Town of Montezuma

Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT - May 2016

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GIS DATA Disclaimer

The original sources of each dataset is identified on the maps. Due to the different sources and scales of projection, key features such as roads, parcel boundaries and streams may not overlap accurately when comparing several data layers on the same map. Acreage calculations for various parameters in this report were generated through the use of ArcGIS and are an approximation of the actual size. For more precise measurements, contact the Cayuga County Planning Department.

Rural Landscape, Montezuma

"You don't stumble upon your heritage. It's there, just waiting to be explored and shared."
-Robbie Robertson, Canadian singer-songwriter

Introduction

The Town of Montezuma Comprehensive Plan was initiated, generated, and supported by the Montezuma community in a collaborative process intended to guide town officials and the community in making decisions that affect the future of the town. The comprehensive plan provides a basis for guiding future growth, development and community preservation. The plan also acts as a historical document that identifies present land use and infrastructure, as well as the physical, cultural, and demographic characteristics of the town.

A grant award from NYSERDA for Comprehensive Planning and/or Land Use regulatory updates was made available to participating municipal partners in the "Vision CNY - Regional Partnership For Comprehensive Planning," a project of the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB) in collaboration with five Central New York Counties. The Town of Montezuma provided a letter of support in August of 2013 for the grant proposal submitted by CNY RPDB and as a result became an eligible municipality for funding to develop and implement planning components and regulatory updates in support of future land uses and development that support climate resiliency and smart growth practices for environmental, economic and cultural sustainability.

With the award of the grant, the town became eligible for funding assistance in Comprehensive Plan and consulting services through the CNY RPDB. In August of 2014, the project was introduced to the town. The

CNY RPDB met with town representatives who established a working committee to pursue the development and implementation of planning components to guide smart land use practices and sustainable development locally, including economic and environmental resiliency. Potential sustainable planning policies, regulatory tools, and strategies eligible for funding assistance through the project included:

- Municipal Comprehensive Plans
- Comprehensive Plan Updates
- Separate Components of Comprehensive Plans (such as "Greenprint Plans" identifying local conservation land priorities)
- New Smart Growth Zoning, and
- Sustainable Land Use Updates to Local Ordinances.

The Town of Montezuma determined that a new Comprehensive Plan would best serve the town's needs, laying the foundation for land use regulatory updates, and established a local committee comprised of Planning Board members to consult with CNY RPDB staff monthly in the development of the Plan.

In September 2014, the Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) held its first meeting and began to identify the formal process it would follow to develop the plan. The CPC used the *Technical Guidance Manual for Sustainable Neighborhoods,* published in 2013 by the U.S. Green Building Council and the Pace University Land Use Law Center, as the primary guidance resource to guide discussions and the format of this Comprehensive Plan. The manual provides criteria based on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development rating system.

Through in-depth study, analysis, and community participation, the Comprehensive Plan provides a sound basis for guiding future growth, development, and community preservation. Community input from surveys and the CPC played an important role in the development of the Comprehensive Plan by directly informing a series of clearly defined goals and recommended actions for the town to pursue. Any future land use or zoning regulations must be consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

Members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee:

Joe Verdi, Chair	Marian Ellinwood	Cheryl Longyear
Barb Culotti	Carol Fordyce	John Malenick, Supervisor
Donald Ellinwood	John Fordyce	

Public Participation

The Comprehensive Planning Committee formulated a survey which was mailed to 420 town residences and property owners and was available for public review at two public locations. The intent of the survey was to seek out opinions on present day Montezuma and what the public sees for the Town of Montezuma in the future. 82 completed surveys were returned, a 21% response rate. Analysis of the results of the written survey and community inventory formed the basis for this comprehensive plan. All CPC meetings were open to the public.

Plan Structure

The contents of this plan include an introduction and three chapters. Chapter 1: Goals and Recommendations lays out the specific goals and recommendations for the town by topic area; Chapter 2: Community Inventory and Analysis explains the historic and current state of the town and what it has to offer; and Chapter 3: Regional Influences is intended to give background information on existing conditions in the town and region. Five Appendices in the back of the Plan contain information on Principals of Smart Growth, Conservation Subdivisions, Issues of Community Concern, the Community Survey, and National Register Listings.

Adopting and Implementing the Comprehensive Plan

Legislative Authority

In the State of New York, village and town governments are granted authority to adopt a comprehensive plan pursuant to Village Law §7-722 or Town Law §272-a. The comprehensive plan, a set of policy and analytic documents and maps, strategies and tools for the guidance of community well-being, land use, and development, is also intended to provide the foundation for local zoning laws. Once adopted, all land use policy decisions in the town must be in accordance with the comprehensive plan. The review of future projects no longer occurs on an independent project-by-project basis, but rather in consideration of the comprehensive plan and the community vision. This Plan provides guidance as to where and how future development should occur in the town. In addition, all other governmental agencies must consider this plan when directing or funding capital projects that occur within the town.

Adopting the Comprehensive Plan

The purpose of adopting a comprehensive plan is the protection of the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the community and their environment. Once adopted, review of future projects occurs in consideration of the community vision and the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, all other governmental agencies must consider this plan when directing or funding capital projects that occur within the town. Adoption of a comprehensive plan is a discretionary decision and is considered a Type I action pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law and Title 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations Part 617.4(b)(1).This means that the plan must meet the provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) prior to final adoption by Town Board.

In accordance with New York State General Municipal Law 239, the Governing Board must refer the adoption or amendment of the proposed comprehensive plan to the County Planning Board's 239 Land Use Committee for review for potential inter-municipal impacts of the proposed plan. The Governing Board may adopt a Comprehensive Plan (or an amendment to a Comprehensive Plan) by resolution.

Review and Maintenance of the Plan

Because communities are continually changing and adjusting to new conditions, this comprehensive plan is a work in progress, and can be thought of as a document that provides guiding principles for the future development and growth decisions. This comprehensive plan should be reviewed regularly to ensure its continued relevance with the existing conditions, goals and objectives of the Town of Montezuma. Following the adoption of the Plan, the Town Board should conduct an in-depth review of the plan every five years and make changes as needed. This in-depth review should assess the status of the plan's recommendations

and implementation actions, such as land use regulation revisions, capital improvement programming, expansion of recreational opportunities, tourism, economic development, and progress on other work identified in the Goals & Recommendations (Chapter 1) of the plan. As policy-making changes and the physical characteristics of the community change, the comprehensive plan should also change. The plan should be a "living document".

Circumstances that may warrant revising the plan include:

- A finding of significant change within the community or substantial unforeseen circumstances or impacts;
- A finding of significant public benefit associated with the proposed revision or a need to maintain and protect public investments and resources; or
- The need to maintain compliance with new laws, regulations, court actions, or other mandates

Implementing the Montezuma Comprehensive Plan

All of the work that the community has done thus far in preparing the Comprehensive Plan can be lost without a solid framework for implementation based on available funding resources and realistic expectations. Some recommendations in this plan may be implemented over a longer period of time, others will be a concentrated, short-term effort, but all elements of the Plan should be considered in terms of budgets and time frame.

A Comprehensive Plan is a valuable resource a community can use to win significant grant funding from a wide variety of sources. Forming partnerships with various public agencies at the local, county, state and federal levels is advisable as these agencies can often assist communities in their funding and implementation efforts. Special committees may be established by the Town Board to address specific focus areas identified in the Plan. These committees should include members of the community most familiar with the Comprehensive Plan and its guiding principles. Examples of such committees are a Farmland Preservation Committee, An Historic Preservation Committee, or a Energy and Technology Committee.

Community efforts can often be strengthened and community benefits broadened by cooperative planning and promotional strategies among neighboring communities. Through cooperative efforts with other agencies and inter-municipal relationships with neighboring municipalities, planning can have positive impacts on the community, as well as on the region as a whole.

Suggestions for priority implementation actions noted in this Comprehensive Plan include the following:

Short-term recommendations:

- Create a Map of Potential Conservation Lands as a first step in facilitating conservation subdivision design
- Investigate options for expanding high-speed internet throughout the town
- Work with the state to connect the Erie Canalway Trail from Port Byron to Lyons passing through the Town of Montezuma

Long-term recommendations:

- Update zoning to incorporate conservation subdivision principles
- Encourage light industrial development at the Archer Daniels Midland site
- Work to build a stronger sense of place in the community

History of Planning and Land Use in the U.S.

Towns across America, as a result of an evolving story of settlement, bare unique physical and cultural characteristics reflected in their villages and along their roadsides. Rural towns like Montezuma contribute to and are affected by regional centers of social, cultural, and economic activity. Rural life offers residents, employees, and visitors a wealth of opportunities and experiences to enjoy every day. Rural character and identity rests upon both tangible and intangible elements such as sights, sounds, scents and experiences that combine to provide the Montezuma community with a familiar sense of place, and for many, a profound sense of meaning.

A Comprehensive Plan provides a framework within which these unique characteristics and elements of a place can be drawn upon to create or preserve an environment supportive of a community's vision for itself. Through careful analysis, including direct community involvement in the process, rural planning addresses problems and takes advantage of opportunities to create unique, viable and pleasant rural places. This first Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Montezuma strives to do just that for a community already rich in citizen commitment and possibilities.

As European settlers emigrated to the United States, they adopted English common law under which land they owned, their "property," meant a place in which they held a bundle of rights including:

1) the right to control and use the property;
2) the right to benefits from the property;
3) the right to transfer or sell the property; and
4) the right to exclude others from the property.

However, those rights were not absolute; they were, as they still are, subject to the rights of society often as codified in law. In the early history of the United States, society placed few limitations on the use of land as it seemed an endless resource, especially with a limited population base. From Jefferson's Corps of Discovery to the Homestead Act to massive federal irrigation, road building, and energy producing projects, the challenge was not limiting use of land but rather getting it settled, cultivated, and developed. However, as the population increased and people began to congregate in cities, the need arose for local governmental control to put some limits on the movement of industry and commerce into residential areas and to prevent residents from becoming nuisances to each other. These limitations generally took the form of zoning ordinances regulating incompatible uses, building heights, setbacks, and lot sizes. However, as the density of populations grew and spread, some began to recognize a need for planning, and noting the changing times, Theodore Roosevelt reminded his constituents in the summer of 1910: "Every man holds his property subject to the general right of the community to regulate its use to whatever degree the public welfare may require it."

Concern for the public welfare reached a peak in the 1960s and 70s as members of Congress observed that the balance between economic growth and development on the one hand, and protection of natural resources on the other, had tipped too far in the direction of growth and development. Congress moved to expand legal limitations that would address the issue of dwindling natural resources and environmental degradation. As a result, federal laws such as The National Environmental Policy Act, The Wilderness Act, The National Forest Management Act, The Endangered Species Act, etc., were enacted that have had significant

impacts on land use. Many states also passed their own laws and adopted policies that complemented the new federal laws.

In New York, the enactment of Article IX of the State Constitution, the Municipal Home Rule Law, the Statute of Local Governments, and the State Environmental Quality Review Act have provided municipalities the power to enact local laws that compliment several of the federal laws mentioned above. The scope of this power and the procedures for implementing it are set out in the Municipal Home Rule Law, adopted in 1963. Section 10 of the Municipal Home Rule Law contains the constitutional grants of power to local governments and adds thereto the powers to collect local taxes authorized by the Legislature, to provide for the protection and enhancement of the physical and visual environment, the apportionment of local legislative bodies, and assessments for local improvements, as well as the powers granted to local governments in the Statute of Local Governments.

The Municipal Home Rule Law also includes a Bill of Rights for Local Governments and provision for a unique Statute of Local Governments, under which home rule powers may be given to quasi-constitutional protection against change (Section 2(b)(1)). Among the rights and powers enumerated under the Bill of Rights for Local Governments are the right to have a legislative body elected by the people; to adopt local laws; to have local officers elected or appointed by the local residents or officers; the power to agree (as authorized by the Legislature) with the federal government, a State, or other government, to provide cooperative governmental services and facilities. Also included are the power of eminent domain; the power to make a fair return on the value or property used in the operation of certain utility services, and the right to use the profits therefore for refunds or any other lawful purpose; and the power to apportion costs of governmental services of function upon portions of local areas as authorized by the Legislature.

Prior Local and Regional Planning Initiatives

Various community-based planning initiatives have contributed to the development of the Montezuma Comprehensive Plan. Guidelines for future growth and development in the Town of Montezuma came from the Town of Montezuma Zoning Ordinance, adopted in 1991. The Zoning Law of the Town of Montezuma includes Articles regarding Planned Development Districts, Use Regulations, Dimensional Requirements, Parking and Loading, and Signs in addition to general and administrative legislation for the town.

The EDR *Heritage Park Plan* developed in 2014 provides a vision for the future of the park and the many historic and natural resources found within. The Montezuma Heritage Park is one of the town's most significant cultural resources and contains historic structures such as the Richmond Aqueduct, Clifford House, and remains of the original Erie, Enlarged, and Cayuga-Seneca Canals. The Park Plan offers suggestions for protecting these historic resources and encouraging public use and exploration, including improving and creating walking trails and infrastructure for greater public accessibility.

The archeological surveys for the Montezuma Heritage Park and Giardina Park were prepared by EDR in early 2015. The Archeological Survey for Montezuma Heritage Park identified sixteen prehistoric and historic archeological sites in the park, while the Archeological Survey for Giardina Park found that the park location "has the potential to include historic-period archeological remains...associated with the Enlarged Erie Canal boat basin as well as associated commercial structures that formerly stood in the area located northwest of the boat basin," including aboveground stone remnants that are evident in the northwest section of the park. Both studies provide recommendations for minimizing impacts to noted archeological resources.

The 2013 *Cayuga County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan* was developed by Cayuga County in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The goal of the Hazard Mitigation Plan is to improve planning for, response to, and recovery from disasters. All jurisdictions within Cayuga County with the exception of the Town of Cato participated in the planning process and have their own section dedicated to disaster preparedness within the county's plan. The Town of Montezuma's section discusses historic instances of disasters in the town and a plan for reducing long-term impacts of these disasters, including flooding, ground failure, severe storms, severe winter storms, and transportation hazards.

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets awarded Cayuga County an Agriculture and Farmland Protection Planning Grant in 2012 to update the original County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, adopted in 1996. The Cayuga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB) established a steering committee made up of the AFPB, additional farmers, agriculture-related business representatives, and agricultural service providers to complete the plan update. An extensive public outreach campaign and opportunities for public input were crucial to the planning process. The *Cayuga Countywide Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan* was adopted by the Cayuga County Legislature in August of 2014. The 2014 Plan includes information about the strengths, opportunities, needs, and challenges that the agricultural industry faces in Cayuga County, and puts forward the overall vision of creating sustainable farms and agriculture-related businesses throughout the county.

Federal and State Planning Initiatives

As a part of the development of this Comprehensive Plan, relevant federal and state planning initiatives were reviewed. The Draft New York State Open Space Conservation Plan (2014), once finalized, will serve as the blueprint for the State's land conservation efforts, which between 1998 and 2011 have conserved nearly a million acres of land with an investment of $2.42 billion in land conservation and natural resource protection.[1] The Draft Plan is an update of the 2009 Plan and is required by law to be revised every three years. The fundamental purpose of the 2014 Draft Plan is the same as the 2009 Plan- to urge increased protection of New York's natural, scenic, recreational, historic and cultural resources. The updated Draft Plan addresses open space and conservation actions with four critical priorities: promoting outdoor recreation; addressing climate change; ensuring clean water, air and land for a healthy public and vibrant economy; and protecting, using and conserving our natural resources and cultural heritage.

Issues in the New York State Open Space Conservation Plan of particular importance to the Town of Montezuma include the rich agricultural lands in the western Finger Lakes Region, the Montezuma Marsh area, and the Erie Canal Corridor. The Plan makes note of the Erie Canal Greenway as part of a long-term effort to create an interconnecting greenway system across New York that will strengthen local and regional ties and protect and enhance natural and cultural resources. The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is considered a significant historic, cultural, recreational, educational, and scenic resource to be preserved for future generations. The Montezuma Marsh area is also mentioned in the Open Space Conservation Plan as a Major Resource Area, a registered National Natural Landmark, and New York's first Audubon Society-designated Important Bird Area. Strategies noted in the Plan for preserving this wetland complex include:

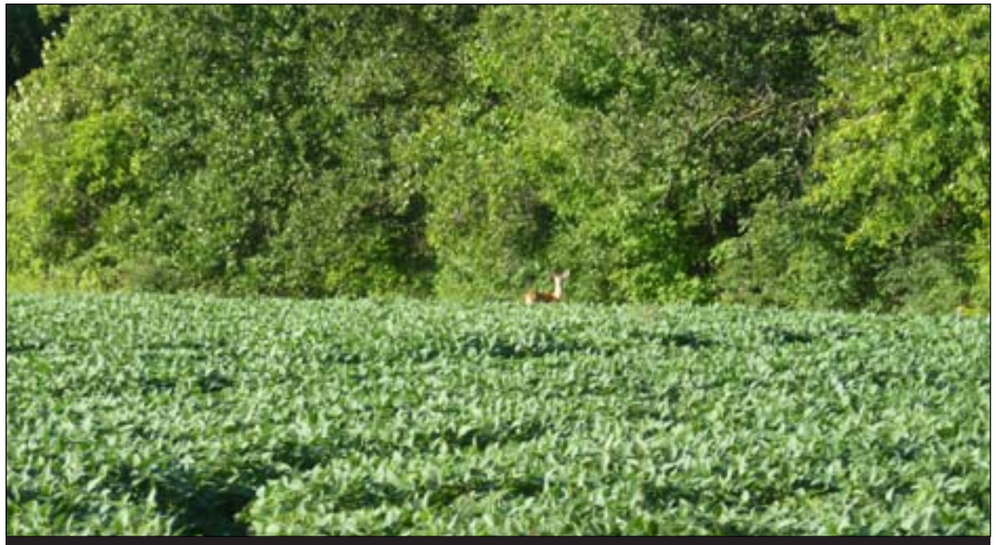
1 http://www.conservationalmanac.org/secure/almanac/highlights_pdfs/New%20York.pdf

fee acquisition by DEC and the USFWS; purchase of conservation easements by government and not-for-profit partners; and execution of Cooperative Management Agreements among partners and landowners.

The New York Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is prepared periodically by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to provide statewide policy direction and to fulfill the agency's recreation and preservation mandate. The updated SCORP refers to the Finger Lakes as a major water recreational resource. The document serves as a status report and for overall guidance in recreation resource preservation, planning, and development from 2014 through 2019. The document is also used to guide the allocation of state and federal funds for recreation and open space projects as well as for the allocation of municipal and not-for-profit funds to local areas and facilities with the greatest needs.

Every five years, the NYS Division for Historic Preservation, which includes the State Historic Preservation Office, prepares a statewide preservation plan which notes preservation progress, needs, and opportunities throughout the entire state. The 2009-2013 NYS Historic Preservation Plan sets seven goals for historic preservation, including: catalyze New York's state and local economies using historic preservation, heritage development, and tourism; expand incentives, technical assistance programs and policies to stimulate rehabilitation and reuse in older and historic residential and commercial areas and to encourage the preservation and interpretation of archeological sites; integrate historic preservation into smart growth policies, local and regional planning, and decision-making to enhance economic competitiveness, community sustainability, and quality of life; strengthen collaboration and partnerships among preservation and related organizations; expand and strengthen education, outreach, and capacity building efforts; integrate historic and cultural resource preservation into New York's sustainability and green building efforts; and increase awareness, identification, interpretation, preservation, protection, and stewardship of both prehistoric and historic sites and artifacts located on private and state-owned lands.

The 2015-2020 NYS Historic Preservation Plan sets similar goals, including: expanding preservation efforts across the state by strengthening the practice of preservation, enhancing collaboration to advance preservation, training New Yorkers in preservation trades, skills and crafts, and showcasing preservation contributions; promoting preservation at the local and regional level by integrating preservation into local and regional decision making and building support for preservation among local officials and developers; and cultivating pride of place by expanding and diversifying participation in preservation, engaging New Yorkers in historic sites and museums, and capitalizing on heritage tourism opportunities. These state-wide goals were kept in mind while creating this Comprehensive Plan and drafting the goals and recommendations for the Town of Montezuma.



Deer amidst crops, Montezuma

Chapter 1: Goals and Recommendations

During October and November 2015, 82 residents completed a Town of Montezuma Community Survey. The replies will help to guide future growth and development in the town and have been incorporated into the goals and recommendations identified in this Comprehensive Plan. The survey was distributed in mid-October with a November 9 due date. The survey was designed, printed, and analyzed by the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB). Members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee took a leading role in distributing the survey via mail. Surveys were also available at the Town Hall, and an article was submitted to the local newspaper to advertise the survey.

There are approximately 1,139 people residing in Montezuma, with 463 occupied households. 420 surveys were mailed out with 25 returned to the Town Hall. 82 surveys were eventually returned representing about a 21% return rate. 70% of respondents were over the age of 55; 22% were between the ages of 36 and 55; and 8% were between 21 and 35. Because 70% of respondents were over 55 but only about 32% of the total population in Montezuma is over 55, the survey results do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the younger populations in the town.

65% of respondents had lived in Montezuma 21 years or longer and it is clear from the survey that most have chosen to live in Montezuma primarily because of the rural character, family connections, convenient location, the healthy environment, and the cost of living.

The survey respondents noted that maintaining a healthy environment with a safe community and clean, safe drinking water were most important. Respondents were generally pleased with the ambulance service, fire protection, police services, and emergency medical services. Only 8% responded that childcare services

were ‘good’ or adequate,’ although the majority (72%) had no opinion, which may be an indication of the age of the majority of respondents. Residents were generally happy with the proximity to jobs, health and social services, and the quality of the school district. 26.9% thought that Seneca River water quality is poor. Many thought there could also be some improvement regarding the affordability, availability, and quality of rental properties, as well as a greater focus on single family and senior citizen housing options. Most respondents did not want cluster housing or multi-unit housing (apartments, town homes), although this could also be reflective of an older response population who might be less familiar with newer sustainable planning techniques and the benefits of these types of housing.

Phone service for cellular and land lines received good ratings. 35.1% indicated that the internet service was ‘poor,’ and 29.9% responded ‘no opinion’- likely residents without Internet access.

Respondents thought that town services were generally good or adequate. 25% of respondents noted that they have municipal water and most were happy with the quality of their drinking water. 49% of respondents noted that they have well water, with 41% of that group noting that drinking water quality was poor. There were multiple comments that municipal water should be expanded due to the poor quality of well water available. 28% responded that road maintenance was poor, with Fuller Road the most often sited road as in need of maintenance and also noted a few times as in need of better snow removal.

74.7% of respondents are concerned with speeding through the town, especially on Route 90, Fuller Road, McDonald Road, and E&W Loop Roads. 63.7% also indicated they were concerned about pesticide application in the town, with 21% of those respondents concerned about residential applications, 25% concerned about agricultural applications, and 54% concerned about both.

Respondents felt that Montezuma leaders should work to preserve views and natural areas, develop local laws to protect the environment and natural resources, and provide tax incentives for the preservation of undeveloped natural areas and open space. Many respondents thought that Montezuma should encourage new policies to help reduce agriculture-related neighbor conflicts, to encourage farmland protection through long term land agreements, to limit the conversion of farmland for non-agricultural uses, to maintain the town’s rural character, to encourage niche-farming and agri-tourism, to increase erosion management practices on agricultural land, and to offer tax incentives to keep land in production.

Most farmers (55%) do not yet know what they will do with their farm upon retirement. 28% hope to pass their land on to children or other family members, and 11% wish to sell it to another farmer.

Most respondents are interested in economic development and felt that Montezuma leaders should encourage at home businesses, manufacturing, retail businesses, professional services, and restaurants. While most (50.7%) were supportive of commercial wind turbine development, 23.4% of respondents were not in favor of commercial wind turbine development. Multiple people responded that there is a need for an at home hair salon/barber shop or day-care and that manufacturing opportunities should be focused at the ADM facility. Many people would like to see a grocery, convenience store, and/or gas station in town, specifically along Loop Road, Route 31, Route 90, or at the marina. Respondents thought Montezuma should invest resources in developing a community center, farmers and artisan markets, and Seneca River public access.

The majority of respondents felt that land use regulations should be developed to address degradation of

environmentally sensitive areas, design standards for commercial development, future subdivision of larger parcels, land use that lowers surrounding land values, land use that adversely impacts the environment, and mobile home placement and site requirements. The majority were also supportive of regulations for the upkeep of occupied structures, upkeep of vacant parcels and dilapidated buildings, and rental housing inspections and landlord registrations. Many (39%) expressed support for regulations for minimum lot sizes, with the majority noting that minimum lot size requirements should remain the same.

There was strong support for publishing a community events calendar and/or a town newsletter, and placing community events in the local newspaper. Most expressed support for improved communications with neighboring municipalities and to conduct an inventory of historical sites. Most (46.2%) did not think the town should purchase an electronic message board to display local news and events. Most respondents normally receive information about the town through word of mouth, with a significant amount of people also receiving information from the local newspapers, most notably the Auburn Citizen.

Respondents provided the following list of buildings that they wanted to protect for their historic value: Montezuma Hotel/Clifford House (16 respondents), Mentz Church (12 respondents), the Canal, Stop 69, Montezuma Heritage Park, Churches, Marina, and the VFW.

Most people felt that encouraging attendance at town-related meetings would be the biggest challenge for the Town of Montezuma in the future, followed by maintaining tax levels in relation to services provided and improving utility infrastructure (electric, phone, Internet, natural gas). Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of respondents (70%) do not attend Town Board meetings at any point during the year.

Community Vision Statement

“The Town of Montezuma strives to preserve its rural character, cultural and historic assets, and agricultural and natural resources while encouraging economic growth and an expansion of services to meet the needs of the community.”

The community survey and the community inventory and analysis have formed the basis for the following goals and recommendations. These goals and recommendations are referenced in Appendix D – Issues of Community Concern/Community Survey.

The Suitability Analysis Map for the Town of Montezuma (page 17) highlights important aspects of land parcels that should be considered when determining their suitability for future development, including: size of parcels, amount of land with 15% or greater slopes, amount of wetlands on parcels, land in an agricultural district, amount of land in the 100 year flood zone, and land in scenic viewsheds. The map provides a visual reference to potential future development areas or conditions that call for special attention in future planning and development decisions.

The Suitability Analysis Map includes a suggestion for a potential future sewage treatment plant site and associated sewage lines. This site was chosen because it is located on state land, is on a waterfront parcel and can therefore discharge to the Seneca River, is outside of the 100 year flood zone and steep slope areas, and can be sited in the midst of trees so as to remain visually unobtrusive. The suggested sewage lines follow the main roads in the hamlet, where the most dense development is located, and extend down Fuller

Road in order to service future potential development sites, as indicated in pink shading on the Suitability Analysis Map. Future housing developments, including senior citizen housing options, and/or commercial development would be well suited along this potential sewer system through the hamlet in any of the noted potential development parcels.

Goals and Recommendations

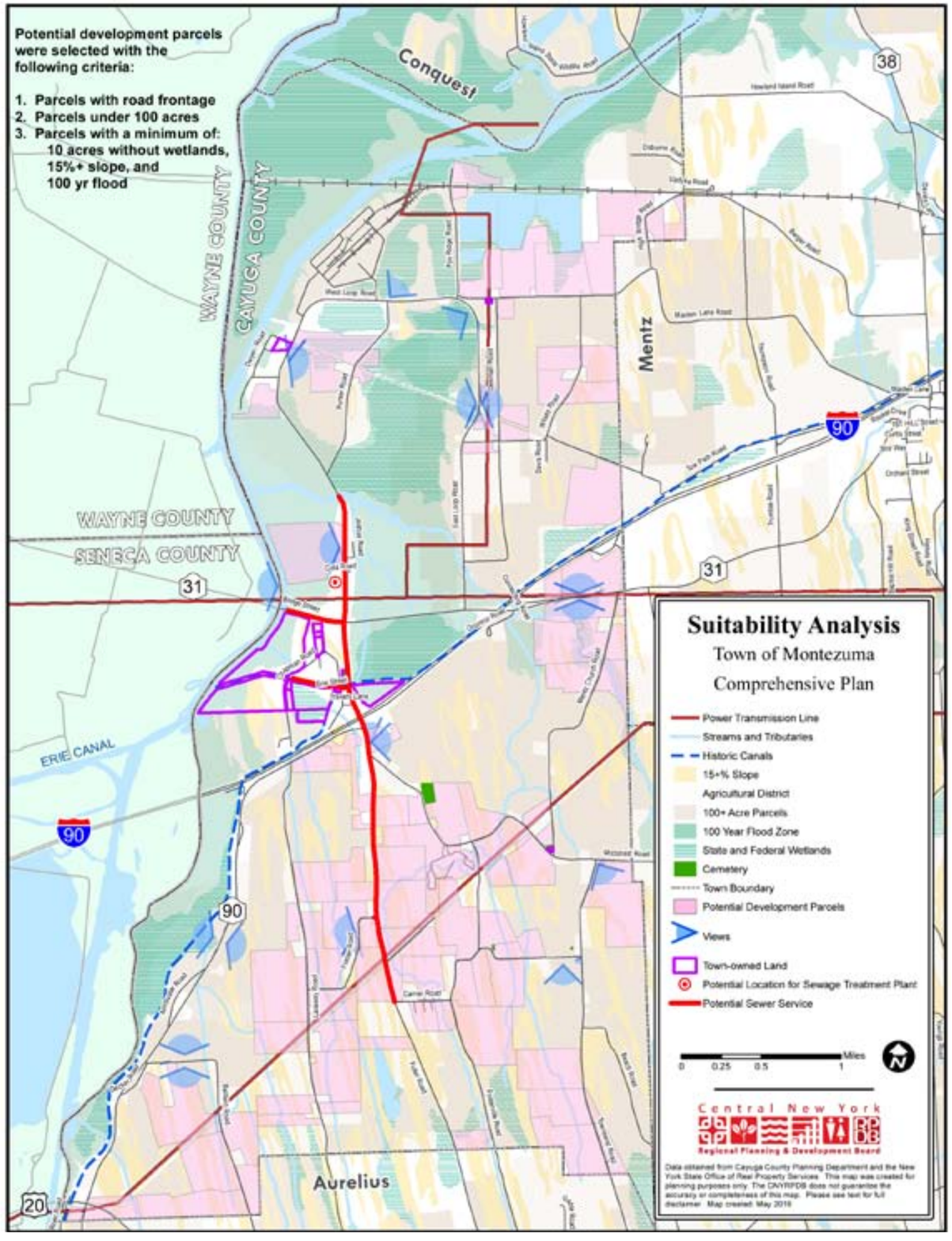
Agriculture and Farmland Protection

1. ***Preserve the rural-agrarian character of the town***
   a. Facilitate the protection of farmland balanced with managed community growth and preservation of open space through farmland protection and agricultural easements.
   b. Facilitate a collaborative relationship with educational institutions and community-oriented organizations in support of local agriculture and the farming community (ex. Sponsor an annual "Agricultural Day" to educate the general public about the importance of agriculture, local foods, etc.)
   c. Encourage farmland preservation by working in collaboration with related NYS, County and other agencies and programs.

2. ***Support the future viability of local agricultural practices***
   a. Develop a more diverse and complementary agriculture-related business base in the town and encourage the establishment of a local food eatery, restaurant, or market. This could also reduce travel time for town residents, as they currently have to drive out of town to buy groceries or to go out to eat. Local establishments would also provide additional employment opportunities in the town.

Land Use, Planning, and Subdivision Regulation Supportive of the Community's Vision

3. ***Protect the existing open space and scenic views of farmland and the river in the Town of Montezuma***
   a. Review and rework existing town land use regulations to support low-impact development patterns and land uses that conserve resources, complement the rural character of the residential setting, and encourage farms to remain in farm production while effectively planning for "Smart Growth" (see Appendix A).
   b. Work with local or regional planning agencies to develop effective land use tools such as Overlay Districts, Conservation Subdivision Process with flexible zoning, Easements, Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) or Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs to protect identified by the community as important to conserve, including rural character, farmland, highly visible open space lands, scenic views, historic areas, and wildlife buffer areas.
   c. Allow for reasonable land area for neighborhoods of single-family dwellings at a medium to low density on a range of lot sizes using conservation-sensitive design (see Appendix B).
   d. Encourage preservation of large and continuous areas of absorbent vegetated open space and minimal overall land disturbance by allowing flexibility in site planning for development based on a town-wide inventory and mapping of potential conservation lands.
   e. Protect life and property from flooding issues by protecting wetland areas and their ability to mitigate flooding in the town, and by limiting development in flood prone areas.
   f. Set a maximum impervious area for all development.



4. Protect the natural resources of significance in the Montezuma community

a. Educate residents about the flood protection value of wetland areas.
b. Encourage protection of wetland areas through the use of conservation easements or other protective measures.
c. Adopt a local wetlands protection ordinance.
d. Support wetland protection initiatives by public agencies and private organizations.
e. Conserve imperiled species and ecological communities and protect and restore native plants and wildlife habitat.
f. Consider land use regulatory buffers to significant habitat and prevent development from disturbing these areas.
g. Educate community members about the dangers of invasive species in the area and work to contain the spread of invasives.
h. Encourage conservation of land by private owners and farmers.
i. Implement long-term management plans for new or existing wetlands and water bodies and their buffers.
j. Work toward generating visitation to the town's conserved areas for low impact active recreation such as kayaking, birding, and photography.
k. Use established environmental protection guidelines to regulate and limit building in areas with steep slopes (15% or more) reducing soil erosion, storm water run-off, and sedimentation of water resources.
l. Develop a town-wide map of potential conservation lands and adopt it as a guide to steering development away from floodplains, wetlands, and habitat for imperiled species and ecological communities. Where this is not possible, implement conservation plans to protect habitat.

5. Maximize the potential of the town's history and historic resources to become sources of economic and cultural benefit to the community

a. Encourage and facilitate tourism based on historic resources.
b. Work with the state to connect the Erie Canalway Trail from Lyons to Port Byron through the Town of Montezuma and encourage tourism through the historic and natural resource-rich area.
c. Maintain and encourage partnerships with the Audubon Society, Montezuma Wildlife Refuge, and the Montezuma Wetland Complex to preserve and highlight both natural resources and man-made cultural and historic resources in the region.

6. Plan for and seek opportunities to increase the availability of affordable housing in the town

a. Encourage development of smaller housing units geared toward the elderly, with handicapped accessibility, no stairs to basements, and wheel chair ramps.
b. Encourage development of affordable single-family homes and duplexes for families of all ages.

7. Encourage efficient, well-planned development that supports the community's vision

a. Encourage light industrial development at the Archer Daniels Midland site.
b. Encourage commercial and industrial development opportunities along the Route 90 corridor and along the Route 31 corridor east of the Thruway, including agriculture-related businesses such as a local food eatery, restaurant, market/convenience store or bakery, or other businesses.
c. Update zoning code to allow mixed-use areas in the Hamlet.
d. Public sewer service location should be carefully considered, as it will inevitably affect the location of future development. Locate sewer line in optimal location for commercial development.
e. Coordinate future expansion of municipal water service in desirable areas for residential development.
f. Identify desirable growth areas within or adjacent to existing Hamlet.
g. Explore opportunities or incentives that encourage rehabilitation of vacant or under-used structures to meet housing demands.
h. Prevent the accumulation over time of inefficient land use patterns such as narrow and deep "spaghetti" lots along roadways in the town by updating zoning regulations. Consider creating a minimum lot width to depth ratio in the Agricultural Residential zone.

Environmental Stewardship and Water Quality Protection

8. Support water quality preservation through good stewardship of the Seneca River and nearby watersheds

a. Reduce agricultural run-off from entering waterbodies by encouraging small- and medium-scale farming operations instead of large-scale operations.
b. Monitor and report issues dealing with CAFO regulations and encourage best management practices on farms for reducing agricultural run-off.
c. Work with NYS DEC and Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District to ensure that sensitive areas are protected from agricultural run-off.
d. Maintain and reference (prior to development decisions) a current map of all natural resources including stream corridors, water bodies, undeveloped shoreline, beaches, wetlands, watershed areas, vegetation communities, woodlands, steep slopes, meadows, specimen trees, wildlife habitats, soils, geology, and aquifer contribution areas ("Map of Potential Conservation Lands").
e. Review and amend riverfront local laws to ensure water quality protections.
f. Encourage sustainable land use practices through the implementation of Incentive or Overlay Zoning. For example, consider creating a Riparian Zone that identifies and protects buffers along stream and river corridors.
g. Buffer wetlands and water bodies from uses and conditions that contribute to environmental damage.

Improved Public Utilities and Services

9. Improve communications infrastructure

a. Survey and assess where the need is greatest for high speed fiber optic internet options in Montezuma and encourage new internet providers to provide service in town. Consider fixed Wi-Fi service for areas that do not currently have internet service.

10. Explore potential benefits and impacts of renewable energy resource development

a. Assess the viability of various renewable energy forms throughout the town, including solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass.
b. Work towards the renewable energy goals written in the town's Climate Action Plan.

11. Maintain or improve the present quality of town roads and services

a. Create a single waste district for the town with one hauler providing service to all residents by contracting out for a single hauler for the town and include in tax bill. This will encourage residents to utilize the single waste hauler to reduce emissions and road maintenance requirements.

b. Encourage the state and county to repave dilapidated roads, especially Fuller Road. Investigate various funding opportunities to properly fix and pave town roads.

c. Investigate options for future public sewer districts (refer to discussion on page 54 and Suitability Analysis map on page 17)

d. Provide access to public drinking water in areas that are most affected by well-water issues by implementing new water line already planned, creating an inventory of wells in the community noting which have collapsed or have high sulfur or iron concentrations, and investigating future options for public water districts.

12. Maintain or improve the quality of transportation and circulation through the town

a. Reduce congestion associated with roadside stands by requiring on- and off-street parking for farm stand operations and enforcing existing zoning regulation: Section 504 P-1: "A farm stand shall be no larger than 200 square feet, located no nearer the edge of the street than fifty feet."

b. Create opportunities for off-street parking, especially at the Clifford House, the VFW, and the Marina. Create opportunities for on-street parking along Route 90, especially during the annual garage sale.

c. Become a walking and bicycling friendly town by implementing sidewalks in the Hamlet to connect community to Montezuma Heritage Park and/or the Seneca River, implementing bicycling facilities along Route 90 and Route 31 to provide alternative transportation options throughout the town to residents and visitors, and implementing bicycle lanes, paths, or signage to indicate designated bicycling areas.

d. Discuss opportunities for reducing speed throughout the town, especially on narrow, winding roads to improve safety. The community survey showed that residents are most concerned about speeding on Route 90, Fuller Road, E and W Loop Roads, and McDonald Road.

e. Adopt design and construction standards for private roads to ensure better access for emergency service vehicles.

f. Encourage the State and County to update State and County bridges and culverts, such as the bridge on E Loop Road that crosses Salt Creek and the two large culverts on West Loop Road.

13. Support volunteer recruitment for fire and ambulance services

a. Encourage younger residents to enroll as a volunteer fire fighter or EMT.

Community Revitalization and Historic Preservation

14. Encourage revitalization of the community

a. Support the rehabilitation of existing housing to provide options for all residents, including seniors, in a range of incomes and needs by applying for grants and working with Cayuga County to implement a housing rehabilitation program.

b. Revise zoning to allow mixed use in high priority revitalization areas, such as the Hamlet.

c. Prioritize structures for targeted revitalization efforts such as NY Main Street grant funding.

15. Expand efforts to support the preservation of the historic heritage of the town

a. Develop a plan to secure federal and/or state funding to support local historic preservation and rehabilitation efforts, especially for Montezuma Heritage Park.

b. Evaluate the potential for the development of a town history museum in an existing historic structure.

c. Prevent demolition of historic buildings and alterations to the community's cultural landscape by working with the NYS office of historic preservation and owners.

d. Encourage upkeep and protection of historic resources, such as the Richmond Aqueduct (which has been degrading into the river) and the Historic Mentz Church (which needs updates to its building foundation).

e. Acquire the Clifford House, if fiscally possible, to prevent its deterioration, and prioritize stabilization and rehabilitation of the building and historic area.

f. Apply to NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to become a Certified Local Government (CLG), and then seek designation as a "Preserve America Community" to be eligible for possible future federal preservation grant funding through the "Preserve America Grants Program."

g. Encourage upkeep of historic resources by landowners, Finger Lakes Land Trust, and town.

h. Establish a town-wide map listing of historically valued structures.

16. Build a stronger sense of place in the community

a. Encourage attendance at town meetings by advertising upcoming events/meetings online, at the Town Hall, and/or in the local newspaper.

b. Encourage organization of an annual "Montezuma Community Day" event to bring together the community, such as the annual 5K that has been organized in the past.

c. Continue to support the Friends of the Montezuma Heritage Park, including their tours of historic resources and maintaining/building trails, and encourage new volunteers to support the group.

d. Encourage participation in the annual Canal Clean Sweep.

e. Use storytelling or other means to engage the community and encourage community members to assist in both planning and participating in town events.

W Loop Road, Montezuma

Chapter 2: Community Inventory and Analysis

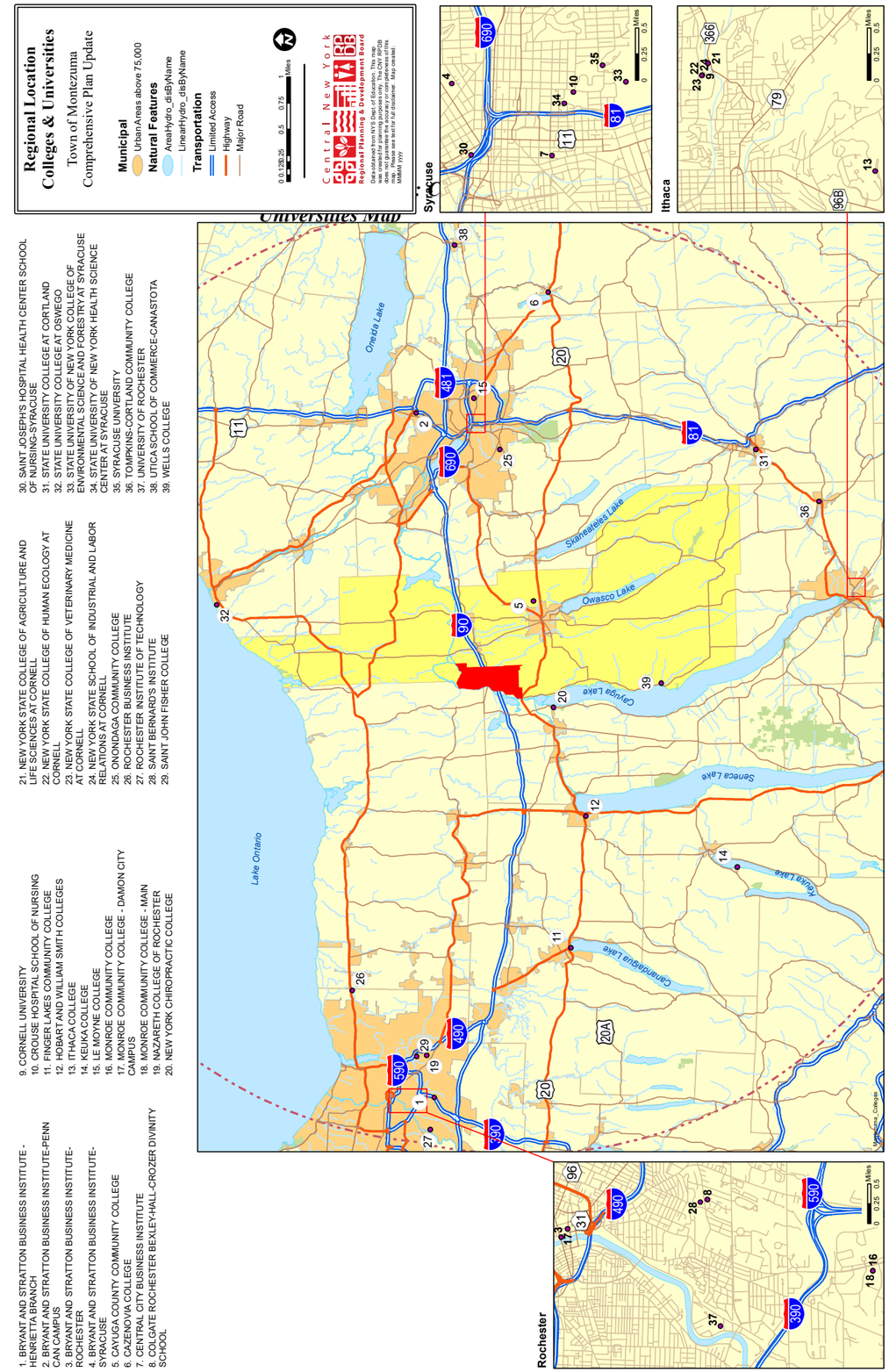
Location

The Town of Montezuma is located in western Cayuga County in the heart of the Finger Lakes Region of Central New York. The town is bounded on the north and west by the Seneca River, on the south by Aurelius, and on the east by Mentz and Throop. Cayuga County is comprised of a hilly southern plateau, a relatively flat central plain region, and drumlins in the north, where the Town of Montezuma is located. Cayuga means “People of the Great Swamp” in the Iroquois language of the Cayuga people native to the region. Primarily a rural, agricultural community, Montezuma is located northwest of the City of Auburn at the great bend in the Seneca River. The region features deep north-south valleys.[2] The gently rolling farmland in Montezuma varies in elevation between about 380 and 670 feet. In places, the landscape of the town offers spectacular views of surrounding farmland. Cayuga Lake offers a prime water supply source to populations in the region.

The Town of Montezuma is within easy commuting distance of several state and private Colleges and Universities, including: Cayuga County Community College, Cornell University, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Ithaca College, Le Moyne College, Onondaga Community College, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry (ESF), SUNY - Cortland, SUNY Health Science Center, SUNY - Oswego, Syracuse University, Tompkins-Cortland Community College, University of Rochester, and Wells College.

The quality of life in Montezuma is enhanced by the availability of low-cost and architecturally intact

2 http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/services/largemarkers/inventoryfour.html



historical housing, good schools, nearby cultural attractions, parks and recreational opportunities, and low crime rates. Outdoor recreation opportunities abound in central Cayuga County with opportunities for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and enjoying the outdoors. In the Town of Montezuma, direct access to the Seneca River offers opportunities for water activities including boating, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, and sport fishing.

History of the Community

Cultural History

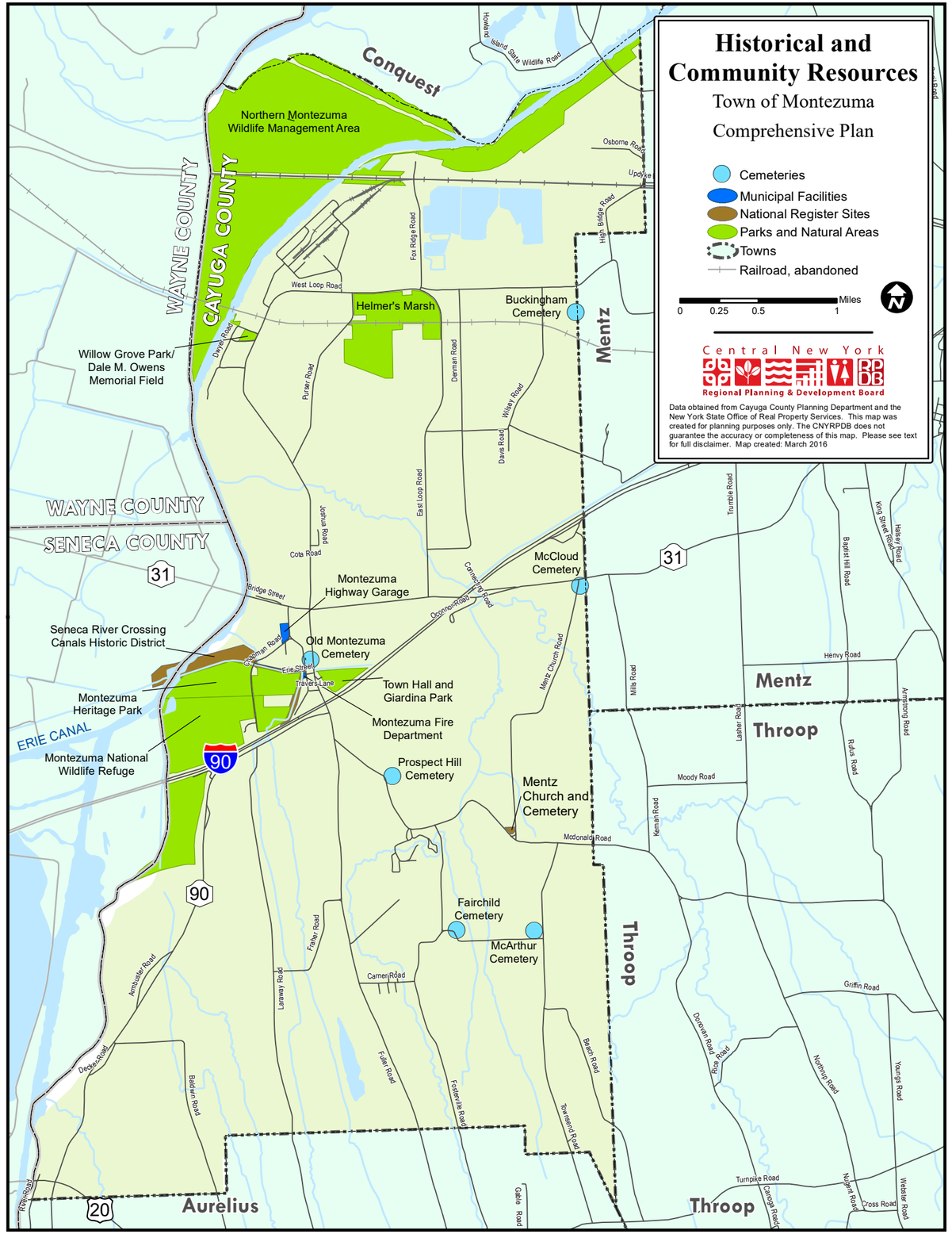
Prior to European colonization, lands in the Finger Lakes Region of Central New York were home to the Haudenosaunee (ho-den-o-shaw-nee) People of the Six Nations of the Iroquois. The Cayugas, one of the six nations, were known as the "People of the Great Swamp." The Haudenosaunee raised crops and livestock in clearings, wetlands, and forested areas they maintained near regionally nomadic settlements.

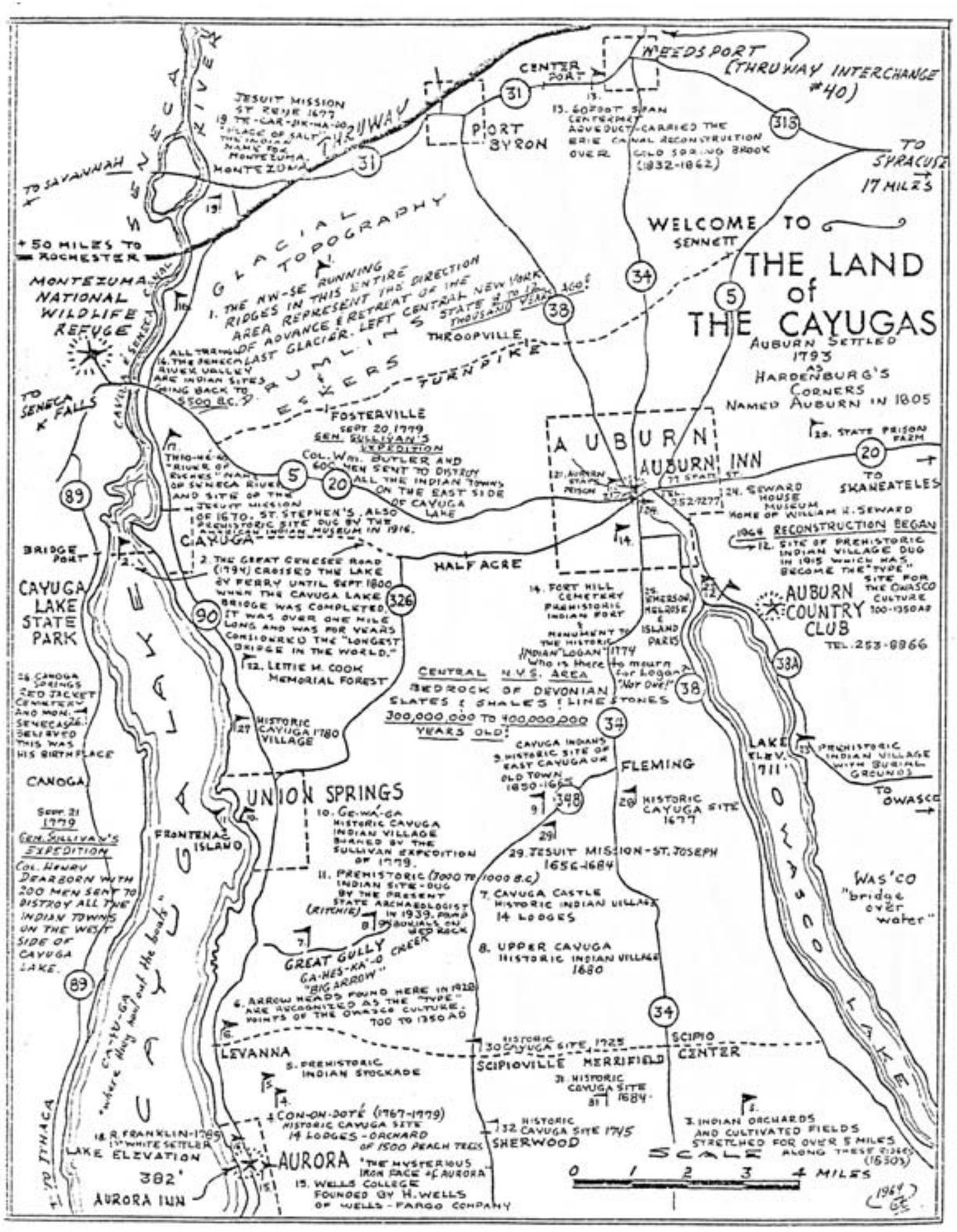
"Map of the Expedition of the army under General John Sullivan against the Indians of Western New York, in the Seneca and Cayuga lake regions, June 18th to Sept. 15, 1779. Manuscript." (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

During the Revolutionary War, both New York State and the Continental government offered land as a bounty for enlistment in the military forces. In 1779, George Washington launched an effort to clear the Iroquois people from their ancestral homes across New York State, and that year the Sullivan-Clinton Campaign employed over 5,000 troops, roughly one third of the Revolutionary Army in that effort. By Sullivan's official report, the 1779 Campaign burned 40 Haudenosaunee towns and their agricultural fields including those of the settlement at Cayuga Castle to the south of the Town of Montezuma.[3]

On March 20, 1781, in an attempt to raise two military regiments, New York State passed legislation promising bounties of unappropriated land equal to five times the grant of the federal government (500 acres) to an enlisting private fulfilling a three year enlistment. By July 1782, an area in central New York known as the Military Tract was set aside for

3 Source: (http://sullivanclinton.com/texts)

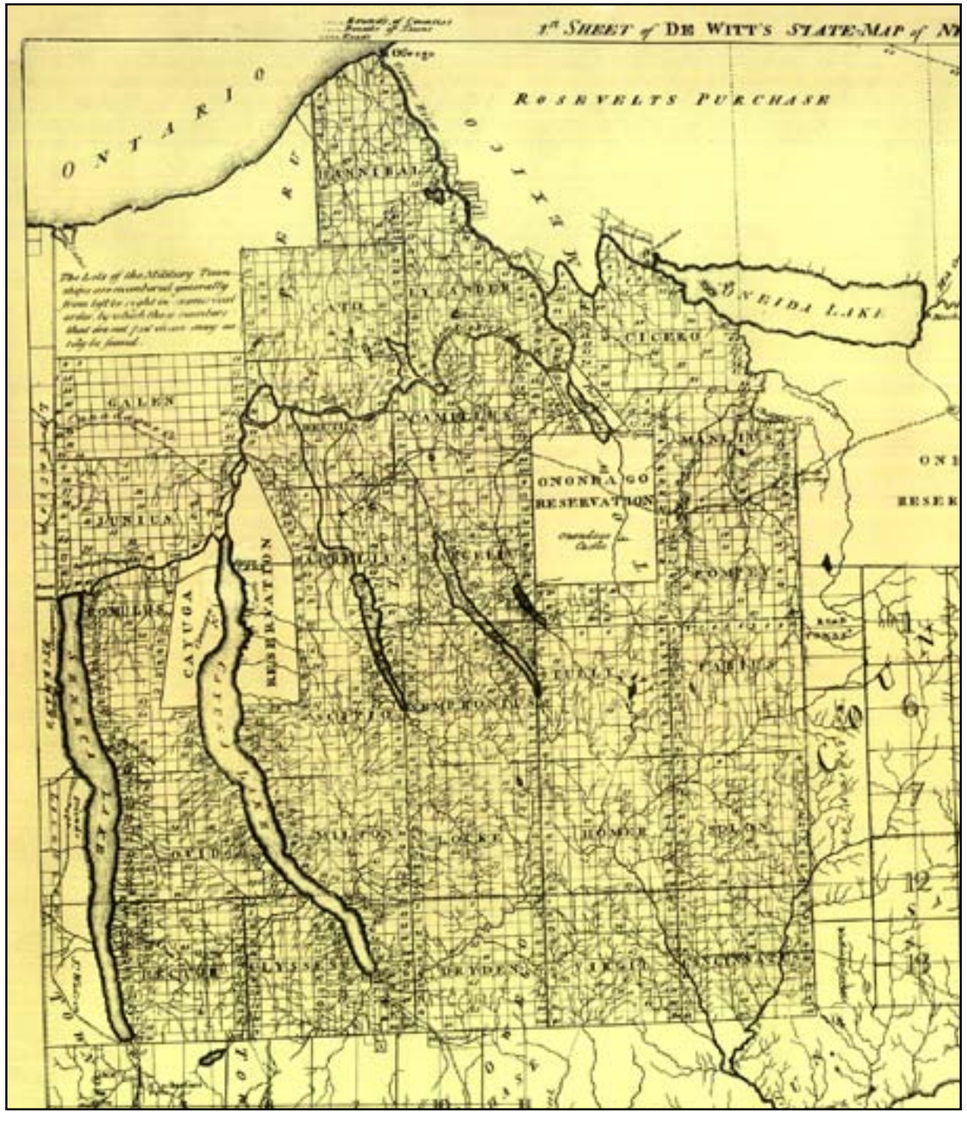




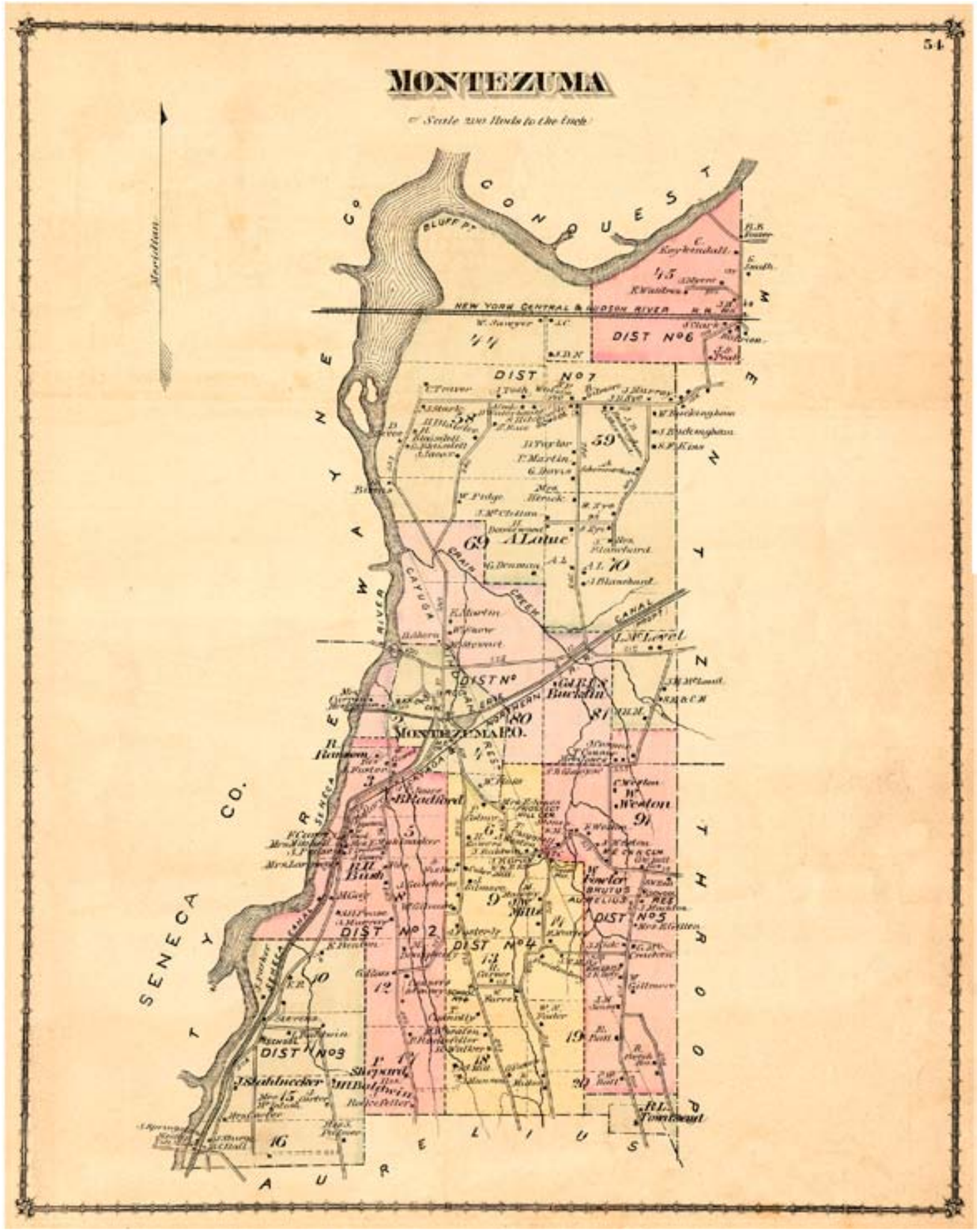
"Land of the Cayugas" map created in 1964 showing locations of some Haudenoshaunee villages, sites and orchards in the vicinity of the Town of Montezuma prior to the 1779 Sullivan Campaign. (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

this purpose. The Military Tract, located in the Finger Lakes area, contained 28 Townships, including two Native American reservations for the Cayugas and the Onondagas. In both 1795 and 1807, as the new American colonial government continued to pursue a westward push, the State of New York purchased the lands of the region from the Iroquois, although the state land purchases were never ratified by the U.S. Congress.[4] Each of the subsections or townships within the Military Tract was comprised of 60,000 acres, and

4 Source: (Iroquois, Engelbrecht, William, 2003)



Map of the Military Tract of Central New York, 1793 (Source: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nycayuga/maps/1793/dewitt.jpg)



Town of Montezuma Map 1875. (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

the townships were named for classical heroes as they were surveyed, mapped and numbered 1 through 26. The townships as originally surveyed were too large and geographically challenging to administer and were gradually divided into smaller towns. Maps of the early 1800s indicate a large reservation of land labeled Cayuga Reservation around the north end of Cayuga Lake, located within what would become the southwestern corner of the Town of Montezuma.

The Town of Montezuma was formed April 8th, 1859 out of Mentz.[5] Mentz was formed on March 30, 1802 out of two of the earliest townships in the Military Tract, Aurelius and Brutus. Aurelius, originally township 8, also contained what later became the City of Auburn, and Brutus, originally township 4, also contained parts of what later became the Towns of Cato and Conquest.[6]

The History of Cayuga County 1789 – 1879 by Elliot G. Storke notes the moderately uneven surface of the Town of Montezuma, with hills in the north (drumlins) and steep highlands in the south. Storke calls attention to the productive soil in the town at the turn of the nineteenth century, including "exhaustless deposits of alluvium" which were hoped to allow the lands to be some of the "most valuable and productive regions of the globe."[7] Storke also makes note of the "Montezuma Marshes," which contained shell marl that could be used as an excellent fertilizer, and immense quantities of flag which were shipped to eastern markets to be used to make chairs and other goods. These conditions would inevitably lead to the growth of a wealth of farming and fishing enterprises in Montezuma.

Storke also notes the abundance of salt springs in Montezuma. The salt springs were discovered by the Native Americans who dug small holes in the ground to obtain the brine. Subsequent wells were dug deeper by white settlers who obtained brine in sufficient quantity for the manufacture of salt. Between 16,000 and 20,000 bushels of salt were made from the Montezuma springs in 1823. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, salt manufacturing in Montezuma was abandoned due to the "superior strength of the Onondaga brines."[8]

The New York Central Railroad was a rail line that travelled from the mid nineteenth century to the late twentieth century. The New York Central system included extensive routes in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Massachusetts, plus Ontario and Quebec, and it can be traced back to the Mohawk & Hudson Railroad and the merging of railroads across New York State in the 1850s and 60s.[9] The New York Central Railroad passed through the north of the Town of Montezuma, but there was no station within the town. Montezuma was, however, a historically important stop along the Erie Canal. In July 1820, boats started running three times a week between Utica and Montezuma, and in 1821, the boats ran between Montezuma and Schenectady.[10]

During and following the Civil War years, at around the time of the introduction of the railroads across Cayuga County, nearby Auburn and Seneca Falls became centers for social reform movements including abolitionism, the underground railroad, education, and women's rights. Auburn became home to Harriet Tubman after the Civil War, where she started a home for elderly African-Americans, known today as the Harriet Tubman Home. Seneca Falls was the location of the first Convention on Women's Rights organized by Jane Hunt, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mary Ann M'Clintock, and others, and therefore became known as

5 Source: 1789 History of Cayuga County, New York, by Elliot G. Storke, Syracuse, NY
6 Source: Town of Montezuma, townofmontezuma.org/timeline
7 Source: 1789 History of Cayuga County, New York, by Elliot G. Storke, Syracuse, NY
8 Source: 1789 History of Cayuga County, New York, by Elliot G. Storke, Syracuse, NY
9 Source: New York Central System Historical Society, Inc. http://nycshs.blogspot.com/2008/05/nyc-railroad-history.html
10 Source: 1789 History of Cayuga County, New York, by Elliot G. Storke, Syracuse, NY

AGRICULTURAL FAIR AT AUBURN.

Above is a lithograph by J.S. Skinner of the 1850 Agricultural Fair at Auburn, NY showing a variety of livestock, visitors and buildings in an enclosed fairgrounds, looking like an early predecessor of the New York State Fair. (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com).

At right a "Comparitive View of the Agricultural Condition of the County of Cayuga in 1850 and 1845" (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com).

COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE AGRICULTURE CONDITION
of the County of Cayuga
in 1850 and 1845.

	1850	1845	Increase	Decrease
Improved Acres	298633	295651	2982	
Unimproved acres	998			
Horses	12503	13932		1429
Cows	18113	19715		1602
Oxen	3428	25341		2208
Other Cattle	19905			
Sheep	122446	175148		52702
Swine	28769	43546		14777
Wheat Bushels of	406730	652896		184166
Barley "	3039 53	143516	160437	
Oats "	735441	652281	83160	
Rye "	29695	4415	25280	
Indian Corn	704954	479151	225803	
Peas & Beans "	5691	60278		54587
Buckwheat "	46784	74066		27282
Potatoes "	281602	536023		233241
Hay tons of	72590			
Butter lbs "	1693315	1696764		23449
Cheese "	217413	394001		176588
Flaxseed Bushels	2545			
Other grass seed	1678			
Flax lbs of	10761	139126		128365
Flaxseed Bush.	1324			
Hops lbs of	1442			
Wool "	367085	412667		45582
Maple Sugar	109048			
Molasses Gallon	410			
Beeswax & Honey lbs	34678			
Domestic Fabrics $	23117	85546		62429
Animals slaughtered	$350676			
Population	55489	49663	5826	

the birthplace of the Women's Rights Movement.[11] A predominant contingent of the Society of Friends, or Quaker faith, settled in the Finger Lakes region during the late 18th century and was catalyst to an unusually dedicated and effective community effort toward equal rights reforms in the young nation, including equal access to education and women's rights.

Hamlets and Historic Settlements

As the Montezuma population grew thanks to its close proximity to the Erie Canal and New York State railroads, so too did the need for local products and services. A community settlement and commercial centers of activity developed at the Hamlet of Montezuma, also known as the Village of Montezuma.

Hamlet

According to Elliot Storke, the first settlers were Dr. Peter Clarke, Comfort Tyler, and Abram Morgan in 1798, who were attracted to the area by the salt springs.[12] The Hamlet of Montezuma was incorporated as the Village of Montezuma in 1866 with a population of 550, but later abandoned the status as a village.[13] The hamlet surrounds New York Route 90 and High Street, nestled between the New York Thruway to the south and Crane Brook to the north. This area is adjacent to the Seneca River at the historic junction of the Erie and Cayuga-Seneca Canals. At the end of the nineteenth century, the village contained four churches, a district school, a dry goods store, a hardware store, a drug store, four grocery stores, two hotels, and a grist-mill.[14] The current Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) building was also a former business along the Erie Canal. Prior to housing the VFW, May and Leslie Jones operated a Red and White grocery store out of the building for about forty years, until the late 1960s. Today, the Hamlet of Montezuma consists of a cluster of several residences, Montezuma Heritage Park, the Town Hall building, the Town Highway Garage, the Fire Department, and a US Post Office.

Prior to the Erie Canal being built, settlement occurred in Montezuma primarily near the marina along Montezuma Turnpike. This area is often referred to as the "old village." The center of town changed with the development of the Erie Canal, focusing development in the present-day hamlet. One can see clearly from the 1875 Village Map the important role the former route of the Erie Canal had in the development of the settlement. Although many historic buildings and remnant structures remain at the core of the hamlet today, the working waterway is no longer at its heart. State Route 90 runs north and south through the hamlet, beginning at the intersection with State Route 31 and traveling south down the eastern shore of Cayuga Lake all the way to Kings Ferry, where it then turns and travels east to Homer. State Route 31 runs east and west through the hamlet and travels across New York State, from Vernon in the east to Niagara Falls in the west. Historically, Route 90 was an important stagecoach route off of the Erie Canal.

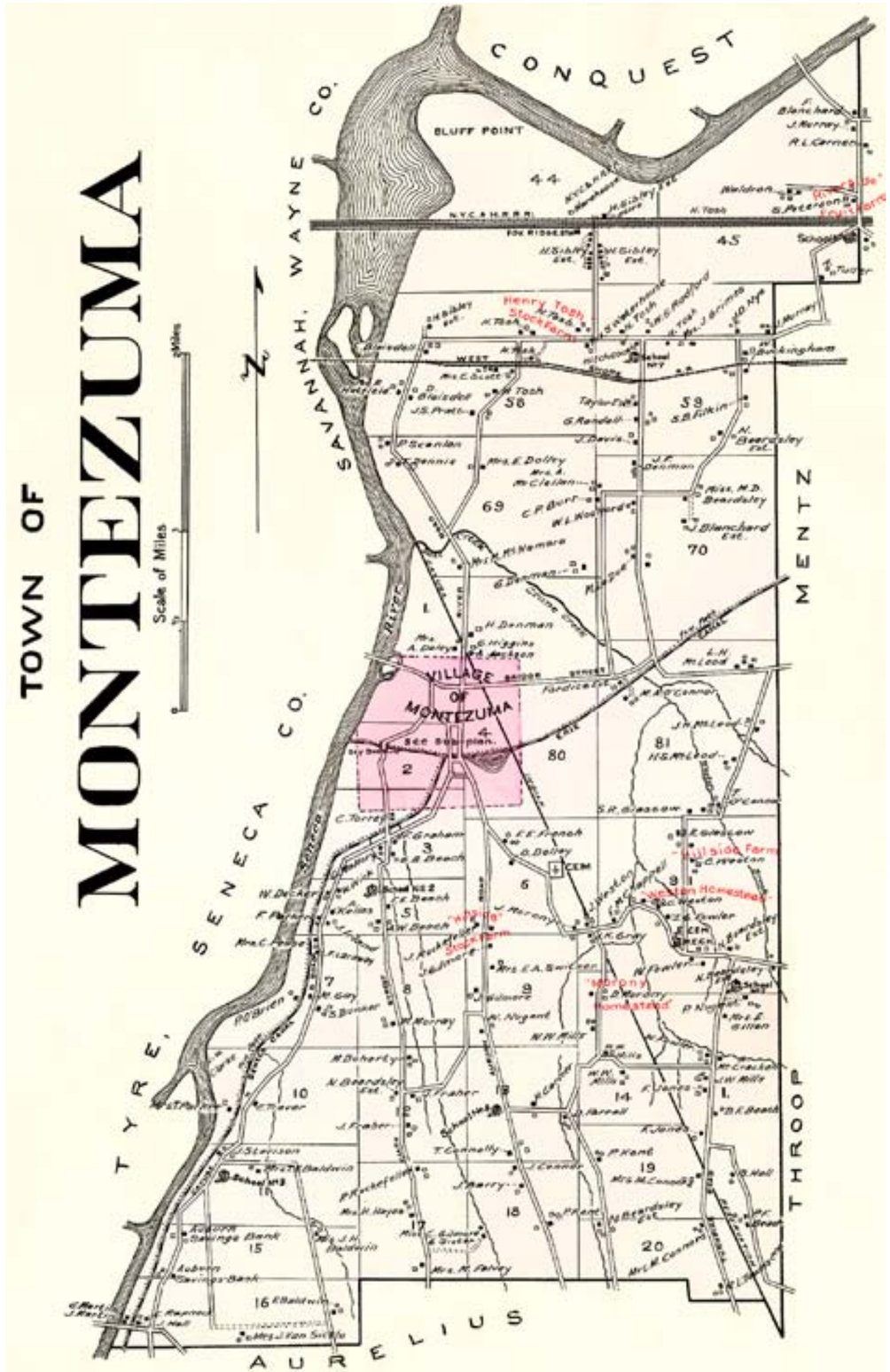
Historic and Cultural Resources

The Rural-Agrarian Landscape

As described by O. D. Von Engeln in his 1988 book *The Finger Lakes Region, Its Origin and Environment*, the Town of Montezuma is located in a region that is "scenically unique." Von Engeln's description of the

11 Source: http://senecafalls.com/history.php
12 Source: 1789 History of Cayuga County, New York, by Elliot G. Storke, Syracuse, NY
13 Source: Town of Montezuma, townofmontezuma.org/timeline
14 Source: 1789 History of Cayuga County, New York, by Elliot G. Storke, Syracuse, NY

Montezuma village map, 1875. (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com)



Montezuma town map, 1904. (Source: http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

The remains of the Richmond Aqueduct (Source: Jean Mackay, Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor)

geographical environment of the Finger Lakes Region with "its general expression wide farm acres and level upland pastures [amid] long, narrow, roughly parallel lakes...with high, almost cliff-steep shores [and] narrow, deep gorges" is an accurate description of the landscape surrounding the Town of Montezuma. Located at the great bend in the Seneca River, the Town of Montezuma is located in the heart of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, just north of the tip of Cayuga Lake. There are scenic vistas of historic resources, farmland, and the rural landscape throughout the town, with especially breathtaking views along West Loop Road and NYS Route 90.

Montezuma Heritage Park

There are many historic resources in the Town of Montezuma, although the most significant collection of these are located within the Montezuma Heritage Park, bounded by the Hamlet of Montezuma, the Erie Canal, the Richmond Aqueduct, the Route 31 Bridge, Route 31, Chapman Road, and High Street. The Montezuma Heritage Park is a historically and architecturally significant collection of resources and sites that vividly tells the story of the town's history as part of the Erie and Cayuga-Seneca Canal corridors. The Montezuma Heritage Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the 70-acre Seneca River Crossing Canals Historic District and includes: the remains of three early canals; the original Clinton's Ditch, including Lock 62; the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, including Lock 11; the Clifford House; the remains of a cross-over bridge between Cayuga-Seneca and Enlarged Erie Canals; the Montezuma Fibre Mill (manufactured paper from flag harvested from cattails); the reservoir on a drumlin used for the paper mill

Helmer's Marsh, Montezuma - 130 acres of public conservation land located at the turn from E Loop Road to W Loop Road

Historic Mentz Church and Cemetery, Montezuma

Cayuga-Seneca Lock 11 (Source: http://montezumaheritagepark.blogspot.com/2012/05/clean-sweep-volunteers-prepare-park-for.html)

The Clifford House - previously known as the Exchange Hotel along the historic Erie Canal waterway. Building is now currently vacant and up for sale by a private owner.

processing plant; the remains of the Enlarged Erie Canal dry dock; the remains of 7 arches of the Richmond Aqueduct on the Seneca River; a historic mural of the former Exchange Hotel; and the Cayuga-Seneca and Enlarged Erie Canal junction.

Montezuma's modern development began in 1820 when it became a western terminal for the early Erie Canal. At this time, salt production was also a moderately successful industry in Montezuma due to shallow subsurface, high-strength brines. By 1849, the Erie Canal path was relocated to higher ground in Montezuma via the building of the Richmond Aqueduct. In 1965, the town was awarded funding through the Outdoor Recreation Development Bond Act and the Land and Water Conservation Act to acquire 136 acres of land that contains rich natural and historic canal resources, later named the Montezuma Heritage Park. This historic corridor brings cultural and natural resources together to represent New York's present day Canal System.

The Clifford House, or Montezuma Hotel, located on Route 90 in the Montezuma Heritage Park, is one of the only remaining canal era buildings in Montezuma. The property is currently vacant and up for sale by a private owner. Rehabilitating this building could benefit the Town of Montezuma significantly by preserving an important historic and cultural resource and providing economic development opportunities.

Historic Mentz Church

Nestled at a crossroads in the rural countryside of the Town of Montezuma stands the Historic Mentz Church built by the first settlers of the area. The gable-roofed one-room church was erected prior to its incorporation as the First Methodist Episcopal Church in 1825. It was purchased from the Weston family on a lot where a cemetery was located with the earliest burial in 1813. Built by area farmers with timber from their land, it represents a unique example of early nineteenth century architecture in Cayuga County. Virtually intact to its date of construction, the church retains a remarkably high degree of integrity in design, material, craftsmanship and feeling of the early settlers of this area.

This small, humble landmark was one of the first in Cayuga County to be served by roving clergy from the Baptist, Methodist and Protestant faiths until it became incorporated on May 10, 1825 as the First Methodist Episcopal Church of the Town of Mentz. Here worship was an integral part of early life in the small community, and the church helped to serve the needs of area families for 130 years.

Before the church was built, first services were held in the barn of John Gilmore and area homes. The first authentic record of the church's history was known as a "society." It joined in circuit with Montezuma and the Village of Port Byron and became known the "mother" church.

Later, it became part of a three-point charge with the Montezuma and Fosterville Methodist churches. After World War II, many families moved to larger cities and only a half-dozen families remained until it closed in 1954. Although closed, it was never forgotten, and through the efforts of the Mentz Fidelas Club and Lester O'Hara, the church was preserved to stand the test of time. In 2003, the Town of Montezuma acquired the church and committed to preserving it by appointing a preservation committee to oversee restoration work and make recommendations for the use of the church. It is still owned by the Town of Montezuma today and is the home of the Montezuma Historical Society.

In 2004, the church received the honor of being named to the State and National Register of Historic Places.

A preservation committee met monthly to plan events to be used for the enrichment of the community through cultural, social and local church activities. Beginning in early Spring of 2005, restoration began with many hours of work donated to remove wallpaper, paint, restore the original front doors, clean, replace windows, and to restore the electricity. On Sunday, May 15, 2005, almost one-hundred eighty years to the day of its incorporation, the community honored and celebrated it's re-opening and listing as a historic place.

Cemeteries

Three main early historic cemeteries exist in Montezuma: the Mentz Church cemetery, Prospect Hill Cemetery, and Old Montezuma Cemetery. There are also four small former family plot cemeteries located in rural farmland areas in Montezuma, including: Buckingham Cemetery, Maiden Lane Road, Fairchild, and MacArthur burials.

Mentz Church Cemetery: The Mentz Church Cemetery has over 200 graves with the earliest burial in 1813. It surrounds the Mentz Church, which was later built on the corner of McDonald and Mentz Church Roads. Many of the early immigrating families that first settled in the area of Mentz Corners are buried here.

Prospect Hill Cemetery: Just southeast of the Hamlet of Montezuma, this cemetery is located high on a hill on McDonald Road. The cemetery was established by the Clark family with several family members buried here, including Peter Clark, one of the early pioneer founders of the town. His home was built on another

Mentz Church Cemetery rehabilitation

large drumlin overlooking the marshes in the hamlet near where today's water tower is located. Other noted citizens of Montezuma buried in this cemetery are Royal Torrey, Clifford Jones and Charles Higgins — important political figures in Montezuma's history.

Old Montezuma Cemetery: Located along a hillside on Route 90 in the hamlet of Montezuma, this early cemetery has burials beginning in 1810 when the Hamlet of Montezuma was first settled. It contains approximately 185 graves with the last known burial in 1933.

Captain Richard Damewood, born in 1759, is buried in the cemetery. He enlisted in the military in 1781 and served in New York's Regiment at the siege of Yorktown during the Revolutionary War. After the War of

Top: Prospect Hill Cemetery

Right: Old Montezuma Cemetery

Bottom: Fairchild Cemetery

1812, he became engaged in boating on the Erie Canal, eventually settling in Montezuma. Over the years, Captain Damewood's grave site became obscured and forgotten, located on an outer hedgerow covered by brush in the cemetery. During a cemetery cleanup project, it was discovered that his cemetery marker had become embedded into the trunk of a tree. In 2007, the town received a new military stone provided by the Sons of the American Revolution National Graves' Committee to replace Captain Damewood's gravestone. Joanne Damewood Butler, descendent of Richard's son, Henry, was present to help install the new stone at the grave site.

Historic Roadside Markers

Historic roadside markers play an important role in local historic preservation by educating the public and fostering historic tourism. Nine historic roadside markers are located throughout Montezuma, including five New York State markers and four markers donated by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. Markers include:

Historic roadside markers in the Town of Montezuma

Historic roadside markers in the Town of Montezuma

NYS Markers
Old Erie Canal, Route 90
Salt Springs, Route 90
Comfort Tyler, Route 31
Squagonna, Route 31
Montezuma, Route 90

William G. Pomeroy Foundation Markers
Early Aqueduct, Chapman Road
Cayuga-Seneca Canal/Exchange Hotel, High Street
Mentz Church & Cemetery, McDonald Road
Early Cemetery, Route 90
Seneca Canal Crossing Canals Historic District

New York State Canal System

The Erie Canal, Cayuga-Seneca Canal, and Barge Canal systems all pass through the northern portion of the Town of Montezuma. Because of its rich historic and cultural resources, Montezuma has been designated as a Point of Interest along the Erie Canal Heritage Corridor.

Under the direction of Governor DeWitt Clinton, the Erie Canal was first completed in 1825 and was built to connect the Hudson River to Lake Erie. Although Governor Clinton's idea was at first met with harsh criticism, calling the idea "Clinton's Ditch" or "Clinton's Folly," the Erie Canal allowed for goods and raw materials to be transported cheaply from western to eastern New York. The Erie Canal is credited for spurring the first great westward migration of American settlers and today known as one of the most important

Historic photograph of Lock 11 on the Cayuga-Seneca Canal

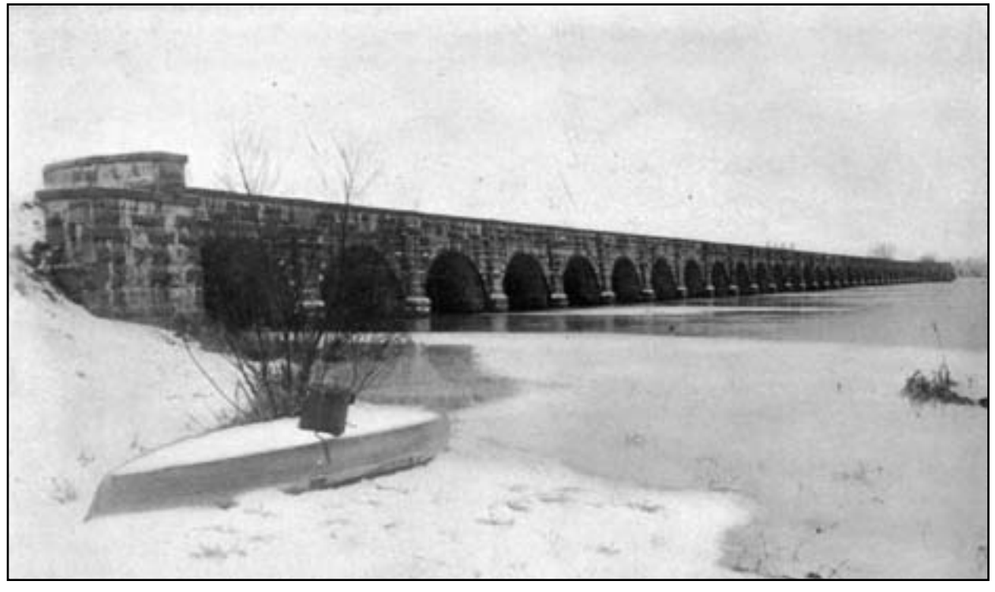
projects in the development and success of New York. The New York State Barge Canal is currently listed on the National Register for Historic Places and has been nominated as a National Historic Landmark.

Crossing the Seneca River at the canal's original junction in Montezuma was very difficult, so the State decided to relocate the canal to higher ground and build an aqueduct to carry boats across the shallow river. The Richmond Aqueduct is the second largest on the Erie Canal, originally at 11 feet high and 22 feet wide with 31 stone arches. It was completed in 1857 and allowed for easier and quicker crossing of the Seneca River.

The first portion of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal was completed in 1821 and connected Seneca Lake to the Seneca River Outlet at Cayuga Lake; however, once the Erie Canal was finished, locals craved a route linking Seneca Lake to the newly-built Erie Canal, and this portion of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal was built and officially opened in 1828. The full Cayuga-Seneca Canal begins at the junction of the Erie Canal and Montezuma and connects the Erie Canal to Cayuga and Seneca Lakes.

Because the idea of building the Erie Canal came with such skepticism, the canal was built very narrow and shallow, as no one anticipated the heavy boat traffic it accommodated at its peak. As railroads began to operate widely in the second half of the 19th century, the Erie Canal underwent an upgrade to try to remain influential and relevant. The Barge Canal Act was passed in 1903, which called for the creation of a more substantial barge canal, an enlarged version of the Erie Canal. The Barge Canal Act also called for improvements of the Oswego Canal and Champlain Canal routes, and together with the Cayuga-Seneca Canal and Erie Canal, the four canal routes were referred to as the New York State Barge Canal, or what is known today as the New York State Canal System.

Historic Photo of the Erie Canal in the area of the current Byron Lapp Memorial Trailhead (Source: Town of Montezuma Heritage Park, Park Plan, EDR)



Historic photograph of the Richmond Aqueduct (Source: http://www.eriecanal.org/texts/Whitford/1906/Chap24.html)

Historic Photo of the Erie Canal Basin in Montezuma

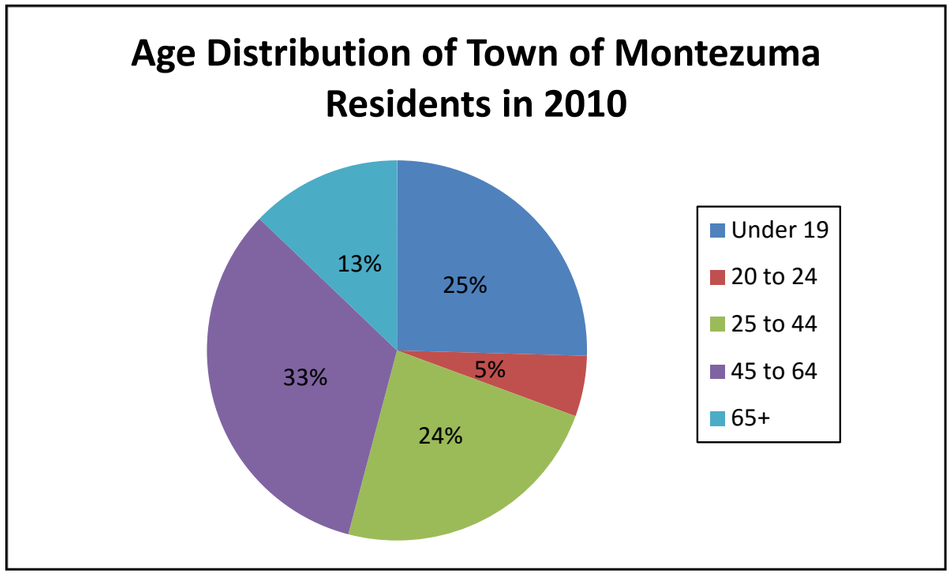
Current Photo of the Erie Canal Basin in Montezuma (Source: Town of Montezuma Heritage Park, Park Plan, EDR)

Demographic Profile

Population

Cayuga County's total population for 2010 was 80,026. The largest proportion of this population resides within the center of the county and includes the City of Auburn with a population of 27,687, surrounded by the five towns of Sennett, Throop, Owasco, Fleming and Aurelius. Other than the City of Auburn, there are twenty-three incorporated towns in Cayuga County, ranging in population from Brutus with 4,464 residents in 2010, to Sempronius with 895 residents.

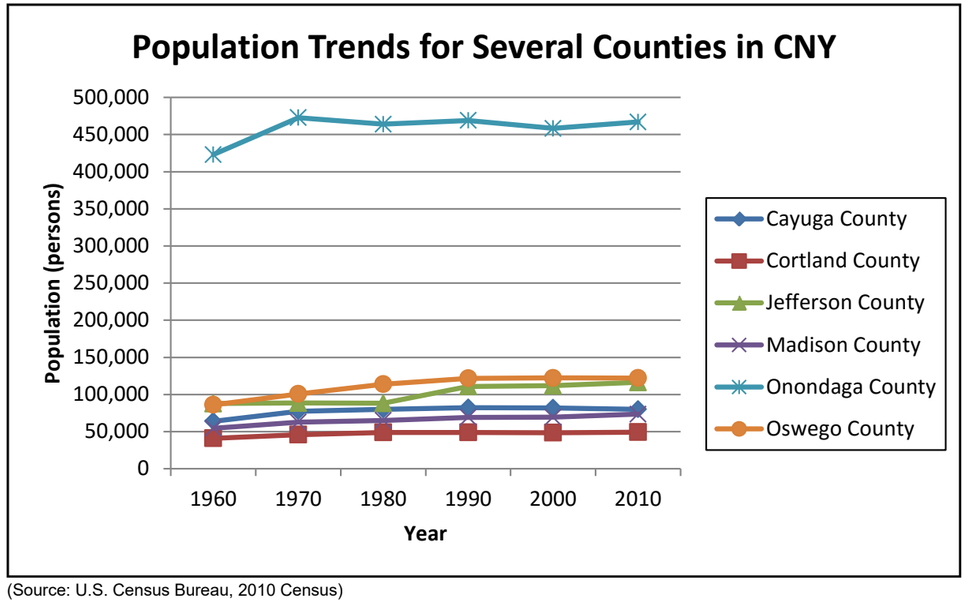
The total number of households in the county is approximately 36,489, with 12,639 of those in Auburn. The county offers a diversity of housing choices, and the county is well known for its wealth of 19th century architecture.



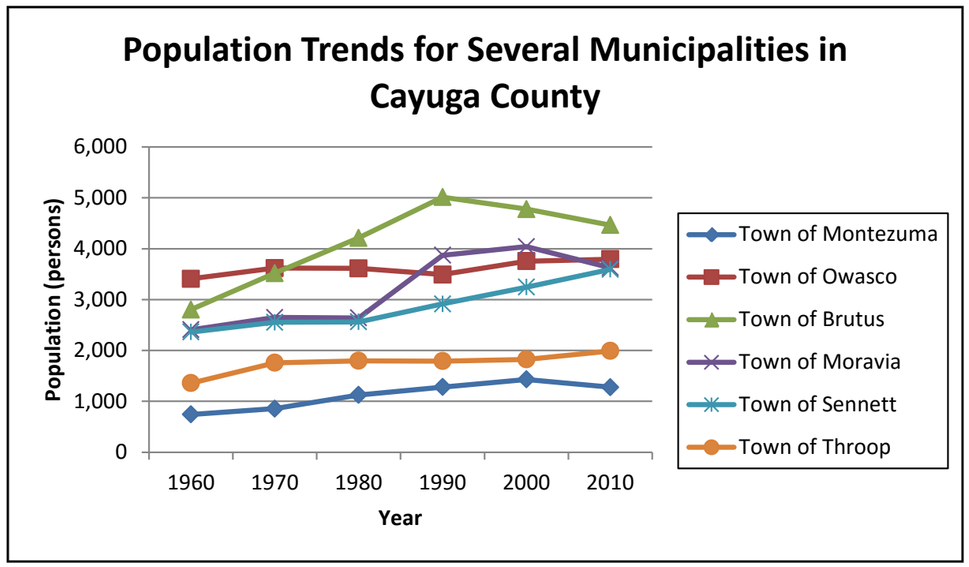
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census)

The population of the Town of Montezuma has remained relatively steady since 1960, ranging from a low of 743 persons in 1960 to a high of 1,431 persons in 2000. Since 2000, the population in Montezuma has fallen to 1,277 persons. Population trends in other municipalities in Cayuga County have been similar, although some have significantly increased since 1960, such as in the towns of Brutus and Moravia.

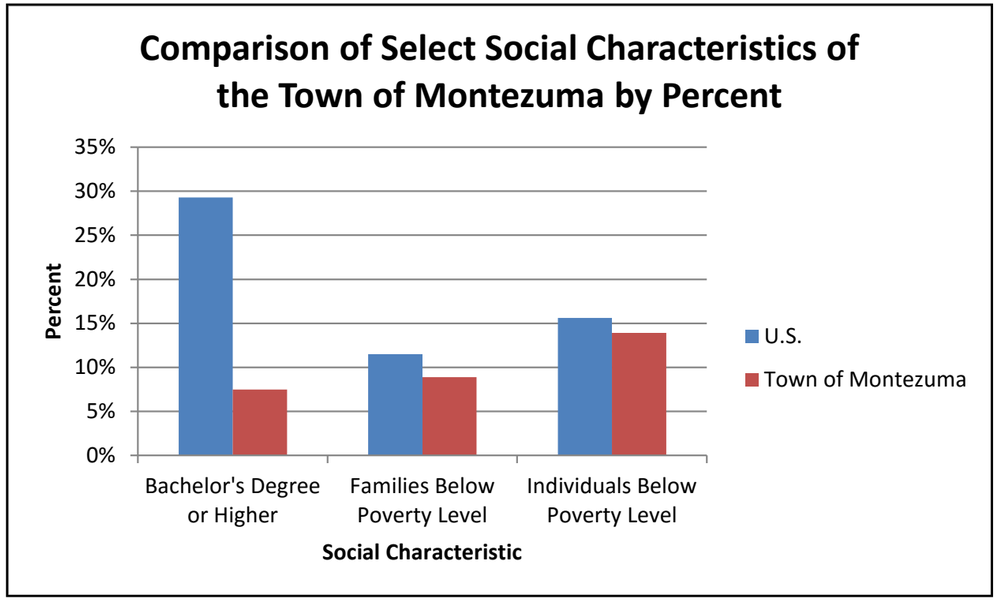
In 2010, 46% of Montezuma residents were 45 years of age or older, and 30% were under 24 years old. The Town of Montezuma has a lower percentage of college educated population than the U.S. average, but a lower percentage of families and individuals below poverty than the U.S. averages.



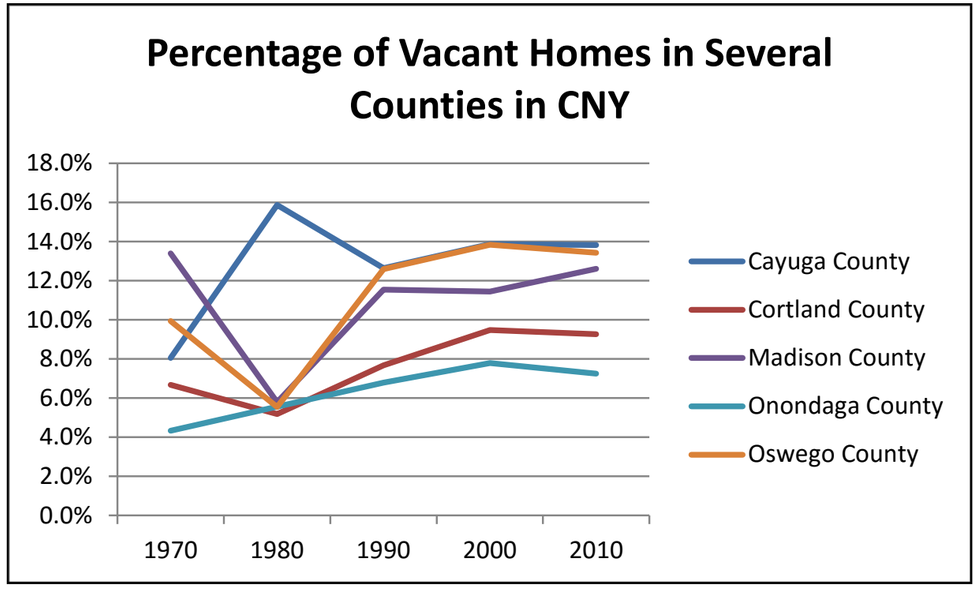
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census)



(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)



*Note: 2014 year reflects results of the ACS 2010-2014 5-year estimate (Source: American Community Survey)



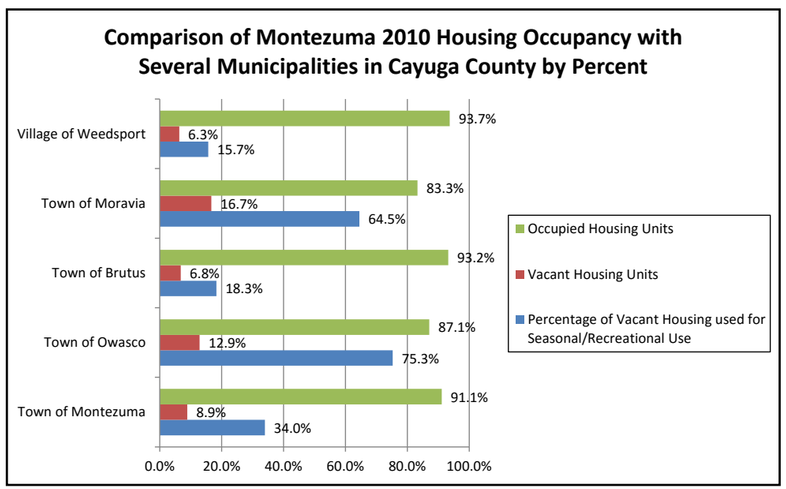
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Housing

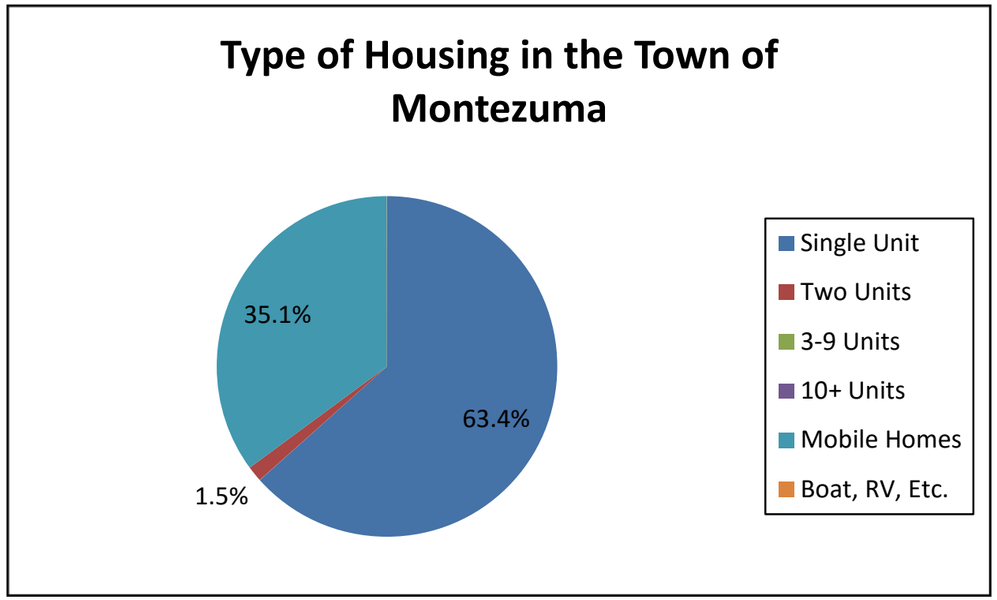
In the Town of Montezuma, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that there were 531 total housing units in 2010 down from 547 total units in 2000. Owner occupied housing represented 85% of that total in 2010. 47 residences, or 8.9% of total housing units, were reportedly vacant in 2010. 34% of the vacant homes were reported to be used primarily for seasonal/recreational purposes, which can be mostly attributed to snow-birds who live in Montezuma for half of the year and in Florida for the other half of the year.

Housing vacancy rates in the CNY region since 1980 have trended higher. Although Madison County vacancy rates have slightly decreased overall, they still remain high at 12.6%. Between 1970 and 1980, Cayuga County vacancy rates increased significantly, from 8.1% to 15.9%. One explanation for the sharp increase in housing vacancy rates in Cayuga County between 1970 and 1980 is that housing stock increased by 17.5%, from 26,348 to 30,955 homes, while population in the county only grew 3.2%. Housing vacancy rates have most likely remained high because county population has decreased by 2.8% since its peak in 1990, but housing stock has grown 9.6% during the same time period. Since then, housing vacancy rates throughout Cayuga County have remained some of the highest in the five county CNY region, at about 13.8% in 2010. This suggests a trend of development that is not sustainable, and growth should be redirected towards existing housing and rehab programs rather than continued new development.

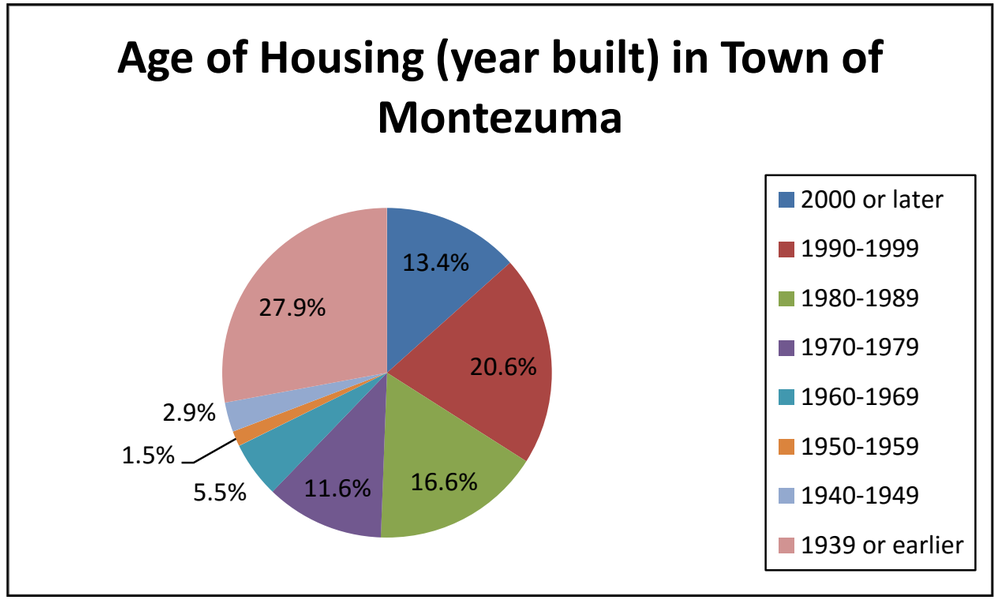
The median cost of housing in Montezuma as reported by the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS) is $89,300, and median gross monthly rent in the town is $728. Most homes in Montezuma were built prior to 1939 or after 1990 and the majority are single-unit homes (63.4%) or mobile homes (35.1%). Some of the older housing stock has been updated to be more energy efficient and modern, although most older homes have not and are not up to current standards. Affordable housing options, including mobile homes, apartments, house rentals, and rent-to-own properties are available in the town, although community members feel rental housing affordability, availability, and quality could be improved. Transportation costs are more of a concern for town residents than housing costs, since it is necessary to drive out of town to run most errands or to get to most places of employment. This represents an opportunity for economic



(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census)



*Note: 2014 year reflects results of the ACS 2010-2014 5-year estimate (Source: American Community Survey)



*Note: 2014 year reflects results of the ACS 2010-2014 5-year estimate (Source: American Community Survey)

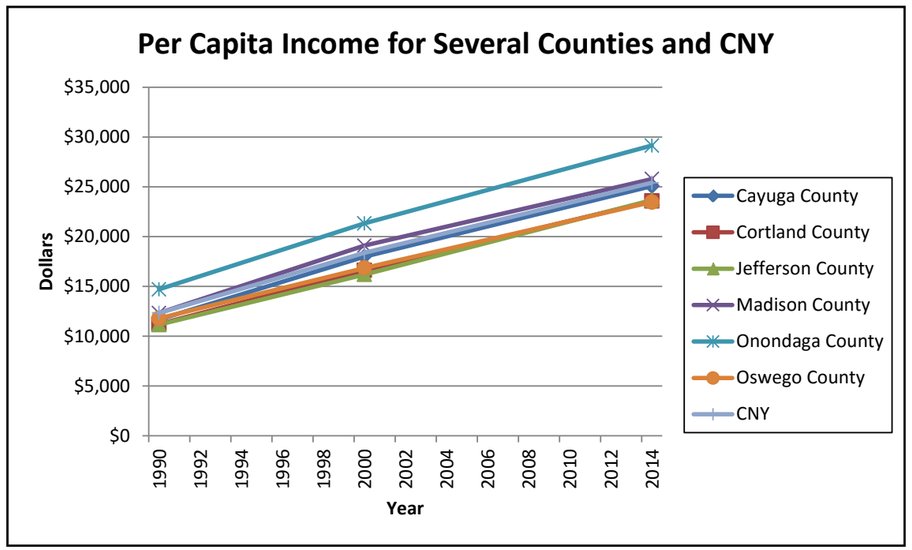
development in the town, as residents would likely shop at businesses closer to home if they became available. Smaller housing options geared toward the elderly are also needed in the town, including options that are handicapped-accessible, with no stairs to basements, and wheelchair ramps.

Multifamily homes currently represent less than 2% of the housing stock in the town. In the future, as the new casino in Tyre is finished, additional multifamily housing may be needed as casino workers seek affordable places to live nearby. Multifamily homes with rental options are more desirable and practical in Montezuma than large-scale apartment buildings, as they would be able to meet the demand in the town while fitting in with the character of the community, and they do not necessarily require expansion of public water or sewer systems. This new demand for housing could also be an opportunity to rehabilitate vacant or substandard housing rather than developing new housing subdivisions.

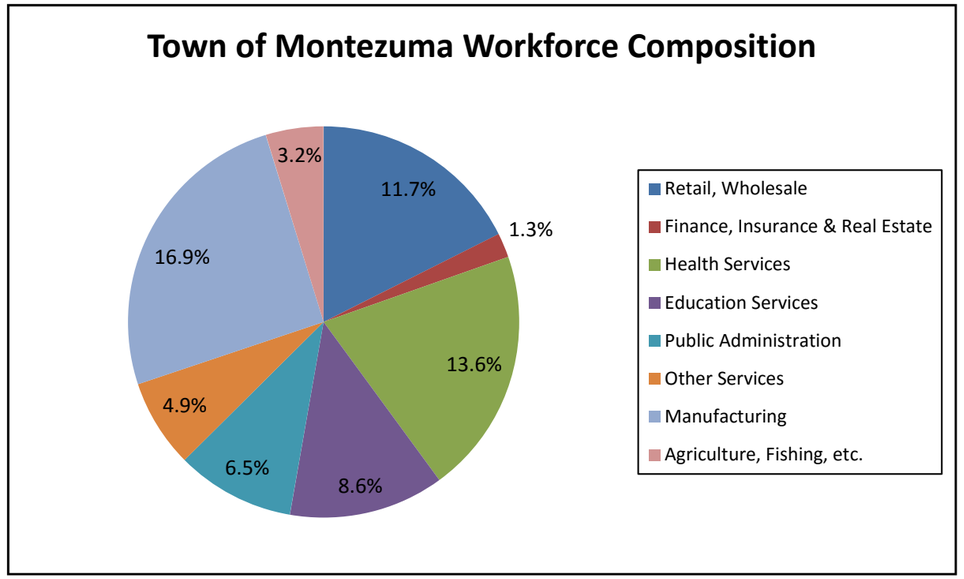
Business/Economic Base

Situated in central New York State between Syracuse and Rochester, Cayuga County's principal sources of employment are health services, manufacturing, and retail/wholesale, with about 15% of the population employed in each of these industries. Agriculture is also vital to the Central New York economy, with Cayuga County producing some of the state's finest livestock, dairy products and cash crops. Cayuga County is the second largest producer of agricultural commodities in New York State, producing goods with a market value of $293.4 million and providing nearly 2,900 jobs in 2012. The products of agriculture in Cayuga County are led by field crops and dairy, representing 77% of total agricultural sales. Based on the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS), per capita income for Cayuga County was $25,070, up from $18,003 in 2000.

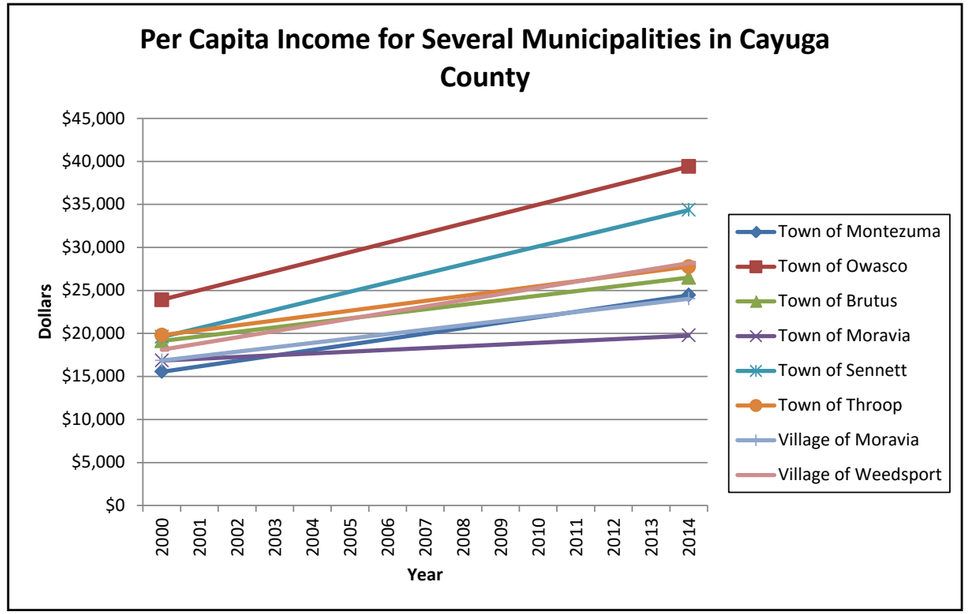
Montezuma resident occupations were reported in the 2010-2014 ACS as largely manufacturing (17%), followed by health services (14%), retail/wholesale (12%), education services (9%), and public administra-



*Note: 2014 year reflects results of the ACS 2010-2014 5-year estimate (Source: American Community Survey)



*Note: 2014 year reflects results of the ACS 2010-2014 5-year estimate (Source: American Community Survey)



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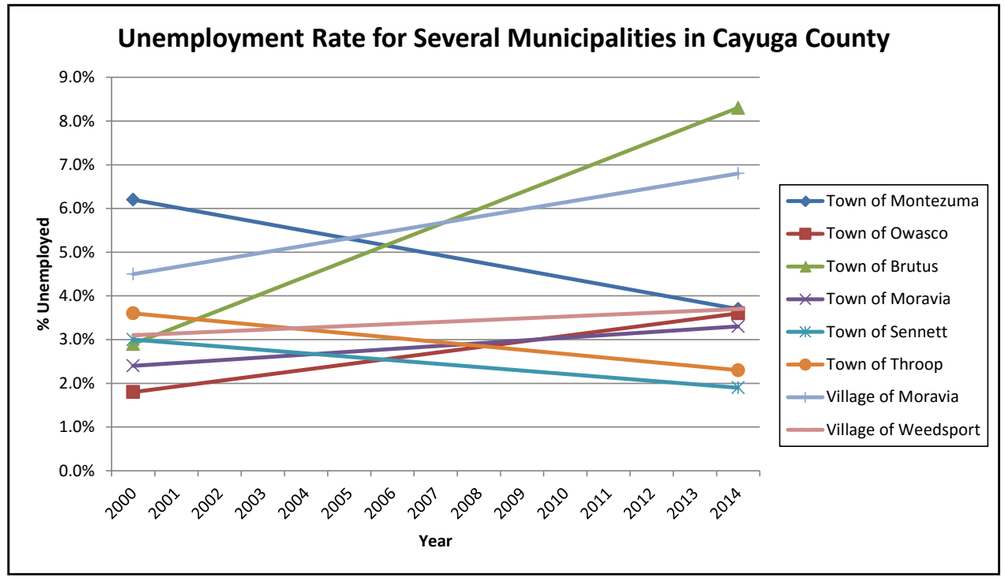


*Note: 2014 year reflects results of the ACS 2010-2014 5-year estimate (Source: American Community Survey)

tion (7%). Average time spent traveling to work is 26.9 minutes, and 4.3% of people work from home. The Archer, Daniels, Midland (ADM) facility (previously Clinton Corn Processing and Empire State Sugar) that once employed around 200 local workers now only employs a handful. The ADM site is a 375-acre flat industrial property with convenient access to rail, canal, and thruway systems, making it a practical location for transport-oriented businesses to locate. At present, the ADM site takes in grain, stores it, and sells it to local farmers. There are currently four buildings on the property, including the main office shop and three warehouses that store grain. The Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) facility in the Town of Montezuma has convenient access to rail facilities at the northeast end of the property and is also located close to the thruway. The property also has dockage on Seneca River at the northwest end of the property, although it is not currently being utilized. This site provides significant opportunities to industries that rely on multiple modes of transportation as part of their business models, and could be marketed to attract such business. An inventory of this site will be helpful to determine future best uses and to drive development and employment opportunities in the area.

Despite the reduction in employees at the ADM facility, the 2010-2014 ACS shows a decrease in unemployment rates in the Town of Montezuma, dropping to 4.3% from 6.2% in 2000. This is likely because the majority of workers at the ADM facility lived outside of the Town of Montezuma, and the workers were able to find jobs elsewhere. Population in the town also dropped from 1,431 in 2000 to 1,182 in 2014 as youth from Montezuma moved outside of the town. Median family income for Montezuma residents also rose from $44,808 in 2000 to $59,886 during the same time period, which is approximately 92% of the national average.

In the Town of Montezuma, with its highly productive soils and abundant water resources, the business of agriculture has also remained strong in recent years, with just over 3% of the population engaged in agri-

Archer Daniels Midland Property (Source: Google Maps, April 22, 2016)

culture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining activities.

In addition to the many agricultural operations in the Town of Montezuma, there are a number of small businesses serving local markets, and a few that supply regional products and services. Local products include farm-grown produce, hay, and beef. There are construction, agriculture, camping, plumbing, and hunting services. The many historic and natural resources that Montezuma has to offer are significant and should be capitalized on for economic development in the town. Historic resources, such as the Montezuma Heritage Park, Mentz Church, Richmond Aqueduct, and Clifford House, illustrate Montezuma's rich history as part of the Erie and Cayuga-Seneca Canal corridors and can act as tourist destinations, especially for those passing through the town on the Erie Canalway Trail. Hunting, fishing, and the beautiful rural landscape of the town and scenic views of the Seneca River are assets the town can capitalize on by targeting development of complementary infrastructure and services to attract visitors. Although local campgrounds provide visi-

tors the opportunity for longer stays in Montezuma, there may be additional commercial and professional services opportunities related to Montezuma's historic and natural resources.
Some of the businesses currently operating in Montezuma include:

Archer, Daniels, Midland (ADM)
AVerdi Storage Containers
Bennett's Trailer Park
Cook Forage
Cooks Construction and Restoration
Equity Angus
Hejamada Campgrounds
Helmer Roofing
Montezuma Anchorage Paddle Camp, LLC
Nice N Easy
NYS Thruway Rest Area
O'Connor Pallet
Saroodis Agri-Services
Smith Enterprises
Wellington Plumbing

Municipal Infrastructure and Services

The Town of Montezuma has one voting district. Montezuma Town government consists of an elected Town Supervisor, Town Clerk, and Highway Superintendant serving two year terms, and an elected Town

Board with five members (including the Town Supervisor) serving terms of four years. The Town Board appoints the Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer, and Zoning Board of Appeals. The town also holds positions for a Town Justice, Tax Assessor, Town Historian, Recycling Manager, Tax Collector, Water Clerk, and Animal Control Officer.

Montezuma operates one water district that serves about 475 people. Water from Owasco Lake is treated by the City of Auburn which sells treated water to the Cayuga County Water Authority which then sells the water to the Town of Montezuma. Accessibility of drinkable water presents a big concern in the Town of Montezuma, as public water is not currently available throughout the whole town, and there are issues of high sulfur and iron concentrations in well water and wells continue to collapse. A plan for a new water line exists for the town, which will be important for providing drinkable water resources to those in the town who currently face these issues. An inventory of collapsed and inadequate wells would be an important first step in assessing locations for any additional future municipal water expansion in the town.

The Town of Montezuma does not operate a public sewer line. The town expects that in the near future the DEC will mandate a sewer line based on Cayuga County health inspections in the area. Placement of this sewer line should be carefully considered, as it will inevitably affect the location of future development. The Suitability Analysis Map for the Town of Montezuma (page 17) includes a suggestion for a potential future sewage treatment plant site and associated sewage lines. The Suitability Analysis map highlights important aspects of land parcels that should be considered when determining their suitability for future development, including: size of parcels, amount of land with 15% or greater slopes, amount of wetlands on parcels, land in an agricultural district, amount of land in the 100 year flood zone, and land in scenic viewsheds. The map provides a visual reference to potential future development areas or conditions that call for special attention in future planning and development decisions.

This suggested sewage treatment plant site was chosen because it is located on town lands, is on a waterfront parcel and can therefore discharge to the Seneca River, is outside of the 100 year flood zone and steep slope areas, and can be sited in the midst of trees so as to remain visually unobtrusive. The suggested sewage lines follow the main roads in the hamlet, where the most dense development is located, and extend down Fuller Road in order to service future potential development sites, as indicated in pink shading on the Suitability Analysis Map.

Boat launch at the marina

The Town Highway Department provides plowing and repairing of town roads, while the county and state provide plowing and repair-

Aerial photo of ADM Facility taken on June 10, 2010. This image shows buildings constructed during Empire Sugar and Clinton Corn ownership. (Source: Bill Hecht)

ing of their respective roads. Sidewalks and bicycle lanes or pathways are not a part of the current transportation infrastructure in Montezuma. The Town of Montezuma also has an agreement with Cayuga County that allows them compensation to plow some county roads. While the town is responsible for repairing its roads, the town cannot afford to properly fix most roads and instead updates roads using the oil and chip method. Currently, many town, county, and state roads in Montezuma are in disrepair.

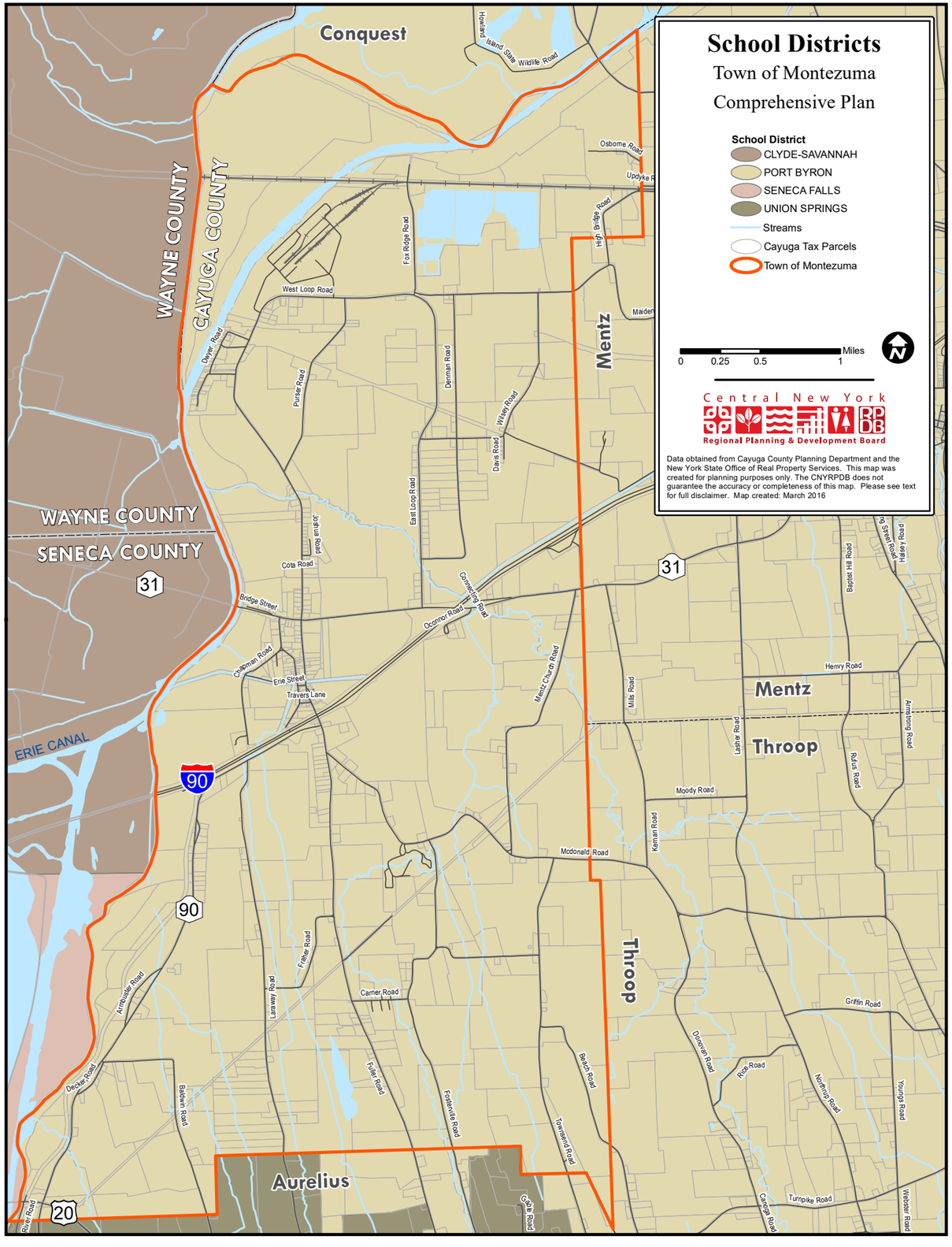
There are issues with speeding throughout town, as there is little monitoring of speed. Specifically, the town is working to lower the speed limit on Fuller Road where there is an especially precarious intersection with NYS Route 90. Narrow roads throughout town make speeding especially dangerous, as wide farm equipment requires the majority of the road to travel.

Off-street parking opportunities are lacking in various locations through the town, including at the Clifford House, the VFW, and the marina (to be developed on the Seneca River at Route 31). On-street parking is also lacking during the Route 90 annual garage sale.

Water transport is possible via the marina boat launch off of Route 31 and at the ADM site, although neither site is used for the transport of goods. The ADM site does not currently use their wharf for any transport, and the marina boat launch is only functional for smaller boats. While not currently utilized to its full potential, the Seneca River provides important opportunities for water transport of goods and people to and from Montezuma. Traveling north from Montezuma, the Seneca River gradually turns east, connecting with Cross Lake, Onondaga Lake, and eventually Oneida Lake. Traveling south along the border of the Town of Montezuma, the Seneca River provides a connection to Cayuga Lake and the adjacent communities, as well as the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, which travels from the north end of Cayuga Lake west to Seneca Falls, Waterloo, and eventually Seneca Lake. Local air transport is provided by the Weedsport or Seneca Falls airports.

The bridge on High Bridge Road in the neighboring Town of Mentz has recently been closed, which has caused traffic to be rerouted, increasing response times for emergency services in the Town of Montezuma. The County bridge on East Loop Road crossing Salt Creek is also in need of repair, along with the two large culverts on West Loop Road. These kinds of infrastructure issues can be of critical importance to the Montezuma community.

Healthcare and emergency services in Montezuma are not always easily accessible. The closest hospital, doctor's office, and pharmacy are all located in Auburn and/or Port Byron, requiring residents to travel about 4-7 miles to reach these services. EMT services are also lacking in the town, with two EMTs cur-



Top: A. A. Gates Elementary School, Port Byron

Middle: Dana L. West Jr.-Sr. High School, Port Byron

Bottom: Cayuga Mennonite School, Montezuma

rently registered in the town but only one active. There are two new EMTs that are expected to start work very soon. Road construction standards are needed to prevent this from reoccurring in the town.

Montezuma does not have its own police department. The town is served primarily by County Sheriffs and State Police. Because there are no local police services, calls can take only a few minutes to up to over an hour to receive service.

The Montezuma Fire Department is an all-volunteer fire department, operating from a single station on High Street and providing fire suppression, rescue, and EMT first-Response services to all of the Town of Montezuma. The Fire Department often doesn't have enough trained personnel to go out on calls, but must do so anyway. The older population seems to be the main reason for this issue, as working-aged residents are busy during the day, and retired residents do not have the physical stamina demanded of a volunteer fire fighter.

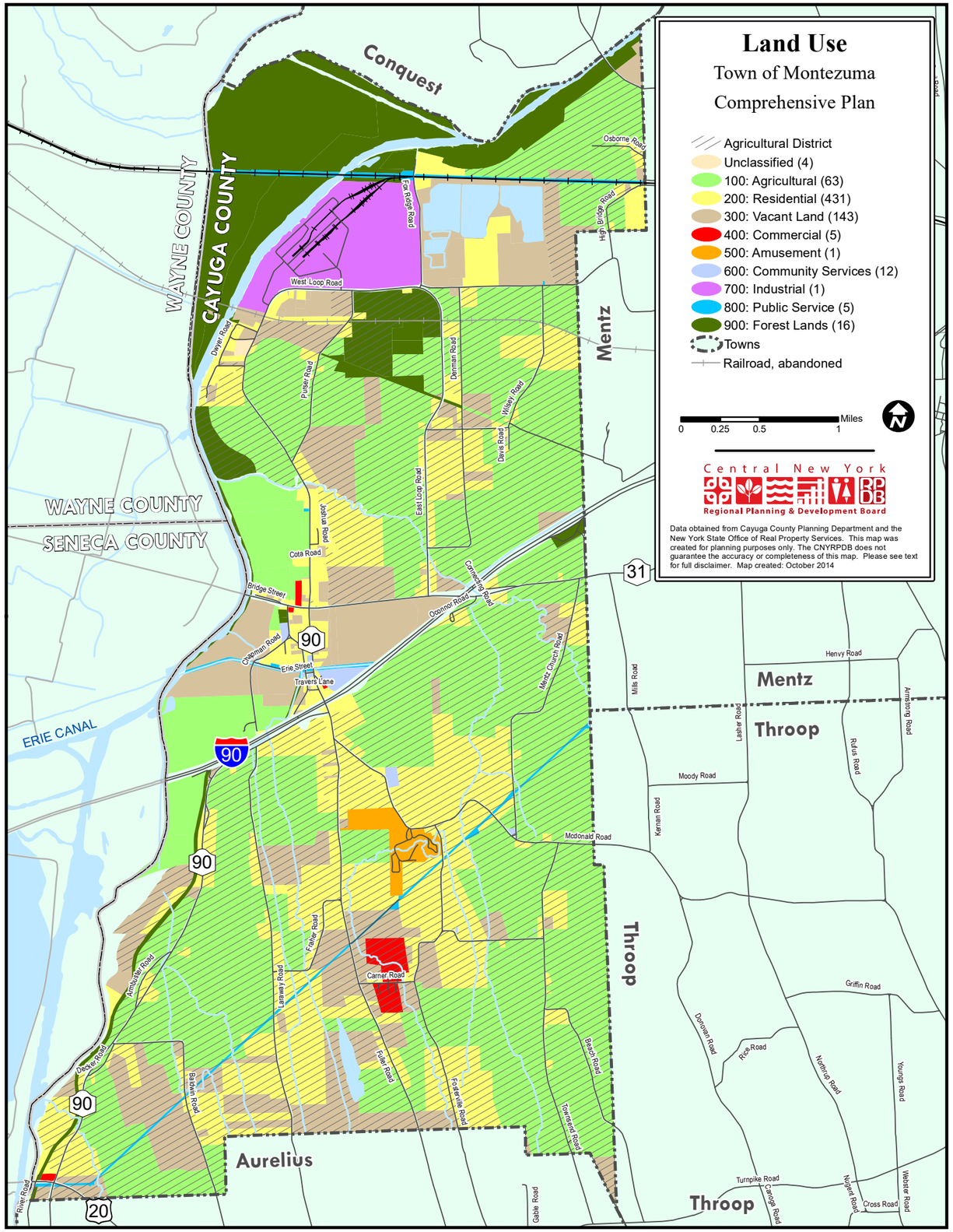
The Montezuma Fire Department participates in a mutual aid system, cooperating with neighboring departments in providing apparatus and manpower for working fires and other large incidents both inside and outside of the town.

Emergency response within the Town of Montezuma is provided by the Montezuma Fire Department, whose personnel operate at a Basic Life Support Level, and ambulance services are provided most often by Rural Metro Medical Services, based in Auburn, which provides Advanced Life Support Services if needed. Port Byron and Savannah also offer emergency response services to the Town of Montezuma if necessary.

The Montezuma Volunteer Fire Department is dispatched by the Cayuga County 911 Center. Because the Town of Montezuma does not have municipal water throughout the town, fires that occur within areas without municipal water service must draft water from static sources and the use of tanker trucks to bring water to the scene of an emergency.

Residents currently contract out individually for solid waste haulers, but the town is considering creating a single waste district for the town with one hauler providing service to all residents. This would reduce vehicle trips and provide environmental benefits while reducing the need for road maintenance, as often multiple haulers service the same roads on the same days. Every other Saturday from 9:00am - noon, the town provides the opportunity for residents to bring recyclables to the Highway Garage facility for the town to dispose of. The town also provides a spring clean up, where residents can bring items to the Highway Garage for disposal. A small percentage of primarily elderly residents are offered pick-up services at this time, but the town may want to consider this type of pick-up for all residents since the cost is covered by all tax payers.

The Port Byron Central School District serves the Town of Montezuma in public education and includes A.A. Gates Elementary, serving approximately 500 UPK-sixth grade students, and Dana L. West Jr.-Sr. High School, serving approximately 500 students in grades 7-12. The two schools are connected and sit on the same campus in the Village of Port Byron, about 5 miles east of Montezuma. There is one Mennonite School in the town, the Cayuga Mennonite School, located on Baldwin Road. The school has 36 students and 4 teachers and serves Mennonite children in grades 1-8.



Port Byron Library

The Port Byron Library in the Village of Port Byron is the primary library serving the Town of Montezuma. The Port Byron Library is part of the Finger Lakes Library System, which received its Charter from the Regents of the University of the State of New York in 1958 to serve the public libraries in Cayuga, Cortland, Seneca, Tioga, and Tompkins Counties. The library contains close to 13,000 volumes and circulates over 17,000 items each year. The Auburn Library is also close by, but there are some restrictions to the items that non-city residents can check out.

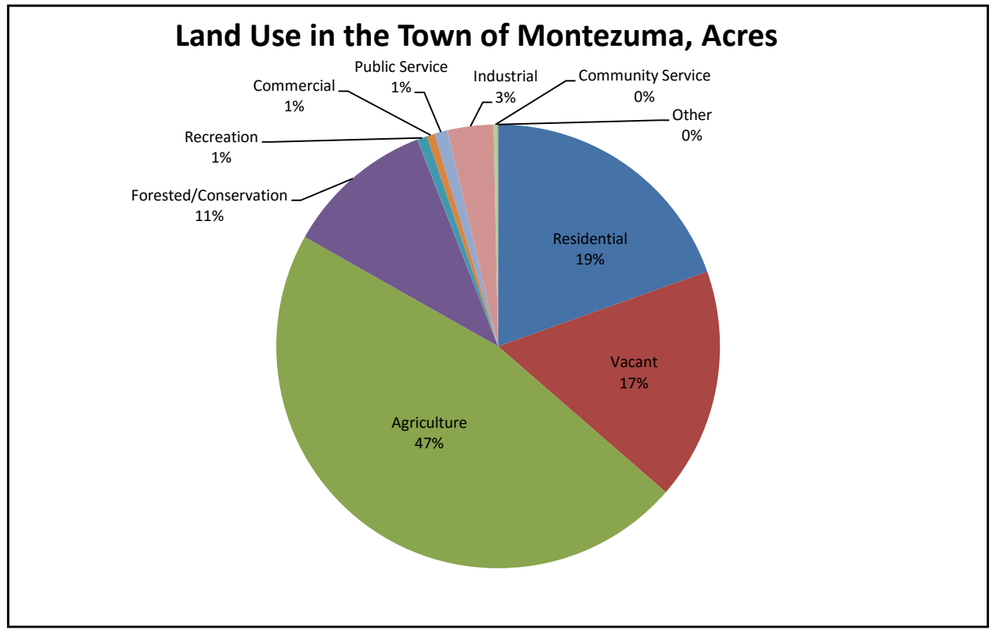
The libraries and Port Byron School also provide access to public internet, although internet sites at the school are often blocked due to content. Internet access throughout Montezuma is not reliable. Broadband exists in some areas of the town and is provided through Telephone and Data Systems (TDS), but the service is less than ideal with limited speed and capacity. School children, businesses, and residents could benefit greatly from increased availability of high speed fiber optic internet and alternative options for internet providers. Electric and natural gas services are provided by NYSEG.

Land Use and Zoning

The Town of Montezuma has 6 zoning districts: Agricultural Residential; Open Space, Recreational District; Hamlet District; Industrial District; Planned Development District; and Commercial District. Montezuma also has a zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, but no site plan review requirements except for what is asked for as a submission within the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

Subdivision regulations require submittal of both a conceptual drawing and a preliminary plan that shows existing features of the land and proposed street and lot layout within and adjacent to a subdivision. These preliminary plans are not approvable but are a required step in plan submittals necessary during the review process. The Subdivider must then submit a formal application for which the Planning Board will hold a public hearing and approve, modify and approve, or disapprove the final plat.

Zoning regulations dictate that when a Planned Development District (PDD) is proposed, applicants may present a rough sketch and written descriptive form to get initial opinions from the Town Planning Board, although this step is optional. A plan, drawn to scale, and written report must then be submitted to the Town Board as part of the application for establishment of a PDD. The Town Board will then refer the application to the Town Planning Board, which will refer the application to the Cayuga County Planning Board for formal review. The Cayuga County Planning Board and Town Planning Board then offer recommendations to the Town Board about the application. The Town Board then evaluates the application and holds a public



(Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services, 2014)

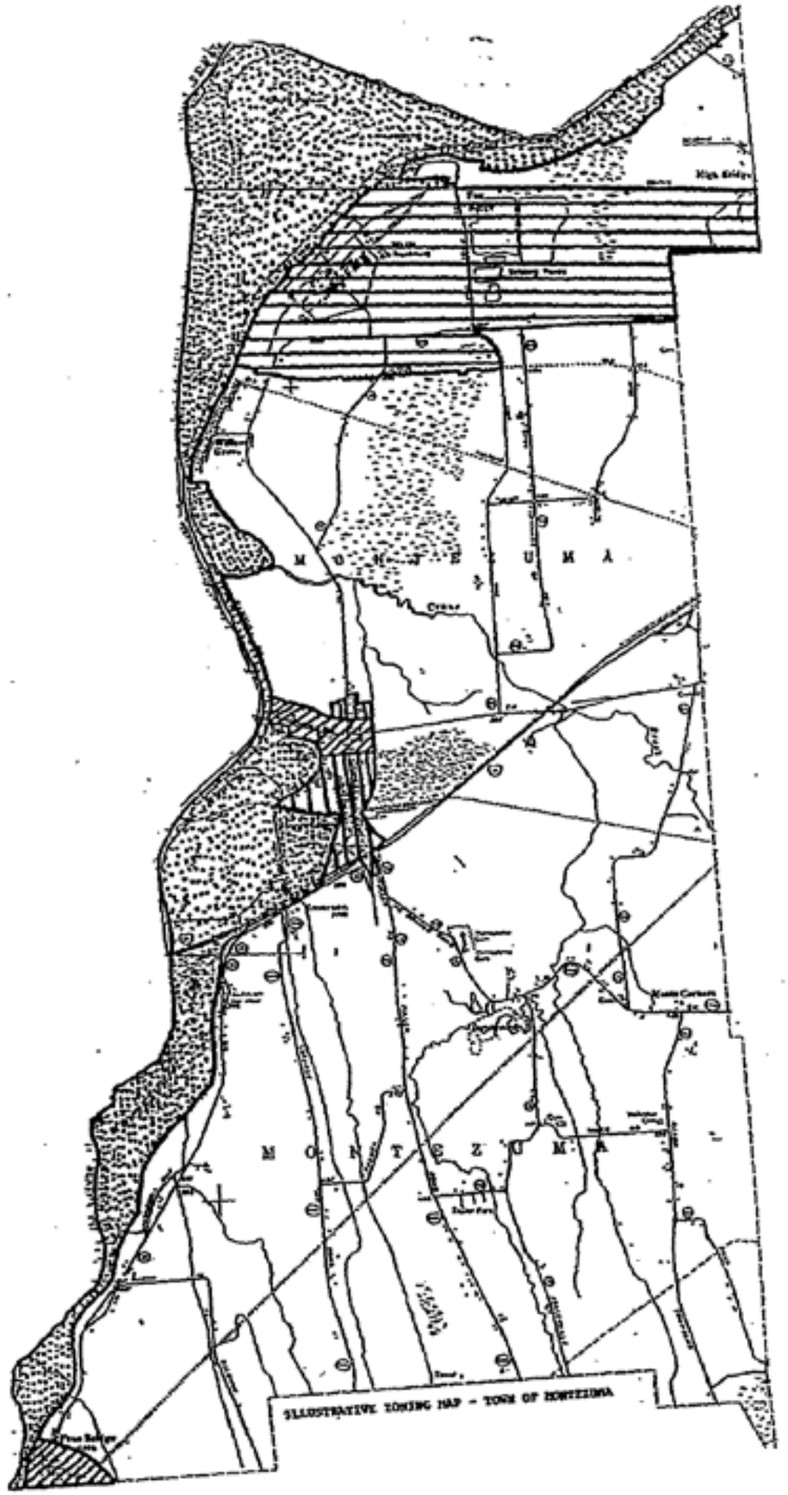
hearing, after which time the Board will grant or deny the PDD zoning.

Zoning code also requires plans detailing size, type, and location of buildings and structures to be submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals for participatory outdoor recreational facilities. Applicants for industrial uses must submit plans detailing area dimensions, location, number and location of structures, specifications of the water supply, sewage and refuse disposal facilities and approval of said facilities by the Cayuga County Health Department.

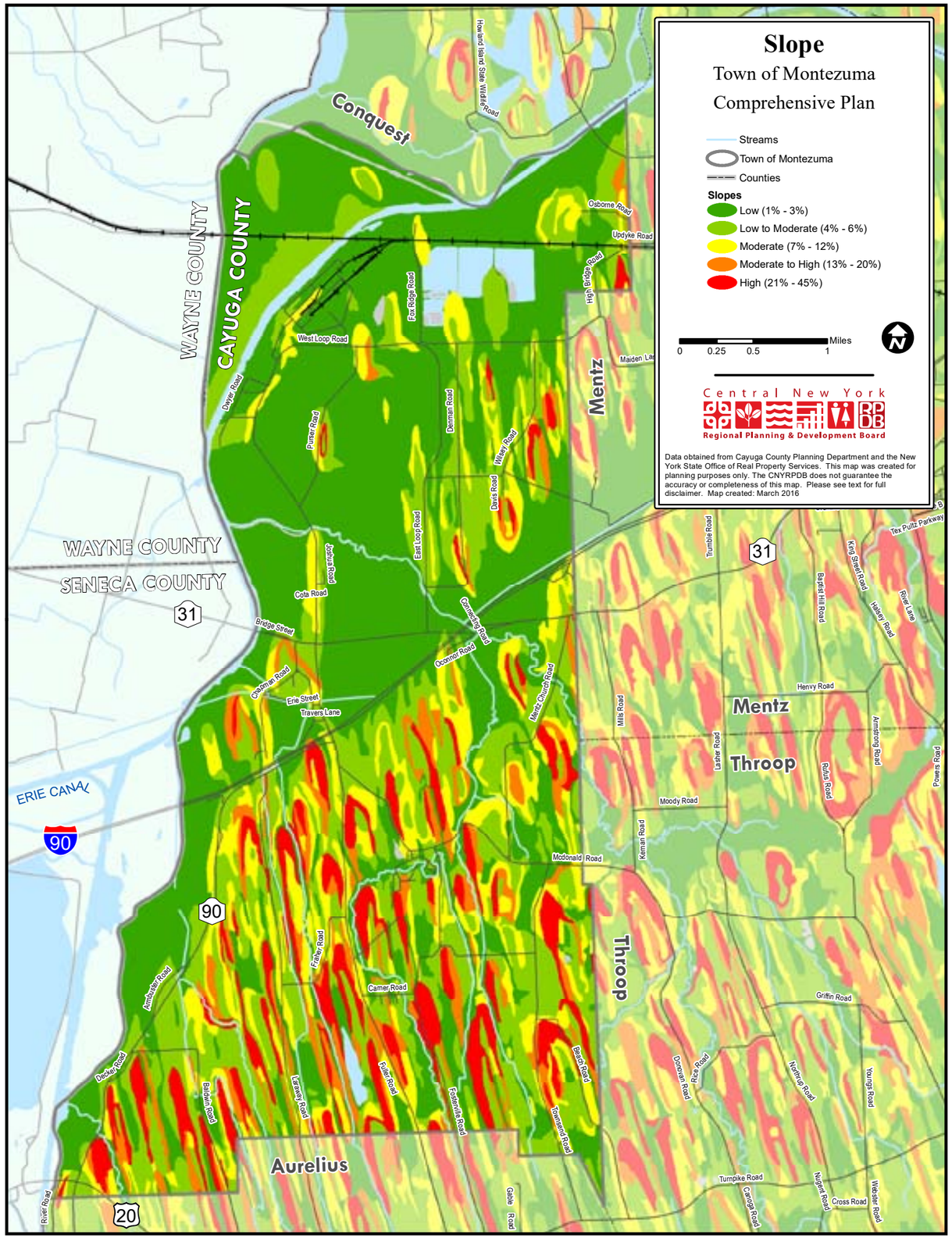
Subdivision and zoning regulations require site plans and review for matters of subdivision, industrial uses, PDDs, and outdoor recreational uses only. This means that developers of parcels that are not going to be subdivided or are not planned for industrial or recreational uses or PDDs can continue their projects without site plan review. While it is good that some kinds of development must undergo a form of site plan review, it is best practice to require site plan review and approval for all development projects so that the town can ensure that no types of development move forward unchecked. The existing zoning map for the town, found in the 1974 Zoning Ordinance and shown on the next page, is also virtually unreadable and needs to be updated.

47% of land in Montezuma is used for agricultural purposes, while 19% is used for residential purposes, 17% is vacant, and 11% is forested/conservation land.[15] 23.5% of land parcels and 30.3% of total assessed value of land in the town falls within the FEMA floodplain. This is a significant issue for development, health, and safety in the community. The town has a history of significant flooding impacts in its north and

15 Information obtained from the New York State Office of Real Property Services, 2014



Existing Zoning Map for the Town of Montezuma - created as part of the 1974 Zoning Ordinance, this map is virtually unreadable.



west sections due to its location along the Seneca River and extensive wetland areas. The southern portion of the town is impacted less by flooding and contains rolling hills, with peaks and valleys crossing agricultural, residential, and commercial lands.

Current zoning regulations require a minimum road frontage of 150 feet in the Agricultural Residential zone which, in combination with deep parcels and few roads, has caused the formation of "spaghetti lots" throughout the town as farmers sell land that has been subdivided into large, deep lots with the minimum road frontage. The town's zoning code could be amended to prevent this issue by requiring a width to depth ratio of new subdivisions, and planning for access roads in development areas.

There is a general lack of pressure to develop residential properties in the town, as current property owners would have to give up some of their land for new development to occur, and municipal water services would have to be expanded even further than currently planned. Large land areas that might be suitable for residential development are often purchased for farming, and there generally hasn't been a lot of major subdivision or residential development in recent years, with mostly a lot here and there getting developed over time. Increasing residential development could benefit the town tax base, but large scale residential development isn't expected in the town due to the lack of developable land (land not on drumlins or in wetland areas), a lack of municipal water infrastructure and the cost of expanding that infrastructure, and the general desire for farmers to keep their land in farming. However, if landowners do decide to sell parcels of land to be subdivided for residential development, and/or if the municipal water line is expanded further, the town would like to discourage the formation of spaghetti lots. Zoning maps and code should be re-evaluated to address this issue.

There is also currently a lack of pressure to develop commercial areas in the town. Commercial use areas in the town have not been identified through zoning that anticipate new commercial development opportunities. Town residents and visitors currently have to travel outside of Montezuma to purchase their everyday goods, as there are no markets or deli/convenience stores within the town. Laundromat and car wash facilities are also non-existent in the town, as the town would need a public sewer line for these industries to be feasible. The Nice N Easy off of Route 90 in the southwestern corner of the town currently operates on well water but would like to see public water infrastructure extended to their site as well. The town does not currently have zoning regulations that allow for mixed-uses, which could encourage compact and sustainable development of residential, commercial, and professional services, especially if located in close proximity to the Hamlet.

Some small businesses have cropped up in predominantly residential areas in the town. Although there have not been any major issues between small businesses and surrounding residential neighbors, some businesses can create noise and liability risks, such as when visitors sometimes wander from Hejamada Campground and RV Park onto private residential property.

Natural Resources and Environment

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge

The natural setting of the Town of Montezuma is remarkable in that it includes part of a National Natural Landmark, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Located in the middle of one of the most active flight lanes in the Atlantic Flyway, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1938 as a refuge and

breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. It provides resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds on its 9,809 acres. 242 species of birds, 43 species of mammals, 15 species of reptiles, and 16 species of amphibians can be found on the refuge for at least part of the year.[16]

16 http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Montezuma/wildlife_and_habitat/index.html

Wetland resources in the Town of Montezuma

Wildlife, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge

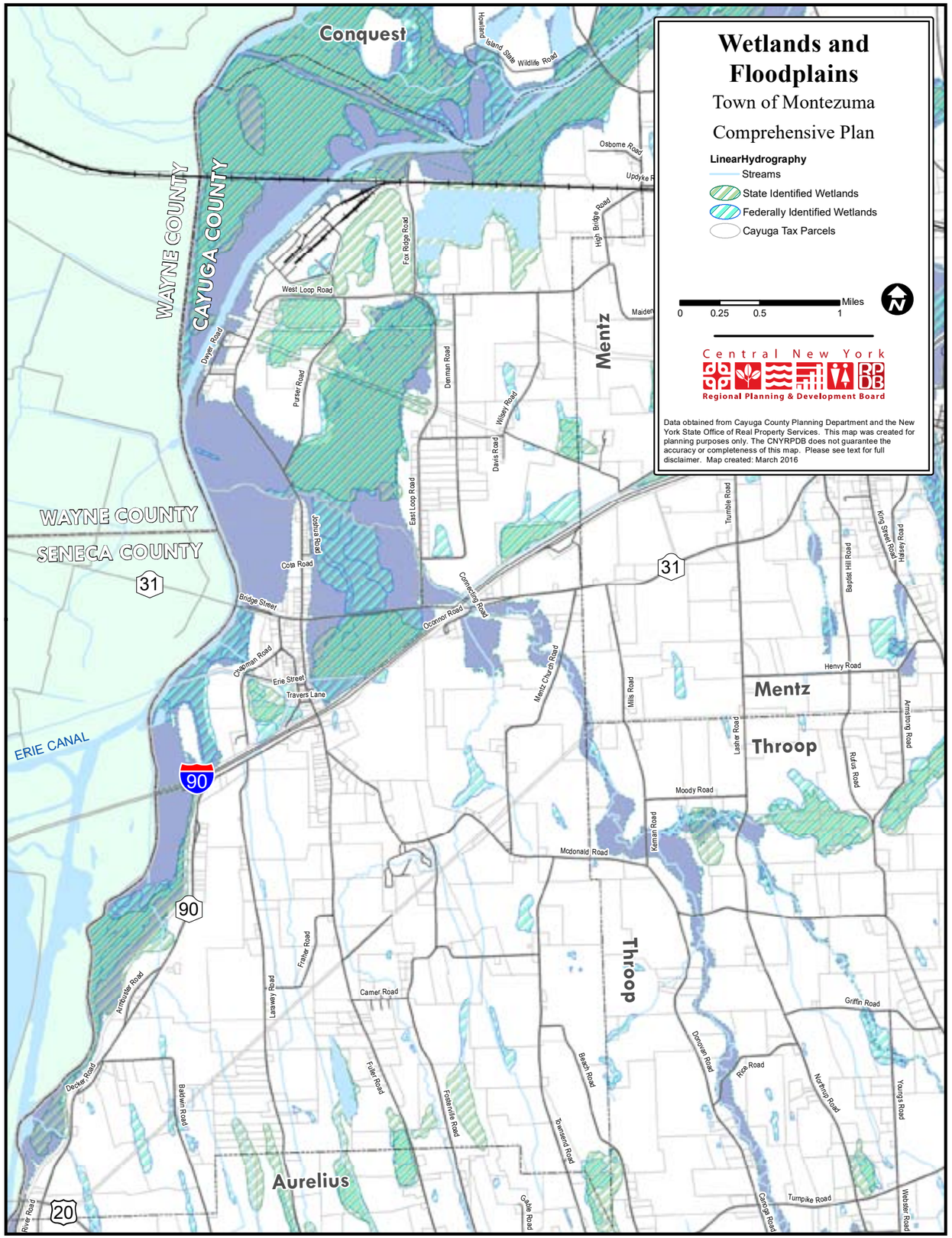
Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area

The Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area also falls partially within the Town of Montezuma and consists of 3,600 acres divided into three units; Howland Island (3,100 acres); Bluff Point Unit (388 acres); and the Way-Cay Unit (114 acres). The area has been managed primarily for the natural production of waterfowl since 1962. More than 220 birds may be seen in the area throughout the year, as well as 46 mammal species, such as deer, raccoon, fox, squirrels, skunk, rabbits and opossums.[17]

The Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and the Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area provide significant low-impact recreational opportunities for visitors, especially when coupled with the man-made historical and cultural resources found in the Town of Montezuma. A system of trails with wayfinding signage could facilitate stronger connections between the Hamlet of Montezuma and the Wildlife Refuge across the river.

The Town of Montezuma features vast areas of open agricultural fields and rich soils through which small streams course on their way to outlets on the Seneca River. Due to its location amid the eastern Finger Lakes, the Town of Montezuma has a somewhat extended growing season even though it receives heavy amounts of snow in winter that are typical of Central New York State. The unusual topography of this region results in a great diversity of landscapes and ecological types within relatively small geographical areas like the Town of Montezuma. The northern portion of the town is characterized by flat wetlands, while the southern portion of the town has steep rolling hills and drumlins left by glacial retreat in the town's geological history. Planning should consider the shape and relief of the landscape to determine appropriate future uses and development of land in order to prevent negative impacts to natural and cultural assets valued by the community.

17 http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/68699.html

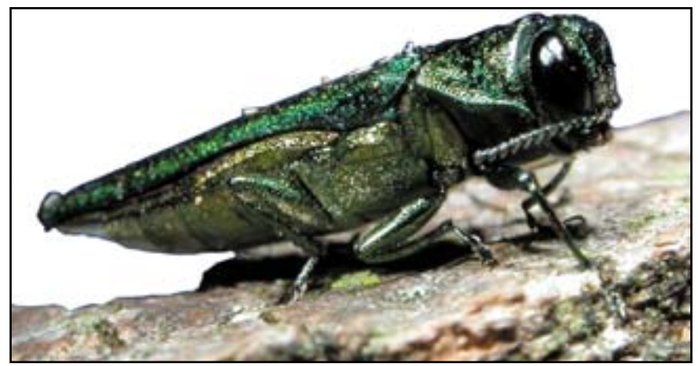


Farmland and vegetation on the slopes to the east of the Seneca River serve as important buffers by filtering out and minimizing sediment and nutrient runoff into the river. Roadway pollutants and nutrient and chemical run-off from agricultural practices in combination with unchecked erosion, poorly planned land clearing, and insufficient vegetated buffers (like mown lawn) have the potential to severely impact the quality of water resources. There are currently no special requirements in the town for the preservation of these important vegetated buffer lands adjacent to the town's streams and along the river, but it is recommended that the town re-evaluate zoning code to address this concern.

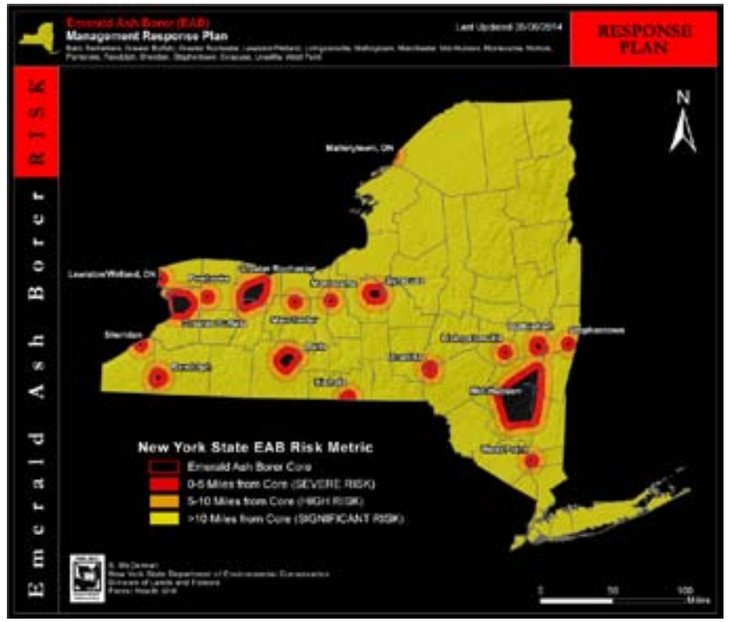
Much of the northern half of the Town of Montezuma is covered by federally and state recognized wetlands. Wetlands also are significantly present along the town's border with the Seneca River and sprinkled throughout the southern portion of the town. Most of the wetlands in Montezuma fall on forested or conservation land, but a significant amount also falls on agricultural and other privately-owned lands. A significant wetland area on Purser/W. Loop Roads has been purchased by the Finger Lakes Land Trust for continued protection of habitat and wildlife.

Ducks Unlimited, the NYS DEC, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other conservation organizations continue to purchase land in the town from farmers and private landowners that is located on floodplains and wetlands for conservation purposes. While the town wishes to conserve lands with significant resources, this issue is also a cause for concern in the town, as official conservation lands are no longer on the tax roll. Conservation by private owners and farmers, especially on wetland and floodplain lands, should be encouraged.

Invasive species and development threaten native species in the Town of Montezuma. Based on the New York State Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management Response Plan, Montezuma contains a confirmed case of EAB and has a severe risk of future EAB attacks. Hickory wasps, Black Swallow-Wart, Elephant Ear, wild grape vines, wild roses, garlic mustard weed, yellow flag iris, and poison ivy all represent invasive species in Montezuma that threaten the livelihood of native species and human populations in the area.

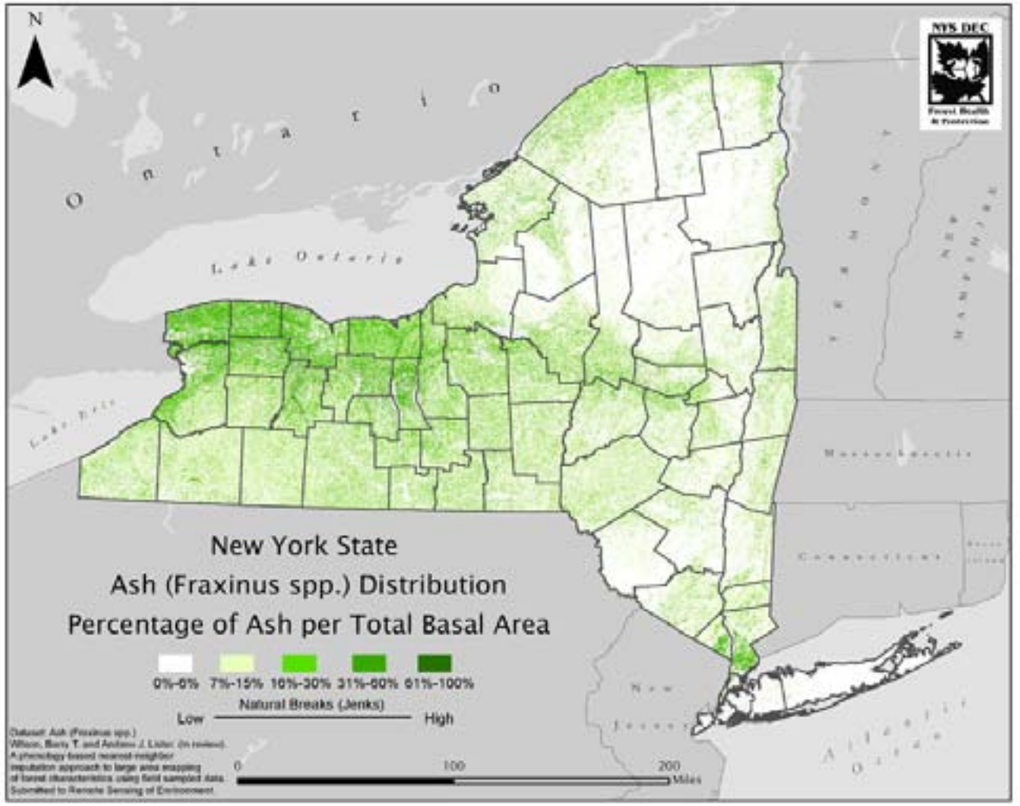


Emerald Ash Borer (Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension)



New York State EAB risk areas (Source: NYS DEC)

Montezuma EAB risk area (Source: NYS DEC)



New York State Ash Distribution map (Source: NYS DEC)

Montezuma residents are especially concerned with the wellbeing of bald eagles, otters, minx, trillium, milkweed, and cattails in the area.

Seneca River

The Seneca River flows eastward from its beginning at the north end of Seneca Lake to Three-Rivers in Onondaga County where it joins with the Oneida and Oswego Rivers and empties into Lake Ontario. The New York State Canal System, connecting 524 miles of inland navigable waterway from the Hudson River to the Great Lakes, Finger Lakes, and Lake Champlain, the Erie Canal, and the Cauyga-Seneca Canal systems are all part of the Seneca River and pass through the Town of Montezuma.

The Seneca River also presents excellent opportunities for fishing, with walleye, tiger musky, northern pike, largemouth and smallmouth bass as the main gamefish found in the river. Black crappie, yellow perch, bluegill, white perch, brown bullhead, catfish, carp and sheephead are also found in the river. Because of its abundance of fish, the Seneca River has become a popular location for bass and carp tournament anglers.

Agricultural Lands

High quality agricultural soils continue to be an important natural resource in the Town of Montezuma.

Seneca River in Town of Montezuma (Source: http://montezumaheritagepark.blogspot.com/p/components-of-park.html)

Diverse and sustainable practices in farming open land contribute to high aesthetic values associated with scenic farmland views from surrounding lands, and in addition provide an important source of food and forage for migrating birds and pollinator species. The working farms that continue the practice of agriculture in Montezuma today continue to give the community its much valued rural-agrarian character. While only about 3.2% of the population is involved in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining operations, 47% of Montezuma's land is used for agricultural purposes.

Because of its high quality soils, the Town of Montezuma continues to attract agricultural businesses. Mennonite families with a strong tradition in farming began settling in the Town of Montezuma in the 1990s. This trend has increased across Cayuga County in recent years as farmers of retirement age sell their land.

Approximately 5,260 acres in the town are classified as agricultural land use. Montezuma's highly productive fine loamy soils are underlaid with limestone and shale. Vast tracts of productive land and open space characterize the town and are interspersed with a scattering of wetlands and forested areas. The majority of farmed lands in Montezuma produce corn, soybeans, hay, and vegetables, and the livestock operations include dairy and beef cattle and sheep. Sparsely populated rural residential clusters and occasional views of the Seneca River seem accessories to a predominately agricultural landscape throughout the town. In addition to supporting a wealth of agricultural products to local and national markets, the many fields cleared for farming in Montezuma afford spectacular views of the surrounding countryside for which the Finger Lakes Region is famous. According to the community survey, most farmers do not know yet what they will do with their farms upon retirement, and many are interested in receiving information on conservation options that will protect their land from future development.

In recent decades, global economies of scale have led to the consolidation of many smaller farms into much

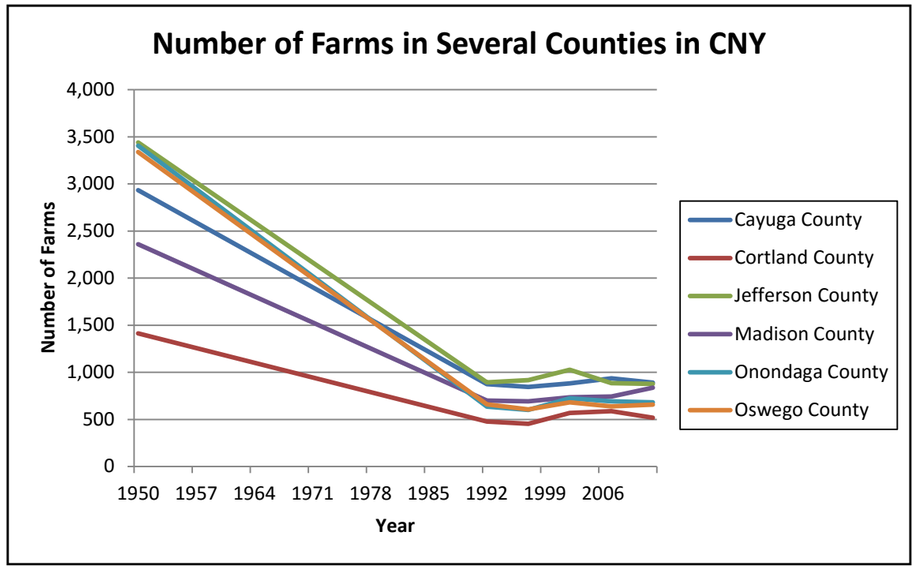
Cattle at pasture, Montezuma

Farmland, Montezuma

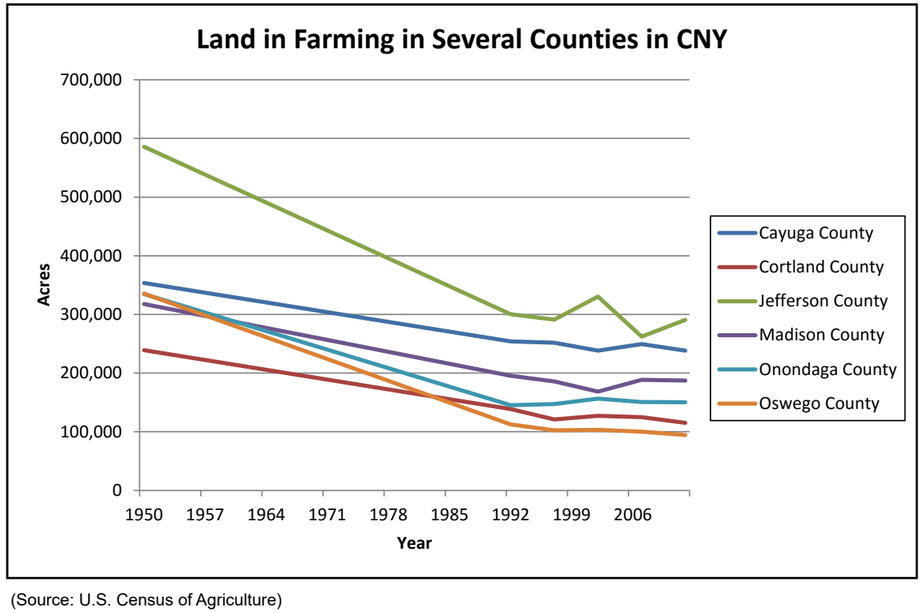
larger operations. In the Town of Montezuma as elsewhere in Cayuga County, dairy farming operations have grown in scale and local crop production percentages have favored feed crops for dairy cows. Many farming operations in Montezuma have been taken over by the Mennonite Community in recent years, who have increased the size of farming operations but continue to use highly environmentally conscious agricultural practices.

Technological changes in agricultural practices in recent decades have included biological engineering, chemical inputs, and considerable advances in farm machinery, including greatly increased scale. Many Montezuma residents are concerned about the application of pesticides, both on farmland and in residential areas. Specifically on farmland, residents have shown concern regarding air-spraying of pesticides, as the chemicals are less targeted and can affect nearby residences.

Since 1993, the use of bovine somatotropin (BST), a synthetic hormone that may increase milk production, has been common in dairy production, and in 1996, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) were introduced across the U.S. in agricultural production of corn, soybeans, cotton, and milk. These trends underscore the dilemma farmers face over production and pricing requirements that are increasingly challenging to meet, even as there has been concern over the potential long-term IMPACTS of genetic modification of



(Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture)



(Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture)

Farmland, Montezuma

crops, as well as chemical additives and hormones in food supplies. With increasing demand from consumers for hormone and chemical-free products, organic farming has been on the rise across New York State in recent years.

Other things to consider in light of resource conservation, global food security and sustainability include that 70% of grain grown in the U.S. is fed to animals in feedlots and 23% of the Earth's available fresh water is used to produce grain fed to livestock. On one acre of land, seven times more plant protein can be produced than meat protein. Because of the fossil fuels used to produce and transport livestock as well as greenhouse gases produced by livestock themselves, livestock production also accounts for anywhere between 14.5% and 51% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Beef production creates the most greenhouse gas emissions at about 30 pounds of CO_2e per pound of beef, compared to broccoli, for example, which creates 2.2 pounds of CO_2e per pound.[18]

Concerns have been raised in the community about the associated impacts of large-scale farming in the town, including the impacts of manure spreading and the associated nutrient-rich runoff to the Seneca River and Cayuga Lake. In 2008, the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District launched an Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program to assist county farmers in improving their environmental stewardship as well as their economic viability. The vision of the AEM program is to have a strong, progressive and sustainable farming sector in Cayuga County through a voluntary method of assessment, planning, implementation and education addressing natural resource concerns related to agriculture. Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) regulations will help to reduce effects of agricultural runoff in the Owasco Lake watershed by requiring all concentrated animal operations to apply for a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit and to develop Comprehensive Nutrient Management

18 http://onegreenplanet.org/

Map showing the location of current agricultural district in Cayuga County (Source: Cayuga County Planning, 2014)

Plans (CNMP) to mitigate farmstead runoff. The CNMP must explain measures that the farming operation will take to prevent pollutants from all areas of the facility from entering waterbodies, including pollution from manure, litter, process wastewater, food processing waste, digestate and fertilizer. The CNMP must explain the individual(s) at a facility that is in charge of implementing the plan in conjunction with an AEM certified planner. Environmental Best Management Practices (BMPs) used faithfully in farm management that strive to protect Montezuma's natural resources can assure that farming continues as good land stewardship.

Due to the productivity of agricultural land in the town, roadside farm stands continue to crop up in residential areas. Concerns have been raised by the community about congestion associated with these farm stands, and zoning regulations in the town require that farm stands be located "no nearer the edge of the street than fifty feet."

As evidenced by U.S. Census data, the number of farms in Cayuga County has dropped dramatically in recent decades, down over 70%, from 2,934 farms in 1950 to 873 farms in 1992. The number of farms in Cayuga County grew about 7% between 1992 and 2007 to a reported 936 farms, but the number of farms in the county has since decreased almost 5% to 891 farms according to the 2012 agricultural census. Land in farming in Cayuga County, as in other central New York counties, also trended downward steadily and significantly (33%) between 1950 and 2000, and has continued to decrease close to 11% between 2000 and 2012 according to the U.S. Census.

The majority of the Town of Montezuma is located within Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 5, created in 2013 out of six previous agricultural districts in the county. 82% of total county land area falls within the consolidated district, with 64% of that land as active viable agricultural land. The purpose of agricultural districting is to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production. Based on a combination of landowner incentives and protections, districting is designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Included in the benefits to farmers 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. The Agricultural Districts Law protects farmers against local laws which unreasonably restrict farm operations located within an agricultural district, and was established to protect and promote a farmer's opportunity to operate a successful business.

Under the Agricultural Districts Law, farmers are provided:

- Limitations on eminent domain, other public projects, or private citizen construction projects
- Protection from unreasonably restrictive "anti-farming" local laws
- Right to Farm Law protection from nuisance lawsuits
- Exemption of the land's non-agricultural value from local real property taxes through an agricultural assessment.

Portions of Montezuma that do not fall within the Cayuga County Consolidated Agricultural District include the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and other Federal, State, and Town-owned lands.

BioEnergy

Sustainable agricultural practice such as biomass production offers potential for economic growth in agri-

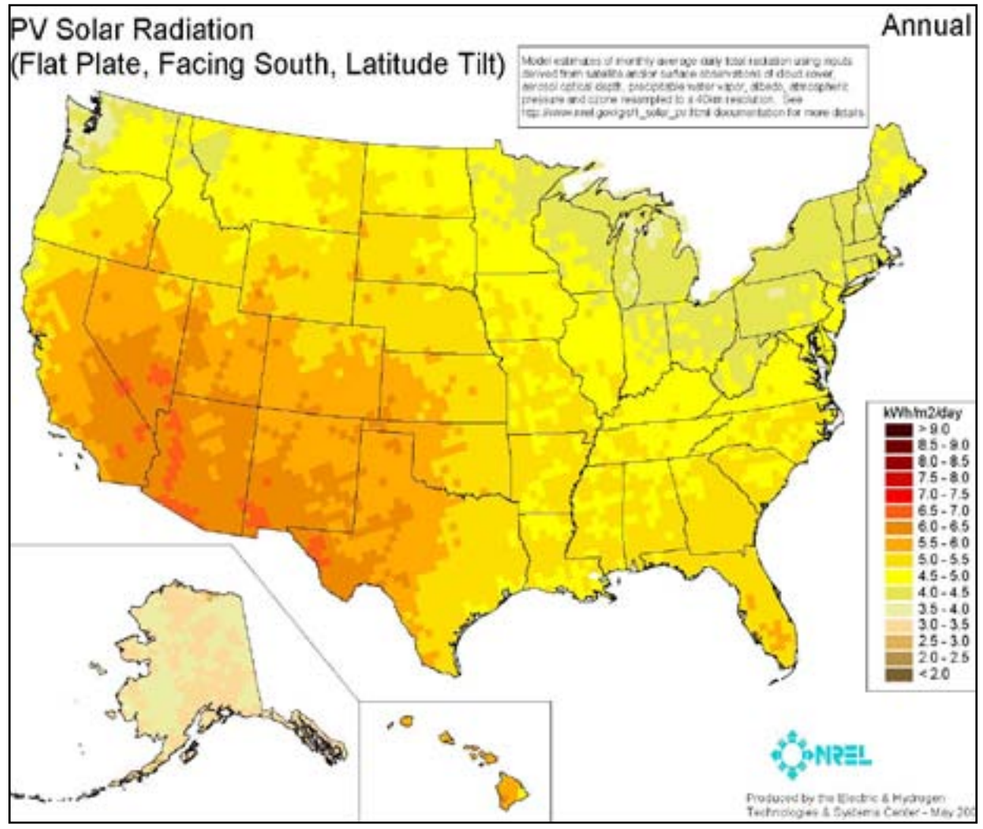
culture in Montezuma as well as for environmental benefits provided by this kind of land cover, including water quality protection and habitat support. Emerging technologies in the use of biomass as a feedstock for biofuels, bioproducts, and bioenergy will likely lead to economic advantages in the development of biomass resources over many other agricultural products. Because bioenergy and bioproducts from biomass offer higher net energy ratios in the generation of end products, a growing market for their use is opening up. Biomass, although not currently a significant component of Montezuma's land cover, can be produced and harvested on a sustainable basis as short-rotation woody crops (SRWC) such as shrub willow or switchgrass. Biomass crops can easily be grown in ways that reduce total carbon in the atmosphere by capturing the carbon in the soil, and they can be raised in areas of lower quality soils or areas that would otherwise require drainage. Untilled soil with perennial grasses, woody crops, or no-till annual crops not only captures carbon from the atmosphere that is held in the roots, leaves, and stalks left on the soil, it also prevents soil erosion and minimizes stormwater runoff and sedimentation of water resources, an especially important environmental benefit for agriculture in the Finger Lakes Region. Another benefit with the growing economic viability of biomass production is the preservation of Montezuma's beautiful rural-agrarian landscapes.

Solar Energy

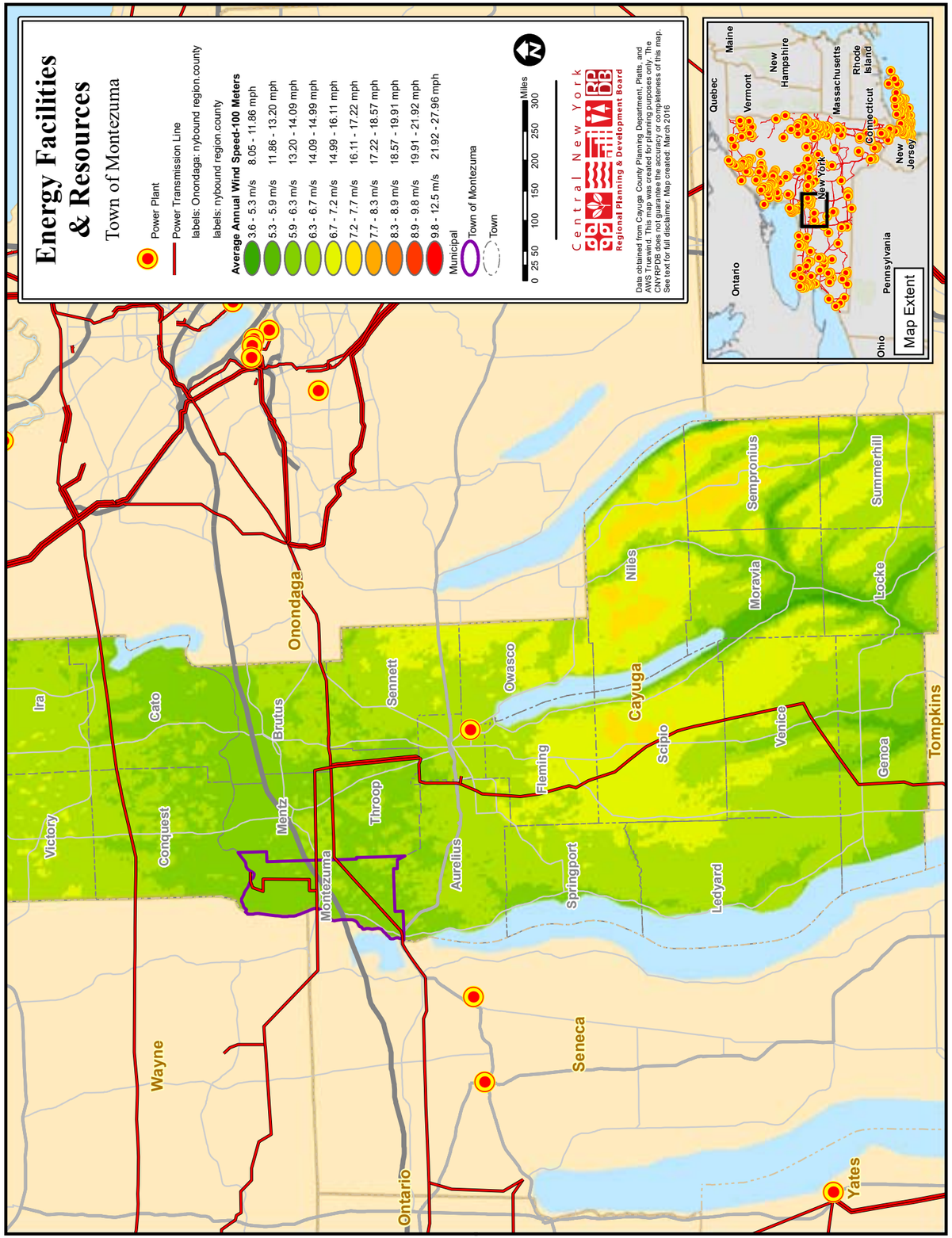
While Central New York may not have the abundant solar resources of Southern California or the southwestern states, it is important to recognize that photovoltaic (PV) systems can perform well in relatively cloudy and cold climates. In fact, cold temperatures can actually increase the electrical output of PV modules. While cloudy regions will require larger, more expensive solar arrays than sunny regions, the size and cost of other components such as inverters will stay the same. Because a system's PV panels represent only about 30 percent of a system's total installed costs, a system installed in an area with one-half the sunlight of another area does not cost twice as much. Even in Syracuse, which averages only about 3.65 kWh per square meter per day of solar radiation capacity for the year, PV systems can be cost-effective under certain conditions.

There are state (NYSERDA) incentives and state and federal tax credits in place currently to encourage

Roof-mounted and ground-mounted solar electric array (Source: National Renewable Energy Lab [NREL])



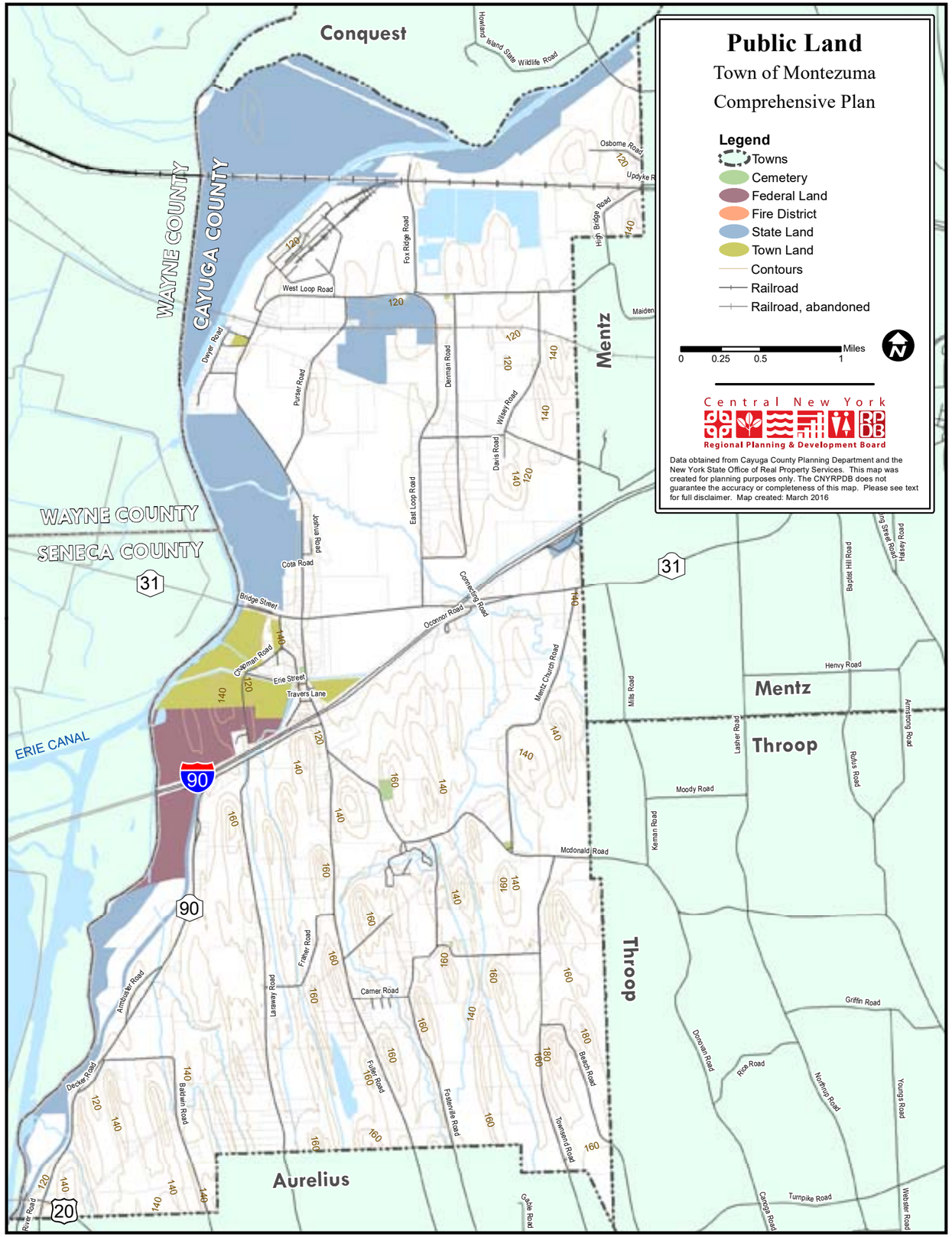
National Solar Radiation Map (Source: National Renewable Energy Lab [NREL])



both municipal and private solar energy investment. An emerging tool that municipalities can use to help spur investment in PV systems is the property tax assessment model, pioneered by the Berkeley FIRST (Financing Initiative for Renewable and Solar Technology) program, and known as PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing. PACE financing allows property owners to borrow money to pay for renewable energy systems, energy efficiency improvements, water conservation, and/or seismic retrofits and spread the cost of the upgrade over a period of time through an annual special tax on their property tax bill. The primary innovation of this program is that since both the solar system and the tax obligation remain with the property, if the property is transferred or sold, the new owners will pay the remaining tax obligation. Since there is little or no up-front cost for the property owner, it eliminates the primary risk that has discouraged investment in PV systems, i.e., that the property owner may move before they recoup their investment in reduced energy costs.

NYSERDA, New York Power Authority (NYPA) and City University of New York (CUNY) developed a NYS Unified Solar Permit that helps to reduce costs for solar projects by streamlining municipal permitting processes and supports the growth of clean energy jobs across the state. The unified solar permit is part of Governor Cuomo's NY-Sun initiative to create a more flexible power grid, lower NY's carbon footprint, and promote clean energy. Adoption of a standardized residential/small business solar permit is a key element to help New York municipalities remove barriers to local economic development in the growing solar industry. The standardized permit cuts costs by creating a uniform permitting process in municipalities across the state. Installers in New York State have had to work with different permits and permitting processes in each of the State's 1,550 municipalities, which increases the complexity of permitting and has caused project delays and added costs. The Town of Montezuma has adopted the unified solar permit to reduce soft costs associated with solar installations.

A. A. Gates Elementary School in Port Byron with solar PV system



The town is currently participating in the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board's municipal procurement program for solar PV energy and may install solar PV on town property as part of the program. The town also assisted in the 2015 Solarize CNY program, a bulk solar purchasing program for residents and small businesses. Solarize CNY provided opportunities for below-market solar options for Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties. The town adopted a Climate Action Plan in December of 2015 which set targets of reducing municipal emissions by 50% and community emissions by 10% by the year 2025, primarily by using renewable energies and through energy efficiency projects.

Wind Energy

Wind energy is a renewable resource that is less abundant in Montezuma than ideal, but may be viable in certain locations. Community-based wind energy projects are typically developed by local farmers, ranchers, and investors, or local governments or educational institutions rather than national or local professional developers, and have historically been smaller in size than corporate-owned projects. Publicly-owned community-based projects have often been used to provide "on-site" or "behind-the-meter" lower-cost energy for local governments or community institutions. Unlike community-based wind energy projects, which typically use megawatt-scale turbines to produce electricity for export to the grid, on-site generation typically uses smaller turbines to power a facility directly, offsetting the need to purchase more expensive retail electricity.

Hydropower

Being positioned along the Seneca River could provide opportunities for hydropower if conditions are right. The town should consider investigating whether hydropower is a viable opportunity in Montezuma.

Variations of on-site small wind energy
(Source: American Wind Energy Association)

Public Parks, Recreation and Protected Areas

There are three public park areas in the Town of Montezuma, including Giardina Park, Willow Grove Park, and Montezuma Heritage Park. All of these park areas are owned by the Town of Montezuma.

Giardina Park
Located adjacent to the Town Hall at 8102 Dock Street, Giardina Park is the former historic site of a 600' by 600' boat basin used for the Enlarged Erie Canal between 1849-1917. The parkland was acquired in the 1990s by the town from the New York State Thruway Authority under the office of former Town Supervisor, John Giardina. The park is located in the same 16-acre parcel as the Town Hall and contains a basketball court, running/walking track, youth playground equipment, baseball field, and pavilion.

Willow Grove Park/Dale M. Owens Memorial Field
Located on West Loop Road near the small community known as Stop 69, Willow Grove Park contains a walking track and the Dale M. Owens memorial baseball field. The 3.8-acre park is located near the site of the former Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern Rapid Railroad (RS&E trolley) line, which ran from downtown Rochester to Auburn and Syracuse from 1907-1930. The baseball field was named after a baseball coach who died in a tragic car accident.

Montezuma Heritage Park
The largest and most significant public park in the Town of Montezuma is the Montezuma Heritage Park.

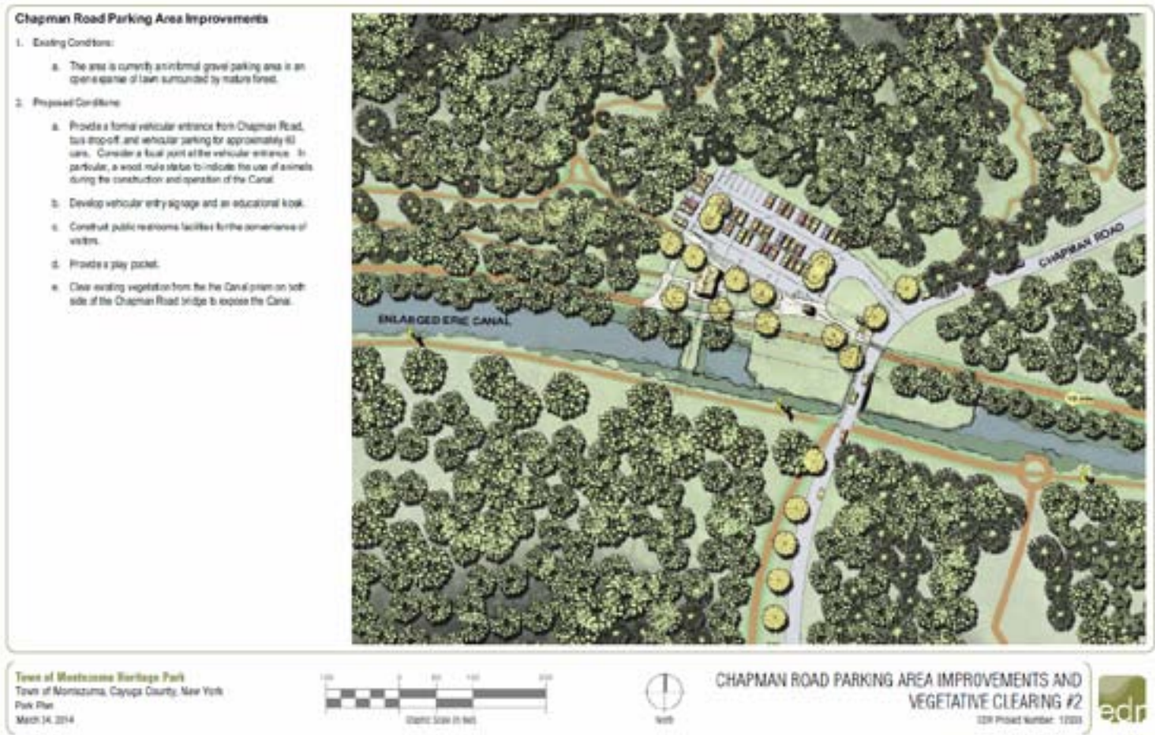
Giardina Park

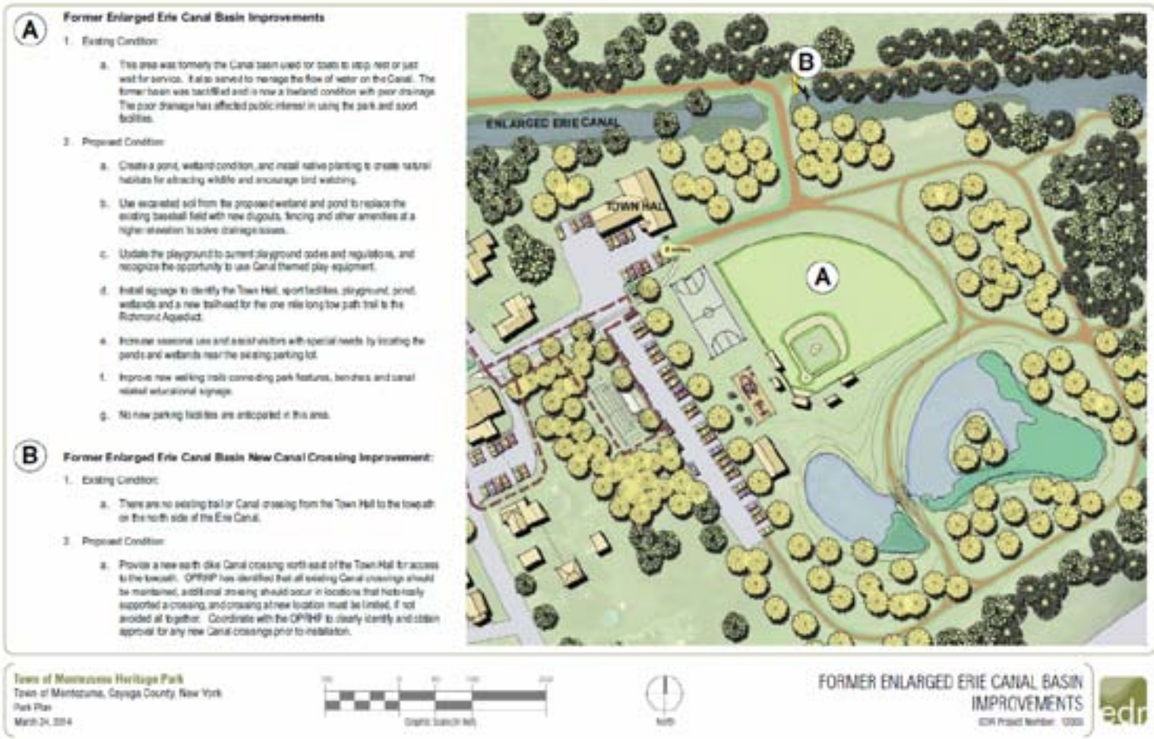
Willow Grove Park/Dale M. Owens Ball Field

Little League team at Willow Grove Park/Dale M. Owens Ball Field, 1953

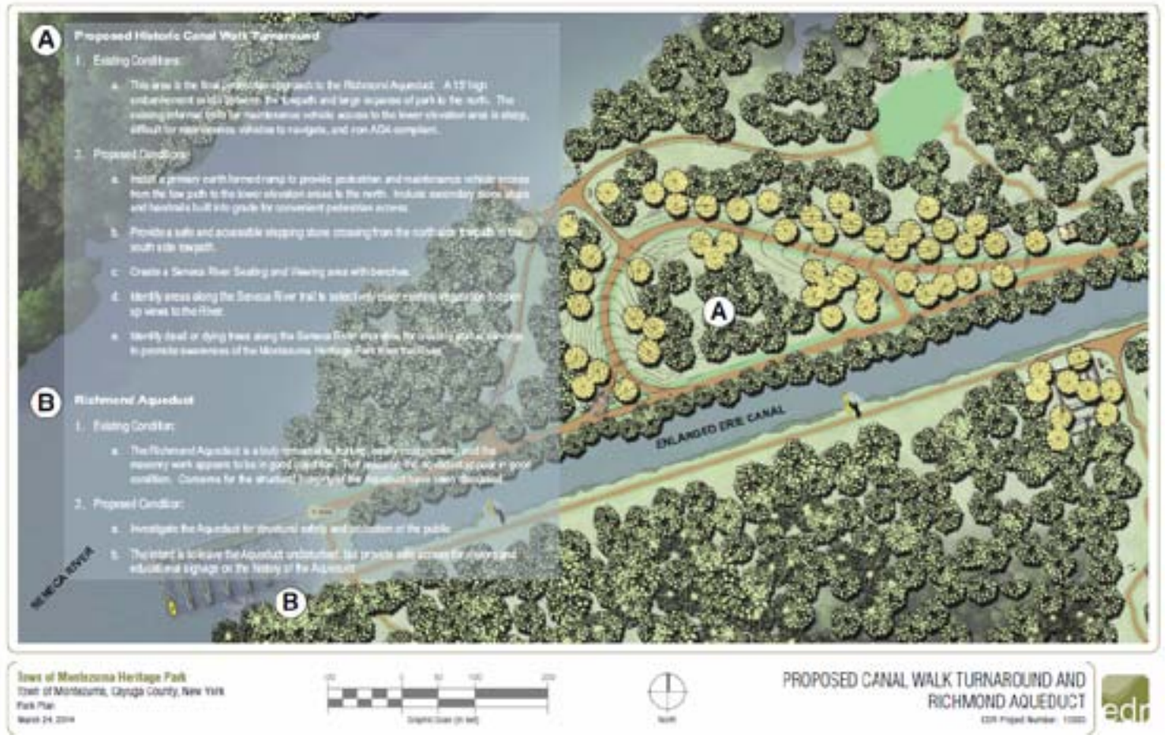
The town acquired the over 140 acres of land in the 1960s to preserve and protect many significant natural and historic resource sites located along the Seneca River/Erie Canal that tell the story of New York State's Canal System from 1820 to today. There are a series of trails located throughout the park for visitors to view the area's rich history. The remains of the Richmond Aqueduct, a series of stone arches, a remnant of a historic elevated canal that crossed the Seneca River, can be visited along the original towpath trail, and other historic sites, such as the Clifford House, paper mill, Cayuga-Seneca Lock 11, Clinton's Ditch and Lock 62, and the enlarged Erie Canal dry dock, can be viewed in the park as well. In 2014, EDR created a Park Plan to ensure protection of historic resources and encourage public uses of the Montezuma Heritage Park. This plan can help to guide preservation efforts of the important historic and cultural resources at the park.

Montezuma Heritage Park





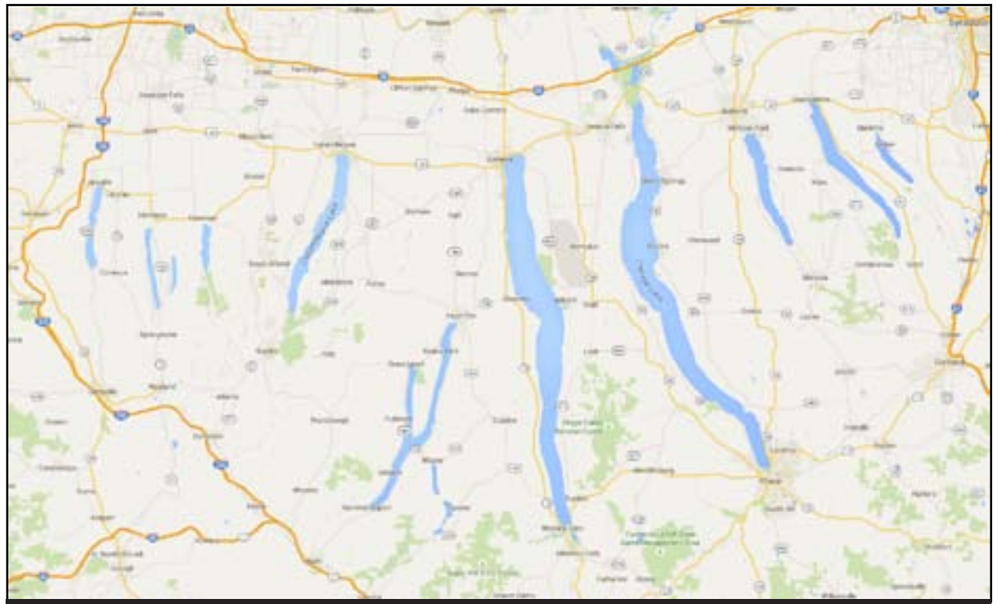
Concepts from the 2014 EDR Montezuma Heritage Park Plan



Concepts from the 2014 EDR Montezuma Heritage Park Plan

Paper Mill remains, Montezuma Heritage Park (Source: http://mont-ezumaheritagepark.blogspot.com/p/components-of-park.html)

High Street Trailhead, Montezuma Heritage Park (Source: http://montezumaheritagepark.blogspot.com/p/components-of-park.html)



The Finger Lakes Region

Chapter 3: Regional Influences

The Finger Lakes Region

The Town of Montezuma is located in the Finger Lakes Region of Central New York State. The Finger Lakes Region, approximately midway between New York City and Niagara Falls, encompasses 14 counties with 11 lakes ranging in size from 11 to 40 miles in length with more than 650 miles of shoreline. Located in the area formed by the cities of Rochester, Syracuse, Binghamton, and the Corning/Elmira area, the region is bordered by Pennsylvania to the south and Lake Ontario to the north. Lakes in the region include Canandaigua, Cayuga, Owasco, Keuka, Seneca, Skaneateles, Canadice, Conesus, Hemlock, Honeoye and Otisco. The names of these lakes reflect the region's rich Native American heritage. The region draws visitors from all over the world to experience Finger Lakes Region Wines, stunning rural scenery, historic villages, beautiful waterfalls, and recreational opportunities that abound throughout the area during all four seasons of the year.

Many major cities lie within 500 miles of the Town of Montezuma, including Syracuse (34 miles), Rochester (58 miles), Albany (173 miles), Toronto (216 miles), New York City (262 miles), Philadelphia (269 miles), Baltimore (312 miles), Boston (340 miles), and Pittsburgh (331 miles). Immediate support industries in Cayuga County include trucking, warehousing and an array of small manufacturing facilities. For employment, entertainment, and other needs, the Town of Montezuma has easy access to the cities of Auburn (11 miles), Syracuse (34 miles), Cortland (48 miles) and Ithaca (49 miles). The City of Ithaca, Ithaca College and Cornell University are approximately 45-50 miles from Montezuma; about an hour's drive.

Finger Lakes Winery (Source: Grapevine Country Tours)

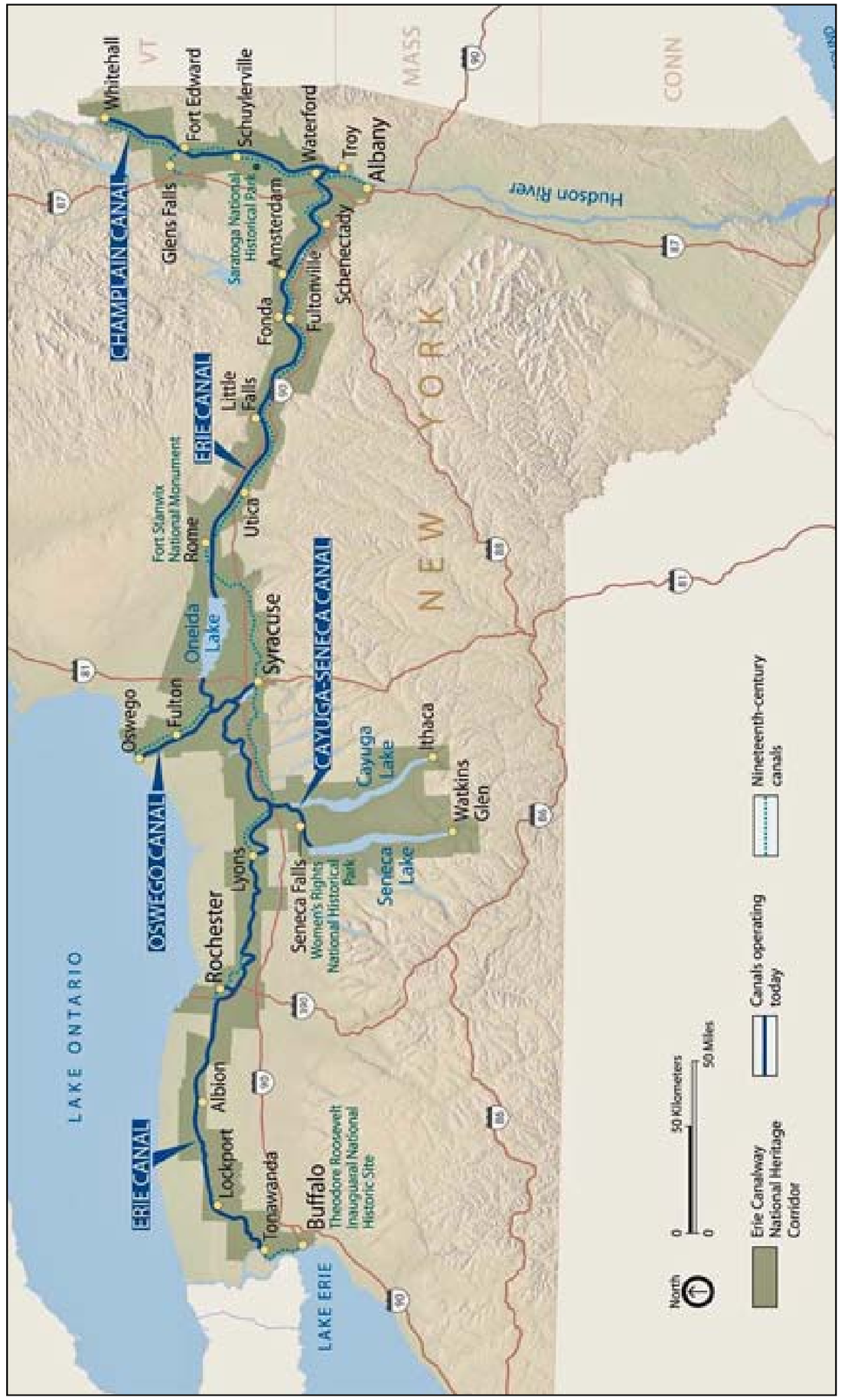
Montezuma is approximately a 40 minute drive from the City of Syracuse and one hour from the City of Rochester. Montezuma is also located approximately 11 miles from the correctional facility at Auburn, NY, and 32 miles from the Cayuga Correctional Facility in Moravia.

The Finger Lakes region provides important water resources for recreation and wildlife habitat and are a source of public drinking water to the 1.5 million residents in the surrounding communities. Cayuga County contains portions of Cayuga Lake, Owasco Lake, and Skaneateles Lake, each of which provide drinking water to nearby communities. Owasco Lake is the primary source of water for Cayuga County residents, with 70% of the county relying on the lake as a drinking source. Cayuga Lake provides drinking water to many nearby communities as well, including the City of Ithaca, while Skaneateles Lake provides drinking water to the City of Syracuse and other close-by towns and villages.

The nearest railroad to the Town of Montezuma is Rochester Subdivision, operated by CSX Transportation. The railway runs from the State Fairgrounds in Syracuse west to Buffalo on the former New York Central Railroad main line, passing through Montezuma on the way. There are no airport facilities in the Town of Montezuma. The Finger Lakes Regional Airport, a small regional airport, is located about 15 miles away in Seneca Falls; the Skaneateles Aerodrome, another small regional airport, is located about 22 miles away in Skaneateles; and the Ithaca/Tompkins Regional Airport is located about 46 miles away, just northeast of Ithaca, New York. Hancock International Airport is located 35 miles away in Syracuse, New York.

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

Cayuga County is traversed by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, a 524 mile-long scenic navi-



Map of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor (Source: ithacafingerlakes.com)

gable waterway constructed in 1825 connecting the Great Lakes of New York State with the Atlantic Ocean at New York City via the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Hudson River. The heart of the federally designated National Heritage Corridor passes through the Town of Montezuma, which has been designated as a Point of Interest, as the original Erie Canal location, Seneca River, and Cayuga-Seneca Canals pass through the town. This National Heritage Corridor is celebrated for its rich history, including the birthplace of the women's rights movement, transportation, early settlement and industry, historic architecture, wine country, and world-class cultural and recreational attractions. Cultural events and festivals along the historic corridor are taking root as well as a multiple-use trail currently in development that will stretch 360 miles when completed, becoming the longest such trail in the nation. Currently, there are over 280 miles of completed trail that are open to the public. As the Canalway Trail continues development, it will become a significant recreational and economic asset promoted and open to hikers, joggers, bicyclists, cross country skiers, and visitors to the region, connecting and benefiting hamlets, villages and cities across New York State.

The Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway

The Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway along Route 20 falls within the southwest corner of the Town of Montezuma and continues to encircle Cayuga Lake. With gorges at its southern end, vineyards on its gentle slopes, and marshes at its northern end, the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway features diverse landscapes and spectacular views. A tour of 87 miles around Cayuga Lake leads through charming, historic villages, past scenic waterfalls, parks, and farmland, with opportunities for bird watching and sightseeing along the way.

The Montezuma Wetlands Complex

The Montezuma Wetlands Complex, located within and to the west of the Town of Montezuma, represents more than 50,000 acres of wetlands that are being restored by a group of Federal and State partners, conservation organizations, and private landowners. The US Fish and Wildlife Service manages the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and the Visitors Center, the NYS DEC manages the Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area, and the Audubon Society manages the Montezuma Audubon Center, the Nature Conservancy, and Ducks Unlimited. The Montezuma Wetlands Complex provides extremely important habitat for birds and other wildlife. The Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge provides vital habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, as it is located in the middle of one of the most active flight lanes in the Atlantic Flyway. It provides resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds on its 9,809 acres, including breeding habitat for bald eagles. The Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge provides hiking opportunities, including the Esker Brook Nature Trails located off of Route 89 on Tyre Road, the Seneca Trail located at the Visitor Center, and the Oxbow Trail located off the Wildlife Drive. The Montezuma Wildlife Management Area is another popular hiking location near the town.

Bald Eagle (Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service)

Appendix A: Principals of Smart Growth

"Smart growth is development that serves the economy, community, and the environment. It provides a framework for communities to make informed decisions about how and where they grow. Smart growth makes it possible for communities to grow in ways that support economic development and jobs; create strong neighborhoods with a range of housing, commercial, and transportation options; and achieve healthy communities that provide families with a clean environment. In so doing, smart growth provides a solution to the concerns facing many communities about the impacts of the highly dispersed development patterns characteristic of the past 50 years. Though supportive of growth, communities are questioning the economic costs of abandoning infrastructure in the city and rebuilding it farther out. They are questioning the necessity of spending increasing time in cars locked in traffic and traveling miles to the nearest store. They are questioning the practice of abandoning brownfields in older communities while developing open space and prime agricultural land and thereby damaging our environment at the suburban fringe. As these quality-of-life issues become increasingly important for American communities, local and state policymakers, planners, developers, and others are turning to smart growth as one solution to these challenges."

In the early 1990s, numerous national private sector, public sector and nongovernmental partner organizations also recognized the problems facing communities, and in 1996, they came together to form the Smart Growth Network, a broad coalition of 32 organizations that support smart growth. As a first step, the network examined the breadth of characteristics of successful communities, and from that process developed ten guiding principles for smart growth. They illustrate the characteristics associated with healthy, vibrant, and diverse communities that offer their residents choices of how and where to live, and were a first step in articulating the goals of smart growth. The ten principals of Smart Growth are:

1 MIX LAND USES
2 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF COMPACT DESIGN
3 CREATE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHOICES
4 CREATE WALKABLE COMMUNITIES
5 FOSTER DISTINCTIVE, ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE
6 PRESERVE OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, NATURAL BEAUTY, AND CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS
7 STRENGTHEN AND DIRECT DEVELOPMENT TOWARD EXISTING COMMUNITIES
8 PROVIDE A VARIETY OF TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS
9 MAKE DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS PREDICTABLE, FAIR, AND COST EFFECTIVE
10 ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION IN DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS

More detailed information is available on Smart Growth, along with technical assistance and options for forming policy direction at the local level to implement smart growth from the Smart Growth Network in Getting to Smart Growth, at http://www.smartgrowth.org, and from New York State's Smart Growth Task Force at http://smartgrowthny.org/hPlanning/index.asp?i=pln.

Appendix B: Conservation Subdivisions

Small rural-agricultural towns like Montezuma will inevitably face development pressures as a consequence of regional population growth and the attraction of scenic farmlands and waterfront land for residential housing, especially as the casino in the neighboring Town of Tyre grows and attracts development. Rural residential development, in its conventional form of two acre lots subdivided out of large agricultural parcels and commercial strip malls along rural roadways, multiplies quickly to produce sprawling suburban developments that consume large areas of open space and drastically alter a town's rural-agrarian character. The existing rural character of the Town of Montezuma was the single most common reason chosen by survey respondents for living in Montezuma, and is therefore an important quality to protect.

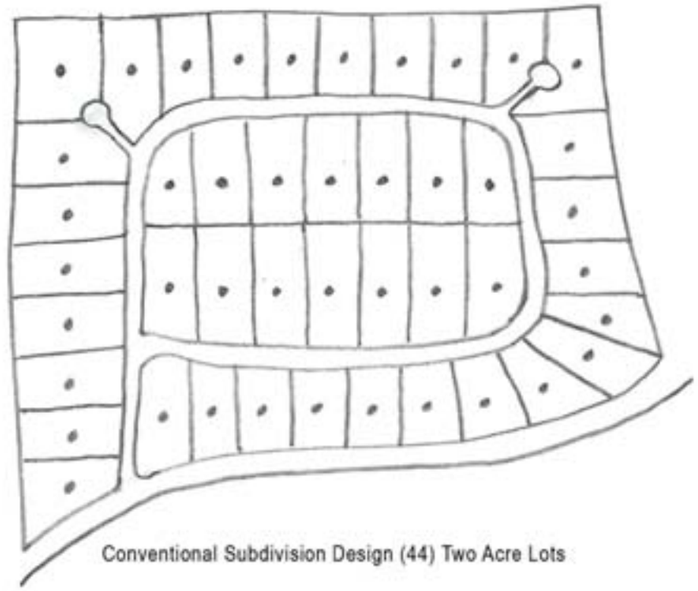
There are effective land use tools for residential and other kinds of development that foster protection of the open space that is a key component of Montezuma's rural character. One of the most effective methods used takes place in the process of the subdivision of land. It is called Conservation Subdivision Regulation. This method of regulating the subdivision of land is intended to preserve or protect natural, scenic, historic, or cultural features of value to a community while allowing flexibility in the overall development design and layout of major subdivisions (4 or more lots), and while not reducing the number of lots that can be developed.

Planning and development studies in recent years have demonstrated clear economic and environmental benefits of using Conservation Subdivision Design methods versus conventional subdivision methods. One example, "The Belle Hall Study," evaluated the economic and environmental costs of two different residential subdivision plans and concluded that a conservation-oriented design that maintained half of the tract as green space, yet had the same number of developed lots, has substantially less environmental impact and cost half as much to build.

Conservation design can make the difference in our perception and acceptance of density in developments and can also offer great added benefit to a community in terms of municipal cost, community amenities, environmental protection, and farmland conservation.

Specifications set for lot sizes in a single residential subdivision may not seem significant; however, conventional large lot size requirements of two to five acres implemented in communities across a county or region can have a staggering cumulative impact consuming open space, scenic views, and the viability of agriculture. Smart planning strategies (and land use regulation that conserves open space) result in far less land being consumed by development. These strategies also ensure that much less of the municipal budget is spent on infrastructure and community services than with conventional development patterns.

Conventional subdivision regulations currently in use in the Town of Montezuma may not support the community's desire to protect the rural-agrarian character of the town. Implementing a Conservation Subdivision Design approval process with a conservation site analysis prior to site plan layout would be very beneficial. This would include identifying the location of any significant natural or cultural resources on a sketch plan, followed by a dialogue between the property owner (or developer) and the planning board about the conservation value of the lands proposed for development. The conservation method of subdivi-



Conventional Subdivision Design (44) Two Acre Lots

Conservation Subdivision Design (44) 3/4 Acre Lots
& Protected Open Space

sion of land is intended to allow an opportunity to preserve or protect natural, scenic, historic, or cultural features of value to the community while also allowing flexibility and an opportunity for developers to initiate creative solutions to protecting important community resources (i.e. steep slopes, scenic views, prime agricultural soils, trail corridors, stream corridors, wetlands, woodlands, historic sites, stone walls, etc.). A first step in facilitating conservation subdivision design is to inventory and map the above listed resources on a town-wide "Map of Potential Conservation Lands."

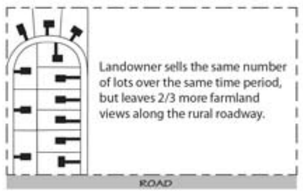
One regulatory method to consider to prevent an accumulation of narrow, deep roadside parcels through repeated minor subdivision of land over time is Road Access Control, which limits the proliferation of driveways along roads as well as associated safety issues. Using this practice, development takes place inward from existing roadways, centered around new local roadways. This can be done by limiting the number of new curb cuts on any tract to one for minor subdivisions, and two for major subdivisions in any ten-year period. Two frontage lots can be allowed as long as they are at least 50 feet apart and served by a common driveway between them accessing 2-4 homes. After the fourth home, a subdivision street would be required (the common driveway would be built like a town road in terms of sub-base and base, but need not be asphalted until the fifth house is built, at which time it would become a town road).

Using this practice, parcels can be subdivided into the same number and size of lots that could be created using standard subdivision while also preserving the much-valued rural landscape of the Montezuma community. Concept 1 illustrates how landscapes develop lot-by-lot over time when using standard subdivision compared to conservation subdivision that re-orients development to take better advantage of parcel depth and to preserve rural character. There is no loss in the number of units that can be developed, they are just better located in the landscape, preserving resources and resulting in safer more livable neighborhoods over time.

Without Road Access Control

After ten years of residential development, the different patterns that result impact 'Rural Character' as well as safety along roadside parcels.

With Road Access Control



Subdivision regulation choices result in different forms of development over time.

Choice A

Continue Subbdivision of Land at Standard Minimum Lot Sizes (1 - 3 acres)

This is Standard Subdivision Lot By Lot

Choice B

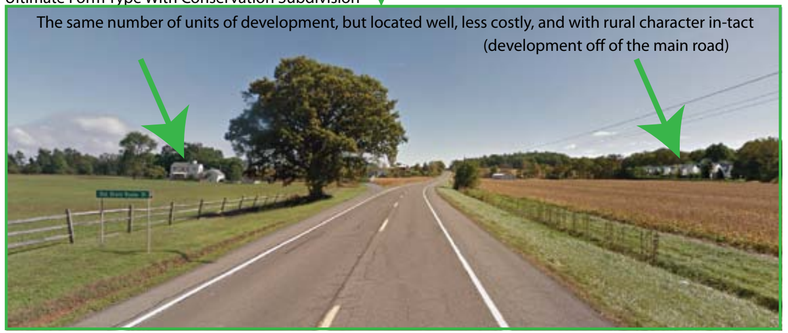
Use Conservation Subdivision for Major Subdivisions

(which allows the same number of development units but protects foreground views and sensitive lands)

Concept 1: Sustainable Development

With very few areas in the Town suitable for development due to environmental conditions, Smart Growth is critical. Regulation changes that address the location of future development can preserve both development opportunities and rural character.

Ultimate Form Type With Conservation Subdivision



Ultimate Form Type With Standard Subdivision

Appendix C: Issues of Community Concern

Agriculture and Farmland Protection
(See Goals 1 and 2)

In the Town of Montezuma, with its highly productive soils and abundant water resources, the business of agriculture has remained strong in recent years. Preserving the rural-agrarian character of the town is extremely important to town residents, as was highlighted in the community survey. However, just over 3% of the population are currently engaged in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining activities. Complementary agriculture-related businesses in Montezuma such as a local food market or restaurant within the town would capitalize on local food production and benefit Montezuma by providing local customers for farmers, creating local jobs, and resources that visitors could take advantage of while spending time in the town.

Land Use, Planning, and Subdivision Regulation Supportive of the Community's Vision
(See Goals 3-7)

Much of the northern half of the Town of Montezuma is comprised of federally and state recognized wetlands. Wetlands are also significantly present along the town's border with the Seneca River and throughout the southern portion of the town. Most of the wetlands in Montezuma are on forested or conservation land, but a significant amount are also on agricultural and other privately-owned lands. The wetlands located on privately-owned lands are not necessarily protected from development, and while there is currently very little pressure to develop on these lands (no public water or sewer in major wetland areas), this could become an issue in the future, especially if new sewer and water are introduced (reference Suitability Analysis map). 23.5% of land parcels in the town falls within the 100-year FEMA floodplain, and the town has a history of significant flooding impacts in its north and west sections due to its location along the Seneca River and extensive wetlands. The Seneca River experiences seasonal flooding and has caused significant property damage over the years, along with erosion of riverbanks. Flooding also occurs seasonally along Crane Brook, which experiences erosion issues after heavy rainfall events and causes a loss of property and cropland as the streambanks deteriorate.

Conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, the NYS DEC, the US Fish and Wildlife Service continue to purchase land in the town from farmers and private landowners that is located on floodplains and wetlands for conservation purposes. While the town wishes to conserve lands with significant resources, this issue is also a cause for concern, as these lands are no longer on the tax roll. Encouraging conservation of land that can remain on the tax roll will benefit the community as well as wildlife populations.

There is a lack of pressure for residential and commercial development in Montezuma, and indeed there is a very limited supply of lands suitable to development due to the presence of environmental conditions including wetlands, flood zones, steep slopes, and valued agricultural lands (see Suitability Analysis map). The town should consider encouraging light industrial development at the Archer Daniels Midland site, should the property, or portions of the property, come up for sale or rent. The Route 90 corridor and the Route 31 corridor east of the Thruway are also possible locations for commercial development, especially development related to agriculture. The town is in need of a local food eatery, restaurant, market or deli/

convenience store, bakery and other small businesses close to the Hamlet, as residents and visitors currently have to travel outside of Montezuma to purchase their everyday goods. The town should consider revising zoning regulations to allow for mixed-use zones in close proximity to the Hamlet. This would encourage compact and sustainable development of both residential and commercial facilities in the town. In addition, current zoning regulations require a minimum road frontage of 150 feet in the Agricultural Residential zone which has caused the formation of spaghetti lots throughout the town as farmers sell land that has been subdivided into large, deep lots with the minimum road frontage. Road frontage requirements in the Agricultural Residential zone should be reconsidered to take width to depth ratios into account to reduce these issues. This, in combination with careful planning for subdivisions with new roads that can access the depths of subdivided lands, would help to consolidate development and preserve open space and farmland.

Heritage tourism related to historic resources could help to spur economic development in the area by bringing customers to local businesses. This kind of compatible economic development effort would help to encourage preservation of historic resources as well. The town is working with neighboring towns, villages, counties and the state to create an official connection for the Erie Canalway Trail from Lyons to Port Byron through the Town of Montezuma. A spur trail is being discussed off of the Canalway Trail into Montezuma Heritage Park and the 5 miles of existing trails within. The likely route of the Erie Canalway Trail between Port Byron and Lyons through Montezuma would be an on-route link along Route 31, however concepts 2A and 2B show two other possible Erie Canalway Trail linkages, one that follows along Towpath Road and continues along an off-road trail back to Route 31, and one that follows from Port Byron along the old trolley bed (now a utility corridor), connecting to Trumble Road and back to Route 31. Regardless of which route is taken from Port Byron to Montezuma, it is important to connect the Erie Canalway Trail to Montezuma Heritage Park so that visitors can take advantage of the historic resources it has to offer (shown in the EDR visual following Concept 2B[19]). Concept 2A shows a few options for this connection, including along an existing utility corridor parallel to the Thruway and through the Hamlet, or traveling on-road down Route 90 through the Hamlet and connecting with the Heritage Park. Travelers can then visit the Richmond Aqueduct and connect back to Route 31 via the existing Drumlin Trail through Montezuma Heritage Park.

A new, low-impact recreational trail on state and federal lands along the river to the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge entrance from the Montezuma Heritage Park, as shown in Concept 3, would add over two miles of riverfront natural heritage enjoyment and link directly to the entrance of the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge while also offering the option to travel alongside a portion of the historic Cayuga-Seneca Canal. As shown in Concept 3, a few trail linkages and loops could also be made from Wildlife Drive in the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge back to the proposed trail across the Seneca River, including at a new river crossing area, or by traveling along Wildlife Drive to Route 89 in Tyre and eventually connecting back with Route 31 and traveling back to Montezuma. It is important to note that the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge does not currently allow bicycling within its limits; however, it is something that is under consideration for the summer months. The suggested trails in Concepts 2A, 2B, and 3 would connect historic and natural resources in Montezuma to neighboring towns, increasing opportunities for heritage tourism and providing economic development opportunities in Montezuma.

Affordable housing options, including mobile homes, apartments, house rentals, and rent-to-own properties are currently available in the town, although the community survey revealed that most Montezuma residents think there could be an improvement in the quality, availability, and affordability of rental options. Smaller housing options geared toward the elderly are needed in the town, including options that are handicapped-accessible, with no stairs to basements, and wheelchair ramps. Transportation costs are often more of a concern for town residents than housing costs, since it is necessary to drive out of town to run most errands or to get to most places of employment. This represents an economic opportunity in the community, as residents would likely shop at local businesses should they become available.

19 Note: the EDR visualization labels the marina as "former marina." This marina is now active again and being built up to accommodate tourists.

Environmental Stewardship and Water Quality Protection
(See Goal 8)

Concerns have been raised in the community about the impacts of large-scale farming in the town, including the impacts of manure spreading and pesticide use and the associated nutrient-rich runoff to the Seneca River. It may be possible to work with Cornell Cooperative Extension or the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District to monitor agricultural runoff and determine optimum measures to control pollutants and sedimentation. Preserving/encouraging buffers around wetlands and waterbodies can be addressed through overlay zoning districts with special protections.

Invasive species, such as the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), threaten native species in the Town of Montezuma. EAB is extremely aggressive and kills both stressed and healthy ash trees. Most trees that are infested die within 2-3 years. Because EAB is native to Asia, there are no natural EAB predators in North America, and EAB has killed millions of ash trees since it was first discovered in Michigan in 2002. Since ash trees provide increased property values, storm water mitigation, and decreased energy demands, ash trees are commonly found both in natural areas and urban forests, with about 1 in every 10 trees in NYS hardwood forests an ash tree. As ash trees are infected and die off, the benefits provided by the trees will be lost.

Development similarly threatens native species in Montezuma. Where possible, development should be focused away from habitat for imperiled species and ecological communities, or conservation plans should be implemented to protect important habitat. Regulatory buffers and community education could also help to conserve habitat and prevent the spread of invasive species.

Improved Public Utilities and Services
(See Goals 9-12)

Residents currently contract out individually for solid waste haulers, often causing multiple haulers to be servicing the same roads on the same days. Implementing a town-wide waste hauler will reduce vehicle trips in the town, therefore reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing road maintenance needs.

Internet access throughout Montezuma is also not reliable. Broadband exists in the town and is provided through TDS, but the service is less than ideal. Residents who purchase the extra fast internet option do not often see benefits of their decision. Some residents, such as those living in Bennett Mobile Home Court, are not able to be serviced by TDS or Verizon, despite the Verizon database claiming DSL availability. School children, businesses, and residents could benefit greatly from the availability of high speed fiber optic internet.

While the town is responsible for repairing town roads, the town cannot afford the cost to repair asphalted roads and instead updates roads using the oil and chip method. Many roads in Montezuma are therefore

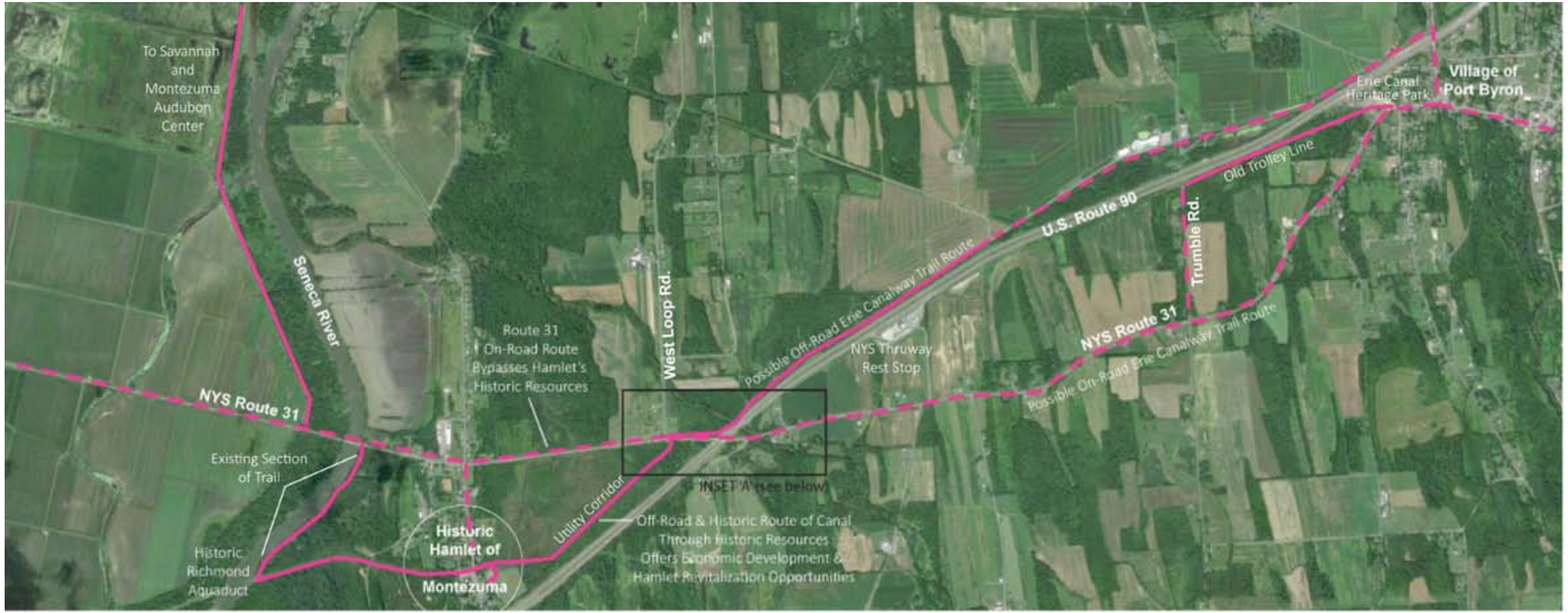
in disrepair, including non-town roads. There are issues with speeding throughout town, as there is little monitoring of speed. Narrow roads throughout town make speeding especially precarious, as wide farm equipment requires the majority of the road to travel. Parking opportunities are lacking in various locations through the town, including at the Clifford House, the VFW, and the marina, to be developed at the river-front. Due to the productivity of agricultural land in the town, roadside farm stands continue to crop up in residential areas and concerns have been raised by the community about traffic congestion associated with roadside farm stands. On-street parking is needed near these farm stands as well as along Route 90 during the annual garage sale. As Montezuma begins to attract visitation through development of the Heritage Park, etc., opportunities for on and off street parking should be investigated.

Sidewalks and bicycle lanes or pathways are not a part of the current transportation infrastructure in Montezuma. Sidewalks in the Hamlet connecting the community to the Montezuma Heritage Park and/or the Seneca River would be beneficial to both community members and visitors to the community. Bicycle lanes or paths would be beneficial along Route 90 and Route 31 to provide alternative transportation options and recreational trail connections throughout the town to residents and visitors.

The Town of Montezuma does not operate a public sewer line. The town expects that in the near future the DEC will mandate a sewer line based on Cayuga County health inspections in the area. Placement of this sewer line should be carefully considered, as it will inevitably affect the location of future development. Laundromat and car wash facilities are non-existent in the town, but could be feasible industries if the town implements a public sewer line. Accessibility of drinkable water also presents a big concern in the Town of Montezuma, as public water is not currently available throughout the town. There are issues of high sulfur and iron concentrations in well-water and wells continue to collapse. A plan for a new water line exists for the town, which will be important for providing potable water resources to those in the town that currently face these issues.

Community Revitalization and Historic Preservation
(See Goals 13-15)

25.1% of homes in Montezuma were built prior to 1939. Some of the older housing has been updated, but most have not and will need to be updated and rehabilitated. Most of the older housing units do not meet today's codes. There are also aging mobile homes, built in the 1970s, that need to be updated as well. These updates may be costly and many homeowners may require assistance in affording these renovations.
Montezuma has significant cultural and historic resources as well that the community members have been interested in protecting and revitalizing over the last 50 years, especially in relation to the Heritage Park and the historic resources within. However, many historic resources in the town are threatened by decay and lack of upkeep. When the Erie Canal was rerouted to the Seneca River, many of the early buildings that contained businesses were burned or torn down, including the Methodist Church on Route 90. It is important for the town to preserve the historic resources that remain. The town should consider purchasing the Clifford House, for example, to prevent potential demolition and/or redevelopment of this historic resource now that the building is vacant and for sale. The Richmond Aqueduct and Historic Mentz Church are also threatened by degradation, which has been the fate of many historic resources in Montezuma already, including Meil's Dry Dock and the Paper Mill. These resources are particularly important to the town because they can be used to draw in tourists and generate economic activity, especially considering Montezuma's position along the Erie Canalway Trail.



INSET 'A'

Towpath Road to Seneca River Via Richmond Aquaduct: Off-Road

Route 31: On-Road

Concept 2A: Erie Canalway Trail Route

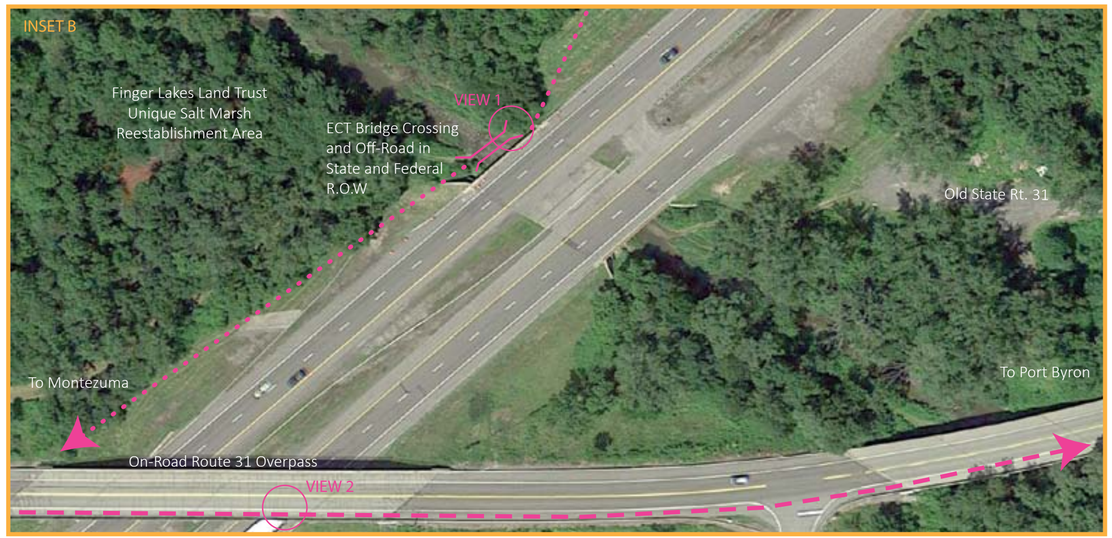
Aerial Images Showing Potential Erie Canalway Trail Linkage Options Between Savanna and Port Byron Through the Historic Town of Montezuma, NY

VIEW 1

Off-Road Erie Canal Trail Option:
Install New Foot/Cycle Bridge Over Crane Brook

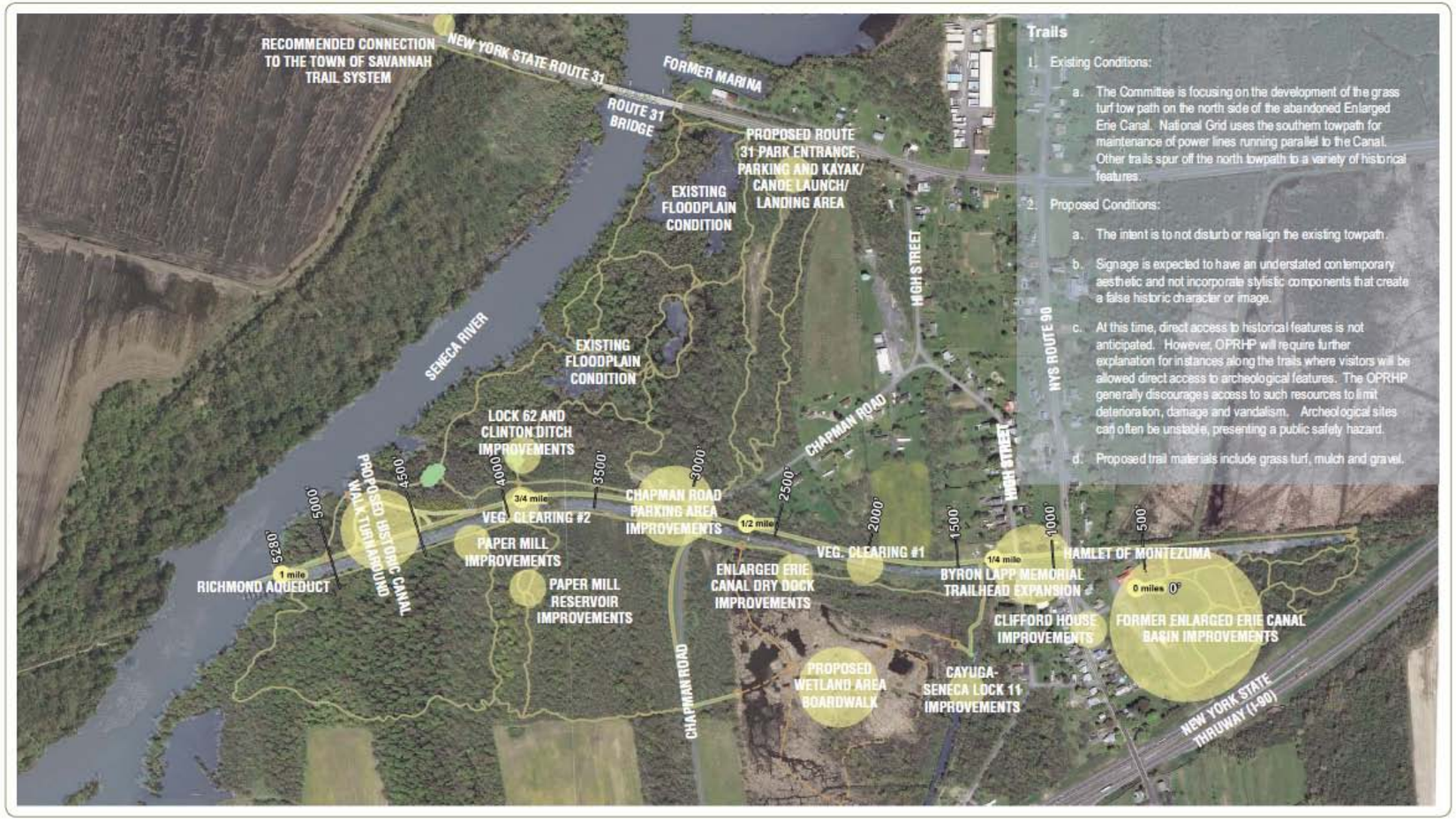
VIEW 2

On-Road Erie Canal Trail Option:
Using Existing Route 31 Overpass



Concept 2B:

Potential Erie Canalway Trail Linkage Across Crane Brook in the Town of Montezuma, NY On-Road Vs. Off-Road within existing State and Federal Right-of-way



Trails

1. Existing Conditions:
   a. The Committee is focusing on the development of the grass turf tow path on the north side of the abandoned Enlarged Erie Canal. National Grid uses the southern towpath for maintenance of power lines running parallel to the Canal. Other trails spur off the north towpath to a variety of historical features.
2. Proposed Conditions:
   a. The intent is to not disturb or realign the existing towpath.
   b. Signage is expected to have an understated contemporary aesthetic and not incorporate stylistic components that create a false historic character or image.
   c. At this time, direct access to historical features is not anticipated. However, OPRHP will require further explanation for instances along the trails where visitors will be allowed direct access to archeological features. The OPRHP generally discourages access to such resources to limit deterioration, damage and vandalism. Archeological sites can often be unstable, presenting a public safety hazard.
   d. Proposed trail materials include grass turf, mulch and gravel.

Town of Montezuma Heritage Park
Town of Montezuma, Cayuga County, New York
Park Plan
March 24, 2014

500 0 250 500 1000
Graphic Scale (In feet)

North

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

EDR Project Number: 12033

Concept 3:

Seneca Riverfront Trail on Town, NYS, & Federal lands From Montezuma Heritage Park To Route 20 Bridge, crossing to Montezuma NWR. Interpretation of the historic remains of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal via spur trail.
(approx. 2.5 mi.total length)

Connecting Trail to Montezuma NWR via Route 20 Bridge Over Seneca River

Potential Trail View Setting Examples (from Google Maps)

Photo by Cian Chambliss

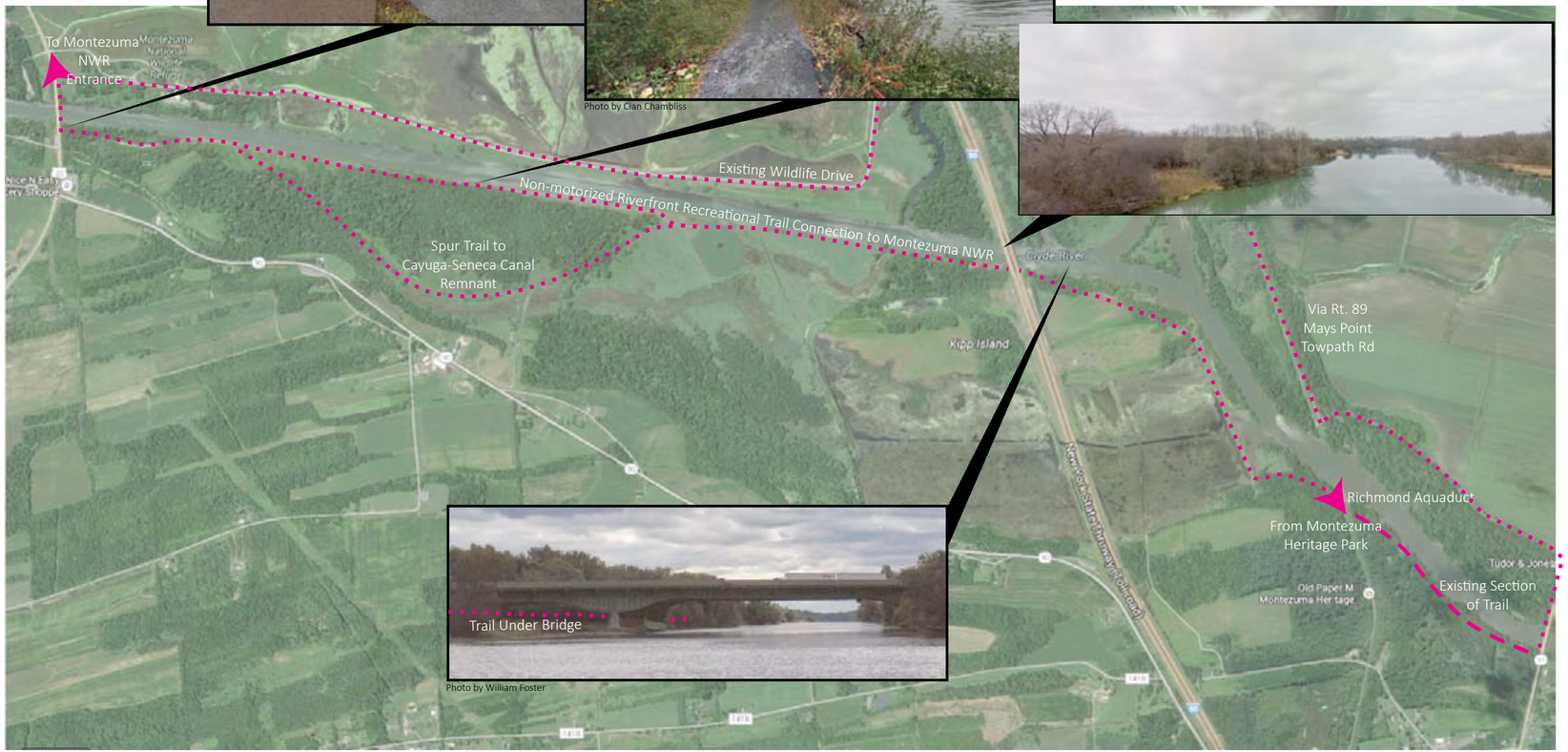


Photo by William Foster

Appendix D: Community Comments of Draft Plan

Summaries of the comments received during the public meeting for the Draft Comprehensive Plan held in June 2016 included the following:

1.

Appendix E: National Register Listings

Mentz Church
Mentz Church Road, Cayuga County, New York

Seneca River Crossing Canals Historic District
Montezuma and Tyre, Cayuga and Seneca Counties, New York

New York Barge Canal
NYS Barge Canal, Waterford to Tonawanda, Whitehall, Oswego & Waterloo

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Mentz Church**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **Mentz Church Road at McDonald Road** [ ] not for publication

town **Montezuma** [X] vicinity

state New York code NY county **Cayuga** code 011 zip code 13117

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. in my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title : Commissioner for Historic Preservation — Date 7/23/04

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other (explain)

Signature of the Keeper — date of action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

[ ] private
[X] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

[X] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2		**TOTAL**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

RELIGIOUS; church

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

mid- and late 19th Century: vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls heavy timber framing with clapboard siding

roof shingles

other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Description

The Mentz Church, built ca. 1820-30 and enlarged during the 1870s-80s, is a rectangular, gable-roofed frame building in the former crossroads hamlet of Mentz Corners in the predominantly rural town of Montezuma (approximately three miles east of the village of Montezuma). It sits on a roughly triangular lot on the west side of Mentz Church Road at the juncture of McDonald Road a few miles southeast of the hamlet of Montezuma in northwest Cayuga County. The church is surrounded by working farms and a few scattered farmhouses (both altered older buildings and modern dwellings). The gently sloping parcel is covered by lawns dotted with mature trees. A cemetery, containing approximately 225 headstones dating from 1813 to the 1940s, surrounds the former church to the northwest, north and east. There are no outbuildings located on the nominated parcel.

The church is a vernacular, early nineteenth century, clapboard sided building enlarged ca. 1870-80 with a large, square tower centrally engaged on the front façade. The main block consists of a simple, three-bay-wide, five-bay-deep superstructure resting on a slightly raised, rubble stone foundation. The two-part tower incorporates vernacular Victorian design features, most notably patterned shingles on the upper level and a pyramidal roof with flared eaves and ornamental finial.

The main entrance, centered at the base of the tower, featured a large, paneled door surmounted by a flat-arched transom light. (The original door is currently in storage and the transom light no longer exists.) The doorway is flanked by small, shed-roofed "bump-outs" that contain the entrance foyer. The bays flanking the front tower are blind. The five-bay wide side elevations feature symmetrical fenestration with rectangular, wood-trimmed window openings containing 2/2, double-hung sash believed to have been added during the 1880s period of renovation. Several openings retain their original shutters *in situ;* all other shutters survive substantially intact in storage.

The interior survives with a substantial degree of integrity of design, materials and craftsmanship. The main block contains a small open sanctuary with simple, late 19th century pews and a slightly raised dais. Some tongue-in-groove wainscoting survives, as well as simple wood trim around door and window openings.

The cemetery, containing several hundred burials, is laid out very informally around the north, east, and south sides of the former church. A broad range of markers ranging from the early 19th to the mid-twentieth century are represented; most are vernacular renderings of popular funerary motifs of their respective periods. For example, quite a few simple early nineteenth century gravestones with typical urn, willow and angel head motifs survive, as do a number of mid- to late nineteenth century obelisks; twentieth century tastes are reflected in many classically inspired forms and decorations.

The church is now owned by the town and plans are underway to restore it for community use.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[ ] **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[X] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

[ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B** removed from its original location

[ ] **C** a birthplace or grave

[X] **D** a cemetery

[ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] **F** a commemorative property

[ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance: See continuation sheets

Areas of Significance:
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture, funerary art

Period of Significance:

1813 – early 1950s

Significant Dates:

1813; ca. 1820; 1880s; first ½ of 20th century

Significant Person:

NA

Cultural Affiliation:

NA

Architect/Builder:

unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Albany, NY. Division for Historic Preservation. Research files.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by historic American Building Survey
_____
[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
_____

Primary location of additional data:

[X] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal Agency
[ ] Local Government
[ ] University
[ ] Other: _____

Significance

The Mentz Church, built ca. 1820-30 and expanded in the 1870s/80s, is architecturally significant as an intact, representative example of nineteenth century religious architecture in rural Cayuga County. A relatively small, vernacular building, the church is nonetheless an imposing edifice in its small, crossroads hamlet setting and forms the visual focal point of the community's only intersection. Virtually intact to its early 19th century date of construction and late 19th century remodeling, the church retains a substantial degree of integrity of design, materials, craftsmanship, setting, location, and feeling to the period of significance. The church is surrounded by a burial ground that is significant in the area of funerary art: it contains a broad range of 19th and early 20th gravestones that embody typical designs (from simple slabs to handsome obelisks) and decoration techniques (from willow and urn patterns of the early 19th century to the more elaborate carvings and iconography associated with the Victorian and Classical periods.)

The town of Mentz, originally known as "Jefferson," was formed in 1802 (renamed Mentz in 1808). The earliest settlers in the area (Peter Clarke, Comfort Tyler, and Abram Morgan) were attracted by the region's rich salt springs and arrived around 1798. By 1810 they had established the Cayuga (Salt) Manufacturing Company, which folded several decades when it could not compete with salt production in nearby Syracuse. Meanwhile, the area proved highly arable and farming became the mainstay of the local economy, boosted by a variety of small milling ventures on nearby waterways. The tiny hamlet of Mentz Corners, established during the second quarter of the 19th century, served as a small center of commerce for farm families in the surrounding rural agrarian community who prospered due to relatively easy access to the nearby Erie Canal (competed in 1825). Originally built as a non-denominational house of worship on land donated by local farmers, the Mentz Church hosted roving circuit riders of the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian faiths. (Prior to the erection of this first permanent church, worshippers gathered in the barn of John Gilmore.) Typical of rural vernacular churches of the period, the Mentz Church began as a rectangular, gable-roofed frame building with symmetrical fenestration and simple wooden trim. The interior was an open, unadorned space catering to no particular denomination or liturgical practices.

Early 19th century records note that the "society" in Mentz was linked to worshippers in nearby Montezuma and Port Byron, with the church in Mentz referred to as the "mother" church. One of the earliest preachers was the Reverend Samuel Bibbins of nearby Weedsport. For many years, the church also served as the area's only "public" building, often used for a variety of social, political and recreational events. For example, the Logan Grange No. 107 was organized in 1873 and used the church as a meeting space. At some point, the building became affiliated solely with the Methodist denomination. In the 1870s/80s, the plain, Federal era building was upgraded with the addition of the front tower with simple, yet fashionable, Victorian era ornament. The simple interior fabric also appears to date from the late 19th century.

In 1859 the town of Montezuma was carved out of the town of Mentz; Mentz Corners fell within the boundaries of Montezuma and continued to serve as a small hub of social, commercial and religious activity for the area's farmers. During the 20th century, the hamlet declined as more people were able to travel to the larger villages of nearby Montezuma and Port Byron for their social and commercial needs. Other than a few scattered farmhouses, the Mentz Church is the only extant reminder of the tiny hamlet of Mentz Corners. Electricity was installed in 1928, but there is still no running water in the building. The church closed its doors in 1954 due to lack of congregants, but the building remained under the care of Mr. Lester O'Hara, whose grandparents had worshipped in the church during the Civil War era. During the past half-century, the church has offered one service per year, during the summer, followed by a covered-dish luncheon. The building was recently acquired by the town; local citizens plan to operate the former church as historic site.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 1 acre

UTM References: 18: 363260/4761750

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundary of the nominated property coincides with the legal lot lines as delineated on the attached county tax map (92.00, lots 24 and 25).

Boundary Justification: The boundary coincides with the full extent of land historically and currently associated with the nominated resource.

11. Form Prepared By: (Research conducted by: Ms. Cheryl Longyear, Montezuma Town Historian, Port Byron, NY)

name/title Nancy L. Todd, Program Analyst

organization Division for Historic Preservation date June 2004

street & number Peebles Island, Box 189 telephone (518) 237-8643 x 3262

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

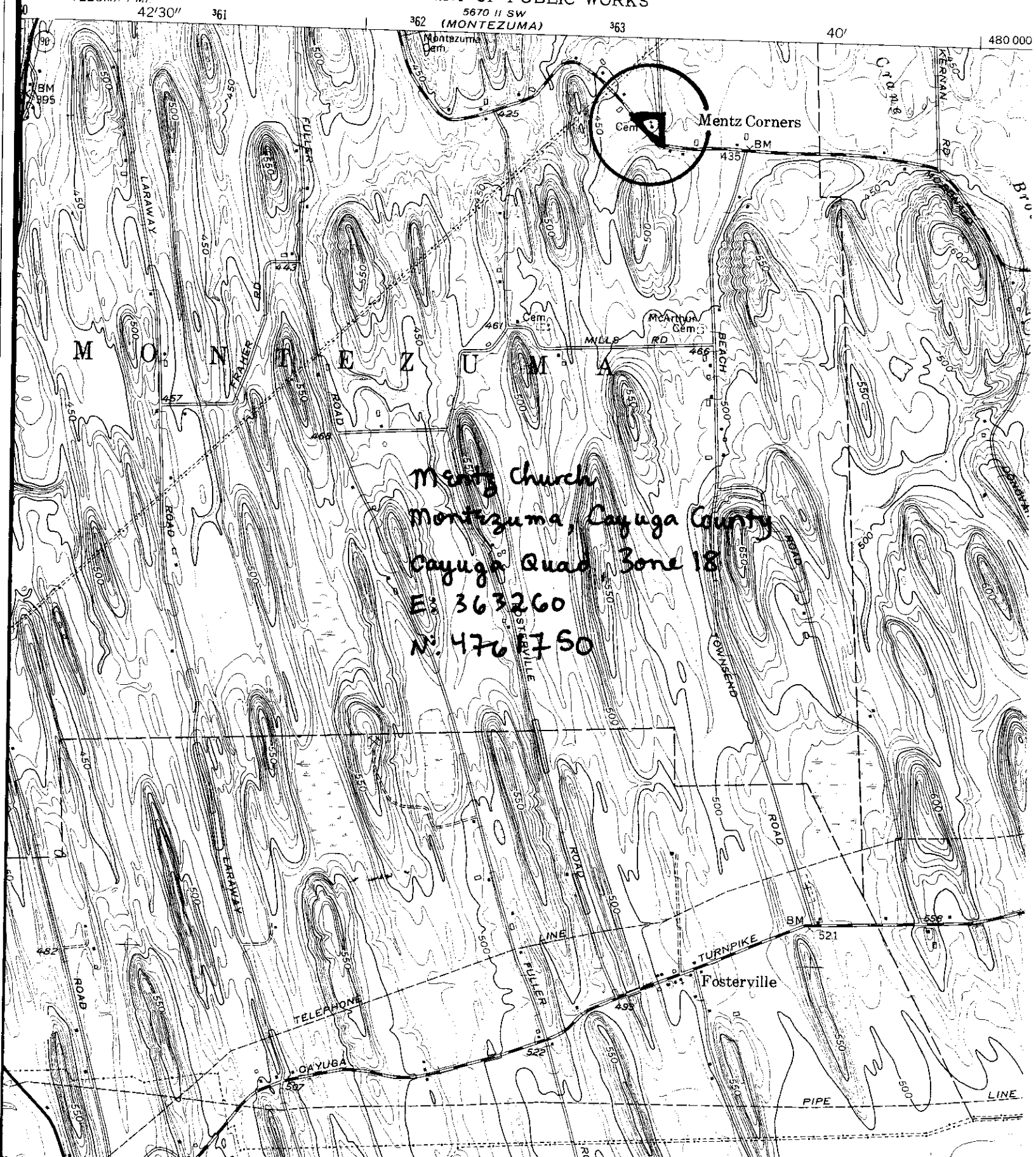
Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



Mentz Church
Montezuma, Cayuga County
Cayuga Quad, Zone 18
E: 363260
N: 4761750

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x' in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Seneca River Crossing Canals Historic District

other name/site number

2. Location

street & number Off NY Route 90 ☐ not for publication

city or town Montezuma and Tyre X vicinity

state New York code 036 counties Cayuga/Seneca codes 011/099 zip code 13117

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ public-local
- ☒ private
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

- ☒ district
- ☐ building(s)
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
11		structures
		objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Canal

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

7. Description

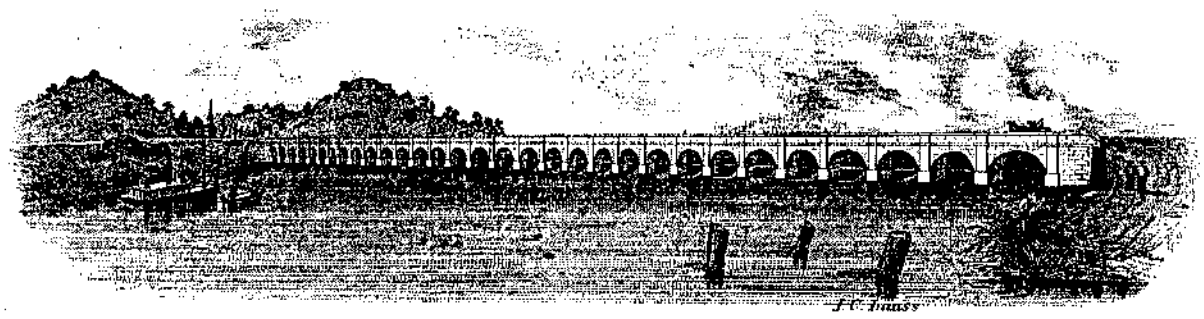
Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls STONE, EARTH
roof N/A
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)



From *Van Rensselaer Richmond, State Engineer,* original drawing of the Aqueduct, 1849-57
(Alternately known as the Seneca River, Richmond, or Montezuma Aqueduct)
Looking south along the Seneca River

DESCRIPTION

The Seneca River Crossing Canals Historic District includes more than one mile of Enlarged Erie Canal prism (constructed here between 1849 and 1857); towpath and heelpath; a drydock; remains of the Richmond (Montezuma) Aqueduct crossing the Seneca River, illustrated above in its complete appearance (nine of the original 31 arches remain); remnants of the original Erie Canal constructed between 1817 and 1825 and nicknamed Clinton's Ditch after its most forceful proponent, former Governor DeWitt Clinton, including Lock #62; piers of the original mule bridge that crossed the Seneca River during the Clinton's Ditch era; and a culvert that carries a natural stream beneath the Enlarged Erie Canal. Also included at the easternmost point in the district is a "change bridge" abutment at the junction of the Erie and Cayuga & Seneca canals, and a short remnant of the Cayuga & Seneca Canal traveling southward nearly one-half mile from its junction with the Erie, including Lock #11, just south of the junction. The district is generally situated along the east-west alignment of the Erie with a leg traveling southward along the Cayuga & Seneca Canal, and is contained within the towns of Montezuma, Cayuga County, and Tyre, in Seneca County.

The boundary of this historic district is drawn to include features of both the original and enlarged canals, using the historic survey maps of the canals, commonly called the "Blue Line Maps" after the color of the property lines for lands acquired by New York State for canal purposes. The features and boundaries of the district are included in the attached map, and a copy of part of the 1896 survey map, officially known as the Schillner Maps after their delineator, is also included for comparison purposes.

From east to west, the components are as follows:

CAYUGA & SENECA CANAL

At the eastern end of the district is the junction of the Enlarged Erie and Cayuga & Seneca canals. The Cayuga & Seneca, one of the ten lateral canals constructed during the period of "canal fever" that followed the opening of the Erie in 1825, traveled south and west from Montezuma to connect the Erie with the two Finger Lakes contained in its name. At its junction with the Erie is an abutment for the "change bridge" that allowed the

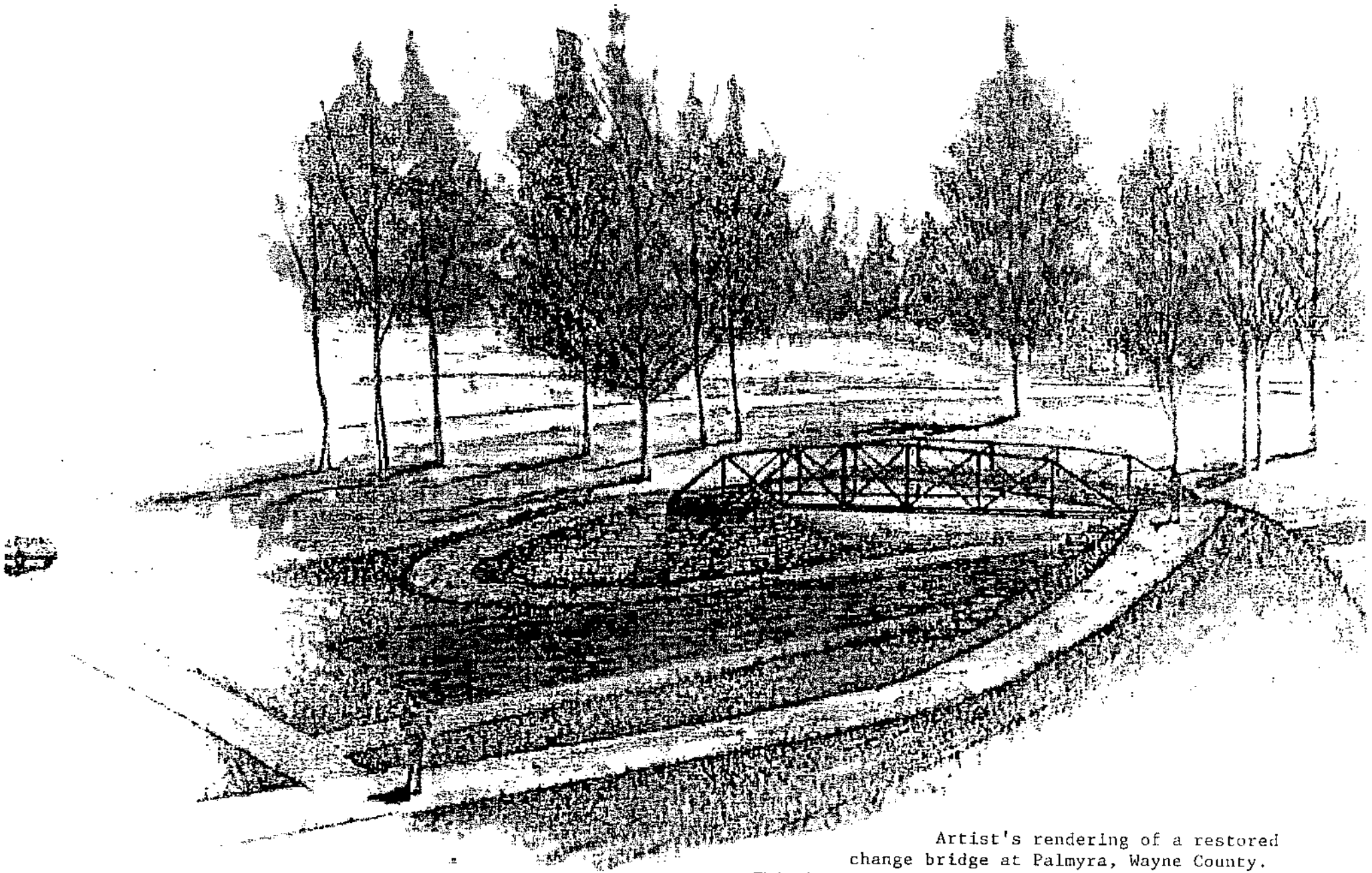
towing animals to cross an intersecting waterway without having to be unhitched from the boat. (See attached sketch of a change bridge in Palmyra, west of this site. The bridge at the canal junction would have been similar to the one shown in this illustration although the one depicted here was simply to carry the towpath from one side of the canal to the other.) There are very few change bridge remnants left in the state and this one is highly intact, and therefore highly significant. Immediately south of the junction of the two canals is Cayuga & Seneca Canal Lock #11 in pristine condition, as well as approximately one-half mile of the prism. Although overgrown with heavy vegetation, the prism is discernable and therefore included in this nomination.

In 1878, when most of the unprofitable lateral canals were closed, the Cayuga & Seneca was one of those that remained open besides the Erie. When the Barge Canal System was constructed in the early twentieth century, the Cayuga & Seneca was considered important enough to retain, but like the Erie and other laterals, it was almost totally reconstructed, and this nineteenth-century Cayuga & Seneca Canal was abandoned along with its adjacent counterpart, the Enlarged Erie. The new junction of the Erie and Cayuga & Seneca was moved west of Montezuma, and the abandoned Cayuga & Seneca remained intact for a considerable distance south of Montezuma. During the 1950s, the old Cayuga & Seneca was interrupted by construction of the New York State Thruway, leaving only about one-half mile intact north of the highway. The southern boundary of this leg of the district is at the New York State Thruway.

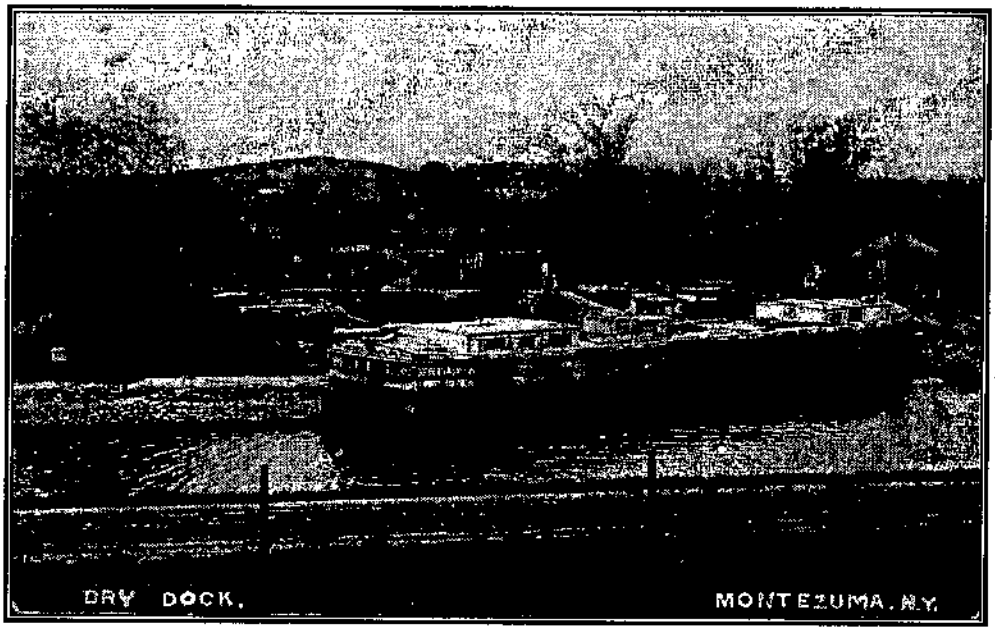
ENLARGED ERIE CANAL

From the junction of the two canals in the hamlet of Montezuma in the town of the same name, the open prism of the Enlarged Erie travels westward for about one mile, to the Seneca River, which runs perpendicular to the canal in an approximate north-south direction. At this point the Erie was carried over the river on the Richmond Aqueduct, described below. On the west side of the Seneca River, in the town of Tyre, the canal prism is open and discernable as a canal for approximately 150' beyond the wingwall of the aqueduct. West of that, its path can be determined by the presence of a power line in its path. Only that part of the canal prism that remains open is included in this nomination.

Despite the abandonment of the Enlarged Erie upon the opening of the Barge Canal in the early twentieth century, and its sale to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, the abandoned canal in Cayuga County and this part of Seneca County retains a significant degree of its original integrity. The Enlarged Erie Canal originally measured 70 feet in width at the surface, approximately 50 feet wide at the bottom, and was seven feet deep. Today it is overgrown with vegetation but remains visible in the landscape. Sections of the Enlarged Erie are watered in some locations, and include the towpath, the heelpath, and in Montezuma, a drydock that includes some masonry in its perimeter walls and a nearly intact stone wall that delineated one of the boat bays. At the approximate center of the Cayuga County side of the district is a stone culvert carrying a natural stream under the Enlarged Erie Canal.



Artist's rendering of a restored change bridge at Palmyra, Wayne County. This bridge, called the Aldrich Change Bridge, is similar to the one that would have existed at the junction of the Erie and the Cayuga & Seneca Canals



Historic photograph of Montezuma Dry Dock

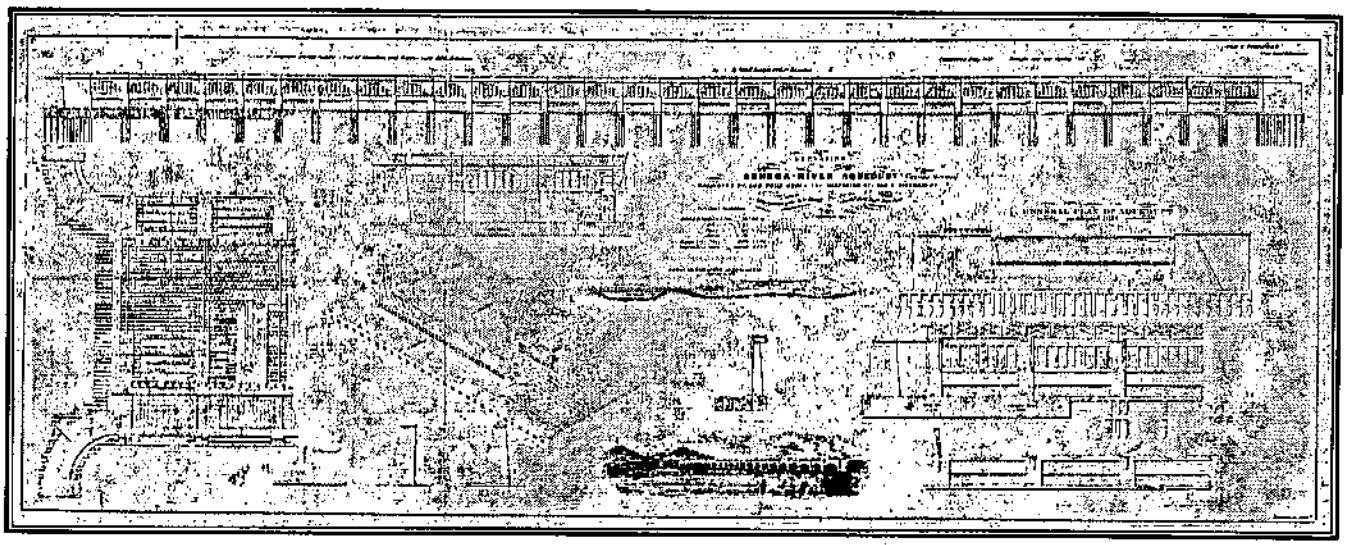
CLINTON'S DITCH

Also present on the east side of the Seneca River is the meandering path of Clinton's Ditch. In the eastern part of the historic district, it is south of the Enlarged Erie. At the approximate mid-point of the Cayuga County side of the district, it travels in an S-shaped path and winds up north of the Enlarged Erie between Chapman Road and the Seneca River. Clinton's Ditch is depicted as the dotted line on the attached 1896 map from the

New York State Archives. Clinton's Ditch, which was completely abandoned in this location with the opening of the new canal in 1857, remains an open depression in the landscape around Montezuma and along its path is original stone Lock 62 as well as archeological remains of what was most likely the locktender's residence adjacent to the lock. Near the eastern shore of the Seneca River are three wood piers made from trees that once carried the mule bridge across the river. Clinton's Ditch boats crossed the Seneca River and many other intersecting waterways within the waterways themselves rather than on aqueducts and it is likely that no other such remnants of this earlier structure are visible across the entire canal system.

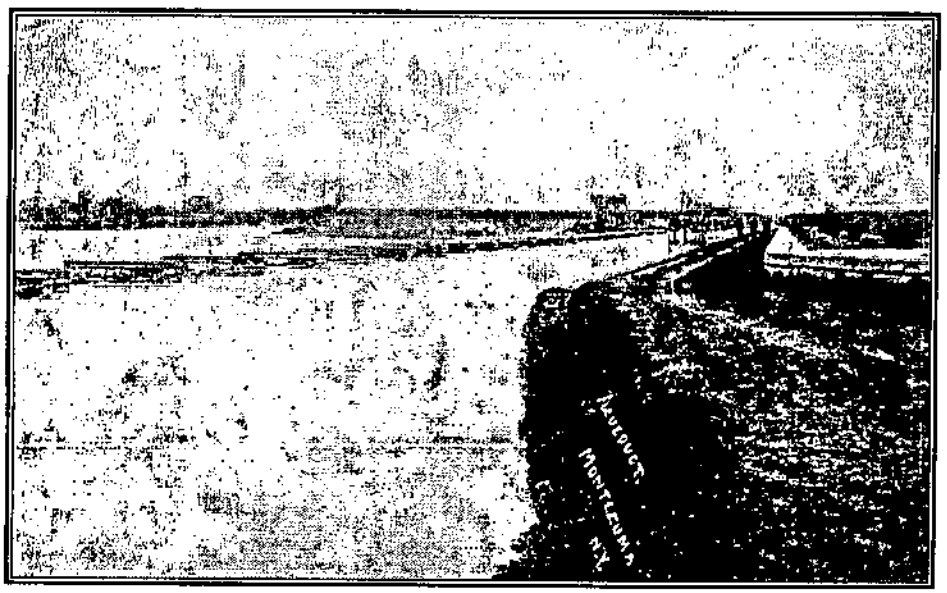
Clinton's Ditch measured 40 feet wide at the surface and 28 feet wide at the bottom, and was four feet deep. It was gradually replaced between 1836 and 1862 as parts of the Enlarged Erie Canal were opened. In some locations, the original alignment was used for the enlarged canal and therefore, the earlier iteration is completely indiscernible, as it has been completely subsumed within the newer structure. On the other hand, where a more advantageous route was determined, such as here in Montezuma, Clinton's Ditch was simply replaced and abandoned. Much of it is no longer visible, but where it does remain, it is considered highly significant because it illustrates the scale and construction techniques of New York State's first canal-building era in the early nineteenth century.

RICHMOND (MONTEZUMA) AQUEDUCT OVER THE SENECA RIVER



Small scale image of engineer's drawing of Seneca River Aqueduct

In the western section of the historic district are the remains of the Seneca River Aqueduct, more commonly known as Montezuma Aqueduct, or Richmond Aqueduct, named for its designer, Erie Canal engineer Van Rensselaer Richmond. As originally constructed, it was approximately 894 feet in length, and 86 feet in width. The canal trough was 50 feet wide and about eight feet in height. The aqueduct is oriented along the east-west alignment of the canal and incorporates limestone piers and abutments. When opened in 1857, it included 31 arches, each 22 feet wide, separated by 32 piers of hydraulic stone masonry, each 5 feet in width.



Undated photograph of the Aqueduct in use, looking west

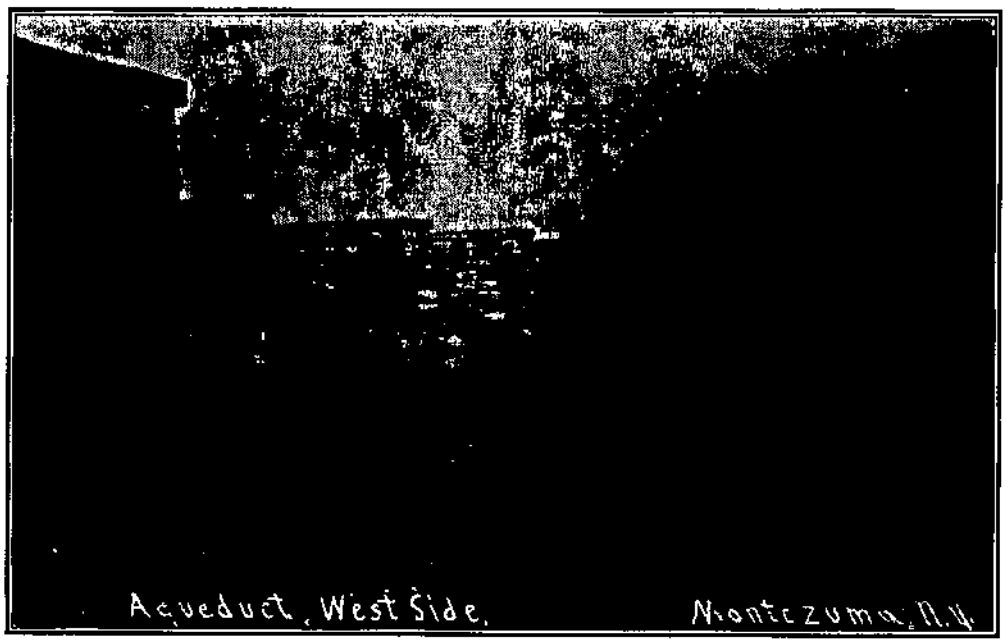
Canal Historian Nobel Whitford, writing in 1905, called the Richmond Aqueduct one of the most important structures on the Enlarged Erie Canal. He described the aqueduct in the following manner: "The foundation floor covered an area of 79,783 square feet, or nearly two acres, supported on 4,464 bearing piles, varying in length from fifteen to thirty feet. The towing-path, with a parapet wall three and one-half feet high, was carried over on thirty-one stone arches. During construction a wooden lock temporarily connected the navigation of the old canal with the aqueduct level. On completion this level was extended to the Clyde lock."

The piers and abutments rise approximately 11 feet above the wood platform that the aqueduct was built on in the riverbed, and the arches rise approximately 8 additional feet. Wing walls at both the upstream and downstream portions of the structure are quarter-round in plan and also constructed of limestone. The riverbed beneath the aqueduct retains original wooden flooring laid upon heavy timber sleepers. The piers, walls and dam are laid up in regular ashlar courses of rectangular limestone blocks. The blocks feature finely cut joints, bedding surfaces, and corners with rock-faced surfaces where exposed to view. The wooden trough which carried the canal across the piers is no longer extant although some fragments at each end remain. Rubble stone walls protect the nearly vertical sides of the canal prism as it narrows at the approaches to the aqueduct. According to Richmond's drawing, the aqueduct cost $200,000 to build by the time it opened in 1857.

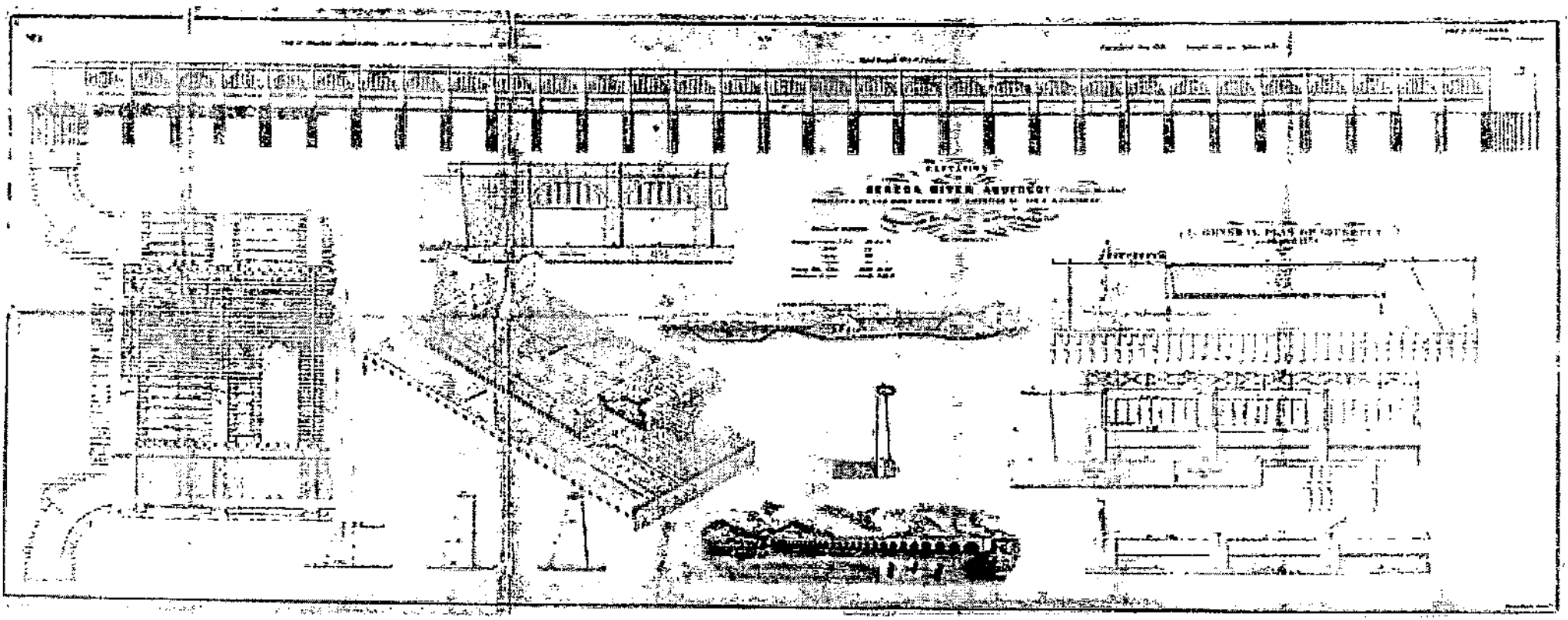
In the early twentieth century, when the Enlarged Erie was replaced by the Barge Canal, the segment of the Seneca River that the Richmond Aqueduct crossed was incorporated into the new canal system. Consequently, the center of the aqueduct was destroyed, leaving six arches on the east (Montezuma) side of the river, and on the west (Tyre) side, three arches. The aqueduct and canal remains are expected to become the focal point of a historic park developed by the Town of Montezuma and Cayuga County on the east side of the Seneca River.

Richmond Aqueduct, Historic Views

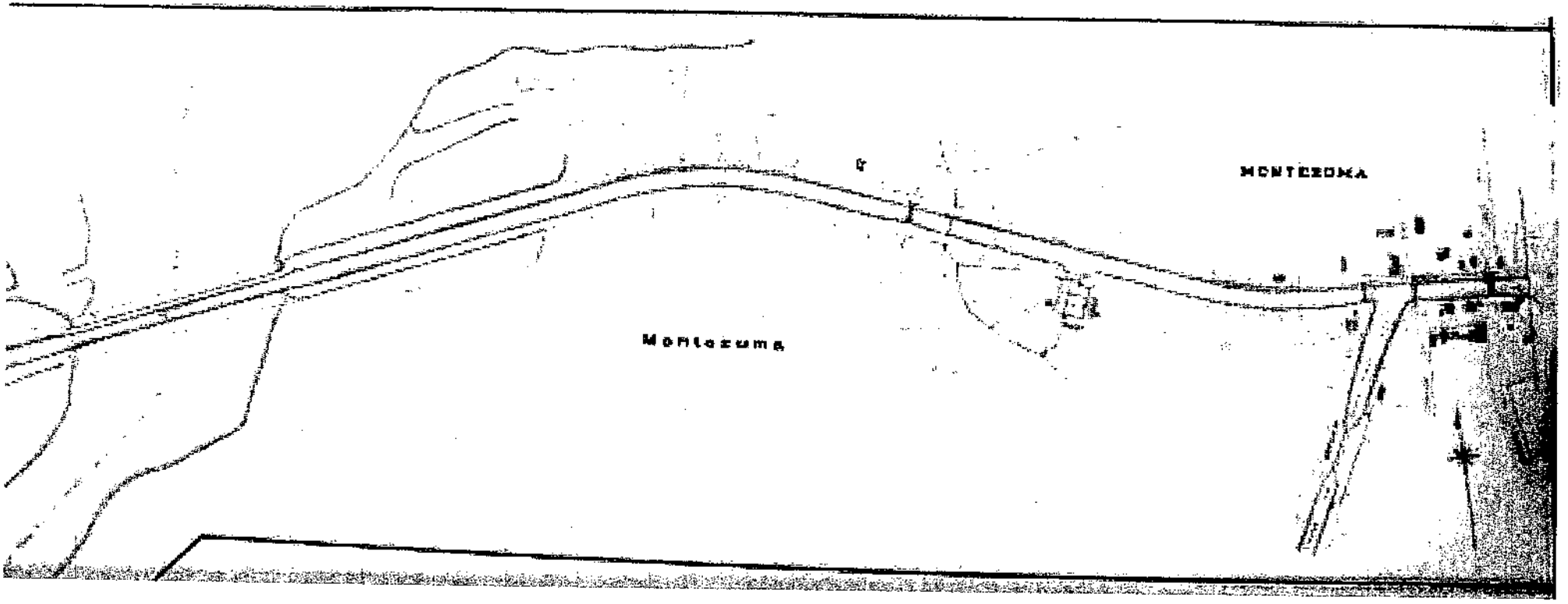
Looking west across Seneca River, undated photograph



Looking east across Seneca River, undated photograph



VAN RENSSELAER RICHMOND'S DRAWING
SENECA RIVER AQUEDUCT 1859



SCHILLNER MAP, PLATE 28, 1896

8. Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

ENGINEERING

COMMERCE

Period of Significance
1817-1917

Significant Dates
1817, 1849-57, 1917

Significant Persons
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Van Rensselaer Richmond, Engineer

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☒ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other Name of repository:

NYS Canal Corporation, Albany, NY 12201-0189

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Seneca River Crossing Canals Historic District, which includes the Richmond (Montezuma) Aqueduct and trunk of the Enlarged Erie Canal, a portion of the original Erie, (known as Clinton's Ditch after its most adamant proponent, one-time New York State governor, DeWitt Clinton), a small section of the Cayuga & Seneca Canal, and adjacent archeological remains, is historically significant as an outstanding example of nineteenth century canal engineering and as an important part of the New York State canal system, the most notable component of which was the Erie Canal. It is eligible under Criteria A and C. The aqueduct, which is alternately known as the Seneca River, Richmond, or Montezuma Aqueduct, is the centerpiece of this nomination. Van Rensselaer Richmond was the name of the New York State canal engineer who designed the structure and his name has been so completely associated with the aqueduct that it is often referred to as the Richmond Aqueduct.

Remaining on the approximately 70-acre site are small pieces of the original Erie Canal, begun in 1817 and completed in 1825. The canal represented one of the greatest engineering achievements of the emerging American nation and became an immediate success, overwhelming the small canal's freight-handling capacity due to its relatively shallow depth and numerous small single-chamber locks. Support for the expansion and improvement of the canal became apparent soon after the canal's completion as its economic success became apparent. The decision to enlarge the canal was reached by the Canal Commissioners in 1835, and construction of the first enlargement occurred in phases between 1836 and 1862. (The canal was enlarged again in 1895 but that event has no relevance to this site.)

As new sections of the enlarged canal were opened, the original canal was abandoned in locations where it was replaced on a new alignment. In Montezuma, where all of Clinton's Ditch was abandoned, some portions are still visible and are contributing components of this nomination. This section of the Enlarged Erie, including the aqueduct, opened during the spring of 1857.

At the first Montezuma crossing of the Seneca River (c.1825-1857), canal boats traversed the river itself, and mules towing the boats walked across the river on a narrow wooden bridge just above the water level. This method of crossing was employed in many locations where the path of the canal crossed natural waterways, but the unpredictability of water flow made the process unreliable and fairly dangerous. In many instances, including this one, such crossings were replaced with aqueducts during the enlargement of 1836-1857.

In addition, surrounding the Seneca River were the Cayuga Marshes, now known as the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. This was a particularly difficult portion of the canal to both engineer and construct because of the swampy nature of the soil. Among the difficulties in constructing the canal was keeping the prism intact, and one of the most important reasons for enlarging and rerouting the canal in Montezuma was to raise the bottom of the canal above the level of the swamp. As illustrated on this section from engineer Van Rensselaer Richmond's drawing of the aqueduct, the raised level of the canal improved the structure of the prism and rendered the water-level crossing of the river obsolete. This situation dictated the need for an aqueduct at this new higher level.

These improvements were designed to increase the canal's capacity and longevity. The monumental limestone structure of the aqueduct is representative of the engineering practices employed in the enlargement of the canal in the mid-nineteenth century and emblematic of the historic emphasis on durability, fine stone masonry craftsmanship and attractive overall design.

When the Enlarged Erie Canal was replaced by the Erie Division of the Barge Canal System in the early twentieth century, the old waterway was completely abandoned in this area as Clinton's Ditch had been 60 years previously. The canal prism became overgrown with volunteer vegetation and in some cases was partially filled, but it remained quite perceptible in the landscape. Across New York State, much of the Erie Canal right-of-way was sold to utility companies which now use it as power pole right-of-way, as is the case in the Montezuma and Tyre sections of the canal. The current owner is Syracuse-based Niagara Mohawk Power Company, which provides electrical service to much of upstate New York and is now a subsidiary of an international company.

The new Barge Canal System, constructed between 1905 and 1918, utilized this part of the Seneca River in the replacement of the Erie Canal between Albany and Buffalo, leaving the Richmond Aqueduct an impediment to travel along the new waterway. Upon abandonment of the Enlarged Erie, the center part of the aqueduct was dismantled to open the Seneca River channel for shipping, leaving six arches of the towpath structure and six piers of the trunk extant on the east (Cayuga County) side of the river, and three piers and arches extant on the west (Seneca County) side. The remaining finely-built limestone piers, abutments, and wing walls are extraordinarily well-preserved. The condition of the aqueduct remains attests to the care with which it was designed and erected. Design flourishes such as the rock-faced ashlar masonry, finely tooled corners and joints, well-proportioned capstones and the quarter- round wing walls reflect a desire to build a structure of enduring utility and beauty.

On the east side of the Seneca River, Cayuga County and the Town of Montezuma are currently working to establish a historical park constructed around the theme of the four canals visible on the site. At present, the towpath (north) side of the prism is available as a hiking trail for approximately one mile from the hamlet of Montezuma to the Richmond Aqueduct. In the Town of Tyre, while no similar effort is underway to develop the site for public access, canal remnants are no less intact and worthy of recognition and preservation.

Major Bibliographical References

Riley, Michael, Twelve And A Half Miles: The Erie Canal In Cayuga County , Self-published, printed by Dupli Printers, Syracuse, New York, 2002.

Whitford, Noble H., History of the Canal System of the State of New York, Together with Brief Histories of the Canals of the United States and Canada. Albany, New York: Brandow Printing, 1914. (on-line version consulted at the following address: http://www.history.rochester.edu/canal/bib/whitford/1906/Contents.html)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 70 acres

UTM References
(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

4 18
Zone Easting Northing

☒See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anthony Opalka, Historic Preservation Program Analyst

organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation date September 2005

street & number PO Box 189 telephone 518-237-8643

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188-0189

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property boundary is outlined on the attached map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes land taken by the State of New York to construct the original Erie Canal (also known as "Clinton's Ditch") between 1817 and 1825, and to construct its replacement known as the Enlarged Erie Canal between 1836 and 1862 in the towns of Montezuma (Cayuga County) and Tyre (Seneca County) surrounding the Seneca River Crossing. Some of the land remains in state ownership (New York State Canal Corporation) while other land was sold to private owners or local governments when the nineteenth-century canals were abandoned in the early twentieth century.

UTM Coordinates, Zone 18

1	361125	4763176
2	360872	4762607
3	361061	4763119
4	359557	4762989
5	359548	4763121
6	360482	4763425
7	360359	4763229

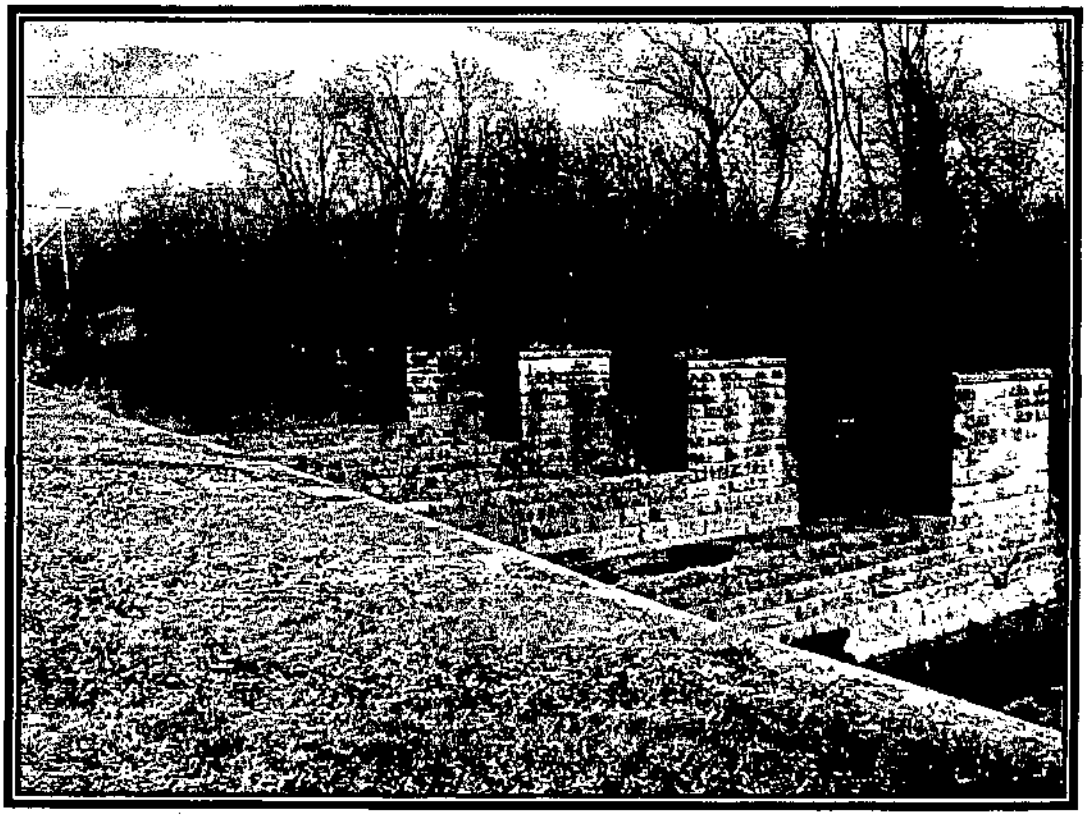
Photograph key

Pictures taken August, 2003 and June 2005
Photographers: Nancy Todd, Mark Peckham, Anthony Opalka
Negatives: New York State Historic Preservation Office

1. Cayuga & Seneca Canal, Lock #11
2. Cayuga & Seneca Canal, Lock #11
3. Cayuga & Seneca Canal, Lock #11
4. Cayuga & Seneca Canal, Lock #11
5. Change Bridge abutment
6. Enlarged Erie Canal towpath
7. Montezuma Drydock
8. Clinton's Ditch Lock #62
9. Clinton's Ditch Lock #62
10. Clinton's Ditch Lock #62
11. Remains of Mule Bridge at original Seneca River Crossing
12. Richmond Aqueduct, east side
13. Richmond Aqueduct, west side
14. Richmond Aqueduct, east side
15. Richmond Aqueduct, west side

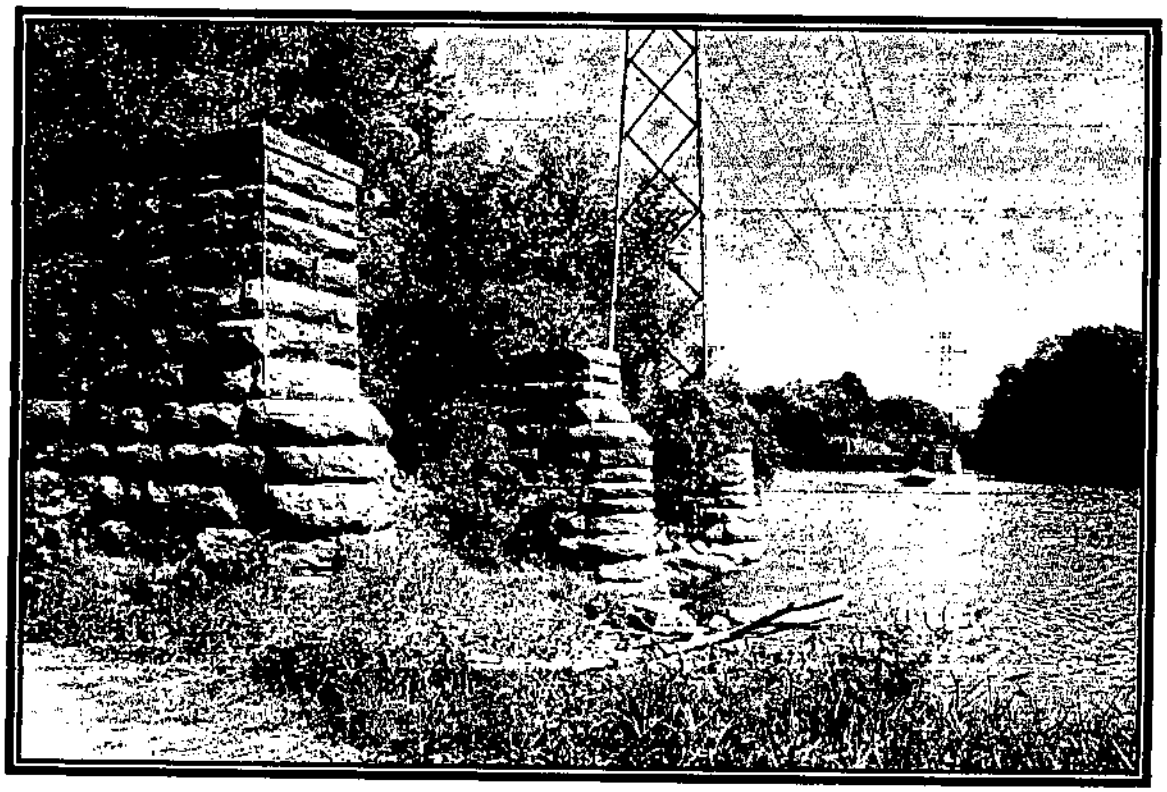
All photograph numbers are indicated on property map attached.

Richmond Aqueduct towpath arches, east side of Seneca River



Richmond Aqueduct piers to hold the canal trough, east side of Seneca River

Richmond Aqueduct wingwall and first arch, west side of Seneca River

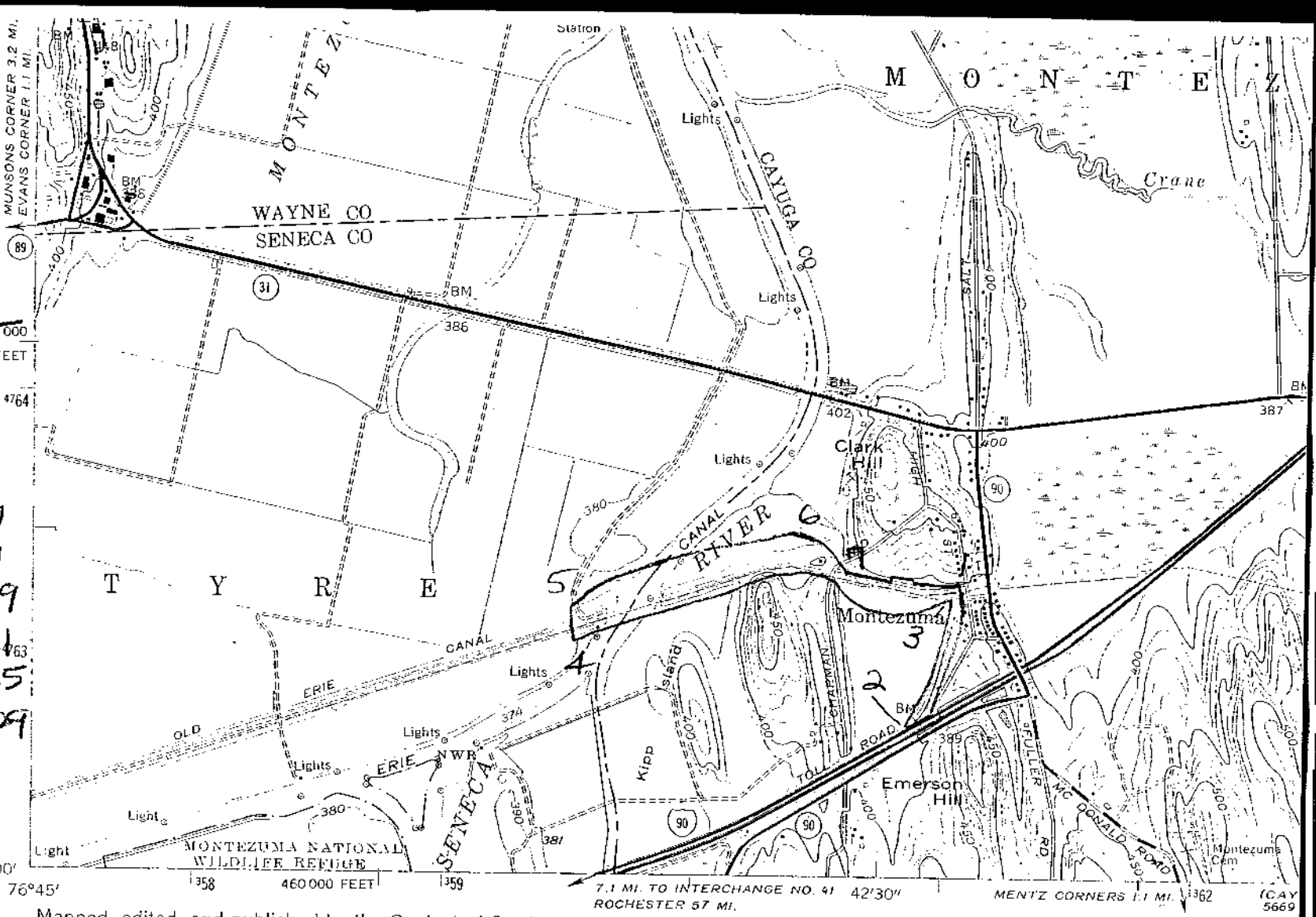


Richmond Aqueduct, piers to hold trough, west side of Seneca River

SENECA RIVER
CROSSING CANALS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

MONTEZUMA QUAD
ZONE 18

1	361125	4763176
2	360872	4762607
3	361061	4763119
4	359557	4763989
5	359548	4763121
6	360482	4763425
7	360659	4763209



(SENECA FALLS)
5669 IV NE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

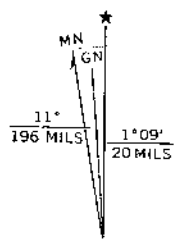
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Culture and drainage in part compiled by Corps of Engineers, Dept. of the Army, from aerial photographs taken 1942
Topography by planetable surveys 1954

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from aerial photographs taken 1976 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1978



UTM GRID AND 1978 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE

1000 0 1000 2000

CONTOUR INTE
NATIONAL GEODETIC VE

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIO
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

John L. Buono
Chairman

New York State Thruway Authority
New York State Canal Corporation
200 Southern Blvd., P.O. Box 189, Albany, NY 12201-0189
www.thruway.state.ny.us

Michael R. Fleischer
Executive Director
TDD/TTY 1-800-253-6244

March 8, 2005

Ruth L. Pierpont, Director
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

RECEIVED
MAR 10 2005
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
FIELD SERVICES BUREAU

Re: Richmond Aqueduct and Adjacent Erie Canal Features
Montezuma, Cayuga County
Tyre, Seneca County

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

Thank you for your February 8, 2005 letter informing us that the Richmond (Montezuma) Aqueduct will be considered by the State Review Board for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

We are pleased that this Enlarged Erie Canal structure, which has great historic and engineering significance, will be afforded the formal recognition it deserves. We note that Noble Whitford (Page 800, "History of New York Canals") referred to "...the Montezuma Aqueduct, which, from its size and the unusual difficulties due to its location, is perhaps the most noteworthy structure on the Canals".

For your information, our records show that, while the remains of the Aqueduct are under the jurisdiction of the Canal Corporation, the Enlarged Erie Canal to the east and west of the Aqueduct was abandoned by the State in 1926.

Again, thank you for your letter.

Sincerely

Lawrence J. Frame, P.E.
Acting Director

CANAL MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS
Lawrence J. Frame, P.E., Director
Phone # (518) 436-2747
Fax # (518) 471-5023

Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board