



Town of Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan 2021 Update



Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York
2021

Town of Wilton

Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan 2021 Update

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**Hudson River
Valley Greenway**

*In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.
- John Muir*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Scenic vistas, exceptional habitats for threatened and endangered species (including the Northeast's largest population of the Karner blue butterfly), many miles of established trails and significant opportunity for increased pathway connectivity, and vibrant outdoor recreational spaces provide a rich natural environment for the Town of Wilton's residents and visitors.

The Town of Wilton continues to grow, a trend that has fluctuated but remained positive each decade since 1930. The Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) projects the population of the Town will continue its growth from 16,173 in 2010 to 19,652 in 2030, a change of nearly 22 percent. This population change gives the Town of Wilton the largest projected growth in the next decade of any municipality in the county.

This prediction indicates that the large demand for additional housing will likely continue and result in the conversion of open space lands to residential uses unless there are more effective strategies in place to protect these areas. The town's natural landscapes are an attractive resource for the increasing number of young adults and families as well as the populations nearing retirement age.

With the projected population changes in both overall numbers and makeup, it is vital that the Town of Wilton moves forward this plan's recommendations to not only ensure that open space and agriculture land are protected, but that the changing recreational needs of the town are met as well. This plan is broken up into three main concerns for the town: Open Space, Recreation, and Pathways.

This Action Plan summarizes findings, goals and necessary action steps to accomplish the goals detailed in the 2021 Update to the Town of Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan (OSRPP). The OSRPP update is the fulfillment of one of the priority recommendations from the Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2004 and updated in 2015. With many changes occurring in the Town since the 2007 adoption of the OSRPP, an update was warranted and commissioned by the Town Board. The purpose of the OSRPP update is to establish a strategy for the preservation of the diverse agricultural, historical, recreational, and scenic open space lands that strongly influence the quality of living in the Town of Wilton. The residents of the community, through expression in the adopted Comprehensive Plan, have acknowledged and endorsed the role of open space and the contributions these resources make to daily life in the Town. A balanced approach to future use of land in the Town is

important and proper and appropriate measures implemented now will allow for managed growth and preservation of the Town's natural resources in the future.

The intent of the OSRPP update is to provide a means of connecting open space areas, residential areas, recreation areas, service providers, Town services, and commercial areas with a town-wide system of pathways that allow for multiple forms of transportation to move effectively throughout the Town. The system will also have public health and quality of life benefits by providing opportunities for exercise, recreation, and connections with the natural world.

Through public outreach efforts, the OSRPP update incorporates the concerns and hopes of this community to establish a vision to guide future planning and development in the town. The plan reflects a history of commitments to protect open space and historic resources and expand upon a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities through building upon the successes of previous planning initiatives at the local, regional, and statewide levels.

A Commitment to Open Space, Connectivity and Recreation

Since its formation in 1818, the Town of Wilton has shown strong commitment to enhancing and preserving open space, recreational venues and pathways. Significant efforts to identify and protect open space, recreational venues and pathways over the past several decades, demonstrates the Town's commitment to its open space and recreational resources and the connections between them. The most significant efforts include:

- Improvements to the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations and inclusion into the Town Code, including adoption of a Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance (CSD);
- Continued Implementation of the Master Plan for Gavin Park;
- Continued updates of the town-wide multi-use trail system; and
- Continued financial support for WWPP.

The OSRPP is directly supported by public comments made during the development of the 2015 Town Comprehensive Plan and is closely associated with other recent open space preservation and recreation planning efforts. To oversee the this update, the Town appointed an advisory committee consisting of Town Board members, town officials and residents. They were instrumental in the plan development process including formulating strategic actions to achieve the desired results of permanent preservation of natural resources and unique features.

Goals for Open Space

Open space is a broad and complex consideration. Within the context of the preservation goals for Wilton, open space refers to natural terrestrial features such as meadows, steep slopes, forested areas; aquatic features including lakes, streams, ponds, and wetlands; heritage areas including historic landmarks and buildings; geological features including hydric soils and aquifer recharge areas, vernal pools; and consideration of scenic views. The values of open space are as diverse as the types of open space listed above.

Preservation of open space is especially important considering the presence of the Saratoga Sand Plains ecosystem in the Town of Wilton. Management efforts benefit a number of species including the Karner blue butterfly, Frosted elfin butterfly, Blanding's turtle, Persius duskywing butterfly, hognose snake, spadefoot toad, blue spotted salamander, and other species identified by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) as being Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Open space conservation is addressed through the Town's environmental and land use regulations. The Town's conservation subdivision law requires developers to utilize a conservation approach when subdividing lands of 10 or more lots. Open space on either along the Adirondack Northway is protected from development through the Northway Corridor Overlay District (NCOD). Natural areas and their timber, soil and streams are managed and protected by the Town's Timber, Soil and Stream Regulations.

Goals for Recreation

The Town has a significant number of pre-school and school-aged children. According to the 2010 Census, approximately 27 percent of the Town's population is 19 years of age or younger. This statistic indicates a strong need for recreation facilities of both an active and passive nature. Furthermore, it is a stated goal of the Town's Comprehensive Plan "to provide sufficient opportunities and facilities for both active and passive recreation activities." Active recreation includes types that require support equipment and facilities such as fields, courts, or tracks for the conduct of an organized game or match. Passive types are activities that are less reliant on structured facilities or competitions and include walking, jogging, trail running, dog walking, on and off-road cycling, hiking, snowshoeing, skating, cross country skiing, fishing, hunting, and bird watching.

Goals for Pathways

OSRPP envisions a town-wide system of pathways that effectively links open space areas, residential areas, recreation areas, points of interest, service providers and commercial areas. The strategy relies on a long-term, phased approach to piecing the links together through timely consideration during the development review process and optimal use of relevant state and federal transportation and funding programs. When complete, the Town's trail system will have meaningful connections to residential and commercial areas via multiple and alternative transportation routes affording seasonal access and movement for walkers and bicyclists.

Recommendations and Action Steps

The Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update established a general town-wide goal "to conserve, improve, and protect our Town's natural resources, viewsheds and open space including wildlife habitat, that contribute to the diversity, character, aesthetics, environmental quality, economy, and general health, safety and welfare of the community." The OSRPP update outlines actions for the Town to implement to accomplish this goal. The Town worked with the community and its partners to identify the highest priority actions for open space, recreation and pathways in Wilton. The Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update also provided a set of recommendations for specific planning areas throughout the community. The 2015 update was adopted by the Open Space Committee and incorporated into the following recommendations and action steps.

Open Spaces

1. Continue to identify areas of the Town landscape that are suitable for open space preservation. The areas identified should be based on prioritized considerations that reflect the public's enjoyment and ecological function of the space preserved.
2. Review and update existing Town regulations (i.e. zoning, site plan, subdivision) as necessary to achieve a balance between the adequate protection of resources and the fiscal and social needs of the Town and its residents. Evaluate potential land preservation mechanisms such as easements, land acquisition, purchase of development rights, and the use of incentive zoning to achieve the

transfer of development rights. Utilize incentive-based tools for open space preservation coupled with regulatory measures implemented through zoning, development guidelines, and a conservation development subdivision review process.

3. Develop a management strategy to inventory and catalogue all open space parcels for the Town. Develop a single form to inventory the existing open space parcels for their recreation and environmental education potential. Consider the required investment, desired uses and activities for open space lands, specific attributes and constraints of existing open space areas, appropriate management techniques, funding available, and human resources available to undertake management of the parcels inventoried and catalogued.
4. The Town should accept open space parcels that are being offered for donation, based on a thorough review by the Planning Board and Town Board. In many cases a parcel offered or to be acquired by sale or donation may involve one an organization such as Saratoga PLAN, the Open Space Institute, Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, or some other entity.
5. Consideration of fee simple purchase of lands or easements should be made on a case-by-case basis. Once a determination has been made that the parcel under consideration meets the criteria for priority open space, a method for owning, managing and financing the acquisition must be established prior to the final decision on acquisition. Factors to consider include cost, method of funding, means of ownership, the cost of upkeep, the approach to maintenance, and the long-term source of funding to cover maintenance and management costs.
6. Ensure enough funds are budgeted for existing and continuing program and land management. Furthermore, it is recommended that multiple funding sources be prioritized and pursued. Priority should be given to applying for available federal, county and state programs. As a next priority, private donations to fund preservation efforts would be possible.
7. Implement protection options as easements, tax abatements, transfer of development rights, and purchase of development rights programs, incentive programs, outright purchase, and other funding mechanisms.
8. Encourage existing farms to take part in agricultural protection programs in Saratoga County through the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program and other resources such as the USDA and NYS Department of Agriculture.

Water Resources

9. Adjust the stream corridor buffer standard to be measured from the shoreline, rather than the center of the waterway. This will add a more defining measuring point and increase the amount of protected areas. Standards should focus on the quality of the stream corridor, steepness of the slope, conditions which may contribute to erosion, and habitat value. Buffers and lot clearing restrictions around areas with physical constraints may be warranted and should be established on a case-by-case basis.
10. Review the Stream Corridor Overlay District requirements and update as necessary to work toward protecting the integrity of natural stream systems to the maximum extent possible. Incorporate these protections as necessary into site plan and subdivision regulations.

11. Minimize the potential impacts of erosion and sedimentation through strict compliance with the most recent State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Construction Permit requirements for stormwater management and pollution prevention.

Scenic Resources

12. Identify, map and protect high-quality scenic resources.
13. Utilize Visual Overlay Districts for highly sensitive areas to address road setbacks, cut and fill, lighting, reflective glass, height, structures that could be considered intrusive such as billboards or cellular towers, and site layout/design.
14. Require through site plan review and SEQR that all projects describe the potential impact on any locally significant visual resources that are identified in this document. During the site plan review procedure for review of commercial and industrial projects the Planning Board should utilize best practices to lessen the visual impact including screening, relocation on site, disguise, low profile, and sensitive lighting. The Zoning Board of Appeals should utilize similar standards in the review of variances, particularly variances relating to signs.
15. Improve compliance with the Northway Corridor Overlay District. The intent is to protect natural areas on either side of the Northway from development. A set of compliance guidelines should be compiled and imposed during subdivision and/or site plan review by the Planning Board. These guidelines should include realistic enforcement and penalties with requirements for rehabilitation, reclamation, and restoration of said lands.

Recreation

16. Support ongoing projects at Gavin Park. Consider additional locations for recreation.
17. Establish minimum recreation facility standards for active and passive recreation related to the size of individual development projects.
18. Complete a long-range plan for a compatible but diverse set of outdoor recreational uses at Camp Saratoga.
19. Consider implementing and supporting bike parks and multi-use areas.

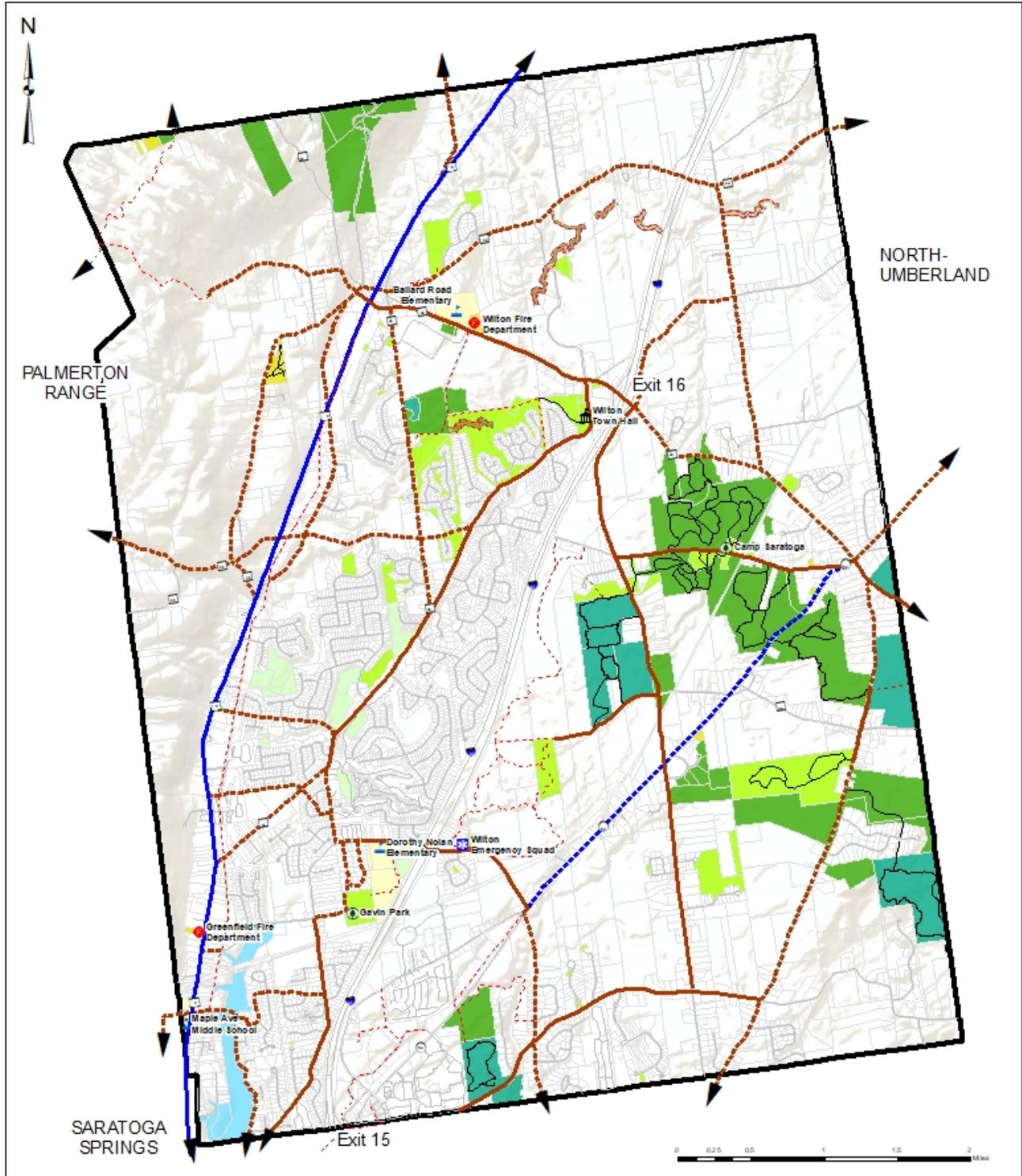
Pathways

20. Invest in a clear and simple comprehensive all-season trail map for visitors. Identify all Town parks, WWPP and Saratoga PLAN trail preserves, state land trails, and county trails. Include length of time for the hike, the level of difficulty, and appropriateness of the trail for different ages and abilities. Illustrate the extent of the trail system, rules and regulations, and the location of different types of trails and attractions.
21. Create a standardized informational, wayfinding and interpretive signage plan that makes it simple for people to find and navigate local trails.
22. Develop standards for the design of trailheads. Incorporate parking and trail registers where appropriate.

23. Negotiate access agreements with property owners at key connectivity points, and to trail destinations such as open space, park, and recreation lands with future connections to destinations such as schools, shopping areas and employment centers.
24. The powerline owned by National Grid located on the east side of Route 9 has potential to be a part of the interconnected Pathway. It was an original potential Saratoga County “Heritage Trail” and is being mentioned once again as a possible connector for the Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails system.
25. Develop use and safety guidelines and regulations for trails throughout the Town and conduct a public outreach and education program to advise Town residents.
26. Adopt a trail management strategy for off-road trails. A *trail use ordinance* could help the trail managing agency protect trails. The ordinance should contain the rules and regulations of the trail system and should be posted at trailheads. It is recommended that the standards for municipal trailheads be compatible with the standards of the State Department of Environmental Conservation.
27. Consider and prioritize paving projects to improve on-road connections to trail.
28. Establish and adopt a detailed plan for on- and off-road connections adjacent to Northway crossings.
29. Consider use of park and recreation fees for maintenance of Town trails.
30. Require private developers to connect future subdivision and residential development plans to trails.

Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park

31. Support the WWPP and its mission. Ensure that actions relating to land use at the local and regional levels are consistent with the program’s identified goals.
32. Continue compliance with NYS DEC and other state and federal standards, regulations and requirements for projects located within the WWPP to ensure protection of critical habitats and resources.



- Legend**
- Existing "Signed" On Road Bike Lane
 - Existing On Road, Paved Shoulder
 - Existing Off Road
 - Proposed "Signed" On Road Bike Lane
 - Proposed On Road, Paved Shoulder
 - Proposed Off Road
 - Town of Wilton
 - Wilton Water Sewer Authority (WWSA)
 - City of Saratoga Springs
 - Saratoga County
 - New York State
 - School
 - Other Public Lands
 - New York State DEC Fishing Access



Town of Wilton, NY Existing and Future Pathways

NOTE: For detailed mapping refer to Town website
Mapping produced by the Town of Wilton Planning & Engineering Department.
Information is deemed accurate but not guaranteed. DECEMBER 2020

Document Path: N:\GIS\MXD_Files\Sketches\OSR\PPP_Mapping_2021\Fig8_Pathways.mxd

SECTION 1 OVERVIEW



1.1 Open Space, Connectivity and Recreation for Future Generations

The Town of Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan Update (OSRPP) is the fulfillment of one of the priority recommendations from the Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2004 and updated in 2015. With many changes occurring in the Town since the 2007 adoption of the OSRPP, an update was warranted and commissioned by the Town Board.

The purpose is to establish a strategy for the preservation of the diverse agricultural, historical, recreational, and scenic open space lands that strongly influence the quality of life in the Town of Wilton. The residents of the community, have acknowledged and endorsed the role of open space and the contributions these resources make to daily life in the Town. A balanced approach to future use of land in the Town is important and proper and appropriate measures implemented now will allow for managed growth and preservation of the Town's natural resources in the future.

The intent of the OSRPP is to provide a means of connecting open space areas, residential areas, recreation areas, service providers, Town services, and commercial areas with a town-wide system of pathways that allow for multiple forms of transportation to move effectively throughout the Town. The system will also have public health and quality of life benefits by providing opportunities for exercise, recreation and connections with the natural world.

Wilton's Physical and Organizational Landscape

Although most of the town has flat or gently sloped terrain, the approximately 36 square miles of the Town includes Palmertown Ridge in the northwest part of town as well as mountain views to the east and northwest. Two small lakes, several ponds, and a proliferation of streams highlight the town's water resources. While the southern and western portions of the town are notable for their extensive housing and business development, there are large areas of open space in the eastern and northern sections.



Palmertown Ridge

Gavin Park offers fields and facilities for community

events, organized group sports and other active recreation. Camp Saratoga is a former Boy Scout camp now used for passive recreation and environmental education and serves as the main entry to the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park, Inc (WWPP). Land parcels owned by the Town of Wilton, the County of Saratoga, The Nature Conservancy, and the State of New York are included in the geographical area of the WWPP, which extends thousands of acres east of Interstate 87 (the Northway). These protected lands are part of the geologically significant Saratoga Sandplains, an area of ancient sand dunes, important wetlands, and diverse ecological communities encompassing several endangered and threatened species. The existing trail system features many miles of walking, running, biking, horse-riding, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing access to many of these notable natural features.

Wilton's Unique Environment for Open Space, Pathways, and Recreation

Scenic vistas, exceptional habitats for threatened and endangered species, many miles of established trails and significant opportunity for increased pathway connectivity, and vibrant outdoor recreational spaces provide a rich natural environment for the Town of Wilton's residents and visitors.

Open Space

Open space is a broad and complex consideration. Within the context of the preservation goals for Wilton, open space refers to natural terrestrial features such as meadows, steep slopes, forested areas; aquatic features including lakes, streams, ponds, and wetlands; heritage areas including historic landmarks and buildings; geological features including hydric soils and aquifer recharge areas, vernal pools; and consideration of scenic views. The values of open space are as diverse as the types of open space listed above.

Open spaces, while enjoyed for their characteristics of serenity, airiness, and tranquility also serve as habitat for a variety of wildlife and vegetation. The physical setting and climate are supportive of a varied mix of amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish, trees, shrubs, and groundcover. The recommended strategy identifies areas that meet these criteria as well as methods for preserving these lands and features over the long-term. Preservation of open space is especially important considering the presence of the Saratoga Sand Plains ecosystem in the Town of Wilton. This unique ecosystem supports the endangered Karner blue butterfly, frosted elfin butterfly and Blanding's turtle, the hognosed snake, Persius duskywing butterfly, and other species identified by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) as being Species of Greatest Conservation Need.



Farmland and open spaces: Multiple benefits because they protect scenic views, arable land, and important ecosystems.

Recreational Opportunities

The Town has experienced a considerable increase in population. This is true both in comparison to past trends in population increases in the Town as well as comparison to similar towns in the region. As a result, the Town has a significant number of pre-school and school-aged children. According to the 2010 Census, approximately 27 percent of the Town's population is 19 years of age or younger. This statistic indicates a strong need for recreation facilities of both an active and passive nature. Furthermore, it is a stated goal of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, "to provide sufficient opportunities and facilities for both active and passive recreation activities."

Active recreation includes types that require support equipment and facilities such as fields, courts, or tracks for the conduct of an organized game or match. Passive types are activities that are less reliant on structured facilities or competitions and include walking, jogging, trail running, dog walking, on and off-road cycling, hiking, snowshoeing, skating, cross country skiing, fishing, hunting, and bird watching. The OSRPP provides a comprehensive and cohesive set of activities that will fulfill the general goal to enhance opportunities for active and passive recreation.



Multi-use trails and recreation areas: Cross-country skiing is a popular recreational activity in Wilton.

Pathways

OSRPP envisions a town-wide system of pathways that effectively links open space areas, residential areas, recreation areas, points of interest, service providers and commercial areas. The strategy relies on a long-term, phased approach to piecing the links together through timely consideration during the development review process and optimal use of relevant state and federal transportation and funding programs. When complete, the Town's trail system will have meaningful connections to residential and commercial areas via multiple and alternative transportation routes affording seasonal access and movement for walkers and bicyclists.



Land conservation and pathways; linking together forest and open space resources in a town-wide system of pathways.

1.2 Wilton's Commitment

Since its formation in 1818, the Town of Wilton has shown strong commitment to enhancing and preserving the qualities of life made possible by its unique setting. Formal efforts to identify and protect open space, recreational venues and pathways have been recognized over the past several decades.

The Town of Wilton has developed and implemented significant initiatives to preserve open space, protect natural resources, and provide its citizens with ample and diverse recreational opportunities. The most significant efforts are as follows:

- Improvements to the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations and inclusion into the Town Code, including:
 - Adoption of a Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance (CSD) for all subdivisions involving ten or more lots in 2005. The Town has reviewed and accepted open space from subdivisions developed under CSD since its adoption;
 - Adoption of Article IIIA. Historic Preservation which provides for the process of designating landmarks and historic districts in the town;
 - Integration of the NYS Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) permit system as required for stormwater discharges;
 - Development and implementation of hydro-geological standards of subdivision development;
 - Implementation of a construction checklist for subdivision development;
 - Creation of the Stream Resource Management District; and
 - Development of the Northway Corridor Conservation District.

- Continued support for WWPP, including:
 - Contract partnership with WWPP; and
 - Working with New York State and conservation organizations to assess parcels around existing endangered species habitats.



Aerial view of Gavin Park.

1.3 Relationship to Other Plans

The OSRPP is a planned implementation measure referenced in the Town-sponsored efforts and county and statewide initiatives listed below.

Local Plans

2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update maintains the sound direction set forth in the previous Comprehensive Plan (2004) and addresses potential new or emerging issues in a proactive, balanced manner. This Plan identifies the needs of the community and presents an action program that benefits the Town and its residents over the long term. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted by the Wilton Town Board on November 5, 2015.

2011 Wilton Exit 16 Linkage Study

The Wilton Exit 16 Linkage Study was proposed by the Town of Wilton to the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) to evaluate the study area around Northway Exit 16 and develop recommendations that can be implemented to ensure a true center of the community is created, capitalizing on the existing zoning within this area, with a strong sense of identity and adequately provides for the multi-modal needs of residents, businesses and property owners.

2009 Wilton Global Job Development Corporation - Blueprint for Economic and Job Growth

The areas around the Exit 15 and Exit 16 interchanges of the Adirondack Northway have been integral to the local economy as host sites for businesses that provide employment and generate sales and income. The intent of this report is to identify future growth potential within each of these areas and forecast the impact in terms of additional employment in the Town. Since that time, dramatic changes in the retail sales industry will have an impact on development and redevelopment at Exit 15.

2007 Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan

The Wilton OSRPP represents an important implementation step from the Town Comprehensive Plan. During the development process for the comprehensive plan, residents expressed strong interest in open space, recreation, and expansion of pedestrian and bicycle trails as a key element to the rural character of the community. Therefore, the OSRPP is intended to provide a specific strategy for preservation of open space, expansion of recreational opportunities, both passive and active, and development of a trails network that provides meaningful connections and linkages to key destinations throughout the Town through alternative means of seasonal transportation.

Multi-Year Town of Wilton Traffic Planning Study and Update

This study outlines a five-year plan to prioritize and generate estimate costs for potential short-term improvements recommended for 2005-2015. Fees for traffic mitigation, as outlined in the report, are projected to adequately cover identified improvement projects.

2005 Gavin Park Master Plan and 2015 Update

This plan has been continually updated and is primarily a design project that illustrates a full build-out of the remaining sections of Gavin Park. The suggested fields, courts and other improvements were based directly on input from Town residents. The Town updates the Master Plan on a continual basis.

2001 Wilton Wildlife and Open Space Plan

This document introduced the concept of open space protection and was focused on the fiscal implications and advantages of long-term preservation of land. The Plan went on to suggest optional methods for the general preservation of open space.

1998 Town of Wilton Multi-use Trail System Master Plan

The Master Plan provided an inventory and analysis of land use and circulation data, identified the opportunities and constraints for construction, outlined goals and objectives for a trail system, and mapped conceptual locations for trails, trailheads, parking areas, picnic areas, and signage. This document serves as the foundation for the trails section of this document.

Regional Plans

2006 Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan

Saratoga County completed and adopted a countywide open space plan that identifies and prioritizes an intact network of open space resources, trails, and natural resources linked together by conservation greenways.

2005 Open Space for Tomorrow: A Capital District Sprawl and Open Space Action Strategy

This document, prepared by the Open Space Institute (OSI), supports the open space preservation goals of Wilton. WWPP cites Wilton as a “high priority environment.” The priority habitat area also extends to the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area’s Karner Blue Butterfly Unit which overlaps part of the WWPP study area. The document also highlights the west side of Route 9 as a “high priority trail corridor” linked to the Saratoga Greenbelt Trail.

Statewide Plans

2014-2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is prepared periodically by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to provide statewide policy direction and to fulfill the agency’s recreation and preservation mandate. The document is also used to guide the allocation of state and federal funds for recreation and open space projects. The direction for recreation in the state is guided by three overarching statewide initiatives, with associated goals and recommendations. These together respond to the current issues impacting the state’s natural, cultural and recreational resources. Initiatives include enhance and revitalize the state outdoor recreation system; improve connections between recreation, economics, sustainability, and healthy lifestyles; and strengthen the link between people, nature, recreation, and resource stewardship.

2014 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan

The Plan is an update and revision of the 2009 Plan, which identifies the types and locations of open space resources and provides various open space conservation tools and methods. The priorities of the Plan include promoting outdoor recreation; addressing climate change; ensuring clean water, air and land for a healthy public and vibrant economy; and protecting, using and conserving our natural resources and cultural heritage.

1.4 Public Outreach

The OSRPP is directly supported by public comments made during the development of the 2015 Town Comprehensive Plan and is closely associated with other recent open space preservation and recreation planning efforts. To oversee the 2020 update, the Town appointed an advisory committee consisting of Town Board members, town officials and residents. They were instrumental in the plan development

process including formulating strategic actions to achieve the desired results of permanent preservation of natural resources and unique features. The process for adoption of the updated OSRPP requires a pre-adoption public hearing to gather remaining comments regarding the actions suggested in the OSRPP.

1.5 Project Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Preserve Natural Resources

Objectives

Consistently and effectively utilize SEQRA, site plan, subdivision, zoning, the conservation subdivision process, and comply with the most recent State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Construction Permit requirements for stormwater management and pollution prevention to minimize impacts to sensitive natural resources

Goal 2 - Protect Open Spaces

Objective

Consistently and effectively utilize tools such as easements, tax abatements, transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, incentives, and land purchases to preserve special open spaces.

Goal 3 - Balance Development and the Protection of Resources

Objectives

Review the Stream Corridor requirements and update as necessary to work toward protecting the integrity of natural stream systems to the maximum extent possible. Evaluate and identify methods of protecting the Town's watersheds and well fields through an overlay district or performance standards. Explore the feasibility of an improved application protocol for road salt and sand as well as alternatives. Encourage Best Management Practices for fertilizers and pesticides and waste removal associated with all types of property maintenance. Integrate trail considerations into site plan review process.

Goal 4 - Protect Scenic Vistas

Objectives

Identify and map significant scenic vistas from public corridors. Utilize visual overlay districts for highly sensitive areas such as the Palmerton Range. Adopt standards to address site layout/design, road setbacks, cut and fill, lighting, reflective glass, height, and billboards or cellular towers.

Goal 5 - Support Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park and Its Mission

Objectives

Ensure that actions relating to land use at the local and regional levels are consistent with the goals of the Town and WWPP. Continue to coordinate with the WWPP regarding proposed projects in the vicinity of the park.

Goal 6 – Protect Wetlands

Objective

Evaluate potential methods to identify and protect unregulated wetlands, including vernal pools.

Goal 7 - Meet the Active and Passive Recreational Facility Needs of All Members of the Community

Objectives

Utilize input from the residents and accepted standards for the Town’s population profile to identify areas that would be suitable as site for future recreational facilities. Monitor the finding of the acquisition, installation, and maintenance of identified facilities to ensure that public demand is met. Maximize the potential for recreation on county forest lands. Promote the development of open space and recreational opportunities for all age groups. Encourage development activities popular with young generations.

Goal 8 - Expand Trails Linkages and Connectivity

Objective

Use a variety of tools, incentives and regulations to acquire land for trails and to provide a greater connectivity throughout the town and Palmertown Range. Encourage the use of “greenways” wherever possible. Be active with partners to pursue the Palmertown Range Trail project. Approach the Town of Northumberland for information about how to potentially connect to the Champlain Canalway Trail at Hudson Crossing Park. Participate in future partnerships that look to develop a trail above the Saratoga County waterline.



Looking east from the Grant Cottage Scenic Overlook.

SECTION 2 COMMUNITY SETTING



2.1 Regional Context

The Town of Wilton is conveniently located in the north central area of Saratoga County (see “Regional Location Map”). Sharing of a municipal border with the City of Saratoga Springs, Wilton is a highly desirable place to live. The geographic location affords convenient access to recreational opportunities, community services, employment centers and shopping.

One of the distinctive characteristics of Wilton is its relationship with the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area, a matrix of 700-acres of mostly New York State owned lands on several separate parcels in the Towns of Wilton and Northumberland. Most of the acreage is in two contiguous parcels – Camp Saratoga and the Old Gick Farm – that lie east of the Northway, west of State Route 50 and south of Ballard Road.

2.2 Physical Characteristics

The Town of Wilton is comprised of 22,066 acres approximately 36 square miles in area. The landscape consists of generally flat to moderately sloping and rolling topography. The Palmertown Ridge, located to the northwest, is steeper in slope and provides vertical backdrop to flatlands in the central and southern sections of the Town (see “Land Use Map”). The rural, pastoral nature of the northern half of Wilton is a characteristic that many residents credit for the Town’s celebrated quality of life.

Surface water features include lakes, ponds, and streams, many of which originate in the Palmertown Ridge. Two of the largest surface area water bodies in Wilton are Loughberry Lake (partially), which is a public water supply for the city of Saratoga Springs in the southwest, and Lake Elizabeth in the central portion of the Town. Scout Pond, also known as Delegan Pond, is a popular fishing location at Camp Saratoga. The prominent streams include the Snook Kill, Little Snook Kill, Delegan Brook, Bog Meadow Brook, the Little Snook Kill tributary, and various tributaries and sub-tributaries to Loughberry Lake. Except for the Little Snook Kill tributary, all the streams listed above are classified trout streams by the NYS DEC. Fishing is allowed in the Snook Kill due to NYS DEC Fishing Rights Easements. Loughberry Lake cannot be utilized for recreation because of its use as a water supply. The privately owned McGregor Links golf course is a valued recreation resource within the center of Town. It is worth noting that the lands on which the golf course is located will remain open space in perpetuity under an agreement related to the Greens at McGregor Planned Unit Development District.

With a four-season climate and relatively uniform soil types which range from well-drained sandy soils to silt loam, the terrestrial areas support a varied range of wildlife and vegetation. The terrestrial environmental is comprised of forested and open meadows and grasslands.

Saratoga County manages four forest areas and the State of New York owns several larger parcels in the northern section of the Town. The WWPP, located in the central eastern area of the Town with the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area and State Forest, has an ecology consisting of oak-pine savannah with occasional pine barren vernal ponds. It encompasses regionally significant wetland complexes with many vernal ponds. This area provides habitat for the federally and state endangered Karner blue butterfly, the state-threatened frosted elfin butterfly and Blanding's turtle, and special concern species eastern hognose snake, eastern spadefoot toad, and blue-spotted salamander.

This physical setting provides the basis for a keen interest in an open space and recreation strategy that balances development and continued growth with long-term preservation of these natural features and settings.

Natural Resources

Scenic Vistas

Many of Wilton's corridors offer expansive views of the Town's natural resources. Wide views of the Town's open space, woodlands, and former farmlands can be seen along parts of US Route 9, Wilton-Gansevoort Road, Ballard Road, Northern Pines Road, Dimmick Road, and other rural roads. The Palmertown Range is visible to the west and views to the east display Vermont's Green Mountains. The rural nature of the Town is highly visible from these vistas and differentiates it from the denser residential and commercial centers of the town.

Ecosystems and Biodiversity

It is important to identify and understand the diversity of biological communities or "biodiversity" in the Town of Wilton as a basis for preservation and protection of the native species, and not allow new development to have a negative impact on the habitat of endangered or threatened species. Much of the ecologically sensitive habitat plant and animal species are found in the area east of the Northway in the Saratoga Sand Plains ecosystem where significant large and undisturbed parcels remain. Development of this land could alter existing wildlife habitat areas and their travel corridors without the inclusion of open space subdivisions in development proposals.

Existing within the framework of this open space is a diverse population of varying wildlife and vegetative species that complete a generally open and serene natural setting. The Town is home to a wide variety of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, and amphibians. Mammals include white-tailed deer, red fox, raccoons, woodchucks, red and gray squirrels, chipmunks, fisher, beavers, otters, muskrats, and porcupine that have been found primarily in the undeveloped and rural areas of the town. Birds include wild turkey, ruffed grouse, a variety of songbirds, hawks, owls, and the northern mockingbird. In marshes, wetlands or other water areas, wood ducks, mallards, black ducks, geese, herons, kingfishers, and osprey are plentiful. Reptiles and amphibians include spotted salamanders, gray tree frogs, spring peepers, garter snakes, and painted and snapping turtles. Insects of note are the endangered Karner blue butterfly, the threatened frosted elfin butterfly, and Perseus duskywing.

A search of the New York Natural Heritage database identifies three (3) wildlife species with sensitive status may be found within the Town. These include the Blanding's turtle, listed as threatened; the

frosted elfin, listed as threatened; and the Karner blue butterfly, listed as endangered. One classification of forest was noted as unlisted, the hemlock-northern hardwood forest. The US Fish and Wildlife has also identified the presence of the Karner blue butterfly as an endangered species and the federally listed endangered Indiana bat may be present as well.



Karner Blue Butterfly

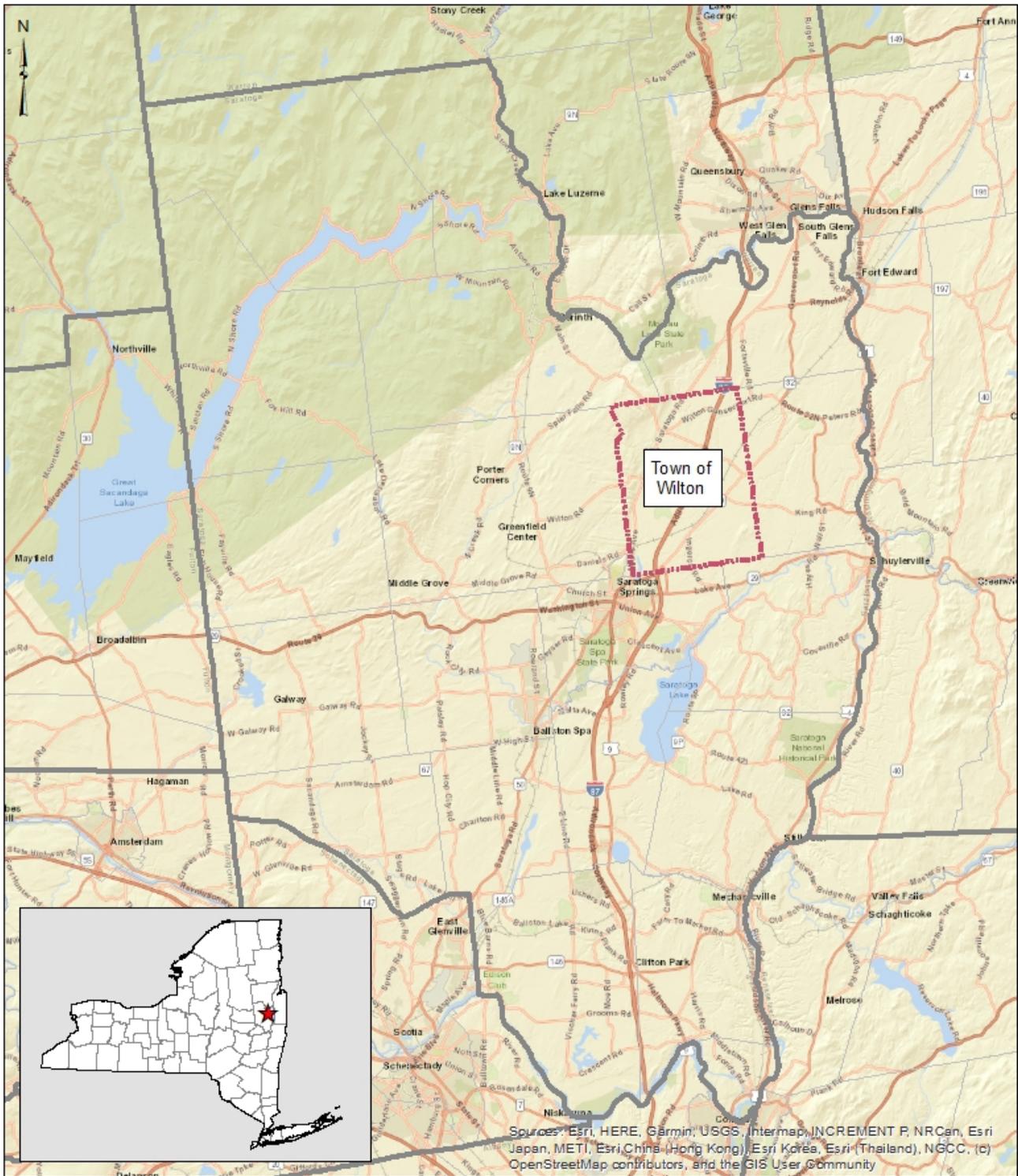


Spotted Turtle

The vegetation of the Town of Wilton is typical of most communities in Saratoga County, featuring a combination of farmed areas, fields, wetlands, and forested or re-forested areas, and residential areas dominated by lawns. In the Saratoga Sand Plains, there is an on-going habitat restoration program that is focused on expanding meadow habitats that have a significant amount of wild blue lupine and little blue stem grass as a prominent vegetation type. Protecting these habitats and the associated wildlife add to the value of open space preservation efforts.

Another successful planning initiative has been setting aside valuable habitat and ecological areas in a large expanse of land to the east of the Northway. Through a cooperative effort among the State of New York, Saratoga County, the Town of Wilton, and The Nature Conservancy, a goal was established to preserve up to 3,000 acres of land. WWPP is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization that partners with these government landowners. Some of the more important are the oak-pine savannah and the pine barren vernal pools. It encompasses regionally and ecologically significant wetland complexes with many vernal ponds, some of which are critically important to the threatened Blanding's turtle. The Saratoga Sandplains provides habitat for the federally and state endangered Karner blue butterfly, the state-threatened frosted elfin butterfly and Blanding's turtle, and special concern species Eastern hognose snake, Eastern spadefoot toad, and blue-spotted salamander. Over 2,400 acres are currently protected within the Saratoga Sandplains.

The primary objective of the WWPP is to cooperate with the state in their protection of the habitat of the endangered Karner Blue butterfly and to provide recreational and educational experiences. The WWPP is situated on an area that was once the basin of a large glacial lake, evident by the very sandy soils and dunes. As such, this area presents geologic qualities different from the western part of the town. These plants and trees include pitch pine, little bluestem grass, and wild blue lupine. The WWPP consists of public and private lands designed to sustain the proper ecosystem of the Karner blue butterfly, and encourage the growth of wild blue lupine, an important food species for the Karner blue caterpillar. Blue lupine requires specific conditions to grow, especially open field areas.



Legend

-  Town Limits
-  Municipalities
-  Counties

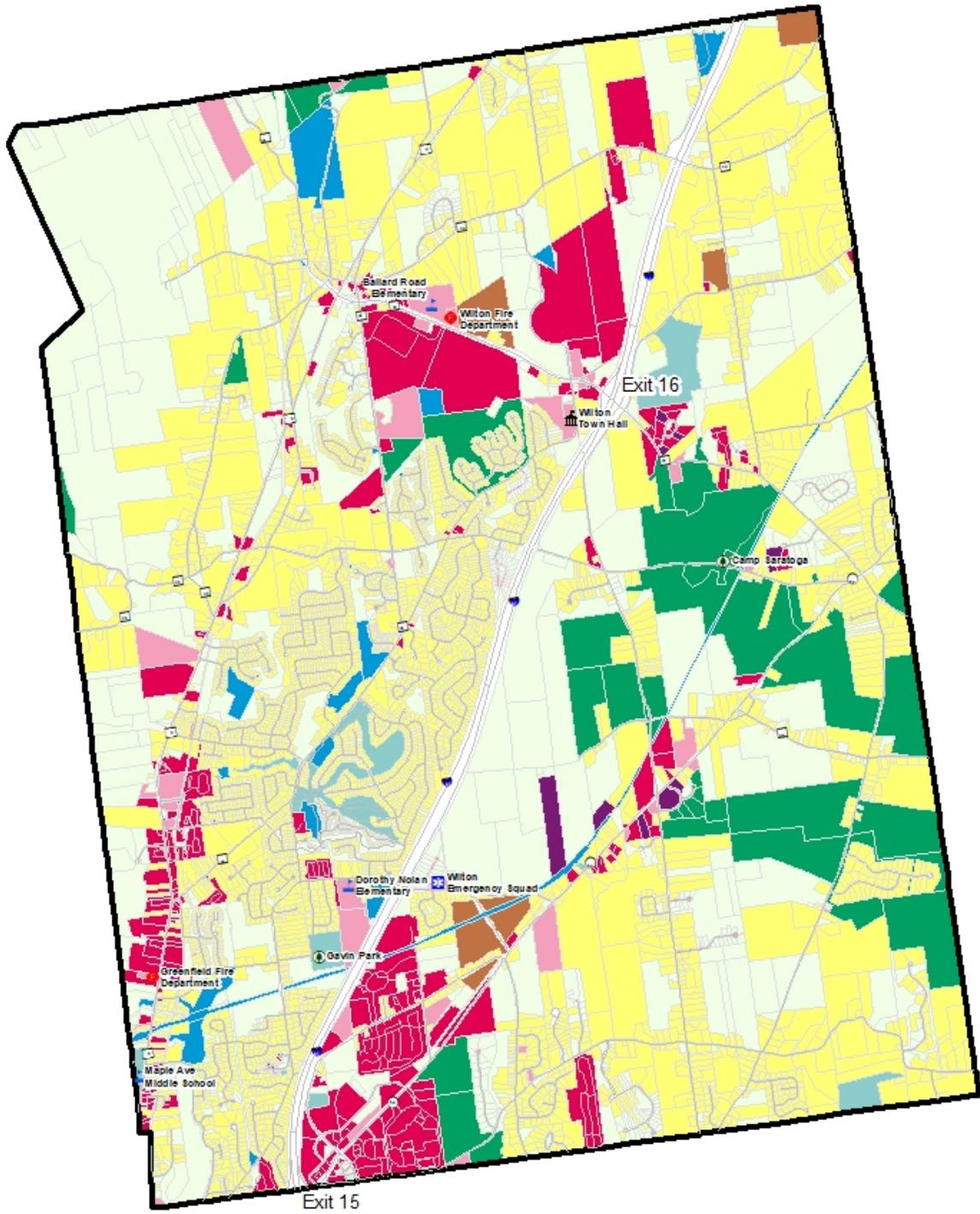


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**Town of Wilton, NY
Regional Location Map**

Mapping produced by the Town of Wilton Planning & Engineering Department. Information is deemed accurate but not guaranteed. DECEMBER 2020



- Land Use Categories**
- | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Agricultural | Industrial | Forested & Conservation Lands |
| Residential | Public Services | Recreation & Entertainment |
| Commercial | Community Services | Vacant |

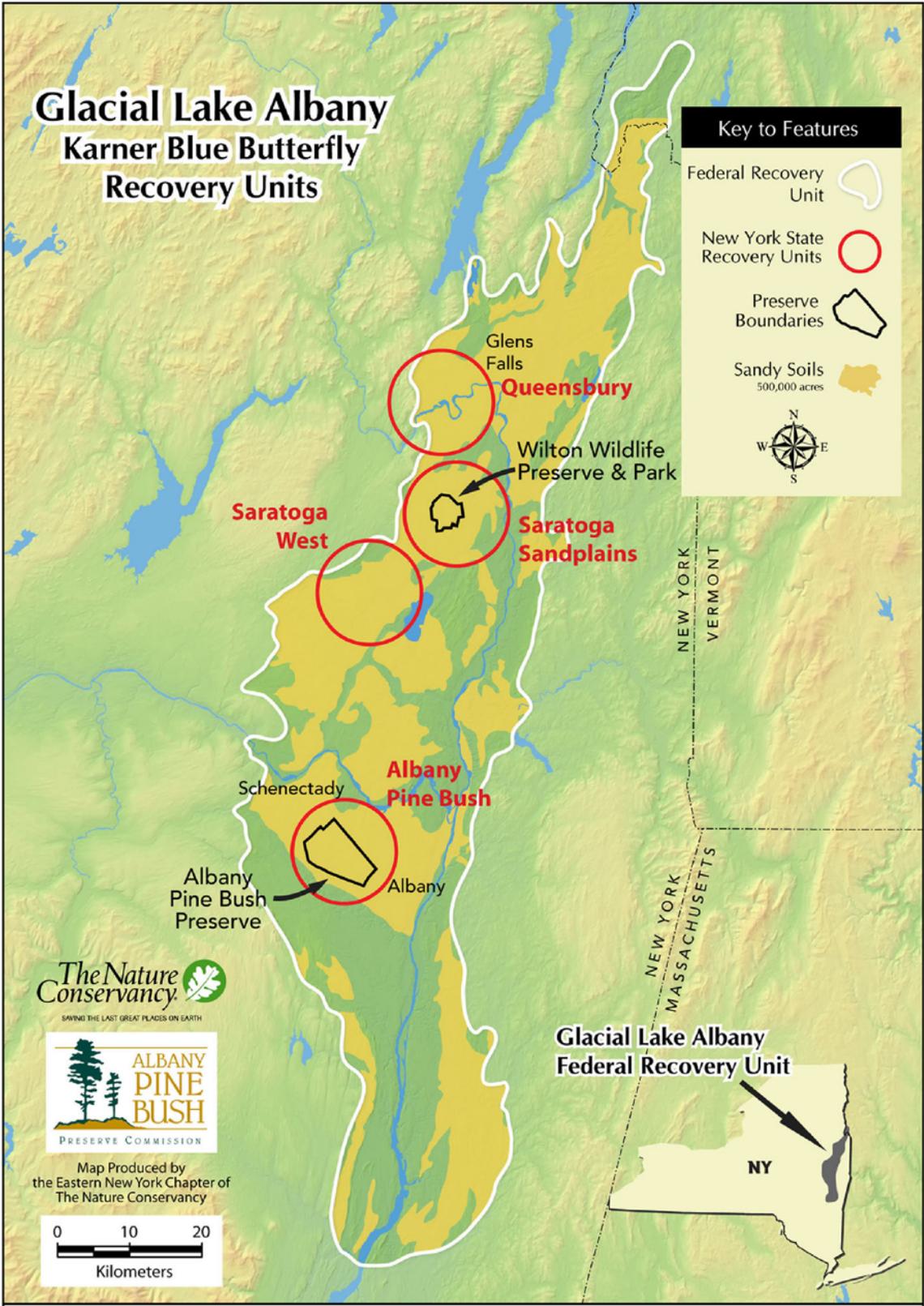


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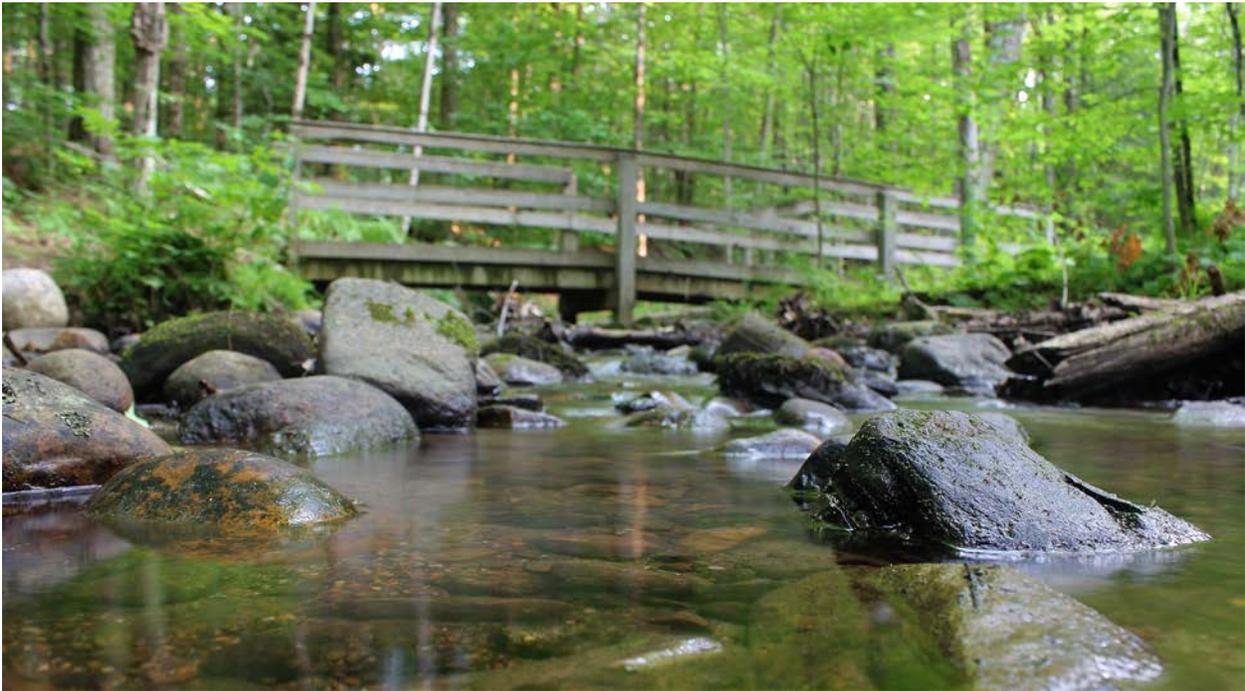
Town of Wilton, NY Land Use Map

Mapping produced by the Town of Wilton Planning & Engineering Department.
Information is deemed accurate but not guaranteed. DECEMBER 2020



Water Resources

The most notable water resource in the Town of Wilton is the Snook Kill. The Snook Kill originates at Perry's Pond near Northern Pines Road in the Town of Greenfield and flows in a northeasterly direction through the Town of Moreau where it flows into the Hudson River. The terrain around the Snook Kill features deep ravines that have served as a natural barrier for the waterway. Several small streams flow into the Snook Kill, including the Little Snook Kill and Delegan Brook. Other open surface waters in the Town include Lake Elizabeth, located adjacent to Worth Road, and Loughberry Lake located near the southwestern border of the Town of Saratoga and City of Saratoga Springs. Several ponds and designated wetlands areas exist throughout the Town especially in the area east of the Northway. There are approximately 2,910 acres of wetlands representing nearly 7.5 percent of the Town. Both federally listed, and New York State wetlands exist with many located along stream corridors and waterways. Refer to "Sensitive Environmental Areas Map", for locations of water resources in the Town.



One of the many feeder streams to the Snook Kill in Wilton.

Loughberry Lake is a critical resource since it serves as the primary water supply and as a visual gateway feature for the City of Saratoga Springs along the Route 50 corridor. Although approximately two-thirds of Loughberry Lake is in the Town, Saratoga Springs owns the lands on the bottom of the lake as well as the entire shoreline. The Town protects the lake by requiring a critical environmental review of any development along the shoreline. It abides by the City of Saratoga Springs's Watershed Rules and Regulations, which do not permit recreational use of the lake or its shoreline. In the future, should the City change these requirements, there may be an opportunity to utilize portions of the buffer area or a part of the lake for swimming, fishing and other non-motorized recreational uses.

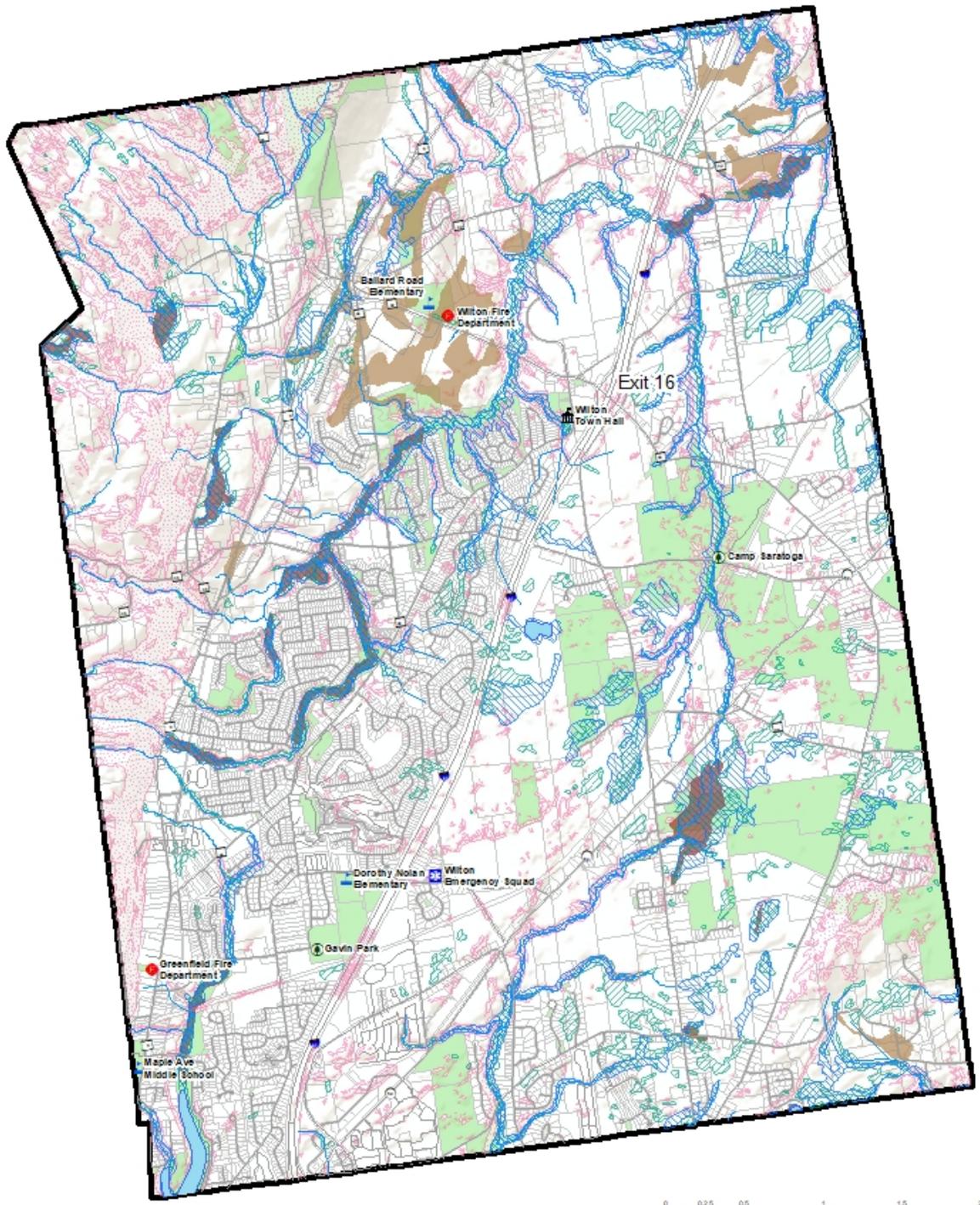
To protect the stream courses and waterways, the existing Town Zoning Code requires a buffer of non-disturbance of various widths depending on grade and measured from the center of the stream course or water body. This standard applies to the Snook Kill, Little Snook Kill, Delegan Brook, Bog Meadow

Brook, and the tributaries leading to Lake Elizabeth and Loughberry Lake, as well as the water bodies themselves.

Another water resource of ecological importance are vernal pools. A vernal pool is a confined basin with no outlet stream where water stands on average for several weeks, usually in the spring and early summer. During periods when water collects, these small, intermittent pools serve as breeding and feeding sites for amphibians, such as salamanders and frogs. Vernal pools are difficult to identify during their drier seasons of the year and are therefore difficult to protect. Because they may be visible only during the spring months, they are often not taken into consideration during the review and permitting process. However, the data relating to areas of terrain with 15 percent or greater slope reveals “pockets” of steep slopes throughout Wilton, especially in the southeast quadrant of the Town (see “Sensitive Environmental Areas Map”). The presence of these pockets may be indicators of potential sites for vernal pools and may require further review during a subdivision or site plan review process. Land use decisions that permit the laying of roads, tree cutting, and building construction in these areas may have a significant adverse impact on the biological integrity of vernal pools.



Delean Pond in Camp Saratoga.



- Legend**
- Streams
 - NWI Wetlands
 - Hydric Soils
 - Public Spaces
 - Waterbody
 - Slope > 15%
 - NYSDEC Wetlands
 - Hydric Soils Inclusions



Town of Wilton, NY Sensitive Environmental Areas Map

Mapping produced by the Town of Wilton Planning & Engineering Department.
Information is deemed accurate but not guaranteed. DECEMBER 2020

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Historic and Cultural Resources

The Town of Wilton was founded in 1818. The area where the Wilton-Gansevoort Road meets Ballard Road and near the intersection of Parkhurst and Woodard Roads is the original settlement area of Palmertown. It also forms the original hamlet of Wilton and still features many of the original buildings. The Town features over one hundred buildings that are still intact and were homes to some of the Town's early founders, as well as its residents during the 19th century. According to "Saratoga County Communities: An Historic Perspective," the Town of Wilton was settled between the French and Indian War and Revolutionary War when the area was known as Palmertown.

Prior to European settlers, Native Americans farmed the land and hunted in the vast forests, especially in the western part of the Town, along the Palmertown Range. After the Revolutionary War, the families of Stiles, King, Phillip, Laing, Perry, Dimmick, Johnson and McGregor moved into the area, and many of their original homesteads are still intact. Also, many of the small hamlets in the Town still feature the names of the founders, such as King's Station, Stiles Corners, Dimmicks Corners, Emerson's Corners, and Mount McGregor.

From the original Native American settlements to modern times, the Town of Wilton has developed primarily around its travel corridors. The north-south passageway from Saratoga Springs to Glens Falls slowly began to develop and the Wilton Hamlet featured many businesses such as the Wilton hotel, stores, a blacksmith, wagon shop, Wilton Academy, and several homes. The completion of the Adirondack Northway had a profound impact on the businesses along Route 9, and today commercial growth is centered on the two Northway exits within the Town, Exits 15 and 16. Although some of the buildings have been identified and are still intact, many other buildings and sites have been burned, torn down, or are in disrepair. Future consideration of the historic value of the remaining significant buildings and sites as catalogued by the Town Historian is recommended during development review.



Grant Cottage
State Historic Site: Final home of Ulysses S. Grant,
Commanding General of the Union Army during the Civil War
and 18th President of the United States.

Wilton enacted Zoning Provision 129-173 Historic Preservation. This new law states that in cases where the Town Historian has identified a building or site as a historically significant feature, the Town Historian be given a 30-day notice for the opportunity to review and catalogue the site for inventory purposes. This will ensure that historic sites and buildings are appropriately evaluated and photographed before a building permit is granted, and, if plausible, the building be preserved in some fashion, or portions of the building preserved for possible display by the Wilton Heritage Museum. Consideration should be given to strengthening Wilton's code to preserve the community's historic structures and places.

Agricultural Spaces

Historically, rural, open space was the dominant land use in the Town of Wilton. However, there are now only a few active farming areas and land development has significantly impacted the extent of open space in the town. Most of the active farms are scattered throughout the Town with some concentration in the northeast corner of the Town.

The 2015 Inventory and Analysis performed by the Town of Wilton determined that agricultural lands and farms in the Town of Wilton totaled 220 acres, or 1 percent of the total Town acreage. This represents a substantial change from 2007 statistics that reported 5% of the land as agricultural. Currently, Saratoga PLAN, a land trust operating in Saratoga County, is conducting a field analysis to clarify the amount and types of active agricultural uses in the Town of Wilton. Although the results are incomplete, they provide some insight on the existing stock of agricultural lands and farms.



The Tooker Farm: 89 acres Protected by Purchase of Development Rights through Saratoga PLAN

Saratoga PLAN has preliminarily identified 43 parcels totaling over 1,916 acres with agricultural lands or farms in the Town. The average acreage per parcel is nearly 45 acres. Acreage calculations included the entirety of the parcels considered despite the uses being contained to only a portion of each property. Further site assessments are recommended to determine the scale of agricultural activities and verify the formal nature of the use.

The agricultural uses and farms listed consist of poultry farms, horse farms and stables, hobby farms, farm-raised meats, dairy farms, and field crop areas. These places represent an important component to the economy of Saratoga County, offer scenic farm landscapes and provide a sense of place.

Due to the mixed rural and suburban character of the Town, it may be valuable for the Town and its partners to divide existing agricultural activities between formal and informal uses. Formal uses include commercial businesses activities which are considered part of the formal economy. Informal uses involve properties whose primary uses are private residential or recreational but also include unofficial agricultural activities considered part of the informal economy. For informal uses, the scale of agricultural activities and infrastructure is a significant determinant in whether the property owner is producing enough goods and services to be defined as a business enterprise.

Preserving all active farms in the Town of Wilton is a priority. Obtaining county, state, and federal funding for preservation of farmland are among our goals. With so little active farming left in the Town, and a growing number of mouths to feed and educate, the few remaining farms are a top priority. Unless specific protections and alternative opportunities for landowners are presented, continued loss of farmland, especially formal uses, is anticipated.

2.3 Growth and Development Patterns

The Town of Wilton continues to grow steadily. From its roots as a rural farming community in 1950 with a population of less than 1,500 people prior to the construction of the Adirondack Northway,

Wilton has grown to its present status as a dynamic, suburban community with numerous business operations and an estimated population of over 17,000. Recent population trends indicate that Wilton will continue to attract new residents and businesses. The population more than doubled in the 30-year period between 1980-2010 and is estimated to have increased by 650 people between 2010-2017 (3.8%) (See Table 1)

Table 1 Total Population – Town of Wilton & Saratoga County (1980-2017)									
Town of Wilton					Saratoga County				
1980	1990	2000	2010	2020*	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020*
7,221	10,623	12,511	16,173	17,909	153,759	181,276	200,626	217,264	235,358

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

*CDRPC Projections

According to population statistics from the 2010 Census, the percentage of persons under 20 years old (school-aged children) shifted slightly lower between 2000 and 2010. This change reflects a higher percentage of residents who are 65 or older (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2 Population Percentage by Age – Town of Wilton & Saratoga County (2000-2017)								
Town of Wilton					Saratoga County			
	Under 20 Years	20-35 Years	35-65 Years	65+ Years	Under 20 Years	20-35 Years	35-65 Years	65+ Years
2000	31.3%	16.6%	44.2%	7.9%	27.6%	19.1%	41.9%	11.5%
2010	27.0%	14.5%	46.2%	12.3%	25.8%	16.7%	44.4%	13.1%
2017	25.4%	16.8%	43.6%	14.3%	23.4%	17.7%	42.5%	16.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3 Projected Population Percentage by Age – Town of Wilton & Saratoga County (2020-2050)								
Town of Wilton					Saratoga County			
	Under 25 Years	25-44 Years	45-64 Years	65+ Years	Under 24 Years	25-44 Years	45-64 Years	65+ Years
2020	28.8%	23.1%	29.6%	18.4%	28.4%	23.9%	29.3%	18.5%
2030	27.2%	23.2%	25.5%	24.2%	27.1%	24.3%	25.2%	23.4%
2040	26.7%	22.5%	25.4%	25.3%	26.8%	24.0%	25.0%	24.2%
2050	26.0%	23.1%	27.0%	23.9%	27.0%	23.9%	26.6%	22.5%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, & CDRPC Projections

One outgrowth of this population dynamic is an increased demand for recreation facilities to accommodate active and passive forms of recreation for all age groups. Examples include opportunities for on-road and off-road bicycling, trail hiking, additional playing fields and courts, and additional playgrounds and unstructured open space.

According to the 2015 Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan, the largest single active land use in the Town is residential (more land identified as vacant or unused). The most intense area of residential development lies between US Route 9 and the Northway south of Ballard Road with some recent developments shifting the line of development northward a bit. This area consists of suburban style development in subdivisions of varying sizes. Less intense residential development is scattered throughout the remainder of the town. This development consists of small subdivisions and individual lots.

2.4 Environmental and Land Use Regulations

Open space conservation is addressed in the adopted conservation subdivision law. This provision makes it required for developers to utilize a conservation approach when subdividing lands of ten (10) or more lots. The new subdivision regulatory process will provide a set aside for open space lands, water bodies, wetlands, sensitive habitat areas, unique environmental settings, steep slopes, and other components of subdivision review. Open space along either side of the Northway is protected from development through the Northway Corridor Overlay District (NCOD). Another mechanism for preservation is through Timber, Soil and Stream Regulations. These regulations require site plan approval and standards for timber harvesting, vegetation cutting, soil disturbance, and stream resource protection. While existing standards for drainage, wetlands, and stream protection are adequate, land clearing and timber harvesting regulations should be updated. Consideration should be given to including subdivisions of fewer than ten (10) lots under the conservation subdivision regulations.

SECTION 3 OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PATHWAYS



3.1 Open Space Resources

Open space is defined by the Zoning Code as “an area of land not developed with residential, industrial or commercial structures and used for recreation, agriculture, forestry or left in its natural state”.

Lands within Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Inc. (WWPP)

Over 2,400 acres of protected lands within the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area are an important part of the Town’s open spaces. In 2003 the Town of Wilton, The Nature Conservancy, NYS DEC and the WWPP became partners in conservation with the protection of less than 5 acres of Karner blue butterfly habitat in the Saratoga Sand Plains. This area is also part of the Glacial Lake Albany Recovery Unit and now supports Karner blue butterflies. The success of increasing this federally endangered species from 1,000 butterflies to 20,000 in roughly 10 years is directly due to the restoration of habitat and the permanent protection land. The unique partnership worked towards a common goal to protect and manage these lands. A description of the partners and their roles is found in section 4.2.2.



Wild blue lupine (*Lupinus perennis*): A native plant to the Saratoga Sand Plains. Karner blue butterflies are dependent on these plants for food. Scenes like this can be found throughout the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park.

WWPP is now a not-for-profit organization comprised of partner representatives and interested citizens. WWPP became established in 1996, incorporated in 1998, and a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 2001, in response to the work of The Nature Conservancy and the NYS DEC to identify and monitor populations of the endangered Karner blue butterfly in the towns of Wilton and Northumberland.

The Town's overall goal is to create a 3,000-acre preserve for the Karner blue butterfly and a park for people. This is a community-based program with a focus on conservation, education and recreation. Saratoga County joined the partnership a few years later.

WWPP's role in the partnership is to:

- Support the protection and conservation of significant lands of ecological and recreational value;
- Support DEC efforts to maintain and recover imperiled wildlife species like the state-threatened frosted elfin butterfly and Blanding's turtle;
- Educate the general public, children, groups through programs and guided interpretive walks; and
- Offer and sponsor recreational opportunities.



Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park: Visitors at a meadow overlook where Karner Blue butterfly can be seen. This is an example of how WWPP combines conservation, recreation and education.

WWPP and partners offer the following recreational elements within the study area:

- Several miles of hiking trails for bird watching, nature photography, nature appreciation, trail running, dog walking and mountain biking;
- Winter groomed and ungroomed trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing;
- Fostering nature and wildlife appreciation and environmental learning;
- Fishing at Delegan Pond and nearby streams;
- Hunting and trapping on state and county-owned lands;
- Public access to the historic Cornell Hill Fire Tower;

County Forests

There are approximately 1,132 acres of County Forest in the Town of Wilton. Five of the seven parcels exist inside the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area, and the other two are located just west of Wilton Mall and in the southeast corner of the Town. Saratoga County manages much of these lands for reforestation and public trails. These wide expanses of land provide important wildlife habitat and act as critical buffers to other environmentally sensitive lands.



Saratoga County owns 696.83 acres of County Forest on 10 parcels in three areas in the vicinity of Camp Saratoga. The first area consists of 7 parcels on 497 acres. Two of these parcels (119.85 acres) are in the Town of Wilton. These are reforestation lands with numerous informal unmaintained trails throughout.

The second area is comprised of approximately 200 acres on 3 parcels. Saratoga County maintains a trail system off the west side of Edie Road. The “Edie Road Trail” contains approximately 2.4 miles along a trail loop with several Habitat Conservation Zones and a small pond. These trails link Camp Saratoga to Bullard Lane and the new 38-acre town-owned parcel on the south side of Bullard Lane.

The third area trailhead is located in Northumberland at the end of Gailor Lane. The “Kalabus-Perry Trail” consists of two trail loops totaling approximately 3.5 miles on 246 acres. It straddles the Northumberland border and connects to the trail system in the Town of Wilton’s Neilmann parcel.

There are several new trails on County Forest land along Edie Road and Bullard Lane. There is public access from a parking lot on Edie Road just south of Scout Road and from Bullard Lane. As on other County parcels non-motorized vehicles are allowed and hunting is allowed in season. Long-term plans include a trail linkage from these trails to the Camp Saratoga parcel south of Scout Road.

There is no written policy regarding recreational use of County Forests, however, County Law Section 219 County Reforestation sets some parameters in this regard. Recreational uses permitted include “kindred” recreational uses. Hunting is permitted, however snowmobiling, 4-wheel vehicles and overnight camping are not permitted. Under agreements with the town of Wilton in 2003, no pre-existing uses may be extinguished on County Forests. County Forest parcels may be sold only through an act of the State Legislature. Present regulations call for DEC to exercise first refusal on any of these lands proposed for divestiture.

County Forests are selectively harvested approximately every 15 to 20 years and are accessed via existing logging roads. Individual sites have timber management plans that were developed in the mid-1980s. Wilton recently renewed a contract with Saratoga County to undertake habitat protection, plan and manage trail construction, and establish recreational uses on County Forests. Numerous opportunities for trail connections are possible through county forest, particularly the parcel along State Route 50 near the Wilton Mall.

Palmertown Range

In addition to its scenic vista, the Palmertown Range has great ecological significance from a countywide and regional perspective. Forming the southeastern most corner of the Adirondack Foothills, the striking and scenic ridge on the west side of Route 9 holds valuable natural resources and is predicted to be a hot spot of climate resilience, a place where species can find the microhabitats they will need to survive and adapt to a changing climate. Furthermore, the Range and especially its ridge, is predicted to serve as a corridor for long-distance species migration between the Adirondack Mountains and the Green Mountains of Vermont. The headwaters of the Snook Kill and Spring Run flow from the Palmertown Range, and its forests play a major role in the quality of surface waters downstream. Conservation of the woodlands, wetlands, and waters of the Palmertown Range, and capitalizing on their potential as economic drivers through outdoor recreation is an open space project that the Town of Wilton is already participating in. The Town is active on the Palmertown Guidance Committee and has committed to implementing the 2018 *Southern Palmertown Conservation and Recreation Strategy*, along with six other municipalities, two state agencies, two conservation organizations, and Skidmore College. The partnership has obtained major funding to craft a master plan (in progress) for the Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails system that seeks to create an extensive network of trail opportunities for people of all types, interests, and abilities.

By actively investing in the Palmertown project, the Town could establish gateways from Route 9, Woodard Road and Parkhurst Road into the Friendship Trails systems and partner to create “community forests,” lands where members of the community volunteer to manage and steward the resources in woodland tracts for a variety of community objectives – timber, mountain biking, maple syruping, hiking, education, resource protection, etc. For its potential for open space, recreation, economic development, education, and pathways, the Palmertown Range should emerge as a more prominent and explicit priority in Wilton’s OSRP plan.

Other Open Spaces

Open space preservation initiatives ensure that development in the remaining areas of the town vulnerable to development is sensitive to the scenic and unique character of the area.

Critical land known as the Fox Parcel was purchased by the State of New York in 2018. This parcel, located at Ruggles Road to the south east and Route 50 to the northwest, has strategic importance for the management of Karner blue butterfly habitats and a combination of sandy uplands and pine barren vernal ponds. The Fox Parcel represents a total of 157 acres – 89-acre original parcel purchased by The Nature Conservancy plus a 68-acre parcel from the Frawley family purchased with a second County Open Space grant which extended the protected area to Ruggles Road.

Implementation of the conservation subdivision design process and attention to viewshed protection during site plan review is aiding the town in preserving locally important views such as the McGregor Fault, Palmertown Range, Pine Barrens, Snook Kill Gorge, and Kendrick Hill. This process has yielded numerous private, common areas of open space. Most of these lands are held in common by residents and is managed by a conservation easement, deed restriction, or homeowner’s association. While these lands are not available to the public, they represent important preserved open space in private ownership.

Saratoga PLAN has fee simple ownership of the Orra Phelps Preserve, an eighteen-acre preserve with a trailhead off Parkhurst Road. Saratoga PLAN also holds conservation easements to lands associated within the Mulberry Estates and Kings Mills open space subdivisions, as well as on the Tooker Farm.

Northway Corridor Overlay District, a 100-foot no-build area, provides a continuous linear green buffer between all development and the Northway. This natural corridor protects neighborhoods visually and from vehicle noise by providing a natural barrier from the Northway. The regulation does not allow for any activity within the buffer area.

An initiative that is in its infancy, land along the Palmertown Range bordering NYS Route 9 and currently under private ownership, is being considered for the creation of a community forest. Approximately 210 acres would be preserved. Hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing and cross country skiing are among the activities that could take place here.

3.2 Recreation Resources

Public Interest in Active and Passive Recreation

In recent years, the Town of Wilton has experienced significant growth primarily from families with young children. Consequently, the Town has come under increased demand for quality recreational facilities and playing fields, particularly for youth athletics. The Town responded accordingly by funding

the development of a Master Plan for Gavin Park, the Town's active recreational park facility and by improving passive opportunities at Camp Saratoga. See Appendix B for a complete recreational inventory of Camp Saratoga.

Existing Resources

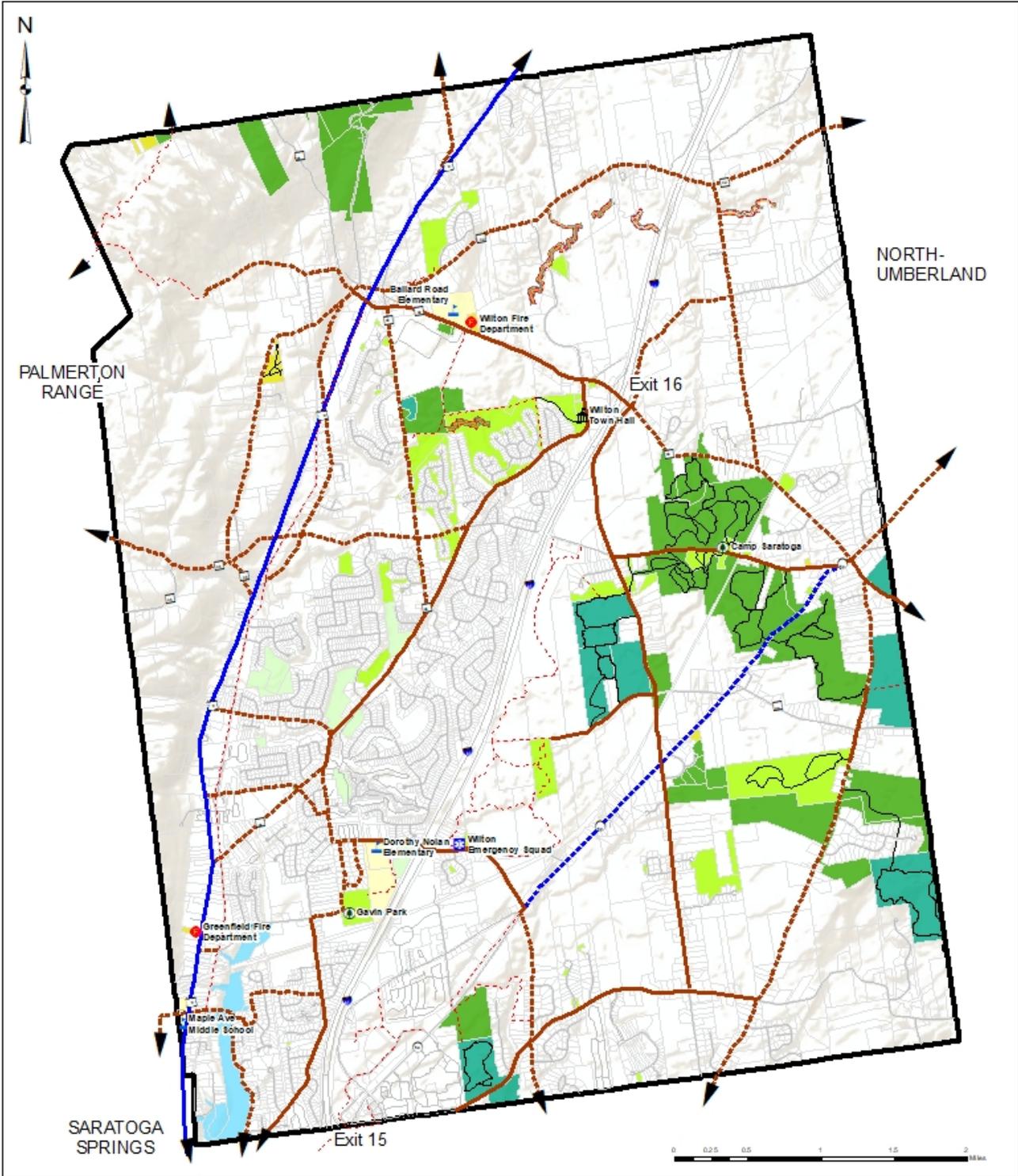
Wilton presently has two major town parks offering recreational opportunities. Gavin Park is designed for organized group sports and other active recreation. Camp Saratoga is used for passive recreation and environmental education and various programs provided by WWPP. The Town's resources are augmented by an estimated 2,400 acres of land owned by Saratoga County, and NYS DEC. Complementing these resources are the facilities owned by the Saratoga Springs School District at Dorothy Nolan Elementary School, Maple Avenue Middle School, and the Ballard Road Elementary School in the South Glens Falls School District.

Ongoing Recreational Improvements

The Town of Wilton is continually exploring ways of incorporating new parklands at little or no direct cost to the residents. It is anticipated that some of the new lands devoted to public parklands will occur through negotiating with private developers. Future conservation design subdivisions and Planned Development District's will all have open space components that will lend themselves to the development of public elements such as trails and trail connections, playgrounds for common use, and sports fields. A priority recommendation is the development of a set of forms, one of which can be used to inventory existing open space parcels for their recreation and environmental education potential, and the other to review potential open space lands using a fair and equal set of criteria.

A contract with the Saratoga Springs School District for additional land adjacent to the Dorothy Nolan School, was annexed to Gavin Park for the shared use of all residents. A master plan for the site was developed and the construction of new playing fields and satellite parking was completed.

The privately owned McGregor Links golf course is a valued recreation resource within the center of Town. It is worth noting that the lands on which the golf course is located will remain open space in perpetuity under an agreement related to the Greens at McGregor Planned Unit Development District.



- Legend**
- Existing "Signed" On Road Bike Lane
 - Existing On Road, Paved Shoulder
 - Existing Off Road
 - Proposed "Signed" On Road Bike Lane
 - Proposed On Road, Paved Shoulder
 - Proposed Off Road
 - Town of Wilton
 - Wilton Water Sewer Authority (WWSA)
 - City of Saratoga Springs
 - Saratoga County
 - New York State
 - School
 - Other Public Lands
 - New York State DEC Fishing Access



Town of Wilton, NY Existing and Future Pathways

NOTE: For detailed mapping refer to Town website
Mapping produced by the Town of Wilton Planning & Engineering Department.
Information is deemed accurate but not guaranteed. DECEMBER 2020

Document Path: N:\GIS\MXD_Files\Sketches\OSRPP_Mapping_2021\12\16_Pathways.mxd

3.3 Pathway and Trail Resources

Existing Conditions

The trail system envisions a town-wide series of trails to link open space areas, residential areas, points of interest, service providers, and commercial areas. The strategy relies on a long-term phased approach to piecing the links together through timely consideration during the development review process and efficient use of relevant state and federal transportation and funding programs.

There are many benefits to be gained from the development of trails throughout the Town. Bicycling, walking, and other non-motorized means of transportation are healthy, non-polluting and energy conserving forms of transportation, recreation, and physical fitness, and they do not require costly infrastructure to construct and maintain. Trails also facilitate use of alternative transportation, such as walking and biking. Encouraging alternative transportation use improves a community's overall transportation system by reducing the use of energy, reducing automobile traffic and congestion. In addition, roadway improvements to accommodate bikes, such as the addition of wider paved shoulders promotes additional safety for all users.



Sidewalks connect important places and provide an alternative means to move around Wilton.

A trail system can incorporate a combination of trails and linear parklands, on-road paths, sidewalks, and subdivision walkways. Natural corridors and systems, such as stream banks, can also be used to develop trails. Greenways along rail lines, public rights-of-way, power easements, and waterways produce educational, environmental, aesthetic, and recreational benefits.

The Town of Wilton continues to be in a growth mode. It is an appropriate time to incorporate natural corridors and trail systems into future development. Town officials continue to put trails and open spaces as priority planning initiatives as evident in the plans listed below:

- 1998 Town of Wilton Multi-Use Trail System Master Plan;
- 2001 Wilton Wildlife and Open Space Plan; and
- 2007, Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Trails Plan.

Linkage and Connectivity

Linkages are connections to other trail systems, key transportation routes, and origins and destinations within or adjacent to the Town. Both natural and manmade linear features, such as stream corridors, abandoned rail lines, or on-road bike paths, can be used to connect open spaces. Opportunities to link Town trails to neighboring communities, such as Saratoga Springs (Spring Run Trail and Bog Meadow Trail), and nearby destinations, such as Moreau Lake State Park should be identified, and discussion among Wilton officials and the officials of adjacent municipalities should be encouraged to facilitate development of links to other local trail systems.

Table 4 Open Space and Trails by Ownership				
<i>Landowner</i>	<i>Locations</i>	<i>Amount of Protected Lands (acres)</i>	<i>Recreational Trails (miles)</i>	<i>Trail Name</i>
NYS DEC	Ballard Road	43	1.20	Opdahl Farm
NYS DEC	Camp Saratoga State Route 50	1,126	2.00 2.00 0.25 .40	Old Gick Farm Fox Acres Farm Ingersoll Trail Edie Road Connector
Town of Wilton	Camp Saratoga Bullard Lane Traver Road	236	0.25 0.50 2.00 1.50 1.60 1.00 .40	Delegan Pond Trail Bullard Lane Trail Witt Trails Kings Mill Trails Neilmann Trail Centennial Trail Rolling Green Con.
School District	Gavin Park	-	1.00	Perimeter Trail
Saratoga County	County Forests	1,132	3.50 2.40 0.80	Kalabus-Perry Trail Edie Road Trail Louden Road Trail
Saratoga PLAN	Parkhurst Road	18	0.38	Orra Phelps Preserve
TOTALS		2,555	19.98	

Future Connection to Moreau State Park and Saratoga Spa State Park

Representatives of Wilton are members of the Palmertown Guidance Committee, which is exploring how to connect Town trails to Moreau Lake State Park and historical resources, such as Grant Cottage State Historic Site on Mount McGregor. The State Park can be accessed from Wilton by way of the US Route 9 NYS Bike Route, and by Old Saratoga Road. The Palmertown Ridge Trail will connect Moreau Lake State Park with Saratoga Spa State Park and provide an important open space and recreational link.

The Palmertown Mountain Management Plan was prepared in January 2016 as an addendum to the Moreau Lake State Park Master Plan developed by OPRHP in 2006. Management recommendations include the recently acquired adjacent parcels of 1,031 acres which collectively form the Palmertown Range Addition to Moreau State Park: McGregor parcel (763 acres), Clothier parcel (60 acres), and Mackenzie parcel (208 acres). Goal #4 of the Recreation Goals and Strategies states, “Implement a system of non-motorized multi-use, sustainably designed trails that will connect to the trail system in the rest of the Moreau Lake State Park, to Grant Cottage, and to planned regional trails outside the park.” The official Master Plan for the Palmertown Range addition completed in November 2015 and included in the Management Plan illustrates the



The official Master Plan for the Palmertown Range

State's intentions for the site. These include:

- Completion of the Main Connection Loop which connects Lake Bonita, Grant Cottage, Lake Ann, and the Ridge Trail;
- Connecting the Main Connection Loop to existing rock outcrops for views along Lake Bonita;
- Completion of the Waterfall Trail which will extend south along a tributary of Stony Brook and connect the Main Connection Loop to Lake Bonita;
- Completion of the Lake Bonita Loop trail around the western portion of Lake Bonita with a connection to the Palmertown Range Trail, Main Connection Loop, the Waterfall Trail, and an existing dock on Lake Bonita;
- Addition of a Maintenance Access at Wilton Mountain Road to the Lake Bonita Loop;
- Continuing the Lake Ann trail to connect to Lake Bonita;
- Completion of an access trail between Grant Cottage to Lake Ann; and
- Connecting the Eastern Ridge Trail to the Lake Ann Trail with a new trail through the Mackenzie parcel.

With additional partners, a trail is envisioned to run 13 miles south along the top of the Palmertown Ridge, through the Mount McGregor parcel and connect with Wilton trails. Ultimately this trail system would connect to the Saratoga Greenbelt Trail, Railroad Run, Saratoga Spa State Park, and the Zim Smith Trail.

Future Trail Connections

Champlain Canalway Trail

The actual connection to the Champlain Canalway Trail is east through Northumberland to Hudson Crossing Park and the Dix Bridge where it crosses into Washington County, continues north on the east side of the Hudson River until reaching the Village of Fort Edward where it crosses again and continues north on the west side of the river.

Town of Greenfield

Greenfield could potentially connect with Wilton trails via some roads and rights-of-way such as Daniels Road; Cohen Road; Clothier Road; Bloomfield Road; Woodard Road; The Delaware & Hudson railroad right-of-way, and easements through or purchases of privately held lands.

The 2018 Southern Palmertown Conservation & Recreation Plan completed by Saratoga PLAN and OSI with assistance from a consultant team, recommends the development of hiking trails connecting Moreau Lake State Park to Lincoln Mountain State Forest and the Daniels Road State Forest in Greenfield. The Town has indicated that it is interested in pursuing this and other conservation efforts but will only proceed with significant local support and input throughout the process.

Saratoga Greenbelt

The Saratoga Greenbelt Trail is a 24-mile network of trails that upon completion will form a continuous loop throughout the City of Saratoga Springs. A key consideration in the design of the trail is compatibility and linkage to existing trails to connect the city's neighborhoods with the downtown business district and key destinations. A small portion of the trail is envisioned to come north up Maple Avenue to Daniels Road where it turns west. Additional connections are proposed with the City of Saratoga Springs at the Exit 15 area.

Saratoga County Waterline

The County waterline from the Hudson River in the Town of Moreau provides a potential future opportunity for an off-road trail along Route 9 that would connect Moreau State Park with the Town of Wilton and all trail points south. Presently the rights above the water line have not been purchased and there is no ability to utilize the corridor for trail purposes. The Town has identified several private property owner whose permission, by easement or other method, would be needed to accomplish this.

Town of Wilton

Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan 2021 Update

**Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York
22 Traver Road
Wilton, New York 12831
(518) 587-1939**



APPENDICES

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APPENDIX B	EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT
APPENDIX C	ROLE OF CAMP SARATOGA AND RELATED OPEN SPACES
APPENDIX D	OPEN SPACE AND TRAIL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

APPENDIX A LIST OF RESOURCES

- Barton & Loguidice Engineers, 2011. Wilton Exit 16 Linkage Study.
- Behan Planning, 2006. Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan.
- Clough, Harbour & Associates, 2004. Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan.
- Daniels, K.H. and Sampson, D.S., 2005. Open Space for Tomorrow: A Capital District Sprawl and Open Space Action Strategy. Open Space Institute.
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- M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, 2015. Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan Update.
- NYS DEC, 2014. Draft New York State Open Space Conservation Plan.
- The LA Group, 1998, Town of Wilton Multi-use Trail System Master Plan.
- The LA Group, 2001, Wilton Wildlife and Open Space Plan.
- The LA Group, 2007, Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Trails Plan.
- The LA Group, 2009, Wilton Blueprint for Economic Growth.
- The LA Group, 2005 and 2015 Gavin Park Master Plan and Update.
- Town of Wilton, 2004. Zoning, Chapter 129.
- Southern Palmertown Conservation & Recreation Strategy (2018)

APPENDIX B
EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

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SECTION 1 OPEN SPACE

1.1 Prioritization of Spaces

In order to bring the concept of open space preservation to reality, the motivations and reasons cited to date need to be organized into a logical process and evaluation for Town staff, the Planning Board and the Town Board. The Town Comprehensive Plan sets forth broad goals for growth management, open space preservation, and conservation of natural resources. To implement these goals, the following system of prioritization will allow for Town officials and involved private entities to evaluate the attributes for potential spaces as they become available. This system should be arranged so that each individual parcel proposed for Town acquisition is evaluated utilizing one set of criteria.

The Town of Wilton open space preservation initiative is envisioned to be a system of natural, connected landscapes that fosters resource protection, biodiversity of plant and wildlife habitat, recreational use and provides for permanent retention of the rural and scenic aesthetic qualities of the community.

To achieve this vision, the Town will need to implement a preservation strategy for lands offered that focuses on four major components:

- Set forth a system for prioritizing lands that meet the stated criteria for preservation protection;
- Identify key parcels of land and corridors for consideration and prioritization;
- Set forth realistic, alternative methods for securing desirable open space areas; and
- With partners, establish a plan for stewardship and management of lands secured for open space preservation.

The considerations for evaluating the importance of land for permanent preservation need to be diverse in order to adequately address the varying factors associated with the potential natural ecological and human ecological value of a given area. The following system of prioritization is therefore divided among seven (7) categories of considerations. These categories include physical composition, natural resources, locational and relational, scenic vistas, historic value, management, and priority areas.

1.2 Physical Composition

The parcel should be of sufficient size and configuration to meaningfully advance the preservation of open space. The shape and placement of open space is equally as important as its overall area. Open space shape and size is often dictated by the shape of the wetland or the extent of a steep slope. Careful consideration is needed as to how preserved land can maximize benefit and yield optimal long-term value to the environment and the community.

Such consideration for placement and shape of lands to be preserved include, but is not limited to:

- Buffer between environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, wildlife habitats, unique landforms, etc. and areas proposed for disturbance and/or development;
- Separation between developed areas and/or highway corridors;
- Preservation of scenic views or unique natural settings; and
- Planned or proposed trails and recreation areas.

The decisions regarding the location and shape of areas targeted for preservation should be made on a case-by-case basis, as the setting and the surrounding uses will influence each site. Therefore, the resulting shapes and locations may vary between larger, consolidated shapes and linear shapes occurring through a narrower expanse.

The physical composition of a preserved area also involves the physical attributes relating to topography, the presence of hydrologic elements (i.e. wetlands, streams, ponds, lakes, etc.), riparian values and soil composition. These physical elements can play a key role in the environmental sensitivity and uniqueness of a desirable area for preservation. Therefore, wetlands, streams, ponds, lakes, shoreline areas, hydric soils, soils with hydric inclusions, flood zones, and slopes over 15 percent are core features that have proven environmental values and/or are not conducive to development. As such, these areas are a fundamental consideration when determining areas appropriate for preservation.

Within the context of these sensitive areas, the Town Comprehensive Plan mentions three (3) specific areas within Wilton that are worthy of preservation. These are the Appalachian oak-pine forest, Pine Barrens vernal ponds, and Snook Kill Gorge. The oak pine forest generally extends from the Northway east to the Town line and from Loudon Road in the south northward to Ballard Road. The Pine Barrens vernal ponds are largely found bounded by Scout Road, Cole Brook Road, Ruggles Road, Loudon Road, and Edie Road. This area encompasses and expands around the area identified as the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area. Much of the area remains undeveloped due to a lack of municipal water and sewer service however, there are several subdivision proposals in the planning stages that may impact the extension of the sewer and water lines. Thoughtful planning at this juncture can effectuate a balance of open space preservation and the development of higher uses.

1.3 Natural Resources

The Wilton setting has varied and abundant natural resources. Placing emphasis on natural resources as a principal consideration for open space recognizes the wealth of biological resources throughout the Town of Wilton. Priorities associated with natural resources are based on ecological boundaries, blocks of productive habitat, habitat linkages and rare natural communities and species. Areas to be preserved should reflect ecosystem function, watershed and riparian value, quality of the resource, and the number and frequency of resource known to be present.

The natural resources to be considered as priority concerns include biological diversity or “biodiversity” and habitat protection. Conserving areas that support multiple plant and animal species is the optimal method for preservation of biodiversity and prevention of the further decline of species in the Town. The preservation of biodiversity encompasses conservation efforts targeted to larger tracts of land as well as individual species. The Town is host to 51 species of mammals; 110 species of breeding birds; 18 species of reptiles; 21 species of amphibians; and numerous species of hardwoods and hemlocks. Of these resident species, the Karner blue butterfly is a state and federally-designated endangered species, the Frosted Elfin butterfly is a state-designated endangered species, and three others are state designated species of special concern – the Eastern Spadefoot toad, the Eastern Hognose snake, and the Spotted salamander. Land preservation and acquisition efforts should focus on conserving sites with multiple species and plant communities particularly those, which are protected or endangered.

1.4 Locational and Relational

In addition to benefits of habitat protection, open space as a fundamental attribute provides separation between structures, neighborhoods, and land uses. Therefore, the connectivity of open space is important to the continuing functions of open space as a means to protect habitat and provide spatial separation between developed areas. By connecting open space expanses, critical links can be maintained between habitats, trail systems can be logically extended, and the aesthetic impact of uninterrupted open space is improved.

The connectivity of open space areas can be achieved through proper planning and design review when development proposals are submitted for the Town's plan review process. Therefore, consideration of the location of a proposed area for open space protection and its relationship to adjoining open space areas or its potential for filling voids or providing links to other open space areas is a priority consideration. Awareness of connectivity and linkages will build an integrated and functional system of open spaces over time. These linear spaces and expanses can also provide areas for trail links in the town-wide trails plan. Vital sections of a Town-wide trail network should be considered as development proposals are reviewed for individual parcels identified on the trails plan.

Expansive and uninterrupted expanses of open space are often critical to sustaining wildlife habitat. Placing priority on the provision of connection and linkages between open space areas will aid in the preservation of surface water resources, food resources, and nesting areas, etc. that are fundamentally important to the protection of plant and wildlife species.

Lastly, preservation of the rural and aesthetic quality of the Town will be further advanced with the existence of continuous and uninterrupted open space areas.

1.5 Scenic Vistas

The NYS DEC in their July 2000 memorandum titled *Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts* defined standard and significant aesthetic impacts. According to NYS DEC, aesthetic impact occurs when there is a detrimental effect on the perceived beauty of a place or structure. Significant aesthetic impacts reduce public enjoyment and appreciation for a resource or impair the character or quality of a place. However, due to the subjective nature of what is perceived as special, thresholds must be established to avoid reviewing projects in a manner that may be deemed arbitrary and capricious. The NYS DEC has developed a procedure for visual impact assessment primarily based on a visual assessment of an inventory of designated statewide significant resources including the following: property on or eligible to be on the National or State Register of Historic Places; State Parks; Urban Cultural Parks; NYS Forest Preserve; National Wildlife Refuges; National Natural Landmarks; the National Park System; Rivers designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational; a site, area, lake, reservoir, or highway designated or eligible for designation as scenic; a state or federally designated trail; Adirondack Park Scenic Vistas; State Nature and Historic Preserve Areas; Palisades Park; and Bond Act properties purchased as Exceptional Beauty or Open Space.

Since the Town of Wilton does not feature any of these resources, scenic resources should be identified if they have one or more of the following attributes: a rise in elevation providing a focal point of a vista or elements of a panoramic view; an open field that provides a unique and distinct landscape scenery that also displays the agricultural history of the Town; or a reservoir, pond, lake, or permanently running stream that provides a scenic view.

1.6 Historic Value

Open space in Wilton inherently has strong ties to the Town's heritage. As stated in the Town Comprehensive Plan, there are numerous historic sites in Wilton. Residents have expressed support for the preservation of the Town's historic resources. These sites are comprised of historic structures and places that have local, regional and national significance.

1.7 Management

Much of the land area within the Town of Wilton is under a dedicated form of open space preservation both public and private (Figure 5, "Protected Lands by Landowner in WWPP Map". The Town of Wilton, New York State, Saratoga County and the City of Saratoga Springs, share public ownership of these areas. NYS DEC Fishing Rights Easements along the Snook Kill provides further public access. Private ownership includes lands of The Nature Conservancy as well as lands of various homeowner associations.

1.8 Previously Identified Priority Areas

In keeping with the above factors, certain areas within the Town have been identified as priority areas for utilization of open space techniques. The areas are shown in Figure 4 and represent priority areas based on the presence of unique environmental (wetlands, steep slopes, habitat, hydric soils, etc.) and large expanses with opportunity for connectivity among spaces. In that regard, Figure 4 represents a tool for guidance as future development proposals are reviewed under the Town's site plan and subdivision review procedures.

There are several large tracts of vacant lands within the study area boundary. Within the vacant land category there are numerous parcels depicted in Figure 4 are representative of priority areas for open space preservation as they meet many of the criteria associated with physical composition, natural resources, and location and relationship to other open space areas.

1.9 Methods for Space Preservation

Methods for preserving open spaces can take many forms. Potential methodologies include:

- Acquisition;
- Management of Publicly Owned Lands;
- Development or Density Transfer; and
- Regulatory.

The above list represents a general categorization of methods. Each of these general methods includes more specific methods for permanent, long-term land preservation. Critical to the evaluation for identifying preferred methods is consideration of practical resources that will work in the Town of Wilton. The management considerations listed above are fundamentally important considerations attempting to gauge practicality and workability of a successful preservation strategy.

1.10 Acquisition

There are a variety of approaches under New York State Law to acquire open space. Section 247 of General Municipal Law (GML) authorizes local governments to expend public funds to acquire interests or rights in real property to preserve open space. This section of the GML also provides that after acquisition, the valuation of open space areas for real estate taxation purposes will be limited by the restriction of the future use of the parcel to open space.

There are basically two forms of acquisition: fee simple and partial interests or rights by easement. An owner may own all the rights associated with a given parcel or some of them. A third option is leasing. These acquisition options are explained as follows:

Fee Simple

This form of acquisition involves the purchase of the fee title interest in a parcel of land. Types of fee title acquisition include:

- Purchase at fair market value.
- “Bargain Sale” – This involves acquisition of real property by a conservation organization or a municipality below market value.
- Installment Sale – This involves sale of real property over a period of years. This method allows the seller to defer and possibly reduce, the tax burden by spreading income from the sale over a number of years.
- Real property can be sold with an option that allows the seller continued use of the land during his or her lifetime. Income from the sale is received at the time of sale but actual land transfer occurs upon the death of the seller.

Preserving land through fee simple acquisition allows for a high degree of protection. The principal drawbacks associated with this method are the expense of acquisition and ongoing management and maintenance.

Purchase of Rights Through Acquisition of Easements

The purchase of certain rights to a property through easements can be used to effectively preserve open space qualities of the parcel. Under this approach, the owner voluntarily offers rights to the land for sale. The current landowner retains ownership and a conservation easement is placed on the land and recorded in the deed. The buyer, usually a local unit of government, pays the difference between the value of the land as restricted and the value of the land under its “highest and best use,” which is generally residential or commercial, depending on the local zoning plan. The parcel remains on the tax rolls. The real property tax paid, therefore, contributes to the tax base, but at a reduced level. The restricted level of use on the parcel becomes a stabilizing effect on the future assessment on the parcel.

Leasing

Leasing is generally one of the least expensive options. Leases may be short-term or long-term and can vary in terms of rights and preservation activities. However, leases provide the least control in terms of permanency of preservation activities.

1.11 Financing Methods

Closely associated with acquisition considerations are methods of financing to provide funding for purchase or leasing and ongoing management and maintenance of the land. The available alternatives are as follows:

Private Programs

These include funds raised from private donations or contributions to accomplish local preservation objectives. Community foundations and philanthropic organizations are also sources of private funding. In-kind service or donations of materials can also play an important role in meeting various needs for administrative, legal, surveying, and accounting services and building and maintenance materials.

Gifts and Donations

Gifted or donated property, materials and/or services are important components to the overall preservation effort. Gifts and donations of land, in fee or easement, can be made to qualified not-for-profit and local, state, or federal governments. Gifts of funds for acquisition of lands can also be made or targeted to specific acquisition proposals. This method could be effective in the purchase of parcels within the WWPP.

Federal Programs

The relevant programs through the federal government include:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF);
- Pittman-Robertson Program;
- Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program;
- Sport Fish Restoration Program;
- Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21); and
- Farm Security and Rural Investment Act including Wetland Reserve Programs, Forest Legacy Programs, Farmland Protection Program, Forest Stewardship Program, Forest Land Enhancement Program, Conservation Security Program, Urban and Community Forestry Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, and National Flood Insurance Program.

State Programs

The principal means by which the state provides funding for preservation efforts is through the programs funded through the 1993 Environmental Protection Act. Through this act, the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) was established to meet pressing environmental needs including preservation of open space. The EPF is currently funded at approximately \$300 million on an annual basis. Other programs include the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The Town of Wilton has received funds in the past through these programs. In 1998, New York State provided \$50,000 to the WWPP. An additional \$18,000 has been allocated to the WWPP through the NYS DEC.

Local Programs and Sources of Funds

Dedicated sources of funding for open space preservation at the local level are as outlined below:

- The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors began the Farmland Protection and Open Space Preservation grant program in 2003 to assist farmers meet the required local match of state farmland protection grants. The County allocated \$250,000-\$500,000 annually to fund a matching grant program to purchase development easements or a fee interest in agricultural lands or open space areas. In order to qualify, priority areas must meet the following considerations and criteria: have proximity to other easements, be under development pressure, be consistent with a local open space plan, and leverage a high value in terms of acres per dollar. County funds used for acquisition of lands subsequently purchased by the Town should be dedicated to a revolving account for future acquisitions.
- Sources at the local level include allocation taxes, fees, or bonding. State law permits local governments to create a tax on the transfer of real property to purchase open space lands or easements. This process involves passage of a local law by the chief executive with the concurrence of the local legislature, or independently by the local legislature with a two-thirds majority vote, requesting the State legislature to adopt a bill authorizing the municipality to impose the transfer tax (Municipal Home Rule Law §40). These programs usually require a mandatory referendum and establishment of a community preservation fund and advisory board to administer the fund.

- Local governments, pursuant to passage a local referendum, can bond for funds to acquire and preserve lands for open space. The bonding option was considered and put to a vote in June of 2001. The measure envisioned a \$3 million bond to fund open space acquisition efforts in Wilton but was not successful. In consideration of this outcome it is unlikely that future bonding is a feasible option.
- Special Districts – Municipalities can create special districts for funding local initiatives and capital improvements. This is most commonly done for municipal sewer and/or districts, lighting districts, etc. The advisory committee overseeing development of the OSPRR Plan has discussed the option of special districts encompassing the dedicated open space lots resulting from the subdivision process. The tax imposed on these districts could be allocated to a reserve account dedicated to the management and maintenance of these open space lots.
- Recreation fees in lieu of land dedication – The Wilton Town Board has authorized an increase in recreation fees from new residential building lots approved in the Town. The funds are allocated to a dedicated account for capital improvements to the Town’s recreation park facilities.

The final items for prioritization are management and operational considerations on lands dedicated to open space. These considerations focus on practical issues relating to ownership, maintenance, management, management cost, and special needs that may be associated with preservation of a site. Depending on the physical and structural characteristics of a given site proposed for preservation, these are varying considerations, which will affect the feasibility of long-term, permanent preservation. Therefore, a system of management alternatives is needed to assure that appropriate measures are taken to properly preserve a site or area.

Specific considerations affecting the preservation from a management perspective are as follows:

- Ownership – publicly-owned federal, state, county, or town; non-profit land trust; preservation group; homeowners’ association; private developer.
- Expenses – insurance and liability; budgeting, annual costs, and revenue sources; experience and staff capacity with property and preservation management; public accessibility restricted, limited, or open; in house staff or contracted, etc.
- Maintenance – clean up and trash removal; habitat maintenance; facility maintenance, trails, restrooms, and bridges, etc. and structural, historic restoration and upkeep, painting, plumbing, electrical, etc.

SECTION 2 RECREATION

2.1 Gavin Park

Gavin Park is comprised of approximately 28 acres owned by the Town of Wilton and an additional 25 acres known as the “Annex” that is leased from the Saratoga Springs City School District and managed by the town. An additional 21 acres located between the Northway and the Dorothy Nolan Elementary School is utilized by the Wilton Water and Sewer Authority. Park visitor trips increased from 60,640 in 2005 to 250,700 in 2015 (over 400% in 10 years). Table 4 lists the recreational resources in Gavin Park and Figure 6 illustrates the location of the recreational resources.

Multi-Purpose Gymnasium (2)	Batting Cages (1)	Indoor/outdoor pickle ball courts (12)
Meeting Room and Kitchen (1)	1.25-Mile-Long, 4-Foot-Wide Stone Dust Perimeter Trail Loop	Tennis Courts (2)
Picnic Pavilions (3)	Ice Skating Rink (pending)	Basketball Courts (2)
Concession Area (2)	Volleyball, Shuffleboard & Horseshoes (1)	Soccer/Multi-Use Fields (9)
Playground and Accessible Play Area (1)	Spray Park	Baseball/Softball/Tee-ball Fields (7)
Outdoor Exercise Stations (3)	Soccer Kick Wall (1)	Seasonal Parking Lots (4)

The annexed area, situated in the far back of Dorothy Nolan Elementary School, contains 9 full size soccer fields of various sizes that were developed by the Town from 2001 to 2007 and which are also used by the school district. Increased population is putting additional pressure on Gavin Park and the facility must expand and diversify recreational opportunities to meet the growing demand. The Town’s goal is to expand informational, educational and recreational programs for a wider range of interests and improve the physical facilities. Currently, the Town contracts programming services.

The Town completed the Gavin Park Master Plan in 2005 to review existing facilities and the resident’s demands for future programs, equipment and facilities. Improvements and current status are:

- Improved vehicular circulation – Complete
- Maintenance area – Complete
- Improved play/picnic area – No change
- Relocation of the East Pavilion and construction of an additional pavilion – Complete
- New combination field – No change
- Soccer/multi-use fields – Complete
- Improved baseball/softball fields – Partially completed
- Court expansion – No change
- Improved lighting and perimeter trail – Complete
- New multiple sports fields to support a variety of recreation at The Annex – No change
- Expansion of the southern parking lot – Partially complete
- Additional parking for the school fields – In planning

Since the 2005 Master Plan, the Town Parks and Recreation department has considered additional projects which they hope to complete in the future. These include:

- Installing plantings and flowers with interpretive and descriptive signage along the walking paths;
- Paving the gravel road connecting to the Elementary School's seasonal parking lot and adding approximately 50 new parking spaces on the northern side of the road;
- Constructing a formal stone dust trail from Dorothy Nolan Elementary School to Gavin Park through the Wilton Water and Sewer Authority property;
- Relocating the maintenance area to expand the southern seasonal parking through the site;
- Renovating the outdoor restrooms.
- Installing additional fitness equipment along the walking paths;
- Adding access to the outdoor concessions from outside the Spray Park;
- Installing air conditioning units for the Christopher Dailey Gym; and
- Renovating the office, including structural improvements, site beautification, facilities upgrades, and additional emergency services.

Legend

□	Soccer / Multi-Use Field Number	G	Tennis Courts	O	Seasonal Parking
⊙	Baseball / Softball Field	H	Maintenance Areas	P	Soccer Storage
A	Office	I	Concession Stand	Q	Future Pavilion
B	Gavin Gym	J	Batting Cage	R	Spray Park
C	Christopher Dalley Gym	K	Ceremonial Area	S	Volleyball, Shuffle Board & Horse Shoes
D	Main Pavilion & Restroom	L	Playground & Accessible Play Area	T	Ice Skating Rink
E	East Pavilion	M	Access Drive with Fence	U	Walking / Jogging Path
F	Basketball Courts	N	Soccer Kick Wall		



2.2 Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Inc.

Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Inc. (WWPP) in partnerships with the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County and NYS DEC, works to protect open space resources, provide the community with opportunities for outdoor recreation and advance environmental education.

The following recreational elements are in place:

- Several miles of hiking trails for bird watching, nature photography, nature appreciation, trail running, dog walking and mountain biking;
- Winter groomed and ungroomed trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing;
- Programs fostering nature and wildlife appreciation and environmental learning;
- Fishing at Delegan Pond and nearby streams;
- Hunting and trapping on state and county-owned lands;
- Public access to the historic Cornell Hill Fire Tower;
- Camping organized by the Town of Wilton.

2.3 County Forests

There are just over 525 acres of County Forest in the Town of Wilton. Five of the seven parcels are inside the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area, and the other two are located just west of Wilton Mall and in the southeast corner of the Town. Saratoga County manages much of these lands for reforestation and public trails. These wide expanses of land provide important wildlife habitat and act as critical buffers to other environmentally sensitive lands.

2.4 Other Open Space Resources

Open space preservation initiatives ensure that the development is sensitive to the scenic and unique character of the area. Through the conservation of private, common areas of open space, conservation subdivisions often benefit the Town by preserving locally important views. The majority of these lands are held in common by the residents who live there and are managed by homeowner's associations. They can often provide trail linkages between public lands and preserves. An example is the PUD off Woodard Road in the northwestern corner of Wilton. Although not developed to date, this area will have a series of permanent easements that permit the public to utilize portions of the subdivision for hiking and hunting.

There are a number of conservation easements that are held by various interest groups. Saratoga PLAN has fee simple ownership of the Orra Phelps Preserve, an eighteen-acre with a trailhead off of Parkhurst Road. Saratoga PLAN also manages the undeveloped lands associated within the Mulberry Estates and Kings Mills open space subdivisions. These easements protect approximately twenty-five acres and ninety-seven acres respectively and offer a trail along the Snook Kill.

Additional open space resources include the McGregor Links Country Club Golf Course which has numerous mature trees and is adjacent to Lake Elizabeth. The 100-foot no-build buffer that provides a continuous linear green corridor along the Northway not only protects neighborhoods from vehicle noise but also provides an attractive driving experience from the Northway. Presently, the regulation does not allow for any activity within the buffer area. The Town will focus on improved enforcement of the buffer.

2.5 Methodologies

There are several methodologies in which to measure whether the Town has the capacity in its existing park and recreation facilities to meet the growing demand of new residents and businesses: standard-

based, demand-based, or resource-based. A combination of these approaches will more accurately assess community needs. The standard-based approach uses established standards to determine facilities and park areas needed to meet the needs of a given population size. The standards may be based on demand studies, the professional judgment of park and recreation planners and governmental agencies. The demand-based approach relies on information gathered from participation rates, surveys, and other information that indicates how much of the population wants certain types of facilities. The resource-based approach examines the assets and resources of the area for open space, parks and recreation facilities, and defines how these resources can be utilized.

Standards-based Approach

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provide widely used industry standards for recreation. The minimum average standard has specific recommendations for different types and sizes of parks. See the table below for a summary of these standards, which advocate a total of 21.25 to 30.5 acres per thousand residents. NRPA stresses that park standards should be viewed as a guide that addresses minimum, not maximum, goals. The Urban Land Institute concurs with NRPA and recommends a general overall standard of 25.5 acres of parkland per thousand residents.

NRPA shifted its traditional needs assessment approach in 1995, now advocating that municipalities use an individualized "level of service" or "systems" approach. In 1995 NRPA guidelines made it the individual community's responsibility to determine how they want to develop their parks and suggested that communities shift from the application of a blind national standard to an assessment of real time demand in the context of the local community. This view takes into consideration the popular concept of looking at parks and recreation land as an integrated system. This approach is a grassroots process where residents and recreation advocates formulate minimum acreage and development criteria for park and recreation resources and apply locally identified level of service guidelines.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) derives much of their recommendations for recreation facility design guidelines from NRPA. Therefore, the Town is consistent with this planning document.

Demand-based Approach

The demand-based approach utilizes the systems methodology, which seeks to achieve more stakeholder involvement. This offers a custom approach to park planning that places a greater emphasis on cultural resource planning and the addition of more green space for aesthetic balance and the good health and well-being of residential and corporate citizens. This approach establishes a set of individualized standards for the community. An example of this approach is the improvements recommended through the Gavin Park Master Plan Update, which integrated the needs and desires of the numerous participating sports interest groups.

Resource-based Approach

The resource-based approach identifies parklands and open space for their resource value. Lands that are valuable for preservation of natural resources or that would serve a particular recreational purpose for the community is identified through this process. An example of this type of approach is how the WWPP, NYS DEC and other partners diligently protect the habitat of the Karner blue butterfly while providing a network of trails for public use.

2.6 Recreational Analysis

Table 2 and Table 3 on page 2-12 reveal details regarding present and projected population totals and age distributions for the Town and the County. According to U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, the population of the Town of Wilton has increased by approximately 650 since 2010. The Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) projects that the population of the Town of Wilton will be approximately 17,909 by 2020 and 19,652 by 2030, an increase of 1,086 in the next three years and 4,129 in the next twelve years. These projections demonstrate a slowdown in the rate of population growth by over two-thirds since the end of the last millennium. To put it another way, population change will reflect an estimated 694 new households between 2010 and 2020, and 697 new households between 2020 and 2030. The slowdown is indicative of both national and statewide demographic trends.

The Town is projected to experience a similar aging trend as the rest of the County, with the percent of the population over the age of 65 gradually increasing into 2050. However, the population aged 25 to 44 is projected to remain relatively stable while the percent of the population under the age of 25 and between 45 and 64 is projected to decrease. This reflects a shift away from a dominance of families to a more balanced age distribution within the Town and the County. The Town should continually consider these shifts when planning for future recreation needs.

Table 2 Recreation and Open Space Needs Analysis					
<i>Types of Recreation</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Existing Number</i>	<i>Recreation Standards*</i>	2020***	
				<i>Facilities/Acres/Miles Needed</i>	<i>Deficit/Surplus</i>
Community Parks (ac)	Gavin Park Camp Saratoga	55 25	5 Acres per 1,000	90	-10
Neighborhood Parks (ac)	-	0	2 Acres per 1,000	36	-36
Undeveloped Open Space (ac)	Other Town Lands Other Land Owners	216 1,945	8.9**	160	+2,001
Unpaved Multi-use Trails (mi)	Townwide	19	0.16 per 1,000	3	+16
Soccer/Multi-use Fields	Gavin Park	9	1 per 10,000	2	+10
Baseball/Softball Fields	Gavin Park	5	1 per 5,000	4	+1
Tennis Courts	Gavin Park	2	1 per 2,000	9	-7
Basketball Courts	Gavin Park	2	1 per 5,000	4	-2
Picnic Shelters	Gavin Park	2	0.36 per 1,000	6	-4
Playground	Gavin Park D. Nolan School Ballard Elem. School	1 1 1	0.16 per 1,000	3	-
Swimming Pool	-	0	1 per 20,000	0	-

*NRPA Standards: National Recreation and Parks Association.

**Small Community Park & Recreation Planning Standards (State of Colorado 2003).

***Based on Capital District Regional Planning Commission 2020 population estimates of 18,000.

Table 2 provides a summary of facilities and an analysis of recreation and open space needs for the town based on population projects for 2020. The recreation standards utilized in the analysis represent the accepted level of service standards for recreation related park improvements. They should be a guide as opposed to an absolute number. Each community has a level of need based upon their individual community profile.

An inventory and analysis of the recreation facilities in Wilton indicates there is one primary multi-purpose park area (Gavin Park) comprised of 55 acres of land. The Town's resources are augmented by Camp Saratoga and state and county open spaces, which include an estimated 620 acres of lands utilized for trails. Together these two resources provide a total 2,513 acres of parkland to residents. On a purely demographic view, it would appear that Wilton presently has a generous surplus of open space. The Town, however, has deficient open space acreage in the small community park and large community park categories. Natural recreation standards recommend that a town the size of Wilton should have approximately 75 acres for a large park and one or more smaller parks totaling about 30 acres. Wilton currently has only 55 acres of large parks and no smaller parks. The potential exists for the additional acreage with land conveyed from conservation subdivisions, particularly in the north end of Wilton. This is important given the lack of parklands in this region relative to the substantial growth anticipated in the near future.

As previously mentioned, NRPA has moved away from the simplified method of assigning acreage to an assigned number of people. The favored methodology is a more complicated view that produces a customized recreation plan anticipating growth and new demands for recreation. It combines some standardized planning with more subjective input from the public and professional analysis. It also allows and encourages the Town to distribute acreage into park classifications dependent on local needs and regional demand. Under this scenario, the Town would elect to increase its local standard for recreation and open space needs.

SECTION 3 PATHWAYS

3.1 Priority Trails

Priority trails in the Town include:

- Network of trails on Town parcel in Camp Saratoga;
- Network of trails in NYS/County Forests in WWPP;
- Town of Wilton Neilmann Parcel;
- County Forest trails east of Ruggles Road;
- County Forests east of Wilton Mall;
- Orra Phelps Nature Preserve trail by Saratoga PLAN at Parkhurst Road; and
- Completion of the Town's Bicentennial Trail from Camp Saratoga to Gavin Park.

3.2 Users

In order to determine where trails are most necessary and will be most heavily used, it is important to determine potential users. Types of users include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, hikers, cross-country skiers, and equestrians.

3.3 Destinations

When considering trail locations, it is important to consider the destination interests of all users. Do common "user groups" such as residents, students, and visitors, have common recreational, utilitarian, or cultural destinations? Identifying destination types can provide a basis for further establishing where trails should be built or expanded. For instance, Town residential users are most likely recreational users, utilizing trails and trail systems to access parks and open spaces. It is important to identify the ways in which open spaces currently link to other open spaces and recreational areas, and to plan for trails that provide additional connections. Some residents may also follow the pathway system to bike or walk to work or commercial and shopping areas. Over time, the new hamlet areas could develop into small commercial hubs that will become destinations in their own right. Students are likely to use the trails to get to school, to ball fields and recreation areas, and to easily access other neighborhoods where friends may live, as well as to access commercial areas for shopping or part-time employment. Visitors are most likely to use trails to access open space and recreational areas, to observe wildlife, natural areas, and scenic locations, to learn about local history or culture, or simply to exercise.

3.3 Trail Types

The following types of trails are under consideration for the Wilton trail system. They are listed here for illustrative purposes, and do not reflect any formal classification system.¹ It should also be noted that the Town repaves approximately 5 to 6 miles of roadways per year. Possible improvements to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, such as adding paved shoulders, are always considered when planning for repaving each budget year.

On-road "Signed" Bicycle Route

Located in higher use travel corridors, these routes are typically 4 to 6 feet wide, on-street, right-of-way lanes designated for the use of bicycles. A painted line on the roadway pavement on each side of the street and precautionary signs mark the routes for motorists and designated and marked crossings.

¹ For a formal classification system, see the New York State Highway Design Manual, Chapter 18, *Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicyclists* at www.dot.state.ny.us/cmb/consult/hdmfiles/chapt_18.pdf for official classifications and design standards based on American Assoc. of State & Highway Transportation Officials "Green Book" (1999).

These bike paths are best suited for streets that have a minimum width of 32 feet, with each traffic lane measuring at least 12 feet. An example of a bicycle path of this type early on was the US Route 9 designated bike route.

On-road, Shared Route - Some Improvements (i.e., paved shoulder)

These are local roads used by the biking and walking public, but that are not officially “designated” or improved as bike paths. These roads usually do not have designated, signed or painted bike lanes, but do have wide, paved shoulders. In some localized areas, they may be signed as bike routes. An example of a pathway of this type in the Town of Wilton is Ballard Road, east of US Route 9 and Northern Pines Road.

On-road, Shared Route - No Improvements

These are local roads historically used by the biking and walking public but are not officially designated or improved as trails. They become trails because they provide natural corridors or connections, have low traffic volume, or are aesthetically pleasing. Examples of this type of pathway in the Town of Wilton are Parkhurst Road and Wilton-Gansevoort Road.

Off-road Multiple Use Trails

Ideally, the development of the trail system will eventually include many different types of trails to accommodate a variety of users, some of which are compatible with others, and some of which are not. Trails include footpaths, nature trails, bike paths, equestrian trails, cross-country ski trails, and, possibly, snowmobile trails. Where feasible, these trails can be designed to be accessible to people with physical challenges. Trails are developed within designated areas can be developed as connections between neighborhoods or destinations. Off-road trails are completely separated from roads and are usually located on publicly owned land such as parks, school sites, or along natural corridors (such as streams), abandoned railroad corridors, or utility easements. Trails within the WWPP study area are examples of off-road trails.

Types of multi-use trails include the following:

- Footpaths/Hiking Trails/Nature Trails – Pedestrians are generally the largest group of users and can use most of the trails designed for other users. This group includes walkers, hikers, joggers, bird-watchers, and nature enthusiasts. A trail width of 4 to 8 feet is required, with a vertical clearance of 8 feet. The trail surface can be packed gravel, stone dust, asphalt grindings, wood chips, or bare earth (provided that proper drainage exists).
- Bicycle Trails – Bike trails should be a hard surface, such as bituminous paving or compacted stone dust. The trail should be 10 feet wide and have a vertical clearance of 8 feet. Bike racks should be installed at the trailhead areas. At this time, no bicycle trails exist or are proposed which meet this standard.
- Equestrian Trails – There are a significant number of equestrian enthusiasts within the Town who desire riding trails. Generally, horses need a soft surface (natural ground, turf, stone dust) free or large rocks and stumps. The trail width should be 10 to 12 feet, with 12 feet of vertical clearance. Trail facilities should include adequate trailhead parking areas (large enough to park and maneuver horse trailers) with hitching posts.
- Cross-Country Ski Trails – Ski trails can vary in width, terrain, and degree of grooming required. Ski trails can be nothing more than the existing trails, which are used for pedestrians or equestrians and are signed for ski trail use in the winter months. Such trails can be un-groomed with trails “broken”

by skiers or can have a parallel track set. The trail would need to be 8 to 10 feet wide, with a vertical clearance of 12 feet. A varying terrain is desirable. Other trails to be groomed with surface rolled for skating lanes and track set for classic technique. A number of trails are maintained by WWPP at Camp Saratoga and north on state land.

3.4 Recommended Trail Locations

To see the locations of existing and proposed trails and trails, please refer to Figure 8. The identification of locations for open space conservation and recreational use will partially dictate pathway locations. Commercial and employment centers will also influence trail locations, in order to encourage the use of alternative transportation throughout the Town.

North-South Corridors

- US Route 9 – A New York State designated bicycle trail. It runs north and south through the length of the Town. The US Route 9 bicycle trail traverses the Hudson and Champlain Valleys, running from New York City north to the Canadian border. The NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) announced the addition of the appropriate markings along US Route 9 in March 2018.
- Parkhurst Road – Existing On-road, no improvements. Parkhurst Road provides access to the Orra Phelps Preserve. This 18-acre preserve of open space is a plant and animal sanctuary and contains numerous walking trails.
- Northern Pines Road – An existing on-road trail with no immediate need for improvements. Northern Pines carries a large amount of traffic from US Route 9 to McGregor Country Club, Traver Road, and to the central, most intensely developed residential area in Town. The shoulder is in good condition. Painted lines to delineate the bikeway and signage need to be added. Signage should include cautionary signs alerting motorists to the bikeway, as Northern Pines Road is a very busy commuter road.
- Ernst Road – Existing on-road in no immediate need of improvements.
- A north-south off-road trail was originally recommended along the National Grid (formerly Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation) gas easement parallel to US Route 9 (from Smith Bridge Road to Ernst Road). The existing county water line follows this route. An off-road multi-use trail along the route of the proposed county water line may be recommended.
- A north-south off-road trail could also be developed along the site of the former Mount McGregor railroad bed parallel to US Route 9 that once ran to Mount McGregor from Saratoga Springs. These off-road trails could strengthen the north-south corridor, provide some off-road relief, and increase safety by separating bicyclists and pedestrians from automobile traffic.

East-West Routes

Northway crossings provide the biggest obstacles for developing east-west trails through Wilton. The following east-west routes provide Northway crossings.

- Jones Road – An existing, on-road trail needing some improvements. Jones Road provides a pathway connection between the residential areas in the central section of the Town, Camp Saratoga and the WWPP study area. Sections of the road have been widened and paved by 3 feet on each side to accommodate bicyclists.
- Ballard Road – An existing, on-road trail utilizing the paved shoulder. The intersection of Ballard Road with Traver and North Roads is becoming increasingly difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross, due to rapid development at Northway Exit 16. However, Ballard Road provides a connection to US Route 9, Ace Hardware, Ballard Road Elementary School, and the Target distribution center. Improvements and replacement of the bridge to increase safety would be necessary for Ballard Road to be considered a desirable east-west crossing.

- Wilton Gansevoort Road – An existing, on-road trail which is currently sufficient. This road provides an east-west pathway through the northern section of the Town.

Southern Area

- Connections to Saratoga Springs are currently made via US Route 9 and Jones Road. Loughberry Lake Road provides a pleasant route for bicyclists and connects to Saratoga Springs as well. An additional connection to Saratoga’s North Broadway is possible, passing behind the Maple Avenue Middle School, and through lands owned by Skidmore College.
- Jones Road is an important route from State Route 50 to major residential areas, Gavin Park, and Dorothy Nolan Elementary School. Some sections of Jones Road have been upgraded with safer, widened shoulders, and pavement markings. All sections should be upgraded with a wider shoulder.
- A former railroad right-of-way exists parallel to State Route 50, which may provide an opportunity for a trail linking commercial development at Exit 15. A trail would also provide a green strip through an area that will most likely continue to be developed commercially. Acquisition of the right-of-way should be explored.
- Old Gick Road provides an opportunity to link to commercial development. A connection would need to be made across private, undeveloped lands to connect Jones Road to the system.

Recreational Bicycle Routes

The 1998 Trail System Master Plan recommends a number of routes to be designated as bicycle trails. These “loops” include:

- Parkhurst Road to Ballard Road to Traver Road, then to Northern Pines, US Route 9, and back to Parkhurst.
- Northern Pines Road to Travers Road, to either Ballard or Scout Road, and back to Northern Pines.
- Ballard Road to Ruggles Road to Loudon and Edie Roads. Open space and preserve lands can be accessed from Edie and Ruggles Roads. State Route 50, northeast of Ingersoll Road, should possibly be included in this loop, since it provides access to open space lands as well.

Recreational Trails

Opportunities to provide additional multi-use trails on Town, County, State, and private lands should be explored. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) is developing the Palmertown Ridge Trail that will connect Moreau Lake State Park with Saratoga Spa State Park. The trail will connect existing trails within Moreau Lake State Park, including the Western Ridge Trail and the Ridge Run Trail. The completed Palmertown Ridge Trail will not permit motorized uses.

3.5 Site Plan Review Integration

New development or redevelopment should be evaluated (during site plan approval) in terms of accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists and connection to destinations, service providers, private property crossings, and the need for acquisition or the need for agreements for easements or rights of crossing. For example, under the design standards for hamlets, some property owners may be required to provide access to any planned future adjacent trails.

3.6 Greenways

Wherever possible, “greenways” should be encouraged. A greenway is a linear open space, such as a path or trail, which links parks and communities around the Town, providing public access to parks, green spaces, preserves, and other destinations. A possible location for a greenway is along the Snook Kill, a New York State designated fishing stream.

3.7 Funding

Available Programs

Several funding programs are applicable to the development of the Wilton trail system. Programs and sources include:

- National Park Service (NPS) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – Federal funds for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.
- NPS Rivers, Trail and Conservation Assistance Program – Federal funds to support community-led conservation and recreation projects.
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation (OPRHP) Recreational Trails Program (RTP) – Federal funds administered by the Federal Highway Administration for recreational trail projects.
- NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) – Annual funds for acquisition, development, and improvement of parks, preservation and heritage projects.
- NYS Conservation Partnership Program (CPP) – Multi-faceted grant program funds land trust programs, conservation and stewardship professional development, outreach initiatives, public access improvements, and conservation easement and fee-acquisition projects.
- The Conservation Alliance Grant Program – Funds four-year projects through grassroot nonprofit groups to protect specific wild places for their habitat and recreation values.
- National Recreation and Park Association Meet Me at the Park Play Space Grants – Funds municipal park and recreation agency projects which provide new opportunities for physical activity for kids and families.
- PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program – Funds for bicycle infrastructure projects such as bike paths, lanes, trails, and bridges.

Funding Implementation Strategies

- Implement immediate, short-term and long-term actions;
- Adopt a trail maintenance plan (currently in place through the County);
- Develop funding mechanisms to support costs of trail construction and maintenance; and
- Include part or all of these costs as ongoing budget items.

APPENDIX C
HISTORY AND ROLE OF CAMP SARATOGA

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SECTION 1 HISTORY OF CAMP SARATOGA

1.1 History of Connection to Open Space, Recreation, and Trails

Historic Camp Saratoga has been an important part of Wilton's open space, recreation, and trails systems for almost a century, first as a Boy Scout camp and then as the nucleus and centerpiece for Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Inc. (WWPP). The Town of Wilton contracts with WWPP for outdoor education programs and services within the WWPP.

1.2 Historic Context and Use as a Boy Scout Camp

Operating as the local Boy Scout camp from 1930 through the early 1990s, Camp Saratoga not only provided a summer resident camp and weekend outdoor activities for Scouts but also offered a serene, well-maintained natural setting for local residents and area organizations to enjoy.

Saratoga County Council Boy Scouts of America purchased the property in 1930 from the Gick family, composed by that time primarily of two brothers who owned extensive property in the area and who had established their prominence partly through their county-wide and state-wide transportation leadership and partly through their philanthropy. At that time, Gick Road, named for the family and said to be one of the first macadam roads in the state, ran from Gansevoort to Saratoga Springs, following a long-standing Native American trail (later to form most of the footprint of State Route 50). The railroad at the eastern edge of Camp Saratoga, begun in 1835, was at the time a busy thoroughfare connecting Saratoga Springs and Gansevoort as well as more distant points and carrying eight to ten freight and passenger trains each day as part of the Delaware and Hudson system. The railroad is now owned and operated by Canada Pacific.

The 290 acres originally purchased comprised all of the Gick property on the west side of the railroad and included a pond, dam, tenant farmhouse, and barn. In the early decades, the Delegan Pond provided income to the Boy Scout council as Scouts and leaders harvested and sold ice from the pond to preserve food before electricity was widespread. That income helped give the council the means to develop and sustain the camp.

Many miles of trails were established and maintained at Camp Saratoga over the years and a variety of buildings and program facilities were constructed to meet the needs of Scout campers. Some of the trails and activity areas were built by groups such as the 464th Combat Engineers, and many buildings were erected by community groups or businesses (International Paper, Rotary, Lions, etc.). In its heyday, the camp, which had expanded to 320 acres, included a large dining hall, ranger's cabin, health lodge, winter lodge, nature lodge, cook's cabin, boathouse, shower house, four campers' cabins, pavilion with enclosed trading post, chapel, and several lean-tos and outhouses in addition to the original farmhouse (used as the administration building) and barn. Program areas included rifle and archery ranges, a campfire circle with seating, and a variety of seasonal activity areas. In the 1980s individual Boy Scout troops were encouraged to build their own lean-tos, outhouses, and water systems on the property.

The Karner blue butterfly may have been identified at the Scout camp as early as the 1960s when legendary Wilton naturalist Dr. Orra Phelps inventoried plants in the area. Skidmore botany students, under the guidance of Dr. Hank Howard, were aware of the butterfly in the 1970s. Beginning in the early 1980s, the local Scouting community, led by Camp Saratoga property manager Larry Gordon, ensured the protection and enhancement of the environment needed by the endangered species.

The camp's role in the community evolved as it served as the site of a variety of community activities over the years. In addition to the development of butterfly habitat, the camp was used for such conservation activities as Thomas Luther reforestation projects (1930 to 1950), New York State Forest practice agreements and related harvesting, and several conservation events featuring exhibits and activities hosted by regional conservation groups. The camp was used as a training site by multiple organizations, including BOCES (conservation as well as construction trades), the DEC Hunter Safety program, the MPTU/Navy, the National Guard, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the 464th Army Reserves, and other community groups. Other frequent users were Girl Scouts, 4-H, Wilton Rod & Gun Club, Saratoga County Cooperative Extension, Skidmore College, Empire State College, Waldorf School, and community recreation groups (skiing, hiking, running, etc.). Several local businesses held annual employee retreats at the camp.

When Twin Rivers Boy Scout Council formed from the merger of Saratoga County Council and several other BSA councils in 1990, Camp Saratoga became the property of the new council and continued to host Scout camping and other outdoor events.

1.3 Evolution as the Central Element of Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Inc

Established in 1996, WWPP grew out of the vision of then Wilton Town Supervisor Roy McDonald, who partnered with The Nature Conservancy to start the new organization and establish an area for wildlife preservation, environmental education, and recreation.

When Twin Rivers Council BSA decided to sell Camp Saratoga in 1998, it seemed particularly appropriate that the camp property should become the nucleus of the newly formed WWPP. Not only was the preservation of the endangered Karner blue butterfly important to the vision, but the woodlands, wetlands, open fields, trails, streams, and pond provided the perfect setting for both preservation and enjoyment of nature. Camp Saratoga became the largest protected parcel within WWPP study area.

In 2001, the Town of Wilton purchased Camp Saratoga and immediately sold it to The Nature Conservancy. In accordance with plans developed in 2001, much of the Camp Saratoga property (287.34 acres) was sold to the NYS DEC.

Changes to the man-made infrastructure at Camp Saratoga occurred just before the 2001 sale and have continued in the ensuing years. In the late 1990s, the barn was demolished, and a pavilion near the dam and Scout Road was built. After the Town of Wilton assumed ownership, the administration building (the original tenant farmhouse c. 1860) was demolished, the Rabbit Hole (winter camping facility) and leaders' cabin were demolished, five lean-tos were built as part of a BSA Troop 24 Eagle project, the former Chapel was repurposed as a campsite campfire assembly area, the original Campfire ring and seating were refurbished, the Bush Pavilion (near the dining hall) was reconstructed after storm damage, a portion of the Health Lodge was altered for re-use by WWPP, and the Baker Pavilion (near the dam) was refurbished. A handicapped accessible near the pond has been established. The NYS DEC removed lean-tos and other small structures on the land it purchased. Many of the uses outlined in the section above have continued on the town-owned portion of Camp Saratoga.

One of the most significant improvements is the relocation of the historic Cornell Hill Fire Tower. The Town of Wilton brought the Cornell Hill Fire Tower from Luther Forest in Malta to Historic Camp Saratoga in 2011. It was donated by the Luther/Mackay family (Luther Forest Corporation) in honor of Thomas Luther's involvement in Camp Saratoga's creation in 1930. The 60-foot Aermotor LS-20 tower

with 7'x7 metal cab was first erected in 1924 by the New York Conservation Commission on the Luther Forest property in Stillwater. It operated as a fire observation tower until 1970 and was sold to the Luther/Mackay family (Luther Forest Corporation) in 1976. It remained in place until 2010, at which point Luther Forest Corporation had it disassembled, refurbished and rebuilt on the Camp Saratoga site. The Town built a cabin as a re-creation of the living quarters utilized by the fire observers. The public is invited to climb the tower and visit the cabin on certain weekends throughout the summer and fall seasons.

SECTION 2 CAMP SARATOGA TODAY

2.1 Current Status, Partnerships, and Opportunities

There are 3 parcels consisting of 312.15 acres that comprise the lands of Camp Saratoga (see Table 7). The Wilton-owned portion of Camp Saratoga has now become the central education program area for the WWPP while also serving as the gateway to state-owned portions of the old Camp Saratoga.

Table 1 Lands of Camp Saratoga		
<i>Parcel #</i>	<i>Landowner</i>	<i>Size (acres)</i>
129-1-41	Town of Wilton	2.16
128-1-7.12	Town of Wilton	22.65
128-1-7.111	State of New York	287.34
	TOTAL	312.15

Camp Saratoga and other lands in the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area are managed through a series of partnership involving the Town of Wilton, WWPP, Saratoga County, and the State of New York.

WWPP's role in the partnership is to:

- Assist NYS DEC in the protection and conservation of significant lands of ecological value to the Karner blue butterfly and other flora and fauna;
- Support NYS DEC in the maintenance and recovery of imperiled wildlife species like the state-threatened frosted elfin butterfly and Blanding's turtle;
- Educate the general public, children, groups through programs and guided interpretive walks; and
- Offer and sponsor recreational opportunities.

The Town of Wilton role in the partnership is to:

- Maintain key properties at the Neilmann Parcel and Camp Saratoga;
- Provide public benefit through linkage of public properties, particularly trail linkages between public lands;
- Provide area for WWPP's various programs; and
- Sponsor various conservation programs and provide community organizations short-term camping.

Saratoga County's role in the partnership is to:

- Manage the county forest lands for reforestation and public trails, where appropriate and supported by policy. These wide expanses of land provide important wildlife habitat and act as critical buffers to other environmentally sensitive lands.

The State of New York's role in the partnership is to:

- Provide guidance, policy and direction regarding the management of wildlife habitat;
- Prioritize lands for protection and acquisition;
- Land acquisition that serves to protect endangered species and their habitat; and
- Provide management policy for the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area.

The permitted uses in common in the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area are hiking, biking, and x-country skiing. The Town of Wilton maintains its lands in this area for multi-use recreation while NYS DEC maintains their adjacent lands for wildlife protection.

Like most of the state's Wildlife Management Areas, Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area is managed by NYS DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife for wildlife conservation and wildlife-associated recreation (hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing/photography). Funding to maintain and manage this site is provided by the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration or "Pittman-Robertson" Act, which is acquired through excise taxes on sporting arms, ammunition and archery equipment.

NYS DEC's goal for managing the Saratoga Sand Plains is to ensure the protection of the unique habitat and wildlife, while providing a variety of recreational opportunities. NYS DEC and its partners seek to restore and manage this unique ecosystem to recover the federally and state endangered Karner blue butterfly. The sandy soils found in this area are essential to blue lupine - the only plant that the larvae of the butterfly feed on. NYS DEC and its partners have worked to restore habitat for the Karner blue by creating blue lupine meadows. Saratoga Sand Plains will be managed to provide environmental education and a variety of recreation opportunities.

NYS DEC's management plan for the Saratoga Sand Plains Wildlife Management Area will ensure the protection of the unique habitat and wildlife, while providing a variety of recreational opportunities. The management planning process includes an analysis of the natural features of an area, the ability of the land to accommodate public use and review of current policy and regulation. The management plan is being developed by an interdisciplinary team of NYS DEC staff, in consultation with the other partners of WWPP and with input from the public. The planning process will culminate in a series of proposed management actions to be implemented over a five-year period. Possible impacts from the management plan may include modifications to current recreational practices and minor noise, erosion and visual impacts from tree cutting for habitat improvement. It is for this reason it is important for the Town and its residents to voice their desires and concerns to the State and WWPP prior to the completion of the management plan.

Camp Saratoga Trails

There are three distinct interconnected trail systems that provide approximately 12 miles of trails throughout the area known as Camp Saratoga. These trails are open to the public for a variety of non-motorized uses and can be accessed through five trailheads.

There are several new trails on County Forest land along Edie Road and Bullard Lane. There is public access from a parking lot on Edie Road just south of Scout Road and also from Bullard Lane. As on other County parcels non-motorized vehicles are allowed and hunting is allowed in season. Long terms plans include a trail linkage from these trails to the Camp Saratoga parcel south of Scout Road. A summary of the trail areas and those on adjacent public lands is found in Table 2 on the following page.

2.2 Physical Attributes, Habitats, Trails, and Recreation

Camp Saratoga encompasses field, savannah, woodland, pond, and wetland ecosystems.

The land on the north side of Scout Road is relatively level and dry while land on the south side of the road has some hilly terrain and numerous wetlands. These wetlands provide important habitat for a variety of reptile and amphibian species like snapping turtles and spring peepers.

Delegan Pond, also known as Scout Pond, is a 7-acre, spring fed impoundment on the south side of Scout Road. Water levels are managed by an earthen and wood dam constructed in the 1860s to provide water to livestock on the Old Gick Farm. The dam is typically lowered for 2 days in the fall to drain the pond. The 2 million gallons per day flow enables the pond to fill in 2 days during the spring. The pond provides habitat for great blue herons, belted kingfishers, and beavers. There are abundant opportunities for environmental education around the entire 450 feet of shoreline. The Town of Wilton stocks Delegan Pond annually with brook trout. Fishing is permitted and reserved for residents 16 years of age or younger. Fishing at the site is fully accessible with provisions made from a bridge structure. Other access is provided on a small dock structure with handicap accessibility (see photo).

Delegan Pond's headwaters are the Miller Swamp and its outlet is Delegan Brook, a non-navigable stream that flows north, paralleling the Adirondack Northway, and into the Snook Kill, which flows easterly into the Hudson River through the Town of Moreau. Delegan Brook exists at an elevation of 290 feet and has a watershed area of 6.49 square miles. It is widely known as a birdwatching destination and it supports brook trout, the threatened eastern hognose snake and Blanding's turtle.

There are approximately 2,237 acres of protected land within or adjacent to the WWPP study area. The preserve supports more than 120 species of birds and more than 70 species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians including eastern hognose snakes, eastern spadefoot toads, Blandings turtles, Karner blue butterflies and frosted elfin butterflies.

Plant species include pitch pine, little bluestem grass, sweet fern and wild blue lupine. Tree species include:

- *Scotch Pine (Pinus Sylvestris)*
- *Red Pine (Pinus Resinosa)*
- *Blue lupine (Lupinus perrennis)*
- *Jack Pine (Pinus Banksiana)*
- *Sugar Maple (Acer Sacchrum) Pin Oak (Quercus Palustris)*
- *White Pine (Pinus Strobes), Norway Spruce (Picea Abies)*
- *White Oak (Quercus Alba)*
- *Common reed (Phragmites australis)*
- *Eastern Hemlock (Tsuga Canadensis)*
- *American Beech (Fagus grandifolia)*
- *Lady Slipper*
- *Black Birch (Betula Nigra)*
- *Red Maple (Acer Rubrum)*
- *Northern Red Oak (Quercus Rubra)*
- *Jack Pine (Pinus Banksiana)*
- *Pitch Pine (Pinus Rigida)*
- *Black Oak (Quercus Velutina)*
- *Serviceberry (amelanchier sp.)*

Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Units exist in three areas in DEC Region 5 and support by far the majority of the remaining populations of the state and federally endangered Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides Melissa samuelis*). These areas have been designated recovery units in a draft state recovery plan and are also sites for recovery goals under the draft federal recovery plan for this species. Acquisition and easements are utilized in conjunction with management agreements and other land protection tools to halt the decline of the Karner blue butterfly and to create the long-term self-sustaining populations necessary to remove the species from the endangered list.

The recovery units are listed below and illustrated in Figure 3 in the main document:

- Saratoga West Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Unit – This area contains the largest single remaining Karner blue butterfly population as well as several smaller populations. The Unit includes habitat and areas suitable for habitat restoration which can be used to link populations.
- Saratoga Sandplains Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Unit – This Unit includes WWPP. The WWPP includes only part of the Unit, the rest being in the Town of Northumberland. The Northumberland portion contains a particularly good Karner blue population as well as several smaller ones, which can be linked to those in the WWPP study area.
- Queensbury Sandplains Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Unit – This area contains the northern most populations of the Karner blue in the state. The Unit includes habitat and areas suitable for habitat restoration which can be used to link populations. Management over the long term is necessary to increase and preserve Karner blue butterfly populations.

Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) is a threatened species in New York found in central and eastern of Saratoga County. DEC has acquired properties, in fee or under easement, containing Blanding's turtle habitat.

APPENDIX D

OPEN SPACE AND TRAIL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The Town of Wilton's combination of natural resources, rural and suburban character and recreational opportunities are integral elements to the quality of life of the Town's residents.

The Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update established a general town wide goal "to conserve, improve and protect our Town's natural resources, viewsheds and open space including wildlife habitat, that contribute to the diversity, character, aesthetics, environmental quality, economy and general health, safety and welfare of the community."

The objective is to keep open space and trails as natural as possible while allowing for pedestrian, equestrian and other non-motorized uses during all seasons. These guidelines cover the proper cutting, maintenance and development of trails and the lands owned by Town of Wilton, NY.

Maintenance of the Town's open spaces and trails is conducted by Town of Wilton Buildings & Grounds staff in partnership with the Town's Highway & Parks Departments, the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park (WWPP) trail stewards or Friends groups. Trail maintenance standards will utilize acceptable practices and methods in the maintenance of trails to the particular uses of the trails. Maintenance activities include:

- Periodic inspections
- Maintaining drainage structures
- Stormwater management, using established trail construction and maintenance techniques to control water flow and stabilize trail surfaces
- Removal of debris
- Clearing and grubbing to maintain height and width clearances
- Maintaining bridges and other structures
- Maintaining signage
- Maintaining support facilities
- Tree pruning, trimming or removal
- Invasive species removal

These activities must be coordinated with the Town Land Use Administrator. Activities that go beyond standard maintenance procedures (blazing, clearing brush from treadway, tree pruning/ trimming/ removal, maintenance of erosion control structures) including, any trail or open space development will require the approval of the Town Engineering and Planning Department.

Standard Maintenance Procedures:

1. Trim plants, bushes and trees to a trail width of 4-8 feet. On trails where trucks are used for access, a wider width maybe required (If trail is an old road, maintain its width.) Clear trail to a height of 8 feet; on trails used by horses trim height to 10-12 feet. Cut stumps of removed trees

as close to the ground as safely possible. Cut all vegetation to be removed, do not pull up. Cut limbs and branches growing into the trail at the trunk of the tree. This reduces frequency of trail maintenance. Avoid cutting, trampling or laying brush on unusual flowers, ferns or shrubs that are along the sides of the trails. Also keep rock piles, stonewalls and boulders clear.

2. Slash resulting from trail work should be cut to about 6 feet in length and stacked with stems aligned in the same direction. Lay down logs and brush with maximum contact with the ground to speed decay. Limit the height of stack to 4 feet and locate the stacks in areas that are relatively clear to begin with and set back away from the trail as much as possible. Chipping materials is acceptable.
3. Follow the Town's safety procedures when working with equipment and/or lifting.
4. People using chainsaws must be cleared for the season by the Safety Officer. A signed waiver will need to be filed with the Town for volunteers. No volunteers shall use motorized equipment without approval of the Town.
5. All bridges and boardwalks must be approved by the Town before construction is started. All new trails and major rerouting of old trails must be approved by the Town before making any changes. On bridges and walkways, keep gaps between boards to one inch or less.
6. Report any unauthorized cutting on trails or Town lands to the Town. Also, report any damage to the trails caused by erosion or use.
7. Trails are to be marked with Town trail markers. Trail markers are placed on live trees that are easily visible in the distance, on the right side of the trail, 6 feet above the ground. At least ½" of nail should be left protruding to allow for tree growth. One trail marker should be visible in either direction.
8. Funds for maintenance activities can be obtained from the Park and Recreation fees fund. A budget should be established under the trails program line item expenditures for activities related to the program.
9. Contacts for tree evaluation and trail maintenance:
 - a. Town of Wilton Land Use Administrator – 518-587-1939 ext. 230
 - b. Town of Wilton Buildings & Grounds Supervisor – 518-587-1939

