

TOWN OF GROVELAND Livingston County, New York

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan



Prepared by:



Prepared for:

**Town of Groveland
Livingston County, New York**

September 2010

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

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Councilman John Driscoll
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Councilman Craig Phelps

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Introduction and Stakeholder Participation

Purpose and Need

The Town of Groveland Municipal Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan (Plan) is the result of the voluntary participation by a variety of stakeholders concerned about the future of farming in the community. The Plan, funded through a grant provided to the Town by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, is a proactive approach to protect and enhance agriculture as the primary industry and predominant land use in Groveland. Without such a plan to guide future decision-making in the community, subtle changes in land use practices over time could result in the loss of high quality farmlands ultimately undermining the continued viability of agriculture in the Town. The Town supports farmland protection efforts and will work with Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy in pursuing future farmland protection projects.

Planning Process Overview

The planning process that led to the creation of this document included the important participation of Town officials, local farmers, residents, Livingston County personnel and regional planning agency representatives, and other organizations engaged in the agricultural industry. The contribution of time and effort by these stakeholders was invaluable in documenting existing conditions in the community and identifying strategies to enhance local agriculture. The primary purpose of this Plan is to provide these and other stakeholders in this farming community with information to help promote effective land use management focused on the protection of farmland in the Town of Groveland.

According to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Law (NYSDAM), Article 25AAA, the term “Protection” is defined as:

“...the preservation, conservation, management and improvement of lands which are part of viable farming operations, for the purpose of encouraging such lands to remain in agricultural production.”

The use of the word “protection” in this Plan should not be perceived as a means of restricting any property owner’s rights to the use of their land. Rather this Plan is an important next step in support of local farming as an economically viable industry that significantly contributes to the local and regional economies of New York State.

Communities in New York State have a variety of land use management tools to protect local farming and farmland. One important component of such planning involves enhancing and

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promoting agriculture by educating both the farming and non-farming communities about the economic and non-economic value that agriculture brings to a community. Farming provides important economic benefits to a region, but perhaps even more significantly contributes to local history, community heritage, and rural character. No one can deny the aesthetic value to a community's quality of life that rural landscapes provide. One of the primary purposes of this Plan is to serve as an educational tool to educate the community about the past and future importance of agriculture in Groveland.

This Plan also provides information and recommendations on other methods to enhance and protect local agriculture through a variety of land use management tools including agricultural zoning measures, enhanced subdivision requirements and acquiring development rights through purchase from an interested land owner or voluntary donation. This Plan can also become the basis for a more comprehensive look at overall land use and development patterns for the Town. As such the Plan contains a Future Land Use map. The purpose of the Future Land Use map is to identify desired locations for future development where certain land uses should be encouraged within the Town to protect agriculture.

The Future Land Use map does not regulate or restrict land use. Rather, it provides guidance to help guide land use decisions when the need is there. For example, this Plan should be consulted when making important decisions about where to promote development and where to invest in public infrastructure such as water lines, sewer lines and roads. Information contained in this document should also serve as a basis for updating the Town's zoning ordinance and other land use regulations.

The Town's zoning ordinance is a regulatory tool to manage land use within the community. As such, the zoning ordinance must be consistent with the Future Land Use map, particularly in order for it to be legally defensible in a court of law. By identifying agricultural and farmland protection strategies and by developing a plan for future land use, the Town of Groveland is better positioned to enhance its agricultural industry and long-term environmental and economic sustainability.

Stakeholder Participation Process

The Town of Groveland was awarded a municipal agricultural planning grant from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets during the summer of 2009. Subsequently, the Town Board formed an Advisory Committee (AC) to oversee the planning process and work with the Town's planning consultant, CHA Companies, Inc. (CHA) in developing the Farmland Protection Plan.

The planning process involved a series of six advisory committee meetings. All meetings were open to the public, although two of the meetings were specifically advertised to the general public as informational meetings. As part of the stakeholder process, the AC oversaw each meeting and provided information and guidance. CHA planners facilitated each meeting, collected data from participants, and reviewed relevant information with attendees to build understanding and consensus about farmland protection goals and strategies. CHA worked with AC members to implement a stakeholder participation process as outlined below to provide inclusive opportunities for participation in the planning process.

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Purpose:

The stakeholder participation process identified a variety of forums and outreach mechanisms to engage interested individuals and organizations in the development and preparation of the Groveland Farmland Protection Plan. The Town of Groveland maintains a listing of meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and notices on its website at: <http://www.grovelandny.org/index.html>

Opportunities for Participation:

The process allowed for stakeholder participation via several community outreach mechanisms in addition to the ability to review project information on the Town’s website. These include:

- Advisory Committee Meetings
- Farmer Survey/Questionnaire
- Public Information Meetings and Public Hearings
- Public and Agency Review and Comment of the Draft Plan

Lead Process Participants:

Town of Groveland Supervisor	James C. Merrick
Town Clerk	Sandra Bean
Town Board & AC Chairperson	Craig Phelps
Town Board	Burt Lyon
Planning Board	Roger Haich
Zoning Board	Tim Sullivan
AC Member	Steve Burnette
AC Member	Adam Meyer
AC Member	Brad Macauley
AC Member	Ron Claud
AC Member	Ted McCauley
Genesee Valley Conservancy	Eric Grace
CHA Planner	Walter Kalina, AICP
CHA Planner	Mike Alexander, P.P., AICP
CHA Planner	Jeff Williams

Committee members representing the local agricultural community met six times during the planning process. The Committee provided perspective and local knowledge to help guide the process, and reviewed interim and draft planning documents. The AC is responsible for making final recommendations to the Groveland Town Board and the Livingston County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board.

Meeting notices and agendas were mailed or e-mailed to committee members in advance of each meeting. Public information meeting notices were posted on the Town’s website and in a local newspaper of general circulation. Notes of all meetings were compiled and posted by the Town to its website, and are summarized below. Notes of meetings are provided in Appendix A.

Summary of Meetings

August 18, 2009

Public Informational Meeting #1 & Project Kick-off Meeting

CHA conducted the project kick-off meeting with the Advisory Committee, Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board members and the public to identify the purpose of the Farmland Protection Plan, work tasks to be accomplished during the planning process, and identify preliminary issues of concern in the community. As noted during the meeting the plan will be developed consistent with New York State Agriculture & Markets Section 25.

Although the Farmland Protection Plan is not technically a “comprehensive plan” it will contain an element common to comprehensive plans – a future land use map. The Town will gain important benefit from the planning process resulting in a product that can be used to promote farmland protection as well as help guide future land use decisions. CHA notes that, like a comprehensive plan, the Farmland Protection Plan is a planning tool that should be used to guide decision-making. By contrast, zoning or other local laws and ordinances are binding regulatory directives. While the Farmland Protection Plan serves to inform future regulations in the Town of Groveland, its content is not legally binding.

September 22, 2009

Inventory & Analysis of Existing Conditions

CHA conducted the second Advisory Committee meeting to review preliminary existing conditions information, identify farm operator survey strategies, and discuss general issues facing farming. Descriptive farmland and environmental maps were distributed, and information from the maps was subsequently used in the existing conditions section of the Plan (Section 2).

The Town’s existing land use map utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data obtained from Livingston County Planning, identifies many parcels as residential, but it was noted that some properties designated as residential may actually be used primarily for agricultural purposes. AC members noted that many of these parcels contain a single-family home, but property owners rent remaining land on the property to local farmers. The locations of these parcels were noted on the map, and were subsequently adjusted. A small tract homes in the northwest section of Groveland has developed on land that is considered less productive for agricultural purposes. Lands near but not adjacent to Conesus Lake have experienced an increase in single-family housing development on large lots. However, the majority of the land within these lots is still being farmed. It was also noted that almost all of the land labeled as “vacant agriculture” on some preliminary GIS maps is actively farmed.

October 27, 2009

Farm Operator Survey/Interviews

The Advisory Committee conducted surveys with local farm operators beginning in October 2009. Follow-up survey interviews were conducted on October 27th at the Groveland Town Hall. The purpose of this meeting was to assist farmers with completing the surveys that were mailed to them

during the previous month. The meeting provided farmers an opportunity to ask questions about the Farmland Protection Plan and to learn about additional ways to participate in the planning process.

November 17, 2009

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis identifies “strengths”, “weaknesses”, “opportunities”, and “threats” confronting local agriculture. CHA intended to use input from this public meeting to conduct a SWOT analysis for inclusion in the Farmland Protection Plan. However, due to a low public turn-out, the SWOT analysis was postponed. CHA conducted a discussion with the AC that identified a need to look at the Town’s zoning for possibly three representative parcels within the Town. A build-out analysis of the parcels could be conducted to test the zoning to illustrate potential impacts to agriculture from development. The committee identified several potential sites to consider. The Committee also agreed to postpone the SWOT analysis meeting until January 2010.

January 21, 2010

Public Informational Meeting #2 and SWOT Analysis

On January 21, 2010 Groveland conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis regarding agriculture in the community. The meeting was the second public informational meeting and publicly noticed in advance. However, turnout was limited to AC members and a few residents.

For the purpose of the SWOT exercise, strengths were considered as those things that make Groveland competitive and sustainable in the agricultural industry. Weaknesses were considered as those things that serve as disadvantages to farming and farm operations. Opportunities included any factors that the Town could capitalize on to enhance its competitiveness and sustainability. Threats are issues or concerns over something that may jeopardize the community’s agricultural competitiveness or sustainability. This exercise provided a basis for drafting a vision statement for agriculture in the community as well as goals and objectives that are addressed elsewhere in the Plan. The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats identified during this meeting are summarized as follows:

Strengths:

- Town is zoned for agriculture
- Good access to I-390
- It’s Groveland – it’s our home
- Town has the critical mass for farming
- Not much traffic on local roads to interfere with farming
- Good access to farm mills
- Ability to get produce and livestock to markets quickly
- Good balance between dairy and cropland
- Steep slopes along the Conesus Lake limit development
- Town Board and local officials are committed to agricultural preservation

Weaknesses:

- Some local roads and bridges hamper movement of large farm equipment

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- Valley lands are productive, but subject to flooding and only when drained
- Problems still exist with containing Canaseraga Creek floodwaters (property owners are hindered by what can be used for rip rap)

Opportunities:

- Existing rail line (now only a freight line – could provide for increased movement of farm goods by rail)
- Windmills – residential and larger windfarms could be a source of revenue (does not appear to be much opposition in the Town and local zoning now addresses these uses)
- Niche markets – some exist, not much organic or specialty farms exist as yet – potential may be there as well as potential for agri-tourism

Threats:

- One of the most important issues, although it is not really much of an issue at present in Livingston County, is getting along with non-farm neighbors – potential for nuisance lawsuits
- State/national economies are in bad shape creating impact on local taxes and property owners (financing mandates)
- Agriculture is presently exempt from minimum wage laws. However, NYS is considering changing labor rules, which could put the local farming industry at a competitive disadvantage against foreign competitors.
- Development in general that destroys agriculture

Some discussion focused upon setting a vision and some goals regarding agricultural protection in the Town. There was general consensus among participants that the primary goal of the Plan should be to protect farmland, and the plan's secondary goal should be to maintain the area's rural character. Key points expressed included:

- Keep the Town agricultural – maintain its rural character, as well as the look and feel of the community
- It is “Home” – people live here for a reason because they like the way it is
- Promote very little change
- Manage growth and development to be compatible with local agriculture

March 9, 2010 Finalize Draft Plan

The Advisory Committee met on March 9, 2010 to finalize a draft of the Farmland Protection Plan for public review and comments. A lengthy discussion took place about the future land use map and the land use and zoning recommendations portion of the plan contained primarily within Chapter 4. A future land use map was presented that highlights those farmland parcels that are considered to have high or moderately high farmland viability based on the criteria discussed at previous meetings and that appears in Chapter 4. The primary purpose of the future land use map is to illustrate the highest value productive farmlands within the Town, a primary goal of the planning process. Those areas that may be less viable farmland may be more appropriate for other types of future growth and development. The future land use map provides some guidance to possibly encourage residential and other forms of development to occur along the Route 63 corridor especially at its northern and

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southern ends in Groveland. These are areas that provide highway access, some sewer and water infrastructure and some less viable farming areas that may be better suited for growth and development than the large contiguous areas of highly productive farmlands.

May 13, 2010 Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on the Draft Farmland Protection Plan on May 13, 2010 to gather input and comments on its contents from the community, agencies and other stakeholders. A PowerPoint presentation of the planning process and a summary of the Plan were provided by CHA at the hearing (see Appendix B). The PowerPoint slides were also posted to the Town's website link to the Farmland Plan.

The public hearing was attended by Town Board and Farmland Committee members, but not well attended by the community. Comments received at the hearing were in support of the Farmland Plan and support expressed by one resident for the preparation of a comprehensive plan for the Town. Additional comments were provided by one Town Board member during the comment period and revisions have been made to the Plan in response to those comments. Comments included minor changes in some wording to Chapter 1 and clarification of the proposed agricultural protection zoning district recommended in Chapter 4.

May 20, 2010 Livingston County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board Review

The Draft Farmland Protection Plan was also sent to the Livingston County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board for review and comment subsequent to the public hearing. A presentation of the Plan was provided by CHA and a Town Board member to the County Board on May 20, 2010. The presentation included a PowerPoint summary of the Plan and a question and answer session. The County Board generally expressed support of the Plan and its contents and acknowledged that any zoning modifications as recommended by the Plan will need to be inclusive of farmers, landowners and residents in the Town. Board members stated this process could take considerable time in implementing any zoning recommendations. The County Farmland Protection Board expressed its support of the Plan in a letter to the Town (see Appendix C).

The Plan has been revised based on comments received during the public comment period. An Implementation Section of the Plan has been added at the end of Chapter 4 at the suggestion of the County Farmland Protection Board. The Plan will be sent to the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Commissioner for its formal review and approval as the last step in the planning process before the Plan can be implemented. Substantive comments received from the State will be incorporated into a Final Farmland Protection Plan.

Farm Operator Surveys & Interviews

Sixty-five (65) surveys were mailed to local farmers in an effort to better understand relevant agricultural issues and challenges currently facing local agriculture. The first round of surveys was mailed in late September/early October 2009. A follow-up Survey/Interview session was held at the Town Hall on Tuesday

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October 27, 2009 from 7pm to 9pm. The session was open to the public, but local farmers were the primary focus group. The purpose was to assist farmers who had questions about the Farmland Protection Plan. This session provided local farmers an opportunity to discuss concerns and ideas one on one with an Advisory Committee Member. A second round of surveys was mailed in January 2010 to those who did not respond to the first mailing.

Of the 65 surveys mailed to local farmers, 29 were completed (to various degrees) and returned; this represents a response rate of approximately 45 percent. The Genesee Valley Conservancy (GVC) provided valuable assistance to the Town by compiling the survey data. Once compiled, CHA analyzed and summarized the results. Key survey results include the following:

- The returned surveys accounted for more than 80 parcels involved in agriculture in the Town.
- Approximately 77% of the parcels were farmed by the property owner, while 23% of the parcels were farmed by someone else.
- Approximately 80% of multiple parcels being farmed were contiguous, while 20% of multiple parcels being farmed were identified as being scattered throughout the Town.
- Approximately 74% of the respondents indicated that they own or rent farmland outside of the Town of Groveland.
- Approximately 88% of the respondents indicated they are farming their land.
- Approximately 65% of the respondents indicated that farming was their primary source of income.
- When asked how long their land has been farmed by their family, respondents indicated the following:
 - 60% between 0-50 years
 - 16% between 50-100 years
 - 8% between 100-150 years
 - 16% more than 150 years.
- When asked how long their land has been farmed by others, respondents indicated the following:
 - 38% between 0-50 years
 - 0% between 50-100 years
 - 15% between 100-150 years
 - 46% more than 150 years
- Tillable cropland was the most common agricultural use identified by respondents.
- Approximately 57% of respondents are the primary farm operator.
- Approximately 30% of respondents indicated that they employ others on the farm.
- Approximately 94% of respondents indicated that they grow crops on the farm.

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- Approximately 42% of respondents indicated that they allow the public on their property.
- Approximately 75% of respondents indicated that they have made significant capital investments to their farm during the past five years, while 63% indicated that they plan to make capital improvements during the next five years.
- When asked to rank the following categories as either of high, of low, or of no concern respondents indicated the following:

Subject Categories	of High Concern	of Low Concern	of No Concern
Farmland Protection Needs	67%	26%	7%
Operating prices and profitability	69%	15%	15%
Aging farms and farmers	42%	42%	15%
Rising property values/taxes	92%	4%	4%
Conflicts with non-farm neighbors	20%	56%	24%
Encroaching development	36%	52%	12%
Public Infrastructure needs to support farming	32%	60%	8%
Loss of farm support, markets and services	56%	36%	8%
Fuel costs	60%	24%	16%
Labor availability/issues	32%	40%	28%
Financing/Insurance costs	46%	38%	17%
Agri-tourism/specialty farming opportunities	4%	76%	20%

A sample survey questionnaire is provided in Appendix B.

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Existing Conditions

Town of Groveland’s Setting

The Town of Groveland is a rural farming community located in the central portion of Livingston County, New York approximately 45 miles southwest of the City of Rochester (see Figure 2-1). The Town is bordered by rural towns including Geneseo to the north, Conesus to the east, West Sparta and Sparta to the south, and Mount Morris to the west. Conesus Lake, one of the Finger Lakes, forms the eastern boundary of the Town.

Interstate 390 is the primary highway into Groveland oriented generally north to south in the western portion of the Town. I-390 is a significant connective highway between Rochester and the Southern Tier of New York, and plays a major role in the movement of people and the shipment of goods, including farm products. This corridor has experienced some recent changes in land use as growth out of the Rochester area moves southward from Monroe County. This highway serves as a growth corridor that has stimulated growth along some portions of its course throughout the region. The villages of Geneseo about five miles north of Groveland, and Mount Morris about four miles west of Groveland, are the two nearest population centers. Both of these villages are directly connected to I-390 by interchanges and State roadways, as is the Town of Groveland along NYS Route 408 near Hampton Corners and along NYS Route 36 south of Sonyea.

Lands in Agriculture

The Town of Groveland is known as a farming community, and its predominant form of land use is agriculture (see Figure 2-2). According to New York State Office of Real Property Service (RPS) data obtained from Livingston County, Groveland contains approximately 920 land use parcels or properties. Of this total, approximately 140 parcels, or about 15% of all properties, are designated as agricultural. In terms of geographic area, however, agricultural lands overwhelmingly dominate all other uses. Agricultural land uses cover approximately 16,979 acres of land in Groveland, or 67% of the total land area. This calculation does not include any agricultural uses located on “rural residential” properties. Based on local knowledge, much of this land is also actively farmed.

Figure 2-3 describes land cover in Groveland, which is another way of illustrating existing surface patterns of land use and vegetation in the Town. Tax parcel boundaries are shown in this map to further illustrate the locations of pasture and cropland in Groveland, as classified by National Land

Use Data (NLCD).

Topography affects the viability of lands for agricultural uses throughout the Town of Groveland; Figure 2-4 overlays slope percent calculations upon a satellite image of the Town's topography. Generally speaking, the Town's highest elevations are located in its central land area; the topography slopes downward towards Conesus Lake in the eastern portion of Groveland, as well as in the direction of NYS Route 63 in the central-western portion of the Town. Lower elevations dominate the landscape in the vicinity of NYS Route 63 and the rail lines in the western portion of Groveland.

Agricultural and rural residential parcels are illustrated on Figure 2-5. This map also identifies those parcels that are included in Agricultural District #2. As shown, much of the Town's land area is included within the Agricultural District. According to Town data in 2009, Groveland has 61 farm operations on 139 separate parcels of land, most of which are contained within the Agricultural District #2. Groveland's primary farm operations include the production of dairy, cattle, hay, and field crops. According to Livingston County data, there are 10 active dairy farms in Groveland, most of which are relatively large operations. These 10 farms and associated lands account for approximately 15% of the agricultural land in the Town.

Agricultural Districts

In 1971, New York State enacted an Agricultural Districts Law (Article 25AA) that authorized the formation of districts to provide protection of farmland and farm businesses. The average Agricultural District size in New York is approximately 20,000 acres. Agricultural District # 2 in the Town of Groveland covers approximately 60% of the Town's land area. The district consists of approximately 16,126 acres, mostly located east of State Route 63.

Section 305-a. of Article 25-AA contains the following mandate:

“Local governments, when exercising their powers to enact and administer comprehensive plans and local laws, ordinances, rules or regulations, shall exercise these powers in such manner as may realize the policy and goals set forth in this article [*Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law*], and shall not unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations within agricultural districts in contravention of the purposes of this article unless it can be shown that the public health or safety is threatened.”

Agriculture Districts help protect farmland from development through a variety of methods. The use of agricultural districting is a common approach statewide. According to the New York State Dept. of Agriculture and Markets (<http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/agsservices/agdistricts.html>) the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Law Article 25-AA states the following:

“...authorizes the creation of local agricultural districts pursuant to landowner initiative, preliminary county review, state certification, and county adoption. As of April 2002, 341 agricultural districts existed statewide, containing approximately 21,500 farms and 8.6 million acres (about 30 percent of the State's total land area).

The purpose of agricultural districting is to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production. The program is based on a combination of landowner incentives and protections, all of which are designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-

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agricultural uses. Included in these benefits are preferential real property tax treatment (agricultural assessment and special benefit assessment), and protections against overly restrictive local laws, government funded acquisition or construction projects, and private nuisance suits involving agricultural practices.”

Prime Farmland Soil and Soils of Statewide Importance

The National Soils Survey Handbook defines prime farmland soil as “land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops”. Statewide important soil is defined as “nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.”

Groveland contains approximately 10,668 acres of prime farmland soils (Figure 2-6). Figure 2-7 illustrates the overlap of prime farmland soils and lands presently located with Agricultural District #2. The Town also contains approximately 6,099 acres of statewide important soil (Figure 2-6). Additionally, the Town contains approximately 3,488 acres of soil that would be considered prime farmland soil if they were drained (Figure 2-6). In total, these high-quality soils represent 20,255 acres of the Town of Groveland’s land area.

Based on NYS Office of Real Property Services agricultural assessment data, Figure 2-8 illustrates the relative potential productivity of soils throughout the Town of Groveland. Some of the most highly productive soils are located in the western portion of the Town west of State Route 63, and some of the lowest value soils are located along the steep slopes and drainage basins east of State Route 63. Higher value soils dominate much of the land area east of Route 63.

Environmentally Sensitive Lands

Environmentally sensitive lands consisting of floodplains and wetlands are illustrated on Figure 2-9. The floodplain of Canaseraga Creek is extensive, covering about one-fifth of the entire Town land area. This floodplain is bounded by State highways 63 to the east and 36 to the west. Interstate 390 and an existing rail line traverse this broad, fertile valley. The floodplain area also contains sizeable wetland areas. With the exception of Conesus Lake on the Town’s northeastern corner there are few other significant surface waters or areas of wetland and floodplain in the Town. Figure 2-9 also identifies several existing conservation easements and parcels where there has been an application for the purchase of development rights (PDR).

Figure 2-10 compiles onto one map the locations of prime farmland soils, soils of statewide importance and environmentally sensitive lands to provide an important perspective regarding farming potential in Groveland.

Census of Agriculture

The Census of Agriculture, conducted nationwide every five years with the most recent being 2007,

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is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. This Census considers land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, and many other important facets of agricultural operations. The Agricultural Census provides detailed information at a countywide level and also compiles data at the zip code level, but not the town level.

According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture the number of farms in Livingston County was 792, down slightly (-1%) from 2002 at 801 farms. However, the total acreage of farmland increased by 6% from 209,496 acres to 222,415 acres between 2002 and 2007. The average-sized farm also increased by 7%, from 262 acres to 281 acres. Statewide during this same period, the number of farms decreased 2% to 36,352 and the total area of farmland decreased by 6% to 7.17 million acres; the average size of New York State farms decreased by 4%, from 206 acres to 197 acres.

Also according to the 2007 Census, cropland represents approximately 75% of the farmland in Livingston County. Woodland accounts for approximately 12%, pasture 6%, and other uses 7%. The average age of farm operators in the County is 57.2 years, compared to 56.2 years Statewide. Males make up 85% of all farm operators in Livingston County, compared to 82% Statewide.

On a countywide level, Livingston County experienced some other noteworthy trends which included a market value increase of agricultural products sold in the two five year periods from 1997 to 2002, and from 2002 to 2007. According to the County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, during the five years from 1997 to 2002, the County experienced an 11% increase from \$75,000,000 to \$84,000,000, respectively. According to Census data, during the next five years the County experienced a 55% increase from \$84 million to just under \$154 million. The 55% increase is most likely attributable to an increase in milk prices during the five year time period.

The average market value of products sold increased 85% in the County from \$104,942 in 2002 to \$194,243 in 2007. Statewide the average market value per farm increased 45% from \$83,689 in 2002 to \$121,551 in 2007, a clear indication of the value of farming in Livingston County in comparison to the State as a whole.

Livingston County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

The Livingston County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board commissioned the creation of its Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan in 2006. The County's plan provides a series of findings and recommendations relative to land use conditions and advancing the agricultural industry in Livingston County. The plan found that the traditional agricultural base of farming in the County was transitioning from mid-size family farms to a new structure comprised of more large consolidated agribusinesses and smaller farms, often associated with equestrian agriculture. It was also found that this transition was occurring as development pressure moves southward from the Rochester area and threatens the County's high-quality farmland. The plan states that *"...the County should be proactively encouraging towns to support the retention of the best soils and most productive farmland in a manner that supports local development objectives."* This emphasis on co-locating a town's best farm soils with its productive farmland is considered to be a key priority of Groveland's Farmland Protection Plan.

Other key findings of the Livingston County plan that are relevant to the Town of Groveland include:

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

- Dairy accounts, directly and indirectly account for about 75% of the agricultural output of the County.
- Livingston County has one of the State’s highest concentrations of prime and productive soils, but lags behind its neighboring counties of Genesee, Wyoming and Monroe in average net farm income by nearly \$32,000 per farm operator.
- Regional agricultural infrastructure is strong, but vulnerable to changing markets, particularly vegetable processing.
- Though increasing, competition for land resources is not significantly driving up land values with cropland the most vulnerable to conversion pressure with annual loss rates of about 1.2%.
- Intergenerational transfers of agricultural operations are becoming difficult.
- There are significant gaps in understanding among policy makers, regulators, farmers, agribusinesses and other stakeholders.
- Although the nursery and greenhouse industry has grown in New York State, especially in metropolitan counties Livingston County has not been able to capitalize on it.
- Towns in the northern and eastern parts of the County are projected to have the County’s highest growth rates

The Livingston County plan also provides 13 key recommendations that may provide additional information and be relevant to, or have implications for, the Town of Groveland. These include:

- Developing an agribusiness retention, expansion and attraction plan
- Enhancing business development programs and more fully incorporate the interests of the agricultural industry
- Expanding education and training programs
- Creating an outreach and public relations program
- Developing a regulatory and policy action program
- Supporting entrepreneurship and on-farm skills development
- Supporting broadened access to capital
- Supporting regional agricultural leadership development
- Supporting farm-friendly county based land use policies and programs
- Actively support town based agricultural planning
- Investigate regional efforts to improve rural land preservation tools
- Support a Purchase of Development Rights Program in the County
- Promote understanding and appreciation of Livingston County agriculture to the non-farm public

The County plan also contains information on “Cost of Community Services” studies across the nation that show that farms, in general, pay more in taxes than they demand back in services by as much as 60%. Community services include but are not limited to schools, roads, and emergency services (i.e., police, fire, medical). In New York State, fifteen studies have been conducted that commonly show that farmland, open space, and forest land generate more in tax revenue than they receive in community services.

Finally, according to the County plan, more agricultural land in Groveland is owned outright by farmers rather than rented. Rental lands, however, help to continue agricultural practices in areas that

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

may otherwise become fallow farmland and abandoned. It also allows the property owner who is renting the land to retain/obtain agricultural assessments and/or benefit from a source of income from their land. More information on the County’s Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan can be found at <http://www.co.livingston.state.ny.us/planning.htm> .

Town of Groveland Zoning Ordinance Overview

The Town of Groveland regulates land use through its adopted zoning ordinance and map. Existing zoning districts are shown in Figure 2-11. Currently, the Town is in the process of reviewing and possibly updating portions of its zoning ordinance, which was originally enacted on October 19, 1966. Article III of that zoning ordinance was subsequently amended by adding Sections 32 and 33 to establish two new districts: the Agricultural/Limited Business District and the Agricultural/Light Industrial/Commercial District.

The present Groveland zoning ordinance contains seven districts that regulate land use Townwide. These districts include:

- Agricultural/Residential Use District
- Agricultural/Limited Business Use District
- Agricultural-Light Industrial Commercial use District
- Agricultural Industrial Use District
- Conesus Lake Residential Use District
- Conesus Lake Shore Residential Use District
- Watershed & Reservoir Use District (the Town is in the process of removing this district – see below)

Each district permits uses by right and allows certain uses by conditional permit. The following are some summary uses that are permitted by right or by conditional permit for each district. This is not an inclusive list of all permitted uses, and the actual ordinance should be consulted for a complete description of permitted uses.

Agricultural Use District (A Districts) permit all customary agricultural operations, structures and uses including farm dwellings. The A District also permits all uses by right and by conditional permit as allowed within the R Districts. Other permitted uses include ponds; bank earth products; veterinarian office and uses incidental thereto, riding academies, stables for boarding or breeding of horses, kennels for boarding or breeding of cats and dogs. Conditional permit uses include residential trailers and establishments for the sale of livestock and other commercial and retail use buildings.

There are no building height limitations, and all residential structures are subject to the restrictions outlined in the R Districts. Typical setbacks include a front yard depth of not less than 60 feet and a side yard depth of not less than 15 feet.

Residential Use District (R Districts) permit by right one and two family dwellings; churches; schools; libraries; customary home occupations; home farm and garden operations. Conditional uses include physician, dentist and veterinarian offices; apartment houses and multiple dwellings; membership clubs; overnight guest homes; auto courts; hospitals; convalescent homes; and retail businesses uses. Buildings are limited to three stories in the R Districts. One and two family

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

dwellings shall have minimum lot sizes of 20,000 square feet; multiple family dwellings shall not be located on lots smaller than 10,000 square feet. The gross floor area of a multiple dwelling shall not exceed 90% of the lot area. One and two family dwellings shall have a lot coverage requirement of no more than 35% and multiple family dwellings no more than 50%. Minimum yard requirements include 60 front yard setback, 15 foot side yard setback, and a 30 foot rear yard setback.

Agricultural Industrial Use District (A-I Districts) permit by right A District uses; manufacturing; terminal facilities; motor vehicle and equipment sales; wholesale and retail businesses; sales; storage and warehousing; food processing and packing plants; storage distribution and sale of bulk fuels, other industrial uses permitted by the Board of Appeals. Buildings are limited to a height of 35 feet, with lots having a width of not less than 100 feet and an area of not less than 20,000 square feet. Minimum yard requirements include 60 front yard setback, 25 foot side yard setback, and a 30 foot rear yard setback.

Conesus Lake Shore Residential Use District (LSR District) permits by right one- and two-family dwellings (seasonal and year round). Conditionally permitted uses include uses permitted by the Board of Appeals. Buildings are limited to three stories with minimum lot areas of 6,000 square feet. Lot coverage is 35% and minimum yard requirements include 75 foot front yard setback, 6 foot side yard setback, and a 5 foot rear yard setback.

Conesus Lake Residential Use District (LR District) permits by right one- and two-family dwellings; churches; schools; libraries; customary agricultural uses and accessory structures. Conditionally permitted uses include uses permitted by the Board of Appeals including educational and recreational camps, off street parking areas, and retail business uses. Buildings are limited to three stories with minimum lot areas of 20,000 square feet for dwellings. For other permitted uses, except agricultural, the lot area shall be not less than 3 acres; all conditional permit uses will contain a lot area of not less than 10 acres. Lot coverage is 35% for one- and two-family dwellings. Minimum yard requirements vary depending on use.

Watershed and Reservoir District (W-R District) permits by right all customary agricultural operations, structures and uses including farm dwellings; the digging of diversion ditches; bank products for retaining dams/ponds; and any building of reasonable proportion necessary for the pumping, storage, or treatment of water. Conditionally permitted uses include one- and two-family dwellings as permitted by the Board of Appeals, which follow the requirements for R districts. The Town is in the process of removing this district from its Zoning Ordinance and Map since the area contained within the district is no longer in use as a public water supply.

Agricultural/Limited Business District (ALB District) permits by right all customary agricultural operations, structures and uses including: farm dwellings; business, professional and executive offices; medical and dental offices and clinics; funeral homes; banks; employment agencies; artist or performing art studios; barbershops; government sponsored public buildings or grounds. Conditionally permitted uses include those permitted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Building heights are limited to 35 feet with lot areas not less than 100,000 square feet. Lot coverage is limited to 50% with the building footprint not to exceed 10% of the total lot size. Minimum yard requirements include 60 foot front yard setbacks, 25 foot side yard setbacks, and a 50 foot rear yard setback with a 20 foot landscaped buffer. There are requirements for shared curb cuts along Route 63 where possible and for landscaping buffers between residential and business districts.

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Agricultural/Light Industrial/Commercial District (ALIC District) permitted by right include all customary agricultural operations, structures, and uses including farm dwellings; light manufacturing; industrial offices; wholesale trade; specialty trade; motel/hotel; restaurants; vehicle dealerships and services; convenience stores; retail centers; printing and publication; storage units, and government sponsored public buildings or grounds.

Conditionally permitted uses include adult uses and those permitted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Building heights are limited to 35 feet. Lot coverage shall be limited to 50% with the building footprint not to exceed 10% of the total lot size. Minimum yard requirements include 200 foot front yard setbacks from route 63; 100 foot side yard setbacks, and a 100 foot rear yard setback with a 20 foot landscaped buffer. Landscaping requirements apply.

The zoning ordinance also contains a series of definitions, which is perhaps one of the most important elements of any local code; definitions are often subject to individual interpretation and possible confusion if vague. It should be noted that some definitions, many of which were originally written in 1966, describe uses that may have once existed at a much different scale and/or function than they exist today.

The Town of Groveland also requires site plan approval for the following uses: multi-family residential developments, mobile home parks, retail establishments, professional offices, shopping centers and mini-malls, warehouses and industrial, institutional, and commercial buildings or uses. Agricultural land uses are exempt, with the exception of roadside stands for the sale of agricultural products from a permanent structure.

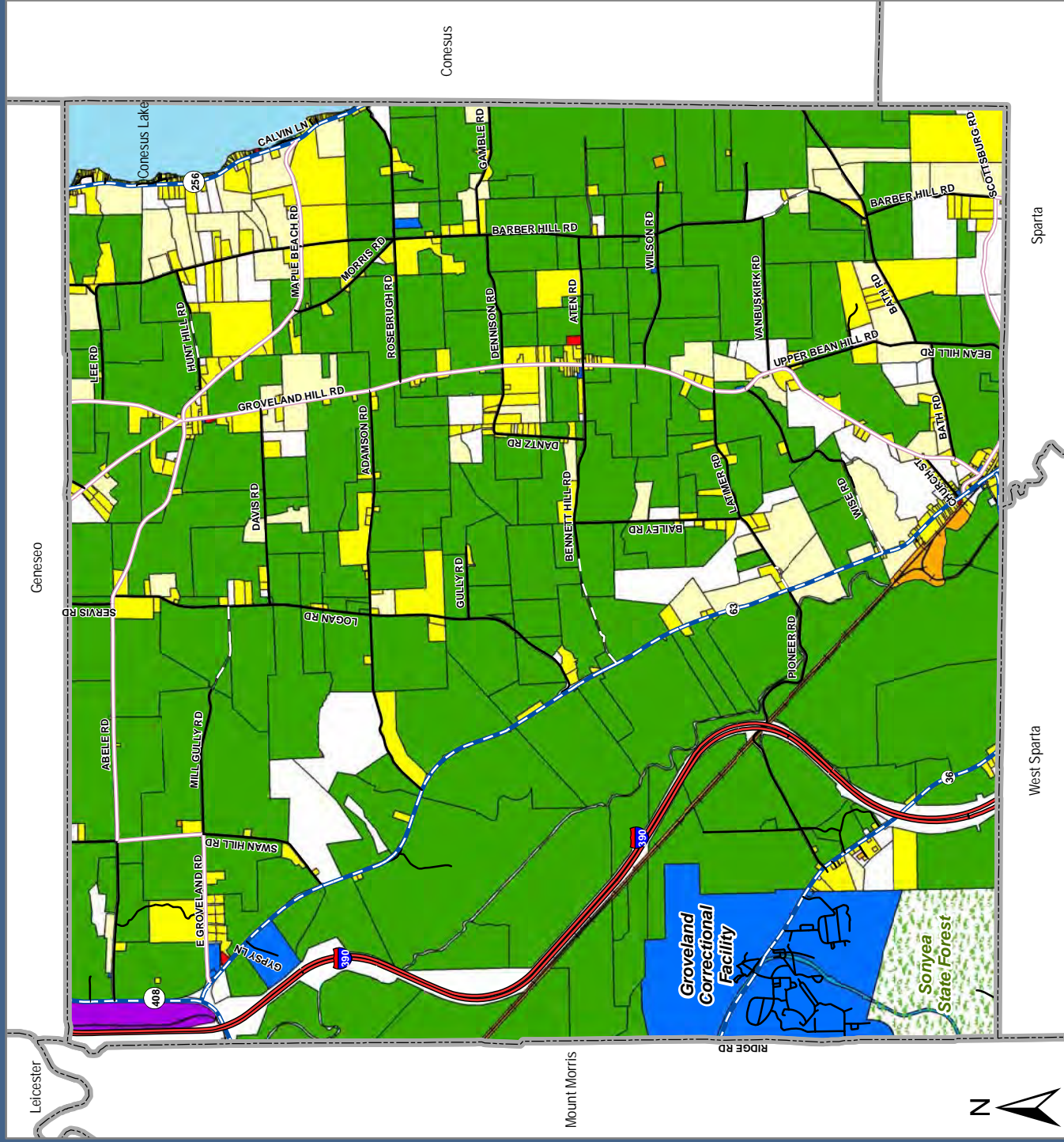
Environmental considerations and additional lot development constraints that are part of the ordinance include avoiding areas with slopes greater than 15%, bedrock less than 5 feet from the surface, areas of high ground water, soils with excessively slow or fast percolation, flood hazard areas, state regulated (NYSDEC) freshwater wetlands, fringes of waterbodies and watercourses.

Land use development patterns, and particularly future patterns of growth, are largely determined by and a consequence of existing zoning ordinances, along with the presence of important public infrastructure and topographic constraints. Therefore, it is important that local zoning ordinances and the type and locations of land uses that are promoted must be consistent with man-made factors such as highways, public water and public sewer infrastructure. These types of public infrastructure can have significant implications on growth and the potential loss of farmland. Figures 2-12 and 2-13 illustrate the existing locations of public water and sewer lines in Groveland. This information, as well as environmental factors such as steep slopes, wetlands and floodplains, are critical considerations when determining where future growth should be directed in the community in order to protect farmlands. This is discussed in Chapter 4 of the Plan.

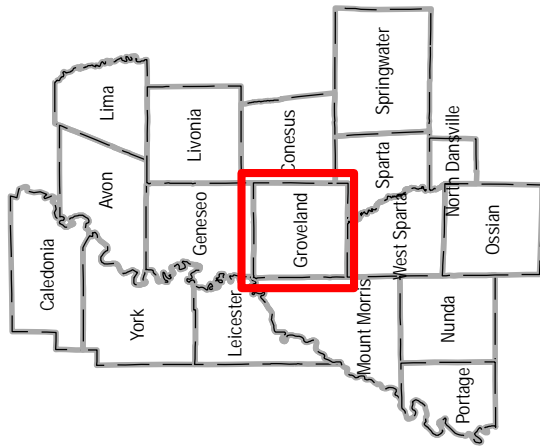
Town of Groveland

Existing Land Use 2009

Figure 2-2



Livingston County



Legend

Land Use

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Community / Public
- Utilities / Transportation
- Industrial
- Vacant

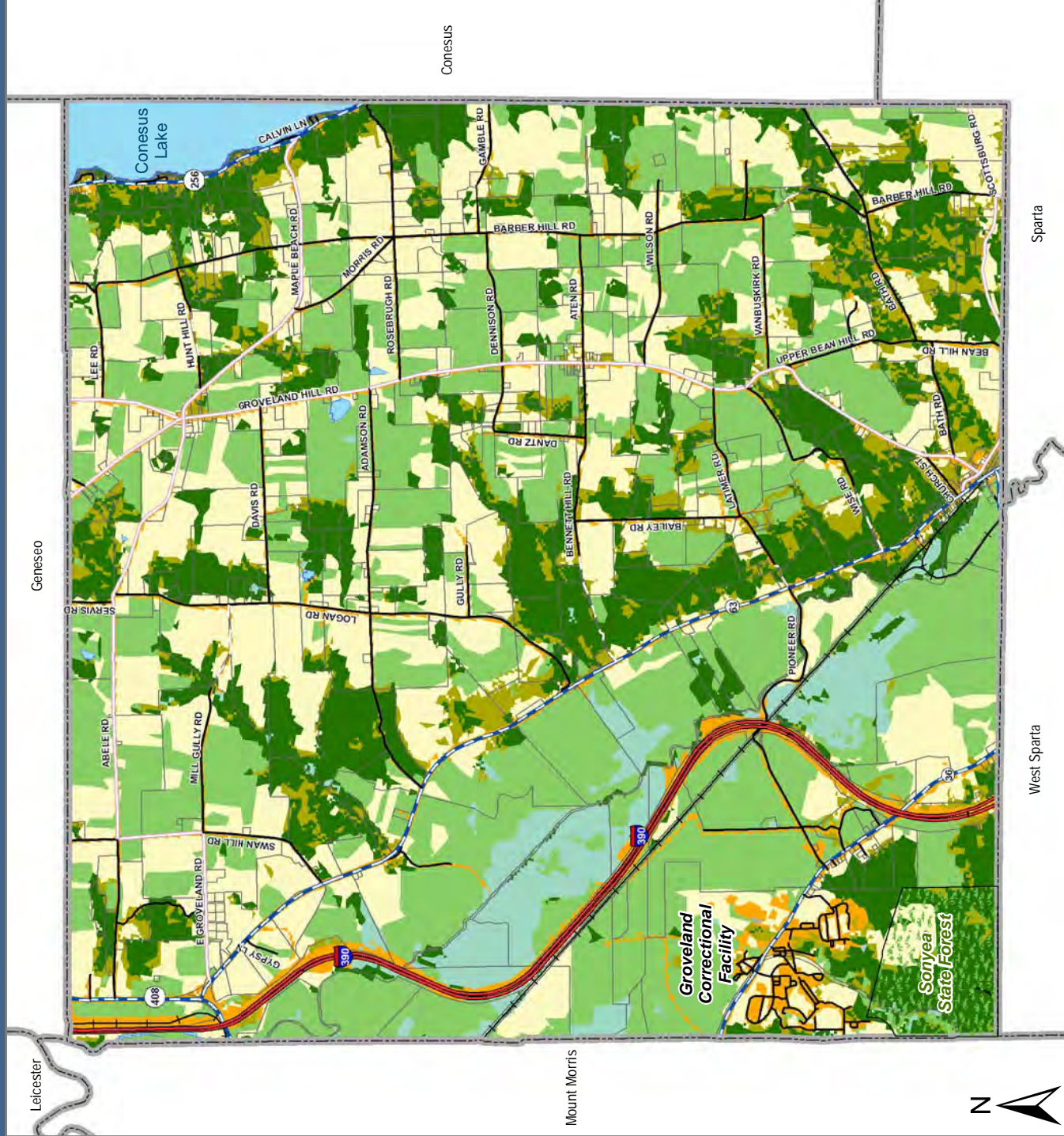


Source: Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, Property Class, 2009
Map prepared by CHA, Inc. and Livingston County Planning

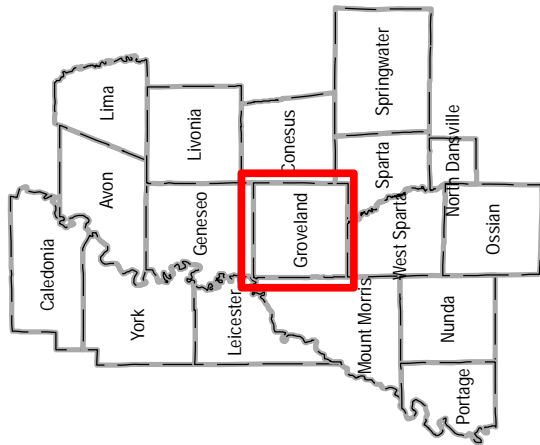
Town of Groveland

Existing Land Cover

Figure 2-3



Livingston County



Legend

NLCD Land Cover

- Water
- Developed Land
- Barren Land
- Forest
- Grassland/Shrub
- Pasture
- Cultivated Crops
- Wetlands

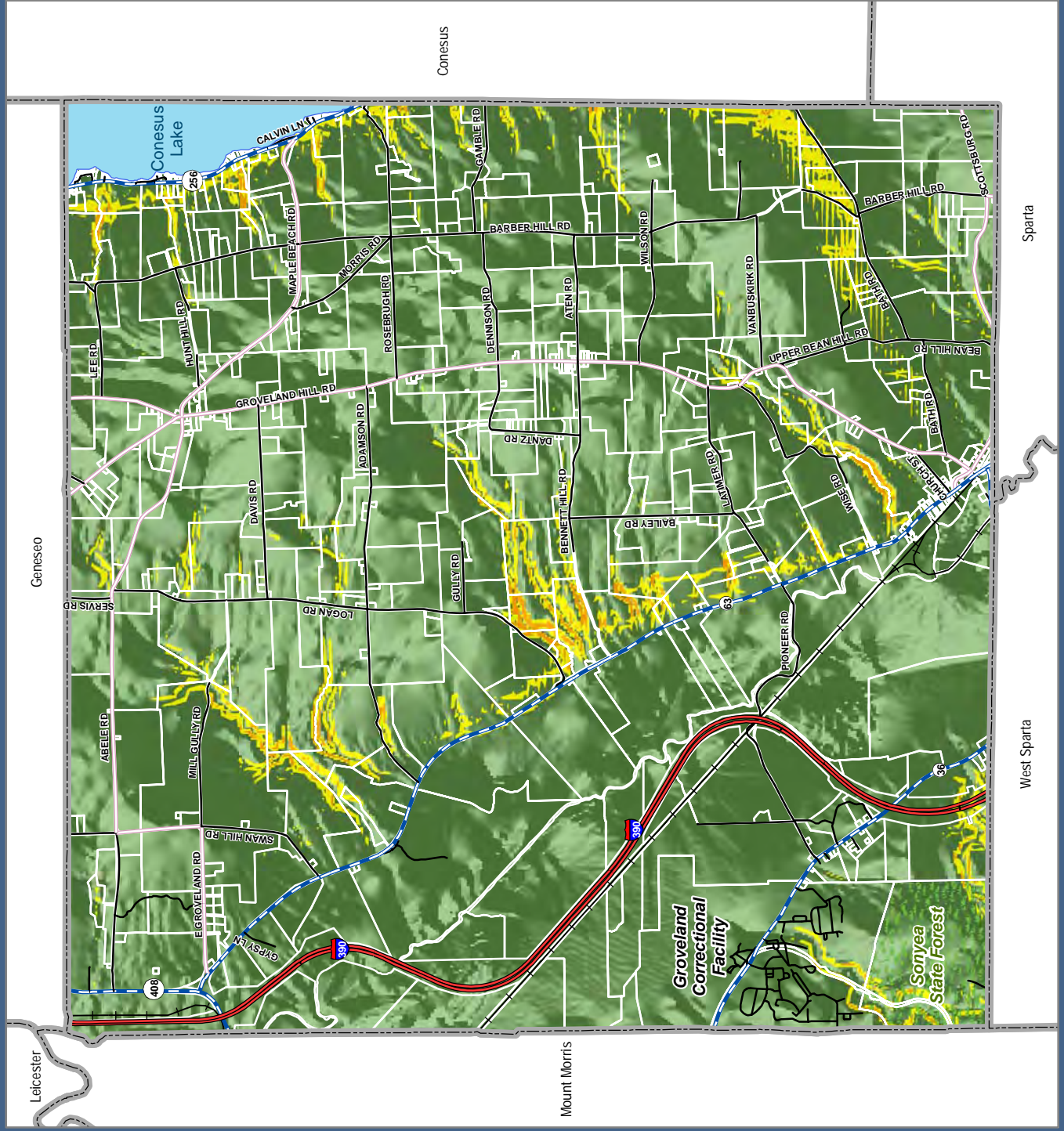


Sources:
 USGS National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD)
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

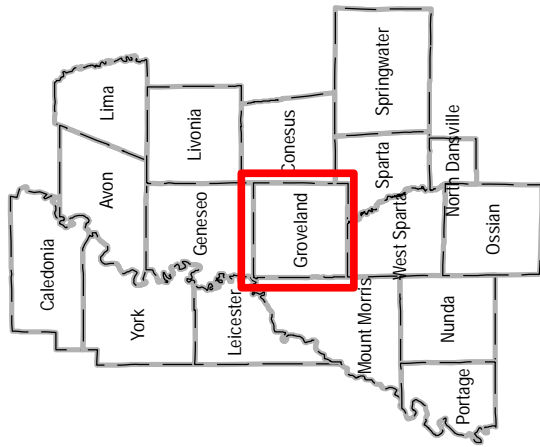
Town of Groveland

Topography and Slopes

Figure 2-4



Livingston County



Legend

Slopes

- 0-8% Slope
- 8-15% Slope
- >15% Slope

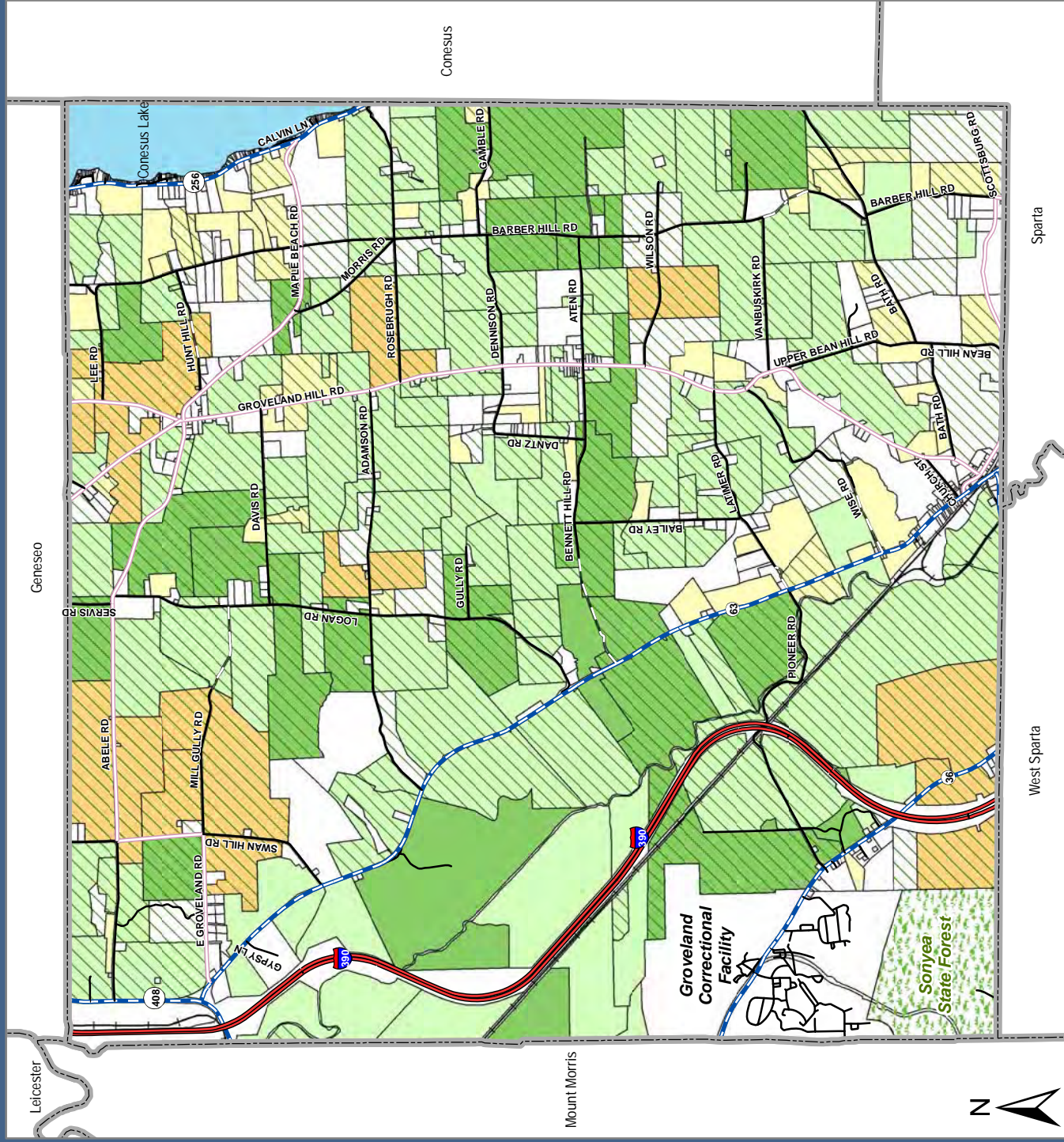


Source:
USGS National Elevation Dataset (NED)
Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

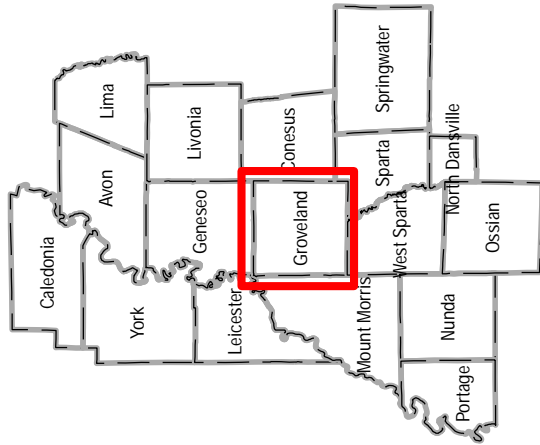
Town of Groveland

Agricultural and Rural Residential Land, 2009

Figure 2-5



Livingston County



Legend

- Land Use**
- Other Agricultural Land
- Dairy
- Cropland
- Rural Residential
- Non-Agricultural Land Uses
- Land in Agricultural District # 2



Source:
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Livingston County Agricultural District #2, 2007
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc. and Livingston County Planning

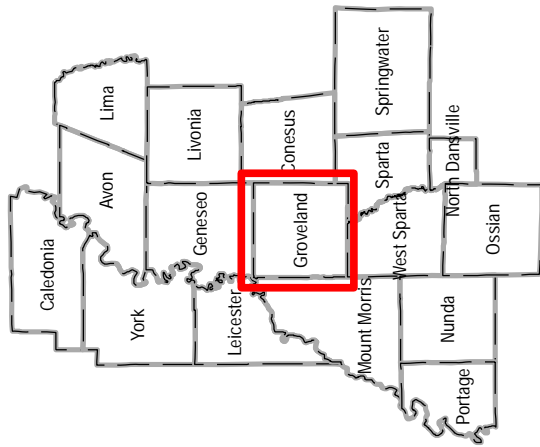
Town of Groveland

Prime Farmland and Soils of Statewide Importance

Figure 2-6



Livingston County

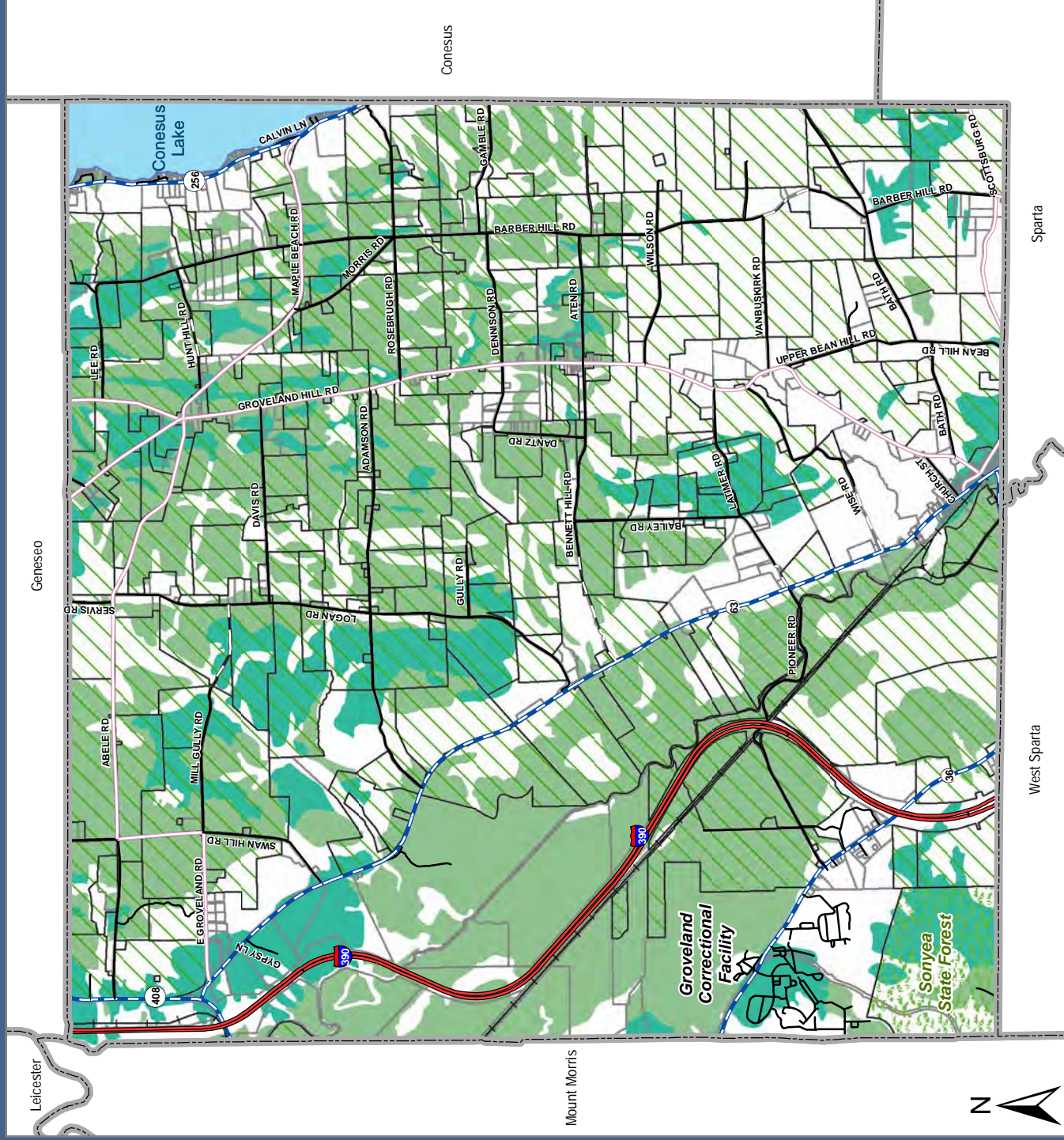


Source:
 USDA Soil Survey of Livingston County, NY, 1966
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc. and Livingston County Planning

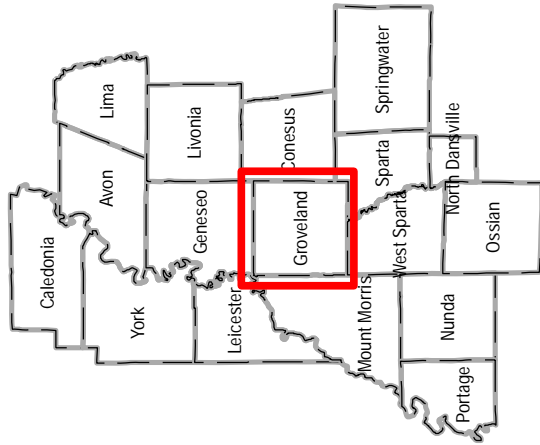
Town of Groveland

Prime Farmland and Agricultural District #2




Figure 2-7



Livingston County



Legend

-  Land In Agricultural District # 2
-  Prime Farmland
-  Prime Farmland If Drained

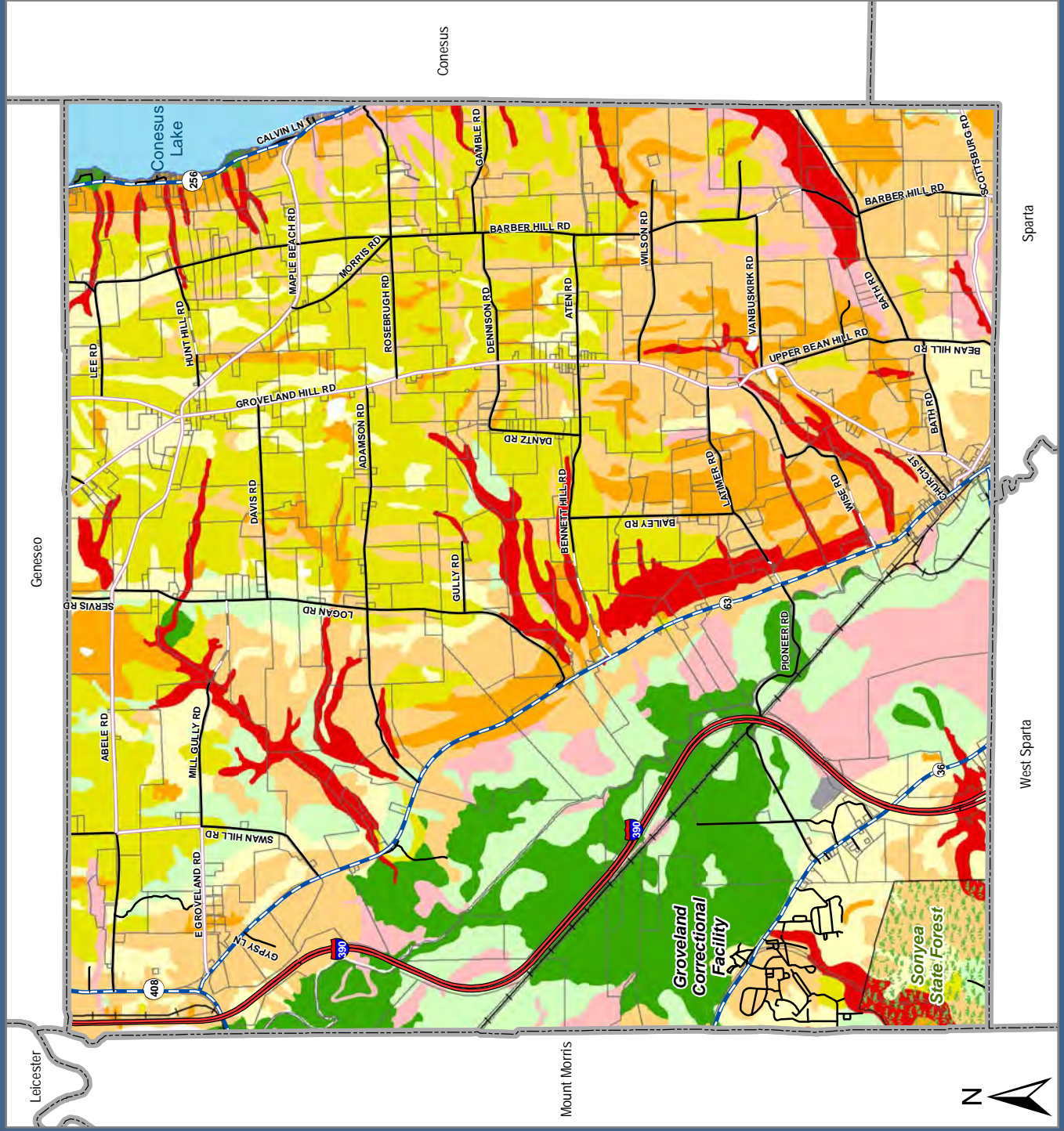


Source:
 USDA Soil Survey of Livingston County, NY, 1956
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Livingston County Agricultural District #2, 2007
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

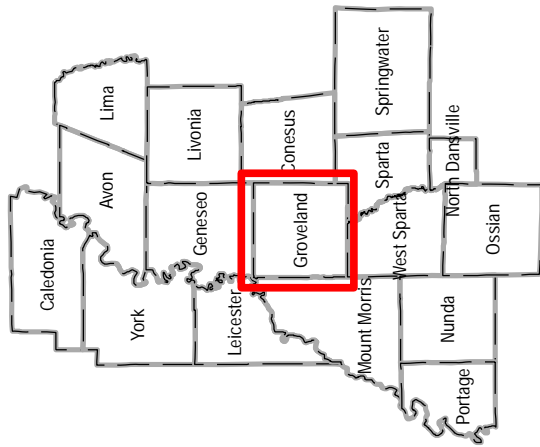
Town of Groveland

Agricultural Assessment Value of Soils, 2009

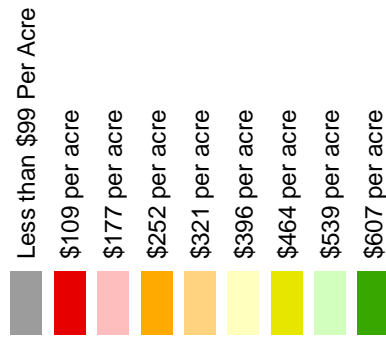
Figure
2-8



Livingston County



Legend

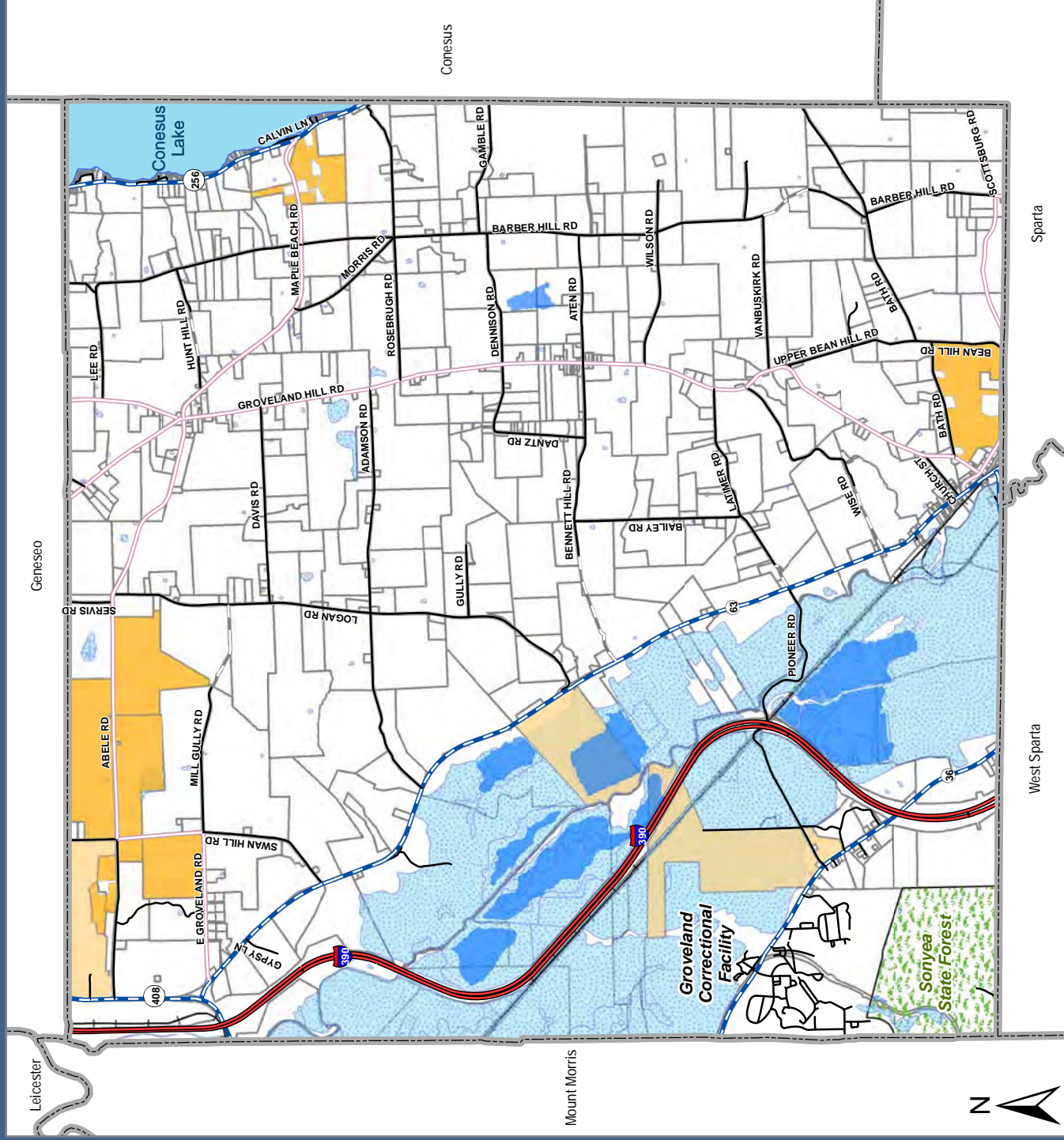


Source:
Soil Valuation Per Acre, NYS Dept. of Agriculture
& Markets, 2009
USDA Soil Survey of Livingston County, NY, 1956
Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
Map prepared by CHA, Inc. and Livingston County Planning

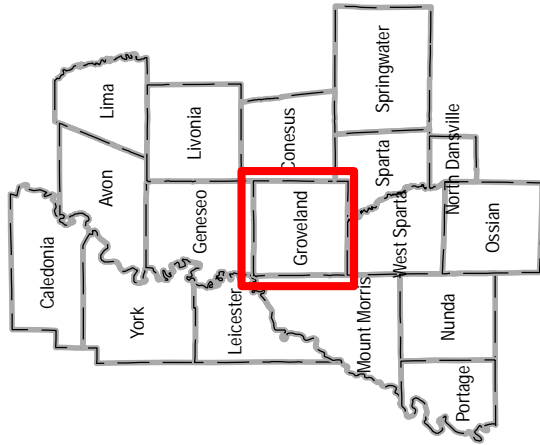
Town of Groveland

Environmentally Sensitive and Protected Lands, 2010

Figure 2-9



Livingston County



Legend

- Pending Purchased Development Rights
- Existing GVC Conservation Easements
- Floodplains
- NYSDEC Wetlands

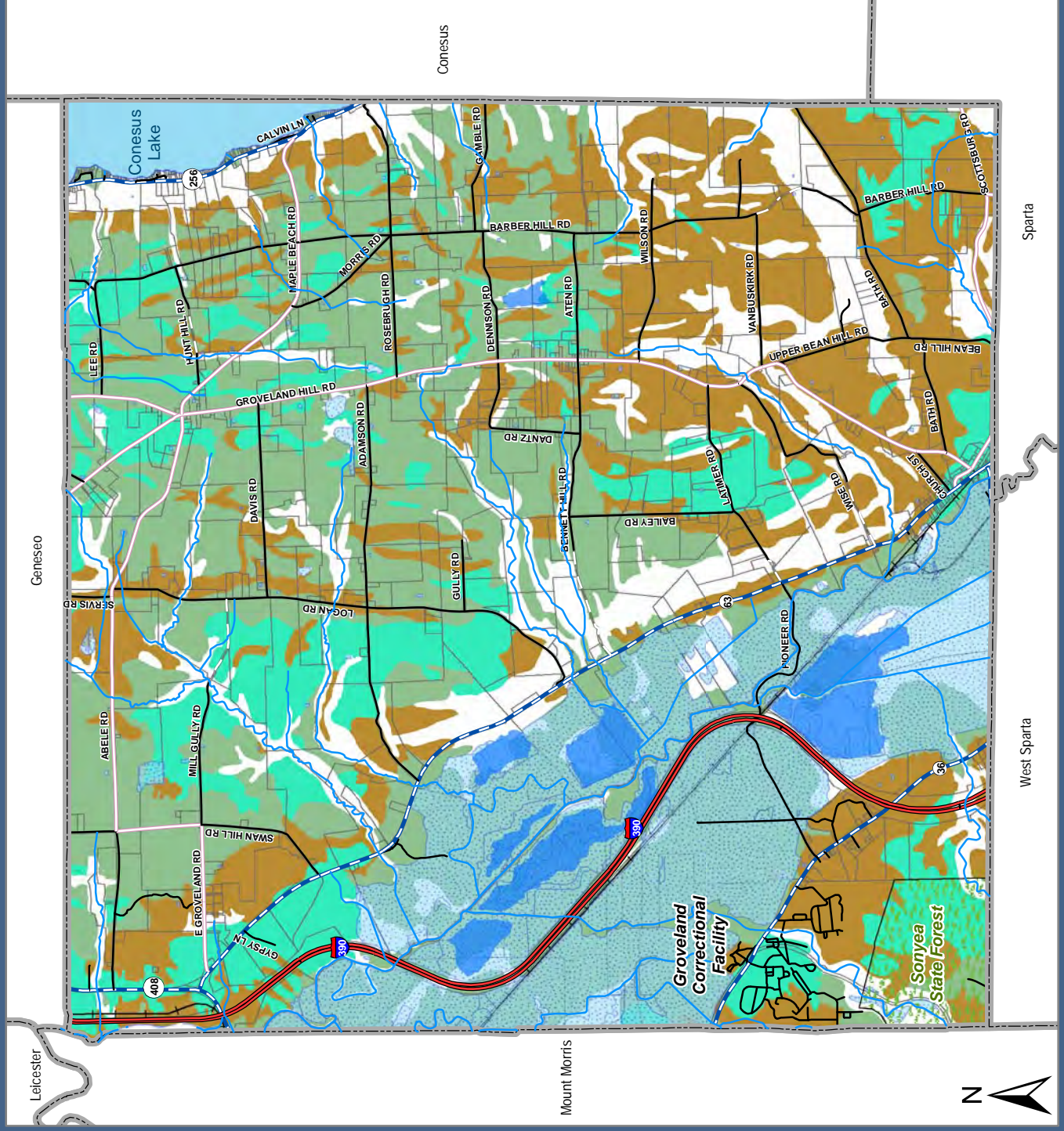


Source:
 Genesee Valley Conservancy (GVC) Conservation Data
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 FEMA 100-Year Floodplain Data
 NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Wetland Data
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

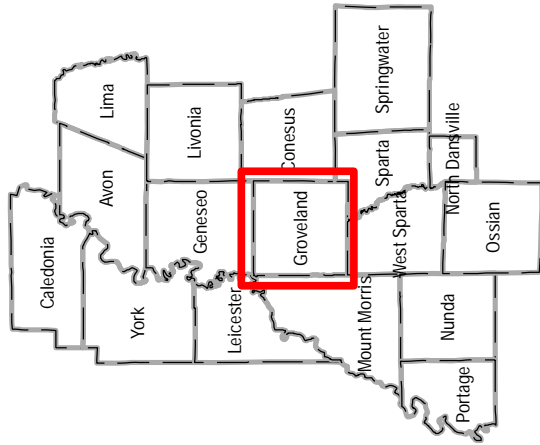
Town of Groveland

Prime Farmland, Soils of Statewide Importance, Wetlands, and Hydrography

Figure 2-10



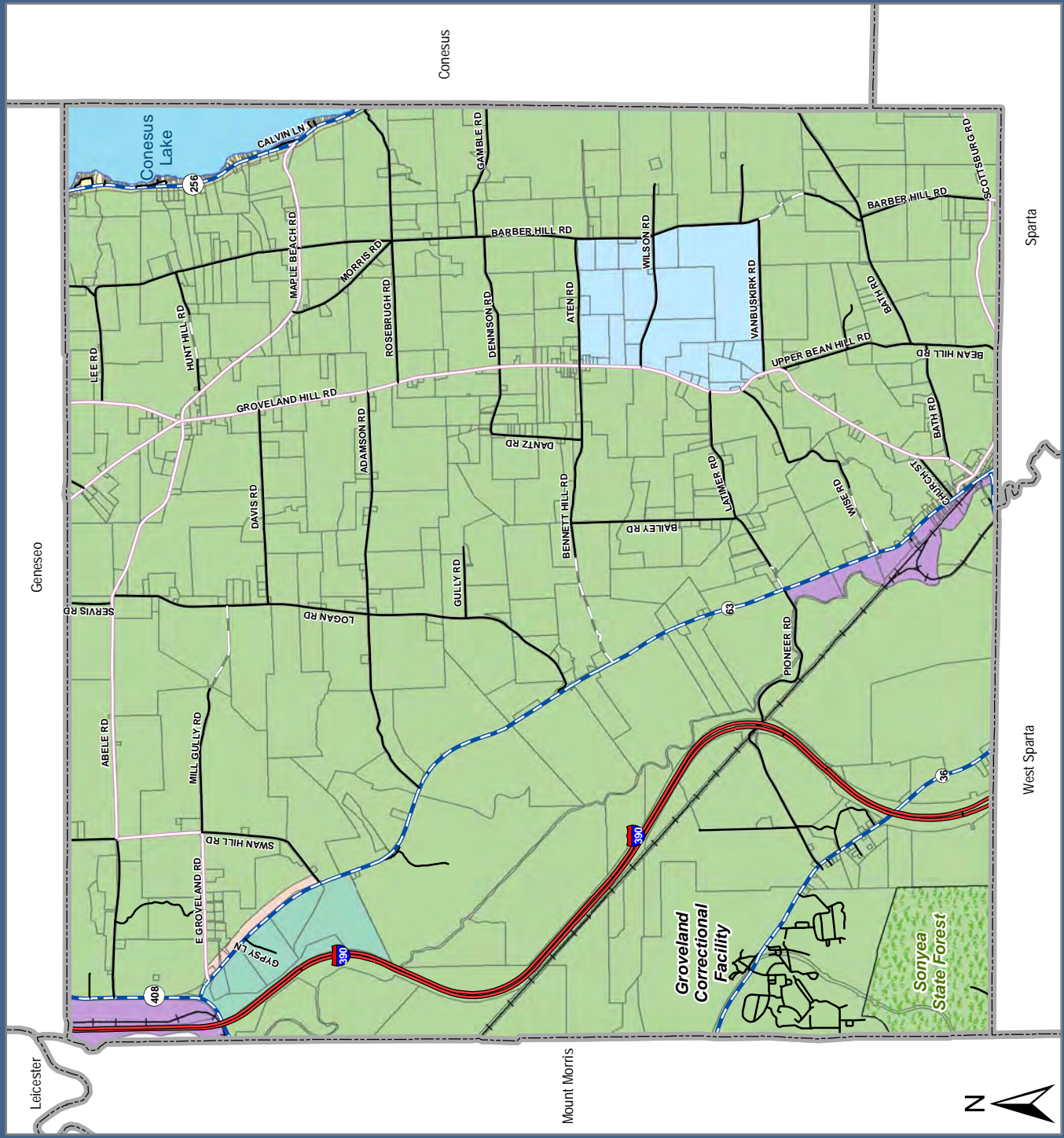
Livingston County



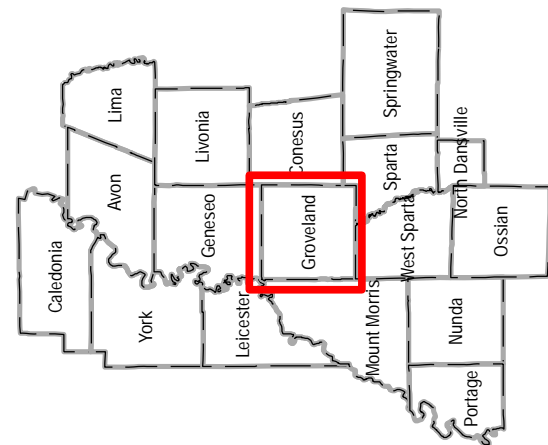
Town of Groveland

Existing Zoning, 2009

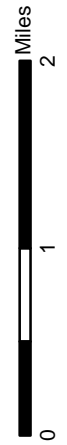
Figure 2-11



Livingston County



- Legend**
- Agricultural/Residential Use District
 - Agricultural/Limited Business Use District
 - Ag-Light Industrial-Commercial Use District
 - Agricultural-Industrial Use District
 - Conesus Lake Residential Use District
 - Conesus Lake Shore Residential Use District
 - Watershed & Reservoir Use District



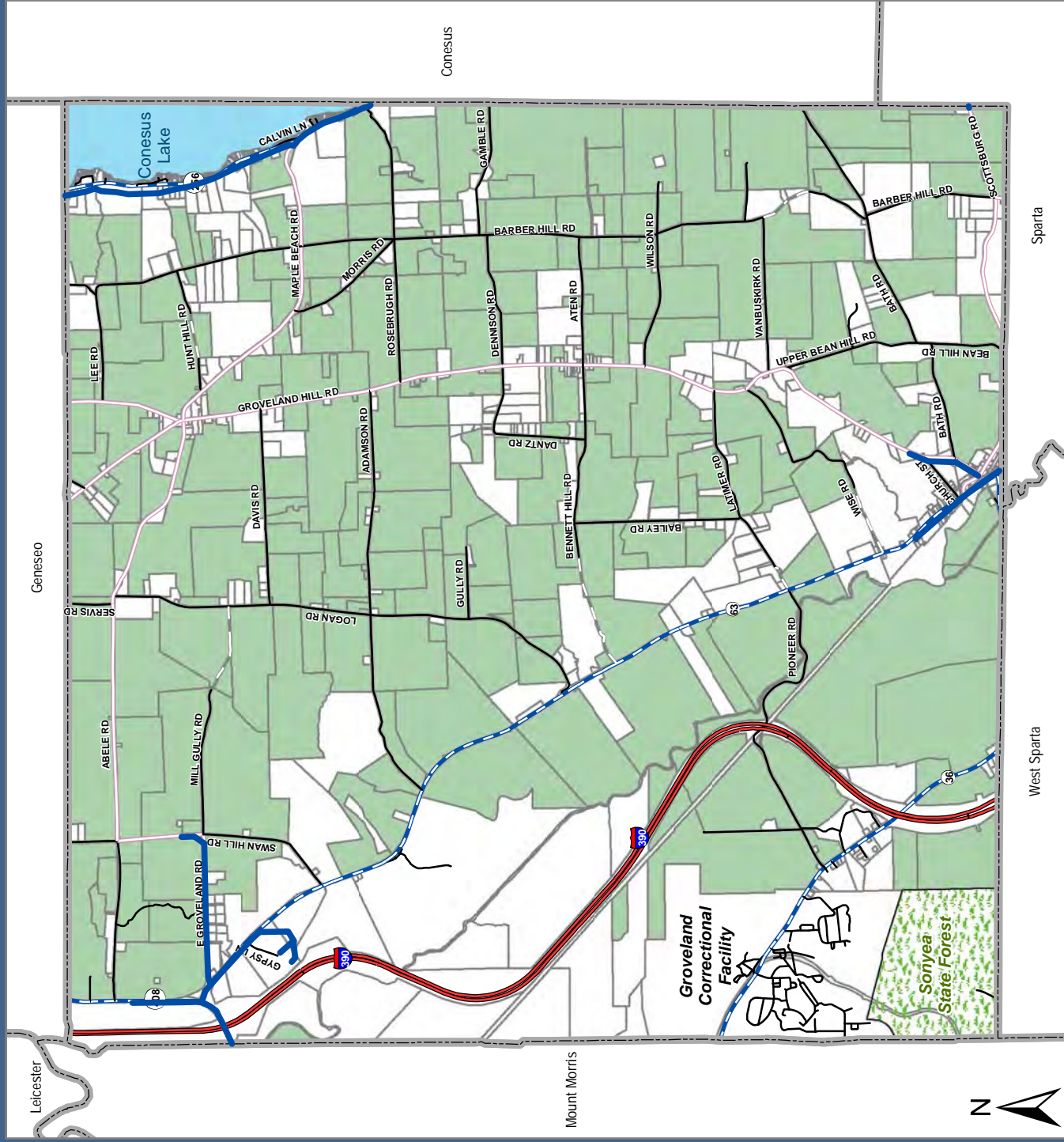
Source:
Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
Map prepared by CHA, Inc.



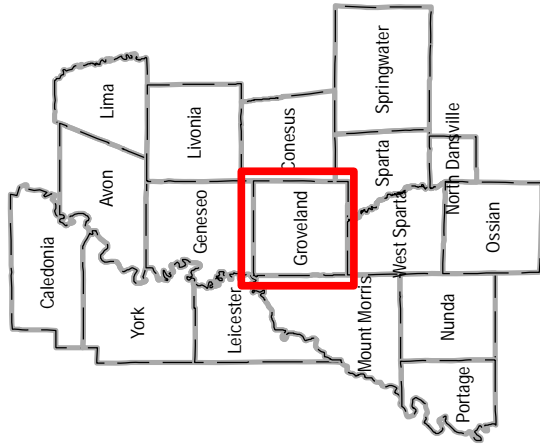
Town of Groveland

Existing Water Lines and Agricultural District #2

Figure
2-12



Livingston County



Legend

- Land In Agricultural District # 2
- Water Lines

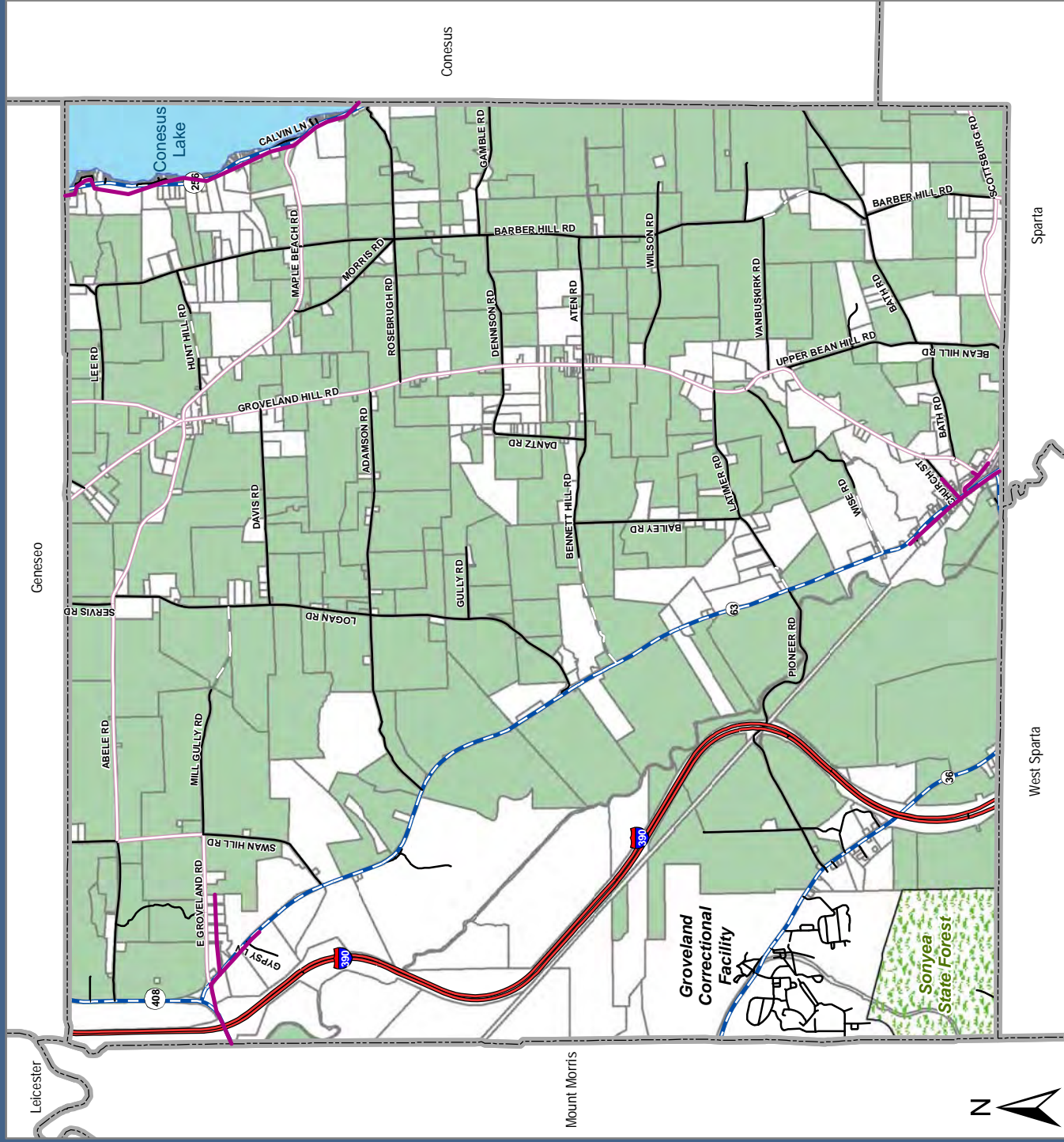


Source:
Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2008
Livingston County Agricultural District #2, 2007
Livingston County Water and Sewer Authority Water
Line Data, 2008
Map prepared by CHA, Inc. and Livingston County Planning

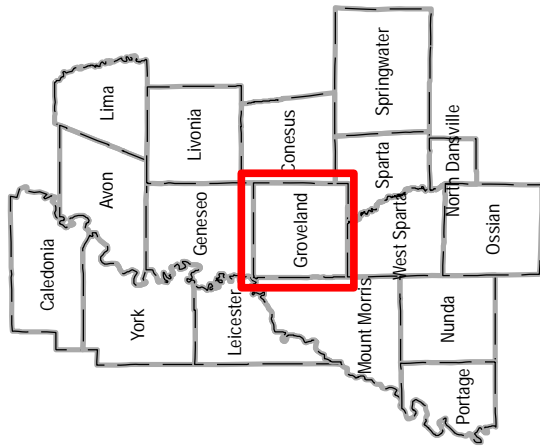
Town of Groveland

Existing Sewer Lines and Agricultural District #2

Figure 2-13



Livingston County



Legend

- Land In Agricultural District # 2
- Sewer Lines



Source:
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2008
 Livingston County Agricultural District #2, 2007
 Livingston County Water and Sewer Authority Sewer Line Data, 2008
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc. and Livingston County Planning

3

Vision, Goals & Objectives

The Town of Groveland Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan serves as a reference document for future decisions by Town officials and the community regarding agricultural preservation, land use development, and protection of important farmland resources. This section of the Plan outlines a vision, goals and a series of objectives for the community to achieve agricultural and farmland protection.

Vision for Agricultural Preservation

Local farmers, residents, community stakeholders, and Town representatives have established a shared vision for the Town’s future pertaining to agricultural preservation. On January 21, 2010, a public meeting was held to establish a clear vision for agricultural and other land uses in the future. Meeting participants offered a variety of ideas that have been compiled into this vision for the Town of Groveland. Our shared vision serves as a foundation to establish the goals, objectives and recommendations for agricultural and farmland protection.

Vision Statement

It is our vision that the Town of Groveland remains a farm-friendly community where agriculture and rural landscapes are the primary reasons why people choose to live here and call our Town “home”. This community supports agriculture, and although we acknowledge that change is a part of life, we like things the way they are. We hope that our rural lifestyle will be available for future generations to work productive lands and enjoy nature’s beauty and resources. Our Town will continue to be known for its prosperous farms, scenic hillsides, woodlands and fertile valleys. Development will be managed to respect, protect and preserve our farms, as well as our rural heritage and natural resources.

Agricultural Preservation Goals & Objectives

Goal: Protect farmlands by minimizing the loss of high quality and highly productive areas of prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance.

Objectives

- Identify large contiguous areas of prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance as priority farmland protection locations and encourage development where these irreplaceable resources are less prevalent or non-existent.
- Review and update as necessary the Town’s land use regulations, including zoning and subdivision ordinances to provide provisions for the protection of farmlands, prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance.
- Encourage property owners with prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance to enroll and participate in the State and County Agricultural District programs.
- Promote the purchase, lease, transfer and/or acquisition (including donation) of development rights and conservation easements in high quality farmland areas.

Goal: Encourage implementation and enforcement of effective Town land use policies and regulations that protect and preserve farmland, agricultural uses, and agricultural resources.

Objectives

- Implement and enforce effective land use regulations (zoning, subdivision and site plan review requirements) to ensure consistency with the vision, goals, and recommendations of this Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.
- Incorporate land use mechanisms, such as density averaging, into the Town’s zoning ordinance that can both protect farmland and allow for residential uses.
- Promote clustered forms of development and conservation type subdivisions.
- Follow assessment procedures of farmland properties and structures based on farming uses and not development potential and/or value.
- Work with property owners and community and regional stakeholders to identify priority areas for farmland preservation efforts.

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Goal: Protect, enhance and maintain the Town’s water and other natural resources.

Objectives

- Encourage farmers and all landowners to engage in effective stormwater management practices and restrict development and vegetation removal in areas of steep slope, dense woodlands and significant drainageways.
- Protect and maintain natural drainage systems including wetlands and floodplains as cost effective and efficient “green infrastructure” to the greatest extent practical.
- Maintain appropriate lot size and densities for residential development in those areas that rely on private well water and individual septic systems for wastewater disposal.
- Encourage denser forms of residential, business and commercial development in those areas that are or can be serviced by highway, public water and sewer.

Goal: Educate the community about the value of farming and inform residents, landowners, business owners, and developers about the importance of local farmland protection.

Objectives

- Conduct public informational meetings to inform the community about farmland preservation issues and involve local school districts and institutions with this effort.
- Comply with the NYS Ag and Markets law in the completion and dissemination of agricultural information.
- Encourage participation by local officials in farmland protection training sessions.
- Promote representation of local farms on Town boards and committees.
- Engage and encourage participation by local residents and farmers in farmland preservation.

Goal: Enhance economic opportunities for the agricultural industry.

Objectives

- Develop a farm product marketing strategy for branding and establishing niche markets that are unique to Groveland.
- Promote regional awareness of local farm markets and local farm produce stands.
- Encourage local agricultural businesses to stay and locate in Groveland.

Goal: Maintain a cost efficient public infrastructure network that supports agriculture's needs.

Objectives

- Seek grant funds to improve local infrastructure that supports agricultural practices.
- Improve Town-owned and maintained infrastructure including local roads, bridges and drainage culverts that benefit local farm operations and provide safe and efficient access to prime farmlands.
- Consult and collaborate with regional, State and Federal agencies on priority capital improvement projects that support local agriculture, including identifying funding opportunities, scheduling and long-term maintenance of public facilities.

4

Analysis & Recommendations

Land Use Analysis

Based on a review of existing land use and environmental data mapped for the Town of Groveland as previously presented in Chapter 2, a land use analysis was conducted to determine consistency with the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan. These were established in Chapter 3 through collaboration with the Advisory Committee and other stakeholder participants. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, a series of land use analysis map overlays were produced relative to several important land use planning criteria. This analytical phase of the Farmland Protection Plan process helps to identify geographic and regulatory relationships among important land use variables such as existing zoning regulations and properties included in the existing agricultural district. The analysis includes a review of existing zoning regulations and the development of criteria for evaluating agricultural use, potential and viability Townwide as discussed below.

Zoning Analysis

The Town of Groveland covers approximately 40 square miles of land. Current zoning regulations, as first discussed in Chapter 2, establish seven zoning districts. The approximate areas and the percentage of the Town covered by existing zoning districts are as follows:

Zoning District Designation	Total Acres	Total Square Miles	Percent of Town
Agricultural Residential	23,448	36.64	93.5 %
Agricultural Industrial	363	0.57	1.4 %
Agricultural Limited Business	52	0.08	0.2 %
Agriculture/Light Industrial /Commercial	322	0.50	1.3 %
Conesus Lake Residential	52	0.08	0.2 %
Conesus Lake Shore Residential	57	0.09	0.2 %
Watershed and Reservoir	788	1.23	3.1 %

The existing Agricultural Residential District is by far the largest zoning district covering more than 93 percent of the Town’s total land area. This is followed by the Watershed and Reservoir District which is being removed from the zoning ordinance and zoning map since the Town’s water supply

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

has recently changed and the district is no longer needed to protect the community's former water source. The 3.4 percent of the Town's remaining land area is covered by all other zoning districts.

The importance that the Town places on local agriculture is reflected by the name designations and the allowed uses in its zoning districts that are intended to accommodate agricultural and non-agricultural uses. Although well intentioned, current zoning categories and their associated regulations particularly under the Agricultural Residential District do not adequately protect the Town's most important farmland areas from subdivision and residential development. Although the pace of subdivision has been slow, fragmentation of farmland is occurring. Fortunately, the Town is not experiencing much development pressure at the present time, but this trend could change and the rate of development could accelerate in the future as demographics, housing needs, and local economic conditions change. The Town's favorable development potential is due in part to the large amount of existing farmland in combination with the general lack of natural development and regulatory constraints.

To illustrate this concern with existing zoning, consider the size and limited restrictions placed on residential development in the Agricultural Residential District which presently occupies nearly 94% of the Town. A quick estimate of development potential indicates that approximately 18,000 houses could be developed within the district just by assuming the following:

- Houses could be constructed on 1 acre lots – which is the minimum required for septic systems,
- Houses would not be constructed in areas containing wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes greater than 8%,
- 20% of the land area in the AR district would be set aside for public use and public infrastructure (roads, utility rights-of-way, etc.), and
- Residential setbacks include: a minimum 60 foot front yard setback, 15 foot side yard setbacks, and 30 foot rear yard setbacks.

The above scenario points out that if significant development pressures were present the implications for farming would be very significant. Even a small percentage of development interest could fragment large areas of existing contiguous farmlands jeopardizing the viability of many farms. Although development to any such extent may not occur in the foreseeable future any substantial increase in residential land use in prime farming areas of the Town could further fragment large contiguous blocks of farmland and alter farm access to the extent that some farm operations could be disrupted to a degree that affects their ultimate viability and profitability.

To better manage growth and protect agriculture and farmland resources, the Town of Groveland must determine what it wants its future development potential to be. One way of anticipating development potential is to base future growth on current and recent development trends. Town officials have indicated that the number of building permits received annually is relatively low and in the range of approximately six requests per year.

If development interest were to increase, for example, threefold to where Groveland receives 20 building permit requests for single family homes a year which is not unreasonable, it can be estimated that during the next 20 years period, approximately 400 new homes would be built to accommodate that demand. By again assuming the minimum 1 acre lot sizes, 20% of land dedicated for roads and

infrastructure, and an additional 10% of land restricted by natural constraints (steep slopes, woodland, etc.); then approximately 520 acres of developable land, possibly high quality farmland would be needed for new housing. Additional acreage would be required proportional to larger lot sizes. This simple scenario helps provide some rationale for how much land could be needed to accommodate future residential growth. If such residential demand were to occur it could take many different forms to develop, including the possibility that it could occur anywhere Townwide and in very widely dispersed patterns or in more concentrated areas. If highly scattered housing patterns were to occur especially in highly productive farmland areas such development could result in affecting farmland productivity and viability, particularly where large contiguous blocks of farmland might become fragmented. The affect on farming could be much less significant if some development is encouraged to occur in more concentrated areas of the Town on lands of lower farmland quality.

Agricultural Potential, Productivity and Viability

A planning level analysis of agricultural potential, productivity and viability was conducted to determine the general locations of the Town's most important farmlands and farming areas. A series of five analysis maps (Figures 4-1 through 4-5 presented at the end of this chapter) were prepared to evaluate farmlands throughout the Town of Groveland in very general terms based on available GIS land use and parcel data.

Six criteria were developed to evaluate farmland based on information drawn from the mapping of existing natural and man-made features as first provided in Chapter 2. All parcels in the Town were assigned and mapped according to their respective total scores in meeting the evaluation criteria as described below. If a criterion was met, then one point was assigned to that particular parcel and so forth for each additional criterion until all six criteria where applied to each parcel. These criteria were established as follows.

- **Agricultural Land Cover:** If more than 80% of an individual parcel contains agricultural uses¹, one point was assigned by GIS to that parcel. The inputs used for this criterion were based on land cover data for each parcel, as illustrated on Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2.
- **Topography:** If less than 30% of a parcel contains slopes in excess of 8%, one point was assigned by GIS to that parcel. In other words sites were assigned one point if the majority of a parcel, regardless of its size was relatively flat or gently sloping, therefore considered favorable for farming. Data used for this criterion were based on topographic information for each parcel, as illustrated on Figure 2-4 in Chapter 2.
- **Prime Soils and Soils of Statewide Importance:** If the combined coverage of prime soils and soils of statewide importance was greater than 70% of a parcel, one point was assigned by GIS to that parcel. Data used for this criterion was based on soils information as illustrated on Figure 2-6 in Chapter 2. Soils information and information on environmentally sensitive lands and slope were also combined as one analysis map as shown on Figure 4-1 provided at the end of this chapter.

¹ Based on USGS National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD).

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- **Acreage:** If the total acreage of a parcel is greater than 100 acres, one point was assigned by GIS to that parcel. Parcels that equal or exceed 100 acres are shown on Figure 4-2 provided at the end of this chapter.
- **Agricultural Districts and Zoning:** If a parcel is located in Agricultural District #2, and zoned to permit agricultural uses, one point was assigned by GIS to that parcel. Parcels that are located in the agricultural district and zoned for agricultural uses are also shown on Figure 4-2.
- **Potential Productivity:** If parcels have an average potential agricultural productivity soils value greater than \$400/acre, one point was assigned by GIS to that parcel. Parcels with agricultural assessment soil values ranging from less than \$200/acre to greater than \$500/acre (values on these maps represent a spatially weighted average of potential agricultural productivity)² are shown on Figure 4-3 provided at the end of this chapter. Figure 4-4 identifies the same soils value information, but is shown as an overlay to existing land use categories.

For purposes of this analysis, all agricultural, rural residential and vacant properties are considered to have at least some agricultural potential. Properties categorized as other existing land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, etc., likely present challenges for conversion to agricultural land use, and therefore were not considered as having much, if any, potential for agriculture.

Total scores for all parcels were computed and compiled using GIS. A maximum possible score of six points indicates those properties most likely to be considered either best suited to, or most viable and in use for agriculture. Conversely, a minimum possible score of zero points seemingly indicates lands least suited for agricultural uses, perhaps due to existing natural features, for example steep slopes, parcel size, or previous development of that parcel. Compiled scores were assigned and mapped on Figure 4-5 as follows:

- **High Agricultural Potential and/or Use:** Properties meeting 5 or 6 of the parcel rating criteria or in other words scoring 5-6 points
- **Moderate Agricultural Potential and/or Use:** Properties meeting 3 or 4 of the parcel rating criteria
- **Some Agricultural Potential and/or Use:** Properties meeting 1 or 2 of the parcel rating criteria

A small number of parcels were given some additional consideration in determining agricultural potential and viability based on unique known conditions that could not be accounted for by the rating criteria. Ratings for these parcels were adjusted accordingly. Although the analysis is somewhat simplistic and dependent on available data, it does provide some degree of confidence in identifying the locations of large areas of contiguous farmland that possess important characteristics that contribute to agricultural potential and viability.

² Based on NYS Real Property Services data.

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Elevation contours, significant woodlands and parcels with non-agricultural uses are overlaid onto Figure 4-5 to provide additional context to farming locations and to demonstrate the important roles that topography, wooded areas and non-farm uses may play in determining the extent of farming in Groveland. Agricultural potential is highly influenced by topography, particularly where abrupt changes in elevation occur. Figure 4-5 also illustrates the extent that non-agricultural development, for example residential uses, occurs in farming areas. Properties with moderate to high agricultural potential and/or use as shown in Figure 4-5 are illustrated in the two darker shades of green. These lands are considered to be the most important farming locations in the Town, perhaps with some exceptions depending on localized characteristics that cannot be accounted for by this more regional analysis.

The analysis indicates that that the highest-potential, most productive and/or the most viable farmlands are concentrated in several areas of the Town including:

- In the higher elevations of the Town north of Wilson Road, west of Barber Hill Road, and east of Logan Road,
- North and south of East Groveland and Abele Roads in the northwestern portion of the Town, and
- In lower elevations east and west of I-390 and west of NYS Route 63 in the southwestern quadrant of the Town.

Generally speaking, the analysis confirms that the Town of Groveland consists of very large contiguous areas of moderate to high-quality land for agriculture. The analysis is intended to help identify some of the locational differences among properties within the Town and determine areas that may be in most need for farmland protection, such as through conservation easements and purchase of development rights. The analysis is also useful for general community planning purposes, including its ability to direct decision-making for future land use. The analysis has limitations because of the availability of information and therefore, individual properties should not be included or excluded from farmland planning or conservation decisions based solely on this analysis. However, the mapping provides some insight to facilitate and inform decision-makers and landowners in Groveland about farmland protection.

Future Land Use

Information from the analysis described above as illustrated on Figures 4-1 through 4-5 will provide guidance to the Town as it considers how it wants to protect its farmlands and direct future growth and development. Consistent with the vision and goals expressed in Chapter 3 for preserving farmlands, agricultural lifestyles, and the rural character of the Town of Groveland, the analysis can encourage potential future development to locations that may be best suited for limited agricultural and non-agricultural uses. The information can also be used as a basis to modify existing zoning and other local regulations as necessary to protect farming and agriculture in the Town.

The review of current zoning and the analysis of agricultural potential, along with input from project stakeholders are also a basis for preparing a future land use map of the Town as presented in Figure 4-6. The future land use map reflects existing land use patterns and present zoning to some extent.

Figure 4-6 is also intended to provide further guidance for directing non-agricultural uses to two primary areas in proximity to NYS Route 63 in the northwestern and southernmost quadrants of the Town. These two locations are where sewer and water infrastructure currently exist to some extent and agriculture is less dominant. Both locations also provide access to State highways and I-390.

The viability of existing agriculture in the community as illustrated on Figure 4-5 must play an important role in shaping future land use patterns and decision-making in Groveland if farmland is to be protected. In most cases, large contiguous parcels of farmland that currently exist need to be kept intact from fragmentation by scattered development to the greatest extent practicable. This is not an easy goal to achieve because the development rights of all landowners in the Town must and need to be respected. Zoning and local regulations can only accomplish so much in protecting farmland since farming is dependent on many variables and relies on national and local economics and market conditions and a supply of potential future farmers to carry on their trade.

The future land use map is not intended to limit the subdivision or rights of a landowner's property, but it is intended to encourage development away from prime farmlands. Areas of less agricultural viability with or in proximity to existing water and sewer infrastructure and highways typically provide favorable locations for future development. These areas also offer opportunities for more diverse and concentrated forms of residential development, possibly at higher development densities and smaller lot sizes in comparison to other areas of the Town.

Until now the Town has lacked a future land use map to help guide growth and development and protect its valuable agricultural resources. The lack of a future land use map, and zoning that is consistent with Figure 4-6, has left much of the Town potentially vulnerable to farmland conversion to other uses. While Groveland is unlikely to experience strong development pressure in the near future, it is nonetheless important to define the patterns and terms under which residential development in particular, should proceed. The future land use map is also a clear guide to potential developers and businesses about where to consider locating new development that is supported by the community and at the same time supportive of local agriculture.

Some level of growth and development in Groveland is inevitable. How and where that growth and development occurs is largely a function of market forces as well as the Town's zoning laws, subdivision regulations and site plan review processes. As the Town experiences development interest in the future, residential and commercial areas identified on Figure 4-6 could provide suitable locations and opportunities for traditional small-town housing and business services to develop in Groveland.

By promoting residential and other forms of non-agricultural development at perhaps slightly higher densities than may exist currently in portions of the Town, the framework is in place to allow for a more defined hamlet-style or town-center mixture of uses while at the same time preserving the Town's important farmlands and overall agricultural character. Although not centrally located, the area in the southern portion of the Town along NYS Route 63 offers certain characteristics and advantages derived from its location that could make this developing hamlet into a more traditional center of Town activity with diverse land uses comprised of different forms of business and residential opportunities and varying forms of building styles, densities and architecture.

Farmland Protection Recommendations

Nine land use categories have been identified on Figure 4-6. These designations are defined as follows noting which categories are based on existing zoning districts and which are not, but could become new zoning districts.

Future Land Use Designation	Description	Total Acres	% of Town
Agriculture Protection Areas **	Agricultural areas in which agriculture is, and intended to remain, the dominant land use above all other uses. Some residential parcels are scattered within these areas mostly along local roadways.	15,952	64.8%
Agricultural/Residential *	Agricultural lands interspersed among low density single-family residential parcels and undeveloped areas that may support the transition from farmlands to low to moderate-density single-family residential uses.	6,304	25.6%
Conesus Lake Residential *	Single-family residential uses situated in a lakefront setting.	52	0.2%
Conesus Lake Shore Residential *	Single-family residential uses situated in a lakeshore setting	59	0.2%
Hamlet Mixed-Use **	Mixed residential and commercial/small business uses in traditional hamlet, town center or main street settings.	56	0.2%
Agriculture/Limited Business *	Small to mid-sized commercial/business uses providing goods and services to the Town’s residential and farm population.	39	0.2%
Agriculture/Light Industrial/Commercial*	Mid-sized to large scale commercial and light industrial uses with nearby hamlet and residential uses.	345	1.4%
Agriculture/Industrial *	Mid-sized to large scale general types of industrial uses.	300	1.2%
Institutional/Public **	Lands set aside by government, institutions or other organizations for specific public-benefit uses and purposes that may or may not be publicly accessible.	1,493	6.1%

* Existing Zoning District Category

** Possible New Zoning District Category

Areas identified on the future land use map as Agriculture Protection Areas are widespread locations of existing agriculture where farmland characteristics are most favorable for viable and productive farming. These locations are shown in dark shades of green on Figure 4-6. Some variation in the shade of dark green results from the information overlaid onto an aerial photo of the Town. These areas may include some small residential parcels interspersed among much larger agricultural parcels, but farming is and should remain the dominant land use in this category. These large farm parcels, often contiguous to other large farmlands are the most suitable candidates for farmland preservation, conservations easements, and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs. These parcels are some of the most viable and productive farmlands in Groveland and need to be protected from fragmented parcel development. Residential development and subdivision of large parent parcels in these highly productive areas must recognize their value for farming and consider implementation of

land use practices that avoid areas containing prime farmland soils and other agriculturally desirable characteristics.

Under current zoning these highly viable farmlands fall under the Town’s Agriculture/Residential District. The A/R district in its present format provides little protection to farming because it does not discourage residential development from occurring at the risk of creating future conflicts between agriculture and non-agricultural uses. As a result some fragmentation of large farms is already showing up and this is likely to continue. This fragmentation may not yet be at a stage where it is affecting overall community farming viability or the critical mass of farming that presently exists because the community has not experienced significant development or subdivision interest on any large-scale in these areas. However, this situation may change at some point in the future as growth and development continues to move southward from the Greater Rochester area farther into Livingston County and Groveland.

It is recommended that the Town amend its current zoning regulations to better protect important farmlands by discouraging the conversion of farmlands to non-farm uses in these highly productive areas. It is also recommended that the Town separate these predominant agricultural areas that contain highly viable and valuable farmland into a new zoning district consistent with the future land use map. This new zoning district is referred to here as an Agricultural Protection (AP) district which would distinguish large contiguous areas of highly productive and viable farmlands from other areas of the Town that could support other forms of land use.

The existing Agricultural Residential (AR) district would remain as a zoning category, but its location on the zoning map would be significantly altered to reflect those areas with some agriculture present, but residential uses may also be present and allowed to a somewhat greater extent than in the AP district. Both the AP and AR districts could overlap with the existing Agricultural District #2 as shown on Figure 4-6.

Other existing zoning districts would remain, but may need some modification in language and location to support some of the future land uses as identified on the future land use map. The Town may also want to consider creation of two additional zoning districts to reflect the future land use map and creation of a more traditional town center. These new districts include a Hamlet Mixed-use (HM) district and an Institutional district. These districts would help to encourage non-farm uses to locate in the two previously discussed development areas along NYS Route 63.

Additional recommended actions follow.

Land Use and Zoning

- Prepare a Town of Groveland Right-to-Farm law that protects farmers and provides a local process for resolving disputes that goes beyond the provisions of similar State laws. For example, establish by Town Board resolution a permanent Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) consisting of local farmers and agricultural experts to provide recommendation to the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board on significant development proposals and/or capital improvements that may impact agriculture and farmland. The AAC can also handle disputes and contribute to the amendments of local zoning and land use regulations.

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- Continue to work with local farm operators and landowners, Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy in identifying protective measures for productive farmlands based on soil, location, topography and similar characteristics in order to support agriculture and to direct growth and development, as well as capital improvements in roads, bridges, culverts, water, sewer, etc., away from high quality soils and highly productive farmlands to avoid interference and disruption to farm operations from increased traffic, nuisance complaints, and significant subdivision of large parcels.
- Update subdivision and zoning regulations to be consistent with the information contained within this Plan. Avoid reliance on conventional large lot zoning which adversely impacts farmland and agriculture which accelerates development of parcels and spreads development farther into rural areas, creating a form of sprawl. The resulting lots are typically too small to be farmed or rented for farming and are often abandoned or allowed to transition back into shrub and eventually woodland. It is important that local zoning be flexible for agricultural purposes and so the establishment of any lot size requirements for agriculture, such as minimum lot sizes for dairy farming as has been established in some communities should be avoided. Lot size requirements should be established for non-agricultural land uses.
- Consider density averaging or similar zoning techniques such as sliding scale zoning that set a fixed density for permitted residences within an Agricultural Protection Area district. Under density averaging as a technique, for example, say five residences are permitted for every 100 acres of land; however, each residential property must be between one and two acres in size. Thus, this approach would yield five 1-2-acre lots and one 90-95 acre lot being preserved for farming. Under a sliding scale zoning technique owners of smaller parcels may be allowed to divide more land into lots with maximum lot sizes established, for example at 2 to 3 acres per lot, than large parcel owners who could still subdivide, but at a different ratio and maximum lot sizes. The administration and record keeping for this process could be modeled from lessons learned by other communities in New York as examples of how to augment information on final subdivision plats to ensure proper tracking of parcels that have been subdivided and parcels that have been preserved.
- Consider requiring increased side yard and rear yard setbacks on residential properties in areas of high farmland productivity to establish larger buffers between residential properties and farmland to increase distances between uses and reduce the potential adverse effects from dust, noise, etc.
- Consider modifying road frontage requirements in areas of high farmland productivity and establishing front setbacks maximums and minimums and lot size maximums and minimums according to different areas of the Town and different land use categories to prevent the abandonment of farmlands caused by large narrow residential parcels that tend to break up large farmlands and discourage farmers from renting parcels that are no longer contiguous. For example, some areas may have lot size maximums of 2 acres. Other areas may have 5 acre maximums depending on existing farmland characteristics and potential productivity.

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- Incorporate provisions in Town ordinances for encouraging clustered forms of development and conservation type subdivisions in appropriate areas identified on the future land use map to conserve prime farmland and open space. Due to septic requirements the use of raised beds or community septic systems may be necessary depending on densities and lot sizes and should be considered.
- Similarly, consider allowances for cooperative farm subdivisions at some point in the future where a farmer may subdivide several small lots and each owner of the newly subdivided lot becomes an owner of a percentage of a farm, thereby allowing the farmer to continue operations.
- Encourage inter-municipal approaches to land use and zoning with neighboring municipalities to avoid land use conflicts and ineffectiveness in trying to direct development to suitable areas where it may have minimal adverse effects on farming. Work with Livingston County and neighboring communities to achieve common farmland protection and agricultural preservation goals on a regional basis.
- Streamline the local building permit and site plan review process so that farmers, in particular, have ready access to code enforcement, planning and zoning boards, etc. to obtain guidance and permits as quickly as may be necessary to continue farm operations, especially during growing and harvesting seasons in order to avoid delay and hardship and permit local farmers to fulfill their contractual obligations with customers and market schedules.
- Continue to work cooperatively with Livingston County and local agencies and organizations, such as the Genesee Valley Conservancy to promote the purchase, lease, and acquisition (including possible donation) of development rights and conservation easements especially in high quality farmland areas, particularly those parcels and groups of parcels identified as Agriculture Protection Areas on the future land use map.
- Support ongoing training of Town officials with regard to “Smart Growth” land use principles and public infrastructure planning consistent with this Plan and the future land use map.
- Create sufficient required buffer zones on residential properties between farmlands and residential areas to reduce the potential for nuisance complaints related to dust, noise, use of chemicals, etc. and encourage the preservation of existing natural buffers, particularly woodlands and stream channels. In some locations these buffers may exceed 200 feet in width to be sufficient in mitigating the affects of adjacent farm operations.
- Encourage protection of existing natural vegetation as buffers between adjacent farm and non-farm land uses especially in areas of steep terrain and near existing and potential public and private water source areas including lakes, streams, and groundwater recharge areas.
- Utilize the maps and information contained within this Plan as part of local planning and decision-making process and review and update the information in the Plan at least at regular 3 to 5 year intervals to maintain the document as an up-to-date source of information and as a

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useful tool to seek funding for ongoing farmland protection efforts and capital improvement projects.

Economic Opportunities

- Set aside a local source of funds, perhaps from the Town General Fund or through tax revenues, bonding, or some other means, to establish a pool of money for the Purchase of Development Rights and conservation easements on critical farmlands.
- Ensure that local zoning and land use regulations do not inhibit the ability to market produce and goods at local farm stands, road-side stores, or from conducting farm tours, u-pick operations etc. and revise existing regulations as necessary to provide support for the retail sale of goods by local farms.
- Provide for additional sources of supplementing farm incomes by allowing for the rental of apartments at farmstead dwellings, encouraging bed and breakfast development, and promoting local residential windmill development as an alternative energy source to reduce farm operating costs. Also allow certain forms of agricultural commerce and “cottage” type enterprises that are owned and operated by the primary resident of a farm parcel.
- Consider developing incentives that may provide further tax relief or other financial assistance for farmland investment, deed restrictions on non-farm development, and other commitments to long-term farm protective measures including conservation easements.
- Support training of individuals responsible for property tax assessments and encourage valuation based on present use of working farms rather than the potential value of lands for non-farming uses and development.
- Work with Livingston County Economic Development and Planning to promote and encourage local agricultural businesses to stay and locate in Groveland and conduct periodic surveys of existing farm operators and farm support businesses to identify potential issues and obstacles to farm businesses that may be able to be resolved at the local level before detrimental decisions on relocation or the shutdown of operations occur.
- Work with Livingston County and agricultural organizations to develop an identity based on how Groveland agriculture contributes to the regional economy.
- Aggressively seek and pursue funding opportunities and work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Division of Rural Development and the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets to seek grant funds to improve local infrastructure that supports agricultural practices.
- Involve non-farming members of the community in organizing farmer markets, farm festivals, etc. and work with area retail stores, schools, public institutions, such as the Groveland

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Correctional Facility, and local restaurants to purchase and promote locally grown goods and products.

Infrastructure

- Prepare a Townwide capital improvement program with local farm operator input that includes a maintenance and replacement schedule for Town-owned and maintained infrastructure including local roads, bridges and drainage culverts and drainage systems that benefit local farm operations in order to provide safe and efficient equipment access to prime farmlands.
- Work jointly with the NY State DOT and County DPW to schedule and prioritize infrastructure work on roads, bridges, drainage facilities, etc. to avoid possible disruption to local farmers and access to farmlands, particularly during critical planting and harvesting periods.
- Concentrate and direct growth to areas that have existing infrastructure consistent with the future land use map, and limit extension of public water and sewer to discourage development in prime farm areas that presently do not have such infrastructure or that will need expansion or significant upgrades in capacity that may result in encouraging non-farm development.
- Support the provision of high speed internet and similar communications media, including cellular phone services that can be an invaluable tool to local farmers in seeking and distributing important farming related information.

Farmland Protection Education

- Prepare a Town Right to Farm Law that provides information to realtors and possible new residents to the area with information on the community that is designed to educate others on the potential implications of living near active farmlands. This is particularly important in Agricultural Protection areas where farming is the predominant land use. Right-to Farm signs should be installed along key roadways into Groveland to alert prospective residents that it is a farm-friendly community with significant amounts of working lands.
- Create an up-to-date “neighbor relations” information packet for widespread distribution that outlines potential issues associated with living in a farming community and procedures for resolving disputes locally through establishment of the Agricultural Advisory Committee. These packets can be made available at the Town offices, real estate offices, etc. Under a local right-to-farm ordinance a local dispute resolution process should be developed utilizing the AAC.
- Seek funding assistance to create publications and materials for display and posting with website links from the Town’s website that promote the value of farmland protection, farmland protection techniques including the Purchase of Development Rights, identifies the availability of locally grown farm products, purchasing opportunities of land dedicated to farming, etc.

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- Educate the community by distributing information on existing county, state, and federal programs such as on the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs available in Groveland. PDR's are an important voluntary tool that compensates landowners for their development rights to protect their land for agricultural purposes. An easement is created as a deed restriction that runs with the land in perpetuity or in some instances for stated periods of time. The landowner retains ownership and all other property rights.
- Encourage public letter writing campaigns and local involvement in initiatives that support farmland protection efforts at the local, county, state, and national levels.
- Work with Livingston County and perhaps S.U.N.Y Geneseo students and professors to assist in periodic farmland land use inventories and updates of related information contained in this plan with periodic surveys of local farmers and identification of local agricultural economic trends.
- Encourage local schools and farmers to work jointly in encouraging school age children to understand the importance and benefits of farming in the community and sponsor farm tours and the distribution of farming materials to the schools.
- Work with local schools and civic organizations to promote respect for farming and education about the environmental benefits of farmland protection and the potential long-term problems associated with sprawl and the loss of highly viable farmlands. Sponsor contests and events for local residents and children to write essays, photograph agricultural practices as part of local competitions, and encourage seasonal festivals and markets in an effort to promote pride in local farming within the Groveland community.

Implementation of the Farmland Protection Plan

Plan Adoption, Monitoring and Review

The Town of Groveland Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan serves as an important reference document for decisions made by Town and County officials, farm operators, landowners, and the community regarding protection of important agricultural resources, preservation of prime farmlands, updating land use policies, and prioritization of capital improvements to Town infrastructure and services. Implementation involves undertaking this Plan's recommendations and action items as well as the adoption, monitoring and review of the Plan on a regular basis. Reviews should be conducted as needed at no more than two to three-year intervals with updating contents at no more than five-year intervals or as required by Town Board resolution.

Once adopted it is important to monitor the Plan's contents to keep it current as conditions and opportunities change over time. This is especially important with regard to updating the existing and

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future land use maps contained in the Plan. Monitoring is also important to determine the effectiveness of the Plan as its recommendations are implemented. The Town Board should assign responsibility for insuring that the Plan is monitored and reviewed by the Planning Board or an established agricultural advisory committee. Whether the Planning Board or a farmland committee is charged with its review, recommendations for amending and updating the Plan should be formally presented as a memo to the Town Board and made available for public review. Certain changes and/or additions to the Plan can be simply incorporated as supplements attached to the original document.

Procedures for monitoring and revising the Plan should be considered during the Town Board's approval and adoption process. Among these include:

- Establishing a permanent Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- Assigning responsibility for monitoring, reviewing and revising the Plan.
- Reviewing and updating the Plan as necessary with particular attention given to key components such as the inventory of existing conditions in the Town; the Community's vision, goals and objectives; and the Future Land Use components of the document.
- Presenting an annual evaluation memo to the Town Board documenting the effectiveness of the Plan and the status of implementation efforts in achieving desired outcomes. The memo should identify constraints to implementation, and summarize conditions and trends that have changed in the period since the Plan's adoption or last update; and
- Revising the strategies and recommendations to reflect changing circumstances, emerging trends, needs and opportunities, and expressed community concerns and priorities. This is particularly important when seeking project funding assistance from State and Federal agencies or farmland protection organizations that consider up-to-date information and community support as part of the application process for community projects for which funding is sought.

Key Action Items

The following key actions have been identified as important building blocks that the Town should consider and undertake as soon as possible as important first steps in implementing this Plan. Among these actions is the need to develop an on-going list of projects and funding sources to protect farmlands, maintain public infrastructure in support of farming, and pursue special projects of importance to local farming and farmland protection. Developing this list will require ongoing consultation and coordination between the Town and both public agencies and private sector organizations and institutions. The following information identifies important sources of technical assistance and potential project funds. Funding mechanisms may include the set aside of local funds, grants, low-interest loans, and donations.

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Federal, State, regional, and county programs for funding projects are constantly changing especially during the present economic conditions and so agencies should be consulted often. This is by no means an all inclusive list, but it does provide a basis for further research and use by the Town and others. This list should be supplemented with new information as it becomes known and referenced as a possible way to implement this Plan.

Action Item	Primary Responsible Parties	Priority	Approximate Timeframe	Primary Tasks Required	Possible Funding and/or Technical Assistance Sources
Approve Groveland Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan	Town Board	High	Mid to Late 2010	Town Board Resolution of Approval (following Plan Approval by Livingston County Ag. & Farmland Protection Board)	N/A
Establish Agricultural Advisory Committee and Plan Monitoring Process	Supervisor, Town Board and Planning Board	High	Mid to Late 2010	Establish Procedures by Resolution at Time of Approval and Adoption	N/A
Submit Plan to NYS Ag. & Markets for Approval	Town Board, Commissioner NYS Ag. & Markets	High	Mid to Late 2010	Submit Plan for Approval by NYS	N/A
Begin Review and Update of Local Ordinances	Town Board, Planning Board, & Town Attorney	High	Mid to Late 2010 and ongoing thereafter	Prioritize Reviews & Update Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances	Livingston County Planning
Prepare and Adopt a Local Right-to-Farm Law	Town Board & Planning Board	High	Mid to Late 2010	Consult with Livingston County Ag. & Farmland Protection Board	NYS Ag. & Markets, American Farmland Trust
Continue Identification of Potential Farmlands for Purchase of Development Rights	Planning Board, Farmland Committee, Farm Operators & Landowners	High	Mid to Late 2010 and ongoing thereafter	Consult with Local and Absentee Landowners/Farm Operators, Seek Funding Assistance	Livingston County, Genesee Valley Conservancy
Prepare a Town Capital Improvement Plan Considering Agricultural Needs	Supervisor, Town Board & Planning Board	Moderate to High	Early to Mid 2011	Seek Funding Assistance	USDA Rural Development, NYS Environmental Facilities Corp.
Prepare an Up-to-date GIS-based Inventory of Town Infrastructure	Supervisor, Town Board, Highway Superintendent	Moderate	Mid to Late 2011	Inventory and GIS Mapping of Roads, Bridges and Drainage Culverts	Livingston County, NYSDOT, NYS Real Property Services

Sources of Technical Assistance and Potential Funding Programs

NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets

www.agmkt.state.ny.us/

Agriculture & Farmland Protection Implementation Project Program
Agricultural Non-point Source Abatement Control Program (ANSCAP)

Livingston County

www.co.livingston.state.ny.us

American Farmland Trust

www.farmland.org

Cornell Cooperative Extension

www.cce.cornell.edu/livingston

Genesee Valley Conservancy

www.geneseevalleyconservancy.org

NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)

www.efc.org/home/index.asp

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

FEMA Grants and Assistance Programs

www.fema.gov/government/grant/bzpp/index.shtm

Buffer Zone Protection Program (BZPP)

USDA Rural Development

www.rurdev.usda.gov/ny/Mainprograms.htm

Water and Wastewater Loans and Grants
Technical Assistance & Training Grants
Solid Waste Management Grants

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

www.dec.ny.gov/index.html

Environmental Restoration Projects
Environmental Protection Fund

NYS Department of Housing & Community Renewal (DHCR)

www.dhcr.state.ny.us/

Housing Development Funds
New York Main Street Program

NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)

www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/smart-planning/funding

Town of Groveland – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

DOT Capital Program
Transportation Enhancements Program

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/

Environmental Protection Fund
Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act
Municipal Parks Grants

Heritage Area Grants

Historic Preservation

Recreational Trails Program

Land & Water Conservation Fund

NYS Barn Restoration & Preservation Program

Snowmobile Trail Development

NYS Office of Real Property Services

www.orps.state.ny.us/

Real Property System

Assessment Administrator Training

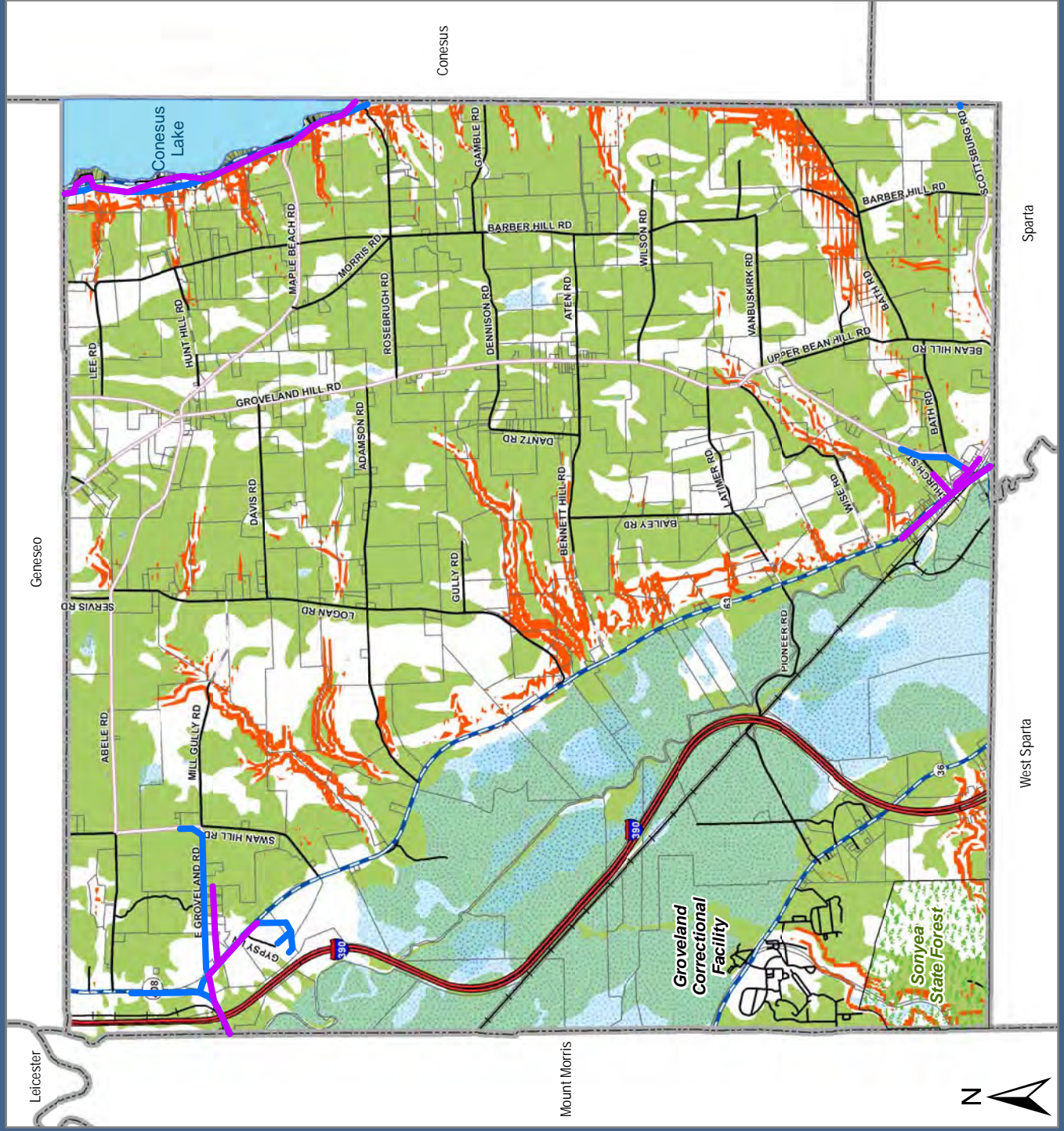
Consolidation Incentive Aid

Maintenance and Reassessment Aid

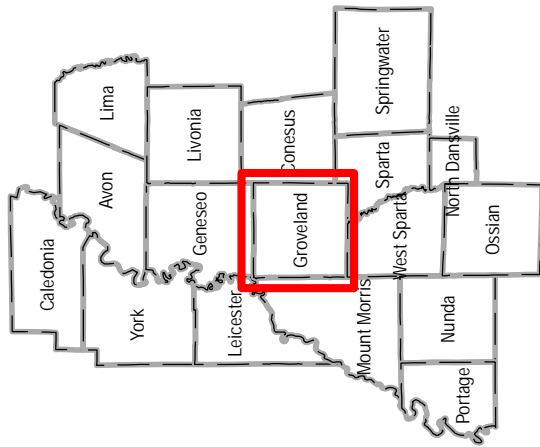
Town of Groveland

Compiled Environmental and Infrastructure Locations

Figure 4-1

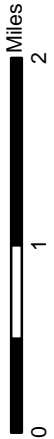


Livingston County



Legend

- Water Lines
- Sewer Lines
- Floodplain/Wetlands
- Slopes > 8%
- Soils - Prime and Statewide Importance

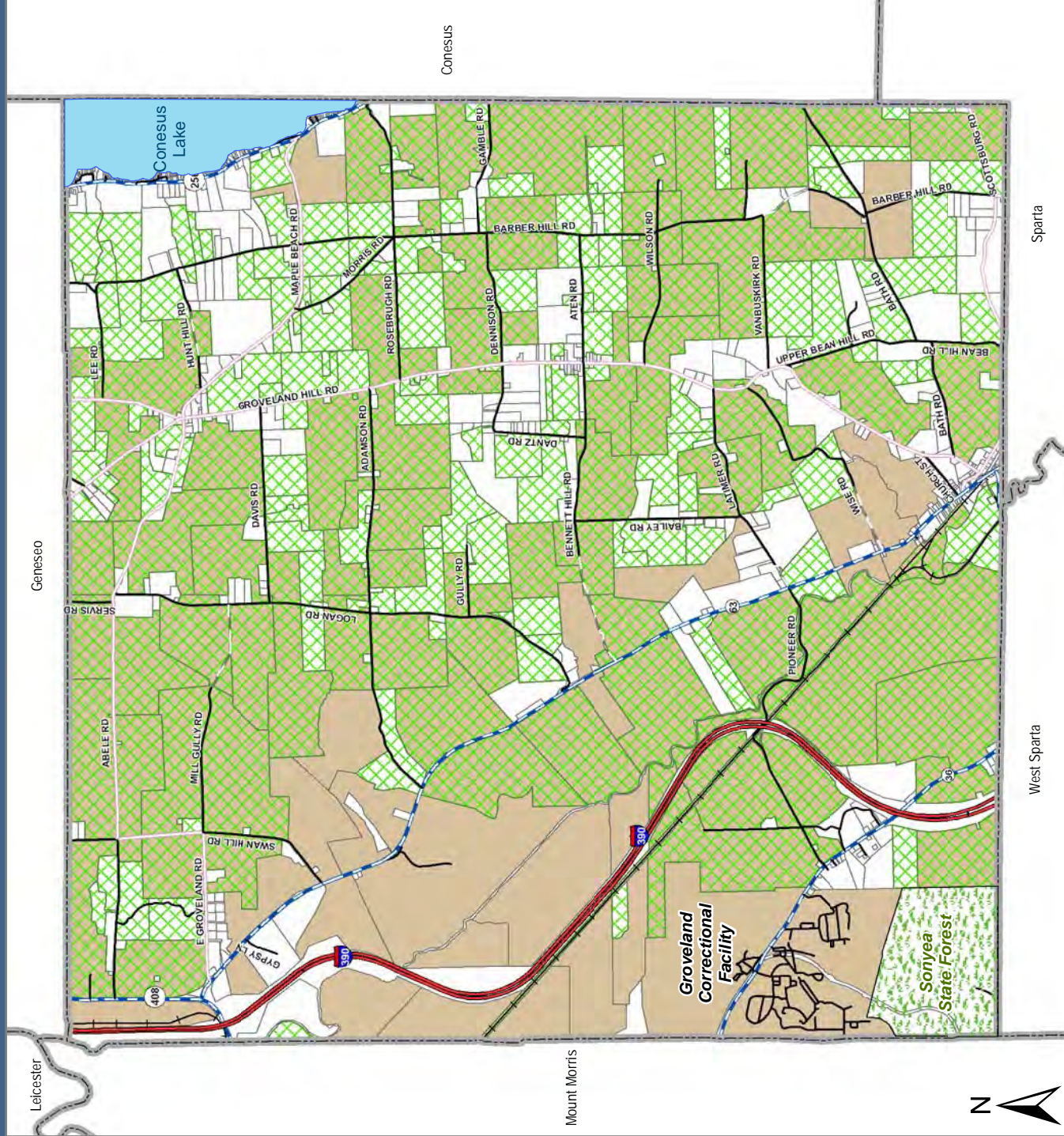


Source:
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Livingston County Agricultural District, 2007
 National Elevation Dataset
 USDA Soil Survey of Livingston County, 1956
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

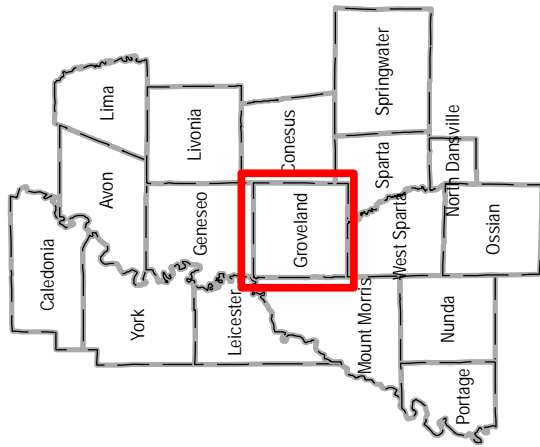
Town of Groveland

Acreage, Agricultural District and Zoning Considerations




Figure 4-2



Livingston County



Legend

-  Ag District Parcels with Ag Zoning
-  Parcels > 100 Acres
-  Ag District, Ag Zoning Parcels > 100 Acres

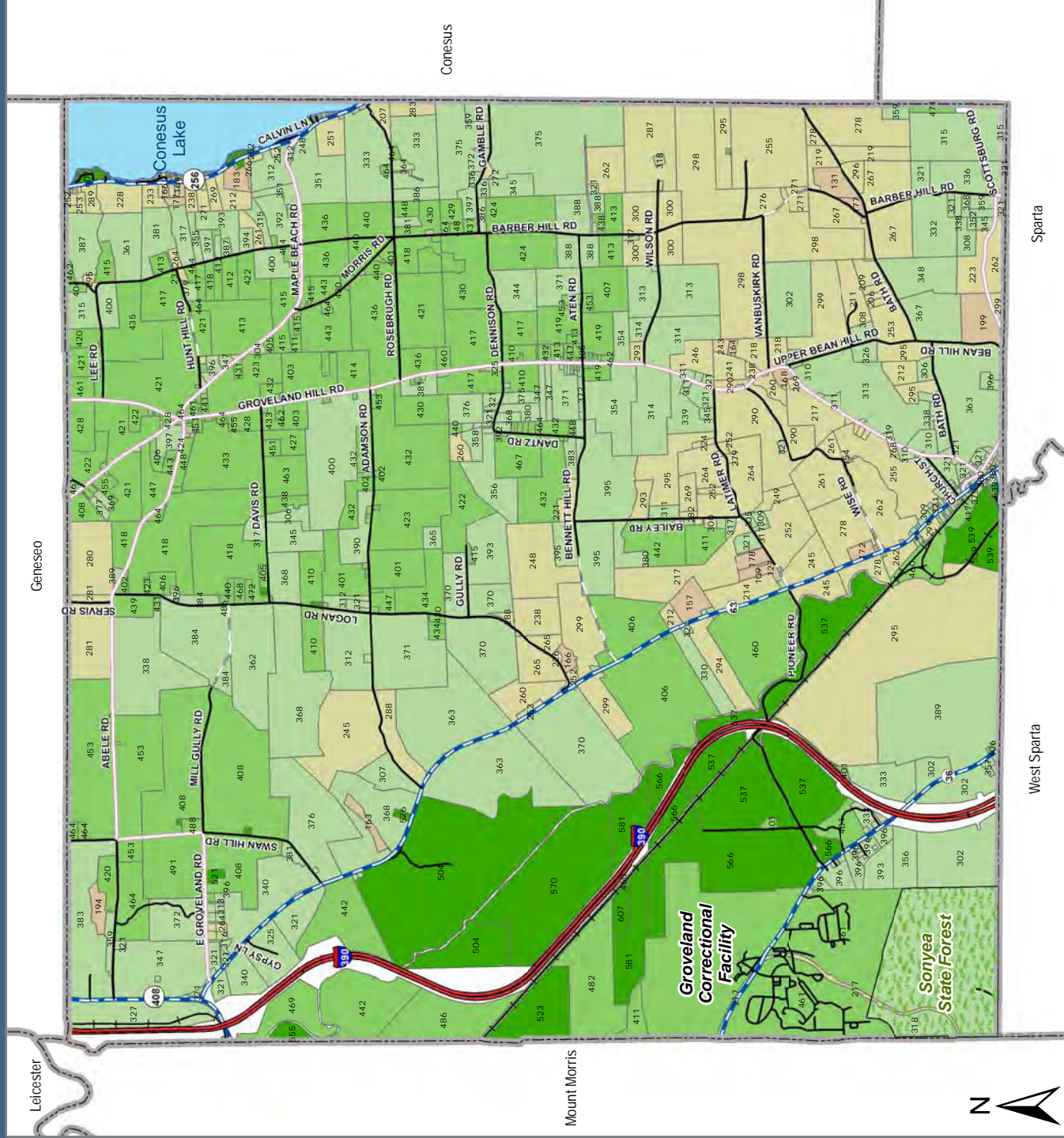


Source:
Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
Livingston County Agricultural District, 2007
Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

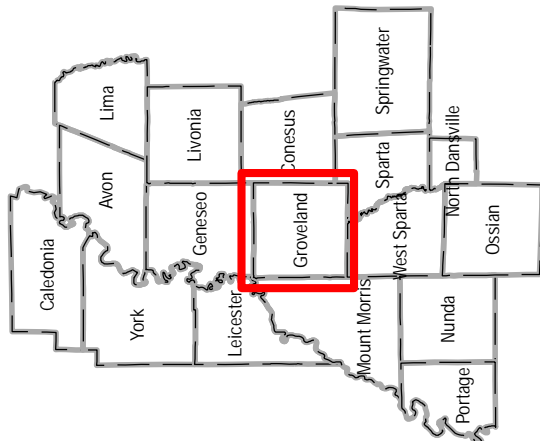
Town of Groveland

Agricultural Assessment Value of Soils, Summarized by Parcel

Figure 4-3

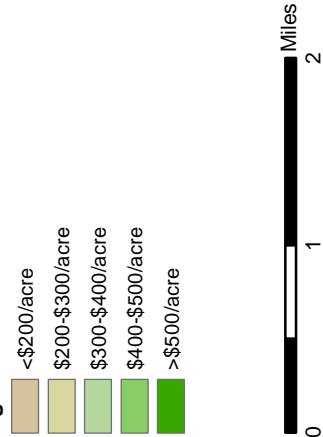


Livingston County



Legend

Agricultural Assessment Value of Soils

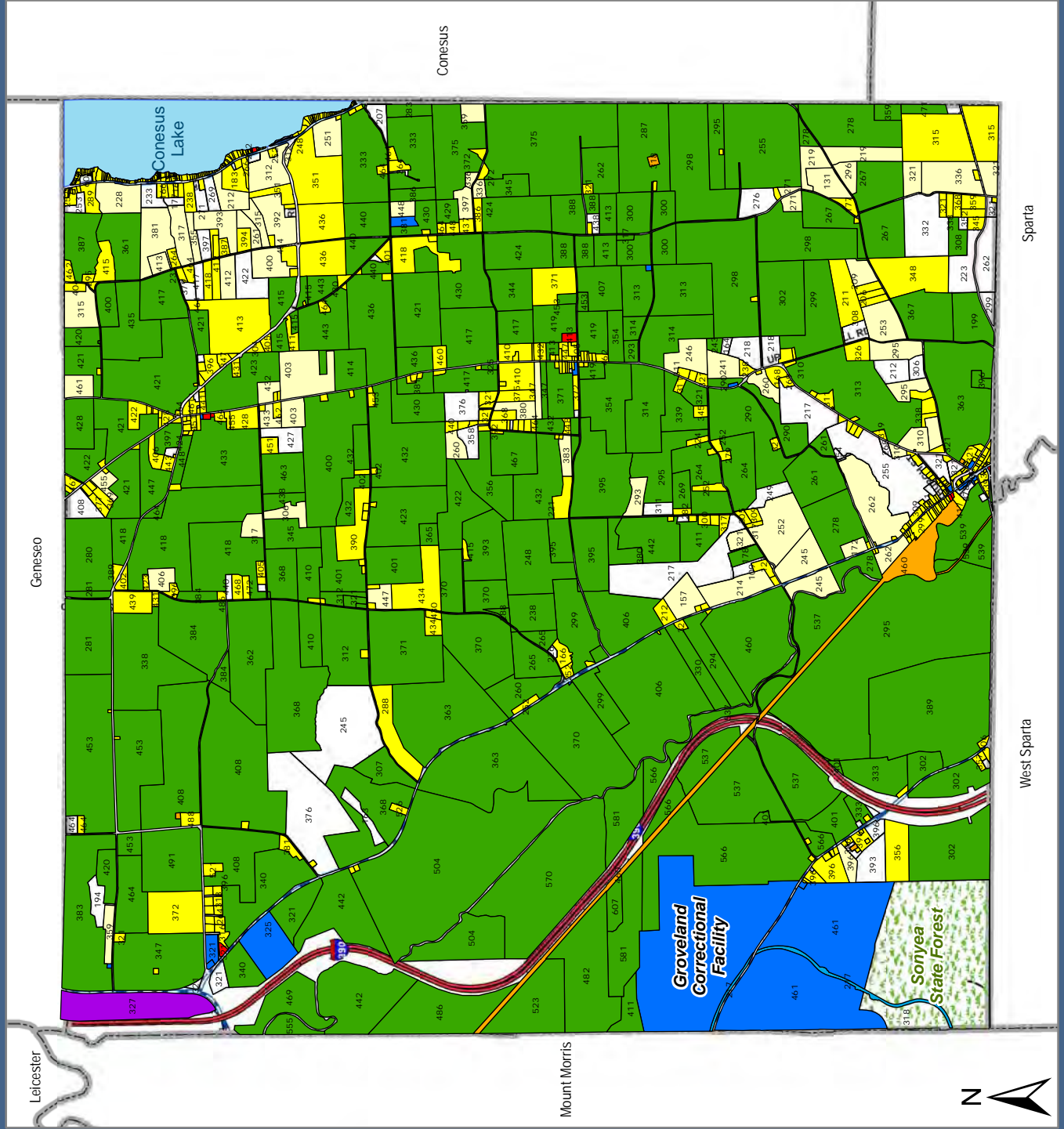


Source: Soil Valuation Per Acre, NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets, 2009
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

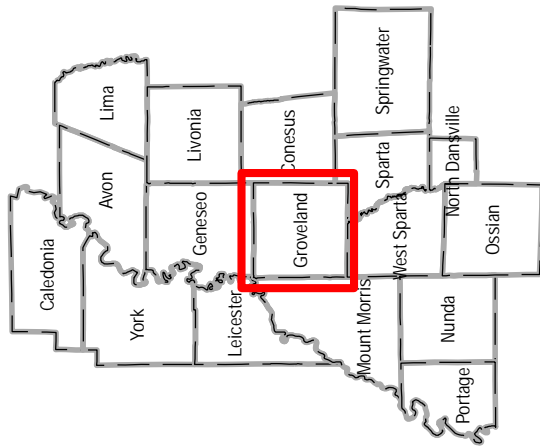
Town of Groveland

Agricultural Assessment Value of Soils by Parcel and Existing Land Use

Figure 4-4



Livingston County



Legend

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Community / Public
- Utilities / Transportation
- Industrial
- Vacant



Source: Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, Property Class, 2009
Soil Valuation Per Acre, NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets, 2009
Map prepared by CHA, Inc.

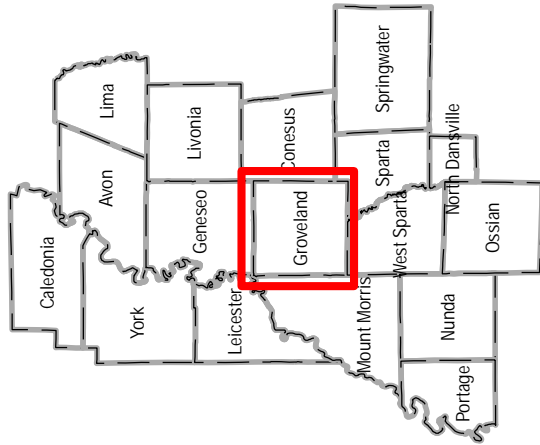
Town of Groveland

Agricultural Potential and Viability

Figure 4-5



Livingston County



- Agricultural Potential and/or Use**
- High Agricultural Potential and/or Use
- Moderate Agricultural Potential and/or Use
- Some Agricultural Potential and/or Use
- Existing Non-Agricultural Use
- Wooded Areas
- 10-Foot Elevation Contours

* See Chapter 4, Page 3 for a full description of the agricultural potential categories and assignment process.



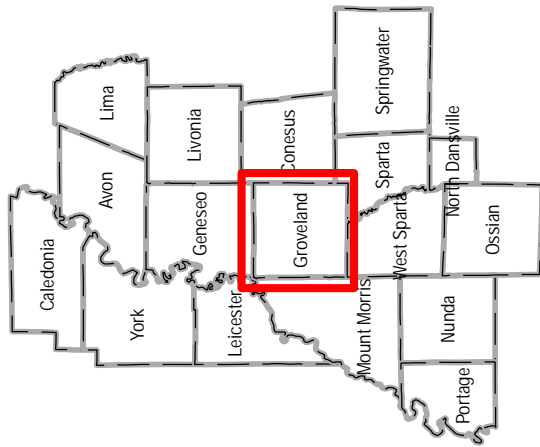
Town of Groveland

Future Land Use

Figure 4-6



Livingston County



Future Land Use

- Agricultural Protection Areas
- Agriculture/Residential
- Pending Purchased Development Rights
- Existing GVC Conservation Easement
- Conesus Lake Residential
- Conesus Lake Shore Residential
- Hamlet Mixed-Use
- Limited Business
- Light Industrial/Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional/Public
- Agricultural District



Source:
 Livingston County Real Property Tax Parcels, 2009
 Livingston County Agricultural District #2, 2007
 Map prepared by CHA, Inc.