Hamlets

3

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PLANNING FOR SMART GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF HAMLETS IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE

ROGER TRANCIK, FASLA
URBAN DESIGN CONSULTANTS
ITHACA, NEW YORK

Hamlets 3 was written and produced by:

> Roger Trancik, FASLA
> *Urban Design Consultants*
> Ithaca, New York

This guidebook can be viewed online at the *Hamlets 3* website www.adkhamlets.org.

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credits

contents

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The Hamlets 3 team produced all images except the following:
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Hamlets 3

about

1.0

SMART GROWTH BALANCES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION.

About *Hamlets 3*
Many hamlets in the Adirondack Park have expressed a need for residential and commercial expansion. Using the principles of smart growth, *Hamlets 3* responds to this need by helping local communities and regional decision-makers plan for sustainable development. Smart growth, which balances economic development and preservation of the environment, has two important benefits:

1. it enables communities to integrate land suitable for development into the fabric of the existing hamlet, thus concentrating rather than dissipating resources, and

2. it complements the protection of forests, farmland and other forms of open space by avoiding visually unappealing, and resource-inefficient sprawl and strip development.

This guide develops a planning and design model for smart growth that builds on existing community centers and bridges state and local planning processes.
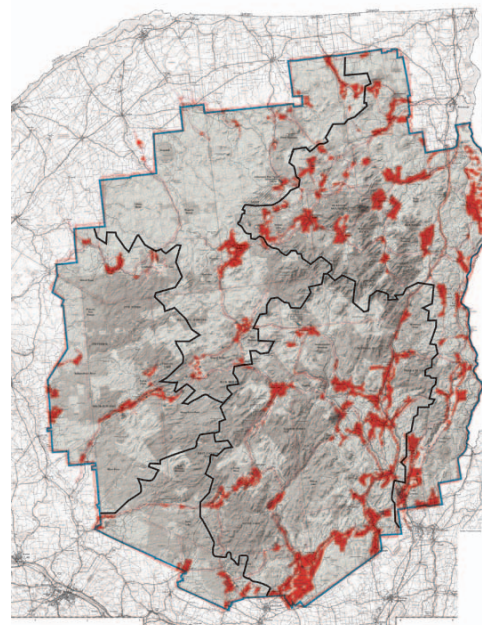
Hamlets 3 encompasses the entire 6-million acre park and over 130 hamlets and villages, mapped in red.

Hamlets 3 builds on Hamlets of the Adirondacks 1 & 2 from the 1980s.

HAMLETS 1 AND 2

Hamlets of the Adirondacks

Hamlets of the Adirondacks
Development Strategies
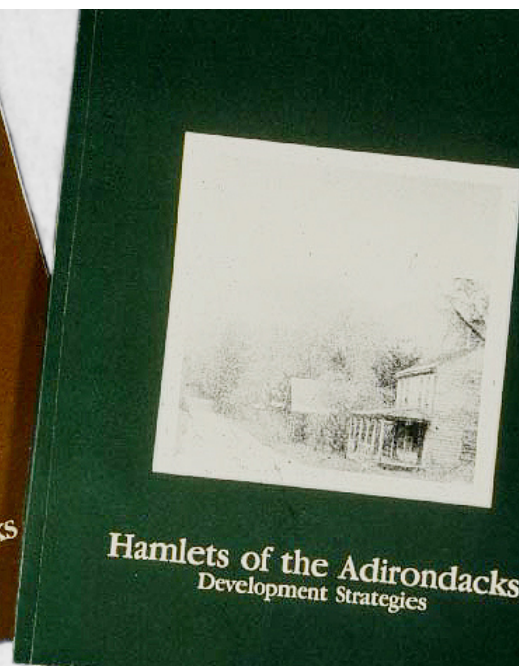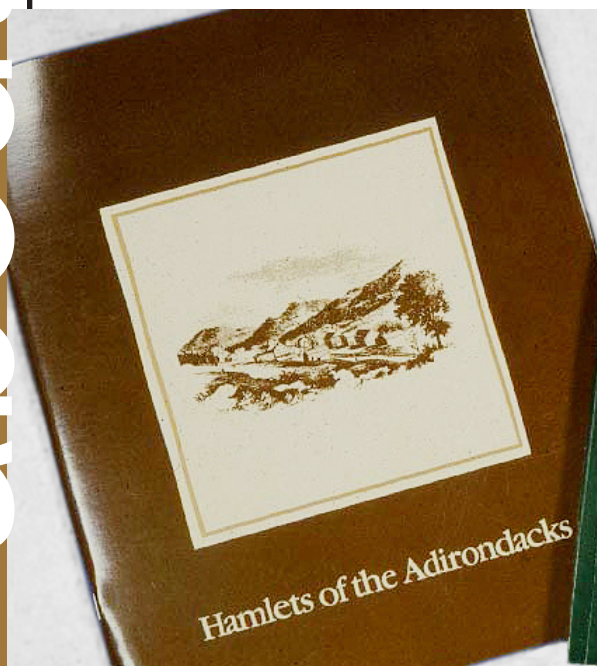
*Planning for **Smart Growth** and*

EXPANSION:
HAMLETS OF THE ADIRONDACKS 3

DEC
SMART GROWTH CATEGORIES

- **LOCAL** - *one municipality*

- **REGIONAL** - *two or more municipalities*

- **PARKWIDE** - *multiple municipalities*

PROJECT
GOAL:

TO DEVELOP A SMART GROWTH PLANNING MODEL THAT WILL HELP ADIRONDACK HAMLETS EXPAND INTO THE FUTURE

PROJECT
OBJECTIVES:

PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES WITHIN & NEAR HAMLETS BY PREVENTING SPRAWL

INTEGRATE EXPANSION PROJECTS INTO THE FABRIC OF EXISTING HAMLETS

PROMOTE SMART, SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE HAMLETS

Hamlets 3 presentations in different areas of the park guided discussion on smart growth principles, precedents, and best practices.

SMART GROWTH IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE IN HAMLETS.

Hamlets 1 & 2 **background**
*Hamlets 3* is the third installment of a series that builds on two previous studies from the 1980s: *Hamlets of the Adirondacks 1 and 2*. *Hamlets 1* educated persons and agencies (especially those outside of the park) about the existence of the hamlets, addressing any perception that the Adirondacks is entirely a wilderness, without any communities or resident population. It made the case that the hamlets had pressing needs for new investment and revitalization, and that appropriate policies and programs were required to meet the needs of hamlets. Problems identified in *Hamlets 1* included struggling local economies, workforce housing shortages, inadequate infrastructure, deteriorating public realms, and perceived administrative obstacles to development.

    Hamlets 2 provided local governments, planning boards, community organizations, and concerned individuals with ideas and strategies on hamlet revitalization. *Hamlets 1* received a National Merit Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects, and *Hamlets 1 & 2* won the American Planning Association's National Best Planning Project Award in 1987. Roger Trancik, professor emeritus, Cornell University, was lead consultant in the development and production of *Hamlets 1 & 2*.

Hamlets 3 **project**
Hamlets 3 finds ways to create opportunities for sustainable smart expansion of Adirondack hamlets by improving their physical and economic environment. This can be achieved in part through affordable housing, jobs, open spaces, community facilities, and the expansion of infrastructure.

    Hamlets 3 recognizes the uniqueness of the Adirondacks as a significant nature preserve that also contains a diverse collection of hamlets – "a park of people and nature." It recognizes the special problems of the Adirondack hamlet as small, isolated, and having a seasonally-fluctuating population and economy. It also recognizes the requirements of the regional environmental planning regulations administered by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) and the need to provide local communities and their constituent agencies with tools, procedures, and guidelines to plan for appropriate kinds of development. *Hamlets 3* respects the positive attributes of the Adirondacks to improve quality of life in the hamlets.

Client groups and sponsors
Hamlets 3 is funded by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), in partnership with the APA and Department of State, under its current and ongoing Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Grant Program. The overall purpose of this initiative is to link environmental protection, economic development and community livability within the special conditions of the Adirondack Park.

    The firm of Roger Trancik, FASLA, *Urban Design Consultants*, Ithaca, New York is lead consultant for *Hamlets 3*. The Adirondack Community Housing Trust is principal client with Essex County, acting through its planning department, as the municipal sponsor. A broad-based Advisory Committee representing many different public, semi-public and private organizations and stakeholders throughout the park provided project direction and feedback during the development of *Hamlets 3*. For a complete listing of contributors see credits on Page 2.

Park-wide scope

The DEC's Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Grant Program sponsors three types of projects:

- Local – those that involve one municipal government
- Regional – those that involve two or more municipalities in a similar geographic region of the park
- Park-wide – those that involve multiple municipalities and have a park-wide scope

Hamlets 3 addresses the park-wide category, encompassing the entire six-million acre park and over 130 hamlets and villages. It develops smart growth planning methods for the region as a whole that communities can apply locally.

The Adirondack Park as a park is unique in the United States. It consists of a mosaic of public and private holdings and a mix of seasonal and year-round residents. Its land area is about the same size as the State of Vermont, and larger than Yellowstone National Park. In fact, it is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States.

While the park has been a recreational destination since the 19th century, its forestry and mining industries have an even longer history, giving birth to the Adirondack hamlet as a physical and social entity. But with the park's remoteness and changes in technology posing almost insurmountable barriers to economic growth, sustaining the Adirondack hamlet has been a major challenge.

Yet, Adirondack Park communities continue to retain their heritage, sense of place, and powerful relationship with nature in the 21st century. Today these settlements, along with tourism, are the cornerstone of the Adirondack economy and are essential to the future of the park. The region's renewable resources have been largely preserved, enabling its supreme environmental quality to be leveraged to achieve development of hamlets compatible with this unique landscape. Through smart growth planning, communities can preserve hamlet culture and lifestyle and find the right balance between development and preservation.

Hamlets 3 worktable combines digital and hand-mapping techniques.

The workflow was organized in four stages over a two-year period.

WORKFLOW

STAGE ONE	STAGE TWO	STAGE THREE	STAGE FOUR	
REGIONAL SURVEYS	CASE STUDY HAMLETS	MODELS + GUIDELINES	FINAL PRODUCTS	
0	1	2	3	4
Presentations	Analysis	Synthesis	Handbook	
Feedback	Mapping	Approaches	CD-ROM	
Committees	Workshops	How-to-chart	Website	
Problem defined	Strategies	Mechanisms		
Feb 2009	June 2009	Jan 2010	June 2010	March 2011
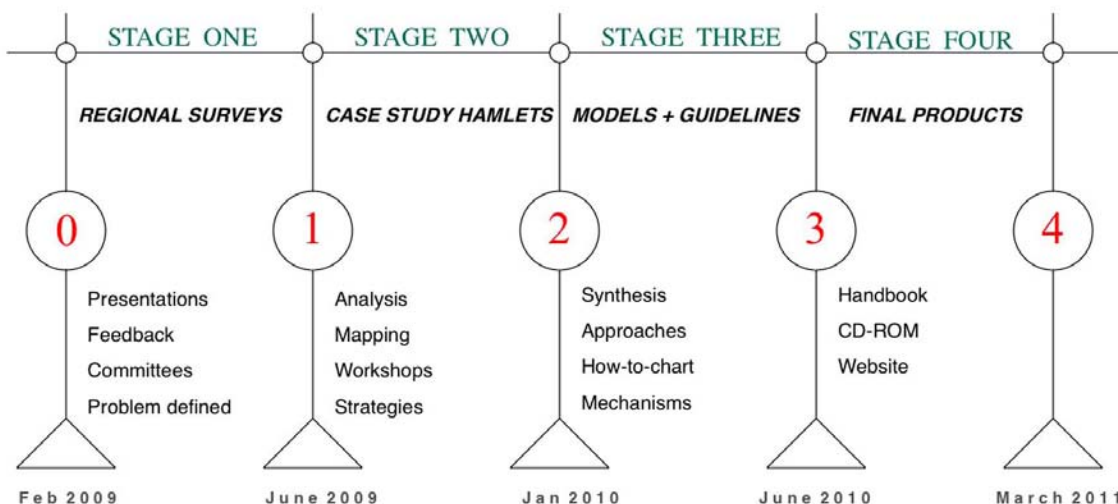
***Hamlets 3* objectives and workflow**
Hamlets 3 has three objectives:

- to protect natural resources in and around hamlets by preventing sprawl
- to integrate expansion projects into the structure of existing hamlets
- to promote smart, sustainable physical and economic growth of hamlets

These objectives underpin the four stages of the project workflow.

In **Stage 1** visual presentations in different areas of the park showed principles, precedents, and best practices of smart growth. Regional surveys elicited feedback on the following questions: What types of hamlet expansion are needed? How much expansion is desirable? Can expansion be accommodated within existing settlement areas or is outward expansion required? What impact does location and geography have on expansion? What smart growth principles can be applied to sustainable hamlet expansion in the Adirondacks? These discussions led to the selection of case study communities addressed in the second stage.

In **Stage 2,** the team conducted fieldwork in three hamlet clusters – Elizabethtown, Old Forge, and Star Lake – to document, analyze, and evaluate hamlet expansion options. This included a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) of public space and its "walkability," mapping of lost spaces including vacant sites and buildings, and documentation of natural conditions, roads, water, and sewer lines. They recorded demographics, existing zoning, land uses, and open space assets, documented historical and cultural heritage and photographed visual character to determine areas of high value. They distributed a user survey and held a series of workshops and 'charrettes' in the communities to assess expansion needs and to evolve 'sketch plans' and economic development proposals. These on-site studies and interactions led to the models and design strategies developed in the third stage.

In **Stage 3**, the team created a planning model with design tools for hamlet expansion that local communities could use. This included a step-by step guide of how to apply

Smart Growth Rings and hamlet expansion overlay zones for identifying the most suitable sites for smart growth in and around a hamlet. They developed design prototypes and guidelines for expansion and incremental growth. They formulated ways to achieve success, such as increasing density within APA regulations, finding new mechanisms for financing infrastructure and expansion projects, and developing effective modes of local participation and governance.

Production of this guidebook took place in **Stage 4** to communicate findings and illustrate the principles and processes of smart hamlet expansion in the Adirondack Park.

SMART GROWTH PRACTICES EMPOWER COMMUNITIES TO PLAN FOR FUTURE EXPANSION.

Principles

smart growth

2.0

What is smart growth?

Most people think of smart growth as a way of preventing suburban sprawl in fast-growing regions of the country. They ask: why plan for smart growth in the Adirondacks where little, if any growth is occurring? This is a sensible question, but smart growth also provides stimulus to a declining local economy. If effectively implemented, smart growth can create investment incentives to improve conditions in Adirondack hamlets. So just what is smart growth in the context of the Adirondack Park?

Smart growth in the Adirondacks is the opposite of auto-dependent growth. A smart-growth Adirondack hamlet remains compact, walkable, well defined, and connected to neighboring hamlets. Smart hamlets provide job opportunities and year-round, affordable, workforce housing for Adirondackers. Smart growth in the Adirondacks steers new development toward existing hamlet infrastructure or facilitates new infrastructure investments. It respects a community's form and place as well as the natural features of the park. Smart plans for hamlet expansion are prepared publicly, creatively, and in concert with the state's park-wide land use and development regulations. The visual character of Adirondack smart growth is rooted in 19th century architecture and building traditions brought into a modern age of energy efficiency and independence.

Principles of smart growth

The smart growth principles presented in this section form the foundation for the *Hamlets 3* planning and design model. Photographs of sites in the Adirondacks and other places with similar climate and landscape illustrate these principles and their captions discuss ways of realizing them. The *Hamlets 3* principles of smart growth are:

- Form and place
- Boundaries
- Walkability and human-scale
- Access to nature
- Compact centers
- Energy and sustainability
- Jobs and housing
- Travel choices
- Visual quality
- Resource preservation
- Collective decision-making

FORM AND PLACE

Björholmen, Sweden

Illustration: Björholmen hamlet and marina on the west coast of Sweden, a fine expression of place-making principles, recently expanded into a modern recreation destination while preserving its compact form and traditional architecture of red fisherman's houses. New boardwalks on the waterfront improve pedestrian access through the hamlet.

BOUNDARIES

Rivello, Italy.

WALKABILITY

Essex, New York.

Old Forge, New York.

PRINCIPLE:
WELL-DEFINED BOUNDARIES PREVENT HAMLET SPRAWL AND PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES.

Illustration: In the southern Italian hilltop hamlet of Rivello, continuous boundaries between built and natural follow the land's contours, strengthening the core; they channel density into the center, protect agriculture, and present a sweeping view to the horizon.

PRINCIPLE:
WALKABLE PUBLIC SPACES PROMOTE SOCIAL INTERACTION AT A HUMAN SCALE, ENERGIZING HAMLET ACTIVITIES.

Illustration: Essex and Old Forge pedestrian spaces in the hamlet center encourage walking and social interactions that benefit local businesses.

HUMAN SCALE

Illustration: The Rich Brothers Lumber Company founded the small hamlet of Wanakena in 1902 and built colorful arts and crafts cottages from salvaged lumber, many of which remain today. It is one of the best examples in the Adirondacks of a human-scale hamlet, with compact and sociable spaces and strong ties to nature.

Wanakena, New York.

PRINCIPLE:

ACCESS TO NATURE PROVIDES MANY WITH THE AUTHENTIC ADIRONDACK EXPERIENCE.

ACCESS TO NATURE

Illustration: The kayak and canoe launch at Moose River Outpost off Route 28 in Old Forge, and Inlet's Arrowhead Park are both good examples of access to nature from within a hamlet.

Arrowhead Park, Inlet, New York.

Moose River, Thendara, New York.

RESOURCE REUSE

Dalhalla Quarry , Sweden.

Illustration: Dalhalla Quarry is a former limestone quarry in central Sweden near Lake Siljan now used as a summer music venue with 4,000 seats. The amphitheater hosts 20-30 events each summer and the acoustical qualities are comparable to the best outdoor stages in Europe.

PRINCIPLE: STRONG HAMLET CENTERS SUPPORT DENSITY AND PROVIDE A COMPACT MIX OF USES.

GREEN DESIGN
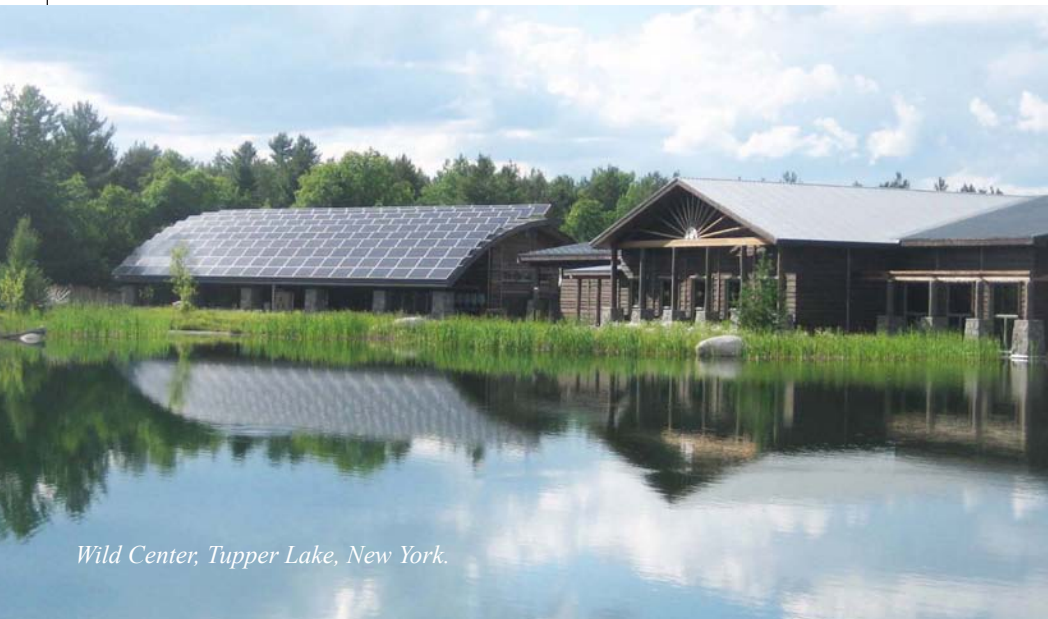
Wild Center, Tupper Lake, New York.

Illustration: The Wild Center Natural History Museum of the Adirondacks in Tupper Lake reclaims an old sand pit, converting it into a retention pond that filters storm water through indoor aquatic exhibits. The building, partially made of local materials, has solar panels and green roofs, and the parking lots are made of permeable pavers. The building's architecture reflects the Adirondack's Great Camps.

Illustration: Växjö Sweden Old Town has set a goal to be 70% fossil fuel free by 2025. Heat is supplied from a central biomass plant using wood chips from local mills. Växjö also utilizes geothermal heat pumps, hydroelectricity, and energy-efficient buildings while reducing oil demand through transit, walking, biking, and ethanol usage.

PRINCIPLE: ENERGY EFFICIENCY IS ACHIEVED THROUGH GREEN DESIGN AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE.

Illustration: The original 1904 hydroelectric plant in the hamlet of Wadhams, built to generate electricity for transmission to Mineville, closed in 1969. During the energy crisis of the 1970s it was purchased, restored, and reopened for small-scale production by local entrepreneurs and has, along with the popular Dogwood Bread Co. café and Wadhams Free Library, contributed to the revitalization of the hamlet.

Wadhams hamlet, New York.

ENERGY

Växjö's energy-efficient affordable housing.

Bio-fuel mass in Växjö is used for district heating.

Welcome to Växjö
The Greenest City in Europe

From water to Fossil Fuel free
—one step at a time

Water is used to generate electricity in Växjö, Sweden.

LOCAL POWER
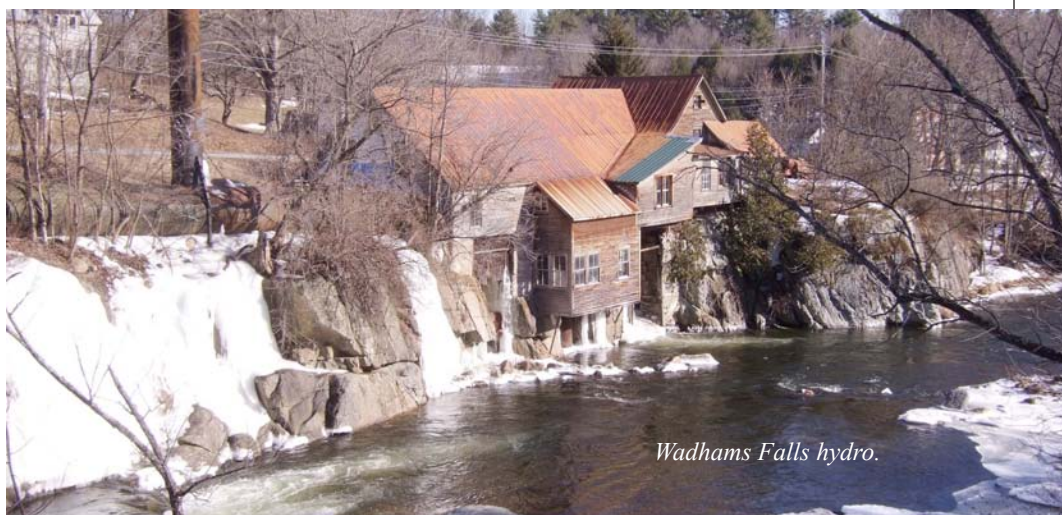
Wadhams Falls hydro.

SUSTAINABILITY

Nubanusit, New Hampshire.

JOBS AND HOUSING

Newton Falls, New York.

Illustration: The recently built Nubanusit Neighborhood and Farm illustrates innovative sustainable expansion in a rural context. On the banks of the Nubanusit River near Mt. Monadnack, New Hampshire, and one mile from the village of Peterborough, this 29-unit cohousing hamlet requires no fossil fuel and grows organic food on site. Energy-efficient structures in walkable clusters fit with the natural surroundings by using existing rocks and trees on the land.

PRINCIPLE: JOBS AND HOUSING GO HAND IN HAND.

Illustration: Newton Falls, a remote hamlet of 80 homes in the northwestern Adirondacks nearly disappeared when the local paper mill shut down in 2000. It made national headlines, however, when the mill reopened under new owners a few years later. By creating 104 new jobs and bringing in an estimated $18 million to the local economy, it sparked housing renewal in the hamlet.

Newton Falls Fine Paper Mill.

Inlet canal, New York.

Illustration: Making better use of existing rail lines and waterways could expand travel opportunities of Adirondack hamlets.

PRINCIPLE: REVIVING OLD RAILROADS WOULD GREATLY EXPAND TRAVEL OPTIONS.

Illustration: Essex hamlet along Lake Champlain shows the best of historic hamlet architecture in the eastern Adirondacks, expressing local character in form and detail. Many fine buildings hug main street, offering a model of high visual quality with intimate views of the lake.

PRINCIPLE: HIGH VISUAL QUALITY ATTRACTS INVESTMENT AND REFLECTS A HAMLET'S HISTORY.

TRAVEL CHOICES

Upper Hudson River Railroad, New York.

Adirondack rail corridors.

VISUAL QUALITY

Hamlet architecture, Essex, New York.

PRESERVATION

Tolleby, Sweden.

Illustration: In Tolleby hamlet on the island of Tjörn, Sweden, expansion is clustered along edges of natural valleys, preserving ecosystems, active farmlands and wetland areas.

PRINCIPLE: CRITICAL RESOURCES ARE PRESERVED THROUGH GOOD PLANNING.

Good planning and design
These smart growth examples show why good planning and design matters. Good community design leads to investment and economic development. However, Adirondack communities typically abdicate the job of design and physical planning to the cumulative results of incremental development or the actions of a land developer. The former results in scattered lot-by-lot development and the latter in disconnected enclaves. Neither process is likely to result in smart growth and investment.

The solution to this is for Adirondack communities to become proactive in the process rather than reactive, to take the next step and begin the physical design process to determine where major elements of the road system and water and sewer lines should be and what land uses and public spaces should be where. Planning and design can trigger unimagined possibilities and work to create form and structure for smart hamlet growth. In Section Five of the guide we introduce a smart growth planning and design model that communities can use to be more proactive.

PRINCIPLE: COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING IS PRUDENT WHEN GROWTH IS SLOW AND INCREMENTAL.

Elements

study

3.0

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS ARE DISCUSSED.

Study elements
This section discusses the fundamental questions and issues raised in *Hamlets 3,* including physical hamlet types, ways of hamlet expansion, why hamlets should or should not expand, factors to consider when choosing the best way to expand, and the need for a clear set of smart methods for planning future hamlet growth.

Defining the Adirondack hamlet
Today's Adirondack hamlets date from the early 1800s, when pioneers arrived (many from New England, Canada and Europe) to settle the Adirondacks and establish industries to harvest timber, extract mineral resources, and clear land for farming, raising sheep, and other agricultural pursuits. Shipping and commerce boomed with the opening of the Champlain Canal and the development of railroads. Tourism grew alongside resource industries, as the natural beauty of the region drew visitors. The early settlements evolved into the 130 (or so) places that today we call hamlets. They range in size from a little over a hundred in population to 5,000 or more.

The term "hamlet" most commonly refers to a small village or rural settlement that does not have its own elected government. However, defining "hamlet" in the Adirondacks is more complicated, as the term also refers to a state land use classification .

In 1973 New York State established the Adirondack Land Use and Development Plan, which divided privately-owned land within the Adirondack Park into six land use classifications, including one called "Hamlet" (colored brown on the land use map). The land use classification "Hamlet" usually coincides with a "hamlet" settlement, but not always. Some "hamlet" settlements are not classified "Hamlet" land use (usually designated Moderate, colored red). And some "Hamlet" land use area is undeveloped land. Also some larger hamlets are incorporated places and are called "villages."

Using the terms "Hamlet" (land use) and "hamlet" (settlement) can lead to confusion. The distinction is important, however, as legally Hamlet-designated areas afford more density options and less Adirondack Park Agency project jurisdiction. Eighteen of the 92 townships in the Adirondacks have physical "hamlets" but not "Hamlet-designated" areas. As used in *Hamlets 3*, "hamlet" means a community or physical settlement.
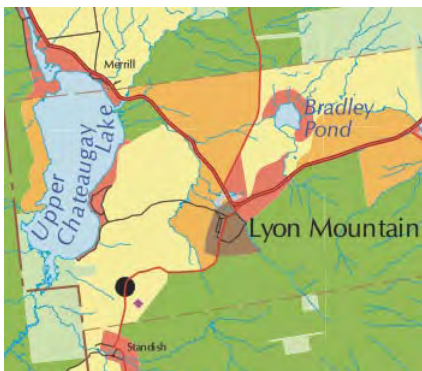

Star Lake: Many hamlet businesses take seasonal fluctuations into account.

Today's Adirondack hamlets are close-knit mountain communities surrounded by vast tracts of wilderness. Preserving hamlet culture is vital to the park's future.

IN THE ADIRONDACKS, "HAMLET" REFERS BOTH TO A LAND USE DESIGNATION AND PHYSICAL PLACE.

HAMLET BROWN

Lyon Mt. (colored brown) – both a land use-designated and physical Hamlet.

HAMLET RED

Wanakena (colored red) – a physical, but not a land-use-designated hamlet.

Why expand a hamlet?

According to research at Cornell University, there are three ways for a rural community to increase its economic vitality: increase per capita income, attract money from outside sources, or grow in population. These growth opportunities require some type of physical expansion whether it is the reuse of a factory, infill housing development, or expanded recreation opportunities.

Not all hamlets will want, or need to expand. Expansion, or the process of increasing a hamlet's land area, population size, economic base, open space, amenities, and/or service provision, is a factor of supply and demand. In some hamlets, demand for developable land outstrips its supply, which leads to increased land values and decreased affordable housing. In other instances, rising home and business vacancy rates indicate an abundance of land with little demand for its use.

To many in the Adirondack Park, hamlet expansion means obtaining an APA map amendment that reclassifies land into the APA Hamlet classification; however, more Hamlet-classified land does not necessarily lead to new development. Smart growth means a hamlet grows in a manner that increases economic viability and improves quality of life without sacrificing the region's natural resources or Adirondack aesthetic. Whether or not a map amendment is necessary to achieve this should be determined through a planning process including a market analysis and an inventory of existing developable parcels within or immediately adjacent to a hamlet's existing footprint.

Ways to expand: inward vs. outward
Once a demand for expansion has been established, a hamlet must choose the best type of expansion for its needs. Without any effort to plan, Adirondack hamlets grow incrementally, one lot at a time and usually along the lines of existing infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer lines. On the other hand, a proactive physical plan, along with financing for access and infrastructure, maximizes the use of land within and around existing hamlets and maintains the region's quality of life.

Inward growth happens within the existing hamlet footprint and can include:

Building reuse – repurposing vacant or obsolete buildings, including vacated schoolhouses, obsolete factories/mill buildings, churches, gas stations, empty storefronts, carriage houses, seasonal cottages, and garages.

Infill on vacant land – developing underutilized sites, brownfields, and areas not served by roads.

Dividing / reconfiguring lots – maximizing use of land within existing hamlets by subdividing "estate"-size lots large enough to accommodate several additional dwelling units.

Existing buildings have the potential to provide for residential and commercial growth inside a hamlet. Reconfiguring large, 19th century, "white elephant" houses often allows for additional dwelling units or accessory apartments. The lots on which such houses are located may also be large enough to accommodate several new dwelling units by dividing and/or reconfiguring the lots. Accessory structures, such as carriage

houses may also have the potential for reuse. Vacant sites located within the existing framework of the hamlet offer additional potential for inward growth.

Outward growth offers the opportunity to extend beyond the existing hamlet footprint and can include:

Contiguous sites at the edge – extending the hamlet footprint to vacant adjacent land that currently lacks access.

Linear hamlet extension – building incrementally one lot at a time along existing roads stringing away from hamlet centers.

Discrete development areas – developing hinterland sites not adjacent but well connected to existing hamlet centers.

Sites adjacent to hamlets may become extensions of the existing neighborhood and are often best suited for outward development as roads and utilities can be readily lengthened. Linear corridors are probably the easiest way to expand outward as their access and infrastructure already exists. However, this type of growth can lead to strip or ribbon development reducing a hamlet's visual quality and fostering automobile dependency. Development in the hinterlands, away from the hamlet and related to existing recreational facilities, can be considered smart growth if carefully planned to prevent sprawl.

Communities should consider both inward and outward expansion options but always seek inward options first. In spite of the varying challenges described here, inward expansion offers the most potential to achieve smart growth.
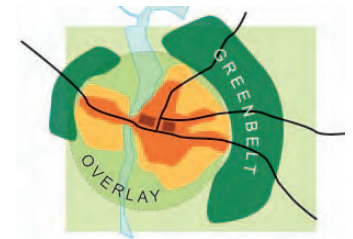
INWARD vs OUTWARD

INWARD – WITHIN HAMLET FOOTPRINT

- Adaptive reuse of obsolete buildings
- Infill on vacant / underused sites
- Dividing / reconfiguring lots
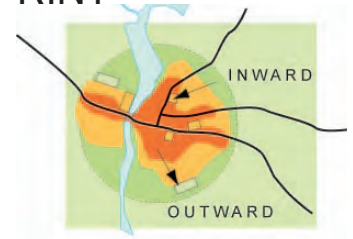
OUTWARD – BEYOND HAMLET FOOTPRINT

- Contiguous sites at the edge
- Linear hamlet extension
- Discrete development areas

Hamlets 3 introduces the concepts of "overlay", "greenbelt" and inward-outward expansion.

WAYS TO EXPAND

Adaptive reuse of obsolete buildings
Inward

Contiguous sites at the edge
Outward

Infill on vacant/underused sites
Inward

Re-dividing/reconfiguring lots
Inward

Linear hamlet extension
Outward

Discrete development areas
Outward
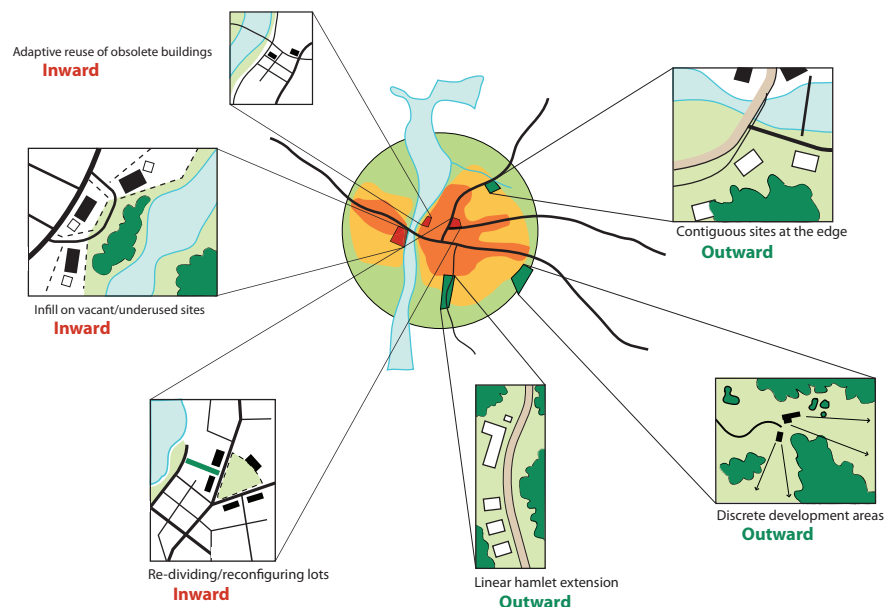
Diagrams of a fictional Adirondack hamlet show six ways to expand.

CONCENTRIC

GRID

LINEAR

NODAL

CROSSROAD

HAMLET LAYOUT

Factors to consider
When assessing ways to expand, factors will include physical hamlet layout, availability of land, site constraints, infrastructure, land use, and regional location.

Physical layout
There are five typical hamlet layouts in the Adirondacks, each requiring different expansion design strategies. A community normally accumulates multiple layout characteristics as it grows and expands.

Concentric – Hamlets with concentric form usually have continuous "ribbon" development around a lake or other central feature. Several issues arise from this type of development, including the lack of a hamlet core, waterfront privatization, decreased water quality from dispersed or failing septic systems, and expensive infrastructure extension. Adirondack example: Star Lake

Grid – Grid hamlets consist of streets consciously planned at right angles, forming rectilinear blocks. While grids make communities easily understood by visitors and allow for controlled expansion, they do not respond well to changes in topography. Expanding within a hamlet grid requires redeveloping underutilized parcels, reconfiguring lots, or introducing new buildings on interior-block sites. Adirondack example: Port Kent.

Linear – Linear hamlets are strung out along a line, be it a roadway or a river. The dispersed, elongated nature of a linear hamlet can result in diminished visual quality because of automobile-dependant development. Such communities often lack a core or center. Hamlets of this type should interrupt the linearity with clustered human-scale developments. Adirondack example: Wilmington

Nodal – Nodal hamlets are defined by physical organization around a dominant, well-defined open space at the center of the hamlet, where pedestrian and vehicular traffic converge. In a nodal hamlet there is an obvious spatial definition, a clear sense of knowing when you have arrived or when you are there. Expansion should take into account the sense of human scale and the activities the node generates. Adirondack example: Jay

Crossroad – Crossroad hamlets, formed at the intersection of two or more transportation routes, often grew haphazardly from their original settlement nucleus. When pressures for expansion force hamlets to grow at their edges, they tend to transform into strip development. Infill along parallel or secondary streets close to the intersection combats this kind of sprawl. Adirondack example: Bloomingdale

Layouts of typical Adirondack hamlets inform expansion design.

LAND AVAILABILITY

Land Availability

Every hamlet has some available land for expansion; it is just a matter of locating the sites. A lost space analysis, or the process of locating parcels that are undeveloped or underutilized, can help communities find land suitable for density increase by infill development. In many hamlets, vacant land exists within the APA Hamlet district boundary and communities should consider expanding into these areas. Outward expansion should be explored only when limited land is available within the existing fabric and after infill opportunities have been exhausted.

Site constraints

The physical and natural constraints of the land should inform Adirondack hamlet expansion. GIS mapping software and data overlays can help facilitate analysis of these factors. *Hamlets 3* uses layers of data from the U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS), National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), NYSDEC and the APA to analyze hydrography, wetlands, steep slopes, and Forest Preserve.

Hydrography – Surface waters, including lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams, have varying degrees of regulatory restrictions along their boundaries. Plotting these regulations onto maps yields an accurate representation of developable land.
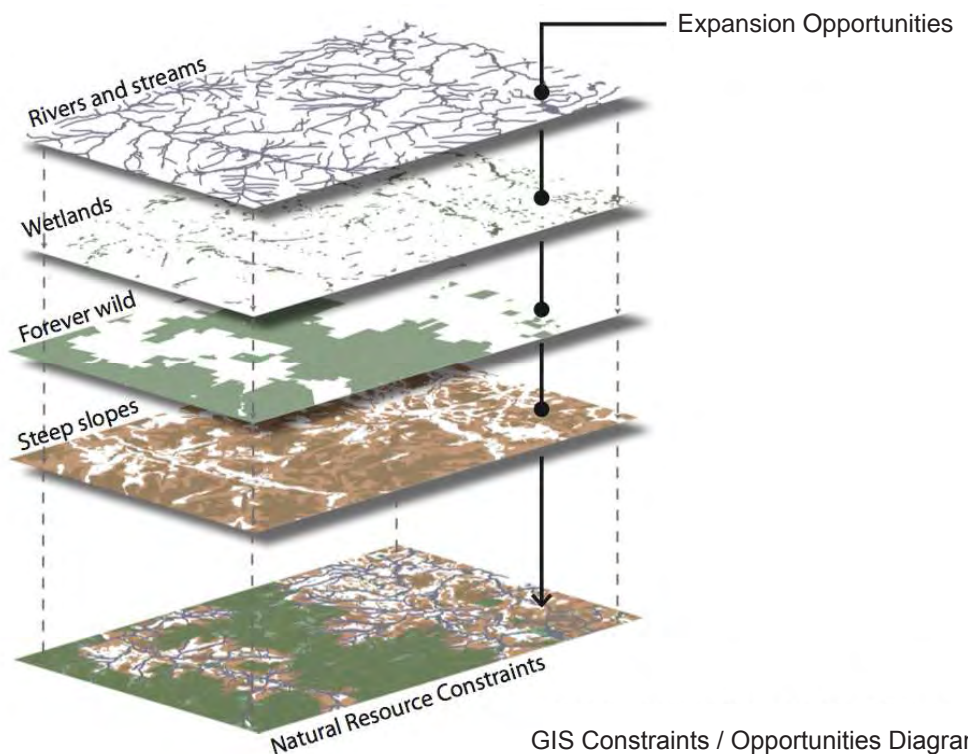
Wetlands – Regulated by the APA, wetlands and their boundaries should be preserved, as they are critical habitats for various wildlife species and work to clean ground and surface water.

Forever Wild – made up of Forest Preserve lands classified under the State Land Master Plan as Wilderness, Wild Forest, Primitive, Canoe, Intensive Use, Historic, Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers, Travel Corridors and State Administrative Areas.

Slope – Steep slopes in the Adirondacks are expensive to build on and are susceptible to erosion and negative impacts on water systems. Slopes above 15% grade should be considered generally unbuildable.
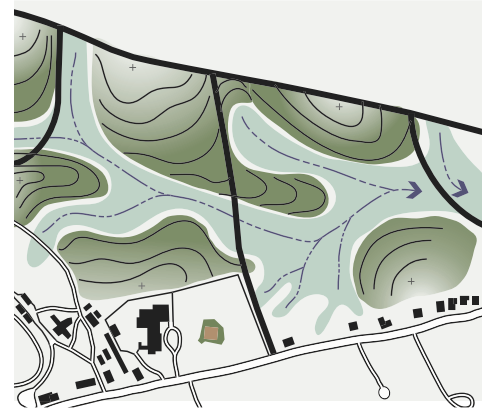

In Westport there is developable land at the hamlet's northern boundary, but with challenging topographic conditions.
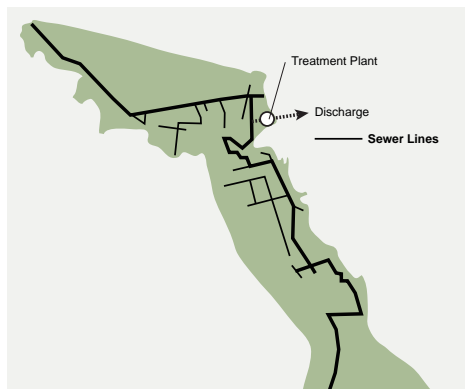

Expansion Opportunities

Rivers and streams

Wetlands

Forever wild

Steep slopes

Natural Resource Constraints

GIS Constraints / Opportunities Diagram

GIS mapping of Elizabethtown's natural resources determines constraints and opportunities for expansion.
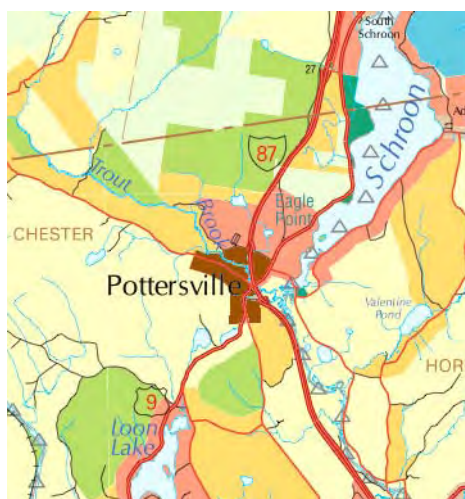
INFRASTRUCTURE
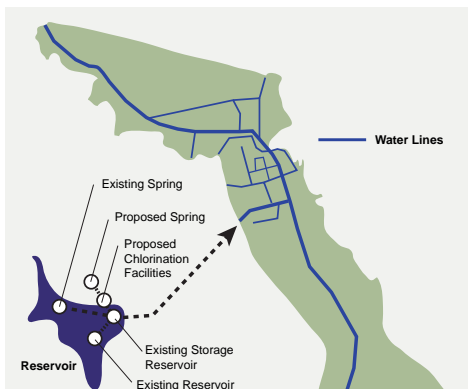
Water Supply.

Sewer System.

Hamlet expansion often requires extending water and sewer lines like here in Westport.

LAND USE 1

State Forest Classification	Private Land Classification	Average Lot Size
Wilderness	Hamlet	none
Canoe Area	Moderate Intensity Use	1.3
Primitive	Low Intensity Use	3.2
Wild Forest	Rural Use	8.5
Intensive Use	Resource Management	42.7
	Industrial Use	none

APA Map, Cranberry Lake.

APA Map, Pottersville.

It is easier to expand into moderate intensity (red) land than it is into the highly restrictive (green) resource management areas.

Infrastructure

Road, water, sewer, and other municipal infrastructure are critical factors in the demand for and design of hamlet expansion. If it is in the public interest to encourage smart growth of a hamlet, then innovative ways of financing the necessary infrastructure will have to be developed. Broadband infrastructure, health services, and business support networks also work to attract new investors and residents to Adirondack hamlets.

FUNDING INFRASTRUCTURE NECESSARY FOR HAMLET EXPANSION CAN BE PROBLEMATIC.

Land use circumstance 1

The Adirondack Park Agency's land use restrictions are an important factor in hamlet design and expansion. Diverse land use circumstances are found throughout the park, illustrating the need for a process that incorporates variation. In this context, it is easier to expand into Moderate Intensity land than it is into the highly restrictive Resource Management areas. Cranberry Lake's land use situation limits its outward growth potential while Pottersville could easily expand into Moderate Intensity regulated areas near the hamlet center.

LAND USE 2

Land Use circumstance 2

About half of the park is state-owned land which greatly influences a hamlet's potential for outward expansion. Almost all of this land is designated Forever Wild, precluding any potential for development. Hamlets such as Piseco, that do not have APA Hamlet-designated areas and are surrounded by significant amounts of state land, must seek inward, place-enhancing development in Moderate Intensity areas to further their economic growth.

Piseco, a small hamlet classified APA Moderate Intensity, is in the Town of Arietta where 90% of the land is state-owned.
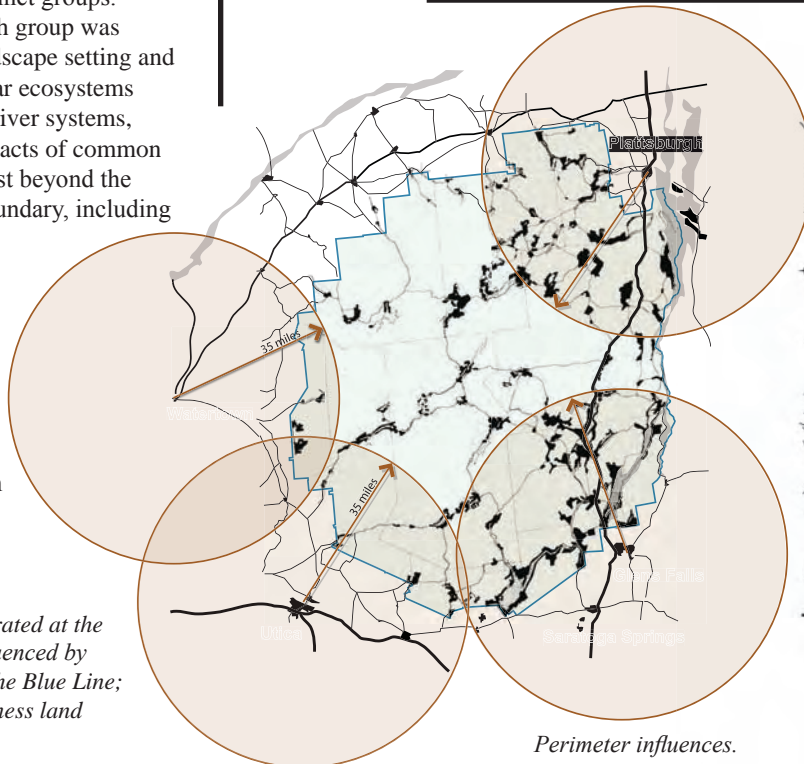

Piseco hamlet.
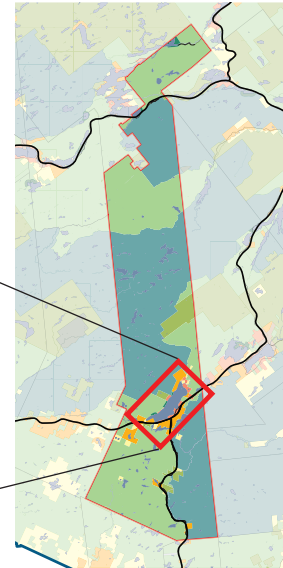
Town of Arietta.

Regional context

The Adirondack Park contains numerous sub-regions. The first phase of this work, *Hamlets of the Adirondacks,* grouped hamlets around shared geographic characteristics, finding nineteen distinct groups. The character of each group was derived from its landscape setting and relationship to similar ecosystems such as large lakes, river systems, upland habitats, or tracts of common wilderness. Cities just beyond the Adirondack Park boundary, including Plattsburgh, Glens Falls, Watertown, and Utica, influence the economies and functions of nearby hamlets. These varying regional conditions have a significant impact on hamlet expansion.

Settlement is concentrated at the Park's perimeter, influenced by larger cities beyond the Blue Line; large tracts of wilderness land occupies the center.
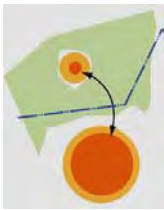
SUBREGIONS

Perimeter influences.

Interior subregions.

CLUSTERS

CENTER-SATELLITE

MULTI-NODAL

URBAN SYMBIOSIS

HAMLET NECKLACE

Historically, the clusters were shaped by watersheds, transport routes, geography and economics.

Cluster configurations

Hamlets never stand alone; rather they exist in clusters that share commercial, civic, and recreational resources. There are four types of hamlet cluster configurations in the Adirondack Park:

Center-satellite – a large, principal hamlet surrounded by smaller hamlets.

Multi-nodal – a group of equally-sized hamlets

Urban symbiosis – hamlets at the periphery of the park near a major urban center.

Hamlet necklace – a series of hamlets strung out in a row.

The cluster configurations point to diverse approaches to smart growth planning. Elizabethtown, Old Forge, and Star Lake clusters represent three distinct sub-regions in the park and embody characteristics of all four cluster configurations. Each cluster also has a different social, economic, historic and ecological purpose, allowing for study of hamlet expansion in the park's widely diverse places. Thus, they were selected for *Hamlets 3* field analysis.
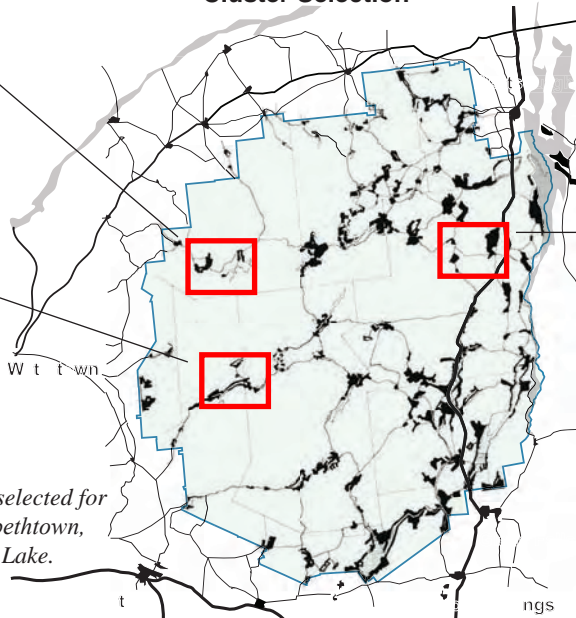
HAMLETS NEVER STAND ALONE BUT ARE CLUSTERED AROUND SHARED RESOURCES.

Cluster Selection

Star Lake
Oswegatchie
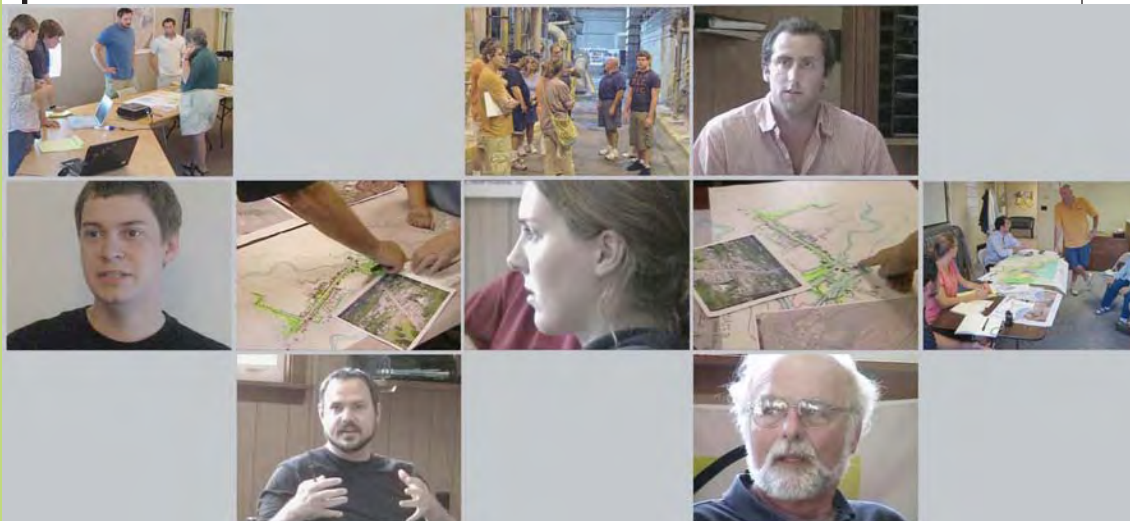Newton Falls
Wanakena
Cranberry Lake

Old Forge
Thendara
Big Moose
Eagle Bay
Inlet

Elizabethtown
Lewis
New Russia
Keene
Keene Valley
Saint Huberts

*Three clusters were selected for field analysis: Elizabethtown, Old Forge, and Star Lake.*

FIELDWORK IDENTIFIED EXPANSION SITES AND ISSUES.

Numerous workshops were conducted in the hamlet clusters by the Hamlets 3 team.

Field analysis

In July and August of 2009, the *Hamlets 3* team spent six weeks studying the potential for smart growth and expansion of hamlets in the Elizabethtown, Old Forge, and Star Lake clusters. The fieldwork process consisted of four weeks of field analysis and two weeks of graphic and document production. The team studied sixteen individual hamlets (see lists on page 24) using smart growth principles and inward/outward expansion methods. Analysis at the cluster, hamlet, and site scales identified a variety of expansion issues, potential expansion sites, and schematic proposals.
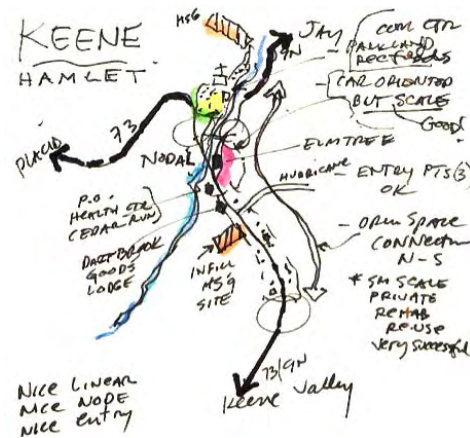
An on-site sketch map.

Field analysis at the ESF Ranger School at Wanakena, in Star Lake cluster.

4.0

field Analysis

FIELDWORK

Analysis process

In the first week, the team held preliminary meetings with liaison persons, followed by a week in each cluster to do field analysis. They set up a temporary field office in the principal hamlet of each cluster. They held public meetings and informal workshops and performed site visits, historic research, economic data analysis, inventories, and mappings. A public survey questionnaire determined how hamlets interact, what amenities would enhance a community, and what types of services a cluster lacked. The analysis and surveys gave the team an idea of what sites to investigate as expansion cases.
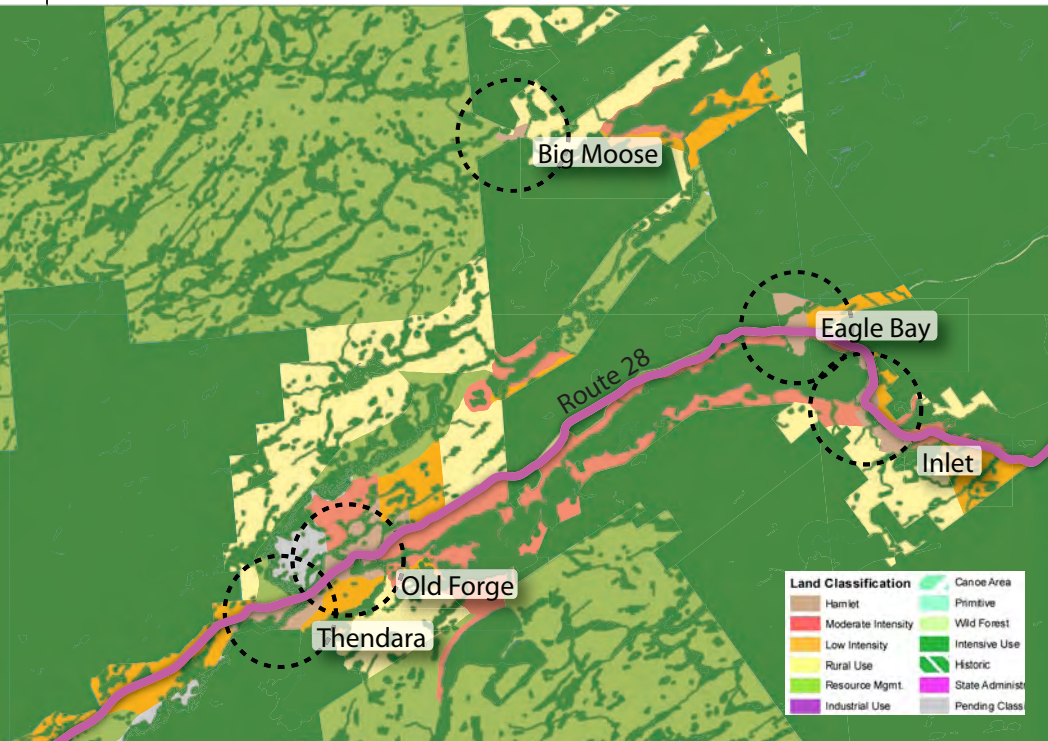

Site Key
1 - The Cobblestone
2 - Soccer Field/ Ice Rink
3 - Hale / Senior Housing
4 - River St. Lots
5 - Old Sunoco Station
6 - Old Yellow Diner
7 - Veteran's Memorial Park
8 - Pink Building
9 - North St. Sub-Division

Elizabethtown expansion sites map.

Hale house expansion site in Elizabethtown.

GIS map of developable land in Old Forge cluster.

FIELD WORK MATERIALS INCLUDED AERIAL IMAGERY, GIS DATA, APA MAPS, AND QUESTIONNAIRES.

Orthoimagery of Thendara hamlet.

A typical week in the field involved the following activities:

Day 1 – Reconnaissance of hamlets (including cognitive sketch maps) to assess landscape, environmental qualities, and physical hamlet conditions; APA Map and satellite imagery analysis; public midday kick-off meeting to discuss growth of the hamlets.
Day 2 – Field visits to possible expansion sites; photography, GIS and other mapping procedures; one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders.
Day 3 – Analysis of questionnaire responses, historical research, economic data analysis; mapping continues; public, informal, walk-in workshops in the evening.
Day 4 – Finalize diagrams, maps, photo documentation; prepare Powerpoint presentation.
Day 5 – Public exit presentation followed by question and answer; community social event.

E-TOWN FIELD ANALYSIS

The Elizabethtown cluster comprises two hamlet groups, one in the Boquet Valley (Lewis, New Russia, Elizabethtown), the other in Ausable Valley (Keene Valley, Keene, St. Huberts). The Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area and the Giant Mountain Wilderness separate these valleys. The Boquet Valley group benefits from close proximity to Interstate 87 and has a strong relationship with the Lake Champlain Valley hamlets of Willsboro, Essex, and Westport. The Ausable Valley Group has connections to the High Peaks Wilderness and the regional center of Lake Placid.
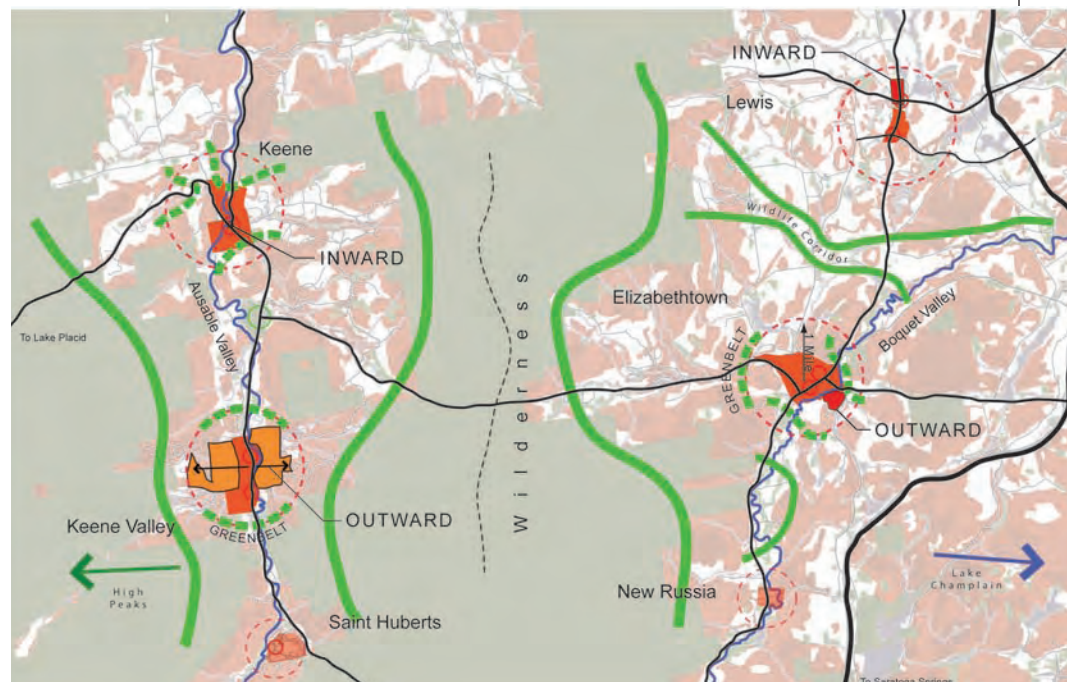
E-TOWN

TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMICS

Elizabethtown is the central hamlet of its cluster. Survey responses indicated frequent travel to Elizabethtown for daily needs and employment and travel away from Elizabethtown for residence and recreation. In the Ausable Valley Group, 27% of the workforce is employed in the tourism industry. Because the Boquet Valley Group employs 38% of the workforce in public administration or educational, health, and social services, it acts as a civic center. These differences are a function of transportation and history. Elizabethtown has been the county seat of Essex County since the late 19th century while St. Huberts, Keene Valley, and Keene of the Ausable Valley Group are situated on Route 73, a major

High country at Marcy Field in the Elizabethtown cluster.

THE E-TOWN CLUSTER IS TWO GROUPS OF HAMLETS DIVIDED BY A VAST WILDERNESS.
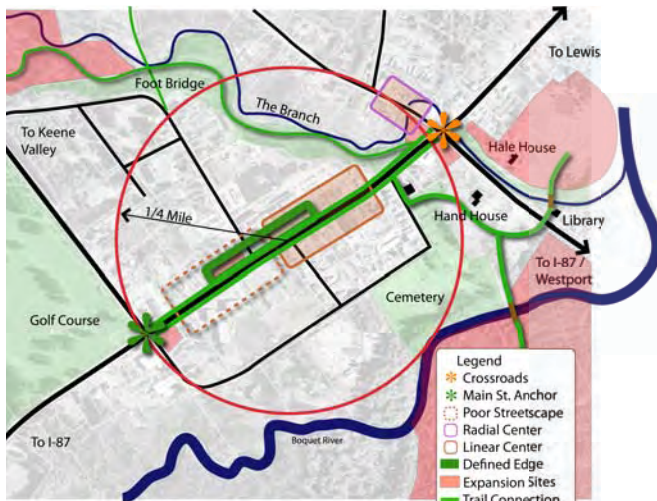

E-town cluster-scale analysis.

E-TOWN SPINE

The "Green Spine" connects inward expansion sites in E-town.

Veterans Memorial Park would be enlarged.

E-town framework shows good and bad streetscapes, green spine, and trails connecting expansion sites.

corridor linking from Interstate-87 to the High Peaks Wilderness. When I-87 bypassed Route 9 and the Boquet Valley hamlets during the 1960s, it left the group without much of its traditional tourism base, thus necessitating reliance upon government employment.

GREEN SPINE

A green spine on Court Street would enhance its visual quality and activate the street. The spine would connect many infill site opportunities, beginning at the Hale House property and ending at the south end of Court. The vegetative buffer would reduce the street's harshness and define the street edge in front of large retail stores. Veteran's Park would be extended to the wall of the Stewarts and Essex County

View of Court Street, the main thoroughfare through E-town.

Planning office building by eliminating the existing service drive. Redevelopment of infill sites and adaptive reuse of several historic structures would further add to Elizabethtown's appeal to residents and visitors.

HAMLET IDENTITY

Hamlets need strong centers to give them identity and to attract the attention of visitors. Infill sites are ideal places for adding population and business opportunities to a cluster, while at the same time improving the character of hamlets, particularly those that may have lost some identity through the loss of historic buildings.

Elizabethtown once had numerous historic buildings along Court Street, its main thoroughfare; however, these buildings have since been demolished and replaced with medium-box retail. Hindered by large parking areas and a lack of greenery, pedestrians are reluctant to stroll along the street after working hours. Evening activity is limited and the public realm unwelcoming.

E-TOWN CLUSTER HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING DENSITY WITHIN THE HAMLETS.

TWIN HAMLETS

In contrast to Elizabethtown and Lewis, the twin hamlets of Keene and Keene Valley have built out most parcels, creating a scarcity of affordable housing opportunities. Because the steep terrain of the Ausable Valley reduces the viability of outward expansion, these hamlets require inward reconfiguration for affordable housing. New trails between these hamlets would provide greater access to wilderness and foster a shared identity. Events such as farmers markets and craft fairs at Marcy Field would provide the opportunity for outward economic expansion, benefiting both communities.
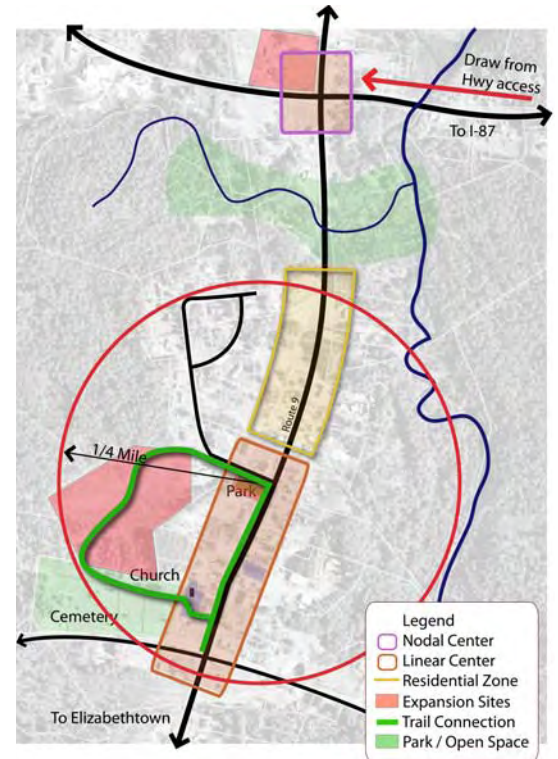

New Russia, a charming rural hamlet is classified Moderate Intensity.

DENSITY

The Elizabethtown cluster highlights the importance of increasing density within existing hamlets before seeking outward expansion. Elizabethtown and Lewis each contain an abundance of underutilized parcels that detract from their appeal. Keene and Keene Valley have limited room for outward expansion and few undeveloped parcels. These hamlets must reconfigure existing lots for inward expansion. New Russia and Saint Huberts are hamlets that do not have Hamlet-classified land and should work toward preserving their strong rural character.

LINEAR LEWIS

Other hamlets in the cluster offer similar lessons. The linear hamlet of Lewis lacks an attractive streetscape, preventing the hamlet's recognition as a distinct place. The community is spread out along Route 9 with a concentration of several businesses at the southern end of the hamlet while a critical intersection to the north remains mostly vacant. Proposals for streetscape improvements, redevelopment of infill parcels, a new motel at the intersection of Routes 9 and 12, increased park space, and landscaped walkways all address these conditions. Lewis has a sizable amount of Moderate Intensity land adjacent to its Hamlet district, providing noteworthy expansion potential.

Lewis framework shows a linear hamlet and future site for commercial growth to the north.
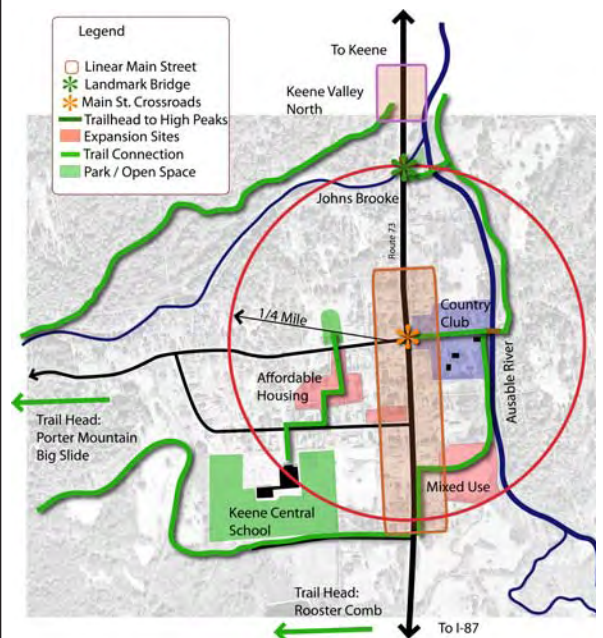
Keene Valley framework shows trailhead connections, expansion sites and open spaces.
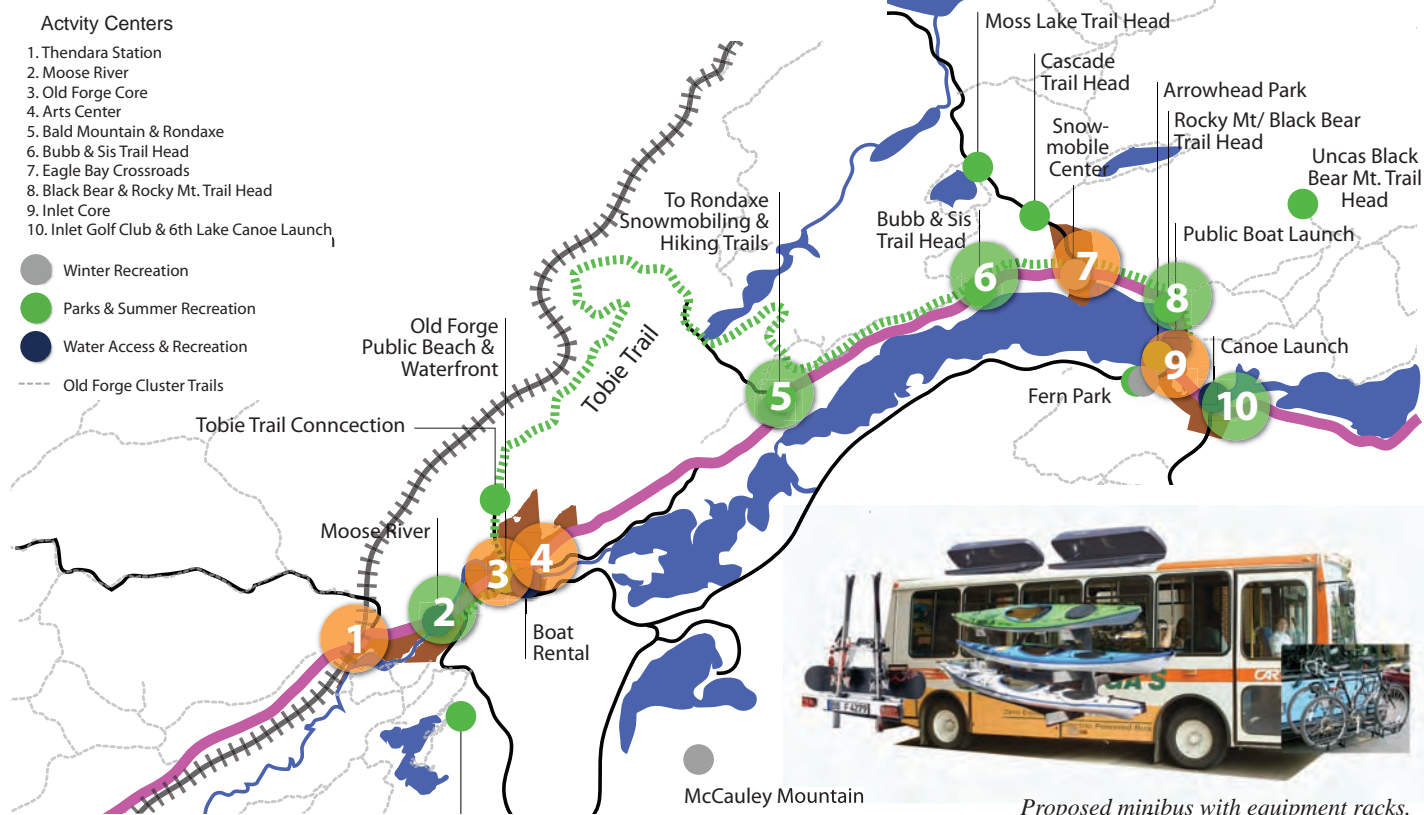
OLD FORGE

Hamlet Activity Centers

Outdoor Recreation Centers

Actvity Centers

1. Thendara Station
2. Moose River
3. Old Forge Core
4. Arts Center
5. Bald Mountain & Rondaxe
6. Bubb & Sis Trail Head
7. Eagle Bay Crossroads
8. Black Bear & Rocky Mt. Trail Head
9. Inlet Core
10. Inlet Golf Club & 6th Lake Canoe Launch

○ Winter Recreation

● Parks & Summer Recreation

■ Water Access & Recreation

--- Old Forge Cluster Trails

Moss Lake Trail Head

Cascade Trail Head

Arrowhead Park

Rocky Mt/ Black Bear Trail Head

Snow-mobile Center

Uncas Black Bear Mt. Trail Head

To Rondaxe Snowmobiling & Hiking Trails

Bubb & Sis Trail Head

Public Boat Launch

Old Forge Public Beach & Waterfront

Tobie Trail

Tobie Trail Conncection

Canoe Launch

Fern Park

Moose River

Boat Rental

Proposed minibus with equipment racks.

McCauley Mountain

New Art Center (above) and lake access (below) at minibus stop 4 in the corridor (see map).

OLD FORGE FIELD ANALYSIS

The Old Forge cluster comprises Thendara, Old Forge, Big Moose, Eagle Bay, and Inlet. Old Forge is considered the principal hamlet of the cluster because it contains the cluster's greatest concentration of civic and commercial services. Stakeholder interviews and survey results indicate that people in the area travel to Old Forge and Thendara for educational, medical, and social services while tourism employment, which accounts for one-quarter of the workforce, is scattered throughout the cluster. The region is one of the Adirondacks' oldest tourism centers and is home to the affluent Adirondack League Club.

TRANSIT CORRIDOR

The Route 28 corridor, defined by the Fulton Chain of Lakes, forms a linear string of hamlets in the Old Forge cluster with Big Moose located outside of the string. The team analyzed the corridor and mapped points of recreational and cultural activity to understand hamlet expansion opportunities. The hamlets of Old Forge and Inlet each maintain strong centers whereas Thendara and Eagle Bay present opportunities for place-making improvements through compact development. Several recreation nodes offer access to the region's vast trail network.

The field analysis concluded that a cluster-wide shuttle bus system was needed to achieve smart growth between the Adirondack Scenic Railroad depot in Thendara and the Golf Club at Inlet. The route would stop at ten major activity centers along the way. It also recognized the need for enhancement and expansion of sites at these ten centers. The density and character of the cultural centers should remain urban while the recreational centers more natural.

Site Key
1 - Foley Lumber TOD
2 - Senior Housing
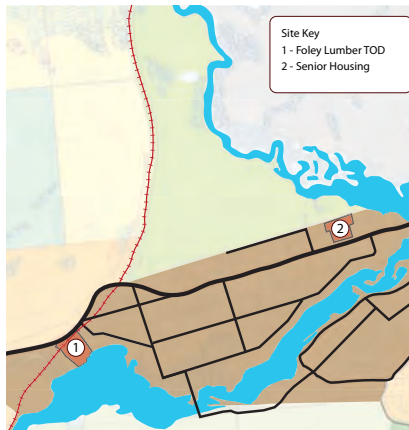
Two sites on Route 28 (#1 Foley Lumber & #2 senior housing) were identified as key expansion opportunities in Thendara hamlet.

DESIGN 1

FOLEY LUMBER REUSE

The gateway hamlet of Thendara is the first place visitors experience as they enter the Old Forge cluster from the south and is the Adirondack Scenic Railroad's only stop in the park. As such, development in this gateway should be maximized to indicate arrival at a special destination. The team identified the Foley Lumber site as a potential location for adaptive reuse. Because the Adirondack Scenic train depot and Route 28 shuttle bus stop are

FOLEY LUMBER PROJECT COULD BE AN ARCHE-TYPE FOR SMART TRANSIT-ORIENTED GROWTH.

located there it could house transit-oriented, mixed-use development. A series of open spaces would connect this transit center to a publicly accessible dock on the Moose River. A new visitor information facility and residential uses would complement an existing node with a hotel, several restaurants and bed and breakfasts, and a church.
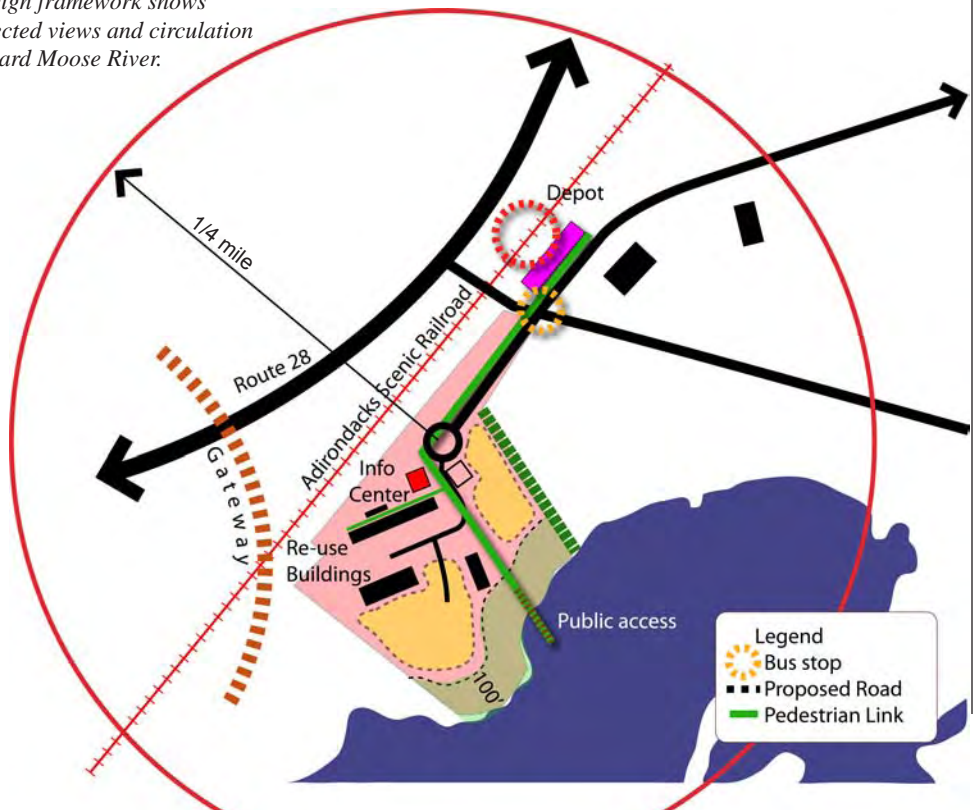


Existing Foley buildings could possibly be reused.

Foley site joins Route 28, Adirondack Scenic train depot, and Moose River, a one-of-a-kind opportunity for innovative transit development.

Design framework shows directed views and circulation toward Moose River.

Point Park framework, where curving roads come to a point in Old Forge core, illustrates how a signature civic-cultural space could be expanded.
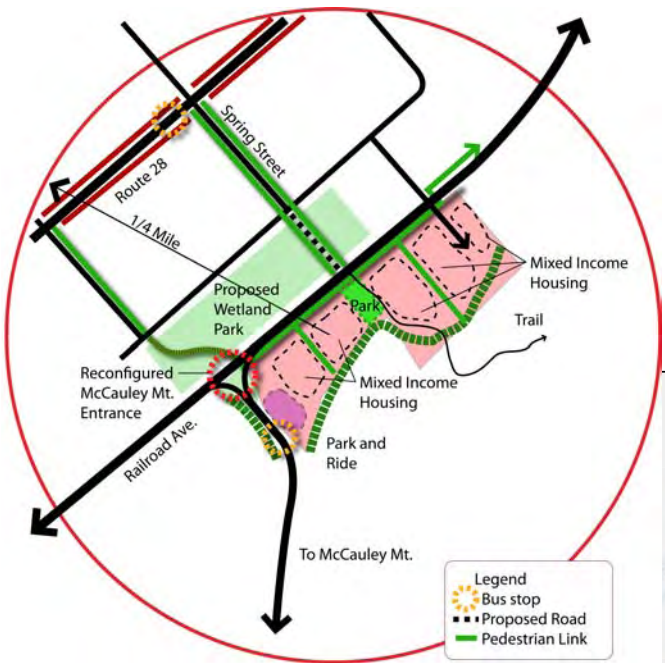
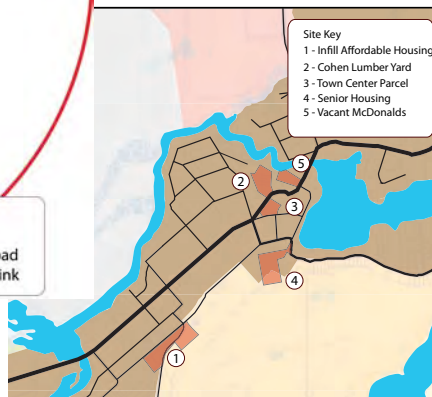*Railroad Avenue framework provides sites for much needed mixed-income housing by extending the hamlet grid.*

Point Park site with Cohen Lumber highlighted.

FROM LOST SPACE TO CIVIC SPACE IN OLD FORGE.

Railroad Avenue site.

Site Key
1 - Infill Affordable Housing
2 - Cohen Lumber Yard
3 - Town Center Parcel
4 - Senior Housing
5 - Vacant McDonalds

Old Forge expansion sites.

DESIGN 2
OLD FORGE CORE

Historic music park.

Old Forge is a vibrant hamlet center with residential density supporting a lively commercial corridor. The hamlet's main street is successful because it is compact, has commercial building facades defining the street, and has ample areas for walking and outdoor seating. The view down mainstreet ends at Point Park, which offers views of surrounding mountains and Old Forge Pond. Analysis suggests preserving and enhancing this amenity with a new music park and band shell inspired by the park that historically existed there. This would require the removal of a vacant restaurant and reconfiguring parking along the park's edge. The vacant Cohen Lumber on Route 28 could house new development. The property includes office and retail. Residential uses stretch to the river at the back of the site.

RAILROAD AVENUE HOUSING

The attractiveness of Old Forge to seasonal residents has created significant demand for affordable workforce housing. A vacant Railroad Avenue parcel in the hamlet, formerly town storage space, could be used for affordable cottages and bungalows to

house local families. The site is located both within Hamlet-designated land and on adjacent Low Intensity land. In hamlets nearing their maximum build-out, clustered expansion onto available contiguous parcels should be encouraged.

SMART GROWTH TIES OUTWARD EXPANSION TO RECREATION.

Expanding the McCauley Mountain recreation center could provide investments in the nearby hamlet of Old Forge.

McCAULEY MT. EXPANSION

The lack of remaining developable land within the hamlet of Old Forge illustrates the need for outward expansion in quickly growing hamlets. West-Central Adirondack Recreational Development Association's (WARDA) McCauley Mountain expansion proposal is an example of smart outward expansion. The proposal builds upon an existing facility with new trails, a Nordic ski race center, and indoor recreational facilities. This expansion is located in close proximity to many existing residents of McCauley Mountain.


Eagle Bay expansion sites.

DESIGN 3

EAGLE BAY CROSSROADS

Composed primarily of seasonal residences, Eagle Bay has few businesses but acts as a gateway to the settlement of Big Moose. A liquor store, an ice cream shop, and a snowmobile repair/storage facility create a small commercial district in the hamlet. The development of a snowmobile chalet on a remediated brownfield parcel and a shuttle bus stop would help establish Eagle Bay along Route 28. The adaptive reuse of an historical structure could provide space for an information center on the TOBIE bike trail and strengthen this intersection.

The Old Forge cluster highlights the importance of planning at the sub-regional scale. Hamlets are interdependent and share economic, cultural, civic, and recreational facilities and services important to residents. The proposed bus system can build on the cluster's synergies and alleviate traffic congestion. At the same time, this linear cluster emphasizes the need for strengthening hamlet nodes.
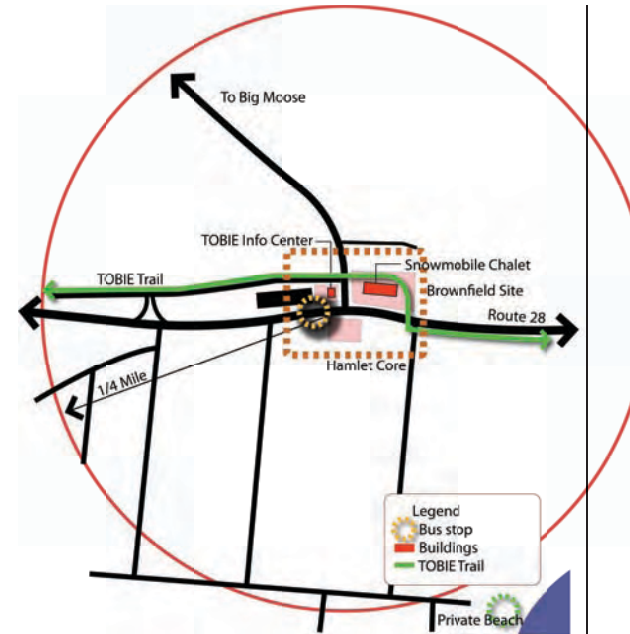
Eagle Bay intersection, an historic 'knuckle' in the regional road network, is a contemporary point of smart expansion.

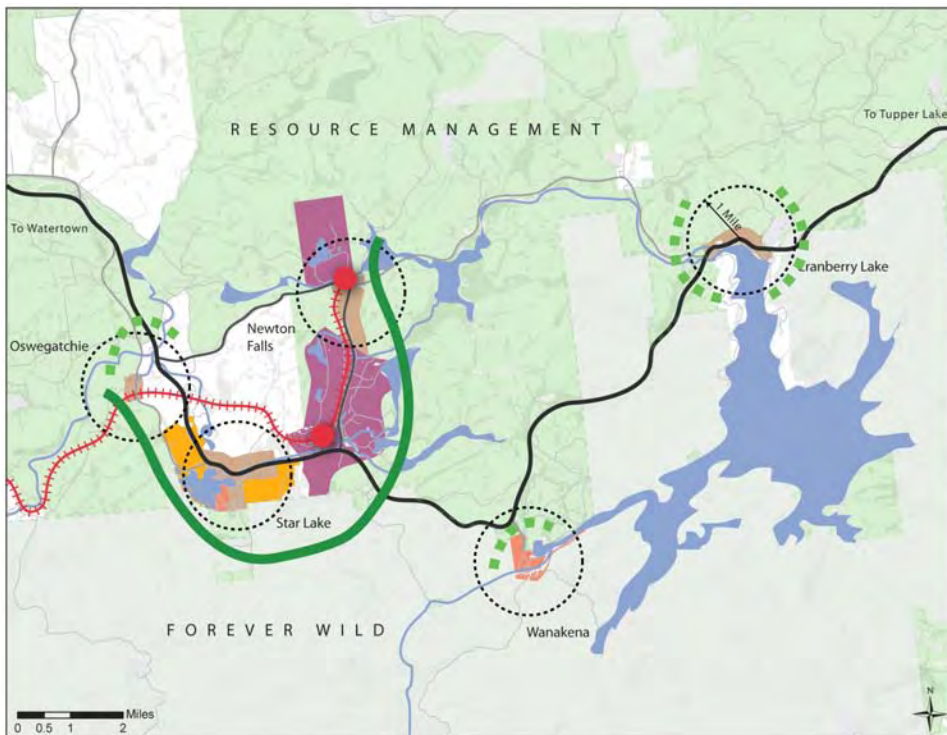*Tobie Trail information center could appropriate this vacant brick building.*

DESIGN 3 SHOWS HOW A KEY INTERSECTION ON ROUTE 28 CAN BECOME A MORE COHESIVE HUB.

STAR LAKE

Star Lake regional analysis.

STAR LAKE CLUSTER FORMS A 'U' WITH TWO OUTPOST HAMLETS.

STAR LAKE FIELD ANALYSIS

The Star Lake cluster, isolated by vast expanses of natural lands, has five hamlets: Star Lake, Oswegatchie, Newton Falls, Wanakena, and Cranberry Lake. With the exceptions of Wanakena and Cranberry Lake, the cluster's U-shaped settlement pattern closely follows the former Carthage & Adirondack Railroad line and historic roads.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The five hamlets, located within the towns of Clifton and Fine, are economically and administratively interdependent to the point that one interviewee said, "When Star Lake sneezes, Cranberry Lake holds the tissue." The physical layout of the cluster's two towns is also closely connected as a traveler crosses the towns' border several times between Oswegatchie and Cranberry Lake (see map on page 63).

Star Lake is the cluster's primary hamlet and residents from each of the satellite hamlets rely on services located there. Steel, mining, and mill operations on the cluster's abundant industrial land, historically provided jobs for the residents. However, most of these businesses, aside from the Newton Falls Fine Paper mill, have since left. The hamlet of Wanakena provides employment opportunities through the Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) Ranger School while Cranberry Lake offers jobs in tourism. The interconnections of these hamlets provide an opportunity for cluster-scale economic renewal.
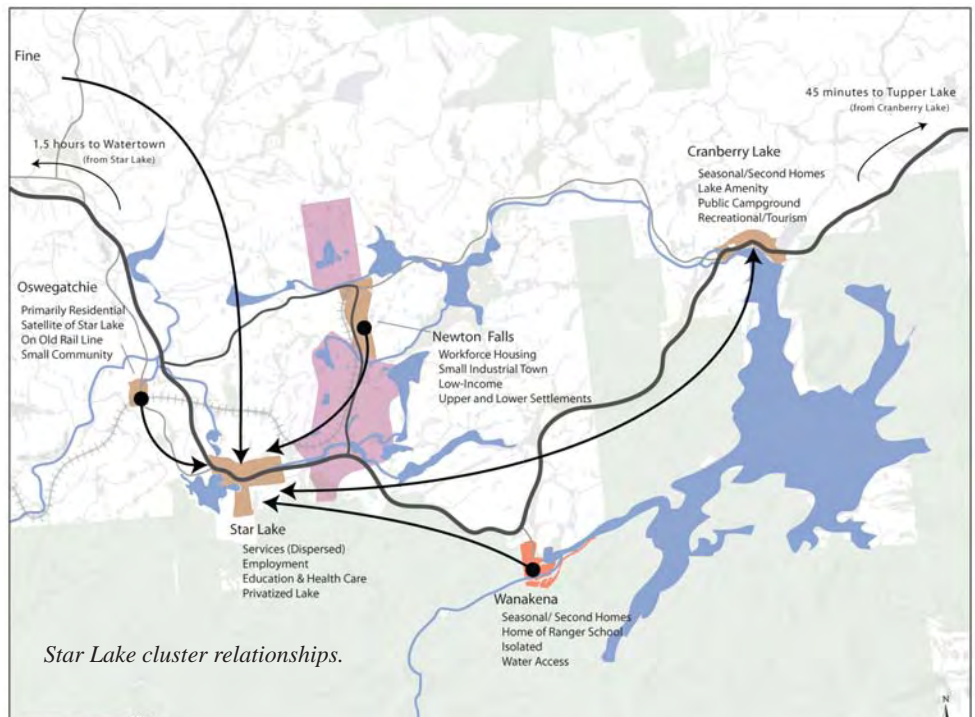

Star Lake cluster relationships.

FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

The cluster contains a large amount of Industrial Use land at the former J&L Steel Corporation, Benson Mines, and currently-operated Newton Falls Fine Paper sites. Reintroducing rail service into this industrial complex would enable the paper mill to import pulp more economically and new forest products industries and mining operations to export products.

The rail service could entice industry back to these sites. Forest product companies should be approached to locate on the former J&L property. Chips from these companies could then be used at a pressboard plant or chip-drying facility, providing on-site renewable energy. The ESF Ranger School at Wanakena could also establish a sustainable forest products research and development workshop where students study new wood products technologies.

By introducing new industries, enhancing existing assets, and facilitating communication among them, the Star Lake cluster would become an example of sustainable industrial revitalization.

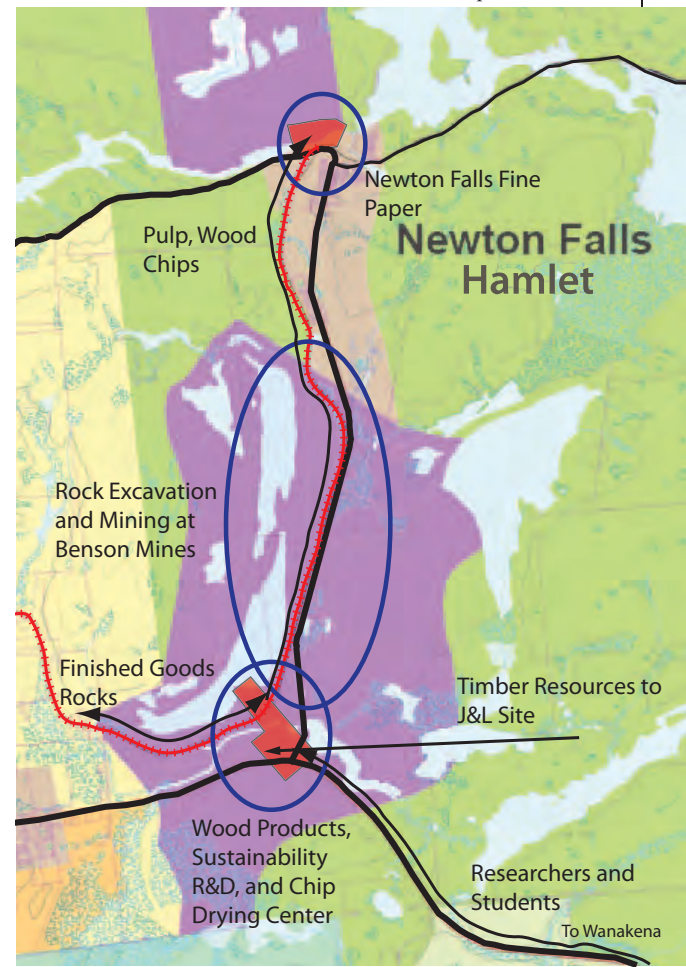## ACTIVATING THE RAILWAY WILL STIMULATE GROWTH OF INDUSTRY AND HOUSING.

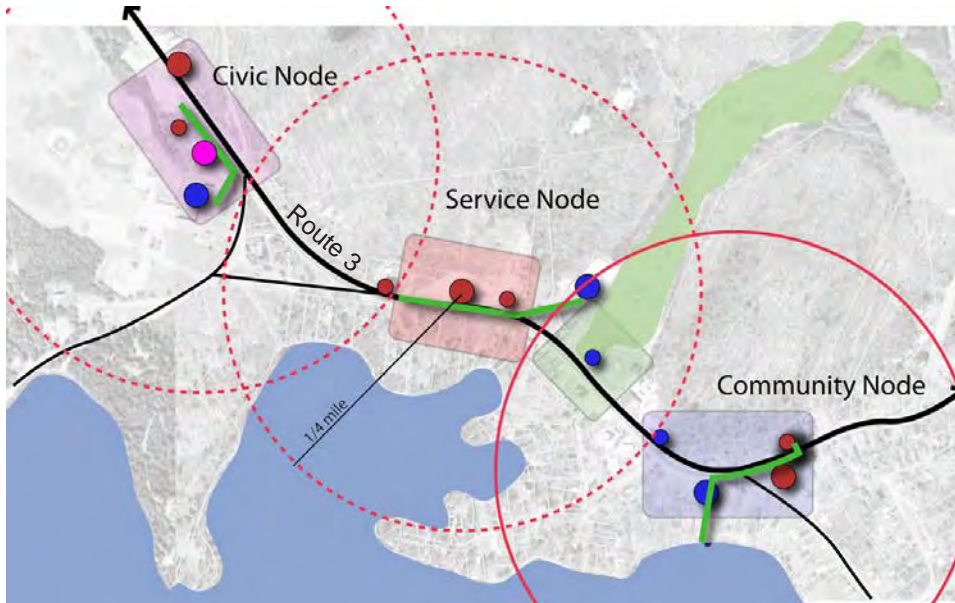*Site visit to Newton Falls Fine Paper mill.*

Remains of J&L Steel Corporation site.

Rebirth of the paper mill was a first step toward smart growth. Benson Mines and J&L are next.

Industrial redevelopment zone.

Newton Falls Fine Paper

Pulp, Wood Chips

Newton Falls Hamlet

Rock Excavation and Mining at Benson Mines

Finished Goods Rocks

Timber Resources to J&L Site

Wood Products, Sustainability R&D, and Chip Drying Center

Researchers and Students

To Wanakena

Ranger School could play an important role in sustainable wood products research.
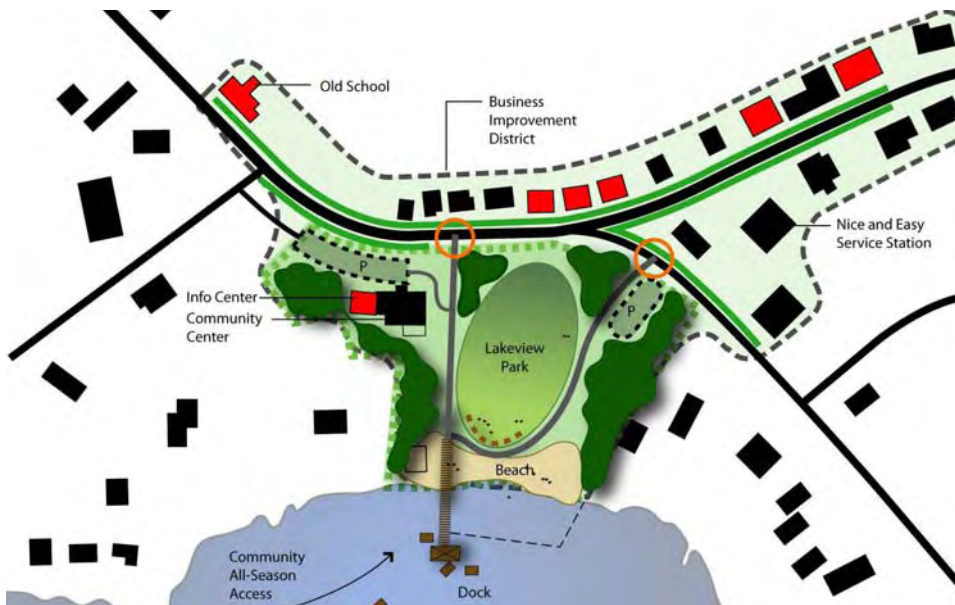
There are three loosely-formed nodes in Star Lake along Route 3.

Community park location in Star Lake.

LAKEVIEW COMMUNITY PARK WOULD HELP CLARIFY THE HAMLET CENTER.

The new park could become a point of focus and arrival, providing expansive views of the lake.

STAR LAKE CENTER RENEWAL

The cluster should work to attract investors and residents by creating vibrant hamlet centers. Star Lake is currently a fragmented hamlet with three individual nodes, of which none resembles a town center. The hamlet's "community" node presents an opportunity for a hamlet core and waterfront park. A dilapidated former hotel site, a limited-access canoe launch, and a town-owned parcel, consisting of a community center and water pump, could be consolidated to create the new Lakeview Park, providing public lake access.

Infill development on underutilized parcels adjacent to the park, along with streetscape improvements, would signal a distinct and vibrant place to visitors and the community alike. The proposal calls for a public beach, a boat launch, and a dock tie-up area with lake views extending from the revamped hamlet center.

Glimpse of Star Lake behind Community Center.

CRANBERRY LAKE VISTAS

The recreation-oriented hamlet of Cranberry Lake has potential to attract business owners and entrepreneurs to the region. With vistas across Cranberry Lake, the hamlet is already established as a destination to those looking for wilderness waterways. Cranberry Lake should preserve its major scenic vistas as it expands. A vacant field on the eastern edge of the hamlet, along with an old gas station on its western edge, are potential expansion sites that should be redeveloped in order to strengthen the hamlet's gateways.

The Star Lake cluster provides examples of hamlets that have available APA Hamlet-designated land for development. These places should seek inward expansion to create strong centers before significant outward expansion can be justified. An industrial renaissance coupled with strengthened hamlet centers provides opportunity for economic uplifting within the cluster.

SCENIC VISTAS LOOK OUT OVER CRANBERRY LAKE INTO THE FIVE PONDS WILDERNESS.

Cranberry Lake hamlet is all about vistas toward the south from Route 3.

Vista 1.

Vista 2.

Vista 3.

Vista 4.

Vacant land within the hamlet can be a target for smart growth in Cranberry Lake.

EXPANSION SITES

The Hamlets 3 field analysis of July and August 2009 led to an initial listing of expansion sites and helped citizens brainstorm growth opportunities in their hamlet. It provided insights into expansion problems in different areas of the park. This process clarified the need for an expansion planning model applicable to a variety of situations, a model that could advance the cause of smart growth in the Adirondacks. It would have to be a model that local planning board members could easily use. Section 5 introduces such a model.

Fieldwork Expansion Sites

50 total expansion sites | **31** inward | **19** outward

Elizabethtown Cluster

Inward

Reuse of Obsolete Buildings:
Old Yellow Diner (E-town)
Vacant Pink Building (E-town)
Elm Tree Inn (Keene)

Infill Vacant/Underutilized Land
Cobblestone Property (E-town)
Soccer/Ice Rink (E-town)
River St. Lots (E-town)
Veteran's Memorial Park (E-town)
Town Park (Lewis)
Affordable Housing Site (Keene)
Community Space (Keene)

Re-dividing/Reconfiguring lots
Hale Senior Housing (E-town)
Mobile Home Site (Keene Valley)
Assisted-Living Lot (Keene Valley)

Outward

Contiguous Sites at the Edge
No. St. Subdivision (E-town)
Cemetery Land (Lewis)

Linear Hamlet Extension
Site @ corner of Rt. 12 & Rt. 9 (Lewis)

Discrete Development Areas
Marcy Field (Keene Valley)

Old Forge Cluster

Inward

Reuse of Obsolete Buildings:
Vacant McDonalds (Old Forge)
Rt. 28 Senior Housing (Thendara)
Moose River Outpost (Thendara)
TOBIE Info Center (Eagle Bay)
Arrowhead Park Expansion (Inlet)

Infill Vacant/Underutilized Land
Hamlet Center Parcel (Old Forge)
Foley Lumber Reuse (Thendara)
"Snowmobile Chalet" (Eagle Bay)
Canal Bridge Remodel (Inlet)
Inlet Golf Site (Inlet)

Re-dividing/Reconfiguring lots
Cohen Lumber Lots (Old Forge)

Outward

Contiguous Sites at the Edge
Railroad Ave. Housing (Old Forge)
Senior Housing Expansion (Old Forge)
Fern Park Expansion (Inlet)
6th Lake Canoe Launch (Inlet)

Linear Hamlet Extension
Art Center Node (Old Forge)

Discrete Development Areas
McCauley Ski Mtn. (Old Forge)
Airport Development (Old Forge)
Bald Mtn & Rondaxe trailhead (Old Forge)
Bubb & Sis Trailhead (Old Forge)
Black Bear/ Rocky Mtn. Trailhead (Inlet)
Map Amendment Sites (Inlet)

Star Lake Cluster

Inward

Reuse of Obsolete Buildings:
Core Infill Buildings (Star Lake)
Vacant Gas Station (Cranberry Lake)
Church Reuse (Star Lake)

Infill Vacant/Underutilized Land
Walkway Links - 3 Nodes (Star Lake)
Core Open Spaces (Newton Falls)
Empty Field East End (Cranberry Lake)

Re-dividing/Reconfiguring lots
Community Waterfront Park (Star Lake)

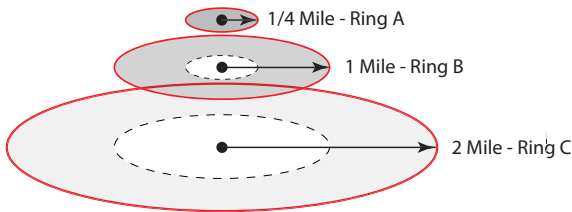#### Outward

Contiguous Sites at the Edge
Benson Mines (Newton Falls)

Linear Hamlet Extension
Residential Building Lots (Oswegatchie)
No. Shore Housing (Wanakena)

Discrete Development Areas
J&L Site (Newton Falls)

MODEL LAYERS

Model

expansion

5.0

Hill

Trees

Hamlet

Wetland

1 Physical on-the-ground condition

1/4 Mile - Ring A

1 Mile - Ring B

2 Mile - Ring C

2 Time-distance overlay rings

3 APA map

C5

C3

A1

B2

C4

4 Rings over APA map = expansion overlay zones

5 Accommodate for natural resource constraints (GIS) within rings

reuse of empty industrial facilities (C3)

golf/ski/trail lodgings (C5)

6 Inward - outward expansion design guidelines by zone

adding blocks to hamlet grid (B1)

anchoring hamlet intersections (A1)

Scorecard

7 Scorecard: expansion project evaluation

Expansion model

The model in this section provides a framework for planners, community leaders, and residents to understand the complexities of their hamlet and to create a plan for future expansion following smart growth principles. The model presents Smart Growth Rings that overlay current APA land use classes to create a set of 15 unique overlay zones, each with its own guidelines for expansion.

The three Rings.

Smart Growth Rings

The expansion model developed for *Hamlets 3* is organized around three concentric Smart Growth Rings centered on a common point in the core of a hamlet. The radius of each Ring is determined by approximate travel time to the hamlet center where goods and services are located and where the majority of household trips are taken. Travel times are relative within a particular hamlet, and will vary from hamlet to hamlet depending on conditions such as topography, the presence of water bodies, road and walkway connectivity, and other physical characteristics. When the Rings are applied to the APA Land Use and Development Map, they locate and prioritize potential sites for hamlet expansion. The Rings provide the framework for smart growth planning of new development within or near existing hamlet centers, encouraging a physical form that is walkable, compact, and energy efficient.

Locating the Rings at the correct hamlet center is essential for proper application of the model; the proper hamlet center will usually be at a major intersection or in the middle of a hamlet's main street or commercial district. In some cases choosing a hamlet center offers an opportunity for a community to decide what its core is. Deciding on a center point is an opportunity to engage the public in discussion and incorporate resident feedback into the decision-making.

THE EXPANSION MODEL IS ORGANIZED AROUND THREE CONCENTRIC RINGS.

GROWTH RINGS

RINGS

Ring A: Inward Growth – has a one-quarter-mile (1320') radius that approximates a five-minute walk. For many Adirondack hamlets this Ring will encompass most, if not all of a hamlet's central area. Expansion within the existing hamlet footprint should happen in Ring A and should be prioritized when feasible. Sites not classified on the APA Map as Hamlet in Ring A may be suitable for an upgrade through the APA map amendment procedure. Total acreage of Ring A is 126 acres.

Ring B: Outward Expansion – has a one-mile (5280') radius or roughly a five-minute bike ride or 20-minute walk to the hamlet center and is appropriate for either inward or outward expansion, depending on hamlet size. Expansion in this Ring may involve contiguous sites at the hamlet's edge or linear corridor extensions, but it is critical to prevent linear strip sprawl. It is sometimes appropriate to upgrade portions of land in Ring B to promote denser, more compact development. Total acreage of Ring B is 1,884 acres.

Ring C: Hinterland Growth – has a two-mile (10,560') radius corresponding to a 10-minute bike ride or a 40-minute walk from the hamlet center. A four-minute drive makes Ring C appropriate for low impact, open space-oriented expansion that may require vehicular access by hamlet residents and seasonal users. Special care should be taken not to disrupt ecological functions, wildlife habitat, or landscape views and vistas when expanding into Ring C. Density upgrades are not generally recommended. Total acreage of Ring C is 6,028 acres.

APA LAND USES

Hamlet – These are the growth and service centers of the Adirondacks where limited permit requirements encourage development. Only development of select expansions of buildings and uses, large projects, or those in or near sensitive areas require APA approval. Hamlet boundaries typically extend beyond established settlements to provide room for future expansion. No density limit. APA Map Color: Brown.

Moderate Intensity Use – Most uses are permitted; relatively concentrated residential development is most appropriate; 1.3 acres per principal building. APA Map Color: Red.

Low Intensity Use – Most uses are permitted; residential development at a lower intensity than hamlet or moderate intensity is appropriate; 3.2 acres per principal building. APA Map Color: Orange.

Rural Intensity Use – Most uses are permitted; residential uses and reduced intensity development that preserves rural character is most suitable. 8.5 acres per principal building. APA Map Color: Yellow.

Resource Management – Most development requires an Agency permit; compatible uses include residential, agriculture and forestry. Special care is taken to protect the natural open space character of these lands. 42.7 acres per principal building. APA Map Color: Green.
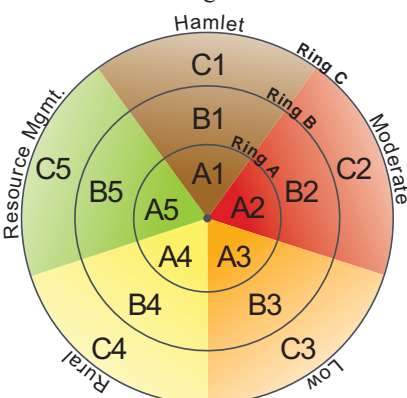
Industrial Use – Industry exists or has existed or may be suitable for future industrial use. Industrial uses are also allowed in other land use area classifications. Non-industrial uses are not permitted. No density limit. APA Map Color: Purple.

Overlaying the Smart Growth Rings on the APA Land Use and Development Map derives expansion overlay zones. This process yields 15 unique expansion zones, each characterized by its Smart Growth Ring location and APA land use classification. The expansion zones that emerge from this overlay have specific locational characteristics and design development potentials for smart hamlet expansion.
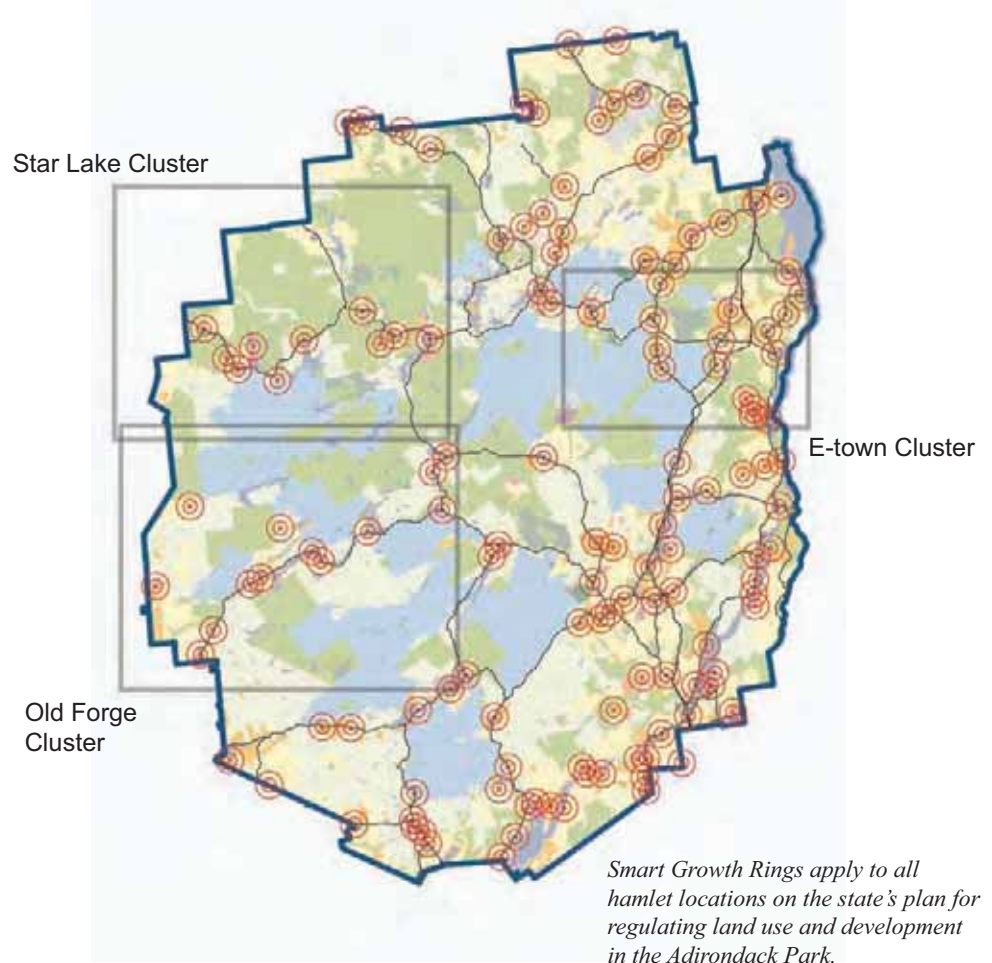
The model can help communities locate, describe, evaluate, and prioritize possible expansion site opportunities so that projects fit into an overall planning framework for smart growth. An evaluation scorecard and smart design scenarios for inward and outward expansion projects are incorporated into the model.

The *Hamlets 3* expansion overlay zones are intended to be used with existing APA private land use and intensity classifications. Overlay zones are commonly applied when special rules or guidelines are needed for areas of unique natural, historical or cultural significance, scenic resources, or planned development projects.

The expansion zones are utilized only in connection with the APA classifications of Hamlet, Moderate Intensity Use, Low Intensity Use, Rural Use, and Resource Management. Other APA designations fall outside the realm of the model because of their unique characteristics. These zones include Industrial Use and those pending classification. APA guidelines should

APPLYING RINGS

Star Lake Cluster

E-town Cluster

Old Forge Cluster

Smart Growth Rings apply to all hamlet locations on the state's plan for regulating land use and development in the Adirondack Park.

Expansion overlay zones are derived from where the three Smart Growth Rings meet the five APA land classifications.

APA Classes				
Hamlet	Moderate	Low	Rural	Resource Management
1	2	3	4	5
Ring A 1/4 mile A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
Ring B 1 mile B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
Ring C 2 mile C1	C2	C3	C4	C5

be followed for development in these zones. New York State Forest Preserve Forever Wild lands are undevelopable and therefore omitted from the smart growth expansion model, although they are still essential to consider in hamlet expansion.

It is possible for Smart Growth Rings to overlap when hamlets are located close together. In these instances intersecting Rings are joined at their points of intersection. The overlay zones are not necessarily regulatory, but could be incorporated into code at a municipality's choosing.

Overlay zone descriptions

The descriptions and guidelines for each of the 15 overlay zones were developed using the ten smart growth principles. These zone descriptions should be consulted when examining possible expansion zone sites and project proposals. Each zone is distinct but may share similar characteristics with other overlay zones. In general, zones closer to the hamlet center that have less restrictive APA land use classifications are better suited for denser development of residential and commercial uses than zones further from the hamlet center, which have more restrictions.

Zone A1:
1/4 mile / Hamlet

Zone A2:
1/4 mile / Moderate

Zone A4:
1/4 mile / Rural

Adirondack views of select expansion zones in Ring A.

OVERLAY ZONES

RING A

1/4 mile - Ring A
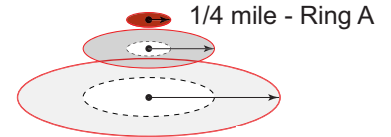
A1: 1/4 mile / Hamlet
Greatest potential for smart inward growth because of its close proximity to hamlet center and its land use classification; appropriate for a mix of urban uses including year-round housing, commercial, residential, and cultural development; reuse of obsolete buildings and vacant land; dense, tight fabric and compact, walkable spaces; priority funding area for infrastructure and business improvement.

A2: 1/4 mile / Moderate (1.3 acres)
Very suitable for significant inward growth of moderate-density residential and retail development; a second priority (with good proximity to hamlet center) when sites in A1 are unavailable; areas may be prime candidates for upgrade to Hamlet brown; A2 has high potential for re-dividing or reconfiguring lots, accessory units and bike–bus transportation options.

A3: 1/4 mile / Low (3.2 acres)
Suitable for inward, lower-intensity residential expansion near intersections and nodes in hamlet center or institutional uses, such as schools, churches, municipal office space, or local resource-based industry; possible smart growth upgrades of sites contiguous to Moderate or Hamlet as a means of consolidating density and preventing inner-hamlet sprawl.

A4: 1/4 mile / Rural (8.5 acres)
Best suited for inward, rural-density expansion uses that preserve landscape character; sensitive treatment of wetlands and steep slopes; open space conservation projects and trusts; active recreation for hamlet residents; urban farming, community gardens, and food production; key areas could receive density transfers for smart growth in special cases.

A5: 1/4 mile / Resource Management (42.7 acres)
Resource Management land within hamlet core; unique opportunities for recreation greenways, greenbelts, parklands and access to waterfronts and nature trails for hamlet residents; small, unobtrusive structures associated with conservation education and information, agriculture, forestry or recreation; not recommended for significant building construction or intensity upgrades.

RING B

1 mile - Ring B
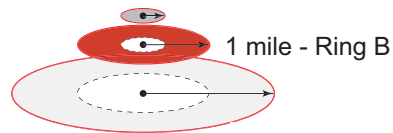
B1: 1 mile / Hamlet
Very high potential for smart inward or outward growth (depending on hamlet size); urban uses include residential and commercial, retail, and employment centers; compact patterns of growth encouraged by targeted priority funding for infrastructure and site improvements.

B2: 1 mile / Moderate (1.3 acres)
Appropriate for inward or outward growth, including compact, energy-efficient development of single and multi-family housing and non-residential uses associated with recreation, tourism, and resorts; linear expansion along roadways requires careful planning to prevent unsustainable strip sprawl; sites contiguous to existing development most ideal.

B3: 1 mile / Low (3.2 acres)
Not a high priority zone for extensive residential or commercial expansion; in larger hamlets portions of B3 land, if linked to existing hamlet, may be suitable for low intensity expansion or density transfers to support outward cluster development; potential hamlet sprawl zone; careful planning required to prevent extensive low-density development at the hamlet periphery, contiguous sites to existing development most appropriate for expansion.

B4: 1 mile / Rural (8.5 acres)
Very low priority for residential expansion but highly appropriate for agricultural or recreational land and water-related activities (i.e. skiing, hiking, golf, boating) and reuse of existing rural structures; sites in B4 may be suitable to upgrade for eco-village type residential clusters.

B5: 1 mile / Resource Management (42.7 acres)
Residential expansion not appropriate in B5 due to environmental restrictions; suitable expansion projects include forestry, agriculture or natural resource-based recreation; new buildings should be of very low-impact; seasonal outdoor uses encouraged, i.e. trails, farmers markets and open space for shared community events.

OVERLAY ZONES HELP LOCATE THE POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH IN THE APA MAP.

ZONES CLOSER TO THE HAMLET CENTER HAVE LESS LAND USE RESTRICTIONS AND ARE BETTER SUITED FOR DENSER DEVELOPMENT.

Zone B1:
1 mile / Hamlet

Zone B2:
1 mile / Moderate

Zone B5:
1 mile /
Resource Mgmt.

Adirondack views of select expansion zones in Ring B.

APPLYING RINGS TO CLUSTER HAMLETS SHOWS THE MODEL'S ADAPTABILITY.

Zone C2:
2 mile / Moderate

Zone C3:
2 mile / Low

Zone C5:
2 mile / Resource Mgmt.

Adirondack views of select expansion zones in Ring C.

RING C

2 mile - Ring C
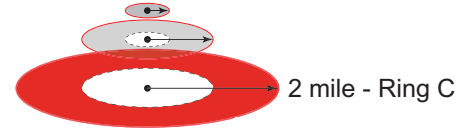
C1: 2 mile / Hamlet
Applies mainly to larger, linear hamlets and is well suited for residential and commercial expansion, but lower priority than A1 or B1 due to increased travel time to and from hamlet center; Inward expansion should respect ecological conditions within hamlets, especially near waterways.

C2: 2 mile / Moderate (1.3 acres)
In smaller rural hamlets, C2 land is generally inappropriate for expansion, but in large hamlets, suitable for significant outward residential and recreational development; commercial growth is discouraged because of increased distances from the hamlet center; best practices should be incorporated to prevent strip development along roadways in C2.

C3: 2 mile / Low (3.2 acres)
Ecologically sensitive yet suitable for minor, well-planned outward residential development and open space expansion. Unchecked development in this zone will result in hamlet sprawl. In larger hamlets, discrete sites may be upgradeable to Moderate to encourage pocketed, compact development; sustaining wildlife habitat and natural resources critical in C3.

C4: 2 mile / Rural (8.5 acres)
Sites limited to agricultural, forestry and outdoor recreational expansion projects; building construction should be minimized and take advantage of pre-existing structures whenever feasible; special consideration given to the ecological conditions of the site with land remaining predominantly for rural uses.

C5: 2 mile / Resource Management (42.7 acres)
Distance from hamlet center and natural resource constraints make this land the lowest priority for hamlet expansion involving building construction; in special cases development could occur on discrete sites with a strong relationship to unique natural amenities and resources of the park; visitor accommodations in the form of well-designed and ecologically sensitive recreational lodges or camps are possible.

EXPANSION ZONES CODIFY URBAN-TO-RURAL PLACES IN THE PARK.

Hamlet   *Moderate*   *Low*   *Rural*   *Resource Management*

E-TOWN RINGS
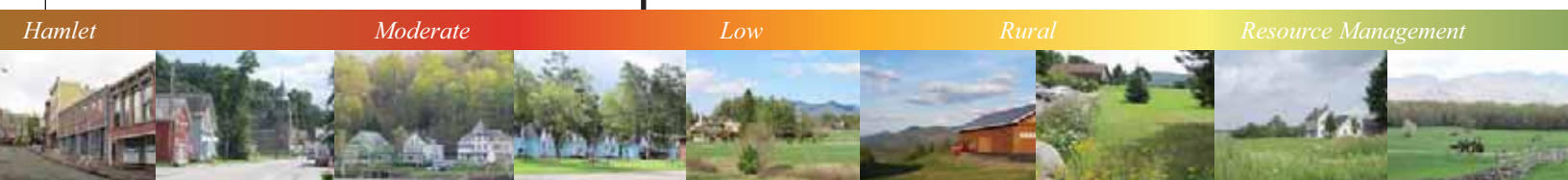
Rings applied to cluster hamlets
The following examples reveal a cross-section of results when the model is applied to actual hamlets, while also demonstrating how the model responds to various hamlet conditions. Wide variations exist in the size and diversity of zones found within each hamlet's Rings. For example, Wanakena has only four overlay zones while Keene Valley has twelve. The shape of zones and their location relative to the hamlet core also differ. Some hamlets have an extensive amount of Forest Preserve Forever Wild land within their Rings whereas others, such as Lewis, have none or very little.

SMART GROWTH RINGS WERE TESTED ON THE SIXTEEN CLUSTER HAMLETS STUDIED IN THE FIELD.

E-TOWN CLUSTER RINGS

The Elizabethtown cluster features two pairs of hamlets with intersecting Smart Growth Rings – Elizabethtown/New Russia, and Keene Valley/St. Huberts. Each pair comprises one larger hamlet with goods and services and a smaller, more residential hamlet. In these situations understanding the relationship between hamlets is essential for choosing proper expansion projects of mutual benefit and for finding opportunities for collaboration. Elizabethtown and New Russia have intersecting C Rings that merge to form a large, contiguous outer ring. The two communities represent an APA land
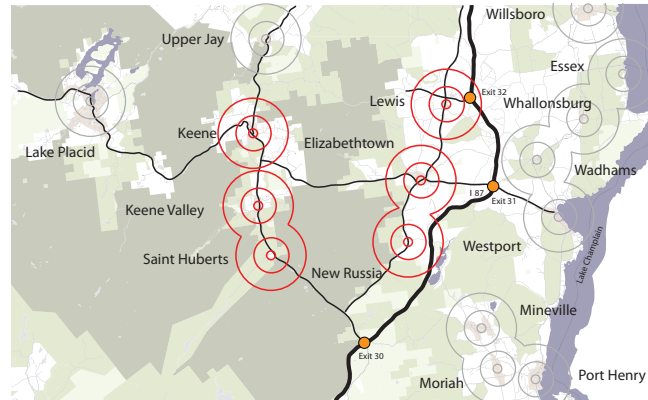
Smart Growth Rings are applied to hamlets in the E-town cluster showing their relationship and position over the APA Map. Expansion overlay zones are derived from this process.

Note: The radii of Rings on the following maps are properly scaled to smart growth distances of ¼ mile, 1 mile, and 2 miles.

C4 C5

B2

C5 B2 C3

B5 B2 C4 Keene Valley

B1 B3

B3

A1 A3

B5 A5

C3 A5 C5

B1 B5

B5

C5 B4 C5

C5

Saint Huberts

B2

A5 A5

B5 A2 B5

B2

C5
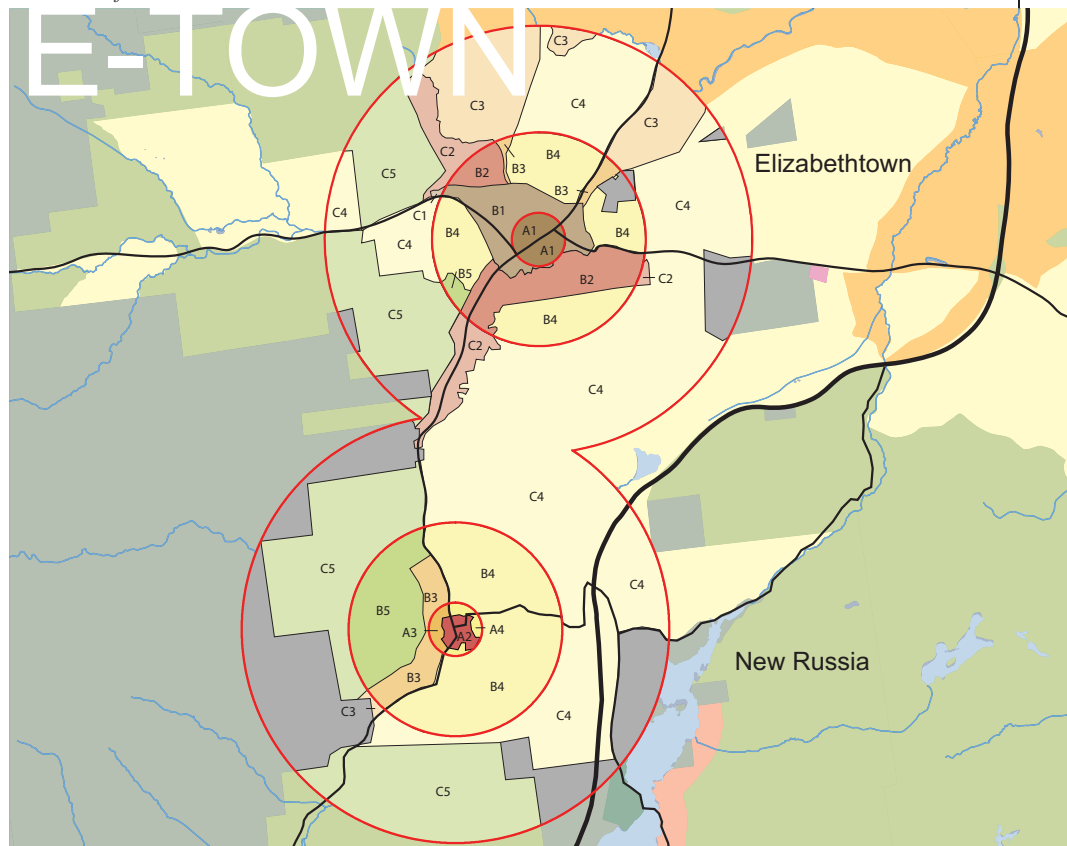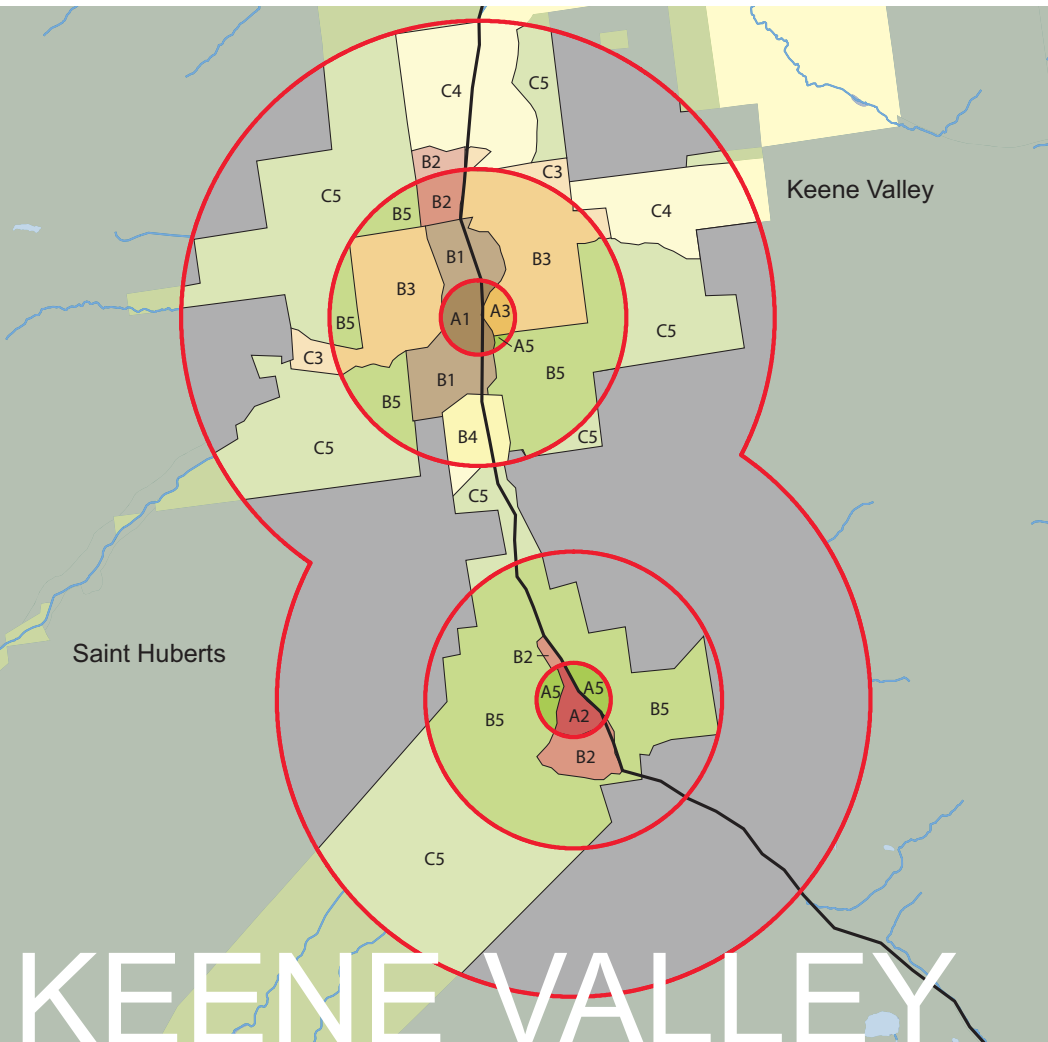
KEENE VALLEY

Keene Valley hamlet provides goods and services while Saint Huberts is smaller and predominantly residential. Their Smart Growth Rings overlap.

Lewis

C5

C2 C2 C4

C5

B2 B2

B4

B2 C2

B2 A2 A1 B2

C3 B3 B1 C3

B3 B4

B3 B3

C3 C4 C5

LEWIS

C5 Keene

C5 C4

C5 C3

B3

B1

B4 B1 B4

C4 A1

B1

C4

B5

C5

KEENE
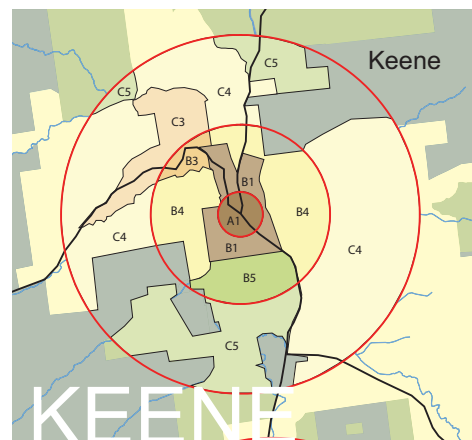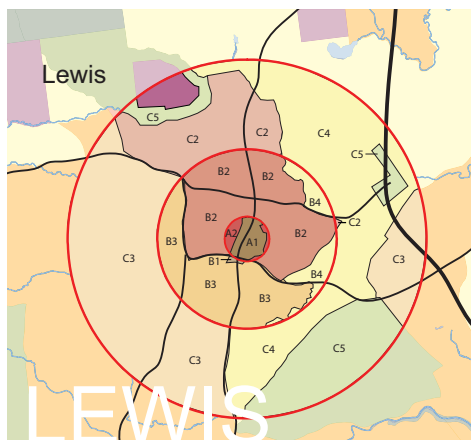
use-designated Hamlet (Elizabethtown) and a hamlet without any Hamlet-designated land (New Russia). The model reveals appropriate expansion options for each, despite their size differences. New Russia features more areas that should be preserved to maintain rural character while the existing built area in zone A2 offers infill opportunities. Elizabethtown features more zone area appropriate for outward expansion (classes 2-Low and 3-Moderate).

The Elizabethtown model reveals two potential areas of undesirable strip sprawl development along road corridors in zones C2 and C3. Strip development might also develop in zone B3 in New Russia because of its relatively smaller size.

Keene Valley and St. Huberts also share a common Ring C. Both hamlets have large amounts of Forest Preserve land in zones B5 and C5, making recreation and open space-based projects highly suitable. Keene also has similar characteristics, creating the potential for community connector trails at the cluster scale between these hamlets to link recreation amenities. It is crucial to build a strong center in the A1 zone of Keene Valley, to prevent inner hamlet sprawl in its linear B1 zones.

Because Lewis has large amounts of class 2 and 3 land in Rings B and C, it is important to focus on these areas to prevent large-scale sprawl, especially in Ring C. As a linear hamlet facing potential strip sprawl development along road corridors in zones B2 and B3, Lewis should prioritize building a strong center node in zone A1.

SOME HAMLETS HAVE FEWER ZONES THAN OTHERS, BUT STILL CAN EXPAND.

OLD FORGE CLUSTER RINGS

The Smart Growth Rings of the Old Forge cluster emphasize the way the hamlets are strung out on a line like beads on a necklace. Two pairs of hamlets with intersecting Rings provide opportunities for collaborative projects. The concentration of expansion zones at opposite ends of a road corridor offers the opportunity for potential transportation links as part of hamlet expansion. Expansion sites, even in different hamlets, along the same corridor have the potential to complement one another. This potential can be realized with strong collaborative efforts at the cluster scale.

EXPANSION ZONES ALONG THE SAME CORRIDOR HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER.

Old Forge and Thendara are so close that they appear to blend into one another. In such cases it is important for each hamlet to maintain a strong center with infill expansion projects in their respective A1 zones. Their close proximity also provides different opportunities for each. Thendara's expansion zones, coupled with a high percentage of Forest Preserve land, are best suited for recreation and open space-associated expansion. Old Forge has more area suitable for expansion and is therefore a better location for medium and large-scale commercial expansion projects.

OLD FORGE RINGS
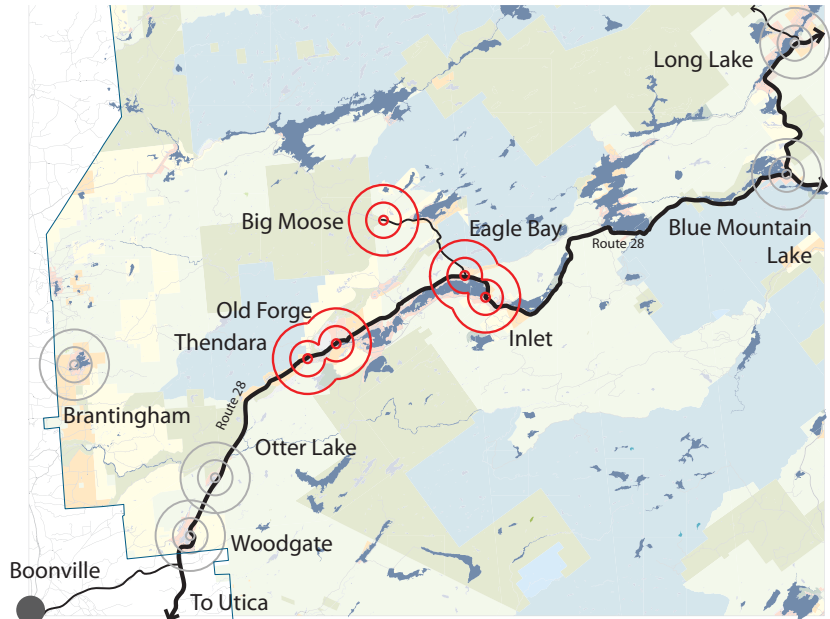
Rings of the Old Forge "necklace" offer projects unique to smart, collaborative expansion of hamlets along Route 28 corridor.
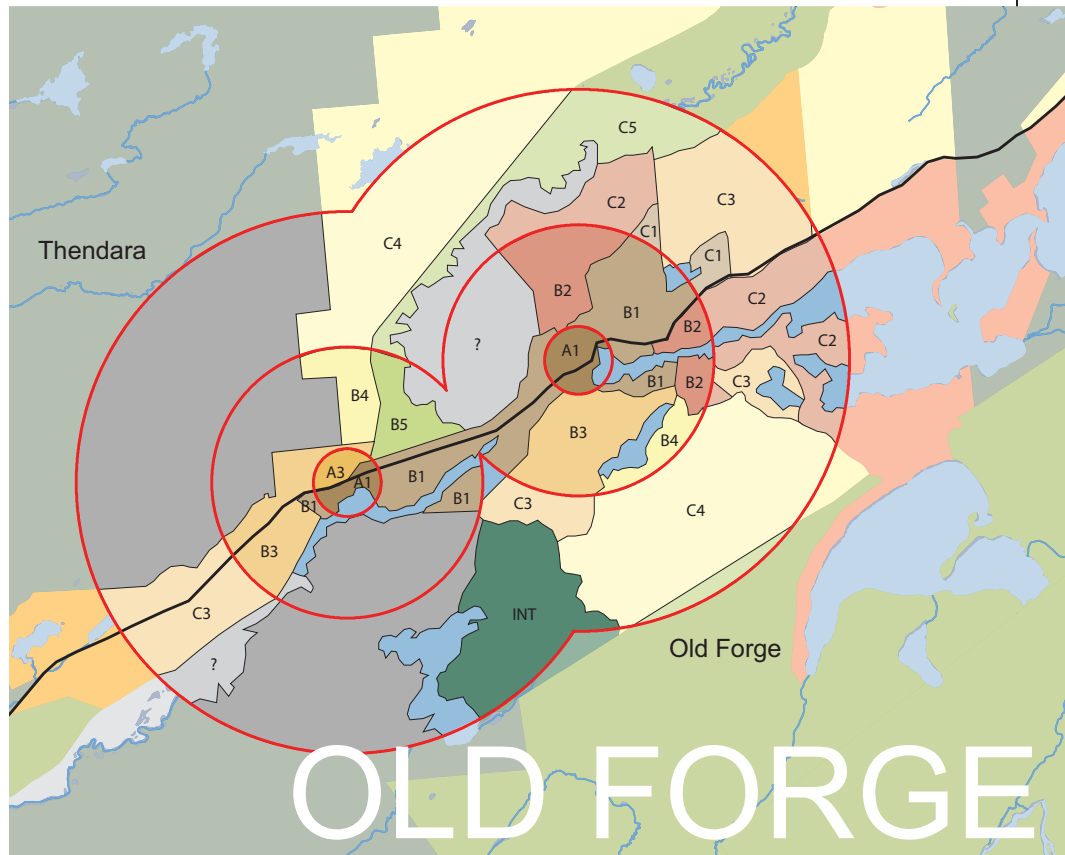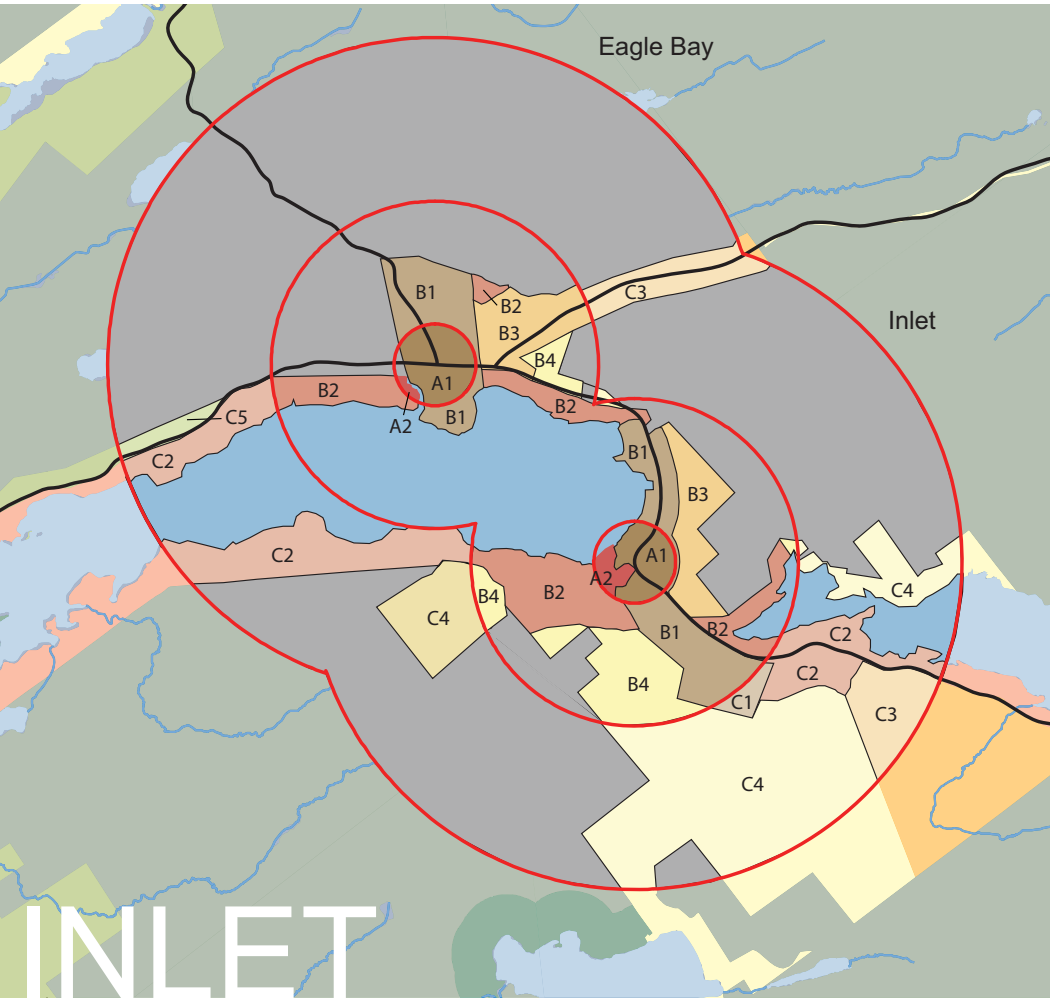
Inlet and Eagle Bay Rings are joined together by extensive green systems and waterways.

WHERE RINGS OVERLAP, HAMLETS SHOULD LOOK FOR SHARED EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES.

Inlet and Eagle Bay have Smart Growth Rings containing a large proportion of water. An extensive waterfront offers unique recreation-based expansion opportunities, but also requires careful planning for compact patterns of expansion due to the limited availability of land close to the hamlet core. Coupled with considerable amounts of Forest Preserve land, constraints on expansion appear severe, but careful implementation of inward expansion strategies can alleviate development pressure. In such restrictive cases, Class 1 or 2 zones in Ring A or B might be appropriate for upgrade.

A Great Lot Line (from historic survey plats) is clearly visible west of Big Moose hamlet. Big Moose has zones favorable to open space and recreation-based expansion.

EVEN THE MOST REMOTE HAMLETS CAN USE THE MODEL TO GROW SMART.

STAR LAKE CLUSTER RINGS

Applying Smart Growth Rings to the Star Lake cluster hamlets creates a large proportion of Class 5 land. This class is rich in natural resources that should be protected for both ecological and economic reasons. At the fringe of development, these edge lands are the most threatened by unplanned outward expansion, especially as locations for second home development. Careful planning can protect the natural environment, while capitalizing on the scenic qualities, recreation potential, and natural resources of these zones.

UNPLANNED OUT-WARD EXPANSION THREATENS EDGE LANDS.

Oswegatchie and Star Lake have intersecting C Rings that also extend close to Newton Fall's Ring C. While each of the three hamlets has zone A1, their B and C Ring overlay zones present different expansion opportunities. Oswegatchie has significant amounts of zones B4 and C4 that are important for maintaining its character while offering agricultural and open space expansion potential.

Star Lake has more area suitable for expansion, including its relatively large B1 and B3 zones. The extent of these zones emphasizes the importance of inward expansion strategies in A1 as a way to prevent inner hamlet sprawl. The lake adjacent to the A Ring of the hamlet of Star Lake creates unique opportunities for waterfront expansion projects with strong connections to the hamlet core.

STAR LAKE RINGS
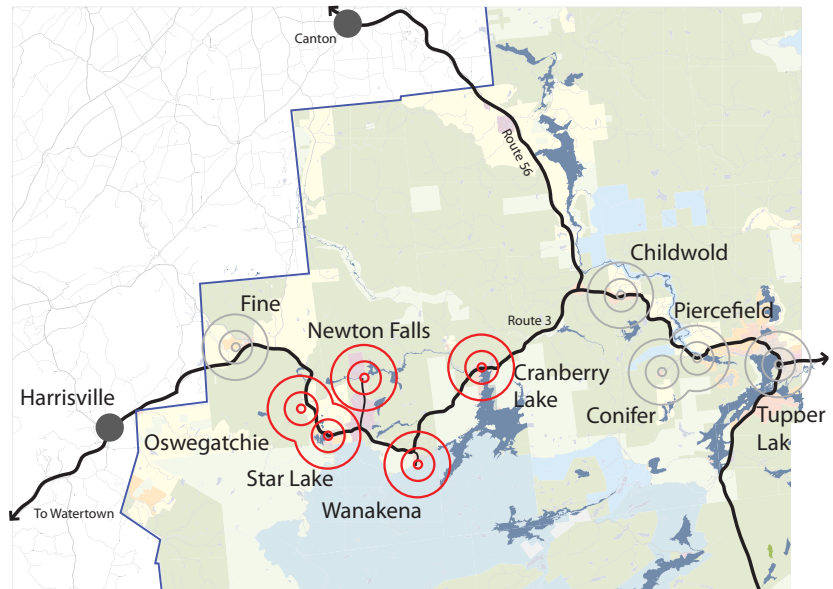
Large wilderness landscapes and resource-based industrial areas intersect within Smart Growth Rings of the Star Lake cluster.

Cranberry Lake
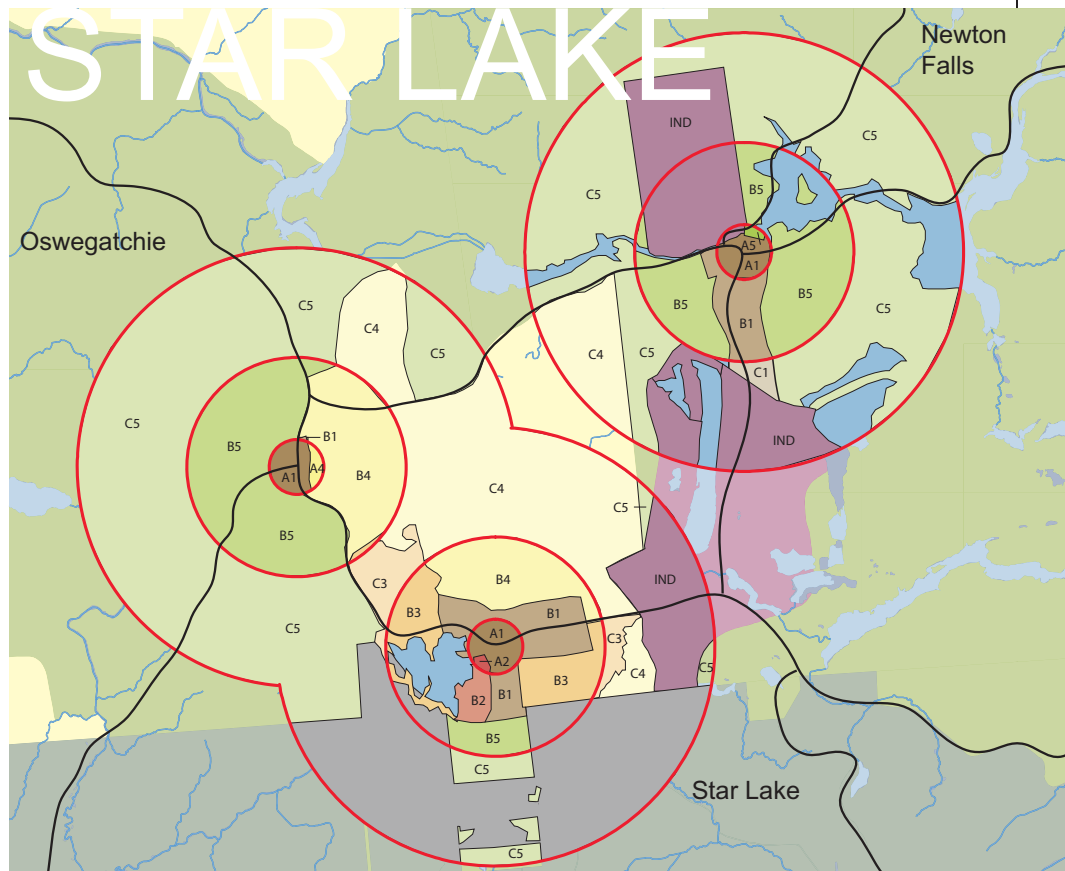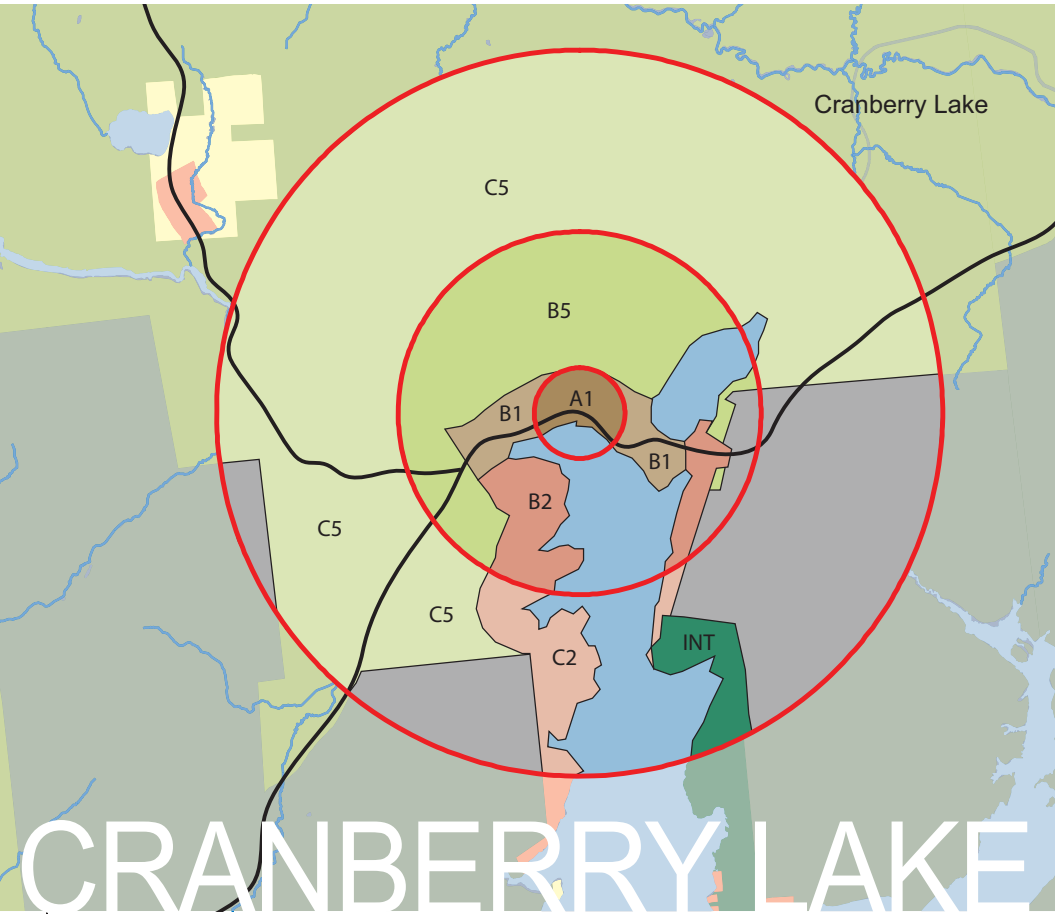
CRANBERRY LAKE

Cranberry Lake and Wanakena Rings are situated on the frontier of vast forestlands, making these hamlets vital gateways to trails and recreation amenities.
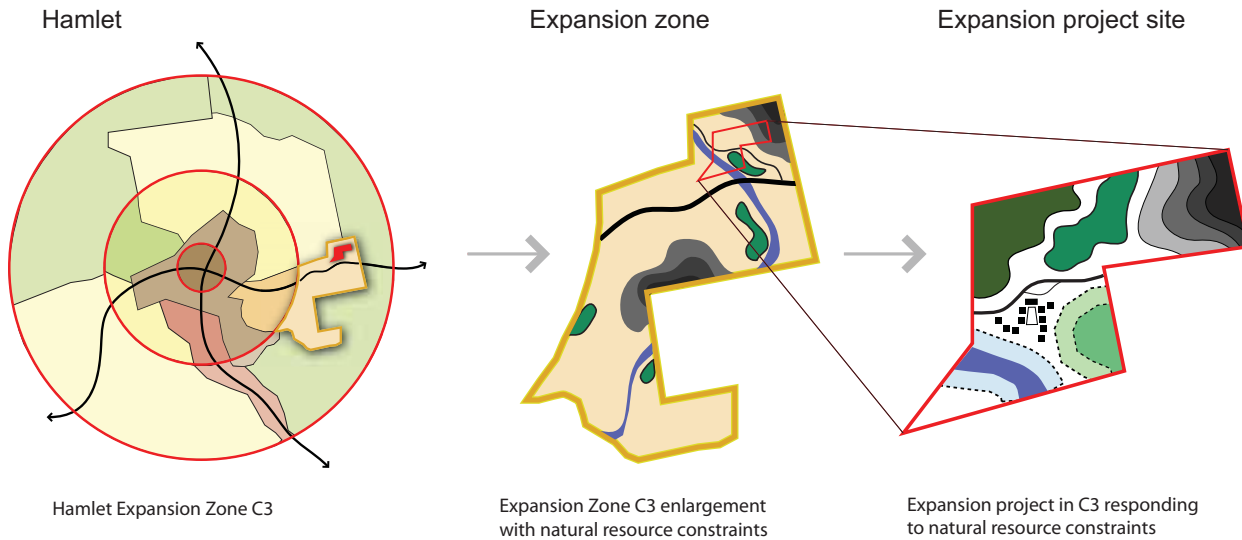

Wanakena

WANAKENA

HAMLETS RICH IN NATURAL RESOURCES SHOULD PROTECT THEM FOR ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC PURPOSES.

Newton Falls is one of a small group of hamlets in the Adirondacks that have Industrial Use classified land. Such hamlets can capitalize on the opportunity this classification offers. A cluster scale analysis helps determine proper industrial use projects that build on the competitive advantages of a region, such as the extensive area of Resource Management (class 5) land in and around the Star Lake cluster. Projects related to processing local natural resources and creating value-added goods are ideal uses for these sites.

Cranberry Lake wraps around the water's edge and also has significant amounts of C5 and B5 zones within its Rings. This combination of natural resources so close to the hamlet's core makes recreation-based expansion ideal. Since the prime expansion zones for residential and commercial development wrap around the lake, expansion planning should emphasize maintaining or creating new public access to the shoreline. A1 and A2 zones located on a lake provide special opportunities for public waterfront amenities with strong pedestrian links to the hamlet core.

MOST HAMLETS WILL FIND EXPANSION ROOM WITHIN THE INNER TWO RINGS.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Hamlet

Expansion zone

Expansion project site

Hamlet Expansion Zone C3

Expansion Zone C3 enlargement with natural resource constraints

Expansion project in C3 responding to natural resource constraints

Using the model step by step
The expansion model is one element of the hamlet expansion planning process. A hamlet expansion plan follows a series of steps that engage the cluster, hamlet, expansion zone, and expansion site scale.

STEP 1

Identify expansion needs
The need for physical growth can be determined through market studies of demographic and economic projections along with analysis of the existing supply of developable land and the demand for its usage. The community may also need affordable housing, new open space, or a specific good or service not currently available. The need for such specific expansion can be explored through public participation.

Effective outreach leads to a community-wide brainstorming process that identifies the specific needs for hamlet expansion. Public participation also fosters a sense of ownership, thus

expediting the implementation process. Page 63 offers more information on the public participation process.

Collaboration among hamlets in a cluster should also begin at this step. Coordinating resources, sharing collected demographic and economic information, and discussing each hamlet's needs and assets makes best use of a cluster's resources.

STEP 2

Analyze local conditions
On-the-ground inventories can be conducted to document the strengths and weaknesses of the community in relation to the ten smart growth principles. Field sketches, photographs, diagrams, checklists, and APA maps all help in understanding hamlet frameworks and land use situations.

This hypothetical example shows how the expansion model locates a possible site for growth in an overlay zone; the six steps guide the planning process for the site to become a tangible smart growth project.

EXPANSION PLANS SHOULD BE FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON SATISFYING IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY NEEDS.

PROCESS DIAGRAM

Step 1
Identify Expansion Needs

STEP 1
-Distribute surveys & hold public meetings
-Coordinate with cluster hamlets
-Perform market analysis including demographic and economic projections

Public Input

Step 2
Analyze Local Conditions

STEP 2
-Map physical conditions
-Analyze hamlet strengths and weaknesses in relation to the 10 smart growth principles (also referring to scorecard)
-Obtain maps from APA

Public Input

Step 3
Locate Potential Expansion Sites

STEP 3
-Hold public peetings to brainstorm possible sites
-Conduct "lost space" analysis
-Map potential sites
-Present initial list & map to community for feedback

Public Input

Step 4
Apply Expansion Model

STEP 4
-Apply Smart Growth Rings Model to hamlet
-Cross-check sites against overlay zone descriptions
-Prioritize projects based upon hamlet needs, smart growth attributes, and design strategy appropriateness

Public Input

Step 5
Evaluate Expansion Sites & Projects

STEP 5
-Evaluate sites and projects against scorecard
-Modify projects if needed
-Prioritize sites and projects
-Hold public meeting to discuss findings

Public Input

Step 6
Create Plan & Implement

STEP 6
-Combine expansion sites, projects and process materials into document
-Use document to guide policies, regulations, and funding priorities
-Interface with APA if needed

Reassess and Update Periodically

Incorporating public input at each step of the way will determine the type of project best suited for a particular site.

STEP 3

Locate potential expansion sites
Aerial images, maps, public participation, and ground inventories help identify potential sites for development in a hamlet. Expansion opportunities include individual parcels (used as a whole or reconfigured), a collection of parcels, or even a street district.

Hamlets should be analyzed for lost spaces – generally leftover, underutilized, vacant and empty spaces, with or without structures – that make no positive contribution to the character and well-being of a community. These hidden resources are excellent opportunities for redevelopment and hamlet expansion.

STEP 4

Apply expansion model
The model describes, categorizes, and prioritizes expansion sites. A site is examined in the larger context of its overlay zone for natural constraints and protected resources. Overlay zone descriptions and community needs help to determine what type of project best suits a particular site. Inward and outward design strategies determine a physical form for the new development that respect the site's specific natural constraints such as wildlife habitat, slopes, soils, wetlands, rivers, and their respective regulations.

STEP 5

Evaluate expansion sites and projects
A hamlet smart growth scorecard (see page 58) evaluates expansion projects against smart growth principles. Projects are rated on a series of categories covering site characteristics, project use, project design, relationship to the environment, and other issues related to smart growth. Expansion projects should be judged both relative to, and independent of, one another to determine priorities or to see if the project requires adjustment to proceed.

STEP 6

Create plan and implement
The expansion projects, with supporting materials from all steps, are collected into a hamlet expansion plan document. This plan reflects a vision for the community that local officials, leaders and residents can use to guide policies, regulations and funding priorities and to successfully initiate hamlet expansion. Communities may choose to invite a professional consultant familiar with the expansion model to assist them in their efforts.

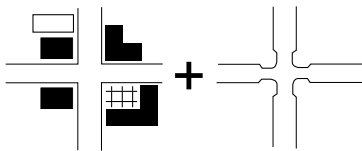THE STEPS ARE STRAIGHTFORWARD AND FACILITATE SMART GROWTH OF HAMLETS.

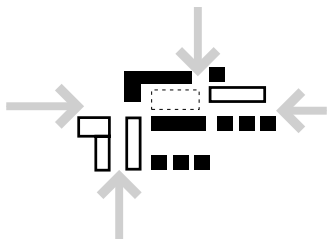## DESIGN TOOLS OFFER PRACTICAL AND "SMART" SOLUTIONS.
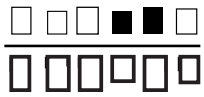
Hold Street Wall: Consistent setbacks enclose the street, creating outdoor rooms.
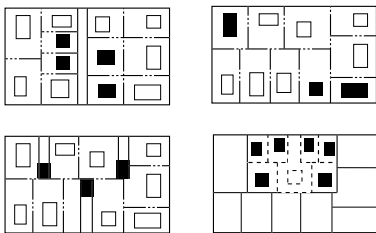
Fill Block: Reconfigured lots and infill make the case for improving infrastructure.

Anchor Corners: Sites at intersections provide important visibility.

Push Spaces Together: Compact development uses hamlet land more effectively.
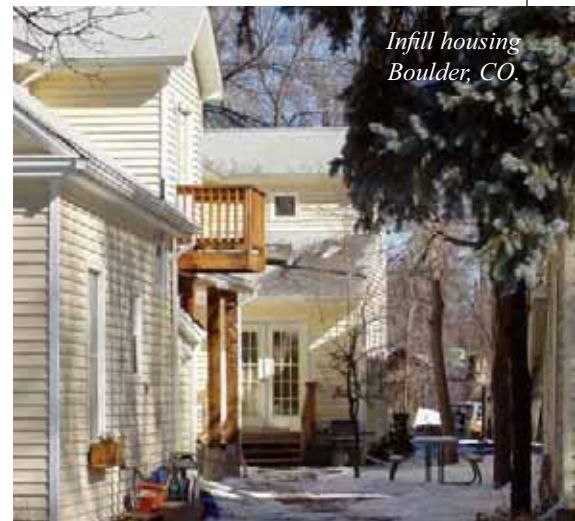
DESIGN TOOLS

Before

After

Building on a vacant lot, creating internal accessory units, constructing an addition, or reconfiguring lot lines are all ways to increase density in a residential neighborhood.

Design tools

The design of new development impacts the way people live and has a long-lasting legacy. The following design tools offer practical and smart solutions that can easily be applied to hamlets across the Adirondacks. They will help prevent scattered development and reinforce the hamlets as cohesive places.

Infill growth uses existing infrastructure and adds density to hamlet centers. New buildings that are well designed and consistent with existing architectural styles will strengthen public spaces and enhance local businesses by drawing more residents and visitors to the commercial core.

Infill housing Boulder, CO.

DESIGN TOOLS
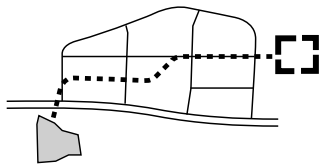
Connect Places: Pedestrian paths connect important destinations.
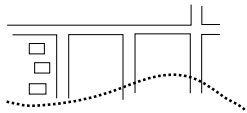
Walk and Bike: Trails provide safe routes and public access.
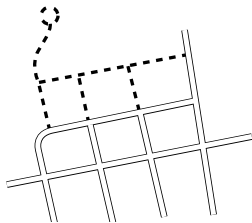
Extend Grid: Grid patterns slow traffic and are easily extended.
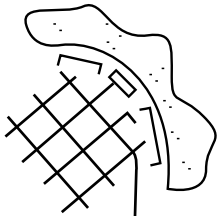
Hold/Wrap Edge: Defined edges prevent scatter development.
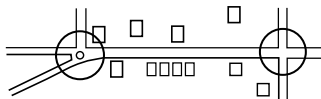
Intercept Strip: Landscaped rotaries break up the strip.

DESIGNING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE IS ESSENTIAL.

Hamlet expansion should promote a variety of movement options. Connecting places with new streets, greenways, and trails for walking and biking allows people to choose among means of local travel. Grid patterns, whose layout can be extended easily, serve pedestrians well by offering alternative routes to destinations and reducing traffic speed at intersections. Street design features such as safe crosswalks and sidewalk bulb-outs command attention and protect pedestrians. Landscaped rotaries are an effective way to intercept linear strip development. Wrapping hamlets with agricultural or wilderness greenbelts helps differentiate hamlets from surrounding lands and holds development to planned edges.

Smart growth projects take advantage of the views, vistas, mountains, and wetlands of the Adirondacks, while at the same time respecting sensitive ecologies. Public access to lakes and rivers should be kept open. On-site renewable energy should be produced whenever possible.

DESIGN TOOLS GET YOU STARTED ON EXPANSION PLANS.
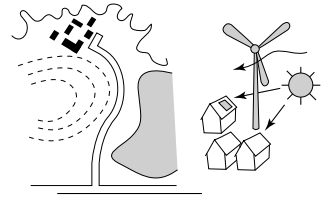
Design with Nature: Landscape informs design, protecting sensitive ecologies.
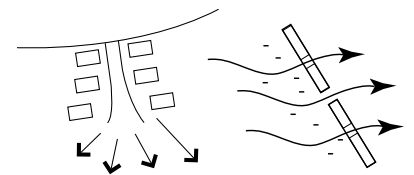
Views and Vistas: Good site design protects views and vistas.
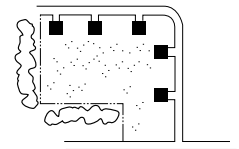
Off the Field: Smart outward development tucks buildings along natural edges.
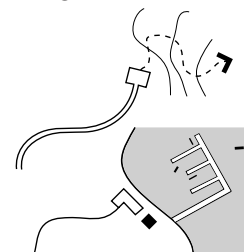
Front Amenities: Waterfronts and trailheads create growth opportunities.

SHOPS AT OLD MILL

Conserve and Reuse: Adapted buildings retain a hamlet's sense of place.

You can visually compare patterns of black (buildings) to white (open areas) in these three figure-ground maps.

Existing figure-ground – shows the random pattern of a typical hamlet with buildings in undefined open space.
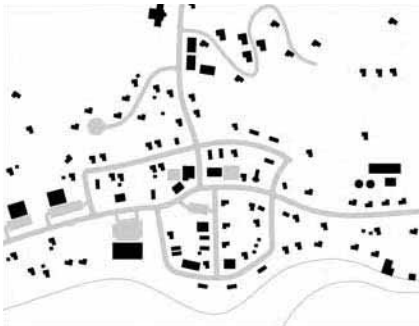
Unplanned figure-ground – shows the spreading out of buildings and fragmentation of open spaces as hamlet growth occurs.

Smart growth figure-ground – shows the compact organization of hamlet growth, with the possibility of human-scale spaces inside and greenbelts at the periphery.

LOST SPACE

This fictional Adirondack hamlet, constructed in 3D on the computer, highlights lost spaces in red, which are growth opportunities. See corresponding plan upper left.

A FIGURE-GROUND DIAGRAM IDENTIFIES UNDERUTILIZED PARCELS WITHIN THE HAMLET.

Lost space

A figure-ground diagram can identify underutilized parcels within the hamlet. By simplifying buildings and open spaces into two colors: black (existing structures or "figure") and white (vacant lands or "ground"), communities can see unused developable lands. Gaps in the fabric are clear.

Lost space analysis stems from the figure-ground studies by identifying undeveloped lots and under-functioning buildings. Lost spaces include surface parking lots, vacant or unused parcels, and hamlet core buildings with interior vacancy or unrealized vertical potential such as one story commercial buildings or retail buildings with vacant second and third levels. Lost spaces are critical for redevelopment because of their important location in hamlet centers.

The fictional Adirondack hamlet above has many readily identifiable lost spaces,

ranging from a former industrial building to waterfront parcels in the hamlet core. Numerous vacant parcels exist in the hamlet center and a larger undeveloped parcel lies just outside the core. The figure-ground analysis identifies street walls along several neighborhood roads and an underutilized parcel at a main intersection.
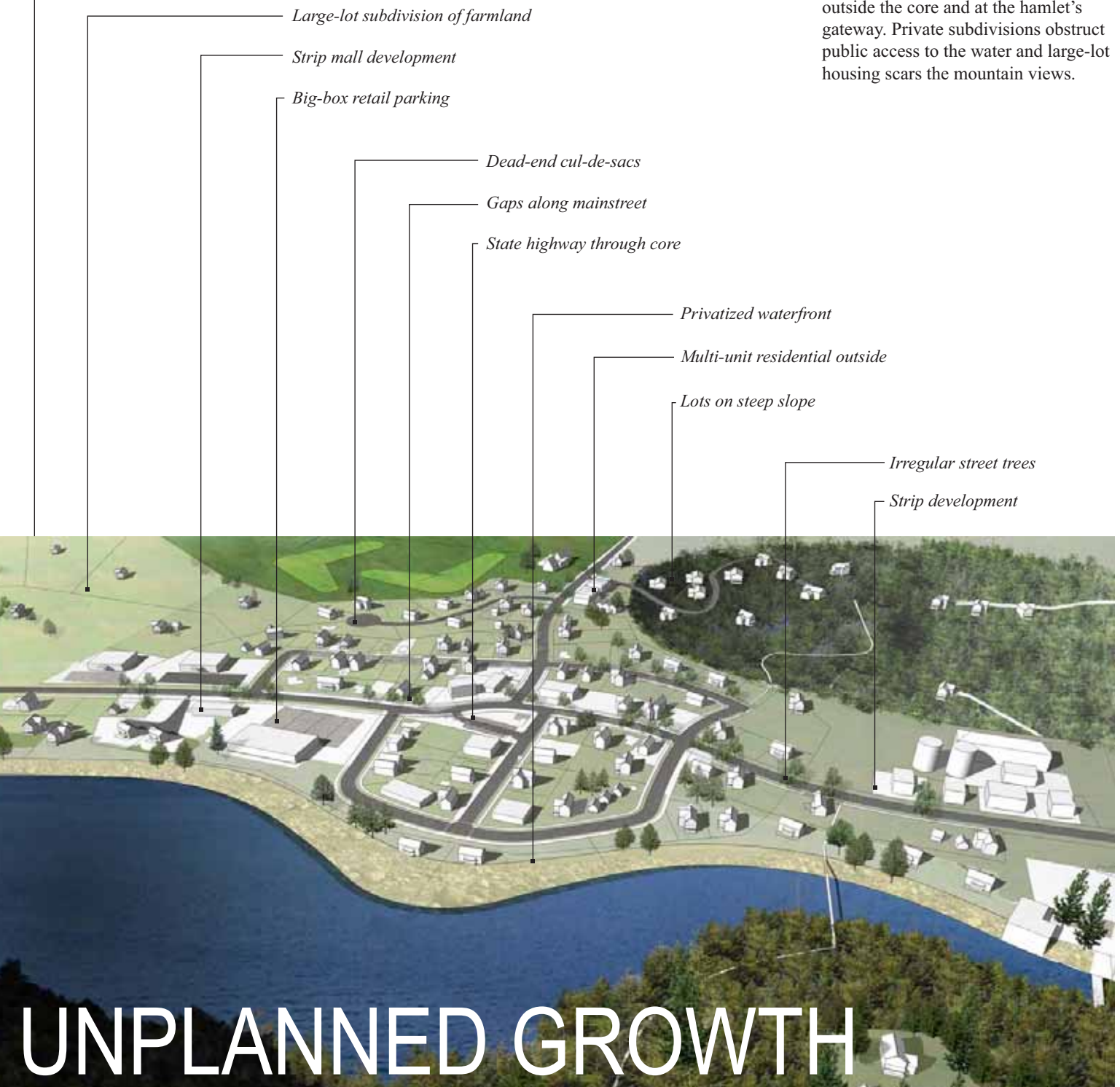
Lost space in Old Forge core.

COMMON MISTAKES

Common mistakes
3D computer visualization shows a hamlet that is the victim of unplanned growth. Large-format retail along its edges erodes the hamlet's character. Sprawl housing occupies a large parcel outside the core and at the hamlet's gateway. Private subdivisions obstruct public access to the water and large-lot housing scars the mountain views.

Large-lot subdivision of farmland

Strip mall development

Big-box retail parking

Dead-end cul-de-sacs

Gaps along mainstreet

State highway through core

Privatized waterfront

Multi-unit residential outside

Lots on steep slope

Irregular street trees

Strip development

UNPLANNED GROWTH

APPLIED STRATEGIES

Applied strategies
In this visualization smart growth is brought inward. Local businesses front a new public green in the hamlet center while a green spine solidifies an axis down to the waterfront park. Infill housing preserves the neighborhood's street spaces and a new subdivision ties into the existing fabric. A greenbelt with its associated farmland and wilderness preserves the hamlet's rural character.

Agriculture greenbelt

Multi-unit expansion on public waterfront

Industrial reuse community center

Grid extension and infill

Waterfront park, kiosk, and boardwalk

Water / sewage treatment on golf course

Hamlet green and pavilion

Refurbished hydroelectric

District biofuel plant

SMART GROWTH

SCORECARD

Evaluation scorecard

The scorecard systematically evaluates potential expansion sites and projects, reflecting smart growth principles. Choosing projects and sites that score highly on these categories will encourage smart hamlet expansion.

Hamlets 3
Smart Growth Scorecard

Expansion Zone

1. Site Location and Infrastructure

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Existing buildings on site can be reused					
Ground clean up is not required					
Adjacent to existing development					
Existing or planned water service at or near site					
Has road access					
In sewer district or planned sewer district					
On-site sewage treatment capabilities					
Doesn't require expansion of municipal services					

2. Project Use

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Encourages appropriate mix of uses					
Provides housing types priced to different income levels					
Adjacent to existing development					
Responds to identified community needs					
Contributes to activity & vitality in hamlet center					

3. Movement Systems

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
New roads connect efficiently to existing street system					
Provides adequate sidewalks, footpaths, bikeways					
Could leverage public transit (i e. bus service)					

4. Community Character and Design

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Project is spatially well-defined					
Layout promotes appropriate density & compactness					
Adds to public realm (i.e. parks, plazas, open spaces)					
Building orientation maintains street edge					
High visual quality architecture integrates with hamlet					
Creates a sense of place					
Incorporates best practices in green design (i e. LEED)					
Protects/enhances historic form and historic resources					

5. Natural Resource Analysis

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Avoids sensitive ecological & wildlife areas					
Provides on-site stormwater management/treatment					
Avoids development on working agriculture or forest					
Does not block view corridors and scenic vistas					
Provides public access to nature and open space					

6. Social Benefits

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Stakeholder participation conducted early in process					
Maintains/enhances public health, safety & security					
Encourages social interaction					

7. Economic Development

Category	Great	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Provides job opportunities in the hamlet					
Contributes to local tax base					
Provides education, entertainment or recreation					

SUCCESS IS ACHIEVED INCREMENTALLY, OVER LONG PERIODS OF TIME.

Achieving success

Success is a process involving the cooperation of many stakeholders, the pursuit of funding, the navigation of regulatory agencies, and the participation of willing developers and enthusiastic leadership. In the Adirondacks, success is not immediate but is achieved incrementally, sometimes over long periods of time.

The *Hamlets 3* expansion model can be employed in all Adirondack hamlets, with or without local zoning programs. APA regulations, permits, and project review can be used in communities without zoning to achieve expansion, but implementing a hamlet expansion plan requires more than going through APA processes. A combination of actions, policies, regulations, and financing mechanisms are required for success. This section presents an assortment of implementation methods that can be mixed and matched to help communities achieve success in realizing smart growth projects.

The Hamlet of Schroon Lake.

Success

achieving

6.0
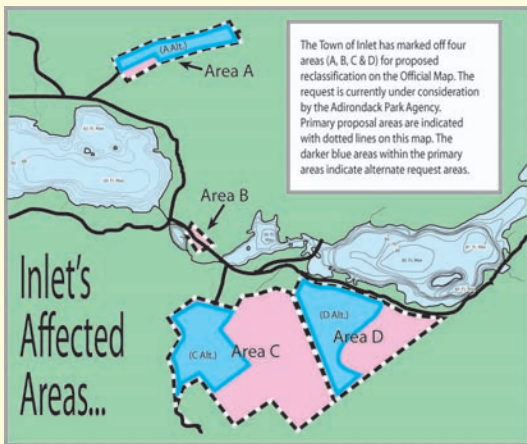
Town of Inlet map amendment application.

Town of Inlet submitted a map amendment application to the APA to change approximately 1,913 acres of three Low Intensity Use areas and a Rural Use area. The town cited a lack of developable private property and sought a change that would increase the housing supply. The request by Inlet was for large areas to be intensified to Moderate Use Intensity. Without proper planning, such a change could lead to sprawl. After public resistance, the public comment period was extended.
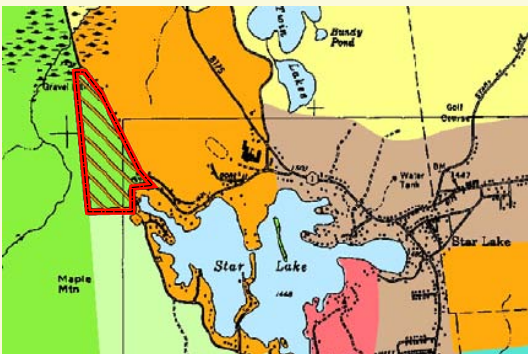
Star Lake map amendment application.

Star Lake received a map amendment for approximately 60 acres of land through the APA process to upgrade Resource Management land to Low Intensity Use. The amendment was initiated because the area was already developed beyond the intensity guidelines of its present classification. The area was adjacent to existing Low Intensity land and met the APA character description, purposes policies, and objectives of the Low Intensity Use classification.

IMPLEMENTATION

APA regulations

Within the regulatory structure of the Adirondack Park Agency are several methods to facilitate smart growth expansion. APA land use classifications (see page 22) have specific regulatory guidelines that projects must adhere to. For any given parcel, for example, the APA sets a maximum number of principal buildings for a specific number of acres. These structures can be clustered together, however, to support smart growth principles, while maintaining the allowed parcel density.

APA map amendments

It is possible to amend APA land use classifications. The amendment process can be initiated by a private landowner, a town, or as the result of a comprehensive planning process or APA-approved local land use program. Based on an inventory of natural constraints, including slopes, soils, wetlands, and other features, the Agency determines if the amended classification fits the land. The APA uses regionally identifiable boundaries such as roads or streams, not private property lines, as land use classification boundaries. When a request for a map amendment does not use regional boundaries, the Agency will adjust the map amendment area to be consistent with the Agency's boundary criteria.

Map amendments are best used to increase density in Rings A or B to support smart growth. Hamlet classification, probably the most desired map amendment, cuts two ways – though free of almost all APA jurisdiction, it potentially opens up a community to undesirable development unless local land use controls are in place.

Density transfers

Depending upon legal circumstances, a hamlet that desires additional density for an area may be able to use one of three kinds of density transfers.

First, a landowner has the ability to transfer density on a given parcel of land. This enables clustering development on the most appropriate areas while avoiding development on least.

Second, if density transfer is provided for in the local zoning law and is part of an APA-approved local land use program, two land owners can transfer density between them. If density transfer is not part of an approved local land use program, transfers are limited to adjacent properties. This limitation may be overcome by means of a complicated scheme of transferring density from one property to another in a kind of fireman's bucket brigade.

Third, a municipality may transfer density as part of an approved local land use program as an alternative to an APA map amendment. The Town of Westport-approved local land use program provides an example of this. A land conservation organization owns a mountaintop within a large APA Rural Use zone there. Westport transferred the building rights associated with the protected mountaintop to an area adjacent to the hamlet settlement in order to increase density in a Village Growth zoning district.

Zoning

Adopting local zoning laws may facilitate the implementation of the *Hamlets 3* expansion model. Hamlets with local zoning controls can translate overlay zone descriptions, prescriptions, and design strategies into regulatory codes, zoning laws, and ordinances. Form-based zoning assures

that a project's general shape, massing, height, and orientation positively contribute to the existing or desired hamlet context. Incentive zoning provides rewards for development, such as affordable housing or public space, that meets specified hamlet development goals. These codes, combined with zoning that allows for a proper mix of uses, are significant tools for implementing hamlet expansion.

Overlay districts

Overlay districts are drawn on a map over existing zoning to address the special needs of a particular area within a hamlet. Common examples include historic districts, road corridor standards, agricultural protection, watershed protection, and scenic view protection zones. These zones can preserve community character, promote mixed-use development or higher density development, encourage affordable housing, and achieve other community-desired results. *Hamlets 3* expansion overlay zones can be used or incorporated into regulatory overlay districts.

Subdivisions

When a landowner or developer wishes to subdivide an existing parcel it offers a community the opportunity to ensure this expansion reflects smart growth principles. A town board can empower a local planning board to do subdivision review and adopt regulations, such as requiring that a certain percentage of a site be conserved by clustering structures. A design review board can exist independent of zoning laws.

Official map

An official map is a powerful, yet often underutilized planning tool. Town boards are legally empowered to create an official map delineating streets,

THE HAMLETS 3 MODEL CAN BE EMPLOYED WITH OR WITHOUT ZONING.

highways, parks and drainage systems, built and unbuilt. A town can draw out streets and other elements that do not currently exist to create a compact hamlet form following smart growth principles and design strategies. When a developer or landowner develops a piece of land, their plans will be legally bound to the features on the official map.

Official maps are not straightjackets, though. They are a starting point for a rational layout of roads and other infrastructure and can be revised by a town board. If a land developer has a different idea that results in a logical and efficient layout of roads and other infrastructure, he/she can submit that idea to the town board for its action to revise the official map.

Attracting new development

Marketing can bring new investment into a community. A hamlet's marketing effort to attract outside investment depends on the specific characteristics and desires of the community. New development can create jobs, add housing, increase the tax base, and enhance the community's vitality. Marketing strategies should communicate a hamlet's strengths and assets to targeted outside interests including businesses, developers, and private investors. Cluster-based marketing strategies enable hamlets to pool resources and organize collectively.

Tahawus Lodge Center historic building reuse.

Enlightened entrepreneurs are transforming a former Masons lodge in Au Sable Forks into a multi-use building and activity center containing cultural, community, and commercial uses. The project is a superb example of historic building reuse.

FINANCING

Financing expansion
Policies and regulations go a long way towards implementing smart growth expansion, but funding sources and mechanisms are required to complete a hamlet expansion plan. Funds are used to hire planners, improve public spaces, finance public projects, and to add or improve infrastructure.

Outside financial sources
Lack of infrastructure – sewer, water, electricity, roads, and telecommunications – is a common constraint on development in the Adirondacks. Development in the park is often at such a small scale that a developer is unable to provide all the necessary infrastructure pieces for an individual project, in which case a variety of sources and strategies can be used to obtain the necessary resources. Funding should be targeted to specific areas to support compact patterns of growth in and near hamlet centers.

      New York State offers grants for planning, infrastructure, public projects, and other smart growth actions through several different agencies. Some national level grants are available in special circumstances and there are also some Adirondack-specific sources. Special opportunities exist for unique situations such as brownfields, affordable housing, and open space preservation. Targeted funding sources should be sought on a project-by-project basis.

      One way to get outside funding is to leverage existing funds, such as grants, to stimulate supplementary investment. Attracting private investment multiplies the impact of the public funds. In some cases leveraging may be a requirement.

Local financing
Different types of districts can be formed to support expansion beyond direct grants. Community improvement districts (CID) and business improvement districts (BID) are public-private partnerships in which businesses in a defined area agree to pay fees that are then pooled to market an area, to make capital improvements or to provide other services.

      Tax increment financing (TIF) is a financing method that can be used to construct utilities, streets and other infrastructure necessary to make a development possible. A municipality issues a TIF bond when a private party alone cannot accomplish a development. The new tax revenue created by the TIF investment finances the bond. TIFs should be used cautiously as they rely on a speculated property tax increase.

      Impact fees may be appropriate for some instances. They are levied against new development to pay for improvements made necessary by that development. Fee rates may increase with distance from a hamlet center to discourage sprawl.

      The Adirondack Community Housing Trust (ACHT) is a state supported not-for-profit that uses a community land trust to offer "forever affordable" housing. ACHT retains ownership of the land but provides deeds to income-qualified households as a way to finance affordable housing in the Adirondacks.

Adding quality and value
Outside investment and new development are attracted to communities that have strong character and attractive public spaces that create a high quality of life. Hamlets that support and invest in these features

become more appealing to business owners and their employees and families as places to live, work, and play.

Adirondack hamlets can capitalize on the region's natural resources by attracting investors to land abutting waterfronts, parks, and open spaces. Limiting outward development and preserving land abutting settlement areas for recreation increases the value of the land. Investment in infrastructure makes nearby sites, attractive to investors.

Public and private development undertaken by the community and a developer is an effective way to facilitate development on these sites. Examples of public-private arrangements include the public provision of infrastructure, land, and subsidies, and the private provision of public benefits such as affordable housing, public space, and jobs.

PARTICIPATION

Local participation and governance
A plan must reflect the voices of a community. Planning is an inclusive process requiring dialogue among residents, business owners, public officials, and other community stakeholders. Public meetings and workshops held at all stages of the process keep everyone informed of progress and offer a chance to gather feedback.

Building a vision
A community can devise an agreed-upon vision for their future by working together. A vision and a plan for how to get there are necessary for every Adirondack hamlet. The process of building a vision is a tool to engage residents in imagining an ideal future. This vision then acts as a guide for local policies and regulations.

Mobilizing clusters
Adirondack hamlets are generally small communities with limited resources that must compete at the state level for funding and assistance. Collaboration among hamlets in a cluster increases their chances of expansion success by improving their ability to acquire grants, lobby public officials, pool resources, share information, and capitalize on each other's strengths. Hamlets can either mobilize informally for discussions or create a formal cluster entity. County level planning agencies can facilitate cluster collaboration.

Overcoming obstacles
There is no solution that will satisfy all community members. Negotiation, compromise, and patience are necessary for participatory planning, but strong leadership is often needed to prevent efforts from stalling. Reluctant stakeholders having a vested interest in a project or site should be dealt with carefully. Uncooperative property owners of strategic hamlet sites can threaten the character and vitality of an entire community. Buy-outs of landowners are an option if negotiations prove unsuccessful. Regular code enforcement throughout the hamlet will ensure properties are maintained and may encourage an otherwise reluctant owner to cooperate. In rare cases, eminent domain may be used, in accordance with the law, after all other options have been exhausted.


Vacant Elm Tree building.
The now vacant Elm Tree in Keene sits at the hamlet's key intersection and detracts from its character and vitality. Owners of such important sites should be encouraged to sell or redevelop their parcel during the expansion planning process. Offering assistance linked to incentives may help owners envision proper new uses and designs.
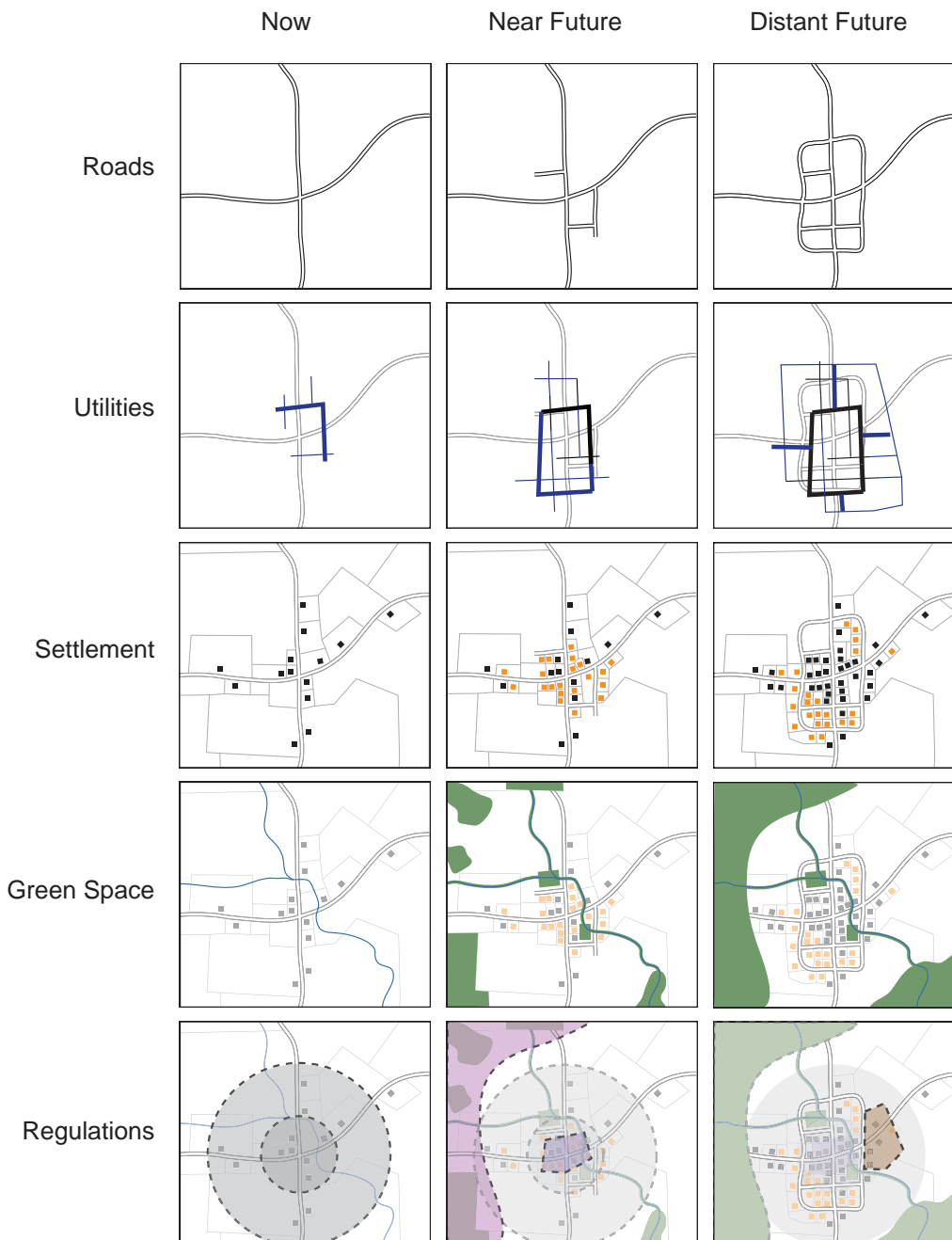

Clifton / Fine boundaries.
The towns of Clifton and Fine are literally intertwined and provide a model for hamlet collaboration. Their physical connectedness and even the sharing of the Star Lake hamlet has resulted in close cooperation between the towns. By sharing facilities, amenities, services and resources, the communities are able to achieve more than they could alone.
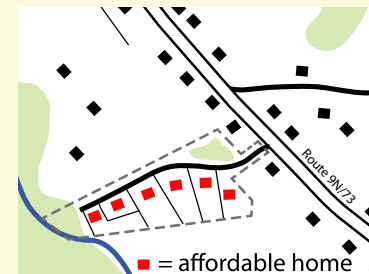
Keene affordable housing site.
The Keene Community Housing Committee, a voluntary community group, worked to implement this six-lot affordable housing subdivision off of Route 9N and 73 in the Town of Keene. The Adirondack Community Housing Trust (ACHT) financed a portion of the mortgage in exchange for title to the land. These homes would be "forever affordable," but the project stalled after efforts between ACHT, utility providers, the NYSDOT, and local residents reached an impasse.

INCREMENTAL GROWTH

	Now	Near Future	Distant Future
Roads			
Utilities			
Settlement			
Green Space			
Regulations			

Incremental Growth

Development in the Adirondacks is largely incremental. Because hamlets tend to build out slowly relative to less rural communities, planning over time, though difficult, is necessary. Plans should be updated and modified periodically to reflect changing hamlet conditions and trends. However, communities should be proactive in guiding growth. The following are general time-related principles that encourage incremental smart growth.

Communities should plan their road network via the official map to encourage compact patterns of development near an existing hamlet center. The community or a developer may finance and build these roads individually or in partnership.

Roads and utility placement within and near a hamlet center encourages infill development and the reconfiguration and densification of inner hamlet lots. Building utilities and utility districts first guides the location of new growth and prevents unplanned linear strip development. However, innovative ways to finance infrastructure are needed.

Existing natural features can be transformed into community amenities through protection and low impact interventions such as trails and beaches. Amenities such as parks increase land values and attract development. Open areas in the form of a greenbelt limit sprawl and promote appropriate use of the land.

Regulations, such as form-based zoning adhering to the Smart Growth Rings, should be implemented first whenever feasible. Special overlay districts, such as a business improvement district (BID), requiring a critical mass of businesses, may come subsequently. When a hamlet core is fully built out, it may be necessary to obtain a map amendment upgrade for suitable adjacent land.

Looking ahead

The most pressing need for Adirondack communities is to replace jobs lost over the years with the decline and disappearance of industrial, commercial, forestry, and agricultural businesses. These activities historically underpinned the development of Adirondack hamlets, which now must adjust to changing demands for resources and technology. Using smart growth strategies to develop attractive, user-friendly hamlets, rich in amenities, can create favorable conditions for emerging economic opportunities. Hamlets that position themselves with an eye to long-term sustainability will succeed in their quest for new investment.