

TOWN OF MALTA: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Background

The Town of Malta prepared a Comprehensive Plan and a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) in 2005. Understanding and managing growth was the central focus of the plan. The Town examined measures to plan for this growth, including developing an open space plan, agricultural/farmland protection plan, traffic study, and bicycle and sidewalk expansion plan. This original GEIS established the basis for long term improvements to the Town and a way to (partially) fund these improvements.

The development of the Luther Forest Technology Campus (LFTC) and subsequent construction of AMD/Global Foundries spurred growth, and the Town prepared an update to the GEIS or *Supplemental Malta Town-Wide Generic Environmental Impact Statement* in 2015. The Draft (or DSEIS) update reflected changes that had occurred since the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, including approval of the LFTC and adoption of the Downtown Form Based Code (FBC).

2015 Malta Town-Wide SEIS

The 2015 DSEIS re-analyzed the Town's future growth potential, based on the zoning in place at the time. To develop this growth projection, the total "buildout potential" was initially calculated, accounting for existing buildings and environmental and site constraints (see **Figure 1**). The 2015 buildout analysis determined that approximately 6,500 residential units and 18.1 million SF of non-residential development could be built in the town. This represents the overall development potential, not a growth projection.

A series of alternate growth projections were subsequently developed, examining historical development patterns, location of utilities, developer feedback, and other planning trends to estimate potential growth that might occur over a 10-year period. The location of this growth/development was also projected based on the development patterns and the availability of suitable lands and developer interest. (see **Figure 2**). The 2015 DSEIS projected that 2,100 to 3,100 residential units and 1.6 to 2.5 million SF of non-residential development would occur in the Town by 2024; the majority (1,500 to 2,400) of the residential units were projected to occur within the Downtown FBC district.

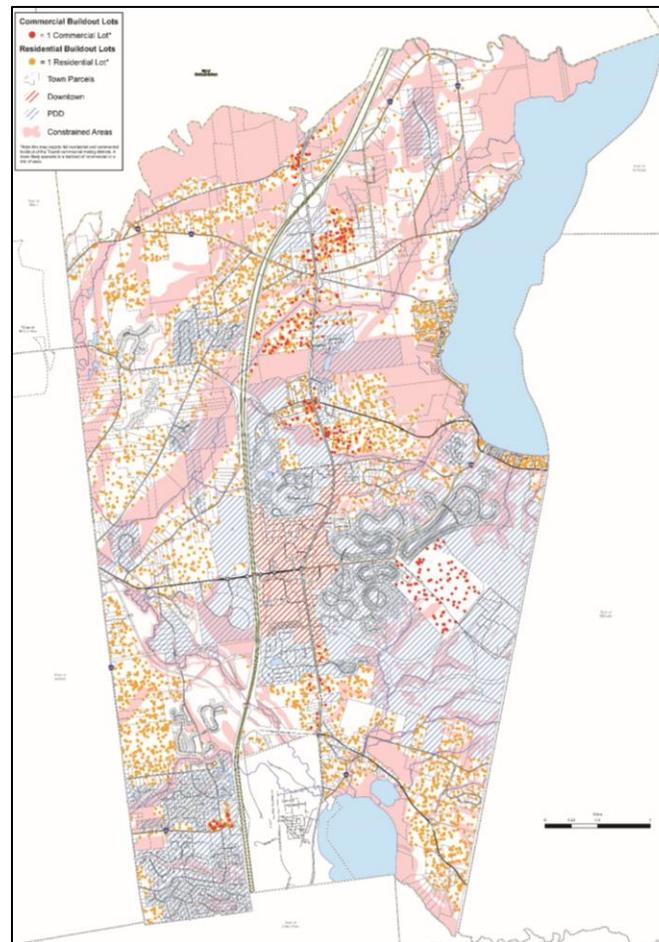


Figure 1: 2015 Buildout Potential (from 2015 DSEIS)

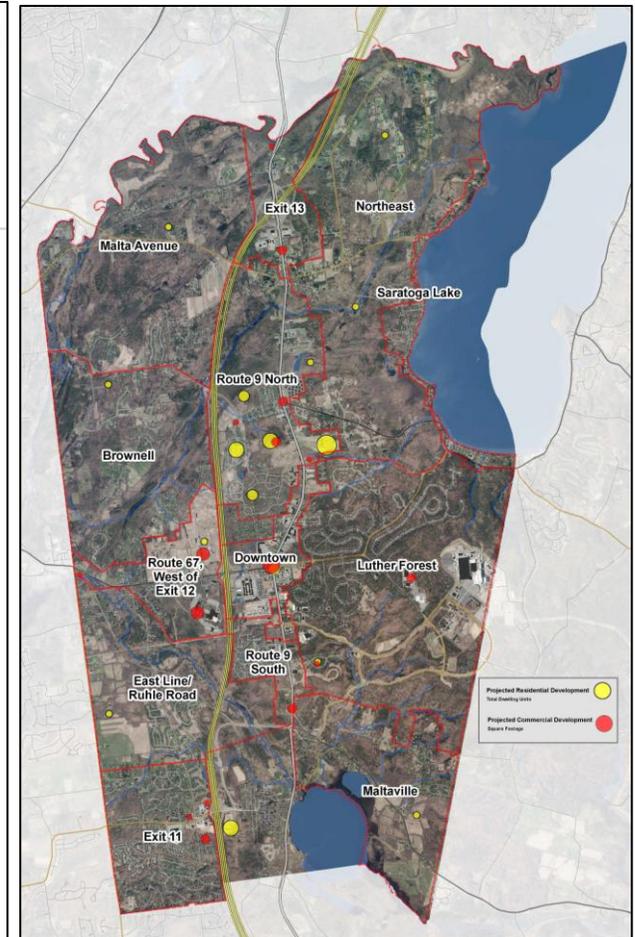


Figure 2: 2015 Projected Growth (from 2015 DSEIS)

Zoning Changes Since 2015

Since 2015, several zoning amendments have been approved that have changed the permitted density and/or the permitted uses within select geographic areas (see **Figure 3** for the 2015 zoning and **Figure 4** for the current zoning/subsequent zoning changes).

Specifically, the following zoning changes have been approved since 2015:

East of Round Lake - 2016: The area east of Round Lake was rezoned from R1 to R5.

Route 67 West (west of the Downtown FBC district) - 2016: Several zoning changes were approved for the portion of Route 67 located to the west of I-87. These changes include establishing the new PDD 52-Saratoga Medical Park (replacing a former R5 residential district) and rezoning the remainder of the corridor from R1, R5, PDD, and LC to C2 with a new Route 67 West Overlay District.

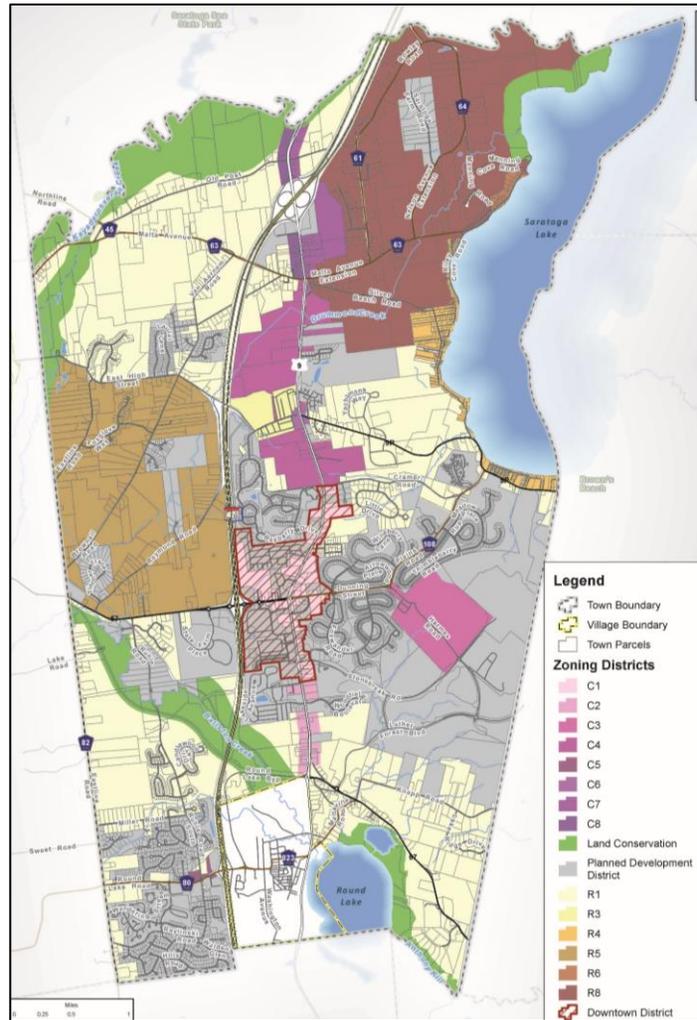


Figure 3: 2015 Zoning

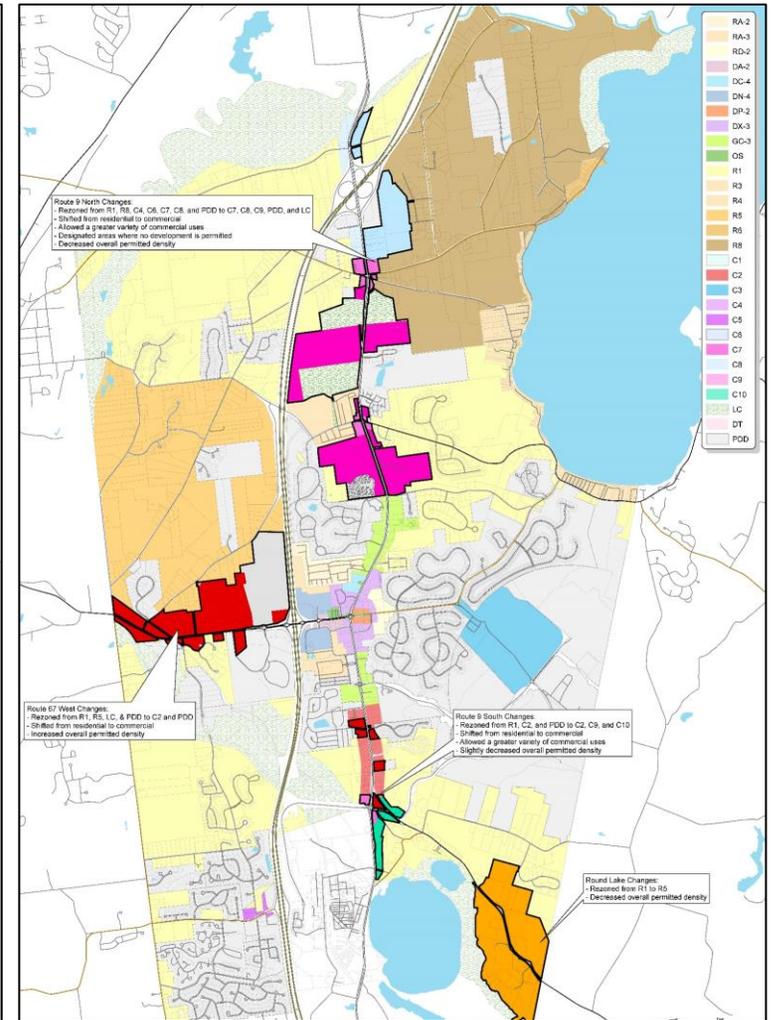


Figure 4: Existing Zoning (Zoning Changes since 2015 highlighted)

Route 9 South (south of the Downtown FBC district) - 2016: Several commercial zoning changes were approved along Route 9, to the south of the Downtown/FBC district; the zoning changes included rezoning parcels from R1 to C2, C9, and C10, rezoning a PDD parcel to C2, and a C2 parcel to C9.

Route 9 North (north of the Downtown FBC district) - 2018: The following zoning changes were approved along Route 9, to the north of the Downtown/FBC district: C4 parcels were rezoned C7, C9, LC and PDD; C6 parcels were rezoned C9; C7 parcels were rezoned C8 and C9; C8 parcels were rezoned; multiple PDDs were rezoned C7; R1 parcels were rezoned C7; and R8 parcels were rezoned C9.

Implications of Zoning Changes on Buildout Potential

A summary of the aggregate changes in overall permitted density (reflecting minimum lots within the rezoned areas) is provided in the table below. As indicated in the table, overall, the zoning changes approved since 2015 have *reduced* the number of lots that can be developed in the affected areas (a total reduction of 277 units). A summary of the changes in the four rezoned areas is provided below.

East of Round Lake: The area east of Round Lake experienced the biggest reduction in buildout potential of the four areas that were rezoned. The significant decrease in the permitted density in the area east of Round Lake is a result of the change from the higher density R1 district (which has a minimum lot size of 40,000 SF) to a lower density R5 district (which has a minimum lot size of 80,000 SF), essentially cutting in half the number of permitted lots within the approximately 325-acre rezoned area.

Route 67 West (west of the Downtown FBC district): The zoning changes in the Route 67 west area resulted in a minor increase in the overall permitted density. More significantly, the zoning changes approved in this area shifted the permitted uses from primarily residential (with the previous R1 and R5 districts) to commercial (with the current C2 and PDD 52).

Route 9 South (south of the Downtown FBC district): The zoning changes in the Route 9 south area resulted in a negligible decrease in the overall permitted density on the rezoned parcels. However, the zoning changes eliminated previous R1 residential districts and increased the diversity of permitted commercial uses.

Route 9 North (north of the Downtown FBC district): The Route 9 North zoning changes, in the aggregate, resulted in a decrease in the maximum permitted density in the area, due primarily to the establishment of approximately 150 acres of new LC districts, where no development is permitted. While multiple additional zoning changes were implemented along this corridor, they did not result in a substantial change in the permitted density; rather, they shifted the permitted uses from residential to commercial (with the R1 to C7 and R8 to C9 zoning changes) and increased the diversity of permitted commercial uses along the corridor.

Development since 2015

Since 2015, approximately 780 residential units and over 53,000 SF of commercial uses have been constructed. Another 800 residential units (including multi-family rentals) and over 490,000 SF of commercial uses are approved and expected to be constructed, resulting a total of 1,578 residential units and over one million SF of non-residential development. This is on track with the 2,100 to 3,100 residential units and 1.6 to 2.5 million SF of non-residential development that the 2015 SEIS projected would occur in the Town by 2024. Most of the development that has occurred in the Town of Malta since 2015 has been within the Downtown FBC district (see **Figure 5**), as was also projected in the 2015 SEIS. The presence of infrastructure appears to be the major driver for development outside of the Downtown FBC district (see **Figure 6**).

Zoning Change Area	Change in Permitted Density
R1 to R5	-176
Rt 67 West	44
Rt 9 South	-6
Rt 9 North	-137
Totals	-277

*Note: The change in permitted density reflects the maximum number of lots that could be developed using the most common minimum lot size in the applicable zoning districts. Environmental constraints were not considered.

Findings

Recent development that has occurred in Malta has been consistent with the existing zoning's intent to focus growth in the downtown/FBC district. The concentration of recent development within this downtown core can be attributed to the adoption of the 2013 FBC, the new 80' right-of-way requirements (which have slowed subdivision applications), downzonings, and the establishment of new LC districts.

The rezoning east of Round Lake has been successful in limiting growth in this area.

The lack of existing infrastructure and presence of Drummond Creek have potentially prevented the development of the commercial node intended with the Route 9 North rezonings. As a result, future development will likely be limited in the rezoned Route 9 North district due to these factors. Rather, future development pressures will likely occur in areas where there is existing infrastructure, including the R1 district along the north side of Round Lake and the eastern section of the rezoned Route 67 West area.

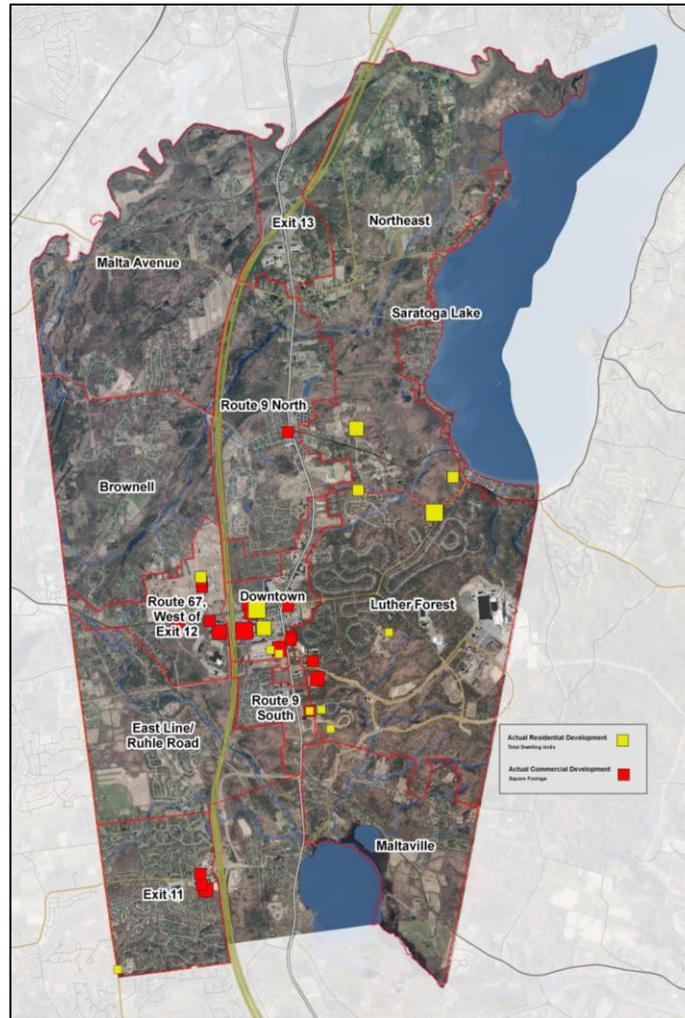


Figure 5: 2019 Actual Development

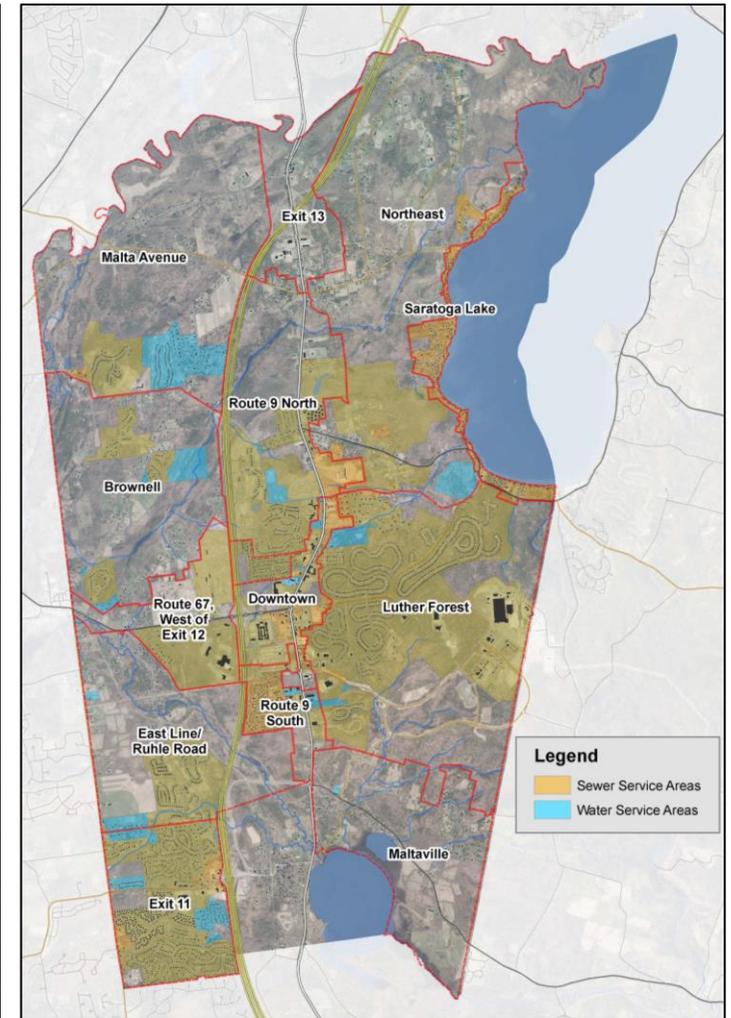


Figure 6: Infrastructure Service Areas