

Town of Little Falls



2026 Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by the Town of Little Falls Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
for the Town Board of Little Falls.

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Executive Summary

The Town of Little Falls is a predominantly rural community shaped by generations of farming. While situated closely to the industrial and commercial activity of the City of Little Falls, the town maintains a distinct identity focused on land stewardship and a quiet residential character. This Comprehensive Plan is the result of a year-long collaborative effort, during which residents and stakeholders provided the necessary feedback to shape the future of their community.

The development of this plan was guided by a dedicated Steering Committee, which oversaw a comprehensive public engagement process including town-wide surveys and a detailed SWOT analysis. By formalizing this structure for public engagement, the plan ensures that future conversations regarding town growth and development occur collaboratively rather than in silos. This approach allowed the town to identify critical priorities in the areas of natural resource protection, farmland preservation, and economic development. It was successful in establishing a clear strategy for the next decade that balances historical preservation with modern infrastructure needs.

The plan addresses a wide range of interconnected topics, including workforce development, housing diversity, and agricultural protection. Throughout these focus areas, a consistent priority remains: The Town of Little Falls is a lovely place to live and work, but strategic improvements are needed to bring more jobs and housing options to the area. To achieve this, the plan lays out a framework that prioritizes public health and safety and integrates economic development, infrastructure, housing, energy, and broadband access into a shared vision and strategy.

Ultimately, this document serves as a unified policy roadmap. By establishing a framework for ongoing collaboration and partnerships with regional stakeholders, the town is positioned to effectively see its vision through to completion.

Town Officials

Supervisor

Dan Casler

Councilmen

Kirk Schwasnick

Mitchell Soules, Sr.

Kevin Sullivan

Anthony Viscomi

Town Clerk

Sandra Regan

Planning Board

Bob Brown, Chairman

Karen Casler, Vice Chairwoman

Jesse Bucenec

Luke Petkovsek

Marianne Graziadei

Kelly Gehring

Steering Committee

Steve Salamone, Chairman

Marianne Graziadei

Kimberly Pepper

Bob Brown

Bob Kimbro

Dan Casler

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, history, and vision to this process. This first-ever Comprehensive Plan belongs to the community, and its adoption is a testament to our shared commitment to the town's future.

We strive for total inclusion in our planning; if any voices were missed during this inaugural effort, we apologize. This is a living document, and we look forward to continuing our partnership as we bring this vision to life over the coming years.

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The History of the Township of Little Falls, New York

Located in the Mohawk Valley in Herkimer County, New York, the Town of Little Falls is a rural and historically rich place that has seen years of settlement, agricultural growth, and industry. It is located in the area along the Mohawk River that has a significant 40-ft descent, which was an important site known as Astenrogan or "tumbling waters" in the Mohawk language. This area along the river was part of the Mohawk Upper Castle region, which connected important Native trails, playing an important role in the portage network. The area still has a draw for those who enjoy the blend of the pastoral scenery and roots in history.

From 1723 onward, land grants were given to Palatine German immigrants through the Burnetsfield Patent, which granted land to the new settlers. Grantee John Jost Petrie built a gristmill ~1725 near Furnace Creek, which marked the first European settlement in the area. The mill, which became known as the "Yellow House," became a gathering site and landmark for traders and travelers alike. Other land patents, like Fall Hill, were claimed by John Jost, a member of Nikolas Herkimer's family. Later, this land was parcelled out to his descendants, providing the means for town land ownership.

During the French and Indian War (1750- 1760s) the area played a part in providing a conduit for transporting supplies. During the Revolutionary War in 1782, attacks occurred on settlers' homes as well as on Petrie's Mill. This raid by the Tory-Iroquois destroyed the mill and took Daniel Petrie's life. Captives were then taken to Canada.

In 1794, there were six wooden locks installed by the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company. This brought an influx of laborers to the area. The locks helped to bypass the rapids on this section of the Mohawk River. By 1806, the town included a stone school (built in 1794) and the Octagon "Pepper-box" Church, built by the Concord Society to serve several denominations with sermons offered in both English and German. In 1811, the neighboring village, which later became the City of Little Falls, was incorporated. By 1852, the area had undergone several name changes—including "Rockton"—before finally becoming known as Little Falls.

The City of Little Falls would become the center for the economy of the area, including the Township of Little Falls. The town and city of Little Falls, while separate entities, remain linked through geography and history.

With the City of Little Falls to the east, the town of Little Falls borders many other Herkimer County municipalities. Also to the east are the Towns of Danube and Manheim; to the west are the Towns of Herkimer and German Flatts; while to the south, there is the Town of Warren; and to the north lies the Town of Fairfield. Another bordering municipality includes the Town of Stark to the southeast. Within the township itself lie the Hamlets and local communities of Jacksonburg, Kelhi Corners, Paines Hollow, and Wrights Corners- each represents an area where there was a settlement pattern that grew along the roadways and paths in the Town of Little Falls.

On February 16, 1829, the Town of Little Falls was created after it was separated from the Town of Herkimer to the west. It remains small but, to this day, remains a distinct entity focused on agriculture. It covers approximately 22.5 square miles of the Mohawk Valley and has rolling hills with fertile soil. The town is divided into two sections by the Mohawk River, which runs through its center. Its proximity to the Erie Canal kept it connected to major transportation routes and helped promote industrial growth throughout Central New York. In 1889, the Little Falls Grange was founded to help promote the development and maintenance of agriculture in the rural areas. Farms in the area were known for producing dairy and cheeses. With the help of town societies, the Grange helped to maintain order and cooperation.

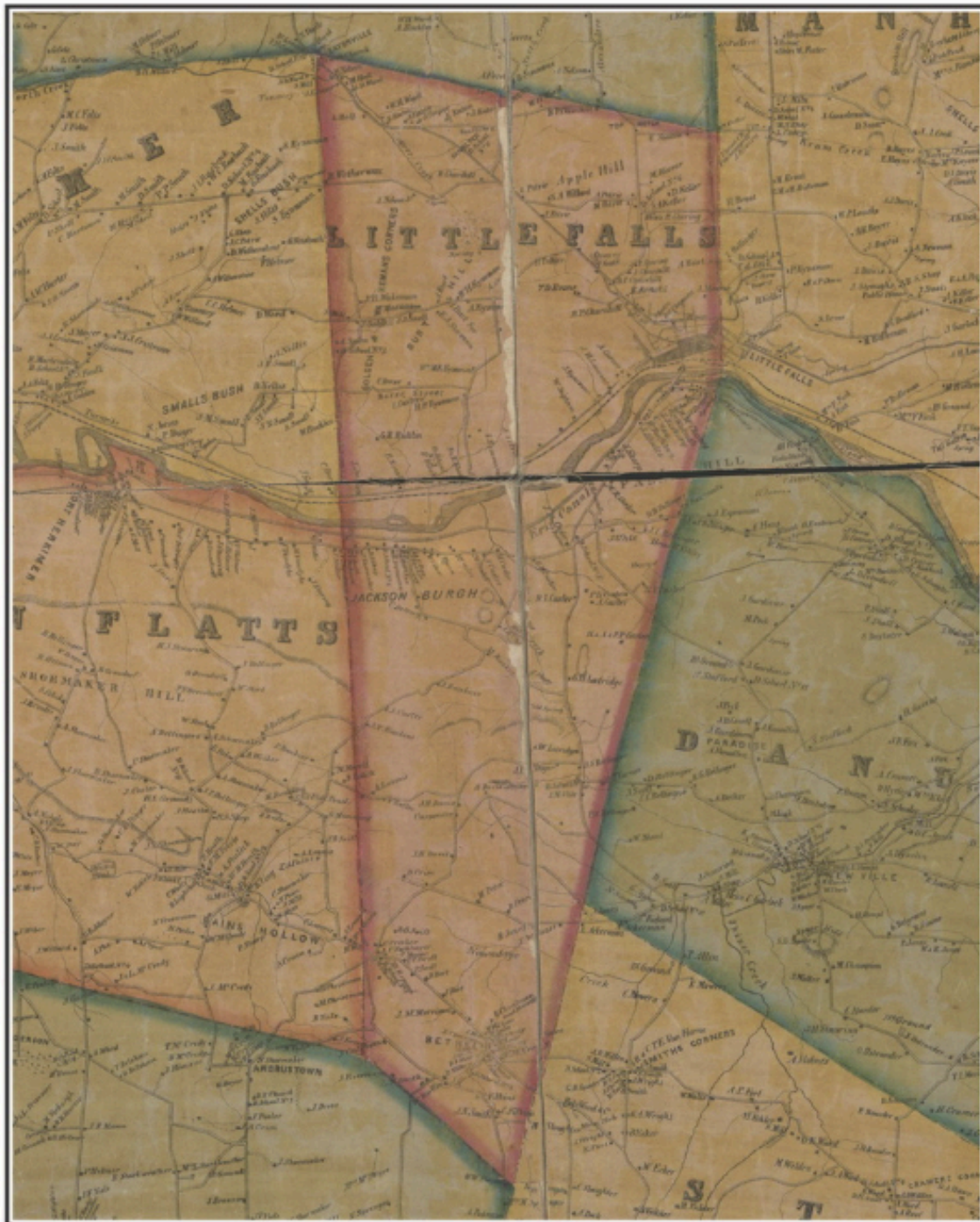
The expansion of agriculture, especially dairy farming and cheese production, encouraged industrial growth along the canal while supporting the farmers who produced these important goods.

Local manufacturers were able to produce notable items such as woolens, cotton goods, dairy machinery, paper goods, knitted fabric, bicycles, leather, and tools. The production of a variety of textiles and other goods led to Little Falls earning the nickname "Lowell of the Empire State," a reference to the renowned textile center of Lowell, Massachusetts. The name reflected the number and size of the mills operating in the area. Agriculture has been a longstanding tradition and has marked a way of life for a vast number of people in the Town and the surrounding area. To this day, this legacy continues through dairy farming and cheese production. In 2015, the tradition of cheese production and dairy farming was celebrated by the annual Little Falls Cheese Festival in the neighboring City of Little Falls. The city also hosts an annual Garlic Festival that celebrates the region's agricultural heritage and the tradition of harvesting crops from local farms, with a special focus on garlic and culinary traditions.

Locally, there is easy access to transportation routes via the New York State Thruway, railroads, and canal boats. The Town has an economic connection to both industry and agriculture, as well as many other options for adults and children. These include many recreational options ranging from kayaking on the Mohawk River to riding bicycles on the New York State Rail Trail. Town residents may also enjoy exploring local historic sites and snowmobiling in the winter. Farm stands and farmers' markets abound in the area, and activities like Sundae on the Farm give everyone something to do.

Located among rolling hills, the Town of Little Falls has a rural character and a small population that enjoys the changing beauty of all four seasons. There are many ties to historical events and recreational activities; as well as opportunities in agricultural production, water power, transportation, and industry. Its contributions to the regional dairy markets, early industrial development, and rural landscape have secured Little Falls a significant and enduring place in Herkimer County.

Little Falls 1859



From Map of Herkimer County 1859 R.E. O'Connor www.old-maps.com

How Does a Comprehensive Plan Help the Town?

These plans establish a legal framework for zoning and safeguard against legal disputes. They are instrumental in managing growth and change across residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. Additionally, they play a crucial role in protecting natural, scenic, and agricultural resources, particularly in rural areas. These plans also help align infrastructure development with land use planning. Finally, they are essential for securing state and federal grants and funding.



Importance of Comprehensive Planning in a Small Township

New York State Town Law 272-a grants municipalities the authority to engage in planning, and for the Town of Little Falls, this document serves as a declaration of our local intent. By establishing this framework now, we ensure that future land-use decisions reflect our community values rather than being based on reactive choices. This plan represents our proactive step toward a thriving future, where growth is carefully managed to protect the rural character and heritage that define our home.

The Town of Little Falls aims to cultivate a community that preserves our agricultural roots and natural beauty while allowing for thoughtful, modern development. By choosing a proactive approach today, we can ensure that new development strengthens our local economy without compromising the quiet, rural character that makes our town feel like home. We are committed to building a future that is resilient, intentional, and driven by the residents who live here.

A Comprehensive Plan gives the Town of Little Falls a voice in its future. Without it, decisions regarding the town's development may be dictated by outside developers or state agencies. With this plan in place, the future of our town will be determined by its own residents.

Vision

Preserving Our Roots and Growing Our Future

The Town of Little Falls, located in the heart of Herkimer County, is a community deeply rooted in a rich agricultural heritage. Local farms, agri-businesses, and the surrounding scenic landscape collectively shape a rural character that is distinctly its own. Historic homesteads, rolling farmland, and a strong shared commitment to stewardship define the town's identity and contribute to the rural charm that attracts both residents and visitors alike. In doing so, the town aims to align its vision for agriculture with the goals and recommendations of the Herkimer County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.

Through this Vision, the Planning Board and Steering Committee seek to protect valuable farmland and open spaces, support local farmers and agricultural businesses, and maintain the town's rural character, while also providing opportunities for thoughtful economic development, housing, and education that meet the needs of current and future generations.

Mission of this Plan

The Planning Board and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee worked diligently to create a forward-looking, community-focused plan that reflects the shared values and priorities expressed through public input during the planning process. Guided by data gathered from a town-wide survey, the Steering Committee is committed to preserving the Town's agricultural heritage and rural character. This plan identifies opportunities for thoughtful and targeted growth and development within the Town. Overall, it serves as a strategic roadmap to enhance the quality of life for both current and future residents.

Why is a Plan Important?

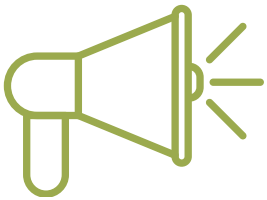
A comprehensive plan is an essential tool for amplifying community voices and ensuring accountability. Through effective governance, it incorporates residents' perspectives and ideas into a shared vision for the town's future. The plan offers a clear and transparent framework for decision-making that aligns actions with the community's priorities. It guides growth, protects the character of the community, and coordinates public investments. Ultimately, the plan acts as a long-term roadmap to enhance the quality of life for both current and future residents.

What is Good Governance?

Our Definition

Good governance is the structure through which the town makes fair, consistent, and community goal-focused decisions. It ensures that public resources are managed responsibly. It ensures that all residents are treated equitably in the application of the laws, regulations, and municipal services.

How We Applied Good Governance Principles



The committee focused on civic engagement and excellent communication in this plan's public outreach strategy. The public was welcome to each meeting. Farmers, residents, local business owners, and municipal board members were all invited to participate in the comprehensive planning process.

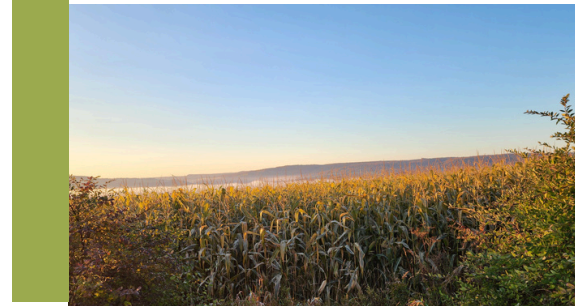
Topics discussed included **land use and zoning, economic development, agricultural and farmland protection, environmental protection, housing, infrastructure, and essential services.**



Zoning

Background

The town does not have zoning, but we discussed land use regulations for thoughtful growth and development that take our rural charm, farmlands, landscape, sense of place, and environmental protection into account.



What could zoning help with?

Zoning establishes rules for how land can be used and developed within a town to ensure compatible uses and orderly growth. Its purpose is to protect public health, safety, and welfare while preserving community character and property values. Zoning also allows the community to define land use goals.

Zoning helps a town define its land use goals and turn them into clear, enforceable regulations that guide future development. It regulates permits, lot sizes, and building dimensions to protect community character and maintain the visual quality of the landscape. By directing where construction and new development can occur, zoning helps prevent overly dense development that could harm rural or scenic areas. It separates different land uses to protect property values, promote public health and safety, and preserve farmland through designated protection zones. Zoning also encourages the creation of business districts, reducing uncertainty for developers while ensuring commercial growth aligns with the town's land use vision, and it provides the legal authority needed to enforce regulations and uphold community values.



Planning Process Overview

Plan Steps:

- Create and run a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.
- Develop, administer, and analyze a Survey for public outreach and engagement.
- Hold a Visioning Workshop Session to gather more public input on community needs
- Perform a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis

Public Outreach and Engagement:

For the Survey and a Community Visioning Session to gather resident opinions, ideas, and feedback, the Community Visioning Session was held on October 22, 2025, at Benton Hall Academy. This session featured guest speakers Scott Ferguson from SUNY Cobleskill and John Piseck from the Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency. During the session, residents identified five key priorities: transparent and responsive local government; improved communication tools and access to public information; protection of farmland and rural character; investment in core infrastructure such as roads, buildings, broadband, and water systems; and support for local businesses, agritourism, and canal-based recreation.

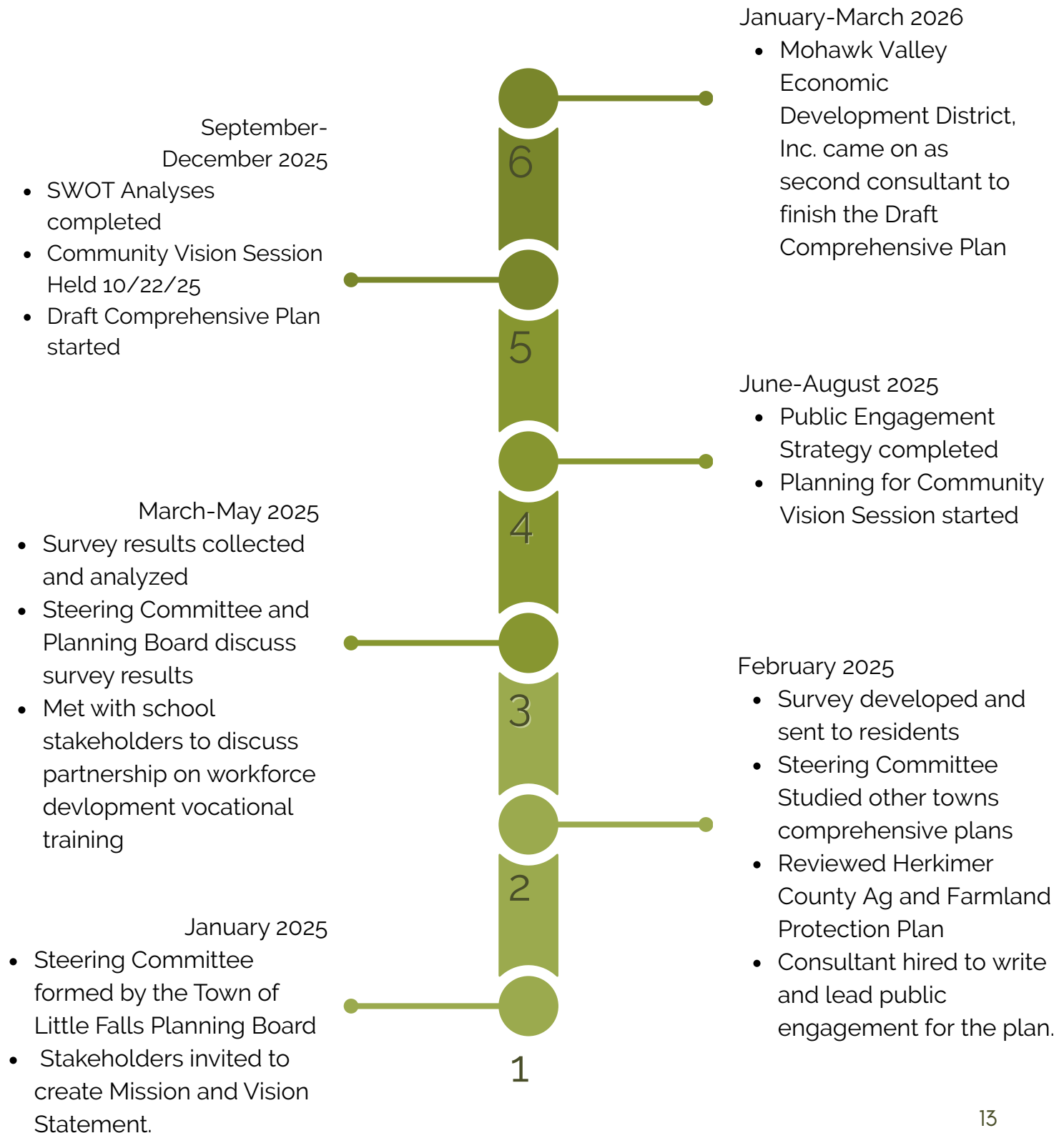
More than fifty ideas were collected through the in-person session and an online submission form. Each idea was reviewed, grouped by theme, and weighted based on community support, measured by the number of stars received, as well as overall sentiment, including concerns, questions, and suggestions. The survey results identified five major themes that were later incorporated into the goals and strategies of this Comprehensive Plan. The primary purpose of the survey was to ensure that the plan reflects community priorities, with governance and communication emerging as the top themes, which led the plan to prioritize a clear definition and commitment to good governance.

Both the Survey Analysis and Visioning Session identified overlapping priorities for residents:

- Strong support for agricultural preservation and vocational skill development
- Desire to maintain rural character and natural beauty while addressing aging infrastructure
- Interest in shared services, agritourism, and workforce training opportunities with the City of Little Falls.

All public input provided clear direction for the plan, particularly in establishing goals related to communication, transparency, and intermunicipal collaboration.

Planning Timeline 2025-2026



Public Outreach Strategy

Key Goals:

- Ensure diverse community representation in the planning process
- Engage key stakeholders for in-depth insights
- Maximize survey participation through multi-channel promotion
- Provide transparency and accessibility in data collection
- Target survey responses total 300 (We received 234)

The development of this Comprehensive Plan was driven by a robust public engagement strategy designed to include all residents, community leaders, local advocates, and business owners. Under New York State Town Law 272-a, municipal planning must be an open and inclusive process to ensure the final document truly reflects a "shared vision." For a community like Little Falls, which is navigating its first-ever planning process without existing zoning, this strategy serves as the vital bridge between a technical legal document and a living community roadmap. By facilitating town-wide surveys and a detailed SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), the Steering Committee moved beyond the minimum legal requirements to foster a transparent environment where differing opinions could inform a unified strategy for the next decade.

This commitment to broad participation also serves a critical legal and financial purpose for the Town. New York State requires informed decision-making for future growth; by collecting comprehensive data on community needs now, the Town is better positioned to secure state grant funding for future infrastructure and economic projects. Furthermore, a plan rooted in heavy public participation meets the state's "reasonableness" test. Should the Town ever choose to implement land-use protections or zoning in the future, this history of engagement proves that such decisions are not arbitrary, but are instead based on a legally defensible foundation of resident feedback and shared community values.



Public Outreach Strategy

Public Engagement: Methodology and Outreach Tools

To develop a plan that truly reflects the Town of Little Falls, the Steering Committee utilized a multi-channel engagement strategy. This approach ensured that data collection was inclusive, reaching residents across different demographics and levels of digital access.

1. Direct Outreach and Statistical Data

Direct Mailing Campaign: To ensure every household was reached, physical surveys were mailed to 1,473 residents. This was a critical step in overcoming digital barriers and ensuring a statistically representative response from the community.

Community Survey: An accessible online version of the survey was hosted on the Town website, allowing for convenient participation and real-time data collection.

Stakeholder Interviews: Targeted interview forms were sent to key community leaders, local business owners, and advocates to gather granular insights into specific economic and social needs.

2. Media and Digital Awareness

Traditional Media: Press releases were distributed to local newspapers and radio stations to ensure that residents following traditional news sources were informed of the planning timeline.

Social Media Campaign: The Town maintained a consistent digital presence with weekly Facebook updates and survey reminders to keep the community engaged and informed throughout the process.

3. Accountability and Adaptive Strategy

Steering Committee Oversight: The committee followed a rigorous Implementation Schedule, taking direct responsibility for promoting the survey, distributing flyers, and identifying key stakeholders for interviews.

Evaluation and Adjustments: The strategy was not static; the committee conducted bi-weekly reviews to assess the effectiveness of outreach methods and adjusted tactics in real-time to ensure maximum participation.



Survey Results

The statistics below are percentages of the survey respondents who support specific actions. A majority of priorities in this plan were identified by what actions and needs were supported the most by residents in the survey.

Date: March 2025

Objective



- ✓ Resident Input
- ✓ Find Needs
- ✓ Identify Opportunities

Solar Projects

48% Strongly opposed to large scale wind or solar

Housing

Most residents support the establishment and development of rental properties, senior housing, and affordable single family homes.

More than half the residents who responded to this survey did not support multifamily housing or townhouse development projects.



Priorities

91%

Support agricultural preservation and local food production

85%

Want to maintain rural character and identity

81%

Expand and improve infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, etc.)

92%

Encourage small business growth and entrepreneurship

81%

Want to see collaborative partnerships with local municipalities

81%

Support expanding broadband services



Economic Development

Tourism

74% support developing tourism and recreation opportunities

Attracting new businesses

64% support corporate development projects, like manufacturing

Workforce Development

More than 75% of residents support vocational training for skilled trades



SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Date: September 29, 2025

Strengths

- Farmland and commitment to preservation
- Scenic beauty and rural identity
- Outdoor activities (trails, snowmobiling, etc.)
- Agricultural history and knowledge
- Amish community contributions to protecting farmland
- Proximity to educational opportunities and regional resources
- Friendly, family-oriented community

Opportunities

- Build better agricultural education partnerships and networks
- Build better resident networks
- Strengthen vocational and agricultural training opportunities
- Support farmers
- Develop strategies for agritourism
- Create strategies for Airbnb and small-scale rural tourism
- Create a local marketing campaign for farmers and agricultural operations
- Housing developments
- Bike trail and town park improvements
- Create more farmland availability
- Niche markets and value-added agricultural products
- Support business development
- Possibly recruit new farmers with farms for sale

Weaknesses

- Communication with leaders is difficult at times
- We don't have a centralized information hub
- There's a lack of clarity on municipal boundaries
- Limited grant writing capacity of municipal leaders and residents
- Budget constraints and limited workforce development
- Need stronger civic and public engagement with community projects
- Limited waste management options
- Codes enforcement gaps
- Broadband access gaps
- We need flood protections

Threats

- Aging farmers and loss of future farming generations
- Lack of tourism
- Land use demands from solar and wind expansion
- Uncertain economic climate for farmers
- Lack of zoning protections leaves the town vulnerable to unwanted growth and development.
- Risk of forced consolidation
- Natural disasters like flooding

Visioning Session

Goal: To develop a forward-looking comprehensive plan that protects the town's defining assets, provides guidance for future policy and land-use decisions, reflects community priorities, and enhances preparedness for future initiatives and funding opportunities.

Date: October 2025

What We Heard

Topics Discussed:

- Housing options for seniors, young families
- Rentals
- Renewable energy projects
- Awareness of food insecurity
- Protect natural beauty and rural identity
- Improve road infrastructure and intermunicipal communication with residents
- Housing and rentals
- Responsible corporate development
- Vocational school and training opportunities

On the road to Town of Little Falls 2036

PRESERVING OUR ROOTS AND GROWING OUR FUTURE

Purpose of the Workshop

A Plan Built by the People, for the People

For the first time in our history, the Town of Little Falls is developing a Comprehensive Plan. This isn't a top-down mandate; it is a collaborative blueprint that will shape every major decision our town makes over the next 5 to 10 years.

Goals

To ensure this plan is both concise and actionable, we have synthesized the feedback from our community visioning sessions, the resident survey results, and the Planning Board's SWOT analysis. By distilling these seven original themes into five core goals, we have captured every major area of concern and opportunity for the Town of Little Falls. This streamlined framework allows the town to focus its resources effectively, turning a broad community vision into a clear, implementable strategy for the next decade.



Good Governance and Civic Engagement

Communities, transparency, shared services, grant readiness



Agriculture and Rural Economy

Farmland protection, farm succession, value added production, agritourism



Infrastructure, Housing and Growth Management

Broadband, roads, water systems, housing choice, conservation design



Economic Development and Tourism

Canalfront activation, small business support, regional marketing



Environment and Community Character

Scenic preservation, renewable energy, parks, trails, and waterways

Geography and Municipal Services

Geographics

The Town of Little Falls was formed in 1829. The town is 22.3 square miles within Herkimer County. Within the 22.3 square miles, the town maintains 15 miles of road. The highway system in the town consists of state, county, and town roads.

The town has no public water, sewer, or storm systems. Water is supplied by private wells. Wastewater is handled through septic systems.

The Mohawk River and the Erie Canal cross the central portion of the town.
Hamlets: Kelhi corners- located in the northern part of the town on NY 169
Paine Hollow - located in the southern part of the town at the corner of NY 167 and NY 168

School Districts: Little Falls, Herkimer, and Mohawk

Emergency Services: 911, New York State Police, City of Little Falls Ambulance and Fire, Little Falls Hospital

Areas that border the town:

- North Side of the Mohawk River
 - Manheim
 - Fairfield
 - Herkimer
 - City of Little Falls
- South Side of Mohawk River
 - Danube
 - Stark
 - German Flats

Economic Development

The town has a modest but stable economy centered on agriculture, small-based businesses, and proximity to employment centers in nearby cities. There is potential to strengthen the local economy by supporting agribusiness, tourism, and small-scale rural enterprises.

Economic Development Goals

- Support and retain local farms and agribusinesses
- Encourage small businesses, especially those compatible with the rural character
- Promote tourism and recreation related to agriculture and natural beauty
- Coordinate with regional economic development agencies

Strategies

- Promote farm stands, U-pick operations, and value-added agriculture
- Encourage reuse with the Herkimer IDA on business development programs
- Support high-speed broadband and internet access to enable remote work and business growth



Economic Development

Businesses in the Town

- Dan's Auto Repair
- NEP Glass
- Gardinier Dairy Supply
- Mohawk Valley Golf and Events Center
- Paradise Gardens, Gathering, and Gifts
- North Creek Family Farm and Greenhouse
- Mahlon Fisher Carpentry
- Chrises Collision
- RD's Redemption Center
- Buell Fuel
- Bella Vista Restaurant
- Sky Ranch Airport (Lamannas Airport)

Cemeteries: The Town of Little Falls contains a range of active, historic, and abandoned cemeteries that reflect early settlement patterns, family farms, and religious institutions. These burial grounds represent important cultural and historic resources and contribute to the town's rural and historic landscape.

Bellinger Cemetery, Burt Road Cemetery, Captain Frederick Getman Burial Ground, Church Street Cemetery, Fairview Cemetery, Garlock Cemetery, Herkimer Home Burial Ground, Hoffman-Fox Cemetery, Holy Trinity Lutheran Cemetery, Klock-Petrie Cemetery, Lottridge Cemetery, Mountain View Memorial Gardens, Old Saint Mary's Cemetery, Rosencrantz Cemetery, Sandy Lane Cemetery, Talcott Cemetery, and Wilcox Cemetery.



Housing

The town offers primarily single family, owner occupied housing in rural settings.

Housing Goals

- Maintain low density, rural housing character
- Provide options for aging residents and young families
- Prevent unchecked subdivision and sprawl
- Ensure new housing complements agricultural and environmental goals

Existing Housing Conditions

- Housing stock is primarily single family
- The owner occupancy rate is high
- New housing has been low to moderate in recent years



Land Use

Land Use Overview

Land use in the town reflects a predominantly rural community with large agricultural tracts, scattered low-density residential development, and limited commercial activity. As development pressure increases across upstate New York, the town seeks to guide future land use in a way that preserves its agricultural heritage, protects natural resources, and supports orderly growth.

Future Land Use Goals

- Preserve large blocks of agricultural land and open space
- Direct residential growth to areas with existing infrastructure
- Maintain the rural character of the town

Future Land Use Categories

- Agricultural Conservation Areas
- Rural Residential
- Conservation/Open Space

Recommended Land Use Strategies

- Use conservation subdivision design in rural areas
- Require site plan review for development near sensitive resources

Existing Land Use Pattern	Description
Agricultural (6704 acres)	Dominant use across most of the town. Includes active farmland and pastures
Institutional/Public	Primarily rural residential
Commercial (221 acres)	Very limited, typically small businesses or roadside services
Forested/Open Space	Included woodlots, conservation lands, and unused pastureland
Institutional/Public	Included schools, cemeteries, and town owned properties

Farmland Protection

Purpose of Farmland Protection

To ensure that agriculture remains a viable land use and economic driver, the town commits to proactive farmland protection efforts.

Strategies

Land Use Regulations

- Implement agricultural protections

State and Local Programs

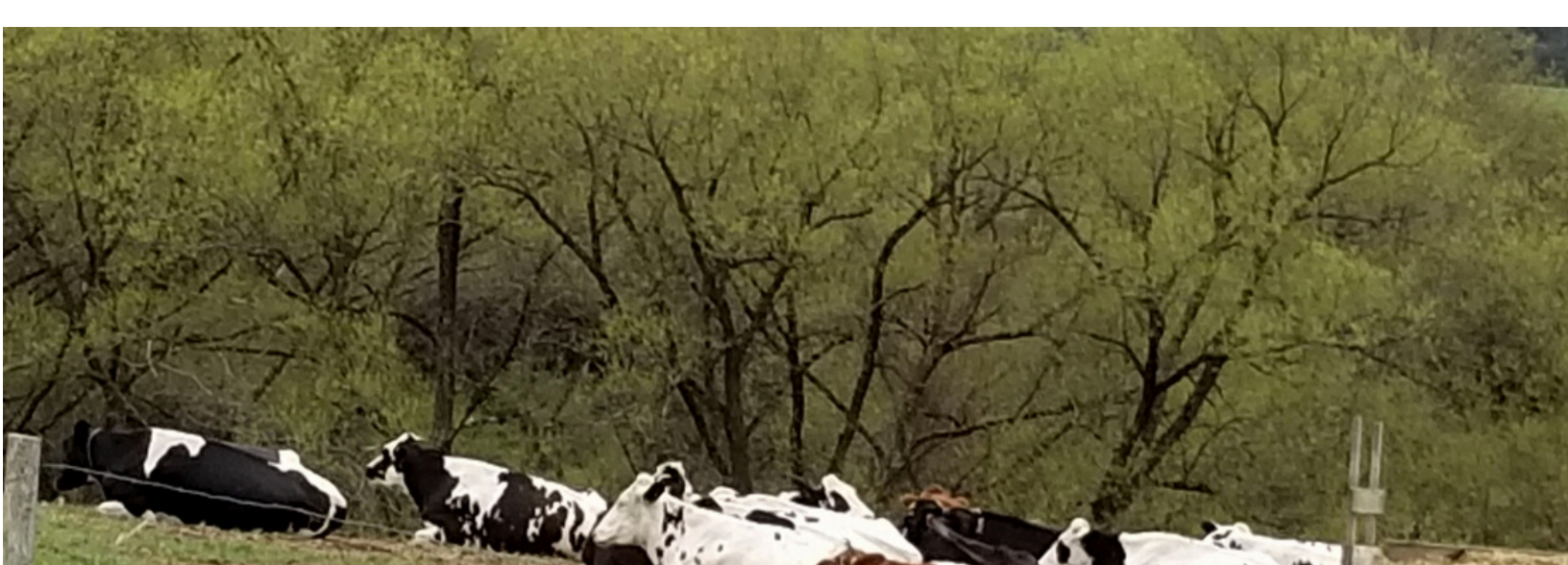
- Encourage landowner participation in state and local programs.

Education and Outreach

- Encourage workshops on farmland succession and estate planning
- Provide information to farmers on preservation options and financial tools

Partnerships

- Work with Herkimer County, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and conservation organizations to secure funding and technical support.



Transportation

Overview

The town is served by a network of state, county, and local roads. Transportation infrastructure is critical for farm operations, access to services, emergency response, and economic development. As a rural community, the town does not operate public transit and relies on road infrastructure for all forms of mobility.

Transportation Goals

- Maintain safe and reliable roadways for all residents and users
- Support transportation access for agriculture and emergency services
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety where appropriate
- Coordinate with county and state agencies on transportation planning

Transportation Conditions

Road Type	Maintained By
State Highways	NYS Department of State
County Roads	Herkimer County Highway Department
Town Roads	Town Highway Department
Private Roads and Driveways	Property Owners

Recommendations

1. Continue regular maintenance of town-owned roads, culverts, and signage
2. Identify and prioritize road safety improvements, especially for intersections and school routes
3. Work with Herkimer County to ensure coordinated upgrades to county roads
4. Seek grant funding for transportation infrastructure improvements (e.g., CHIPS, BRIDGE NY)

Natural Resources, Environment and Watersheds

Overview

The town is served by a network of state, county, and local roads. Transportation infrastructure is critical for farm operations, access to services, emergency response, and economic development. As a rural community, the town does not operate public transit and relies on road infrastructure for all forms of mobility.

Environmental Strategies

- Establish conservation zoning in areas with steep slopes and sensitive habitats.
- Implement stream and wetland buffers through site plan review
- Support forest and farmland conservation through voluntary easements
- Require developers to incorporate natural features into site design

Key Natural Resources

- Water: streams, ponds, wetlands, and aquifers are critical for drinking water and habitat.
- Soils and slopes: steep slopes and highly erodible soils present challenges to development
- Forests: important for wildlife, timber, recreation, and carbon sequestration
- Floodplains: located along creeks and low-lying areas, requiring special development consideration

Natural Resource Goals

- Protect streams, wetlands, and groundwater from pollution
- Maintain scenic views and rural landscapes
- Encourage environmentally responsible land use practices
- Promote conservation of forests and wildlife habitat

Watersheds

- The Mohawk River is the only watershed that flows through the town. This watershed lies entirely within the borders of New York State. The Mohawk River flows through the town to the east through many counties, where it eventually joins the Hudson River.

Town Resident Stories and History

Born and Raised in The Town of Little Falls

As a young kid, living in the town of Little Falls meant freedom, simplicity, and a real sense of home. It was a place where you could ride your bike down quiet roads, play outside until dark, and grow up surrounded by people who knew your name and cared about your family. The land, the seasons, and the small-town way of life all helped shape a childhood built on hard work, respect, and community.

Now, as a married man with a family, Little Falls means something even more important. It is no longer just the place where I grew up, but the place where I raised my own family with the same values and experiences that meant so much to me. It is a community where family still matters, where people still help one another, and where children can grow up with a sense of security, belonging, and pride in where they come from. Living here connects the past and the future, making Little Falls not just a place to live, but a place to call home for generations.

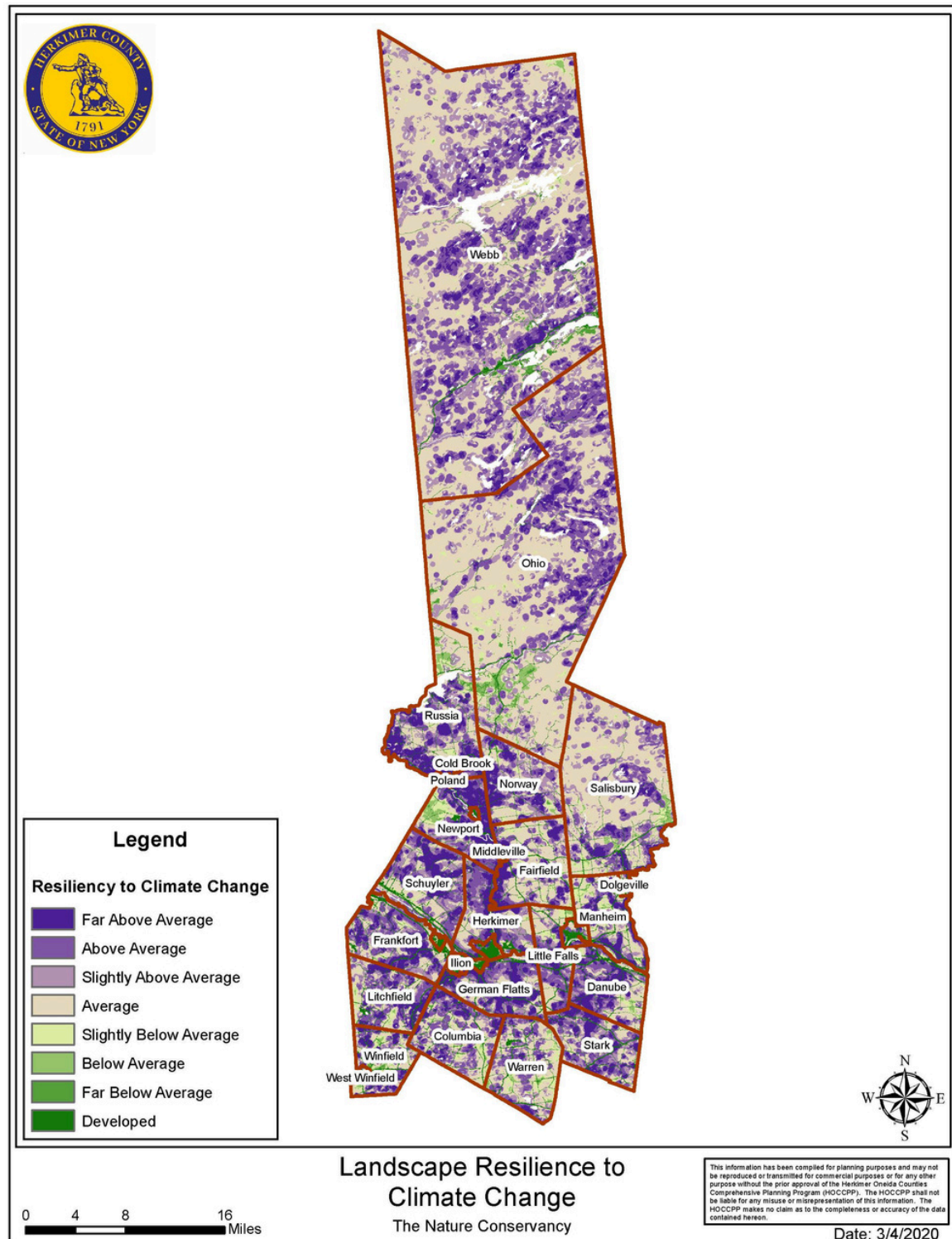
Why I Chose to Live in Little Falls

Twelve years ago, as I prepared for retirement, I could have moved anywhere in the United States—but I chose Little Falls. Being close to my sister and the charm of a small rural town made it the perfect place to settle down. My wife and I started a wedding venue here, and couples now travel from across the country to celebrate their special day surrounded by the beautiful views of the Mohawk Valley. Little Falls has truly become home for us and for many unforgettable moments.

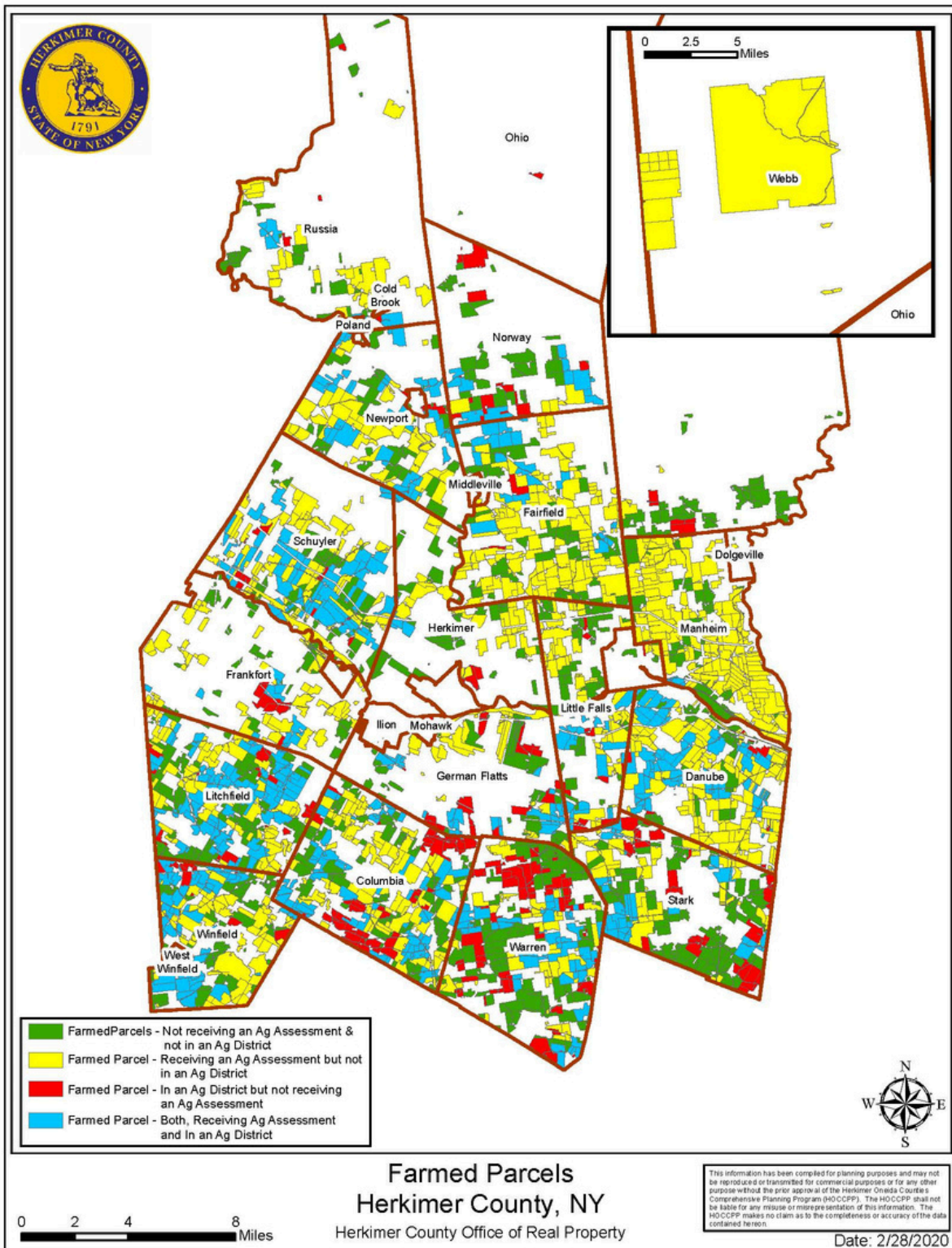
Appendices

Appendix A: Maps
Appendix B: Community Visioning Analysis
Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials
Appendix D: Survey

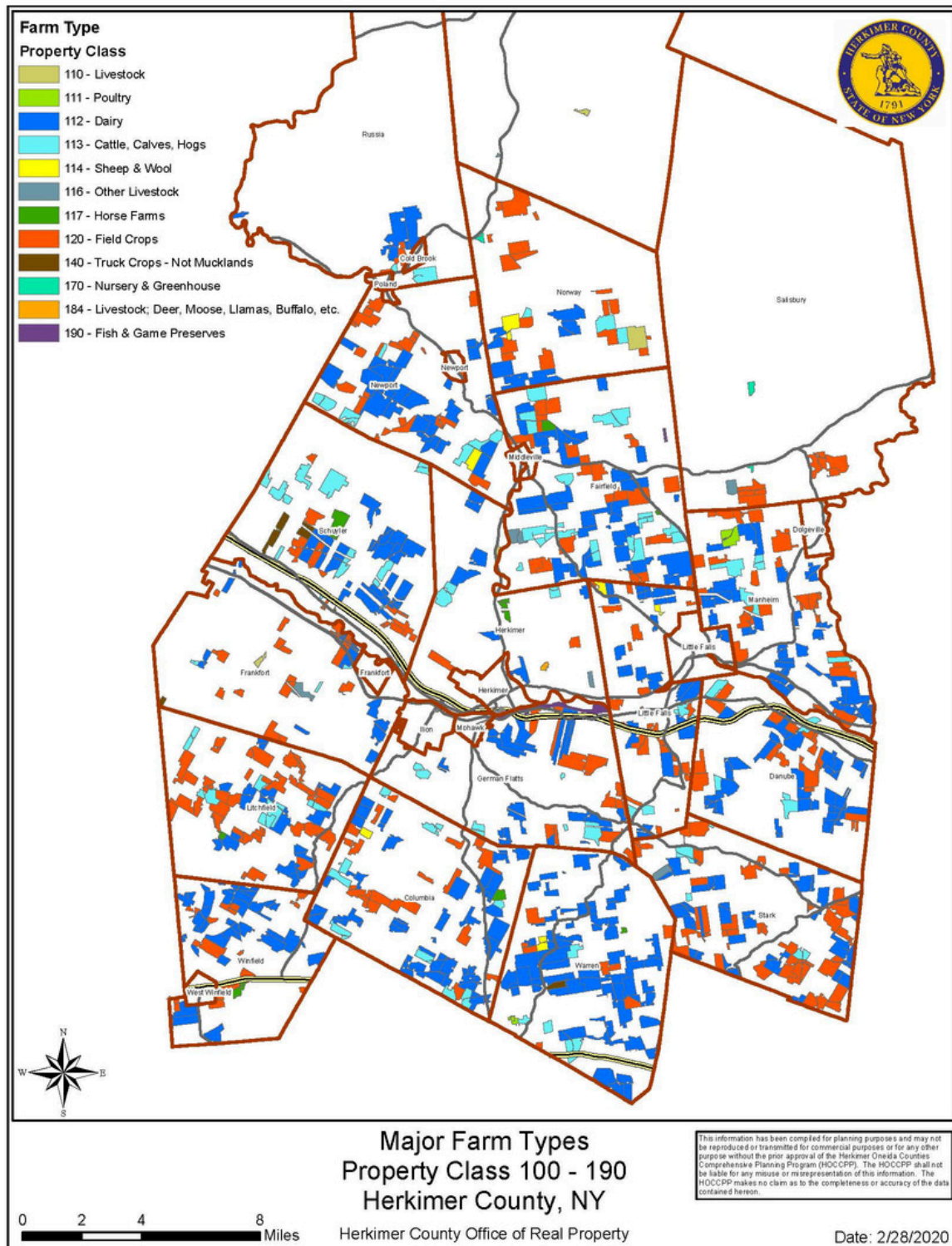
Appendix A: Maps



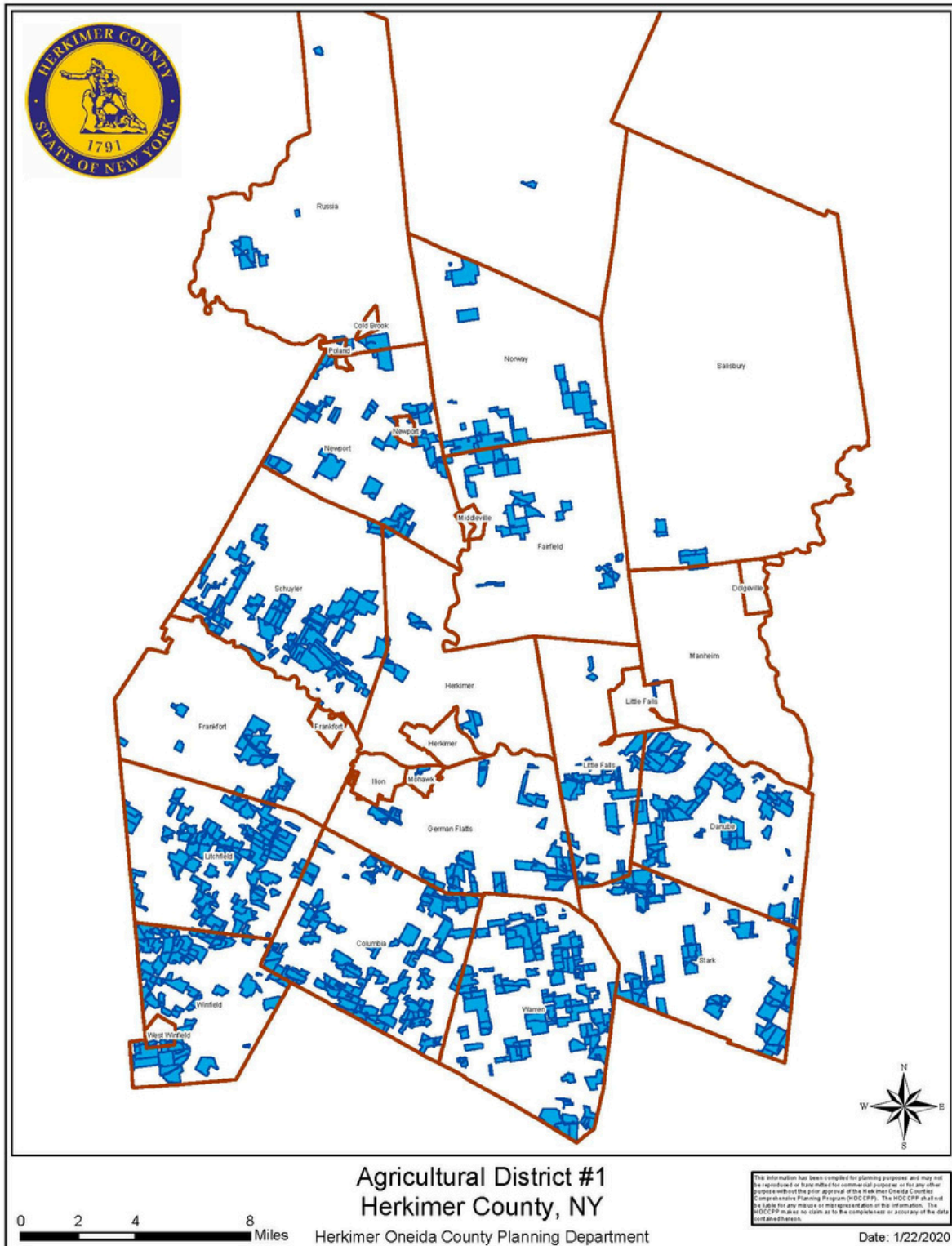
Appendix A: Maps



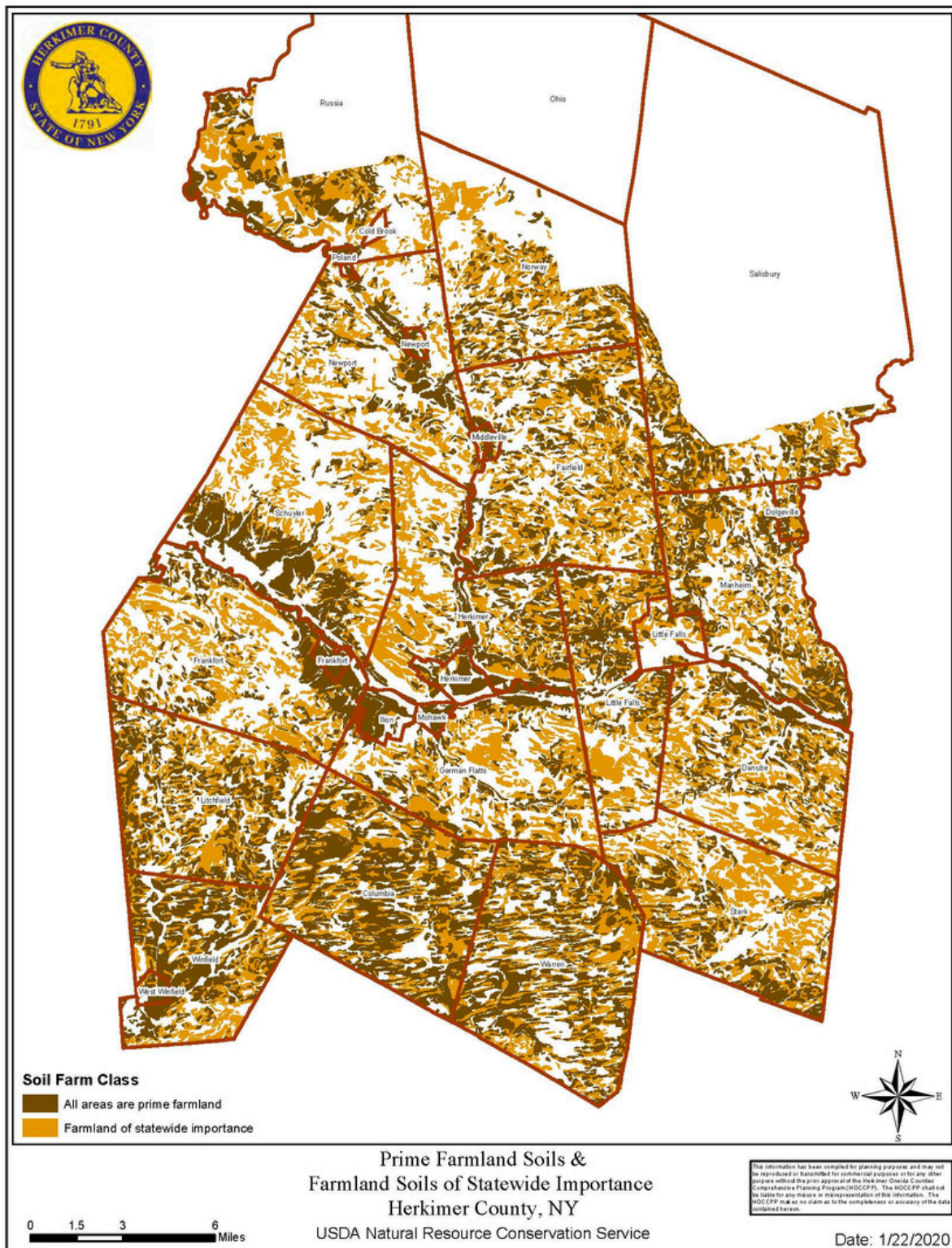
Appendix A: Maps



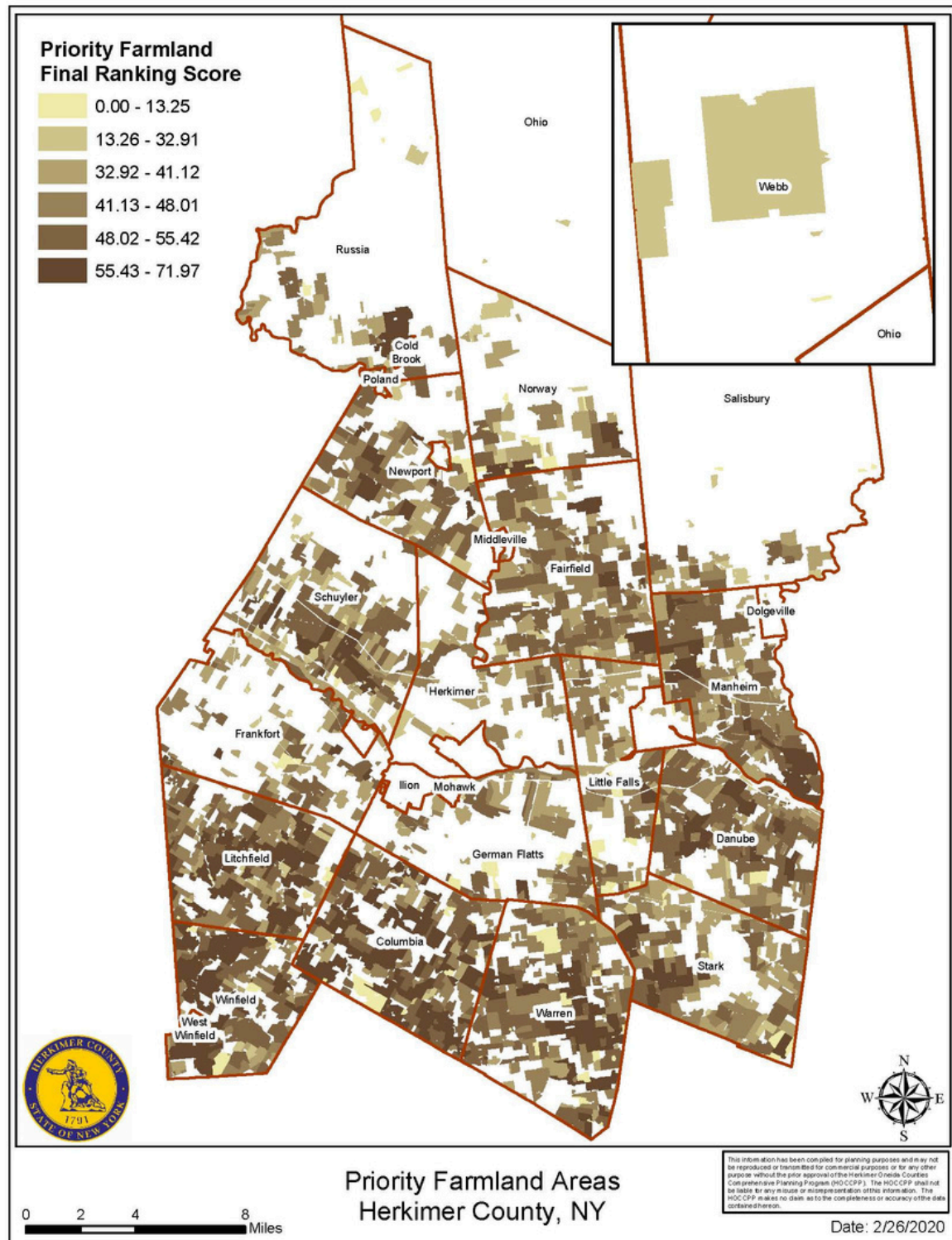
Appendix A: Maps



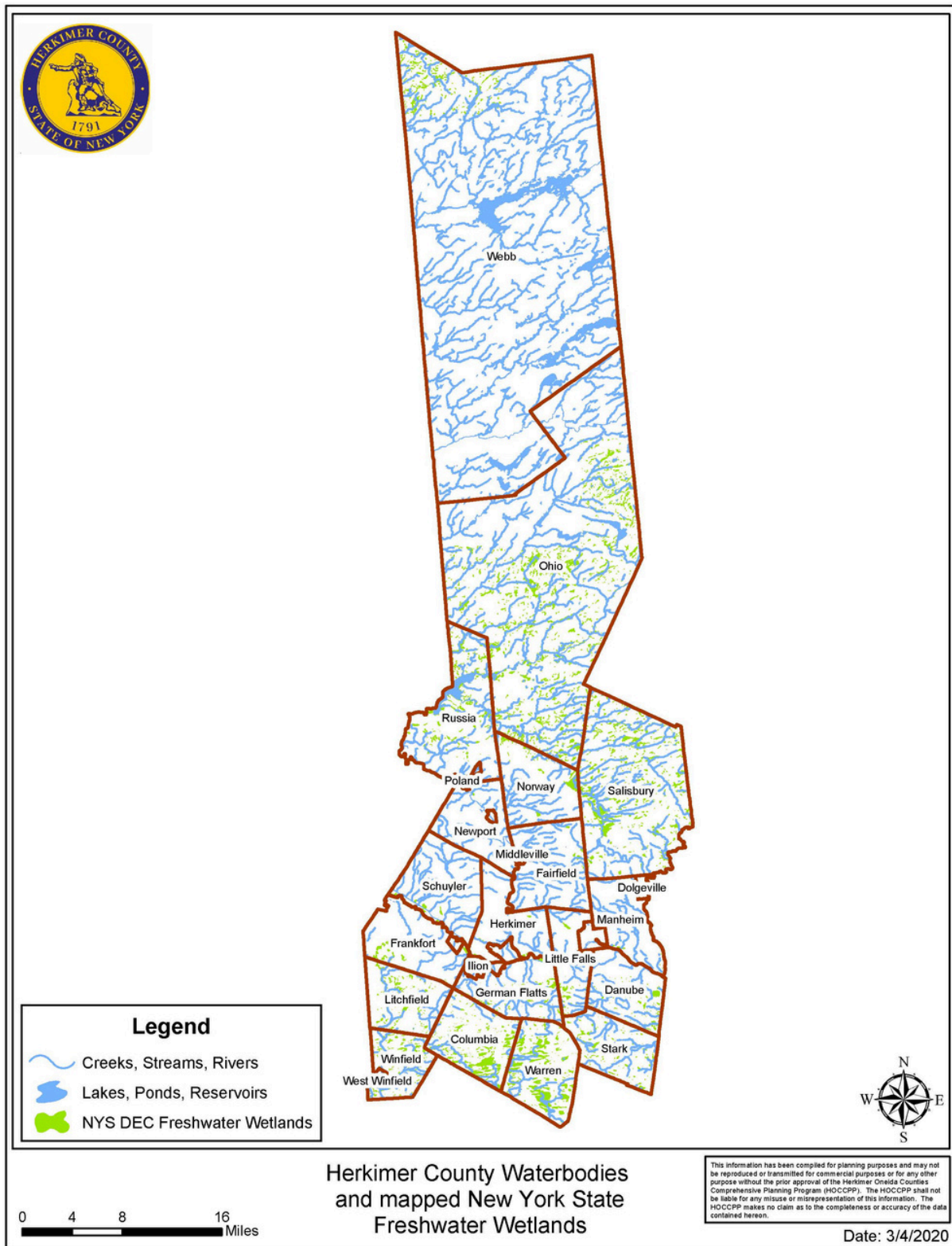
Appendix A: Maps



Appendix A: Maps



Appendix A: Maps



Appendix B: Community Visioning Analysis

Town of Little Falls Comprehensive Plan

Community Visioning Summary & Draft Goals

(Prepared for the Town Board – November 2025)

1. Purpose

This summary provides an overview of what residents shared during the Town's Community Visioning Session and how those insights, together with survey and SWOT findings, informed five goals for the Comprehensive Plan.

The Steering Committee will continue to refine these goals, objectives, and strategies for inclusion in the draft Plan. The intent is to ensure the comprehensive plan reflects community priorities while remaining realistic for implementation.

2. What We Heard

More than 50 ideas were collected through the public session and online form. Each idea was analyzed by theme and weighted according to both community support (number of stars) and sentiment (concern, question, or suggestion).

Top Priorities Expressed by Residents:

- Transparent and responsive local government
- Better communication tools and public access to information
- Protection of farmland and rural character
- Investment in core infrastructure — roads, broadband, and water systems
- Support for local business, agritourism, and canal-based recreation

Theme	% of Total Weighted Input	Rank
Governance & Communication	46% combined	1
Agriculture & Farmland	17.8%	2
Infrastructure & Services	13.4%	3
Economic Development & Tourism	10.4%	4

Appendix B: Community Visioning Analysis

Theme	% of Total Weighted Input	Rank
Housing, Environment, Character	12% combined	5

3. How It Aligns with Previous Input

The community survey (234 responses) and SWOT analysis conducted this Fall revealed nearly identical priorities:

- Strong support for agricultural preservation and vocational skill development.
- Desire to maintain rural character and natural beauty while addressing aging infrastructure.
- Interest in shared services, agritourism, and workforce training as economic opportunities.

The visioning results reinforced those findings, adding clearer direction on communication, transparency, and inter-municipal collaboration as enabling conditions for progress.

Together, the survey, SWOT, and visioning session provide a consistent message:

Residents want growth that is practical, coordinated, and true to the Town's rural roots.

4. From Seven Themes to Five Goals

To make the plan concise and easier to implement, seven themes were consolidated into five goals that capture all major areas of concern and opportunity.

Goal	Focus Areas
1. Good Governance & Civic Engagement	Communication, transparency, shared services, grant readiness
2. Agriculture & Rural Economy	Farmland protection, farm succession, value-added production, agritourism
3. Infrastructure, Housing & Growth Management	Broadband, roads, water systems, housing choice, conservation design

Appendix B: Community Visioning Analysis

Goal	Focus Areas
4. Economic Development & Tourism	Canalfront activation, small business support, regional marketing
5. Environment & Community Character	Scenic preservation, renewable energy, parks, trails, and waterways

These goals will anchor the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and guide implementation priorities.

5. Suggested Next Steps

Phase	Description	Timeline
Steering Committee Review	Committee refines goal language and strategies	November 2025
Draft Plan Development	Preparation of draft Goals & Objectives chapter	December 2025
Town Board Workshop	Board reviews draft chapter and identifies priorities	December 2025 – January 2026
Public Review	Full Draft Plan released for comment and hearing	Early 2026

6. Key Takeaway

The community has been remarkably consistent: residents want clear communication, coordination, and careful growth that sustains the Town's rural identity. The five goals summarized here offer a balanced roadmap for doing exactly that.

The Steering Committee will continue refining objectives and strategies so that, when the draft Plan is released, it represents a shared and actionable vision for the Town's future.

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Steering Committee

Meeting dates and minutes

January 7, 2025

We had our first meeting at the Town Hall with Dan, Sandy and some of the Planning Board members. Also in attendance was Amanda Whalen. She's a member of Mohawk Valley Economic Development. She gave us a lot of information on steps to take in developing a comprehensive plan.

January 21, 2025

All members were in attendance, along with Dan. We received a copy of Jordyan Mueller's resume to review as a candidate for our Project Manager for developing the comprehensive plan.

January 31, 2025

The committee met with Jordyan via zoom to discuss the steps to be taken to develop a comprehensive plan. We discussed coming up with a Mission and Vision Statement and what a comprehensive plan consists of. Kim will start doing research on the history of the town.

February 12, 2025

Jordyan was officially approved as project manager for the comprehensive plan at the Town Board meeting on Feb 11, 2025

We discussed developing a survey for town residents to complete to obtain the data to continue with developing the plan. We reviewed a draft survey from Jordyan. There is a total of 1457 residents in the town according to the census. Our goal is to receive around 300 responses to the survey.

February 25, 2025

The committee reviewed the state guide to comprehensive planning. Other rural town plans were reviewed. We also started reviewing Herkimer County Ag and Farm Land Protection Plan.

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Survey was distributed by members of the committee and by social media. Planning on closing the survey by the end of March.

March 11, 2025

Mitch Soules was invited to attend the Steering Committee meetings as a town board member. Encouraged more participation in the survey. Jordyan updated the committee on the results of the surveys so far.

March 25, 2025

More results of the survey were reviewed.

April 1, 2025

Survey was completed on March 31, 2025. We received 232 completed surveys. Steering committee and planning board met. We informed the planning board of our progress.

May 8, 2025

Jordyan discussed grants available for townships.

May 19, 2025

Continuing to review the results of the survey with Jordyan. Compiling information and beginning to form a draft. We need to provide care for rural integrity. Need to look into partnership with schools for hands on learning for farming and trades.

June 5, 2025

Began talking about scheduling a Community Vision Session. A session open to the public to review results of the survey and to include time for questions and answers.

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

July 29, 2025

Continue to work on community involvement. Facebook page is up to 92 followers. Looking at October 22, 2025 to hold the Community Vision Session. Will try to schedule the Benton Hall Auditorium for the event.

August 14, 2025

Continued to review the information from Jordyan. Planning is going forward for the Community Vision Session.

September 29, 2025

With the information that was collected to date we did a SWOT analysis with the town planning board.

October 21, 2025

Reviewing all the information to be covered at the Community Vision Session to be held on October 22, 2025.

October 22, 2025

Community Vision Session at 6pm at Benton Hall Academy auditorium. 47 town and city residents were in attendance. Jordyan compiled the results of the session and the survey.

November 17, 2025

Everyone's information was compiled and a draft of the comprehensive plan to date was distributed for review.

In December Dan asked for copies of the draft of the comprehensive plan to date to be distributed to the Town Board members for their review.

January 13, 2026

Several members of the committee attended the Town Board Meeting. The attorney for the town had not received a copy and he wanted time to review it before going forward. We were informed at the meeting that going forward we would be working with MVEDD. Our point of contact is Sara Bouillon. She has a copy of the draft plan.

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Agenda : Steering Committee 1.21.25

- Discuss chairperson(s)
 - How often for meetings in person
 - Are members able to communicate and respond to emails with input on a weekly basis?
 - Discuss members interest in being the “champion” of creating and or doing info gathering
 - Town history
 - Understanding demographics
 - Follow up of surveys sent out to get community feedback
 - Review map
 - Identify key stakeholders who steering members can count on for feedback
 - Possible addition to steering committee ?? (town map handout)
- Review Comp Planning Step by Step- (Amanda email available)
 - Reference Herkimer County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan (adopted 2020) part 1
- Review / select project manager for town board's approval (handout)
 - resume
 - what is role of town board in completing comprehensive plan
 - suggestions on how to expedite the completion of plan
- Draft Outline what we expect from the project manager: (handout proposal/ deliverables per Mueller)
 - Create vision statement with actionable objectives (review draft handout)
 - Work with steering committee to assemble survey questions based off of draft vision statement
 - Distribute survey thru various means to encourage input from rural residents , to include Amish
 - Assemble results
 - MVED (Mohawk Valley Economic Development) will be involved with the process.
 - Need to understand if MVED is able to do
 - Review SWOT analysis
 - Create Goals action plans with strong involvement of steering committee based off of surveys, town meetings

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Community Input & Needs Assessment for the Little Falls Comprehensive Plan

Prepared for: Town Board of Little Falls

Prepared by: Jordyan Mueller

Date: February 11, 2025

Purpose of Engagement

Given budget limitations, this engagement will focus on gathering community input and stakeholder perspectives to help guide future planning efforts. This approach ensures that the town receives valuable data without compromising the integrity of a full comprehensive plan.

Scope of Work

1. Survey Development & Deployment

- *Design and distribute a comprehensive community survey to assess residents' priorities and concerns.*
- *Ensure broad accessibility through digital and print formats.*

2. Stakeholder Interviews

- *Conduct interviews with local organizations, municipal officials, and other key stakeholders.*
- *Summarize key themes and insights from discussions.*

3. Data Collection & Analysis

- *Compile and analyze survey responses to identify major trends.*
- *Organize findings into a report with visual data representations.*

Deliverables

- **Finalized Survey Instrument** (digital and print-friendly)
- **Summary of Stakeholder Interviews** (key themes and insights)
- **Survey Findings Report** (statistical analysis, key trends, and recommendations for future planning)

Project Timeline

- **Survey Development:** February 12, 2025
- **Survey Distribution & Collection:** February 13, 2025 – March 20, 2025
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** February 13, 2025 – March 20, 2025
- **Final Report Submission:** April 8, 2025

Value to the Town of Little Falls

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

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Value to the Town of Little Falls

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

- **Community-Driven Decision-Making:** Ensures that planning efforts reflect resident and stakeholder priorities.
- **Cost-Effective Approach:** *Provides meaningful data at a fraction of the cost of a full comprehensive plan.*
- **Foundation for Future Planning:** The findings can support grant applications, policy development, and future land-use planning.

Next Steps

- Review and approve the revised scope and contract.
- Finalize survey questions with planning board and steering committee input.
- Begin outreach and engagement efforts.

For further discussion or questions, please contact:

Jordyan Mueller

Jordyan.LF@gmail.com

315.868.8924

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

PHASE 2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

PURPOSE OF PHASE 2

To generate clear, community-informed recommendations on key planning priorities through a structured outreach campaign and a fall Community Conversation event.

This phase builds on the momentum from the community survey and creates a bridge between broad input and actionable ideas.

KEY GOALS

- Reach more residents in accessible, visible ways.
- Deepen public input on survey-identified priorities.
- Prepare residents and decision-makers for the Community Conversation.
- Deliver recommendations that reflect local values and concerns.

TIMELINE OVERVIEW

- Now – July 26: Finalize form, flyer materials, and outreach kit
- Aug 2–4: Public launch during Canal Days
- Aug 4 – Sept 15: Weekly outreach campaign
- Sept 16 - Oct 6: Event promotion and reminder outreach
- October (Week of Oct 6): Community Conversation event
- 2 weeks after event: Summary memo delivered to Steering Committee & Town Board

OUTREACH COMPONENTS

1. Central Input Form (Live Aug 2)
 - Single online form with sections for each priority topic
 - Residents may respond to any or all topics
 - Contact info to receive event invitation
2. Weekly Topic Highlights (Aug 4 – Sept 15)
 - Rotating topics drawn from the original survey: housing, roads, agriculture, broadband, workforce, land use, etc.
 - Each topic featured in:

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

- Social media posts
- Postcards at key locations
- In-person outreach prompts
- 3. Postcard Handout
 - Introduces topics, link to the input form, save the date
- 4. In-Person Drop Boxes & Flyers
 - Locations: Library, Post Office, Ann Street Deli (pending), Stewart's (pending), Brewery, RD's, Dan's Auto, Chris' Collision, (others as recommended).
 - Postcards and response slips available at each site
 - Collected responses manually entered into master dataset

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION EVENT

- Target week: Oct 6–10
- Format: In-person, 90-minute session
- Structure:
 - Quick recap of survey + outreach themes
 - Discussions by topic (3–5 stations)
 - Each group asked: “What should the Town consider doing about this?”
- Output: At least one recommendation per topic, captured by facilitators

FINAL OUTPUT

- Resident-Generated Recommendation Memo
- Organized by topic
- Includes insights from outreach + event
- Delivered to Steering Committee and Town Board within 1 week of the event

COMMITTEE SUPPORT NEEDED

- Help distribute flyers and postcards locally
- Encourage turnout during outreach and event promotion
- Help design and pilot Community Conversation event
- Facilitate small group discussion at Community Conversation event

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Town of Little Falls Invites Residents to Community Visioning Session for Comprehensive Plan

LITTLE FALLS, NY – October 2, 2025 – The Town of Little Falls invites all residents to a Community Visioning Session on Wednesday, October 22 at 6:00 p.m. at Benton Hall Academy Auditorium to help shape the Town's new Comprehensive Plan.

The session will feature Scott Ferguson, Executive Director of the Institute for Rural Vitality at SUNY Cobleskill, along with John Piseck from the Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). Together, they will share examples and insights from other rural communities that have faced similar challenges and opportunities in agriculture, business development, and local infrastructure.

Residents will also hear more about the results of the spring community survey and the draft goals now taking shape for the Comprehensive Plan.

"This is about bringing the community together to take the next step," said Town Supervisor Dan Casler. "We listened in the spring. Now we want residents' ideas and strategies to bring shape to the goals and life to the plan."

Following brief presentations, residents will have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss ideas with one another—working together to explore strategies for bringing community priorities and comprehensive plan goals to life.

"Our town's strength is in its people," Steve Salamone, Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee added. "This plan is about preserving what makes Little Falls special and finding ways to grow responsibly. We can only do that by working together."

Leading up to the event, the Town is running a five-week social media campaign highlighting survey themes and examples from other New York communities. Residents can follow along and join the conversation at

www.littlefallsny.com/LLFC/ComprehensivePlan.

Community members can RSVP or submit ideas in advance at <https://bit.ly/46Dc01Z>.

Event Details:

Community Visioning Session

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Town of Little Falls Comprehensive Plan

Steering Committee Briefing

1. Purpose

This briefing summarizes what we heard from residents through the Community Visioning Session and online submission form, how that input was analyzed, and how it translates into five revised community goals for the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

The intent is twofold:

1. To help the committee clearly see the patterns that emerged from the data; and
2. To give members a framework to refine and finalize the Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Strategies before presenting them to the Town Board.

These goals are a second iteration. They reflect what the data indicates but are open for refinement based on your collective judgment.

2. How the Data Was Analyzed

- *Data Source:* Over 50 ideas were collected through the in-person Community Visioning Session and online idea form.
- *Coding:* Each comment was categorized by Theme and Sub-Theme.
- *Scoring:* Each idea received a Weighted Score calculated as:

$$\text{Weighted Score} = \text{Stars (★ count)} \times \text{Sentiment Value}$$

where

Idea/Suggestion = 3 *Question/Unclear* = 2 *Concern/Issue* = 1

- *Aggregation:* Scores were summed by Theme to produce a Total Weight (how strongly residents supported or emphasized each topic).
- *Ranking:* Themes were ranked by Total Weight and expressed as a share of all community input (% of total weight).

This process allows comparison not only of how *often* ideas appeared, but how *strongly* residents felt about them.

** See accompanying spreadsheet, "Community Visioning Analysis," for detailed results by theme, sub-theme, and weighted score.*

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

3. What We Heard

Theme	Total Weight	% of Total	Rank
Governance & Collaboration	47	23.3 %	1
Communication & Civic Life	46	22.8 %	2
Agriculture & Farmland	36	17.8 %	3
Infrastructure & Services	27	13.4 %	4
Economic Development & Tourism	21	10.4 %	5
Housing & Neighborhoods	19	9.4 %	6
Community Character & Environment	6	3.0 %	7

Key takeaways:

- Residents care deeply about how the Town communicates and collaborates: internally, with the City, and with them.
- Agricultural identity remains central, tied to both economic opportunity and preservation of rural character.
- Infrastructure gaps (broadband, water-district feasibility, roads) are practical priorities.
- Economic and housing topics appear, but residents frame them through the lens of *responsible growth*.
- Environmental and character issues matter but are viewed as part of broader growth-management discussions.

4. How The Data Was Interpreted

To make the plan more focused and actionable, the seven themes were consolidated into five overarching goals that still capture the full range of community priorities:

Consolidated Goal	Original Themes Represented
1. Good Governance & Civic Engagement	Governance & Collaboration + Communication & Civic Life
2. Agriculture & Rural Economy	Agriculture & Farmland
3. Infrastructure, Housing & Growth Management	Infrastructure & Services + Housing & Neighborhoods + Community Character & Environment
4. Economic Development & Tourism	Economic Development & Tourism

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Consolidated Goal	Original Themes Represented
5. Environment & Community Character	Community Character & Environment (remaining focus areas)

These goals preserve every major discussion point while reducing overlap and making implementation more manageable.

5. How These Results Align with Previous Findings

The visioning results reinforce and extend the priorities identified in the community survey and SWOT analysis and refine the direction set by the initial draft goals used for the session.

Community Survey Alignment

The survey (completed by 234 residents) showed strong consensus around the Town's rural identity, agricultural base, and hands-on workforce values. The top-rated priorities were:

- Agricultural preservation and local food production
- Vocational training, school partnerships, and land-maintenance skills
- Maintaining rural character and natural beauty
- Investing in road infrastructure

Residents expressed clear agreement that the Town should protect farmland, invest in practical infrastructure, and prepare residents for land-based jobs.

At the same time, the survey highlighted topics needing more conversation or generational bridge-building, including:

- Rental housing and planned development
- Water and sewer access and broadband expansion
- Renewable energy siting and local understanding of food insecurity
-

These results confirm the Town's readiness to plan while also underscoring where engagement and education are still needed.

SWOT Analysis Connection

The SWOT exercise previously identified the Town's strengths (agriculture, natural scenery, small-town character, proximity to the City and canal), weaknesses (limited communication tools, aging infrastructure), opportunities (agribusiness, tourism, and shared services), and threats (development pressure, farmland loss, population decline). Each of those findings is now reflected within one or more of the five revised goals:

- Good Governance & Civic Engagement directly addresses communication gaps and capacity issues.

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

- Agriculture & Rural Economy builds on agricultural strengths and land-based opportunities.
- Infrastructure, Housing & Growth Management responds to weaknesses and threats related to aging systems, development pressure, and farmland loss.
- Economic Development & Tourism leverages the Town's natural beauty, canal access, and small-business potential.
- Environment & Community Character captures the community's shared value of rural identity and scenic preservation.

Data from the session and the survey demonstrated that Governance and Communication function best as a single "Good Governance & Civic Engagement" goal, while Infrastructure, Housing, and Character belong together under a "Growth Management" framework.

The remaining categories—Agriculture, Economic Development, and Environment—stand on their own and align directly with both survey priorities and SWOT opportunities.

In short: the five revised goals are the synthesis of every engagement phase to date.

- The survey identified what residents value most.
- The SWOT clarified the Town's assets and vulnerabilities.
- The visioning session translated those insights into action-oriented strategies.

Together, they form a coherent, data-driven roadmap for the Town's first Comprehensive Plan.

6. Draft Goals, Objectives & Strategies (for Committee Review)

Each goal includes preliminary objectives and strategies drawn from session input and committee discussion to date. The accompanying spreadsheet (Recommendations Table) links each goal to its quantitative data (Total Weight, % of Total, and Rank) so you can see how community emphasis aligns with the proposed structure.

These goals will form the backbone of the Comprehensive Plan's *Goals, Objectives, and Strategies* chapter

Committee members are asked to review each goal and consider:

- Do these goal statements accurately reflect what residents meant?
- Are the objectives realistic and within the Town's scope of influence?
- Which strategies should be prioritized in the first 1–2 years of implementation?
- Are there any missing pieces (e.g., youth engagement, code enforcement, emergency services)?

7. Suggested Next Steps

Appendix C: Public Meeting Materials

Step	Timeline	Responsibility
Committee discussion & edits to revised goals	Next meeting + follow-up via shared document	Steering Committee
Integrate feedback and finalize Goals & Objectives chapter	Within two weeks of meeting	
Present consolidated draft to Town Board	December/January	Committee Chair + Committee
Public review of full Draft Plan	Winter 2025–26	Town Board

8. Closing Thought

The revised goals summarized here are a roadmap of what residents value most. The community is asking for government they can trust, infrastructure that works, and growth that keeps Little Falls rural and authentic.

Your task now is to confirm: *Does this roadmap feel right?*

If not, where and how should it be adjusted before we move toward a full draft of the Comprehensive Plan?

Attachments / Appendices

- **Appendix A: Community Visioning Analysis** (Excel Workbook – full data, weighting, and recommendations)

Appendix D: Survey

YOUR INPUT MATTERS!

Help shape the future of the Town of Little Falls

The Town of Little Falls is developing a Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth and improvements. We want to hear from **YOU!**

 Survey takes less than 5 minutes and will help shape the town's future!

Why Participate?

- ✓ Have a say in community decisions
- ✓ Influence future development and policies
- ✓ Help make Little Falls a better place to live, work, and thrive

Town of Little Falls -
Comprehensive Plan Survey



How can you participate?

Scan the code in this flyer to access the survey directly.

Follow this link:
<https://forms.office.com/r/Mbr5XsYYPS>

Contact the steering committee to take the survey in person

reallygreatsite.com

123-456-7890

reallygreatsite.com

Appendix D: Survey

Town of Little Falls | Community Survey Analysis Summary

Executive Summary

Town of Little Falls Community Survey Analysis

This executive summary highlights key findings from the Town of Little Falls community survey, which gathered 234 responses and serves as a foundation for the Town's future comprehensive planning efforts.

Key Findings

1. Strong Community Consensus

Residents across all age groups expressed broad support for:

- Agricultural preservation and local food production
 - Vocational training, school partnerships, and land maintenance skills
 - Maintaining the town's rural identity and natural beauty
 - Investing in road infrastructure
- These themes represent shared values and are excellent candidates for early planning and policy development.

2. Issues That Need More Conversation

Some issues revealed either generational divides or general uncertainty:

- Rental housing and planned development
- Water/sewer access and internet expansion
- Wind and solar energy projects
- Food insecurity awareness

These topics require more targeted community engagement, clarification, or scenario testing to better understand resident concerns and values.

Plan-Ready Opportunities

Based on strong support and low disagreement, the following issues are well-positioned to move forward in the planning process:

- Zoning or policy strategies to support young families and first-time buyers
- Public-private partnerships focused on vocational and land-based skills training
- Initiatives to strengthen farm viability and local food systems
- Capital planning or grant alignment for road maintenance and upgrades
- Narrative framing and visual storytelling that reinforces the Town's rural identity

Appendix D: Survey

These priorities can anchor early sections of a Comprehensive Plan or shape short-term project development while broader planning efforts are underway.

Why a Comprehensive Plan is Needed

The survey surfaced both aligned values and unresolved tensions. A Comprehensive Plan would:

- Integrate community priorities into a cohesive vision
 - Offer space for deeper public engagement and education
 - Provide technical guidance on land use, zoning, and infrastructure
 - Improve access to grant funding and regional partnerships
-

Immediate Next Steps

With modest resources or supplemental funding, the Town can:

- Host focus groups this summer to explore divisive issues more deeply
 - Hold a Town Hall in October to engage residents in mapping how issues connect (e.g., housing and school enrollment, broadband and workforce)
-

Recommendation

The Town of Little Falls is ready to move forward. A Comprehensive Planning Grant would ensure this momentum leads to action—by translating what we’ve heard into a clear path for the future.

Purpose of this Report

This report presents the results of the Town of Little Falls community survey. It is intended to inform the Town Board and Steering Committee of key findings and emerging themes, and to help guide next steps in the comprehensive planning process. The primary goal is to provide enough clarity and structure to support a decision about pursuing a Comprehensive Planning Grant.

The report takes a neutral but strategic tone, grounded in the data while focused on identifying gaps, alignments, and areas that warrant further attention or policy development.

Overview of Survey Analysis Approach

The survey was structured around eight core categories:

Appendix D: Survey

- Location & Community Identity
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Workforce Development
- Emergency Services
- Food Insecurity
- Key Priority Issues

Each question was analyzed using three lenses:

1. Level of Support (High Avg %) – the average level of importance or agreement.
2. Consensus Tag – based on standard deviation and support gap between age groups.
3. Priority Status – identifies whether an item is “Comp Plan Ready,” “Plan Alignment Needed,” “Engagement Needed,” or best placed on a “Watchlist.”

A final Planning Tag was assigned based on a combination of factors to help identify next steps.

To help interpret the data, the following terms were used:

- **Standard Deviation:** This measures how much responses varied. A high standard deviation means people had very different opinions; a low one means most people agreed.
- **Support Gap:** The difference in how strongly different age groups supported a topic. A large support gap means younger and older residents may not see the issue the same way.
- **Consensus Tag:** A label that reflects how much agreement exists on an issue. It combines the level of support and the level of agreement across age groups to help determine whether a topic is ready for planning, needs more discussion, or may not yet have community buy-in.

Strategic Summary of Findings

1. Reinforcing Priorities (High Agreement, High Readiness): These are issues with strong support across all age groups. They are ready to shape the early goals of a Comprehensive Plan.

- Ag Preservation & Local Food Production
- Vocational Training
- School Partnerships
- Rural Area Identity
- Agricultural Economic Development
- Land Maintenance

2. Potentially Undervalued Issues (High Support, Moderate Divide): These issues received high overall support, but show some disagreement between age groups. They may be underestimated in current town conversations and would benefit from more focused discussion.

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- Roads
- Housing Costs
- Ag Education

3. Divide or Unclear Issues: These issues either show significant disagreement between groups or low support overall. They point to possible misunderstandings, tensions, or topics where residents need more information before forming an opinion

- Internet Access & Water/Sewer (high divide, infrastructure gaps)
- Wind & Solar, Planned Development (low support)
- Self-perception around food insecurity (low understanding or stigma)

Community Engagement Recommendations

Engagement efforts are organized into two categories: actions that can begin soon with minimal resources, and activities best suited for implementation with additional funding and professional planning support through a Comprehensive Plan grant.

What Can Happen Soon (Summer–Fall 2025)

1. Intergenerational Focus Groups

Small facilitated groups that bring together residents from different age groups to discuss topics such as renewable energy, housing options, internet access, and planned development.

Timing: Summer 2025 (dependent on additional funding)

Purpose: Surface values-based perspectives and generational concerns.

2. Town Hall Meeting (October 2025)

A public forum to:

- Share key survey findings in plain language
- Discuss emerging planning priorities
- Introduce and facilitate a collaborative mapping activity focused on identifying connections between issues (e.g., “How do local food, school enrollment, and land use intersect?”)

3. Priority Mapping Activity

A visual engagement tool to help residents draw connections between key issues. Participants use sticky notes or poster prompts to surface cross-cutting themes and intersections.

Purpose: Help shape the planning framework through community-defined insights.

Activities Best Undertaken with Additional Support

4. Clarification Workshops

Professionally facilitated workshops to clarify complex or divisive topics:

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- The meaning and potential forms of “planned development”
- Broadband expansion logistics and limitations
- Renewable energy siting and policy considerations

5. Pop-Up Listening Posts

Temporary booths at key community locations (e.g., post office, library, farm stands) that pose a single question and gather quick resident input.

Needs: Staffing support, materials, and coordinated data collection.

6. Postcard or Mailer Campaign

A single-question postcard campaign mailed to all households, designed to gather targeted feedback while increasing awareness of the planning process.

Needs: Design, printing, mailing, and analysis.

7. School-Based Engagement

Surveys or forums targeting families and youth in partnership with the school district.

Needs: Staff time, coordination with schools, and possible participation incentives.

Survey Methodology

The Town of Little Falls community survey received a total of 234 responses. While a precise response rate is unavailable due to the lack of a formal household mailing list, the survey reached a broad cross-section of residents through a combination of distribution methods.

The survey was available both online and in paper format, with promotion via social media and a printed flyer containing a QR code. One uniform version of the survey was distributed to all participants.

The survey was designed collaboratively by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the consultant, using Microsoft Forms as the collection platform. It included a combination of scaled response questions and open-ended prompts, allowing both quantitative and qualitative input.

Respondents were asked to identify their age group using the following ranges:

- Under 18
- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55–64
- 65+

The survey also included a question about housing status (own or rent), helping to contextualize responses to housing-related issues.

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The methodology prioritizes broad accessibility, ease of participation, and relevance to planning categories. The results provide a reliable foundation for identifying both areas of strong alignment and areas that require further exploration or engagement.

Category Highlights

Each section below includes a summary of strong agreement aligned priorities, areas of divide, and planning implications based on quantitative support and qualitative insight.

Housing

Strong Agreement:

- Young Families & First-Time Buyers
89% overall support, low disagreement between age groups
Implication: There is clear community support for helping younger families stay or move in. This could be addressed through changes to zoning, incentives for housing development, or local programs that make it easier to buy or build.

Areas with Divide:

- Rental Housing
53% overall support, 22% gap between age groups
Implication: Younger residents are more supportive of rentals, while older residents may have concerns. This suggests the need for community conversations about the role of rental housing in meeting local needs.
- Planned Development
28% support overall
Implication: There is skepticism about this idea, possibly due to misunderstanding or distrust. Engagement efforts should explore what “planned development” means in a rural setting and how it could be designed with community input.

What This Means for Planning:

- Prioritize family-oriented housing initiatives.
- Use future engagement activities to better understand how residents feel about different types of housing and whether those ideas could work in the Town of Little Falls.
- Talk with residents about what “development” really means and address any misunderstandings or fears about what it could look like in the town.

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Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Young families & First Time Buyers	89%	11%	Mixed Support	25-34	45-54	5%	Plan Alignment Needed
Farmstead	87%	12%	Mixed Support	55-64	25-34	13%	Plan Alignment Needed
Single Family Homes	84%	13%	Mixed Support	35-44	45-54	12%	Engagement Needed
Senior Housing	76%	18%	Mixed Support	35-44	65 +	20%	Engagement Needed
Rental	53%	44%	Low Support	35-44	65 +	22%	Monitor / Low Action
Planned Development	28%	61%	Low Support	55-64	35-44	12%	Monitor / Low Action

Infrastructure

Strong Agreement:

- **Roads**
93% support, 10% support gap
Implication: Improving road conditions is a clear priority and could be aligned with upcoming infrastructure funding.

Areas with Divide:

- **Water and Sewer Access**
74% support, 35% support gap
Implication: Younger residents are more supportive, older residents less so. Future planning should explore why this gap exists and what concerns need to be addressed.
- **Internet Access**
73% support, 31% support gap
Implication: There is strong interest, but also differences in perceived importance. Addressing broadband should be framed as an economic and family retention issue, especially for younger residents.

What This Means for Planning:

- Immediate eligibility for infrastructure funding (CFA, Pro-Housing)
- Show how local businesses, tourism, and remote work can all fit together and support each other, instead of being seen as competing priorities.
- Surface inter-municipal strategies for broadband and water systems.

Appendix D: Survey

Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Roads	93%	7%	Mixed Support	55-64	45-54	10%	Plan Alignment Needed
Ag grants & subsidies	91%	7%	Mixed Support	45-54	25-34	15%	Plan Alignment Needed
Emergency services	84%	15%	Mixed Support	65 +	35-44	14%	Engagement Needed
Water/Sewer	74%	23%	Mixed Support	45-54	65 +	35%	Engagement Needed
Internet	73%	26%	Mixed Support	65 +	35-44	31%	Engagement Needed
Trails	70%	26%	Mixed Support	25-34	65 +	29%	Engagement Needed
Transportation	60%	33%	Low Support	45-54	35-44	21%	Monitor / Low Action

Economic Development

Strong Agreement:

- **Agriculture**
96% support, 6% support gap
Implication: Farming and agricultural development are major community priorities. Planning should support value-added agriculture, farm viability, and land preservation.

Areas with Divide:

- **Retail and Tourism**
Moderate support, moderate divide
Implication: Residents may be unsure how much they want the town to focus on tourism or retail. More input is needed to shape a shared vision.
- **Tech and Remote Work**
79% support, 22% support gap
Implication: Younger and mid-career residents are more supportive. Planners could highlight how tech jobs support local economies without needing big infrastructure changes.

What This Means for Planning:

- Reinforce ag economy and value-added agriculture policies.
- Frame retail, tourism, and tech as complementary—not competitive.
- Align with County IDA and workforce development partners.

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Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Agriculture	96%	4%	Strong Alignment	45-54	25-34	6%	Policy Ready
Manufacturing	88%	12%	Mixed Support	35-44	55-64	11%	Plan Alignment Needed
Retail	87%	13%	Mixed Support	35-44	65 +	15%	Plan Alignment Needed
Healthcare	82%	17%	Mixed Support	55-64	35-44	15%	Engagement Needed
Technology & Remote Work	79%	19%	Mixed Support	45-54	35-44	22%	Engagement Needed
Tourism	72%	27%	Mixed Support	65 +	35-44	13%	Engagement Needed

Workforce Development

Strong Agreement:

- Vocational Training, School Partnerships, Land Maintenance Skills**
 95–97% support across these areas, low support gaps
Implication: Residents value hands-on skills and education that connect to local jobs. Planning should partner with schools, BOCES, and local employers to build out these opportunities.

Areas with Divide:

- Agricultural Education**
 93% support, 9% support gap
Implication: While support is high, there may be uncertainty about what this looks like in practice. Community examples and success stories could help build broader buy-in.
- Attracting Workers**
 80% support, 17% support gap
Implication: Seen as important, especially by older adults. Engagement should explore what younger residents need to stay or move to the area.

What This Means for Planning:

- Ready for immediate inclusion in workforce partnerships and local training investments.
- Build alignment with school districts and BOCES programs.

Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Vocational training	97%	2%	Strong Alignment	35-44	45-54	5%	Policy Ready
School Partnerships	97%	2%	Strong Alignment	45-54	35-44	6%	Policy Ready
Land Maintenance	95%	5%	Strong Alignment	55-64	25-34	9%	Policy Ready
Ag Education	93%	7%	Mixed Support	55-64	25-34	9%	Plan Alignment Needed
Attracting workers	80%	17%	Mixed Support	55-64	35-44	12%	Engagement Needed

Emergency Services

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Strong Agreement:

- **Availability of Emergency Services**
92% support, 9% support gap
Implication: Emergency services are widely valued. This can serve as a foundation for broader public safety or community resilience planning.

Minor Divide:

- **Response Time**
87% support, 3% support gap
Implication: While support is strong overall, rural geography may raise concerns about how quickly help can arrive. This could be explored further in collaboration with county EMS and volunteer departments.

What This Means for Planning:

- Monitor service gaps and explore regional coordination.
- Could benefit from local data gathering or engagement with county EMS planning.

Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus	Tag	Most Supportive Age	Least Supportive Age	Support Gap	Priority Status
					Group	Group		
Availability	92%	8%	Mixed Support		35-44	25-34	9%	Plan Alignment Needed
Response Time	87%	13%	Mixed Support		35-44	45-54	3%	Plan Alignment Needed

Food Insecurity

Notable Divide and Misunderstanding:

- **Perception of Others Facing Insecurity**
37% support, 27% support gap
Implication: Many residents recognize that others struggle with food access, but perceptions vary across age groups. This suggests a need for better visibility of local hunger and the work of food pantries or meal programs.
- **Self-Perception of Insecurity**
18% support, 19% support gap
Implication: Few respondents identified themselves as food insecure, possibly due to stigma or lack of awareness. Education and storytelling efforts could help normalize the issue and identify more households in need.

What This Means for Planning:

- Need for greater public education on food insecurity.
- Opportunity to align with pantry providers, farm-to-community programs.

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Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus T	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Others	37%	57%	Low Support	25-34	45-54	27%	Monitor / Low Action
Self Perception	18%	78%	Low Support	25-34	65 +	19%	Monitor / Low Action

Location & Community Identity

Strong Agreement:

- Rural Area Identity**
 94% support, 9% support gap
Implication: There is strong alignment around preserving the town's rural character. This can serve as an anchor for planning language and engagement tone.
- Beauty of the Area**
 95% support, 11% support gap
Implication: Natural beauty is a shared community value. It can be used to promote quality of life, tourism, and conservation.

Areas with Divide:

- Sense of Community**
 52% support, 29% support gap
Implication: There is a divide in how connected people feel. Engagement efforts could explore what "community" means to different groups and how to strengthen those ties.
- Desire to Retire Here**
 53% support, 54% support gap
Implication: Younger residents are less likely to see the town as a place they'd retire. This suggests the need to explore what would make long-term residency more appealing—especially for families and mid-career individuals.

What This Means for Planning:

- Use place-based strategies and storytelling in engagement.
- Further assess which aspects of community identity are most contested.

Appendix D: Survey

Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Rural Area	94%	3%	Strong Alignment	45-54	65 +	9%	Policy Ready
Beauty	95%	4%		45-54	65 +	11%	Plan Alignment Needed
Housing Costs	88%	7%	Mixed Support	55-64	65 +	9%	Plan Alignment Needed
School district	70%	9%	Mixed Support	35-44	65 +	34%	Engagement Needed
Sense of Community	52%	9%	Low Support	25-34	65 +	29%	Monitor / Low Action
Retired here	53%	11%	Low Support	55-64	25-34	54%	Monitor / Low Action
Grew up here	81%	12%	Mixed Support	45-54	65 +	19%	Engagement Needed
Population Size	82%	12%	Mixed Support	55-64	65 +	18%	Engagement Needed
Businesses	67%	17%	Opinion Variability	35-44	65 +	17%	Monitor / Low Action

Key Priority Issues

Strong Agreement:

- Ag Preservation & Local Food Production**
 99% support, 4% support gap
Implication: This is one of the strongest shared values in the survey. It intersects with identity, economy, education, and health—and should anchor future planning.

Mild Divide:

- Internet Expansion**
 81% support, 11% support gap
Implication: Still a clear priority, but with some difference in perceived importance. Engagement and messaging should clarify how internet access supports jobs, schools, and emergency services.
- Zoning to Guide Development**
 86% support, 5% support gap
Implication: While support is relatively high, residents may need more information about what zoning changes mean and how they can be tailored to fit the town's rural context.

What This Means for Planning:

- Use these key priorities to guide the plan framework.
- Invite community to help define what "success" looks like in these areas.

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Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Ag Preservation & Local Food Production	99%	1%	Strong Alignment	45-54	25-34	4%	Policy Ready
Small Business development	93%	6%	Mixed Support	45-54	65 +	16%	Plan Alignment Needed
Protect rural character	86%	12%	Mixed Support	45-54	25-34	10%	Plan Alignment Needed
Zoning to guide development	86%	12%	Mixed Support	65 +	45-54	5%	Plan Alignment Needed
Collaboration with other municipalities	81%	17%	Mixed Support	55-64	25-34	10%	Engagement Needed
Internet expansion	81%	18%	Mixed Support	65 +	25-34	11%	Engagement Needed
Roads, water, sewer	81%	18%	Mixed Support	45-54	25-34	12%	Engagement Needed
Toursim	75%	22%	Mixed Support	45-54	55-64	9%	Engagement Needed

Development

Low Support / High Divide:

- Engineering & Manufacturing Jobs**
 65% support, 21% support gap
Implication: There is interest, but views are mixed. A feasibility analysis or small pilot program could help assess real potential.
- Wind & Solar Development**
 28% support, 5% support gap
Implication: There is clear hesitation about renewable energy projects. Residents may need more information about siting rules, benefits, and community control options.

What This Means for Planning:

- Clarify the community's vision for future development, especially renewable energy and manufacturing.
- Create space for public dialogue to ensure alignment with land use and infrastructure goals.

Sub-Issue	High Avg	ST. Dev	Consensus Tag	Most Supportive Age Group	Least Supportive Age Group	Support Gap	Priority Status
Engineering & Manufacturing	65%	35%	Opinion Variability	45-54	35-44	21%	Monitor / Low Action
Wind & Solar	28%	72%	Low Support	55-64	25-34	5%	Monitor / Low Action

Policy and Planning Examples

The following examples illustrate how rural communities across New York State are addressing similar challenges through practical, policy-driven approaches. These examples can guide the Town of Little Falls as it prepares to pursue a Comprehensive Plan and explore implementation strategies.

Housing Diversity: Town of Caroline, NY

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The Town of Caroline revised its zoning laws to allow small-scale multi-unit housing (such as duplexes and accessory dwelling units) in rural and hamlet areas. This policy supports both aging in place and affordability for first-time buyers.

- **Relevance:** Mirrors Little Falls' support for family-oriented housing and concern over housing costs.
- **Policy Mechanism:** Zoning amendments and community education.
- **Link:** [Town of Caroline Comprehensive Plan \(2013, updated 2022\)](#)

Broadband Access: Southern Tier 8 Regional Coalition

The Southern Tier 8 Regional Board coordinated a broadband coalition across multiple rural counties, using survey data and infrastructure mapping to successfully apply for federal and state broadband funds.

- **Relevance:** Little Falls residents ranked internet access as a high priority, but showed divides across age groups.
- **Policy Mechanism:** Cross-jurisdictional coalition, grant writing, and public-private partnerships.
- **Link:** [Southern Tier 8: Broadband Planning](#)

Agricultural Economic Development: Town of New Lebanon, NY

New Lebanon's comprehensive plan incorporated agricultural development into its economic strategy, which led to the launch of a farm-to-institution program and a regional food hub feasibility study.

- **Relevance:** Aligns with Little Falls' top-rated issues—ag preservation, school partnerships, and local food production.
- **Policy Mechanism:** Comp Plan alignment, stakeholder convening, and grant pursuit.
- **Link:** [Town of New Lebanon Economic Development & Agriculture Plan](#)

Renewable Energy Siting: Town of Enfield, NY

Enfield developed a clear local law for solar energy siting, allowing them to balance environmental goals with community concerns. Public workshops were used to educate and shape the local law.

- **Relevance:** Little Falls shows low support and high uncertainty around wind and solar development.
- **Policy Mechanism:** Local siting law informed by public education and participatory policy design.

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- Link: [Town of Enfield Solar Law \(2017\)](#)

Conclusion

The Town of Little Falls community survey paints a clear picture of what matters most to residents—and where additional work is needed to build understanding and alignment.

There is strong consensus around the town's rural identity, the importance of preserving farmland, and the value of practical, hands-on education that prepares people for local jobs. These are issues that can immediately guide early planning efforts and build community momentum.

At the same time, the data reveals important divides—particularly between age groups—on topics like internet access, water and sewer infrastructure, housing types, and renewable energy. These divides do not mean the community is at odds; they signal that some issues need more conversation, clearer information, and stronger trust before decisions can be made.

Without a comprehensive plan, these important conversations risk happening in silos—or not at all. A plan would bring structure to the process, create space for inclusive dialogue, and position the town to pursue funding and partnerships that align with its values and priorities.

Through a Comprehensive Planning Grant, the Town of Little Falls would be able to:

- Bring in technical expertise and outside facilitation
- Integrate land use, housing, economic development, and infrastructure into a single coordinated strategy
- Build on the engagement work already completed and deepen participation through targeted outreach
- Develop clear, actionable steps that reflect both community input and long-term sustainability

In short, the survey helped identify *what* residents care about. A comprehensive plan will help the town figure out *how* to move forward together.

Appendix D: Survey

1/15/25, 10:23 AM

Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

Your input matters! By providing your feedback in this survey, you are helping to shape the future of the Town of Little Falls!

What is a Comprehensive Plan? A Comprehensive Plan is a big-picture roadmap that helps guide the future of our town. It's like a community blueprint that lays out ideas and goals for how the Town of Little Falls should grow and improve over the next 10-20 years. The Town of Little Falls is in the beginning stages of developing this plan. This effort is being led by a steering committee of the Planning Board. To learn more about the comprehensive planning process, google: "Guide to Comprehensive Planning in NYS".

Who should complete the survey? Any resident 16 and over, property owner, or business servicing residents within the boundaries of the Town of Little Falls.

How long does the survey take? The survey takes 10-15 minutes to complete. All responses are confidential. Personal information is confidential unless specified otherwise.

What is the deadline to complete the survey? Surveys should be completed by March 31st, 2025.

Questions? Contact us at TLFComprehensivePlan@gmail.com

Visit www.facebook.com/TLFComprehensivePlan for ongoing updates!

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

What is your age group?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65 +

Do you own, rent, or lease property (including land) in the Town of Little Falls

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1/15/20, 10:23 AM

Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

- ☐ Own
- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Lease
- ☐ Other

Do you own or manage a business in the Town of Little Falls?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, what type of business?

- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Agriculture/Farming
- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Hospitality (restaurants, lodging, etc.)
- ☐ Professional services (legal, financial, etc.)
- ☐ Construction/Trades
- ☐ Other

Why do you choose to live in the Town of Little Falls?

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Rural Character	☐	☐	☐	☐
Natural Beauty	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix D: Survey

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Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Grew up here	☐	☐	☐	☐
Housing costs	☐	☐	☐	☐
School District	☐	☐	☐	☐
Businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sense of community	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town size	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chose to retire here	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

Which of the following are important for our town to prioritize in the next 10 years?

	Not applicable	Not very important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Maintain current rural character and minimal development.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encourage small business growth and entrepreneurship.	☐	☐	☐	☐

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town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

	Not applicable	Not very important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Support agricultural preservation and local food production.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expand infrastructure (roads, water/sewer services).	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expand broadband internet services.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Establish zoning laws to guide responsible development.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Collaborative partnerships with other municipalities like the City of Little Falls, Town of German Flatts, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

How supportive of you of the following:

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Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

	Strongly Opposed	Somewhat Opposed	Somewhat Supportive	Very Supportive
Corporate development projects, such as large-scale commercial wind and solar operations.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Corporate development projects, such as manufacturing or engineering.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

Which housing options are most needed in the Town of Little Falls?

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Affordable single family homes	☐	☐	☐	☐
Senior Housing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Farmstead properties	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rental properties	☐	☐	☐	☐
Housing for young families and first-time homebuyers	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix D: Survey

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Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Planned development housing communities (can include multifamily housing such as town houses).	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

Which infrastructure improvement should be prioritized?

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Road maintenance and expansion.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Improved emergency services (fire, police, EMS).	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to high-speed internet.	☐	☐	☐	☐
More access to agricultural grants and subsidies.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expanded public water/sewer services.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix D: Survey

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Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
More walking/biking trails and safer pedestrian areas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Improved transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

Which of the following are important to the future of workforce development in the Town of Little Falls?

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Agricultural education and farm apprenticeship programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vocational training for skilled trades (construction, plumbing, electrical work etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐
Incentives for young people to work in agriculture and land maintenance.	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Partnerships with schools for hands on learning in farming and trades.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attracting more workers to the area through job placement assistance.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

What should the Town of Little Falls encourage for economic growth?

	Not Applicable	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Agriculture and Agribusiness.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tourism and outdoor recreation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Retail and small businesses.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Manufacturing and skilled trades.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Technology and remote work opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

Not Applicable

Not Very Important

Somewhat Important

Very Important

Healthcare operations such as preventative clinics, physical therapy, etc.

☐☐☐☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

How often have you or someone you know had difficulty accessing or affording nutritious food?

Never

Rarely (1-2 times)

Sometimes (3-5 times)

Often (6+ times)

Always

You

☐☐☐☐☐

Someone you know

☐☐☐☐☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

What barriers, if any, make it difficult for community residents to access nutritious food? Check all that apply.

☐

Cost

☐

Limited availability or locations

☐

Transportation Issues

Appendix D: Survey

1/15/25, 10:23 AM

Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

☐ Lack of awareness of where to find it

☐ Other

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

How satisfied are you with the following:

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Availability of emergency services (fire, police, EMS).	☐	☐	☐	☐
Response time of emergency services (fire, police, EMS).	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Enter your answer

Imagine the Town of Little Falls in 10 years. What do you hope will have changed, improved, or stayed the same?

Enter your answer

Appendix D: Survey

1/15/26, 10:23 AM

Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

What is one improvement - big or small - that would enhance daily life in the Town of Little Falls and make it a better place to live?

Enter your answer

How do you prefer to stay informed about town planning and community decisions? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Printed Newsletters
- ☐ Email updates
- ☐ Social Media (Facebook, town website, etc.)
- ☐ Public meetings/town halls
- ☐ Other

Would you like to provide your contact information for follow-up discussion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Full Name (optional):

Enter your answer

Email Address (Optional, for updates or follow-up questions)

Enter your answer

Appendix D: Survey

1/15/26, 10:23 AM

Town of Little Falls - Comprehensive Plan Survey

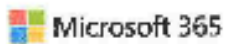
Phone Number (Optional, if you prefer a call or text):

Enter your answer

How would you prefer to be contacted?

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Text Message
- ☐ No preference

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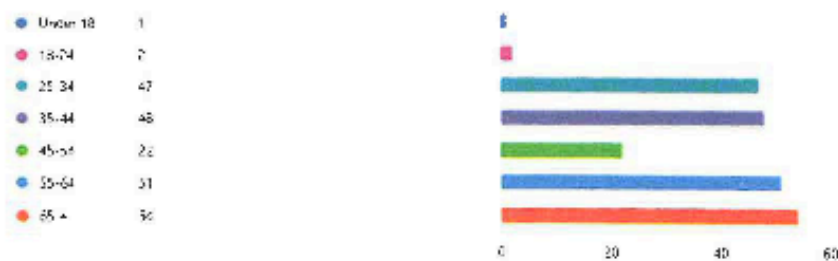
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Appendix D: Survey

**Survey Closed
4/1/2025**

229 Responses (graphics do not reflect 5 hard copy surveys)



Respondents live here because:

- Natural Beauty – 70.1% Very Important / 23.5% Somewhat Important
- Rural Character – 64.5% Very Important / 28.2% Somewhat Important
- Sense of Community – 54.6% Very Important / 33.9% Somewhat Important
- School District – 49.1% Very Important / 21.4% Somewhat Important

Key priorities:

- 91.3% want to support ag preservation and local food production
- 92% encourage small business growth and entrepreneurship
- 85.8% want to maintain current rural character and minimal development
- 84% establish zoning laws to guide responsible development
- 81.2% expand broadband internet services
- 81.1% expand infrastructure
- 81% want to see collaborative partnerships with other municipalities like the City of Little Falls, Town of German Flatts, etc.
- 74% want to develop tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Development priorities:

- Corporate development projects such as large-scale commercial wind and solar;
Corporate development projects, such as large-scale commercial wind and...
 - Strongly Opposed 48.9%
 - Somewhat Opposed 23.1%
 - Somewhat Supportive 16.7%
 - Very Supportive 9.3%

Appendix D: Survey

- Corporate development projects, such as manufacturing or engineering:

Corporate development projects, such as manufacturing or engineering.



Housing priorities:



Infrastructure priorities:

- Road maintenance & expansion – 55.6% Very important / 38.1% Somewhat Important
- More access to ag grants and subsidies – 50.5% Very Important / 39.6% Somewhat Important
- Improved EMS – 48% Very Important / 36.8% Somewhat Important



Workforce development priorities:

- Vocational training for skilled trades – 75.4% Very Important / 22.3% Somewhat Important
- Partnerships with schools -farming and trades – 70% Very Important / 26.5% Somewhat Important

Appendix D: Survey



- Incentives for young people to work in ag and land maintenance – 63.4% Very Important / 31.7% Somewhat Important
- Agricultural education and farm apprenticeship program – 55.9% Very Important / Somewhat Important
- Attracting more workers to the area through job placement assistance. – 45.5% Very Important / 36.2% Somewhat Important

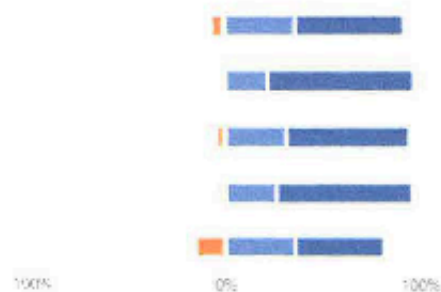
Agricultural education and farm apprenticeship programs

Vocational training for skilled trades (construction, plumbing, electrical work, etc.).

Incentives for young people to work in agriculture and land maintenance.

Partnerships with schools for hands-on learning in farming and trades.

Attracting more workers to the area through job placement assistance.



Economic growth priorities:

- Ag and Ag business – 63.5% Very Important / 32.9% Somewhat Important
- Manufacturing & Skilled Trade – 53.2% Very Important / 53.7% Somewhat Important
- Retail & Small Business – 49.5% Very Important / 37.7% Somewhat Important
- Healthcare operations – 46.8% Very Important / 36.4% Somewhat Important
- Technology and remote work – 40.5% Very Important / 38.6% Somewhat Important
- Tourism & Outdoor Recreation – 34.4% Very Important / 38.5% Somewhat Important

Agriculture and Agribusiness

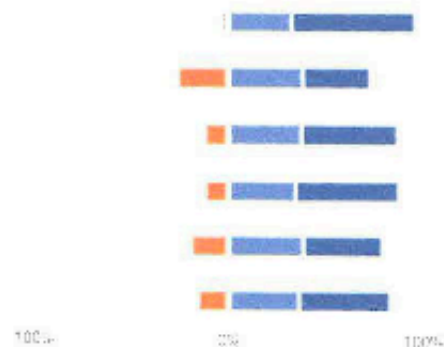
Tourism and outdoor recreation

Retail and small businesses

Manufacturing and skilled trades

Technology and remote work opportunities

Healthcare operations such as preventative clinics, physical therapy, etc.



Food security:

Never Rarely (1-2 times) Sometimes (3-5 times) Often (6+ times) Always

You

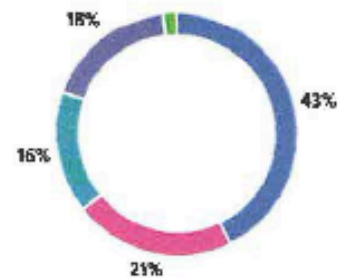
Someone you know



Appendix D: Survey

Barrier – Food Security:

Cost	175
Limited availability or locations	87
Transportation Issues	66
Lack of awareness of where to find it	73
Other	7



Emergency Services:

Very Dissatisfied Somewhat Dissatisfied Somewhat Satisfied Very Satisfied

Availability of emergency services (fire, police, EMS).

Response time of emergency services (fire, police, EMS).

100%



Ongoing Update Preferences:

Printed Newsletters	81
Email updates	91
Social Media (Facebook, town website, etc.)	160
Public meetings/town halls	59
Other	6

