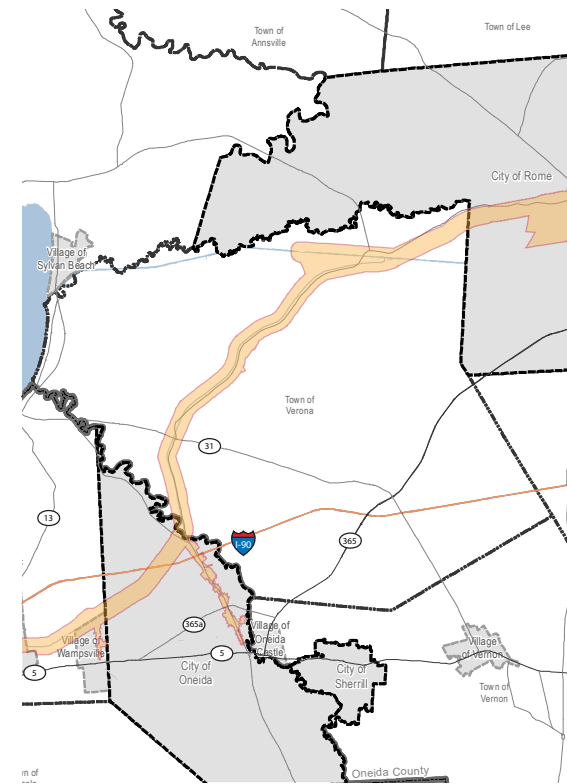


Page intentionally left blank

Draft

TOWN OF VERONA



LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The Town of Verona contains 11 miles of the Old Erie Canal waterway, the longest stretch of any individual municipality within the system. The western boundary of this section is the Oneida Creek Aqueduct. Because the Oneida Creek centerline is the dividing line between Oneida and Verona, half of the aqueduct is in the City of Oneida and the other half is in the Town of Verona. The eastern boundary of the section is at Zingerline Road.

Although this long section traverses a mostly rural, undeveloped landscape, there are some notable

trail features in Verona. The Old Erie Canal is bisected by the Barge Canal in New London at the end of Glur Road (north of the Barge Canal), Dry Dock Road (south of the Barge Canal), and historically fed water to the Barge Canal system. The area around Dry Dock Road contains multiple decommissioned buildings and canal related utilities which surround the dead-end of the Old Erie Canal on an abandoned lot. In addition to the opportunities on this site and in New London, understanding the hydrologic implications of this area is essential to understanding the range of possibilities for the hydrological conditions of the system within the Town of Verona.

HISTORY

The Town of Verona in Oneida County was first settled by George A. Smith in 1792 and Asahel Jackson in 1796. Jackson established the first public house for boatmen traversing the natural waterways of the Mohawk River, Wood Creek, and Oneida Lake. Following the acquisition and sale of the Oneida Reservation by the State in 1797, the area was quickly settled. The Town of Verona was formed on February 17, 1802 from the towns of Westmoreland and Augusta (Jones, 1851; Wager, 1896).

In addition to the Erie Canal (1819), two Oneida Lake Canals (1853-63, 1877-78) and the Barge Canal (1918) also cut through the town. In 1830, the Rome and New London Turnpike Company was incorporated by the New York State Legislature to construct a road from Verona to Rome. The New London Plank Road Company constructed a plank road from Vienna to Verona in 1847. By the mid-

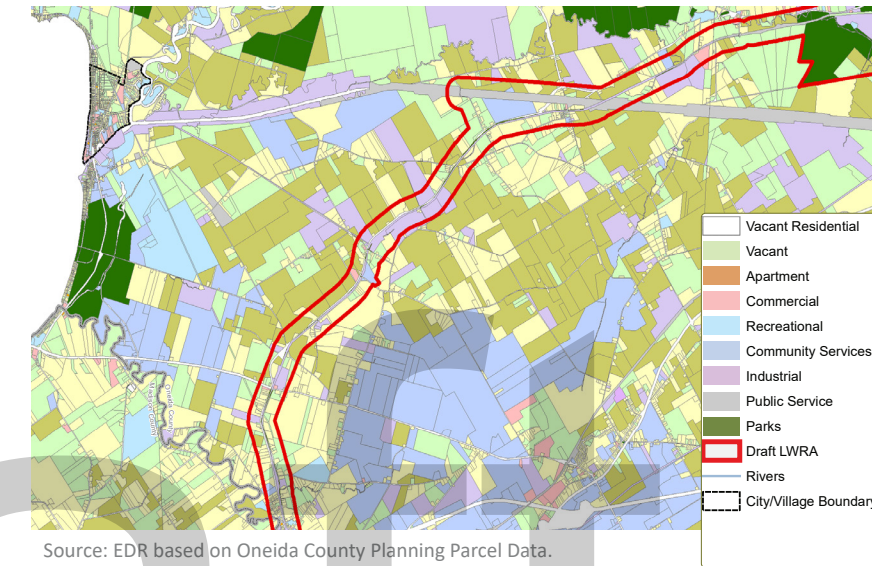
TOWN OF VERONA LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

ZONING WITHIN THE WRA	
OVERLAY DISTRICTS	YES
SUBDIVISION REVIEW	YES
SITE PLAN REVIEW	YES
DESIGN STANDARDS	NO
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ALLOWED?	YES
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	NO

nineteenth century, several railroad companies were authorized to establish rail service throughout the county, specifically in Verona (Wager, 1896; Goodman, 2005).

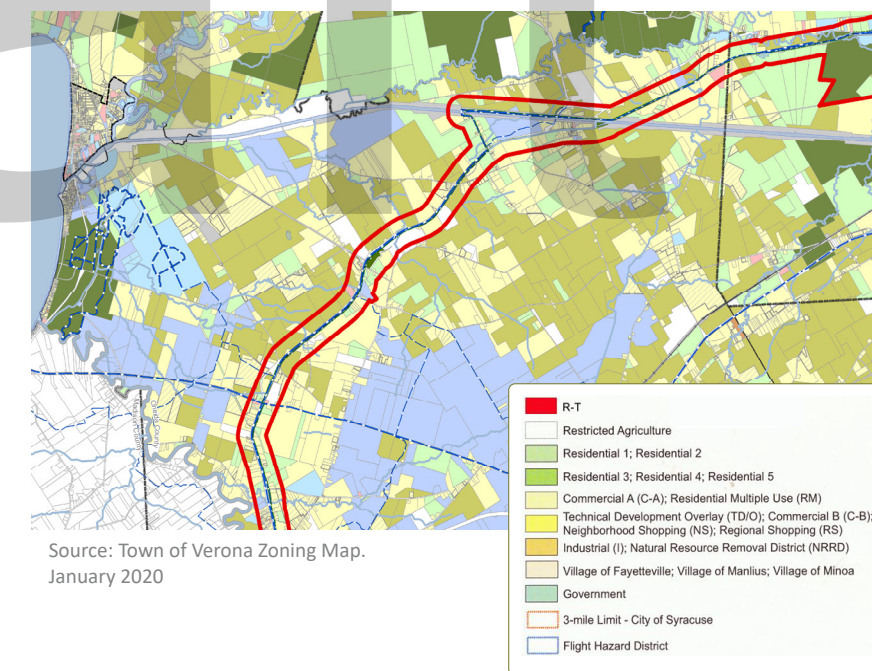
The confluence of water, road, and rail transportation supported several successful enterprises, including agriculture, boat building, glass-making, canning, and mining. Due to the abundance of mineral deposits in Verona, the town has a long tradition of medicinal mineral springs. Verona Springs was established as a health resort for the use of the mineral springs; a water cure was propounded by Dr. Seymour Curtiss in 1850. He was succeeded by Dr. Nelson Hunt and his wife, who managed Verona Springs throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. As the New York Central Railroad and New York Barge Canal supplanted the canal system in Verona, only agriculture and small-scale industries remained (Jones, 1851; Wager, 1896; Goodman, 2005).

LAND USE



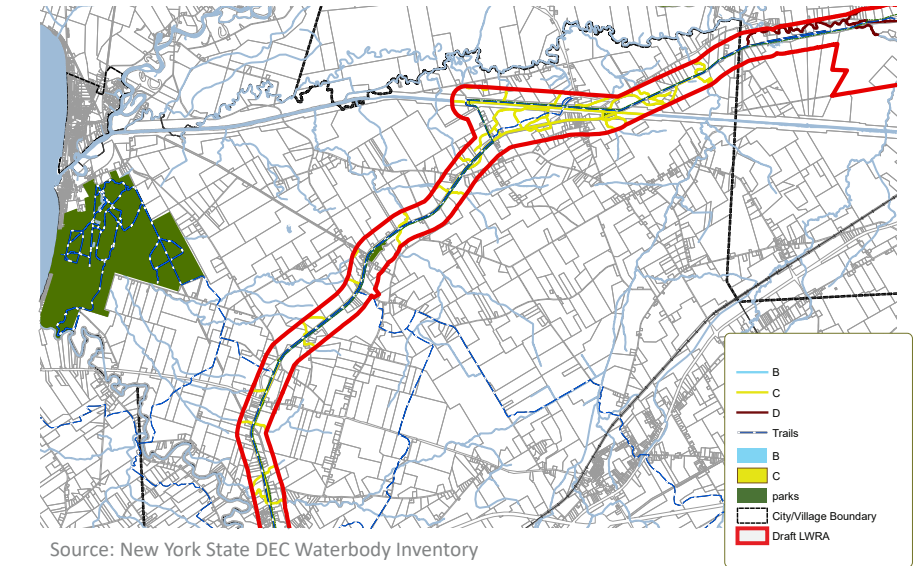
Source: EDR based on Oneida County Planning Parcel Data. January 2020

ZONING



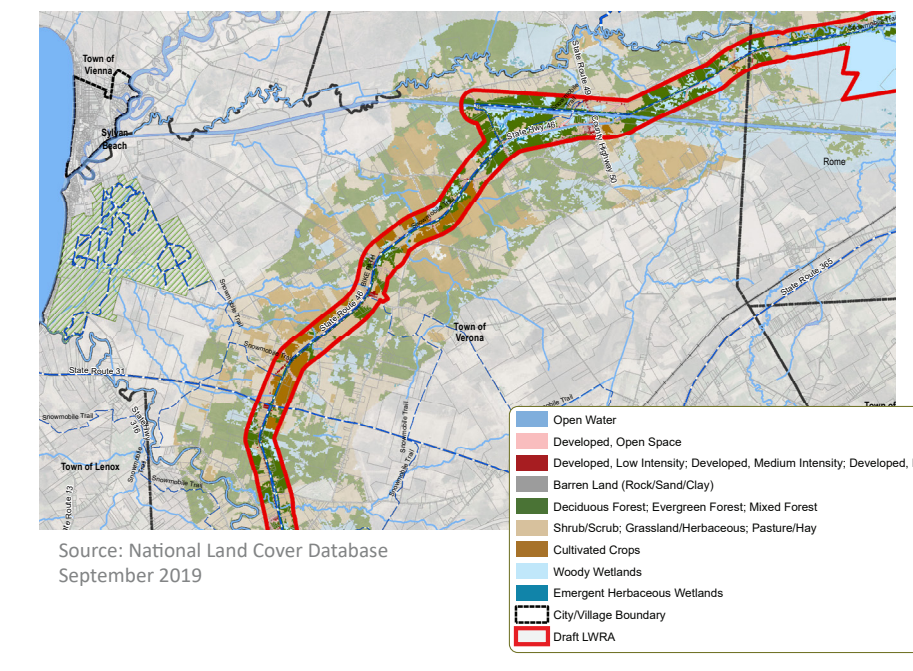
Source: Town of Verona Zoning Map. January 2020

WATER QUALITY



Source: New York State DEC Waterbody Inventory. September 2019

LAND COVER



Source: National Land Cover Database. September 2019

LAND USE AND ZONING

The 11 miles of the WRA within the Town of Verona are characterized by a sparsely populated rural landscape and challenged hydrological canal conditions. The WRA starts in the hamlet of Durhamville, which is primarily a residential area, but also contains some parkland, a veteran’s club, post office, elementary school, bar, golf club, and a gas station. The WRA and Canal then head north and follow along State Route 46. The stretch between Durhamville and Route 31 is primarily rural residential with some areas of vacant land. There is a large DOT parking area north of Route 31 that serves as a parking area for canal trail users and seems to have had little attention in recent years. As the LWRP boundary continues east from the parking area, it enters a long stretch of rural area characterized by agricultural uses, vacant land, and intermittent residential use. Some notable locations within this area include: the Town of Verona offices and playground, a tiny hamlet of Stacy Basin, Lock 21 on the New York State Barge Canal, portions of the hamlet of New London, and a trail access point at the end Glur road (which is minimally developed). With the exception of one parcel, the intersection of Route 31 and Route 46, and 3 of the 4 hamlets, the corridor through the Town of Verona is zoned “Rural Development.”

Within the hamlet of Durhamville the core is zoned “Commercial Neighborhood Service” and surrounded by a “Residential” zone. The intersection of Route 31 and Route 46 is also zoned “Commercial Neighborhood Service.” The parcels on the west side of Route 46 in the hamlet of Higginsville are also zoned “Commercial Neighborhood Service.” Finally,

the hamlet of New London is zoned “Commercial Neighborhood Service” with a “Rural Residential” zone. It is worth noting that the hamlet of Stacy Basin is only zoned “Rural Development.” The area around Lock 21 is also zoned “Rural Development.” One parcel within the corridor near the intersection of Zingerline Road and Heelpath Road is zoned “Heavy Commercial Industrial” and is currently an auto parts and repair business.

WATER QUALITY AND LAND COVER

The Old Erie Canal retains its Class C designation as it flows through the Town of Verona. This regulatory classification signifies that fish and wildlife habitat are the best use of the waterway. Recreational uses are also to be supported in Class C waterways, although water depth, dense aquatic vegetation and frequent algal blooms impair recreational uses, including paddling, in this segment. Through the Town of Verona within the WRA, the land adjacent to the Canal is a combination of wooded banks interspersed with agricultural fields. It is also notable that as the canal passes through Verona from west to east, less and less water remains in the canal. There are multiple locations where there is no water at all at certain times of year. A USGS study has determined that the average water depth from DeWitt to Durhamville is 3.5 feet, while the average water depth from Durhamville to the New York State Barge Canal is 1.3 feet (CITATION).

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Among the four state-recognized historic resources in the Town of Verona, the New York State Barge Canal is the most

significant and memorable from the perspective of pedestrians and cyclists traveling within the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park. Trail users come into contact with this historic asset where the Erie Canalway Trail (ECT) crosses over the NYS Barge Canal at Lock 21 via a narrow footbridge which is integrated into the lock infrastructure and offers unique and dramatic views of the barge canal. During boating season it is common for boat travel and lock operation activity to be viewable from the footbridge and the park setting around Lock 21. Other register-eligible historic assets in the Town of Verona include a bridge over the Old Erie Canal at Mills Road, an 1855 stone canal culvert which conveys Brandy Brook under the Old Erie Canal in between Route 46 and Canal Street north of Durhamville, and a residence at 5333 Broad Street in Durhamville.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

The Verona section of the WRA includes two significant on-road portions of trail. Beginning at the western edge of the Town of Verona, the trail is on-road through the hamlet of Durhamville. While the trail passes directly through the hamlet, there are no specific attractions geared toward trail users. Once the WRA passes through the hamlet, it continues on-road for 2 miles on Canal Road. These on road routes would benefit from wayfinding interventions to help carry riders and walkers more confidently along the on-road portions.

Approximately 2.5 miles northeast of Durhamville a NYS DOT pull-off area provides trail access, parking, and picnic tables on Route 46 between Mills Road and Walker Road. The area has some interpretive signage, but few other amenities.

The Canal here is situated behind a fence and vegetation obstructs the view of the feature. Approximately 1.5 northeast of Mills Road, Town of Verona Park is located at the Germany Road intersection, immediately adjacent to the canal. It has ball fields, restrooms, a pavilion, and some modest playground equipment. This area is suitable for investment, as the Town of Verona offices are located within walking distance, so maintenance and programming could occur relatively easily.

At the intersection of Lock Road and Route 46, approximately 2.8 miles from the Town of Verona Park, the Erie Canalway Trail leaves the Old Erie Canal corridor and follows Lock Road to Lock 21. Though Lock Road has a low traffic volume, it could benefit from additional infrastructure to accommodate cyclists and trail users. Lock 21 is a significant node which draws multiple user types, including trail users who pass directly over the lock. While the ECT heads north on Lock Road, the Old Erie Canal waterway continues east: for approximately 1.7 miles the Old Erie Canal waterway is separated from the ECT. Without the ECT paralleling it, this portion of the Old Erie Canal waterway faces unique challenges with less access and less visibility; however it is still hydrologically connected to the rest of the Old Erie Canal. Approximately 1.3 miles east of Lock Road, the waterway passes under New London Road before feeding into the Barge Canal and rejoining the ECT. Though it is not located along the Erie Canalway Trail route, the Old Erie Canal is interrupted by the Barge Canal in New London, and the confluence of the Old Erie Canal and the Barge Canal includes numerous abandoned buildings and other infrastructure (along the south side of the Barge Canal). This site could play an important role in improving water flow in the Old Erie; as well as providing an

opportunity for cultural interpretation and improved recreational opportunities.

Unlike many of the western sections, non-motorized boating is not promoted within the Town of Verona. Water levels between the Oneida Creek Aqueduct and the City of Rome are inconsistent, ranging from relatively clear, navigable (with small watercraft) water to a completely dry and overgrown canal bed.

TRANSPORTATION + UTILITY CROSSINGS

STRUCTURE NAME	TYPE	OWNER	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY
Oneida Creek Aqueduct	Aqueduct		
Center Street	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Canal Street/Main Street	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
1855 Culvert	Culvert	Town of Verona	Town of Verona
Zingerline Road	Road	Town of Verona	Town of Verona
NYS Route 46	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Center Street Bridge	Road	?	?
Main Street (CR50)/New London Road	Bridge	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
NYS Route 31	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Mills Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Dunbarton Spur Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Germany Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Higginsville Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Collins Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Senn Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Lock Road	Road	NYS DOT	NYS DOT
Lock 21	Lock	Canal Corporation	Canal Corporation
Infrastructure	?	Canal Corporation	Canal Corporation
Abandoned Footbridge	Footbridge	?	?

This section also has more narrow culverts which would require portage and interrupt paddling.

The inconsistent water quality complicates boating, but it also impacts the overall experience for people using the trail for recreation. In many areas dry conditions have led to tree growth in the bed and banks of the canal. In these instances the canal seems to disappear which can be confusing or unsatisfying for users who wish to experience the history of the Old Erie Canal waters.

SPOTLIGHT: Canal Waters In Verona

The graphic to the right illustrates the various conditions of 11 miles of the Old Erie Canal as it passes through the Town of Verona. The photographs were taken at points where there is a road crossing the canal (see Transportation + Utility Crossings Table on the preceding page). The color bar at the bottom describes the quality of the canal water (clear, green, weedy, or dry) observable at points where roads and waterways cross over or under the canal. The names of these locations and the infrastructure associated with them are displayed along the blue line. Pictures of the water conditions looking east and west of each road crossing are displayed above the blue line.

This graphic indicates that there may be a relationship between features which bypass or intersect the canal, and the condition of the water in the canal. The exact impacts of these require more study.

For a more detailed account of the water as they relate to the trail and adjacent infrastructure, see Appendix ___.

View Looking West < > View Looking East



This photo was taken in 1995, and shows a navigable canal in Verona



1995

This photo was taken in 2020 from the same location as the one above. Drastically different conditions suggest that water flow has been impacted within the last 25 years. Discovery of the cause may help re-water the canal.



TODAY

A NYS DOT Parking Pull off area on Route 46.



TOWN OF VERONA ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The map to the right provides an overview of the context of the WRA in the Town of Verona.

- + Maintain the Oneida Creek Aqueduct and explore potential to make Oneida Creek Aqueduct a more prominent node and parkette.
- + The Empire State Trail passes directly through the center of the Hamlet of Durhamville. Wayfinding here can be challenging and could be improved in partnership with the Empire State Trail initiative and the Town of Verona. In addition, the town should consider other improvements which would accommodate trail users such as ____.
- + Water level and quality is inconsistent throughout the corridor in Verona. Understanding all of the factors that influence the hydrology of this section is critical to developing goals and interventions for this section of the Old Erie Canal. Members of the public have indicated that some septic systems in Durhamville are polluting the canal. Multiple downed trees present an immediate obstacle in the canal. Issues with blocked and leaking culverts may also be impacting the volume of water in the system.
- + The Erie Canalway trailheads in Verona are mostly informal and are not well marked. Trailheads should be better identified including: the Hamlet of Durhamville, Glur Road, Circle Drive, Lock 21, Town of Verona Community Park, Route 46 DOT Pull Off, Canal St/Route 31 intersection.
- + Although parts of the Old Erie Canal are navigable by small watercraft, there is no promoted kayak launch (hand launch) in Verona at this time.
- + Enhance the NYS DOT Route 46 pull-off area in the Town of Verona along the trail, explore the removal of the chain link fence, which would provide access to the Canal's edge. Verona Beach State Park is

approximately 3 miles away, explore creation of wayfinding for trail users to access Verona Beach (and the Village of Sylvan Beach). Town of Verona Community Park is one of the only attractions in the 11 mile stretch. Community-supported enhancements would benefit both trail users and people living in the Town.

- + Improve the on-road section of trail along Lock Rd. in partnership with Town of Verona.
- + Explore the potential to strengthen the relationship between the Hamlet of New London, the Old Erie Canal, and the Barge Canal. Business development and trail and barge canal access could occur here.
- + Several abandoned buildings and infrastructure components remain at the site in New London where the Old Erie Canal meets the Barge Canal. Reuse or integration of these features into a functional site should be explored.
- + Lock 21 is a significant and well maintained destination. Camping is allowed informally at this location but adding amenities and formally advertising this option could help grow usership. Enhancements here could help introduce and invite site visitors to engage with the trail.
- + Explore options for a Glur Road Trailhead.
- + As bridges over the canal are repaired or rebuilt, they should accommodate paddlers and the Old Erie Canal Water trail.
- + The culverts under Route 46 and Route 31 in the Town of Verona represent 2 of only 3 locations along the entire Old Erie Canal waterway where paddlers are prevented from paddling through. As DOT upgrades or replaces these bridges clearance for paddlers on the Old Erie Canal waterway should be considered.

