent of homes were valued at more than \$200,000 dollars. The value of housing within the Village of North Syracuse is consistent with the style, size, and age of post-war homes.

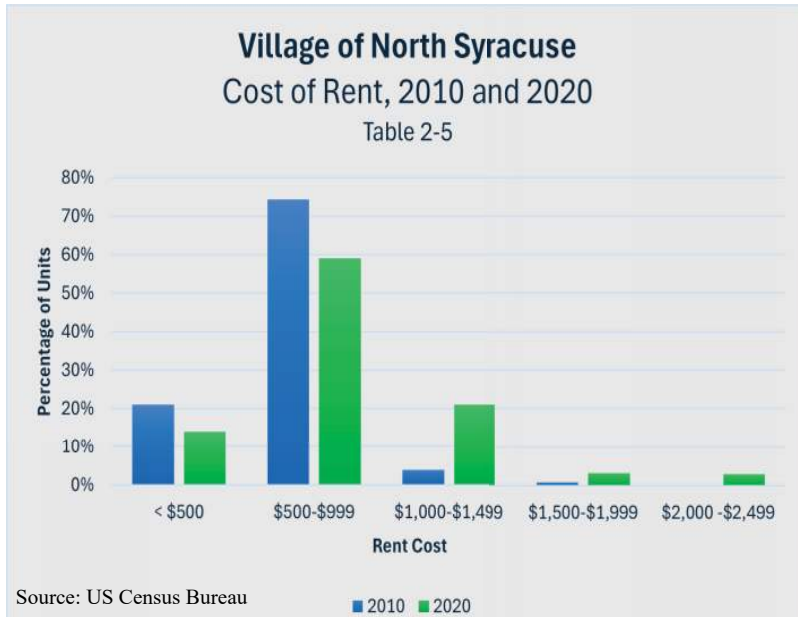


While the values of homes in the village are generally more affordable when compared to the county level values, home values have increased significantly in the village in the past decades. As illustrated in Table 2-4, as of 2020, the majority of homes were valued within the \$100,000 to \$149,999 range, while in 2010, the majority of homes were valued under \$100,000. The number of homes valued above \$150,000 has increased significantly since 2010, from just 99 units in 2010 to 399 units in 2020.

This trend reflects the county-wide trend of rising home values, with county-wide home values increasing by \$23,700 from 2010 to 2020.

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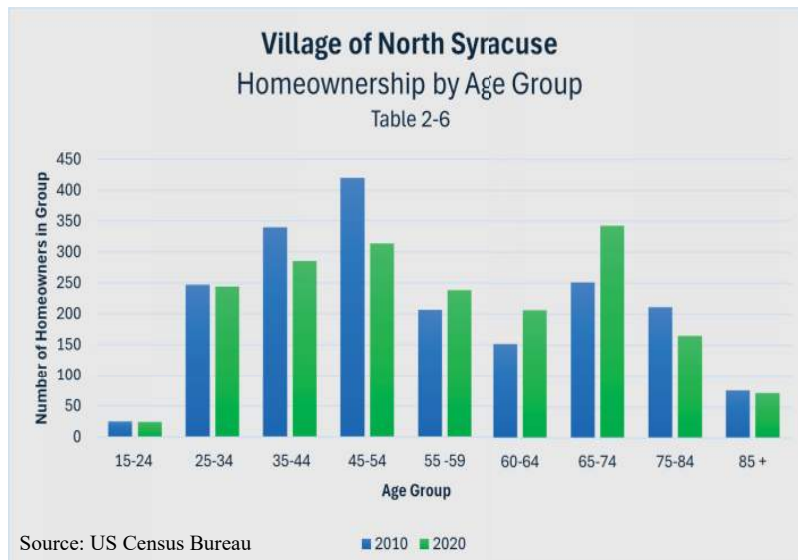
Cost of rent within the village of North Syracuse has increased significantly in the last decade. In 2010, the median cost of rent was \$685, while in 2020, the median rent cost had increased to \$877. As illustrated in Table 2-5, from 2010-2020, the percentage of rental units under \$999 decreased significantly, and the percentage of units in the \$1,000 to \$2,499 range increased. In 2010, 95.3 percent of rental units were less than \$999, and 21 percent were less than \$500.



In 2020, however, only 73% of units were under \$999, and only 14% were under \$500. Rental units in the \$1,000 to \$1,499 range increased from 3.9% in 2010 to 21% in 2020. Although there were few rental units in 2020 that were higher than \$1,499 in 2020, these numbers also increased from 2010, following the trend of rising rent costs in the village.

Rent costs in the village are on average very similar to those at the county level. The median rent in Onondaga County in 2020 was \$888, only \$10 higher than the median rent of the village.

## Tenure by Age Group

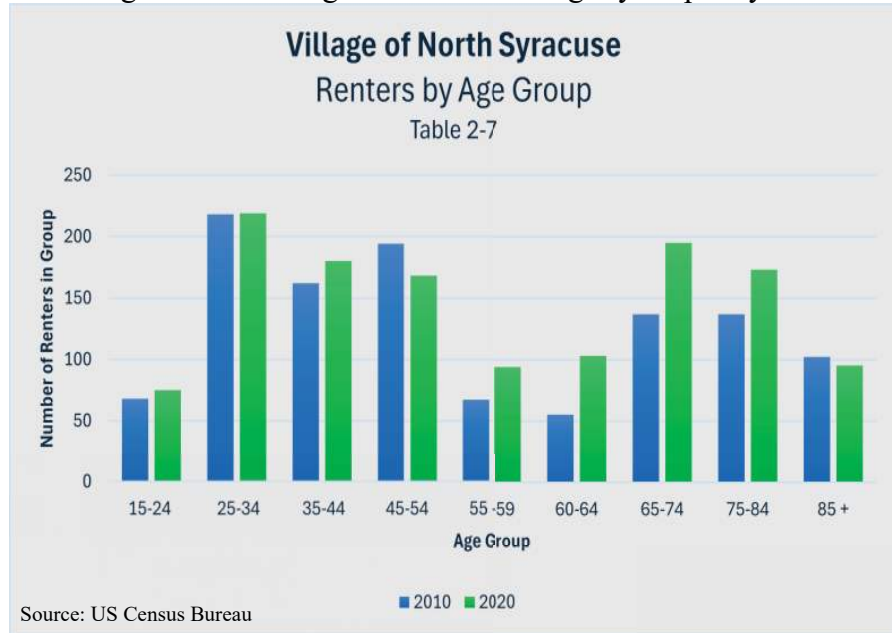


As illustrated in Table 2-6, there has been a decrease in younger and middle-aged homeowners in the Village of North Syracuse. Between 2010 and 2020, homeownership among individuals aged 25 to 34 remained relatively stable, while ownership among those aged 35 to 54 declined significantly. Conversely, the village experienced an increase in homeowners between the ages of 55 and 74 at a rate similar to the decrease in the middle-aged group. This increase in older homeowners is reflective of the aging population of the village. The homeownership trends experienced by the Village of North Syracuse are not uncommon to villages within Onondaga County, as many villages have experienced a decline in homeownership within

recent years, especially in ages 35 to 54. The increase in older homeowners also reflects the county-wide trend of an aging population.

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Renter ages in the village have shifted slightly in past years. In 2020, the majority of renters in the village



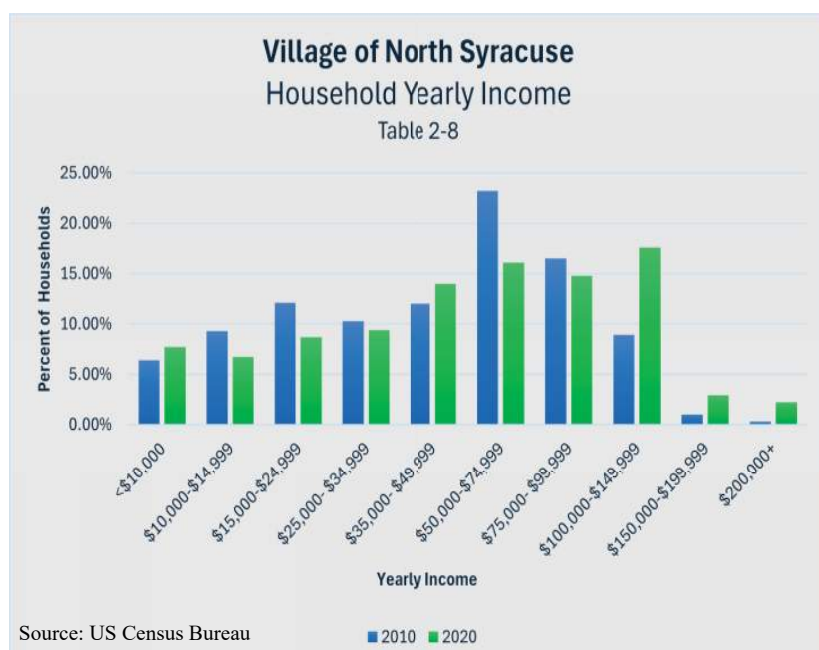
were between 25 to 54 and 65 to 84. As shown in Table 2-7, the numbers of renters between the ages of 15 and 54 have fluctuated slightly but have not dramatically changed from 2010 to 2020. While younger renter numbers have remained relatively stable, the number of older renters, particularly those aged 55 to 74, has grown significantly, reflecting an aging population.

When compared to the rest of the county, the Village of North Syracuse has a higher percentage of older renters than many other villages. This increase in the number of older renters corresponds with the overall aging population and the increase in senior housing in the village.

## Economic Overview

The following economic overview reflects trends regarding household incomes, local and regional employment trends, an overview of the metropolitan area that explains how the Village fits into the region, and finally, educational and employment trends.

### Household Incomes



On average, incomes in the Village of North Syracuse have increased. From 2010 to 2020, the median household yearly income rose from \$49,764 in 2010, to \$57,125 in 2020, an increase of \$7,351.

Households earning \$100,000 to \$149,999 experienced the most significant growth, rising from 8.9 percent in 2010 to 17.6 percent in 2020. The number of households making \$150,000 to \$199,999, while still quite low compared to incomes below \$150,000, also saw notable growth, from only 1 percent in 2010 to 2.9 percent in 2020. The number of households that made over \$200,000 increased from 0.3 percent in 2010 to 2.20 percent in 2020.

While incomes in North Syracuse on average are lower than those county-wide, the trend of increasing household incomes within the village of North Syracuse is consistent with the increase in incomes county-wide.

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## Local and Regional Employment

As of 2020, the most common occupation groups in the Village of North Syracuse are Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Manufacturing, and Educational Services. Between 2010 and 2020, the Village experienced a decline in the number of its residents that work in the manufacturing, entertainment, accommodation and food service industries. During the same ten-year period, the Village experienced an increase in the number of its residents who work in transportation services, information services, educational, healthcare and social services, and professional scientific, management, and administrative services.

These trends correspond with the regional shift from manufacturing industry to an increase in the service sector, specifically healthcare and education industries. Key employers in the region include SUNY Upstate Medical Center, Syracuse University, St. Josephs Health, National Grid, and Crouse Hospital.

The future arrival of the Micron Technology Mega-Fab in the Town of Clay is anticipated to bring a significant increase in jobs to the region, including to the Village of North Syracuse.

## Higher Education and Labor Force

Between 2010 and 2020, the Village of North Syracuse experienced an increase in the number of residents who received a college education. The number of residents receiving a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 321 residents, from 633 residents in 2010 to 954 residents in 2020, and the number of residents who did not finish high school decreased by 233 residents, from 418 residents in 2010 to only 185 residents in 2020.

From 2010 to 2020, the Village of North Syracuse experienced an overall increase in its workforce (i.e. those 16 and older) of 179 residents, from 5,539 residents in 2010, to 5,718 residents in 2020. Onondaga County, on the other hand, experienced a slight decrease in overall workforce from 2010 to 2020. In 2010, about 64.3% of the total population were employed, while in 2020, 61.7% of the total population was employed.

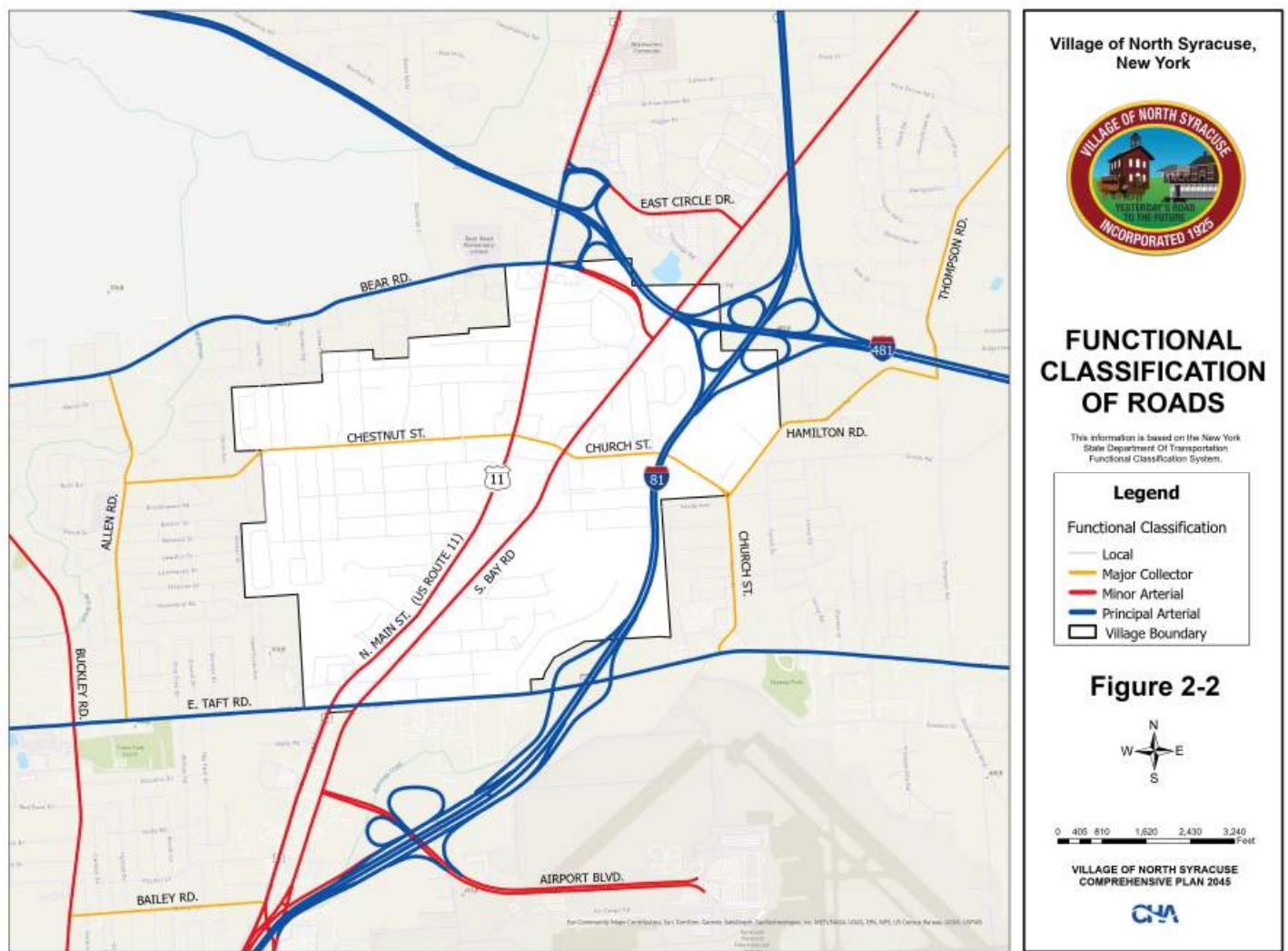
## Local & Regional Transportation Networks

### Traffic Circulation

Transportation systems have played a major role in shaping land use and development patterns within the Village of North Syracuse. Traffic is one of the more visible impacts of land development and economic activity. Traffic caused by further development and economic activities stimulated by land development not only affects the Village's local road network but also impacts the connected highway system and regional travel.

The transportation network of the Village of North Syracuse must provide local and through traffic access to nearby residential areas and the business district. The map titled "Functional Classification of Roads" (Figure 2-2) illustrates the existing road network within the Village and surrounding area. This map also illustrates the functional classification of the roadways within the Village. The road network must balance "mobility": the ability to move from one location to another, and "access": the ability to get to or from a specific parcel of land. Some roads are designed to emphasize mobility over access, while others are the reverse. Functional classification is a means of defining the relative amount of mobility versus access a specific roadway is intended to provide. Arterials are oriented toward mobility (speed and capacity) rather than access, while local streets provide high levels of access at typically slower speeds. Collectors should provide a balance between access and mobility. Functional classifications also reflect expected traffic volumes, capacity, speeds, and design characteristics.

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There are currently 32.3 miles of public roadways in the Village of North Syracuse, about 26 miles of which the Village is responsible for operating and maintaining. Onondaga County operates and maintains the 1.87 miles of South Bay Road that runs through the village, and the New York State Department of Transportation operates and maintains 1.7 miles of US Route 11 and 4.6 miles of Interstate 81 and 481 that run through the Village.

The two main routes within the Village, US Route 11 and South Bay Road, are classified as minor arterials. Although minor arterials are principally designed to emphasize mobility over land access, because of the village environment, these roads are also used to access a high number of properties within the Village. This is both a benefit and a drawback in the marketability of properties within the Village. Multiple cross streets and/or curb cuts provide excellent access to a property, but too many points of access create numerous conflict points and causes confusion on the part of the driver. The other purpose of a minor arterial is to connect a community with neighboring ones and with the metropolitan highway system.

Both US Route 11 and South Bay Road serve the Village of North Syracuse and connect to the surrounding roadway network. They both traverse generally in a north-south direction and carry the most amount of traffic in the Village. A review of historical traffic volumes from 2003 to 2024 show that traffic volumes along US Route 11 have decreased since the early 2000s, but have remained relatively stable within the last decade, apart from a brief dip in 2020 likely as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Traffic on South Bay Road has fluctuated slightly but has remained generally stable since the early 2000s, aside from a temporary dip in 2020 during the pandemic. Local village roads have also seen little change in traffic volumes over the past decade. These patterns mirror

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trends in other Onondaga County villages, such as Baldwinsville and Fayetteville, which experienced similar pandemic-related declines but have otherwise maintained flat or slightly reduced traffic volumes over time. These trends indicate that the congestion in the village is mostly localized, caused by driveway access points and local traffic conflicts rather than sustained increases in daily traffic.

Both US Route 11 and South Bay Road are primarily two-lane highways with development along both sides of the road. This adjacent development significantly hinders the ability to increase the capacity of the roadways. This is especially true of US Route 11 through the Village. Localized congestion currently exists on these routes, especially during the morning and evening commuting periods, due to the conflict between through traffic and local traffic. Uncontrolled driveway access, commercial truck traffic, and parking along the front of businesses are several of the factors which contribute to this congestion.

The vital links of the roadway system within the Village of North Syracuse are the collector and local roads. These roadways provide the connection for the residential areas of the Village to the arterial system. Although the collector and local roadway networks do not currently have congestion problems, congestion problems in other parts of the Village have the ability to impact the collector and local roadways. Travelers tend to take the quickest route, although it may be longer. If congestion occurs on the arterial network, then drivers will switch to the collector and local roads to reach their final destination, thereby increasing traffic through the neighborhoods. To assure that traffic travels on the appropriate roadways, it is critical the Village manage congestion to avoid trip diversions into areas that were not designed to accommodate significant amounts of traffic.

In 2018, the Syracuse Metropolitan Traffic Council (STMC) assisted the village in a study that analyzed the traffic impacts of several potential changes and improvements to the Route 11/Church Street intersection. These changes included consolidating several parking lots into one municipal lot, reducing and altering Route 11 driveway access, promoting primary driveway access at Church Street, maintaining full access at Route 11, Church Street intersection, and extending Church Street as a right-out only at South Bay Road. Since this study in 2018, the village has implemented one of these, making Church Street a right-out only at South Bay Road. Other changes discussed in this study have not yet been implemented but may be considered in the next 20 years.

## Pedestrian Connection

A typical concern of villages throughout Onondaga County, including the Village of North Syracuse, is the potential conflict that occurs between pedestrians and vehicles, particularly in the heart of the Village. Villages typically evolved around a main transportation corridor that connected nearby communities. These transportation corridors, within villages, were mainly pedestrian oriented as the only alternative mode of traffic back then was horse and buggy. Therefore, the Village was developed with only that in mind, as the automobile overtook the horse and buggy as a means of transportation, the pedestrian became secondary. Today, the village is fairly walkable, but pedestrian travel can still be dangerous due to the amount of traffic traveling along US Route 11 and the numerous curb cuts and parking maneuvers that occur. Recent updates to pedestrian connectivity along Route 11 have significantly increased safety and walk-ability of the village's central corridor. Many of these updates originated from the North Syracuse Complete Streets Plan completed in 2016, which outlined the village's goals and plans for safer vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation within the village.



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In accordance with some of the suggestions in the Complete Streets Plan, the NYSDOT recently made pedestrian improvements to Route 11, adding or improving sidewalks and crosswalks to meet ADA requirements along Route 11 from Taft Road to Caughdenoy Road, just north of the village limits. This has created a safer and more accessible pedestrian route through the core of the Village. There are also future projects (discussed later in this document) planned to improve and add additional sidewalks throughout the local interior streets within the village, improving this pedestrian network further.

## Bicycle Connection

While pedestrian connectivity has been improved within the village, the village lacks a cohesive bicycle network. The village currently has limited bicycle infrastructure, with lane markings on some roads but no formal lanes or bike racks. In 2013, the SMTC completed a Bicycle Commuter Corridor Study in 2013 that recommended implementing bicycle infrastructure, including adding a bike lane along South Bay Road to connect to existing bike lanes south of the village and adding sharrows (shared lane markings) and “Share the Road” signs to Chestnut Street and Church Street.

Additionally, in 2016, the Village of North Syracuse Complete Streets Plan also outlined recommendations for future bicycle infrastructure, including installing bike lanes along Route 11, sharrows and “Share the Road” signage along Chestnut Street, installing bike racks and signage near community destination points and bus stops, and connecting bike routes within the village to the City of Syracuse and the Oneida Lake region.

Since these two plans, sharrows and bike road signs have been added along Chestnut Street and Church Street. Although there has been planning efforts and community support behind improving the village’s bike network, lack of budget has been a limiting factor, and the rest of the outlined recommendations have not yet been implemented.

## Regional Transportation

Onondaga County is located at the crossroads of two major interstate routes, I-81 and I-90 (NYS Thruway). The county features strong transportation facilities for rail and aviation that contribute to its strength in distribution, warehousing, and shipping. The Syracuse Hancock International Airport is located directly southeast of the Village of North Syracuse, on the east side of Interstate 81, and is a popular option for commercial flights.

There are several regionally significant transportation projects underway that will likely affect the Village of North Syracuse. The I-81 Viaduct Project is a NYSDOT project that will eventually remove the elevated portion of Interstate 81 in downtown Syracuse and replace it with a community grid. This project has already started construction, with the current phase including reconstruction of the I-81/I-481 interchange. Construction has already impacted traffic in the village, with detours rerouting traffic through the village, and future phases may have further impacts on the traffic patterns within the village.

Another significant project is the enhancement of the public transit system. Centro has been working in partnership with local communities to implement a Bus Rapid Transit Network in Onondaga County. This may impact the frequency of bus routes within the village.

The Micron project may also cause increases in traffic levels, as there will be additional residents commuting to work at the facility in Clay as well as other supporting jobs. General traffic levels may also rise along with the projected population increase and the housing that will be necessary to accommodate this population.

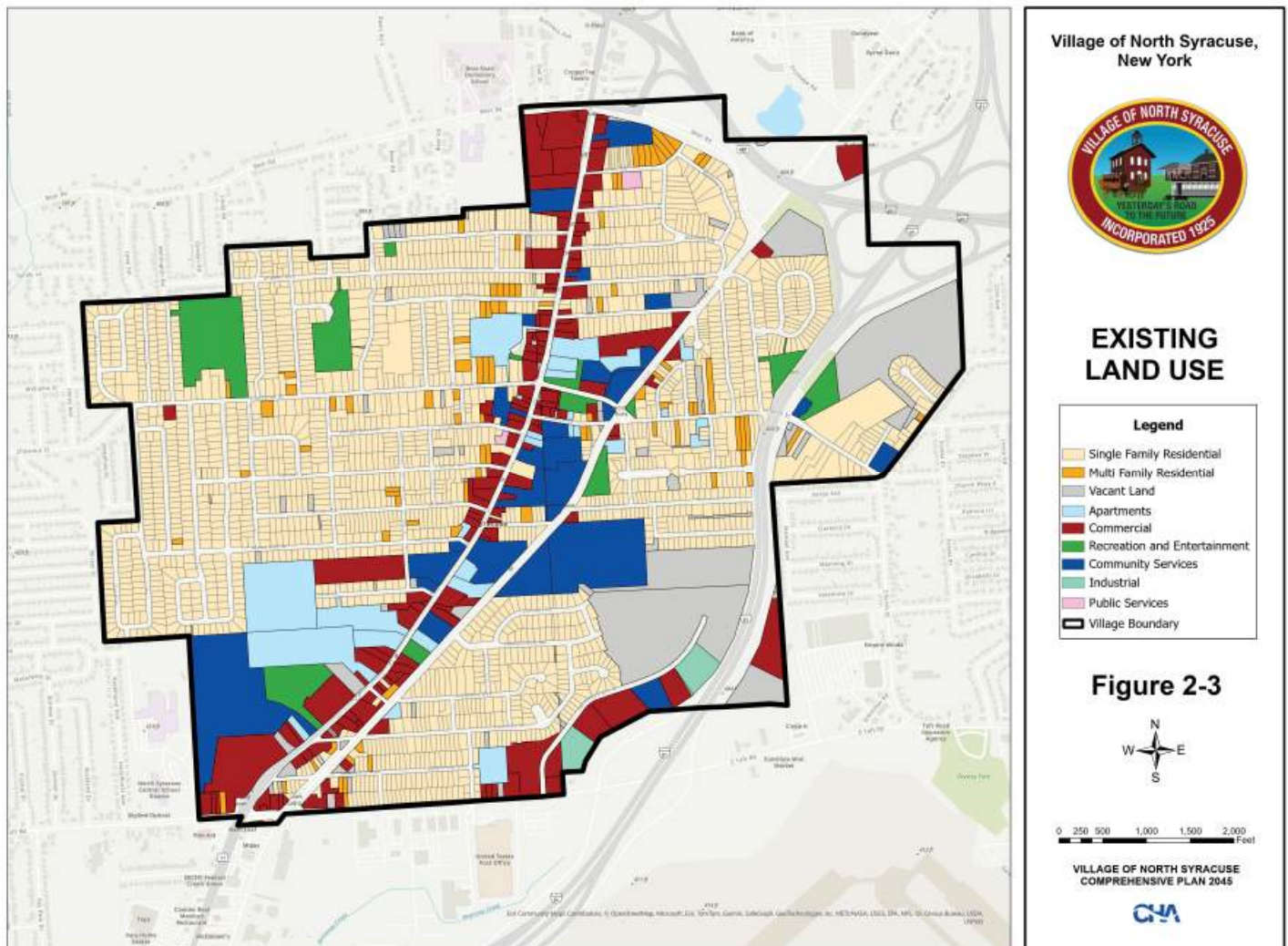
## Land Use Characteristics and Trends

Land uses within the Village were identified and documented by parcel utilizing information from the New York State GIS Clearinghouse. A map titled “Existing Land Use” (Figure 2-3) is provided to show the pattern of land use existing throughout the Village. A summary of land use is provided below.

The Village of North Syracuse is almost entirely built out, with 90% of its land actively developed. Residential land use comprises around 62% of the total land area in the Village. Commercial uses make up about 12% of Village land area with a very small percentage devoted to industrial uses. Recreation and Entertainment (including the village’s parks), community services, and public services make up around 14% of village land.

The amount of developed land in the village has increased slightly since the early 2000’s, with vacant land decreasing from 14% to 10%. Much of the remaining vacant land is wetland and presents challenges to future development.

Many single-family residential properties consist of smaller, post-war-style homes. With most land already developed and little vacant land available, opportunities for new residential construction have been limited over the past two decades. However, the development that has occurred reflects changing trends and consumer demand, introducing larger lots primarily occupied by multifamily duplexes rather than single-family homes. Between 2004 and 2006, several cul-de-sac subdivisions featuring duplexes were built in the Village’s northeast corner continuing the cul-de-sac development pattern that began in the southeast corner during the 1990s, although those



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The multifamily trend has continued in other areas of the Village, complemented by the addition of new senior housing and apartment complexes, which have diversified the housing stock and provided options for renters, smaller households, and older residents seeking accessible living arrangements.

Commercial development, once concentrated within the center of the Village, has expanded along the U.S. Route 11, which extends through the Village to other parts of the region. This commercial development is a mixture of strip and stand-alone commercial development. Uncontrolled driveway access and excessive curb

cuts onto Route 11 and along certain sections of South Bay Road contributes to existing traffic congestion. The numerous commercial signs which exist along both corridors add to the visual clutter created by the variety of building styles, shapes, and sizes. Commercial parcels located adjacent to the residential parcels are in most cases too small to accommodate proper buffers to protect the privacy of surrounding properties.



Two shopping plazas exist at either end of Route 11 as it extends through the Village. Both plazas are set back from the road with large parking lots between the buildings and Route 11 and are more easily accessed by vehicle than on foot. The plazas are technically accessible to pedestrians via sidewalks existing along Route 11 to get to the shopping centers, however there are no pedestrian walkways within or through the parking lots, and the malls are not as pedestrian friendly as shops within the village center. The plaza located at the intersection of Taft Road and Route 11 is comprised of retail stores, restaurants, gyms, and offices. Bear Road Plaza, located at the north end of Route 11 at the intersection of Bear Road and Route 11, contains mostly retail and offices.

The type of retail and service uses located in the Village has changed over the decades. Uses which primarily serve the local residents, such as grocery stores, dry cleaners, and doctors have largely been replaced by specialty shops and auto-related services such as gas stations and repair shops. Many of the retail and service uses have relocated to enclosed strip malls and shopping plazas such as the two in the village and others located outside of the Village's boundaries. Big box retailers such as Wal-Mart and Target have established outside of the Village along Route 31 in the Town of Clay and along the northern section of Route 11 in the Town of Cicero. This has resulted in Village residents having to travel farther to acquire goods and services. This is a problem, primarily for the increasing population of seniors and for those who enjoy walking from home to shop for day-to-day needs. The lack of a central neighborhood store also reduces opportunities for community gathering and adding to the village character.

Gateway Park located in the eastern section of the Village was established to attract office and warehouse type uses. This business park is mostly comprised of office and industry use, including medical offices and manufacturing facilities. Wetlands and other environmental constraints have made it difficult to develop all of the Gateway Park properties.

Community services, which include such institutional uses as libraries, churches, schools, government buildings, emergency services, and cemeteries are scattered throughout the Village.



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**Table 2-9**

**VILLAGE OF NORTH SYRACUSE, NEW YORK, ZONING DISTRICTS, PERMITTED USES AND USES SUBJECT TO SPECIAL PERMIT, 2025**

PERMITTED USES		USES SUBJECT TO SPECIAL PERMIT
<b>PD Planned Development</b>	Planned Development	NA
<b>C-T Commercial Transitional</b>	Retail, personal service and restaurant, professional and business offices, municipal uses	Similar Uses of Similar Character
<b>C-1 Business</b>	Multiple-family dwellings, small retail and personal service uses, small professional and business office uses, schools, mortuary/funeral homes, public utility Substations, accessory uses and structures, and residential units in combination with nonresidential use.	Public outdoor recreation, community centers, private clubs, religious institutions, restaurants and bars, and package food restaurants.
<b>C-2 Commercial</b>	Retail, professional and business office uses, religious institutions, private clubs and community centers, schools, funeral homes, multiple family dwellings, public utility substations, and accessory uses and structures	Public outdoor and indoor recreation, drive-in service, restaurants and bars, motor vehicle sales and repairs, hotels/motels, and shopping centers.
<b>C-2A Storage Unit</b>	N/A	Storage Units
<b>C-3 Village Center</b>	Retail, professional and business office uses, religious institutions, clubs and community centers, schools, funeral homes, multiple-family dwelling, public utility substations, accessory uses and structures, and residential units in combination with nonresidential use.	Public outdoor and indoor recreation, drive-in service, restaurants and bars, motor vehicle service businesses, hotels/motels, and shopping centers.
<b>R-M Multiple- Residential</b>	One, two and multiple-family dwellings, schools, cemeteries, public utility substations, and accessory uses and structures	Home occupation, public outdoor recreation, community centers, private clubs, and religious institutions.
<b>R-9 Residential 9000</b>	One-family dwellings and accessory uses and structures	Home occupation, public outdoor recreation, community centers, religious institutions, golf courses, schools, cemeteries, and public utility substations
<b>R-SR Residential Senior Citizen</b>	Senior citizen housing	Home occupation, public outdoor recreation, community centers, private clubs, and religious institutions

## Infrastructure and Utilities

In order to obtain information regarding the current conditions and future needs of infrastructure and utilities, and other services within the Village, interviews were conducted with representatives from the each department, utility, or service provider.

## Infrastructure Maintenance

The Village of North Syracuse Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for maintaining and repairing much of the infrastructure within the Village. Major responsibilities include maintaining the roads, sidewalks, streetlights, street trees, parks, several buildings, and miles of sewers. Currently, the DPW has seven full-time employees who utilize a variety of equipment to help maintain Village infrastructure. When necessary, the Village DPW will coordinate efforts with State and County agencies to repair infrastructure that services the Village businesses and its residents. Current challenges the DPW faces include lack of funding for staffing, need for equipment upgrades, and infrastructure upgrades. The DPW building roof was recently renovated and while the is functional, it is anticipated that the building may need further upgrades or a new facility will be required within the next 20 years.

## Water

Water service in the village is provided through the Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) and reaches the village via a system of pipelines from both Lake Ontario and Otisco Lake. The village water system is primarily supplied from three locations: a pump station on Wolf Street in Syracuse, a trunk water main along Route 11 from Mattydale into and through the village, and a one-million-gallon water storage tank on Tuller Road.

Currently, there are no current issues with water service within the village of North Syracuse. The water system requires little to no improvements and experiences little to no disruptions. OCWA has several planned projects that will affect the village water system. The Wolf Street Pump Station is scheduled to be rehabilitated, which will improve the function and longevity of the overall system. Additionally, the North Syracuse Water Storage Tank will be refurbished and repainted. Water service will be maintained in the village throughout these improvement projects.

In 2019, OCWA replaced the water main along Church Street and Chestnut Street as part of the North Syracuse Complete Streets Corridor Project. OCWA constantly monitors the condition of water mains within their service area, and it can be expected that some water mains will require replacement over the next 20 years to maintain and improve the water system. OCWA should be consulted to evaluate impacts if any property with high-volume water use is proposed in the village.

## Stormwater, Wastewater, and Sewage

The Village is served by the Onondaga County Metropolitan Sewage Treatment facility located along the east shore of Onondaga Lake in the City of Syracuse. The Village sewer system was built in three phases during the mid-1960's. Today, the sewer system services village households and businesses.

The Village is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the sewer system within the Village. DPW employees periodically flush or clean the sanitary sewers as needed. However, due to the complexity of servicing major repairs, the Village often must contract out to either Onondaga County or to a private party to properly service the system. The trunk sewers that connect the Village's sewer network to the County's network are County-owned, and thus, are serviced by Onondaga County. The sewer system is currently past its life expectancy of 50 years and likely needs upgrading. Recently the sewer system has been spot-repaired in several areas. An inventory and inspection of the system is necessary in the next few years to determine what improvements are needed.

The Village stormwater drainage system is completely separated from the sanitary sewer system and connects

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with the County trunk mains. All catch basins within the village are maintained by the DPW. Currently, the Village does not have any major capital improvement projects scheduled for the sewer or stormwater system, however, it is anticipated that there will be improvements needed to the sewer system within the next 20 years.

## Electrical and Gas

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Electric and natural gas services are primarily provided by National Grid. There are no major electrical generation or electric and natural gas distribution facilities within Village boundaries.

## Communication Systems

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The Village is provided with telephone, cellular, and cable communication services provided by a variety of service providers in the Central New York region. Leading internet providers include Spectrum and Verizon Fios, and T-Mobile Home Internet.

## Municipal Trash & Refuse Collection

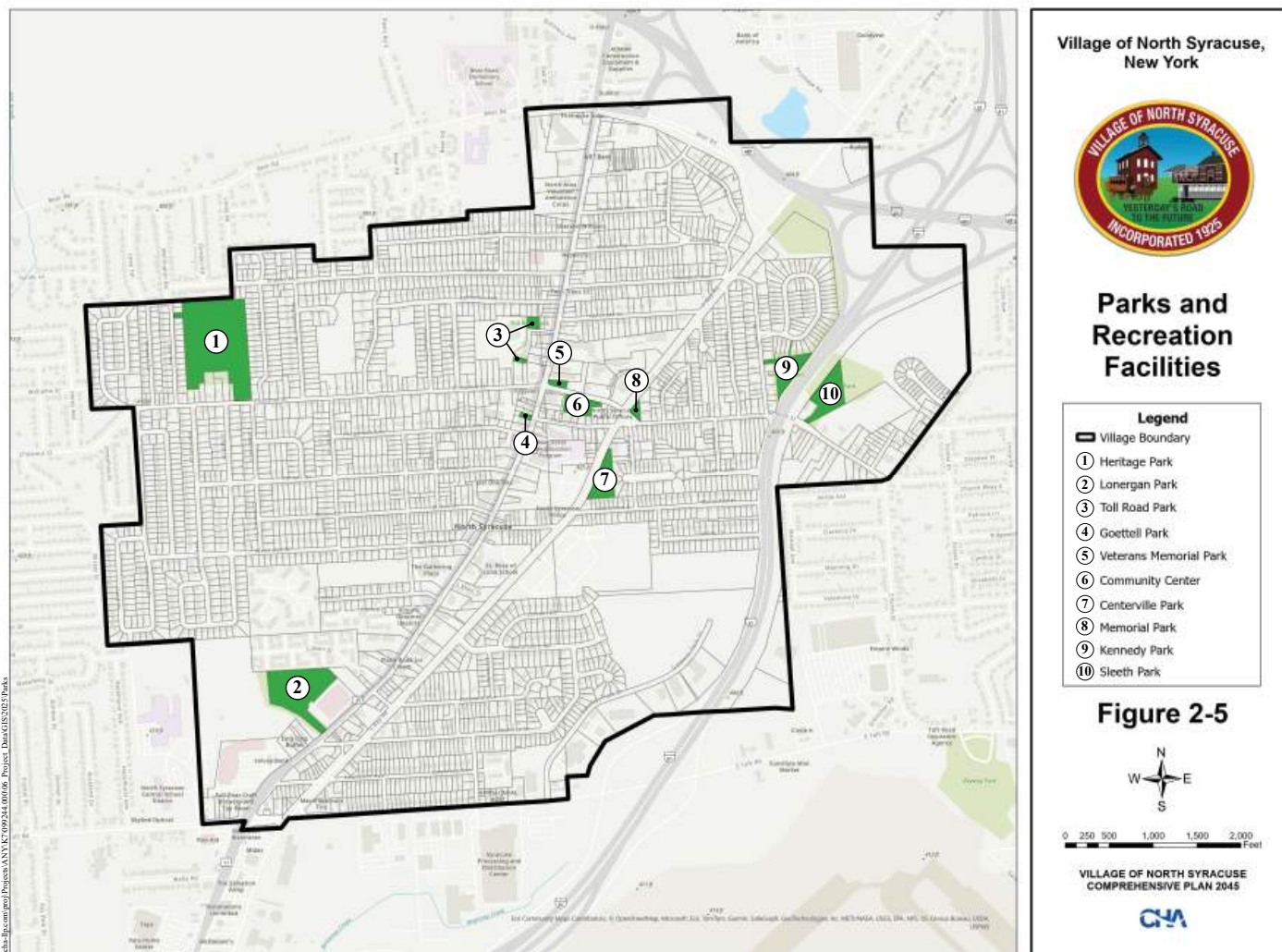
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Private contractors provide refuse collection services within the Village. Collection is available to residential properties on a weekly basis as curbside pick-up. In addition, the Village DPW holds a household pickup for heavy items such as couches and furniture on the first Monday of each month March through October, with a 10-item limit per calendar year. The Village DPW also collects yard waste such as grass clippings and tree branches for one to two weeks per month from March to October. Christmas tree pickup is offered during the month of January, and leaf pickup is offered in November and December. Brush and bulk waste are taken to OCCRA drop-off site in Jamesville. The Village also participates in the County's mandatory recycling program.

## Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Village of North Syracuse maintains one of the most extensive park systems for a community of its size within New York State. There are a total of nine parks and a community center within the village, all accessible to residents and visitors. Three of these parks are smaller, more urban, passive parks, and one is a nature preserve. The Parks Department also organizes or hosts over 25 recreational programs and community events, including a family festival, yoga, concerts, holiday events, swim lessons, parades, and more.

As part of the comprehensive plan process, a representative from the North Syracuse Parks Department was interviewed to provide an understanding of the current conditions and future needs of the parks in the village. The programs have begun to outgrow the parks facilities, as the Parks Department continues to increase recreational programming. In the next 20 years, the department anticipates needing more spaces to hold events, particularly pavilions or covered spaces within parks. Although the village has plenty of park space, making improvements to and expanding existing facilities within these parks will create opportunity for even more event programming in the future. The following provides a brief description of each park, their amenities, and their needs for the future. Figure 2-5 shows a map of the parks within the village.



## Heritage Park

Heritage Park is located on Chestnut Street on the western side of the Village with a second, smaller entrance off Lee Terrace. The park is perhaps the most visited park within the Village due to its wide variety of recreational opportunities for residents. Heritage Park contains a basketball court, tennis and pickleball courts, softball and soccer fields, a Disc Golf course, a playground, a dog park, and a community pavilion. Heritage Park is also the largest park within the Village and provides the most open space for Village residents. The fields and facilities at Heritage Park are often rented out through the parks department for events and activities.

Heritage Park has recently undergone several improvements, including upgrading existing courts, adding pickleball courts, and adding additional trails through the park. The restrooms in the community building were also updated with new sinks, urinals, mirrors, wall coverings, and paint. There are no further improvements to Heritage Park currently planned, however desired future upgrades to the park include adding a new playground suitable for the 9-13 age range and expanding the community pavilion or adding new shade structures to create more covered areas to hold events. Many events are held at Heritage Park, so expanding the existing structures could lead to more opportunities to rent out spaces for events.

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## Loneragan Park

Loneragan Park is located off Main Street toward the southern border of the village, adjacent to the Wood Wind Garden Apartments. The park has a state-of-the-art Little League facility, which includes a batting cage and a modern baseball field that is equipped with lighting for night games. The park also contains a gazebo and a seating area that is used for summer concert performances. In addition, Loneragan provides two playgrounds as well as public restrooms.

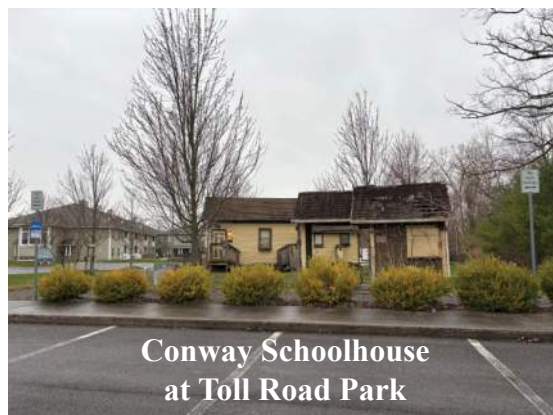
The building which contains the public restrooms has recently been upgraded, with new light fixtures and ceiling tiles. Additional future improvements desired include developing a trail around the park, similar to the trail system created at Heritage Park.

## Toll Road Park

Toll Road Park is located along the western side of Main Street north of the Village Center and is adjacent to the Toll Road Senior Apartments. The park's size was significantly reduced when the apartments were constructed. Today, it includes two distinct areas: a small playground located south of the senior apartments and a historic park featuring the Conway Schoolhouse building to the east.

These areas are not visible from Main Street and are separated by parking areas and a roadway. The playground is primarily used by apartment residents or visitors and lacks signage or visual cues indicating it is a public amenity. Currently, the parks department does not prioritize increasing public awareness of this playground, as the village offers ample alternative recreational opportunities.

The schoolhouse and historic park have fallen into disrepair, and the village is currently developing plans to improve this section of Toll Road Park. Anticipated improvements include the creation of a pollinator garden, historical information, and exterior improvements to the schoolhouse.



## Goettell Park

Goettell Park is located in the heart of the Village Center at 103 Main Street. The park is a small passive park nestled between two buildings. The park invites visitors to pass through or sit and relax while they are downtown and acts as a gateway into town from the municipal parking lot. The park includes a meandering path from the municipal parking lot to the sidewalk on Main St, a seating area with several benches, decorative landscaping, a clock feature, and a historical wall mural on the adjacent building.

On May 24, 2025, the village celebrated its centennial as a village, with a festival downtown. This milestone was memorialized with the addition of a sculpture paying homage to Sweethearts' Corner, a local



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landmark that started as a produce stand in 1945, turned supermarket and ice cream shop. This sculpture was installed in Goettell Park. There are no other current capital improvement projects for this park.

## Veterans Memorial Park

Veterans Memorial Park is located on the corner of N. Main Street and Centerville Place in the Village Center. This park is a small plaza space, featuring a circular plaza area with a flagpole in the center and a brick memorial wall and a brick planter box. The memorial is a tribute to war veterans from multiple branches of the armed forces. There is a second flagpole, pedestrian lighting, decorative landscaping and several benches. This park is relatively new and there are no improvements currently needed or planned for this park.

## Community Center

The North Syracuse Community Center is located in the center of the Village at the intersection of Centerville Place and South Bay Road. The Community Center has two large banquet rooms and a small meeting room. The center is home to village board meetings, planning meetings, community group meetings, and can also be rented out for private parties and community events. Rooms can be rented out through the Parks Department Office.

Because the community center is an old building and hosts many events and meetings weekly, the village has several plans to renovate and update the building to better serve the needs of the community and to improve the building's energy efficiency. The village recently installed a new furnace and replaced the main door. Current and future capital improvement plans include installing a new elevator, updating windows and lighting, and updating bathroom facilities to be more inclusive (gender neutral or family bathroom options).



## Centerville Park

Centerville Park is located on the eastern side of South Bay Road in the Village near the community center. The park has one basketball court, hills for sledding, a playground, and a pavilion with picnic tables. The park was recently updated around 2013 with drainage improvements, a repaved basketball court, and a new pavilion. There are no further improvements planned for the park.

## Memorial Park

Memorial Park is a small park space located on the corner of South Bay Road and Church Street, across from the Community Center. The park features both old and young tree plantings, decorative shrubs, and a short meandering path with benches placed along it. This is another passive park, a scenic and peaceful place to walk through or sit and relax. There are no structures or facilities within this park. There are currently no improvement projects planned for this park.



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## Kennedy Park

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Kennedy Park, located off Grove Street and tucked in a residential neighborhood in the Village's northeastern corner, contains an outdoor swimming pool and a bathhouse building with changing rooms and restrooms, which are free to use for village residents and available at a fee for non-residents. The park also features a pavilion, a playground, and a sand volleyball court that are open to all. Individuals also can reserve the use of the pavilion for parties or other social events.

The parks department holds swimming lessons every summer at the Kennedy Park pool. While the pool is a popular summer attraction for residents, in recent years the swimming lesson program has declined in number due to increasing competition from indoor lessons offered at the YMCA.

The pump house for the pool has received upgrades to the pump and filter system. The village anticipates that they will need to update the changing facilities at the bathhouse to be more inclusive, either including a family restroom or a gender-neutral restroom. The village has also been discussing the idea of installing a splash pad at Kennedy Park. A splash pad could be added in addition to the swimming pool, or to replace the swimming pool in order to save money and increase use.

## Sleeth Park

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Sleeth Park is a forested nature preserve located off of Church Street on the east side of the I-81 highway. There are informal dirt trails throughout the wooded area of the preserve that are maintained in spring and fall. Sleeth Park can be accessed through the Meals on Wheels Parking lot or from Sleeth Mill Circle, however there are no formal trail-heads for the preserve. The preserve is not highly used due to the lack of any official parking and entrance, but it is currently not a priority of the village to improve access to the preserve, as the current focus is to develop trails at a more highly used park such as Lonergan Park.

## Historic Resources

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There are very few historic structures within the Village due to it being a community largely built out following World War II. However, the village still has a robust historical and cultural significance.

The Village of North Syracuse was home to the first Plank Road in the United States. Although the original plank road is no longer there, the village has maintained a historical plaque and a small park-let commemorating the history of the Plank Road at Toll Road Park. Previously, Toll Road Park was a larger park featuring the "Plank Road Village" with a model village and museum. However, around 2008, Toll Road Park was mostly redeveloped as senior apartments, and the Plank Road Village was mostly dismantled. This large and expansive park has been reduced to less than a ¼ of its original size. The previous museum, an old schoolhouse building, remains, but no longer functions as a museum due to interior structural safety concerns. The village is working on plans to further improve and enhance this park-let.

The old schoolhouse building at Toll Road Park was a one room schoolhouse built in the late 1800s and was known then as the Conway School House. It was originally located at E. Taft and Totman roads but was later relocated to Toll Road Park, where it remains, and used as the museum building.

Other historic buildings in the village include the Main St. School and the Community Center. The Main St. School building was built in 1925 and used as a high school for the village. Today, the building houses the North Syracuse Early Education Center. The Community center building was built around 1905 as the headquarters

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of the South Bay Trolley Line, the trolley system that existed within the village during this time. The trolley passenger station was once located directly behind the Community Center.

The Wizard of Oz Memorial Grove is another significant historical and cultural resource of the community. This forest is a seven-acre old-growth oak forest that preserves the native trees typical of the forests that blanketed the area prior to European settlement and is one of the only such sites in Onondaga County. The grove is owned by the North Syracuse Central School District and is located behind North Syracuse Junior High school. The grove is also historically and culturally significant due to its speculated identity as the forest that inspired the Great Forest of Oz in L. Frank Baum's famous book *The Wizard of Oz*. The forest is located near Baum's childhood home, and it is known that he played in the grove as a child. The forest contains many large old trees dating back to 1820, some of which have been named after historical figures.

The Village Cemetery also has historical significance to the village, as it contains the graves of many community pioneers and veterans from all the way back to the Revolutionary War. The original office building of the cemetery still stands in the northern portion of the cemetery on Route 11 but is used for storage. The oak forest behind the cemetery, known by some as the North Syracuse Cemetery Oak Grove, is also historically significant. The forest is an old growth forest of about 1 acre, containing trees that are estimated to be over 300 years old, even older than the trees in the Wizard of Oz Memorial Grove.

## Natural Characteristics

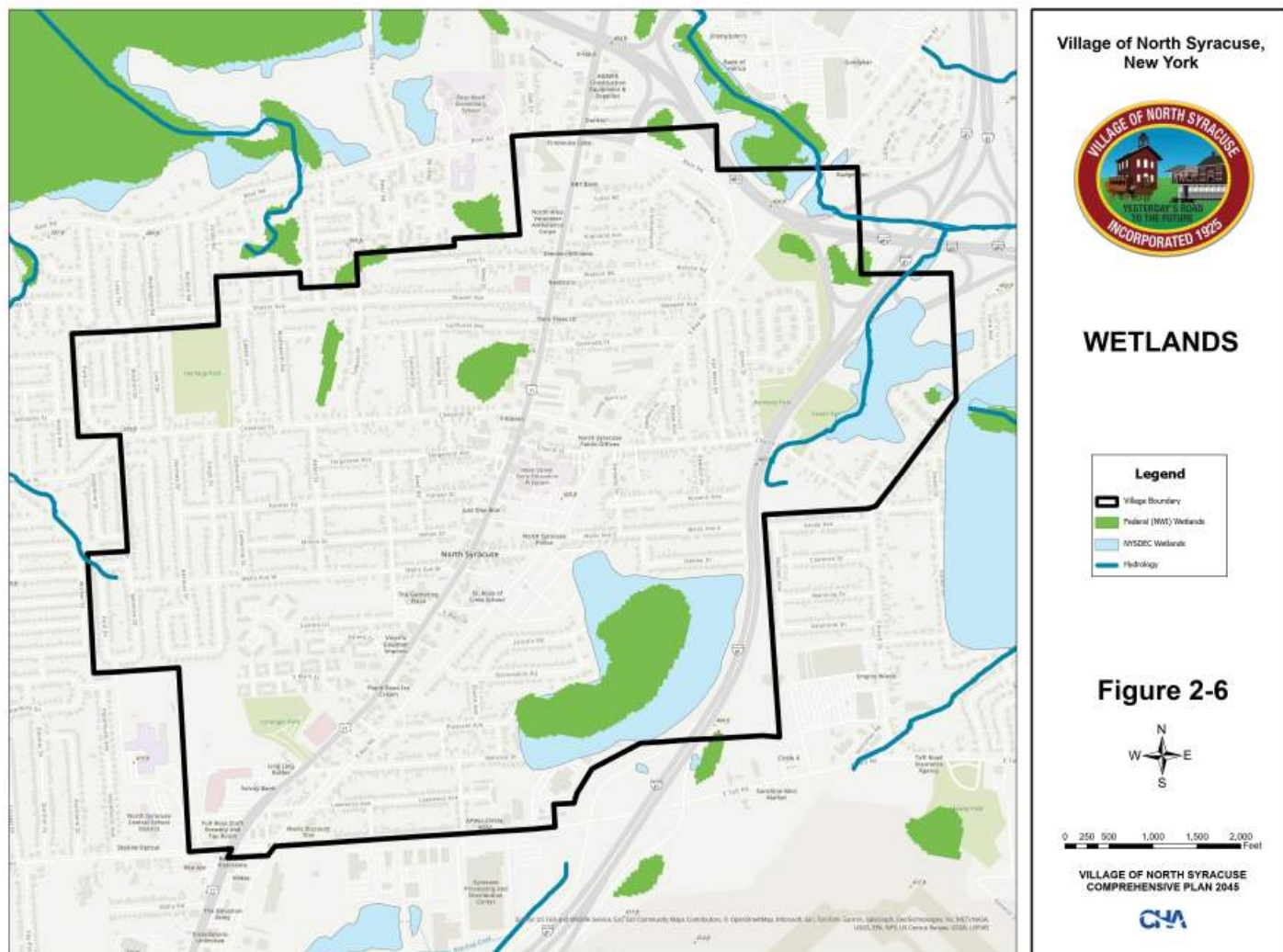
### Wetlands

Regulatory agencies, environmental groups, and the scientific community define wetlands differently. However, for the purposes of village planning, discussion is limited to those agencies that regulate wetlands in New York State. They include the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). New York State defines wetlands based primarily on vegetation typically adapted to wet conditions. The State requires any wetland that is 12.4 acres (5 hectares) or greater to be mapped and regulated.

As of January 1st, 2028, this threshold will decrease to 7.4 acres (3 hectares) or greater. As of 2025, the state adopted new wetland regulations for protecting smaller wetland areas. The regulations states that small wetlands of "unusual importance" will be regulated if they are determined to meet 1 of the 11 newly established criteria. These criteria include watersheds with significant flooding, urban areas, rare plants or animals, water quality, class 1 wetlands, local importance, vernal pools, flood-ways, previously mapped wetlands, and wetlands that hold regional significance. The NYSDEC's regulatory protections are also no longer limited to wetlands depicted on the NYS Freshwater Wetlands Maps, and these maps will now be referred to as Previously Mapped Freshwater Wetlands. A 100-foot buffer zone is extended upland from the wetland boundary to protect the wetland from encroaching development and related impacts.

The highest classification is Class I and is afforded the highest level of protection; the lowest classification is Class IV. As illustrated in Figure 2-6, the Village contains about 110 acres of State Class II wetlands, seen in light blue. Any work occurring within the wetlands or their buffer zones requires a permit from NYSDEC pursuant to Article 24 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

The Village also contains approximately 54 acres of federal wetlands as illustrated in Figure 2-6 in green. By virtue of their administrative role, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers has jurisdiction over all water of the United States, including wetlands. Federal jurisdiction is determined by the identification of three criteria: vegetation adapted



to wet conditions, flooding, and hydric soils. Further investigation is necessary to confirm the exact location of federal wetlands within the Village for site-specific projects. It is important to note that federal jurisdiction extends to State regulated wetlands, providing these wetlands exhibit the three required criteria. Any work occurring within the wetlands or their buffer zones requires a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

## Topography

USGS topographic information indicates very little change in elevation across much of the Village. Elevations range from 423 feet along the Village's southwestern side to 400 feet in the Village's northeastern side. The most readily apparent change in local topography occurs in the Village's southeastern corner as you head north and east.

## Forests

The Village of North Syracuse is home to two old-growth oak forests that serve as significant natural and cultural landmarks. The Wizard of Oz Memorial Grove, a seven-acre forest located behind North Syracuse Junior High School, preserves native oak species typical of the pre-settlement landscape. The grove contains majestic trees dating back to the 19th century. Similarly, the North Syracuse Cemetery Oak Grove, an approximately one-acre old-growth forest behind the Village Cemetery, features trees estimated to be over 300 years old, making them even older than those in the Wizard of Oz Grove. Together, these two forests represent irreplaceable ecological assets.

## Community Services

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Interviews were conducted with representatives from the Police, Fire, Ambulance, Library, and the North Syracuse Central School District. Each representative was asked about the current status of their operations and if they had any major issues, needs, or capital improvement projects scheduled for the future. Below is a summary of the interviews.

### Police Services

The North Syracuse Police Department (NSPD) provides police services to the Village of North Syracuse. The NSPD includes a staff of 10 full-time officers and two administrative personnel. The Police Department possesses eight vehicles and shares the same building as the Village Hall, which is located at 608 South Bay Road. The department utilizes half of the first floor of the building and the entire basement. In addition, the department stores long-term evidence and files in a building behind Village Hall.

The NSPD's average yearly call responded to in the past decade have been at around 12,000 calls per year, with 12,691 calls received in 2022. However, since 2022, call numbers have fallen lower due to a decrease in staff and in 2024, the NSPD responded to 9,890 calls. As the village continues to grow, the department anticipates a need for increased staffing, especially due to the recent loss of full-time officers. Barriers to hiring more officers include competition with other local police departments and a loss of interest in police in past years.

The NSPD has also outgrown its current facility as the demand for police services has grown. The shared building they are currently housed in is quite small and does not provide sufficient space for the department needs. The department needs additional storage, office, and interview space, as well as a separate area to hold juveniles. In addition, the storage building is very old and in need of repairs, and the front of the department building features large windows that are a security concern.

Within the next 20 years, it will be necessary to either update the department's existing facilities, which would include rehabilitating the storage room building and upgrading the facade of the main office to provide security, or acquiring a new facility.

The department would prefer to acquire a single facility that is large enough to meet the department's storage and administrative needs, as to not have operations segmented. This facility should include space for an evidence room, police lab, at least three interview rooms, a juvenile holding room, booking area, records storage, multiple offices, and a waiting room. Additionally, a secure garage with five to six vehicle bays is required.

Currently, there are no capital improvement plans in place for the department.

### Fire Services

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The North Syracuse Fire Department (NSFD) provides fire protection services to the Village of North Syracuse and the surrounding communities. The NSFD was established in 1913 and has become known as one of the premier fire departments in Onondaga County. The department responds to around 9,000 calls per year.

The NSFD currently operates two stations and 8 pieces of apparatus. Station One is located at 109 Chestnut Street and Station Two is located at 70 General Irwin Boulevard. Both stations serve the North Syracuse Fire

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District, which consist of the Village and parts of the Town of Clay and the Town of Cicero. The North Syracuse Fire District is comprised of fifteen square miles and provides protection and rescue services to around 25,000 residents. In addition to providing fire and medical services to the Villages of North Syracuse, Clay, and Cicero, the department assists neighboring fire departments with personnel and equipment when requested. Because the NSFD serves the Village of North Syracuse, the Town of Clay, and the Town of Cicero, the department receives funding from all three municipalities.

The NSFD is a volunteer fire department, and their staff is mostly made up of volunteers. The department has 31 volunteers, and 6 paid staff members. The paid staff includes 1 full-time custodian and 5 part-time caretakers who help with maintenance and night responses. In the past few decades, volunteer numbers have been declining, and the department needs additional volunteers. This decline may be caused by a lack of time, a lack of awareness of the volunteer program, and the fact that due to the aging population of the village, there are fewer young people available to become involved in the department. The fire department also must adhere to the same regulations and training as paid fire departments do, making it more difficult to attract volunteers.



Although volunteer numbers are declining, there are some programs that offer incentives to join the department. The NSFD offers a “Bunk-In” program, which allows college students who are members of any Volunteer Fire Department in New York to live in the one of the fire stations for free and train with the department in exchange for volunteer services. This program has been successful, but there is competition as many fire stations offer similar programs. Other incentives include school tax cuts and retirement benefits for volunteers. However, the department hopes to offer additional incentives in the future in order to attract more volunteers. The NSFD also anticipates that due to lack of volunteers and potential increase in population, in the next 20 years it will be necessary to transition the department from a volunteer department to a combination department, with a mix of paid staff and volunteers. However, finding the funding for full-time paid staff presents a challenge for the department and the village.

As of 2024, the NSFD is currently working on a capital improvement project that will consolidate the two existing stations and downsize their equipment. This project will expand Station 1 by adding four additional bays, a total of 6,000 feet. Once the expansion to Station 1 is complete, the NSFD plans to close Station 2. This consolidation will also allow the department to downsize their equipment to 2 fire engines instead of 3.

There are not any other capital improvement projects anticipated in the next 20 years, however as the department is required by the state to update gear every 10 years and vehicles every 20 years for safety standards, the department will need to replace several pieces of equipment and apparatus within the next 20 years.

## Ambulance Services

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North Syracuse is also served by the North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corporation Incorporated (NAVAC), a nonprofit which provides emergency medical services to the northern portion of Onondaga County, including the Village of North Syracuse. Ambulance services are dispatched from NAVAC headquarters, located at 603 North Main Street in the Village of North Syracuse. NAVAC’s service area covers approximately 64 square miles, which includes North Syracuse, Clay, Cicero, and the Hancock International Airport.

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NAVAC staff consists of 50 part time and full-time paid personnel (paramedics, EMTs, and admin staff), and around 35 volunteer personnel. There are about five “operational volunteers” who perform ambulance services, and 25-30 “non-operational” volunteers who participate in other ways, including administration and fundraising. NAVAC partners with eight fire departments, responding to over 8,000 calls annually. The average number of calls responded to in 2024 was 8,519. NAVAC also partners with LifeNet, an air-medical service, to provide air transportation for patients in need of the trauma and specialty medical care available at local hospitals.

NAVAC additionally utilizes several Advanced Life Support Certified (ALS) emergency vehicles, which include six ambulances and a support vehicle. As of 2025, they are in the process of adding a seventh ambulance. Each ambulance is replaced after 5 years of use.

Considering the current and projected population increase, as well as the aging population within the village, NAVAC anticipates a need for significant growth within the next 20 years, both in staffing and facilities. NAVAC has experienced a decrease in volunteer numbers since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 but has started to see numbers rise again. Attracting additional volunteers and full-time staff will be a focus of NAVAC to support the increase in demand in the next 20 years. No capital improvement plans are officially planned yet, but within the next 20 years NAVAC plans on either constructing a new headquarters facility or renovating their current headquarters that they have already outgrown.

NAVAC is in communication with the state and county Departments of Transportation to anticipate how construction of the I-81 viaduct project will affect traffic flow, and to coordinate solutions to ensure that ambulance routes are not disrupted.

## Library Services

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The Village of North Syracuse Library was opened in June of 1996 to serve as a branch of the Northern Onondaga Public Library system. It is located at 100 Trolley Barn Lane in the central business district of the Village. The library includes a community room, two study rooms, and a children’s room available for use by the public, and computers available to patrons.

The library offers a large variety of programs each year for children, teens, and adults. These include story times, computer classes, writing workshops, and art classes. Since 2023, the library has seen an 80% increase in programs offered, some of which can be attributed to rebounding from loss of programs during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The basic computer classes have had a dramatic decrease in attendance, as computer use has become more common.

The library is open 7 days per week and services approximately 80,000 patrons each year. Currently the library has 14 staff members.

Short-term improvement projects include adding an awning and new seating to the existing outdoor patio.

## Education Services

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The Village is encompassed by the North Syracuse Central School District. The district contains 11 schools in total, one of which is located within the village and two of which are located just outside the village limits.

North Syracuse Early Education Program, also called Main Street School, is located within the Village at 205 South Main Street. This school has 14 classrooms and serves over 350 preschool level children. North Syracuse Junior High School is located at 5353 Taft Road, directly southwest of the village limits, and Karl W Saile Bear

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Road Elementary School (KWS Bear Road) is located at 5590 Bear Road, northwest of the village limits.

Most students from the village of North Syracuse attend Cicero-North Syracuse High school following junior high, which is located in Cicero, Northeast of the village. The North Syracuse School district enrollment has significantly declined in the past decade, likely due to the aging community and decreasing birth rates in the village. At its highest enrollment rates in the district were 10,000, while as of 2025 rates are around 7,400 students from K-12, plus another 600 preschool students.

Recently the KWS Bear Road Elementary School was fully renovated, and the roof and water main were replaced in the Main Street School. The Main Street School is housed in a historic building built in 1925, and the district anticipates various improvements will be necessary in the next few years to ensure a safe learning environment. A utilization study will be conducted to determine whether it is best to improve the current building or to relocate the school to a newer building. Current capital improvement projects within the district include minor updates at North Syracuse Junior High School and a community pool at Cicero-North Syracuse High School.

# 3

## *Vision for the Future*

### Vision Statement:

*“The Village of North Syracuse will grow to be a more vibrant, attractive, and inclusive community with clearly defined gateways, walkable neighborhoods, and a unified village identity”*

This is the vision for the future of the Village of North Syracuse. It speaks to the character of the Village it hopes to enhance and transform into in the years to come. The Advisory Committee began the visioning process by brainstorming words that they felt described their vision for their community. Words like “vibrant,” “refreshed,” “attractive”, “safe”, and “inclusive” came to mind. Above all, the Committee emphasized the importance of strengthening community connections, enhancing the sense of village identity, and ensuring the financial stability of the village for the next 20 years. This Vision Statement is intended to set the course for the future of the Village as well as provide guidance for achieving the Village’s collective vision.

### Goals and Strategies

Goals and strategies for the Village-wide topics of Economic Development, Transportation, Public Infrastructure and Community Facilities, Housing and Neighborhoods, Parks, Recreation and Open Space, and Historic Resources are presented below. When implemented, these goals and strategies will achieve the Village’s vision for the future as stated above. The goals describe a desired end to be reached. The strategies provide a specific course of action to be taken to reach the stated goal.

### Economic Development

Collectively, residential properties consist of the largest land use (approximately 62%) and serve as the primary source of tax revenue for the Village. Although housing values have increased significantly in the past two decades, the residential tax base remains insufficient to support the provision of community services and the implementation of major capital improvement projects. The Village should increase its tax base through economic development opportunities to offset some of the tax burden placed on homeowners.

Due to the limited amount of developable land suitable for medium to large scale development, the village must be strategic in its efforts to increase economic development. Leveraging existing vacant and underutilized properties will be essential. Current opportunities for development exist along major transportation corridors such as Route 11, South Bay Road, and Taft Road, which offer strong visibility and accessibility for businesses and have vacancies due to past commercial sprawl and competition with adjacent towns. Additionally, the village’s proximity to Interstate 81, Hancock International Airport, and the proposed Micron facility provide unique opportunities and

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significant competitive advantage for economic development within the Village. Future development should align with and market this proximity, targeting mixed-use projects and complementary commercial uses.

Gateway Park, a business park located in the southeastern portion of the Village, and the land around it, is another area with economic development opportunities. Many of the buildings located in the business park are currently vacant, and the largest area of undeveloped land in the village exists north of the park. Although this land is largely wetland, there is potential for thoughtfully expanding both residential and commercial development into this area to create opportunities for economic development.

As the Village's population continues to age, attracting new residents, particularly young families, is essential to sustaining community vitality and economic growth. Maintaining a balanced demographic mix will support local businesses, increase demand for housing, and strengthen the labor force, all of which contribute to a more resilient economy. Young families bring long-term stability, expand school enrollment, and generate sustained consumer spending, which helps maintain property values and broadens the tax base. Strategic efforts to refresh the village's existing housing stock, enhance housing diversity, improve safety and amenities, and promote the Village as a desirable place for families will be critical to offsetting the impacts of an aging population and ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability.

To strengthen community ties and enhance neighborhood appeal, the Village could also encourage block parties as a way for residents to connect. Reviving a past process where petitions were circulated and Police, Fire, and DPW coordinated street closures would make these events easy to organize and foster a stronger sense of community.

Increasing the visual aesthetic of the village is important for attracting new residents and recruiting and retaining businesses. Although there have been significant streetscape improvements in recent years, primarily along Route 11 within the village center, the absence of consistent aesthetic features throughout the village, such as unified signage, landscaping, and architectural character, diminishes the Village's overall identity and marketability. Currently, the lack of clearly defined gateways makes it difficult for visitors and residents to recognize when they have entered the village, creating a weak sense of identity. Streetscape improvements should be continued to the East and West of the village center. Enhancing visual aesthetics through design standards, gateway treatments, and public space improvements will strengthen the Village's sense of place and support broader economic development goals.

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to increase its tax base.*

## Strategies

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- Develop a feasibility study for the development (both residential and commercial) of areas of the vacant land near Gateway Park Drive.
- Develop a feasibility study for the development of new commercial development along Taft Road.
- Identify vacant or underutilized properties that are appropriate for commercial development. Market these properties for businesses that will strengthen the Village's identity through the continued establishment of niche market shops, recreation, and restaurants.
- Create incentives, such as state and federal tax programs, to market vacant commercial buildings and/or sites.

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- Market the Village as a strategic business location, highlighting its close proximity to the Syracuse Hancock International Airport and the Micron facility as key advantages.
- Develop a comprehensive financial plan

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to enhance the sense of community and identity within the village.*

## Strategies

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- Develop a Gateway Study that examines the creation of clear gateways into and out of the village.
- Develop and maintain village-wide design guidelines including colors, materials, and branding for all signage, way-finding, and other aesthetic features throughout the village.
- Explore creation of additional neighborhood common areas, including landmarks and gathering spaces.
- Encourage the resurgence of Block parties.
- Review current building codes and ensure proper enforcement and compliance.
- Utilize community development funds for streetscape improvements such as sidewalk and curbing replacement, establishment of ornamental lighting districts, planting of street trees, and the placement of flags and public benches, especially to the east and west of the village center.

### Potential Environmental Impacts Associated with Economic Development:

The Village of North Syracuse is primarily a built-out community that is serviced by municipal water and sewer infrastructure. It is the Village's intent to develop and redevelop properties in the most efficient and environmentally sensitive manner possible as described in the goals and strategies presented above for Economic Development.

While the plan encourages reuse of vacant and underutilized land, any future site-specific development proposals, particularly in areas containing state or federal wetlands, will require additional environmental review and compliance with applicable permitting requirements. This ensures that future projects are implemented responsibly and in accordance with all regulatory standards. Overall, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

## Transportation (Pedestrian & Vehicular)

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Traffic congestion has been identified as an issue within the village, especially along Route 11 and South Bay Road during peak hours. Contributing factors include excessive curb cuts, cut-through traffic, and detours related to the I-81 Viaduct construction project, which is expected to continue through 2028. As highly traveled regional connectors, Route 11 and South Bay Road specifically experience heavy through vehicular traffic, creating congestion and safety concerns for pedestrians.

This trend is likely to intensify as development expands in nearby towns such as Cicero and Clay, most notably with the Micron project, potentially further increasing traffic volumes through the Village.

Although improvements to pedestrian and vehicular safety have been made along Route 11 and adjacent streets like Chestnut Street and Church Street, there are still safety issues caused by excessive curb cuts and poorly

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defined parking lots. In addition, there are other corridors in the village, specifically South Bay Road but also smaller residential streets, that lack sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure, limiting safe pedestrian connectivity throughout the whole village. The village should prioritize sidewalk expansion and comprehensive streetscape enhancements, particularly along South Bay Road, to create a safe and continuous link between the east and west sides of the Village and its center.

Bicycle infrastructure has also been identified as an area of opportunity. Currently there is minimal bicycle infrastructure within the village. Shared lane markings exist on some roads, but there are no formal bike lanes or bike racks. The village should prioritize bicycle infrastructure, in addition to pedestrian infrastructure, to create a thorough connection for residents throughout the village.

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to manage vehicular traffic to create a safe village for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.*

## Strategies

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- Review existing SMTC plans and studies that apply to the village.
- Maintain and enhance existing traffic calming techniques such as sidewalk bump outs, speed cushions, pedestrian crossing signs, on street parking, and brick pavers or other materials to act as a visual delineator at crosswalks.
- Regulate parking lot aesthetics by creating parking standards.
- Provide adequate buffering between residential areas and roadways to reduce traffic noise, calm traffic, and improve aesthetics.
- Regulate and restrict the number of curb cuts along Route 11 and South Bay Rd.
- Consolidate small lots along Route 11 and South Bay Rd to allow for restrictions on the number of direct access points.

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to maintain consistent and safe pedestrian and bicycle mobility across the entire village, and to strengthen connections from the East and West side of the village to the village center.*

## Strategies

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- Review existing SMTC plans and studies that apply to the village.
- Develop a sidewalk and bicycle master-plan that safely connects the East and West side of the village to the village core for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- Create pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements along South Bay Rd that are consistent with those made to Route 11.

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- Reduce vehicle cut-through traffic along Van Mara Drive and Grove Street and promote safe pedestrian and cyclist mobility along these roadways

## Potential Environmental Impacts Associated with Transportation (Pedestrian & Vehicular):

The strategies listed above are expected to result in positive environmental impacts. Reducing the number of curb cuts, consolidating access points, and improving shared parking facilities will help minimize congestion and vehicle idling, thereby reducing emissions. Enhancements such as landscaped buffers and additional street trees will improve aesthetics, provide shade, improve air quality, and contribute to stormwater management. Expanded pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure will encourage alternative transportation modes, further reducing reliance on vehicles and supporting a healthier, more sustainable environment. No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

## Public Infrastructure and Community Facilities

Reliable infrastructure and well-maintained community facilities are essential to the Village's long-term sustainability and quality of life. While much of the existing public infrastructure is in good condition, some systems will require upgrading in the next 20 years.

The sewer system is currently past its life expectancy of 50 years. Although it has been spot-repaired in several areas, an inventory and inspection of the system is necessary in the next few years to determine what improvements are needed. The water system is also expected to require some upgrades and replacements throughout the next 20 years. Significant investment in public infrastructure will likely be required within the next 20 years and strategic planning for capital improvements will be critical to minimize financial impacts and ensure continued delivery of service.

Other public infrastructure such as sidewalks, curbing, crosswalks, street trees, planters and streetlights exist in some areas (most prominently on Route 11) but should be implemented across the entire village to create cohesive connection and visual identity.

Demand for community services such as police protection, public facilities maintenance, and administrative services have increased in past decades. With this increase in demand, these crucial services currently face growing challenges, most notably limited funding for staffing, equipment, and infrastructure upgrades. Prioritizing investment in community services will be vital to ensure the health of the village in the next 20 years.

### Goal

*It is the goal of the village to maintain its infrastructure and high-quality service provision by proactively enhancing public infrastructure and public facilities.*

### Strategies

- Develop a full inventory and condition assessment of existing infrastructure to identify deficiencies and prioritize improvements.
- Develop plans for future infrastructure replacement intervals and upgrades.
- Proactively maintain and/or improve the Village's bond rating and seek financial support to upgrade

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infrastructure.

- Collaborate with other agencies and governments such as Onondaga County and the Onondaga County Water Authority for future improvements to water and sewer service.
- Prioritize public infrastructure improvements when spending community development and village-generated funds.
- Work with Cornell Cooperative Extension to determine and create a Village Forest Master Plan that focuses on the protection, maintenance, and replanting of appropriate tree species within the Village to help maintain its character.
- Develop a study for relocating village administrative and police services.
- Relocate the Department of Public Works to a location that is not surrounded by residential properties. Or investigate collaborating (leasing space and/or consolidating services) with the New York State Department of Public Works facility on Taft Road.

## Potential Environmental Impacts Associated with Public Infrastructure and Community Facilities:

Any infrastructure upgrades required will occur in existing developed areas, minimizing disturbance to natural resources. Temporary impacts during construction will be short-term and mitigated through best practices. Streetscape improvements and tree planting will have positive effects on air quality and village character. Overall, no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

## Housing and Neighborhoods

Designed as a postwar commuter town with many small “starter” homes following World War II, the Village of North Syracuse has retained much of its traditional neighborhood character over time. While housing trends nationwide have shifted toward larger homes on larger lots, the Village’s compact, walkable neighborhoods offer a unique alternative that appeals to today’s home-buyers seeking affordability and convenience.

In recent years, some single-family homes have been converted into multi-family units, creating challenges related to affordability, code compliance, and neighborhood character. Another issue in neighborhoods are code violations such as deteriorating facades, cluttered yards, and poorly maintained structures that create a sense of visual disorder and diminishing neighborhood pride. Recognizing these issues, the Village is proactively working to maintain quality of life by strengthening code enforcement and encouraging reinvestment in single-family housing and should continue to do so in the next 20 years.

The Village has the unique opportunity to market itself to first-time home-buyers as well as young families. When compared to the rest of Onondaga County as well as to surrounding towns, the Village of North Syracuse has a very young stock and affordable supply of housing. North Syracuse’s neighborhoods also offer a friendly community setting within walking distance of public amenities including several public parks. These distinct neighborhood attributes allow the Village to meet a niche market for singles, young families, first-time homeowners, and senior citizens.

### Goal

*It is the goal of the village to create affordable housing opportunities to attract young families to the village.*

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## Strategies

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- Offer programs and incentives for first time home-buyers such as local grants or tax breaks.
- Provide education and information on federal home buying programs or grants.
- Increase homeownership levels by marketing the Village and its many assets such as neighborhood parks, community facilities, and the provision of high-quality services.
- Market neighborhoods as starter homes for young adults, new families, and empty nesters.

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to maintain attractive neighborhoods and refresh the existing housing stock.*

## Strategies

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- Pilot and develop a Block Builders program within the village that identifies clear target areas to improve curb appeal and village pride.
- Develop incentives such as grants or tax breaks to homeowners for flipping or making exterior improvements to houses.
- Launch beautification awards with public recognition or small prizes to incentivize property owners.
- Encourage the formation of neighborhood associations such as neighborhood watch groups and neighborhood cleanup days.
- Review neighborhoods have proper access to parks and other community facilities through safe streets, and where appropriate, a sound sidewalk network with proper lighting and year-round maintenance.

### Potential Environmental Impacts Associated with Housing and Neighborhoods:

Housing and neighborhood strategies focus on reinvestment in existing areas, minimizing land disturbance. Temporary impacts from renovations will be short-term and mitigated through best practices. Beautification efforts and tree planting will provide positive environmental benefits. Overall, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

For its size, the Village of North Syracuse boasts one of the most extensive park systems in Central New York. Parkland and open space are distributed throughout the village and are within walking distance of neighborhoods. The community views this abundance of parkland as a significant asset that must be preserved for future generations. Many of the parks have received improvements within the past decade in accordance with the 2006 Parks Master Plan and most of the parks are in good condition.

The variety of recreation programs offered by the Parks Department is also a community asset, with over 25 different programs in 2025. However, as programs continue to expand and new programs are added, they are outgrowing park facilities. Specifically, additional covered spaces like pavilions and buildings to hold events are needed in the future, especially with potential population increases. Currently, the Community Center holds the

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most events and is rented on many weekends by community members. Because the Community Center is a key hub for recreational activities, officially listing it as a part of the village's parks system would be beneficial for planning and funding purposes and to reinforce its value as a recreational asset. To further promote awareness, the village should consider installing a kiosk at the Community Center highlighting programs and activities.

Additionally, while the village's parks are distributed across the community and within walking distance of many neighborhoods, a lack of consistent pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure has been an issue in past decades. The village has recently addressed this by adding sidewalks connecting the parks to the village center. To build on this progress, the village should consider formalizing a "Park Loop Trail" along these connections, featuring pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and way-finding signage. Incorporating sidewalks along residential streets that connect to the recent sidewalk improvements as part of a comprehensive sidewalk and bicycle master plan will further ensure safe and accessible routes to parks from all areas of the village.

Along with connecting the existing parks, another potential recreation opportunity lies in the Wizard of Oz Memorial Oak Grove. This land is currently owned by the North Syracuse Central School District. The village should assess the value and feasibility of designating this property as a village park, either through acquiring the land or through an agreement with the school district. In addition, creating a catalog of mature trees, both within the Wizard of Oz Memorial Oak Grove and throughout the Village, is recommended to preserve the historical and ecological significance of these resources, support long-term conservation, inform future planning, and highlight the Village's commitment to protecting its natural heritage.

Limited funding for proper maintenance and upgrading of park facilities poses a major challenge to sustaining the long-term health and quality of the Village's park network. To address this, as well as the other challenges discussed in this section, and to guide future investments, the Village should develop an updated Parks Master Plan. This plan should assess the condition of existing parks, identify opportunities for new facilities, prioritize maintenance needs, and outline strategies for connectivity, accessibility, and funding. An updated plan will ensure that the park system continues to meet community needs, supports population growth, and preserves the Village's recreational assets for generations to come.

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to maintain ongoing park improvement and appreciation of the village's parks.*

## Strategies

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- Update Parks Master Plan
- Formalize a park loop trail that connects the parks in the village for pedestrians and bikers, with consistent signage and way-finding.
- Create a kiosk or information center at the Community Center that highlights programs and activities within the village.
- Add the Community Center to the list of parks.
- Research funding opportunities for park improvement and maintenance efforts.
- Encourage residents to form park associations that consist of volunteers who help maintain parks.
- Maintain proper access to parks for all residents, young and old alike, and provide appropriate facilities to

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meet the needs of local residents.

- Work with Cornell Cooperative Extension to catalog mature trees, especially within the Wizard of Oz Oak Grove and the North Syracuse Cemetery Oak Grove
- Create a maintenance plan for their preservation.
- Market the parks and open spaces as a method to attract first-time homeowners and increase the chance to acquire park funding and volunteer opportunities.

## Potential Environmental Impacts Associated with Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Park improvements will occur within existing developed areas, minimizing land disturbance. Temporary impacts from renovations or construction of new facilities will be short-term and mitigated through best practices. Tree preservation and planting of new trees will provide long-term ecological benefits. Overall, no significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

## Historic Resources

History plays an important role in the character of the Village of North Syracuse, and it is important to highlight and preserve its historic features in order to maintain the community's unique identity. Key historic features include Toll Road Park, the Conway Schoolhouse building that now resides at Toll Road Park, the Wizard of Oz Memorial Oak Grove, the North Syracuse Cemetery & Oak Grove, the Main Street School, and the Community Center.

Despite the significance of these resources, public awareness remains limited. With the anticipation of increasing population within the area, it is important to create awareness and education regarding the village's historic assets. Advertising historic areas as community and cultural resources is key in attracting visitors and reinforcing community identity and character.

It is also important to preserve the historic resources and ensure that they are not lost with future development. Historic structures such as the Main Street School, Community Center, and Conway Schoolhouse were built in the late 1800s and early 1900s and should be preserved. While the majority of the village's housing stock in the Village was built in or after the 1950s, its architectural character also contributes to the community's character. Design guidelines should encourage the retention of original features and appropriate renovations, while infill development should replicate historic attributes to maintain the Village's historic charm.

Other challenges include maintenance of historic resources. Due to their age, these structures require improvements to maintain safety and integrity. The Conway Schoolhouse building and the Community Center already have improvements planned for the next few years, and improvements to other structures will likely be required in the next 20 years. Proactive planning and funding strategies will be essential to preserve these assets for future generations.

## Goal

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*It is the goal of the village to celebrate and preserve local and regional identity.*

## Strategies

- Develop design guidelines to encourage new businesses to incorporate appropriate historic attributes into

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the design of their buildings outside of the Village Center, specifically along Route 11 and South Bay Rd. corridors.

- Provide a public education campaign regarding the Wizard of Oz Memorial Oak Grove.
- Continue the development of the Conway Schoolhouse building adjacent to Toll Road Apartments as a small historic park and increase public awareness about the park.
- Pursue state and federal grants and historic tax credits to fund maintenance efforts.
- Formalize a Historic Loop Trail (potentially as part of the Park Loop Trail) that connects historical features in the village, complete with interpretive signage highlighting historic sites.

### Potential Environmental Impacts Associated with Historic Resources:

Preservation and enhancement of historic resources will occur within existing developed areas, minimizing land disturbance. Any short-term impacts that may result from improvements or renovations to historic structures will be mitigated through best practices. Protecting historic buildings and landscapes provides long-term cultural and environmental benefits. Overall, no significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

# 4

## *Alternatives*

Chapter 4 outlines alternatives to comprehensive planning including the no-action alternative and the preferred planning strategy alternative to provide Village of North Syracuse with an informed decision-making process.

### **SEQRA Compliance**

To comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) the Village of North Syracuse must consider alternatives. The Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan involved a public participation process that extended over a period of nine months from mid-2025 to the spring of 2026, and ultimately resulted in the public identifying a series of issues and opportunities as well as goals and strategies. The planning process included an inventory and analysis of existing conditions within the Village including an assessment of its current land use, transportation, infrastructure, community facilities, and community services. The Comprehensive Plan reflects public consensus regarding a shared vision for the future and provides the necessary framework for achieving that vision.

### **No Action Alternative**

The no-action alternative would involve the Village of North Syracuse continuing its present course and not undertaking a planning process that would result in the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The result of this no-action alternative would be a possible and probable worsening of some of the key challenges and issues facing the Village as well as a loss of an opportunity to build public consensus about a shared vision for the future that guides decision-making and resource allocation toward collective goals.

These challenges include: a continued loss of community character and identity, a continued lack of arrival in the village, an increased demand for services and a declining/stagnant tax base, worsening traffic conditions along Route 11 and South Bay Road within the Village; a continuation of the unconnected pedestrian network across the village, with limited cyclist infrastructure; continuing longer term vacancies within the commercial corridors and within the neighborhoods; continued isolation of elderly residences within high- trafficked commercial corridors; continued disconnect between the two sides of the village (west of Rt 11 and East of South Bay Road); continuing changes in land use in some residential areas that potentially affect neighborhood stability; possible stagnation or decline of the local business climate; and finally, the possibility of a decline in the aesthetic character and overall quality of life in the community.

### **Alternative Planning Strategies**

The Village of North Syracuse has, throughout the planning process, evaluated and considered alternative land use, transportation, and development scenarios as part of refining the community's vision from the 2005 comprehensive plan.

The Village of North Syracuse is a mature, built-out community, which offers limited opportunities for new

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development. To this effect, the Village must rely on infill and redevelopment opportunities, especially along Route 11 and South Bay Road. Many existing conditions as well as market forces within the area limit redevelopment scenarios within the Village and thus limit the number of planning alternatives available for consideration. Business and tax base enhancements are high priorities for the Village as well as neighborhood revitalization. Residential neighborhoods are generally well-maintained but are experiencing conversions of single-family homes into multi-family and rental properties. Therefore, the preferred planning strategy has been limited to infill and redevelopment opportunities. Finally, because the Village of North Syracuse is a mature, built-out community, the preferred alternatives for proposed land use and development is reflective of the limited opportunities for alternative planning strategies.

# 5

## *Implementation Plan*

The Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2025 will serve as a key reference for all future decisions made by Village officials and department heads regarding growth and development of the Village during the next 20 years. This implementation plan provides a process for ensuring that Village decisions and actions will comply with the public's vision as expressed within the comprehensive plan. It also provides a framework for monitoring progress and updating the plan as needed to keep it relevant and effective.

### Plan Adoption

The Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan should be adopted within three months of completion. The Plan, as well as any amendment thereto, is subject to the provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) under Article Eight (8) of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations. The adoption of the comprehensive plan by the Village of North Syracuse is considered a Type 1 action subject to review under 6 NYCRR 617. The Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2025 has been prepared in a standard negative declaration format with SEQRA requirements.

### Priority Actions

The following list of actions have been identified as important building blocks that the Village should undertake to implement the comprehensive plan, and ultimately, achieve the Village's vision.

#### Develop a Comprehensive Financial Plan

The Village of North Syracuse should create a multi-year financial plan that evaluates current revenue, forecasts future needs, and identifies strategies for funding services and capital improvements. This effort should include hiring a qualified financial analyst to conduct a detailed financial analysis. Based on this analysis, the village should develop a comprehensive financial plan to help make informed decisions, prepare for economic fluctuations, and ensure long-term financial stability.

#### Update Zoning Ordinance

The Village of North Syracuse should update its zoning ordinance to align with the updated Comprehensive Plan. The overall vision, goals, and strategies for the Village provide a solid foundation to review and update the zoning ordinance to ensure compliance with the comprehensive plan. Immediately following the adoption of the plan, a zoning committee should be formed to review the ordinance and propose revisions as necessary to be adopted by the Village Board.

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## Create a Village-wide Marketing Strategy

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The Village of North Syracuse should build upon its comprehensive plan by marketing its business and community assets to help entice new residents and businesses to locate within the Village. This strategy should include coordinated efforts with regional partners and local economic development agencies such as Onondaga County, the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board, and CenterState CEO (formally MDA) to help market developable sites and investment opportunities within the Village.

The Marketing Strategy should include updated print materials such as brochures that inventory vacant and underutilized properties, summarize infrastructure capabilities, and identify incentives for doing business within the Village. These materials should also showcase the Village's unique advantages, including its proximity to Interstate 81, Syracuse Hancock International Airport, and the future Micron facility as well as the Village's extensive park system, family-friendly amenities and recreation opportunities, walkability, historic resources, and small-village character and charm.

Marketing efforts should also include a strong digital presence to reflect current media trends and effectively reach target audiences. This should include efforts such as updating the Village website with dedicated sections for residents and businesses, launching targeted social media campaigns, and utilizing interactive GIS-based property maps. These tools will allow prospective businesses and residents to easily access information about available properties, infrastructure capacities, and available programs and incentives.

Marketing materials, both print and digital, should include distinct sections tailored to potential residents and potential businesses, addressing the priorities and decision-making factors most relevant to each audience.

The marketing strategy should also incorporate unified branding and design standards for signage, way-finding, and promotional materials to strengthen the Village's identity.

## Develop a Village Gateway Study

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The Village of North Syracuse should develop a Gateway Study that outlines a strategy to clearly define gateways into and out of the village in order to reinforce village identity and improve overall visual appeal.

This study should analyze existing conditions and identify key entry and exit points as potential locations to implement gateway treatments. The study should also examine and evaluate potential design concepts for gateways that reflect the village's character and create a sense of arrival. Well-designed gateways will enhance the Village's marketability, create a positive first impression for visitors and potential residents, and support broader economic development and place-making goals.

## Develop Village Design Guidelines

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The Village of North Syracuse should develop and maintain comprehensive village-wide design guidelines that serve as a framework for all future public and private improvements, ensuring consistency in visual character, and reinforcing the Village's sense of place.

These guidelines should address all aesthetic features throughout the village, including signage, architectural character, landscaping, and public space features. Color palettes, fonts, materials, and branding should be outlined for all signage, including way-finding, gateway signs, streetscape signs, and business identification. Standards should be defined for landscaping, streetscape, and public space features including trees, plantings, lighting, and

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benches. Guidelines for architectural character should include building materials, facade treatments, roof-lines, and color schemes that reflect the village's aesthetic and historic character, encouraging the retention of original features and appropriate renovations when possible. These guidelines should apply to both new construction as well as renovations of existing buildings.

## Develop a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

The Village of North Syracuse should develop a pedestrian and bicycle master-plan to improve connectivity, safety, and accessibility for non-motorized transportation. Building on recent pedestrian improvements along Route 11, the plan should focus on expanding enhancements to the east and west of the village center, particularly along South Bay Road, a critical corridor within the village. The plan should also include an investigation into key east-west blocks to further connect the village to these vital corridors. The plan should identify priority areas for new infrastructure such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and bike racks, while also incorporating traffic calming and safety strategies like speed bumps, lane narrowing, curb extensions, and diverters. Additionally, the plan should explore opportunities to connect with existing regional bike trails outside the Village. By creating a well-connected and safe network, the Village can foster a more walkable and bike-friendly community.

## Develop programs and incentives for home ownership and stewardship

The Village of North Syracuse should explore and actively promote existing programs while developing additional initiatives that make home ownership more attainable and encourage ongoing property maintenance.

Programs may include offering financial assistance for first-time home-buyers through down payment support or low-interest loans, as well as providing grants, tax breaks, or matching funds for exterior home improvements such as facade upgrades and landscaping. The Village should also consider piloting a Block Builders Program, modeled after the successful initiative in Fulton, NY. This program would incentivize clusters of neighbors to collaborate on exterior improvements by offering matching funds, bonuses, and discounts, creating a visible and collective impact on neighborhood aesthetics.

In addition to financial incentives, the Village should provide education and information on available federal programs and grants that support homeownership and property improvements. Connecting residents to these resources will help them access funding opportunities and make informed decisions about maintaining and upgrading their properties. Educational workshops and outreach campaigns can further promote best practices for property maintenance and sustainability.

Finally, recognition programs such as beautification awards can celebrate well-maintained properties and inspire community-wide participation. By combining financial support, education, and community engagement, the Village can improve housing quality, encourage reinvestment in aging properties, and create a more vibrant and attractive community.

## Develop a Forest Master Plan

The Village of North Syracuse should develop a comprehensive Forest Master Plan to guide the long-term management, preservation, and enhancement of its forests and urban tree canopy. This plan should address tree planting, maintenance, and replacement, as well as policies for protecting significant forested areas.

A key component of the plan should be working with Cornell Cooperative Extension and other forestry experts to catalog existing mature trees, with special attention to the historic Wizard of Oz Oak Grove and North Syracuse

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Cemetery Oak Grove, two of the Village's most significant ecological features. This inventory will serve as the foundation for a proactive maintenance and preservation program, ensuring that these iconic trees remain healthy for future generations. The plan should also identify any trees at risk in need of maintenance and any opportunities for expanding tree canopy coverage in residential neighborhoods, along streetscapes, and in public spaces.

In addition to preservation, the Forest Master Plan should include strategies for community engagement, such as tree-planting programs, educational workshops, and volunteer stewardship initiatives. By involving residents in the care and expansion of the urban forest, the Village can foster a sense of ownership and pride while promoting sustainability. Ultimately, this plan will help maintain ecological health, improve air quality, provide shade, and enhance the Village's overall aesthetic and environmental resilience.

## Develop a study for relocating village services

As outlined in this plan, several village services need or will need new or improved facilities in the next 20 years. The Village of North Syracuse should develop a comprehensive feasibility study to evaluate the potential benefits and costs of relocating certain village services, including the Department of Public Works, the Police Department, and Village Administrative services. For each service, this study should consider space and functionality requirements, projected future needs, potential relocation sites, financial implications, and community impact.

## Develop an inventory of vacant and underutilized properties

The Village of North Syracuse should create a comprehensive inventory of vacant and underutilized properties to support strategic redevelopment and economic growth. This inventory will serve as a critical tool for identifying opportunities to attract new businesses, housing, and community amenities. The process should include mapping and cataloging properties that are vacant, underutilized, or in need of reinvestment, using existing records, field surveys, stakeholder engagement. The inventory should also use GIS mapping to create an accessible digital database and should be maintained and updated regularly to ensure accuracy and relevance over time.

## Develop feasibility studies for the development of Gateway Park Drive and Taft Road

As part of the comprehensive plan process, Gateway Park and Taft Road were identified as key areas for potential development in the next 20 years. The Village of North Syracuse should initiate a feasibility study to evaluate the potential for the development of these two areas for economic growth and community enhancement. The study should examine land use opportunities, zoning and infrastructure, traffic and access, economic impact, and potential funding opportunities. The study should also assess existing environmental factors and examine potential environmental impacts and mitigation strategies, especially for development within the wetland areas near Gateway Park. It should also outline required environmental review in order to maintain compliance with applicable permitting requirements.

## Further development of the Conway Schoolhouse Site at Toll Road Park

The Village should continue the development of the Conway Schoolhouse site adjacent to Toll Road Apartments as a small historic park. Although the building once functioned as a museum, its interior is currently unusable and would require significant cleaning and renovation to serve any future purpose. The vision for this site is to create a passive historic park that preserves the structure as an exterior landmark while enhancing the surrounding area with educational elements, interpretive signage, and thoughtfully designed plantings. Increasing public awareness through outreach, signage, and partnerships with local schools and historical organizations will ensure this landmark survives as a valued cultural and recreational asset.

## Plan Monitoring

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To ensure that the Village of North Syracuse Comprehensive Plan remains up-to-date, it is important to develop ways of monitoring its effectiveness and approaches for keeping it current as circumstances change over the years. The Village must review the Plan after 10 years to assess growth and change and update as required to ensure that it remains an effective planning tool. After 20 years, the plan should be thoroughly reviewed and revised. Planning is an ongoing process and adopting a comprehensive plan is not the final step to the process, but a start.

20 years after the plan adoption, the Comprehensive Plan should be thoroughly revised. The revision process should include:

- Creation of a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
- Updating the Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions
- Preparation of an evaluation report documenting the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan and implementation efforts, identifying constraints upon implementation, and summarizing conditions and trends that have changed in the period since the plan adoption.
- Revise the goals and strategies to reflect changing circumstances, emerging needs and opportunities, and expressed citizen priorities.