

## COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN--VILLAGE OF HERKIMER

The proposals for the future use of land and supporting elements are shown on the map entitled "Comprehensive Land Use Plan--Village of Herkimer" and further enlarged upon with the aid of several additional maps which follow. Included are proposals for reorganization of the existing land use pattern in some areas, new development in others and in still other areas, where the present pattern is considered desirable, no changes are proposed. Each facet of land use, including Residential Land Use, Conservation and Flood Plain Areas, Commercial Land Use, with particular attention to the Central Business District, Industrial Land Use, Parks and Recreational Areas, Transportation, including indications of improvements to existing streets as well as proposals for new streets, Public Buildings, Public Utilities and Educational Facilities, will be discussed separately in the sections that follow.

### Residential Land Use

In the analysis of existing land use in the Village it was noted that in essence the existing pattern of residential land use was sound except for the mingling of incompatible land uses in certain areas of the Village. The southwestern part of the Village was noted as a particularly serious problem area in this regard. In view of the general pattern of land use and the supporting elements of transportation and public facilities, it is believed that this area can be substantially reclaimed over a period of time by removing the blighting influences presently in the area, and

can become in the future a desirable residential area composed primarily of apartments and other higher density residential buildings.

The area to the east of the new connection of Route 28 with Route 5, however, is not considered to be a desirable area for residential use as it is isolated from other residential areas and supporting public facilities. At present it is a small area with spotty development of residential uses mixed with a number of non-residential uses. This area is considered desirable for industrial development, however, and it is therefore proposed that the land uses in this area be changed to industrial use. The desirability of this change is discussed further in the section on Industrial Land Use.

Modifications in other residential areas of the Village are minor in comparison with the proposals above; however, these modifications are considered important for the future well-being of the Village. They include the removal of isolated cases of incompatible land uses and replacement of these uses by additional public facilities and the relocation of others. Further discussion of proposed public facilities will be found in the sections of this chapter devoted to them.

New residential development is shown in the northwest portion of the Village, which is a continuation of present development in this area. The residential development here is indicated as low density use, partially because of the location of the area with respect to the other residential areas in the Village, partially because of the topography of the area, and partially because of the character of present development. On the steeper slopes especially, the land can be best developed only with large lots and at comparatively high cost which indicates a very low density of more expensive homes.



### Conservation and Flood Plain

It will be noted that there are several areas on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan that are indicated as conservation or flood plain areas. The descriptive title "flood plain" is very apt in this case as the land so indicated is subject to periodic flooding by the West Canada Creek or the Mohawk River. Some of this land, especially at the juncture of these two streams, may be reclaimed for certain purposes by filling to a higher elevation. This land will not be desirable for building purposes, however, and yet could provide excellent services to the community if devoted to public recreational facilities. Some of this land should be retained as a natural wild life refuge as it appears to be ideally suited for this purpose. Under no circumstances should this land be considered as land suitable for private buildings as such development can only lead to a very dangerous situation with considerable loss of property and even possible loss of life.

Conservation areas are also indicated as extensions of similar areas in the Town. These are areas where development should be prohibited in view of the natural drainage courses and other topographic reasons. Much expensive drainage work by the Village can be eliminated by preserving these areas in their natural state.

### Commercial Land Use

Commerce is a very important aspect of community life in the Village of Herkimer. Commercial land uses have therefore been allowed to develop in areas which are not conducive to such uses and which, as a result, have lead to blighted conditions in residential areas. This is particularly noticeable in the Southern Neighborhood of the Village.

It is proposed that those areas where considerable concentrations of commercial uses are in existence should be further developed as commercial areas while commercial uses in areas predominantly developed in other uses should be discouraged. Those areas where further commercial development should be encouraged are shown in red on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. It will be noted that these areas are all on or near intersections of thoroughfares in the Village, so that the residents can more easily gain access to them. This historically important relationship between transportation and commerce is still important in the location of commercial uses today and will remain so for at least the immediate future. Most of the proposed changes in the thoroughfare system and in the downtown area are also predicated upon this relationship as applied to modern forms of transportation and merchandising. When applied to the neighborhood commercial centers, which are generally composed of those uses serving the local residents with "convenience goods" we have small concentrations of neighborhood stores conveniently located with respect to the neighborhood they serve.

When applied to the Village as a whole, we also find concentrations of stores and services in those locations that are easily reached from all parts of the Village and which serve as convenience centers for the entire population. These uses are located on or near intersections of primary thoroughfares and may be seen clearly along State Street, Mohawk Street, and Caroline Street between Mohawk and State as well as in the downtown area. These uses are referred to as "general commercial uses." They are nearly always oriented toward shoppers in automobiles, as differentiated from pedestrian shoppers, and also include those uses whose primary interest is in the shopper's automobile rather than in the shopper herself. These latter uses are the components of "automobile row," service stations and garages. Generally speaking, these uses tend to form themselves into



clusters and are easily identified.

A third category of commercial use is referred to as "Limited Commercial." It is seen on the Master Plan along the west side of Prospect Street. This type of commercial or business use is composed of business offices, offices of attorneys, physicians and other professional people and occasionally some financial institutions and insurance companies. These uses, more than ever before, desire land located close to but not in the Central Business District, where their own parking can be provided on the same parcel, and where the central location provides access for all residents. These uses are considered to be compatible with higher density residential uses if properly restricted and when located adjacent to the Central Business District can provide an excellent transition between the Central Business District and adjacent residential areas.

The fourth general category of commercial use is composed of those uses whose primary interest is in the pedestrian shopper and include department stores, variety stores and associated specialty shops and service establishments found in the center of the Central Business District. As indicated in the Land Use Analysis, it is this downtown area where many of the problems lie which have such an important bearing upon the entire Village and the surrounding region. For this reason, a separate section will be devoted to the proposals for the downtown area.

#### Central Business District

The three most serious deficiencies noted in the downtown area today, as mentioned in the Land Use Analysis, are (1) inadequate parking spaces, (2) traffic congestion in the downtown area, and (3) a disruption of the

pedestrian oriented stores on Main Street, particularly on the west side of Main Street from Park Avenue to the Acme Store. A conceptual design solution to these problems can be arrived at easily enough; to pay for the indicated improvements in order to achieve the solution is another matter. For this reason as well as because the entire downtown area is affected, such a design solution must be capable of being undertaken in a series of steps. These steps toward redevelopment of the Central Business District can then be combined into Stages which can be carried out as fast as the financial and administrative resources of the Village permit. Much more detailed studies of the possibilities for downtown renewal should be undertaken by the Village before such a plan is put into effect; however, in order properly to explain the solution arrived at, certain steps have been grouped into stages and separate maps drawn to show how the redevelopment could proceed. While four such stages are shown in the Master Plan, the final redevelopment could be completed in fewer stages or more stages, depending upon the ability of the Village and the business community to undertake each stage. It is important to note, however, that the renewal process must be a cumulative one with each improvement carried out in conformity with an over-all plan.

The downtown improvements selected as most desirable for the first stage are shown on the map entitled "Redevelopment Plan--Central Business District--Stage 1." These particular improvements were selected as they could be undertaken immediately with little disruption of the present downtown community and would greatly assist in the encouragement of private enterprise to review their own operations downtown.

It will be noted on the map that Albany Street is proposed to be changed from a street to a parking area. This would provide additional parking