

Town of Chili Open Space Master Plan

April 2015



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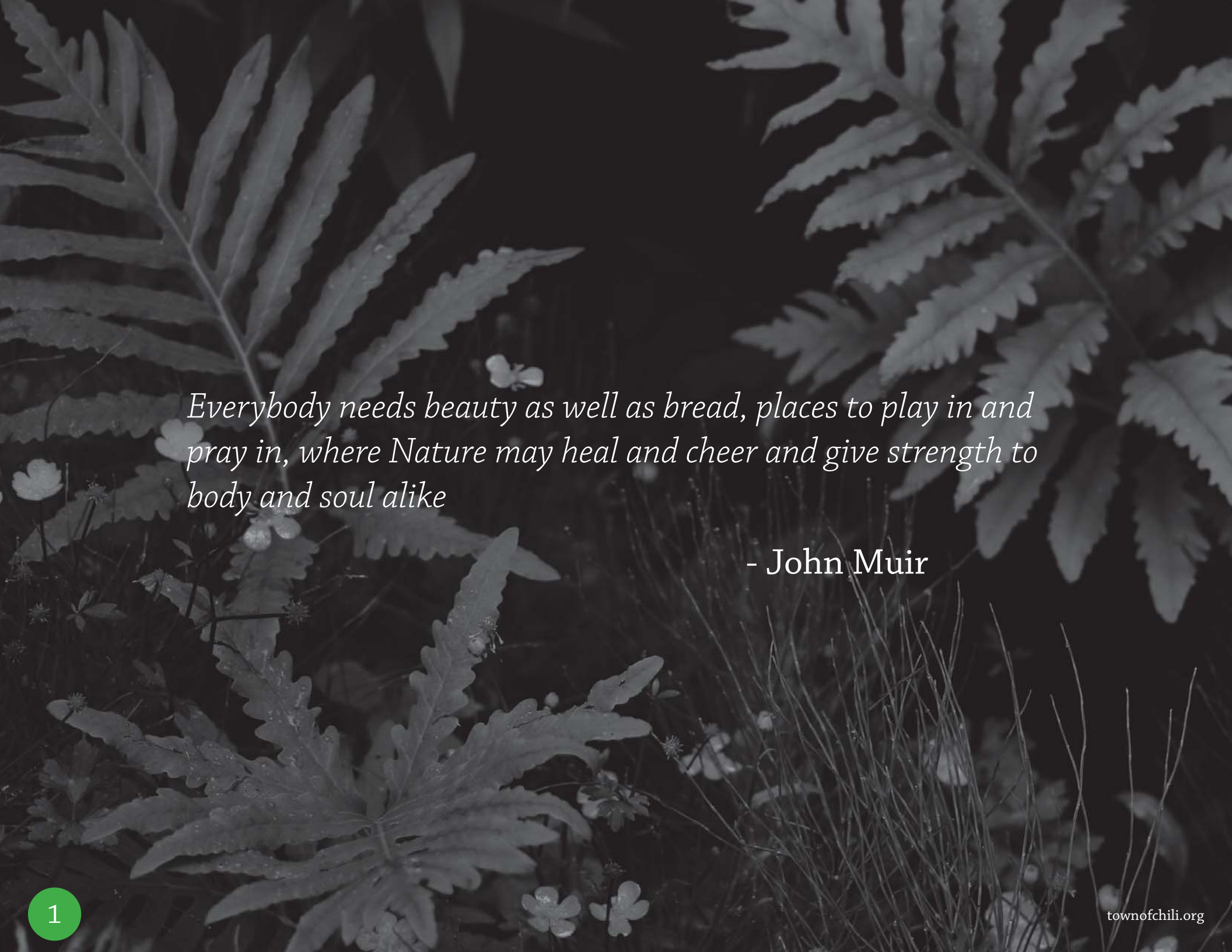
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A dark, monochromatic photograph of a forest floor. The image is filled with the intricate patterns of fern fronds and the delicate shapes of small white flowers. The lighting is soft and diffused, creating a sense of depth and texture. The overall mood is serene and natural.

*Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and
pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to
body and soul alike*

- John Muir

CHAPTER 1

The Open Space Master Plan

Open spaces are a vital part of the Town of Chili's identity and are a key contributor to the rural character that makes it a desirable place to live and call home. The *Open Space Master Plan* is a tool to help ensure these spaces are preserved for current and future generations.

Open space can mean different things to different people – while some may value the sweeping vistas of Chili's farmlands, others spend their time exploring the marshes and forests in one of the Town's many natural areas, or playing soccer at Union Station Park. No matter the preference, open spaces provide communities with access to recreation and a sense of breathing room.

This feeling of openness is important to the Town's residents and is the reason many people choose to live here. An unintended result of this desirability is that the Town's

urban footprint has expanded over the past several decades and new development is encroaching on Chili's rural areas.

To identify the tools and actions necessary to preserve these valuable assets for current and future residents, the *Open Space Master Plan* brings together the open space recommendations and strategies from the Town's many recent planning efforts into one implementation framework. These recommendations were consolidated and prioritized, resulting in a series of implementation actions for the Town of Chili.



Photo courtesy of Jon Ignatowski



Photo courtesy of Jon Ignatowski

This chapter provides an introduction to the benefits of open space and discusses the need for open space preservation in the Town of Chili. Also included in this chapter is a summary of the Town's recent and ongoing planning efforts.

UPPER | The Reed Road Bird Refuge includes 131 acres of mature wooded wetland and excellent migratory and nesting bird habitat.

LOWER | Agriculture has played a large role in defining the cultural heritage of the Town of Chili.

Benefits of Open Space

Open space can provide a number of benefits to communities, including flood protection and habitat preservation, recreational and social opportunities, increased property values and other fiscal benefits, as well as overall improvements to quality of life. A brief summary of the environmental, community and fiscal benefits of preserving open space is provided below.



Environmental Benefits

Preserving open space can provide a wide range of environmental benefits to communities. Natural areas can minimize runoff and reduce erosion, thus improving water quality. Forests and woodlots can help improve air quality by absorbing pollutants from the air. Open spaces also help connect existing natural areas, reducing habitat fragmentation. Many open spaces are also home to our most sensitive plant and animal species; preserving these spaces can help make the difference between survival and extinction.



Community Benefits

Open spaces can also provide social benefits to community members and improve the overall quality of life. By providing a range of parks and open space areas, communities encourage interaction between residents and improve access to healthy activities. Properly managed open space can also increase property values and attract new business to the community. Particularly important to the Town of Chili, preserving agricultural open spaces supports the continued viability of one of the Town's largest economic sectors and sources of cultural heritage.



Fiscal Benefits

While fiscal benefits are typically associated with new development, parks and open spaces can also provide economic and fiscal benefits to communities. In terms of direct benefits, the cost of providing services to developed lands (e.g., residential, commercial) exceeds the cost of providing services to undeveloped lands (e.g., parks and open spaces) relative to the tax base, making open space a cost-effective form of land use management. Indirectly, parks and open spaces can attract non-resident visitors (i.e., tourists) that may decide to grab lunch while visiting, thus putting new dollars into the local economy.

Why Plan for Open Space

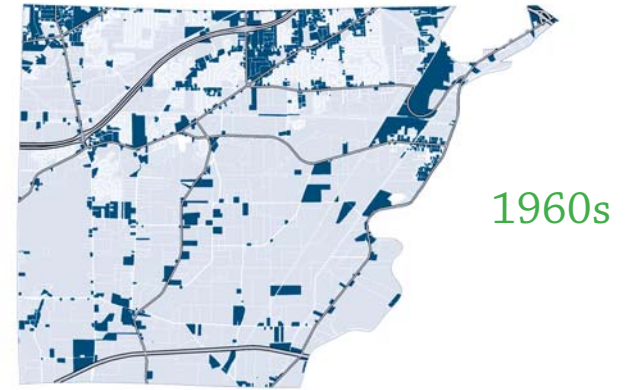
While open space is one of the defining characteristics of the Town of Chili, recent development trends are pushing new development south of Paul Road and into traditionally agricultural and open space areas. If these trends continue, the sense of openness that many residents enjoy could be lost.

As part of the *Open Space Inventory* (2011), the spatial and temporal pattern of development was examined to identify open space areas potentially threatened by development. Like many communities across the U.S., development in the Town of Chili began to accelerate in the decades following World War II. Through the 1970s, much of this new development occurred north of Paul Road (see figures to the right). During the 1980s, however, development began pushing south of Paul Road into portions of the town dominated by agriculture and other open spaces.

The *Open Space Inventory* identified several key points associated with development trends in the Town:

- 1 *Residential development is pushing south* - as areas north of Paul Road are mostly developed, any new development is likely to occur south of Paul Road and impact the Town's agriculture and open space areas.
- 2 *Residential parcels are getting larger* - the average parcel size has increased from 0.7 acre during the 1960s to 1.5 acres during the 2000s. This represents a 100 percent increase in residential lot size.
- 3 *Impact on Prime Farmland Soils* - approximately one-third of the Town's prime farmland soils are located on developed parcels. Once development occurs on prime soils, the resource is lost forever.

Without the proper planning and land development tools, the Town of Chili's valuable open spaces may be lost.



RIGHT | As northern portions of the Town became built-out, development (blue) was pushed to the Town's southern portions, which are dominated by farms and open spaces.

Purpose of the Open Space Master Plan

Over the past several years, the Town of Chili has completed several planning efforts that either wholly or partially address preservation of the Town's open space assets. The purpose of this *Open Space Master Plan* is to bring all of these efforts together and provide easy-to-use implementation guidance.

Development of the *Open Space Master Plan* occurred in three distinct phases:

Consolidate

The first step in developing the *Open Space Master Plan* was to identify all of the individual strategies and recommendations addressing open space (e.g., farmland, forests, wetlands, parks and recreation facilities) from each of the previous plans and studies. Once identified, similar recommendations were grouped into like categories (e.g., zoning changes, education and outreach). A total of 115 strategies in 11 categories were identified.

Prioritize

Most of the previous planning efforts identified implementation priorities within the context of the individual plan. However, with resources always limited, it is important to identify which strategies as a whole are of greatest priority to the community. Based on the existing priorities, along with input from the community, a consolidated list of prioritized recommendations was developed.

Implement

Once the recommendations had been assigned a priority, it was necessary to formalize the 11 categories into a series of overarching actions, develop implementation time frames, evaluate the relative importance of each recommendation in each action based on the assigned priorities, and identify the party responsible for implementation. Potential funding sources were also identified to assist in implementation.



Master Plan Organization

The *Open Space Master Plan* is organized into four chapters - Introduction (Chapter 1), Chili's Open Spaces (Chapter 2), Plans & Studies (Chapter 3), and Open Space Action Plan (Chapter 4). A brief summary of the contents of each chapter is provided below.

CHAPTER 2

Chili's Open Spaces

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the Town's open space assets as identified in the *Open Space Inventory*, the *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan* and the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update*, including active agricultural lands, forests and woodlots, park and recreation facilities and wetlands.

CHAPTER 3

Plans & Studies

Chapter 3 provides a summary of the various plans and studies that were reviewed as part of this planning effort, including the *2030 Comprehensive Plan*, the *Open Space Inventory*, the *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*, the *Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update* and the *Black Creek Trail Feasibility Study*.

CHAPTER 4

Open Space Action Plan

The Action Plan serves as the implementation guidance for the *Open Space Master Plan*, tying together detailed recommendations into a series of implementable actions. The actions provided in the Action Plan represent those first steps necessary to protect and preserve open space in the Town of Chili. Potential funding sources are also discussed in Chapter 4.



*Our lives... need the relief of where the pine flourishes and the
jay still screams*

- Henry David Thoreau

CHAPTER 2

Chili's Open Spaces

The Town of Chili is blessed with a wide range of valuable open spaces that contribute to the quality of life that makes the Town a desirable place to live. Whether it's a neighborhood park, a picnic at Black Creek Park or a hike along the Genesee Valley Greenway, open spaces play a vital role in the daily lives of the Town's residents.

This chapter provides an overview of the Town's open space assets as identified in the *Open Space Inventory*, the *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan* and the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update*, including:



Active Agricultural Lands



Parks & Recreation Facilities



Forests & Woodlots



NYSDEC & NWI Wetlands

A summary of each of these assets is provided on the subsequent pages, including the geographic distribution of these lands throughout the Town. For additional details regarding these lands, please see the appropriate planning report as indicated on the following pages.



Photo courtesy of Jon Ignatowski



UPPER | Wetlands are some of the most diverse ecosystems in the world and provide a wide range of benefits including wildlife habitat and flood protection.

LOWER | The Town of Chili is home to 19 park and recreation facilities, including the Paul Road School Nature Center (pictured).

Agricultural Lands

The Town of Chili has a strong agricultural heritage that continues to shape its rural character and play an important role in the local economy. The Town's gently rolling farm fields and scenic vistas also contribute to its quality of life by providing a sense of openness and breathing room enjoyed by many of its residents.

As noted in the Town of Chili *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*, the predominant croplands include corn used for human consumption, feed or energy production, hay, wheat, soybeans, peas, edible beans and mixed vegetables. There are also several livestock operations in the Town, including beef cattle, horse farms, dairy herd replacements, and a small number of swine, sheep and chickens.

In total, there are more than 5,666 acres of actively farmed lands in the Town, the vast majority of which are located south of Black Creek and have been identified as priorities for protection in the *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*. More than 90 percent of actively farmed lands are located on high quality soils. A brief summary of the Town's active agricultural lands is provided below.

5,666 acres of active farmland

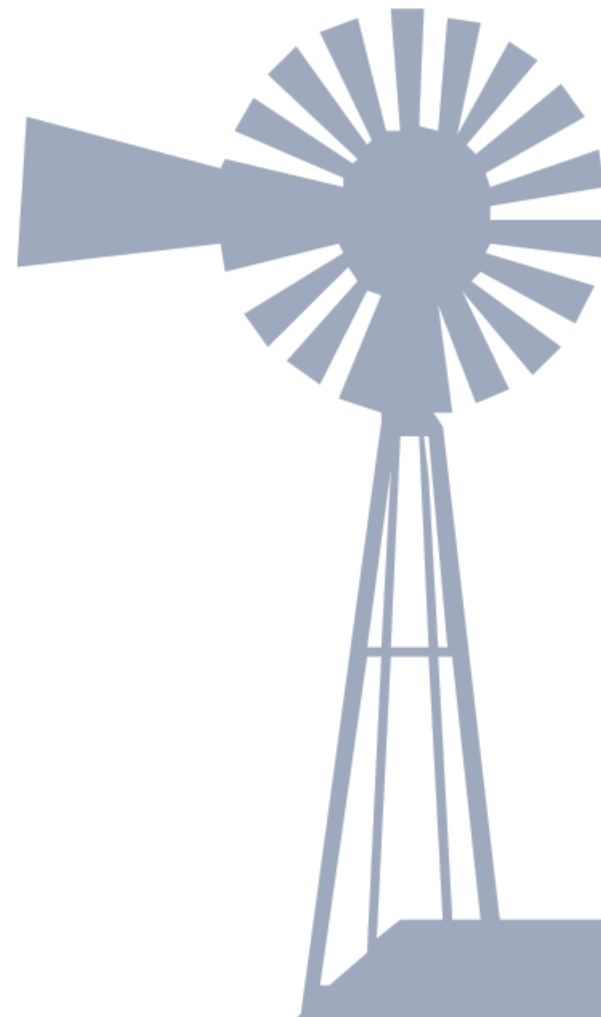
This represents 22 percent of the Town of Chili's total land area and includes only active farm fields and other open land that may be suitable for farming.

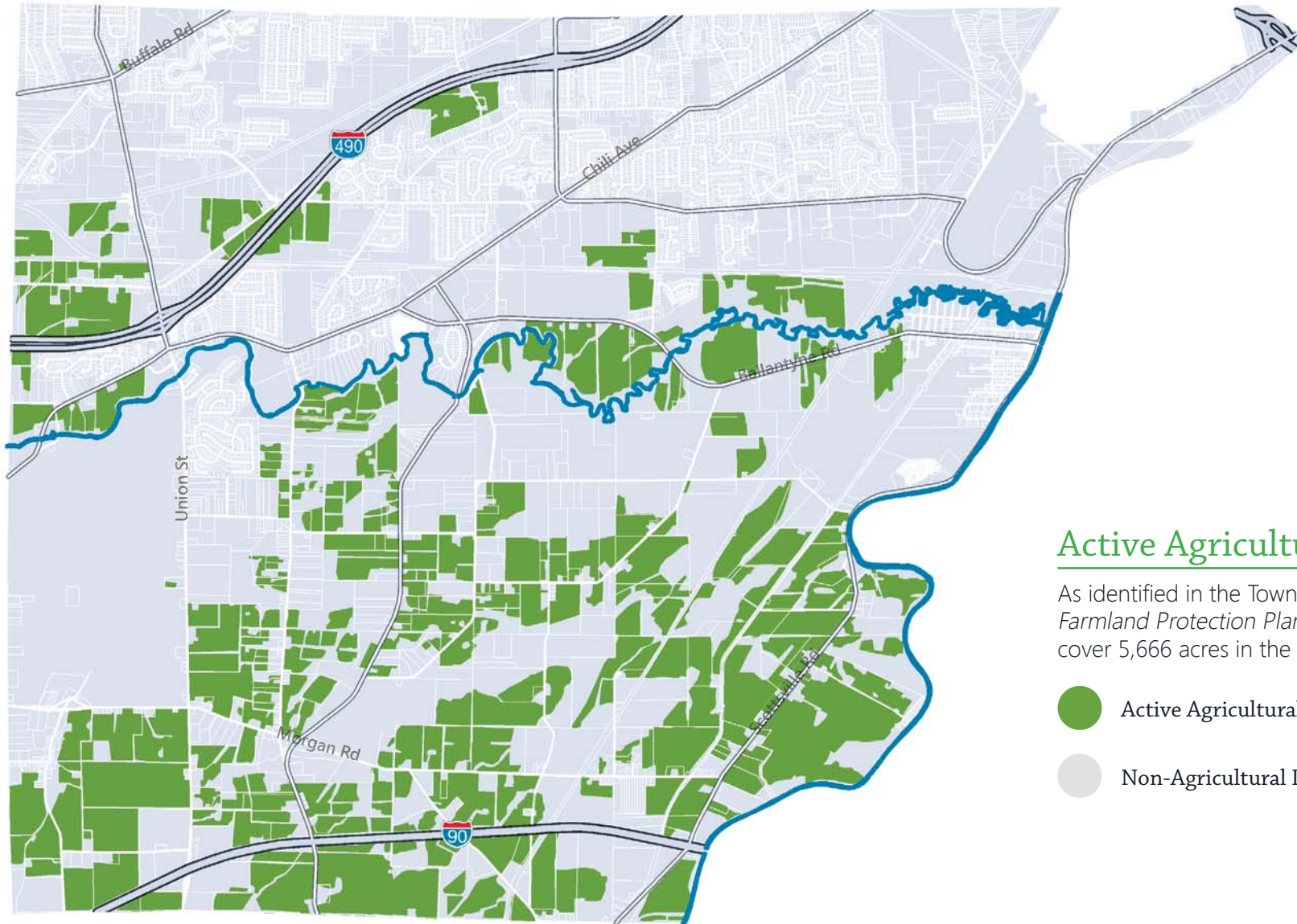
58% located on prime farmland

21% located on prime farmland (if drained)

12% located on farmland of statewide importance

9% are located on non-prime soils





Active Agricultural Lands

As identified in the Town of Chili *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*, active agricultural lands cover 5,666 acres in the Town.

- Active Agricultural Lands
- Non-Agricultural Lands

Forests & Woodlots

Forests and woodlots are an important component of the Town's open spaces, providing a range of benefits to its residents - from the beauty of being in a natural setting, to cleaning the water they drink and the air they breathe.

As identified in the *Open Space Inventory*, the Town of Chili is particularly interested in preserving woodlots and contiguous forest areas that are greater than five acres in size. Using 2001 tree canopy data provided by the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium, the Inventory identified approximately 9,212 acres of forest land in the Town (36% of the total Town area), of which 7,357 acres (80%) were in contiguous woodlots greater than five acres. A breakdown of the types of forests in the Town of Chili is provided below.

7,357 acres of forests

This represents contiguous forest lands greater than 5 acres in size. These areas include the following forest types:

48% forested wetland

13% mixed forest

37% deciduous forest

2% evergreen forest

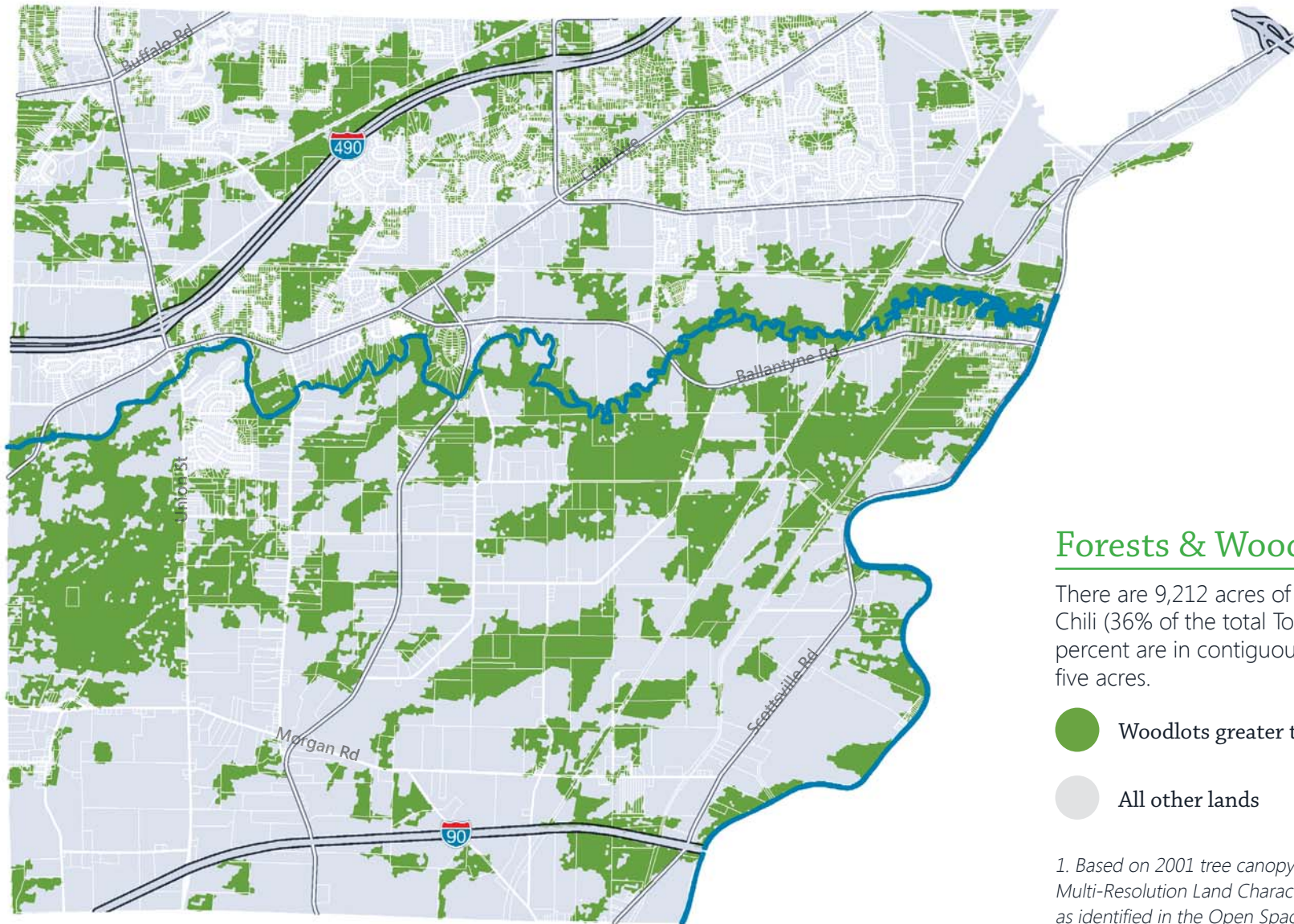


3,743 acres
LARGEST WOODLOT





71 acres
AVERAGE WOODLOT





Forests & Woodlots¹

There are 9,212 acres of forests in the Town of Chili (36% of the total Town area), of which 80 percent are in contiguous woodlots greater than five acres.

-  Woodlots greater than 5 acres
-  All other lands

1. Based on 2001 tree canopy data provided by the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium, as identified in the Open Space Inventory. Woodlots cleared after 2001 may still be depicted on this map.

Parks & Recreation Facilities

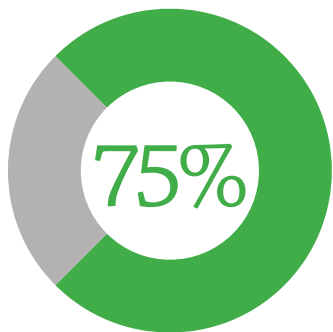
Town of Chili residents have access to more than 2,300 acres of parks and recreational spaces, all of which provide considerable benefits to the community - from improving physical and mental health, to strengthening community cohesion and increasing property values.

The largest park in the Town is Black Creek Park, which covers approximately 1,400 acres along the Town's western boundary and is owned and operated by Monroe County. There are several additional public parks in the Town, nearly all of which have spaces for active play (e.g., soccer, baseball) or passive recreation (e.g., hiking, bird watching), as well as shelters, lodges and other facilities.

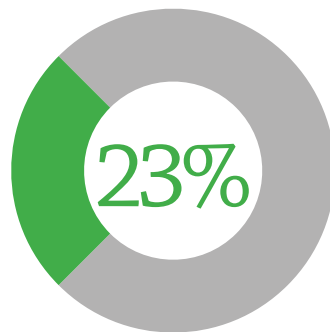
In addition to public parks, there are a number of conservation lands owned

by the Town of Chili, Monroe County, the NYSDEC and the Genesee Land Trust. A portion of the 90-mile Genesee Valley Greenway also traverses the Town along a former railroad right-of-way and the former Genesee Valley Canal.

Of particular interest are those parks, recreational and open space facilities owned by the Town of Chili – of the 19 recreational facilities located in Chili, eleven are owned by the Town (see map on facing page).

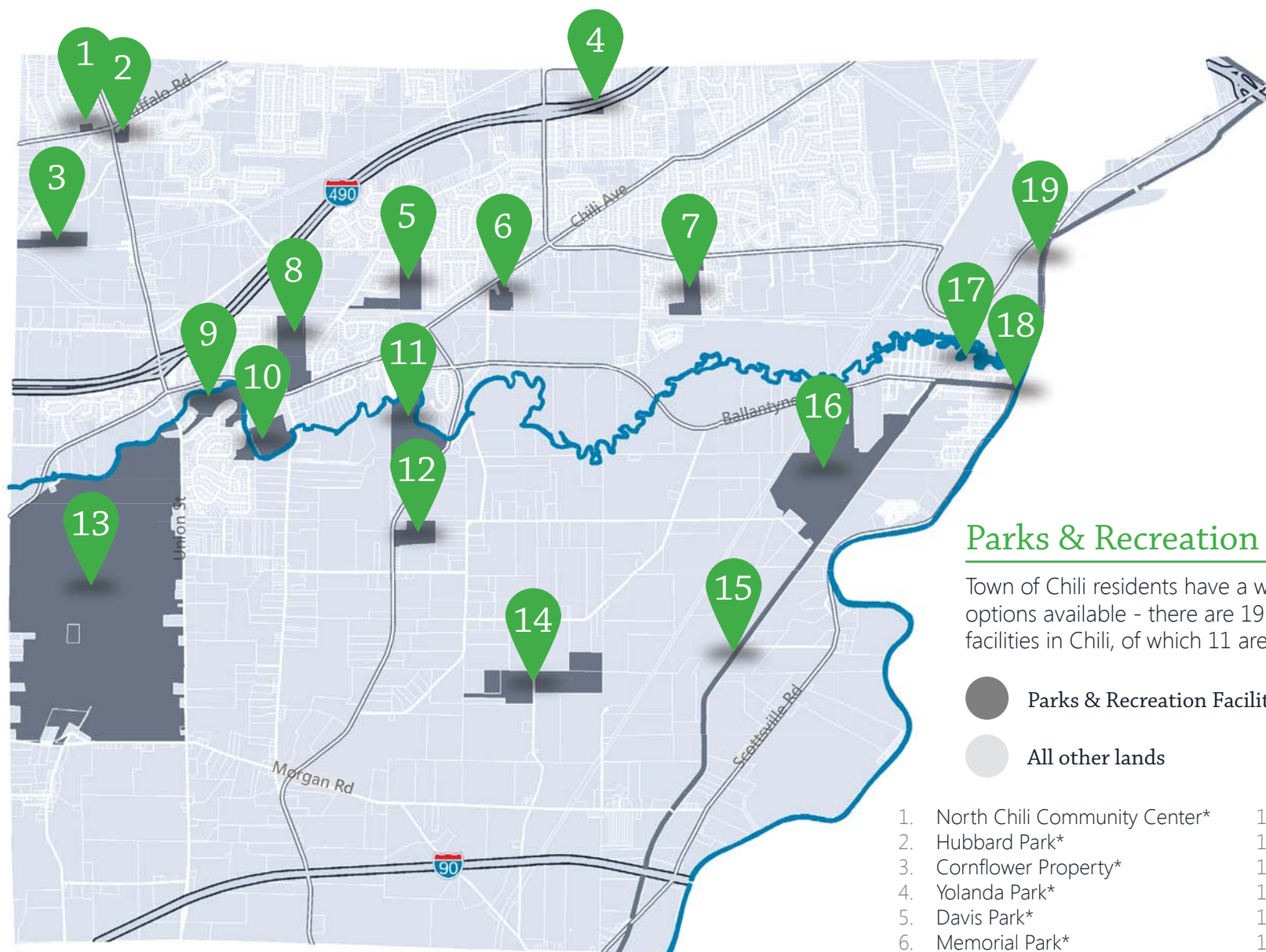


75% of survey respondents indicated that parks & open space are **very** important.



23% of survey respondents indicated that parks & open space are important.

LEFT | Selection of survey results from the *Town of Chili Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update*. As depicted, the majority of survey respondents indicated that parks and open spaces are important, with 75 percent indicating they are very important.



Parks & Recreation Facilities

Town of Chili residents have a wealth of recreation options available - there are 19 park and recreation facilities in Chili, of which 11 are Town-owned.

- Parks & Recreation Facilities
- All other lands

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. North Chili Community Center* | 10. Chili Heights Nature Trail* |
| 2. Hubbard Park* | 11. Pfrengle Property* |
| 3. Cornflower Property* | 12. Widener Park* |
| 4. Yolanda Park* | 13. Black Creek Park |
| 5. Davis Park* | 14. Reed Road Bird Sanctuary |
| 6. Memorial Park* | 15. Genesee Valley Greenway |
| 7. Paul Road School Nature Center | 16. Brookdale Preserve |
| 8. Chestnut Ridge Nature Center | 17. Ballantyne Park* |
| 9. Union Station Park* | 18. NYSDEC Boat Launch |
| | 19. Little Black Creek Park |

* Town-owned facilities

NYSDEC & NWI Wetlands

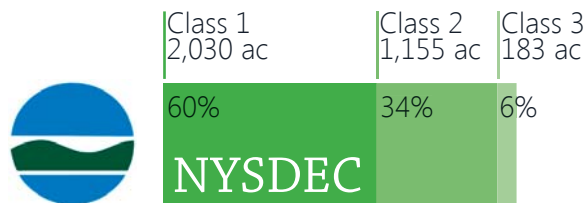
Wetlands are some of the most diverse ecosystems in the world and provide a wide range of benefits including wildlife habitat and flood protection, as well as opportunities for passive recreation. These spaces are an important piece of the Chili open space network.

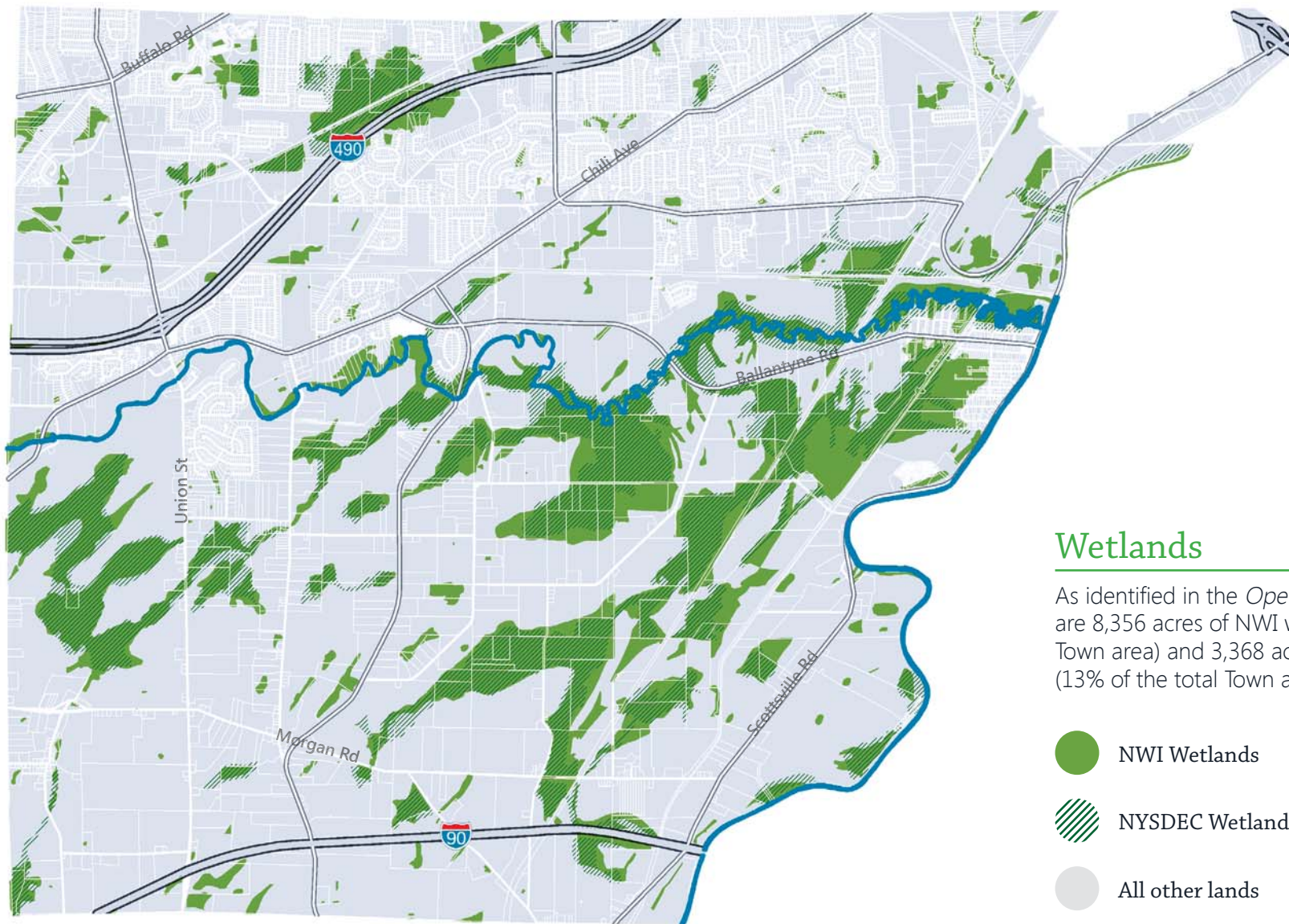
Wetlands in Chili range from the emergent cattail marshes along the edge of the Genesee River to the forested swamps of the Reed Road Bird Refuge. To identify the amount and type of wetlands in the Town, two separate data sources were evaluated - NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Wetlands and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Wetlands.

The NYSDEC identifies and regulates wetlands that are greater than 12.4 acres, as well as a 100-foot buffer around the wetland. The NYSDEC also assigns each wetland to one of four ranked regulatory classes. The highest

quality wetlands are identified as Class 1 (large size, diverse vegetation, presence of rare species), while Class 4 wetlands are of much lower quality (e.g., small size, predominately invasive/exotic species). The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps all wetland areas, regardless of size and quality. During the mapping process, the NWI identifies information such as the cover type (e.g., forested, emergent) for each wetland.

As indicated below, the majority of NYSDEC wetlands are classified as Class 1 wetlands, while forested wetlands comprise the largest category of NWI wetlands.





Wetlands

As identified in the *Open Space Inventory*, there are 8,356 acres of NWI wetlands (33% of the total Town area) and 3,368 acres of NYSDEC wetlands (13% of the total Town area) in the Town of Chili.

-  NWI Wetlands
-  NYSDEC Wetlands
-  All other lands

A black and white photograph of a dense forest. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a bright, glowing effect in the center of the image. The trees are tall and slender, with their branches and leaves creating a complex, textured pattern. The overall mood is serene and natural.

The distribution of open space must respond to natural process.... The problem lies not in absolute area but in distribution. We seek a concept that can provide an interfusion of open space and population.

- Ian McHarg

CHAPTER 3

Plans & Studies

The Town of Chili has completed a number of planning efforts that directly or indirectly address the protection and preservation of open space. The purpose of this *Open Space Master Plan* is to consolidate the various recommendations and strategies and provide guidance on implementation.

The first step in developing the *Open Space Master Plan* was to review all of the recent plans and studies and identify those strategies and recommendations that addressed open space. The following plans and studies were reviewed as part of this planning effort; summaries of each document and how it relates to open space are found on the following pages.



Open Space Inventory
Completed 2011



Parks & Recreation Master Plan
Completed 2014



2030 Comprehensive Plan
Completed 2011



Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan
Ongoing (to be completed in 2015)



Black Creek Trail Feasibility Study
Completed 2013

Additionally, an evaluation of the Town's existing regulatory environment as it relates to open space was conducted during the development of the *Open Space Master Plan*. An overview of this evaluation is provided in this chapter.



Photo courtesy of Jon Ignatowski

UPPER | The *Open Space Inventory* Steering Committee touring the Pfrengle Property in the fall of 2011.

LOWER | Windrows of hay ready for baling in the early summer, just south of the Reed Road Bird Sanctuary.

Open Space Inventory

Completed in 2011

The purpose of the *Open Space Inventory* was to develop a detailed inventory of open space lands in the Town of Chili that would serve as an update to the 1973 *Open Space Index* and be incorporated into the 2030 *Comprehensive Plan*. The Inventory was developed in close coordination with the Conservation Board, which is under legislative mandate to:

Maintain an up-to-date inventory or index of all open spaces in public or private ownership within the municipality, including but not limited to natural landmarks, glacial and other geomorphic or physiographic features; streams and their floodplains, swamps, marshlands and other wetlands; unique biotic communities, scenic and other open areas of natural or ecological value; and of the ownership, present use and proposed use of such open areas, so as to provide a base of information for recommendations by the Board for their preservation and/or use (Section 19-5.D of the Town Code).

The *Open Space Inventory* provides a detailed look into the various types of open space currently located in the Town of Chili, including their geographic distribution. The Inventory also includes a summary of general strategies used to protect open spaces in other New York State communities.

Inventory Components

-  Land use & land cover analysis
-  Land use changes over time
-  Woodlots & forests
-  Waterbodies & watersheds
-  Floodplains & floodways
-  Wetlands & riparian areas
-  Agriculture, prime farmland & active agricultural lands
-  Parks & recreation



2030 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in 2011

The Town of Chili's *2030 Comprehensive Plan* (2030 Plan) was adopted in 2011 and seeks to create meaningful goals and policies that will guide the Town's growth and development in a manner consistent with the vision of its residents. In creating these goals and policies, the 2030 Plan identifies that the most successful pattern of future land use will need to protect the Town's sense of openness and rural character.

The 2030 Plan includes six broad categories for which a series of goals and objectives are identified; the 2030 Plan also identified 12 General Community Goals outside of these six categories. Specific strategies were then developed for each objective. Those goals and objectives relevant to open space are provided below, while the relevant strategies are provided in Chapter 4.

General Community Goals

- Coordinate land use, public and community facilities and transportation needs in a manner that will provide for the efficient overall improvement of the town, its future growth and adequate protection of its natural resources.
- Preservation of open space/natural areas will emphasize the protection of unique natural resources and significant environmental assets within the town.
- The town shall strive to implement a "Healthy Community" concept to promote a system of pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and existing recreational trails.
- The Town will continue to promote agriculture and to help sustain farming of the town's prime agricultural soils by giving precedence to protecting these prime soils within established agriculture areas.

Specific Goals & Objectives

- **Managing the Built Environment**
Objective 4: Focus development to avoid sprawl.

Objective 5: Preservation of park and/or public open space in conjunction with development.

Objective 6: Minimization of adverse environmental impacts resulting from development.
- **Conservation, Open Space and Environmental Protection**
Goal 1: To improve, preserve and protect the environment (six objectives).
- **Economy and Associated Land Uses – Agriculture**
Goal 1: To enhance agricultural viability and resources (five objectives).

Black Creek Trail Feasibility Study

Completed in 2013

The Black Creek Trail was originally identified as a Mid-Term Project Recommendation in the *Regional Trails Initiative* (2002) as a way to provide a non-motorized transportation facility that connects neighborhoods, parks, trails, schools, retail and service establishments, and employment centers. As a result, the Town of Chili received funding from the Genesee Transportation Council to complete a feasibility study for a trail connecting the Village of Churchville and the Genesee Valley Greenway near Black Creek.

The purpose of the *Black Creek Trail Feasibility Study* was to identify and evaluate a series of alternative alignments for the proposed trail, including the economic benefit, cost of improvements, land ownership, connectivity, and environmental impacts of each. For ease of organization and evaluation, the study area was divided into three segments, with several alternative alignments developed for each. After careful review of the proposed trail alternatives, a preferred alternative was selected and consists of Alternatives A-1, B-2, and C-1. Each alternative includes both road right-of-way (ROW) for on-road sections of the trail, and publicly owned land and easements on private property for off-road segments.

Alternative A-1

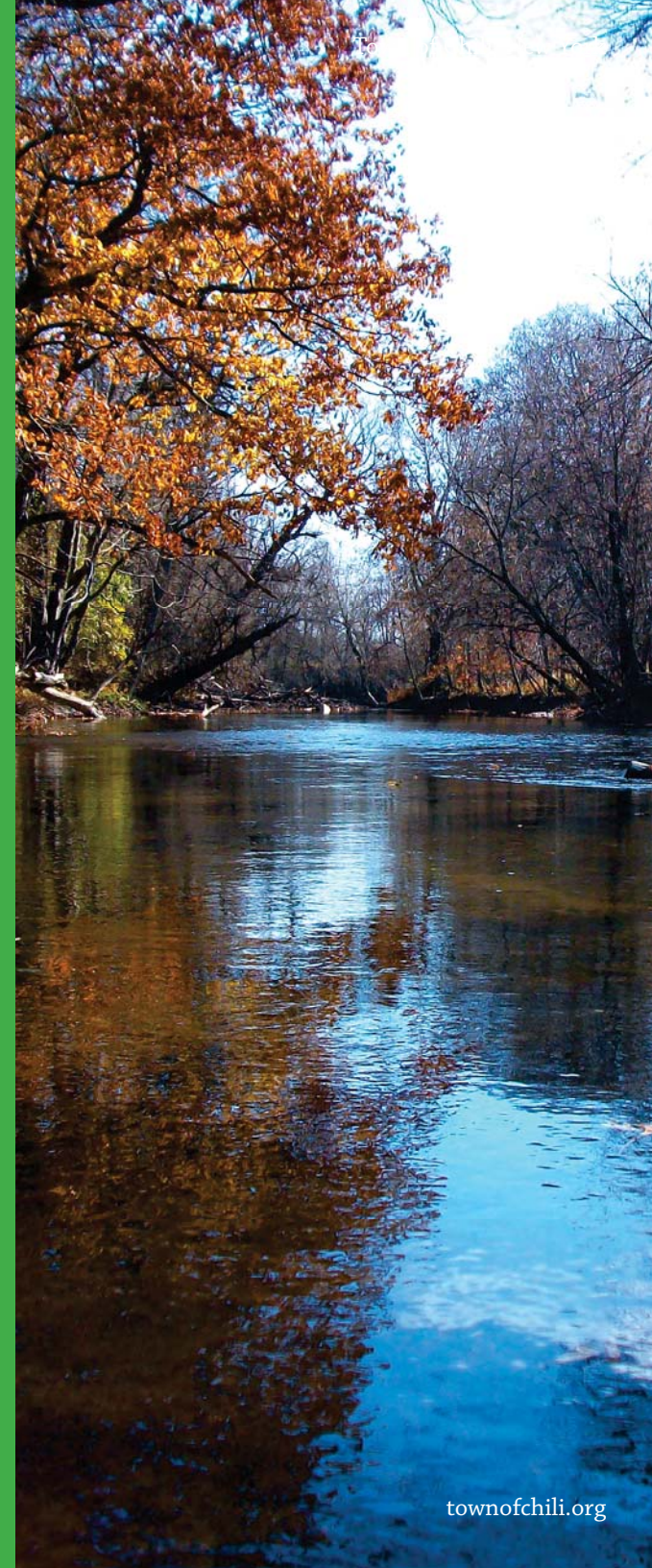
- A-1 was selected as the preferred alternative for connecting Churchville Park via the West Shore Trail at Howard Avenue in the Village of Churchville to Black Creek Park in the Town of Chili.

Alternative B-2

- B-2 was selected as the preferred alternative for connecting Black Creek Park to NYS Route 386 at the Pfrengle property in the Town of Chili.
- While preferred, this alternative is not currently feasible for advancement.

Alternative C-1

- C-1 was selected as the preferred alternative for connecting NYS Route 386 at the Pfrengle property to the Genesee Valley Greenway Trail.
- C-1 is contingent on the advancement of B-2.





Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

Completed in 2014

The purpose of the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update* is to provide long-term guidelines for expanding and improving community parks and recreational opportunities in the Town of Chili. This plan was driven by community-identified priorities, including youth development, environmental benefits, physical health, social interaction, mental health and well-being, and economic impacts. In addition to identifying future recreational needs and establishing immediate and long-range plans for promoting, financing, implementing, administering, and maintaining facilities and programs, the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update* also documents those needs that qualify for state, federal, and other sources of financial assistance.

Based on community feedback, the recommendations developed in the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update* are in response to four key issues identified as critical for the Town of Chili Parks and Recreation Department to consider.

Key Issues

- Provide high-quality parks, recreational facilities, and programs. Effectively utilize what already exists by upgrading present parks, facilities, and programs. Develop new parks, facilities, and programs to meet changing or unmet needs.
- Improve the balance between organized athletics and alternative recreation with regards to programs offered and facilities available. Organized athletics includes team sports such as baseball, soccer and football. Alternative recreation includes active and passive recreational opportunities such as hiking, bicycling and birdwatching. Improving the balance should focus on program offerings, as well as parks and facilities.
- Structure an economically sustainable parks and recreation system to support the goals of all recreational groups. Phase in a fee structure over time for use of the Town's facilities to help finance the development and maintenance of Town recreational amenities.
- Maximize the impact of limited resources through coordinated long range planning. Develop synergy between the various planning efforts anticipated to occur in the Town of Chili over the next few years - *Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update*, Towns of Chili and Wheatland *Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan*, and the Town of Chili *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*.

Town of Chili Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan

Ongoing (to be completed in 2015)

The Town of Chili's history and cultural heritage is closely tied to agriculture. Whether it's a large commercial farm producing field crops such as corn and soybeans, or a small part-time operation specializing in vegetable products, farming remains one of the predominant land uses in the Town. To continue its long tradition of support, the Town is preparing an *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan* that identifies strategies and recommendations to protect farmland and ensure the long-term viability of the Town's agricultural industry. The vision, goals and objectives for this plan are provided below.

The Vision

A town where diverse agricultural production thrives within a regional food system that supports the business of farming and is in harmony with the community at large.

Plan Goals

- Retain sufficient land within the Town to support a viable agricultural industry.
- Enhance the economic and fiscal benefits of agriculture in the Town.
- Minimize disruption to farm operations from non-agricultural development and infrastructure.
- Continue to support public understanding of farming.
- Support environmentally responsible agricultural practices.

Implementation

The Plan recommends that the Town Board establish an Agricultural and Farmland Advisory Committee to oversee implementation of the recommendations in the Plan. This Committee should include representatives of the agricultural community and related businesses as well as non-farming residents.



Town of Chili Open Space Regulatory Evaluation

Completed as part of the *Open Space Master Plan*

The purpose of the Town of Chili Regulatory Evaluation was to examine the regulatory conditions in the Town as they relate to open space protection and preservation and identify modifications that will permit the Town to more effectively preserve these spaces for future generations. As part of this analysis, the Town's regulatory program (e.g., zoning ordinance, site plan review regulations) was reviewed and evaluated specific to open space. A series of key findings and recommendations were identified.

There are two important points to make regarding this review:

- This review is meant to supplement the existing regulatory recommendations identified in the Town's other open space planning efforts; and
- This evaluation did not identify new, adoption-ready zoning or other regulatory language and instead focuses on conceptual level changes that can be made.

A sample of the key findings from this evaluation are provided below (the full list is incorporated into the recommendations provided in Chapter 4).

Sample Key Findings

- The tree removal and permit process is not well defined and somewhat ambiguous. This should be rewritten in its entirety to ensure these resources are protected and to provide a clearer path for developers/owners. Requirements for large tree and woodlot preservation should also be included in this process.
- Although the terms *woodlots*, *wooded areas* and *large trees* are used throughout the Town's Zoning ordinance, these terms are not included in the Definitions section.
- Language specifying the protection of agriculture and open space as an overarching purpose is lacking from the Purpose and Objectives sections in the Zoning ordinance, Site Plan Review, and Subdivision regulations.
- Parks and playgrounds are considered special permit uses in the Planned Residential Development District. These features should be removed from the list of special permit uses and made a requirement for all PRDDs.

A dark, moody photograph of foliage. In the lower right, a small white flower with five petals is in bloom. The background is filled with various leaves, some showing serrated edges, in shades of dark blue and black.

Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something.

- Carl Sagan

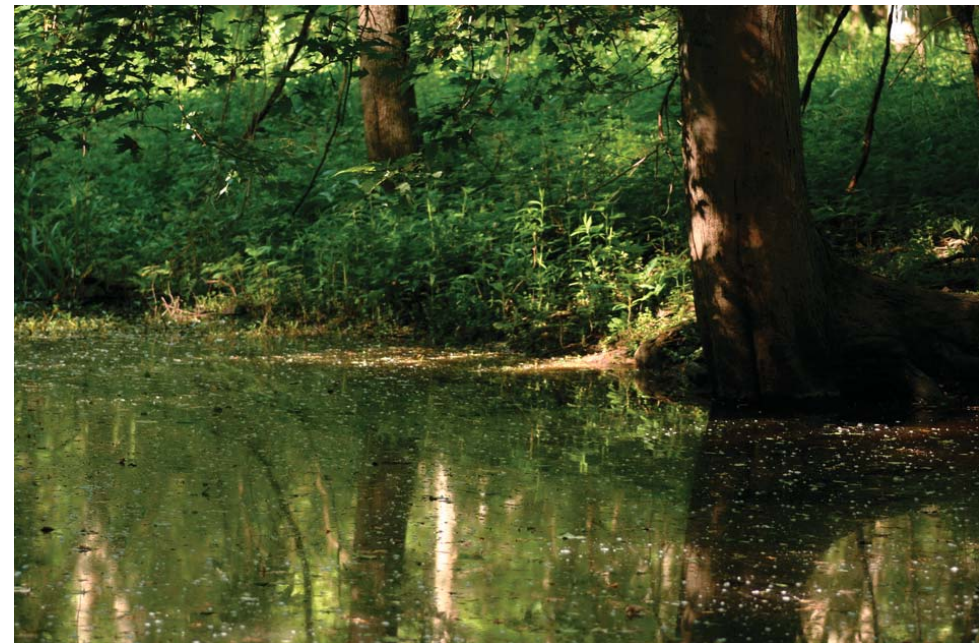
CHAPTER 4

Open Space Action Plan

The Action Plan provides the implementation guidance for the *Open Space Master Plan*, tying together the detailed recommendations into a series of implementable actions. The actions provided in the Action Plan represent those first steps necessary to protect and preserve open space in the Town of Chili.

The *Open Space Master Plan* incorporates recommendations and strategies from the Town's recent planning efforts addressing agriculture, open space and parks and recreation. As a result, approximately 115 individual recommendations were extracted from these efforts. To reduce the complexity of implementing this large list of recommendations, they were grouped together and a series of overarching actions and next steps were identified. These actions, as well as the individual recommendations and strategies that comprise each action, are provided in this chapter.

This chapter also provides a summary of several relevant grant programs that could potentially be used to fund the implementation actions. This summary includes eligibility and application information for a range of state, federal, and private funding programs.



	Your Vote
the Agricultural Districts under the New York Agricultural Districts Law.	
agricultural lands or provide other tax relief (e.g., reduced school taxes).	●
	● ●
that would encourage growth and development in designated agricultural areas.	● ●
e farming to keep large tracts of viable agricultural soils intact.	
Purchase of Development Rights for high quality farmland in the Town (i.e., the Program).	●

UPPER | Forested wetland in the Town of Chili.

LOWER | Town residents indicated which recommendations they thought were most important during the Public Open House held on May 19, 2014.

Implementation Actions

To facilitate implementation of the recommendations and strategies identified from the previous planning efforts, a series of 11 actions were identified. These actions represent overarching strategies and first steps for the Town of Chili.

As previously noted, the purpose of this *Open Space Master Plan* is to provide easy-to-use implementation guidance for the large number of recommendations addressing open space protection and preservation in the Town of Chili. To accomplish this, it was first necessary to refine the originally extracted list of approximately 115 recommendations by merging similar recommendations and removing recommendations that have been implemented. The resulting 84 recommendations were then grouped into a series of like categories (e.g., zoning recommendations, outreach and education recommendations, parks and recreation recommendations). These 11 categories formed the basis of the Implementation Actions identified on the following pages (each individual recommendation was assigned to one of these 11 actions; the individual recommendations for each action can be found beginning on page 31).

Recommendation & Implementation Action Process



The final 11 Implementation Actions were grouped into one of three timeframes - Short-Term Actions (0 to 3 years), Mid -Term Actions (3 to 5 years), and Long-Term Actions (5 to 10 years). Potential funding sources were also identified (see page 44 for a more detailed discussion of potential funding sources). Each of the 11 Implementation Actions is discussed on the following pages; the actions are grouped by timeframe.

Short-Term Actions

Short-Term Actions should be implemented within the first 3 years following plan completion (2015 to 2017).

1

Agricultural & Farmland Advisory Committee

Develop an Agricultural & Farmland Advisory Committee (as noted in the *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*) whose purpose is to work with public agencies and private institutions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Town's agricultural economy. These functions could also be incorporated into the Conservation Board, which would require a change to the charter.

Potential Funding Sources

- Not applicable

2

Zoning Code Update

Update the Town's Zoning Code, Subdivision Regulations, and Site Plan Review to protect and preserve agriculture, natural resources, and other open spaces.

Potential Funding Sources

- Farmland Protection Implementation Grants
- Cleaner Greener Smart Growth Practices Implementation Grants

3

Open Space Partnerships

Continue to coordinate with landowners, non-profit organizations and other municipalities to protect and preserve farmland, natural resources and other open spaces. This should include public outreach and coordination with relevant public agencies and boards, non-profits, private developers and municipal officials.

Potential Funding Sources

- Not applicable

Mid -Term Actions

Mid -Term Actions should be implemented within 3 to 5 years following plan completion (2018 to 2020).

4

Farmer Outreach

Secure funding to develop an outreach program focused on providing farmers with relevant information regarding tax exemptions, agricultural districts, environmental management, and other financial incentives.

Potential Funding Sources

- Farmland Protection Implementation Grants
- Arts, Culture & Heritage Projects Grants

5

Open Space Outreach & Education

Secure funding to develop an outreach program for coordinating and sharing educational information to local residents, schools, land owners, and private developers. This program should identify who is responsible, a program budget, what content will be shared, how it will be disseminated and how often.

Potential Funding Sources

- Arts, Culture & Heritage Projects Grants

6

Trail Master Plan

Secure funding for trail master planning and solicit volunteers to serve on the project steering committee.

Potential Funding Sources

- Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grants
- Recreational Trails Program

Long-Term Actions

Long-Term Actions should be implemented within 5 to 10 years following plan completion (2020 to 2025).

7

Conservation Program Feasibility

Secure funding to study the feasibility of various town-based/supported conservation programs and solicit volunteers to serve on the project committee.

Potential Funding Sources

- Farmland Protection Implementation Grants
- Urban & Community Forestry Grant Program

8

Scenic Road Designation

Work with the Town Historic Preservation Board to identify potential scenic roads in the Town of Chili. Use the resources provided by the NYSDOT to pursue state designation through the application process.

Potential Funding Sources

- Not applicable

9

Parks & Recreation Improvements

Set aside funding in the Town's Capital Improvement Program and seek grant funding to implement prioritized parks and recreation recommendations.

Potential Funding Sources

- Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grants
- Community Impact Grants Program

10

Infrastructure Improvement Impacts

Review & update the Town's Capital Improvement Program to ensure that infrastructure improvements and extensions do not negatively impact agriculture, natural resources, or other open spaces.

Potential Funding Sources

- Not applicable

11

Watershed Management Implementation

Although not reviewed as part of this effort, the Black and Oatka Creeks watershed management plans provide a number of recommendations relevant to agriculture and open space in the Town of Chili.

Potential Funding Sources

- Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grants
- Cleaner Greener Smart Growth Practices Implementation Grants





UPPER | Fall kayaking on Black Creek in the Town of Chili.

RIGHT | Moth drying it's wings in the morning sun near a wetland on the Town-owned Pfrengle Property.

FAR RIGHT | Active farmland dominates southeast Chili, including wheat fields such as this.

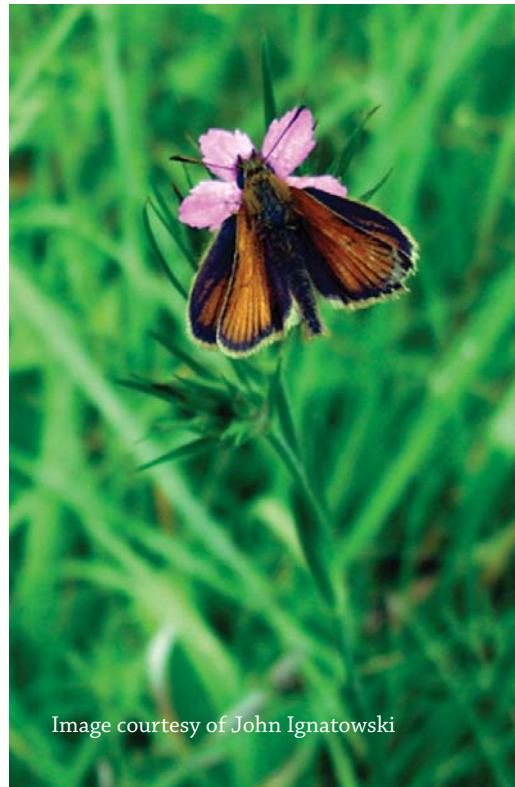


Image courtesy of John Ignatowski



Image courtesy of John Ignatowski

Action Item Recommendations

While the 11 Action Items described on the previous pages provide broad-brush, big picture initiatives, the 84 individual recommendations and strategies form the basis of the actions and provide further details and steps that support each of the actions.

To ensure that the open space recommendations provided in the *Open Space Master Plan* can be accomplished, each has been assigned a relative priority ranking and the party(ies) primarily responsible for implementation. By identifying this information, the Town can more effectively focus its resources and achieve the desired outcomes. A check-box is also provided for each recommendation, allowing users to track implementation progress.

Priority & Importance

Each recommendation was assigned one of the four following priorities - High, Medium, Low, or Ongoing. Priorities were assigned once the recommendations had been consolidated and were based on the priorities assigned during the previous planning efforts; input from town residents during a public open house and the project Steering Committee was also used.



High Priority recommendations are the most important within a given action and should be implemented first.



Medium Priority recommendations are the next most important within a given action and should be implemented after higher priority actions.



Low Priority recommendations are the least important within a given action and should be implemented last.



On-Going recommendations are more iterative and will be continuously addressed over time.

Responsible Parties

Once priorities had been assigned, the agency or group potentially responsible for overseeing implementation of each recommendation was identified. While many of the recommendations will necessarily include the involvement of many departments or organizations, the entities identified in the tables on the following pages are those that should lead the implementation of each. These entities include:



Agricultural & Farmland Advisory Committee



NYS Department of Ag & Markets



Town of Chili Conservation Board



Cornell Cooperative Extension



Town of Chili Commissioner of Public Works



NYS Farm Bureau



USDA Farm Service Agency



Town of Chili Planning Board



Private Sector



Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District



Town of Chili Assessor's Office



Town of Chili

1

Agricultural & Farmland Advisory Committee

TIMEFRAME | Short-Term Action (0 to 3 years)

Develop an Agricultural & Farmland Advisory Committee (as noted in the *Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan*) whose purpose is to work with public agencies and private institutions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Town's agricultural economy. These functions could also be incorporated into the Conservation Board, which would require a change to its charter.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Leverage funds from developers, grants and other sources for farmland protection efforts.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborate with neighboring Towns, Monroe County Cooperative Extension and other entities to support and promote farm markets, roadside stands and other agri-tourism enterprises on a regional basis.	Medium	TC, SWCD, CCE, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work with Monroe County and regional entities to retain and attract food processors, distributors and other agriculture-related industrial businesses to the region.	Medium	TC, SWCD, CCE, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue to support the Chili Farmers Market.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work with the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District to identify, obtain funding for, and construct drainage projects that would benefit agricultural operations in the Town.	Medium	TC, SWCD, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advocate for agricultural interests when Monroe County, New York State or private utilities propose infrastructure improvements or extensions or intensive development within the Strategic Farmland Protection area.	Medium	TC, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support and monitor environmental protection, sustainable energy and drainage improvement programs administered by other entities and participate in decisions by the NYS DEC, utility regulators and others that may affect farmland in the Town.	Medium	AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in decisions by Monroe County, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), utility regulators and others that may affect farmland in the Town. To the extent possible, advocate for agricultural interests in the Town.	Ongoing	FB, A&M	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage agri-tourism, on-farm sales and value-added processing.	Medium/Ongoing	AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Zoning Code Update

TIMEFRAME | Short-Term Action (0 to 3 years)

Update the Town's Zoning Code, Subdivision Regulations and Site Plan Review to protect and preserve agriculture, natural resources, and other open spaces. To aid in organization, Zoning recommendations have been grouped into one of four categories - Site Planning, Permitted Uses, District Standards, and General.

Site Planning Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
During Planning Board and Conservation Board review of site plans, consider potential impacts on agriculture during the review of development proposals. (e.g., a vegetative buffer of trees adjoining farmland will reduce the productivity of the field, as trees block sun and roots grow into fields).	High	PB, CB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employ Conservation or Cluster Subdivision Design to ensure that the natural features of land are maintained to the greatest extent possible by allowing an adjustment of the location of residential dwelling units on a parcel of land.	High	PB, CB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where soils permit, place new dwellings on lots smaller than five acres in areas of active farming to keep large tracts of viable agricultural soils intact.	High	CB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revise subdivision regulations to acknowledge that preservation of prime agricultural soils and agricultural infrastructure is one of the objectives of the regulations. Require applicants to document the location of prime agricultural soils and existing agricultural infrastructure in the sketch plan and preliminary plat. Encourage house lots to be located on the least productive agricultural soils and ensure that existing agricultural infrastructure is maintained, including drainage improvements and access lanes (see Town of Chili Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan for specific language changes).	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limit the scale and concentration of development to what can be supported by the transportation system and limit the number of individual access drives, roadways, and other curb cuts onto arterial and collector roads to maintain planned traffic-carrying capacity and safety and, as well, permit more efficient use of interior lands. Consider the facilitation of shared driveways.	High	TC, PB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add prime soils, soils of statewide importance, wetlands, floodplains and woodlots to what is required on the site plan for minor subdivisions (as identified in Section 439-18.A.1) and develop guidelines for the Building Department.	High	TC, DPW	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add the requirements currently specified in Section 500-29.R.6 of the Zoning ordinance to all Site Plan Review projects. Also, review and better define tree impacts and any mitigation required.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Update Site Plan Review standards to include landscaping, location and amount of open space on the developed property, stormwater runoff and erosion control, and architectural features.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Update Subdivision Review regulations to include protection and preservation of open space, promoting cluster development and requiring stormwater and erosion control measures.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

2

Zoning Code Update

TIMEFRAME | Short-Term Action (0 to 3 years)

Permitted Use Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Continue to permit agriculture as a permitted use in the Agricultural Conservation (AC), Rural Agriculture (RA), and Floodway (FW) districts.	High/Ongoing	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modify the definition of "Agribusiness" to mean farm-related businesses such as distribution and processing, rather than farming and the production of agricultural products.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modify the definition of "Agriculture" to include animal feeding and other intensive agricultural operations.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rezone 541 acres along Stryker, Humphrey and Ballantyne Roads from PRD Planned Residential to AC Agricultural Conservation.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stipulate that farming activities take precedence over other uses in areas zoned for agriculture by enacting a "right-to-farm" clause.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider allowing diverse business uses on farms within State-certified agricultural districts. Establish limitations on lot size, setbacks, deliveries and other aspects of the business for each type allowed.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider revising zoning regulations to allow diverse, ag-related business uses on farms in the AC zoning district on a case-by-case basis with a special use permit. Establish limitations on lot size, setbacks, deliveries and other aspects of the business as well as appropriate special use permit criteria.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limit the use of publicly-owned environmentally sensitive areas to low impact activities (e.g., environmental education, walking, hiking, jogging and cross-country skiing).	Medium	PB, TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain zoning regulations that accommodate on-farm sales and value-added processing and agricultural support businesses on farm parcels.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revise zoning to remove restrictions on the products permitted to be sold at farm stands.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

District Standards Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Add agriculture, wetlands and woodlots to the list of assets to be preserved to Section 439-4 (General Review Standards)	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add language to 500-10.A.2 specifying the protection of agriculture and open space as a purpose.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add language to Section 439-2 (Subdivision of Land: Purpose and Content) specifying the preservation and protection of agriculture, open space and other environmental features to the purpose	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add language to Section 500-10 that limits development in floodplains to recreational, agriculture or other low-impact uses.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add language to Section 500-3 (A and B) specifying the protection of agriculture and open space as a purpose.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
For farms in the AC zoning district, incorporate an exception to the minimum 10-acre lot size requirement for farm operations within State-certified Agricultural Districts.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce minimum lot size for forest or wildlife preserves as noted in Section 500-27 (D and E) so that opportunities to preserve smaller spaces are not lost.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create an Open Space or Environmental Protection Overlay District to supplement the underlying zoning district regulations to protect areas that have been determined to possess unique visual qualities and have been identified as requiring protection from development.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add definitions for large trees, woodlots, mature hardwood trees, and natural topography to Section 500-101. For example, woodlots could be defined as any contiguously wooded area greater than 5 acres in size, while large trees could include all trees greater than 12 inches diameter at breast height (dbh).	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue to require dedication of parkland (or open space) during subdivision approval or accept payments in lieu of land dedication and investigate other dedicated mechanisms for funding open space.	Ongoing	PB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include requirements for open space preservation as part of the zoning regulations for large-lot districts to discourage the encroachment of subdivisions onto open space and agricultural lands by minimizing the percent of buildable footprint.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

2

Zoning Code Update

TIMEFRAME | Short-Term Action (0 to 3 years)

General Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Integrate the Conservation Board into the Town's Building Department development approval process by specifying that the Building Department provide project plans to the Conservation Board for review and consultation. This should include those projects that do not go before the Planning Board.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revise Section 500-61.H.3 (Tree Removal) to provide a clearer path for developers. Requirements for preserving large trees and woodlots should also be included in this process. One possible method is to replace this section with a Woodlot Environmental Protection District (EPOD). This district could be floating or could reference a woodlot GIS data layer maintained and updated by the Conservation Board. Either a floating district or woodlot GIS layer could also serve as the Town of Chili woodland map noted in Section 500-61.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the schedule provided in the Open Space Inventory as a framework to maintain and update the data provided in the Inventory.	High	TC, CB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stress the importance of amenities such as sidewalks, trees, parks, landscaping, street lights, and community centers in establishing and maintaining neighborhood character.	High/ Ongoing	PB, CB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop a Land Mitigation Ordinance to require developers to provide mitigation for impacts to open space lands, or pay a development fee in lieu of mitigation into a local open space protection fund.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Update and maintain on a regular basis the anticipated land use plan map and narrative.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Open Space Partnerships

TIMEFRAME | Short-Term Action (0 to 3 years)

Continue to coordinate with landowners, non-profit organizations and other municipalities to protect and preserve farmland, natural resources and other open spaces. This should include public outreach and coordination with relevant public agencies and boards, non-profits, private developers and municipal officials.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Sponsor applications for State or Federal grants for the purchase of development rights to high quality farmland within the Town's Strategic Farmland Protection area.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support private sector efforts to protect significant environmental areas and coordinate these activities with the Town's comprehensive planning program where applicable.	Medium/ Ongoing	TC, PB, CB, PS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work with other municipalities, landowners and institutions to identify and protect significant ecological corridors and habitats and possible park joint ventures and trail linkages.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities and programs of both public and private educational sectors should be coordinated between the town and its educational providers to maximize existing resources, to avoid duplication of and anticipate impacts of development on land resources and facilities.	Low/ Ongoing	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

4

Farmer Outreach

TIMEFRAME | Mid-Term Action (3 to 5 years)

Secure funding to develop an outreach program focused on providing farmers with relevant information regarding tax exemptions, agricultural districts, environmental management and other financial incentives.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Encourage farmers to participate in the Agricultural Environmental Management Program and other programs that protect environmental quality on farms, including protection of water quality and retention of topsoil.	High	AFC, SWCD, FSA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage state, county, and farmers to renew, sustain, and expand the Agricultural Districts under the New York Agricultural Districts Law.	Medium	CCE, SWCD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partner with other agencies to provide information to entrepreneurs about sources of technical and financial assistance for value-added processing and agri-tourism enterprises.	Medium	TC, SWCD, CCE, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage landowners and farm business operators to obtain all applicable real property tax exemptions and incentives.	Ongoing	TC, TA, SWCD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify owners of land that is leased for agricultural production who do not receive agricultural use assessments and mail them information about the program.	Ongoing	TA, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue to support the Town Assessor's efforts to inform farmland landowners about tax relief programs that they may be eligible for, including information about deadlines for applying. Include information about exemptions in the Town's annual mailing regarding agricultural assessments.	Ongoing	TC, TA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue to maintain communications with farm operators before and during the improvement and maintenance projects (e.g., roads, drainage) in order to identify and avoid potential negative impacts.	Ongoing	DPW, SWCD, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>

5

Open Space Outreach & Education

TIMEFRAME | Mid-Term Action (3 to 5 years)

Secure funding to develop an outreach program for coordinating and sharing educational information to local residents, schools, land owners, and private developers. This program should identify who is responsible, a program budget, what content will be shared, how it will be disseminated and how often.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Periodically publish and distribute information about farm markets, roadside stands and other agriculture-related businesses in the Town.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide information to residents and local schools about programs administered by New York State, Monroe County, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and other agencies that raise public awareness of farming practices and the economic significance of agriculture, including educational activities for school children.	Ongoing	TC, SWCD, CCE	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disseminate information prepared by others, such as brochures at the Town Hall or information on the Town website that includes information about standard farm practices and the right-to-farm provisions of the NYS Agricultural District Law.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

6

Trail Master Plan

TIMEFRAME | Mid-Term Action (3 to 5 years)

Secure funding for trail master planning and solicit volunteers to serve on the project steering committee.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Establish a town trails committee to prepare a trails master plan to connect town trails with county, regional and statewide trails.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

7

Conservation Program Feasibility

TIMEFRAME | Long-Term Action (5 to 10 years)

Secure funding to study the feasibility of various town-based/supported conservation programs and solicit volunteers to serve on the project committee.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Consider establishing a voluntary, Town-based Purchase of Development Rights program to protect agriculture and other open spaces. This could include a Capital Reserve Fund or allocation of Town funds to support the purchase of conservation easements. These funds could also be used towards the up-front costs of securing PDR funding, such as appraisals and surveys.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conduct a fiscal impact analysis to identify the public costs and revenues associated with new development. This type of analysis would identify the fiscal costs and benefits associated with different types of development, such as residential, commercial or industrial.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage landowners to donate conservation easements to a land trust, potentially as part of estate planning. Encourage the Genesee Land Trust, the Genesee Valley Conservancy and/ or other organizations to provide information to landowners about the potential benefits of easement donation and to encourage private donation of conservation easements.	Low	TC, PS, AFC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluate the creation of a Conservation Easement Program to provide tax incentives that protect active farmland and open space lands from being developed.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

8

Scenic Road Designation

TIMEFRAME | Long-Term Action (5 to 10 years)

Work with the Town Historic Preservation Board to identify potential scenic roads in the Town of Chili. Use the resources provided by the NYSDOT to pursue state designation through the application process.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Consider designating roads of visual, cultural or historical significance as official scenic roads under the New York's Scenic Roads Program.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Parks & Recreation Improvements

TIMEFRAME | Long-Term Action (5 to 10 years)

Set aside funding in the Town's Capital Improvement Program and seek grant funding to implement prioritized parks and recreation recommendations.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Convert a portion of Davis Park into a parking lot, add restrooms and improve drainage to better accommodate high attendance at tournament events.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implement general facility improvements to all parks, including lodge and picnic shelters; bleachers; ice rink; additional restroom access; multi-purpose turf field; pickleball courts; landscaping and park beautification; and improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to parks and open space.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implement general operation improvements to all parks, including striping parking lots; lighting at parks and fields; increased security and cameras to help with vandalism; additional park staff/equipment to help with projects/improvements; create a Trails group; create a Friends group; develop a fee structure and system to phase in facility fees over 3 years.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implement programs and events proposed by town staff and advisory committee members, such as: teen programs; Gymboree program for toddlers; special needs programs; preschool recreation and education program; before and after school daycare programs; playcare babysitting program; camping; fishing; bird watching; organized hiking; community gardening; birthday party packages; and the Town staff necessary to implement these programs.	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage and support (e.g., financial, staff) private initiatives to maintain or improve neighborhoods, parks and open spaces through neighborhood cleanups, tree plantings, supervision and maintenance of play areas, or adopt-a-park programs.	High	TC, P, PS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address the drainage issues in Hubbard Park and restore its restrooms.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address the drainage issues in Yolanda Park.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transform Memorial Park into a central park for the town. Improvements may include a new amphitheater, conversion of Merante Field into artificial turf and upgrading existing restrooms.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish a preliminary program for a community center in Memorial Park to include meeting spaces, programmed fitness facilities and both youth and senior-oriented facilities.	Medium	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

9

Parks & Recreation Improvements

TIMEFRAME | Long-Term Action (5 to 10 years)

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Advance low-impact improvements to the Cornflower Property including a small parking area, a trailhead with informative signage, and a stacked loop trail system.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance low-impact improvements to the Pfrengle Property including a small parking area, a trailhead with informative signage, nature trails and conservation areas, and space for recreational programs and outdoor environmental education.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Convert underutilized space in Widener Park into an off-leash dog park.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connect Chili Heights Nature Trail and Union Station Park with a bridge over Black Creek to create a loop trail system.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support existing park programs and events by providing on-site storage facilities.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

10 Infrastructure Improvement Impacts

TIMEFRAME | Long-Term Action (5 to 10 years)

Update the Town's Capital Improvement Plan to ensure that infrastructure improvements and extensions do not negatively impact agriculture, natural resources or other open spaces.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Minimize impacts on agricultural operations from maintenance and improvement projects on Town roads. Consider potential impacts on neighboring farmland. Design and implement improvement projects to minimize impacts.	High	TC, PB, DPW	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider impacts of increased development on agriculture relating to extensions of sewer or water services.	High	TC, PB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoid or reduce impacts on agricultural operations from water and sewer district extensions.	Medium/Ongoing	TC, PB, PS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limit town roadway improvement projects and all road-related land acquisition projects in agricultural, scenic and historical residential areas to those necessary to maintain road surface, safety and efficiency.	Low	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

11 Watershed Management Implementation

TIMEFRAME | Long-Term Action (5 to 10 years)

Although not reviewed as part of this effort, the Black and Oatka Creeks watershed management plans provide a number of recommendations relevant to agriculture and open space in the Town of Chili; a town-specific implementation plan should be developed.

Recommendations	Priority	Responsible Party	Completed (Y/N)
Continue to support efforts of the Black Creek and Oatka Creek Watershed Coalitions to improve management of the watersheds, in cooperation with the Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council	High	TC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Funding Sources

Funding for *Open Space Master Plan* initiatives will likely come from a host of public and private resources. A summary of several key funding resources for the Town is provided below.

Farmland Protection Implementation Grants

New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

Farmland Protection Implementation Grants (FPIG) are available for project sponsors to implement activities consistent with local agricultural and farmland protection plans. Beginning in 2013, FPIG have been expanded to offer both a Request For Applications, as well as a Request For Proposals.

Requests for Applications

This non-competitive grant opportunity is exclusively for municipalities to amend their local laws to become more farm-friendly and/or to create laws to establish a transfer of development rights program.

Eligibility

Municipalities that have conducted a zoning audit.

Funds

\$15,000 (or 75% of the cost, whichever is less).

Local match requirements up to 80% services, 20% cash.

 http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/ap/agservices/fp_impl_grants.html

Requests for Proposals

This competitive grant provides funding to eligible entities for implementation activities including conservation easement projects and incentive payment projects.

Eligibility

Municipalities, counties, not-for-profit conservation organizations, soil and water conservation districts.

Funds

Varies, see website.

Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council

NYS Regional Economic Development Councils

In 2011, New York State created ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) and mandated that each develop a five-year strategy which identifies an overall economic development approach for the region. Each regional strategy is updated annually to promote priority public sector investments and compete for access to a pool of State funding and development support. The use of State economic development funding for public or private sector projects is now directly tied to the advancement and implementation of regional economic development strategies. Funding priority will be given to projects which meet or advance the strategies and goals identified by the corresponding regional economic development council.

The Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC) identified four umbrella strategies to promote a unified approach to public and private investment in the nine-county region. Each of the four strategic areas outlines a series of specific projects that will enhance economic development and competitiveness in the Region. In particular, the FLREDC identified the investment in communities, industrial development and infrastructure as a priority regional strategy.

The Consolidated Funding Application process, which includes several potential funding sources for implementing the *Open Space Master Plan*, is influenced by the priorities identified by each REDC.



<http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/finger-lakes>

Consolidated Funding Application

NYS Regional Economic Development Councils

A significant amount of State funding is now procured through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process, an initiative begun in 2011 in concert with the establishment of the regional economic development councils. The CFA process functions as a funding clearinghouse, whereby applicants can apply for multiple sources of traditional funding via a single application. Applications for CFA resources must be reviewed by both the funding agency and the REDC to be scored for compliance with agency and regional goals.

CFA Resources

The following funding resources relevant to the *Open Space Master Plan* are available through the CFA process:

- New York State Council on the Arts – Arts, Culture and Heritage Projects
- Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation – Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grant Program
- Environmental Facilities Corporation - Green Innovation Grant Program
- Cleaner Greener Communities Phase II Implementation Grants



<http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Funding-Opportunities/Consolidated-Funding-Application/Guidance.aspx>

Cleaner Greener Smart Growth Practices Implementation Grants

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

The Cleaner Greener Program offers competitive grants to implement market-transforming sustainability initiatives and projects. Funding will support policy and plan development, technical assistance, and implementation of projects and initiatives that can be inspirational and replicated to expand market adoption and overall impact.

Eligibility

Public, private, and non-profit entities are eligible to apply. Applications will be reviewed and scored by the respective Regional Economic Development Council and NYSEDA based on the following criteria:

- Stimulate Market Transformation
- Support Sustainable Planning & Design Practices
- Create Regional & Community Benefit
- Leverage CGC Funds
- Reduce Carbon Emissions

Funds

Funding for the Cleaner Greener Program is provided through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. A complete list of the current NYSEDA programs available in the CFA are provided on the CFA Guidance webpage (see link below).

One of the benefits from using the CFA process is that applicants may qualify for funding sources from additional New York State Agencies.



<http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Funding-Opportunities/Consolidated-Funding-Application/Guidance.aspx>

Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grants

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) administers an EPF grant program focused on the acquisition, preservation and construction of park and historic preservation projects. This funding program supports the purchase of property and easements, the construction of public parks, and the preservation of historic resources and structures.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include municipalities, state agencies, public benefit corporations, public authorities and not-for-profit corporations. Funding for this program is provided through the CFA process.

Funds

The EPF Parks program will fund improvements up to \$500,000, requiring at least a 1:1 match, and state funds cannot equate to greater than 50 percent of the total project cost. Therefore, a project requesting the maximum of \$500,000 will be required to have additional resources committed equivalent to \$500,000 or more. Applicants can utilize other local and in-kind funds towards their dollar for dollar match, and must be capable of funding the entire project prior to requesting reimbursement.

 <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5285.html>

Green Innovation Grant Program

New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation

The Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) is funded and administered by the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation and funded through the NYS Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund which is capitalized largely through federal support.

Eligibility

The GIGP supports projects that incorporate unique ideas for stormwater management, innovative green infrastructure design, and cutting-edge green technologies. GIGP-funded projects range from simple rain gardens to large-scale wastewater treatment sites. A wide range of applicants are eligible for the GIGP, including municipalities, state agencies, public benefit corporations, public authorities, not-for-profits corporations, firms, individuals, partnerships, associations and Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Funding for this program is provided through the CFA process.

Funds

The GIGP program funds up to 90 percent of project costs with no defined maximum yet will only fund the green infrastructure portions of the project. Non-sustainable components will require coverage via other project funding.

 <https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance>

Arts, Culture and Heritage Projects

New York State Council on the Arts

The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) provides grants for the study of and presentation of the performing and fine arts; surveys and capital investments to encourage participation of the arts; to encourage public interest in the cultural heritage of the state; and to promote tourism by supporting arts and cultural projects.

Eligibility

NYSCA awards grants to nonprofit organizations either incorporated in or registered to do business in New York State, Indian tribes in New York State, and units of government in municipalities in New York State. Funding for this program is provided through the CFA process.

Funds

Grants for arts, culture and heritage projects are available for projects that directly drive public participation, tourism and regional vitality in communities, large and small. Awards will range from \$10,000 - \$100,000 and require a 50 percent match in cash or in-kind support.

 <https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance>

Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

The purpose of the NYSDEC Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program is to provide support and assistance to communities for comprehensive planning, as well as management, and education initiatives that create healthy urban and community forests that enhance the quality of life for urban residents.

Eligibility

Municipalities, public benefit corporations, public authorities, school districts and not-for-profit organizations that have a public ownership interest in the property or are acting on behalf of a public property owner are eligible. Eligible projects include tree inventories and management plans; tree planting, maintenance and invasive pest detection survey and \$1,000 Quick Start Arbor Day Grants. Eligible projects must be located on public properties or rights-of-way and must be equally matched by local resources. Applicants should give appropriate consideration to under-served neighborhoods in their areas when selecting sites for projects.

Funds

Communities may request between \$2,500 and \$50,000, depending on their population. Funds are made available from the Environmental Protection Fund and will be managed and allocated by the NYSDEC.

 <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5285.html>

Recreational Trails Program

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a State-administered, Federal assistance program for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of recreational trails (both motorized and non-motorized) and trail-related projects.

Eligibility

Funds are available to non-profit organizations, municipal, state and federal agencies, and other government entities. Funded projects must be identified in, or further a specific goal of, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and must be available to the general public.

Funds

This matching program provides up to 80 percent of the project cost and requires project sponsors to provide the additional resources. In many cases, the actual match from the project partners is 50 percent or more. While no specific limits are provided, in 2013 the RTP approved 23 awards ranging from \$23,000 to \$200,000.

 <https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance>

National Trails Fund

American Hiking Society

The American Hiking Society's National Trails Fund is the only privately-funded, national grants program dedicated solely to building and protecting hiking trails. Created in response to the backlog of trail maintenance projects across the country, the National Trails Fund has helped hundreds of grassroots organizations protect some of America's most cherished hiking trails. To date, the American Hiking Society has funded 182 trail projects with more than \$560,000 in National Trails Fund grants.

Eligibility

The National Trails Fund offers Hiking Trail Improvement grants to active member organizations of the Hiking Alliance. Each year, Alliance members have the opportunity to apply for a grant to improve hiking access or hiker safety on a particular trail. Organizations interested in applying that are not yet Alliance members can sign up on the organization's website.

Funds

Between \$500 and \$5,000 available per project; these grants are administered annually.

 <http://www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/>

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

New York State Department of Transportation

The TAP provides funding for transportation alternatives programs and projects, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation. Safe Routes to School projects, as well as projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways are also included in the TAP.

Eligibility

TAP funds can be used for a variety of alternative transportation projects, including the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities; conversion of abandoned railroad corridors for trail use; and infrastructure-related projects to provide access for and improve the safety of children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

Funds

Successful TAP applicants will be reimbursed for 80 percent of their project's eligible costs. Governor Cuomo made \$50 million available for TAP for 2014; it is unknown if funding will be made available for subsequent years.



<https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance>

Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP)

New York State Department of Transportation

The TEP is a federal reimbursement program under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), administered by the New York Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). The purpose of the program is to recognize that transportation systems include more than the traditional highway and bridge infrastructure by funding transportation projects of cultural, aesthetic, historic and environmental significance.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, TEP projects must address the provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic/historic highway programs, landscaping or other beautification, the preservation of abandoned railway corridors or environmental mitigation to address highway runoff or habitat fragmentation by highways. Applications can be sponsored by municipalities, state agencies or state authorities.

Funds

TEP funds will cover up to 80 percent of the project cost, with the remaining 20 percent coming from the project sponsor.



<https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance>

Community Impact Grants Program

Home Depot Foundation

Grants from the Home Depot Foundation (HDF) are available to registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and tax-exempt public service agencies in the U.S. that are using volunteers to improve the physical health of their community.

Eligibility

As it relates to the *Open Space Master Plan*, HDF grants can be used for planting trees or community gardens and/or landscaping community facilities that serve veterans.

Funds

Grant awards of up to \$5,000 are given in the form of Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials, or services.



<https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/opdm/local-programs-bureau/tap/guidance>

Town of Chili
Open Space Master Plan

April 2015



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