

# **TOWN OF LEYDEN**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



**ADOPTED JULY 11, 2017**



## TOWN OF LEYDEN IN NEW YORK STATE





## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance for the physical development of the town for the future. The plan is intended to provide a framework for land development and land subdivision controls. It will also help assure that the growth of the area will be in concert with plans for infrastructure and road development, and will not negatively impact natural resources and rural character. Finally, it is hoped that other governments (state, county, and other local governments) will find the plan useful in shaping their future development activities. It is the purpose of this plan to create a vision for the community's future that is a shared vision of the citizens of Town of Leyden.

### **Periodic Review and Update of the Plan**

It is the recommendation of the Planning Board that this plan be reviewed and updated every ten years by the Town Board and others, as designated by the Town Board. A periodic review will refresh the Board's perspective on the longer range issues affecting Leyden, and help to reinforce the link between day-to-day development decisions and longer range town policies. In addition, a periodic update will keep the plan current with the ever-changing conditions of the town without the need for large-scale planning efforts.

### **The Organization of This Document**

This document is organized into the following parts:

#### **Part I. Community Profile**

This section presents a compilation of relevant facts about demographics and indicators of the town based on U.S. Census and other data.

#### **Part II. Goals and Strategies**

This section presents a discussion of community issues and strategies that reflect the needs and desires of the community. It was developed based upon public meetings, and a SWOT exercise.

### **Part III. Land Use Plan and Policies**

This section includes policies which guide development in the town and form the framework for its land use regulations and are intended to inform the decisions of the planning board and zoning board of appeals. All development projects in the town should conform to these policies.

#### ***Appendix A. Maps***

## **PART I. COMMUNITY PROFILE**

### REGIONAL SETTING

The Town of Leyden lies just west of the Adirondack Park in southernmost Lewis County on its border with Oneida County. The Black River forms the town's eastern border. The western half of the Village of Port Leyden lies in the town (its eastern half is part of the Town of Lyonsdale). Surrounding towns include: Lewis, West Turin, Lyonsdale, Boonville and Ava.



Route 12 Looking North

### HISTORY

Leyden was the first town formed in Lewis County on March 10, 1797. It included territory referred to as Inman's Triangle as well as all of Lewis and Jefferson Counties lying east and north of the Black River.

The first settler to this town was William Topping who came here with his family from Meriden, Connecticut in early 1794. Their home was on the East Road, a little Northeast

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of Sugar River. Topping was shortly joined by his brother, Jared, William Dustin, Asa Lord, and Bela Butterfield. The first birth took place in June 1796 when Topping & his wife had a son, Jonathan. The early settlers were joined by others primarily from Haddam, Middlefield, and Middletown, Connecticut.

The first sawmill in the county was built in 1795 at Talcottville by Bela Butterfield. The first gristmill in the Town of Leyden and the second one in the County was built on the Black River at Port Leyden, then called Kelsey's Mills, in 1799 and was in operation in 1800 by Peter W. Aldrich and Elber Kelsey. This village remains the largest in size in the township to date.

The hamlet of Talcottville is located in Leyden and has served as a summer residence of the late author Edmund Wilson. At one time it was a thriving hamlet with a sawmill, a gristmill, stores, a cheese box factory and others. The schoolhouse is now used as the Leyden Town Hall, but the Methodist Church, believed to have been built in 1868, is no longer in use today. The Town of Leyden Highway Department is located in Talcottville.

Locust Grove, a little more than a "four corners" area, has quite a distinguished past in serving as the home of the Merriam family. Nathaniel Merriam came to Leyden in 1800. He served in the Assembly in 1811 and 1820 and became County Judge in 1815. His great-grandson, Dr. C. Hart Merriam was nationally known in the fields of zoology, botany, and ethology. For a time he was connected with the Smithsonian Institute and authored several books throughout his professional life.

The Black River Canal ran from Rome to Lyons Falls, a distance of thirty-five and one half miles. The Canal was started in 1838 and water was let to Port Leyden in 1850 and in 1851 the Canal was put to use. By 1855 the canal was brought to the Black River below the falls in Lyons Falls (called High Falls at that time). This waterway, as anticipated, brought wealth and prosperity to the northern part of New York State. Farmers, lumbermen, and others took advantage of it. The heydays for the canal was in the 1890's when lumber, potash, and dairy products were carried from this section to New York City or Buffalo, by way of the Erie Canal from Rome. Most of the Canal was closed by 1922. The last boats were used to carry limestone to build Delta Dam.

In 1931 the proposed new state road from Boonville to Port Leyden to Lyons Falls would follow the old canal bed through the Village of Port Leyden. Thus the canal was filled in and a two-lane highway (Route 12) was built through the village, completed in 1935. In 1966 this same Route 12 was changed again – four lanes through the Village of Port Leyden toward Boonville- then back to two lanes until four lanes were formed around a restored section of canal locks at Denley- back to two lanes just before the Sugar River Bridge- other changes in the road also.

The Utica and Black River Railroad was organized January 29, 1853. The road was opened in Trenton and to Boonville in 1855. Due to financial trouble the company was

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reorganized under the name of The Black River and Utica Line on May 22, 1861. The road was completed to Port Leyden in 1867, Lowville in 1868 and Carthage in 1871. The road was leased to the Rome, Watertown, Ogdensburg Railroad in 1886 and the R.W.O. leased them to the New York Central in 1891. In 1882 the locomotives on the line were changed from woodburning to coal.

In the 1880's through the 1930's as many as 10 trains passed daily in the area. Many passengers relied on daily train service- to work, school, shopping, visits, etc. The freight trains carried cattle, coal, produce, milk, lumber, and other supplies that our area had to sell or wanted to buy. Refrigerator cars were first used in 1899.

In May 1961 all passenger service was discontinued. A few years before this a combined passenger and freight train, the Beeliner, provided daily service through Port Leyden. In July 1964 the track between Lyons Falls and Lowville was taken up. Shortly after the rest of the line between Utica and Lyons Falls was sold to Conrail- 45 miles. Conrail is owned by the Genesee Valley Transportation Company of Batavia, New York.

Many industries and businesses have come and gone in the Town of Leyden- sawmills, cheese factories, farming and many more. The Port Leyden Knitting Mill, built in 1907, closed and was demolished in the 1990's. Kelpytown has become the home for several businesses.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### **Population**

According to the 2010 Census, the Town of Leyden decreased by 0.4% between 2000 and 2010. The population of Lewis County grew by 0.5%, and the state as a whole experienced a 2.1% increase in population.

Figure 1. Population Distribution

Population	1990	2000	2010	% Change
Town of Leyden	1,778	1,792	1,785	-0.4%
Lewis County	26,796	26,944	27,084	+0.5%
New York State	17,990,455	18,976,457	19,378,102	+2.1%

Source: US Census Bureau

### **Household and Family Size**

The Town of Leyden has an average household of 2.51 persons. The average household size was slightly higher in Lewis County (2.55) and higher still in New York State as a

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whole (2.57). Average family size was 3.04 in Leyden in 2010. Family size was slightly lower in Lewis County and slightly higher in the state as a whole.

Figure 2. Average Household and Family Size, 2010

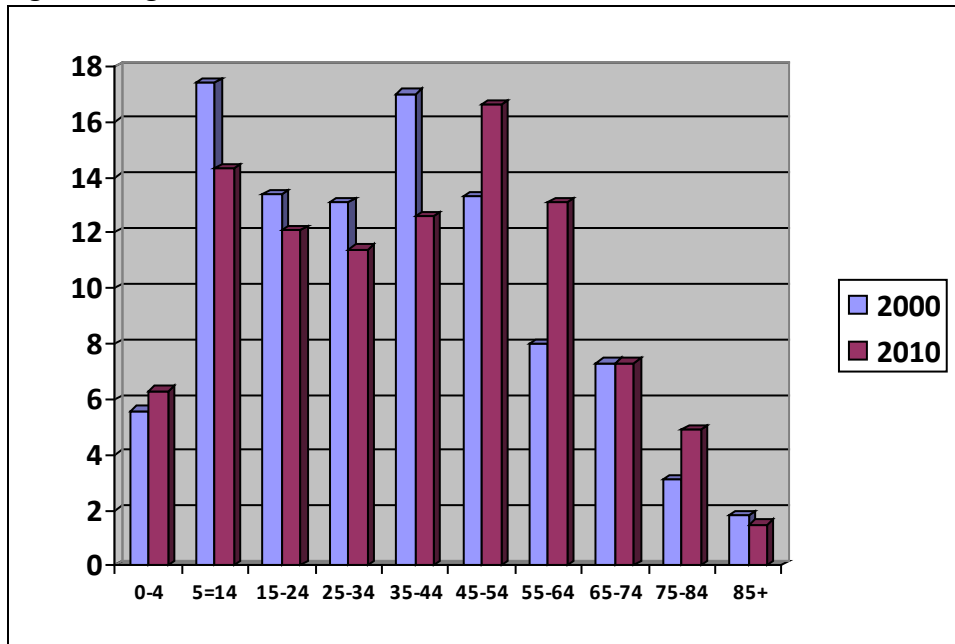
	Town of Leyden	Lewis County	New York State
Average Household Size (2010)	2.51	2.55	2.57
Average Family Size (2010)	3.04	3.01	3.20

Source: US Census Bureau

## Age

The Town of Leyden's population generally aged during the first decade of the millennium, as age groups below 45 decreased and age groups above 45 increased. This trend is very common in Tug Hill and nationwide. Median age in the town increased significantly from 35.3 in 2000 to 39.8 in 2010.

Figure 3. Age Cohorts



Source: US Census Bureau

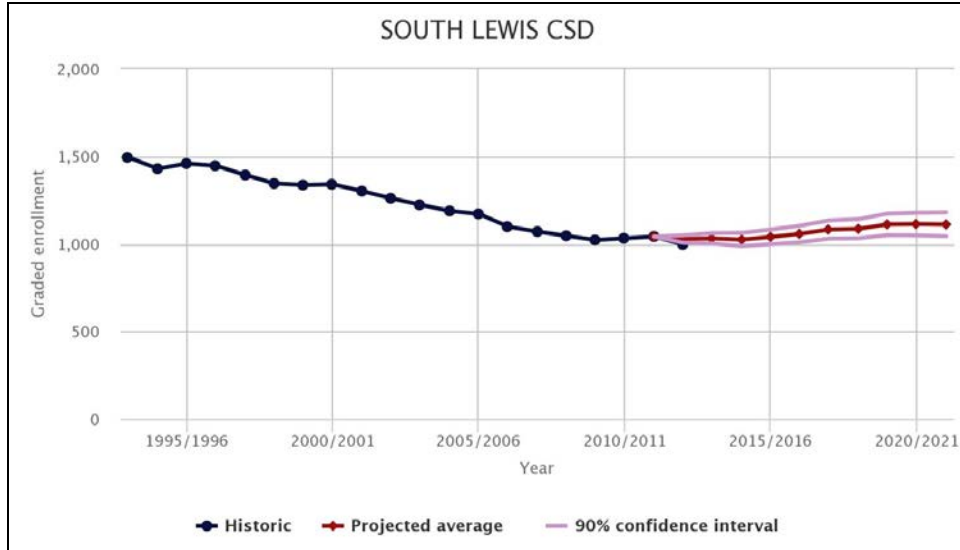
## School Districts

Residents of the Town of Leyden attend either South Lewis Central Schools or Adirondack Central Schools. Port Leyden is home to an elementary school that is part of the South Lewis district. Enrollment at South Lewis was 1,058 in 2011 and enrollment at Adirondack was 1,395. Enrollment projections provided by the New York State Center

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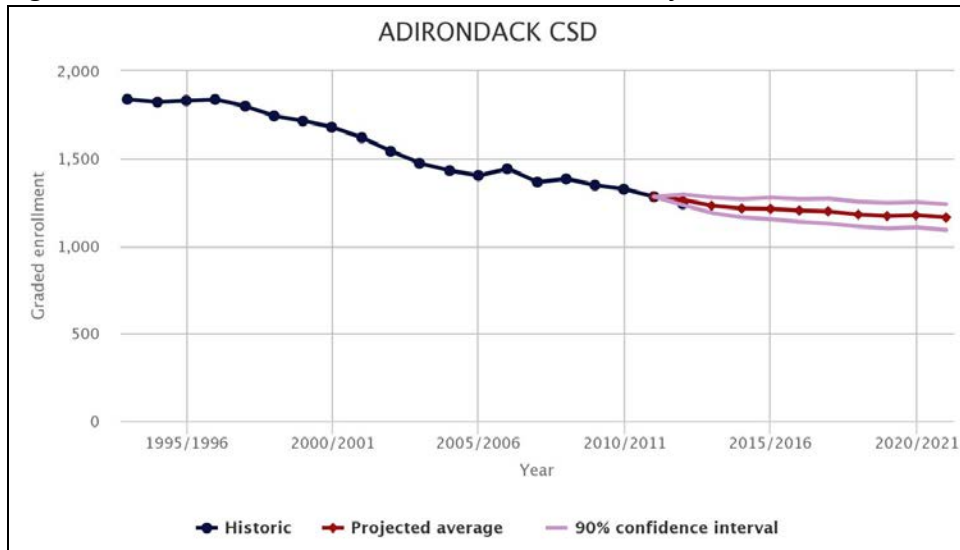
for Rural Schools show the South Lewis Central School District having a slight increase in students between 2010 and 2020. The student population in the Adirondack Central School District is projected to decline slightly during that time period.

Figure 4. South Lewis School District Enrollment Projections



Source: NYS Center for Rural Schools

Figure 5. Adirondack School District Enrollment Projections



Source: NYS Center for Rural Schools

## Income

Median household income, according to census data, is lower in the Town of Leyden compared to Lewis County as a whole, and New York State. Median family income is

lower as well. In 2012, 19.6% of the town's population fell under the poverty level, compared to 13.5% for the County, and 14.9% for the State.

Figure 6. Median Income, 2012

	Town of Leyden	Lewis County	New York State
Median household income	41,833	45,187	57,683
Median family income	43,702	53,956	69,968

Source: US Census Bureau

### Educational Attainment

Approximately 85% of Town of Leyden residents 25 years old or older have a high school diploma. This number is very similar to that of Lewis County and New York State residents. The percentage of town residents with Bachelors and Masters degrees is lower than that of the County and State, however.

Figure 7. Educational Attainment, 2012

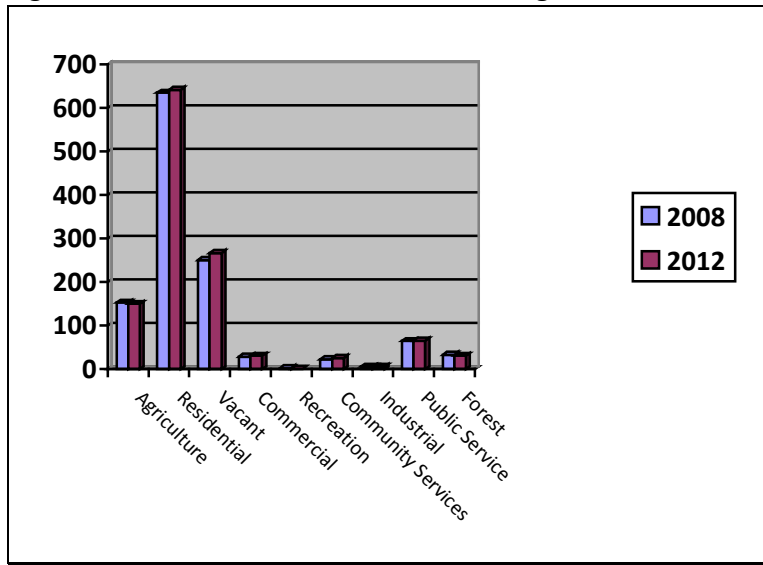
Percent of the population age 25+ with...	Town of Leyden	Lewis County	New York State
No high school diploma	14.6	13.2	15.1
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	85.4	86.8	84.9
Bachelor's degree	7.4	13.1	32.8
Graduate or professional degree	1.9	5.5	14.1

Source: US Census Bureau

### Land Use

Most tax parcels, by far, in Leyden are assessed as residential with vacant and agricultural land coming in a distant second and third. Between 2008 and 2012, the number of parcels in the residential, vacant, commercial, community services, and public service categories increased. During that time period, the number of recreation and forest parcels decreased and the number of industrial parcels remained steady. The total number of tax parcels in the town grew from 1,197 to 1,220.

Figure 8. Land Use Distribution and Change

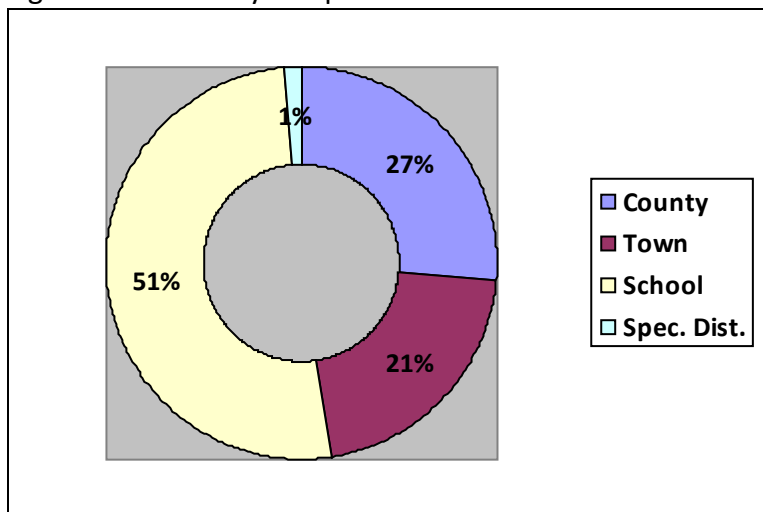


Source: NYS Office of Real Property Svcs.

### Tax Rates

Property owners paid \$26.00 to \$26.79 (depending on school district) per \$1000 assessed value in real property taxes in 2012. That is slightly higher than the average Lewis County town mil rate. This is due to the Adirondack and South Lewis school districts having higher than median tax rates.

Figure 9. Tax Bill by Recipient Jurisdiction



Source: NYS Comptrollers Office



The Hamlet of Talcottville

## **PART II. GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

### **AGRICULTURE**

There are currently about 24 farms in the Town of Leyden. This number has been decreasing over the last few decades. The majority of these farms are enrolled in the Lewis County agricultural district program. Ag districts are designed to protect agriculture from over restrictive zoning, excessive real property taxation assessments, ad valorem assessments for special improvements, the exercise of eminent domain, and certain policies of State agencies. Agricultural districts are a good step in preventing the premature abandonment of farmland due to land speculation and rising assessments, but do not permanently protect farmland from development pressures. They represent areas where farmers themselves have made a commitment to agriculture, at least for an eight year period.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The road network in Leyden is functional and kept in good repair. Snowplowing in the town gets good reviews with the state plowing Routes 12 and 12D and the county and the town plowing all other roads. The highest traffic volume in the town is along Route 12 between Lyons Falls and Port Leyden (4,800 cars per day).

Towns like Leyden with a low tax base can ill afford the costs associated with constructing new highways or reconstructing roads left by land subdividers. Future road costs connected with new development may be minimized by requiring that all roads built by subdividers be constructed to town standards. Another option the town has for protecting its tax base from excessive road costs is the designation of minimum maintenance roads. A minimum maintenance road is a low-volume road segment primarily providing agricultural or recreational land access, having an average traffic volume of 50 or less vehicles per day, and with no year round residences or businesses. Where seasonal limited-use roads have to be upgraded if and when a year round residence is built along the road, minimum maintenance roads do not. Neff, Rava, and portions of Cone, Gulf, Iseneker, New, Stuckie, BJ Mackey, and Ziegler Roads are currently designated by the town as minimum maintenance roads.

Public transport options are few in Leyden, with the exception of a Lewis County Public Transportation (LCPT) route that connects the Village of Port Leyden and Old Forge and service to Utica.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

Community facilities in the Town of Leyden include the Town Hall (a former school house) and a highway barn in the hamlet of Talcottville. Buildings in the Village of Port Leyden include the village hall, justice building, post office, and village barn. The Village of Lyons Falls and Port Leyden each have public water systems that extend in into the Town of Leyden (as water districts) Port Leyden has a public sewer system that services the village only. The Village of Port Leyden and the hamlet of Talcottville have storm drainage infrastructure and streetlights. There is currently no natural gas service in the town. Parts of the town are in the Boonville Municipal Power service area.

Police coverage in the town is provided by the Lewis County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police. Fire and emergency protection is provided by several fire and ambulance districts, including Boonville, Constableville, and Port Leyden.

Garbage collection is provided by private contract.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Buildings in the Town of Leyden considered by residents to be historic include the Edmund Wilson House (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), the Town Hall (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), and the Talcottville Church. St. Marks Church, in the Village of Port Leyden is listed on the National Register. It has been noted by residents that some of the older housing in the town is in need of better maintenance as well as the portion of the Black River Canal combine lock section along Route 12 near Denley Dam.



The Edmund Wilson House in Talcottville

## RECREATION

Recreation opportunities in the town include canoeing, kayaking, and fishing on the Black River, fishing on the Sugar River, and snowmobiling. The Village of Port Leyden has a park which features ball fields, a swimming pool. There are five DEC fishing access sites along the Black River on the border between the Towns of Leyden and Lyonsdale. Residents would like to see the development of hiking and horse trails in the town in the future.

## ECONOMIC FACTORS

Due to its rural nature, the Town of Leyden has few employers. Most residents work in Lowville, Rome, and Utica. According to 2012 census data, the average travel time to work for Leyden residents was 21 minutes. The top three industries Leyden residents are employed in are 1) education, health, and social services, 2) manufacturing, and 3) agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining. There are no large retail stores located in the town. There is a gas/quick stop store. The closest stores are located in nearby Lowville and Boonville.

Area residents have said the town is lacking medical services, manufacturing and higher education. Residents also wish to keep and maintain the rural character of the Town of Leyden. A balance can be achieved by promoting expansion of recreational opportunities, development of educational opportunities, maintenance of historical attractions, protection of our scenic beauty, and if deemed feasible, development of resources to attract agribusiness, health facilities and other small businesses in a business park setting. This would encourage the young and old to stay in a healthy and viable township.

Figure 10. Employment Status, 2012

Population age 16 years and over...	
In labor force	64.7%
Civilian	64.7%
Employed	59.6%
Unemployed	5.1%
Armed Forces	0.0%
Not in labor force	35.3%

Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 11. Percentage of Employed Persons by Industry, 2012

Industry	
Educational, health, and social services	26.2
Manufacturing	16.7
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	13.2
Construction	8.4
Public administration	7.3
Other services (except public administration)	6.1
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	5.9
Retail trade	5.2
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	5.0
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.6
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	1.6
Information	0.5
Wholesale trade	0.3

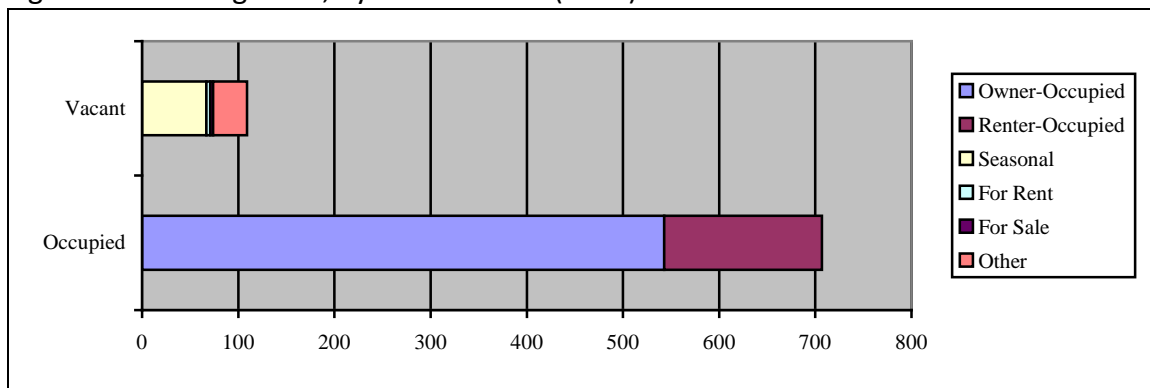
Source: US Census Bureau

## HOUSING

According to the 2010 Census, 86.6% of all housing units are classified as occupied and 13.4% are vacant. Of occupied housing units, 76.8% are owner-occupied and 23.2% are renter-occupied. Seasonal units account for the majority of vacant units (61.5%), while homes for rent and sale are 3.7% and 2.8% respectively. Homes classified as “other vacant” account for another 32.1% of all vacant housing units.

Residents in the town are concerned about the falling quality of some of the older housing stock as well as the lack of quality rental housing.

Figure 12. Housing Units, by Classification (2010)



Source: US Census Bureau

## **GOALS**

### **PROVIDE AND ENHANCE MULTIPLE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.**

- Use land use planning tools to preserve highway function.

### **PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS.**

- Improve access and use of the Black River.
- Encourage development of hiking and horse trails.
- Promote use of snowmobile and ATVs on trail system roads.
- Link town website to Lewis County recreation “apps”.
- Consider creating a community-wide event/celebration

### **RETAIN AND IMPROVE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE COMMUNITY.**

- Encourage the development of historic resources, including important structures, the Black River canal locks, and the railroad grading area.

### **IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT.**

- Capture tourist dollars by encouraging the development of restaurants, b&bs, hotels.
- Promote the restoration and reuse of agricultural land.
- Promote smaller “family” farms.
- Encourage farm related business.
- Encourage the development of health care and/or educational facilities.
- Encourage small business and job creation.

**PROVIDE FOR AND ENHANCE A VARIETY OF HOUSING OPORTUNITIES.**

- Work with government and not for profit entities to improve the general condition of the housing stock.

**RETAIN AND IMPROVE COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- Encourage the preservation of the Port Leyden elementary school.
- Seek improvements to the town hall.
- Encourage shared services.
- Explore the use of alternative energy systems in town facilities.



View toward Spencer Hill on Bailey Road

## **PART III. LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **STEEP SLOPES**

Development on steep slopes can create several problems, including soil erosion, road washout, turbidity and sedimentation in nearby streams, malfunctioning septic systems, and road hazards. Many such problems can be managed by proper design and installation of erosion and drainage control devices, but they are expensive. The Town of Leyden has steep slopes throughout its area, with concentrations along NYS Route 26 and between West Road and Dutch Hill/Ziegler Roads.

### **WETLANDS**

Wetlands over 12.4 acres in size are regulated by the state, and any development or drainage work requires a permit from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Wetlands mapped by the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) are also present in the town, primarily in the eastern half.

Wetlands serve the important functions of flood water control and groundwater recharge. Floodwater can spread out over the broad wetland area, and be released gradually downstream thus preventing floods from cresting at a high level downstream immediately following a storm. Because water rests in a wetland area, it has a chance to be absorbed into the groundwater, thus replenishing its supply. In addition, wetlands are rich ecosystems, providing habitat for fur bearing animals, birds, and a variety of other wildlife.

Leyden has very few DEC regulated wetlands, all of them located in the far western portion of the town. NWI mapped wetlands are more abundant, with the majority also located in the western areas of the town.

### **FLOODPLAINS**

Floodplains have been mapped as part of the state Flood Hazard Regulatory Program, which requires flood proofing measures be taken for all buildings constructed within designated floodplains. Building permits must be obtained for all new structures, and major structural changes to existing buildings within such zones.

Floodplains are mapped on the basis of the largest flood which would, on average, occur once every one hundred years, referred to as the “one hundred year flood.” Flood hazard areas exist in the Town of Leyden along portions of the Black and Sugar Rivers.

## **STREAMS, CREEKS AND RIVERS**

Its water courses are among Leyden's most valuable resources. Most streams, even small ones, are classified by the state as Class C or better, meaning that they are regulated streams suitable for fishing.

The state controls development which is located on or across stream banks through the Department of Environmental Conservation permit system, but has no control over neighboring development which may impact the stream. Its regulatory power ends at the edge of the stream bank.

## **WILDLIFE**

The upland plant communities in the town are relatively intact remnants of the indigenous communities present when the first settlers arrived, with the exception of species eliminated by disease such as elm and chestnut. Much of the previously tilled land has now regenerated into forest cover in various stages of succession. The result of this pattern of use is a mosaic of different species associations that support a great diversity of plants and animals. Wildlife in the region is well documented in the book Tug Hill: A Four Season Guide to the Wild Side. Several of these species, especially birds are in danger of decline if these blocks are reduced by new roads and clearings. Undeveloped areas along rural roads offer corridors that allow freedom of movement necessary to promote healthy and genetically diverse populations for all wildlife species. Continuous frontage development inhibits this free movement and is a potential threat.

## **AREAS OF SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Tug Hill Commission has also completed mapping of special environmental and cultural areas region-wide that include: major stream corridors, important headwater areas, gulfs, large contiguous forest areas, important habitat areas, and historic sites. A map of these features is included in the appendix.

## **DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

Land use in Leyden consists primarily of residential, agricultural, and a smattering of small scale commercial use (primarily located between the Villages of Port Leyden and Lyons Falls). The hamlet of Talcottville contains the town's institutional uses, including the town hall and the highway garage. There are approximately one hundred mobile homes scattered throughout the town, and one mobile home park. There are mining

operations in the northeastern and southeastern corners of the town as well.

### **Development Patterns**

Historically, development has tended to cluster in higher densities in hamlets, and adjacent to the villages. Recent development trends have favored scattered development throughout the remainder of the town, generally at much lower densities along state, county, and town roads.

### **Development Pressures In The Future**

As of this writing, development pressures are low due to the downturn in the economy that began in 2008. This does not necessarily mean that the Town of Leyden won't grow in the future, however. Future development in the Town of Leyden will likely be comprised primarily of single-family housing, including mobile and modular homes. New development will most likely locate in the southern part of the town, which is closer to the Utica area and is served by cheaper electric power provided by the Boonville Municipal Commission. Some of this residential development will likely be seasonal recreationally oriented.

State Routes 12 and 12D will continue to attract a degree of commercial development as traffic between Watertown and Utica increases. There will be pressures for home occupations and businesses to sprout in rural residential areas, as is typical in the region.

***Land use regulations in the Town of Leyden currently consist of a zoning law with a single unnamed zone. The law allows all uses (that are not specifically prohibited) either by right or by site plan review in all areas of the town. Amending the zoning law to include provisions for special use permit review would give the town more control over development review. Adoption of a subdivision review law could also benefit the town in this regard.***

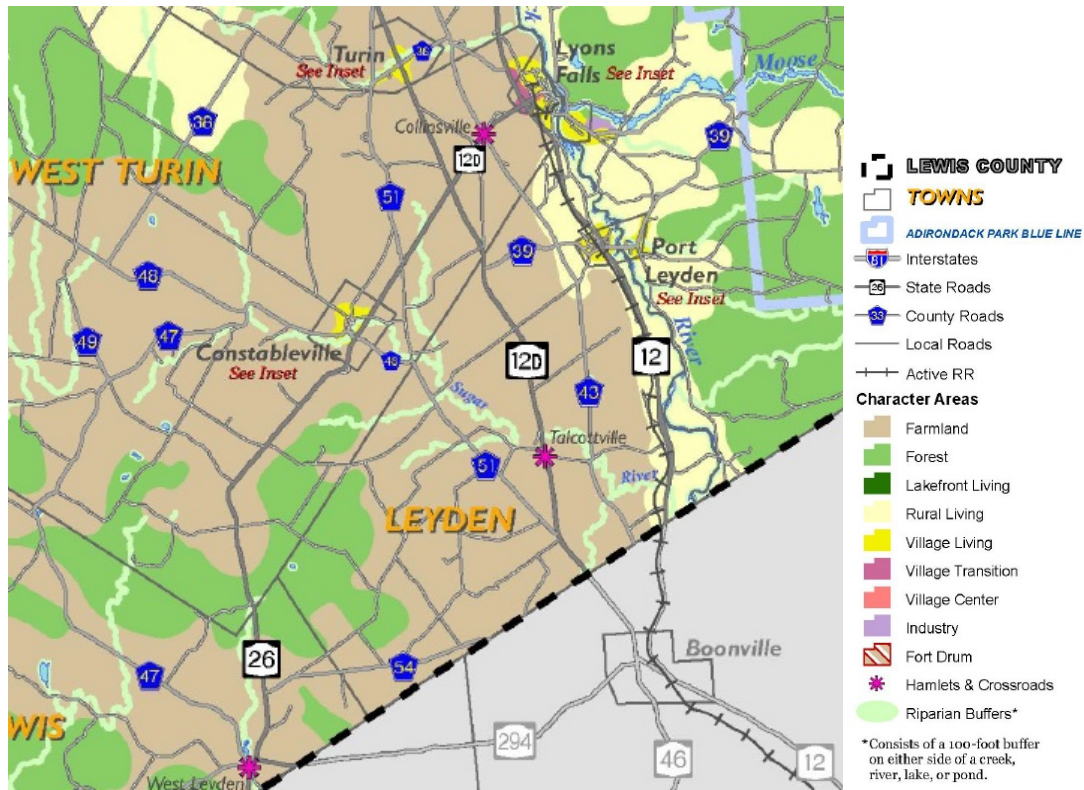
### **County Plan**

Lewis County's 2009 Comprehensive Plan includes a character area plan for the entire county. According to the plan, "the Lewis County Character Area Plan (CCAP) provides a blueprint for growth, preservation, and land use management at both the county and local level. The purpose of the CCAP is to: Delineate areas of common identity and character, similar to a generalized existing land use map; Identify areas recommended for future development, including residential, commercial, and mixed-use areas; Provide guidance on issues relevant to each category, such as revitalizing Main Street or

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protecting farmland; and Establish a common starting point for Future Land Use Plans at the Town or Village level.

The plan identifies most of the land in the Town of Leyden as agricultural, with areas of forest to the west and rural living along the Route 12/Black River corridor.



## **LAND USE POLICIES**

### **WATER RESOURCES**

The Town of Leyden has abundant water resources, including rivers, streams, wetlands, and ground waters. Both the ground and surface waters of the town, upon which the residents of Leyden depend for their good health, recreation, and economic well being are vulnerable to haphazard development and land use. Residents of the town (outside of the immediate vicinities of the Villages of Lyons Falls and Port Leyden) are not supplied by community water systems and are entirely dependent on local groundwater sources for household use. Lewis County recently completed a water study for its southern towns. Leyden should support and implement the recommendations outlined in the report.

On site systems themselves can readily cause groundwater contamination if they malfunction or are placed too densely. Soil erosion and sedimentation from earth disturbing development activities can also degrade surface water supplies if not properly controlled. The improper development of floodplain areas can also create problems when floodwaters carry contamination into water supplies. It is highly important for the future recreational use of the Black and Sugar Rivers and Moose Creek that shoreline development does not contaminate their waters.

#### **Policies:**

1. Limit development taking place along streams, in floodplain areas, wetlands, and wellhead protection areas to those uses that will not adversely affect water quality.
2. Properly separate sewage disposal systems from drinking water sources.
3. Require lots to be large enough to ensure that sewage which is disposed of on-site can safely percolate, and that wells will not overdraw groundwater supplies.
4. Require uses and structures to be properly set back from streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands.
5. Require land disturbing activities to be conducted in accordance with proper erosion control measures.

### **RURAL CHARACTER**

An important attribute of the Town of Leyden is its rural character. Low density development, scenic views, ample open spaces, and a diverse landscape are all identified as important characteristics of Leyden's physical environment. An abundance

of forests, brushlands, wetland and open farmlands contribute to a varied and diverse landscape which gives the town its rural flavor.

Rural character can be slowly destroyed by poorly planned or unplanned development. Sprawl, a lack of effective buffering, screening, and landscaping techniques; the proliferation of unattractive commercial signs and billboards; and the strip development of road frontages all contribute to a loss of ruralness.

Conventional subdivisions (typically seen in suburban areas) completely consume all land in the subdivision area. The open space is dispersed in small pieces to individual homeowners. While giving each landowner a small piece of private property, conventional subdivision does not reserve enough open space to meet many important community objectives. The open space in a conventional subdivision, while constituting a major part of the subdivision is configured in such a way that its visual impact is significantly diminished or negated. There are several alternatives to this type of development including: cluster subdivisions and conservation subdivisions.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage lower residential densities in environmentally sensitive and rural areas of town.
2. Encourage or require the clustering of residential development and the preservation of open space in some parts of the town.
3. Exclude intense land uses such as solid waste and hazardous waste facilities, see Zoning Law for complete list.
4. Require the proper buffering, screening, and landscaping of uses considered incompatible with the rural environment.
5. Prohibit the proliferation of commercial signs and billboards, and require permitted signs to be compatible with the rural character of the town.
6. Protect scenic vistas.
7. Protect historic sites.

**ROADS AND HIGHWAYS**

The long term economic well being of Leyden depends upon the proper functioning of both local and regional transportation routes. Major roads (Routes 12 and 12D) should function primarily to transport traffic through the town and serve interregional

transportation needs. Local roads should function to serve primarily as access to adjacent properties.

Major transportation corridors linking the town with regional employment and recreation facilities may attract both residential and commercial development. While development is welcome, it may result in a decline in proper highway functioning, as development adjacent to major highways increases the traffic entering and exiting roadways. Lack of proper planning can result in major highways eventually functioning as local roads. The very roads which provide the impetus for regional development may become increasingly unable to provide for the existing residential commuters.

**Policies:**

1. Concentrate future commercial and residential development around Port Leyden, Talcottville. *Adding a special use permit process to the Zoning Law may help implement this.*
2. Require land parcels fronting on major highways to have adequate frontage to prevent an excessive number of highway access points.
3. Review site plans to ensure the safety of highway access points and the adequacy of traffic circulation internal to the site.



Looking north on Route 12D at the border with the Town of Boonville.

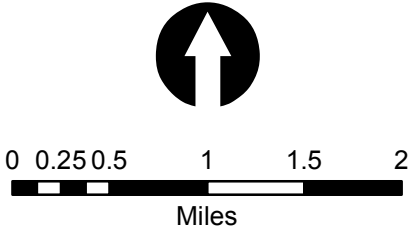
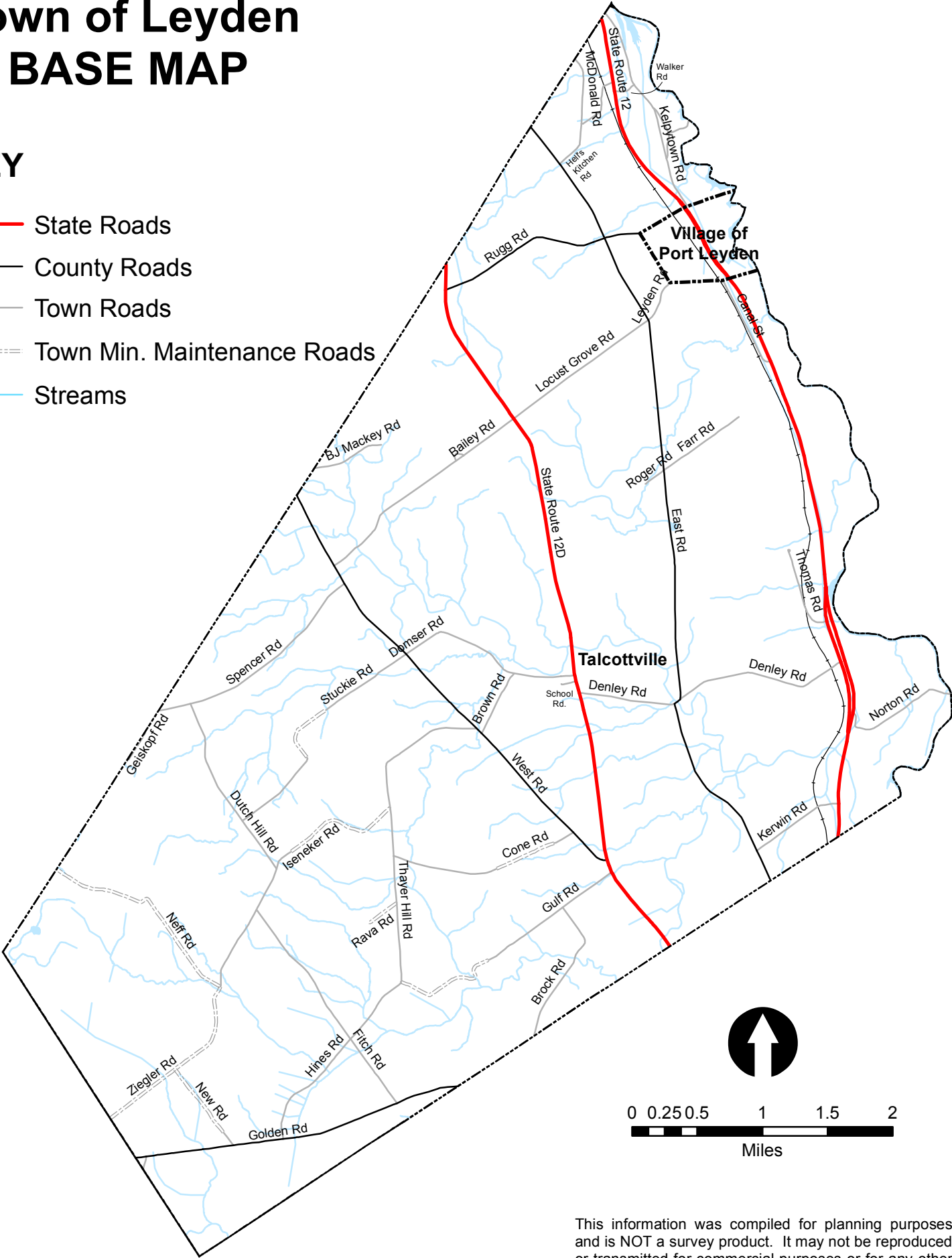


# Town of Leyden

## BASE MAP

### KEY

- State Roads
- County Roads
- Town Roads
- Town Min. Maintenance Roads
- Streams



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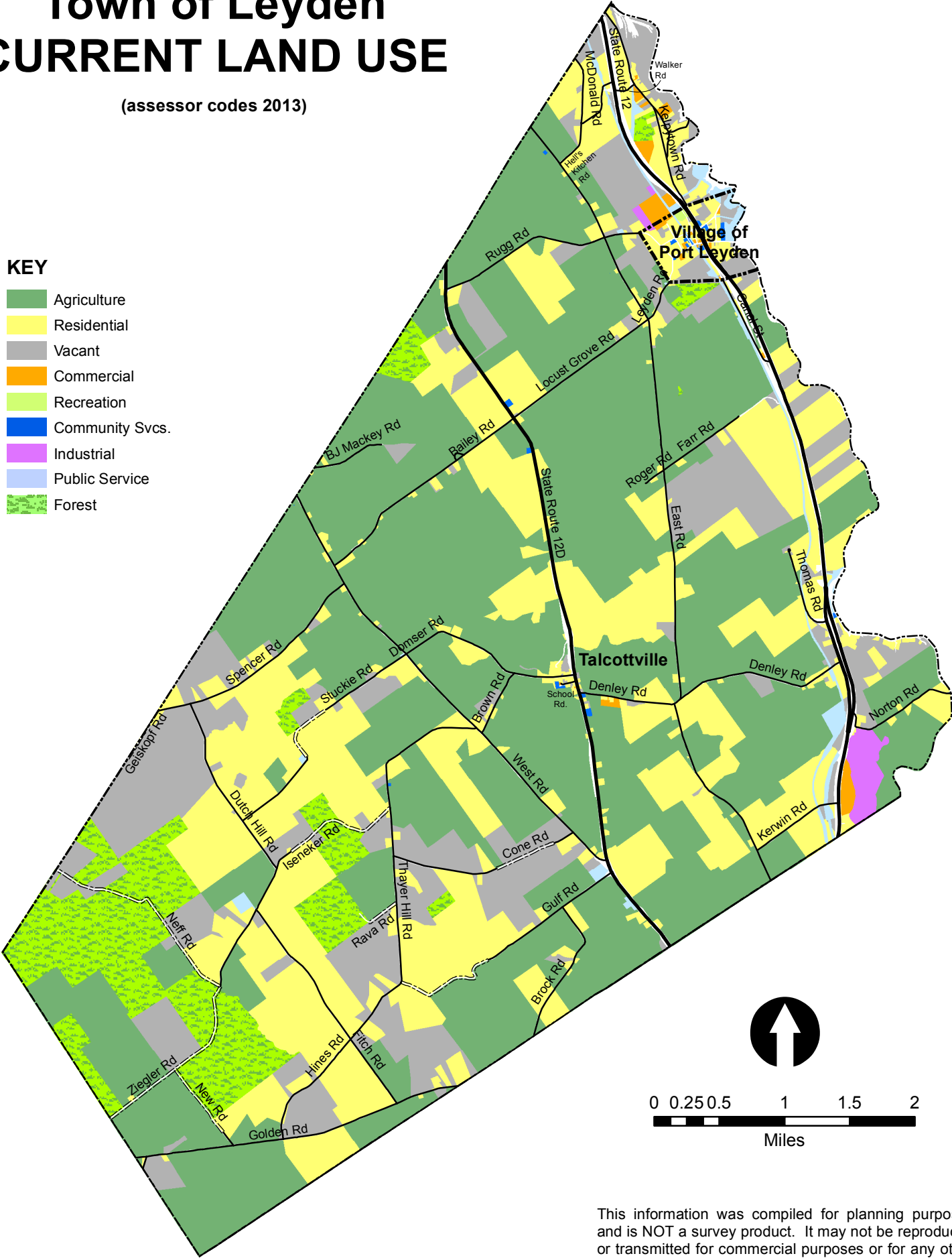
# Town of Leyden

## CURRENT LAND USE

(assessor codes 2013)

**KEY**

- Agriculture
- Residential
- Vacant
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Community Svcs.
- Industrial
- Public Service
- Forest

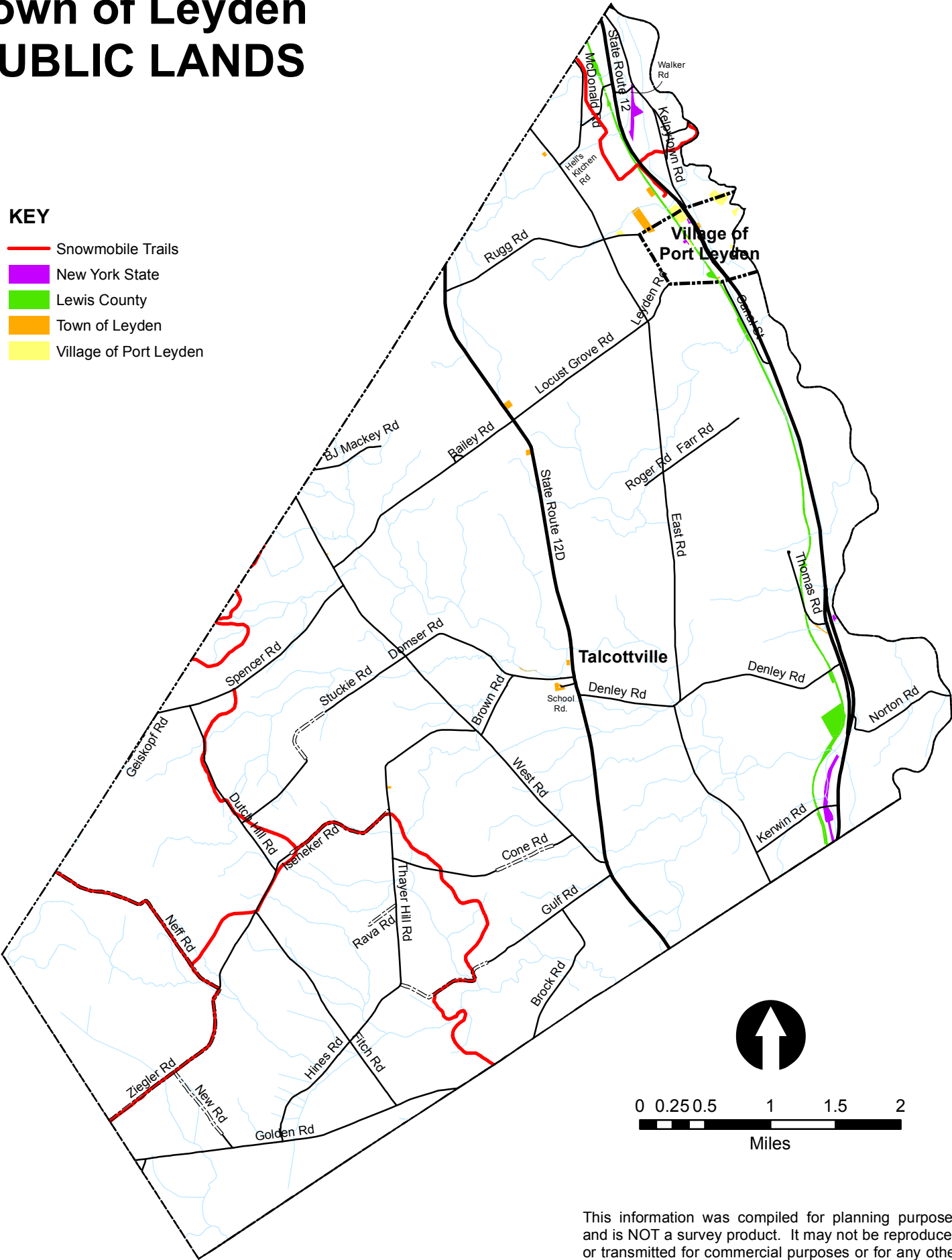


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# Town of Leyden PUBLIC LANDS

**KEY**

- Snowmobile Trails
- New York State
- Lewis County
- Town of Leyden
- Village of Port Leyden

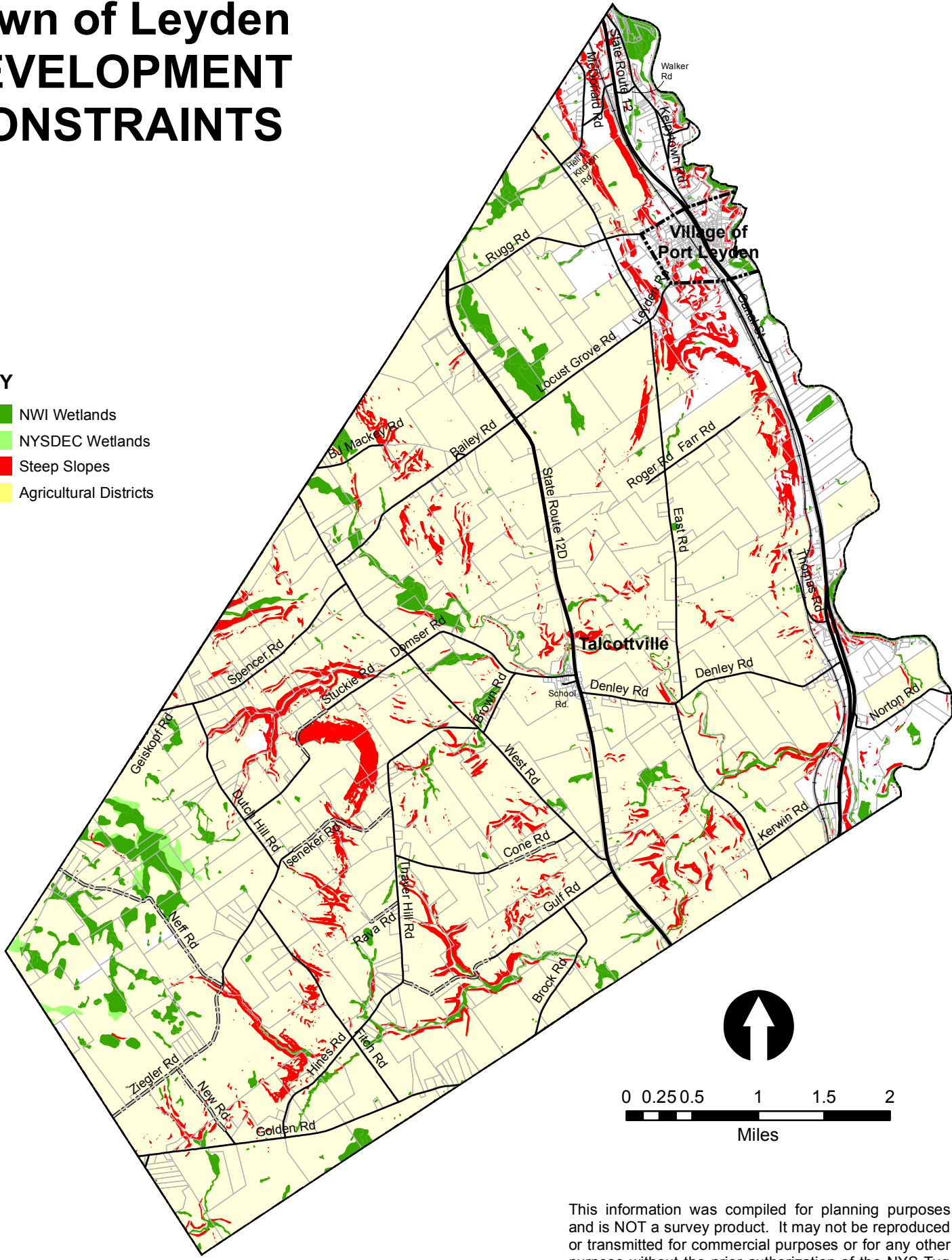


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# Town of Leyden DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

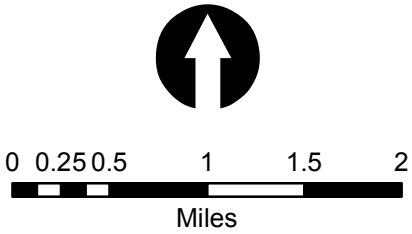
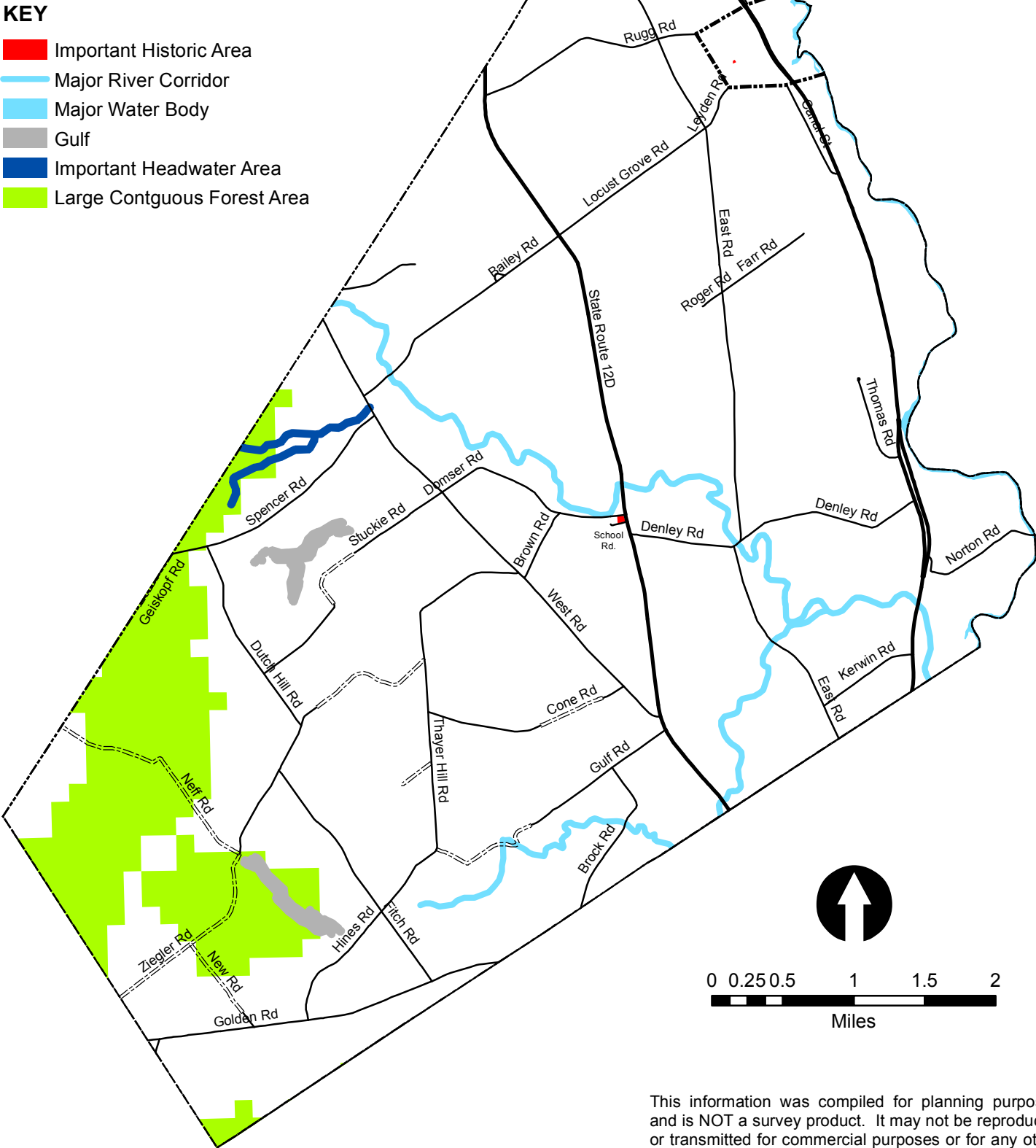
**KEY**

- NWI Wetlands
- NYSDEC Wetlands
- Steep Slopes
- Agricultural Districts



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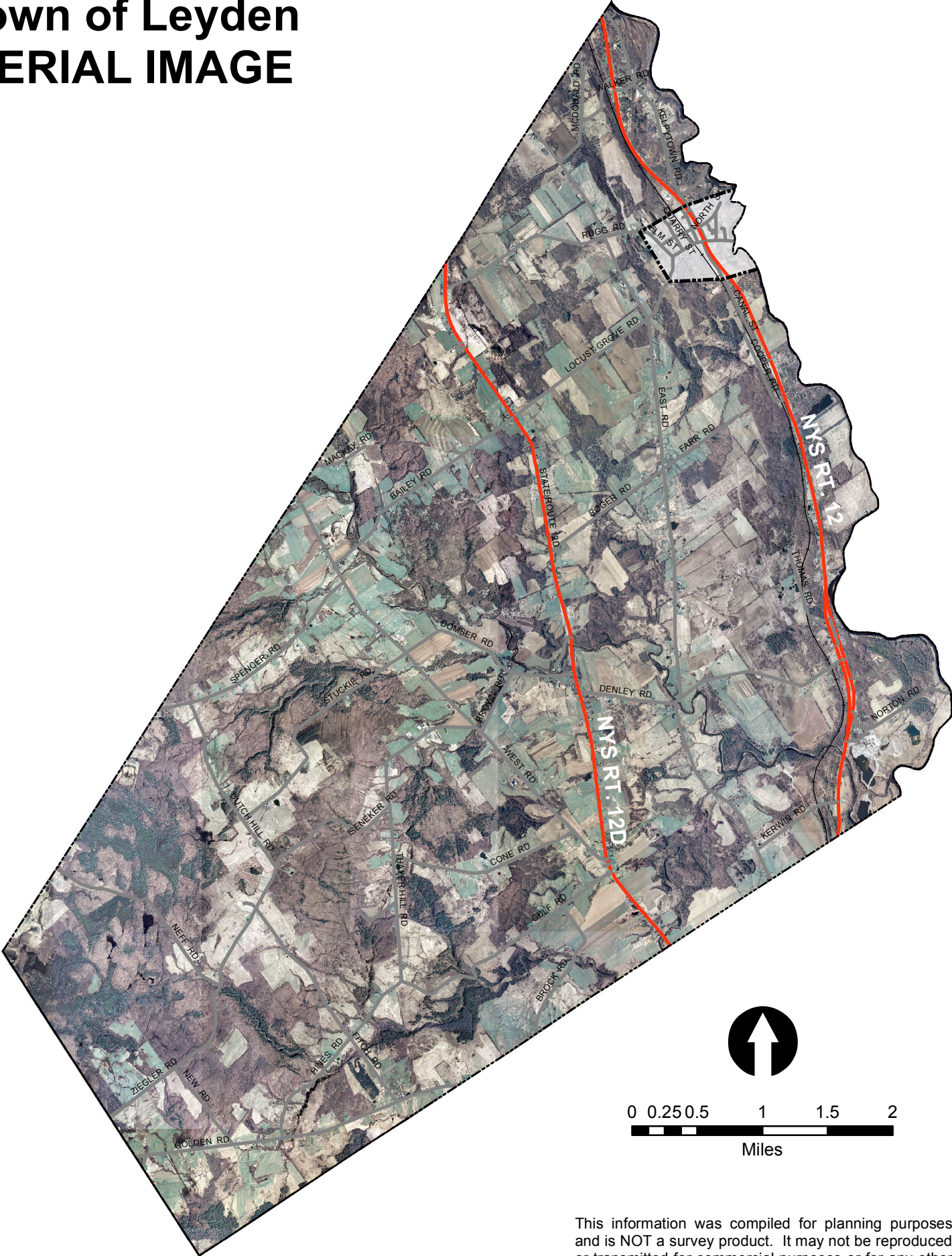
# Town of Leyden SPECIAL AREAS



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# Town of Leyden

## AERIAL IMAGE



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