

# VILLAGE OF FORT EDWARD



# MASTER PLAN

2006

Laberge  Group  
ENGINEERING ARCHITECTURE SURVEYING PLANNING  
4 COMPUTER DRIVE WEST ALBANY, NEW YORK 12205  
NEW YORK OFFICES IN ALBANY AND UTICA

# **Village of Fort Edward**

## **Master Plan**

**2006**

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Albany, New York 12205

# Acknowledgments

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# Introduction to Planning

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## **What is a Master Plan?**

A Master Plan is a written document that identifies and establishes a community's goals, objectives, and recommendations in order to guide future growth, development, and/or preservation. A Master Plan acts as a "guide" or a "blueprint" for the future, summarizes the history of the community, analyzes the present and/or existing conditions, sets forth issues, objectives and actions for forthcoming changes, and outlines an implementation strategy for those actions. In short, a Master Plan tells us where we have been, where we are now, where we want to be, and how we are going to get there.

In order for the Village of Fort Edward to continue to be socially and economically sustainable, it must respond to changing conditions. The vitality of the Village requires a strategic vision that weaves together the facts of changing economic conditions, the importance and value of open space, and the needs and desires of a diverse population.

The Village of Fort Edward is authorized by Village Law §7-722 to undertake "comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens". Village Law further strengthens the role of the Master Plan by stating that any new land use regulations and/or amendments, and all plans for future capital projects of another governmental entity on land within the Village, must take into consideration the adopted Master Plan. As such, the Village understands the importance of a Master Plan and has gone to great lengths to create a vision for the community that will set the tone for years to come.

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## ***Plan Adoption & Schedule of Decisions***

Upon review and acceptance of the Draft Master Plan the Master Plan Advisory Committee scheduled a public hearing on the Draft Plan and provided notice of public hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village at least ten (10) calendar days in advance of the hearing. The Draft Master Plan was made available for public review during this ten (10) day period at the office of the Village Clerk and the Fort Edward Free Library. After the public hearing, the Master Plan Advisory Committee officially recommended the Draft Plan to the Village Board.

The Village Board reviewed the draft plan, passed a resolution accepting the draft plan as complete and commenced the State Environmental Quality Review process. The Village Board declared itself lead agency, and completed Parts 1 and 2 of the Full Environmental Assessment Form. The Village Board determined the significance of the Draft Plan within 20 days of establishing itself as lead agency, finding that the adoption of the Master Plan would not result in any significant impact on the environment and therefore prepared a Negative Declaration in accordance with 6 NYCRR Part 617.

The Village Board scheduled a public hearing on the Draft Plan and provided notice of the public hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village at least ten (10) calendar days in advance of the hearing. The Draft Master Plan was made available for public review during this period at the office of the Village Clerk and at the Fort Edward Free Library. The public hearing on the Draft Master Plan was held within 90 days of the Advisory Committee's recommending the plan.

The Village Board referred the Draft Plan to the Washington County Planning Board for their review and recommendation as required by §239m of the General Municipal Law. At the end of the required 30-day comment period for the County Planning Board, the Final Master Plan was prepared.

Upon completion of the Final Master Plan and all SEQR requirements, the Village Board adopted the Village of Fort Edward Master Plan as their official development policy. The adopted Plan is filed in the office of the Village Clerk and a copy is also filed in the office of the Washington County Planning Department.

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### ***Implementing the Plan***

The adoption of the Master Plan is only the beginning. The mere statements of goals, objectives, and strategies of this plan will not produce the desired results unless the Village implements the concepts through land use regulations, public investment and cooperation, and/or the formation of partnerships with adjacent municipalities.

Once the Master Plan is adopted, the Village Board should designate a Village Master Plan Implementation Committee to review the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Master Plan, and make recommendations for actions that should be pursued by the Village. The Committee should have members that represent the existing Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Master Plan Advisory Committee. This Implementation Committee should first be charged with implementing the recommended changes to the Zoning Code and Zoning Map, in order to

bring these regulations in accordance with the Master Plan. Upon completion of their review, the Committee should present their recommendations to the Village Board for consideration and adoption. The Village Board must follow the legal requirements set forth in Village Law §7-704 - §7-708 and General Municipal Law §239-m when making changes to the Village Code.

The Committee should also be charged with the implementation of the other goals, objectives and strategies of the Master Plan. The Committee should work on each strategy in the order of importance established by the “time frames” given within the next section; however, it is likely that priorities may change with the availability of funding sources for particular projects.

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### ***Updating & Amending the Plan***

In order for the Master Plan to be an effective tool in guiding the desires of the Village residents, it must be reviewed on a regular basis. Ideas and attitudes change over time. Five years from now, a problem that may have been at the forefront of the public mind, may be resolved and something else may take its place. Therefore, it is recommended that the Village Board and Planning Board, or other designated special board, annually review the Master Plan’s goals, objectives, and strategies to ensure that they are relevant to the changing conditions within the Village. It is recommended that the entire Master Plan be reviewed at least once every five years, and be amended where needed. The Plan should be updated or re-written at least once every ten years.

# Goals, Objectives and Strategies

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## Introduction

The Goals, Objectives, and Strategies of the Master Plan, once implemented, are intended to guide the future development of the Village. To best understand the intent of these elements, it might be helpful to know the differences that exist between goals, objectives, and strategies.

- A goal is a general statement of a future condition which is considered desirable for the community; it is an end towards which actions are aimed.
- An objective is a statement of a measurable activity to be accomplished in pursuit of the goal; it refers to some specific aspiration which is reasonably attainable.
- A strategy is a specific proposal to do something that relates directly to accomplishing the objective.

The goals, objectives and strategies developed in support of the Village of Fort Edward's Master Plan were all developed as a result of working with the community members. Much effort was put into the public participation process conducted in support of the planning process. This involved several public workshops, stakeholder interviews, a series of committee meetings, and the distribution of a residential survey.

Culling all the feedback from these efforts, an attempt was made to identify goals, objectives, and strategies that best reflect the community's concerns and desires. The Plan consultants met with the Master Plan Advisory Committee in July 2005 to review a set of draft goals. With the feedback received through this meeting, the goals were finalized and further tailored to better reflect the Village's desired vision of the future. In October 2005, the Advisory Committee reviewed a set of draft goals, objectives, and strategies. Final modifications were made to reflect feedback received at this meeting. The final "draft" Village of Fort Edward Master Plan was presented to the public at hearing held in early December 2005.

As stated in the previous section, the mere statements of goals, objectives, and strategies of this plan will not produce the desired results unless the Village implements the concepts through land use regulations, public investment and cooperation and/or the formation of partnerships with adjacent municipalities. In order to keep better track of this process, the Master Plan

Advisory Committee designated a time frame to each Strategy, projecting when the action should be accomplished. The time frame covers the next five years and is indicated by the following code:

0 – 1 Year - Short term - Next twelve months – By the end of year 2006.

1 – 3 Years – Intermediate term - By the end of year 2008.

3 – 5 Years - Long term: - By the end of year 2010.

0 – 5 - On-going – To be accomplished at any time over the next five years.

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*Municipal, Recreational & Community Resources*



Municipal, recreational and community resources include many aspects of community life that are either administered by the local government, provided through local districts, or made possible by not-for-profit organizations and/or volunteer organizations. Services provided at the municipal level in Fort Edward include road maintenance, snow removal, refuse removal, parks maintenance, storm-water management and drainage, and the provision of public sewers and drinking water. Fire protection and emergency medical services are provided by mostly volunteer agencies, while police protection is provided by the Village Police Department. In addition to quality municipal services, recreational facilities, recreational programs, and libraries, the quality of the public school system is also very important to the Village, to satisfy the needs of the community, and to help define the character of the Village as a good place to live.

Fort Edward has many recreational resources within its boundaries and within the region. While many resources are aimed at local residents, such as the neighborhood parks, e.g., Bradley Park, and McIntyre Park, others, such as the Fort Edward Yacht Basin and the Champlain Canal bring in residents and tourists from throughout the Capital and Adirondack regions. In addition, the Village offers organized recreational programs and activities, which are an important part of the Village park system.

Throughout the Community Outreach process, public participants consistently gave high scores to the available municipal services and recreational opportunities for adults and children, praising these services as an overall asset of living in the Village. Residents expressed the need to maintain and continue to expand upon the current programs and resources.

Coordination with other governmental agencies and advocating for local municipal needs is another service provided by Village departments and local elected officials. Through the residential survey it was revealed that the majority of respondents believe it is *Very Important* for the Village to improve the public water system, to keep taxes low, to improve the general appearance of the Village, and to enforce its' existing codes and laws.

An inventory of the Municipal, Recreational, and Other Community Resources can be reviewed in the Supporting Materials section. The following are Goals, Objectives and Strategies for the future needs of municipal services, recreational resources and infrastructure identified as important throughout the planning process:

**Goal**

*Continue to provide a high quality of public services for the safety, comfort and pleasure of residents and business owners in the Village.*

**Objective 1:**

To provide a variety of quality public services at reasonable tax rates.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 Year(s):** Explore a financially beneficial relationship with other governmental entities to share the cost of certain community services, such as road maintenance and repair.
- b) **1-3 Year(s):** Implement a program to repair and replace aging water and sewer infrastructure and ensure that the Village maintains a safe and sufficient water supply source that can be effectively distributed and provides ample supply and quality.
- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Support the extension of public water to the Fort Edward Industrial Park and to other new commercial and industrial uses outside of the Village limits, to utilize the water system to its fullest extent, and decrease the overall cost to residents.

**Objective 2:**

To continue to deliver emergency services by supporting and investing the necessary resources to the Village's Fire, Police, and Rescue Squads in order to maintain a high level of public safety and security.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-5 Year(s):** Support and invest in the necessary resources to the Village's Highway and Police Departments.

**Objective 3:**

To maintain and expand upon the existing park and recreation system and to encourage and support year-round recreational opportunities.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-1 Year(s):** Study and identify vacant land that would be valuable for open space, recreation, or other needed community resources.
- b) **1-3 Year(s):** Take advantage of the Hudson River as an asset to the Village. Improve signage directing users to the Yacht Basin, and from the Yacht Basin to restaurants, lodging and shopping areas.
- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Dredge the Yacht Basin in order to allow for docking of larger boats.
- d) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to support a variety of concerts and family day events at the Yacht Basin and other public parks.
- e) **3-5 Year (s)** Establishing a year-round recreational facility, i.e., construct an ice rink to enhance winter recreational activities for local residents.
- f) **0-5 Year(s):** Provide better linkages to bike/hike trails to bring people through the Village.
- g) **0-5 Year(s): McIntyre Park** – address the current problems with the drainage system especially on the softball field and basketball court; re-surface the tennis courts; control vehicle access through the park; improve safety around the Old Champlain Canal; maintain and upgrade park lighting on a regular schedule. **Bradley Park** –regularly maintain and where necessary, replace play equipment, picnic tables and grills and other park amenities and improve the overall aesthetics of the park.
- h) **0-5 Year(s):** Research the feasibility of developing a new community and/or municipal center with the adaptive re-use of the old St. Joseph’s school building and grounds.

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### *Historic & Cultural Resources*



The Village of Fort Edward has a wonderful variety of cultural and historic places, as well as many local citizens and not-for-profit groups who are dedicated to preserving the historic sites and buildings within the Village. The preservation and enhancement of historic and cultural resources is crucial to maintaining the unique identity of Fort Edward.

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) developed the most common definition of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is travel based on a mosaic of places, traditions, art forms, celebrations, and experiences that portray a place and its people and reflects their diversity and character. Tourism of historic places in New York State has grown considerably in recent years and has and will continue to play an important role in the growth and development of the Villages' economy, with the advent of the Lakes to Locks Passage and New York Independence Trail community development and tourism promotion efforts.

Historic structures and buildings are crucial to the character of the Village, and to the promotion of tourism, an important, somewhat un-tapped segment of the local economy. Unique landmarks, such as the old Champlain Canal Aqueduct and Stone-arch Towpath Bridge, the Old Fort House Museum, Rogers Island, the Wing-Northup House, and historic downtown, as well as the Hudson River waterfront, make the Village of Fort Edward an interesting place to visit. Enhancements to these historic and cultural resources, could lead to the development of a unique shopping experience in Fort Edward, unlike that of the regional malls. Well planned cultural and heritage tourism efforts will help improve the character and quality of a community in the future.

Throughout the planning process, public participants have stressed the importance of preserving and enhancing historic sites and structures located throughout the Village, rating History the number one asset of the Village.

An inventory of the Historical and Cultural Resources can be reviewed in the Supporting Materials section. The following Goals, Objectives and Strategies have been developed in order to address these issues:

**Goal**

*To preserve and enhance historical and cultural resources for the enjoyment of the current residents and future generations.*

**Objective 1:**

To safeguard and promote historic sites and structures.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 Year(s):** Identify all properties of historic or cultural significance, and ensure the future compatibility of new uses in abutting areas.
- b) **1-3 Year(s):** Identify sources of funding for restoration, historic preservation and marketing activities.
- c) **1-3 Year(s):** Educate the public about the tax incentives available for historic preservation.
- d) **3-5 Year(s):** Restore the old Champlain Canal Aqueduct and Stone-arch Towpath Bridge as a community recreational asset and a public historic attraction. Work with the NYS Canal Corporation, the Recreation Department, the Fort Edward Chamber and the Historical Association to accomplish this.
- e) **1-3 Year(s):** Consult with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation on developing a Historic Preservation Law, or the creation of a Historic Preservation Overlay District to address the restoration of historic buildings within a defined area.

**Objective 2:**

To build community pride and sense of identity.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 year(s):** Develop a thematic signage program proclaiming the historical significance of important structures and sites.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Establish a system of award or recognition for business owners and homeowners who preserve and restore historic structures within the Village.

- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Develop partnerships with business groups and other interested organizations to beautify historic properties and sites.

**Objective 3:**

To enhance, and promote the historic and cultural resources as part of an economic strategy to build a viable tourism industry in the Village.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-1 Year(s):** Foster knowledge of and interest in the significance of history and culture, with a public information program that includes, a Village web site, brochures, and increased publicity and through events such as tours, open houses, concerts, and festivals. Work with the Fort Edward Historical Society, Historical Association, the Rogers Island Visitors Center and the Chamber of Commerce to fulfill these suggestions.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Develop further cultural and heritage programming that promotes the exchange of historical information regarding important historical events that affected Fort Edward; i.e., Underground Railroad and the Revolutionary War.
- c) **1-3 Year(s):** Market the historical assets of the Village through the development of a walking trail linking historic sites to encourage tourism. The trail could include locations like the Old Fort House, Wing Northup House, Rogers Island Visitor's Center, Art Center, Library, Train Station, the Champlain Canal, churches, and all other historic marker locations.

## *Housing*



The availability of good quality housing is vital to the future economic growth and stability of the Village. According to the March 2005 Community Needs Strategy, “the Village has a serious shortage of safe, decent, and affordable housing, particularly units in standard conditions that are available to lower income families and elderly residents”. The Needs Strategy identified a number of priorities, which the Village has begun to address with the assistance of a \$400,000 HOME grant, and a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Many of the older homes throughout the Village have been suffering from years of neglect due to transient tenants, absentee landlords, high turnover of property, and a general lower income population. In general, neglect has resulted in the lowering of property values, which has allowed for many properties to be acquired by absentee owners. Today, much of the housing stock remains largely deteriorated.

The results of the Residential Survey, distributed to all residents in February 2005, identified a wide variety of issues regarding housing. According to the survey results, residents believe that the Village does not need more rental housing and that there is an issue with absentee landlords that should be addressed. Residents would like to see more affordable single-family homes that are owner-occupied, and the availability of quality senior housing. Neighborhood appearance was an issue for the committee, stakeholders, and members of the public. Notably, the high vacancy rate of rental properties that was depicted in the 2000 Census, and the disrepair of some existing homes can lead to an overall negative image of the Village.

An inventory of the Housing Resources can be reviewed in the Supporting Materials section. Many of these issues overlap with the need for improved codes, ordinances, and code

enforcement, which is addressed under Land Use and Zoning. The following Goals, Objectives and Strategies have been developed in order to address the future needs for quality housing:

**Goal**

*Preserve and enhance the existing residential neighborhoods of the Village.*

**Objective 1:**

To encourage future development that is of quality design and construction, and to maintain clean, desirable neighborhoods.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 Year(s):** Develop Design Guidelines for subdivision site plans and building appearance. Incorporate the design guidelines in the Subdivision Regulations.
- b) **0-1 Year(s):** Enforce current codes regarding noise, trash removal and building conditions.
- c) **1-3 Year(s):** Develop and implement clean up programs for neighborhoods and residential properties.
- d) **1-3 Year(s):** Develop an incentive program that will encourage exemplary upkeep of properties by rewarding homeowner's efforts.

**Objective 2:**

To provide a balanced blend of quality housing opportunities including a desirable range of housing types and price ranges, which are affordable and accessible for senior citizen residents.

**Strategies:**

- a) **3-5 Year(s):** Identify potential locations for senior citizen housing, which consider, proximity to public transit routes, the natural setting, or other desirable site features.
- b) **3-5 Year(s):** Identify the preferred types and styles of senior citizen housing, i.e., high-rise condominiums, apartments, low-rise single-family clusters, assisted living centers and others.
- c) **3-5 Year(s):** Encourage quality design for new senior citizen housing units during the site plan review and building permit process. New senior citizen housing in or near existing residential neighborhoods should blend with the existing neighborhoods.

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## *Economic Development*



Fort Edward has a variety of local and regional economic development resources available to encourage the growth and stabilization of the economy. The Village has a local Chamber and LDC that together have the ability to promote the Village and generate economic opportunities. The Village contains an Industrial Park that has available land, served by public water and sewer, and additional properties along Broadway (Route 4) that are within an Empire Zone. Economic Development assistance is also available from the Washington County LDC, with a long established LDC, Micro-enterprise Program, and Entrepreneurial Training Assistance Program.

In order for the Village of Fort Edward to remain economically sustainable, it must respond to changing conditions. The vitality of the Village requires a vision that weaves together the facts of changing economic conditions, the importance and value of open space, recreation, quality housing, and the needs and desires of a diverse population.

The Village is projected to gain population between 2005 and 2010. The most important trend identified is the aging of Baby Boomers, and the loss of the middle aged population. The 55-64 and the 65-74 age group is expected to experience an increase, which could have a positive economic impact, as according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, consumers between the ages of 35-44 and 45-54 are in their peak earning years, and spend the most dollars of all other age groups. Population projections also predict an increase in the median household income for Village residents by 2010.

Throughout the Community Outreach Process, residents expressed a general dissatisfaction with the lack of business and job opportunities in the Village. Residents also expressed the desire for more business activity, especially retail shopping opportunities.

An inventory of the Economic Development Resources can be reviewed in the Supporting Materials section. The following is a list of Objectives and Strategies were formulated from the community outreach process of this plan.

**Goal**

*To foster a more stable and diversified economy that is business friendly, is able to sustain employment opportunities of all types, and offers a greater variety of goods and services to meet the needs and desires of residents and tourists alike.*

**Objective 1:**

To promote Broadway/Route 4 as the vibrant mixed use area of the Village.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-1 Year(s):** Improve the overall aesthetics of the Village by addressing issues such as vacant or dilapidated buildings, broken or boarded up windows, unscreened dumpsters, uninviting fencing and building facades, cluttered sidewalks, railroad tresses, unattractive signs etc.
- b) **0-1 Year(s):** Replace the existing highway-style lighting with Victorian style luminaries that compliment the aesthetics of the Village.
- c) **1-3 Year(s):** Reduce the intensity of street lighting upon upper floor residential uses by using shorter street light poles to light the parking area and driving zone.
- d) **0-5 Year(s):** Encourage business owners to install building mounted lighting for the pedestrian area, such as gooseneck lighting and under-awning lighting to illuminate business signs and store window displays.
- e) **0-1 Year(s):** Establish a “Curtains on Main Street” program to hang curtains in the windows of temporarily vacant buildings.
- f) **0-5 Year(s):** Enhance the commercial and residential transitional areas of Broadway/Route 4 by rehabilitating dilapidated buildings and developing new housing opportunities. Apply for a New York Main Street Grant to fund facade improvements.

**Objective 2:**

To enhance and promote Village resources in order to attract a greater percentage of the tourism industry.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-5 Year(s):** Welcome tourists to the community with attractive gateways in appropriate places throughout the community. The gateway design can be based on a colonial theme, and/or include signage, informational kiosks, sculpture, lighting, ornamental historic objects and attractive landscaping.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to coordinate local promotional efforts with existing regional tourism programs. These include, but are not limited to the Washington County Tourism Association, the I Love New York campaign, the Scenic Byways program, the Lakes to Locks program, and the NYS Independence Trail program.
- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to coordinate and support the efforts of the Fort Edward Chamber of Commerce to market available properties and programs to potential investors.
- d) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to draw out local residents and tourists to the Village with a variety of community events such as the Heritage Days, and Historic Battle Re-enactments, food festivals, (chili cook-off, chowder fest, ice cream socials), street fairs, parades, concerts, athletic events and competitions, boat shows on the Hudson River, Spring and Fall “Beautification Day”, theater, markets (crafts, arts, antiques, flea markets, farmers markets etc.).

**Objective 3:**

To enhance the overall vitality of the Village by supporting existing businesses and promoting the development of new business enterprises.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to support all existing businesses in the Village, and encourage their expansion and growth, if it is consistent with the overall vision of the Master Plan.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Support local businesses in accessing Empire Zone benefits to create new and/or retain existing jobs.
- c) **0-1 Year(s):** Team with the Washington County Local Development Corporation to provide encouragement, tools, and training to help local businesses become more profitable.
- d) **1-3 Year(s):** Consider initiating a low-interest loan pool, making it available to property owners and merchants for various projects including façade improvement, new signage, property acquisition and working capital for business start-ups.
- e) **0-5 Year(s):** Encourage a blend of daily life shops that serve resident needs, and unique specialty shops that customers cannot find in regional malls.
- f) **1-3 Year(s):** Create an exploratory inter-municipal task force to investigate the possibility of developing a Business Improvement District (BID) in the downtown section of the Village.

**Objective 4:**

Develop a comprehensive strategy to revitalize and spur economic development in the Village.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 Year(s):** Explore the feasibility of a joint Town/Village Economic Development Committee.
- b) **0-1 Year(s):** Work with the Fort Edward Chamber of Commerce, the Washington County Local Development Corporation, the Washington County Empire Zone Board, the Washington County Tourism Association, and the Washington County Planning Department to attract and retain employment opportunities.
- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Utilize the Village of Fort Edward web site for the promotion of existing and forthcoming economic development programs to attract and retain business.
- d) **1-3 Year(s):** Create an inventory of vacant buildings and vacant land that includes the gross floor area of the building or size of the parcel, selling price, contact information, and development constraints (zoning or other).
- e) **1-3 Year(s):** Research the feasibility of the Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization© by using the Professional’s Guide to the Main Street Approach, National Trust’s National Main Street Center, 2000.
- f) **0-5 Year(s):** Actively and aggressively work to attract a developer for Rogers Island that will promote a marina, country club, hotel and spa.

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## *Transportation*



The general goal of a transportation system is to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services, therefore, the Village is dependent upon the functionality of the transportation systems, i.e., roads, bridges, transit, walkways, trails and the railroad for its' economic well-being. A well-planned and designed surface transportation system should be accommodating to all modes of traffic, be safe for use, visually appealing and environmentally friendly.

The major commercial and commuter routes through the Village are New York State Route 4, Route 197 and County Route 37 (Burgoyne Avenue). These roads carry thousands of vehicles and passengers on a daily basis. These major arteries connect the Village with adjacent suburban and rural towns and employment centers located throughout the region.

Transportation and traffic related issues in the Village have increased over the years, especially along Broadway (Route 4), Burgoyne Avenue, and East Street. Many issues pertaining directly to Broadway/ Route 4 were already specifically addressed in the Route 4 Corridor Management Plan, adopted by the Village in June, 2005. According to the Village of Fort Edward Residential Survey, many residents are anxious to see the renovations of the Fort Edward rail station completed, and perceive problems relating to traffic volume and speed in specific areas throughout the Village. In addition, the pedestrian network is fragmented, as sidewalks are often too narrow, made of different materials, not always maintained, or simply unavailable in certain locations.

An inventory of the Transportation Resources can be reviewed in the Supporting Materials section. The following Goals, Objectives and Strategies have been developed to address issues relating to overall functionality of the transportation system:

**Goal**

*Maintain and improve the network of streets and sidewalks, for the safety, convenience, and efficiency of drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.*

**Objective 1:**

To provide safe and efficient circulation of pedestrian and automotive traffic.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to promote, fund and advertise the Village sidewalk replacement/reimbursement program.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to maintain, enhance and expand the sidewalks, trails and crosswalks that connect the school, residential and commercial areas.
- c) **1-3 Year(s):** Study the traffic conditions in areas that are experiencing high levels of traffic incidences, pedestrian circulation and safety issues and/or speeding; i.e., Fort Edward School, and the Industrial Park.
- d) **0-5 Year(s):** Encourage new commercial development in high traffic areas, to share driveways, or ingress/egress points in order to decrease vehicle and pedestrian hazards.
- e) **0-5 Year(s):** Where feasible, encourage private developers to install sidewalks and trails as part of public and private construction projects.
- f) **0-5 Year(s):** Deny permission to any entity that looks to build a truck route/bypass that will divide the community and/or detour “thru” traffic and tourists from downtown.
- g) **1-3 Year(s):** Improve the East Street corridor from its’ intersection with Broadway to the Fort Edward train station with sidewalks, lighting and beautification projects.

**Objective 2:**

To improve and maintain the integrity and capacity of the Village transportation system.

**Strategies:**

- a) **3-5 Year(s):** Analyze residential and commercial streets, off-street parking conditions and develop a plan for solving the associated parking problems. Plan and implement an integrated parking strategy that is linked to the sidewalk system.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Continue to maintain and enhance the curbing throughout the Village.
- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Improve and enhance the storm drainage system throughout the Village.
- d) **0-1 Year(s):** Establish a Repair and Replacement program for sidewalks and roads.
- e) **1-3 Year(s):** Establish a program to replace old, high-energy use street lights with increased illumination, energy-efficient lighting.

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## *Land Use and Zoning*



Throughout the planning process, Committee members and residents alike continually focused on the high quality of life in the Village. Residents want to maintain the current land use patterns, preserve architectural diversity, create a stronger sense of place and continue to promote a separate, but solid balance between the residential, commercial and industrial areas. Many public participants expressed concerns regarding a perceived lack of code enforcement, the prevalence of absentee landlords and the proximity of existing industrial businesses to residential areas. The latter issue has resulted in complaints of noise, dust, traffic and general visual clutter. A vast majority of residents also expressed that improving the overall appearance of the Village should be made a top priority, while new business and job opportunities must be encouraged. (See [Proposed Zoning Map](#))

An inventory of the Existing Land Use and Zoning can be reviewed in the Supporting Materials section. The following Goals, Objectives and Strategies support concepts behind preserving and improving the Village's quality of life now and into the future through suggested changes to the existing Zoning Law and general Village land use policies and administrative procedures:

### **Goal**

*Preserve and enhance the existing community character of the Village.*

### **Objective 1:**

To encourage a more balanced mix of residential, commercial and industrial development in the future.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 Year(s):** Review and update where necessary the existing Village Laws, Codes and Regulations. Consider the feasibility of publishing the Code with General Code Publishers.
- b) **0-1 Year(s):** Review the Zoning Code and Map and consider the feasibility of removing the R-2 Zoning District to discourage the further development of additional multi-family housing.
- c) **0-1 Year(s):** Review the Zoning Code and Map and consider extending the C-1 Zoning District along East Street to the Amtrak Station.
- d) **0-1 Year(s):** Review the Zoning Code and Map and consider extending the C-1 Zoning District north on Broadway (Route 4) to the railroad crossing.
- e) **0-1 Year(s):** Review the Zoning Code and Map and consider the feasibility of re-zoning the area along Route 4, between the Amtrak railroad overpass and Cortland Street from C-1, to a more appropriate neighborhood commercial zoning district that takes into consideration the prevalence of residential and historic and cultural attractions in the area.
- f) **0-5 Year(s):** Promote commercial and industrial development that is appropriate in size and scale, and is sensitive to the Village's historic features.
- g) **0-5 Year(s):** Discourage the development of residential units in areas that are unsuitable for housing.
- h) **0-5 Year(s):** Discourage home occupations that are incompatible with adjacent residential uses.
- i) **0-5 Year(s):** Limit variances that are granted by increasing and clarifying the standards for which "hardship" is defined.
- j) **0-5 Year(s):** Maintain the Marina Zoning District on Rogers Island.
- k) **0-5 Year(s):** Within the downtown district along Broadway (Route 4), encourage retail or services on ground floors, with apartments on the upper floors to provide increased housing choices for residents.
- l) **0-1 Year(s):** Within the downtown district, along Broadway (Route 4), amend the zoning code to require a minimum of two stories and a maximum of three stories for new buildings.

**Objective 2:**

To encourage future development that is of quality design, will enhance the existing character of the Village and meet the necessary long-term needs of the community.

**Strategies:**

- a) **1-3 Year(s):** Develop enhanced sign and architectural design guidelines to encourage continuity and attractive design throughout the Village.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Review, create and maintain clearly defined and regulated zoning districts.
- c) **0-5 Year(s):** Encourage the use of aesthetically pleasing architectural design, signage, landscaping, setbacks, and parking area placement in commercial areas.
- d) **0-1 Year(s):** Adopt and Implement a Site Plan Review Law.

**Objective 3:**

To encourage the maintenance and clean up of existing properties, and discourage nuisance activities, such as the creation of noise, odor, dust, and the accumulation of trash that has a negative impact on the quality of life in the Village.

**Strategies:**

- a) **0-5 Year(s):** Encourage existing businesses to be better neighbors. Enforce a new local noise ordinance that will distinguish between what is an acceptable level of noise during the day versus during evening hours.
- b) **0-5 Year(s):** Enforce the building code to ensure the structural integrity of buildings in the Village. Hire a full time Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector.

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# Supporting Materials

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# Community Outreach Process

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The foundation of a good Master Plan is the incorporation of public input early and often throughout the Plan's development. Receiving feedback from the Village's elected and appointed leaders, business owners, and residents is imperative in order to develop an action plan built on a foundation of common goals and objectives.

In early 2004, the Village of Fort Edward Mayor and Board of Trustees invited a number of residents involved in local community committees and organizations to participate in the update of the Master Plan as a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The Village Board appointed a committee of residents with a wide range of experience with local issues important to the planning process.

The Master Plan Advisory Committee utilized a multi-tiered approach to community outreach throughout the planning process. The Committee began meeting in April, 2004 on a bi-monthly basis, gathering information for the plan. During the months of May through August 2004, the Committee conducted field work, surveyed stakeholders, compiled and distributed a Resident Survey, and gathered other important information that would be later incorporated into the final Draft Master Plan.

One method of public outreach was targeted to obtain input from specific groups or individuals identified as stakeholders. A stakeholder is defined as any group or individual that has a stake in, or may be impacted by, recommendations developed through the planning process. In general, stakeholders represent government agencies, residential communities, business associations, and other local organizations, such as nonprofits or volunteer committees that perform a specific public function. This outreach focused on asking specific questions of specific representatives.

Another method of public outreach was targeted toward receiving feedback from the general public. A Resident Survey was mailed in February 2005 to all property-owners in the Village, and the survey was later distributed through the Fort Edward School District to reach home renters. A public workshop was held to solicit the opinions of residents at large. Participants were encouraged to express their opinions on a wide variety of community issues and characteristics. Held at the Village Fire House on Broadway, posted flyers and newspaper articles were used to notify residents and business owners of the meeting.

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### ***Stakeholder Interviews***

In October, 2004 the Advisory Committee compiled a list of stakeholders to be surveyed. The survey consisted of three basic questions in an effort to increase the number of responses by keeping it brief. This objective was reached by having a 50% response rate.

The survey was distributed to several community leaders including the Village Mayor, Village Clerk, Police Department, Village Historian, Water Department, Student Council members, church officials, and various business owners. The survey consisted of the following questions and responses:

#### **Question #1**

*What is the Village of Fort Edward's greatest asset?*

*Responses by majority:*

- The History.
- The People.
- The Yacht Basin / Riverfront.

*Additional responses include:*

- School District.
- Employers - Irving Tissue, Waste Management, etc.
- Location - near canal, river, railroad, state highways, bicycle trail, etc.
- Police Department.
- DPW snow removal is good to excellent.

#### **Question #2**

*What element or area needs improvement to become an asset?*

*Responses by majority:*

- Code Enforcement & clean-up of downtown.

- Incentives to attract and keep businesses in downtown.
- Parking for downtown needed by both businesses and shoppers.

*Additional responses include:*

- Gateway to Village at Rte. 4 & Rte. 197 needs visual elements and signs.
- Rogers Island development.
- Affordable & new housing.
- Finish train station renovations.

**Question #3**

*What do you need that would allow your business or group to prosper here in the village?*

*Responses by majority:*

- More businesses on Broadway.
- Improved truck traffic patterns / Slower speed through the Village.
- Lower Taxes.
- Sidewalk improvements.

*Additional responses include:*

- Parking for Downtown.
- Community Involvement.
- Promotion of the Village.

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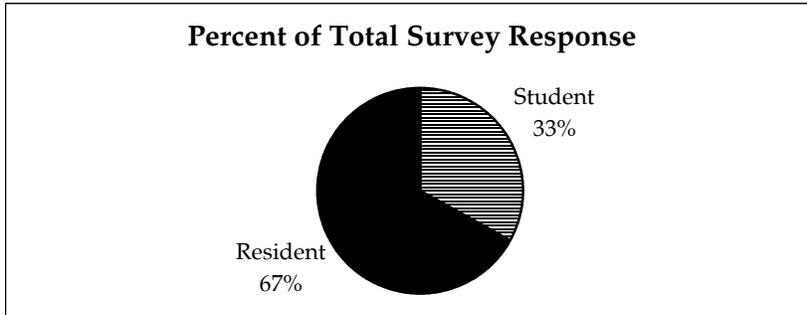
***Resident Survey***

In February 2005, the Village of Fort Edward Master Plan Committee created and distributed a Residential Survey to all homeowners who are hooked in to the Village public water system (1,100). The Committee received 298 responses, which corresponds to 27% of all homeowners surveyed.

The Committee, having concern for the lack of outreach to those who rent their homes, decided to work with the Village of Fort Edward School District for survey distribution through the

students. Students in grades 9 – 12 were given the resident survey as a homework assignment to be filled out with their parents. One hundred fifty (150) surveys were sent home, and 145 were returned.

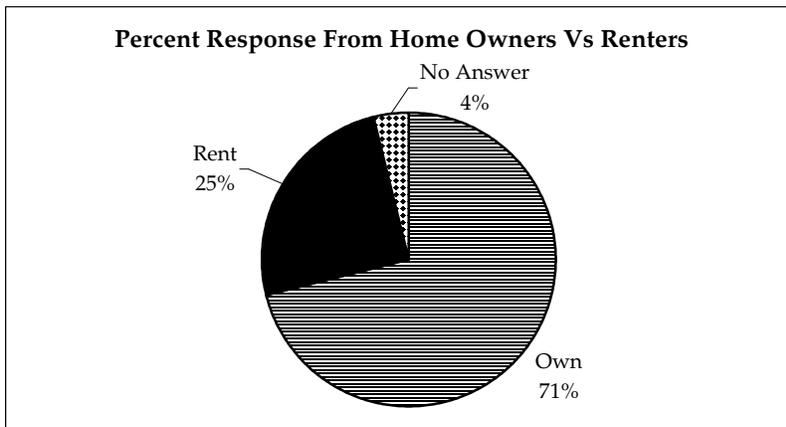
Figure 1:



As shown in Figure 1, with the addition of the student response, a total of 443 surveys were returned, 67% from the initial mail-in resident survey, and 33% from the student take-home survey.

The total response rate is 40%, a statistically significant sample of public opinion on Village issues. Seventy one percent (71%) of those surveyed were homeowners and 25% were renters in the Village. See Figure 2.

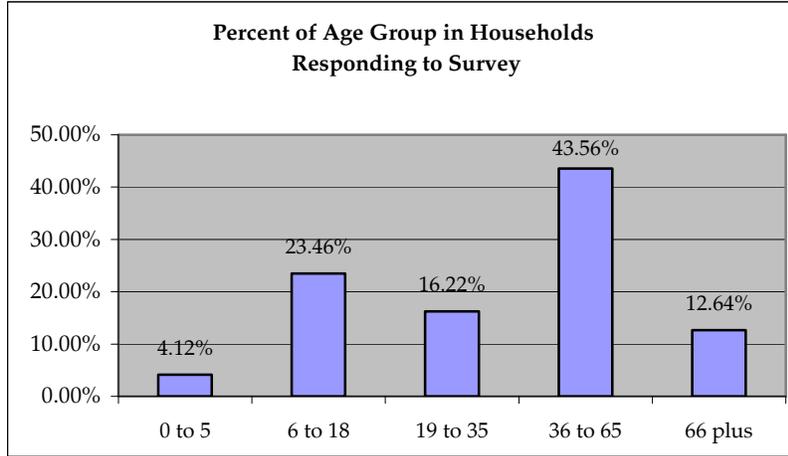
Figure 2:



The first few questions of the survey asked for background household information. As shown in Figure # 3, of the households surveyed, (43.56%) of the survey respondents have household members between the ages of 36 and 65; (24.46%) have household members between the ages of 6 and 18; (16.22%) have household members between the ages of 19 and 35; (12.64%), have

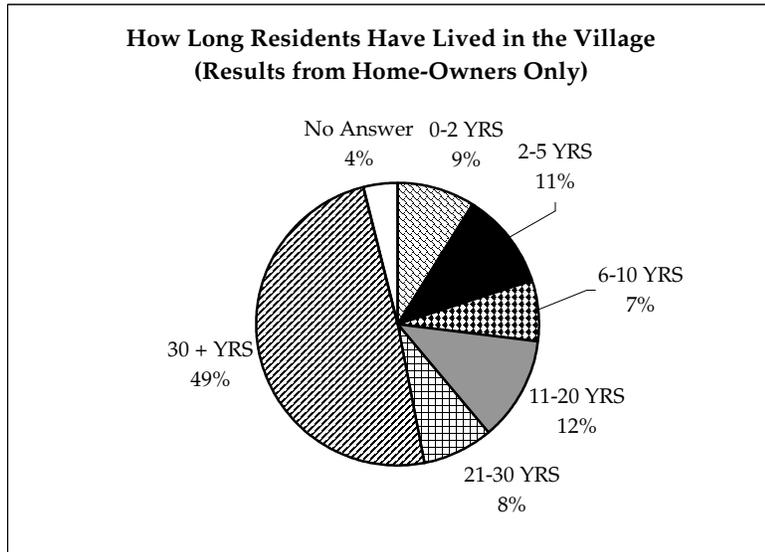
household members that are 66 years of age and or older, and (4.12%) contain members that are between the ages of 5 and younger.

Figure 3:



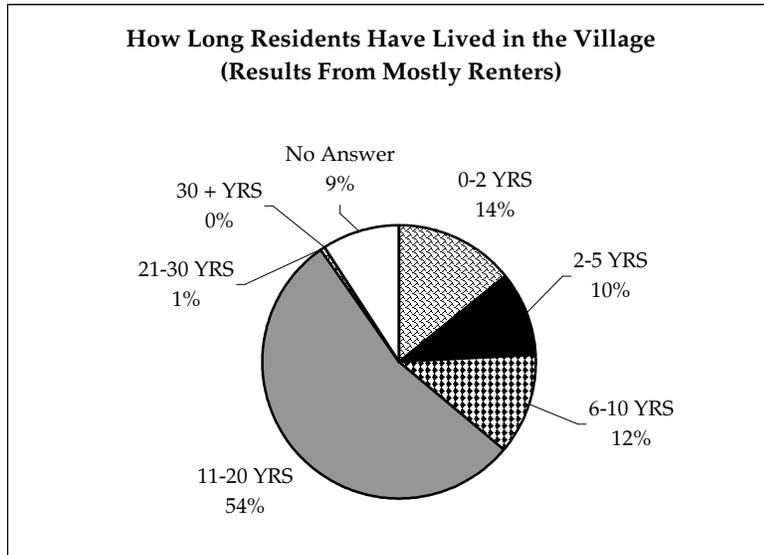
As shown in Figure 4 below the majority (roughly 50%) of the those home-owners surveyed reported having lived in the village for thirty or more years; 12% have lived in the Village for 11 to 20 years, and 11% have lived in the Village for only 2 to 5 years.

Figure 4



As shown in Figure 5 the majority of those Village renters surveyed (54%) have lived in the Village between 11 and 20 years, and 12% have lived in the Village between 6 and 10 years.

Figure 5:



The resident survey consisted of 14 other questions focusing on a variety of topics including business activity, shopping opportunities, rental housing, senior citizen housing, affordable housing, street, sidewalk and park improvements, satisfaction with children's activities, adult recreation, job opportunities, quality of education quality of life issues, and the importance of improving Village water, parking, law and code enforcement, general appearances and lowering taxes. The complete survey results are included in Appendix A. Overall the results revealed several areas of consensus among the Village residents.

### **Quality of Life:**

The majority of survey respondents were mostly satisfied with the quality of life in Fort Edward and remain living there because of its small size, friendly people and school system. Residents are very satisfied with the quality of the education system and mostly satisfied with available children's activities but only somewhat satisfied with opportunities for adult recreation. Residents are concerned with the prevalence of absentee landlords and the dilapidated look of many of the buildings on Broadway. The majority of residents believe it is very important to improve the appearance of the Village and having more strict law and code enforcement is a top priority. At the same time, a vast majority of residents surveyed believe that lowering taxes in the Village is also very important.

**Housing:**

When asked if the Village needed more rental housing a large number of residents replied that it was not important for the Village to have more housing due to the existing problems with dilapidated properties and absentee landlords. Residents expressed that they would like the Village to have more single-family homes that are owner-occupied and the availability of more senior housing that is affordable.

**Business & Job Opportunities:**

According to the survey results there is a general dissatisfaction with the level of business activity and job opportunities in the Village and the dilapidated look of many of the buildings on Broadway. Many citizens expressed that the uncertainty of NYS DOT's Route 4 reconstruction plans has led property owners to hold off on making improvements to their properties. Residents expressed the desire for more business activity especially retail shopping opportunities.

**Transportation & Infrastructure:**

The majority of residents think it is important for the Village to improve the public water system, provide more parking, and improve specific roads and sidewalks throughout the Village.

When asked to specify the streets that needed sidewalk improvements the top ten streets listed in order of importance were: Broadway, East St., McCrea St., Notre Dame St., Mechanic St., Marion St., McIntyre St., Taylor St., Seminary St., and Burgoyne Ave.

When asked to specify the streets that need surface improvements the top ten streets listed in order of importance were: Broadway, East St., McCrea St., Marion St., McIntyre St., Taylor St., Notre Dame St., Rogers St., and Wing St.

**Improvements to Yacht Basin:**

The survey asked respondents to list the kinds of improvements and events that should be encouraged in the Yacht Basin. The list of ideas is extensive, therefore the entire results are included in Appendix A. A few of the top items listed include, but are not limited to, more landscaping, bathroom facilities, more picnic tables and benches, and depth dredging of the basin for improved boat access. Respondents would also like to see the Yacht Basin used for a variety of concerts, family day events; i.e., craft fairs, bazaars, festivals, flea markets, art shows, dance parties, barbeques, etc.

**Likes & Dislikes:**

The survey asked respondents to list the top 2 qualities of the Village that they “Liked” or “Disliked”. The detailed list of likes and dislikes is included in Appendix A.

**Top 10 Likes:**

- 1) Small Village.
- 2) Friendly people.
- 3) School system.
- 4) Low crime; safety; Police Department.
- 5) Yacht Basin.
- 6) Quiet surroundings.
- 7) Historical features.
- 8) The park and recreation system.
- 9) The Village DPW and employees.

**Top 10 Dislikes:**

- 1) Poor code enforcement.
- 2) Dilapidated downtown.
- 3) Absentee landlords.
- 4) Lack of business.
- 5) Vacant storefronts.
- 6) High taxes.
- 7) Nothing for teens to do.
- 8) Increase in crime.
- 9) Poor upkeep of sidewalks and curbs.
- 10) No grocery store.

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***Public Visioning Workshop***

**Methodology:**

In April 2005 the Advisory Committee, with assistance from the Laberge Group, organized a Visioning Workshop to be held in the Fort Edward Fire House. The meeting was advertised in the local paper one week prior to the meeting date, fliers were posted in various public places

throughout the Village, and an announcement of the meeting date and time was posted on the Fire House marquee.

Approximately 20 community members attended the April 27, 2005 public Visioning Workshop. This workshop was designed to solicit feedback from participants on their vision for the Village of Fort Edward. Through a PowerPoint presentation the meeting was designed to provide participants and Advisory Committee members with a better understanding of the planning process, what tasks had been accomplished to date, and what other tasks were to be accomplished in the future. In addition the presentation gave a general overview of the results of the Resident Survey.

Following the presentation public participants were asked to break into three small groups to discuss the following focus topics:

1. Transportation (Roads & Sidewalks).
2. Cultural & Historic Resources.
3. Parks and Recreation.
4. Economic Development.
5. Government Regulations & Policies/Municipal Services.

Participants were asked to brainstorm their topics and identify key issues related to each one. While “key issues” could be assets or liabilities, opportunities or constraints the intent behind this exercise was to get the participants talking and provide suggestions or solutions to problems that the Village is currently facing. The feedback received at this workshop, along with the information garnered through the stakeholder interviews and Advisory Committee meetings, is the foundation for the development of the Master Plan’s Goals and Recommendations. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation shown at the Visioning Workshop is included in the Appendix A.

**Results:**

The Visioning Workshop participants recorded the following information for each of the above five topics:

**Transportation (Roads & Sidewalks):**

- The Village should develop an annual sidewalk maintenance and installation program.

- Re-design the traffic pattern around the school to address safety and flow problems.
- Address traffic flow around the Industrial Park and local streets. Consider diverting traffic at the top of the hill instead of coming down by the park.
- Re-visit need for a new truck route to bypass Route 4.
- McIntyre Street is un-safe for kids walking to and from school. Need crosswalks, stop signs, and sidewalks.

### **Cultural & Historic Resources:**

- The Village should have better marketing of the historical assets to help attract tourists. Develop a walking trail linking historic sites to encourage tourism. (Trail should include locations like the Old Fort House, Wing Northup House, Washington's route through the village, Visitor's Center, Art Center, Library, Train Station, the Old Canal, the Churches, and all historic marker locations).
- Introducing a historic charm will help encourage business and people to come to the Village.
- A Village website should be developed. Consider working with the High School's Technology Department.

### **Parks & Recreation**

- A bike trail/walking trail should connect outer areas to McIntyre Park and Rogers Island to greatly enhance the Village and provide a safe and convenient path to serve our parks.
- An ice rink and additional recreational activities are needed to improve the park system.
- Summer concerts should be a balanced mix for the enjoyment of students and adults.
- New parks should be a requirement for new housing developments.
- Maintain and enhance the existing parks (the Yacht Basin, McIntyre Park, Bradley Beach).

### **Economic Development**

- Preserve the historic context, highlight and build upon it.

- Encourage use of space downtown. Focus on unique specialty shops: Create a draw for other stores with a main attraction (an anchor or chain store). Find a theme and stick with it.
- Improve parking for downtown, utilize the DPW Old Barn.
- Work with the owners of the Fort Edward Industrial Park to continue to bring in new industry and jobs.
- A stronger Chamber of Commerce is needed to produce effective marketing for the Village. The Chamber needs more money and staff.

### **Government Regulations & Policies / Municipal Services**

- Encourage good design of new development by updating and implementing changes to the Village Code.
- Make people aware of cost match for sidewalk repair.
- Aim zoning changes at stopping the increase of absentee landlords by limiting variances, enforcing current zoning.
- Preserve the R1 and R2 zoning districts.
- Hire a full time Building Inspector. Lack of inspections has resulted in a lack of trust in the system. More inspections need to be done. Codes need to be enforced.
- Expand Water District 1 to the east. Expand sale of water to Town and to others.
- Maintain a balance between owner-occupied housing and rental housing. May need to limit new apartments in the Village.
- Consider sharing services with the Town if it is feasible and money saving.
- Support the Fire Department and encourage volunteers.

# Community Profile

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## Regional Setting

The Village of Fort Edward is situated along the eastern shoreline of the Hudson River in the west-central portion of Washington County approximately 45 miles due north of Albany. Regionally the Village is equal distanced to Montreal, New York City, and Boston, with the closest metropolis being the City of Glens Falls located six miles northwest of the Village.

The Village covers approximately 1.8 square miles. Surrounding municipalities include the Village of Hudson Falls to the north, the Town of Argyle to the east, and the Town of Greenwich to the south, with the Hudson River providing the western-most border.

The Adirondack Northway (Interstate 87) is located six miles west of the Village by way of State Route 197. The Northway is a modern expressway that extends from the New York State Thruway at Albany to the Canadian border. Using this connection, access is gained to the Great Lakes Region and the eastern seaboard of both the U.S. and Canada. The Village's location to the Interstate Transportation System, including the Hudson River and the Champlain Canal, is a vital resource for business and industry. In addition, both passenger and freight rail service is available to the Village. The Delaware and Hudson Railway, a part of the Canadian Pacific Rail System, serves Fort Edward and Amtrak provides daily service from Fort Edward's historic train station south to New York City and North to Montreal. (See [Aerial Image Map](#))

## Historic Overview

The Village of Fort Edward is rich with American History dating back to pre-colonial times and directly linked to the presence of the Hudson River. For many centuries Native Americans inhabited and traveled through the area, long before French and European settlement. During this period the Hudson River was navigable as far north as Fort Edward before it was necessary to portage (carry overland) to the headwaters of Lake Champlain. The Native Americans referred to the area as "Wahcoloosencoochaleva", which translates into "Great Carrying Place".



French trappers later formed an alliance with the Algonquin and Huron to protect the fur trade and the French settled throughout the Hudson and Champlain valleys.

In the early 1600's Henry Hudson and the Dutch East India Company explored the upper portions of the Hudson River. Dutch fur traders and settlers came to the region establishing a successful fur-trading commerce utilizing the convenient trade route between the Upper Hudson region and Albany. By the early 1700's the British sought control over the area resulting in the French and Indian War (1755–1763). According to archaeologist David R. Starbuck “the French and Indian War (known also today as the Seven Years’ War) was the critical first step toward the Revolution.” Increased taxation from the British to pay for the colonial wars and garrisons of British soldiers ultimately sparked our American desire for independence.

The military fort named “Fort Edward” in honor of Edward, the Duke of York was constructed in 1755. The structure was located on the east side of the Hudson River<sup>4</sup> around the current site of the Old Fort House Museum. The fort was briefly the third largest city in the colonies with a peak force of 16,000 men.

Rogers Island was also home to a large military complex garrisoned by “Rogers’ Rangers”, a force of soldiers who fought against the French using tactics adopted by the local native Americans traveling on snowshoes and fighting from behind trees. Their leader Major Robert Rogers developed a series of “Ranging Rules” instructing his men in the principles of forest warfare. Many historians believe that without the heroic efforts of the Rangers in the colonial period the United States would not be the same place today.



Rogers Island and Fort Edward had the largest concentration of hospitals in northern New York where sick and injured soldiers were sent from camps all over the Northeast. A large small pox hospital was also located on the southern part of the island far away from the main encampment area. Currently, archeological excavations of Rogers Island are uncovering the well-preserved ruins of the military encampment and hospitals on the island. The story of military life at this time period is still unfolding.

For roughly fifteen (15) years following the Seven Years’ War colonists lived under royal British government control. However, in 1776, the Revolutionary War between the Americans and the British commenced. Battles between the British and the United States Navy on Lake Champlain

slowed the advance of the British and led to British General John Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga, the "turning point" of the Revolutionary War.

The peacetime that followed the Revolutionary War led to rapid settlement of the Upper Hudson Valley. Logging, mining and agriculture were the first industries in the area producing the materials for industrial growth. New communities thrived by harvesting timber, slate, graphite, stone and other plentiful natural resources and exporting them to the flourishing cities of the north, south and west. Construction of the Champlain Canal began in 1817. It was to be the first section of New York's Canal System to open and provided direct access for freight and passenger boats from Lake Champlain at Whitehall to Fort Edward on the Hudson River. This "water highway" completed an inland route from the Saint Lawrence River to New York City. The canal expanded local commerce into new areas and by the mid-1800's the railroad further opened new markets for the export of goods.



The first feeder canal was constructed in 1822 at the foot of Fort Edward hill to supply water to the Champlain Canal from the Hudson River. That same year a flood destroyed part of the dam across the Hudson River and the feeder canal failed. A new dam was built in Hudson Falls at a higher elevation and the new feeder canal was constructed between Hudson Falls and the Champlain Canal by 1824.

The feeder canal was one of the most important reasons for the commercial success of the area. Hamlets began to develop with canal-related businesses and settlement patterns expanded throughout the region. The main streets of the historic Villages evolved along the path that is today known as Broadway/Route 4. The Town of Fort Edward was established by an Act of the State Legislature in 1818 and the Village of Fort Edward was chartered in 1849.

The Industrial Revolution closely followed the construction of the Champlain Canal. It was now possible to manufacture products locally and efficiently move the products to distant markets. Large lumber mills were built along the Hudson River and canals, and until the canal lost its prominence due to the invention of the steam engine and automobile, the canals and river were frequently used for travel and transport of lumber, limestone, paper, cement, agricultural goods, and other locally manufactured items. Historic records indicate that two lumber mills alone produced 100,000 feet of lumber daily.

By 1849, the year the Village was incorporated, the community had a thriving population of 2,000 people and Fort Edward continued to prosper during the post civil war period. New mills and factories were built, the most significant of which was the International Paper Company, constructed in 1898. The paper mill produced newspaper print for New York City daily newspapers and for a five-year period manufactured all the paper used for US stamps.

The Village population reached a peak of prosperity during the 1920's, however the recession of the 1930's and the movement of industry to areas with cheaper labor and lower energy costs had an impact on Fort Edward, as with other Upstate New York communities. Although the International Paper Company closed its Fort Edward plant in 1942 eliminating 750 local jobs, the Scott Paper Company re-opened the plant in 1945. In 1942 General Electric opened its plant on Broadway and in the late 1950's the Washington County Office Complex was constructed adjacent to the General Electric facilities, bringing more workers in need of housing and services to the Village.



## Vision for the Future

At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Village of Fort Edward is poised for revitalization with its many unique municipal and natural assets. The Village should invite development that attracts new residents and business opportunities. Fort Edward is unique in that it is the only municipally in Washington County that has a yacht basin and splendid riverfront park with direct access to a historic main street and a train station offering commuting options for residents and tourist alike. Downtown Fort Edward was historically designed in a manner that is still conducive to small business, shops, restaurants, and other attractions that could operate in the existing buildings clustered near the river. The future of the Village is dependent upon efforts to enhance the image of the community, improve living conditions, and to promote and protect historical, cultural, and recreational assets. Fort Edward offers a variety of living types ranging from single-family to multi-family; historic to modern; all within a good school district. The Village should strive to preserve and enhance these assets and provide the necessary amenities and services to existing and new residents, businesses and visitors now and into the future.

## Demographic & Economic Characteristics

This section provides information about the Village of Fort Edward in a variety of subject areas and will help paint a picture of the community's current social, physical and economic conditions. By examining the population past, present and future, recommendations can be made concerning the future land use and socio-economic make-up of the community. In addition to the Village data provided in this section comparisons to the Town of Fort Edward, Washington County and the State of New York have been made where appropriate. These comparisons will provide a level of context that is required to understand the health and future of the Village of Fort Edward.

The information contained herein has been compiled utilizing data from the 1990 United States Census, the 1997 Economic Census, and the 2000 United States Census. The data presented is the most up to date available at the time of printing and sources have been documented under each table and chart.

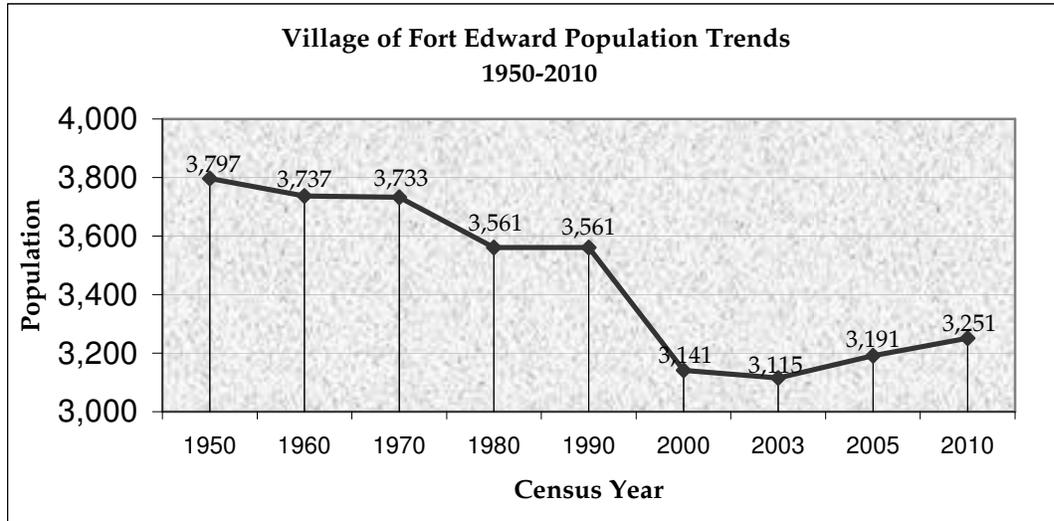
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### *Population*

Local population growth or decline is often dependent upon several factors including economic expansion, environmental capacity, housing suitability, varying needs within age cohorts, and overall regional desirability.

The Village of Fort Edward's population has been gradually declining since the 1950s. Since the 1950 Census, the population of the Village decreased by 656 persons, a decline of 17.3%. Between 1990 and 2000 the Village experienced a loss of 11.8% of its population. While the Village population has steadily decreased in the past six decades the Town of Fort Edward experienced a population increase between 1950 and 1970. This population shift from Village to Town can be seen in many other Upstate New York villages as many village residents chose to relocate from densely populated areas to more suburban Town settings.

Figure 6 Village of Fort Edward Population Trends 1950-2010 (Projected)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and ESRI Biz

According to ESRI Business Information Solutions, 2005-2010 population projections, the Village will experience a change in this downward trend in the future. The Village is projected to gain population between 2005 and 2010. Figure 6 illustrates the population trends of the Village of Fort Edward since the 1950 Census.

The following table compares population trends in the Town and Village to the County, other neighboring communities, and New York State between 1980 and 2000.

Table 1: Total Population Figures 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 1980-2000
Village of Fort Edward	3,561	3,561	3,141	0%	-11.8%	-11.8%
Town of Fort Edward	6,479	6,330	5,892	-2.3%	-6.9%	-9.1%
Village of Granville	2,696	2,646	2,644	-1.9%	-.1%	-1.9%
Town of Granville	5,566	5,935	6,456	6.6%	8.8%	16%
Town of Argyle	2,847	3,031	3,688	6.5%	21.7%	29.5%
Washington County	54,795	59,330	61,042	8.3%	2.9%	11.4%
New York State	17,558,072	17,990,455	18,976,457	2.5%	5.5%	8.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

As illustrated in Table 1, Washington County as a whole has been steadily increasing in size since the 1990 Census. Between 1980 and 2000 the population of the County grew 11.4%. Between 1990 and 2000 the County grew by 2.9%. Two of the towns in Washington County that have shown significant growth since 1980 are towns of Argyle and Granville.

When reviewing population trends within communities it is often helpful to look at the age breakdown of the population to determine where the population shifts occurred. Table 2 depicts the general age demographics from the 2000 Census for the Village of Fort Edward as compared to Washington County.

According to the 2000 Census 29% of the Villages' total population was 19 years of age or younger and 27.3% of the County's total population was 19 years of age or younger. Over 20% of the Village's population is between the ages of 20 and 34 and 37% are between the ages of 35 and 64. Slightly over 13% of the population are over 65 years old. Similarities exist between the Village and the County as a whole however the County has a slightly higher percentage of residents between the ages of 35 and 64 and a slightly lower percentage of people between the ages of 20 and 34.

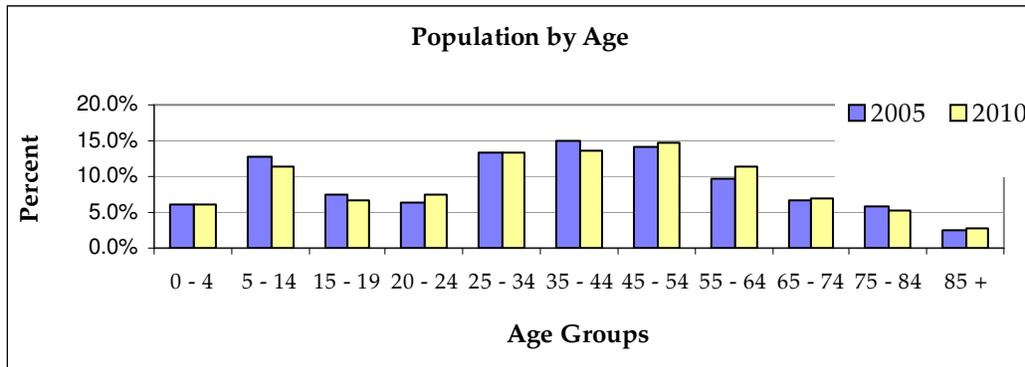
**Table 2: 2000 Demographic Characteristics**

Village of Fort Edward	Number	Percent	Washington County	Number	Percent
Male	1,515	48.2%	Male	31,301	51.3%
Female	1,626	51.8%	Female	29,741	48.7%
Under 5	209	6.7%	Under 5	3,413	5.6%
5 to 9	216	6.9%	5 to 9	4,182	6.9%
10 to 14	270	8.6%	10 to 14	4,754	7.8%
15 to 19	215	6.8%	15 to 19	4,286	7.0%
20 to 24	188	6.0%	20 to 24	3,446	5.6%
25 to 34	458	14.6%	25 to 34	7,959	13.0%
35 to 44	514	16.4%	35 to 44	9,979	16.3%
45 to 54	390	12.4%	45 to 54	8,542	14.0%
55 to 59	151	4.8%	55 to 59	3,274	5.4%
60 to 64	118	3.8%	60 to 64	2,657	4.4%
65 to 74	218	6.9%	65 to 74	4,570	7.5%
75 to 84	145	4.6%	75 to 84	2,950	4.8%
85 and over	49	1.6%	85 and over	1,030	1.7%
Total	3,141	100%	Total	61,042	100%
Median Age	35.3		Median Age	37.5	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

According to ESRI Business Information Solutions' 2005-2010 population projections the Village will experience certain population shifts between age groups in the future. Figure 7 below illustrates the projected shift of population within age cohorts between 2005 and 2010.

**Figure 7 Village of Fort Edward Population by Age, 2005 and 2010 (Projected)**



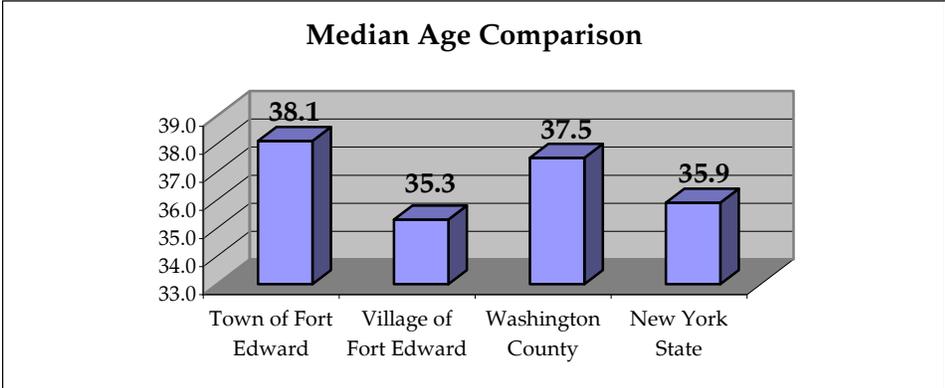
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and ESRI Biz

This figure shows that between 2005 and 2010 the under 5 age cohort will rise slightly however the 5-14 cohort will experience a decrease in population at it matures into the 15-19 year cohort in 2010 or as families move away from the Village. The 20 to 24 year cohort will gain population from the maturing 15-19 cohorts and the 25-34-age cohort will rise only slightly.

Other trends are evident from examining the cohort projections. The 35 to 44 age cohort will experience a major decrease as it matures into the 45-54 cohorts leading to the growth in the 45-54 age group. The 55-64 age group will also experience the same type of increase as well as the 65-74 age group. The most important trends revealed here is the aging of Baby Boomers and the loss of the middle aged population.

Figure 8 illustrates the median age of the population in the Village of Fort Edward compared to the Town of Fort Edward and Washington County as a whole. The median age of Village residents is competitively younger than that of the Town or County. This change will possibly have a positive economic outlook. According to the 2001 Consumer Expenditure Survey conducted by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, nationally, consumers between the ages of 35-44 and 45-54 are in their peak earning years and spend the most dollars of all other age groups.

Figure 8: Median Age Comparison



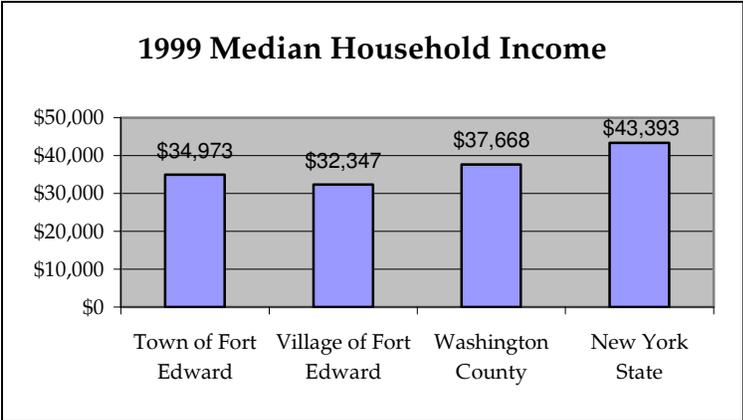
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Income**

The personal income figures of a community are one of the most important indicators of the condition of the local economy. Gaining an understanding of the wealth in the community can show the individual ability to maintain their homes and contribute to the local economy.

Figure 9 illustrates the 1999 median household income level of the Village of Fort Edward as compared to the Town, Washington County and New York State. According to the 2000 Census the citizens of the Village of Fort Edward reported an increase in income levels over the last ten years. Family, household and per capita income levels increased to higher levels. In 1990 the median household income for the Village was \$27,203 and in 2000 the median household income for the Village was \$32,347.

Figure 9: 1999 Median Household Income



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

As depicted in Table 3 ESRI Business Information Solutions' 2005-2010 population projections predict an increase in the median household income for Village residents by 2010.

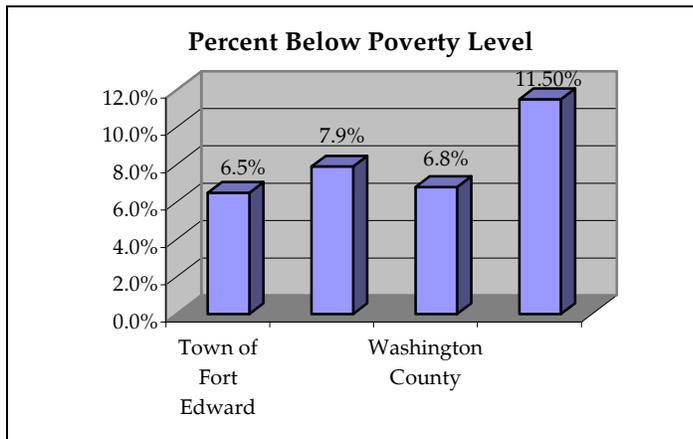
**Table 3: 2000 – 2010 Projected Income**

	2000	2005	2010
Median Household Income	\$32,308	\$37,187	\$42,547
Average Household Income	\$42,808	\$49,043	\$57,312
Per Capita Income	\$17,555	\$19,849	\$23,487

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and ESRI Biz

An important indicator of a community's income status is the percent of its population living in poverty. According to the 2000 U.S. Census the Village of Fort Edward had a 7.9% poverty rate. The percentages below poverty level for the Town of Fort Edward, Washington County and the State of New York are shown in Figure 10.

**Figure 10: Percent Below Poverty Level**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

## Employment

Analyses of employment trends will help identify segments of the area economy that have potential for growth and those that may decline. The following analysis utilizes data from the 2000 Census Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics which profiles those individuals that live within the Village of Fort Edward but do not necessarily work at industries located within the Village. Table 4 below shows the significant statistical changes that have influenced the Village's Civilian Labor Force during the last measurable decade.

**Table 4: 1990-2000 Employment Industry**

Industry Type	1990 Employed persons 16 years and over.	2000 Employed persons 16 years and over.	Percent Change
	1990 Percent	2000 Percent	
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, hunting, and mining	0.76%	0%	(-) 100%
Construction	8.72%	8.5%	(-) 2.5%
Manufacturing	38.23%	21.5%	(-) 43.8%
Wholesale trade	3.9%	1.9%	(-) 51.3%
Retail trade	11.91%	16.9%	+ 41.9%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	2.07%	1.7%	(-) 17.9%
Information	* 0%	5.3%	+ 5.3%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	6.72%	3.7%	(-) 44.9%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	5.40%	5.6%	+ 3.7%
Educational, health and social services	13.36%	16.7%	+ 25%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	** 0%	7.9%	+ 7.9%
Other services (except public administration)	3.18%	1.2%	(-) 62.3%
Public administration	5.75%	9.2%	+ 60%
TOTAL	100%	100%	
* Category was not used in the 1990 Census			
** 1990 Census category was only <i>Entertainment and Recreation</i> , food services, accommodation and arts occupations were counted for under the <i>Other Services</i> category.			

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

As shown in Table 4, according to the 2000 Census, the Village of Fort Edward had 2,651 citizens of working age (16 years or older) and 1,444 citizens employed in the civilian labor force. The total number of the Village's civilian labor force decreased by 57 individuals over the ten-year period between 1990 and 2000 while at the same time the number of persons unemployed dropped by 128 persons in 1990 to 84 in 2000.

The most significant change in employment industry in the last ten years was the decrease in jobs in the Other Services category with a loss of 62.3%. Wholesale Trade losses were equivalent to slightly over 51% and the Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (FIRE) categories also experienced a loss of almost 45%. The manufacturing industry also lost almost 44%, the Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities industries lost over 17%, the Construction industry lost 2.5%, and the Agricultural, Forestry, Fisheries, Hunting and Mining industries lost 100% of all jobs since the 1990 Census.

During this same decade, the Village gained most of the new jobs in the Public Administration (+ 60%), Retail Trade (+ 41.9%), and Educational, Health and Social Services categories (+ 25%). The Village also gained jobs in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services, (+ 7.9%) and the Professional, Administrative, and Waste Management Services categories (3.7%).

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## ***Education***

According to the 2000 U.S. Census residents are generally well educated (see Table 5). In 2000 46.9% of the population of the Village of Fort Edward over the age of 25 had attained a minimum of a high school diploma, with 16% going on to higher education. Although 11.15% of the population over the age of 25 had received at least an associates degree only 5.8% received their bachelor's degree which is comparatively lower than the County and the State. This is an important factor in measuring the quality of the Village's labor force. In general, higher educational attainment should result in higher paying jobs, which should have a beneficial impact on the Village.

**Table 5 - 2000 Educational Attainment of Persons 25 and Over**

Level of Education	# Of People	Percent of Total Population		
		Village of Fort Edward	Washington County	New York State
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	85	4.4%	5.9%	8.0%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	233	12.1%	14.9%	12.9%

High school graduate	903	46.9%	40.2%	27.8%
Some college, no degree	308	16.0%	16.6%	16.8%
Associates degree	213	11.1%	8.0%	7.2%
Bachelor's degree	111	5.8%	8.6%	15.6%
Graduate or professional degree	71	3.7%	5.7%	11.8%
Total Population 25 years and over	1,924	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

***Ethnicity/Race***

The racial composition of the Village of Fort Edward is essentially homogeneous. Based upon the 2000 Census 3,129 of the residents are of one race and 12 are two or more races. Furthermore, 3,100 (98.7 percent of the total population) are white. The minority population includes those that have identified themselves as black or African American (11 residents); American Indian and Alaska Native (6 residents); and Asian (12 residents).

**Natural Characteristics**

***Soils and Surface Geology***

The Village of Fort Edward was an area affected by repeated glaciations during the Pleistocene era. Some of the soils in the area such as the Nassau and Bernardston soils were formed from glacial deposits during this time. Glacial deposits were subsequently modified by lake and stream deposits. Many of these more recent alluvial (sediment) deposits are comprised of material from the underlying bedrock of the region. This bedrock is primarily made up of Ordovician limestone, shale, sandstone and dolostone.

The main soil groups in the Village of Fort Edward, the Vergennes and Kingsbury soils were formed from these lake deposits and stream terraces. Soil formation is an ongoing process; therefore, there are soils in the Village that have formed more recent alluvial deposits (Hamlin, Teel and Limerick soils).

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## ***Water Resources***

### **Surface Waters**

The Upper Hudson River is the most dominant natural feature of the Village. Throughout history the river has shaped the land and the development of the local communities and surrounding region. Today it is a very important asset to the region in terms of its scenic and recreational attributes.

In 1997 Executive Order 13061 put forth by President Clinton, established the American Heritage River (AHR) Initiative, a creative, sustainable development program designed to promote environmental protection, encourage economic revitalization, and foster historic and cultural preservation at the community level. In 1998 Governor George Pataki nominated the Hudson River for designation as an American Heritage River. The Hudson is among only fourteen (14) other rivers in the United States to receive such designation. The status as an American Heritage River will help improve coordination among federal, state, local and private efforts to both improve and protect the river's water and wetlands, restore waterfront communities and stimulate cultural activity in the future.



### **Floodplains**

Both a 100 and 500-year floodplain can be found along the Hudson River. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program have delineated these boundaries. Flooding has occurred in the past in low-lying areas adjacent to the river causing some limited damage to property.

FEMA generally identifies floodplain boundaries based on the official FEMA maps. Development within FEMA identified floodplains is restricted because they serve as water recharge areas and as water storage areas during periods of heavy rain or snow thaw and because the likelihood of water damage to homes and businesses is great. Besides focusing attention on the danger associated with flooding, floodplain boundaries are good indicators of sensitive environmental areas. Thus, efforts to restrict development in floodplains will usually

have the added benefit of protecting other important natural resources and the hydrologic system.

In areas exposed to 100-year floods, according to FEMA Flood Insurance Program, new or substantially improved dwellings must have the lowest floor elevated to or above the base flood level. The purpose of these restrictions is to provide protection against the perils of flood losses and encourage sound land use by minimizing exposure of property to flood losses. Clearly, restriction on development in the floodplain is necessary not only in the interest of protecting the integrity of natural ecosystems but also to protect life and property.

### **Wetlands**

There are no state regulated wetlands within the Village boundaries.

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### ***Wildlife***

#### **Urban Wildlife**

Although the Village has not conducted an inventory of its resident wildlife species there is some documentation and anecdotal accounts of the creatures that make their home in Fort Edward. Small mammals such as rabbits, squirrels, rodents, as well as a variety of species of songbirds are often found in the Village. Deer and groundhogs are also Village residents.

The large wetland/open water area located between Old Fort Street and Cortland Street across from the Old Champlain Canal aqueduct and stone arch towpath bridge likely provides habitat and resting areas for ducks, mallards, and other migrating waterfowl, as well as for a variety of amphibians including grass frogs and common toads.

#### **Rare and Endangered Species and Habitats**

According to the NYSDEC Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources Natural Heritage Program, the nearby Town of Fort Edward has a large area identified as a Raptor Winter Concentration Area. This area has also been identified by the National Audubon Society of New York as an Important Bird Area (IBA). The IBA encompasses approximately 10,000 acres of grasslands, cultivated fields, small woodlots and wetlands that are critical breeding and

wintering habitat for the endangered Short-eared Owl and threatened Northern Harrier as well as other bird species.

An Endangered Species is any native in imminent danger of extirpation or extinction in New York or any species listed as endangered by the US Department of the Interior. A Threatened Species is any species which are likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future in New York or is listed as threatened by the US Department of the Interior.

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### ***Identified Environmental Issues***

#### **Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site**

The Hudson River is the location of a major PCB (polychlorinated byphenols) Superfund site. The Superfund Site stretches approximately 200 miles, from Hudson Falls, New York, to the Battery in New York City. From approximately 1947 to 1977 the General Electric Company (GE) discharged as much as 1.3 million pounds of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from its capacitor manufacturing plants at the Hudson Falls and Fort Edward facilities into the Hudson River. Since 1976 high levels of PCBs in fish have led New York State to close various recreational and commercial fisheries and to issue advisories restricting the consumption of fish caught in the Hudson River.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) PCBs are considered probable human carcinogens and are linked to other adverse health effects such as low birth weight, thyroid disease, learning, memory, and immune system disorders. PCBs in the river sediment also affect fish and wildlife. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the Proposed Plan for the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site for public comment on December 12, 2000. The Plan identifies the EPA's proposed cleanup method. The document outlines pertinent information from the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study and provides a summary of the alternatives that the Agency evaluated.

Due to numerous requests by the public the comment period was extended to April 17, 2001. By the conclusion of the public comment period EPA received nearly 73,000 separate, individual comments on the Proposed Plan. After the public comments were reviewed the EPA issued a responsiveness summary (white papers) that provided the Agency's response to all significant comments submitted during the public comment period.

In February 2002 the EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) that documents its final decision, calling for the targeted environmental dredging and removal of approximately 2.65 million cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment from a 40-mile stretch of the Upper Hudson. In the ROD the EPA selected a plan that addresses the risks to people and the environment associated with PCBs in the sediments of the Upper Hudson River. According to the EPA the dredging of PCBs from the Upper Hudson will lower the health risks to people, fish, and wildlife.

In April of 2004 the EPA announced the key engineering details that will guide the six-year clean up project. Phase I of the Dredging project will be performed on the segment of the Hudson that runs through the Town and Village of Fort Edward (EPA River Section 1). In December 2004 the Fort Edward Industrial Park (Energy Park) was chosen as a suitable site for the sediment processing/transfer (dewatering) facility needed for the cleanup of the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site.

# Municipal, Recreational & Community Resources

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## Municipal Resources

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### *Village Government*

The Village of Fort Edward was incorporated in 1849. Today, the municipal offices are located in the combined Town/Village Hall on Broadway in the Village of Fort Edward. The Village is governed by an elected Mayor and a Village Board of Trustees. The Mayor is an elected official that serves a four (4) -year term and the Village Board is comprised of the Mayor and four Board members who serve four (4)-year terms. The office of the Village Clerk is an appointed position and the Village Justice is subject to election every four (4) years. The Village's Highway Department is served by a Superintendent that is appointed and several employees who are responsible for maintenance of Village roads and properties and undertake a broad range of other work throughout the Village. The Washington County Code Enforcement/Building Inspector is employed part-time for the Village and is responsible for the administration and enforcement of building and zoning codes in the Village. The Village shares the services of the Town Assessor who is appointed to a six (6) -year term.

The Village Board meets once a month. The Mayor, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, appoints members of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, each having 5 members. These Boards meet monthly or on an as-needed basis. The Planning Board's primary duties are to review and approve subdivisions and site plans. The Zoning Board's primary duties are to rule on use and area variances and to review and approve special use permits.



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### *Village Budget*

The Village's fiscal year runs from June 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup>. The tentative budget is presented no later than March 20<sup>th</sup> and includes all proposed expenditures for the coming year as well as all proposed means of financing all expenditures. Public Hearings are conducted for public

input during the month of April. The Village Board of Trustees must adopt the budget by May 1<sup>st</sup>. The actual expenses and total budget are used to determine the taxes to be raised in the coming year.

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### ***Department of Public Works (DPW)***

The Village of Fort Edward Department of Public Works is headquartered at the Highway Department garage located behind the police station in the Village of Fort Edward. At the present time the department employs a Highway Superintendent, four (4) full-time employees and one (1) part time employee. The duties of the DPW include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sanding, salting and plowing streets,
- Repairing, sweeping and paving streets,
- Cleaning catch basins and culverts,
- Picking up recyclables,
- Picking up leaves and brush,
- Installing water connections to homes,
- Maintaining water lines.

The DPW maintains approximately 14 miles of road and has a fleet of vehicles consisting of two (2) pickup trucks, three (3) dump trucks with plows, one (1) loader, one (1) street sweeper, and one (1) tractor for plowing sidewalks.

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### ***Fort Edward Police Department***

The Village of Fort Edward has a paid police department with a Chief of Police that is an appointed official. The Police Department has four (4) full-time officers and five (5) part-time officers.

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### ***Fort Edward Volunteer Fire Department***

The Fort Edward Volunteer Fire Department is governed by the Fort Edward Fire District and provides fire protection to both the Village and Town of Fort Edward for over a century. A system of fire hydrants throughout the Village and parts of the Town provides ample water flow to those areas in case of an emergency. Like other volunteer fire departments, the Fort Edward Fire Department has an on-going struggle with recruiting volunteers to maintain adequate manpower.



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### ***Fort Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad***

The Fort Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad Inc. was formed in 1956 and has been providing a quality community service since then. Fort Edward Rescue spans a coverage area of 67.5 square miles serving Fort Edward, Hudson Falls and Kingsbury. The Squad currently consists of 29 active members comprised of three Paramedics, nine Critical Care Technicians, four Intermediates, nine EMT's (Emergency Medical Technicians), one CFR (certified First Responder), and three SFA's (standard first aiders), who each volunteer 36+ hours a month while maintaining families and full time jobs. Fort Edward Rescue Squad responds to over 2,000 calls per year, which averages out to 170-200 calls per month, one third of the total call volume in Washington County.

The Rescue Squad operates solely on charitable contributions, sponsorships, and annual community wide door-to-door fund drives. The Rescue Squad is currently raising funds to build a new facility remaining located at 75 Schuyler Street in Fort Edward. When constructed, the new facility will feature five new ambulance bays providing for the expansion in the future, office space, storage areas, as well as the only Advanced Life Support Response unit in Washington County. A modern instructional room is planned to provide the continual medical education requirements that members receive as well as serving as a community room when needed. The facility will also provide temporary shelter to local residents during emergencies.

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### ***Refuse Disposal***

The Village of Fort Edward provides curbside pickup of recyclables and the Town of Fort Edward provides garbage pickup for all Village residents. Refuse and recycling items are picked up weekly at a fee of \$1.50 per 15-gallon bag and \$3.00 for a 30-gallon bag. Trash collection stickers can be purchased at the Town Clerk's office. Leaves and brush are also picked up on Mondays and Fridays during the months of April and May and the months of September through November. Special roadside pickup days for bulk items such as used appliances and tires are made available to residents during certain weeks of the summer.

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### ***Public Sewer Disposal***

The existing sewer system within the Village is owned, operated and maintained by the Washington County Sewer District. The Washington County Wastewater Treatment Facility is located in the Village of Fort Edward and is a combined sewer/stormwater system with activated sludge, secondary treatment of wastewater. The facility has a permitted rolling capacity to treat 2.5 million gallons of wastewater per day and is presently ranging in capacity from 1.3 to 1.5 MGD during dry weather months and 2.0 to 2.46 MGD during wet weather months. According to a compliance plan put forth by the NYSDEC the Washington County Sewer District is responsible for resolving inflow and infiltrations (I & I) issues within their existing sewer system. In order to accept additional flow into the system the County must remove an equal amount of inflow and infiltration which is caused by stormwater inflow.

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### ***Public Water Supply***

The entire Village of Fort Edward is served by a Village Water Department which operates a water treatment/filtration facility and a distribution system that begins in the Town of Moreau west of the Hudson River. According to a survey conducted by RHI, the Northeast Rural Community Assistance Program in 2001, approximately 779 single-family households and 416 rental units were served by the water system. The drinking water source is supplied with four reservoirs with a pumping capacity of 1.2 million gallons of water per day. The water treatment/filtration facility is located on Reservoir Road in the Town of Moreau.

In the spring of 2005 the Village completed a \$5 million upgrade to its' water treatment, storage and distribution system. A new state of the art water filtration facility capable of treating more than 1.2 million gallons of water per day was installed to improve the Village's ability to provide high-quality drinking water to residents and to meet the demands of the future. Additional storage tanks were installed to allow the Village to store more than 1 million gallons of treated water, improving fire protection capabilities and water pressure. Completion of the multi-year upgrade was made possible with the assistance of a \$1.2 million interest free loan through the New York State Drinking Water Revolving Fund.

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### ***Other Utilities***

Niagara Mohawk, A National Grid Company, provides all residents in Fort Edward with electric power service. Natural gas service, also provided by NIMO, is also available to residents and businesses in the Village however some areas such as the King Edward Knolls are not served with natural gas. The Verizon Telephone Company provides telephone service and Adelphia Cable Company provides cable television and high-speed Internet access to the Village.

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### ***Fort Edward Union Free School District (UFSD)***

Located at 220 Broadway in the Village of Fort Edward, the Fort Edward Union Free School District primarily serves Village residents, although about 10% of the school district encompasses parts of the Town of Fort Edward. The school provides classroom instruction for grades pre-school through grade 12.

Education related statistics provided by the New York State Department of Education for school years 2001 to 2003 provided interesting comparisons between Fort Edward Union Free School District (UFSD), similar school districts, and total NYS public school averages where available.

According to the NYS Education Department, the Fort Edward UFSD is a "District in Good Standing", in that it has not been identified as one that needs improvement. According to the School Superintendent the district is in need of increased residential and industrial development. Enrollment is down and the district needs an expanded tax base in order to better serve the



students.

The average expenditure of public schools per pupil for general education across the state is \$7,595, while the Fort Edward UFSD spend \$7,500 per pupil. In addition, schools across the state spend an average of \$17,818 per pupil for special education, while Fort Edward UFSD spends \$16,907 per pupil. Special programs that are offered include Pre-K, Gifted & Talented programs and College Level courses. According to the School Superintendent the school has recently undertaken a major renovation of the auditorium and gymnasium.

Per 2002-2003 statistical data the student enrollment was 566, up 0.89% from 561 for the 2002-2003 school year. Of this number 98.4% were non-minority. Approximately 10.8% of students enrolled in the district qualified for reduced-cost lunch in 2003-2004.

The kindergarten classroom size in the 2003-2004 school year was 17 pupils per classroom. Elementary, middle and high school class sizes range from 11 to 18 students. There were a total of 57 highly qualified teachers, 6 professional staff members, and 16 para-professionals working in the District during the 2003-2004 school year. The student to teacher ratio is 10:1.

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### ***Fort Edward Free Library***

The Fort Edward Free Library, located at 23 east Street, has been a special part of the community since its' establishment in 1914. The library began with only resident donations of 300 books, magazine subscriptions, chairs, paintings, and furniture. Today, the library has over 10,000 adult fiction, adult non-fiction, children's fiction, and children's non-fiction books, and over 1,200 other printed materials including magazines and reference books. The library has also has a large collection of talking books, audio recordings (CDs, tapes, etc), videos (VHS, DVD, etc), CD-ROMS, filmstrips, slides shows, microform, microfilm, subscriptions to electronic databases, and two computers available to the public for Internet access.



The library sponsors a number of special programs for adults, young adults and children. This year, the annual Summer Reading Program was very popular; encourage thirty four (34) children to read over 600 books in a five-week period. The program encourages students to read by offering weekly reading incentives, a cash drawing and prizes for winners of the reading contest.

## **Recreational Resources**

The Village of Fort Edward has many recreational resources within its boundaries and within the region. While many resources are aimed at local residents, such as the neighborhood parks, others, such as the Fort Edward Yacht Basin and the Champlain Canal bring in residents and tourists from throughout the Capital and Adirondack regions. In addition the Village offers organized recreational programs and activities which are an important part of the Village park system. (See [Historic & Recreational Resources Map](#))

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### ***Fort Edward Recreation Department***

The community of Fort Edward has been the beneficiary of one of the most respected and extensive summer programs in the region. The Fort Edward Recreation Department is responsible for supervising activities that include both fun and educational experiences for all residents. Since its inception a commitment has been made to promote positive youth development. The Director of Recreation is responsible for program and event planning, scheduling and for supervising paid and volunteer staff during the busy ten (10) week summer session.

Recreational programs provide appreciation and development of life-long interests and skills. Young people participate in many conventional activities which lead to increased skill development in athletics, improvement in social skills and enhancement of individual responsibility and personal growth.

Throughout the years, the summer recreation program has undergone constant evolution in order to promote the activities that best suit available facilities and resources and are most desirous of the population. Today's summer schedule consists of three major components: (1) Activities, (2) Field Trips and (3) Special Events. During the course of the ten (10) week summer program participants are involved in arts and crafts, baseball, softball, basketball, golf, tennis, bowling, self-defense, weightlifting, swimming, volleyball, dodge ball and a variety of playground games. Field trips have included excursions to New York City, Boston and Montreal for sporting, educational and cultural events. Other destinations have been Cooperstown, New York, Ausable Chasm, Howe Caverns, Saratoga Battlefield, Catskill Game Farm, Hebron Nature Preserve, Alpine Slide, Water Safari, Waterslide World, Fun Spot, Great Escape, Pember and Chapman Museum, Ashville Game Farm, Lake George Forum, NY Giants

Training Camp, white water rafting, rock climbing, horseback riding, and Adirondack mountain hikes. The special event category consists of a Field Day, and tournaments in softball, golf, bowling, tennis, billiards, and dodge ball as well as an arts and craft contest. At the close of the summer festivities prizes, trophies, awards and ribbons are given to the various winners in these competitions.

Recreation will always be an important component in the quality of life enjoyed by Fort Edward residents. The success of the program can be attributed to many factors: (1) the commitment to comprehensive programming; (2) a program that is constantly working towards expansion and improvement; (3) the availability of facilities realized by our community; (4) strong community sponsorship and support; and (5) a dedicated and committed staff.

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### ***Bradley Park***

Bradley Park is adjacent to both the Little League Park and the community swimming pool and offers a beautiful site for picnicking along the banks of the Hudson River. Bradley Park has picnic tables, facilities for outdoor grilling and a small craft launch available for the public. The community swimming pool is available to the residents of the Village and the Town of Fort Edward from late June until early September. Lifeguards are on duty throughout operating hours.



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### ***McIntyre Park***

McIntyre Park's proximity to the school, bike trail and to the community in general, makes it an ideal location for many outside activities. The Park has tennis and basketball courts, playground equipment and includes two ball fields that are home to a Girls Softball League. A recreational facility for youth has also been constructed. McIntyre Park is utilized for a number of the summer recreational programs including, but not limited to, the summer leagues in basketball, flag football, soccer, softball, and tennis for girls and boys of a range



of ages. Special event days such as the tournaments in pool, softball, and the Annual Kids' Field Day are also held at McIntyre Park.

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### ***Hudson River***

The Hudson River is another recreational resource for the Village of Fort Edward for seasonal, recreational boating and light commercial barges. The Hudson flows south to New York City where it joins the Atlantic Ocean. The Erie Canal connects to the Hudson River at the Albany/Waterford sites and provides water transportation across central and western New York State.

The Hudson River has resident species such as the shortnose sturgeon, black bass largemouth and smallmouth bass and many other fishes among the almost 200 other species that occur in the Hudson. According to NYS DEC sport fishing on the upper Hudson River had been prohibited until August 30, 1995, when New York State reopened the Upper Hudson River to sport fishing on a catch-and-release basis only. "All fish caught in the river section between the



Federal Dam at Troy and Bakers Falls in the Village of Hudson Falls, New York, must be immediately returned to the water without unnecessary injury to the fish." During the time the upper Hudson River was closed to fishing the fish populations were given the opportunity to improve in numbers and quality. Besides minimizing the eating of PCB contaminated fish, catch and release will help maintain high quality sport fishing opportunities for years to come.

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### ***Fort Edward Yacht Basin***

Located on the Hudson River, behind the Glens Falls National Bank in the Village of Fort Edward, the recently revitalized Yacht Basin offers free water and electrical hook-ups for boaters. The Fort Edward Chamber sponsored summer concerts take place in the gazebo for the enjoyment of the whole community. The Yacht Basin is home to the Heritage Days Celebration. Heritage Days is held annually on the second weekend in July and features a



variety of exciting activities including, but not limited to, the Heritage Days Parade, pool party at Bradley Park, food and craft vendors, live concerts, canal boat rides, food and a fireworks display over the Hudson River.

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### ***Champlain Canal***

The Champlain Canal, under the auspices of the New York State Canal Corporation, a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority, provides vital water transportation connecting the Hudson River to the south with Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence Seaway to the north. The Town of Fort Edward is host to Lock 6, 7 and 8 of the Canal. Annually, the canal is opened from May to November. Draft depth is reported to be approximately 14 feet deep with a 2,000-ton capacity. The canal invites commercial and pleasure boat usage, with the month of August seeing the highest number of users.



# Historical & Cultural Resources

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## Introduction

The Village of Fort Edward has a wonderful variety of cultural and historic places as well as many local citizens and not-for-profit groups who are dedicated to preserving the historic sites and buildings within the Village. The preservation and enhancement of historic and cultural resources is crucial to maintaining the unique identity of Fort Edward.

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) developed the most common definition of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is travel based on a mosaic of places, traditions, art forms, celebrations, and experiences that portray a place and its people and reflects their diversity and character. Tourism of historic places in New York State has grown considerably in recent years and has played an important role in the growth and development of the State's economy. Well planned cultural and heritage tourism helps improve the character and quality of a community. (See [Historic & Recreational Resources Map](#))

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## *National Register of Historic Places*

The Village of Fort Edward has three structures and one site listed on the National Register of Historic Places (See Table 6). The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources.

Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Listing in the National Register honors a historic place by recognizing its importance to its community, however property owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to



maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they so choose. The following table is an excerpt of the information provided on the National Register of Historic Places website:

**Table 6: National Register of Historic Places**

District, Building or Property	Location	Area of Significance	Historic Period
Rogers Island	Rogers Island	Historic, Non-Aboriginal, Military.	1750-1799
Old Fort House	29 Broadway	Exploration/Settlement, Architecture	1750-1799, 1825-1849
D&H Train Station	Corner of East & Wing Street	Transportation, Architecture	1875-1899, 1900-1924, 1925-1949
Saint James Episcopal Church	112 Broadway	Social History, Architecture	1825-1849, 1850-1874, 1875-1899, 1900-1924, 1925-1949

Source: <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com>

***Rogers Island & The Rogers Island Visitors Center***

The Rogers Island Visitors/Interpretive Center offers tourist information, a research library, historical displays, programs and an archaeology field school for interested tourists. The island is the site of historic Fort Edward, a large British fort during the French and Indian and American Revolutionary Wars. Here the famous Robert Rogers and the Rangers developed their “Rules of Ranging” still in use by ground-fighting armies today.

Throughout the months of June, July and August, the Center is open Monday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM and Sunday 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. During the months of September to May, the Center is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 Pm and Sunday 1:00 PM to 4:00PM. The Center offers a number of special programs and activities throughout the year including, but not limited to, history lectures, tours of the camps, drill, skirmish, gun firing, and troop formation demonstrations, and commemorative ceremonies at the Patriot Gardens. The Adirondack Community College holds their Annual Archaeological Field School at the Rodgers Island Visitors Center’s laboratory usually during the month of July. The Field School has been conducting excavations on the island since 1991 and the digs have revealed a large amount of historical information since then. The public is welcome to visit the lab and see



the artifacts that are found in the field and lectures are given on weekdays throughout the course of the dig.

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### ***The Old Fort House Museum***

Owned and operated by the Fort Edward Historical Association, the Old Fort House Museum is a three-acre museum campus that is home to one of the oldest wood frame structures in upstate New York. The home of Patrick Smyth is the center of the exhibit which was originally constructed in 1772 from timbers taken from the ruins of the fortifications of Fort Edward. The house was used as headquarters for both British and American generals in the Revolutionary War and was twice visited by General George Washington. The museum campus offers guided tours of the Old Fort House which contains authentic furnishings depicting the lives of the occupants from the 1800's through the 1940's. In addition tours are available of an 1840's plank road tollhouse restored to reflect the toll collector's living quarters, the 1853 law office of Judge A. Dallas Wait, the Riverside one-room schoolhouse restored and furnished to reflect the time and a variety of Native American, military, farming and historical transportation exhibits.



The Old Fort House hosts a variety of programs and events throughout the year. The John P. Burke Research Center is open to the public for research on a wide variety of topics and historical lectures and luncheons are held throughout the year. The Old Fort House holds a garage sale and perennial plant sale, an Antique Auction, and an Arts & Crafts, Antiques & Collectibles sale annually on the Museum Campus. In addition, the Smyth House is decorated for the holiday season and open for tours on three weekends in December.



***Fort Edward Historical Association***

The Fort Edward Historical Association is a not-for-profit organization that owns, operates and maintains the historic (1772-73) Old Fort House Museum campus. The house was given to the Fort Edward Historical Association in 1953 and since then the Association has also restored and become caretaker of five additional historic structures from other periods of history. The Association has an office located at 31 Broadway and the Baldwin Barn Gallery and Gift Shop at the Old Fort House Museum which are open weekdays, 10-4 PM. The John P. Burke Research Center at 22 Broadway is also open Wednesdays 10-4 PM and the photographic archives located at the Fort Edward Art Center, 83 Broadway are open on Mondays. The research center and the photo archives house extensive regional historical and genealogical information and photos including a substantial amount of material pertaining to Kingsbury and Hudson Falls as well as the Fort Edward area.



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***Washington County Historical Society***

The Washington County Historical Society is a not-for-profit organization whose primary purpose is to promote the public interest and participation in the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the County. The Society manages a Heritage Research Library that is open to the public. The library contains historical books, maps, photographs, brochures, letters, diaries and private papers, old deeds, manuscripts, magazines, genealogies, and books by local authors. The Society is headquartered out of the Wing-Northup House at 167 Broadway in the Village which is open for tours only on special event days such as the Fort Edward Heritage Days. The Society sponsors a variety of special events and programs including, but not limited to, educational conferences on the Underground Railroad, cruises along the Champlain Canal and talks and presentations on local history at the Northup House



### ***Lakes to Locks Passage***

The “Lakes to Locks Passage, The Great Northeast Journey”, is a designated New York State Byway from Waterford, NY to Quebec, Canada. The Byway recognizes the scenic, historic, natural, cultural, recreational and working landscape resources of the interconnected waterway consisting of the upper Hudson River, Champlain Canal, Lake George, Lake Champlain, and Richelieu River Valley of Quebec, Canada. The Champlain Canal Region of the Lakes to Locks Passage offers 64 miles of a unique American experience along US Route 4 from Waterford to Whitehall passing through the Village of Fort Edward. The Byway allows residents and visitors to understand, experience and appreciate the diverse character of the region.

The Lakes to Locks Passage is a partnership for community development and tourism promotion that is accomplished through cooperation between public and private interest groups to integrate, interpret and promote the “Four Lives of Lakes to Locks Passage:

1. Natural Forces and Native Peoples: Shaped the landscape and culture of the inland waterway rich with resources.
2. Conflict and Settlement: Traces the exploration, warfare and peacekeeping activities of nation-building along the waterway.
3. Corridor of Commerce: Explores the trade in furs, timber, stone minerals, farm products, and technology that flows through these valleys.
4. Magnet for Tourism: Reveals the evolution of tourism and stewardship of the environment.

Currently, the Lakes to Locks Passage partnership is implementing the “Visitor Information and Interpretation Plan”. The plan coordinates the local implementation activities, provides guidelines for graphic design, visitor interpretation and information in a manner that unifies the region from Waterford, New York to Quebec, Canada.

Through a shared name and greater regional presence the partnership for the Lakes to Locks Passage anticipate a coordination and integration of their history and resources for improved public awareness and use of the Byway and improved organization and administration of the Byway at the state and regional level.

***The New York Independence Trail***

The New York Independence Trail Guide is produced by a non-profit organization funded by New York State. The Independence Trail is a self-guided tour of some of the most important sites of the French and Indian and Revolutionary Wars, starting as far south as Staten Island New York, and traveling north to Fort Chambly National Historic Site in Quebec, Canada. The Trail can be accessed at virtually any point along the north-south route between New York City and the Canadian border. The Independence Trail Guide includes an advertisement for the Old Fort House Museum and Rogers Island Visitors Center, both located within the Village.

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***The New York Independence Waterways Trail***

The New York Independence Waterways Trail is an extension of the New York Independence Trail that encourages tourists to explore the historic waterways of eastern New York. The New York Independence Waterways Trail promotes historic sites near significant historical waterways including the St. Lawrence River, Lake Champlain, the Champlain Canal, Lake George, the Mohawk River, and the Hudson River. The Independence Trail Waterways Guide includes an advertisement for Rogers Island Visitors Center.

# Housing Resources

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## Introduction

In March of 2005, the Village prepared a Community Needs Strategy document in order to support the need for HOME Grant funding through the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation and the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal. According to this Strategy, “the number one priority of the Village is to reverse the decades of decline in industry and business development, resulting in lost population, dilapidated housing and infrastructure, a stagnant business climate, and a tired downtown and worn-out community image”. In the summer of 2005, the Village was awarded a \$400,000 HOME grant, and a \$400,000 CDBG housing grant for Broadway.

The Community Needs Strategy document identified “realistic goals that can be implemented with local, state, and federal financial and technical resources”. The Strategy determined that “the Village has a serious shortage of safe, decent, and affordable housing, particularly units in standard conditions that are available to lower income families and elderly residents”. The following priorities were identified: Rehabilitation of housing and neighborhoods; Repair and improvement of rental apartments; Implementation of strict code enforcement; Promotion of home ownership and rental property conversion; and Development of new affordable housing for under-served residents. A complete copy of the 2005-2007 Community Needs Strategy document is included in Appendix B.

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## *Housing Stock*

Housing stock in the Village of Fort Edward consists of various periods of architectural styles and a diversity of housing types. The vast majority of homes were constructed in 1939 or earlier although 13.7% were constructed during the period between 1940 and 1959. Historic homes dating back to the early 18th and 19th century are scattered in various locations throughout the Village

The table below was displayed in the Community Needs Strategy document to show that the Village is substantially behind the County and State in terms of housing age and household income. The housing stock is significantly older than that of the County and the State and

property values are lower in the Village while residents spend 31% of their income on housing expenses. More than 80% of all housing units in the Village were constructed before 1960 and less than 19% of all homes have been built in the last 45 years. As families have aged and income and personal wealth has decreased, the Village homeowners are no longer able to keep up with basic maintenance to their aging homes.

**Table 7 Housing Characteristics – Compared to the Region and NY**

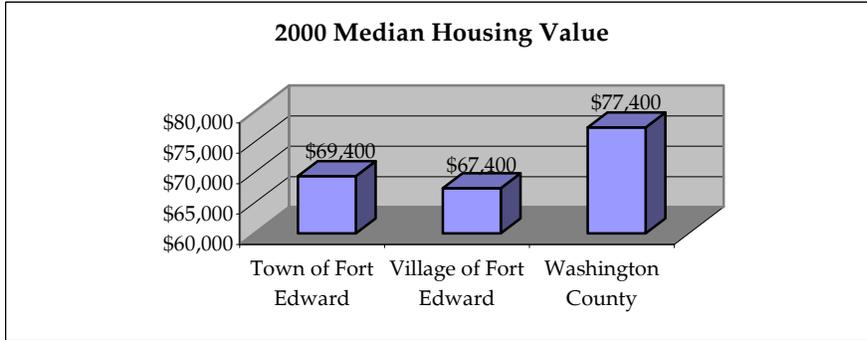
Subject	Village of Fort Edward	Washington County	New York State
Housing Built Before 1940	64.5%	41.4%	31.2%
Housing Built Since 1990	3.8%	12.4%	6.8%
Median Value (Owner Occupied Homes)	\$68,000	\$77,400	\$148,700
Income Used for Housing Expenses	31.1%	28.3%	26.3%
Median Family Income	\$29,390	\$43,500	\$51,691
Median Household Income	\$27,203	\$37,668	\$43,393
Per Capita Income	\$17,555	\$17,958	\$23,389
Percent Poverty Persons	11.3%	9.4%	14.6%
Rental Housing Rate	36.4%	25.6%	47.0%

Source 2000 U.S. Census

### ***Housing Affordability***

It is important to understand the affordability of the Village’s housing stock, when compared to the region. Figure 11 shows the comparison of the median housing value of the Village, Town and County.

**Figure 11: 2000 Median Housing Value for the Village Fort Edward & the Region**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Another indicator of housing affordability and desirability in an area is the number of housing units owned, rented, or vacant. According to the 2000 Census, the Village of Fort Edward had 1,247 occupied housing units and 152 vacant units. The total number of owner-occupied housing units was 759 and there were 488 renter-occupied housing units. The homeowner vacancy rate is 3.6%, while the rental vacancy rate is 7.9%.

**Table 8 Housing Characteristics**

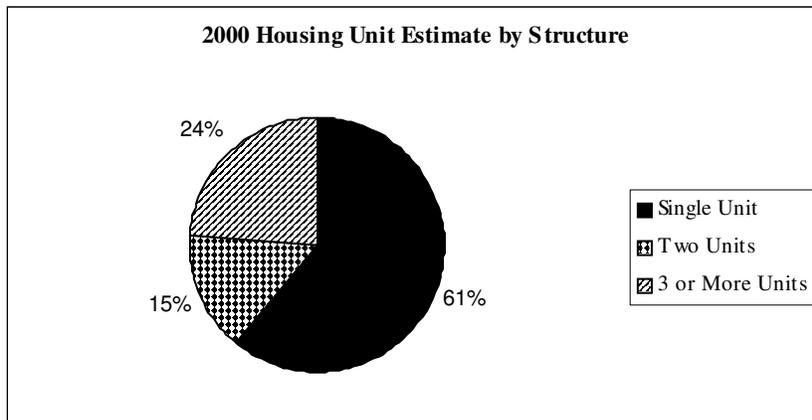
Subject	Village of Fort Edward	Town of Fort Edward	Washington County	New York State
Housing Tenure				
Owner-occupied Housing	60.9%	67.3%	74.4%	53.0%
Renter Occupied Housing	39.1%	32.7%	25.6%	47.0%
Housing Occupancy				
Occupied Housing Units	89.1%	90.4%	83.8%	91.9%
Vacant Housing Units	10.9%	9.6%	16.2%	8.1%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	3.6%	2.4%	2.3%	1.6%
Rental Vacancy Rate	7.9%	7.3%	7.5%	4.6%
Household Type				
Average Household Size	2.50	2.52	2.55	2.61
Average Family Size	2.99	2.95	3.01	3.22

Source 2000 U.S. Census

Table 8 illustrates the stability of the Village housing market as compared to the Town of Fort Edward, Washington County and New York State. According to the 2000 U.S. Census the Village of Fort Edward has a lower percentage of owner-occupied housing units than the Town of Fort Edward and Washington County. Furthermore, the homeowner vacancy rate is higher than the Town, the County and the State. The high number of rental units and the relatively high homeowner vacancy rate in comparison with the region is indicative of a community functioning in an unstable condition.

Another important factor in determining the residential base of a community is the housing unit breakdown by structure. As shown in Figure 12, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, 61% of the structures in the Village are classified as single-unit, which include detached, attached, and mobile home units. This suggests that the Village of Fort Edward offers a variety of housing types with almost 40% of the homes consisting of multiple units.

Figure 12: 2000 Housing Unit Estimate by Structure



Source 2000 U.S. Census

# Economic Development Resources

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## Introduction

Fort Edward has a variety of local and regional economic development resources available to encourage the growth and stabilization of the economy. The Village has a local Chamber and LDC that together have the ability to promote the Village and generate economic opportunities. The Village contains an Industrial Park that has available land served by public water and sewer and additional properties along Broadway (Route 4) that are within an Empire Zone. Economic Development assistance is also available from the Washington County LDC with a long established LDC and Micro-enterprise Program.

## Local Economic Development Resources

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### *Fort Edward Chamber of Commerce*

The Fort Edward Chamber of Commerce has been operating for more than 50 years “as a community minded organization that is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the village and town”. The objective of the Fort Edward Chamber of Commerce “is to provide the area with a united, organized and effective group of both businesses and residents that will encourage growth and give Fort Edward an edge for attracting new business and new homeowners”.

Over the years the Chamber and its volunteers have organized beautification projects, celebrations that ranged from parades to festivals, music concerts, river races and "Memory Lane," a popular Christmas festivity which includes more than 30 live Christmas trees installed and decorated along the Yacht Basin walkway. Chamber members support landscaping projects in the Yacht Basin to insure that visitors are greeted with flowers, flags and a clean, attractive park.



For a number of years, the Chamber has lost membership support from commercial businesses and residents, therefore they are currently undergoing a membership drive and in the process of reorganization. Business membership annual dues are \$50 and non-business membership annual dues are only \$15.

The Chamber has a number of committees that non-business and business members can volunteer to serve on, covering topics of Economic Development, Government, Christmas Lights & Cookie Delights, Memory Lane, Yacht Basin/ Park, Membership, Publicity, and Fund Raising.

The Chamber is actively working on building and updating their website, to include a list of available properties, promotional materials for local businesses, business start-up program information grant opportunities, school district information, local community event listings and links to other websites that have tourism information.

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### ***Fort Edward Local Development Corporation (LDC)***

The Fort Edward Local Development Corporation (LDC) is a not-for-profit corporation that is granted its' purpose by New York State Consolidated Laws §1411 (a) to *“operate for the exclusive charitable or public purposes to relieve and reduce unemployment, promote and provide for additional and maximum employment opportunities, instruct or train individuals to improve or develop their capabilities for such better jobs, carry on scientific research for the purpose of aiding the community or a specific geographical area by attracting new industry to the community or area or encouraging the development of, or retention of, an industry to the community or area, while lessening the burdens of government and acting in the public interest”*.

The State has also granted the LDC with the power to, *“construct, acquire, rehabilitate and improve for use by others industrial or manufacturing plants in the territory in which its operations are principally to be conducted, to assist financially in such construction, acquisition, rehabilitation and improvement, to maintain such plants for others in such territory, to disseminate information and furnish advice, technical assistance and liaison with federal, state and local authorities with respect thereto, to acquire by purchase, lease, gift, bequest, devise or otherwise real or personal property or interests therein, to borrow money and to issue negotiable bonds, notes and other obligations therefore, and notwithstanding section 510 (Disposition of all or substantially all assets) without leave of the court, to sell, lease, mortgage or otherwise dispose of or encumber any such plants or any of its real or personal property or any interest therein upon such terms as it may determine and, in connection with loans from the New York job development authority, to enter into covenants and agreements and to comply with all the terms, conditions and provisions thereof, and otherwise to carry out its corporate purposes and to*

*foster and encourage the location or expansion of industrial or manufacturing plants in the territory in which the operations of such corporation are principally to be conducted, provided, however, that no such corporation shall attempt to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise, or participate or intervene, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.”* New York State Consolidated Laws §1411 (c).

To date, the largest, most publicized project that the Fort Edward LDC has been working on is the rehabilitation of the Historic Fort Edward Intermodal Train Station located on East Street in the Village. The project has received over \$600,000 in grant funding from the federal government to repair the exterior and interior of the building to make the waiting area more welcoming and comfortable for travelers. The Fort Edward LDC is also working with a local economic development specialist to attract new business to the Fort Edward Industrial Park, and in the future, the LDC will be involved in economic revitalization of a Brownfield property located along the Old Champlain Canal.



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### ***Fort Edward Industrial Park***

The Fort Edward Industrial Park is owned by a private land-holding company called WCC LLC of ESMI. The park is about 410 acres and is within the Town and Village of Fort Edward with about 15-16 acres of land available within the Village. The park is within the Industrial Zoning District of the Village and is served by Village Water and Sewer, gas and electric. Seventy five (75) acres of the park is slated to be used for the PCB soil dewatering facility in the future and the sewer and water services will need to be expanded into the Town section of the park in order to enable new business to be developed. About 50 acres of the park are within the Washington County Empire Zone.

## **County Economic Development Resources**

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### ***The Washington County Local Development Corporation (WCLDC)***

The Washington County Local Development Corporation (WCLDC) is a not-for-profit corporation that was formed in 1985 to administer the County’s economic development

programs. The goals of the organization are to create and retain jobs, strengthen the economy, and to increase the taxable value of real property.

The WCLDC, in concert with numerous public and private sector agencies and organizations as well as many local financial institutions, works to provide clients with free, confidential business development assistance in the areas of: Financing, Site Location, Taxes, Utilities, Labor Force, Transportation, and Coordination.

The WCLDC is an economic resource for existing businesses in Washington County and those seeking to locate within Washington County and provides advice, reference material, Empire Zone Program expertise and assistance to businesses to foster stability and growth of Washington County businesses. The WCLDC produces a Business Directory, and their website ([www.wcldc.org](http://www.wcldc.org)) provides much information regarding business development, Empire Zones, the Micro-enterprise assistance program, available properties and financing within Washington County.

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### ***Micro-enterprise Program (MAP)***

The following description is taken from the Washington County LDC website:

The Micro-enterprise Assistance Program (MAP) is administered by the Washington County Local Development Corporation and is free and open to all Washington County entrepreneurs and existing commercial enterprises in Washington County having 10 or fewer employees.

The program was designed to give business owners, or those looking to start a business, advice and instruction regarding best business practices. The program's stated goals are to provide those who participate in the program with the business skills necessary to be successful. The program also offers an opportunity for financing through the Micro-enterprise Loan Fund also administered by the WCLDC.

The program is comprised of three parts:

1. Seminar:

- 11 weekly seminars are given by experts in the field and cover various aspects of business including Business Planning, market basics and advertising, customer service, start-up costs and break even points, and legal, tax and insurance issues, among other topics.

2. Micro-enterprise Loan Fund

- MAP “graduates” who complete the seminar and complete a business plan can apply for low-cost, flexible term financing.

### 3. Technical Assistance

- MAP “graduates” will have access to a variety of business assistance materials, such as reference books, business plan manuals, videotapes, telephone books and education catalogues, among other materials.
- 

## ***Empire Zone***

The Washington County Empire Zone is one of the seventy-one Empire Zones established by the State of New York. Empire Zones (EZs) are designated areas throughout the State that offer special incentives to encourage economic and community development, business investment and job creation. Businesses located within an EZ are eligible to receive significant tax credits and benefits. The Village of Fort Edward has several properties within the Empire Zone, especially along Broadway (Route 4), East Street, and abutting the Amtrak rail lines. (See [Washington County Empire Zone Map – Area # 1](#))

**Qualified Empire Zone Enterprises (QEZE)s** are eligible for sales tax exemption, real property and business tax credits for businesses locating and expanding in such zones. The purpose of the Empire Zones Program is to give companies increasing their employment the opportunity to operate on an almost "tax-free" basis for up to 10 years in designated areas of the State, with additional savings available on a declining basis in years 11 through 15. The Empire Zone provides the following incentives and benefits as reported on the Empire Zone Website:

**QEZE Sales Tax Exemptions:** Qualified Empire Zone Enterprises (QEZE)s are granted a 10-year exemption from State sales tax on purchases of goods and services (including utility services and owned vehicles) used predominantly in such zone (effective March 1, 2001).

**QEZE Credit for Real Property Taxes:** Qualified Empire Zone Enterprises are allowed a refundable credit against their business tax equal to a percentage of real property taxes paid based upon increased employment in the zone (effective for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2001)

**QEZE Tax Reduction Credit:** Qualified Empire Zone Enterprises are allowed a credit against their tax equal to a percentage of taxes attributable to the zone enterprise (effective taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2001).

**Wage Tax Credit (WTC):** This credit is available for up to five consecutive years for companies hiring full-time employees in newly created jobs. For employees in special targeted groups, this credit equals \$3,000 per year, with a credit of \$1,500 per year effective 1/1/2001, for all other new hires.

**EZ Investment Tax and Employment Incentives Credit (ITC-EIC):** Businesses that create new jobs and make new investments in production, property and equipment may qualify for tax credits of up to 19% of the company's eligible investment.

**New Business Refund:** Businesses new to New York State are entitled to a 50% cash refund of unused EZ-WTC and ITC amounts. Other businesses may carry forward unused credits indefinitely.

**Utility Rate Savings:** Special reduced electric and gas rates may be available through investor-owned utilities in New York State. Businesses that locate or expand their operations in an EZ may receive significantly reduced rates.

**Zone Capital Credit:** A 25% tax credit against personal or corporate income taxes is available for contributing or purchasing shares in a zone capital corporation; or for a direct equity investment in a certified zone business; or for contributions to approved community development projects within an EZ.

**Technical Assistance:** Each local zone office is staffed with professionals qualified to assist businesses locating or expanding in an EZ.

**Sales Tax Refund or Credit:** Purchases of building materials to be used for commercial or industrial real property located in an EZ are eligible for a refund or credit of NYS sales taxes. A similar refund or credit of local sales tax may also be available from the locality.

**Real Property Tax Abatement:** EZs may offer tax abatements from an increased assessment, with the abatement value based on improvements to real property for up to 10 years. This holds true for up to seven years at 100%, decreasing over the last three years of the exemption.

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### ***Washington County Tax Incentives***

Washington County and certain taxing jurisdictions in the county with Empire Zones offer a significant incentive to build or improve property on land in these Zone areas. Section 485-e of the Real Property Tax Law allows for an abatement of increases in real property taxes resulting

from the construction or improvement of property in the Zone for up to 10 years. This means that a new building constructed on land in one of these designated Zones would not have full property taxes applied for up to 10 years. The goal is to reduce the costs (cut taxes) to encourage investment and hiring in these Zone areas.

Washington County and the local taxing jurisdictions joined in offering a “fixed” abatement beginning in 2002, the year Washington County was awarded the Empire Zone designation. This action provides a 100% abatement of real property taxes (county, town, village and school to the extent applicable) for 6 years as shown below. This 100% abatement then decreases 25% in each of the following years. A current abatement schedule can be obtained from the Washington County Local Development Corporation website or from the Washington County Empire Zone Coordinator.

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### ***Washington County Tourism Association***

The Washington County Tourism Association is a private not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the many wonderful lifestyle and vacation assets of the county. The Washington County Tourism Association is partially funded through the “I Love NY Program” and produces a number of tour guides and maps. Tourism materials promote a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, area museums, historical site tours, outdoor recreational experiences such as boating and golfing, agricultural tours, historical local arts and crafts and music festivals, local shops and services, and the County Fair.

# Transportation Resources

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## Introduction

The general goal of a transportation system is to facilitate the economical movement of people, goods and services. The Village is dependent on surface transportation system which includes roads, bridges, transit, walkways, trails and the railroad for the quality of our lives. A well-planned and designed surface transportation system should be accommodating to all modes of traffic, be safe for use, visually appealing and environmentally friendly.

The transportation network within the Village of Fort Edward is comprised of State, County and local roads. A discussion of the characteristics of these roads follows.

The major commercial and commuter routes through the Village are New York State Route 4, Route 197 and County Route 37 (Burgoyne Avenue). These roads carry thousands of vehicles and passengers on a daily basis. These routes are major arteries connecting the Village with the outlying suburban and rural residents and with the surrounding region. (See [Village Base Map](#))

## Existing Road Network

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### *Interstate Routes*

The Adirondack Northway (Interstate 87) is located six miles west of the Village by way of Route 197. The Northway is a modern expressway that extends from the New York State Thruway at Albany to the Canadian border. Using this connection, access is gained to the Great Lakes Region and the eastern seaboard of both the U.S. and Canada. The Village's location to the State Transportation System is a vital resource for business and industry. Approximate Highway Mileage from Fort Edward to:

- Glens Falls 5 Miles
- Exit 17, Adirondack Northway 6 Miles
- Saratoga Springs 14 Miles
- Lake George 15 Miles
- Albany 45 Miles

- Boston 180 Miles
- Montreal 185 Miles
- New York City 200 Miles
- Buffalo 300 Miles

***State Routes***

Most of the traffic in the Village of Fort Edward passes along State Route 4. Route 4 is also known as Broadway, the local main street in the Village of Fort Edward. Route 4 is a two-lane, commercial route that runs north and south. This is the primary route to the northern and eastern reaches of Washington County from the upper Hudson Valley. Most of the traffic heading north from areas east of Glens Falls take this highway after getting off the NYS Adirondack Northway (I-87). As a result, a considerable amount of traffic throughout the year passes along Route 4 heading toward Vermont. Route 4 also provides quick access to most areas of the Town of Fort Edward since it runs the entire length of the Town along the immediate eastern shoreline of the Hudson River. Concerns about traffic volume, speed and accidents, commercial business access management, and pedestrian safety along Route 4 were specifically studied in the Route 4 Corridor Management Plan and will be addressed during the upcoming reconstruction of this major road by the NYS Department of Transportation, slated to begin in 2006.



New York State Route 197 is a two-lane road running west to east through the Town. The highway crosses Rogers Island and enters the Village of Fort Edward, intersecting with Route 4 within the Village. Route 197 runs to the east toward Durkeetown and into the neighboring Town of Argyle. Motorists traveling on Route 4 that wish to access locations east of the Village use Route 197 as a connector between Fort Edward and Argyle.



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### ***County Roads***

County Route 37 or Burgoyne Avenue is the only County-owned and maintained road in the Village. This road carries a considerable amount of traffic as travelers use it to link up with NYS Route 32 (Dix Avenue) in the Town of Kingsbury to access points further west like the City of Glens Falls. There is an increasing concern about traffic volume, speed and pedestrian safety along Burgoyne Avenue, especially due to the presence of school-aged children who walk and bike to and from school along this road.

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### ***Local Roads***

The Village has a well-designed transportation system that generally functions well for local residents. For the most part, the roadways are well maintained and traffic flows smoothly on the local roads. Pedestrians are generally accommodated via concrete or old slate sidewalks along various roadway segments. Crosswalks are provided at some of the major intersections and side street crossings. According to the response from the Residential Survey, the following local streets are most in need of surface improvements: East St., McCrea St., Marion St., McIntyre St., Taylor St., Notre Dame St., Rogers St. and Wing St. Based upon the same survey, the following streets are most in need of sidewalk improvements: East St., McCrea St., Notre Dame St., Mechanic St., Marion St., McIntyre St., Taylor St., and Seminary St.



## **Alternative Transportation Options**

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### ***Rail Service***

Both passenger and freight rail service is available to the Village of Fort Edward. Amtrak Railways makes two northbound and southbound daily stops at Fort Edward's historic train station located on East Street near the intersection with Wing Street. Amtrak offers daily

passenger service to locations such as New York, Montreal, and Rutland, Vermont. The “Adirondack” is a daily service offered by Amtrak, which links New York City to Montreal. This service is part of a Trails and Rails program established in partnership with the National Park Service and Amtrak in an effort to promote the areas natural and cultural resources, National Park Service areas and train rider ship. The “Ethan Allen Express” provides daily service from New York to Rutland, Vermont with stops at 10 locations within New York and 2 locations in Vermont. The “Ethan Allen Express’ is financed and operated by a cooperative partnership between the State of Vermont and Amtrak.

During the summer of 2003 Congressman Sweeney and Town officials announced that \$600,000 had been secured for the interior renovation of the historic train station. Exterior renovations have already been completed however more interior changes are currently underway to provide additional services to travelers in the station such as an information kiosk, a food concession and possibly a tourism booth.



The Delaware and Hudson Railway, a part of the Canadian Pacific Rail System, serves Fort Edward and the northeast region. CP Rail System is the seventh largest rail network in North America offering transportation of commercial goods such as food products, coal, automobiles, and machinery and forest products throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

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### ***Bus Service***

The Greater Glens Falls Transit System (GGFTS) is the public transportation provider in the Glens Falls urban area providing fixed route, public transportation service six days a week. The transportation route includes two bus stop shelters within the Village. One is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Route 4 and East Street, the other at the southeast corner of Route 4 and Maple Street (NYS Route 196) An “Amtrak Train – Catcher Service” provides direct bus service connections to inbound and outbound Amtrak passengers to and from the Fort Edward historic train station. The Catcher Service can be provided with 48 hours notice. Regional bus service is provided by Greyhound and Adirondack Trailways. Both operate daily and provide local and express trips running north and south. For more information on bus routes, bus schedules and fares, visit their website at [www.cityofglensfalls.com](http://www.cityofglensfalls.com), or call them at (518) 761-3800.

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### ***Water Transportation***

The Town and Village of Fort Edward hosts Lock 6, 7 and 8 of the Champlain Canal, an eleven-lock system that stretches from Waterford to Whitehall over a distance of sixty miles. The Champlain Canal System is operated and maintained by the New York State Canal Corporation, a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority. The canal operates from early May to mid-November and is subject to the latest water and weather conditions. The hours of operation for locks and lift bridges are set in conjunction with Eastern Daylight Savings time.

The canal locks and channel dimensions can accommodate most pleasure craft sizes. The channel depths are twelve feet with some variation and the bridge clearances are 15.5 feet. The dimensions of the locks are 328 feet long by 45 feet wide leaving 300 feet by 43.5 feet available for vessels. Seasonal permits or two-day passes are required for all motorized vessels using the Canal System's locks and lift bridges. The cost of the passes and permits are determined by the size of the vessel. For pleasure crafts, seasonal permits range from \$25 to \$100; two-day passes range from \$5 to \$20.



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### ***Airport***

Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport (Warren County Airport) is a newly remodeled and enhanced facility owned and operated by the Warren County Department of Public Works. The airport is located approximately five miles northwest of Fort Edward just off NYS Route 254 in the Town of Queensbury. There are two runways, 4,000 and 5,000 feet each, five taxiways, a large corporate apron, a parking apron for 25 transient aircrafts, and an apron with room for 33 additional planes. The fixed base operator is Empire East Aviation, Inc. and offers flight lessons, scenic rides, charters, fuel, and aircraft maintenance.

On demand charter services for Northeast destinations is available through “Quick Flight” air carrier service. Major airline service is available at the Albany International Airport located approximately 45 miles south of the Village in Albany, New York, and the International airport in Burlington, Vermont.

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### ***Pedestrian and Multi-Use Trails***

NYS Route 197 (Reynolds Road) from the intersection with US Route 9 to the beginning of Bridge Street, just before the bridge crossing the Hudson River is part the Saratoga County Heritage Trail. This trail is a county designated on - street bicycle route marked for use by experienced cyclists.

Route 4 is also designated as an on - street bicycle route throughout the entire Village, (New York State Bike Route 9). Bicycle Route 9 runs from New York City to Montreal. The north section travels through Hudson River communities, the gateway of the NY State Canal System, then continues along the Hudson and Lake Champlain Valleys. This bicycle route utilizes the shoulder and travel lanes along the corridor for access and is therefore hazardous at times due to on-street parking and narrow roads in the villages, high speeds on the rural stretches, and the prevalence of numerous trucks on Route 4. Much of Bike Route 9 is not intended for the novice cyclist.

The Old Champlain Canal Towpath can be accessed in the Village of Fort Edward by going east on East Street, north on Wing Street, east on Culver Street then north on McIntyre Street where a portion of this road functions as a designated on - street bike route. The Canal Towpath begins on Culver Street continues as an unpaved path until it connects with the Tow Path Road as a designated on - street bike route. This designated on-street bicycle route continues for approximately ½-mile and then proceeds as an unpaved multi-use trail.



The Old Champlain Canal Towpath connects to an eight-mile westbound bicycle/pedestrian trail, the Feeder Canal Heritage Trail. The Feeder Canal Heritage Trail parallels the Feeder Canal and crosses Route 4 just north of Martindale Avenue in the Village of Hudson Falls. The trail ultimately connects to several on - street connections in the City of Glens Falls and then links up with the Warren County Bikeway. The Feeder Canal Heritage Trail is part of the New

York State Canalway Trail system. The Canalway trail system consists of more than 230-miles of existing multi-use recreational trails across upstate New York.

## **Planned Improvements**

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### ***Route 4 Reconstruction***

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) will be reconstructing US Route 4 from its intersection with Cortland Street in the Village of Fort Edward to its intersection with Gibson Avenue at the Town of Fort Edward/Village of Hudson Falls municipal boundary commencing in mid 2006, and ending in late 2007, early 2008. The two municipalities were jointly awarded a \$600,000 grant from the Governors Office of Small Cities for the replacement of the water line beneath Route 4. In addition, the Town secured \$3.48 million dollar grant through Congressman Sweeney's Office under the Federal Highway Bill (SAFTEA) to complete the Village of Fort Edward's portion of the water line replacement. These funds will also be used to install decorative lighting, brick pavers, cross walks, benches, tree grates, trash receptacles, a visitors kiosk, and signage. The Route 4 Reconstruction Project is anticipated to include:

- Full depth pavement reconstruction of the shared travel turning and parking lanes (where they can be accommodated). Pavement markings will be provided to delineate the shared travel, turning and parking lanes. The shared travel lanes will be 14 feet wide and accommodate both vehicular and bicycle traffic. Parking Lanes will be 8 feet wide and turning lanes, where provided, will be 11 feet wide.
- New granite curbing and concrete sidewalks with a minimum width of 5 feet. Handicapped accessibility ramps with provisions for the blind are proposed to be provided at all intersections and at mid-block crossings. Bulb-outs will be provided at selected intersections to reduce pedestrian crossing lengths and calm traffic. A 3-foot wide snow storage area will be provided between the curb and sidewalk. The snow storage area is proposed to be grassed adjacent to the residential land use and paved with brick pattern adjacent to retail/commercial land use.

- A new storm sewer system to handle surface runoff with bicycle-safe grates over the catch basins.
- Replacement of underground utilities such as existing water lines.
- New traffic control signs which will conform to the New York State Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Where limited sight distance or other non-standard or non-conforming features will be retained, appropriate advisory signs are anticipated to be installed.
- Bicycle access will be provided via a shared lane design, along with bicycle route markers.
- The roadway segment below the railroad overpass in the Village of Fort Edward will be lowered to provide a minimum vertical clearance of 14' 0".
- Residential and commercial driveways will be reconstructed and comply with NYS DOT driveway design standards. Where existing driveways are too wide curbed islands will be provided to reduce the driveway opening.
- Bus stops and shelters will be provided and consistent with NYS DOT Highway Design Manual and ADA guidelines.
- The flashing beacons and signing for the Fort Edward High School will be replaced.
- The bridge over Canadian Pacific Railway is anticipated to be replaced in the near future and as a part of that project, the at-grade crossing near McCrea Street will be upgraded to include railroad cross buck signs with flashing lights.
- Streetscape improvements such as antique street lighting, benches, trees, tree drainage grates and new signage.

The following intersections with Route 4 are anticipated to be improved to accommodate truck-turning movements:

- Argyle Street.
- Bridge Street (Route 197).
- East Street.

- Eddy Street.
- Mill Street.

The intersection of East Street and Route 4 is anticipated to be improved with updated traffic signal systems and where needed, include left and/or right turn lanes. Pedestrian countdown signals will be provided to improve pedestrian crossing safety:

On-street parking lanes will be provided along Route 4 from:

- Moon Street to Notre Dame Street.
- Bridge Street to Liberty Street.

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### ***Route 197 Bridge Replacement***

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) replacement project of the Route 197 Bridge is anticipated to begin in 2009. According to a representative of the NYS DOT the bridge is slated to be replaced and DOT is currently working on the scoping phase of the project. Due to the presence of archeologically sensitive areas this project must go through an extensive review process with SHPO. A traffic study will be done to determine the size necessary for the bridge, taking into consideration current and future traffic impacts.

The Route 4 Corridor Management Plan recommended that NYS DOT consider the feasibility of widening the bridge to accommodate traffic generated by future planned improvements, to improve the “Gateway Image” of the Village, to enhance the view of the Hudson River over the bridge by lowering the bridge walls, or installing a more transparent material, to include a pedestrian viewing area on each side of the bridge and to install pedestrian scale lighting and pedestrian walkways for safety and aesthetic reasons.

# Existing Land Use & Zoning Analysis

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## Introduction

Existing land use patterns compared to the existing zoning districts represents a snapshot of the current pattern of activities and level of development in Fort Edward. This section of the Master Plan provides an analysis of the existing land use patterns through the use of current Geographic Information System (GIS) data and an overview of the existing local zoning regulations. This section also includes a summary of the neighborhood field study conducted by the Advisory Committee to identify a variety of issues or concerns with the condition of buildings, private yards, and sidewalks.

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### *GIS Analysis of Existing Land Use Patterns*

The Village's development patterns have been greatly influenced by the natural terrain, existing water bodies such as the Hudson River and the Champlain Canal, existing railroad, road and bridge network and availability of public water and sewer service. The majority of land area in the Village is either categorized as vacant, single – family residential, community services, or agriculture.

The Village of Fort Edward Existing Land Use Map was created using 2004 Geographic Information System (GIS) parcel-based Real Property Assessment data. Each individual land parcel was assigned a land use category based upon the New York State Real Property Type Classification Codes. Accuracy and completeness of this information is not guaranteed, as the information is only updated on an annual basis. The following land use categories were used to color code all of the Existing Land Use Map for this study:

1. Agricultural – Property used as a part of an operating farm that does not have living accommodations and is used for the production of crops and/or raising of livestock
2. Commercial – Property used for hotels, restaurants, automobile services, storage, retail, banks, offices, funeral homes, etc.
3. Community Services - Property used for schools, libraries, places of worship, cultural facilities, welfare services, hospitals, clinics, government, police, armed forces, correctional facilities, shelters, cemeteries, etc.

4. Industrial - Property used for the production and fabrication of durable and non-durable goods, mining, quarrying, etc.
5. Mixed Use/Multi-Purpose – Property that is used for more than one purpose, such as a multiple floored structure with retail services on the first floor and offices and/or apartments on the upper floors.
6. Mobile Home/Mobile Home Park - Property used for one (1) individual mobile home or an area where mobile homes are owner occupied but land and facilities are leased or rented.
7. Multi-Family Residential - Property used for apartments and all types of residential dwellings that have more than two dwelling units.
8. Public Utilities and Facilities - Property used for electric or gas power generation or transmission, public drinking water and water treatment facilities, communications, train, plane, and bus terminals, canals, waste disposal sewer treatment, etc.
9. Recreation & Entertainment - Property used for parks, theaters, racetracks, bowling centers, health spas, beaches, campgrounds, etc.
10. Single-Family Residential - Property used for one-family, year round residence.
11. Two-Family Residential - Property used for two-family, year round residence.
12. Vacant Lands - Property that is not in use, in temporary use, or lacking permanent improvement.

Table 9 below breaks down the Village properties in to twelve (12) classifications. The information listed in the table is based upon the Washington County GIS system. According to the 2004 GIS parcel-based Real Property Assessment data, the Village contains 1,296 tax parcels comprising approximately 1,034 acres, or 1.6 square miles. These figures are taxable parcels only and do not include land area covered by roads and rivers and hydrologic features; the total land area is actually about 1.8 square miles. The total assessed value of land and structures within the Village is approximately \$100 million.

**Table 9: Land Use Coverage in Fort Edward**

Land Use Category	# Acres	% of Total	# Parcels	Total Assessed Value
Agricultural	101.64	9.82	5	\$59,800.00
Commercial	41.74	4.03	35	\$3,997,200.00
Community Services	127.46	12.32	19	\$8,850,900.00
Industrial	51.55	4.98	9	\$15,663,840.00
Mixed Use/ Multi-Purpose	4.61	0.45	26	\$2,250,000.00
Mobile Home/Mobile Home Park	8.18	0.79	20	\$1,351,480.00
Multi-Family Residential	27.67	2.67	58	\$5,946,500.00
Recreation & Entertainment	12.73	1.23	4	\$320,300.00
Public Facilities & Utilities	59.52	5.75	13	\$1,208,600.00
Single-Family Residential	273.81	26.46	837	\$52,629,170.00
Two-Family Residential	30.55	2.95	119	\$7,512,200.00
Vacant Land	295.19	28.53	151	\$1,123,300.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,034.65</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>\$100,913,290.00</b>

Source: Laberge Group

As indicated in Table 9, and visible on the [Existing Land Use Map](#), the greatest land area within the Village is covered by properties assessed as **Vacant Land** making up 28.53% of the total land area or about 295 acres. This high land vacancy rate could be attributed to land that is undevelopable due to natural constraints such as streams, steep slopes or wetland areas. It should be noted that much of this vacant property is located on Roger's Island or owned by Energy Park Associates and Rourke Developers Inc. The total value assessment of vacant lands within the Village is approximately \$1.1 million.

The second greatest land use category is **Single-Family Residential**, making up 26.46% of the total area, or approximately 274 out of 1,034 acres. Single-family homes are represented all throughout the Village and range from those built prior to 1939 to those constructed in 2004. Generally, these areas are designated as R-1 Residential and R-2 Residential on the [Village of Fort Edward Zoning Map](#). The total value assessment of single-family housing in the Village is approximately \$52.6 million. Homes that are categorized as **Mobile Homes** make up 0.79% of the total area or 8.18 acres. These properties are within the R-3 Residential Zoning District located off of Drifting Ridge and Tori Trace. The total value assessment of mobile home residences within the Village is approximately \$1.3 million.

Properties assessed as **Two-Family Residential** make about 3% of the total area of the Village, or 30.55 acres. The 151 two-family residential parcels are distributed equally throughout the Village, represented in all of the Village Zoning Districts, with many in particular off of East Street and Broadway (Route 4). Two-family homes within the Village have a total value

assessment of approximately \$7.5 million. Properties assessed as **Multi-family Residential** make up 2.67% of the total Village area, or 27.67 acres. Multi-family residences consist of three or more units in a building. Multi-family residences are also evenly distributed throughout many of the various Village Zoning Districts with a concentration off of Broadway (Route 4), and McCrea Street and large apartment complexes off of McIntyre and Notre Dame streets. The total value assessment of multi-family housing is approximately \$5.9 million.

Properties assessed as **Mixed-Use/Multi-Purpose** make up 0.45% of the total Village land area or 4.61 acres. These properties are mostly located along Broadway (Route 4) or within the C-1 Commercial Zoning District. The total value assessment of Mixed-Use/Multi-Purpose properties is approximately \$2.2 million. This category is represented by structures such as detached homes that contain office space, or two story structures that have retail space on the bottom floor, and office and/or apartments on the upper floor.

Property assessed as **Community Services** makes up 12.32% of the total land area or approximately 127 acres. Properties that are categorized as Community Services include the Champlain Canal, the Town and Village government office buildings, the United States Post Office, the Fort Edward Fire and Police Stations, the Fort Edward High School and various religious properties. Properties categorized as Community Services have a total value assessment of approximately \$8.8 million.

Properties assessed as **Agricultural** cover approximately 101 acres or 9.8% of the total land within the Village. The majority of the Agricultural property is located in the northwestern corner of the Village behind Marion Street and Sunset Lane and east of the Champlain Canal, just north of Route 197. The total value assessment of land categorized as Agricultural is \$59,800.00.

**Public Facilities and Utilities** cover approximately 60 acres of the Village. This land use category includes the property managed by the Fort Edward Sewer Treatment Plant, the Amtrak and Delaware and Hudson railroad properties, and the Niagara Mohawk property adjacent to the Hudson River. The total value assessment of land categorized as Public Facilities and Utilities is approximately \$1.2 million.

Properties assessed as **Recreation and Entertainment** represent only 1.23% of the total Village area, or 12.73 acres. The total value assessment of land categorized as Recreation and Entertainment is approximately \$320 thousand. Recreational opportunities within the Village include McIntyre Park, Bradley Park, Underwood Park and the Yacht Basin, although the Yacht Basin is assessed as Vacant Land.

**Commercially** assessed parcels within the Village equal approximately 4% of the total Village area or 41.74 acres. As expected, the intense commercial development occurs along the Broadway/Route 4 corridor which is zoned C-1 Commercial and off Wing Street which borders the Industrial Zone, a few parcels off of Towpath Lane near the Fort Edward Industrial Park, and a few parcels adjacent to the Amtrak railroad. The total value assessment of land categorized as Commercial is \$3.9 million.

Properties assessed as **Industrial** make about 5% of the total area of the Village or 51.5 acres. Industrial properties are almost all contained within the established Industrial Zoning Districts except for two properties owned by Waste Management located off of Culver Street. The largest property assessed as industrial is that of Irving Tissue located off of Eddy Street. Industrial properties have a total value assessment of approximately \$15.6 million.

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### ***Neighborhood Field Survey***

During the months of May through August 2004 the Committee conducted field work dividing the Village into seven (7) distinctive neighborhood focus areas. (See [Neighborhood Focus Area Map](#).)

The Committee focused on a variety of issues or concerns for each neighborhood focus area and identified the condition of buildings, private yards, and sidewalks. The following is a general summary of their findings:

On July 20, 2004, the Advisory Committee met for the first time to begin their neighborhood walks. Starting with Area #1, the Committee identified, with the exception of a few vacant properties, that the majority of properties were well – kept, with some needing only basic maintenance. There were a few properties that were vacant and/or for sale, and the sidewalks were in good condition.

On August 2, 2004, members of the Advisory Committee walked together and observed Area # 2. The Committee identified a number of well-maintained or refurbished stately historic homes along Broadway, north of Case Street. A few streets within this focus area such as Harrison Street, Summit Street, and Burgoyne Avenue need sidewalk repair, and Grove Street and McKie Street do not have any sidewalks. In addition, Area #2 has a number of streets having buildings that are in need of repair or that may be in violation of the building code, such as Summit Street, Maple Avenue, McIntyre Street, Culver Street, and Taylor Street.

Committee members visually surveyed the area bordering Area # 7, including Wing Street and Culver Street on August 2, 2004. They noted that Wing and Culver streets do not have any

sidewalks and there are issues with property upkeep, including the presence of abandoned vehicles, poor dumpster locations, and a lack of landscaping and screening.

Committee members continued to visually survey Area # 3 on August 24<sup>th</sup> and identified a number of vacant buildings and properties that appear to be in poor condition, especially the second floors of the buildings on Broadway. Some of the sidewalks on Broadway are in need of repair especially those that go under the railroad overpass that crosses Route 4. A few houses on Taylor Street, Liberty Street, Keating Street, and Spruce Street are vacant and/or in need of repair. Taylor Street also needs sidewalk maintenance.

Finally, on August 31, 2004, the Committee visually surveyed the neighborhoods in Area # 4, Area # 5, and Area # 6. Within Area # 4 and #5, the Committee identified a few homes on Old Fort Street that are in poor condition and one on Notre Dame Street and on East Street. The sidewalks in this area are generally in poor condition. The Anvil Inn Restaurant and the Family Diner were noted to be in good condition, with the Anvil attracting local customers and others from the surrounding region.

Area # 6 contains the King Edward Knolls residential development. This area was developed about twenty (20) years ago with a variety of single-family home styles including split-level, ranch and colonial. The development is suburban in nature, lacking sidewalks. The open area to the east of the King Edward Knolls, a 53 acre parcel of land, will soon be developed with approximately 100 new homes. South of King Edward Knolls is the new manufactured home development off of Drifting Ridge. The area has been constructed within the last five (5) years and is made up mostly of double-wide manufactured homes on privately-owned lots. A large area of this development is in Phase II of construction and some homeowners complain about the unfinished roads and related drainage issues.

## **Existing Zoning & Other Regulations**

The Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law was adopted in July 1986 and amended several times subsequently. The law is composed of the following sections:

- Article I. Title and Definitions
- Article II. Districts Established; Zoning Map; District Boundaries
- Article III. Use Regulations and Exceptions
- Article IV. Supplementary Use Regulations; Yards; Plats
- Article V. Nonconforming uses

- Article VI. Administration and Enforcement
- Article VII. Miscellaneous provisions

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### ***Description of Zoning Districts***

Future economic growth and neighborhood stability and preservation are directly impacted by the district boundaries, permitted uses, accessory uses, conditional uses, and prohibited uses, as well as the development requirements of the various districts. (See [Zoning Map](#)) The Village has nine delineated base districts, which include the following:

1. R-1 Residential Zone
2. R-2 Residential Zone
3. R-3 Residential Zone
4. C-1 Commercial Zone
5. C-2 Zone
6. C-3 Zone
7. C-4 Zone
8. I Industrial Zone
9. N-1 Marina Zone

### **R-1 Residential Zone**

The permitted uses in the R-1 Residential Zone are listed below:

- One – family detached dwelling.
- An attached or detached private garage, as defined in section 100 –2.
- Offices for members of the learned professions or the office of a business not conducted on the premises, provided that, no goods or merchandise are sold, displayed, or offered for sale therein and no manual labor is performed therein.
- Gardens, including the sale of produce raised on the premises.

- Accessory uses customarily incident to the above uses. Section 100 - 6 B and C, defined an accessory use, and include bulk regulations for “for sale”, “for rent” signs and signs indicating the use of the premises.

Table 10, below tabulates the bulk regulations of the Village of Fort Edward R-1 district:

**Table 10: Village of Fort Edward R-1 District Bulk Regulations**

Minimum Lot Size	15,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Front Yard Setback	30 ft
Rear Yard Setback	None
Side Yard Setback	7.5 ft
Minimum Lot Width	100 ft
Minimum Lot Depth	None
Maximum Building Coverage	25%
Maximum Height	None

Source: Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law

### **R-2 Residential Zone**

The permitted uses in the R-2 Residential Zone are listed below:

- One – family detached dwelling.
- An attached or detached private garage, as defined in section 100 –2.
- Offices for members of the learned professions or the office of a business not conducted on the premises, provided that, no goods or merchandise are sold, displayed, or offered for sale therein and no manual labor is performed therein.
- Gardens, including the sale of produce raised on the premises.
- Multiple dwellings [no more than three (3) dwelling units].
- Two – family dwellings.
- Farming, dairying, gardening, greenhouses, and nurseries, including the sale of products raised or produced on the premises.

Table 11, below tabulates the bulk regulations of the Village of Fort Edward R-2 district:

**Table 11: Village of Fort Edward R-2 District Bulk Regulations**

Minimum Lot Size	15,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Front Yard Setback	30 ft
Rear Yard Setback	None
Side Yard Setback	7.5 ft
Minimum Lot Width	100 ft
Minimum Lot Depth	None
Maximum Building Coverage	25% - 35%
Maximum Height	None

Source: Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law

**R-3 Residential Zone**

The permitted uses in the R-3 Residential Zone are listed below:

- One – family detached dwelling.
- An attached or detached private garage, as defined in section 100 –2.
- One – family manufactured homes with restrictions (listed a – j).

Table 12, below tabulates the bulk regulations of the Village of Fort Edward R-3 district:

**Table 12: Village of Fort Edward R-3 District Bulk Regulations**

Minimum living Space	960 ft <sup>2</sup>
Minimum home width	24 ft
Minimum roof pitch	3/12 with 30 psf snow load

*Source: Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law*

### **C-1 Commercial Zone**

The permitted uses in the C-1 Commercial Zone are listed below:

- Multiple dwellings (no more than four (4) dwelling units).
- Two – family dwellings.
- Farming, dairying, gardening, greenhouses, and nurseries, including the sale of products raised or produced on the premises.
- An attached or detached private garage as defined in Section 100 –2.
- Offices for members of the learned professions or the office of a business not conducted on the premises, provided that, no goods or merchandise are sold, displayed, or offered for sale therein and no manual labor is performed therein.
- Gardens, including the sale of produce raised on the premises.
- Accessory apartments may be located in commercial buildings in a commercial area; however, no apartments may be located on the ground floor or below the ground floor.
- Retail Stores.
- Shops for custom work or the making of articles to be sold at retail on the premises.
- Offices and banking establishments.
- Restaurants and grills.
- Any establishment, which provides goods and/or services directly to the consumer.
- Theaters, bowling alleys, skating rinks, dance halls, billiard halls, and similar amusement establishment.
- Gas and motor oil stations and garages for storage or repairs, including automobile sales rooms.
- Billboards and advertising signs as regulated by laws and ordinances.
- Light manufacturer of any article found by the Planning Board to be acceptable.
- Any additional use which the Planning Board may find to be substantially similar to the uses permitted in this section and not injurious to property or to the uses herein specified, but no such additional use shall be permitted by the Planning Board until after an application has been filed specifying the proposed use in full and a public hearing

shall have been held, after reasonable notice shall have been given to all adjoining holders of real estate, and a decision therein shall have been made in writing.

- Accessory uses customarily and necessarily incident to the foregoing uses.

Table 13 below tabulates the bulk regulations of the Village of Fort Edward C-1 district:

**Table 13: Village of Fort Edward C-1 District Bulk Regulations**

Minimum Lot Size	15,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Front Yard Setback	30 ft
Rear Yard Setback	None
Side Yard Setback	None
Minimum Lot Width	100 ft
Minimum Lot Depth	None
Maximum Building Coverage	35%
Maximum Height	None

*Source: Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law*

**C-2 Commercial Zone**

The permitted uses in the C-2 Zone are listed below:

- Recreational uses only (such as tennis, softball, baseball, basketball and children’s play areas) with no camping facilities or overnight camping.

The C-2 Zone does not have any minimum lot size requirements.

**C-3 Commercial Zone**

The permitted uses in the C-3 Zone are listed below:

- Historical, archeological and/or cultural facilities.
- Government facilities.

The C-3 Zone does not have any minimum lot size requirements.

### **C-4 Commercial Zone**

The permitted uses in the C-4 Zone are listed below:

- The study, designation, protection, restoration, rehabilitation and use of buildings, structures, districts, areas, sites or objects significant in the history, architecture, archeology or culture of this state, its communities or nation.

The C-4 Zone does not have any minimum lot size requirements.

### **I - Industrial Zone**

The permitted uses in the Industrial Zone are listed below:

- Multiple dwellings of three (3) or more dwelling units.
- Attached or detached private garages as defined in Section 100 –2.
- Any industrial use which the Planning Board may find to be not injurious to property or to the uses herein specified, but no such industrial use shall be permitted by the Planning Board until after an application has been filed specifying the proposed use in full and a public hearing shall have been held, after reasonable notice shall have been given to all adjoining holders of real estate, and a decision thereon shall have been made in writing.
- Permitted accessory uses, located on the same lot as the principal structure or use, such as parking areas, signs, and accessory uses customarily and necessarily incident to the principal permitted use.

Table 14, below tabulates the bulk regulations of the Village of Fort Edward Industrial District.

**Table 14: Village of Fort Edward Industrial District Bulk Regulations**

Minimum Lot Size	None
Front Yard Setback	30 ft
Rear Yard Setback	25 ft
Side Yard Setback	25 ft each side
Minimum Lot Width	None t
Minimum Lot Depth	None
Maximum Building Coverage	75%
Maximum Height	3 stories

*Source: Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law*

**N-1 Marina Zone**

The permitted uses in the N-1 Marina Zone are listed below:

- Marinas and all uses defined therein.
- Yacht club and uses defined therein.
- Historical and archeological activities, including museums, displays, artifact repositories and educational classrooms and activities.
- Vessels used only for pleasure and/or educational purposes.
- Permitted accessory uses in the N-1 Marina Zone shall include: public and private parking, signs, marina services, and accessories customarily and necessarily incident to the foregoing uses and to the principal permitted uses.

Table 15, below tabulates the bulk regulations of the Village of Fort Edward Marina District.

**Table 15: Village of Fort Edward Marina District  
Bulk Regulations**

Minimum Lot Size	None
Front Yard Setback	30 ft
Rear Yard Setback	None
Side Yard Setback	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Lot Depth	None
Maximum Building Coverage	None
Maximum Height	2 stories

*Source: Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law*

***Supplementary Use Regulations***

Article IV of the Village of Fort Edward Zoning Law includes supplementary regulations that apply to specific or all districts. The following general regulations are pertinent to the R – 1 Residential Zone, the R – 2 Residential Zone, and the C – 1 Commercial Zone for current and future development:

Section 100 – 11 Exceptions – Side and Rear Yards – where commercial and industrial zones abut residential zones, the yards abutting such residential zones shall be no less than twenty – five (25) feet.

Section 100 – 12 deals with the sale of new and used cars. The sale of new and used cars shall be limited to the Commercial Zone designated as C – 1.

Section 100 – 14 deals with front yard requirements. No building shall be erected, altered, constructed or reconstructed so as to project in any way beyond the average setback line observed by the building on the same side of the street within the block at the time of passage of this chapter. Where there are no existing buildings, the setback line is thirty (30) feet back from the property line.

Section 100–15 deals with side yard requirements. In Zones R–1 and R–2, no building shall be erected, constructed, reconstructed or altered so as to project or encroach nearer than seven and one–half (7½) feet from the side line of the lot, and on a corner lot none shall encroach or project nearer the side street than twenty (20) feet, but in no case shall it be required to be greater than the average setback line observed by the buildings on the same side of the street in the same block.

# Previous Planning Efforts

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## Village of Fort Edward Master Plan, 1963

In 1963, the Village of Fort Edward developed a Master Plan that was funded through an Urban Planning Grant under the provisions of Section 701 of the Federal Housing Act of 1954.

The 1963 Village of Fort Edward Master Plan is divided into nine sections: Part I: Introduction, Part II: Policy Statement, Part III: Present Land Use, Part IV: Population and Labor Force, Part V: Looking to the Future, Part VI: Traffic Plan, Part VII: Downtown Plan, Part VIII: Community Facilities Plan and Part IX: Appendix.

The 1963 Master Plan is a 35-page document presenting a detailed inventory and analysis of the Village's history, existing land use, population distribution, neighborhood housing characteristics, labor force and employment characteristics, parking and transportation elements, infrastructure, public facilities, educational and recreational facilities. Census data from 1950 and 1960 was used as the source for much of the demographic information. Each section of the document presented the data with the use of graphics and maps, very useful elements that were often missing from documents created during this time period.

The 1963 Master Plan was designed to provide the Village with guidance for a twenty year period. The following is a list of Policy Statements provided by the Plan, many of which have actually been accomplished to date or are still applicable to issues facing Fort Edward today:

1. Stable and desirable residential neighborhoods must be encouraged by providing adequate community facilities.
2. Historical buildings within the Village should be preserved.
3. The entire Village should ultimately be served by both public sewers and public water.
4. The pollution of the Hudson River is adverse to the best interests of all the residents of the Village. In addition, the natural character of the river shoreline should be retained.
5. The downtown area should be up-graded by the provision of adequate off-street parking.
6. Neighborhood shopping centers should be limited in size to serve only local residents.
7. The widening of the Champlain Canal along its present alignment will be a positive step toward improving the economic base of both the Village and the region.

8. Development of the industrial corridor along the Delaware and Hudson Railroad is of paramount importance to the Village as a source of employment to its residents and as a means of improving the local tax base.
9. A variety of housing types is to be encouraged to satisfy the needs and desires of Village residents.

It is interesting to note, that the composers of the original Master Plan projected the loss of businesses from Fort Edward's downtown to other regional, automobile oriented shopping areas. The loss of tax revenue from downtown was projected to inevitably result in higher taxes to the homeowners, and Part VII: Downtown Plan presented a number of goals for revitalization of the downtown area.

Part VII of the 1963 Master Plan placed emphasis on the downtown as the social and economic center of the Village, the heart of the community, and the area that attracted the highest concentration of residents and non-residents. The Downtown Plan included an inventory of established businesses, a market analysis of the retail sales of the time, and an analysis of personal income figures and retail expenditures of the time. The goals of the 1963 Downtown Plan area as follows:

Downtown Plan Goals:

1. Downtown Fort Edward should be physically attractive to make shopping a pleasant visual experience and encourage new trade.
2. Downtown Fort Edward should encourage the activities and services, which are logically a part of its downtown area. These activities and services include retail stores, banks and offices, business and personal services etc.
3. Downtown Fort Edward should be developed as a compact unit rather than spread out along Broadway and East Street.
4. Downtown Fort Edward should be served by a system of off – street parking lots designed to enhance existing and future shopping and business.

## **Route 4 Corridor Management Plan, 2004**

The Village of Fort Edward adopted the Route 4 Corridor Management Plan in January 2005. In 2002, the Town of Fort Edward was successful in acquiring a New York State Quality Communities grant through the Department of Transportation on behalf of the Town of Kingsbury, the Village of Fort Edward and the Village of Hudson Falls. As the New York State Department of Transportation plans to reconstruct the Route 4 Corridor in the future, these four

communities, which share a common interest in Route 4, cooperatively chose to develop a management plan for the future development of the Route 4 Corridor.

The Corridor Study Area traverses the Village of Fort Edward, Town of Fort Edward, Village of Hudson Falls, and Town of Kingsbury and is approximately 4.5 miles in length. The purpose of the Route 4 Corridor Management Plan is to analyze the roadway within the context of the local communities and the regional market that it serves and to better integrate existing land uses and future land use potential with the needs and desires of the involved communities.

The Route 4 Management Corridor Plan presents twenty four (24) pages of recommendations and proposed improvements that apply to the segment of Route 4 running through the Village, too lengthy to list within this document. The recommendations are divided into three parts: Part I presents an overview of the improvements proposed by the N.Y. Department of Transportation; Part II presents general recommendations for the Corridor Study Area as a whole, divided into three major topics; Transportation, Land Use and Zoning, and Economic Development, and Part III presents detailed recommendations for each municipality; the Village of Fort Edward, the Town of Fort Edward, the Village of Hudson Falls and the Town of Kingsbury. In addition, conceptual improvement plans for specific “focus areas” chosen by the Advisory Committee are presented.