

TOWN OF MURRAY AGRICULTURAL & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategy #5: Maintain Drought Resiliency	
a.	Work with NYS Canal Corporation to ensure continued access to Erie Canal water for irrigation.
b.	Connect farmers with technical assistance and other resources to promote advanced irrigation technologies and practices, to minimize water waste and improve efficiency, to cultivate drought-tolerant crop varieties, and other best practices, and to access drought monitoring and forecasting information.
c.	Encourage farmers to install conservation practices that improve water retention and drought resilience.
d.	Maintain public water supply infrastructure for use by farms.
Strategy #6: Assist New and Beginning Farmers	
a.	Connect farmers with info and assistance for business planning, tax planning, and financial management.
b.	Connect farmers with information about grant and loan funding sources.
c.	Connect new and beginning farmers with mentorship programs and networking opportunities.
Strategy #7: Expand Youth Education to Encourage Careers in Farming	
a.	Work with teachers and Kendall and Holley Schools to introduce an FFA program.
b.	Work with Kendall and Holley school officials and libraries to incorporate more Agriculture in the Classroom components into the school curriculum.
c.	Encourage schools to include guest lectures, field trips, and hands-on learning experiences for students.
d.	Encourage schools to promote technology-focused careers in agriculture to high school students.
e.	Develop a mentorship program connecting students with local farmers and agricultural professionals.
Strategy #8: Avoid and Mitigate Impacts from Solar Energy Developments	
Adopt and maintain a solar local law that requires solar energy facilities to avoid conversion of Farmland Suitable for Protection and lands with high quality agricultural soils and that requires consultation with the Agricultural Advisory Committee before approving a solar energy facility.	
a.	Suitable for Protection and lands with high quality agricultural soils and that requires consultation with the Agricultural Advisory Committee before approving a solar energy facility.
b.	For solar energy facilities > 1 MW in size, maintain and enforce the following standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid placing solar facilities on high-quality agricultural soils and actively farmed land• Avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts during construction, post-construction, and decommissioning• Monitor construction and restoration activities to comply with agricultural protection standards• Encourage co-utilization of agriculture with solar energy development, if feasible
c.	If large-scale (>25 MW) projects are proposed in the Town, work with the NYS Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) to minimize impacts on farming and ensure compliance with NYS DAM guidance.
Strategy #9: Address Shortage and Cost of Farm Labor	
a.	Encourage Federal agencies to streamline and simplify the H2A visa application process.
b.	Connect farmers with resources to help them navigate the H2A program and other labor requirements.
c.	Encourage Orleans County to explore training and workforce development programs focused on ag skills
d.	Advocate for policies and initiatives that support affordable farm labor, such as wage subsidies or tax incentives for hiring local workers.
Strategy #10: Encourage farms to implement environmental protection and climate resilience best practices as well as energy efficiency and renewable energy for on-farm use	
a.	Encourage farmers to work with Orleans County SWCD to plan and implement best management practices to protect water quality, reduce soil erosion, and improve climate resiliency.
b.	Advocate for continued funding and staffing for Orleans County SWCD.
c.	Connect farmers with information about grants and other financial incentives to increase energy efficiency and install renewable energy for on-farm use.
Strategy #11: Increase Agricultural District Participation	
a.	Distribute information to farmers and landowners to encourage participation in the Agricultural District program. Clearly communicate the benefits as well as potential disadvantages of enrolling parcels in the Agricultural District. Increase efforts during Ag district 8-year review and annual open enrollment periods.
b.	Provide support for farmers and landowners in navigating the application process.
Strategy #12: Manage Drainage and other Infrastructure to Minimize Impacts on Farming	
a.	When improving or maintaining drainage on Town roads, consult with farmers that work adjoining land to ensure that work does not negatively affect farmland.
b.	Encourage Orleans County Highway Dept. and NYS Dept. of Transportation to improve and manage drainage infrastructure to minimize negative impacts on farmland.

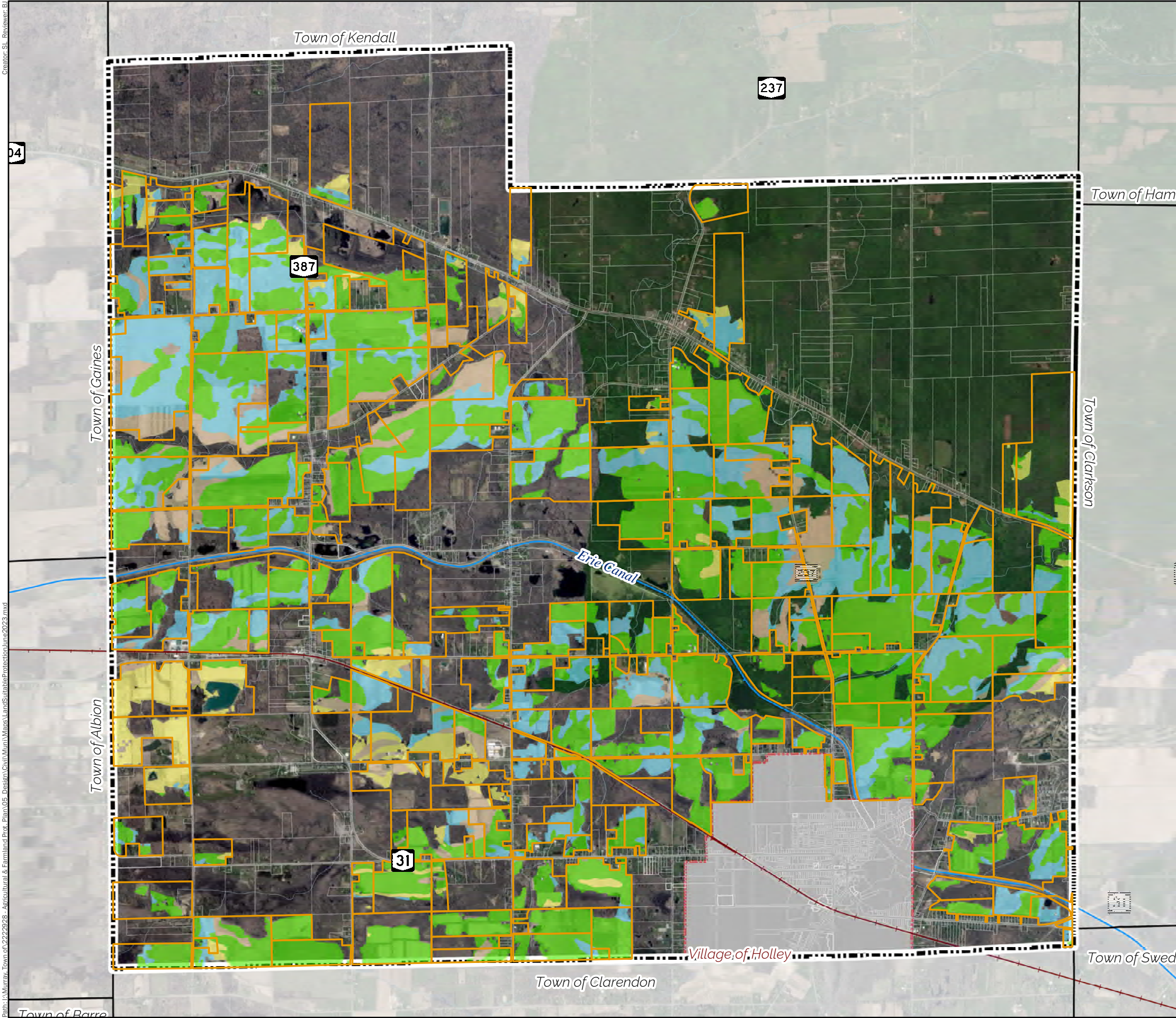
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Murray Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan includes maps, strategies and recommendations for use by Town boards, officials and residents to gain a better understanding of the Town’s agricultural resources and the significance of agriculture within the community. The plan is intended to guide future actions to support farmers and the agricultural industry. The Town of Murray will appoint an Agricultural Advisory Committee to work with other organizations to carry out the recommended actions.

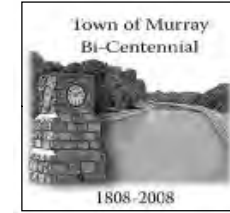
The map of Farmland Suitable for Protection is intended as a guide to direct future development away from these high-quality agricultural soils. It depicts actively farmed land by agricultural soil classification.

Strategies & Recommended Actions	
Strategy #1: Support Agritourism Enterprises	
a.	Encourage farms that sell directly to consumers to participate in County agritourism promotion activities.
b.	Connect farmers and resources for farmers interested in incorporating agritourism into their operations to educational resources and grant opportunities.
c.	Utilize the Town of Murray website to promote roadside stands and other agritourism businesses
d.	Encourage agritourism businesses and local accommodations, restaurants, and other attractions to coordinate marketing and create package deals for visitors.
e.	Review and update local zoning regulations and permitting processes to support the growth and development of agritourism enterprises.
f.	Monitor and publicize the impact of agritourism on the local economy and agricultural sector and advocate for adjustments to State and County policies and support programs.
Strategy #2: Educate the Public About Agriculture	
a.	Encourage Holley and Kendall schools to revitalize and expand agriculture education programs in local schools, such as with an FFA chapter or using NYS Agriculture in the Classroom resources.
b.	Work with local real estate agents and property sellers to ensure that buyers understand the potential impacts of agricultural practices in the community.
c.	Organize events such as farm tours to foster relationships between farmers and the community
d.	Provide information to residents, such as brochures or web posts, about living in a farming community.
e.	Provide information to residents about agricultural practices that protect land and water resources.
f.	Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of public education efforts and make necessary adjustments to improve understanding and support for agriculture.
Strategy #3: Protect High Quality Farmland from Conversion to Non-Agricultural Uses	
a.	Encourage farmers to consider participating in a NYS Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program and/or work with local land trusts to place permanent conservation easements on high quality farmland.
b.	Review and update zoning regulations to protect agricultural uses and limit conversion to non-farm uses.
c.	Connect young and beginning farmers with resources, education, mentors, and access to affordable land.
Strategy #5: Maintain “Farm Friendly” Zoning and Enforcement	
a.	Regularly review and update the town's zoning regulations to ensure they remain supportive of agricultural operations and compliant with NYS Agricultural Districts Law.
b.	Provide training and resources for Murray officials, zoning board members, and code enforcement officers to ensure consistent interpretation and enforcement of farm-friendly zoning regulations.
c.	Maintain the Town’s Right to Farm Law and the role of the Agricultural Advisory Board to address complaints relating to how local laws and policies impact agricultural practices or operations
d.	Communicate with farmers to identify and address any zoning or enforcement issues that may be unreasonably restrictive to farm operations and to ensure that zoning regulations and enforcement practices continue to support and protect agricultural operations.
e.	Revise zoning as needed to accommodate secondary non-agricultural business enterprises on farms that help to supplement farm income, with safeguards to minimize impacts on neighbors and the community.

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Creator: SL Reviewer: BL



TOWN OF MURRAY



AGRICULTURAL & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

FARMLAND SUITABLE FOR PROTECTION

Active Farmland Suitable for Protection by Ag Soils Classification

- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Prime farmland if drained
- Not prime farmland
- Farm Parcels

- Other Parcels
- Town Boundary
- Village of Holley
- Railroad
- Erie Canal
- Streams

LaBella Project No: 2222928
MAY 2023

- Sources:
1. Town Boundaries and Roads: NYS GIS Program Office
 2. Parcels (2022): Regrid
 3. Streams: U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Program
 4. Basemap: ESRI
 5. Railroad: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
 6. Farm Parcels - Derived from parcel data and aerial photos by laBella Associates

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

