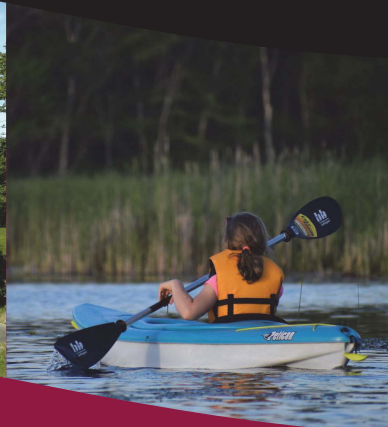


# Town of Champion

## Comprehensive Plan



Adopted March 5<sup>th</sup> 2018

## ***Acknowledgements***

*The Champion Comprehensive Plan was completed by the Champion Comprehensive Plan Committee, which was appointed by the Town Board and made up of representatives from the Town Board, Planning Board, and the Town Historian.*

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**LOCATOR MAP**

**TOWN OF CHAMPION  
IN NEW YORK STATE**



## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance for the physical development of the Town of Champion (more specifically the town outside the Village of West Carthage) for the future. It prepares for potential residential and commercial development that the town may face in the coming years. The plan is intended to provide a framework for land development and land subdivision controls. It will also help assure that the growth of the area will be in concert with plans for infrastructure and road development, and will not negatively impact natural resources and rural character. Finally, it is hoped that other governments (state, county, and other local governments) will find the plan useful in shaping their future development activities. It is the purpose of this plan to create a vision for the community's future that is a shared vision of the citizens of Town of Champion.

### Community Input

Input from town residents was gathered for this plan by a community survey, a visioning exercise, and two public hearings. The survey was mailed to 1,059 property owners in May of 2016. 317 copies were returned (32 were undeliverable) for a 31% response rate. The visioning exercise, called a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was held in July of 2016 and attended by 14 town officials and residents. Finally, public hearings were held November 6, 2017 and March 5, 2018.

### Periodic Review and Update of the Plan

It is the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan Committee that this plan be reviewed and updated every five to eight years by the Town Board and others, as designated by the Town Board. A periodic review will refresh the Board's perspective on the longer range issues affecting Champion, and help to reinforce the link between day-to-day development decisions and longer range town policies. In addition, a periodic update will keep the plan current with the ever-changing conditions of the town without the need for large-scale planning efforts.

### The Organization of This Document

This document is organized into the following three parts:

#### **Part I. Community Profile**

This section presents a compilation of relevant facts about demographics and indicators of the

town based on U.S. Census and other data.

## **Part II. Plan Elements and Strategies**

This section presents a discussion of community issues and strategies that reflect the needs and desires of the community. It was developed based upon public meetings, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercise, and a community survey.

## **Part III. Land Use and Development**

This section includes policies which guide physical development in the town and form the framework for its land use regulations and are intended to inform the decisions of the planning board and zoning board of appeals. All development projects in the town should conform to these policies.

### ***Appendix A. Maps***

### ***Appendix B. Strengths Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Exercise Summary***

### ***Appendix C. Survey Results Summary***

### ***Appendix D. Historic Property Inventory***

## **PART 1. COMMUNITY PROFILE**

### HISTORY (by Lynn Thornton)

In 1797 General Henry Champion purchased “Howard”, Town #4 of the Macomb Purchase. In the same year Noadiah Hubbard of Middletown Connecticut, who had become Champion’s land agent, with surveyor Joel Mix, rafted together down the Black River and staked out their lands in what would become the Town of Champion. The following year, they built cabins there with several other single men (Hubbard and Mix were both married). In 1799, Mix brought his family to West Carthage and Hubbard’s family rode in to Champion on oxen.

On March 14 1800 the New York Legislature passed a bill forming the Town of Champion out of the Town of Mexico, as was the Town of Watertown. Both share the honor of the being the first towns in the later formed Jefferson County and on April 1 the first town meeting in Jefferson County was held in the Justice of Peace Joel Mix’s home. Noadiah Hubbard was elected the first supervisor. The census numbered 153 people.

In 1801 the First Congregational Church Society was formed and Hubbard put up a log schoolhouse at the town’s expense. While in 1802 the first saw mill was built by William Hadsall and John A. Eggleston on Mill Creek near the line of Rutland. The first bridge over the Black River in Jefferson County was constructed at Great Bend.

1807 saw a village green donated by General Champion in return for naming the town after him. This was given to the Town Supervisor, Noadiah Hubbard at that time, and consisted of two acres located at the top of a hill just beyond the center of town. This is the current Village Green Park which is a popular picnic and meeting place today as it was in 1807.

This is where the first church (now the Champion Grange Hall), the first school and a brick store were located. General Champion also promised a bell for the Reverend Nathaniel Dutton’s Congregational Church. Rev. Dutton was the first minister to settle in Jefferson County.

In 1810 Captain Noadiah Hubbard and Captain John McNitt formed two militia units and set about training raw recruits. They frequently trained on the Village Green where the trees still stand in rows to help in formation marching. Weapons were stockpiled in Champion, and on May 29<sup>th</sup> 1813, Champion Militiamen fought at the Battle of Sackets Harbor.

On Christmas Day, 1816 the Congregationalists dedicated their church on the village green (the first church in Jefferson County). The bell, having been recast with silver dollars given by Champion, rang and was heard for miles around the countryside. In 1841

this church was removed from the village green to the valley below for warmth and easier accessibility by the carriages.

Other churches during the same time period:

- 1826 – The Methodists constructed a wooden church at Francis-Babcock Corners near Great Bend.
- 1842 – The Baptists open a church in Great Bend.
- 1852 – The Congregationalists opened a second church in West Carthage.
- 1953 – The Methodists opened a second church in the hamlet of Champion.
- 1968 – The Episcopalians purchased the Masonic Academy (built in 1836 as both meeting hall and school), took it down and using the same stones constructed the one-story church now named St. John's.
- 1875 – With the generous donations and help from the New York Deaconess, Mary Bradford Sterling Clark, the First Trinity Chapel at Great Bend was dedicated by the Episcopalians.
- 1887 – The Methodists closed their church at Francis-Babcock Corners and opened a new First Methodist Church at Great Bend.
- 1915 – Five hundred people signed the register at the dedication of the brick Methodist Church in Great Bend; this became known as Woolworth Memorial Church

In 1912 Champion Grange #18, organized in 1873, purchased the 1816 First Congregational Church and within it, constructed an upper floor for their meeting room. It is still a functioning Grange organization.





DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Champion's population in the 2010 Census was 4,494. Champion grew about 3% between 2000 and 2010, with most of that growth occurring in the town outside the Village of West Carthage (TOV). This growth was on pace with that of Jefferson County as a whole and greater than New York State as a whole. This growth is largely due to Fort Drum (five of the six towns that border Fort Drum grew between 2000 and 2010). Census population estimates for 2015 have the town's population at 4,619.

The number of households increased in the town while average household size decreased. This trend is seen also in the County and the State and is due to smaller family sizes and increases in the number of single person households. Household size is smaller in the Village of West Carthage compared to the TOV. This is not unusual in that there tend to be more single family households and empty nesters in villages.

**Table 1**  
**Population Change 2000-2010**

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Champion (inc. village)	4,361	4,494	+3.0
V. of West Carthage	2,102	2,012	-4.3
<b>Town Outside Village</b>	<b>2,259</b>	<b>2,482</b>	<b>+9.9</b>
Jefferson County	111,738	116,229	+4.0
New York State	18,976,457	19,378,102	+2.1

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table 2**  
**Household Population**

	# of Households 2000	Average Household Size	# of Households 2010	Average Household Size
Champion (inc. village)	1,675	2.60	1,761	2.55
V. of West Carthage	830	2.53	845	2.38
<b>Town Outside Village</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>2.71</b>
Jefferson County	40,068	2.58	43,451	2.53
New York State	7,056,860	2.61	7,317,755	2.57

Source: US Census Bureau

Median household income was estimated by the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey as \$60,241 in 2014. The figure is substantially higher than that for Jefferson County as a whole and slightly higher than for New York State. It is thought that this is because of the attractiveness of the town to professionals due to the quality of the school system and the availability of quality housing. The percentage of all people in the town living below the poverty line was estimated as 9.5% by the 2014 American Community Survey. This compares to 11% in 2009.

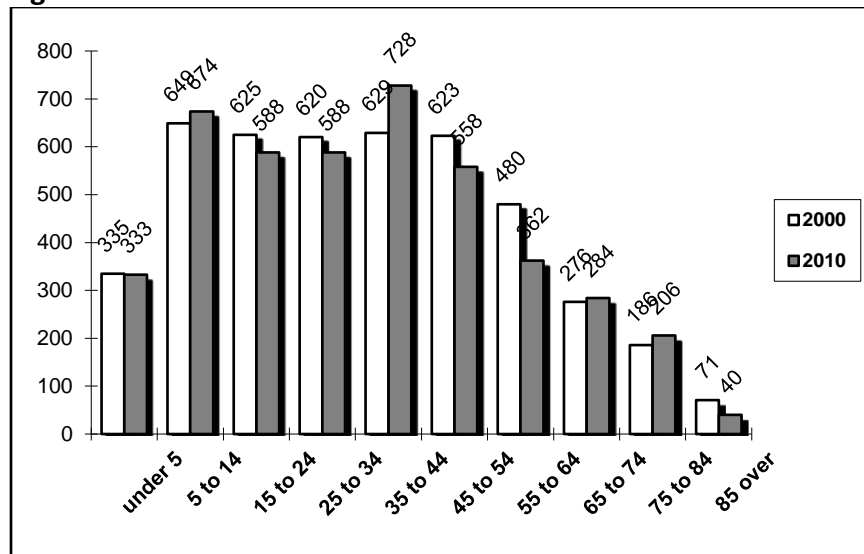
**Table 3**  
**Median Household Income 2014**

Champion	\$60,241
Jefferson County	\$48,613
New York State	\$58,687

Source: US Census Bureau

While the town's population (including the village) aged between 2000 and 2010, it aged comparatively less than many communities in the region. The median age increased from 35.0 to 35.3. The median age for New York State as a whole was 38 in 2010. Figure 4 breaks down Champion's population into ten year age groups for 2000 and 2010. These figures include the Village of West Carthage.

**Chart 1**  
**Age Distribution**



Source: US Census Bureau

## HOUSING

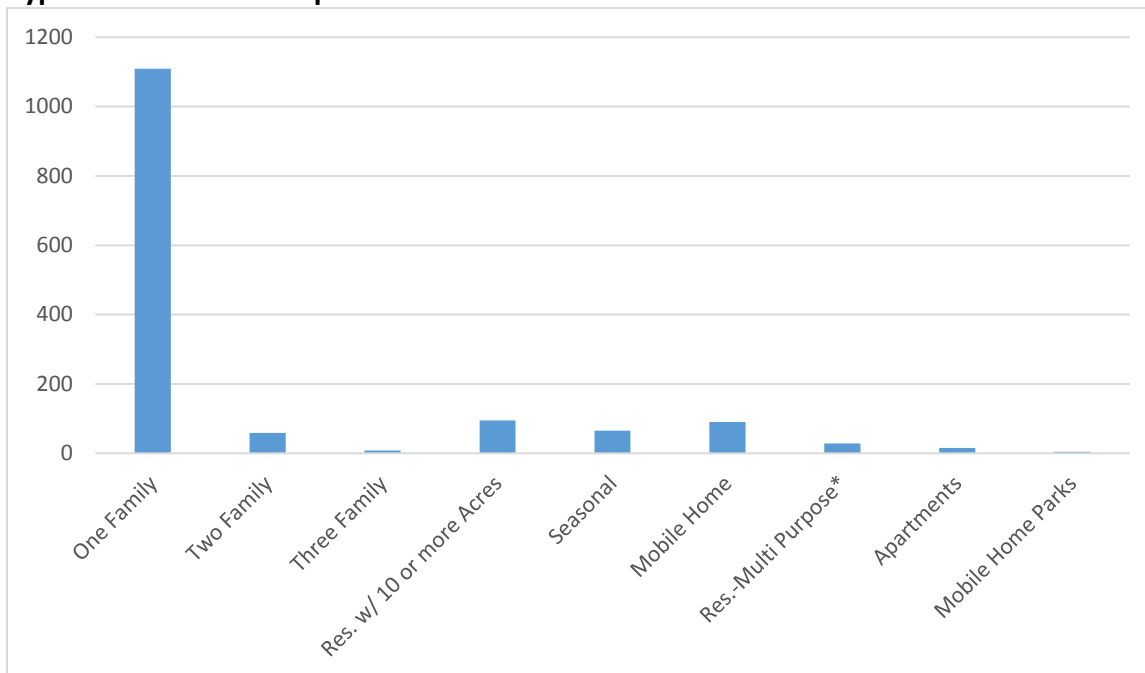
Like population, the Town's housing stock also grew, especially in the TOV. Growth there outpaced that of Jefferson County and New York State. The 2010 Census counted 1,967 housing units in the Town as a whole. A housing unit is defined as a house, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Figure 6 breaks down the residential tax parcels in the town as a whole by type. It can clearly be seen that the vast majority of residential parcels in the town including the village have one family dwellings on them.

**Table 4**  
**Total Housing Stock**

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Champion (inc. village)	1,906	1,967	+3.2
V. of West Carthage	915	891	-2.6
<b>Town Outside Village</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>1,076</b>	<b>+8.6</b>
Jefferson County	54,070	57,966	+7.2
New York State	7,679,307	8,108,103	+5.6

Source: US Census Bureau

**Chart 2**  
**Type of Residential Properties - 2015**



\*More than one residential dwelling on one parcel of land OR a residence which has been partially converted or adapted for commercial use

Source: US Census Bureau

A rough measure of housing affordability is obtained by dividing median housing value in the town by median household income. The lower the quotient, the more affordable the housing. A quotient of 2 or lower is considered an indicator of affordability. Champion scores 2.1, which is lower than Jefferson County at 2.8 and New York State at 4.8. The state's figure is obviously skewed by the New York City metropolitan area, however.

**Table 5**  
**Housing Affordability 2014**

	<b>Median Value for All Owner-Occupied Units</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Score</b>
Champion	129,400	60,241	2.1
Jefferson County	135,200	48,613	2.8
New York State	283,700	58,687	4.8

Source: US Census Bureau

### EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Civilian residents of the Town of Champion are employed in a variety of industries. The top category, by a significant degree, is educational, health, and social services (32.2%). This is followed by retail trade (13.2%), and public administration (10.0%). Note that these jobs are not necessarily located within the town. 366 residents (or 15.3%) of the workforce are employed by the armed services. The Census estimated the average travel time to work for Champion residents as 20.7 minutes. The number of Champion residents employed by the armed forces was 366 in 2014, according to American Community Survey estimates. This compares to 131 in 2009.

**Figure 6**  
**Employment by Industry (Civilian) 2014**

Industry	#	%
Educational, health, social services	574	32.2
Retail trade	236	13.2
Public administration	179	10.0
Manufacturing	161	9.0
Construction	139	7.8
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services	114	6.4
Transportation, warehousing, utilities	108	6.1
Professional, scientific, management, admin., waste management	99	5.5
Other services (except public administration)	71	4.0
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	41	2.3
Information	31	1.7
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	27	1.5
Wholesale trade	5	0.3

Source: US Census Bureau

## EDUCATION

Champion residents are well educated according to census data. The town as a whole has a proportion of high school graduates higher than Jefferson County and New York State. The proportion of residents with bachelor's degrees is slightly higher than that of the County but lower than state percentages.

**Table 7**  
**Educational Attainment (25 years and older) 2014**

	% High School Diploma	% Bachelors Degree
Champion	91.2	23.2
Jefferson County	88.8	20.5
NYS	85.4	33.7

Source: US Census Bureau

## TOWN BUILDINGS

The town government operates out a municipal building located on North Broad Street (Route 26) in the village of West Carthage. The 5,350 square foot structure houses all town offices and has facilities for town meetings and the town justice court.

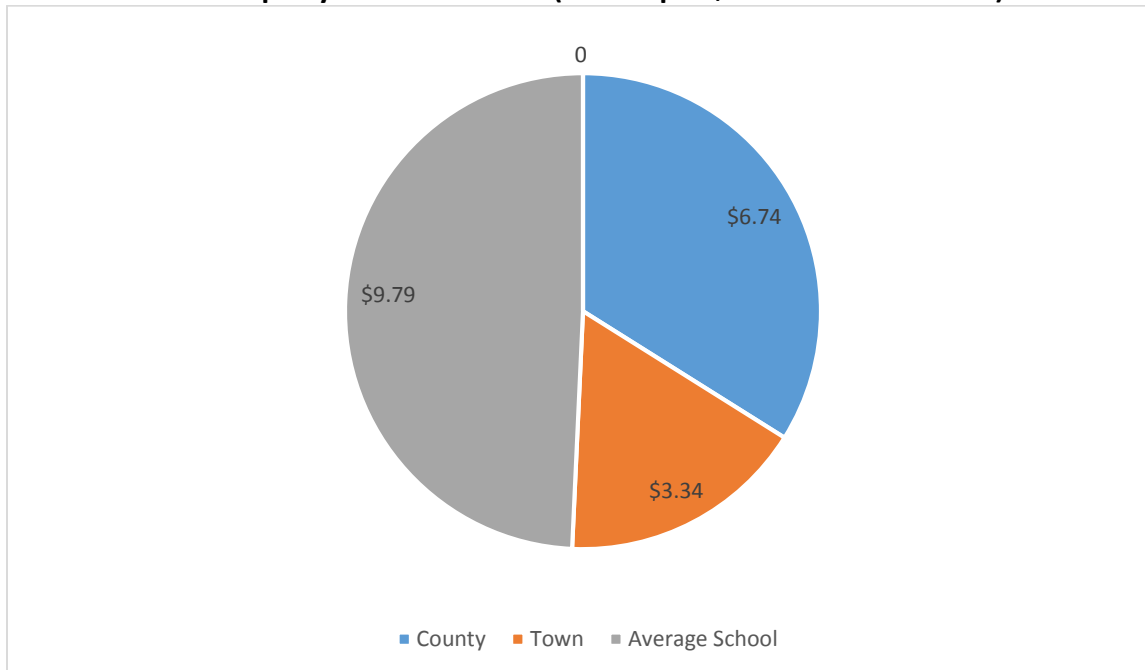
The town highway garage is located on County Route 47 in the hamlet of Champion. The 10,625

square foot structure was built in the 1970s. The property also features outbuildings and a salt/sand storage pile.

### PROPERTY TAXES

In 2015, TOV property owners paid \$20.74 or \$18.99 per \$1000 assessed value in TOTAL property taxes (depending on whether they lived in the Carthage or Copenhagen school district, respectively).

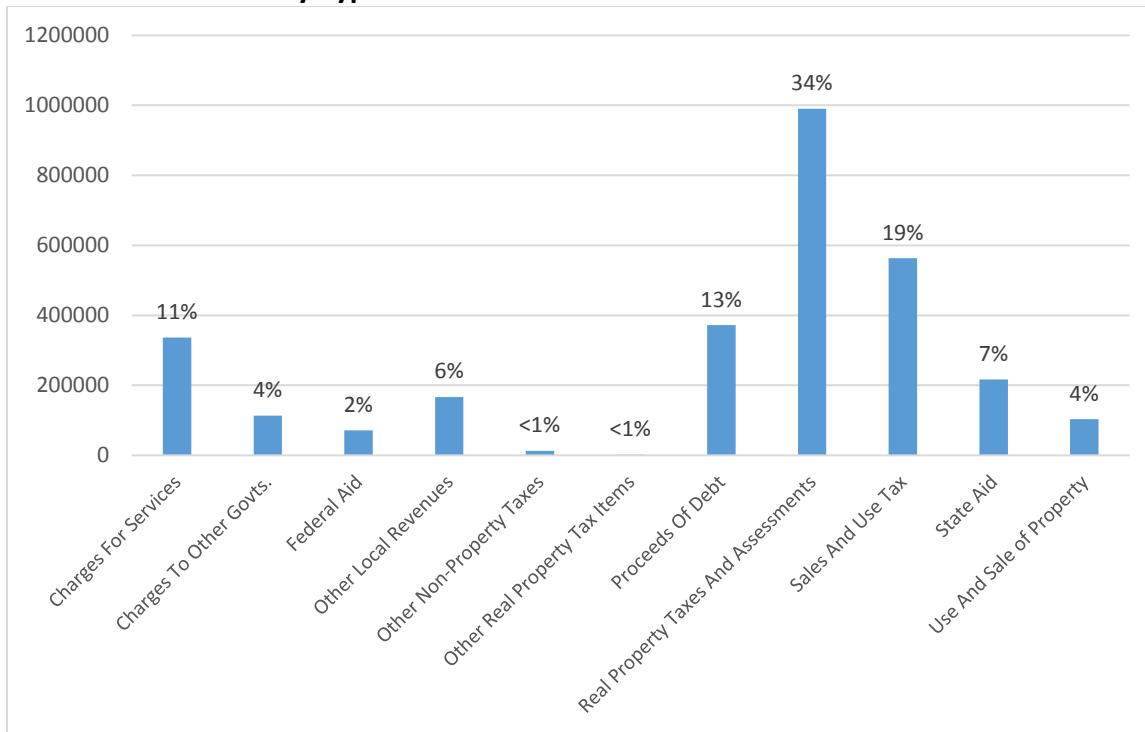
**Chart 3. 2015 Property Tax Breakdown (dollars per \$1000 assessed value)**



Note: does not include special district taxes

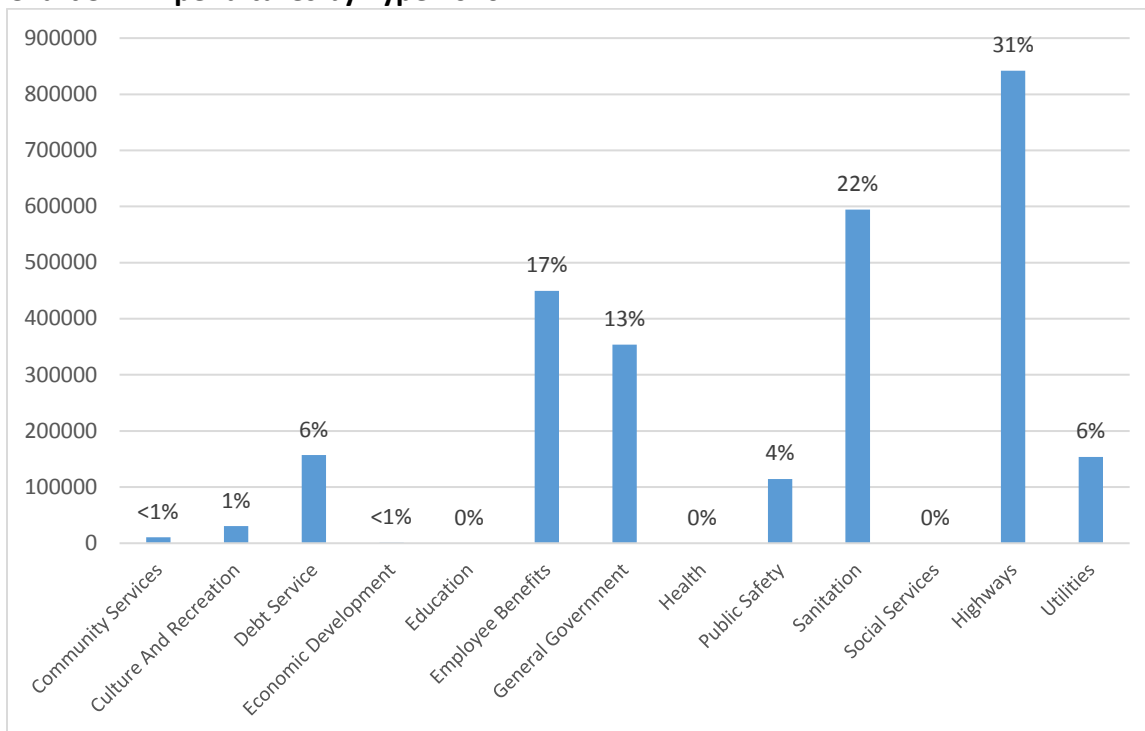
Source: NYS Comptroller's Office

**Chart 4. Revenues by Type 2016**



Source: NYS Comptroller's Office

**Chart 5. Expenditures by Type 2016**

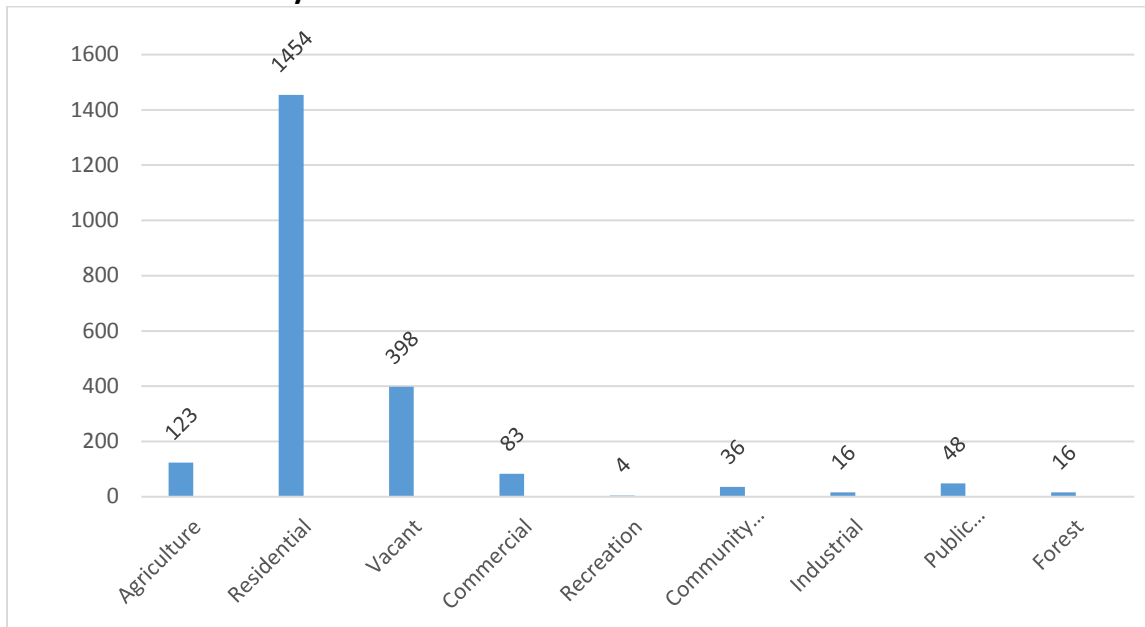


Source: NYS Comptroller's Office

LAND USE

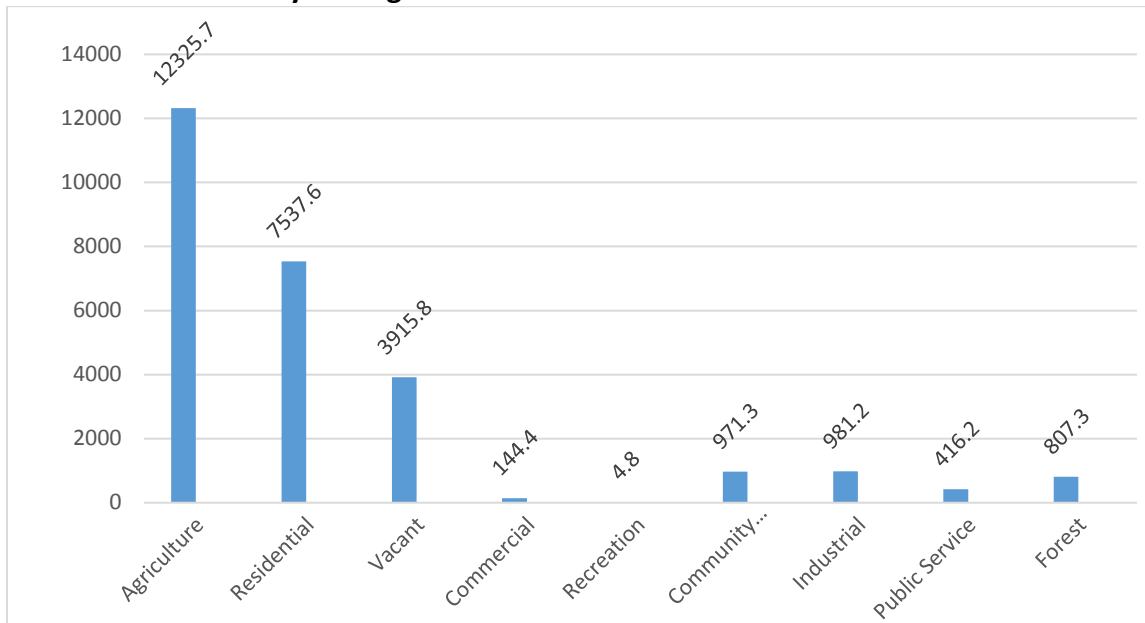
The majority (66.8%) of the 2,178 tax parcels in the town (including the village) were assessed as residential in 2015. The next largest categories were vacant lands (18.3%) and agricultural (5.6%). See definitions on page 13.

**Chart 6. Land Use by Number of Parcels 2015**



Source: NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services

**Chart 7. Land Use by Acreage 2015**

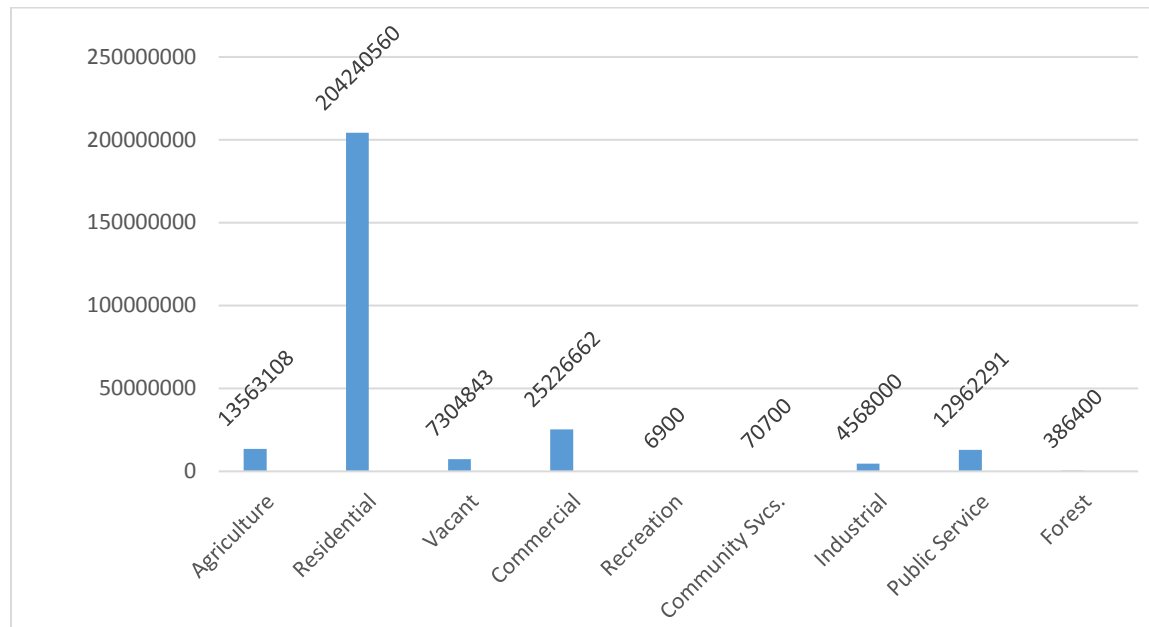


Source: NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services



When total assessed value is broken down by property class, 76.1% of the value is in residential parcels. Next were commercial (9.4%) and agricultural (5.1%). 20% of the town's assessed value is wholly exempt from town taxes, the majority of this value being in community services properties.

**Chart 8. Town Taxable Value 2015**



Source: NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services

## DEFINITIONS

**Agricultural** – property used for the production of crops or livestock

**Residential** – property used for human habitation. Living accommodations such as hotels, motels, and apartments are in the Commercial category

**Vacant** – property that is not in use, is in temporary use, or lacks permanent improvement

**Commercial** – property used for the sale of goods and/or services

**Recreation** – property used by groups for recreation, amusement, or entertainment

**Community Services** – property used for the well-being of the community

**Industrial** – property used for the production and fabrication of durable and nondurable man-made goods

**Public Services** – property used to provide services to the general public

**Forest** – reforested lands, preserves, and private hunting and fishing clubs

Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

## **PART II. PLAN ELEMENTS – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES**

This section of the comprehensive plan presents issues and strategies that address five topical areas – open space and agriculture, historic resources, economic development, transportation, and recreation. These strategies are the result of the planning process and are based on a community survey, public visioning meetings, and meetings with experts in each topic. It is intended that responsibility for pursuing these strategies will be that of various town groups, including the town board, the planning board, ad hoc committees and community volunteers.

### **OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURE, AND RURAL CHARACTER**

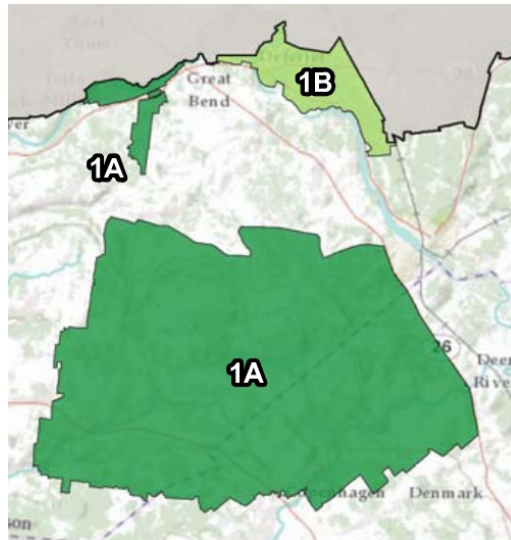
Agriculture is important to the economy of both Champion and Jefferson County. It is important not just for the farm jobs that are maintained/created, but also for the agri-businesses which supports farm operations. The Town of Champion is home to a stable dairy industry and prime agricultural lands, most of which are still in production. Farms are also a solid contributor to the town's property tax base. This natural resource is an important and valuable economic asset, which must be managed wisely. The town can help maintain the proper operation of farms by maintaining road infrastructure and using the land use planning process to limit intrusions of incompatible development near farm lands.

Potential for new farming operations are believed to exist for small fruit (grapes, blueberries, raspberries) and vegetable operations as well as poultry, beef and hog operations. Maple syrup operations are also viable in Champion.

Agriculture is also important for non-economic reasons. The culture of the region is somewhat agriculturally oriented. Agriculture is responsible for the rural atmosphere that residents feel is important. This atmosphere is largely defined by rural landscapes composed of open space, farm fields and pastures, farm houses, barns, and outbuildings.

While development pressures in the rural residential areas of Jefferson County away from the City of Watertown are presently low, this could change and the town should be prepared. The NYS agricultural district program provides a start for the preservation of this resource. Agricultural lands in the town are included in Jefferson County Ag District #2. Conservation easements are another way to protect ag lands and open space. A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between the landowner and a third party such as a land trust (Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, locally), to protect land from development by permanently restricting the use and development of the property, thereby preserving its natural or manmade features. In exchange, the owner receives tax benefits. The legally binding agreement is filed in the Office of the Jefferson County Clerk in the same manner as a deed. The landowner retains ownership of the land, but is subject to restrictions which are detailed in the easement agreement.

One source of funding for the creation of conservation easements is the U.S. Army/Fort Drum. Certain lands near Fort Drum have been designated as priority areas for the U.S. Army Compatible Use Buffer program (ACUB). The purpose of the program is to limit use or development of property near Fort Drum to agricultural and forestry uses. This is intended to minimize encroachment (development which impacts the ability to train) while protecting open space.



ACUB priority areas in and near Champion.  
1A is highest priority, followed by 1B.

Community survey respondents chose rural atmosphere as the town's greatest asset. 40% of respondents felt that the town needs more dairy farms (as opposed to 35% who felt that no more were needed – 25% were not sure). 45% of respondents felt that 'other types of agriculture' are needed (as opposed to 28% who felt they are not needed – 27% were not sure).

**GOAL: MAINTAIN AGRICULTURE, AND THE RURAL, OPEN SPACE CHARACTER OF THE TOWN.**

### Objectives/Strategies

1. Work to maintain and promote agriculture through land use controls and infrastructure improvements.
2. Promote a diversified agricultural base.
3. Work with farms to balance road maintenance needs and impacts from farm vehicles.
4. Encourage the creation of conservation easements (with assistance from Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (THTLT)), especially in the ACUB priority area.

**5. Adopt a clutter, litter, and debris law.**

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

A town's historic sites and structures provide a visible link to its past. Historic resources contribute greatly to Champion's sense of place and identity and provide clues as to how early residents lived and worked. As these resources are demolished, abandoned or allowed to deteriorate, this identity is slowly chipped away. Historic preservation also makes sense economically as it boosts tourism in communities. This is witnessed locally in villages such as Sackets Harbor and Clayton.

The 4 River Valleys Historical Society (a non-profit group operating in the town) owns and maintains the Hiram Hubbard Homestead, built in 1820 in the hamlet of Champion. This property, featuring a Federal style limestone house, has great potential for education and tourism. The Historical Society would like to build an auxiliary structure behind the Hubbard House to display historic agricultural equipment and machinery.

A number of other properties with historic merit have been identified by the town historian. These are listed in Appendix D.

**GOAL: PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE COMMUNITY'S VALUABLE HISTORIC RESOURCES TO PROVIDE ACTIVITIES FOR RESIDENTS, PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE TOWN AND PROMOTE TOURISM.**

### **Objectives/Strategies**

- 1. Support the historical society's efforts with the Hubbard property through the town historian.**
- 2. Continue to inventory and work to preserve historic resources town wide.**
- 3. Seek to create a National Register of Historic Places District for Champion hamlet.**
- 4. Support individual National Register of Historic Places designation for Woolworth Memorial Church and the Buck/Jefferson Hotel in Great Bend.**

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A commercial base is critical to any town because it provides jobs for local residents and keeps property taxes lower. Perhaps the most important thing the town can do to promote commercial development is to build and maintain infrastructure, such as roads, sewage disposal, water supply, and communication systems. Also, because business only thrives in a stable environment, the existence of rational land use controls helps convince potential investors that their environment will be protected. Such controls can also help channel commercial development to locations where the proper infrastructure is in place to service it and where concentrated businesses benefit each other. The Town of Champion has a fine tradition of using zoning and subdivision controls to the economic benefit of the community.

### Commercial Development and Light Manufacturing

In 2016, the town had 62 tax parcels that were assessed as ‘commercial’ (not including commercial living accommodations, such as apartments and hotels). While the majority of these are in the Village of West Carthage, there are concentrations of commercial development in Great Bend and along State Rt. 26 northwest of the village. There were 16 parcels assessed as ‘industrial’ in 2016. The town can help promote commercial development in Champion by keeping an accurate inventory of vacant properties that have potential for business or manufacturing use and sharing this information with the Jefferson County Economic Development Agency, who can use it to connect with potential developers.

### Fort Drum

Fort Drum is the single largest economic factor in the “North Country” region. Originally established in 1908, during the 1980s, Fort Drum was assigned to host a new light infantry division, later named the 10th Mountain Division, which led to a massive expansion of the base. Today, Fort Drum employs approximately 18,854 people, including 15,069 military personnel and 3,785 civilians who, combined, have a total annual payroll of nearly one billion dollars. Issues and concerns addressed in the recently accepted Fort Drum Joint Land Use Study should be considered for future incorporation in the town’s laws, regulations, and policies.

### Tourism

Tourism is a significant industry within Jefferson County. Due to the presence of major recreational attractions, including the Thousand Islands, the St. Lawrence River and the Adirondack Park, the County draws visitors from across New York State, Canada and the Northeast. According to the Thousands Islands Tourism Council, approximately 500,000 hotel room nights are sold annually in Jefferson County. The Town of Champion (and West Carthage) should work hard to capitalize on this activity by enticing visitors to explore the Black River and

other local attractions.

Community Survey respondents felt that “lack of employment opportunities” and “lack of commercial development” were among the most serious problems facing the town. 66% of respondents listed manufacturing as a type of development the town needs (as opposed to 22% who felt that it was not needed – 12% were not sure). 61% of respondents listed retail as a type of development needed in the town (as opposed to 29% who felt that it was not needed – 11% were not sure).

**GOAL: IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT TO CREATE JOBS AND IMPROVE THE TAX BASE.**

**Objectives/Strategies**

- 1. Continue to evaluate town laws relating to permitting and encouraging compatible commercial development (zoning, site plan review, SEQR).**
- 2. Work to encourage development of agricultural value added and light manufacturing operations.**
- 3. Maintain a list of priority commercial development sites where infrastructure exists and work with Jefferson County Economic Development (JCED) to market them.**
- 4. Support the efforts of the Advocate Drum organization.**
- 5. Support the efforts of the Carthage Chamber of Commerce.**
- 6. Work with Spectrum/Westelcom to extend cable and internet services throughout the town.**

**TRANSPORTATION**

The provision of a safe, efficient, and well maintained transportation network is of utmost importance to a typical town's economy and is the primary mission of most town governments. This network must provide not only for automobiles, but also for bicyclists and pedestrians

(especially in population centers such as Great Bend). Like any public infrastructure, it is important that the town create a detailed inventory of roads and highways. An official map is the best way to do this - Champion is currently in the process of finalizing such a map.

The overall road system received a positive rating in the community survey with only 19% of respondents listing maintenance/snowplowing as one of the town's three most pressing issues.

One issue facing roads in the town is the incompatibility of large agricultural equipment with roads (especially shoulders). Unfortunately, this problem has no clear solution at the present.

#### State roads

The town has approximately 17 miles of state owned roads. These include State Routes 3, 12, 26, and 126. The most travelled segment of road in the town is the portion of State Route 26 between Great Bend and Fort Drum. This segment was measured at 9,303 average daily trips (ADT) in 2014. The second most travelled segment was the portion of State Route 3 between Felts Mills and Great Bend – 6,818 ADT in 2015. The NYSDOT has no immediate plans for projects involving these roads.

#### County Roads

Total mileage of County highways in the town is approximately 15.35 miles. These include County Routes 45, 47, 69, 143, and 163. Of these, County Routes 47 and 143 are most in need of repair/maintenance. The County is currently considering a major project to improve and widen County Route 47, which connects County Route 163 and State Route 26.

#### Town roads

The Town contains approximately 43.97 miles of town maintained roads. Portions of three roads are currently classified as seasonal (not plowed during winter months). The town is considering designating certain roads as "minimum maintenance". A minimum maintenance road is a low-volume road segment primarily providing agricultural or recreational land access, having an average traffic volume of 50 or less vehicles per day, and with no year round residences or businesses. Minimum maintenance is not "no maintenance," and a road or road segment which has been so designated shall be maintained at a level which allows the road to remain passable and functional in accordance with the Guidelines for Rural Town and County Roads. The minimum maintenance road concept provides an alternative to abandonment or to designation as a seasonal limited-use road. Abandonment is a difficult process to complete, and a seasonal limited-use road must be upgraded if and when a year round residence is built along the road.

While many town have designated minimum maintenance roads, their legal status is currently unclear. Efforts are underway to solidify their status through legislation at the state level. The town should monitor this situation and then act accordingly.

### Rail

There is no passenger rail service in the Champion. The Genesee Valley Transportation Company, parent company of the Mohawk, Adirondack and Northern Railroad Corp. owns 117 miles of rail and facilities in Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida and St. Lawrence counties including the rail depots at Mechanic Street and at Alexandria and Forge streets in Carthage. It transports freight including fertilizer, pesticides, vegetables and linerboard. The Mohawk, Adirondack and Northern connect with CSX rail in Carthage.

### Air

The Town of Champion is served by the Watertown International Airport. A private airstrip on Alexandria Road in Wilna one mile north of the Village of Carthage features a turf landing strip.

**GOAL: PROVIDE A ROBUST AND WELL MAINTAINED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK THAT ACCOMODATES AUTOMOBILES, BICYCLISTS, AND PEDESTRIANS.**

### Objectives/Strategies

1. Adopt an official road/highway map.
2. Encourage the construction of privately maintained sidewalks and walkways in residential and commercial areas, especially in the hamlet of Great Bend, through site plan review (for new development) and retrofitting of existing development.
3. Work with Jefferson County and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on transportation projects to address roads with high vehicle and pedestrian traffic.
4. Work with the MPO to improve public transportation and demand driven transportation issues (for senior citizens and other special needs populations).
5. Discourage creation of new private roads that serve multiple properties.
6. Require all new roads to be built to town standards for safety and to allow for future development.
7. Work to identify/establish bike lanes, paths, or trails.



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Public infrastructure and utilities add greatly to residents' health and quality of life and are probably the town's biggest asset in regards to economic development and job creation. These assets should be maintained and improved at every possible chance. Care, however, must be taken to extend infrastructure only to areas where future development makes sense.

### Public Water

Public water supply in Champion comes from two sources. The first source is the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) water system. The DANC distribution lines use water from the Black River pumped and treated in Watertown, approximately ten miles west of the town. Average monthly flow is 764,470 gallons. Consolidated Water District #1, in the Great Bend area, receives water from this supply. The second and third sources are a group of wells located in the area known as "Champion Heights" and on Britton Drive. These wells supply an average of 1,285 gallons per day. The town has incorporated wellhead protection into its zoning law and map.

### Public Sewer

Public sewer service is located in two parts of the town: the Great Bend area and Cole Road, Farney Pit Road and State Route 26 northwest of the Village of West Carthage. The Great Bend lines are part of a larger system known as the Route 3 Sewer System. The Route 3 Sewer System includes the Towns of Champion, LeRay, Pamelaia, and Rutland and the Village of Black River. The sewer lines connect into a system operated by DANC that sends wastewater to the City of Watertown treatment facility along the Black River. The treatment plant is permitted to treat 27 million gallons per day and averages eight million gallons per day annually. The area to the north of West Carthage is served by the Carthage/West Carthage sewer treatment plant along the Black River. That plant is permitted to treat six million gallons per day and averages 1.3 million gallons per day annually. This system has excess capacity due to the fact that it was designed to handle waste from local paper mills that have since closed.

**GOAL: PLAN AND PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC WATER AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES, THAT SERVE THE COMMUNITY AND ALLOW FOR GROWTH WHILE PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES.**

**Objectives/Strategies**

- 1. Maintain/update existing water and sewer infrastructure to provide maximum operational capacity and quality service to residents.**
- 2. Expand existing water and sewer infrastructure consistent with NYS Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy Act.**
- 3. Expand existing water and sewer infrastructure to serve existing developed areas that have potential to become even more developed due to location.**
- 4. Expand existing water and sewer infrastructure to protect or improve water quality in Black River, Pleasant Lake and existing or future Town owned wells.**
- 5. Expand water and sewer infrastructure when necessary to prevent or address contamination issues.**

**RECREATION**

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, “parks and recreation have three values that make them essential services to communities: economic value; health and environmental benefits; and social importance. Just as water, sewer, and public safety are considered essential public services, parks are vitally important to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community, ensuring the health of families and youth, and contributing to the economic and environmental well-being of a community and a region.” While most of the active recreation assets in the Town of Champion are located in the Village of West Carthage, the town outside the village does include two Jefferson County Forest properties as well as snowmobile trails. Pleasant Lake provide water recreation to landowners along its shoreline.

Community survey respondents indicated that recreation opportunities in the town should be increased with about two-thirds agreeing that additional non-motorized trails, youth recreational facilities, and youth recreation programs should be developed. 49% of respondents agreed that the town should pursue development of additional motorized trails.

### Champion Lot

The Champion Lot is a 108 acre, Jefferson County owned parcel located on the north side of State Route 126, just east of the hamlet of Champion. The county allows hunting on the property, which creates some issues with homeowners along neighboring Lewis Loop/Champion Heights. There is a proposal to limit hunting here to bows only. There is also a proposal to construct a non-motorized trail on the property, which would be a nice asset for the town's residents.

### Slack Lot

The Slack Lot is a 105 acre, Jefferson County owned parcel located in the extreme southern portion of the town. It currently does not have road access, a situation that the county is in the process of resolving.

### Champion Village Green

Located at top of a hill overlooking the Hamlet of Champion, the 1800 Village Green Park affords a magnificent view of the hamlet and the eastern portion of the town toward the Black River. The wooded park, deeded to the town in 1807 by General Henry Champion, was home to the first church and school in Jefferson County. Foundations for these structures, as well as for a store, remain undisturbed. Two of the actual structures – a church and brick store were moved to the hamlet below in the 1840s. The church remains standing and now serves as the Champion Grange #18 building.

The town has begun development of the park with the planting of indigenous trees and plants, a memorial to the town's founding families, picnic tables, rustic benches, signage, and the construction of an open air pavilion with a field stone fireplace. It is the intention of the town to replicate an authentic 19<sup>th</sup> century park with period walkways, a parade ground, and playground. Long term plans include: an observation deck and the development of a youth program to teach pioneer life skills. The Town Board views the preservation of the town's history as a vital part of its future.

### Snowmobiling

Approximately twelve miles of snowmobile trails are located within the town. These run from Great Bend to Copenhagen and from West Carthage to Copenhagen. The trails are maintained by the Missing Link Snowmobile Club.

### Public Fishing Access

Two fishing access parking areas open to the public are located along Townsend Creek. One fishing access parking area is located along Felts Mills Creek.

**GOAL: PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE COMMUNITY'S VALUABLE RECREATIONAL RESOURCES TO PROVIDE ACTIVITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND PROMOTE TOURISM.**

**Objectives/Strategies**

- 1. Support Jefferson County's efforts to establish a recreation trail on the Champion Lot (County Forest).**
- 2. Pursue upgrades to Village Green Park, including permanent bathroom facilities, arbor management, water source near the pavilion, and expanded parking.**
- 3. Identify other recreational opportunities, such as fishing, boating, and skiing.**
- 4. Inform/educate tourists and residents on the importance of stopping the spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species to the waters of the town of Champion (with the help of organizations such as the St Lawrence-Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO-PRISM)).**

## **PART III. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT**

This section of the comprehensive plan includes policies which form the framework for the town's land use and subdivision regulations and are intended to guide the decisions of the planning board and zoning board of appeals. All development projects in the town should conform to these standards to the extent possible.

### **ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS**

There are areas in the Town of Champion which have a limited suitability or are inherently unsuitable for development. There are other areas in which development should be avoided due to the valuable natural character of the area, a character which would be lost or damaged if disturbed. Areas which are either unsuitable or fragile include steep slopes, wetlands, and stream corridors. See the Development Constraints map in Appendix A for the locations of these features. Data on sensitive environmental features in the town is also available from the Department of Environmental Conservation – more info at [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/38801.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/38801.html).

#### **Steep Slopes**

Steep slopes are considered to be areas which have greater than ten percent slope, which means that there is a vertical rise of ten feet for each 100 feet of horizontal distance. Steep slopes are located throughout the town, but are most prevalent in the central and extreme southern portions.

Slopes of less than ten percent are generally considered slight constraints on development. Slopes of between ten and 15 percent are generally considered moderate constraints on development. Slopes of greater than 15 percent are considered severe constraints on development. The development of slopes is not recommended for several reasons. There are some environmental concerns, such as erosion and stream sedimentation. It is also more expensive for communities to service development on steep slopes with roads, water lines, and sewerage facilities.

#### **Wetlands**

Wetlands are known by many names, such as marshes, swamps, bogs, and wet meadows. Wetlands are transition areas between uplands and aquatic habitats. Standing water is only one clue that a wetland may be present. These areas often act as groundwater recharge areas, areas for filtering and cleaning water, and as significant wildlife habitat. DEC wetlands are scattered throughout the town, but are not that prevalent. National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) wetlands are much more prevalent and are scattered throughout the town.

Wetlands are generally considered a restriction to development. Development can lead to loss of valuable and irreplaceable wildlife habitat. Wetlands are particularly important as they are usually groundwater which is exposed on the surface of the ground, and vulnerable to pollution. Development of these areas is not feasible, as fill is often required and flood protection is often necessary.

### **Stream Corridors**

Stream corridors may act as important fish and wildlife habitats. They may also be important for their significance as drainage conduits. Many have relatively steep slopes. The town is drained by several creeks including Deer Lick Creek, Pleasant Lake Creek, and Townsend Creek. FEMA flood hazard areas are located along various waterways – see Development Constraints map in Appendix A.

Stream corridors must be developed very carefully so as not to destroy their natural characteristics and contributions as habitats and drainage areas. Improper development can lead to erosion of the stream banks, resulting in siltation of the stream and the loss of stabilizing soil. Water quality can be impaired, and the recreational use of the stream degraded. The aesthetic qualities of the stream may likewise be destroyed by improper development.

### **WILDLIFE**

The upland plant communities in the town are relatively intact remnants of the indigenous communities present when the first settlers arrived. Much of the previously tilled land has now regenerated into forest cover in various stages of succession. The result of this pattern of use is a mosaic of different species associations that support a great diversity of plants and animals. Wildlife in the region is well documented in the book Tug Hill: A Four Season Guide to the Wild Side. Several of these species, especially birds are in danger of decline if blocks of habitat are reduced by new roads and clearings. Undeveloped areas along rural roads offer corridors that allow freedom of movement necessary to promote healthy and genetically diverse populations for all wildlife species. Continuous frontage development inhibits this free movement and is a potential threat.

### **FORT DRUM ISSUES**

The town's proximity to Fort Drum creates certain land use and development issues. These include:

- Impacts of alternative energy developments on military flights and airfield radar (including glare and height issues);
- Compatibility of denser development with military operations in close proximity to

Wheeler Sack Airfield and training ranges;

- Impacts of commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational lighting on military flights and other operations;
- Compatibility of development with higher noise areas associated with military operations;
- Impacts of accident potential zones (proximity to Wheeler Sack Airfield), weapons firing range safety zones, and explosive safety zones;
- Impacts of vertical obstructions created by buildings, trees, or other features that encroach into navigable air space used for military operation;
- Impacts of uses (military or civilian) that cause excessive vibrations on military operations or civilian developments;
- Compatibility of wildlife areas that attract birds with military flight operations and bird/wildlife strike hazards.

These issues and others identified in the 2018 Fort Drum Joint Land Use Study need to be considered to guide the town's growth while protecting the viability and future training operations at Fort Drum. The Development Constraints Map in Appendix A illustrates some areas of concern in relation to Fort Drum operations.

## **CHARACTER AREAS**

The goal in planning for the Town of Champion is to provide for the rational growth of the town of Champion and to preserve the scenic, rural, natural resource dependent lands outside Carthage and West Carthage.

### **AGRICULTURE, RURAL AND LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (AR ZONING DISTRICT)**

#### *Location/General Description*

Low density rural residential and agricultural areas generally make up most of the town. These areas are crisscrossed by state, county and town roads and are characterized by farmlands, woodlands, and vacant lands interspersed by single family dwellings. For the most part, residential development is scattered in nature. These areas are not served by public water or sewer.

Challenges to agriculture in this part of the town are the intrusion of nonfarm uses into traditional agricultural areas and the parcelization of the farms into smaller lots. Nonfarm uses mixed into agricultural areas can be a problem, particularly when they are residential in nature. Agriculture is an industry. It involves many activities which may impact residential living such as irregular hours of operation, the use of heavy machinery, the spraying of chemicals, the spreading of manure, and unpleasant noise, lights, and smells. Urban and suburban residents often move to rural areas and may not be aware of these aspects of rural life.

The loss of farmlands to development so far has been characterized mainly by small, incremental

development decisions being made by farmers to subdivide small parcels over long periods of time. The acreage of vacant agricultural land is minimal as this land has mostly reverted to succession growth. The majority of the existing and new residential buildings in the rural portions of the town are single-family detached dwellings. Residential development has been forced to locate where there is the availability of well water, and soil suitability for on-site sewage disposal. Existing constraints created by these factors have necessitated very low density construction, as on-site sewage disposal systems require a lot size of at least one half acre (and often more area) for proper functioning.

There are a number of forms that residential developments can take, depending on the economics of the development and the goals to be achieved. Larger scale single-family subdivision developments in rural areas are usually of three patterns. They can be linear along existing roads, they can cover entire tracts of land, or they can be in a clustered configuration. Linear roadside subdivisions have a negative effect on the function of major roads, by allowing an excessive number of entrances which endanger traffic flows. While the preservation of open space may be a desirable goal, a pattern of open space locked-up behind a row of houses along the road is often an undesirable pattern. It places new housing construction on display, not the unique landforms, vistas, vegetation, and agricultural activities which form the character of the town. The linear pattern may ultimately detract from the preservation of the rural character and quality of life which makes the Town of Champion a unique place to live.

Conventional subdivisions completely consume all of the land of the parent parcel. Open space is dispersed in small pieces (in the form of yards) to individual homeowners. While giving each landowner a small piece of private open space, conventional subdivision does not reserve enough open space to meet many important community objectives. Larger conventional subdivisions can also cause traffic problems because they typically have only one or two points of access to the main road they lie along.

Cluster subdivisions are a viable alternative to conventional types and are encouraged in the town. Clustering procedures are detailed in the town's subdivision law.

The zoning law provides one district to guide development in these parts of the town:

**AR** – The purpose of this district is to promote agriculture and other open space uses, as well as rural residence.

### **Policies**

- 1. The density of development should be lower than that of zoning districts adjacent to the village of West Carthage and around the hamlet of Great Bend.**
- 2. Land subdivisions should preserve large lots of agricultural and wooded lands whenever**



possible.

3. Cul de sacs should be avoided, except when they are necessary for the protection of environmental features.
4. Trees, vegetation and other landscape features such as stone fences should be retained as much as possible on development sites. Uses should be appropriately landscaped so as to fit into the rural setting.
5. Use site plan review to protect important animal and plant habitats.
6. Signs should be limited and placed so as to minimize impacts on naturally aesthetic views.
7. Nonfarm intrusions into agricultural areas should be minimized, thus minimizing conflicts with existing agricultural operations.
8. Infrastructure, such as cell and wind towers should be sited so as not to detract from the rural character.
9. Residential lots should be large enough to ensure that sewage which is disposed of on-site can safely percolate, and that wells will not overdraw groundwater supplies.
10. Lot frontages should be wide enough for adequate spacing of driveways.
11. Nonresidential development can be allowed. Standards for minimum frontage, screening, building size and bulk, impervious surfaces, lighting, noise, odor, signs, on-site circulation, parking and loading, access, drainage and erosion control should be used to ensure that the impacts of development are controlled.

## **HIGHER DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R1 and R2 ZONING DISTRICTS)**

### *Location/General Description*

Closer to the Village of West Carthage, there are several pockets and linear stretches of higher density residential development on smaller lots that are more urban or suburban in character. These areas include the hamlet of Champion, Champion Heights (along State Route 126); portions of County Route 45 southwest of West Carthage; portions of Cole, Hall, Farney Pit, and Sayre Roads; and portions of Jackson II Road.

Lots are typically smaller than in the AR zoning district, ranging from around 10,000 to 30,000 square feet with frontages ranging from approximately 60 ft. to 150 ft. Buildings are closer to the road/street in these areas which creates a more “urban” or suburban feel than in the more outlying parts of the town.

Portions of these areas are served by public water and some feature sidewalks, curbs and street trees. Development should be encouraged here, especially where there is municipal infrastructure and where soil and other environmental conditions permit.

The zoning law provides two districts to guide development in these parts of the town:

**R-1** – purpose is to promote and enhance single and two-family dwellings, residential neighborhoods.

**R-2** – purpose is to promote multi-family dwelling and allow for the placement of single-wide mobile homes.

**NOTE: CONSIDER A HAMLET DISTRICT FOR CHAMPION HAMLET OR AT LEAST EXPAND R-1 ZONE IN THIS VICINITY**

### **Policies**

- 1. Restrict commercial development in these areas to preserve established residential character.**
- 2. Lots should be smaller than in the AR District so that efficient use of existing infrastructure (water, sewer systems, sidewalks, etc.) is made where it is present.**
- 3. Multi-family dwellings require parking to the rear, adequate space, screening, bulk control, sidewalks and street orientation. Accessory apartments and multi-family dwellings should not be glaringly out of character with single-family dwellings.**

## **HAMLET OF GREAT BEND (H ZONING DISTRICT)**

### *Location/General Description*

The hamlet of Great Bend is made up of mixed land uses on small lots. This area is home to institutional uses, such as churches, as well as several commercial uses. Residences are also present in the form of single family dwellings and multi-family dwellings. Many buildings are two stories and are sited relatively close to the street right-of-way creating a strong sense of enclosure along the street. Mixed use development should be highly encouraged here due to the presence of sewer and water infrastructure.

The zoning law provides one district to guide development in this part of the town:

H – purpose is to encourage a walkable, mixed use human scale hamlet area.

### **Policies:**

- 1. Commercial uses of appropriate scale, particularly retail sales and services, should be highly encouraged.**
- 2. Institutional uses should be encouraged.**
- 3. New construction should respect the existing building setback line.**
- 4. New construction should respect the architectural character of neighboring buildings.**
- 5. Development patterns should take their cue from street layout, not from lot lines.**
- 6. Future streets should be laid out in a connected pattern that provides for efficient pedestrian and auto traffic flow. Cul de sacs should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary to preserve environmental features.**

## **BUSINESS AND MIXED USE (B ZONING DISTRICT)**

### *Location/General Description*

Some areas along major highways should be designated for automobile oriented uses that require off-street parking which are inappropriate in other parts of the town. These uses include large product retail facilities for boats, mobile homes, cars, etc.; car washes; fast-food establishments; drive-through businesses; service stations; motels; and other like businesses. These types of businesses require a commercial strip location. Impacts of this type of development can be managed by continued site plan review and proper sign controls, access management techniques, pedestrian friendly design, and the appropriate screening of unattractive features.

An area has been delineated on the zoning map along State Route 26 northwest of the village. This area is served by sewer and water infrastructure.

The zoning law provides one district to guide development in this part of the town:

**B** – purpose is to promote commercial establishments and enhance the business environment.

### **Policies**

- 1. Consideration should continue to be given to setbacks and proper building alignments and orientations.**
- 2. Uses shall comply with drainage controls.**
- 3. Road access should be carefully planned, including shared access where possible.**
- 4. Buffering and screening of side and rear yards shall be provided adjacent to residences and residential areas.**
- 5. Signs should conform to established standards.**

## **INDUSTRIAL (I ZONING DISTRICT)**

### *Location/General Description*

Industrial and manufacturing uses require access to major transportation routes, such as railroads and/or important highways. In the past, such areas were also located along rivers and

streams, with water being used to power mills and other operations. Flat topography, availability of utilities, soil bearing characteristics and compatible land uses are also important considerations. The town zoning law currently has floating zone provisions for industrial uses.

The zoning law provides floating district provisions to guide development in this part of the town:

I – purpose is to promote the industrial sector and economy of the town.

**Policies**

- 1. Uses should be buffered and screened from residential areas.**
- 2. Uses should comply with drainage controls.**
- 3. Lighting controls needed to protect nearby residences**
- 4. Building setbacks should be minimized to prevent waste of valuable land.**

**PLEASANT LAKE (LD ZONING DISTRICT)**

*Location/General Description*

The shoreline of Pleasant Lake has been almost entirely built out with seasonal second homes on small lots. Recently some of these structures have been converted into year around homes or replaced with year around homes. There are areas of NYSDEC regulated wetlands at the western and eastern ends of the lake. Care must be taken when planning for this area so as not to exacerbate the impact of development on wetlands, water quality (weed growth, nutrient loading, invasive species, etc.) and erosion. The town of Champion will support, when legally allowable, the recommendations of the (soon to be formed) Pleasant Lake Association in regard to protecting and improving water quality on this private lake.

The zoning law provides one district to guide development in this part of the town:

LD – purpose is to promote and enhance single-family dwellings around Pleasant Lake.

**Policies:**

- 1. Prohibit land uses that can greatly harm water quality.**
- 2. Maintain appropriate setbacks for structures from the water's edge.**

**3. Limit ratio of impervious ground coverage to open space on lots.**

**RURAL CORRIDOR (RC ZONING DISTRICT)**

*Location/General Description*

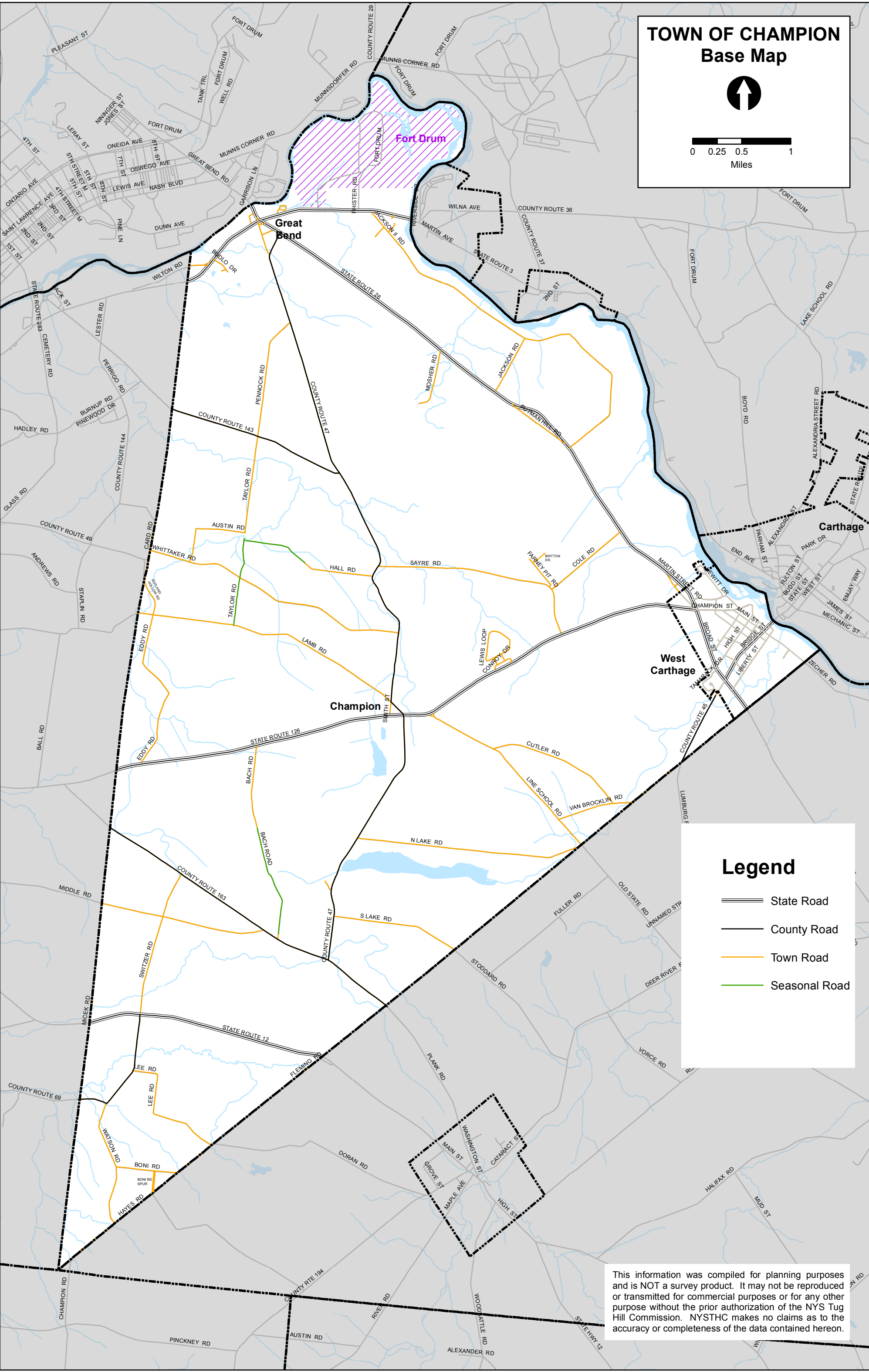
The rural corridor is an area that lies along State Route 26 between the hamlet of Great Bend and the Business zoning district just northwest of the village of West Carthage. While currently rural in character, this corridor is potentially a high traffic area that may become a location for strip commercial type development serving the Fort Drum community. It is hoped that any commercial development can be made to blend in with the rural character of the area.

The zoning law provides one district to guide development in this part of the town:

RC – The purpose of this district is to create an aesthetically pleasing, rural mixed-use travel corridor.

**Policies**

- 1. Parking areas should mostly be located to the rear or side of buildings, where possible.**
- 2. Front yard parking (when necessary) should have a vegetative buffer.**
- 3. Consideration should continue to be given to setbacks and proper building alignments and orientations.**
- 4. Building scale, form and materials (ie. roof pitch, materials and colors) should be consistent with the town's rural character.**
- 5. Uses shall comply with drainage controls.**
- 6. Access controls should be maintained, including shared access where possible.**
- 7. Buffering and screening of side and rear yards shall be provided adjacent to residences and residential areas.**
- 8. Signs should conform to established standards.**



TOWN OF CHAMPION

Base Map

00.250.51

Miles

Legend

State Road

County Road

Town Road

Seasonal Road

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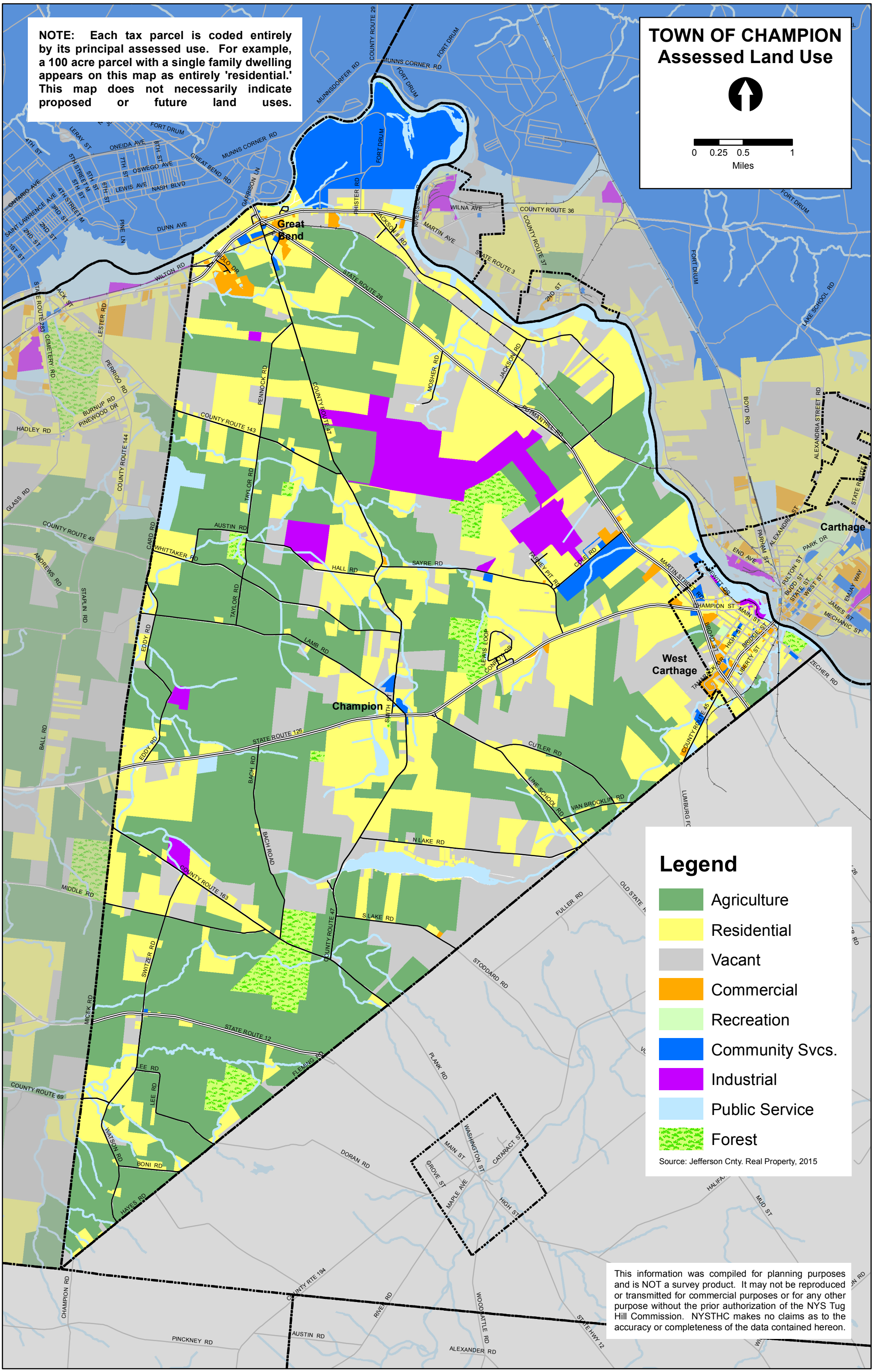


NOTE: Each tax parcel is coded entirely by its principal assessed use. For example, a 100 acre parcel with a single family dwelling appears on this map as entirely 'residential.' This map does not necessarily indicate proposed or future land uses.

TOWN OF CHAMPION  
Assessed Land Use



0 0.25 0.5 1  
Miles



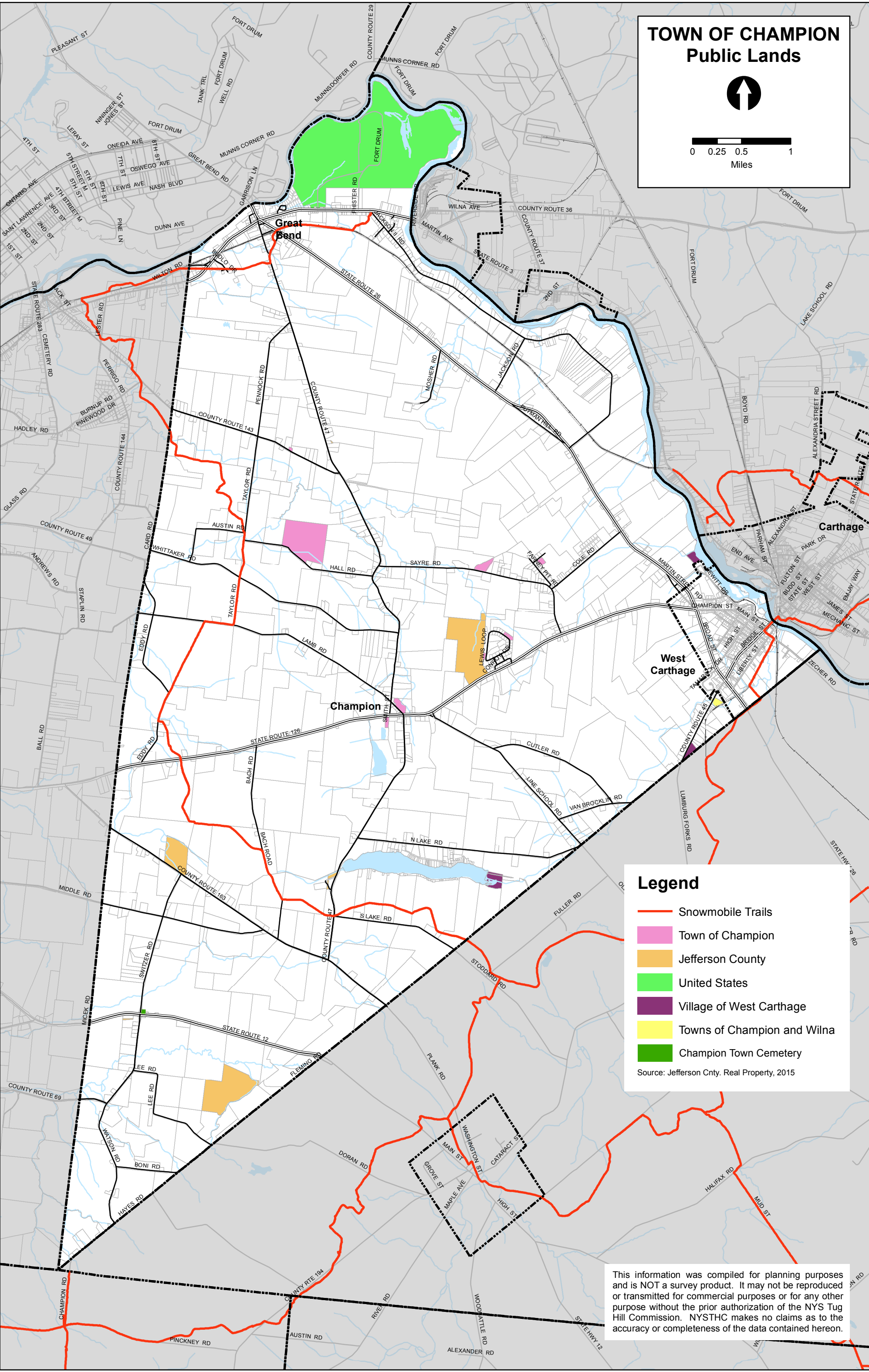
Legend

- Agriculture
- Residential
- Vacant
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Community Svcs.
- Industrial
- Public Service
- Forest

Source: Jefferson Cnty. Real Property, 2015

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TOWN OF CHAMPION  
Public Lands

0 0.25 0.5 1  
Miles

Legend

Snowmobile Trails

Town of Champion

Jefferson County

United States

Village of West Carthage

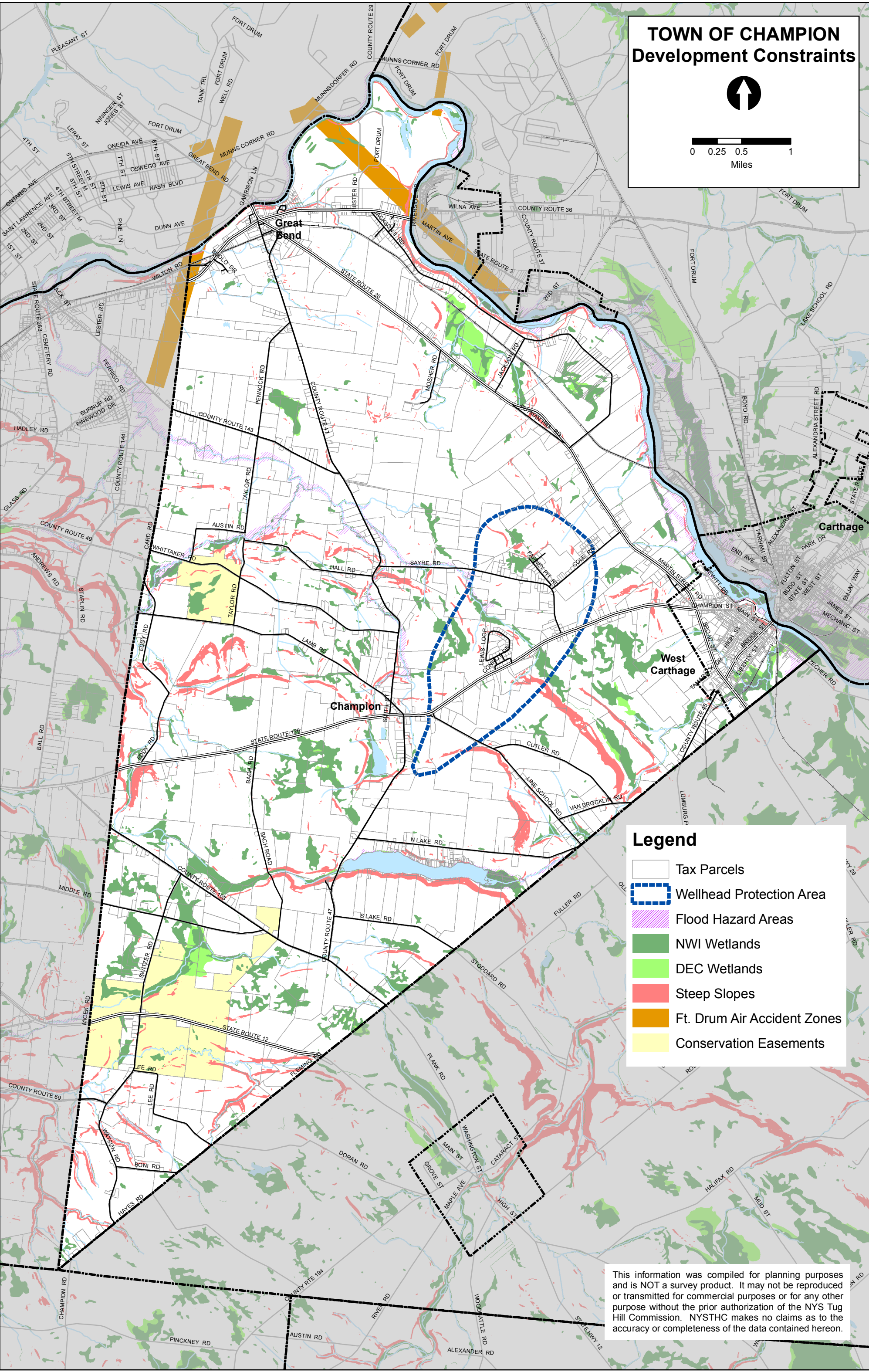
Towns of Champion and Wilna

Champion Town Cemetery

Source: Jefferson Cnty. Real Property, 2015

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TOWN OF CHAMPION

Development Constraints

00.250.51

Miles

Legend

Tax Parcels

Wellhead Protection Area

Flood Hazard Areas

NWI Wetlands

DEC Wetlands

Steep Slopes

Ft. Drum Air Accident Zones

Conservation Easements

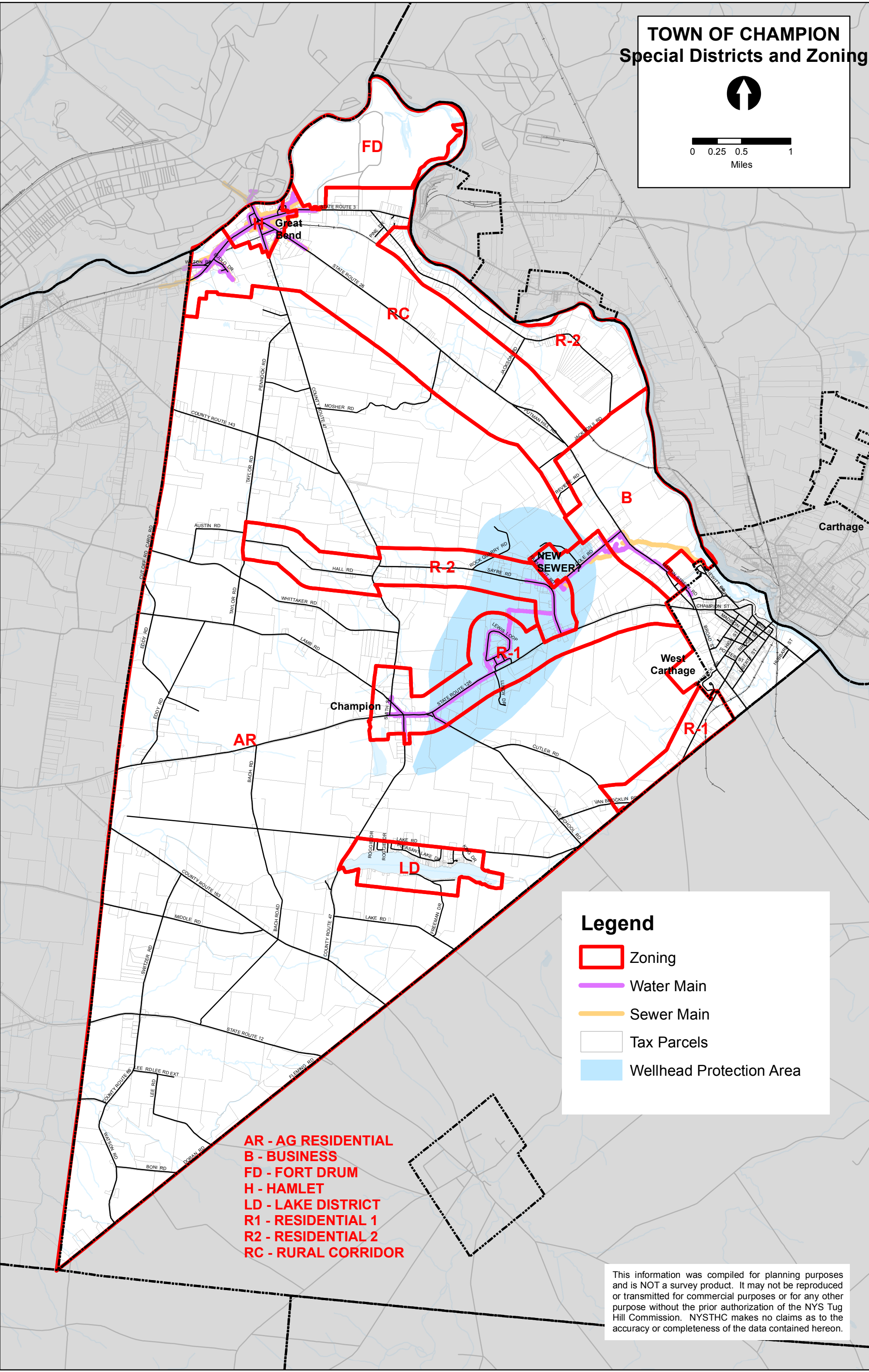
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**TOWN OF CHAMPION**  
**Special Districts and Zoning**





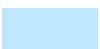


0 0.25 0.5 1  
Miles



**AR - AG RESIDENTIAL**  
**B - BUSINESS**  
**FD - FORT DRUM**  
**H - HAMLET**  
**LD - LAKE DISTRICT**  
**R1 - RESIDENTIAL 1**  
**R2 - RESIDENTIAL 2**  
**RC - RURAL CORRIDOR**

**Legend**

-  Zoning
-  Water Main
-  Sewer Main
-  Tax Parcels
-  Wellhead Protection Area

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Legend

- Zoning
- Water Main
- Sewer Main
- Tax Parcels
- Wellhead Protection Area

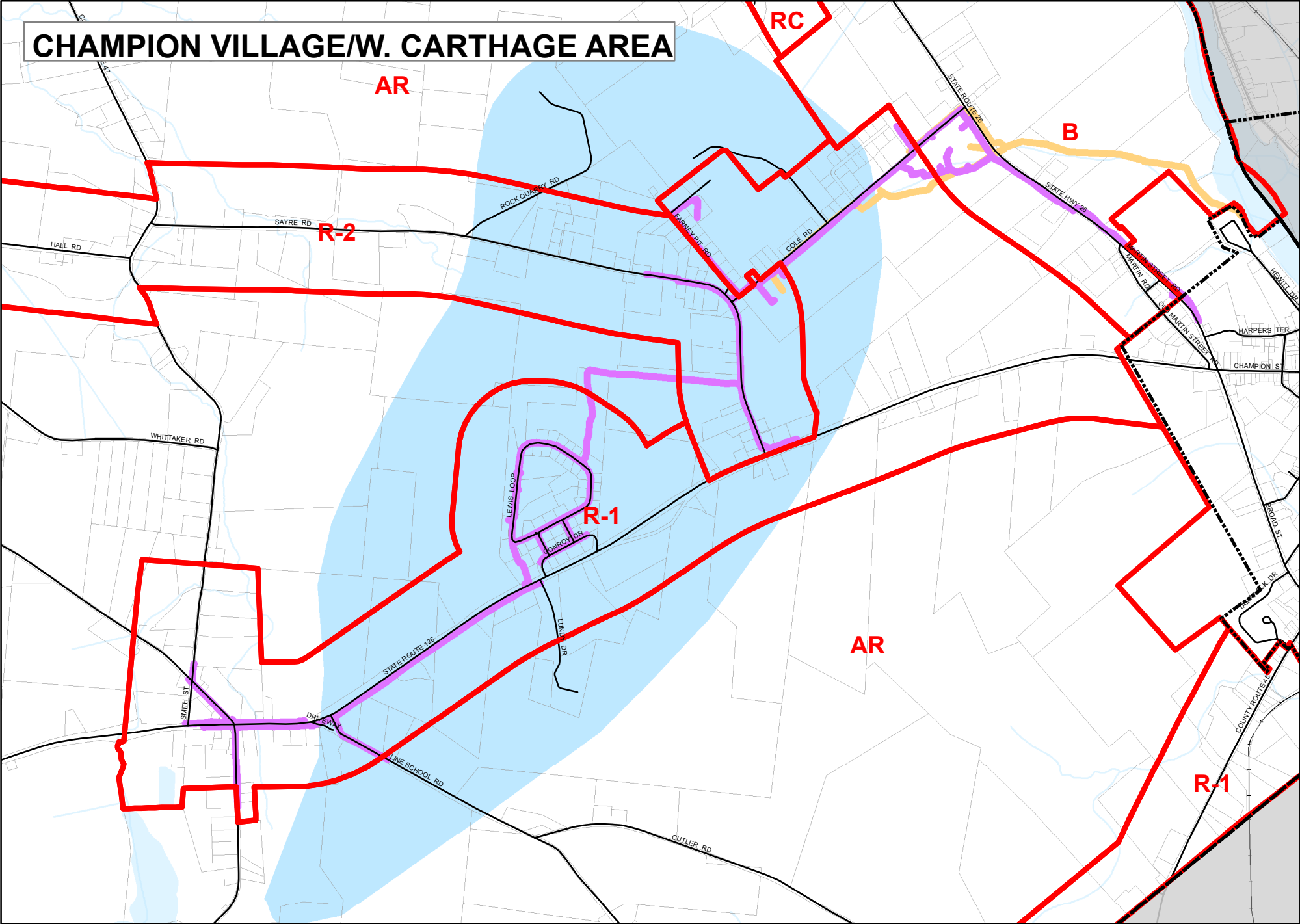
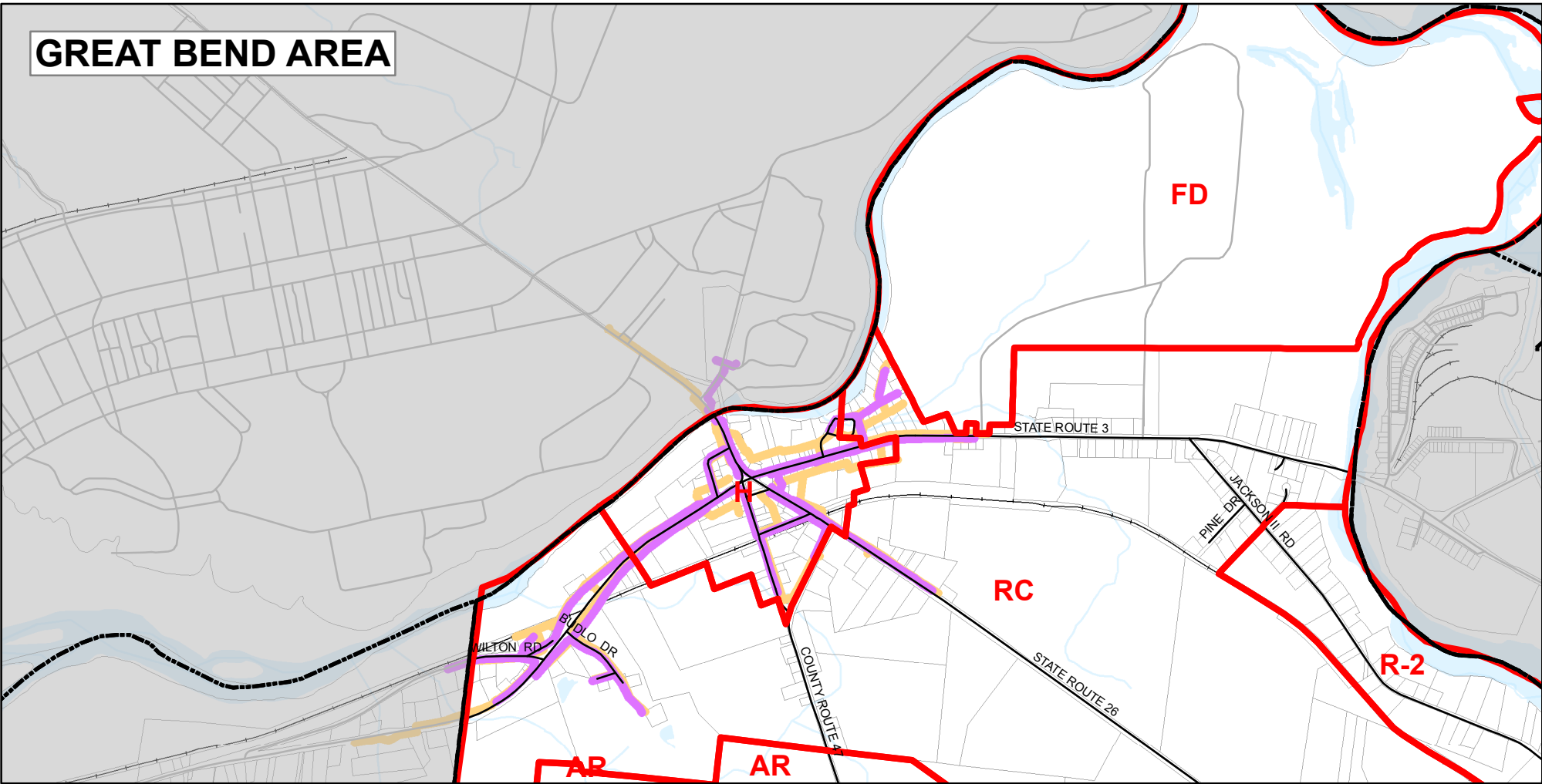
- AR - AG RESIDENTIAL
- B - BUSINESS
- FD - FORT DRUM
- H - HAMLET
- LD - LAKE DISTRICT
- R1 - RESIDENTIAL 1
- R2 - RESIDENTIAL 2
- RC - RURAL CORRIDOR

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TOWN OF CHAMPION  
Special Districts and Zoning

00.1250.250.5

Miles



## APPENDIX B

# 2016 Town of Champion Community Survey

Final Results 7/26/16

The Town of Champion mailed out 1,059 surveys in May. Three hundred seventeen (317) completed surveys were returned and thirty two (32) were returned as undeliverable by the post office. This is a 31% response when you subtract out ones that were not delivered.

1. In what area of the town do you live? (check only one)

72 (23%)	Great Bend	29 (10%)	along NYS Route 126	23 (6%)	Champion hamlet
64 (21%)	other area not listed	22 (7%)	don't live in town	15 (5%)	Champion Peak
55 (18%)	Pleasant Lake	21 (7%)	along NYS Route 26	7 (2%)	along NYS Route 12

2. What do you think are the town's three greatest assets? (check only three that apply)

140 (45%)	rural atmosphere	81 (26%)	agriculture	33 (11%)	employment opportunities
131 (43%)	school system	53 (17%)	Black River	30 (10%)	reasonable taxes
133 (43%)	proximity to Fort Drum	47 (15%)	Pleasant Lake	28 (9%)	road network
127 (41%)	quality of life	41 (13%)	fire protection	10 (3%)	town's infrastructure
90 (29%)	proximity to Watertown	37 (12%)	recreational opportunities		

3. What do you think are the town's three most serious problems? (check only three that apply)

198 (65%)	high taxes	56 (19%)	maintenance/plowing of roads
151 (50%)	lack of employment opportunities	56 (18%)	availability/quality of water
98 (32%)	lack of commercial development	38 (13%)	lack of sewer facilities
68 (22%)	junky yards and road sides	20 (7%)	enforcement of local laws
59 (19%)	lack of recreational facilities	19 (6%)	negative impacts from agriculture

4. What specific types of development do you feel the town needs?

	Needed	Not Needed	Not Sure
Manufacturing	172 (66%)	57 (22%)	32 (12%)
More retail	166 (61%)	78 (29%)	30 (11%)
Restaurants	163 (62%)	71 (27%)	31 (12%)
Grocery stores	114 (44%)	112 (43%)	34 (13%)
Other type of agriculture	112 (45%)	68 (28%)	68 (27%)
Dairy farming	100 (40%)	87 (35%)	64 (25%)
Single family homes	97 (38%)	99 (39%)	59 (23%)
Medical care facilities	97 (39%)	106 (42%)	49 (19%)
Forestry	91 (37%)	81 (33%)	76 (31%)
Senior housing	85 (33%)	102 (40%)	68 (27%)
Individual manufactured homes	45 (18%)	140 (57%)	62 (25%)
Subsidized housing	33 (13%)	175 (69%)	46 (18%)
Apartments	22 (9%)	172 (70%)	48 (21%)
Manufactured housing parks	17 (7%)	203 (81%)	32 (13%)

5. In what area of the town would you like to see more intensive development locate? (check all that apply)

161 (61%)	along NYS Route 26	49 (19%)	along NYS Route 12	16 (6%)	Pleasant Lake
105 (40%)	Great Bend	45 (17%)	Champion hamlet	12 (5%)	Champion Peak
98 (37%)	along NYS Route 126	28 (11%)	other area not listed		

6. In what area of the town would you NOT like to see more intensive development locate? (check all that apply)

154 (63%)	Pleasant Lake	54 (23%)	Great Bend	35 (14%)	along NYS Route 26
88 (36%)	Champion Peak	45 (18%)	along NYS Route 126	34 (14%)	other area not listed
77 (31%)	Champion hamlet	39 (16%)	along NYS Route 12		



7. What issues do you feel the town has not adequately addressed? (check all that apply)

125 (46%) town taxes	90 (33%) incentives for development	20 (7%) local law enforcement
110 (41%) dilapidated properties	74 (27%) recreational needs	20 (7%) location of transfer station
103 (38%) messy and junky yards	55 (20%) town services	19 (7%) animal control
94 (35%) abandoned properties	36 (13%) zoning and planning	18 (7%) subsidized housing

8. Should the town pursue additional development of any of the following?

	Yes	No
Non-motorized trails	143 (65%)	78 (35%)
Youth recreational programs	140 (63%)	82 (37%)
Roads	139 (64%)	80 (37%)
Youth recreational facilities	137 (64%)	78 (36%)
Broadband	130 (61%)	85 (40%)
Town parks	104 (50%)	105 (50%)
Motorized trails	111 (49%)	114 (51%)
Pubic sewer	101 (46%)	117 (54%)
Public water	100 (46%)	117 (54%)
Street lighting	74 (35%)	139 (65%)
Sidewalks	61 (30%)	144 (70%)

9. What local regulations do you feel need changing or updating?

	Yes	No	Need More Info
Junkyard regulations	73 (34%)	56 (26%)	86 (40%)
Unsafe Building regulations	71 (34%)	49 (23%)	91 (43%)
Zoning regulations	51 (24%)	59 (27%)	105 (49%)
Subdivision regulations	43 (20%)	65 (31%)	104 (49%)

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Town of Champion SWOT Exercise – Notes**

Sessions Facilitated by: Jennifer Harvill, Matt Johnson and Jean Waterbury from NYS Tug Hill Commission  
Tuesday, July 26, 2016 – Champion Municipal Building – 2:00 p.m.

#### **In attendance:**

Bruce Ferguson, Town Supervisor  
Henry Watkins, Town Councilman  
Peter LaBarge, Planning Board  
Tom Stewart, Town Councilman  
Ken Mix, Planning Board  
Frances Brooks, Planning Board  
Christina Vargulick, Town Clerk

Jack Sech, Highway Superintendent  
Fritz Metzger, Planning Board  
Tina Knight, ZBA  
Debbie Austin, ZBA  
Ashley Hazzard, Student  
James Surace, Planning Board  
Dan Leary, Town Councilman

#### **STRENGTHS (Current)**

- Natural Resources (water, gravel, ag lands)
- Quality of life
- Location
- School System
- People of Champion – those who live here
- Work force
- Good road system
- Infrastructure (sewer, water)
- Excellent highway crew (plowing, maintenance, etc.)
- Fairly close proximity to health care (Carthage, Samaritan, Lowville hospitals)
- Snowmobile Trails
- Black River (fishing)
- Pleasant Lake

#### **WEAKNESSES (Current)**

- Lack of broadband
- Lack of a place to dispose of green waste (compost) – they don't take green waste at the transfer station
- Lack of availability of public transportation (no set schedules)
  - Taxis are expensive, since they come from Watertown or Ft. Drum
  - No taxi in the Village
- Distance from large metropolitan area – where there are more medical services
- Traffic around Ft. Drum
- Too many deer (threat?)
- Abandoned houses
- Falling down houses, barns and trailers (unsafe or deteriorating buildings)
- Improper disposal of junk, messy conditions of yards
- Junky yards and roadsides
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Broadband (where it is available) and Cable TV are very expensive
- Lack of natural gas just outside the Village (where there are clusters of homes or developments) – propane and oil are very expensive

# **Town of Champion SWOT Exercise – Notes**

**Sessions Facilitated by:** Jennifer Harvill, Matt Johnson and Jean Waterbury from NYS Tug Hill Commission  
**Tuesday, July 26, 2016 – Champion Municipal Building – 2:00 p.m.**

## **OPPORTUNITIES (Future)**

- There is open land with water and sewer – retail or commercial development would be nice
- Black River – development for recreation, viewing, housing development
- Ft. Drum brings a greater variety of retail, restaurants (Arsenal St. and Jefferson County would be a ghost town without Ft. Drum)
- Ft. Drum brings a tax base
- Missile Defense site is a good opportunity to fill housing, jobs, etc. but traffic will be a threat
- County Property and abandoned roads for recreational trails
- Grants for equipment, infrastructure, shared services
- Adult recreational leagues, using the present public facilities – School athletic fields (there used to be a bowling alley, but it burned down twice)
- Increase ATV use via trail network to get ATV's to and from Tug Hill – all the County Roads are closed to ATV traffic
- Village green park (Champion) – use is increasing
- Rural land base for agriculture and forestry development, also hunting and fishing (recreation for economic development)
- Hubbard House and historic tourism
- Kid friendly attractions and recreation to draw in families
- Swimming pool – owned by the RACOG communities
- Snowmobile trail system (Club owns two groomers)
- Agriculture for local products

## **THREATS (Future)**

- If Route 3A closes due to Missile Defense, there'll be too much traffic through Great Bend (no traffic studies)
- Manure from CAFO farms
  - Protecting water supply
- Ft. Drum is also a threat – if it shuts down or downsizes
- Housing being built on Ft. Drum takes people out of the Towns
  - They are also opening that housing to locals – takes people out of the Towns and diminishes the tax base
- Extreme weather
- Ft. Drum – makes us a target (safety)
- Ft. Drum has crowded airspace – they fly very low (safety)
- Nuclear plants
- High taxes – seniors, fixed income folks, etc. cannot stay in homes
  - Medical insurance cost is high for the Town, worker's comp. High cost of employing people.
  - Unfunded mandates
- Abandoned or unsafe houses



## **Town of Champion SWOT Exercise – Notes**

**Sessions Facilitated by:** Jennifer Harvill, Matt Johnson and Jean Waterbury from NYS Tug Hill Commission  
**Tuesday, July 26, 2016 – Champion Municipal Building – 2:00 p.m.**

### **News headlines in five years as suggested by those attending SWOT Exercise:**

- Many Businesses Expand
- Single Family Housing Booms
- Taxes Lowered
- Recreation Center Opens
- Town of Champion Voted Best Place to Live in Jefferson County

## APPENDIX D

### HISTORIC RESOURCES

One of our primary focuses should be the beautiful architecture we see in the Village of Champion; there are several wooden houses of exceptional age as well as many limestone houses that are almost as old and very striking in their appearance. On State Route 126 just before the intersection of Route 47 (next to the fire hall) we see two wood frame houses of very similar design. Both were built by Noadiah Hubbard, in 1802 and 1804, one for the use of his family and the other for his brother Steven who worked with him in the mercantile store at the crossroads. They are both still in good condition and continue to provide shelter today as they did over two hundred years ago. There are other homes in the community almost as old. Of considerable interest, however are the limestone houses that dotted the settlement, many of which are still in use:

- The oldest stone house, circa 1810, was possibly at one time a distillery. Referred to as the Joel Hubbard House, it stands in State Route 126 opposite Line School Road, has been partially stuccoed over. It is currently owned by Louis Waite.
- The Hiram Hubbard Homestead was built in 1820 by stonemason Asa Eggleston under the direction of Noadiah Hubbard. It was given to Noadiah's eldest son, Hiram, in 1832. Today, this ten-room house sits in the center of this crossroads community, just east of the intersection about 30 feet from State Route 126. It is a stately Federal style building of two stories currently owned by 4 River Valleys Historical Society. Already on the National Registry of Historic Places, is being restored with the hope of providing a museum and educational center for the Town. It boasts two historic markers in front to inform people of its past.
- In 1828, after acquiring the land from Noadiah, Asa Carter built a charming stone house opposite the Joel Hubbard home. Built into the hillside, this house for himself and his wife Mira, has the date and initials engraved into the lintel above the front door, "A.C. 1828". Mrs. Carter would live there for forty years. It is currently owned by the Holmes family.
- Another stone home, not built by Noadiah, was the William Dorwin House built in 1823 in the Georgian style. It sits on a hill well back from the Route 126 in a grove of maple trees. After his death, it passed to his grandnephew William Pierce Freeman; thus it came to be known as the "Freeman place" after 1878. This house has been extensively remodeled over the years and is still occupied.



- Construction on Noadiah's third residence began in 1832 a few hundred feet from his original frame home. This is the most imposing of all his homes. There is a story that he wanted his home to be larger and more elaborate than the William Dorwin House, about a mile away, toward Carthage. This beautiful home is currently owned by the Olley family.
- The stone farmhouses of Joseph Peck and Rev. Wilson Pennock (now both owned by the John Peck families) are a little way down route 47, a short distance from Great Bend. These buildings were made of granite quarried from a ledge on the nearby farm of the parents of Frank W. Woolworth, the chain store magnate. Rev. Pennock built his home with his own hands, unusual as the owner was not generally the builder. They are a reminder that many people settled in and around Champion because of conditions favorable to farming.
- A little farther down the road will bring us to the largest stone structure in the township; the Jefferson Hotel in Great Bend, It was built in 1842 by Jewett Clarke, a contractor on the Black River Canal. It stands three stories high and is not far from the Black River. It was once a stage coach stop with a dance floor on the third story, and is now divided into apartments. It is also built of stone from the Woolworth farm.

Also to be considered are several of the early churches:

- The **Second Methodist Church** was built in 1853 in the hamlet of Champion and dedicated in November of the same year. By 1820, Champion had a population of 2,080 and had grown to the point where more was needed than an occasional visit from the circuit's preachers. In 1825, the First Society of Methodists was organized and built a church. Two years later, a Second Methodist Society was established and was to be the fore runner of the present church while the First Society became the church in Great Bend.
- **St. John's Episcopal Church.** In 1823 the Freemasons built a stone academy in Champion village. The lower story was for classrooms and the upper story was the meeting area. This was the only Masonic lodge of Albany to retain its charter during the Morgan troubles. Many famous settlers taught in this school including Rev. Nathaniel Dutton, Luther Dorwin and Dr. Franklin Hough. In 1888 the building was either given to the church congregation by the Masons or was purchased from them. Demolition began and the original limestone was utilized for the

new church, and it was officially consecrated in May 1889. It was active until 2016.

- **Woolworth Memorial Methodist Church.** Located in Great Bend and funded by Frank W. Woolworth as a memorial to his father and mother, this church was presented by him personally to the trustees and congregation on September 15, 1915. It was dedicated by Bishop John Hamilton, the architect was Cass Gilbert of New York City and the contractor was Fred Wright of Adams. A very active congregation has kept this church alive for over 100 years.
- **Trinity Chapel** in Great Bend was brought about through the work and guidance of Mary Bradford Sterling Clark, the wife of George Clark, whose mill was across the street from the church property, and daughter of “Big” Jim Sterling, the wealthy “Iron King” of Northern New York. In 1873, Mary became the first Central New York deaconess in the Episcopal diocese and in two years later the church was dedicated in September. The chapel used a Richard Upton design and is of board and batten construction, which sets it apart from most of Upton’s designs which are of brick. The 4 River Valleys Historical Society was formed for the express purpose of preventing the removal of the chapel to the Partridge Berry Complex in Black River. It received renovations that included painting and a new roof in 2015.

Of further consideration are the cemeteries where the early settlers and their families are interred.

- In Champion Village is **Champion Hillside Cemetery**; on the west side of County Route 47, approximately 1/4 mile north of the Village of Champion. Beautiful and very well maintained. Still active. Burials date from at least 1803 until present. This is one of the oldest active cemeteries in Jefferson County.
- **Sunnyside Cemetery, (F. W. Woolworth Memorial) Great Bend:** On the east side of Champion Road approximately 1/2 mile south of the center of Great Bend. Very well maintained. Still active. The majority of stones are readable. nnygenealogy.com was indebted to the Sunnyside Cemetery Association for providing burial records for the cemetery.
- **South Champion Cemetery:** Located on north side Route 12 South at the intersection with Switzer road, just outside Copenhagen. Mowed but needs work.

- **Champion Huddle (Evergreen) Cemetery:** Located on the east side of the of County Route 143 approximately half way between the intersection of CR 143 and Pennock Road and the intersection of CR 143 and CR 47. Numerous stones either down or in danger of falling. A large number of stones have suffered severe weathering and are difficult to read.
- **Bentley Family Cemetery:** Privately owned cemetery which is marginally maintained. Burial ground is heavily overgrown. Most of the gravestones are readable with little effort. Reportedly 7 burials of which 6 are currently verified.
- **Hadsell Family Cemetery:** Recently located on the Mark Freeman property on the Rutland Hollow Road, on the edge of Mill Creek, this cemetery will be researched in the spring of 2017 by the local historian and archeologist Dr. Tim Abel. Currently it is thought to have about 8 - 10 graves

While investigating the Hadsell Family Cemetery, there are plans to search for any remains of the saw mill built by Hadsell and Eggleston on the Mill Creek that flows through the Freeman Farm.

Memorials to conserve:

June 8th, 1989, a Bicentennial Memorial Monument was unveiled and wreaths placed by seven organizations honored “all those who served their country in time of need” since 1776 to the present day. This monument stands in the Bicentennial Memorial Park at the crossroads of Champion, to commemorate the Bicentennial of the U. S. Constitution.

June 13th, 1996, the 4 River Valleys Historical Society erected its 2nd historical marker in the hamlet of Champion on the Town of Champion’s Village Green.

June 10th, 1999 a five-foot obelisk engraved with the 28 heads of families listed in the 1800 Census of the Town of Champion, Oneida County, New York was dedicated. This monument was erected on the 200 year-old village green park in the hamlet of Champion on Route 126.

It is suggested that all the items described in this section are worthy of conservation, preservation and additional research by the Champion Town Board.