

SECTION IV CUMULATIVE AND GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

A. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Residential and commercial development within the Study Area would have cumulative impacts on the area's natural and human resources. Specifically, these impacts would affect transportation and traffic, development densities, stormwater run-off, groundwater quality and demand for public utilities and municipal services.

Impacts would also affect the area's vegetation, wildlife, and cultural resources. However, the degree to which these resources would be impacted would depend on the nature and location of development, and the extent the recommended mitigation measures are employed.

Of primary concern in implementing the recommended mitigation measures, particularly those related to the municipal infrastructure and services, is their cost. Road improvements, utility upgrades, new town parks and expanded services etc., all require funding. The establishment of policies that would ultimately generate revenues to offset the cost of various

mitigative measures would help reduce the cumulative impacts of development.

Certain impacts, such as those affecting wildlife, historic or archaeological resources or the visual environment, for example, can be difficult to mitigate. Effective mitigation to lessen this impact would likely be a challenging task for those involved in such projects. However, certain beneficial impacts can be expected from new development within the Study Area.

Growth in the Study Area would help to diversify the tax base in the Town of Colonie. While it is generally recognized the Town of Colonie has adequate commercial office space and retail establishments, the industrial base is not large enough to protect the Town against economic downturns in the retail or service industry.

While this problem is not specific to the Town of Colonie (many municipalities in New York State would prefer to see expansion of their industrial base, as

evidenced by the recent inter-municipal competition for the soon to be completed General Motors Super Steel Plant in Scotia), the Town is in the relatively unique position of having both the land area and municipal infrastructure, with limited improvements, to support such growth.

Furthermore, new jobs mean additional spending, resulting in an increase in sales tax revenues for the State and local governments. The expanding area population would also attract more outside investment, resulting in new job opportunities for residents and expand the region's overall economic diversity.

B. GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

The extension of municipal services, particularly sewer and water, into an area that previously lacked one or both, has the potential to induce growth.

The development of new industrial, commercial and residential properties would result in growth within the Town of Colonie. Industrial and commercial growth could create a demand for new businesses which supply supporting goods and services.

For example, a manufacturing facility could require the need for raw materials not currently available in the Town or the Capital District. Any new workers would require places to eat and shop, both during and after business hours, which are conveniently located near their place of business. New job opportunities and related population increases may result in an improved housing market in the Capital District.

As the demand for new housing, goods and services creates favorable market conditions, both private and public financing resources would become readily available to support development. This financing would be available in a variety of forms depending on the proposed use, financial credibility of the borrower, and condition of the State, national and global economy.

Commercial banks and other financial institutions could provide loans for both personal and business purposes under a wide range of terms and conditions. Increased business activity benefits local government by generating increased revenues (i.e., personal, property, sales and business taxes). These revenues are then available for reinvestment into the community in the form of improved public facilities and services.