

## SECTION 2.0: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE BOA

### 2.1 Existing Land Use

#### Introduction

According to 2008 parcel data, obtained from Broome County, the First Ward study area consists of 1,657 parcels covering approximately 367 acres of land. Parcel area does not include transportation rights-of-way, and is therefore a smaller portion of the study area’s total land area (474 acres). Land use classifications are determined by the County assessor according to a system established by the New York State Office of Real Property Services (NYSORPS). NYSORPS uses nine categories to classify land based on the primary use of each parcel. Within the First Ward neighborhood, seven of the nine land uses used by NYSORPS are present. Three parcels, located on Prospect Street and Julian Street, did not have NYSORPS data and are therefore excluded from analysis. Based on their size and location, it is probable that these parcels are either residential or vacant properties. The breakdown of land uses within the BOA study area is provided in Table 4, and illustrated on Map 4.

**TABLE 4: FIRST WARD LAND USES, 2008**

Class Code	Property Type	Parcels	Acreage	% Composition
100	Agricultural	0	0.0	0.0%
200	Residential	1,272	167.0	45.5%
300	Vacant Land	109	55.3	15.1%
400	Commercial	221	67.2	18.3%
500	Recreation & Entertainment	5	11.0	3.0%
600	Community Services	32	57.6	15.7%
700	Industrial	11	8.9	2.4%
800	Public Services	4	0.3	0.1%
900	Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks	0	0.0	0.0%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1,654</b>	<b>367.2</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Data Source: Broome County

#### Overview of Land Use Categories

Each of the land uses present in the study area are described in greater detail below.

#### **Residential**

The First Ward study area’s primary land use is residential, which occupies a total of 167 acres. There are 1,272 residential parcels within the study area, the majority of which are single family homes (63 percent). Multi-family residences are identified by the NYSORPS as commercial, and therefore residential properties are slightly underrepresented. The average residential parcel size is one tenth of an

acre, which is typical for a center city residential area. Residential parcels make up 76.9 percent of all parcels within the study area, but are typically smaller than parcel areas for other land uses. Even though residential properties are the dominant land use within the study area when considering the number of parcels, they account for only 45.5 percent of all parcel land area.

### ***Vacant***

A significant portion of land, including 109 parcels or 15 percent of the land area, within the First Ward is vacant land. According to the NYSORPS, vacant land is any property “that is not in use, is in temporary use, or that lacks permanent improvement.” Most notable, approximately 50 percent of all vacant properties within the entire City are located within the First Ward study area. Clusters of vacant commercial and industrial properties are located on primary roadways along Clinton Street and Charles Street. Large clusters of vacant residential property exist along Seymour and Prospect Streets, and additional vacant residential properties are scattered throughout the study area. This abundance of vacant property affects First Ward residents, lowering the tax base and area property values, and imposing environmental and health threats. Its presence also provides a significant opportunity, being the largest concentration of developable land within the City boundary.

### ***Commercial***

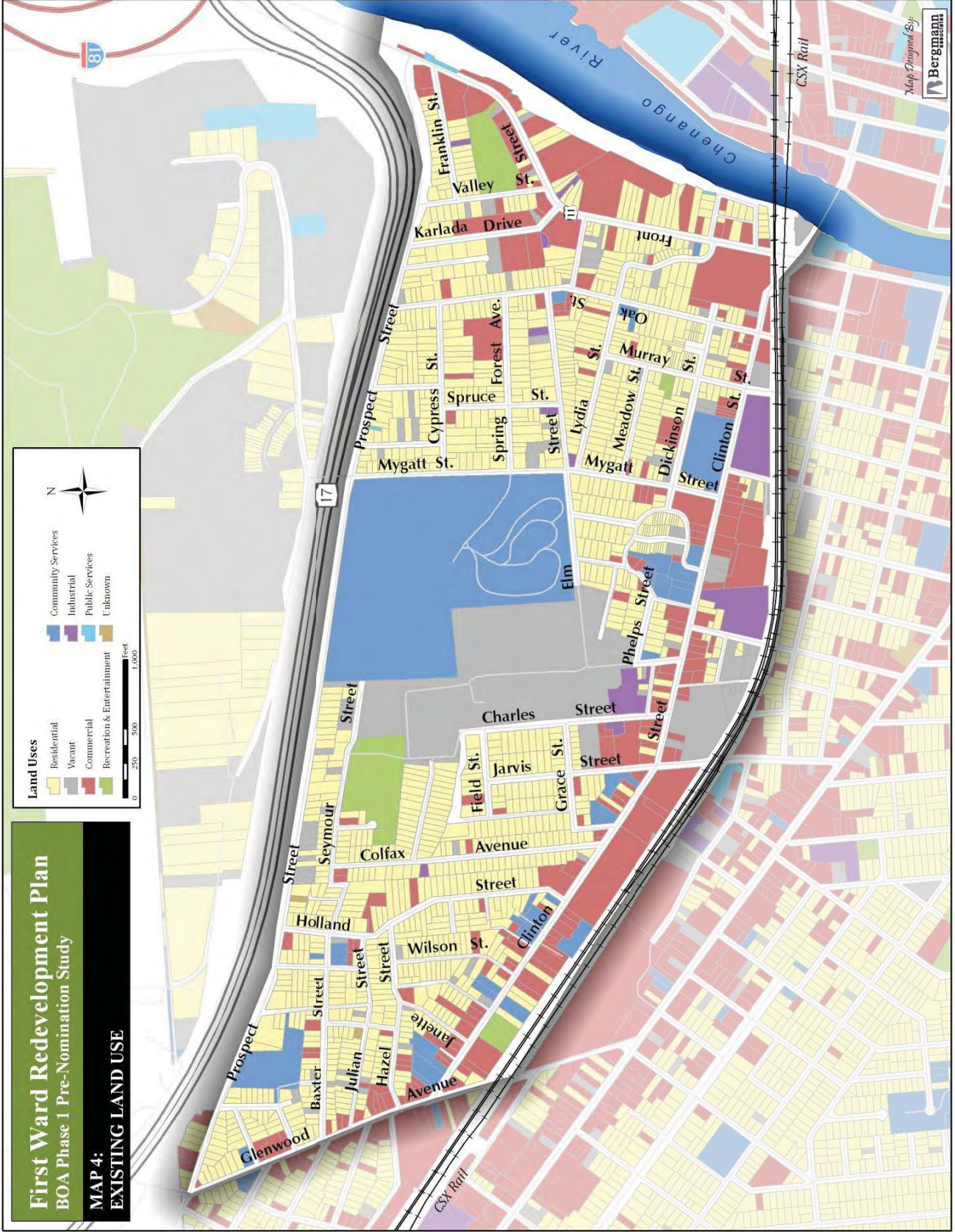
There are 221 parcels designated as commercial, making commercial the second largest land use within the BOA boundary. Commercial properties occupy a total of 67.15 acres of land, or 18.3 percent of the total land area. Commercial properties include multi-family residential properties, as identified by the NYSOPRS. The largest commercial parcel is 4.8 acres in size, located on the First Ward’s east side along Front Street. Commercial parcel sizes range from less than an acre to 4.8 acres with an average commercial parcel size of one third of an acre. The majority of commercial properties are located along the western, southern, and eastern boundaries of the study area on primary roadways.

### ***Recreation & Entertainment***

Five parcels are designated for recreation and entertainment. According to the NYSORPS, these properties are “used by groups for recreation, amusement or entertainment.” These parcels are scattered throughout the study area and comprise a total of 11 acres within the boundary (3 percent). The majority of land area designated as recreation and entertainment are occupied by parks. The First Ward Pool and the First Ward Park occupy two contiguous parcels in the northern portion of the study area, and Valley Street Park is located to the east, abutting Front Street. A small playground occupies one-third of an acre along Murray Street. The remaining parcel accommodates the administrative offices of the Tri-Cities Opera House. The average parcel size for recreation & entertainment is 2.2 acres.

### ***Community Service***

Community service parcels are parcels that are designated for use towards the “well-being of the community.” Land uses of this type consume 57.55 acres within the study area (15.7 percent) and constitute the third largest land use. Of the 31 parcels with this designation, the largest is the Spring Forest Cemetery, which is 39.7 acres of land adjacent to the Charles Street Business Park. In addition to the cemetery, Woodrow Wilson Elementary School occupies approximately four acres of land on Prospect Street. The remaining parcels include religious institutions, the First Ward Action Council, and





the Boys and Girls Club of Binghamton. The average parcel size is 1.8 acres, with the smallest parcel occupying only one-tenth of an acre.

***Industrial***

There are 11 parcels in the study area that have industrial uses. These parcels occupy a total of 8.9 acres, which is only 2.4 percent of the study area's parcel land area. The largest industrial parcel is 2.97 acres, while the average parcel size for this land use is 0.8 acres. Although some development has been occurring in the Charles Street Business Park, 2008 parcel data obtained from Broome County recognize the 32.9 acre site as a vacant property. The majority of industrial parcels are located along Clinton Street, Charles Street and Elm Street including the now abandoned E.H. Titchener property (3.2 acres), which was used to produce metal products.

***Public Service***

Properties that are designated as public service by the NYSORPS are those intended to “provide services to the general public.” This land use represents the smallest use within the study area, with only 4 parcels designated as public service. Two of these parcels are owned by the New York State Electric and Gas Company to provide utility service to area residents. The remaining two parcels are owned by the City of Binghamton. Together the parcels occupy less than one acre of land, representing 0.1 percent of all land area in the study area.

## 2.2 Zoning

### Existing Zoning

The City of Binghamton last revised their zoning code in July 2006, following the 2003 revision of its Comprehensive Plan. The existing zoning code establishes 12 total zoning districts including three residential districts, six commercial districts and three industrial districts throughout the City. In the First Ward, six of the 12 designations are present, including two residential districts, two commercial districts, and two industrial districts. Understanding the existing zoning within the study area will assist with encouraging land development and revitalization efforts that cooperate with the City’s vision for the area. The zoning districts present in the First Ward are summarized in Table 5 and depicted on Map 5.

**TABLE 5: EXISTING ZONING DESIGNATIONS**

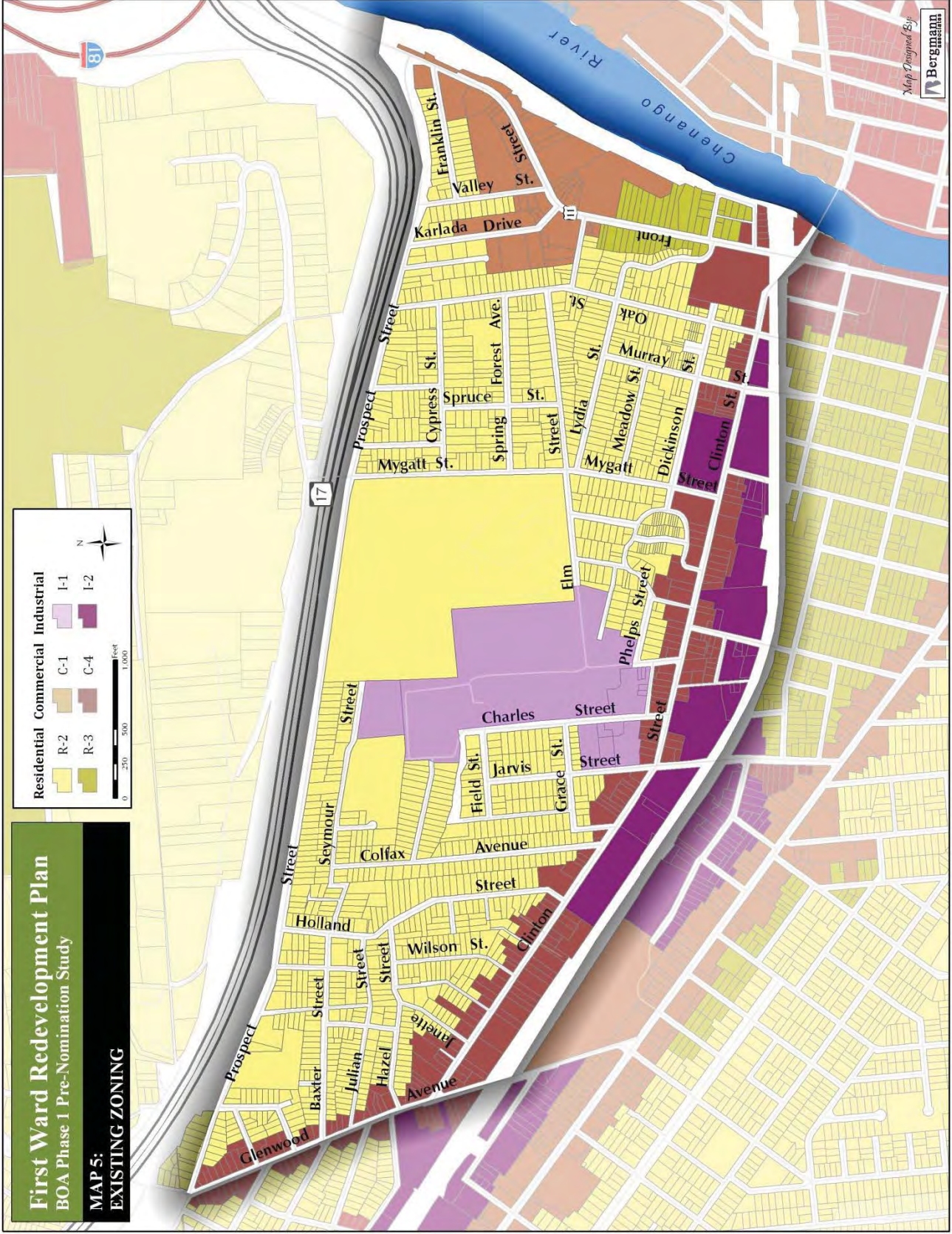
Zoning Designation	Name	# Parcels	Acreage	Portion of Study Area (Acreage)
<b>Residential</b>	R-1 Residential Single Unit Dwelling District	0	--	--
	R-2 Residential One and Two Unit Dwelling District	1,305	223.0	60.7%
	R-3 Residential Multi-Unit Dwelling District	46	8.1	2.2%
<b>Totals</b>		1,351	231.1	62.9%
<b>Commercial</b>	C-1 Service Commercial District	49	22.7	6.2%
	C-2 Downtown Business District	0	--	--
	C-3 Medical District	0	--	--
	C-4 Neighborhood Commercial District	209	44.9	12.2%
	C-5 Neighborhood office District	0	--	--
	C-6 Limited Neighborhood Commercial District	0	--	--
<b>Totals</b>		258	67.6	18.4%
<b>Industrial</b>	I-1 Urban Business Park District	12	40.9	11.1%
	I-2 Light and Medium Industrial District	36	27.8	7.6%
	I-3 Heavy Industrial District	0	--	--
<b>Totals</b>		48	68.7	18.7%
<b>Study Area Total</b>		1,657	367.4	100%

Data Source: Broome County

### Residential

Properties that are zoned residential make up the largest portion of the study area, accounting for 62.9 percent of land area. Two residential zoning designations are present within the First Ward: the R-2 district and the R-3 district. The R-2 Zoning District is intended to designate areas appropriate for a mix of one-unit and multi-unit dwellings that allow low to moderate density development. The R-2 designation is the largest zoning designation within the First Ward, occupying 223 acres or approximately 60.7 percent of the parcel area.

The R-3 District is intended to identify areas where high density development exists or should be encouraged. Within the First Ward, 46 parcels are zoned for R-3 development, occupying 2.2 percent





the total parcel area. The R-3 District is located on the eastern portion of the study area, surrounding the gateway from the center city and a portion of the Front Street corridor.

### ***Commercial***

Commercial areas are broken down into six districts. The Service Commercial District (C-1) and the Neighborhood Commercial District (C-4) are the only two commercial designations within the study area. The C-1 District is intended to designate areas where commercial, light industrial and storage activities should be concentrated. The C-1 District is the smaller of the two commercial designations, making up 22.7 acres or 6.2 percent of the First Ward's parcel area. Parcels with this designation are concentrated along the Front Street corridor, north of the area's existing gateway.

The C-4 Commercial District identifies areas where general retail, service and office activities should exist to serve adjacent neighborhoods. Approximately 12.2 percent of the First Ward parcel area is designated as a Neighborhood Commercial District. Parcels located within the C-4 Zoning District are concentrated along Clinton Street and north along Glenwood Avenue. There are 258 commercially zoned parcels that make up 18.4 percent (68 acres) of the First Ward's parcel area.

### ***Industrial***

Two of the three industrial zones are present in the First Ward: the Urban Business Park District (I-1) and the Light and Medium Industrial District (I-2). The I-1 District is intended to designate areas that are appropriate for technology-based business and industrial uses. The district is located in and around the Charles Street Business Park and occupies 41 acres (11.1 percent) of the First Ward's parcel area. The I-2 District is intended to accommodate light and medium density industrial development and to restrict uses that are incompatible with such development. This zoning area is located on along Clinton Street, adjacent to the existing CONRAIL rail line. The I-2 zoning designation comprises 27.8 acres, or 7.6 percent of the study area.

### **Summary Zoning Analysis**

Understanding the existing land uses and zoning districts in the First Ward BOA facilitates an understanding of where and how future development and investment may occur. Additionally, knowledge of how land is being used within the existing zoning provides a framework for recommendations for revitalization. The majority of property within the study area is zoned and used as residential property. Lands zoned for residential use primarily incorporate residential and community service uses, and are located north of the Clinton Street corridor. These areas include the study area's parks and open space, cultural facilities, and residential properties. Commercial and industrial zoning designations and uses are clustered along the Clinton Street spine, and consist primarily of commercial and industrial uses. In addition, many parcels zoned for industrial uses are currently vacant, which provides the opportunity to attract businesses and create an identity for this main thoroughfare.

## **2.3 Brownfield, Vacant and Underutilized Sites**

### **Introduction**

The presence of brownfields, abandoned or vacant sites provides the First Ward with opportunities and limitations for redevelopment. Brownfields located within the study area were identified based on the current and/or historic use of each site as well as known environmental or health concerns. Brownfield sites within the BOA include abandoned or underutilized industrial or manufacturing properties, active petroleum spill event sites, former gasoline stations, and vacant properties with past spill events, underground storage tanks, or undetermined previous development. A total of 136 properties were identified as brownfields, potential brownfields, or vacant sites. Of the 136, 32 sites were identified for further investigation based on their status as a brownfield or potential brownfield. Three of these 32 properties are publicly owned, and 29 are privately owned.

### **Methodology**

A preliminary environmental site assessment (ESA) was conducted for each of the existing or potential brownfield sites to gain a better understanding of the existing conditions. Information collected during the ESA's was downloaded to a database designed specifically for the project. Each property was ranked according to environmental priority, which was determined based on present and past use of the premises. Consideration was given to whether or not known environmental contamination had occurred, and to the media impacted (i.e. soil or groundwater). Community significance or redevelopment potential of properties related to other planning factors, such as location and ownership, were not included as part of the environmental ranking. The community will have the opportunity to further refine and identify strategic sites above and beyond those discussed for environmental reasons.

An interactive Site Profile Form was generated for each brownfield or vacant parcel, which links to an electronic database. The electronic database will help the City to streamline reviews of specific property information. Site Profile Forms for each of the 136 properties are included in Appendix E. Map 6 illustrates all 136 sites of interest by their environmental ranking and vacancy status.

### ***Environmental Ranking – Low Importance***

Properties were classified as Low Importance if they were vacant, but had no history of spill events, were not listed in any environmental database, and had no prior use of petroleum or chemical tanks. Parcels classified as Low Importance are scattered throughout the First Ward neighborhood and comprise 76.5 percent of all parcels evaluated (104 parcels). Together these parcels make up 14.7 acres of land. The majority of parcels ranked as Low Importance are vacant residential parcels (73 parcels), followed by 27 vacant commercial parcels and only three vacant industrial parcels. Parcels that are of Low Importance are depicted on Map 6.

### ***Environmental Ranking – Moderate Importance***

Properties were classified as Moderate Importance if the site's prior use is unknown; the site had spill events which have subsequently been closed; abandoned drums, surface staining, debris piles or fill is observed; or the site is listed in an environmental database. Of the 136 sites, 18 classify as parcels of Moderate Importance, all of which are in active use. The majority of sites of Moderate Importance have



had prior spill events. The NYSDEC coordinates a Spill Response program that includes maintaining a database of Spill Incident Reports. The reports include information on spills that have occurred throughout New York State, as well as the status of each spill event. The NYSDEC may close a spill event once it determines that necessary cleanup and removal actions have been achieved and that no further remedial action is necessary, or for administrative purposes (i.e. multiple reporting of a singular event). Of the 18 sites, 11 have history of spill events that impacted existing soil. All spill event sites ranked as Moderate Importance have been closed. The remaining parcels are categorized as Moderate Importance due to their listing as small hazardous waste generators.

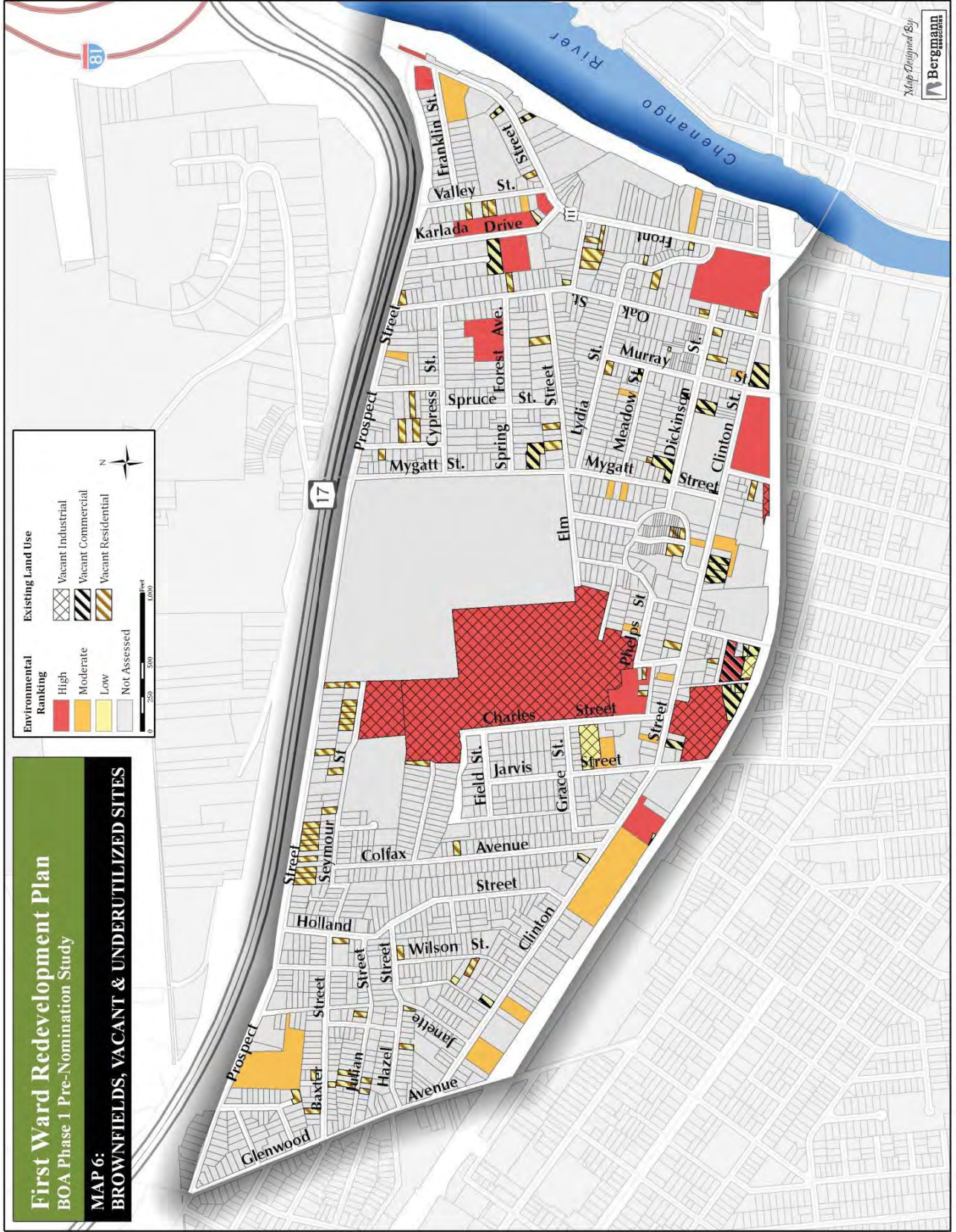
### ***Environmental Ranking – High Importance***

Properties were ranked as being of High Importance based on a number of factors that include if the prior site use was dry cleaning or a service garage, if the site was listed as a large quantity hazardous waste generator, if it was listed in environmental databases with remedial actions required, if unregistered or abandoned tanks were observed, if the site is an active NYSDEC spill site or has had spill events that impacted groundwater, or if the site is an existing brownfield. A total of 14 sites are listed as High Importance and include properties located along Clinton Street, as well as properties located around Front Street. Of the 14 sites, nine have a history of spill events. Only one site remains an active spill site, located along Front Street in the eastern portion of the study area. The site is an active gasoline station that became a spill event on July 1, 2009 resulting from the spill of an unknown amount of gasoline that impacted both soil and groundwater.

Two of the sites listed as High Importance were part of the NYS Superfund program and are located in the Charles Street Business Park. The NYS Superfund program is the State's mechanism for identifying, investigating, and remediating sites where significant amounts of hazardous waste may exist. The former Anitec site was characterized as a Superfund site due to the presence of unknown quantities of chemicals used for the manufacturing of photographic film. Today, the site has been remediated and no longer poses a threat to environmental or public health. The parcel located behind the former Anitec site was the GAF dump, which received waste from Anitec as well as laboratory research waste. A preliminary site assessment also indicated heightened levels of PCBs in the soil. The site has since been adequately remediated and affected soils transported off-site for disposal.

The three remaining sites include the E.H. Titchener property, the Binghamton Power Plant, and a site located on Clinton Street, southwest of the Charles Street Business Park.

- The E.H. Titchener property is identified by the city as an existing brownfield, and was therefore given a ranking of High Importance. Based on curbside assessments completed in August 2009, the site had warning labels present, indicating that it is a current hazard. The E.H. Titchener property is the only site within the study area that the County could foreclose on because of back taxes.
- The Binghamton Power Plant is currently in operation, but the site has monitoring wells visibly located throughout the property, indicating potentially impacted groundwater. In addition, there is a large tank stored on site.
- 219 Charles Street is listed as a large hazardous waste generator, which qualifies it as a property of high environmental importance.



## **2.4 Land Ownership**

### **Introduction**

Evaluating existing land ownership is a key component of a comprehensive land use analysis. Public properties are those properties that are owned by a municipality or other public agency or entity, as opposed to those owned by one or more private individuals.

Land ownership is an important consideration because it identifies where the greatest opportunities for redevelopment may exist. When property is publicly owned there is greater potential for achieving the desired vision for that parcel. Private property owners cannot be required to conform to a specific land use vision unless it is regulated through the City's zoning code and regulations. Even if zoning updates were made that defined new allowable land uses for a given parcel, the property owner would not be required to conform until they desired to change or alter the use of the property. One of the objectives of the City, as it relates to the Redevelopment Plan effort, is to reach out to property owners and build consensus on the future of the First Ward so they can be part of the implementation of the plan on their individual properties. Buy-in and support from local property owners is imperative to the successful realization of the Redevelopment Plan.

The majority of parcels and land area within the BOA are privately owned properties. The breakdown of ownership by land use type is discussed further in the following sections and illustrated on Map 8.

### **Public Property Ownership**

Of the 1,657 parcels within the BOA, 46 are currently publicly owned, comprising 5.8 percent of the study area's total parcel land area. Publicly owned properties include representation from each of the seven land uses identified within the BOA boundary. Recreation and entertainment parcels occupy the most land area, primarily attributed to the parks and playgrounds that are present within the BOA boundaries. Properties used for community services occupy the second most acreage, and include two parcels associated with the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. Vacant parcels that are publicly owned occupy 2.59 acres of land area, and are scattered along Clinton Street and Charles Street. Residential and vacant properties make up the largest number of publicly owned parcels, but each consume less than one acre of land total. Public owners within the BOA include the City of Binghamton, Broome County, and various New York State departments. Broome County owns the majority of parcels (52.2 percent), followed by the City of Binghamton (41.3 percent).

### **Private Property Ownership**

Properties that are privately owned occupy 94.2 percent of all land area within the BOA and include 1,608 parcels. Six of the seven land uses identified within the BOA are privately owned. There are no privately owned parcels currently used for public services. Most parcels are used for residential land uses, which also occupy 45 percent of total BOA land area. Privately owned commercial properties are the next largest land use within the BOA comprising 18 percent of total parcel area, followed by privately owned vacant properties which make up 14.3 percent of parcel area. Table 6 summarizes land uses within the BOA by type of ownership and land area.



TABLE 6: PROPERTY OWNERSHIP BY LAND USE

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Acreage	Proportion of BOA
<i>Public Ownership</i>			
Residential	12	1.74	0.5%
Commercial	4	0.86	0.2%
Vacant	12	2.59	0.7%
Industrial	6	0.92	0.3%
Public Services	4	0.32	0.1%
Community Services	4	4.85	1.3%
Recreation and Entertainment	4	9.95	2.7%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>21.23</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
<i>Private Ownership</i>			
Residential	1,260	165.25	45.0%
Commercial	217	66.29	18.0%
Vacant	97	52.7	14.3%
Industrial	5	7.98	2.2%
Public Services	0	--	--
Community Services	28	52.7	14.3%
Recreation and Entertainment	1	1.05	0.3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,608</b>	<b>345.97</b>	<b>94.2%</b>
<i>Unknown</i>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>BOA Totals</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>100%</b>

Data Source: Broome County (2008)



## **2.5 Natural Resources and Environmental Features**

Environmental factors identify development opportunities and limitations. Protected wetlands, steep slopes, and major waterbodies may define areas where future development should be avoided. Planning for land use in concert with existing environmental conditions promotes the protection of valuable natural resources. Map 9 illustrates the study area's natural features including water resources, wetlands, and open spaces.

### **Water Resources**

Following nationwide deindustrialization, many waterfronts were left vacant and unattended, with only remnants of long industrial pasts. Many communities have begun to capitalize on their waterfronts as natural assets and desirable redevelopment locations. Water resources are equally important from a water quality and quantity perspective. Development often determines the amount of impervious surface that is created and non-porous surfaces contribute to runoff which can impact the integrity of open waterbodies. Polluted waterways are also a less valuable commodity for recreation and tourism. Consideration of water quality is also important because it determines whether potable water is available to serve existing and future residential, commercial, or industrial development. Developing an understanding of an area's water resources can help communities to adopt sustainable practices.

### ***Susquehanna River Watershed***

A watershed is an area of land that drains into the same waterbody, or an area of land bounded by a single hydrologic system. All activities that take place within a watershed, including construction, recreation, and industry, can impact the environmental integrity of the watershed. Additionally, impacts to watersheds or surrounding waterbodies do not remain local, often impacting areas more significantly upstream or downstream. The First Ward study area is located within the Susquehanna River Watershed, which occupies 4,520 square miles of land area and drains into the Susquehanna River. The Susquehanna River connects to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, which stretches across 64,000 square miles and encompasses portions of six states. Major tributaries located within the watershed include the Chenango, Tioughnioga, Unadilla and Owego Rivers. The watershed also has 130 freshwater lakes, ponds and reservoirs that together occupy 16,521 acres of land area. According to the NYSDEC's 2003 Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbody List for the Susquehanna River Watershed, a small stretch of the Susquehanna River near Binghamton, New York was slightly impaired. The River otherwise exhibited improved health from prior sampling periods.

Table 7 summarizes the major tributaries and waterbodies located within the Susquehanna Watershed.



**TABLE 7: MAJOR WATERS - SUSQUEHANNA WATERSHED**

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Segment Length / Area</b>
<i>Major Tributaries &amp; Streams</i>	
	<i>Miles</i>
Chenango River	2,796
Tioughnioga River	1,293
Unadilla River	935
Owego River	766
<i>Lakes / Ponds / Reservoirs</i>	
	<i>Acres</i>
Otsego Lake	4,083
Canadarago Lake	1,882
Whitney Point Lake / Reservoir	1,235

Note: As reported by the NYSDEC, segment lengths for major tributaries include minor streams and creeks that feed into the main waterbody. As a result, reported lengths may seem significantly longer than the actual tributary.

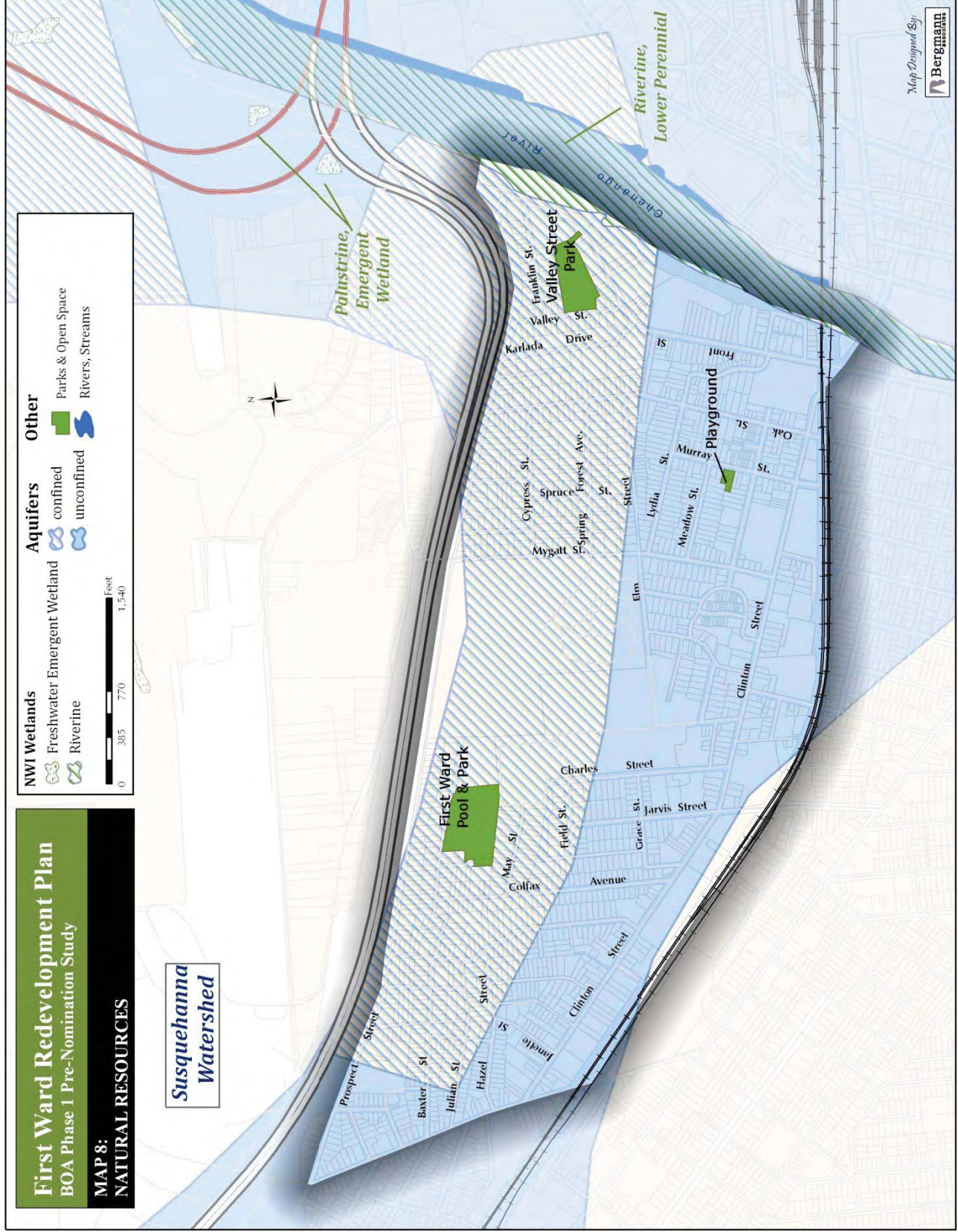
Data Source: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

The First Ward study area is intersected by the boundary of two sub-watersheds: the Chenango Watershed, and the Owego-Wappasening Watershed. The Chenango Watershed drains into the Chenango River, which flows in a southwesterly direction and forms the eastern boundary of the study area. As of 2008, three waters were listed as impaired within the Chenango Watershed including the Upper Little York Lakes, Tully Lake, and the Whitney Point Lake and Reservoir. All three waterbodies are located north of the study area outside of the City of Binghamton. The primary causes of impairment are organic enrichment/oxygen depletion and phosphorous, which is often used for fertilization. The Owego-Wappasening watershed was last assessed in 2004; the only impaired waterbody located within this watershed is located south in Pennsylvania.

The location of the study area in proximity to two sub-watersheds indicates that future development will need to occur with sensitivity to the surrounding water resources. Map 8 illustrates the Susquehanna Watershed and its associated sub-watersheds with respect to the study area.

**Rivers**

The study area’s eastern boundary is located along the Chenango River, which is a tributary of the Susquehanna River. The Chenango River is approximately 90 miles long, stretching from Madison, New York (located approximately 20 miles southwest of Utica) southeast where it picks up the Tioughnioga River before joining the Susquehanna River in the City of Binghamton. In 1837, the Chenango Canal was constructed and prospered through trade, connecting the Erie Canal in Utica to the Susquehanna River in Binghamton, before nationwide construction of railroads rendered the canal obsolete in the 1870’s. Historically, the Susquehanna River has been of regional importance, being named for an Indian Tribe that settled along its banks prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Susquehanna is the longest river in the American northeast, reaching 444 miles from Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, NY to the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. The location of the study area adjacent to the Chenango River provides the opportunity for waterfront redevelopment along Front Street and for recreational opportunities.









## **Wetlands**

Wetlands are areas that are saturated with water. Although not wholly aqueous or dryland, wetlands serve as important transition areas that provide habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna. In addition to being environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands are important natural infrastructure that serve to slow drainage from developed properties, filtering contamination from entering nearby waterways. Consequently, wetlands provide a natural means of protecting water quality and the integrity of stream beds by slowing runoff velocities, therefore reducing erosion. Wetlands have become widely acknowledged as high priorities for conservation, and areas where development should be restricted.

NYSDEC identifies and regulates all freshwater wetlands greater than 12.4 acres in size. There are no state regulated wetlands in or around the study area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also maps wetland areas, regardless of size and regulatory status, through the National Wetland Inventory (NWI).

The NWI classifies wetlands based on five defined systems that include Marine, Estuarine, Riverine, Lacustrine, and Palustrine. The First Ward study area abuts a Riverine wetland that overlaps the banks of the Chenango River. In addition, slightly north of the study area are two Palustrine wetlands. It is not anticipated that existing wetlands will inhibit future redevelopment efforts in the First Ward neighborhood. The Riverine wetland and the two Palustrine Emergent wetlands that are present outside of the study area are depicted on Map 9.

## **Floodplains**

The Chenango River is a significant water feature adjacent to the study area. The presence of the river, which has experienced significant flood events over the past decade, has required much of the riverfront to be protected by floodwalls and other barriers. In 2009, it was determined that the current floodwalls which exist in the study area no longer meet floodwall height requirements and would therefore be declassified. This declassification requires that FEMA re-evaluate existing floodplain boundaries. Draft floodplain maps prepared for the City of Binghamton indicate that a significant portion of the east side of the study area, including all of Front Street and part of the Charles Street Business Park fall within the revised 100-year floodplain. This classification can have significant impacts to homeowners in the form of increased insurance requirements and to developers in the form of increased engineering and costs. The City will therefore continue to coordinate and work with FEMA on this re-mapping effort. The evaluation of the floodplain boundary and potential impacts to redevelopment will be further examined in Step 2 of the First Ward BOA, as it is an ongoing process that commenced in early 2010.

## **Open Space**

There are two main recreational spaces within the First Ward neighborhood: the First Ward Park, located in the northwest, and Valley Street Park, located in the northeast portion of the study area. Both parks have baseball diamonds available for recreational use. A small pocket park is located along Mygatt Street, among clusters of residential properties. Aside from formally established parks, Spring Forest Cemetery is located centrally within the neighborhood, providing approximately 40 acres of open space. Additionally, land located along the Chenango River provides the opportunity for waterfront redevelopment initiatives and the formation of green linkages. The majority of land located along the river is used as privately owned commercial or residential properties.

### **Topography**

The majority of the First Ward study area is characterized by relatively flat surfaces. Significant changes in elevation can be observed along the northern portion of the study area, which changes in elevation from 845 feet above mean sea level, to 915 feet over the distance of less than a mile. The highest land area is located off Prospect Street just west of Mygatt Street, at an elevation of 915 feet. The remaining land within the study area mostly fluctuates between 845 feet and 855 feet above sea level, dropping to 835 feet along the banks of the Chenango River. The consistent elevation levels within the study area indicate that topography should not be a primary consideration associated with future development. Map 10 illustrates the study area's topography using ten-foot contour lines.



## **2.6 Strategic Sites**

The identification of environmentally sensitive sites is the first step in identifying potential strategic sites in the study area that have the greatest potential for remediation, redevelopment, and/or investment. However, in addition to considering existing environmental conditions and current vacancy status, planning level criteria should also be considered when identifying sites that may have exceptional potential to serve as catalysts for revitalization and redevelopment.

Planning level criteria includes, but is not limited to:

- Location (near water, near employment centers, near tourism generators, etc.);
- Existing and recommended future land use;
- Ownership status;
- Potential to provide public amenities or improve quality-of-life;
- Furthers the recognized goal of the community;
- Size of individual properties; and
- Accessibility.

When evaluating individual sites within the First Ward BOA it is clear that although some sites provide notable opportunities for significant new development, there are also sites with existing buildings and facilities whose enhancement could serve to further revitalization efforts on surrounding properties. Thus, strategic sites within the First Ward BOA have been divided into two categories, 1) strategic development sites and 2) strategic enhancement sites, as further summarized below.

### **Strategic Development Sites**

Seventeen sites have been identified as strategic sites, worthy of additional study and consideration based on a combination of both environmental conditions and planning level criteria. Each of the sites, including justification for their inclusion and potential future uses, are summarized below.

#### ***23 Charles Street (#3 on Map 10)***

This parcel is located west of the Charles Street Business Park on the west side of Charles Street. This is a vacant parcel which provides opportunities for infill development or open space and parkland, and could serve as a transitional linkage between the Business Park and residential areas to the west of Jarvis Street. The parcel is also currently owned by Broome County; public ownership may provide flexibility for the parcel with regards to its ability to meet the overall objectives of this plan.

#### ***55 Seymour Street (#4 on Map 10)***

This parcel is located directly to the north of the Charles Street Business Park and east of First Ward Park. Currently vacant, this site was identified as having a high environmental ranking and is part of the NYS Superfund program. Given the location of the site and its vacancy status, this site has been identified as an ideal location for expanded open space and parkland for the neighborhood. However, the exact status of the environmental clean-up must be determined in Step 2 of the BOA program in order to make a firm recommendation for land use. The property is privately owned.

***30 Charles Street – Charles Street Business Park (#5 on Map 10)***

This site is arguably the most strategic site in the First Ward neighborhood from an economic development, master planning, and job creation perspective. The successful build-out of the Charles Street Business Park has the potential to create many positive spin-off opportunities for both the First Ward and the City of Binghamton as a whole. Opportunities for small business development, the potential for a significant interest in residential housing for a variety of income levels, and an enhanced greenway network are all positive outcomes that may be realized through the redevelopment of this property. Any negative outcomes associated with this build-out, such as increased vehicular and truck traffic, must also be addressed.

***187 Clinton Street (#6 on Map 10)***

As one of the largest vacant sites on the primary commercial corridor of Clinton Street, this vacant site poses tremendous opportunities for infill development. The site is privately owned which creates some obstacles for redevelopment. Identifying a preferred land use and development scenario for the site, and assisting site owners with marketing and any necessary brownfield remediation are tasks that the BOA program could help to further.

***9 Slauson Avenue (#7 on Map 10)***

This vacant commercial parcel is currently owned by the City of Binghamton. Although without street frontage on Clinton Street, the vacancy and ownership status of this property, as well as its proximity to rail and vehicular corridors make it a strong candidate for targeted industrial or commercial redevelopment.

***121-133 Clinton Street (#9-#12 on Map 10)***

A row of four vacant commercial properties exists along a key stretch of Clinton Street, representing a key opportunity for parcel assemblage and infill development. Different ownership of the properties complicates property assemblage. However it has been identified as a strategic site for commercial or mixed-use infill development. Clarification of property potential, opportunities for assemblage, and property status will be further explored as part of Step 2.

***1-2 Titchener Place (#13 and #14 on Map 10)***

The Titchener properties are recognized brownfields within the First Ward neighborhood that have been neglected and in deteriorating condition for many years. Recently Broome County acquired the properties due to tax foreclosure with the former landowner. The County will seek to sell the properties in their current condition. If no specific plans are developed prior to Step 2, the property may undergo additional study and consideration in that phase of the BOA program, ultimately helping the County to move the property in a positive direction, consistent with the vision for the neighborhood.

***68-72 Dickinson Street (#15 on Map 10)***

This vacant property is owned by the City of Binghamton and has been identified as a potential location for a small neighborhood pocket park or community garden. Although such uses do not contribute to the tax base or generate jobs, they are important aspects of the neighborhood and directly impact quality-of-life and promote community pride.



***41 Clinton Street (#16 on Map 10)***

This vacant, privately owned parcel has a prominent location at the corner of Clinton and Murray Streets. Near one of the key gateways into the study area, the parcel could be redeveloped in a variety of ways, including commercial, light industrial, multi-family residential, or mixed-use, depending on the ultimate vision of the community or the vision of the property owner.

***17 Karlada Drive (#19 on Map 10)***

This parcel provides opportunity for a number of uses oriented to improving quality-of-life for neighborhood residents. Potential uses for this vacant property include community open space, a community garden, or an opportunity to connect a greenway network through this residential neighborhood, and ultimately, potentially to a waterfront riverwalk or riverfront destination.

***310 and 340 Front Street (#22 and #23 on Map 10)***

When considered in conjunction with the McCormick's Paint property and 339 Front Street, this is a prominent gateway to the First Ward neighborhood and one of the key gateways into the City of Binghamton. Peoples' first image of the neighborhood and City is often formed by their first experience in seeing a place. Recognizing that the floodwalls and floodplain create impediments to development, there are still substantial opportunities associated with improving and enhancing this key gateway area.

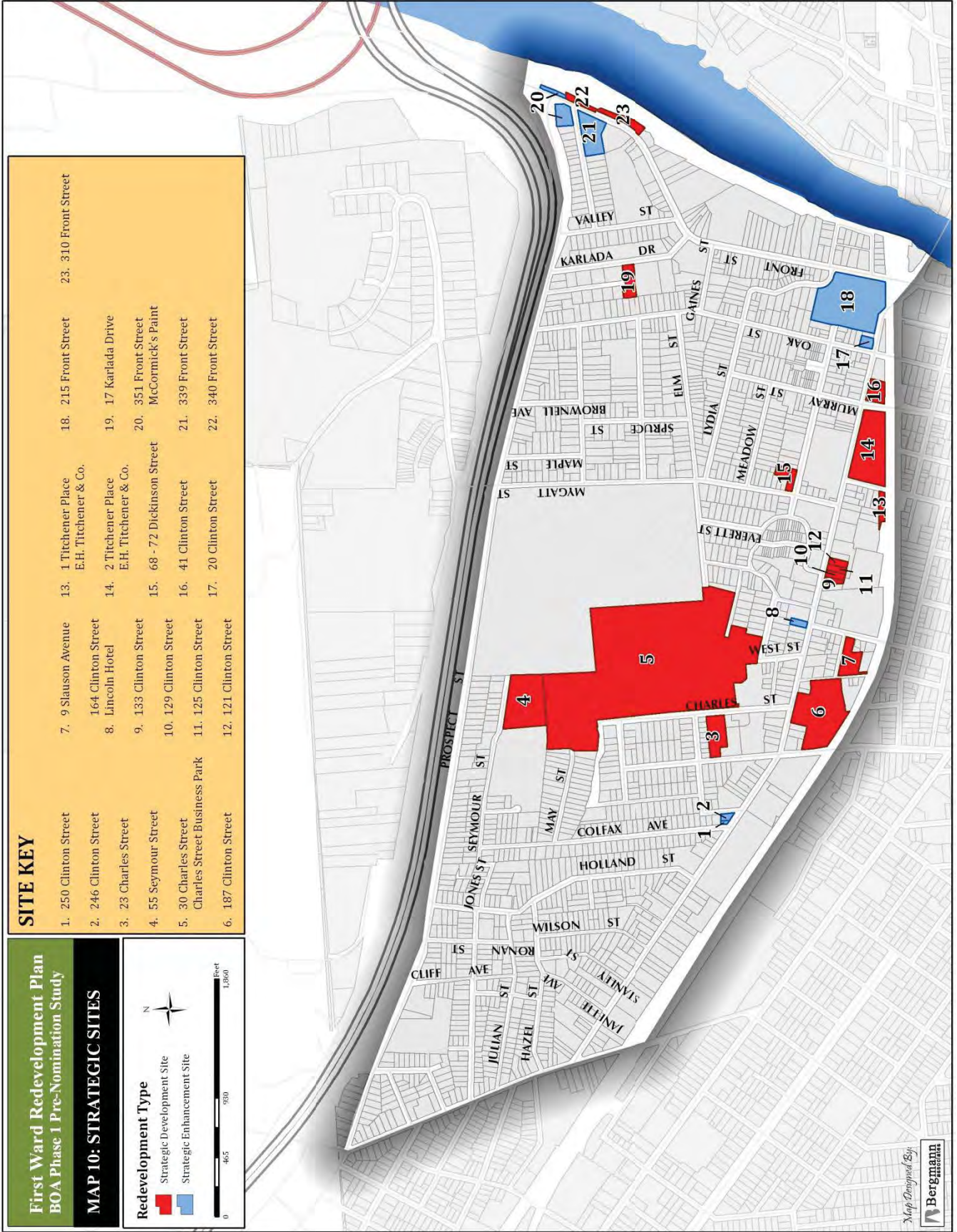
**Strategic Enhancement Sites**

Strategic enhancement sites are those parcels of land that have existing buildings or businesses but would benefit from reinvestment. Enhancements might mean a change in the user, façade improvements, site improvements, or the preservation of a historically significant structure. The properties identified as key strategic enhancement sites, because they are important buildings or sites within the neighborhood, include:

- 250 Clinton Street (#1 on Map 10)
- 246 Clinton Street (#2 on Map 10)
- 164 Clinton Street, Lincoln Hotel (#8 on Map 10)
- 20 Clinton Street, Clinton Hotel (#17 on Map 10)
- 215 Front Street (#18 on Map 10)
- 351 Front Street (#20 on Map 10)
- 339 Front Street (#21 on Map 10)

A more focused analysis of individual enhancement sites, and recommendations for each, will be developed as part of the Nomination Study for the First Ward neighborhood. Sites identified as strategic enhancement sites primarily include underutilized or vacant commercial structures that, with aesthetic improvements, could potentially have a significant role in the overall revitalization of the neighborhood.

# The City of Binghamton FIRST WARD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



## SITE KEY

- |  |  |   |                      |                      |
|--|--|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 250 Clinton Street                                | 7. 9 Slauson Avenue                    | 13. 1 Titchener Place<br>E.H. Titchener & Co.     | 18. 215 Front Street | 23. 310 Front Street |
| 2. 246 Clinton Street                                | 8. 164 Clinton Street<br>Lincoln Hotel | 14. 2 Titchener Place<br>E.H. Titchener & Co.     | 19. 17 Karlada Drive |                      |
| 3. 23 Charles Street                                 | 9. 133 Clinton Street                  | 15. 68 - 72 Dickinson Street<br>McCormick's Paint | 20. 351 Front Street |                      |
| 4. 55 Seymour Street                                 | 10. 129 Clinton Street                 | 16. 41 Clinton Street                             | 21. 339 Front Street |                      |
| 5. 30 Charles Street<br>Charles Street Business Park | 11. 125 Clinton Street                 | 17. 20 Clinton Street                             | 22. 340 Front Street |                      |
| 6. 187 Clinton Street                                | 12. 121 Clinton Street                 |   |                      |                      |

**First Ward Redevelopment Plan**  
BOA Phase 1 Pre-Nomination Study

## MAP 10: STRATEGIC SITES

### Redevelopment Type

- Strategic Development Site
- Strategic Enhancement Site





## **2.7 Summary of Preliminary Analysis and Recommendations for the BOA**

Redevelopment within the First Ward should be based on the needs of its residents, market and economic realities, existing natural and environmental features, and desired land use patterns. This analysis summarizes why revitalization strategies are needed within the First Ward BOA. The success of such strategies, however, will be contingent on community support and activism at the neighborhood level, as well as support at all levels of government.

### **Summary Analysis and Key Opportunities**

While the First Ward BOA has faced challenges in recent years, as the City of Binghamton has seen its population drop and many key industries and employers have left the region, there are a significant number of opportunities that the neighborhood can build upon as it looks into the future and defines a path for its revitalization. The First Ward neighborhood must embrace its unique assets in order to capitalize on its strengths, such as available land, existing building stock, existing infrastructure, and the ongoing planning efforts being undertaken throughout the region.

The key opportunities associated with the First Ward BOA are summarized below and graphically illustrated on Map 11: Actions for Revitalization.

### ***Location, Location, Location***

The First Ward neighborhood is strategically located as one of the gateway neighborhoods into the city, with a significant portion of traffic from State Route 17 and I-86 entering the city along Front Street within the BOA boundaries. Easy access to these major transportation routes, direct access to the Chenango River and a western boundary linking the neighborhood to adjacent communities are important characteristics to consider when developing a plan for revitalization of the First Ward.

### ***Availability of Land***

The First Ward contains a significant portion of the vacant, developable land within the City of Binghamton. According to 2008 parcel data obtained from Broome County, approximately half of all of the vacant land within the City is located in this historic neighborhood, making the area a prime location for City-wide revitalization strategies. The availability of developable land is a major asset within the First Ward neighborhood, though its recognized that a significant percentage of the land is privately owned. The neighborhood has untapped potential that could serve as a catalyst for city-wide revitalization strategies. The



*Current and proposed images of the railroad underpass at the southern gateway to the study area at the intersection of Front and Clinton Streets. All gateways should be enhanced to better promote the First Ward.*

ability of the neighborhood to attract new businesses could serve to provide employment opportunities for residents. New development will also increase the tax base within the neighborhood, and link the core of the neighborhood to redevelopment initiatives on Front Street and Clinton Street.

### ***Clinton Street and Small Business Development***

Clinton Street has struggled in recent years to find its own identity. Land uses range from industrial to commercial to residential to churches, making it difficult to define what Clinton Street is, or should be. Historically known as Antiques Row, Clinton Street has been identified as a prime location within the region for antique and collectible shopping and once boasted a large concentration of these specialty businesses. While a number of antique/collectible businesses still exist, the concentration of these businesses has slowly dwindled. However, there is a great opportunity to reinvigorate Clinton Street as a vibrant concentration of small scale businesses, retail establishments, and restaurants, including antique stores and collectibles. Affordable rental rates along Clinton Street will facilitate reinvestment opportunities. While further market analysis is required and can be completed in later phases of the BOA process, reinvigorating Clinton Street as a corridor of complementary retail uses and specialty eateries and bars would provide the neighborhood with an economic boost as well as provide needed goods and services within walking distance. The opportunity exists for a façade improvement program to improve business connectivity and unify this strategic corridor.

The First Ward is also located within an Empire Zone and should market this designation. Empire Zones were initiated by the State of New York to stimulate economic development in New York through the provision of tax incentives. The incentives were devised to attract businesses to the state and enable existing businesses to grow, thus encouraging job creation. Potential investors in small businesses may benefit from associated financial packages and incentives.

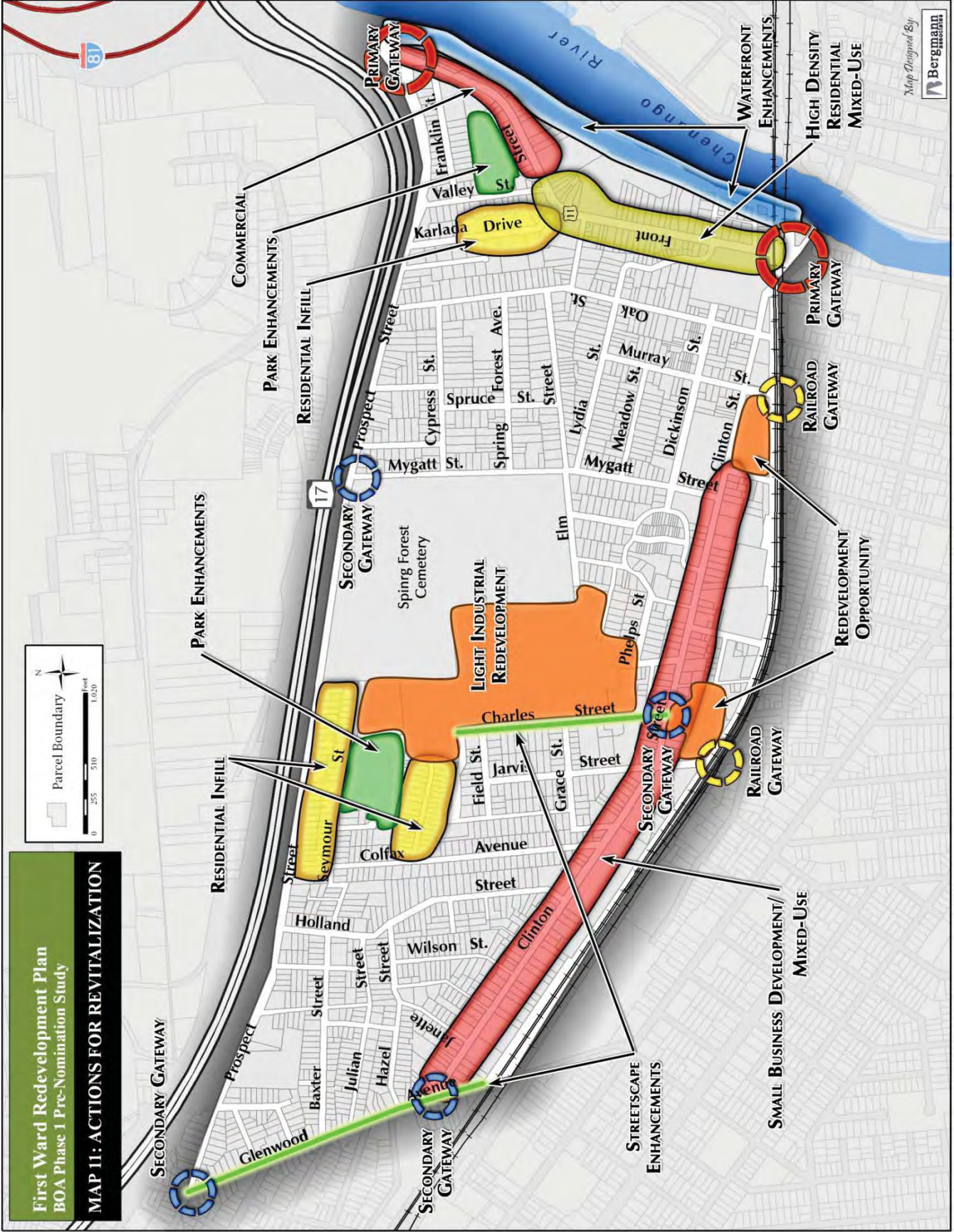
### ***Light Industrial Development***

The Charles Street Business Park, once a brownfield that is now shovel ready for development, is a significant opportunity for the neighborhood. The site is already home to one new development project for the Emerson Network Power Company. Further light industrial and manufacturing development, when developed in a context sensitive to the neighborhood, has the opportunity to:

- Provide a needed economic impetus into the local economy by creating spin-off business opportunities (i.e. stores and restaurants for workers, supporting industrial businesses);
- Provide a steady level of higher income jobs for local workers;
- Increase the number of owner occupied units in the neighborhood as employees of new industrial businesses choose to live where they work; and
- Improve the aesthetic character of the neighborhood through the incorporation of planned industrial park improvements that include green space and linkages.

As identified above, portions of the First Ward are located within an Empire Zone and should market this designation. New businesses may benefit from associated financial packages and incentives.







### ***Sustainable Development and Smart Growth***

Sustainable development came onto the radar following several decades of environmental movements occurring at the international level. The Earth Summit in Brazil (1992) specifically brought focus to the issue by urging countries to establish national sustainability goals. The idea of sustainable development refers to the ability of communities to meet the needs of current residents without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept intersects the notions of environmental, economic, and social progress towards equity. In the First Ward, the implementation of sustainable development and smart growth design principles can enhance the revitalization of underutilized urban lands and limit further sprawl in outlying areas. Sustainable development and smart growth opportunities in the First Ward have the opportunity to have many positive impacts on the local community, including:

- Increasing residents' accessibility to goods and services;
- Increasing employment opportunities by encouraging the development of new businesses on available land;
- Improving the walkability of the neighborhoods to provide opportunities for those without access to vehicles;
- Re-using existing structures; and
- Encouraging development that utilizes existing infrastructure.

Opportunities for green building and the incorporation of LEED standards into new building and site design also pose opportunities for sustainable development in the First Ward.

### ***Green Infrastructure***

As aging infrastructure in the First Ward neighborhood becomes in need of repair and upgrades, there may be opportunities for furthering local goals of sustainable development by incorporating green infrastructure elements, such as porous pavement, street trees, rain gardens, green roofs, swales, and native landscaping.

### ***Open Space and Greenways***

Protecting, encouraging, and expanding open space, greenways, and linkages within the First Ward is an opportunity that can be further explored as part of the BOA program. A comprehensive greenway network is directly linked to the concepts of sustainable development and smart growth and will help improve the character of the First Ward, increase accessibility for local residents, and improve the health and general wellbeing of users from throughout the city. Existing planning efforts in and around the First Ward BOA study area have emphasized creating recreational corridors along the waterfront in concert with the redevelopment of Front Street as a gateway to the city. The First Ward is well-positioned to connect to, and tie into, other trail and greenway initiatives proposed throughout the city.

### ***Housing Rehabilitation***

With an aging housing stock, low housing costs, and high renter occupancy, there are a number of opportunities for residents, investors, and not-for-profit organizations to invest in the rehabilitation of the First Ward housing stock. The types of residential units vary in the neighborhood from modest mid-20<sup>th</sup> century worker homes to more elaborate and architecturally defined 19<sup>th</sup> century residences. In some

instances, such as along Front Street or Clinton Street, there are opportunities for the adaptive reuse of former residential buildings to be converted to commercial uses, office space or mixed-use structures. A number of local groups and individual developers have begun to undertake initiatives to improve the existing housing stock. These efforts should be applauded and continued as additional initiatives are put into place.

***Historic Preservation***

The architectural character and legacy of the First Ward neighborhood is an important part of its identity. Maintaining the historic character and details of existing residences and commercial structures is an opportunity to preserve and protect the legacy of the neighborhood and sustain a unique and appealing location within the City and region.

### **Preliminary Recommendations**

Preliminary recommendations for the First Ward BOA have been organized to coincide with the Goal categories identified in this Redevelopment Plan and build on the opportunities identified for the First Ward neighborhood.

#### ***Economic Revitalization***

Economic revitalization recommendations for the First Ward neighborhood strive to identify realistic business development opportunities that are based on market realities. Phase 2 of the BOA process will incorporate an Economic and Market Analysis that identifies the market potentials, gaps, and opportunities for the study area. Future small business opportunities presented for the First Ward may be different than what has historically been located on Clinton Street.

Further studies of potential brownfield, vacant, and underutilized sites should be developed to determine specific strategies for moving forward, with the final objective to make sites ready for redevelopment.

Economic revitalization of commercial areas could be further enhanced and enabled with targeted streetscape improvement and enhancement projects, such as additional street lighting to promote safety, pedestrian crosswalks and pavement treatments to slow traffic, and landscaping to improve the overall aesthetic character of the neighborhood.

### **PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION**

- Based on market analysis, identify an appropriate niche market for the First Ward and pursue appropriate small businesses through incentive programs and marketing strategies.
- Implement a Façade Improvement Program to improve the storefronts and building facades along Clinton and Front Streets.
- Develop design guidelines for new development that retains the scale, character, and desirable attributes of the neighborhood and is consistent with the gateway design standards to be developed by the Planning Commission.
- Promote waterfront redevelopment along Front Street.
- Create strong gateways into the First Ward from areas to the north, south, east, and west.
- Establish a strong physical connection from the City’s central business district into the First Ward, which could be marketed as “downtown west.”
- Implement recommendations for Front Street as identified in the 2008 Gateway Plan.



***Business Development and Job Creation***

Recommendations associated with business development and job creation will help to reestablish the First Ward neighborhood as a desirable location for businesses because of the opportunities and unique assets located within the neighborhood.

The Charles Street Business Park is the centerpiece for new light industrial and business park style development and has the potential to create hundreds of new jobs in the community. The Business Park is a clean slate, ready for development that offers a campus like setting, residential opportunities within walking distance, access to major transportation routes, and a variety of goods and services. The Broome County Industrial Development Agency should be supported in their efforts to further promote and market the Business Park as an advantageous place to locate a business. Build-out of the Business Park would once again offer the First Ward neighborhood “walk to work” employment opportunities, improving the stability of surrounding neighborhoods and furthering the objectives of the community to identify sustainable and long term planning solutions.

**PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS:  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
AND JOB CREATION**

- Promote the redevelopment of the Charles Street Business Park as a campus-like setting, creating linkages that connect the campus to the surrounding neighborhoods and commercial corridors. Continue to support the efforts of the BCIDA.
- Promote the establishment of support services for neighborhood employers and employees, including day care, healthcare, and restaurants.
- Identify potential sites for light industrial or similar businesses on sites other than in the Charles Street Business Park.

***Smart Growth and Sustainability***

Smart growth and sustainable development principles will help ensure the First Ward Redevelopment Plan addresses the need to create a long term and feasible plan for the revitalization of the First Ward neighborhood. Recommendations will focus on the incorporation of sustainable design principles into both physical aspects of planning, such as buildings and sites, and non-physical elements, such as economic development and health.

The First Ward should build on the area’s existing recreation and open space to provide recreational connectivity to other parts of the city. Greening efforts will additionally serve to provide visual relief and environmental benefits to area residents. The marketing of rehabilitation, redevelopment, and infill development opportunities in the neighborhood should highlight potential costs savings associated with existing infrastructure, proximity of strong neighborhoods and residential core, and access to goods and services.

In addition, the area should maintain support for the conversion of the existing power plant located within the neighborhood into a cogeneration facility. A cogeneration plant uses a single thermodynamic process to simultaneously produce both electricity and heat. Because of system efficiencies, electricity and heat produced by such a facility can be delivered at greatly reduced costs. Although hurdles regarding the feasibility of a cogeneration facility in the First Ward exist, emerging technologies and policy shifts make this a possibility in the near future. The availability of energy at a reduced cost would further increase the competitiveness of the Charles Street Business Park in attracting new industries.

**PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS:  
SUSTAINABILITY**

- Create linkages to trail and greenway connections being developed in adjacent areas of the City and surrounding communities.
- Increase the tree canopy along commercial corridors to improve aesthetics and encourage pedestrian traffic.
- Promote alternative development projects that meet the needs of changing demographic groups.
- Implement recommendations identified in the Broome County Greenway Plan.
- Integrate recommendations for planning in the First Ward as presented in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Increase accessibility to local food by establishing local community gardens and/or farmers markets.
- Preserve the environmental integrity of the existing aquifer and investigate options for sustainable use.
- Continue to advocate for the development and implementation of a “smart grid,” and smaller point-of-origin energy sources to increase viability of a cogeneration plant within the First Ward.

### ***Quality-of-life***

Quality-of-life recommendations for the First Ward will seek to make the First Ward neighborhood a sought-after place to live, visit, recreate, and do business in the City of Binghamton. Incorporation of urban design and place-making elements, such as gateway features, wayfinding signage, lighting, landscaping, and other streetscape treatments will help to improve the aesthetic character of the neighborhood. Providing residents a full range of goods and services, access to parks and open space, and a full range of transportation alternatives all contribute to overall quality-of-life experiences.

Residents of the First Ward share a common sense of pride and loyalty associated with their neighborhood while also recognizing the need for a more stable residential base. Absentee landlords and the conversion of single family homes to multi-family units has had a negative impact on the local community and should be addressed through zoning modifications and special programs that offer incentives to current and future residents. Incentives can encourage home ownership and preservation of existing housing stock. Such incentives may include private partnerships to create Employer Assisted Housing programs.

Local groups and organizations are actively working together to help and rebuild and promote the neighborhood and to foster support and cooperation between existing residents, as well as business owners. These efforts should be recognized and supported by leaders within the City so they can be continued for the betterment of the entire community. Local organizations that provide community-based services and programs to members of the community should also be supported as their efforts are important to the stability and quality-of-life of First Ward residents.

## **PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS: QUALITY-OF-LIFE**

- Capitalize on the area's rich social history through programming that explores the areas' Eastern European roots and further its sense of community.
- Adopt housing initiatives to preserve the historic housing stock and encourage ownership, owner-occupancy and reinvestment within the neighborhood.
- Identify a program to combat issues associated with absentee landlords, including code enforcement, penalties, and potential revisions to regulatory and zoning codes to help address problems.
- Implement and promote home buyer assistance programs.
- Establish a Community Beautification program that involves area youth and other interested residents and business owners in projects that enhance and beautify public streetscapes, parks, and open spaces.
- Institute a Neighborhood Watch program to provide residents with a sense of safety and security.
- Maintain open dialogue with local and regional transportation providers to ensure the transportation needs of the community are addressed.



### **Further Study and Analysis**

Based on the results of the Pre-Nomination Study, an initial list of suggested follow-up planning, design, and implementation efforts has been generated which will help refine the vision and recommendations for the First Ward BOA neighborhood. Suggested projects include, but are not limited to:

- **Retail and Light Industrial Market Analysis**

Based on preliminary information provided in the Pre-Nomination Study, the City should assess the existing retail and light industrial climate in the study area, City, and region. The assessment and analysis should look at existing conditions and trends associated with retail, commercial, and light industrial businesses development. Opportunities for business development should be identified specific to the First Ward study area. Strategies and incentives packages to encourage targeted economic development and business growth should be identified.

- **Housing Analysis and Needs Assessment**

Housing is clearly the dominant component of the First Ward and the need for an in-depth housing analysis is clear. An assessment of single- and multi-family homes, as well as mixed-use apartments, and specialty housing for senior residents and disabled should be undertaken to identify supply and demand considerations. A housing program, comprised of a broad set of improvement tools, must be established and applied to fit varying conditions in different areas. Based on an understanding of the broad housing and economic revitalization goals for the BOA, specific buildings would be identified to achieve goals, whether through adaptive reuse, preservation, or demolition (of buildings that stand in the way of broader development objectives). Recommendations for specific housing projects should be developed aimed at improving owner occupancy levels, maintenance, and general quality.

- **Structural Analysis and Feasibility Study**

Structural analysis and adaptive reuse feasibility studies should be undertaken for existing buildings in the study area that have local value and significance, but whose condition has significantly deteriorated over time. Potential buildings along Clinton Street include the Lincoln Hotel and Clinton Hotel.

- **Parking Study and Analysis**

The availability of parking along Clinton and Front Streets has been discussed throughout the planning process. A thorough parking analysis for the lengths of Clinton and Front Streets within the BOA study area would aid in the ability to identify parking availability, issues, and opportunities on these primary commercial corridors. Potential locations for off-street parking facilities should be identified to complement on-street parking.

- **Streetscape and Pedestrian Facility Plan**

To address concerns associated with pedestrian safety, walkability, and traffic speeds, a Streetscape and Pedestrian Facility Plan should identify improvements and enhancements for study area streetscapes, including conceptual streetscape designs for improving the aesthetics and walkability of the neighborhood. Traffic calming measures and recommendations for roadway improvements and circulation patterns would be considered.

- **Gateway and Wayfinding Plan**

The current condition of gateways into the study area and the City do not portray the community in a positive light. Gateway concepts for primary, secondary and railroad gateways should be developed with options for funding improvements explored. Signage throughout the study area, directing pedestrians, highlighting parks and trail connections, and interpreting the history of the community would help to foster community pride.

- **Historic Building Survey and National Register Designations (Months 3-6)**

The historic building stock in the First Ward, whether homes, churches, or commercial structures contributes to its character. Better understanding the significance of this stock can direct future recommendations for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects. Opportunities may also exist for National Register designations which could lead to the availability of future tax credits for developers.

- **Charles Street Business Park Master Plan**

A conceptual master plan should be developed for the Charles Street Business Park to ensure that site design and layout, as well as access, relationship and linkages to surrounding properties and roadways are taken into consideration as new businesses begin to locate. The Business Park Master Plan should maximize usage while supporting the neighborhood goals of green linkages and sustainability.

- **Clinton Street Land Use Master Plan**

The preferred build out of Clinton Street is defined differently by different people. Understanding the land and market realities associated with the revitalization of this corridor is critical and should be carefully examined in Step 2 of the BOA process.

- **Floodplain and Floodwall Evaluation**

As the designation of floodplains and the current condition of floodwalls can have a direct impact on future redevelopment efforts and neighborhood stabilization efforts in the First Ward, a detailed assessment of existing conditions is warranted to help guide and understand floodplain mapping efforts.

- **Generic Environmental Impact Statement and SEQR**

The preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the entire BOA will help to facilitate new development and job creation and can serve as an incentive for attracting new developers and investors to the study area.

## ENDNOTES

---

<sup>i</sup> Environmental Protection Agency (2009). Brownfields Mission. In Brownfields and Land Revitalization. Retrieved June 2009 from <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/mission.htm>.

<sup>ii</sup> City of Binghamton (2006). Binghamton, New York – A Brief History. In Binghamton, New York. Retrieved June 2009 from [www.cityofbinghamton.com/history.asp](http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/history.asp).

<sup>iii</sup> Only ancestries that comprise one percent of the population or greater are illustrated. These ancestries comprise 91.3 percent of the total population who reported single ancestry in 2000.

<sup>v</sup> Dollar values are adjusted for inflation and represent 2009 dollar values.

<sup>vi</sup> Western New York Railroad Archive (2008). Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad. In Western New York Railroad Archive. Retrieved June 2009 from [http://wnyrails.org/railroads/dlw/dlw\\_stns\\_mainline.htm](http://wnyrails.org/railroads/dlw/dlw_stns_mainline.htm).