

**CHART 11
BUILD-OUT POTENTIAL UNDER EXISTING ZONING**

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Total Land</u>	<u>Single-Family Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Commercial Bldg. Sq. Ft.</u>
R-45	9,810 acres	7,600 DU	--
R-20-1	980 acres	1,700 DU	--
R-20	1,150 acres	2,560 DU	--
R-10	675 acres	2,060 DU	--
C-1	17 acres	--	150,280 SF
PD	195 acres	--	1,672,700 SF
Total	12,827 acres	13,920 DU	1,822,980 SF

BUILD-OUT POTENTIAL UNDER PROPOSED PLAN

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Total Land</u>	<u>Single Family Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Commercial</u>
		Example: @2 ac/DU	
Rural	11,600 acres	5,800 DU	--
Village Town Center	460 acres	1,840 DU	--
Clark Mills	145 acres	580 DU	--
Franklin Springs	45 acres	180 DU	--
Light Industrial	5 acres	--	65,500
Commercial	17 acres	--	150,280
PD	305 acres	--	2,657,160
Oriskany Creek Greenway	250 acres	--	
	12,827 acres	8,400 DU	2,872,940

* Residential density in Village Town Center and Hamlets at an average of 0.25 acres/dwelling unit. Building square feet based on 0.25 Floor Area Ratio.

Interpretation

An interpretation of the build-out analysis shows that fewer units of housing would be developed in the town under the proposed plan as compared to existing zoning. The land in the town would not be developed any faster under the proposal and a significant portion (about 33%) of that land would be preserved as open space. Some of the features of the proposal are:

- Residential density immediately outside the Village of Clinton and hamlets would be maintained at its current level.
- A decrease (or at least a slowed increase) in the density and volume of traffic through the village is anticipated with the development of alternative roadways (by developers) and signing of existing roadways.
 - commercial traffic would outlet onto state highways
 - development of neighborhood commercial areas servicing the hamlets and immediate areas would reduce secondary trips to the village
- An increase in the total potential new commercial tax ratable property by about 50%.
- Permanently preserved open space becomes a community asset.

Alternative Development Scenarios

This analysis (Chart 12 following this page) was developed to take a more realistic look at what development is likely to occur in the Town of Kirkland over the next twenty years under the existing zoning and the proposed plan. The latest census data, building permit data and subdivision approvals were used to calculate an appropriate figure to use as a means of measuring development in the town. It was concluded, very conservatively, that approximately 600 new lots are likely to be approved²⁹ in Kirkland over the next twenty years.

The analysis shows that while the amount of development to occur under each scenario will remain the same, there will be a significant amount of open space preserved under the proposed plan. The existing plan will not preserve any open space. Even if more units are developed than has been anticipated in this analysis, the proposed plan will continue to ensure that open space is preserved.

The other distinct advantage of the proposed plan is that the amount of road frontage consumed will be significantly less, thereby improving traffic safety, preserving viewsheds and maintaining the town's rural character. The existing plan not only excludes open space preservation, but also promotes "suburban-like" development. Moreover, the current plan has no incentives to promote and preserve agriculture in the town.

²⁹ Approximately 30 units/year - this figure is extremely conservative, since one major subdivision could easily double or triple this number.

**CHART 12
ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS
for the
NEXT TWENTY YEARS**

CURRENT PLAN

	<u>LOTS</u>	<u>DEVELOPED ACRES</u>	<u>OPEN SPACE</u>	<u>ROAD FRONTAGE DEVELOPED</u>
R-45 (50%)	300	350	0	
R-10 (25%)	150	45	NA	
<u>R-20 (25%)</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>NA</u>	
TOTAL	600	470	0	9 miles

PROPOSED PLAN (Example: 2 acre density)

	<u>LOTS</u>	<u>DEVELOPED ACRES</u>	<u>OPEN SPACE</u>	<u>ROAD FRONTAGE DEVELOPED</u>
RURAL (50%)	300	350 (acres)	250	
V/T CENTER(25%)	150	45	NA	
<u>HAMLET(25%)</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>NA</u>	
TOTAL	600	470	250	6 miles (3 miles preserved)

Assumptions:

- 30 lots created per year
- 50%/25%/25% split among residential districts
- 200' frontage for lots in R-45 zone
- 75% of R-45 lots use existing roads
- 50% of rural preservation lots use existing roads

Cost Analysis of Proposed Plan

The next decade will likely present a difficult fiscal scenario for the governments and school districts of residential communities. Future development programs should consider fostering revenue generation by:

- 1) allowing quality development of taxable property
- 2) controlling costs associated with new development, and
- 3) encouraging development that generates more in tax dollars than it costs in terms of municipal services.

To qualitatively assess the impacts of the proposed plan as compared to the existing community plan, a logical development scenario over the next twenty years has been assumed. The same volume of residential and commercial development is anticipated; however, the patterns of development will be quite different.

Looking at residential development, the pattern of development likely to occur under the current plan will be a "leap-frog" type development pattern. Developments will be driven by the availability of property and are likely to be traditional large lot, single-family homes sprawled along suburban streets. Under the proposed master plan, the pattern of development will be one of infilling and planned cluster developments that will protect large tracts of agricultural land, fields and forests.



Residential Development on Agricultural Lands

In certain circumstances, there could be some relative increase or conversely, reduction in the values of properties that have particular characteristics. However, it is important to realize that land owners own a non-liquid asset that is subject to many complex market factors, only one of which is the density equation applied by the town's zoning ordinance. In fact, the most important issues and factors affecting land value are typically not zoning related but relate to other parameters such as location, physical improvements, physical assets of the community, employment trends within the region, competitive projects, etc. In short, many factors much more powerful and influential than zoning impact property values. The purpose of zoning is to help regulate where and what type of activities occur in the community so as to manage effects of individual or group projects upon the community as a whole. The value of the entire community and the investment made by ten thousand residents in the Town of Kirkland is also at stake here. The proposed plan stresses flexibility and close coordination between the town and the landowner. In addition, appropriate provisions for variances in specific situations can certainly be worked into the ultimate zoning ordinance.

It is the town's responsibility to consider private property rights, as well as the community's right to health, safety and welfare. Community leaders must weigh the potential of continuing to grow and develop according to the current zoning ordinance against the proposed plan which would ultimately evolve into some type of new zoning framework for the community. The town must consider impacts to individual property owners as well as to the community as a whole. It must consider the benefits of the plan as well as potential costs and it must make a decision. At this

point in time the town is not considering a specific zoning ordinance, only the adoption of a comprehensive plan. Before it adopts a zoning ordinance further consideration should be given to the details of that action as well. Again a balance must be struck.

To assess the fiscal impacts of these alternative development patterns, the planning literature has been examined for studies on the fiscal impact of each development pattern. The landmark study by the Real Estate Research Corporation called *The Cost of Sprawl*, determined that planned development of all densities is less costly to municipalities and developers than sprawl in terms of environmental costs, economic costs, personal costs, and energy consumption. The study adds that the cost differences are particularly significant to costs incurred by local governments. A study by the National Association of Homebuilders, *Cost-Effective Site Planning: Single Family Development*, indicated that site development costs would be approximately one-third less for a cluster development as compared to a conventional development. In this study, site development costs included clearing and grubbing, grading, street pavement, curbs and gutters, street trees, driveways, storm drainage, water distribution, sanitary sewer, and sidewalks.

A study by Wheaton and Shussheim, *The Cost of Municipal Services in Residential Areas*, noted that the costs typically borne by the municipality vary greatly with location (not the case for the private developer), making infill development an important consideration for municipalities. The Rand study, *Municipal Service Pricing: Impact on Fiscal Position*, showed that compact development, contiguous to existing development, would result in far lower off-site capital costs to the municipality than scatter development or leap-frog development allowed to occur two to five miles away from existing development. Each of the above studies strongly supports the notion of infill development and planned cluster development, as a method to controlling municipal impacts associated with new development.

"Value Added" of the Proposed Plan

Studies conducted along the Connecticut River Valley by the Center for Rural Massachusetts, *Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development*, indicate that cluster development values are as high and possibly higher than conventional development. This bodes well for the tax base, since each cluster unit will generate the same burden on the municipal and school systems. Therefore, there may be an incremental gain from planned cluster development due to an incremental revenue increase.

The Center for Rural Massachusetts of the University of Massachusetts/Amherst has determined that "homes in cluster development with permanent open space appreciate more than comparable homes on conventional lots." Jeff Levy at the Center says that "Developers, municipal governments, and home buyers may wish to reevaluate the marketability and property-tax generation potential of cluster developments as an alternative to the more land-consumptive conventional housing pattern. Developers [can] build the same number of units while capitalizing on the economies of scale and flexibility of cluster/open-space design -- [which, in turn] can meet a municipality's land-protection goals at little or no cost."

Infill and planned cluster residential development offer many non-financial gains, including the development of a town center, protection of open space for farming or green space, and a softer visual impact on the countryside. This, in turn, enhances the desirability and value of all real estate in the town.

Looking at commercial development, the proposed plan offers an increase in commercial and Planned Development square footage that can offer the town greater tax revenue generation. In most instances, the fiscal impact of commercial development will be a major net gain for the community, and particularly the school district. Yet the plan's sensitivity to the visual nature of the community ensures that the character of the community will not be lost by this increase in allowable commercial development.

The town's overall goal is to protect and preserve its small-town character, open spaces, sensitive environmental resources and farmland. The type of development encouraged by the proposed plan will reinforce these values and principles. Kirkland will continue to be viewed as a desirable place that successfully respects development and rural value preservation. Property investments and future values will be protected. The proposed plan will also not result in a loss of residential tax base.

X. RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The recommendations embodied in this report provide a blueprint for the development of the Town of Kirkland into the twenty-first century. The plan is a goal the town should aim to achieve. The first step in advancing the plan involves a consensus building process -- sharing the concepts and vision with the broadest array of residents, business men and women, and governmental, institutional, and organizational leaders.

The leadership in the Town of Kirkland is faced with the challenge of responding to increasing financial demands, protecting the essence of the community that makes it so attractive, and in responding to changing needs of the citizenry. Officials are challenged with considering the future of the town now, so that when economic and other opportunities (or problems) arise, the town will be in a position to respond to them.

In order to bring the plan to fruition, there are some first steps that can be taken. These early actions can be accomplished in one to two years. The plan also suggests some activities which will require two to five years to complete, as well as some long-range activities that will take five to ten years or perhaps more to realize. Listed below are recommendations and implementation steps broken down into early action items, and some mid and long-range activities.

EARLY ACTION ITEMS

Plan Adoption, Publication, and Distribution

The adoption of this plan is the first step in making a new land use policy for the town. After compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), the town planning board can officially adopt the plan as its guide to land use management. A summary document of the plan designed for widespread distribution should be prepared and made commonly available for reference in the coming years.

As an annual activity, the planning board should re-evaluate the plan's applicability (relevance based on circumstances which were not foreseeable when the plan was proposed) and make appropriate adjustments to earlier established policies.

Water and Sewer System Expansion

Utility needs will continue to be an issue. While the plan suggests relatively small areas of the town where central water and sewer services may be needed³⁰, there remain several issues that need to be resolved in order to ensure the provision of water and sewer services to those areas (primarily the village town center and the hamlet areas). Agreement between the Town of Kirkland and the Village of Clinton on water allocation outside the village limits, the cost of

³⁰ The vested rights of existing district members would, of course, be preserved.

service expansion and an equitable arrangement for paying for the necessary improvements is essential. A similar agreement needs to be struck with the City of Utica for water service in (primarily) Clark Mills. It is expected that the town's Comprehensive Land Use Plan will reassure the village that there is a reasonable vision for the future of the town and that the village was considered integral to the town plan. The cost of sewer, water or drainage system improvements should be equitably shared among expansion areas and future users on a pro-rata basis. The town would benefit from special purpose districts which permit inclusion of excess capacity in utility systems so that future users can take advantage of in-place infrastructure. A method to recoup proportional costs from the future users is, of course, required.

An immediate follow up step would involve more detailed dialogue between the town and the service providers. An evaluation of the capacity and functional capability of the existing systems to serve the land use program of the Comprehensive Plan would be useful to this dialogue. Conceptual agreements to allow for needed improvements could be followed with facility plans, construction cost estimates, and financing strategies.

Business and Employment Development

Further diversification of the town's economic base is a recognized need. Attracting desirable office and light manufacturing is encouraged. To achieve this, the town could work in a cooperative economic development effort with regional economic development agencies such as the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, the Oneida County Industrial Development Corporation, and the private property owners in the areas targeted for planned development. An early activity would be to confirm the potential market opportunity and to develop an action program to capture that market, including site planning and development, funding support, and marketing efforts.

As part of a rezoning effort, properly zoned sites for well designed office and research parks should be provided. Even if the immediate market does not seem supportive, it would be unwise to permit potential large scale sites to be developed into uses that don't support quality permanent employment which could locate without difficulty elsewhere in the community.

Outside funding assistance will likely be necessary to assist in the development of office and industrial parks. The town should vigorously endorse well conceived projects of this nature.

Land Use Regulation

Zoning Ordinance

Realization of the land uses and densities suggested in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan calls for reconsideration of, and amendments to, the current Town Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. An important early-action item should involve further study of the means of accomplishing the objectives proposed in the Land Use Plan, with particular emphasis on ways of achieving the preservation of open space and natural features in the town while protecting property values and balancing property rights concerns. Toward that end, a proposed

comprehensive amendment to the current regulations should be prepared, based on the Plan. In some areas many of the components of the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations would remain intact, while in other areas there will need to be specific changes in the land use regulations to advance the goals of the plan. The delineation of uses and the establishment of regulations governing development for the new land categories recommended in the Land Use Plan would be part of this effort. Adoption of a comprehensively amended zoning ordinance is recommended for completion within one year.

MID AND LONGER-TERM ACTION ITEMS

Hamlet Development

Improvements to the historic town hamlets should be encouraged in the near future during development plan review and as a mid- and long-range activity by the town's active participation in infrastructure and beautification improvements. To achieve this end, the community centers identified in the plan should be recognized by review boards as special places that must be carefully considered to protect and enhance their qualities and potential. Special analysis of these centers is suggested to facilitate project review initially and to ultimately lead toward land management regulations and/or community development projects sponsored by the town.

Redevelopment Opportunities

The adaptive reuse opportunity presented by the historic mill buildings in Clark Mills should not be overlooked. A cooperative effort to determine redevelopment feasibility between the town, the property owner, and state funding agencies such as the New York State Urban Development Corporation is recommended.

Rehabilitation of the substandard housing stock may be assisted by application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Community Development Block Grant and other programs.

Recreation

Recreation opportunities noted in the plan can be capitalized upon. For the suggested playground site near the apartment complex development in the former school building in Clark Mills, discussions with the property owner can be initiated to determine recreation development potential. If feasible, the next step would involve creation of a conceptual development program and solicitation for funding assistance through local benefactors and through state and federal programs such as the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund administered through the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation.

Design Guidelines

As new development continues in the town and as the older neighborhoods undergo change, the need will increase for more specific standards to guide the community. Individual sets of design guidelines would be beneficial for the following areas:

- Village Town Center and the Hamlets
- Rural Development and Preservation Zone, and
- Highway Corridors for commercial development and Town and County Highway Corridors for "strip" residential development.

Design standards are recommended for preparation and implementation at the same time or immediately following the zoning regulation update (e.g., within the next one to two years). Design guidelines would be particularly useful for the review boards (town, planning, and appeals), as well as landowners, developers, and builders. Cooperative programs to ensure that development will occur that is visually appealing, coordinated, and functional can be established through a dialogue between the town and the development and construction community. The town would gain much by establishing a leadership role to ensure that project sponsors understand both what is expected in project planning and why.

Open Space Plan

As a supplement to the development design guidelines suggested above, there is need to augment this comprehensive plan with a more specific program and development standards to guide the creation of the open space network that is conceptually envisioned herein. The use, management, and linkages between the protected lands resulting from implementing the plan will make this land asset much more useful and valuable to townspeople. This open space project should be commissioned/undertaken as a follow-up step to the design guidelines effort described above. Consider the establishment of an open space committee and/or a local land trust.

SEQR

The most effective tool to evaluate project impacts is the SEQR process. The town is encouraged to use the SEQR process to find equitable methods of allocating the costs of growth to responsible parties. The town can use SEQR to cause the joint review of separate projects in the same area of the community so as to ensure coordinated planning for infrastructure, recreation facilities, highway improvements and other mitigation measures.

Townwide Recreation Opportunities

In a sense, the plan underplays the excellent existing and potential recreation opportunities in the community. This discussion will focus on major outdoor recreation opportunities.

Oriskany Creek Greenway

In both the hamlets and throughout the town, additional potential exists to create passive parks and public access to Oriskany Creek and its major tributaries. Some of these are noted in the plan. Realization of this opportunity can occur by encouraging the provision of public access to these resources as abutting properties are developed. A modification to the zoning ordinance is suggested to recognize the importance of Oriskany Creek as a potential recreational corridor. In addition, the town, with private, county and state assistance, could begin a long range program to acquire conservation and access easements to the Oriskany Creek corridor. This long range action would ensure that this significant natural and recreational resource would be available to residents of all ages for current and future generations. The value of this "greenway" would increase significantly over time, adding to the community assets of the town.

Bike/Hike Trail

Railroad rights of way are becoming increasingly popular for use as recreational trails systems. In fact, there exists a national support organization (the Rails to Trails Conservancy) dedicated to advancing the use of abandoned rail corridors for linear recreation and "muscle-powered" transportation links. A similar cooperative program as described for the Oriskany Creek greenway could be carried out for a Kirkland "rails to trails" program. As a next step in this process, a committee of interested citizens could be formed to begin the necessary discussions to advance this proposal.

Reservoirs

The former water supply reservoirs offer another opportunity for either passive or active recreation. Toward that end, these resources should be considered for community recreation or nature observation sites when the opportunity presents itself and the need for such activities becomes evident.

Development Opportunities

To have an adequate supply of recreation land, the town should establish a recreation land standard for subdivisions; the town should also re-examine the recreation fee schedule as to its adequacy in relation to the cost of land purchase and/or facility development. The Town Board should also consider requiring recreation fees from residential developments that are not subdivisions (e.g., apartment projects). These fees and dedication of recreational lands/facilities should be directed toward achieving the recreational projects and goals outlined in this plan. Coordination of development plan review between the recreation and planning departments is essential as a precursor to Town Board acceptance of land which is offered by developers.

Gateways

Recognition of the importance of the major highway entrances to the town can be formalized as an early-action item through a coordinated improvement program consisting of signage and appropriate landscaping. Civic groups may be willing to underwrite the cost and labor associated with bringing about these improvements. The first location for such an "entry statement" would be at the northern end of town southbound along route 12B. Other sites could follow as the interest and support grows.

Agriculture, Natural Resource and Open Space Preservation

Natural Resource Protection

Significant agricultural, natural and open space resources could be compromised without early action by the town. An aquifer and wellhead protection zone should be considered for the public water supply derived from the aquifer in the Oriskany Creek corridor. Particular attention should be paid to the area near the village well system.

Stream corridors should be afforded immediate additional protection through the development and adoption of a stream corridor protection ordinance (this can be included as part of the suggested changes to the town zoning ordinance).

Consideration should be given to designating as Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) those areas which are unique and important natural features in the town through the process outlined in the SEQR regulations (6NYCRR Part 617). Potential candidate sites for such designation may include the Oriskany Creek aquifer and flood hazard area.

Agriculture

The most important activity for the town to engage in to help maintain agriculture in Kirkland is a continued dialogue with the farming community. The proposed Rural Development and Preservation zone can prove to be an effective tool to allow farmers to gain financial return from development of their property while at the same time preserving some of its agricultural values. A cooperative effort and flexible regulations will facilitate this desired outcome. Professional advice provided free of charge to the property owner should continue through the office of the Town Planner. In special cases involving large properties, and prior to submittal of a land development plan, the landowner and the town may agree to seek early professional advice from outside the town. The town may consider a small budget reserve for this purpose. Ultimately, the landowner would be responsible to engage the required professional services; however, these early cooperative discussions can yield benefits to both parties far beyond the initial outlay.

The town should also consider implementing a program that provides some property tax relief for landowners who make a long-term commitment to agricultural use. This commitment could be through conservation easements (similar to the Town of Perinton program). Such a program would work well with the open space set-aside provisions of the proposed Rural Development

and Preservation zone. Further discussion of town-wide benefits, financial implications and participation by farmers would be a logical first step.

Transportation Improvements

Clinton By-Pass

The town and village boards, with Hamilton College, should jointly request that the New York State Department of Transportation study the problem of traffic congestion in the village and evaluate the feasibility of a truck by-pass route around the village. This study should include evaluation of the Clinton by-pass, a truck bypass route utilizing the existing state highway system (e.g. Routes 5 and 233), and the suggested Hamilton College Parkway. Establishment of a local liaison committee comprised of representatives of affected parties would facilitate review of the project.

Registration of local highway improvement needs to county and state transportation agencies should continue with increased vigor. The town could heighten awareness of its need through commissioning specific studies of roadway and intersections needing improvement for submission to county and state transportation agencies for action. While results may be five or more years away, placement of important highway improvement projects on capital improvement programs is the first step toward construction.

Development Opportunities

Private developers can be required to provide through streets (as opposed to dead ends or cul de sacs) in new projects. The creation of additional through streets is beneficial to existing residents, as traffic flow would be distributed across these new streets. The town subdivision and zoning regulations should be modified to require project sponsors to consider abutting properties explicitly and to provide a solution that can allow the creation of through streets. The town can also adopt an official map that would reserve land for future street development so that these opportunities are not lost.

One step worthy of consideration in the site plan and subdivision review process is requiring cross-lot access drives between commercial properties (as they are developed or are modified). Cross-lot easements can reduce unnecessary movements onto the highway system, to go from one neighboring establishment to another. It is especially important that curb cuts be fully considered when cross access plans are drawn.

The use of the SEQR process will continue to provide the town with the basis for assessing the traffic impacts and necessary mitigation measures related to new construction. Professional analyses are key when reviewing any project with the potential to adversely affect traffic movement.

The identification of alternatives to automobile transportation involving single occupant vehicle trips should be encouraged (buses and car pools to reduce trips and location of convenient commuter "park and ride lots").

Pedestrian Traffic

An expanded sidewalk system (and the bike/hike trail described above in the recreation section) to complement the sidewalk system in the village would be advantageous to those living in the town immediately outside of the village. Toward this end, the town should work with neighborhood groups and the village to establish key paths. Where development is not yet existing, the town should work with future developers to establish sidewalks and hiking trails in new subdivisions. These improvements should be put in place before residents move in, so that it does not prove to be prohibitively expensive or disruptive to do so later.

Visual Resources

Site Design Considerations

Intensification of landscape planting requirements through an ordinance change is recommended for commercial and large-scale residential projects as a method of softening the visual effects of development. Serious consideration should also be given to the development of architectural design standards for the village town center and hamlet districts proposed in the plan. As an early action item, architectural and landscaping review could be advisory. When the reviewing board (potentially the planning board) has gained experience, and the issues and need for review have become more clearly defined, the adoption of appropriate regulations should be considered. The first step in the process is to develop recommended design and development standards for those uses and districts appropriate for review.

One area of great concern is the aesthetic quality of the Seneca Turnpike and NYS Route 12B corridors. A study of methods for improving the visual quality along the Seneca Turnpike is recommended as a first step in maintaining the economic vitality of this corridor. The need for improvements in signage, plantings, architectural unity, parking lot design, curb cuts and street lighting (as well as improvements to reduce or eliminate overhead utility lines) is strong with the potential for substantial benefit among all stakeholders.

Scenic areas, in particular the uplands where excellent views can be obtained, should be given special consideration in the zoning regulations. The opportunities provided by these areas should be preserved to the extent possible during the development review and approval process.