

### **III. ALTERNATIVES**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The FGEIS provides the lead agency and involved agencies with a comprehensive environmental analysis of cumulative growth impacts and potential mitigation measures for the Study Area. These agencies will evaluate and determine the most environmentally sound and economically responsible action to manage growth in this area during the 15-year planning period. At this time no decisions have been made regarding what is an acceptable level of development or what are the appropriate mitigation measures that will be required to manage growth in the Study Area. Ultimately, a Statement of Findings as required by SEQR must be developed by the lead and involved agencies to identify a combination of an acceptable level of development and appropriate mitigation measures.

Development, as projected under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario in Part II of this FGEIS, represents only one of many possible alternative scenarios which could result by the end of the 15-year planning period. An extensive analysis of another development scenario was undertaken as part of this FGEIS, identified as the High Growth Future Development Scenario. This alternative development scenario was analyzed prior to the analysis of the Cumulative Growth Scenario, but assumed that land within the Study Area would continue to develop at a higher rate during the 15-year planning period. This alternative is discussed in B.1. of this section. The No Growth and No Action alternatives are also discussed, including an evaluation of potential impacts, in B.2 and B.3 of this section, respectively.

Alternative methods to finance required public improvements to support future development under the Cumulative Growth Scenario are discussed earlier in this document under Section II, O, Economics. The funding mechanisms which are considered include impact fees, development excise taxes, and negotiated developer contributions.

As discussed in Part II of this FGEIS, the impacts associated with the Cumulative Growth Scenario will have a profound effect on the environmental and socioeconomic conditions within the Study Area. One method to limit identified impacts could include reducing the level of development which is projected to occur during the 15-year planning period. Various techniques to control/limit growth in the Study Area are identified in B.4. of this section.

The Study Area encompasses extensive areas of open space, recreation, and historical and archaeological resources which will be impacted by future development. Various alternatives to preserve these resources are discussed in Section II of this document. Specifically, measures to preserve open space and recreational resources are discussed in Section II,D, Vegetation, Wildlife and Aquatic Ecology, and Section II,L, Recreation. Mitigation measures to preserve and protect historical and archaeological resources are discussed in Section II,K, Historical and Archaeological Considerations.

There are many levels of government which have review authority over projects within the Study Area. These include local (town, village), county, state, and federal governments. The resulting layers of governmental regulations have the potential to create conflicts between regulatory agencies. Potential areas of conflict and possible methods to reduce these conflicts are suggested in B.5. of this section.

Also included in the alternatives section is a discussion of the need to balance both the economic benefits against the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of future development in the Study Area. It is recognized that facilities within the Study Area serve both local as well as regional needs. This is particularly true of Albany County Airport. Therefore, the effects that continued economic growth will have on the quality of life within the Study Area are discussed in B.5 of this section.

## **B. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES**

### **1. HIGH GROWTH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO:**

The development potential of land within the Study Area was initially evaluated based on what was termed the High Growth Future Development Scenario. This initial analysis assumed optimal economic conditions during the 15-year planning period which would allow businesses within the Capital District and the Study Area to expand at a rapid rate of growth.

Under the High Growth Future Development Scenario, several assumptions were made regarding future land use patterns in the Study Area. At the outset it was assumed that certain lands would remain undeveloped. These included all NYSDEC regulated wetlands, existing public and private lands used for recreational purposes (such as Shaker Ridge Country Club), several active farms, cemeteries, and the Ann Lee Pond Nature and Historic Preserve. Also, population and employment projections developed by CDRPC indicated that the Study Area might not support any additional residential and commercial development beyond what was projected in the High Growth Future Development Scenario. While there is no absolute guarantee that the above noted lands will not be developed, the assumption was based on contact with land owners and the history of wetland permitting by the NYSDEC as well as their current policy for minimizing wetland disturbance in this area.

Table III-B-1 outlines the proposed development that was used to support this High Growth Future Development Scenario through the year 2005. This includes site statistics such as number of units, square footage, and land area incorporated for each project. Approximate locations of these developments are

TABLE III-B-1  
 AIRPORT AREA GEIS  
 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE YEAR 2005 - HIGH GROWTH FUTURE  
 BY TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONE

TAZ NO.	PROJ. NO.	NAME OF DEVELOPMENT	HSG. UNITS	GROSS FLOOR AREA			ACREAGE	ZONING
				OFFICE	RETAIL	WHOUSE		
126	1	SHAKER RUN APT.	192					38 RES-B
126	2	SPEC. APT/TWNHSE DEV.	160					27 R-1
		sub-total for taz 126	352	0	0	0	0	65
138	3	DELTA PROPERTIES			10,150			2 BUS E
138	4	COLONIE CENTER ADD.			355,000			19 BUS E
138	5	SPEC. OFFICE DEV.		17,500				2 BUS E
139	6	SPEC. RETAIL DEV.		17,500	23,000			10 BUS E
		sub-total for taz 138	0	17,500	368,150	0	0	33
139	7	FOREST MEADOWS SECT. 2	54					21 RES A-2, A-3
139	8	MINICK OFFICE ADD.		4,746				1 BUS E
139	9	ANDERSON GR. INC.		7,562				2 BUS E
139	10	ANDERSON PUD	112	375,000				97 RES A-3
139	11	SPEC. MULTI-FAM. HSG.	43					17 RES A-3
139	12	SPEC. SINGLE FAM. HSG.	120					31 RES A-3
139	13	SPEC. SF & MF HSG.	95	695,000	78,500			65 RES A-3
139	14	SPEC. SINGLE FAM. HSG.						65 BUS E
139	15	SPEC. OFFICE & RETAIL DEV.						9 BUS E
139	16	NEW 200 ROOM HOTEL			78,500			
		sub-total for taz 139	539	1,082,308	78,500	0	0	326
140	17	NEW 240 ROOM MOTEL/RESTAURANT						10 BUS E
140	18	SPEC. RETAIL & OFFICE DEV.		231,050	55,000			22 BUS E
		sub-total for taz 140		231,050	55,000	0	0	32
155	19	KUJHMAN		9,444				0 BUS G
155	20	ROSETTI		18,400				1 BUS E-2
155	21	WEMBLY SQUARE PH. 2			51,000			7 BUS E-2
155	22	KARNER WOODS PH. 2		45,200				5 BUS G
155	23	ROSEWOOD PLAZA		35,000	35,000			1 BUS E-2
155	24	AMERICAN HEART BLDG.		7,860				1 BUS E-2
155	25	BRANLON PLACE		40,000				1 BUS E-2
		sub-total for taz 155		155,904	86,000	0	0	17
159	26	ASHFIELD ASSOC. [BBL]		64,000				9 UNDEV
159	27	ALBANY AIRWAY		19,500				2 UNDEV
159	28	WESTBURY WOODS	279	300,000			100,000	125 RES A-2, A
159	29	NEMITH		966,000				20 COMM H
159	30	BBL OFFICE PARK						45 UNDEV

TABLE III-B-1  
 AIRPORT AREA GEIS  
 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE YEAR 2005 - HIGH GROWTH FUTURE  
 BY TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONE

TAZ NO.	PROJ. NO.	NAME OF DEVELOPMENT	HSG. UNITS	OFFICE	GROSS FLOOR AREA			ACREAGE	ZONING
					RETAIL	WRHOUSE	IND PARK MANUF		
159		31 SPEC. SINGLE FAM. HSG	60					24 UNDEV	
159		32 SPEC. OFFICE DEVEL. sub-total for taz 159	399	2,002,500	0	0	100,000	31 UNDEV 256	
160		33 MTP CONSTRUCTION			7,300			1 COMM H	
160		34 LATHAM AUTO BODY			7,128			1 COMM H	
160		35 A.J.VEL			70,000			7 COMM H	
160		36 VELLANO			76,624			2 COMM H	
160		37 GEN STEEL FABRICATORS		4,100				13 COMM H	
160		38 CARPITO		2,500				2 COMM H	
160		39 BROADWAY CORP.			43,264			4 COMM H	
160		40 RETAIL-SPECULATIVE		14,000				2 COMM H	
160		41 RETAIL-SPECULATIVE		20,000				2 COMM H	
160		42 OFFICE-SPECULATIVE		360,000				18 COMM H	
160		43 OFFICE-SPECULATIVE sub-total for taz 160	0	866,600	34,000	204,316	0	54 COMM H 105	
161		44 SPEC. OFFICE DEVEL. sub-total for taz 161	0	443,000	0	0	0	53 BUS E 53	
162		45 SPEC. SF HSG. DEVEL. sub-total for taz 162	62	0	0	0	0	31 RES A-2 31	
163		46 WALFRED ASSOCIATES		8,200				1 BUS E-1	
163		47 COLONIE MEADOWS			40,000			57 C-3 RES	
163		48 WALFRED ASSOCIATES			96,000			8 COMM H	
163		49 FORTIN WAREHOUSING						11 COMM H	
163		50 WADE RD 37-39		243,000				19 COMM H	
163		51 HOLIDAY MAT. FITNESS			20,246			4 COMM H, BUS E	
163		52 IMPERIAL POOLS					60,000	13 COMM H, BUS E-1, UNDE	
163		53 OLD NISKAYUNA RD SPEC.		30,000	200,000	100,000		58 UNDEV, IND F, BUS E-	
163		54 RETAIL/OFFICE SPEC.		534,000	356,000			61 BUS E-1	
163		55 IND. PARK SPEC.				90,000		10 BUS E, COMM H	
163		56 COLONIE MEADOWS RESEARCH PK		196,000				10 COMM H	
163		57 SCHULMBERGER SITE sub-total for taz 163	336	1,011,200	376,246	336,000	290,000	10 COMM H 262	
164		58 HANLEY SIGN CO.		3,200				1 COMM H	
164		59 STATE LIGHTING			10,000			1 COMM H	
164		60 A.J.HARRIS			8,400			10 COMM H	

TABLE III-B-1  
 AIRPORT AREA GEIS  
 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE YEAR 2005 - HIGH GROWTH FUTURE  
 BY TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONE

TAZ NO.	PROJ. NO.	NAME OF DEVELOPMENT	NUMBER OF HSG. UNITS	GROSS FLOOR AREA			ACREAGE	ZONING
				OFFICE	RETAIL	IND PARK MANUF		
164	61	INTERMAGNETICS EXP.			130,100		28 BUS E	
164	62	AIR FREIGHT CENTER		70,000			7 COMM H	
164	63	BROCKWAY COMPUTER HANGER		20,000			2 IND F	
164	64	AIRPORT IND. PARK		190,000			18 UNDEV, BUS E-1	
164	65	THEME RESTAURANT	11,500				3 COMM H	
164	66	OFF/WHSE SPECULATION	24,000	216,000			12 COMM H	
164	67	LT INDUST. SPECULATION			338,000		20 COMM H	
164	68	HOTEL-ESTIMATED @ 200 ROOMS					8 UNDEV	
164	69	AIRPORT-INCREASE IN PASSENGER ENPLANEMENTS THROUGH 2005	0	27,200	294,400	+1,480,617 PERSONS (INC. WOLF ROAD STUDY)		
		sub-total for taz 164		30,085	548,000	130,100	111	
165	70	SHAKER PINE					5 BUS E, RES A-2	
165	71	ROSETTI OFF. BLDG.	69	58,000			4 BUS E, RES A-2	
165	72	BRIT. AM. DEV. CORP.					32 A-2	
165	73	WINDSOR PROPERTY 2		29,200			3 UNDEV	
165	74	BRIT. AM. DEV. CORP.		40,960			8 UNDEV	
165	75	BRIT. AM. DEV. CORP.		70,000			7 UNDEV	
165	76	BRIT. AM. DEV. CORP.		40,400			4 UNDEV	
165	77	BRIT. AM. DEV. CORP.			60,000		9 COMM H	
165	78	GRIMM PROPERTIES			36,000		6 INDUST F	
165	79	METROPLEX		350,000			17 COMM H	
165	80	AIRPORT PARK		48,400			11 UNDEV	
165	81	LEGALEASE CORP.		5,040			1 COMM H	
165	82	MCDERMOTT FOOD			5,250		5 COMM H	
165	83	BRIT. AM. DEV. CORP.	181	250,000			79 UNDEV, RES A-2	
165	84	SPEC. OFFICE DEV.		1,155,900			29 UNDEV	
165	85	SPEC. OFFICE DEV.			848,100		30 COMM H, UNDEV	
165	86	SPEC. WAREHSE. DEV.			949,350		32 UNDEV, COMM H	
		sub-total for taz 165	250	2,045,900	30,085	0	280	
166	87	CAMBRIDGE PARK PH. 3	65				24 A2 & A3	
166	88	TALON DRIVE	24				14 A1 & A3	
166	89	CAMBRIDGE PARK PH. 4	3				2 RES A-2	
		sub-total for taz 166	92	0	0	0	40	
167	90	KEELER MOTOR CAR					38 E-1 & A-2	
167	91	RIVERDALE MANOR	17				17 A-2	
167	92	CAPITAL HEALTH PLAN		35,000			8 A-2	
167	93	DAIGLE SUBDIVISION	2	75,000			23 RES A-2, BUS E-1	
167	94	KINGRAKU RESTAURANT			10,346		5 COMM E-1	

TABLE III-B-1  
 AIRPORT AREA GRIS  
 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE YEAR 2005 - HIGH GROWTH FUTURE  
 BY TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONE

TAZ NO.	PROJ. NO.	NAME OF DEVELOPMENT	NUMBER OF HSG. UNITS	GROSS FLOOR AREA			ACREAGE	ZONING		
				OFFICE	RETAIL	IND. PARK MANUF				
167	95	LANDS OF CILLIS	18				15 A-2			
167	96	SCHALREN ESTATES	7				8 A-2			
167	97	TALANIAN PLAZA		19,500			22 BUS E-2			
167	98	SPEC. SF HOUSING DEV.	66				132 RES A-2			
167	99	SPEC. OFFICE DEV.	110	300,000			47 BUS E-1			
		sub-total for taz 167		410,000	142,571	0	314			
168	100	CROSS ROADS SUBD.		318,400			49 BUS E-2			
		sub-total for taz 168		318,400			49			
TOTALS=				2,080	8,611,562	1,212,052	1,784,066	938,000	190,100	1,973

shown on Exhibit III-B-1. This development scenario was based on construction of up to 2,080 new housing units and 12.7 million square feet of commercial space at the end of the 15-year planning period.

Not every potential development project presented by area real estate developers and builders was included in this analysis. Under the High Growth Future Development Scenario, a certain level of anticipated development has already been included. Furthermore, the High Growth Future Development Scenario includes a projected level of development which far exceeds the "high growth future" as determined by CDTC in their Wolf Road and Airport Area studies. As stated by CDTC in their Airport Area Traffic Assessment, "Since it appears that none of the improvements formulated under the study can technically solve expected traffic problems under this [high growth] future, it is recommended that the high growth future be eliminated from further consideration as a desirable or practical framework from which to plan for the area's future transportation needs". Therefore, since a reasonable estimate of the maximum growth that was likely to occur in the Study Area was exceeded, incorporating all potential development proposals was determined to be unrealistic for the purposes of this FGEIS.

The additional 2,080 new housing units projected for the Study Area would result in an increase in the present population by approximately 5,345 people for a total of 13,377 people by the year 2005 (a 67 percent increase). This population increase would include an additional 1,331 school age children (between 5 and 18 years of age). This is a 68 percent increase in the number of school age children when compared to 1989 figures.

As proposed, the projected future land use under the High Growth Future Development Scenario would have a significant impact on existing land use patterns in the Study Area. Table III-B-2 outlines future land uses at the end of the 15-year planning period.

TABLE III-B-2  
FUTURE LAND USE IN THE YEAR 2005 - HIGH GROWTH FUTURE

LAND USE	1990 EXISTING (ACRES)	2005 PROJECTED (ACRES)	CHANGE (ACRES)
RESIDENTIAL	1,620	2,230	+610
COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL	1,360	2,049	+689
ACTIVE AGRICULTURAL	810	386	-424
INSTITUTIONAL/RECREATIONAL	1,350	1,333	- 17
AIRPORT	850	950	+100
OPEN SPACE	2,510	1,552	-958

The potential loss of agricultural lands (52 percent) and open space (38 percent) represents the most significant changes to existing land use patterns under the High Growth Future Development Scenario. The loss of open space would reduce important wildlife habitat as well as impact available scenic and recreational resources.

Under the High Growth Future Development Scenario significant commercial and residential developments will be built within the boundary of the Watervliet Shaker Historic District, particularly in the area of South Family Drive. The existing farmland and open space will be utilized through the construction of residential subdivisions, corporate office parks, and roads. The proposed greenbelt between Ann Lee Pond and Stump Pond (see Section II,D) might

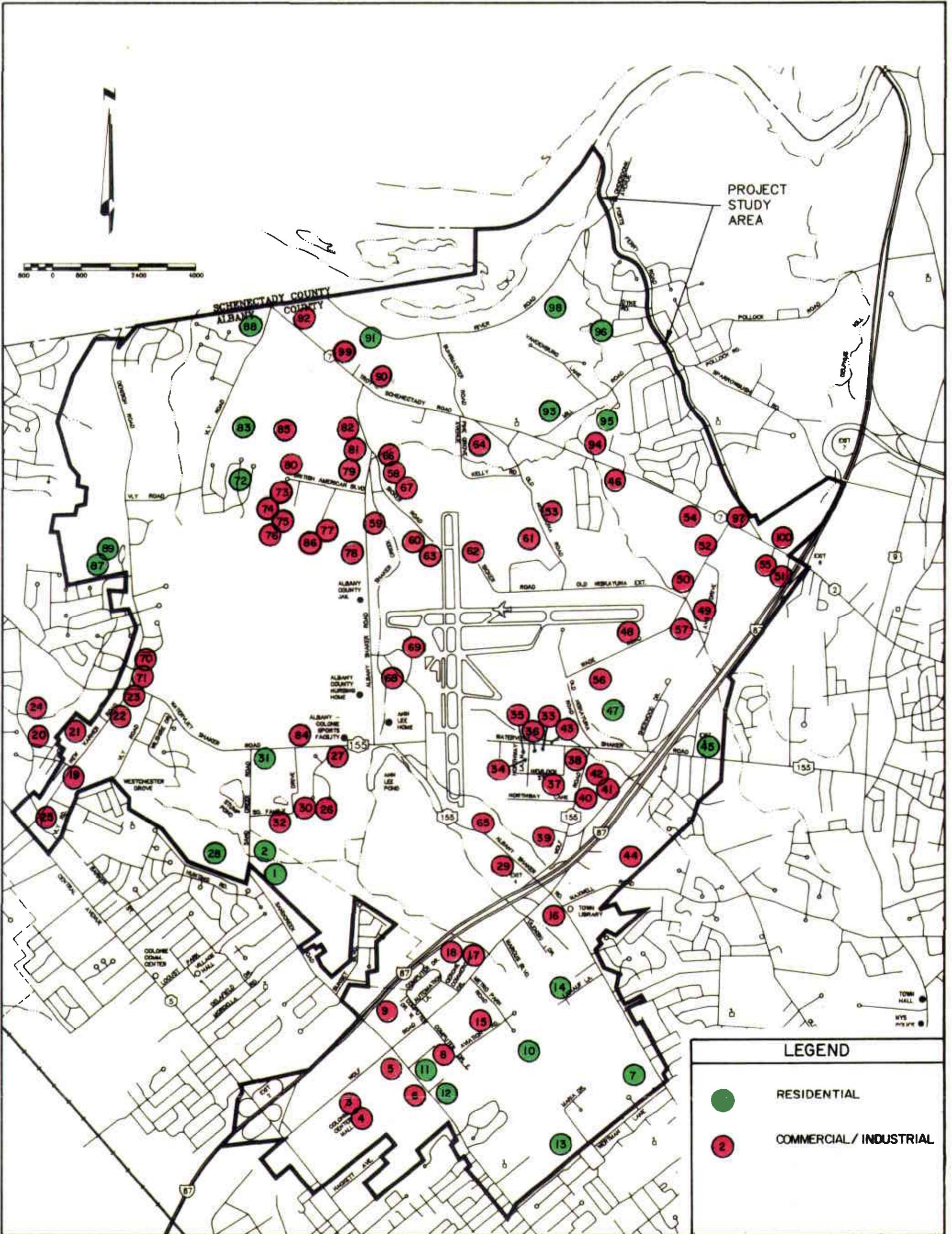
never be realized and the historical context of the District itself will be severely compromised as a result of this development. No mitigation exists to lessen the impacts on historical resources under this development scenario.

Town of Colonie Parks and Recreation officials have stated that a minimum of 28 acres of additional park land will be necessary to provide adequate public recreational facilities for anticipated population increases under the High Growth Future Development Scenario. It is estimated that each acre of parkland developed will cost approximately \$40,000 including acquisition. The cost for additional park land under this scenario is estimated at \$1,120,000.

Municipal services within the Study Area will also be impacted as the population will increase by 5,345 (40 percent) people. It is estimated that an additional 1,331 school age children will attend the North Colonie (370 students), South Colonie (841 students), the Niskayuna School Districts (120 students).

The South Colonie Central School District will receive the most significant impacts. The District is presently reviewing plans to rehabilitate and reopen schools which were closed during the 1970s and 1980s.

The amount of annual solid waste generated, as compared to 1990 figures, under the High Growth Future Development Scenario will also increase. In 2005, approximately 5,345 additional tons of solid waste will be produced as a result of projected residential growth. Non-residential uses will generate another 28,773 tons of solid waste annually in 2005. Thus, the total additional waste generated under this High Growth Future Development Scenario at the end of the planning period from all sources will be 34,118 tons annually. This compares to 116,000 tons of solid waste which was deposited at the landfill during 1989.



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APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS OF PROPOSED  
DEVELOPMENT THROUGH YEAR 2005  
( HIGH GROWTH FUTURE )

EXHIBIT NO.  
**III - B - I**

**AIRPORT AREA GENERIC  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The following unique viewsheds would be directly impacted by proposed development under the High Growth Future Development Scenario:

- o Land area east of Wolf Road and south of Albany Shaker Road;
- o Ann Lee Pond;
- o Route 155 and Sand Creek Road corridor; and
- o Albany Shaker Road corridor.

Proposed development will be concentrated within these four viewsheds and much of the open space which exists within these areas will be lost. Based on the intensity of projected development, potential impacts cannot be successfully mitigated due to the extent of open space which will be lost to residential and commercial uses.

In addition to the above impacts, development proposed under the High Growth Future Development Scenario will have significant impact on the transportation system in the Study Area. Future traffic conditions were analyzed based on projected development presented in Table III-B-1. This analysis was performed according to standard traffic engineering procedures as described in Section II, H, Transportation.

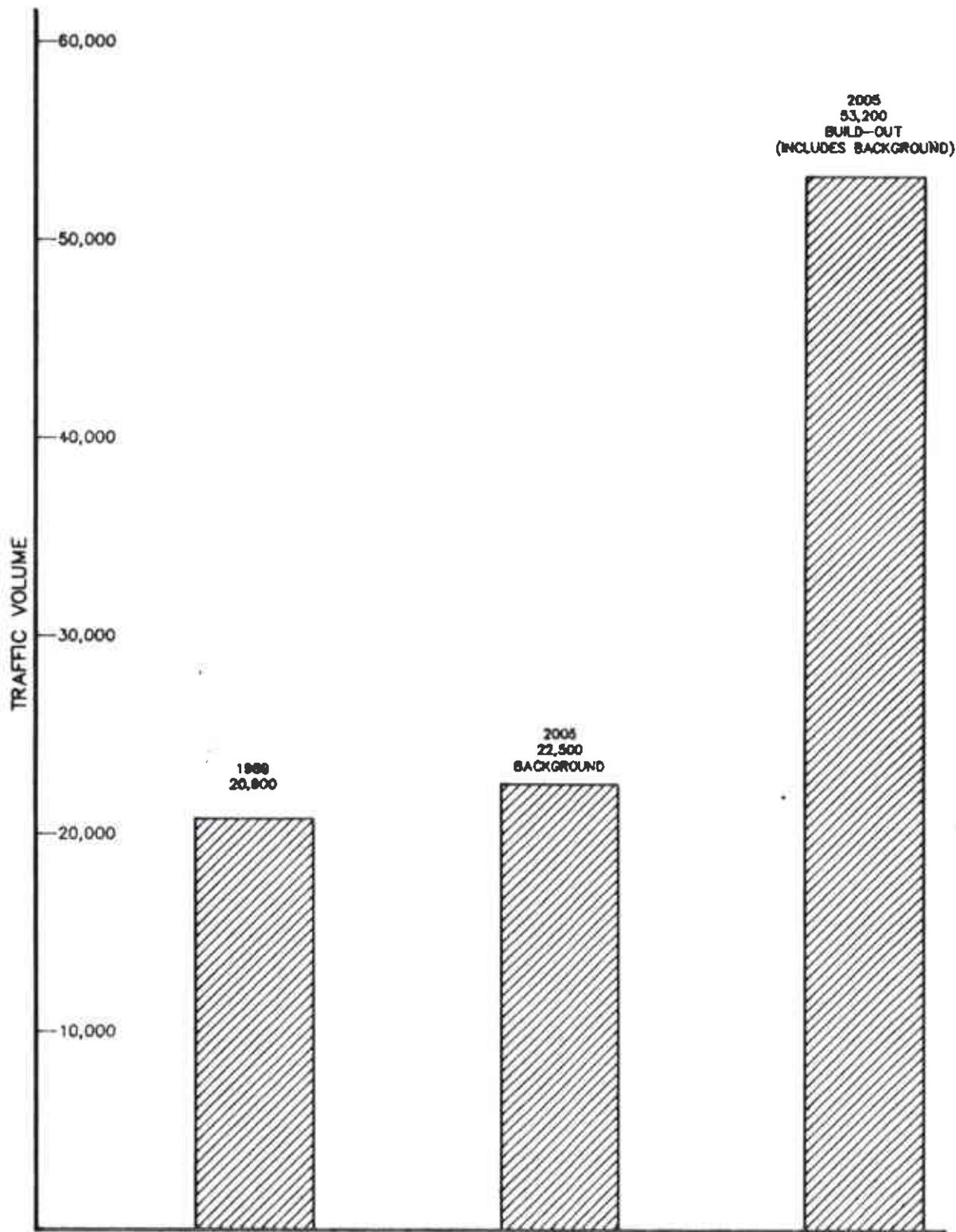
Part of the traffic analysis for the High Growth Future Development Scenario included the estimation of pm peak hour vehicle trips for traffic entering and exiting the Study Area. Exhibit III-B-2 illustrates the total trip generation potential of the new development as well as the growth resulting from background traffic. The volume of traffic is expected to increase by over 150 percent to a maximum of 53,200 peak hour vehicles. To illustrate further the origin of this traffic growth, the total trip generation potential was analyzed according to land use type. Exhibit III-B-3 graphically indicates the volume of peak hour traffic by each land use type. For example, this figure illustrates that

office development accounts for almost two-thirds of the total volume of new traffic that will be generated under the High Growth Future Development Scenario. The Albany County Airport will account for eight percent of the new traffic volume in 2005.

To determine the distribution of the trips generated under the High Growth Future Development Scenario, origin/destination information was based on the 1980 Census Urban Transportation Planning Package, a computer software program specifically designed to provide data on the place of work of residents within a particular zone. Using this data, information supplemented by CDTC and information regarding travel patterns in the Study Area, the projected distribution of new trips was developed. These new trips were then assigned to the existing street and highway system based on travel patterns between trip origin and destination. Exhibit III-B-4 illustrates in graphic form, the percentage of peak hour traffic volume growth on major area roadways at the end of the 15-year planning period under the High Growth Future Development Scenario.

The largest percent increase in traffic in the Study Area will be on Albany Shaker Road. The segment between Ann Lee Pond and the west Airport Access Road will experience 500 percent increase in peak hour traffic volume. Other roadways which will experience high growth include Watervliet Shaker Road (450 percent), Albany Shaker Road (360 percent), Old Wolf Road (250 percent), and Wade Road (240 percent).

Projected traffic volumes in the Study Area are significantly higher under the High Growth Future Development Scenario than they are under the Cumulative Growth Scenario discussed in Section II,H of this FGEIS. For comparison purposes, Table III-B-3 summarizes the existing and projected traffic volumes in the Study Area and presents the annualized growth rates for the 15-year planning period under both development scenarios. The annualized traffic growth rates for



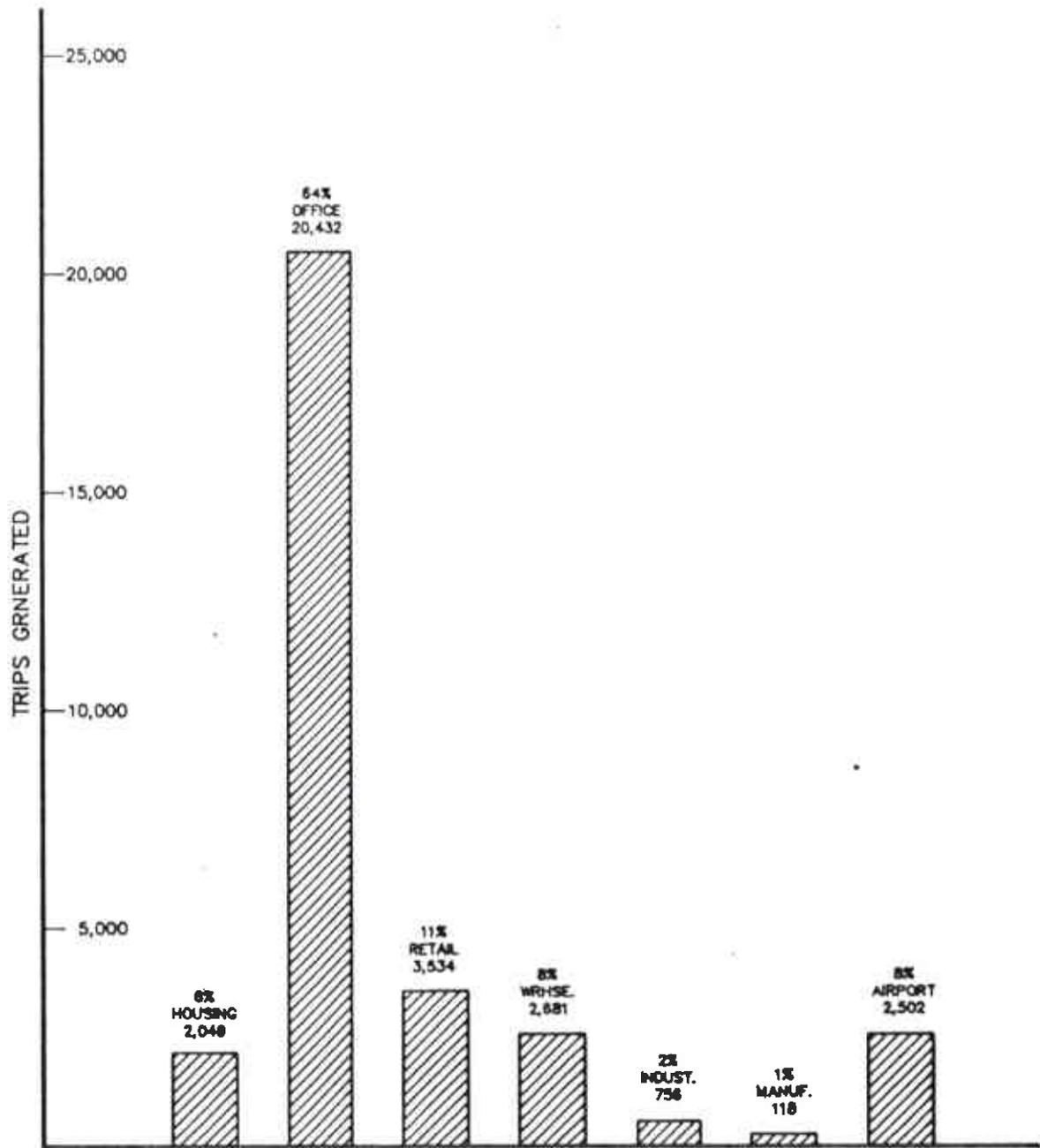
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**TOTAL TRAFFIC ENTERING / EXITING  
STUDY AREA P.M. PEAK HOUR  
IN 2005  
(HIGH GROWTH FUTURE)**

EXHIBIT

**III - B - 2**

**AIRPORT AREA GENERIC  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**



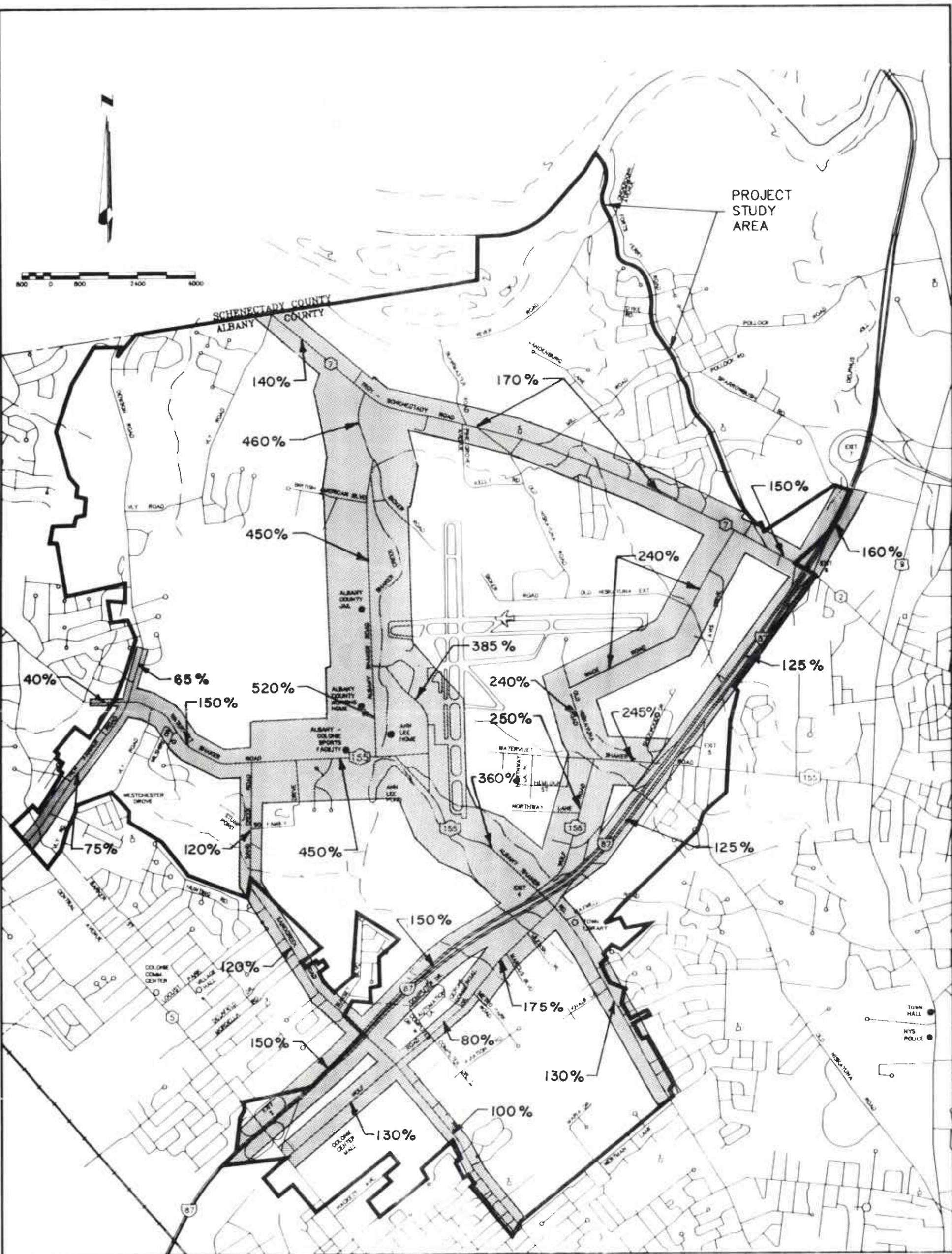
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**TOTAL P.M. PEAK HOUR TRIPS GENERATED  
BY LAND-USE TYPE IN 2006  
(HIGH GROWTH FUTURE)**

EXHIBIT

**III - B - 3**

**AIRPORT AREA GENERIC  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**



PROJECT  
STUDY  
AREA

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PERCENTAGE INCREASE OF PEAK  
HOUR TRAFFIC-2005  
(HIGH GROWTH FUTURE)

III - B - 4

AIRPORT AREA GENERIC  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

this period under the Cumulative Growth Scenario range from 2.8 percent on Vly Road to 10.7 percent on Albany Shaker Road. Under the High Growth Future Development Scenario, annualized growth rates for these same roadways range from 4.6 percent to 12.8 percent respectively.

**TABLE III-B-3  
SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC VOLUME PROJECTIONS**

LINK	PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME			ANNUALIZED TRAFFIC GROWTH	
	1990 EXISTING	2005 CUMUL. GROWTH	2005 HIGH GROWTH	1990-2005 CUMUL. GROWTH	1990-2005 HIGH GROWTH
<b><u>ROUTE 7</u></b>					
VLY RD. TO ALBANY SHAKER RD.	3,350	6,710	8,450	4.7%	6.4%
ALBANY SHAKER RD. TO OLD NISKAYUNA RD.	2,850	5,790	7,300	4.8%	6.5%
OLD NISKAYUNA RD. TO WADE RD.	3,280	7,030	9,250	5.2%	7.2%
WADE RD. TO I-87 EXIT 6	3,740	7,790	9,710	5.0%	6.6%
<b><u>WOLF ROAD</u></b>					
ALBANY SHAKER RD. TO METRO PARK RD.	2,860	4,540	5,480	3.1%	4.4%
METRO PARK RD. TO SAND CREEK RD.	2,980	4,760	5,480	3.2%	4.1%
SAND CREEK RD. TO CENTRAL AVE.	2,570	4,840	5,960	4.3%	5.8%
<b><u>ALBANY SHAKER ROAD</u></b>					
MAXWELL RD. TO WOLF RD.	2,480	4,050	5,730	3.3%	5.7%
WOLF RD. TO OLD WOLF RD.	2,610	7,600	10,250	7.4%	9.5%
OLD WOLF RD. TO AIRPORT ACCESS RD. (SOUTH)	2,750	8,930	12,570	8.2%	10.7%
AIRPORT ACCESS RD. (SOUTH) TO WATERVLIET SHAKER RD.	1,230	2,800	5,170	5.6%	10.0%

TABLE III-B-3 (CONT.)  
SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC VOLUME PROJECTIONS

LINK	PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME			ANNUALIZED TRAFFIC GROWTH	
	1990 EXISTING	2005 CUMUL. GROWTH	2005 HIGH GROWTH	1990-2005 CUMUL. GROWTH	1990-2005 HIGH GROWTH
WATERVLIET SHAKER RD. TO AIRPORT ACCESS RD. (NORTH)	460	1,620	2,650	8.8%	12.4%
AIRPORT ACCESS NORTH TO BRITISH AMERICAN BLVD.	1,190	5,050	7,210	10.1%	12.8%
BRITISH AMERICAN BLVD. TO ROUTE 7	1,220	4,820	6,820	9.6%	12.2%
<u>NEW KARNER RD.</u>					
CENTRAL AVE. TO WATERVLIET SHAKER RD.	1,400	2,320	2,730	3.4%	4.6%
<u>WADE RD.</u>					
ROUTE 7 TO WATERVLIET SHAKER RD.	490	1,610	2,060	8.3%	10.0%
<u>VLY RD.</u>					
WATERVLIET SHAKER RD. TO DENISON RD.	890	1,340	1,750	2.8%	4.6%
DENISON RD. TO ROUTE 7	350	620	810	3.9%	5.8%
<u>WATERVLIET SHAKER RD.</u>					
NEW KARNER RD TO SAND CREEK RD.	1,750	3,420	4,440	4.6%	6.4%
SAND CREEK RD. TO ALBANY SHAKER RD.	1,320	3,550	5,830	6.8%	10.4%
OLD WOLF RD. TO I-87 EXIT 5	1,120	2,860	3,810	6.4%	8.5%
<u>SAND CREEK RD.</u>					
WATERVLIET SHAKER RD. TO HUNTING RD.	860	1,650	2,170	4.4%	6.4%
HUNTING RD. TO WOLF RD.	1,510	2,470	3,030	3.3%	4.8%

**TABLE III-B-3 (CONT.)  
SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC VOLUME PROJECTIONS**

LINK	PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME			ANNUALIZED TRAFFIC GROWTH	
	1990 EXISTING	2005 CUMUL. GROWTH	2005 HIGH GROWTH	1990-2005 CUMUL. GROWTH	1990-2005 HIGH GROWTH
WOLF RD. TO COLONIE CENTER RD.  <u>OLD WOLF RD.</u>	1,420	2,560	2,840	4.0%	4.7%
WATERVLIET SHAKER RD. TO I-87 EXIT 4 OFF RAMP	700	2,520	2,520	6.4%	8.9%
I-87 EXIT 4 OFF RAMP TO ALBANY SHAKER RD.	1,330	4,210	4,210	5.9%	8.0%

In order to accommodate projected development under the High Growth Future Development Scenario, the major transportation routes within the Study Area will require significant improvements. To determine the order of magnitude of roadway improvements which will be required, an analysis was made to determine the number of lanes on the major Study Area roadways that will be necessary to provide the same level of service as presently exists. The results of this analysis are presented on Exhibit III-B-5.

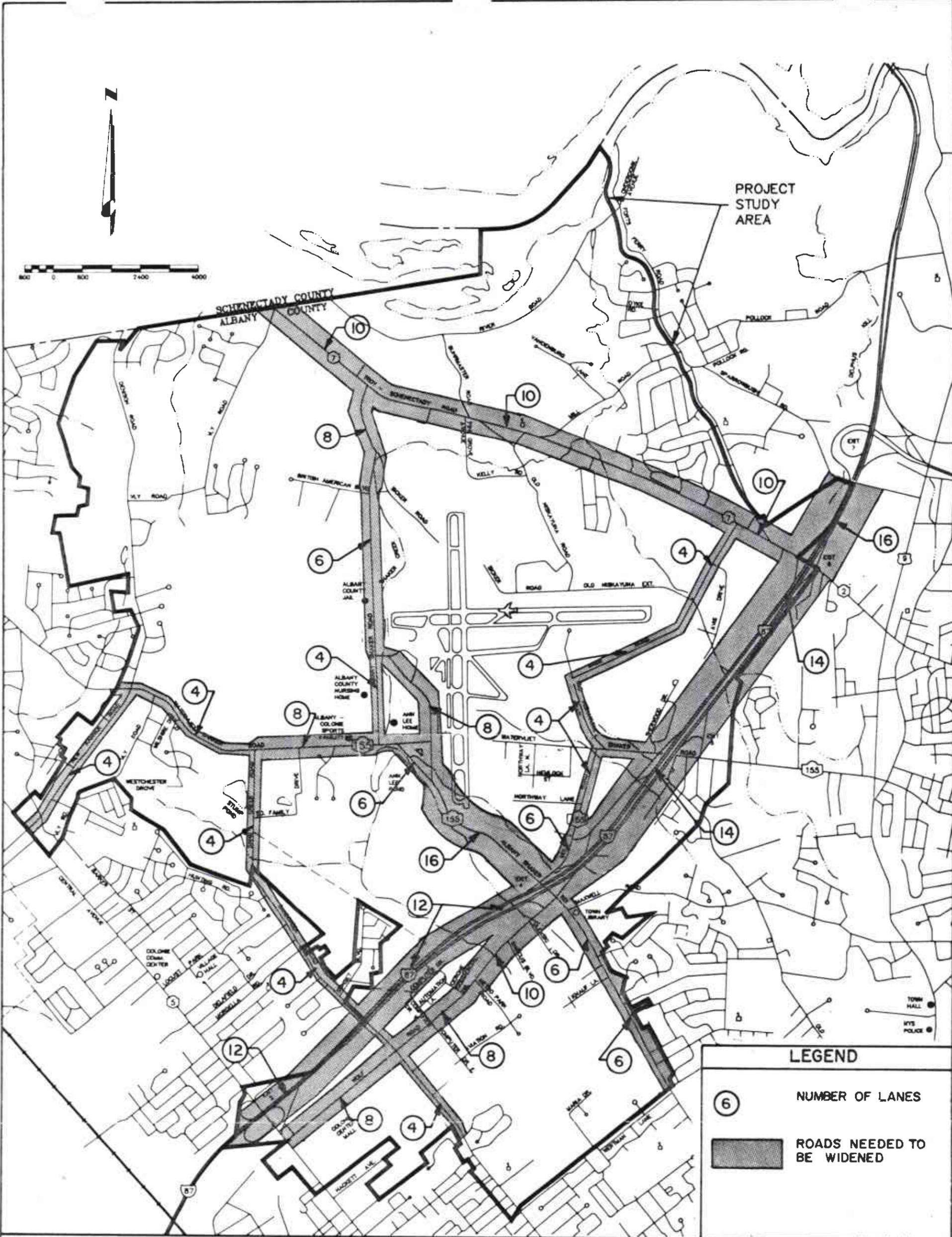
As shown on Exhibit III-B-5, significant widening of existing roadways will be required to accommodate traffic that will be generated. To maintain existing levels of service within the Study Area, 10 lanes will be required on NYS Route 7, 16 lanes will be required on Albany Shaker Road between I-87 and the Airport Access Road, and 10 lanes will be required on Wolf Road. Other major routes such as New Karner, Sand Creek, Old Wolf, Watervliet Shaker, and Wade Roads would require 4-6 lanes to provide adequate capacity for this traffic.

Widening of these highways will have a major impact on adjacent land uses. For example, the widening of Wolf Road to 8 lanes and expansion of the Northway (I-87) to 12 lanes could result in the removal of the majority of businesses on the west side of Wolf Road to accommodate roadway construction. The number of lanes required at most roadway intersections would disrupt or perhaps force the relocation of numerous high volume, traffic dependent businesses. The widening of Route 7 to 10 lanes would have a similar effect on the homes and businesses along this roadway. Similar traffic-related impacts would also occur both within and outside of the Study Area.

The cost of all improvements within the Study Area is conservatively estimated to be in excess of \$190 million. This cost does not include roadway improvements outside of the Study Area as discussed below. When combined with the necessary acquisition and demolition of large tracts of property for required R.O.W., this development scenario would have a tremendous economic impact on the populations of Albany, Schenectady, and Saratoga Counties.

Virtually all through residential collector streets within the Study Area and in adjacent neighborhoods will require improvements to accommodate the estimated increase in traffic. Although not specifically evaluated, certain roadways will need to be widened and intersections will require improvements such as the installation of turning lanes and signalization. On a regional scale, a new north-south arterial will be required along with the widening of State Routes 5 and 2 between Albany and Schenectady and Troy and Schenectady, respectively under the High Growth Future Development Scenario. This level of development will also increase the potential need for a new Mohawk River bridge crossing.

The extreme impacts resulting from the High Growth Future Development Scenario traffic analysis were presented to officials of the Town and Village of Colonie and Albany County. It was determined that this development



**LEGEND**

⑥ NUMBER OF LANES

■ ROADS NEEDED TO BE WIDENED

**CHA** CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES  
ENGINEERS & PLANNERS  
3 WINNERS CIRCLE, ALBANY, N.Y. 12205

LANES NEEDED IN 2005 TO MAINTAIN 1989 CONDITIONS (HIGH GROWTH FUTURE)

EXHIBIT NO. III - B - 5

**AIRPORT AREA GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

scenario was not realistic from an environmental or socioeconomic standpoint. Therefore this alternative for the Study Area was dismissed.

## 2. NO GROWTH ALTERNATIVE:

The significant restriction of new development within the Study Area will prevent many of the environmental and socioeconomic impacts discussed in Section II. Demographic and land use trends will remain virtually unchanged and impacts to geology, vegetation, wildlife, groundwater, and surface water would be slight. Existing utilities and transportation systems will continue to provide adequate service. Since there will be no significant increases in traffic under this scenario, air quality and noise impacts may be reduced as new technology became available through the introduction of quieter, cleaner, and more fuel efficient engines. Available land for recreation and open space will not be affected and historical and archaeological sites, as well as important scenic vistas, will not be disturbed. However, the no growth alternative will have a negative impact on the continued growth within the Study Area which, in turn, would impact the Town, Village, County, and regional economies.

The value of land within the Study Area is a direct function of surrounding land uses, existing zoning, accessibility to other areas, and a land owner's best and highest use for the land. By restricting further development of land within the Study Area, an owner will be denied the right to build, or make improvements to the property. Under New York State Law, the taking of property through government action requires that the governmental entity fairly compensate the property owner when a property cannot be developed or is needed for a public use. While the ultimate decision will lie with the courts, it is probable that the no growth alternative will be perceived as a taking of property. Such action could have severe economic impacts on the Town and Village of Colonie.

If the Town and Village of Colonie are forced to compensate land owners within the Study Area for the loss of development rights, the remaining property owners within these municipalities will have to pay these costs through higher property taxes. Based on an average estimated acquisition cost of \$90,000 per acre for commercial land and \$30,000 per acre for residential land, the acquisition cost of 3,320 acres of existing open space in the Study Area, would exceed \$200 million.

The loss of development rights will translate into a reduction in the County, Town, and Village tax base. Consequently, taxes will need to be raised to offset the anticipated revenue formerly generated by the properties within the Study Area. This decreased tax base would also adversely affect revenues currently raised by local school districts.

Prohibiting growth within the Study Area will directly impact economic growth in the Capital District. The Albany County Airport is the only facility within the Upper Hudson Region (serving nine counties) which offers regularly scheduled commercial flights. Enplanements at the Airport are expected to increase by over 1.4 million people (130 percent) during the 15-year planning period. The Airport is also expected to handle a total of 5,400 tons of air cargo by 2005, an increase of over 80 percent when compared to 1990 conditions. To accommodate this anticipated growth, it will be necessary to expand existing Airport facilities.

The updated ALP, prepared in 1990 for the Albany County Airport, indicated that over \$100 million in improvements will be required over the next 20 years to accommodate the anticipated growth in air traffic. Additional commercial and industrial development will be attracted to the Study Area to provide the necessary support services for Airport and aircraft operations. It is generally accepted by area government and business leaders that the expansion of the Airport

is critical to the continued growth and well-being of the Capital District economy. By prohibiting growth within the Study Area, the expansion of Airport facilities will not be possible and will directly impact the area's economy.

The no growth alternative would severely impact future economic growth within the Town and Village of Colonie as well as the Capital District Region. Existing property values will be impacted and municipalities would experience a reduction in the local tax base. Furthermore, Albany County Airport could not be expanded to meet future demands for service. For these reasons, the no growth alternative was considered to be unrealistic and economically unsound and was, therefore, dismissed.

### 3. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE:

By implementing the no action alternative the FGEIS would not have been prepared. This would eliminate the discussion of development related impacts and mitigation measures for the 15-year planning period.

The FGEIS identifies significant existing transportation deficiencies within the Study Area in Table II-H-2 and transportation capital improvements at an estimated cost between \$8,420,000 and \$11,780,000 will be required to correct them. The existing highway operational deficiencies are illustrated on Exhibit II-H-2. The intersections and highway segments identified on this Exhibit all operate at a level of service which is considered to be unacceptable according to NYSDOT.

Further growth within the Study Area will exacerbate existing unacceptable roadway conditions as well as lead to the deterioration of levels of service on marginally acceptable roadways. This will ultimately contribute to the

decline in the quality of life with regard to traffic congestion and delays, degradation in air quality, and increased personal injury and property damage as a result of traffic accidents.

The opportunity of the lead agency to develop a long-term capital improvement plan for the Study Area, with costs to be distributed on a fair and equitable basis to provide adequate water, sewer, and recreational services within the Study Area, will be lost. The opportunity to develop a comprehensive open space/recreation plan to protect environmentally sensitive areas will be limited. This could result in the permanent loss of unique ecosystems and habitat. The ability of the lead agency to implement long-term planning strategies and innovative land use techniques such as Clustering and TDR's, which provide opportunities for protection of historical and archaeological sensitive areas, open space, visual resources and groundwater resources, will also be limited.

Individual development proposals within the Study Area would be subject to the requirements of SEQR. However, there would be no means to determine the cumulative impacts and required mitigation measures of all development proposals as a group. Furthermore, cost estimates and funding mechanisms for certain mitigation measures would not be developed. Without the cost sharing techniques proposed in Part II of this FGEIS, some improvements associated with new development would continue to be funded on a project-by-project basis. In this age of diminishing federal and state funding, it is likely that necessary infrastructure improvements would have to be financed to a large extent by local governments. For these reasons, the no growth alternative was considered environmentally and economically unsound, and was therefore dismissed.

#### 4. LIMITING/CONTROLLING GROWTH:

According to information already provided in this document, unconstrained development under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario, will create severe impacts on both the environment and infrastructure of the Study Area. These impacts are discussed in detail in part II of the FGEIS. Some of the most significant impacts are related to:

- Transportation
- Vegetation Wildlife, Aquatic Ecology
- Water Supply & Distribution
- Land Use
- Historic and Archaeological Resources
- Recreation
- Municipal Services

Under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario, transportation impacts will require the construction of \$96,216,000 of improvements under Option 1, or \$125,283,000 of improvements under option 2. This would include construction of Exit 3 on I-87, a new north/south arterial from Exit 3 to Route 7, widening of Route 7 to six lanes, and other improvements as identified in Section II,H of the FGEIS.

Under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario, impacts to vegetation, wildlife and aquatic ecology will result in the elimination of approximately 1,266 acres to development (36 percent of the total available open space). This will reduce the quality of wildlife and plant habitat and will adversely effect the general character and aesthetics of the Study Area. Thus, there may simply not be enough appropriate vegetation remaining in the Study Area to support the quantity and diversity of wildlife which presently exists. These impacts are discussed in Section II,D of the FGEIS.

Development under the Cumulative Development Growth Scenario will require the construction of \$27,149,160 of improvements to supply adequate water service with the Study Area. This includes \$17,400,000 for supply, treatment, and filtration; \$2,200,000 for pumping; \$720,000 for storage; \$3,488,640 for transmission improvements; and \$3,320,520 for distribution improvements. These are further discussed in Section II,G of the FGEIS.

Under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario, up to 1,600 new housing units and an additional 7.4 million square feet of commercial space could be built within the Study Area by the year 2005. For example, some concentrated areas of residential development will occur north of Route 7 and along Albany Shaker and Sand Creek Roads. British American Boulevard is projected to be heavily developed as prime office space along with other areas to the south and east of Albany Shaker and Sand Creek Roads. This development will result in the loss of 335 acres of agricultural land and 902 acres of existing open space. These impacts are further discussed in Section II,B of the FGEIS.

The Cumulative Growth Development Scenario will have a significant impact on the Watervliet Shaker Historic District. Development within the district will result in the potential loss of historic structures due to development pressures for more intensive land uses. The construction of roadway improvements and buildings will result in the loss of physical context of historical structures and the historic district as a whole. There is also the risk of overuse of existing open space in the district, such as the Ann Lee Pond Nature and Historic Preserve, due to the loss of adjacent undeveloped areas. Without an

intact historic district it will be more difficult to interpret the district so that the public can fully appreciate the unique historical and archaeological resources. These impacts are further discussed in Section II,K of the FGEIS.

Under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario, a total of \$384,840 of Recreation improvements costs can be attributed to new development in the Study Area at the end of the 15-year planning period. These costs include \$160,000 for development of 4 acres of park land in the Study Area and \$224,840 for the new development's proportionate share of the cost to expand the existing Town golf course.

Municipal Services will also be impacted by development under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario. Additional fire safety capital expenditures of \$725,220 will be incurred by the local fire companies. Approximately \$760,000 annually will be needed to provide expanded police and emergency medical services. North and South Colonie School Districts will need to add additional classrooms to accommodate a projected increase in enrollments. These school expansions will result in approximately \$3,339,949 in school district improvements which are directly attributed to new development in the Study Area.

Part II of this FGEIS identifies various measures which can be implemented to mitigate projected impacts under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario; however, if development under this land use scenario is considered to be unreasonable, various techniques can be employed to limit and/or control development at reduced levels. These techniques include:

- o change existing zoning districts;
- o modify uses allowed in zoning districts;

- o establish more restrictive building lot sizes and bulk requirements;
- o implement an historic preservation ordinance to protect the Watervliet Shaker Historic District;
- o establish programs to preserve open space; and
- o implement a Controlled Growth Law.
- o develop a transportation demand management (TDM) ordinance;

One or more of these techniques could be implemented to reduce and/or control the amount of development which could occur during the 15-year planning period. Each of these techniques are discussed below.

**a. Change Existing Zoning Districts**

This technique is described in Section II, B, Land Use and Zoning of this FGEIS and can be implemented to reduce the amount of certain types of development within the Study Area. For example, land which is zoned for high density residential can be rezoned to low density residential, effectively reducing the number of homes which could be built in that zoning district. Portions of the Watervliet Shaker Historic District can be rezoned from undeveloped to low density residential use, a use which may be more compatible with the historical structures in the District.

Once the Development Mitigation Costs of a specific growth scenario are determined, the Town and Village of Colonie and Albany County could determine if the level of costs meets their needs and objectives. Once an acceptable level of costs was reached, procedures for any required zone change(s) could be initiated. Any changes would have to be carefully considered to ensure that adjacent uses remain compatible with the new zoning in a particular district.

**b. Modify Uses Allowed in Zoning Districts**

This technique involves modifying the types of uses which are permitted in existing zoning districts. Existing zoning districts allow a number of uses to occur within their boundaries. The uses permitted in one zoning district can be quite different, such as restaurant, theater, hotel, and museum uses, and generally do not take into consideration the type of impacts which they may have on a community's infrastructure. For example, Section II, H, Transportation of this FGEIS indicated that nearly 60 percent of the new vehicular trips generated under the Cumulative Growth Scenario resulted from office development. By prohibiting office development as a permitted use in various districts in the Study Area, substantially fewer peak hour trips would be generated. This could result in a reduction in the transportation improvements required to support new development in the Study Area. Once Development Mitigation Costs of a specific growth scenario are determined, and the Town, Village, and County have determined that these costs meet their needs and objectives, the required changes to zoning regulations in the Study Area can be initiated. A careful assessment of the types of uses and their impacts on the Study Area would have to be undertaken to assure that the proposed changes have the effect of reducing future mitigation costs.

**c. Establish More Restrictive Building Lot Sizes and Bulk Requirements**

This technique will require modification of existing zoning ordinances to establish larger minimum lot sizes in all zoning districts and create more restrictive bulk and setback requirements that will limit the size of a building that can be placed on a lot. Both procedures are relatively simple concepts but will have the desired effect of reducing allowable building densities in the Study Area.

Increasing the minimum lot size for residential development, (e.g., from 20,000 to 40,000 square feet) for a single family dwelling could reduce the density in a subdivision in the Study Area by 50 percent. This could significantly reduce the number of residential dwellings to be built within any one of the three school districts serving the Study Area. The result could be a reduction in the number of school-age children, thereby reducing the need to expand existing school facilities.

More restrictive setback and height requirements in the Study Area can effectively decrease the size of commercial buildings in the Study Area. This will reduce the density of such development within the Study Area. Increasing the setback requirements will reduce the available area in which a structure could be built. Furthermore, reducing the maximum building height will limit a proposed building to a fewer number of stories, significantly reducing the total square footage of the structure.

A number of land use intensity standards have been developed to control the density of non-residential uses. Two such standards, Building Coverage and Floor Area Ratio, are the principal standards used most frequently to control building volume. They can be defined as follows:

- o Building Coverage: The percent of a lot that is covered by the building(s); and
- o Floor Area Ratio: A ratio derived by dividing the total floor area of a building by the area of the site or lot.

As with any of the techniques described to limit/control growth, once the Development Mitigation Costs of a specific growth scenario are determined acceptable by the Town, Village, and County, more restrictive building lot sizes and bulk requirements can be implemented to limit growth in the Study Area during the 15-year planning period. These land use controls will not require modification of existing zoning district boundaries or allowable uses. However, a careful analysis will be required to assure that allowable densities in the Study Area are reduced sufficiently to limit development to the desired level through the year 2005.

**d. Implement a Historic Preservation Ordinance to Protect the Watervliet Shaker Historic District**

The adoption of a local historic preservation ordinance to protect the Watervliet Shaker Historic District is included as a mitigation measure for the Cumulative Growth Scenario in Section II, K, Historical and Archaeological Considerations. However, adoption of this ordinance by the Town of Colonie would also provide another means to control growth within a portion of the Study Area. This is because a critical element of this Historic District is its continuing existence in its historical environmental context. As noted in the 1973 National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, "With the exception of the airport at the northeast corner and a few scattered modern structures, the Shaker buildings, cemetery and mill pond are still within their historic environment. The open spaces between 'families' have a crucial visual impact on the remaining structures and valuable archaeological sites are scattered throughout".

Although several new structures have been built in the District since 1973 (Heritage Park and Airline Drive commercial development), much of the open space remains. Under the Cumulative Growth Scenario, over 500,000 square feet of commercial development and 60 housing units are projected to be

constructed by the year 2005. If a historic preservation ordinance was adopted, much of this development would be scaled back to preserve existing open space within the Historic District. Therefore, this ordinance could play an important role in controlling development in the Study Area.

**c. Establish Programs to Preserve Open Space**

In evaluating the impacts associated with the Cumulative Growth Scenario in Section II of this FGEIS, the following methods were described to protect existing open space in the Study Area:

- o establish farmland and open space conservation districts;
- o establish public and private greenbelts;
- o encourage the use of conservation easements;
- o establish transfer of development rights program; and
- o adopt use valuation of farmland assessment law.

These methods were described in Section II, B, Land Use and Zoning; D, Vegetation, Wildlife and Aquatic Ecology; and K, Historical and Archaeological Considerations. Although presented as mitigation measures under the Cumulative Growth Scenario, each method would encourage the preservation of open space in the Study Area. Some examples are provided below.

A farmland and open space conservation district could be established through revision to the Town of Colonic Zoning Law. Undeveloped farmland within the Watervliet Shaker Historic District could be placed in an overly zone and guidelines could be established to restrict the type and density of development which could occur in the Study Area. Farming would continue to be

encouraged, thus helping to preserve the physical context of the historic district. Development, if it did occur, could be restricted to avoid environmentally sensitive areas in the overlay zone.

The establishment of public or private greenbelts could be employed to link Ann Lee Pond and Stump Pond, two environmentally significant areas which were identified in Section II,D of the FGEIS. Either the Town of Colonie or Albany County could purchase land to link these two ponds. A private environmental organization such as The Land Conservancy could also purchase land to achieve the same goal. Land between the two ponds is proposed for development under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario. Nevertheless, the Town may consider requiring developers to dedicate open space so that a contiguous greenbelt is established between Ann Lee and Stump Ponds. The use of conservation easements might also be applicable under certain circumstances.

Under Section 247 of New York State General Municipal Law, the Town of Colonie could acquire the easement to land for the preservation of open space which would maintain or enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources. The owner granting an easement would agree to retain the existing character of the land. The Town, in turn, would grant preferential tax treatment for the land within the easement (ie., reduced property taxes).

A transfer of development rights program could potentially be employed to shift development away from certain locations in the Study Area. For example, intensive office development along Watervliet Shaker and New Karner Roads will require significant roadway improvements to maintain adequate levels of service. If the development rights of parcels in this area (per existing zoning) were transferred to areas in the Wolf Road corridor, perhaps some of the roadway improvements identified in Part II of the FGEIS may no longer be required.

Projected development in the Study Area under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario will result in the loss of 335 acres now considered under active agricultural use. To preserve agricultural lands and prohibit development of this acreage, the Town of Colonie could implement a program which grants a preferential tax assessment to these properties. A Use Valuation of Farmland assessment law generally allows for the assessment of farmland based on its value for agricultural purposes. Included in these laws are restrictions or penalties which are enforced if the owner of farmland sells the property for non-agricultural use or abandons active agricultural production.

Once protected by one or more of these measures, land would no longer be available for development. When used in conjunction with one of the other techniques, such as more restrictive building lot sizes and bulk requirements, the overall density of commercial and residential development in the Study Area could be reduced to a level which is acceptable to the Town and Village of Colonie and Albany County. It is important to note that these measures to protect open space need not be viewed simply as ways to stop development. They should be seen as ways to direct development to certain areas where infrastructure is capable of supporting it. In turn, environmentally sensitive areas can be preserved and the demand for new infrastructure and municipal services can be reduced.

Once the Development Mitigation Costs of a specific growth scenario are determined, appropriate open space preservation methods could be employed to limit development to the desired level. However, some of these measures would be implemented at a cost to the Town, Village, and County.

The funds used to purchase land associated with a proposed greenbelt will have to be raised by the acquiring municipality. The same will apply to the acquisition of conservation easements unless they were donated by the landowner. Even then, the easement, if it was structured to grant the property owner a corresponding reduction in property taxes, will represent a decrease in the municipality's tax base. The use valuation of farmland will also result in a similar reduction in tax base due to the assessment of land based on its agricultural value and not its market value.

As a result, use of the above methods will have to be analyzed carefully to assure that the additional costs associated with their implementation are adequately offset by the benefits of limiting growth within the Study Area.

**f. Implement a Controlled Growth Law**

Another technique which can be applied to the Study Area to control development is the adoption of a Controlled or Timed Growth Law. Once a preferred land use scenario is established by the Town, Village, and County, this Controlled Growth Law can be enacted to control the rate of development which could occur in the Study Area during the 15-year planning period. The purpose of this action would be two-fold. Under a Controlled Growth Law, municipalities can carefully monitor development on a year-to-year basis. This would allow respective planning agencies to plan carefully and fine tune the capital budget annually to provide for the location and sequence of capital improvements to support development adequately over the 15-year planning period. Secondly, the Controlled Growth Law will assure that development in the Study Area will not exceed the preferred land use scenario or occur in areas where there are insufficient municipal services and infrastructure to accommodate this growth. This technique could parallel similar action taken by the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, New

York in the late 1960s and early 1970s to limit residential development (Rose, Jerome G., Legal Foundations of Land Use Planning, Center for Urban Policy Research, New Brunswick, N.J., 1979).

Experiencing the pressures of an increase in population and the related problems of providing municipal services and facilities, the Town of Ramapo developed a master plan which included studies on existing land uses, public facilities, transportation, industry and commerce, housing needs, and projected population trends. The master plan was followed by a comprehensive zoning ordinance. Additional studies on the sewer district and drainage were undertaken which culminated in the adoption of a capital budget which provided for capital improvements over a 6-year period. Pursuant to Town Law Section 271 authorizing comprehensive planning, and as a supplement to the capital budget, the Town Board adopted a capital program which provided for the location and sequence of capital improvements for the 12 years following the capital budget. These two capital plans detailed the capital improvements required to support maximum development and conform to the requirements of the new master plan.

For the purposes of implementing the new master plan and capital improvements program, the Town of Ramapo made revisions to the existing comprehensive zoning ordinance. The Town did not rezone or reclassify any land into different districts, but adopted a new class of Special Permit Uses designated "Residential Development Use".

The standards for issuing the "Residential Use Permit" were based on the availability of the following five essential services:

- o public sanitary sewers or approved substitutes;
- o drainage facilities;
- o improved public parks or recreational facilities including public schools;
- o adequate State, County, or Town roads; and
- o firehouses.

The availability of these "essential services" was directly tied to the Town's 18-year capital improvement program. No special use permit could be issued unless a proposed residential development had accumulated 15 development points, to be computed on a sliding scale of values assigned to the specified improvements under the statute. The purpose of these amendments to the Town's zoning ordinance was to phase residential development to the municipality's ability to provide necessary facilities and services.

Development was not prohibited from occurring under this system, but merely delayed in those cases where essential services or facilities were not yet in place. However, a developer could advance subdivision approval by agreeing to provide those improvements which would bring the rating of the proposed subdivision at or above the minimum number of development points required by the Town.

A similar system could be created to control development within the Study Area, preventing growth from outpacing essential municipal services and infrastructure capacity. The cost of providing these essential services has been identified for the Cumulative Growth Scenario in Part II of this FGEIS. If an alternative growth scenario is adopted by the Town, Village, and County, the costs of essential services will need to be recalculated. In any case,

the Town, Village, and County must develop a capital improvement program to determine the sequence of capital improvements which are needed to maintain services in the Study Area during the 15-year planning period.

LUMAC has prepared a Town Land Use Plan which recommended a generalized pattern for land use and development intensity on a Town-wide basis. Although LUMAC did not specifically address growth control technique as per the Town of Ramapo model, they did recommend that the Town "continue to monitor the experience of other municipalities, and the actions of the State Legislature, with respect to emerging capital financing mechanisms". Based on the impacts outlined within this FGEIS, the Town may wish to further explore the feasibility of establishing this type of controlled growth law.

**g. Develop a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance**

To reduce traffic congestion on Study Area roadways, the Town of Colonie could institute a TDM ordinance which would encourage employers to persuade their employees to modify their commuting behavior. This ordinance could be designed to reduce single-person auto commutes, require the expansion of roadway capacity and create land use policies that encourage the use of public transportation and increased building density. Not only would such an ordinance reduce the number of new trips which would be generated by development, but it would also encourage the reduction of existing trips which are currently occurring in the Study Area. This action could delay or possibly eliminate the need for some of the roadway improvements required to accommodate proposed development under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario.

A number of California communities have developed TDM ordinances. The city of San Diego, for example, has established a TDM program which became effective July 1, 1990. This ordinance is designed to reduce the

number of commuters that drive to work alone from currently 85 percent to 55 percent within five years. Currently, the first phase of the ordinance requires employers with more than 15 employees or 25,000 square feet of office space to file an annual report on employee commuting habits. Businesses must set up an information center for their employees and offer inducements to encourage alternative modes of transportation. They may choose to offer any combination of options including preferential parking, subsidized bus passes, or van pools.

If businesses fail to show a reduction in single-person commuter trips for two consecutive years, the ordinance becomes more restrictive. Employers are then required to develop a management plan which details how the company will encourage the use of car pooling and public mass transit. These businesses are required to include more options which could include paying people to take public transit, charging for parking on-site, and offering free parking to those who carpool, allowing flexible hours to those who carpool and denying flex hours to those who do not.

The cost to implement such a TDM program will directly impact local businesses. Currently the City of San Diego charges \$125 to review each annual report. Management plans prepared for businesses could cost between \$1,000 to \$10,000 to develop and up to \$20 per employee to institute. Nevertheless, such an ordinance could have a substantial impact on future traffic conditions in the Study Area.

It is likely that such a TDM program will need to be implemented on a town-wide level to be equitable to all businesses in the Town of Colonie and to create certain economies of scale. Smaller businesses could join

together with building owners and developers to prepare joint traffic management plans. Workers would likely find it easier to form a car or vanpool with a larger number of employers who would be required to offer incentives.

A TDM ordinance can be used to encourage mass transit. Beyond those measures described above, all site plan reviews for new commercial structures should require provision for adequate bus access. All weather shelters and appurtenances, including telephones and security lighting for the comfort and safety of the public, should be required.

Implementation of such an ordinance may encourage the Capital District Transportation Authority to expand mass transit routes in the Town of Colonie. Although transit services are currently provided by CDTA in the Study Area, greater effort should be made to encourage mass transit as a means of reducing the roadway improvements anticipated under the Cumulative Growth Development Scenario.

##### 5. CONFLICTING GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS:

There are many levels of government which have review authority over projects in the Study Area. In addition to the Town of Colonie Planning Board, the Lead Agency in the preparation of this GEIS, a total of 19 state, county, and local municipal agencies are considered as Involved Agencies under SEQR. As defined in the SEQR law, an "involved agency means an agency that has jurisdiction by law to fund, approve or directly undertake an action" in the Study Area. A complete list of involved agencies in this process is provided at the front of this FGEIS.

Considering the number of agencies involved in actions in the Study Area, potential conflicts may arise out of the governmental regulations which guide the different agencies. For example, the FAA has established land use

standards which recommend that no residential development be permitted within the 65 ldn noise contour of any airport. However, the Town of Colonie permits residential development in some zoning districts which are located within the 65 ldn noise contour of Albany County Airport. These areas are shown on Exhibit II-J-1.

Albany County presently owns large amounts of land within the Study Area and operates several facilities at Albany County Airport which are located within the Town of Colonie. While actions undertaken on County-owned property are subject to environmental review under SEQR, they are not generally subject to the review and approval by any agency or board of the Town. However, certain actions can have direct impact on Town resources. For example, additional stormwater runoff from a newly constructed facility at the Airport will have adverse effects on Shaker Creek. The construction of buildings by Albany County on County-owned property within the Watervliet Shaker Historic District would not be subject to the requirements of a historic preservation ordinance now under consideration by the Town of Colonie.

Residential and commercial development within the Village of Colonie may also impact lands owned by the County as well as other property located within the Town of Colonie. Activities which impact wetlands bordering the Town and Village will not only affect subsurface water quality in both communities, but also the quantity and quality of storm runoff to Ann Lee Pond and Shaker Creek.

This GEIS process, in itself, is an action which has been jointly undertaken by the Town and Village of Colonie and Albany County to mitigate potential conflicts between each municipality. In addition, the SEQR process allows for the coordinated review of projects by involved agencies. Therefore, potential conflicts between these agencies can be identified and mitigating measures can be suggested to alleviate impacts during the preparation of an

environmental impact statement. However, the following are measures recommended which will alleviate intergovernmental conflicts which are not addressed within this FGEIS or through SEQR.

- o A formal notification process should be established between the Town, Village, County, and pertinent Federal and State agencies to alert all parties of proposed actions within the Study Area. Although certain agencies may not have jurisdiction to fund or approve an action, formal written notification would open lines of communication and allow all agencies to comment on pertinent issues in a timely fashion;
- o Architectural standards for all structures to be constructed or modified within the Watervliet Shaker Historic District should be established. These standards should be applied uniformly by the Town, Village, and County;
- o The Town, Village, and County should develop uniform stormwater management standards to better control surface and groundwater impacts within the Shaker Creek drainage basin. Suggested stormwater management techniques are more fully discussed in Section II, F, Hydrology, Drainage and Water Quality; and
- o The Town of Colonie should rezone land within the noise impacted area of the Albany County Airport to a use which is more compatible with FAA and NYSDOT guidelines. The

rezoning of land in these noise impacted areas should be consistent with other land use techniques which are employed to control or limit development within the Study Area.

6. BALANCING REGIONAL VERSUS LOCAL NEEDS:

This FGEIS has identified the impacts and mitigation measures pertaining to future development within the Study Area. Primarily, these impacts address local environmental and socioeconomic factors. However, the Study Area is located at the hub of the Capital District and actions affecting this area have a significant impact on the regional economy.

Albany County Airport serves the transportation needs of a nine county area which includes over one million people. Its presence serves as a magnet for attracting additional commercial development to the Study Area. Companies that rely on the Airport for distribution, such as United Parcel Service and Federal Express, have located in the Study Area for this reason. Nationwide companies locate branch offices in the Study Area for easy access to the Airport and the regional transportation network. As a result, the impacts associated with this development are borne directly by the residents of the Town and Village of Colonie and, to a lesser extent, Albany County.

Appropriate mitigation measures are identified in Part II of this FGEIS to offset environmental and socioeconomic impacts to the maximum extent practical. However, it should be recognized that not all impacts can be mitigated without some reduction in the perceived quality of life of Town and Village residents. As the area becomes more urbanized, some people will grow discontented with the changes that occur in the landscape, while others may not. New opportunities which may become available due to the proposed development will encourage new people to relocate to the Study Area.

The continued growth of the Capital District economy is a function of how well each municipality encourages economic development within its boundary. However, each municipality is faced with the difficult task of balancing economic development against the changes which result from this growth. The intent of SEQR is to determine a suitable balance between social, economic, and environmental factors and incorporate them into the planning and decision making processes of state, regional, and local governments. Therefore, when evaluating impacts associated with the anticipated expansion of public facilities and residential, commercial and industrial development in the Study Area, careful consideration must be given to balancing regional and local needs.

Under the Cumulative Growth Scenario, there will still be moderately severe environmental and socioeconomic impacts for the Study Area. Mitigation measures to offset identified impacts have been identified. However, the Town, Village, and County may consider further reducing the level of development which is permitted to occur in the Study Area through the year 2005. If the decision is made to further restrict development in the Study Area, other areas in the Capital District may become more attractive for development. In any case, the Town, Village, and County will have determined that a proper balance has been achieved between the needs of the residents in the Study Area and the need to help support the economy of the Capital District.