



TOWN OF WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Patti Corlew • Warrensburg Zoning Administrator
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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is a document that provides recommended direction for local government policy and future actions. A Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity for a community to take stock of the issues and opportunities it faces, to identify residents' shared vision for the future, and to provide recommendations and strategies to guide the Town in pursuing its goals for the future. Comprehensive Plans are important documents to help ensure that communities evolve in line with residents' collective vision. They help set priorities for investments in infrastructure, capital improvements, and economic development initiatives.

WHY UPDATE THE EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Town's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2012. Since that time, the Town and the region have experienced changes in demographics, the economy, infrastructure, land use and community needs. The Town and County have also engaged in several geographic-specific and focused planning efforts since 2012. The 2023 Plan sets forth an updated direction that is reflective of today's community conditions and a vision for the future of Warrensburg.

ABOUT WARRENSBURG

Located in the heart of Warren County sits the scenic community of Warrensburg. At roughly 41,000 acres, Warrensburg is a sprawling and diverse landscape, defined by its beautiful rivers, forests, and hills. Bounded by the Hudson and Schroon Rivers, Warrensburg's riparian setting has driven the Town's growth since its formal establishment in 1813. At the confluence of these two waterways, at the very center of the Town, lies the hamlet of Warrensburg. While representing less than four percent of Warrensburg's area, the hamlet forms the historic, civic, and residential core of the Town and is home to over three-quarters of the Town's residents.

Situated at the "gateway to the Adirondacks," Warrensburg maintains an attractive place to live and realize the potential to be a destination for tourists to enjoy its extensive recreation offerings. This is also influenced by the Town's convenient proximity to the Northway (I-87) and the major destinations of Lake George, to the east, and Gore Mountain, to the west. Warrensburg also faces its challenges, including an aging housing stock, rising home prices, and development pressures. This plan seeks to build on the many assets of Warrensburg, build community pride, and support local residents and businesses.

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The goal of the planning process is the identification of a shared vision for the Town's future, the establishment of goals necessary that support the shared vision, a series of detailed recommendations and strategies to achieve those goals, and, finally, a suite of options that the Town can consider to implement the recommendations.

This document is not intended to serve as a "silver bullet" that will resolve all the issues facing Warrensburg. It does provide a series of recommendations and strategies that could incrementally shape the course of the Town's future. Through perseverance and diligence, the Town can take steps towards reaching its long-term goals.





THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

Developing a Comprehensive Plan is a process requiring detailed analysis, public engagement, and multiple rounds of feedback from project partners and the community at large. Background information is gathered through the review of prior planning efforts, researching existing environmental and demographic conditions, and soliciting input from a broad section of the community.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Town of Warrensburg created an Advisory Committee that consisted of residents, property owners, municipal staff, elected officials, and stakeholders from community organizations. The Advisory Committee was tasked with overseeing the planning process.

Advisory Committee Members

- John Alexander, Town Board Member
- Patti Corlew, Zoning Administrator
- Jim Hull, Code Enforcement Officer
- Laura Moore, Warrensburg Museum of Local History
- Joyce Reed, Collection Clerk
- Sharon Sutphin, Planning Board Chairperson
- Teresa Whalen, Warrensburg Beautification Committee

TOWN OF WARRENSBURG

Comprehensive Plan Public Workshop

How do you envision Warrensburg's future?

Help plan the future of Warrensburg on Thursday, October 27 from 5-7 PM at the Town Fire House

The Town of Warrensburg is in the process of updating its comprehensive plan and is looking for input from its residents.

A Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that identifies community priorities and helps the Town chart a course for the future. Comprehensive plans involve community members coming together to articulate a clear expression of the **community's highest aspirations.**

On **Thursday, October 27th**, representatives from LaBella Associates and members of the Town's Comprehensive Plan Committee will conduct a public engagement workshop to identify needs and opportunities and to develop a common vision for Warrensburg's future.

All are welcome to attend and participate in what will be a dynamic and interactive session.

Food from Oscar's will be served!

A 2 Hour Discussion

Can't attend in person? Scan the QR code below to share your vision :

Your input is important!

Thursday October 27
5:00 pm - 7:00pm
Warrensburg Volunteer Fire Company
18 Elm Street, Warrensburg, NY 12885

For More Information: <https://warrensburgny.us/documents/comprehensive-plan/>

The Advisory Committee employed a variety of outreach techniques to encourage participation by a broad range of community members. The Advisory Committee began meeting in June of 2022 and conducted or oversaw the following:

- Initial identification of Issues and Opportunities
- An inventory and analysis of the existing conditions, which examined trends and current conditions of key topic areas identified by the Advisory Committee (see Appendix A)
- Public participation events, which included public workshops, a focus group, stakeholder interviews, participation at local events, and an online survey
- Development of the plan vision and goals
- Identification and prioritization of plan recommendations

Advisory Committee meeting summaries are included in Appendix B.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A range of public engagement methods were employed to ensure meaningful input from residents, business owners, and other local stakeholders. These included;

- Public visioning workshop, conducted in fall 2022, during which the project team provide an update on the planning process and attendees broke into groups to have focused discussions on housing, recreation and tourism, and hamlet revitalization.
- One-on-one interviews with over 20 stakeholders, including residents, community organizations, business owners, property owners, and Town staff and leadership.
- A future hamlet development focus group session that brought together developers, economic development committee members, property owners, and preservationists to identify priorities for future hamlet development.

- Several online surveys were launched at the fall public visioning workshop, including an overarching vision survey and several topic-focused surveys.
- Attendance at key local events, such as the Garlic Festival.
- Public workshop in spring 2023 to review the draft plan recommendations. During this public workshop, the public was provided the opportunity to rank draft recommendations and provide ideas for additional recommendations to be incorporated into the draft Comprehensive Plan. A corresponding

online survey was promoted, offering an opportunity to those unable to attend in person to provide input.

- A Town Board public hearing will be held to review the Comprehensive Plan prior to adoption.

These activities were promoted through press releases in the local newspaper, announcements on the Town website and Facebook page, flyers, and direct invites. Public participation summaries are included in Appendix C.



VISION & GOALS

VISION STATEMENT

A Vision Statement describes the desired future state of a community and provides a picture of what the community is working towards. It serves as the organizing feature of the goals and recommendations.

When community members are approached with difficult or contentious decisions, they can ask themselves, "how does the proposed action support or detract from residents' vision for the community?" The Vision Statement can serve to reorient decision makers in times of uncertainty. The following Vision Statement was developed by the Advisory Committee:

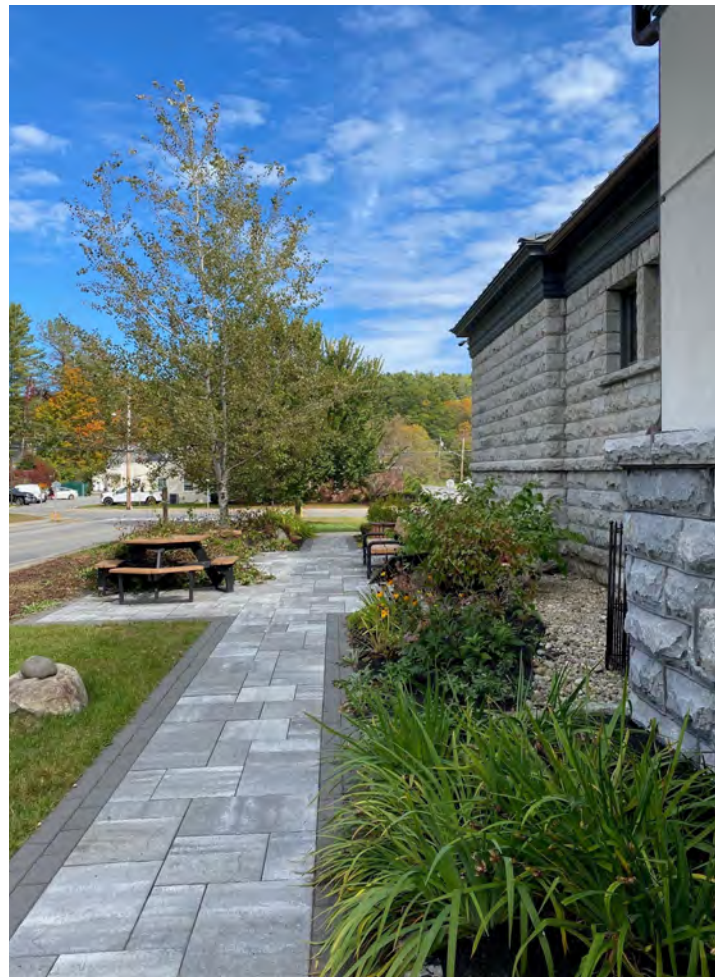
Warrensburg's economy is growing, with new businesses and greater support and revenue for the many local businesses that call Warrensburg home. Our hamlet is an inviting place that welcomes passers-through to stop, frequent our shops, take in the scenic sights of the Hudson and Schroon Rivers, and hike, ski, and fish at our local parks and recreation areas. We continue to attract visitors, drawn to the beauty of the community and our natural and recreational assets, while supporting our residents' ability to age-in-place and former residents' dreams of returning home with a range of affordable housing options. We balance the needs of local residents and tourists in a manner that is mutually beneficial. We protect and celebrate the incredible natural landscape and rivers that run through our community.

GOALS

To achieve this vision, the following broad-based goals were identified, which informed the development of the Plan recommendations:

- 1 IMPROVE HOUSING DIVERSITY**
- 2 IMPROVE & DIVERSIFY RECREATIONAL OFFERINGS**
- 3 ENCOURAGE NEW DEVELOPMENT, WHILE PRESERVING LOCAL IDENTITY & CHARACTER**
- 4 SUPPORT & GROW LOCAL BUSINESS & NEW ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
- 5 PROMOTE & CELEBRATE WARRENSBURG'S ASSETS**

Additional information and background around each plan goal, and its accompanying strategies and recommendations, is provided in the following section.





RECOMMENDATIONS

The Comprehensive Plan recommendations were developed over the course of the planning process and reflect the combined input from public engagement, the inventory and analysis, previous planning efforts, best practices, and the Advisory Committee.

This section includes a substantial number of recommendations, which can be overwhelming when considered as a whole. Not all of the recommendations require immediate action or direct leadership by the Town, so in addition to being organized around the five Plan goals, key recommendations have been identified as high priority, with additional

details on next steps for implementation, to serve as a step-by-step guide to tackle these priority recommendations.

As a community, Warrensburg is already pursuing many of the goals and recommendations outlined here. The Town's robust network of community organizations, volunteers, Town staff, and elected officials have proven their capacity to start tackling these issues. Outlining the goals and recommendations that may already be underway is intended to recognize the efforts and to provide a basis for their continuation.



Goal 1: Increase Housing Diversity

Apart from its scenic setting, Warrensburg is defined in large part by its homes: Housing constitutes the greatest share of total land use in the Town. Within the hamlet, Warrensburg boasts a rich inventory of historic homes on small lots, contributing considerably to its small-town charm. However, Warrensburg faces multi-faceted challenges in improving and diversifying its housing stock as it looks to the

future. The following overview provides context for potential interventions as the Town looks to adequately house its residents, as well as attract new residents in the years ahead.

Housing needs are greatest among Warrensburg's working-class and low-income residents. Fully 40% of housing units in the hamlet are rentals and form a vital source of housing for residents. Renters in

Warrensburg are experiencing increased pressures, however, as rents have climbed over 20% between 2010 to 2020, with monthly rents currently averaging around \$900. As a result, over 40% of Warrensburg residents living in rental housing are rent burdened, which the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines as spending over 30% of one's household income on rent. Homeowners are likewise

burdened, with roughly 36% of mortgage-owning households classified as mortgage-burdened in 2020.

A factor contributing to this dynamic is available inventory. Since 2010, only 40 new owner-occupied units have been constructed in the Town, and there has been no increase in rental units. The growth of short-term rentals has also altered housing dynamics within Warrensburg. The presence of short-term rentals (STRs) is regulated by the Town, which requires the official registration of these units by their operators. As of 2023, there are 104 STRs in the Town, compared to 89 in 2022. Approximately 25% of STRs are in the hamlet. While the expansion of this industry has been welcomed by many on the grounds of economic development and to supplement a dearth of accommodation options in Warrensburg, the growth of this industry is typically accompanied by a corresponding depletion of rental options, where housing that was formerly offered up to (long-term) renters are now being listed as short-term rentals.

At the same time, many of Warrensburg's longstanding residences are in need of rehabilitation. While many factors contribute to a lack of upkeep, one facet of this complex issue is interrelated with Warrensburg's lack of senior housing and the resultant long tenure of an aging population in large, older, single-family homes. Another factor is a lack of available financing for property owners to invest in needed repair work. The recommendations below outline steps the Town can undertake to best leverage its existing housing inventory through a coordinated multi-faceted strategy that connects homeowners with financing options for repairs, promotes the development of senior housing, facilitates the conversion of larger

single-family residences into multi-family use, monitors the expansion of the short-term rental industry, and improves enforcement so that landlords with the means to invest in repair work do so.

In addition to drawing on the great potential and strengths of its existing housing stock, the Town can be proactive in planning for its current and future housing needs. The construction of new housing in the hamlet has slowed in recent decades, despite a growing population. Part of this dynamic stems from constraints imposed by existing zoning. Although land use and zoning actions in the Town are set by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), zoning in the hamlet is controlled locally in most instances. A 2022 study by Warren County evaluated housing development potential throughout the Town, based on existing zoning and found that less than 30% of that development potential is within the hamlet. The existing hamlet zoning can be rethought to allow greater flexibility among these zoning districts so that new housing best addresses the needs of residents. The housing strategy outlined below details zoning and land use initiatives that promote new "missing middle" and affordable housing development. These include facilitating the use of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and other zoning amendments, such as relaxing minimum lot size requirements and encouraging the creation of apartments over Main Street businesses to address rental needs, as well as increasing the vibrancy of Warrensburg's commercial core.

The recommendations derive from both a thorough analysis of existing conditions in Warrensburg, as well as extensive community engagement. Input from the community revealed a strong collective will to improve existing



2,260

Number of housing units

70%

Percentage of housing that is owner-occupied

\$148,800

Median home value

18%

2010-2020 increase in median home value

20%

2010-2020 increase in median rental rates

106

Projected additional housing units needed by 2040 to meet demand



Warrensburg has much to offer current and prospective residents. Ensuring access to safe, affordable housing for seniors to age-in-place and young families to move to Warrensburg is critical for the Town's future.

housing conditions throughout Warrensburg and embrace new opportunities for future growth. Responses from a 2019 Warrensburg Economic Development Committee (EDC) survey indicated that fully two-thirds of respondents would like to see the Town to grow to a maximum of 5,000 residents over its existing population of some 4,000. A further 25 percent stated they would be comfortable with a future population of as much as 7,000. A clear consensus exists within the community to better house its residents and grow its inventory, providing affordable options for both seniors, working people, and young families. With a projected population of ~4,500 by 2040, and a slated increase in average household sizes, the following steps are designed to

address current and future housing needs by restoring Warrensburg's existing stock of housing while embracing new opportunities to grow and transform.





Priority Recommendation: Be Proactive in Exploring Redeveloping Town-Owned Properties for Housing

OVERVIEW

There are several underutilized Town-owned properties that could be well suited for new housing development, bringing these properties back on the tax rolls and introducing additional housing units. One is the former Highway Garage property located on King Street, which now sits vacant. The Town in 2023 successfully applied for

Restore NY funding to demolish the garage, an important step to prepping the site for sale and redevelopment, with a target end use of senior housing. The Town should continue their efforts to see this property redeveloped with housing, in addition to considering housing opportunities for the Town property on Harrington Hill.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

The Town will lead implementation of this recommendation.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The Town has secured \$50,000 in Restore NY Round 7 funding to demolish the former highway garage building on King Street. Additional funding sources to be explored in advancing the redevelopment of the King Street and Harrington Hill properties include:

- NYS Department of State's (DOS) Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) provides matching grants on a competitive basis to eligible towns, villages, cities, and counties located along New York's coasts or designated inland waterways for planning, design and construction projects to revitalize communities and waterfronts. This funding could be used to advance the Harrington Hill site redevelopment planning and implementation.
- NYS Homes & Community Renewal's (HCR) Senior Housing Program provides capital funding for site acquisition, hard costs, and related soft costs to create housing for low-income seniors in New York State. This funding could be used by the future site developer(s) to advance the redevelopment of the site(s) with affordable senior housing.
- Dormitory Authority (DASNY) administers State & Municipal (SAM) grants awarded by the Senate Finance Committee, the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, and the Executive Committee. This flexible funding is used for a variety of capital projects.

KEY NEXT STEPS:

King Street Property:

1. Demolish the King Street garage and prep the site for redevelopment.
2. Issue a Request for Expressions of Interest to purchase and develop the property.

Harrington Hill Property:

1. Conduct a feasibility and market analysis to evaluate the site's redevelopment potential.
 2. Issue a Request for Expressions of Interest to purchase and develop the property.
-

Priority Recommendation: Encourage Alternative Housing Options for Residents Currently in Mobile Home Parks

OVERVIEW

The Town should actively strive to offer a range of alternative housing options for residents. Mobile and manufactured homes have played an important housing option for many families. HUD established important housing construction standards in 1974, distinguishing between mobile homes and manufactured homes. Homes built after June 5, 1976 are "Manufactured Homes" and required to be built on a permanent chassis. Mobile homes constructed prior to this date do not meet the HUD standards. There are mobile constructed prior to 1976 homes located both in and outside of mobile home parks.

Constructing improvements to antiquated mobile homes is challenging and many park owners don't make necessary investments to sustain the quality of the park. Unlike traditional homes, mobile homes typically depreciate in value over time, are difficult to repair/improve, and can limit residents' ability to build equity or wealth from their home investment.

The Town should promote residents' understanding of issues associated with mobile home living, such as higher energy costs, health/safety concerns, and lower resale values. This can be achieved through Town Hall meetings, educational materials, and public forums.

The Town could also consider incentivizing the construction of affordable, energy-efficient, and resilient housing units as alternatives to mobile homes. Such incentives could take various forms, including tax benefits, streamlined permitting processes, and direct financial assistance. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) are now receiving renewed interest; this may be an option to explore within the hamlet.

By promoting the development of such housing, Warrensburg could provide attractive alternatives for current mobile home residents while simultaneously enhancing the overall housing stock and diversity within the community.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

The Town could lead implementation of this recommendation. Potential partners include: Warren County Planning, Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board (LCLGRP), NYS Homes & Community Renewal (HCR), and USDA Rural Development, and others with interest in housing.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

NYS HCR's Mobile and Manufactured Home Replacement (MHHR) Program provides funds to low- and moderate-income homeowners to replace dilapidated mobile or manufactured homes that are site on lands owned by the homeowner. The Town can apply on behalf of homeowners for up to \$100,000 per property. It is often necessary to leverage other NYS funding sources, such as HCR Housing Rehab and HOME programs.

KEY NEXT STEPS:

1. Reach out to Warren County Planning to engage the community development representatives and review the Warren County Needs Assessment (to be published in Fall 2023).
2. Consider participating in the Warren County Housing Task force or establishing a local initiative.
3. Develop informational materials to gauge interest in a Mobile Home Replacement Program. If there is significant interest, consider applying.
4. Explore the use of incentives to encourage housing choice for low/moderate income and workforce housing.

Additional Recommendations:

REVISE ZONING TO ALLOW OR PROMOTE MORE HOUSING OPTIONS, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SENIOR HOUSING

The Town should explore opportunities to update their current zoning to allow for higher density, high quality, and appealing, yet affordable housing. This may include apartments, workforce, rental, and targeted housing options that are appealing to young professionals and millennials as well as senior housing with accompanying amenities or services.

Options include creative utilization of multi-family dwellings and duplexes. This is especially important in terms of attracting and retaining residents who may not otherwise be able to afford a single-family home, such as young families and single professionals. One improvement to the current zoning that could be helpful in further incentivizing this type of housing would be revising the different tiers of multifamily housing to provide more flexibility. Currently, multifamily dwellings allow for a minimum of 3 and a max of 5 units, while apartment buildings allow for 6 or more units. Multifamily dwellings for example could be expanded to permit between 3 and 8 units to provide more investment potential, and the range for apartment buildings would be raised to 9 or more units. Alternately, a new intermediate tier of multifamily housing could be created which permits between 6-10 units,

and apartment buildings could then cover 11 or more units in size.

Also critical is senior housing. As residents age, providing appropriate housing choices near service centers will help to ensure seniors are able to remain active within the community. The Town should explore options to encourage senior housing within or near the hamlet when revising the zoning ordinance, including both rental and condominium housing. Specifically, the Town should consider revising the current definitions of senior housing in the Zoning Code to remove the 20-unit minimum, and setting a reasonable maximum instead.

MONITOR THE EXPANSION OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS

To address unintended consequence of STRs, the Town passed a Local Law in 2019 to regulate STRs and establish a permitting procedure. With the continued growth in tourism in the region and financial benefits to homeowners to convert owner-occupied homes and long-term rentals into STR, the Town should closely monitor their expansion and be prepared to intervene, as necessary. Metrics to track as part of STR monitoring could include: the number and/or density of STRs, home sale prices, the number of STRs as a percentage of rental or total housing stock, rental rates, or filed complaints. The Town should regularly track changes to the identified metrics and continually evaluate the need to intervene through measures such as permitting restrictions and/or zoning limitations, as two examples.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS THAT CAN PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE HOMEOWNERS TO MAKE REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THEIR HOMES

There are a variety of regional, State, and Federal programs that are focused on providing technical or financial assistance to homeowners engaging in home improvement activities. These programs can be devoted to increasing energy efficiency, improving health and safety, or even improving the appearance of a home. The Town currently provides information at Town Hall on an ad-hoc basis concerning several of these programs.

This information campaign should be expanded, so that it is easier for homeowners to find the information they need. Information and links should be provided on the Town website, flyers, and brochures should continue to be available at Town Hall, and information should be provided in the newsletter. Town officials should also be briefed on the programs, so that they may spread this information to their constituents and customers.

ENSURE THAT RENTAL HOUSING STOCK IS WELL-MAINTAINED AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH BUILDING CODES

In addition to being public health and safety issues, poorly maintained or vacant buildings can be a deterrent to potential residents, business owners, investors, and visitors. When strict building code

standards are enforced, it ensures that all housing meets minimum safety and quality standards, and creates an attractive community and business center that instills a sense of community pride and contributes to a high quality of life. In Warrensburg, property maintenance is regulated both under New York State Property Maintenance Code, enforced through Warren County, and local codes for junk. The Town strives to provide a high quality of local code enforcement for those local codes. In the case of the New York State Building Code, enforcement is provided through Warren County. However, since the County cannot maintain a full-time enforcement inspection routine within the Town, it is incumbent upon the local code enforcement officer to coordinate with the County to provide information about possible code infractions. These efforts should continue, as maintaining a neat, clean environment will further enhance the character of the community.

SUPPORT THE CONVERSION OF LARGE SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES TO MULTI-FAMILY UNITS

Most housing in the Town is single-family housing and 70% of occupied single-family housing units are occupied by one- to two-person households. With the decline in average household size due to the Town's aging population and shifts in birth rates, many of the historic homes that were originally designed to house large families are under-occupied. These large, historic homes are also often those that are in a state of disrepair and the most costly to repair. Supporting the conversion of these home to

multi-family units, through zoning and funding, would help bring rental income to the building owners and introduce new much-needed rental housing.

ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF APARTMENTS OVER BUSINESSES IN THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Utilizing the second and third story of existing commercial buildings for residential uses is often a "win-win" scenario for the community. Businesses on the first floor benefit from the additional customer base, property owners gain additional revenue from rent, and residents gain access to additional housing which is often affordable. The Town should seek other ways to create incentives for property owners to establish second and third story apartments. This could take the form of zoning incentives, such as increased flexibility for dimensional requirements.

UPDATE ZONING TO INCLUDE APPROPRIATE MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL PARKING REQUIREMENTS

In areas where there are a high number of vehicles and limited parking, setting minimum parking requirements can prevent overcrowding on streets and in neighborhoods. Minimum parking requirements can ensure that there is enough parking for residents of a particular building or area.

While minimum parking requirements can have benefits, they can also lead to issues such as increased development costs (which can impact housing affordability) and excessive impervious surface coverage (which can contribute to stormwater runoff and heat island effects). Therefore, it's important that minimum parking requirements be carefully calibrated to balance the need for parking with these potential downsides.






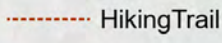
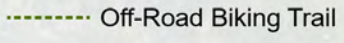
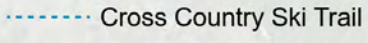
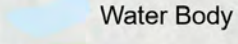
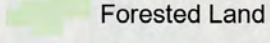
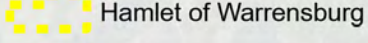
Goal 2: Improve & Diversify Recreational Offerings

Warrensburg is defined by its scenic setting at the confluence of the Hudson and Schroon Rivers. Known as the “Gateway to the Adirondacks,” Residents and visitors alike are drawn to Warrensburg’s vast menu of recreational offerings, from skiing and forested walks to water-based activities and local parks. Outside the hamlet, the Town of Warrensburg is home to some twenty-thousand acres of publicly owned wild,

forested, and conservation lands, including the Pack Demonstration Forest (SUNY ESF) and the Lake George Wild Forest (NYSDEC). Most public recreation resources in Warrensburg are either owned, operated, or stewarded by the NYSDEC, SUNY ESF, Warren County, or the Town of Warrensburg. Among the many recreational activities Warrensburg offers are hiking, fishing, camping, canoeing,

snow mobile-riding, cross country skiing, and more. While undoubtedly one of the Town’s greatest strengths, considerable scope exists for Warrensburg to better leverage its recreational resources with a view of improving visibility, reimagining existing assets, and creating new recreational experiences for both the enjoyment of locals and to draw in visitors.

Recreation Warrensburg

-  Camping
-  Trail Head
-  Canoe Launch
-  Hiking Trail
-  Off-Road Biking Trail
-  Cross Country Ski Trail
-  Water Body
-  Forested Land
-  Hamlet of Warrensburg



While Warrensburg's recreational offerings are a cherished resource for residents, utilization levels vary widely. The resources owned and administered by the NYSDEC – including an extensive nature, cross-country skiing, and trail systems and a popular waterfront access park at the Hudson River Recreation Area – are heavily used, particularly in the summer months. Hackensack Mountain – perhaps the most prominent recreational resource in Town – likewise experiences an overflow of parking at its trailhead. Conversely, the immense forested acreage of ESF's Pack Demonstration Forest has seen declining visitation for years. While Pack once had a visitor's center, it has since closed and no formal programming exists in the forest beyond interpretive trails and a NYSDEC-run summer camp. In a similar vein, while the Town

Warrensburg is rich in recreational facilities, including ski mountains, hiking trails, passive space, and athletic fields. Enhancing these existing resources will reap benefits for residents and tourists alike.

has made significant strides to develop and beautify pocket parks, particularly those with waterfront access, utilization varies widely. Some resources, such as the centrally located recreational field, lack formal programming or connections with broader regional trail systems and recreational resources. The balancing of utilization is therefore a key goal of the recreational objectives outlined below. This aim can be achieved through a variety of measures, including establishing and promoting an integrated system of signage, wayfinding, and promotional materials to improve the visibility and legibility of Warrensburg's recreational assets, improving the trailhead and parking options for the Hackensack Mountain; expanding programming at underutilized parks; and establishing connections to broader regional trail systems.

While much of Warrensburg recreational offerings are publicly owned, the Town is also famed for several noteworthy institutions that contribute to recreation in Warrensburg. These include Camp Echo Lake, Hickory Hill, Sinai Retreats, and Cronin's Golf Resort. Each institution collaborates with the Town government in its own fashion, with varying degrees of public partnership and public access. While current levels of collaboration are largely positive, areas of increased collaboration were identified throughout public engagement.

Despite this array of recreational offerings, public engagement revealed several areas where residents' desires for certain recreational amenities remain unmet, notable waterfront access. It is the confluence of the Schroon River with the Hudson

that fueled Warrensburg's historic growth. Throughout the course of community engagement, a strong community desire was expressed for expanded access to both rivers. The identification of ways to improve access to these resources – both as a means of passive and active recreation and to strengthen physical connections to a historically and locally significant river – is a key component of Warrensburg's recreational goals. Likewise, residents expressed the desire to see the creation of indoor recreational opportunities during the winter months. Opportunities for this goal are identified below.



Priority Recommendation: Establish Regular Communication and Collaboration between Recreation Facility Owners and Operators

OVERVIEW

Increased coordination and collaboration between the Town and other recreation facility owners and operators is needed to ensure that Town residents' needs are prioritized in decision making.

Kay among those property owners in the NYSDC, which is in the process of updating the Unit Management Plan (UMP) for State Forests in Saratoga and Warren Counties (last updated in 2002). The Town should stay informed on the status of the UMP update process and work collaboratively with Warren County, the Adirondack Park Agency, and NYSDEC to ensure that the Hudson and Schroon Rivers are protected and access to these resources are maintained, improved, and expanded. Use of these lands and access to the rivers should be balanced

and serve as a model of economically stable, human coexistence with nature to the rest of the Adirondack Park, State, and nation.

Unlike the lands in the Town operated by the NYSDEC, the Pack Demonstration Forest is a less frequented recreational resource despite being completely open to the public. SUNY ESF, the institution that manages the land trust, considers Pack Forest's primary purpose as a research and education forest. Its use of the property has declined over the years, and it currently maintains no formal programming and has no permanent on-site staff. ESF is currently undertaking an analysis of Pack Forest (as part of a larger review of all their properties) to determine a comprehensive vision for its future use. There are opportunities to improve the facility, including reopening an interpretive visitor center, developing an interpretive trail that incorporates the sawmill that operated at the property historically, and upgrading the two lake access points on the property.

Communication between ESF and the Town currently occurs on an as-needed basis, with no standing annual meetings. The Town should establish a more regular communication schedule with SUNY ESF to discuss the park's current and long-term use.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

Implementation of this recommendation will involve collaboration between the Town, NYSDEC, SUNY ESF, Warren County, and private recreation facility owners and operators.

KEY NEXT STEPS:

1. Contact NYSDEC, SUNY ESF, and other recreation facility owners.
2. Establish a regular communication schedule,
3. Disseminate information about planned and ongoing projects at their facilities with Town residents, including posting updates on the Town website and social media.

Additional Recommendations:

IMPROVE SIGNAGE, TRAIL MARKERS, AND PARKING AT ALL HACKENSACK MOUNTAIN TRAILHEADS

Some of the most popular and successful outdoor recreation destinations include trail networks that can be accessed from downtown areas. The result is a synergy between businesses like restaurants, retailers, and accommodations that keep visitors in one place without the need to drive out of the community. Hackensack Mountain represents an opportunity to be just that; however, signage, trail markers, and parking will need to be improved for it to fulfill this potential. While some improvements

have been made to trail markers in collaboration with Warrensburg CSD students, there is a need for additional trail marker upkeep, clearer signage, and expanded parking at all trailheads.

WORK WITH PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS TO EXPLORE EXPANDING CONNECTIONS TO REGIONAL TRAIL AND LAND- AND WATER-BASED RECREATION NETWORKS

Warrensburg is located along or near several important trail systems, including the First Wilderness Trail, the South Warren Snowmobile Club trail network, and the Warren County Bikeway. The Town should seek ways to develop complementary local connections to the network. By allowing access to and from this trail

throughout the Town, residents will have new and improved recreational opportunities, and the Town can tap into additional economic potential generated by out-of-Town trail users who will have more direct access to Warrensburg businesses. Various regional recreation plans, such as the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor and the Lake George-Warrensburg Bikeway plan provide a basis for these connections. To accomplish bike network connections, the Town will need to work creatively to identify ways to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, as the road rights-of-way of several key connectors are narrow and constrained.

Creating a more comprehensive system for water access to both the Schroon and Hudson Rivers will also involve extensive collaboration with waterfront property owners, as Town-owned waterfront land





is limited. As a first step, the Town should seek funding to conduct a feasibility analysis that dives deeper into identifying key sites for waterfront access to fill gaps and initiate conversations with key property owners. Warren County Planning could be a key partner in this exercise.

PROMOTE THE USE OF CALVIN ENGLE PARK AND ADJACENT WATER STREET FOR EVENTS

Calvin Engle Park in the Town's hamlet was identified as an underutilized recreation space. The park, which features amphitheater seating, plantings, and benches at the corner of Richards Avenue and Water Street and offers views

of the Schroon River, could be better programmed and utilized for local events, potentially spilling into adjacent Water Street. One example of potential programming, given the design of the park, is local music performances, in support of other local events or as stand-alone local draws that would bring the community to the waterfront.

EVALUATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

Residents indicated a strong desire for indoor recreation facilities. The Town should explore the feasibility of establishing a facility that could meet both recreational and community needs. Alternatively, the Town could coordinate with the Warrensburg

Central School District (CSD) to explore broader community access and use of their existing indoor facilities outside of school hours.

SUPPORT INCREASED COLLABORATION BETWEEN WARRENSBURG CSD AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Warrensburg youth have access to an enviable list of parks and recreational facilities. Warrensburg CSD collaborates with some of these facilities, including field trips to the Fish Hatchery, trail marker painting projects at Hackensack Mountain, and Camp Echo Lake through the Camp Inspire program. These collaborations should continue. There are also opportunities for

increased collaboration with SUNY ESF and Pack Forest to introduce students to careers in forestry, conservation, and natural resource management. ESF used to collaborate with BOCES on a variety of programs, but that program has since dropped. There are opportunities to revive this partnership and expand collaboration with BOCES' School of Forestry Program, develop school horticulture projects, and other initiatives that would both serve as a unique school program and increase understanding and use of underutilized facilities.

PURSUE FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FARMER'S MARKET TO ADDRESS TRAFFIC AND SAFETY CONCERNS

The farmer's market has become very successful over the past few years. The Town has continued to add amenities, such as restroom facilities and a pedestrian crossing, to support this growing market. This effort should be continued, to support the farmer's market as it continues to grow in popularity, with a focus on addressing traffic and safety concerns associated with its location on a constrained lot and a roadway with right-of-way constraints. If capacity continues to be a concern, there may be additional means to address traffic, parking, and safety, so that the Farmer's Market can continue to provide residents with the opportunity to support local farms.

WORK WITH HICKORY HILL TO SUPPORT THEIR WORK DEVELOPING YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Hickory Ski Center is a local, community-based destination and actively works to keep lift tickets and seasonal pass prices low for its community base. They are currently undertaking a series of improvements, many of which are supported by grant and outside funding and are being undertaken in collaboration with local and regional partners, including the County and local businesses, camps, schools, and civic organizations. These include expanding non-winter programming opportunities, marketing, educational offerings, and opening a new brewery at the facility. Overall, this institution is very active at partnering with local organizations and securing financing to expand its operations and menu of programming. The Town should collaborate with and support these efforts, as Hickory Ski Center looks to become a year-round recreational destination.



Goal 3: Encourage New Development, while Preserving Local Identity & Character

Although comprising only about 3% of the total land area within the Town, the Hamlet of Warrensburg represents its core commercial and economic backbone. The Main Street corridor within this hamlet

provides an array of shops and services that need to cater to both locals as well as attract visitors and tourists making their way through the area. Being able to provide the right balance of local and tourism needs is an

important consideration in its economic success.

However, the hamlet faces several challenges in its continued growth. This section provides context and

background for recommendations which the Town should consider as it seeks to encourage new development while protecting the local historic character, charm, and scale that residents value.

The Hamlet of Warrensburg was purposefully designated by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) as a discrete area devoted to denser commercial and residential development, greatly helping to preserve the natural resources and open land of the surrounding Town. This area was chosen because of its location along primary travel corridors and proximity to Interstate travel, making it an ideal location for more commercial activity; however, it is geographically constrained. To protect the Adirondack Park, hamlet style development is not permitted to expand outward, and physical constraints of hills and rivers often limit the development area within.

Today, much of the hamlet area—particularly within the commercial center—is already developed. However, the Town needs to find ways to continue to grow economically in order to sustain financial health. This means that new economic development will likely need to come from re-development infill opportunities, where existing developed properties are repurposed or torn-down and replaced by newer and larger commercial operations. But this can come at a cost. The commercial corridor of Warrensburg is home to many older historic and charming structures that define the character and scale of the community. The Warrensburg Hamlet Historic District, which includes both the State and National Register structures, is the largest historic district within the Adirondack Park; however, it provides very limited protections and does not include much of the Main Street

corridor. Promoting new infill growth could result in these structures being torn down and replaced with contemporary businesses, ones which may not contribute positively to the nature of the hamlet.

There are also many historic and older community buildings which have unfortunately fallen into disrepair over time, their owners unable to meet the growing financial burdens of maintenance and repair. Owners of these properties can often be tempted to sell to avoid the financial hardship of trying to rehabilitate the structure. Available grants and financing options are limited and not widely known. For many property owners, it has become more difficult to find commercial tenants to fill their existing space. With a growing number of commercial institutions coming from larger national and regional corporations, it has



become more the norm that older structures such as these are torn down to construct a standard store template. Although the residents of Warrensburg would like their community to serve both locals and visitors, it should ideally seek to meet the needs of locals first where possible, with many preferring to see smaller locally-owned shops and services in lieu of larger corporate chains.

While the Town does not have control of private sector decisions and these market forces, it can adjust the levers of zoning that dictate allowable uses and density. In order to encourage more commercial growth within the hamlet, the Town can expand the number and types of uses that are allowed with the intent that the private sector take advantage of the opportunity this

A goal of this plan is to seek strategies that can accommodate new commercial and residential redevelopment without unnecessarily undermining the charm of the Warrensburg community.

presents. This includes adding some uses that are new, as well as expanding the areas in which other uses are already allowed. It can also try to incentivize certain activities, such as the rehabilitation of existing structures.

While municipal water service serves much of the area, sewer service is currently limited to the eastern portion of the commercial corridor. Expanding sewer services to other unserved portions of the hamlet helps to provide additional development incentive and potential, including mixed-use commercial and residential applications.

However, incentivizing new development alone should not be undertaken without taking advantage of the opportunity to improve the aesthetic appeal of the hamlet. An attractive commercial corridor will, over time, help to attract more business and people wishing to visit, and it is important that Warrensburg projects a certain charm. In order to help see that new development is attractive and contributes positively to the community, some design guidance can be helpful, particularly in regard to elements such as site planning, landscaping, parking and signage, which typically have the greatest impact on visual curb appeal and property values. There are also opportunities to clarify the existing development codes and review processes to help ensure a more consistent and transparent review and approval process.

The recommendations provided here outline strategies the Town can undertake to help incentivize new business and redevelopment within the commercial hamlet areas. This includes expansion of sewer services, design guidelines for new

construction, steps to clarify the current zoning codes to enable more objective, transparent and predictable project reviews, and overall beautification opportunities that can make the hamlet more attractive for business.



Priority Recommendation: Expand Hamlet Commercial Development Opportunities

OVERVIEW

In order to help spur more economic growth within the Hamlet of Warrensburg, additional areas for growth and a wider variety of commercial and residential uses should be allowed for. Currently, the commercial areas of the hamlet are effectively already developed, and there are geographic constraints that limit outward growth in many areas. The surrounding residential neighborhoods are quieter by comparison, and it is important that any future commercial growth try not to infringe on the character of these areas. In order for the hamlet to find ways to continue to grow economically, growth will likely need to come from infill re-development where existing commercial properties are expanded or repurposed with newer and larger operations.



The Commercial Core (CC) zoning district allows for the densest and most intense levels of development, with buildings allowed to be constructed right up to the front and side property lines, allowing more square footage of space than other districts. It also permits the widest variety of uses compared to other districts, allowing for more flexibility. These two factors make it an excellent candidate for new infill growth. As an initial step, it is recommended that the Commercial Core district be reviewed to identify any new commercial or mixed-uses that could be allowed to provide additional re-development flexibility. Preliminary review of the code suggests that there may be currently excluded uses that could be considered, such as a hotel, brew-pub, distillery, veterinary clinic (not kennel), or day care. Residential options could also be expanded as noted under the Goal 1 recommendations. Mixed-use options

combining both commercial and residential in the same building should be encouraged. Individual decisions would need to be made regarding each use being permitted by right, with site plan review, or by special permit. These changes would need to coincide with new and updated definitions in the Zoning Code to properly define each activity.

Secondly, it is recommended that the current extents of the Commercial Core zoning district be expanded in areas where it would not unjustly infringe on the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. At present, there is opportunity for such expansion to occur along a portion of Hudson Street and Elm Street, as illustrated in the Future Land Use Vision Map. This would allow for a logical extension of the downtown business district's central core, right at the crossroads intersection of the bandstand.

Third, it is recommended that the Town also consider options for allowing the same additional variety of uses enjoyed by the Commercial Core district to other areas along the commercial corridor, identified as "Commercial Expansion Areas" in the Future Land Use Vision Map.

The most straightforward implementation of this would be to extend the existing Commercial Core zoning into these commercial expansion areas along Main Street. It is important to recognize that this modification could likely change the visual character along the more residentially-scaled portions of Main Street over time, allowing new buildings that are built directly up to the sidewalk as allowed in the CC district. It could also likely incentivize the tear-down of some existing buildings in favor of replacing them with newer and larger commercial operations. This factor should be considered in that it could alter the long-term character of these areas, and opportunities to incentivize the adaptive reuse of structures should be evaluated.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

The Town Board would lead implementation of this recommendation, with the Town Planning Board as a key partner.

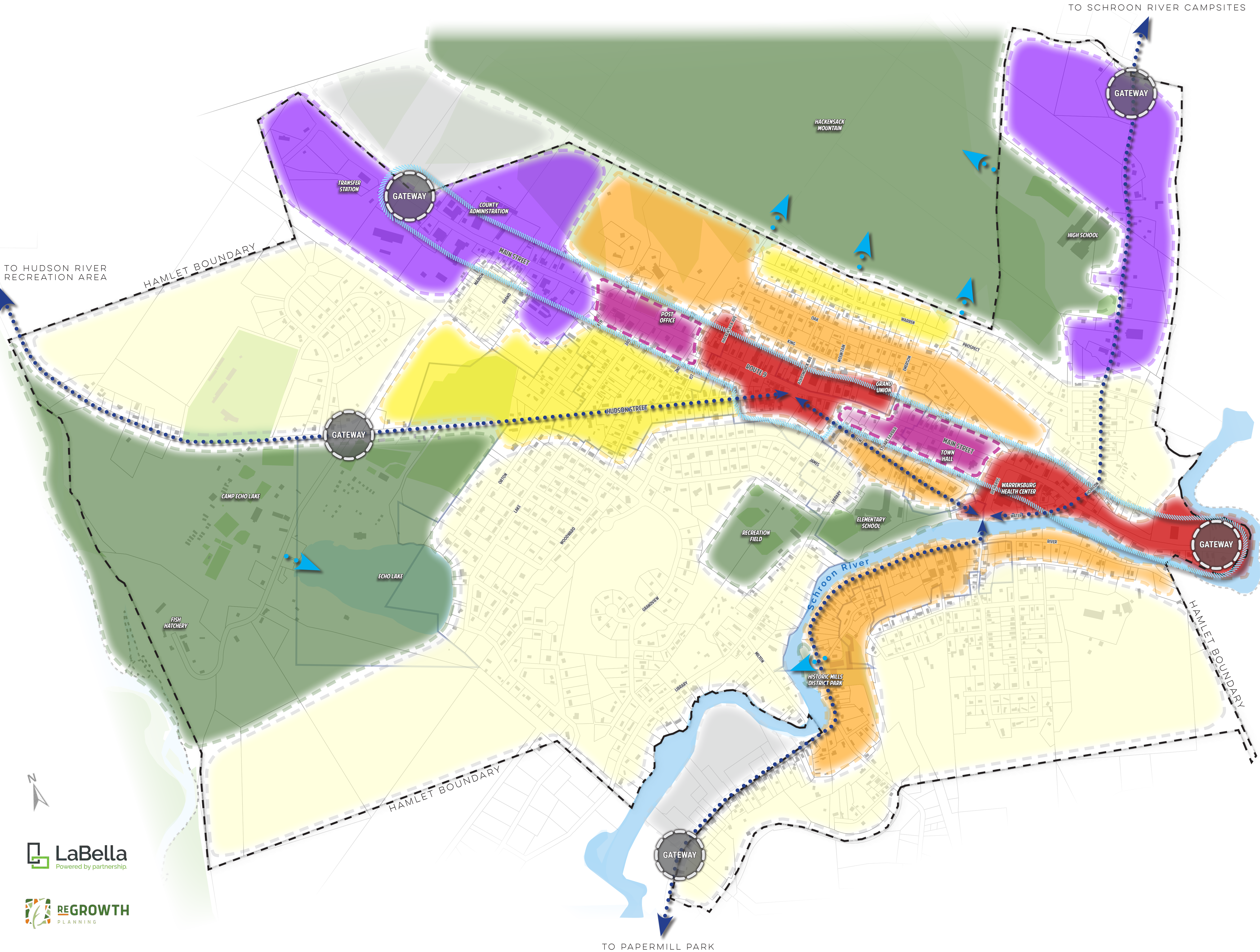
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The Town submitted a grant application in July of 2023 to help fund this work under the Smart Growth Community Planning and Zoning Program administered by the NYS Department of State. Selection for this funding is anticipated to be announced by the end of the year.

KEY NEXT STEPS:

1. Secure funding for zoning update.
2. Identify other zoning-related recommendations from this plan, including this priority recommendation, which could be implemented with the available grant funding.
3. Issue an RFP for the identified zoning updates and select a preferred consultant.

WARRENSBURG FUTURE LAND USE VISION MAP



- Main Street Corridor**
Proposed design guidance related to site plan layout, access management, parking, landscaping and exterior lighting.
- Core Hamlet Business District**
Proposed areas for denser commercial development serving the local community and tourists, with buildings up close to the street and very small setbacks.
- Commercial Expansion Areas**
Areas along Main Street which are identified for expanded commercial activity.
- Highway Commercial / Industrial**
Proposed areas for larger-scale businesses, light manufacturing and automobile-oriented commercial uses which often serve a larger market outside the hamlet and are not as suitable for a small main street hamlet setting.
- Hamlet Scale Mixed Use**
These areas represent a mix of small-scale commercial and residential uses compatible in scale with surrounding neighborhoods, often in converted residential homes, serving the local community. Continue to utilize as a buffer between the core hamlet business district and residential areas.
- Residential Neighborhood**
A primarily small-scale single-family residential neighborhood which does allow for some limited commercial uses such as offices, studios, craft shops, retail and service at a residential neighborhood scale, as well as two-family and multi-family dwellings.
- Residential**
A primarily single-family residential neighborhood which does allow for some limited rural uses such as small-scale agriculture or game preserves.
- Recreation**
Areas for active and passive park space to serve local residents as well as visiting tourists.
- Gateway Treatment**
Locations for continued visual enhancements which reinforce an obvious "gateway" effect, clearly demarking the entry to the hamlet and welcoming visitors.
- Recreational Access Point**
Connections to existing/future recreational areas that can be pursued and enhanced over time.
- Bicycle / Pedestrian Corridor**
Bicycle and pedestrian enhancement corridors which can be pursued over time.

Additional Recommendations:

ESTABLISH MAIN STREET DESIGN GUIDELINS

Develop a combination of design recommendations and requirements for new construction along the Main Street corridor in order to ensure quality and cohesive visual appeal of the Warrensburg hamlet. (See Future Land Use Vision Map.) This would include design provisions for site planning, building massing, parking, landscaping, pedestrian walkways, access management, and exterior lighting. Design recommendations could optionally include working toward a Warrensburg theme based on contemporary Adirondack styling to strengthen local identity, in coordination with Sign Code changes.

UPDATE & CLARIFY ZONING

The existing zoning code should be reviewed and revised to clarify the goals, expectations, and review and approval procedures for both applicants and review board members. These revisions should seek more consistency, predictability and transparency in application reviews so that all parties, including the public, have a better understanding of the review and approval process. This could also include an update of supporting application forms and public noticing procedures, definitions, and an identification of which applications may not required formal review but could be administratively approved.

INCENTIVIZE ADAPTIVE REUSE

As commercial growth and redevelopment occurs within the Main Street corridor, existing older or historic structures that define the character of the hamlet are at risk of being replaced. Incentives for applicants to renovate and utilize some of these existing structures should be provided to encourage the rehabilitation of properties that may have otherwise fallen into disrepair.

EXPAND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

To support additional economic growth within the hamlet, the Town should continue efforts to expand the existing sewer infrastructure further into the established sewer district to areas where it is not currently available. This service would allow and attract more commercial and residential development, particularly mixed-use and denser housing options recommended in this plan.

REVISE THE SIGN CODE

The existing sign code should be revised and redesigned to provide better consistency in application reviews, clarify requirements, and help to improve the aesthetic of the hamlet with reduced visual clutter. The sign code should provide clear definitions, illustrations, and photographic examples so that it is easily understood by both applicants and reviewing boards for consistency. The revised code may consider including sunset provisions for legacy signs that no longer meet design requirements so that they can be brought up to date over time.

IMPROVE ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Improve access management and roadway maintenance along the Route 9 Main Street corridor to help reduce traffic congestion and improve the visual appeal of the corridor. This effort should seek to find opportunities for shared driveways, consolidated and narrowed curb-cuts, and rear-lot vehicular connections, which reduce and simplify turning movements, as well as providing more opportunities for greenspace and landscaping within the Town right-of-way.



Goal 4: Support & Grow Local Businesses & New Entrepreneurship

Warrensburg's location at the Gateway to the Adirondacks provides the community with the opportunity to serve as a key location for locals and tourists to stop and shop. Several long-standing business institutions have profited from this location, attracting locals, tourists, and

regional residents, alike. There is an opportunity to build on this existing customer base to support other small businesses, particularly niche businesses that could serve unmet demand or build on and complement existing long-standing businesses and regional draws.

While the seasonal fluctuation associated with tourism business has been a concern for businesses, particularly small business, who have struggled to keep their businesses afloat in the shoulder season, since the pandemic, the once-reliable seasonal downturn has been

less pronounced, particularly for long-standing, well-known local institutions. The growth of short-term rentals, while causing strains on the local housing market, also increase the number of tourists that are staying locally and represent an untapped opportunity to support local businesses.

In terms of employment, most Warrensburg residents have to travel outside of the Town for work: 84% of the local workforces leaves Warrensburg for work. In addition, while unemployment in Warren County is low, underemployment and low wages are not. This shows an availability of local workers that could support local businesses and opportunities to increase employment and career pathing to grow local incomes.

Lastly, Warrensburg has built the supporting infrastructure with both a Chamber of Commerce and local Economic Development Committee. The Warrensburg Central School District (CSD) is also a local asset that is building its students to be ready for the workforce through apprenticeship programs, trade skills, and partnerships with local businesses. With a strong spirit of local entrepreneurship – in part supported by this existing infrastructure - several recommendations are centered around opportunities to further leverage, support, celebrate, and collaborate with these and other local organizations.





**Priority Recommendation:
Work with Local Groups
to Formalize Connections
and Sharing of Information
on Local Businesses
with Short-Term Rental
Operators**

OVERVIEW

The number of STRs in Warrensburg continues to increase, bringing in visitors discovering Warrensburg for the first time and repeat visitors, returning to revisit old favorites and discover new experiences. These visitors are an untapped market for local businesses.

The Town should take an active role in coordinating with STR owners and engage them with local tourism promotion efforts, since many STR owners serve as ambassadors or informal travel guides for the community and are the first point of contact for visitors. This could come in the

form of a local business information packet that could be distributed to STR operators, potentially including coupons or other promotional materials to local businesses. With an existing local STR permitting system, this provides an opportunity for the Town to serve as a bridge between local businesses and the STR operators to disseminate these materials.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

Implementation of this recommendation will involve regular collaboration between the Town, business owners, and the Chamber of Commerce.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The first step in implementing this recommendation is outreach and coordination, which can be advanced without expending significant resources. Outside design consultant services may be needed to develop the promotional packet. This work effort should be done in concert with the marketing and branding overhaul and could similarly be developed using Market NY funding (see following section).

KEY NEXT STEPS:

1. Collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce on outreach to local business owners.
2. Develop a promotional packet with a map and information on local businesses and coupons.
3. Provide the promotional packet to STR operators as part of the STR permitting process.
4. Regularly update the local business promotional packet and provide updated materials to STR operators.

Priority Recommendation: Develop an Economic Development/Market Analysis with a Focus on New Recreation-Based Business Opportunities

OVERVIEW

The Town should seek funding to prepare an economic development/market analysis to identify opportunities to diversify local businesses, expand operations over multiple seasons, and stabilize revenues. The marketing study will also be a boon to local business owners. Working with local and regional agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce, Warren County Economic Development Corporation, and Warrensburg Economic Development Committee, the Town can disseminate this information to current and potential business owners. Many small business owners do not have the resources or expertise to complete large-scale market analyses. By completing an analysis for the entire community, the Town can provide local businesses with the tools they need to become more successful in the regional market.

The market analysis should include a detailed review of opportunities for new recreation-based businesses in Warrensburg. The Town's strategic location at the Gateway to the Adirondacks and proximity to a range of recreational facilities represents a potential for additional economic development in the form of new recreation-based businesses, such as ski, fishing, and mountain biking shops.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

The economic development/market analysis should be led by the Town's Economic Development Committee with assistance from an outside consultant. The Town should also coordinate with Warren County Planning and their current recreation economy study consultant team, as well as Warren County EDC.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Empire State Development Corporation provides funding for strategic planning and feasibility studies. The funding covers 50% of project costs up to a maximum award of \$100,000. This funding is available through the CFA, with grant applications typically due at the end of July.

In addition to grant funding, the Town could consider requesting technical assistance from the APA through their Economic Services Unit. Based on initial conversations with the APA, their technical assistance could be used to conduct a broader market analysis, which could be supplemented with ESD funding for the more niche recreation business assessment.

KEY NEXT STEPS:

1. Contact the APA's Economic Service Unit to request technical assistance to prepare the market analysis.
2. Coordinate with Warren County Planning as they complete their recreation economy study to determine the scope of the work effort and how it impacts the needs of a more local analysis of recreation-based business demand.
3. Request funding from ESD, as needed, to complete the recreation-based business market analysis.

Additional Recommendations:

INCREASE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE SCHOOL, CHAMBER, TOWN, AND LOCAL BUSINESSES TO SUPPORT APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES.

The Town should work with the Warrensburg CSD, Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce, Warrensburg Economic Development Committee, Warren County EDC, and BOCES to expand student apprenticeship opportunities at local and regional businesses. The School District recently brought BOCES programming to the local school, offering in-house programs with internships provided by industries. This initiative could be further expanded and localized, beginning by building an inventory of supporting or participating local businesses, then working with the school to identify student candidates and their interests, and helping to facilitate apprenticeships, jobs, or training at participating businesses.

ENSURE CONTINUED SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR THE TOWN'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

One of the recommendations from the Town's 2012 Comprehensive Plan was the creation of an Economic Development Committee. The committee, made up of local business people, members of local/regional business groups, a Town Board member, and interested citizens meets on a regular basis and makes regular reports to the Town Board. Since formation, the Committee has taken the lead on initiatives such as seeking grant funding and conducting community-wide surveys. The Town should continue to support and fund this important local committee and the work they are undertaking.

Another key partner in many of the recommendations identified below is the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce. However,

with a staff of one, the Chamber is limited in its capacity to carry out these recommendations. The Town should ensure that the Chamber has adequate support to take on key recommendations, including exploring additional funding opportunities or leveraging regional economic development and business organizations, such as the Adirondack Chamber of Commerce, Lake George Chamber of Commerce, and Warren County EDC.

ENCOURAGE LOCAL GROUPS TO DEVELOP A “FIRST FRIDAY” TYPE OF EVENT

Today, many cities and towns are finding innovative ways to support their small businesses. One popular choice is to hold First Friday events that encourage residents to come together once a month and explore what their community has to offer. First Fridays not only help to support tourism, but they also encourage members of the community to engage with each other. This event brings out more people at once than a typical Friday evening might, so it is an opportunity to support local businesses, enjoy cultural experiences, and fit in some social interaction.

ENCOURAGE THE CHAMBER TO INCREASE COLLABORATION BETWEEN BUSINESSES, INCLUDING HOURS OF OPERATION AND STAFFING

Local businesses in Warrensburg, like many communities in the post-pandemic economy, are struggling with staffing. One technique that

was used in the nearby Village of Lake George and was borne out of the collaborative response to the common thread of pandemic disruption was the sharing of staff. Such a solution could be promoted locally in Warrensburg through the local Chamber. The sharing of staff resources could in-turn result in shifts in business hours of operations to minimize overlap, address underemployment, and ensure that local businesses are open to locals and visitors, alike.

FACILITATE COMMUTING TO EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICES

The Town should identify ways to allow options for residents to get to work. With the planned merger of the Greater Glens Falls Transit with the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), the Town should engage with the CDTA and promote the creation of a regular route from Warrensburg to Glens Falls or other employment centers. In addition to helping employees get to work, particularly lower income residents and youth populations, such a route could also help seniors reach needed services. Complementary measures that would help reduce the reliance on private auto use to travel to work could include developing a commuter parking area(s) and/or providing bike racks in the downtown area, to promote non-vehicular travel for local residents who might be able to bike to work.

CONTINUE TO EXPAND BROADBAND ACCESS

In the contemporary marketplace, for businesses to operate efficiently access to high-speed internet

connections are crucial. This applies to large businesses as well as small, home-based operations. While significant strides have been made to improve broadband coverage both locally and in the greater region, Warrensburg should continue to advocate for expanded and more reliable broadband infrastructure throughout the Town.



Goal 5: Promote & Celebrate Warrensburg's Assets

Warrensburg has a unique and eclectic character. This is on display on Main Street in the form of building murals, a mix of antique shops, home grown/legacy businesses, stately homes, and services catering to the Town's residents and visitors. This is also evident with the diverse opportunities

to enjoy the outdoors; boating/fishing/tubing on the Schroon and Hudson Rivers, walking/hiking Pack Forest, Hackensack Mountain, the Warren County Fish Hatchery and Hickory Ski Center. The Town is fortunate to have an excellent school system focused on addressing the needs of students, and an active

volunteer corps addressing beautification, economic development, and emergency service needs. Events and activities large and small - the World's Largest Garage Sale!, Smoke Eaters Jamboree, Bike Week, Farmer's market, and the Garlic Festival - are local treasures that combine to make

the Town uniquely Warrensburg. One would be hard pressed to identify a community of a similar size with so many attractive attributes and resources within literally 10 minutes of its core. Much of what makes Warrensburg unique has happened organically over time. The Town is facing some growth pressures and the impacts of change, and this threatens key elements of the Town's character. The Town can no longer rely on happenstance; it is vitally important that the Town promote and celebrate what is uniquely Warrensburg and collectively leverage these assets to improve the local economy, maintain a quality of life, and attract and retain residents.





Priority Recommendation: Explore the Warrensburg "Brand" and Develop a Program for a Marketing/ Branding Overhaul

OVERVIEW

Many communities are seeking ways to market themselves to new residents, tourists, and investors. Direct recruitment of new residents and businesses, including financial incentives, are being employed throughout the US.

In New York, the I Love NY program uses a regional approach to destination branding and marketing. The Adirondacks, the Finger Lakes and the Saratoga/Lake George regions are great examples of destinations that have honed their branding and marketing efforts to attract both new audiences and returning visitors alike.

The Town should formalize and promote its brand. Despite the many unique assets of the community, the public and stakeholders raised multiple times during the planning process the question of "What is Warrensburg's identity?" A formal branding and marketing exercise can lay the groundwork for future investments in tourism promotion, placemaking, wayfinding, and related actions.

Developing a brand and marketing plan can take many forms and often starts with research and analysis to determine the community's assets, challenges, audience, character, and vision for the future. More than a logo or a tagline; a brand should be resonant and memorable, while enhancing the identity of a place.

Marketing/branding professionals can help develop a plan, while engaging community members and stakeholders in the process. The branding process could explore the important Town attributes related to nature, the waterfront, history, commerce, and its location as a Gateway to the Adirondacks. Awareness and adoption of marketing efforts can be achieved through a series of conversations, workshops, and/or public surveys. Research, analysis and community engagement help develop a creative brief, which serves as a roadmap to creating branding and marketing materials.

Beyond a logo, a brand should clearly define elements such as fonts, colors, and applications in order to create a cohesive and consistent visual identity. From this foundation, marketing materials can be developed, including a website, print and promotional materials, and merchandise. The branding and marketing plan can help inform and support updates to gateway treatments, wayfinding and signage systems, streetscape enhancements and related infrastructure improvements.

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD & PARTNERS

The Town will lead implementation of this recommendation, with the assistance of a design and marketing consultant. This work effort should be coordinated with Warren County Tourism.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Market New York is a grant program that supports regionally themed marketing projects that promote tourism destinations, attraction, and special events, as well as tourism facility capital improvement projects. The program funds 50% of marketing projects, with a \$50,000 minimum request. Applications are accepted through the CFA process, which are typically due at the end of July.

KEY NEXT STEPS:

1. Pursue Market NY funding for implementation.
2. Issue an RFP for marketing and design services and select a preferred consultant.
3. Work with the selected consultant to develop a Marketing and Branding Plan with a logo, tagline, and messaging.
4. Pursue funding to develop key branding and marketing pieces.

Additional Recommendations:

CONTINUE TO ENHANCE GATEWAYS INTO THE COMMUNITY

Gateways do more than demarcate the boundaries to a municipality – they also play an important role in the character and identity of a community. As the “front door” to a community, the way in which the signage, streetscape, landscape plantings, and other elements come together is crucial in creating the first impression for visitors and residents alike. Gateways may be located at the political boundary of a municipality but may also be located near physical features which provide a sense of entry, such as a topographical change, a bridge, or a change in land use or streetscape element.

The Town and the Town's Beautification Committee have implemented improvements at the key Route 9 gateway to greet visitors traveling from Lake George and I-87. This work should be continued and expanded to all Town gateways and coupled with other initiatives, such as reducing vehicle speeds and potential resting spots for pedestrians and bicyclists, planting street trees to soften the gateway and buffer some of the atypical ‘main street’ uses, and installing pedestrian scaled street lighting to provide a safe, convenient pedestrian environment. A consistent design vocabulary should be used at all Town gateways. The Town should look for public/private partnerships that could assist in locating and sponsoring improvements.

DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE WAYFINDING SYSTEM TO TOWN RECREATION AND HISTORIC ASSETS

Wayfinding is more than just signage. Utilizing branding, colors, and directional elements- wayfinding can help create a sense of place and guide visitors to key locations in the Town. It is a means of celebrating what's important and aiding visitors in navigating the Town. The wayfinding system should translate the Town's unique identity and be consistent with the look and messaging of the recommended gateway enhancements and visitors' kiosks.

CONTINUE TO INSTALL VISITORS' KIOSKS AT KEY LOCATIONS

Complementing gateway improvements can include informational kiosks at key activity nodes. Kiosks can be used to present information on Town Services, points of interest, and informational mapping to guide visitors. The information provided at the visitors' kiosks could also support County-wide and regional initiatives, providing information on the Warrensburg Heritage Trails, First Wilderness Heritage Corridor, or Dude Ranch Trail.

WORK WITH THE REAL ESTATE COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE THE ASSETS OF THE TOWN TO POTENTIAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

During the public input process, participants praised the many great

qualities of living in Warrensburg – a wonderful school district, breathtaking scenic resources, recreation amenities, and more. Warrensburg should actively seek to increase its profile as a desirable place to live. The Town can work to provide information to realtors, so that those responsible for selling real estate in the community are able to provide the most accurate, positive information to potential residents and business owners.

EXPAND THE FEATURES OF THE TOWN'S WEBSITE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND PROMOTE LOCAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING EVENTS, BUSINESSES, AND RECREATION

A community's website acts as a digital gateway, and can often create a positive or negative impression for visitors before they step foot in the Town. In addition, residents and business owners have come to rely on a municipal website to provide a variety of services and information. The Town's website has been updated since the last Comprehensive Plan and already contains a wealth of information. The availability of information should be maintained and expanded, and the Town should continue to work to improve the user-friendliness of the site.

In addition, the Town should work with local and regional groups and agencies to ensure consistent and up-to-date links and information. This will increase the usability of these websites and benefit the residents, visitors, and business owners in the community. The Town can also coordinate with Warren County to

provide up-to-date and accurate GIS information, which can then be added to the County's parcel viewer web application. This could include the extensive recreation mapping that has already been undertaken by the County. This would allow the Town to promote these local assets, without adding the maintenance or administration of the web application itself.

BUILD A SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY PRIDE

Warrensburg is home to many local civic organizations and volunteer corps that protect, support, and advocate for the community, are resources to residents and businesses, and plan and implement many of the local events that occur throughout the year in Warrensburg. Membership in these organizations is down across the board; in order for these organizations and their important work to survive, they must increase participation amongst the younger generations. The first step will be to increase engagement with the Town's youth, in partnership with the Warrensburg CSD. New ideas for events or opportunities to improve existing events should be developed in collaboration with the Town's youth to garner excitement and interest amongst this next generation.

CELEBRATE THE RIVERS THROUGH EVENTS AND ENCOURAGING RIVER SUPPORTING/FRONTING BUSINESSES

Warrensburg's location at the confluence of the Schroon and Hudson Rivers should be celebrated. One recent enhancement that highlights the rivers is the addition of

holiday lights on the many bridges that cross the Schroon. There are opportunities to build on the beauty of this new winter tradition through something like a bridge lighting event or could be expanded to other times of the year. Another type of event that would be celebrate the rivers and the Town's waterfront parks would be a run the river 5K.

In addition to events, the waterfront offers other opportunities for economic development. Outdoor cafes, water-based businesses (such as kayak rental or boat repair), and hamlet-scaled commercial activities on the water can augment economic development activities by providing additional amenities to residents and creating a special experience for visitors.

CELEBRATE THE UNIQUENESS OF THE WARREN COUNTY FISH HATCHERY

Warrensburg is home to the Warren County Fish Hatchery, located on 38 acres along the Hudson. The facility is operated by the Warren County DPW and raises fish to provide improved sport fishing throughout Warren County waters. This is a unique public resource that should be celebrated and promoted, including improved signage, additional collaboration with the School District and local summer camps, highlighting on the Town website, and promoting the use of the facility's pavilions for event rentals.

PROMOTE WARRENSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT'S UNIQUE PROGRAMMING ASSETS

Warrensburg CSD, through local and regional collaboration, has been making strides to bring innovative program to the district. This includes their "In the Zone" after school enrichment programs, which is currently in its sixth year and more recently launched Middle School "Camp Inspire" program, both of which are collaborations with Camp Echo Lake. Most communities lack any comparable program. These programs are assets that should be widely touted, especially as the school district faces declining enrollment.

SHARE INFORMATION ON AVAILABLE COMMUNITY SPACES FOR RENT

Since the last Comprehensive Plan was prepared, a new Fire Station was constructed, and the adjacent former fire station bays have been converted into a new space for community events, complete with a kitchen and several multi-purpose rooms. Both public workshops for the current Comprehensive Plan update were held in this new space; however, use of these spaces for other community events have been minimal. In addition, there are several public and semi-public facilities available for community events that are similarly underutilized. Information on these spaces should be made available on the Town website, including any potential restrictions on use.



IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to establish a community vision and identify the actions necessary to pursue that vision. Implementation of the Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan will depend upon the commitment of local leaders, continued public participation, availability of funding, and successful partnerships.

Many of the recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan will take years to fully realize. They will also require grant funding.

Pursuing regional, State, and Federal grants requires patience and a keen awareness of timing. The grant cycle can work on a semi-annual, yearly, or even decade long schedule. There are also sequencing issues to consider. For example, there are many grants that require municipalities to take part in the initial program in order to apply for funding in subsequent years. In addition, new Town Board members and volunteers replace previous ones. Maintaining a realistic expectation for how much work can be done over time is critical to the plan's success.

STEP 1: ORGANIZE

The first step of implementing the plan involves tasking a group to assist with implementation of the Plan recommendations, which could take the form of a subset of the Town Board or an existing committee.

It is recommended that regular communication on the status of the Comprehensive Plan implementation be provided, including providing updates and an annual status report that records the progress of plan implementation, describing the status of current projects, and identifying projects needing additional information. This information should also be available to the public on the Comprehensive Plan page of the Town's website.

STEP 2: PRIORITIZE

As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process, a series of recommendation prioritization exercises were conducted, including a "vote with your wallet" exercise at Public Workshop #2, an online recommendation ranking survey, and a series of Committee meetings centered around identifying priority recommendations. Those priority recommendations are called out in the proceeding section, with additional information on partners and key next steps needed for immediate implementation. These priorities should be periodically revisited and adjusted, as needed, according to changing conditions or the availability of grant funding.

STEP 3: DEVELOP & LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS

The Town of Warrensburg has a limited budget for full-time professional staff to address municipal issues. Partnering with other local and regional entities could help Warrensburg take advantage of grant programs, share technical expertise, and exchange ideas. Key partners for priority recommendations were identified in the proceeding section. Other organizations that have objectives and missions that may dovetail with the Town's vision for the future include:

- Warrensburg Economic Development Committee
- Warrensburg Beautification



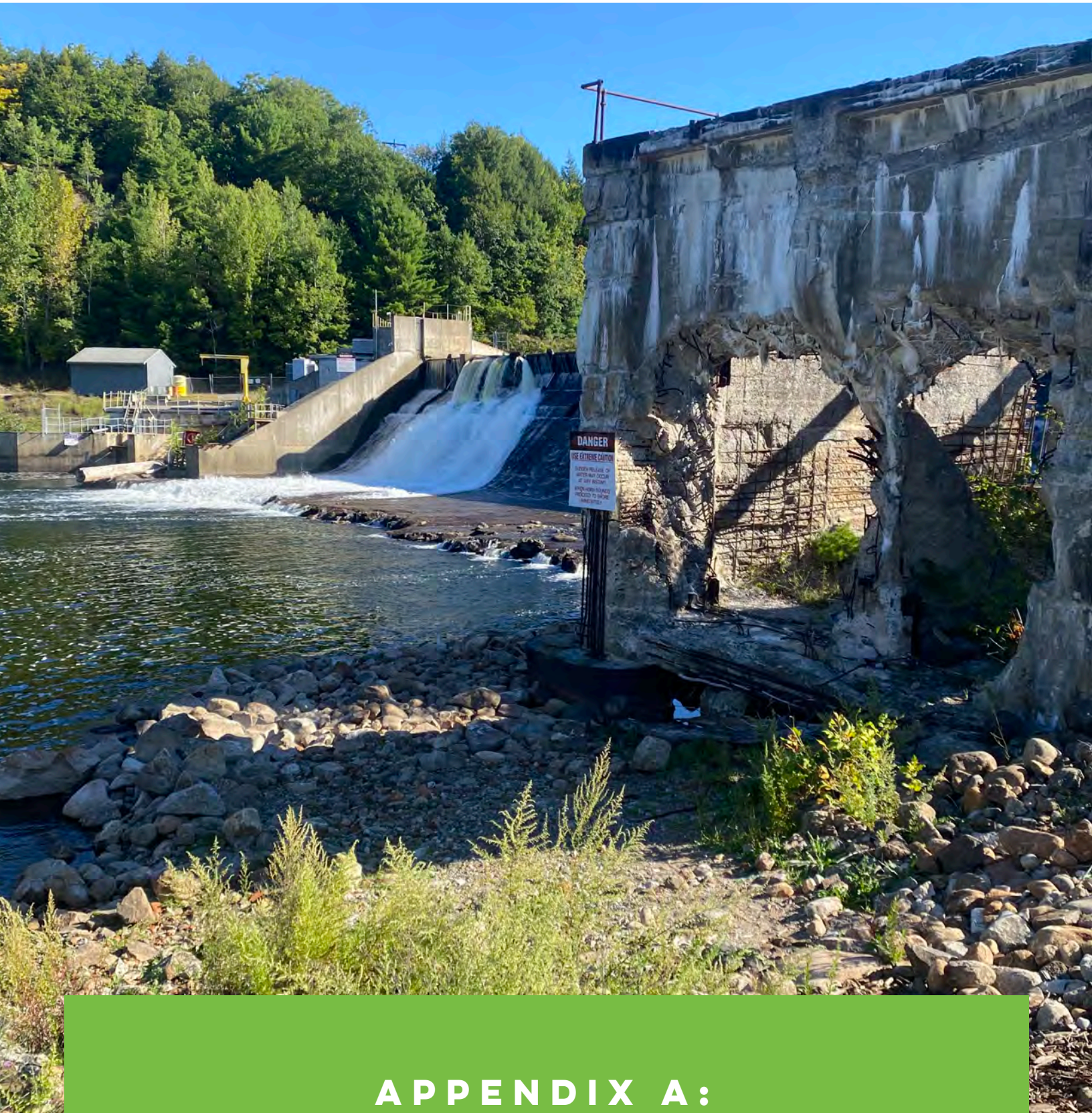
- Committee
- Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce
- Warrensburgh Museum of Local History
- Warren County
- Warren County EDC
- SUNY ESF
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- Capital Region Economic Development Council
- Adirondack Chamber of Commerce
- Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council

STEP 4: PURSUE FUNDING

As a smaller community, the Town has a limited amount of funding to pursue all the recommendations of this plan. However, certain grant programs require smaller cash matches, while some grants can be matched using local volunteer efforts or even funding from a different source (i.e. matching a State grant with a Federal grant). For priority projects, specific funding sources were identified in the proceeding section. As funding sources and

strategies are ever changing, it is important to continually re-examine priorities and to evaluate possible alternatives and implementation strategies to support the projects identified by residents and included in this plan.





**APPENDIX A:
COMMUNITY PROFILE**

WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- DRAFT

OVERVIEW

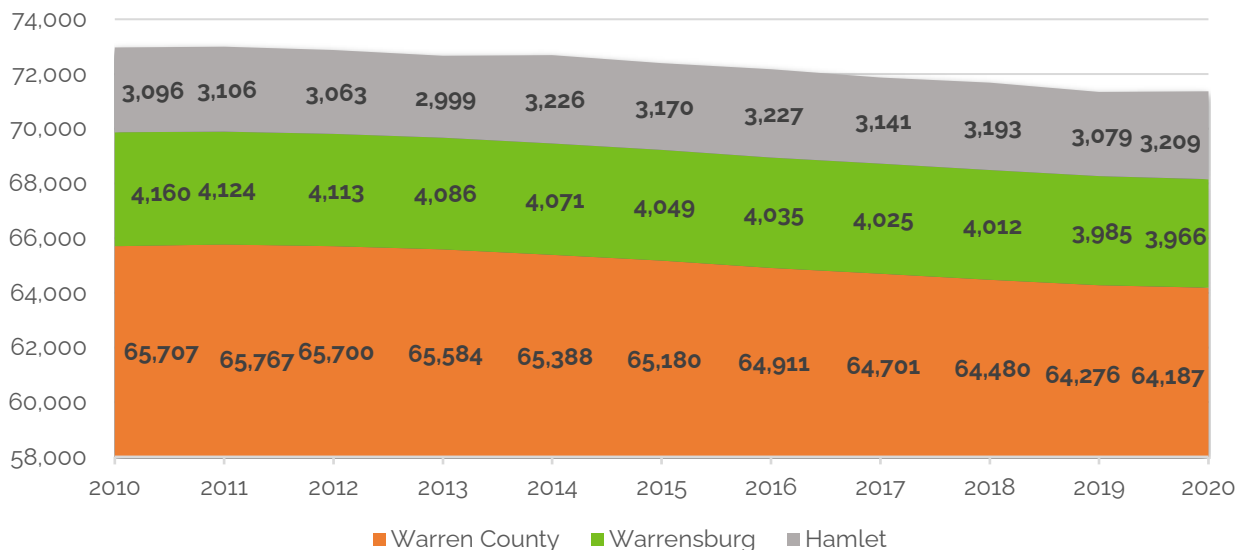
Located in the heart of Warren County sits the scenic community of Warrensburg. At roughly 41,000 acres, Warrensburg is a sprawling and diverse landscape, defined by its striking rivers, forests, and hills. Bounded by the Hudson and Schroon Rivers, Warrensburg's riparian setting has driven the Town's growth since its formal establishment in 1813. At the confluence of these two waterways, at the very center of the Town, lies the hamlet of Warrensburg. While representing less than four percent of Warrensburg's area, the hamlet forms the historic, civic, and residential core of the Town and is home to over three-quarters of its residents. Located at the foot of the Hackensack Mountain and bisected by the meandering banks of the Schroon, within the hamlet of Warrensburg are hundreds of historic and picturesque homes, schools, houses of worship, the volunteer fire and ambulance department, and the robust civic institutions which imbue Warrensburg with a powerful sense of community.

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION

According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the population for the Town of Warrensburg is 3,966, with roughly 77 percent (3,045) within the hamlet of Warrensburg, despite accounting for only four percent of the Town's total land mass.

POPULATION CHANGE: 2010-2020



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Looking at the Town's population over the past decade, the Town's population has declined by over four percent. However, the dynamics of population change have played out unevenly across Warrensburg. Within the hamlet, modest gains in population can be

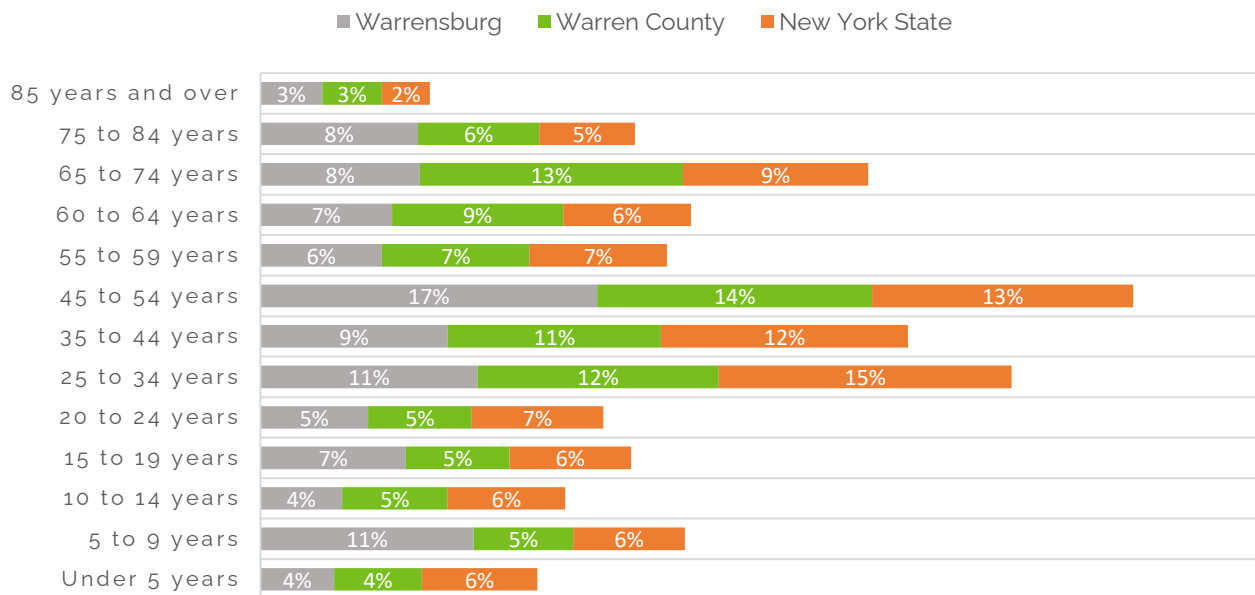
WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- DRAFT

witnessed: between 2010 and 2020, the hamlet's population increased by over three percent. Looking to the future, five-year estimates from ESRI place the projected population of Warrensburg at 3,877 in 2027 (a 2 percent decrease), suggesting that the trend of gradual population loss will continue, albeit at a slackening rate.

AGE

Overall, the population of Warrensburg is younger than that of Warren County: the median age in the Town is 44, compared to 46.9 County-wide. Notably, over the past ten years, the median age in Warrensburg has been decreasing, counter to the County trend – and greater rural America trend – of aging communities. The largest segment of Warrensburg residents are in the prime of life; 17 percent between the ages of 45 and 54. Impressively, 11% of Warrensburg residents are between the ages of 5 and 9, a considerably higher share than that of the County or greater State.

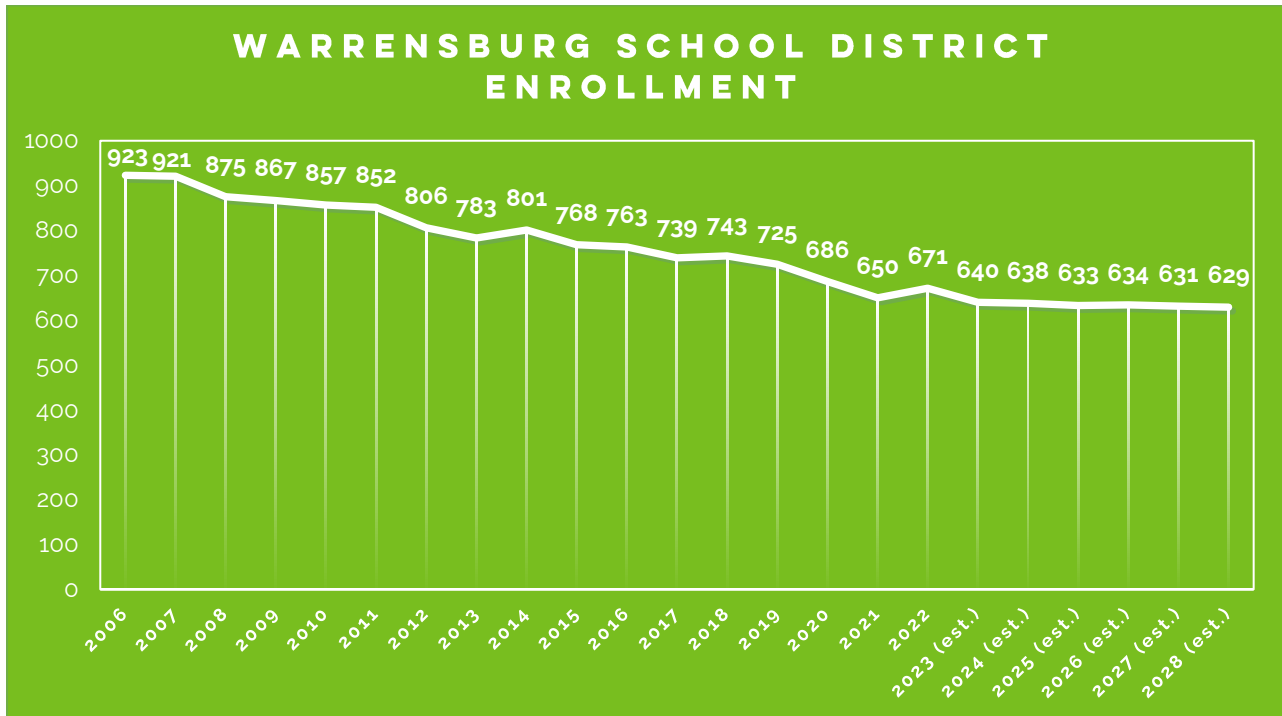
POPULATION DISTRIBUTION



Source: ACS 2020, 5-year estimates

Despite these age trends, the Town's overall population loss has resulted in declining enrollment numbers in the Warrensburg Central School District, the Town's sole district. Indications exist that this trend may be slowing with a possibility of reversal. 2022 enrollment numbers registered the largest (if modest) uptick in enrollment in decades (21 added pupils). Cornell University's Program on Applied Demographics likewise forecasts a near complete tapering off of enrollment losses through 2028, a departure from previous years' steady decline.

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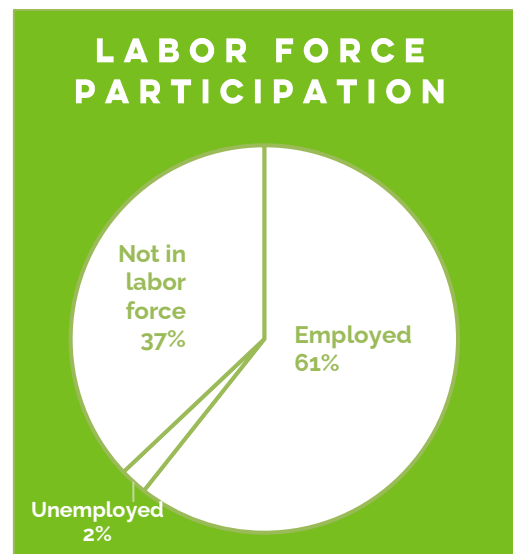
Source: Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics

EMPLOYMENT

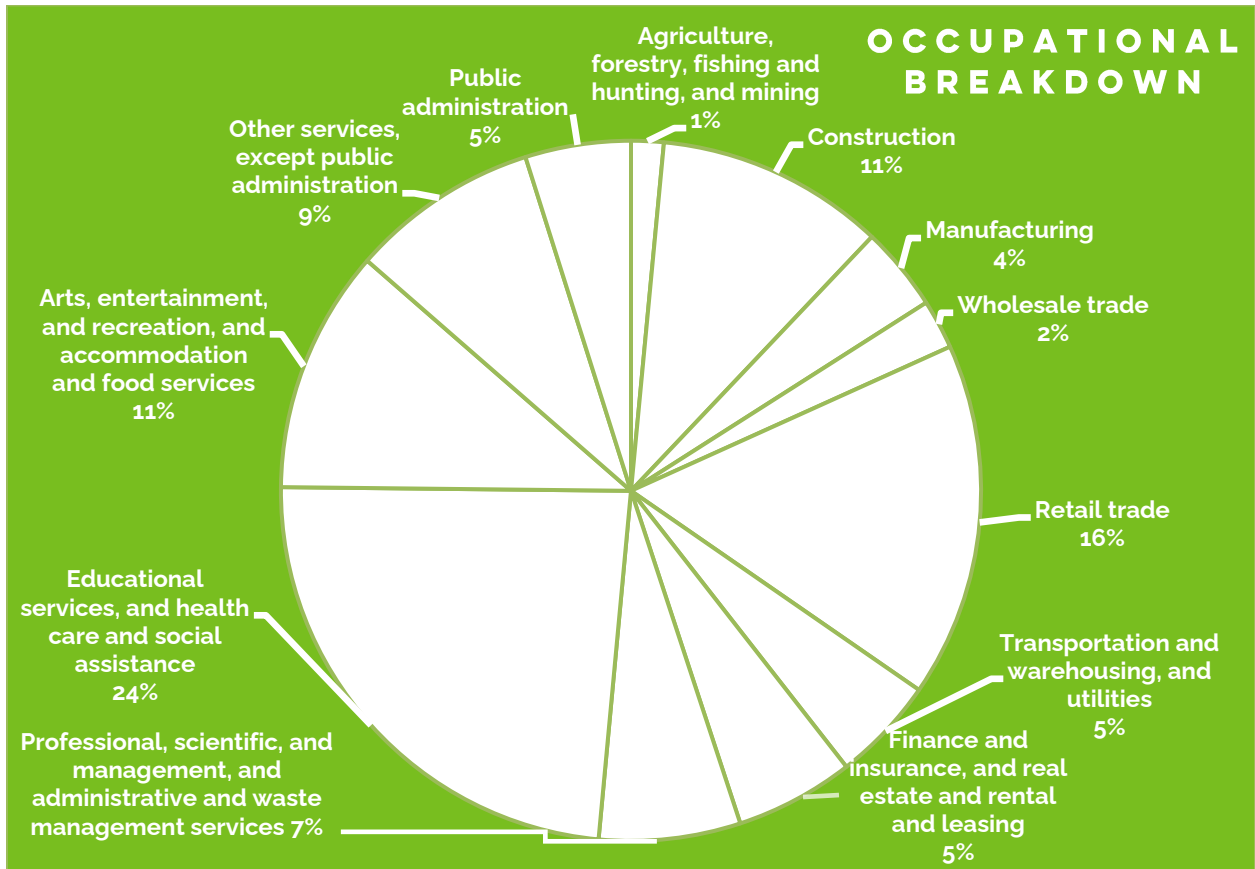
Sixty-one percent of Warrensburg residents are gainfully employed within the labor force, and the Town-wide unemployment rate in 2020 was just two percent. While unemployment is low, underemployment and low wages are not. The median household income in Warrensburg in 2020 was \$55,250, which is 15 percent less than the Warren County median income (\$64,658), despite the Town having a lower unemployment rate than the greater County. Roughly 12% of Town residents collected SNAP benefits in 2020.

The leading industry for Warrensburg residents in 2020 – at nearly a quarter of the whole – was within educational services, health care, and social assistance, followed by retail trade at 16 percent. Town residents engaged in white collar professional services and finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) industries accounted for 12 percent of Warrensburg residents' jobs.

It is also worth noting that most Warrensburg residents do not work locally. Based on a review of the US Census's OnTheMap data for 2019, 84% of Warrensburg residents travel outside the Town for work.



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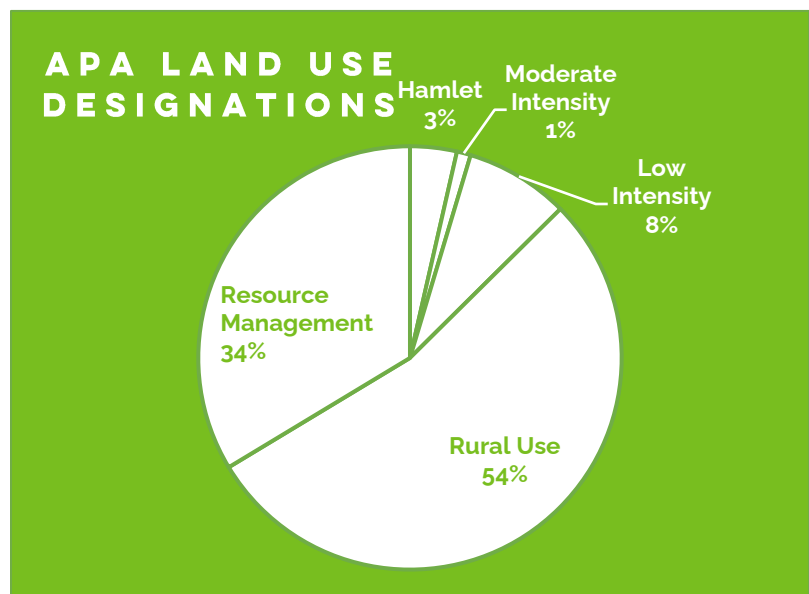


Source: ACS, 2020 5-year estimates

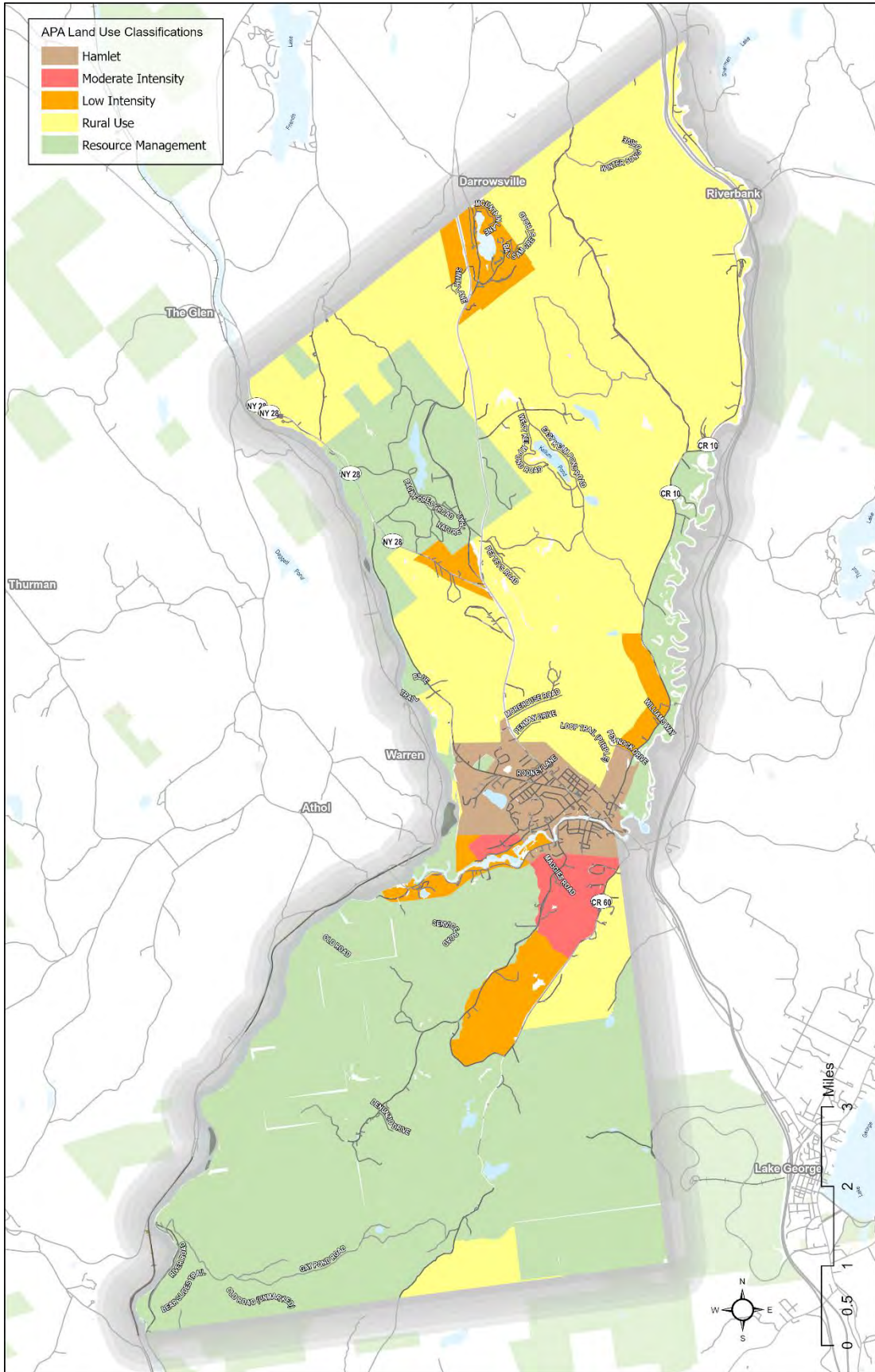
ZONING & LAND USE

ZONING

Due to its setting with the Adirondack Park, most land use activities in the Town of Warrensburg are regulated by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), a State agency with diverse authority. Underscoring the Town's predominantly forested character, over one-third of Warrensburg's total area is given to resource management ("forever wild") and over half of the Town's land use is designated by the APA as rural.

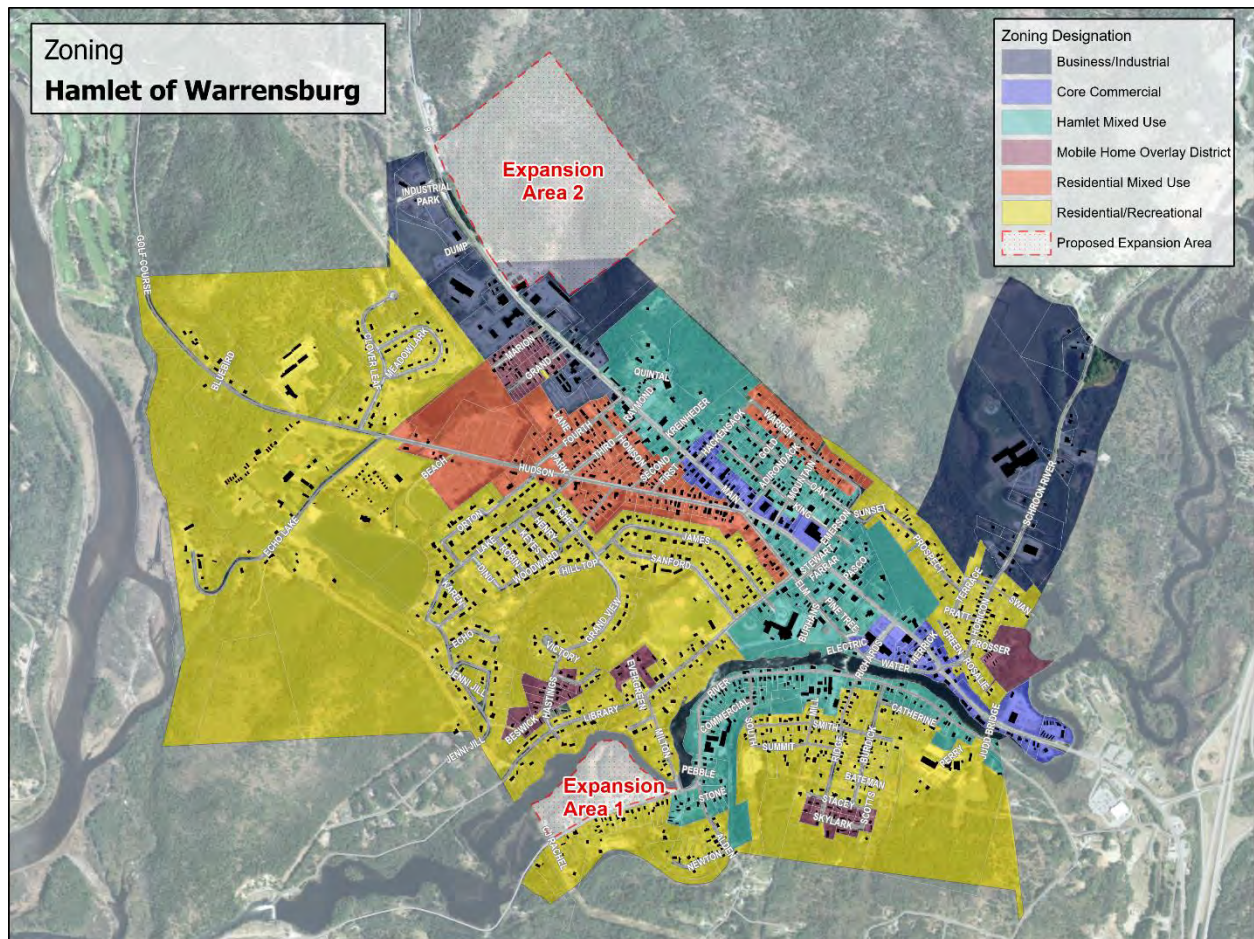


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WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- DRAFT

Within the hamlet, the Town of Warrensburg controls land use regulation. Zoning within the hamlet is comprised of six different designations. The least intense designation, Residential/Recreation (RR) accounts for the largest share of land coverage within the hamlet and encourages low-density residential development. The Residential Mixed Use (RMU) designation is designed to act as a transitional zone between the Town's commercial core and its outlying residential districts. The Hamlet Mixed Use (HMU) designation builds on facets of RMU, but with a greater mix of commercial and office uses at a pedestrian-oriented, walkable scale. The most intense designation, Core Commercial (CC), is mapped along large sections of Warrensburg's historic core along Main Street. The CC district is intended to maximize economic development potential by encouraging infill, reuse and expansion. An overlay for mobile homes (MHO) exists on Marion and Grand Streets. Finally, a business/industrial (BI) zoning designation covers two non-contiguous districts at the hamlet's north and northwestern edges.

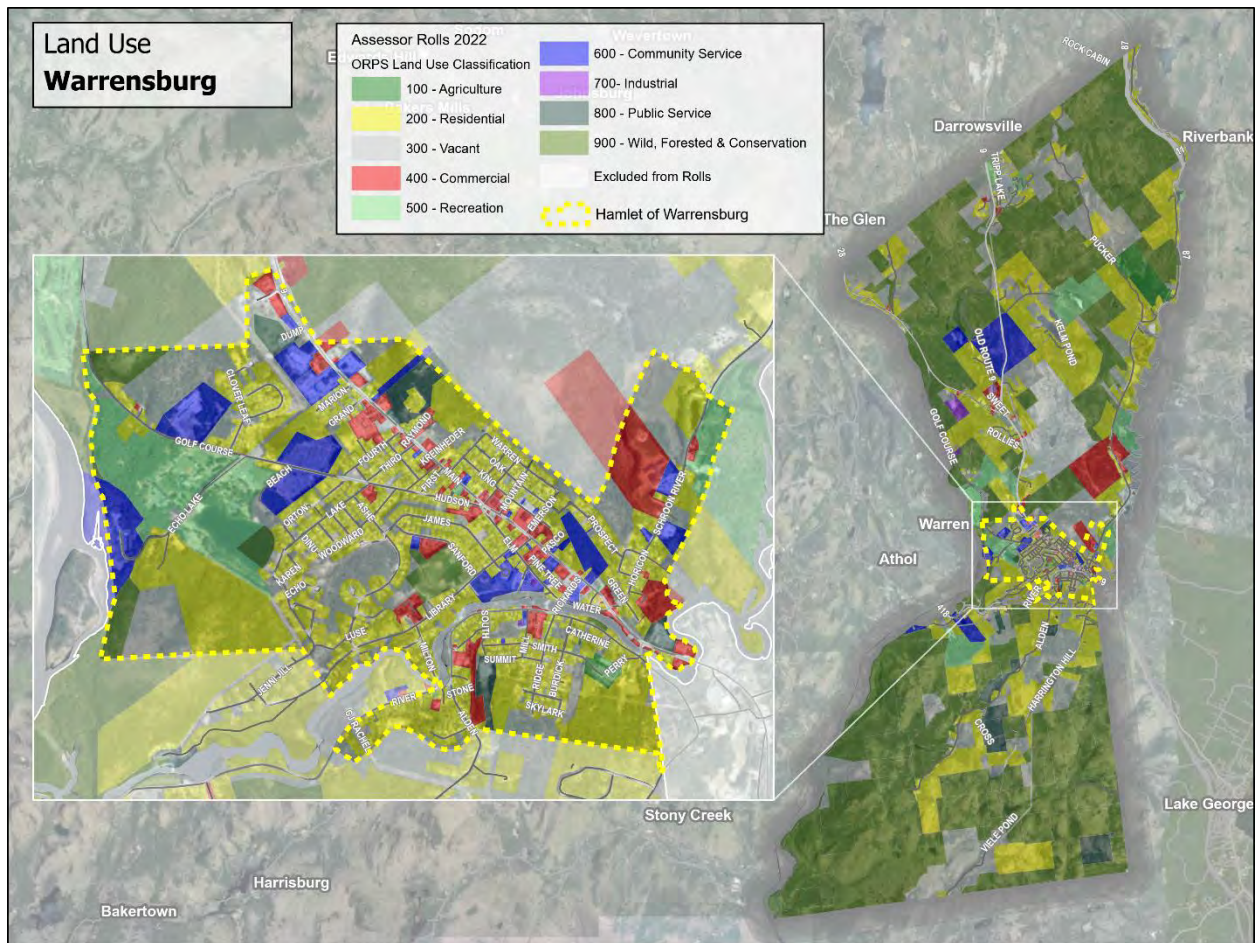


Currently, Warrensburg is petitioning the APA for the extension of hamlet boundaries to encompass two large swaths of land on the hamlet's southern and northern borders. Expansion Area 1 on the southern bank of the Schroom would infill the hamlet's missing river

WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- **DRAFT**

frontage at its southwest extent. Expansion Area 2 – at roughly 115 acres far larger than Area 1’s proposed 22 – abuts the foot of the Hackensack Mountain. If approved by the APA, Area 2 will extend as the hamlet’s existing northern boundary on the opposite side of Main Street, where the hamlet’s industrial uses and waste facilities are concentrated.

Consistent with the Town’s APA classifications, most (over 51 percent) of parcel acreage in Warrensburg is wild, forested and conservation. Within the hamlet, however, uses are more varied, but primarily are residential with significant concentrations of commercial activity centered along Main Street. Generous portions of land within the hamlet are designated for recreational and institutional uses, primarily towards the eastern stretch of Main Street and Library Avenue, where Town educational and municipal facilities are concentrated, along with the Richards Library and Warrensburgh Museum of Local History.



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WARRENSBURG LAND USES

Use	Parcels	Acres	Percentage of Total Land Area
Agriculture	4	371	0.9%
Commercial	116	733	1.8%
Community Service	40	837	2.1%
Industrial	5	96	0.2%
Public Service	19	640	1.6%
Recreation	25	1,383	3.5%
Residential	1,785	9,320	23.3%
Vacant	599	6,060	15.1%
Wild, Forested & Conservation	196	20,578	51.4%
Total	2,794	40,017	100%

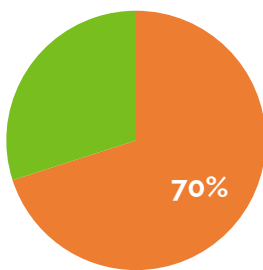
HOUSING

HOUSING STOCK

2020 Census data indicate that there are a total of 2,259 housing units in the Town of Warrensburg, 1,718 of which are occupied. Vacancy rates are lowest within the hamlet (15 percent), and the Town-wide vacancy rate (26 percent) is lower than that of the greater County (30 percent).

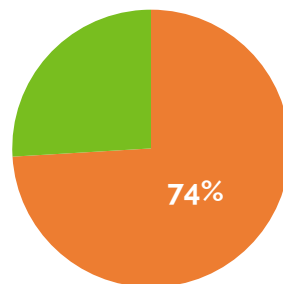
WARREN COUNTY

■ Occupied ■ Vacant



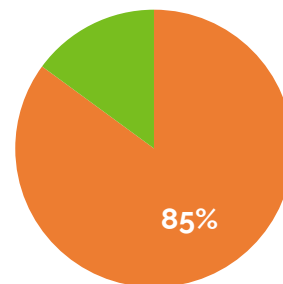
TOWN OF WARRENSBURG

■ Occupied ■ Vacant



HAMLET OF WARRENSBURG

■ Occupied ■ Vacant



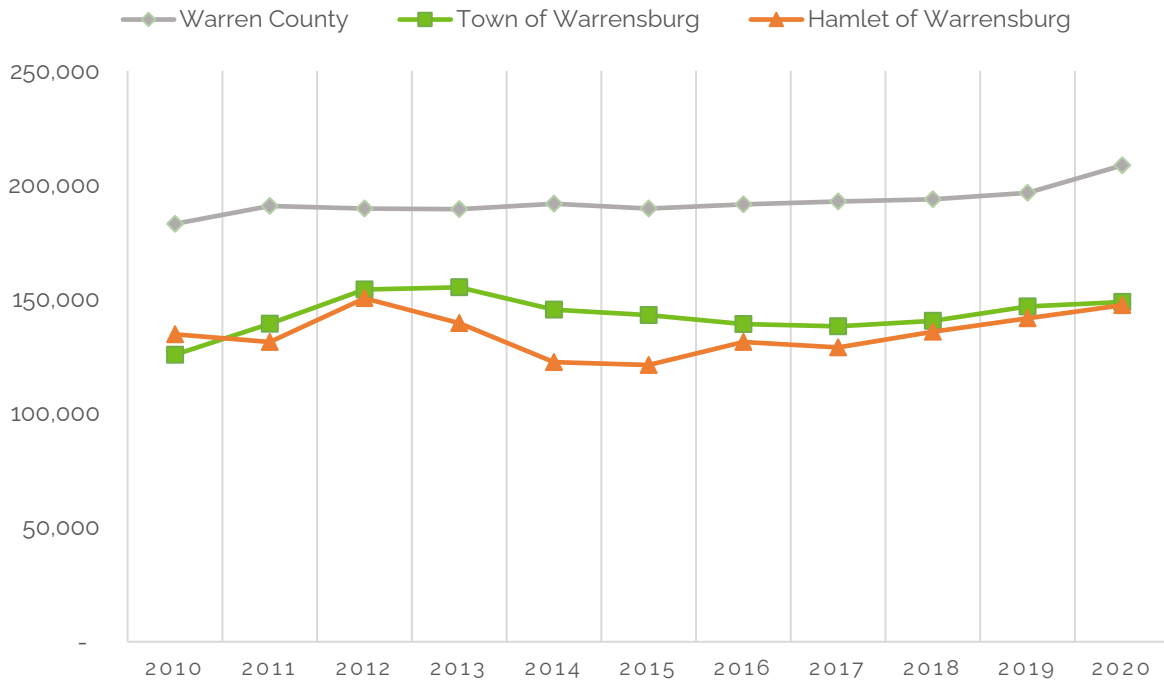
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Based on 2020 US Census estimates, most housing in Warrensburg is owner-occupied (70 percent). However, there is a greater percentage of renter-occupied units in the hamlet (40 percent). In both the Town and hamlet, detached single family homes is the predominant housing typology, accounting for roughly 60 percent of total inventory at both geographies.

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In terms of home values, the median home value in the Town of Warrensburg (\$148,800) is 30 percent less than the County-wide median of \$208,800 (2020 ACS). However, home values in Warrensburg have increased at a greater rate over the past decade than in the County: the median Warrensburg home value increased by over 18 percent between 2010 and 2020, compared to a 14 percent increase County-wide.

MEDIAN HOUSING VALUES, 2010-2020



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Median rental rates in the Town (\$887) are comparable to the greater County (\$932); rental rates in the Town and County have increased by 20 percent and 19 percent, respectively, since 2010. Based on 2020 ACS Five-Year estimates, over 40 percent of Warrensburg renters pay 30 percent or more of their incomes towards rent, qualifying as what the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development define as "rent burdened."

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

As a testament to Warrensburg's natural, historic, and recreational assets, as well as its status as a gateway to the Adirondacks, the number of short-term rentals (STRs) and seasonal homes has expanded rapidly in recent years. To address unintended consequence of STRs, the Town passed a Local Law in 2019 to regulate STRs and establish a permitting procedure. While only 71 housing units are officially registered with the Town as STRs, online estimates aggregating active listings on popular short-term rental websites such as Airbnb and Vrbo places the number of active STRs at roughly 110. Data aggregator Airdna estimates a listing in Warrensburg has an average daily rate of \$380 in 2021. When

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compared to the median gross rent in Warrensburg (\$887), the financial benefits for property owners to opt for STRs is clear; however, impacts on housing affordability must also be considered.

PROPERTY TAX RATES

Properties in Warrensburg are subject to County, Town, school, and special district taxes. The combined tax rate (per \$1,000 of property value) is presented in the table on the following page. Compared to other Warren County Towns, Warrensburg's Town tax rate is lower than Johnsbury, Stony Creek, and Thurman, but higher than the Towns of Queensbury, Lake Luzerne, Lake George, Horicon, Chester, and Bolton.

CURRENT PROPERTY TAX RATES

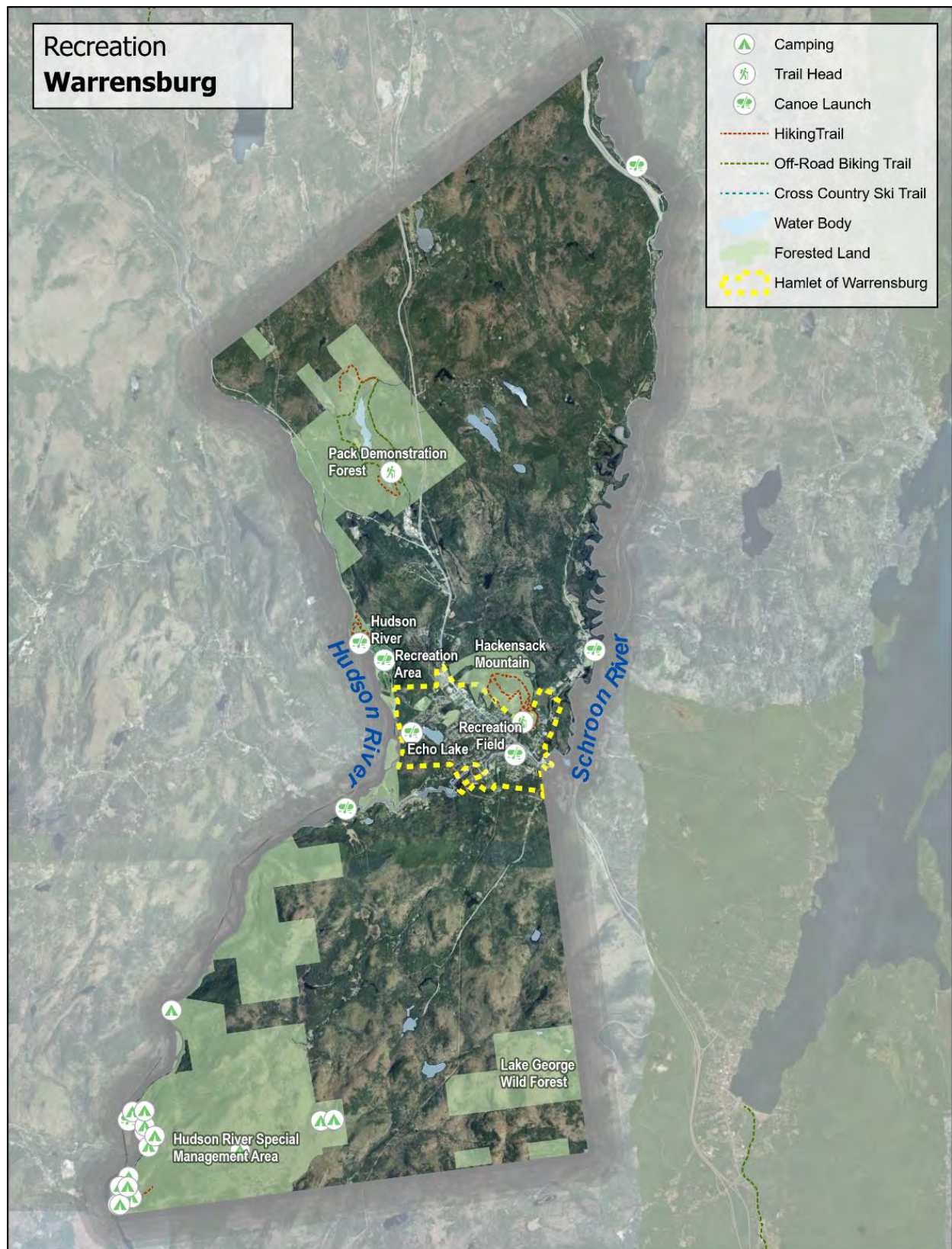
Tax	Rate per \$1,000 of Property Value
County	\$4.099
Town	\$3.797
Fire 1	\$1.231
Light 1	\$0.372
School (includes Library)	\$13.9292
Total	\$23.4282

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Warrensburg boasts extensive recreation opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Sited at the foot of the majestic Hackensack Mountain, a trailhead located off the junction of Warren Street and Hackensack Avenue offers immediately accessible hiking and picnicking opportunities from the hamlet, along with sweeping vistas of historic Warrensburg and the Schroon and Hudson Rivers.

Warrensburg's riverine setting affords residents ample water-based recreational activities as well. Just north of the hamlet, the Hudson River Recreation Area, maintained by the Warren County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Rail, offers scenic walking paths and fishing opportunities along the east bank of the famed river. Thanks to the Warren County Fish Hatchery's location near Echo Lake, County ponds, lakes, and streams throughout Warrensburg are amply stocked with various species of trout. A veritable nature lover's paradise, Warrensburg's northwestern section features the Pack Demonstration Forest, over 2,500 acres of forested lands with a 1-mile nature trail managed by the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF). At the southern end of Town, the Hudson River Special Management Area offers riverside camping opportunities. Within the hamlet, the Recreation Field located across Library Avenue from the Warrensburg Elementary School provides expansive open space for athletic programming and organized sports. With so many recreational options at close at hand, a pedestrian on Main Street can hike a mountain, catch a fish, throw a ball, or launch a canoe – all within a ten-minute walk.

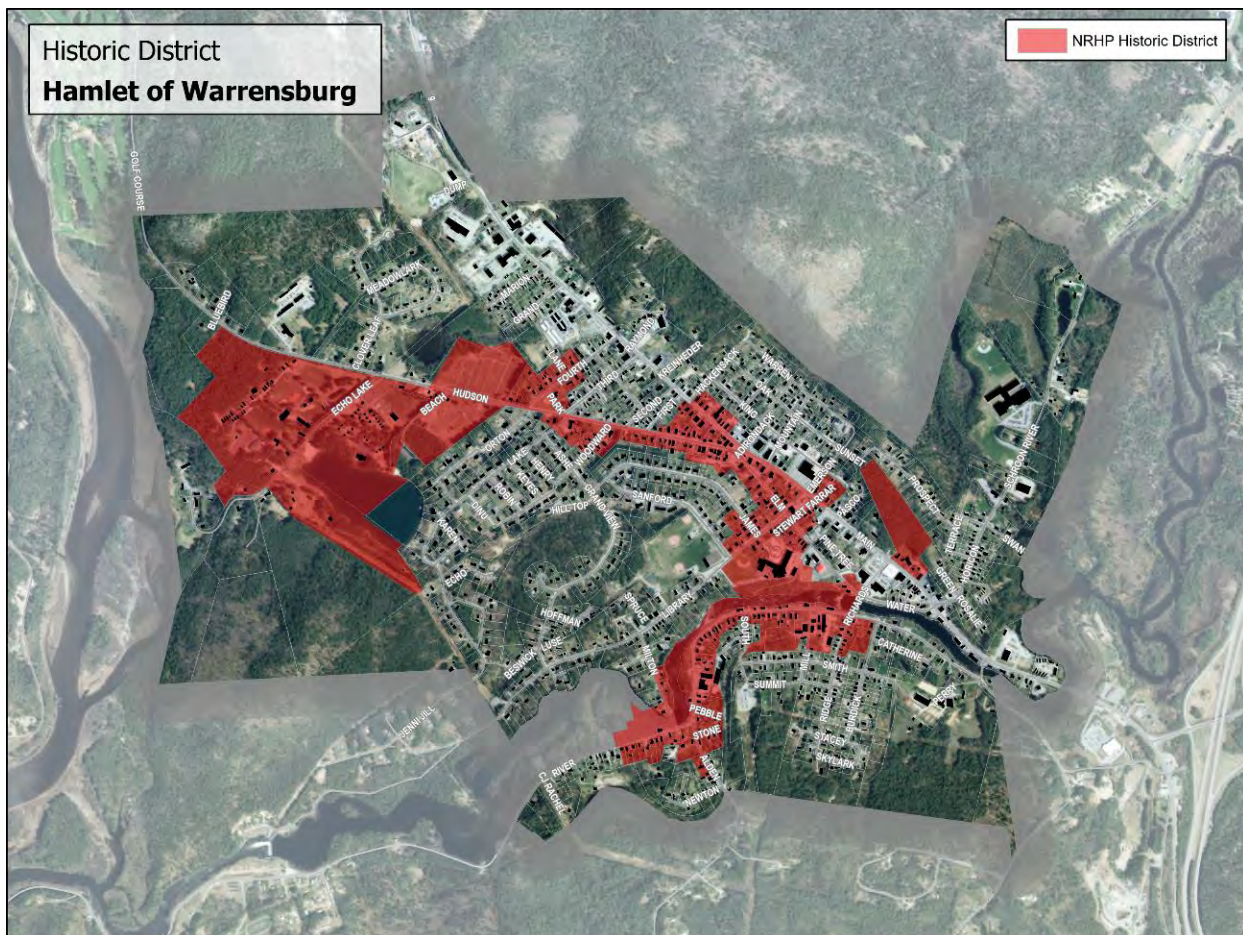
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HISTORIC CHARACTER

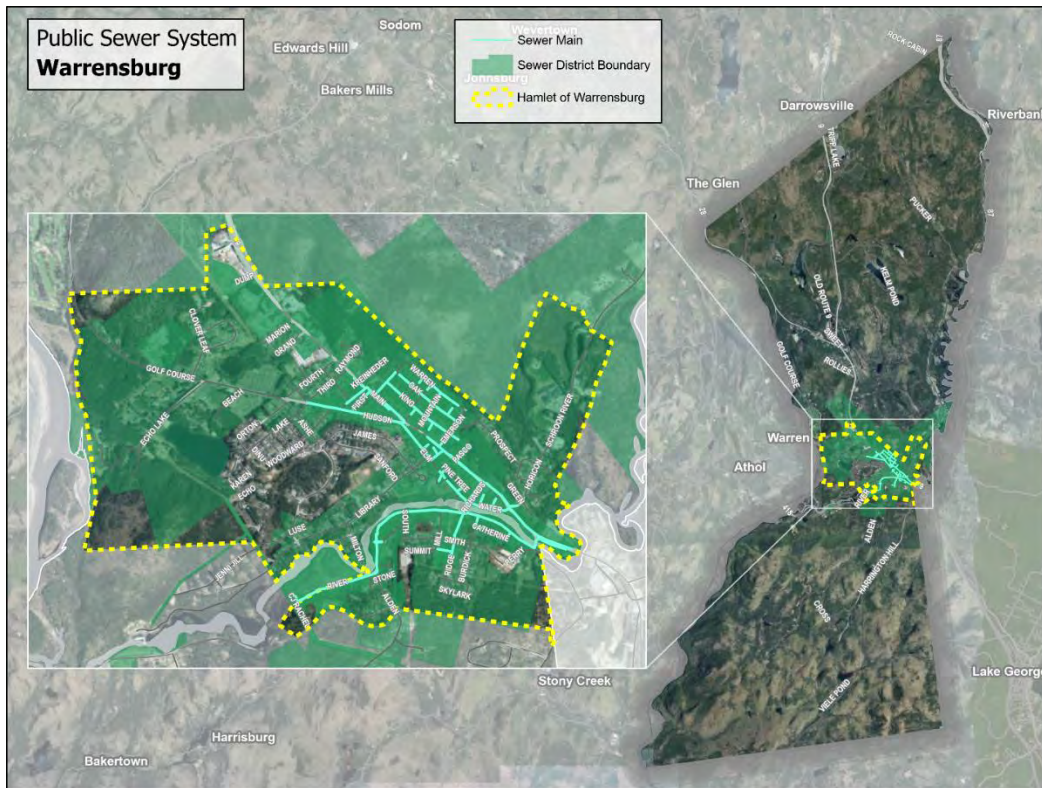
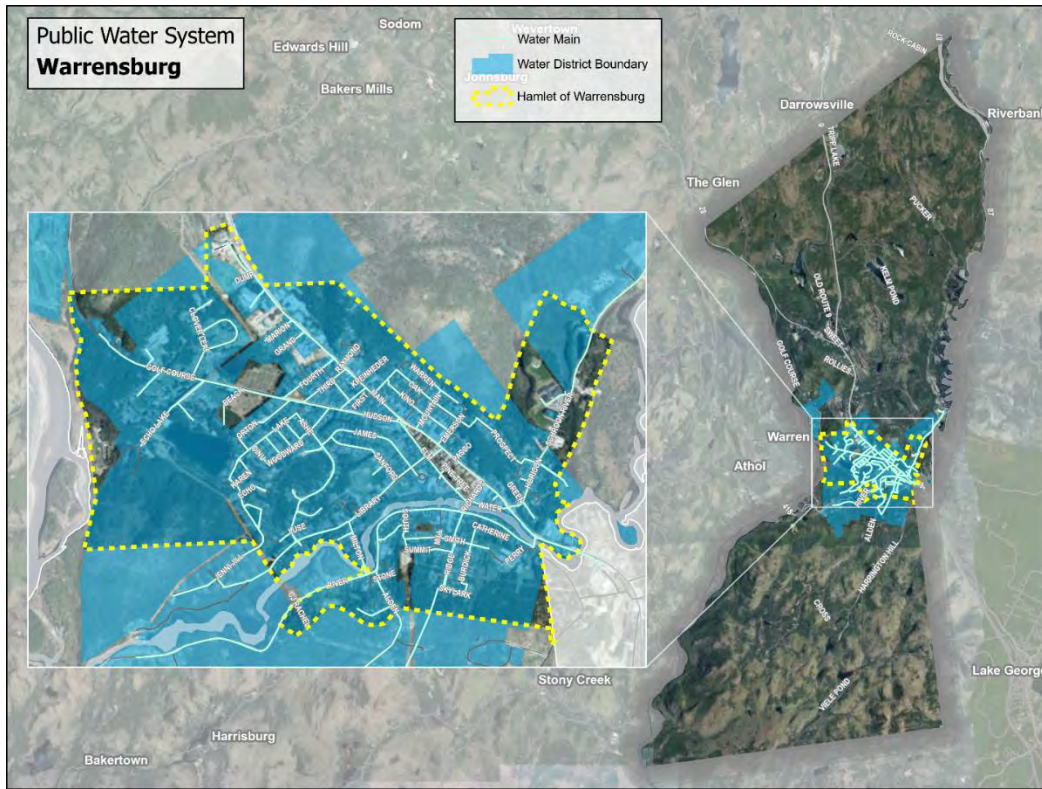
The Warrensburg Hamlet Historic District, which is listed on both the State and National Register of Historic Places, is the largest historic district within the Adirondack Park. The intact and a contiguous nature of the historic district as it snakes along Hudson through Elm and then along the south bank of the Schroon along River Street also serve to make Warrensburg a visually distinctive community. In recent years, an uptick in demolition and redevelopment along Main Street within the Historic District sparked conversations in 2021 about a possible moratorium on demolition to protect the historic buildings.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Most Warrensburg residents rely on private sewer systems, with only 30% of households served by municipal or commercial septic systems. Water infrastructure is generally available throughout the hamlet boundaries, while sewer infrastructure is more limited in coverage, with sewer infrastructure only in the eastern section of the hamlet.

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While the absence of cell service is a major topic in Warren County and the Adirondack Park, cell access is not an issue in either the hamlet or Town of Warrensburg. Dead zones are minimal and generally limited to the Town's sparsely populated southwestern quadrant.

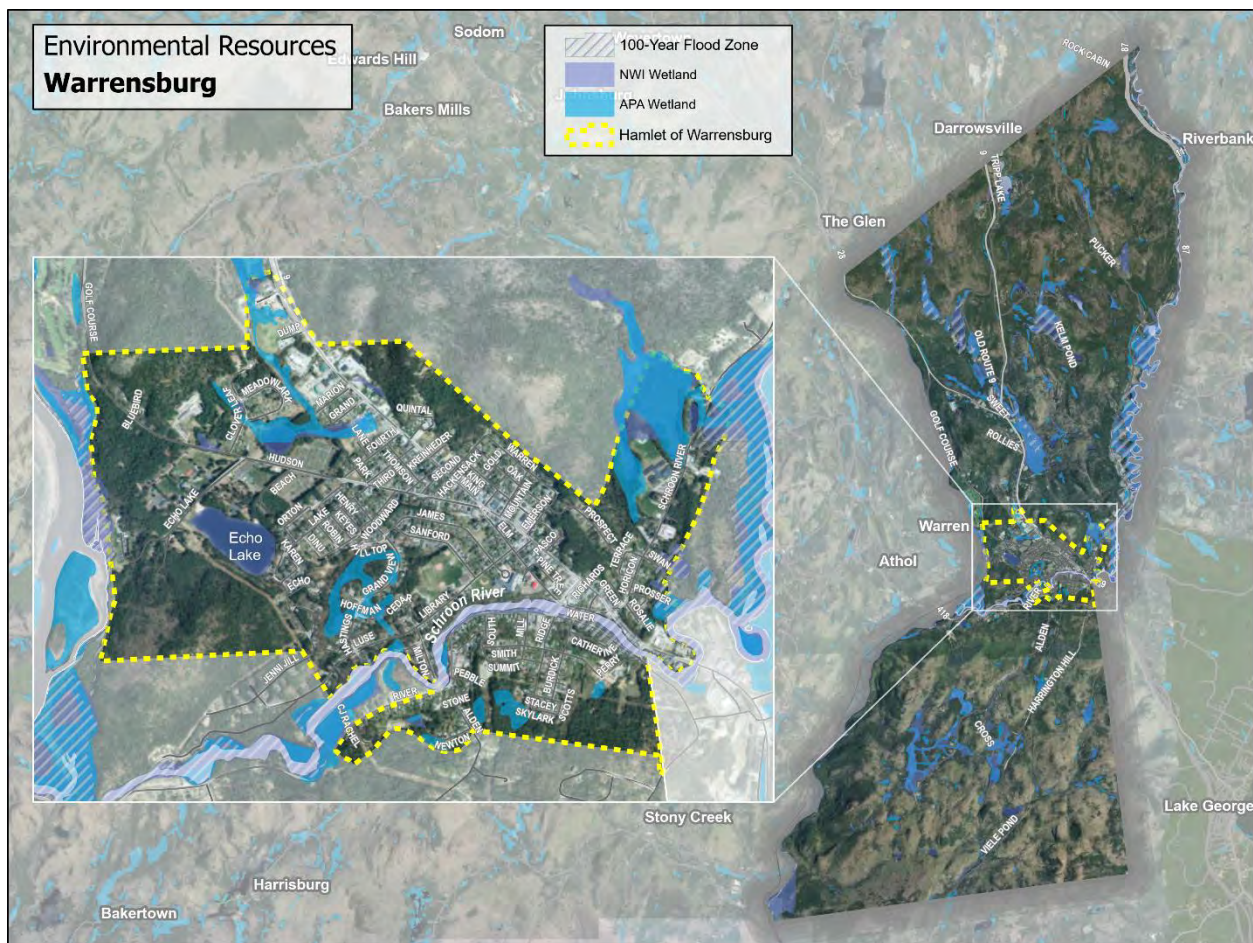


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WATER RESOURCES

Since the Town's founding in 1813, Warrensburg has been defined by its proximity to the Schroon and Hudson Rivers. The Hudson River forms the western boundary of the Town and offers incredible public recreation opportunities. The arrangement of the street grid in Warrensburg's historic core in large part mirrors the contours of the Schroon, a pattern which to this day enables deep connectivity for residents to the banks of the river that historically fueled the Town's growth. While today the uses of the rivers are primarily recreational as opposed to economic, they continues to give much to The town in the way of natural beauty and a sense of place.

While its setting at the confluence of the Hudson and Schroon Rivers is one of Warrensburg's greatest strengths, the scenic setting brings its share of associated risks. Flooding is a risk during severe storm events where the Schroon River overflows its banks. In most cases, parcels within the 100-year flood plain are not built-up or else non-residential. However, within the hamlet on the north and south banks of the Schroon at Main and River Streets, respectively, residential parcels are at risk of inundation during severe storm events.

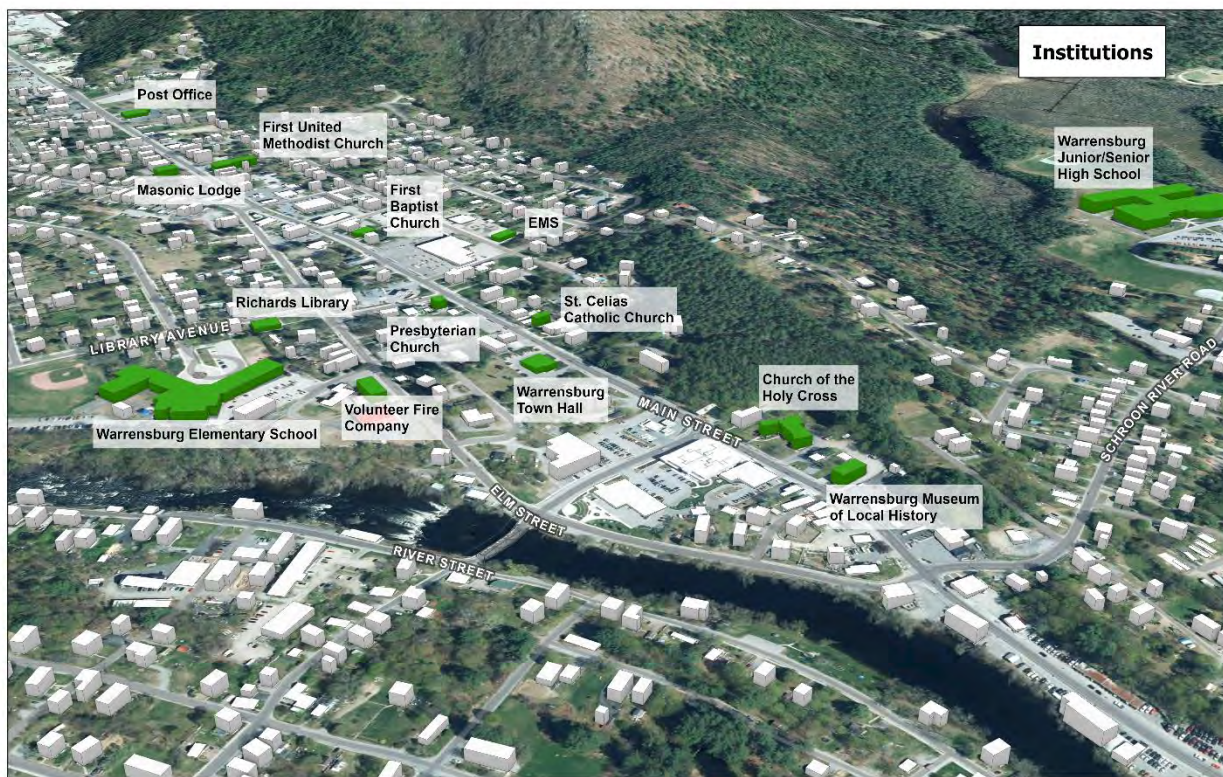


WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- **DRAFT**

COMMUNITY SERVICES & EVENTS

Civic life and community spirit in Warrensburg are bolstered by its robust institutions and an array of seasonal events which foster a strong sense of place within the town. Warrensburg is home to nearly ten houses of worship across a wide variety of denominations. Its voluntary emergency response organizations, both EMS and fire department, are centrally located and contribute to a strong sense of civic life and responsibility among town residents. Warrensburg also boasts its own museum, the Warrensburgh Museum of Local History (the 'h' a nod to the Town's historic spelling), which keeps the town's deep historical memory alive in the minds of younger generations.

Each year, a Warrensburg resident's calendar is dotted with a host of community events, from the fire department's annual "Smoke Eaters Jamboree," to blueberry festivals, "the world's largest garage sale," and much more. The town's expansive programming fosters a strong sense of community among residents while enlivening its commercial corridors.



TRANSPORTATION

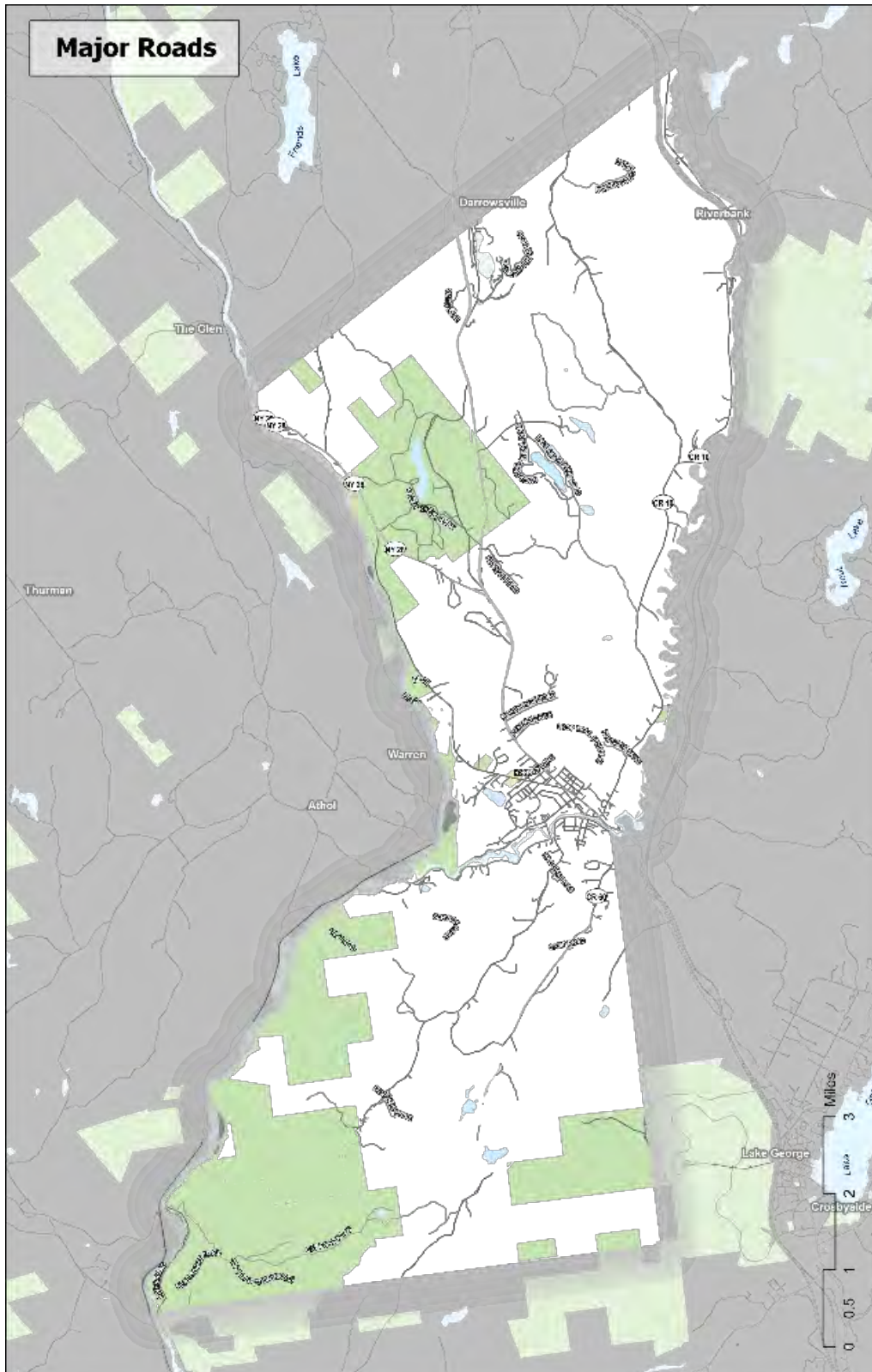
Interstate 87 (the Adirondack Northway) runs along the Town's eastern border. Easy interstate access to Warrensburg from the regional destination of Lake George and from southern parts of New York State have helped to solidify Warrensburg's status as a gateway to the Adirondacks, as evidenced by the rapidly expanding Airbnb and short-term rental industry within the Town. Main Street itself continues its historic role as Warrensburg's

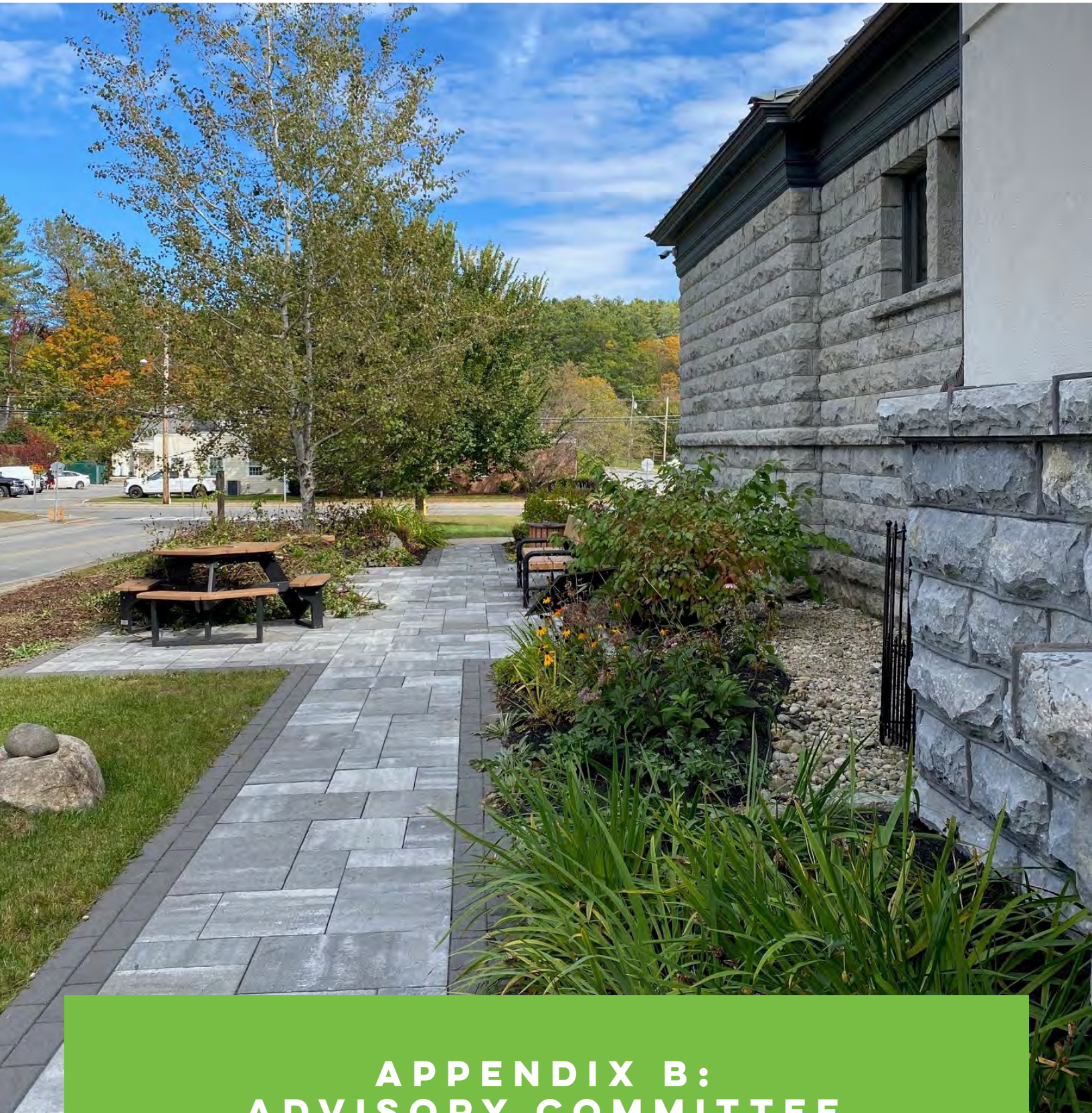
WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- **DRAFT**

principal arterial; most recent average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts from the DOT estimate roughly 11,300 cars travel on portions of Main Street daily.

Warrensburg lies roughly an hour from the nearest stop on Amtrak's Adirondack line, at Saratoga Springs. Visitors from downstate can access Warrensburg by means of rail and bus from the Adirondack line and Amtrak's accompanying Amtrak Thruway Connecting Service direct to Warrensburg. A Greyhound Bus stop on Main Street fosters connections between regional rail and the Town for non-automobile transit.

WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY PROFILE- **DRAFT**





**APPENDIX B:
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETINGS**



WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Meeting 1 Summary

Project Number: 2221521

Location: Zoom

Date: June 22, 2022

Time: 2:00PM

	Name	Organization/Role	Email
Attendees:	Patti Corlew	Warrensburg Planning & Zoning Administrator	patti.corlew@townofwarrensburg.net
	Jim Hull	Warrensburg Code Enforcement Officer	jim.hull@townofwarrensburg.net
	Joyce Reed	Warrensburg Collection Clerk	joyce.reed@townofwarrensburg.net
	John Alexander	Warrensburg Deputy Supervisor	fundirectors@yahoo.com
	Gary Cooper	Town Resident	coopga@gmail.com
	Laura Moore	Warrensburg Museum of Local History	Moorela2012@yahoo.com
	Sharon Sutphin	Warrensburg Planning Board Chairperson	nysutphin1@aol.com
	Teresa Whalen	Warrensburg Beautification Chair	taawhalen@yahoo.com
	Norabelle Greenberger	LaBella Associates	ngreenberger@labellapc.com
	Chris Round	LaBella Associates	cround@labellapc.com

Meeting Scope: Review scope and schedule; SWOT analysis

Meeting Summary:

- Committee members introduced themselves and provided information on their history in Warrensburg and interest in participating on the Committee.



- LaBella reviewed the project scope of work and preliminary schedule. Committee members requested that LaBella provide a copy of their proposal to the Committee.
- LaBella discussed preliminary ideas on the public engagement approach, including a visioning event in the fall, online engagement, a survey, and opportunities to conduct public engagement at an existing Town event. A summary of the Committee feedback on the public engagement approach is provided below, which will be incorporated into a public engagement plan.
 - Public workshops were held previously at the school and can also be at the fire house community center.
 - Prefer to post information on the recently updated Town website instead of creating a new Comprehensive Plan website.
 - Want to ensure that survey mechanism limits the number of times any single resident can respond. LaBella indicated that IP addresses are collected as a means of eliminating multiple repeat responses.
 - Interest in having 15-20-minute updates at Town Board meetings rather than daytime meetings.
 - Interest in interviewing stakeholders and wanting to ensure the public is involved in the process.
 - Opportunities to hold visioning event at the farmers market apple festival in mid-September.
 - Smoke Eaters Jamboree event on July 30 is too early for visioning event, but could be an opportunity to inform the public that the Comprehensive Plan process is starting.
- Committee discussed how the work of the previous Comprehensive Plan would be incorporated into the current planning process. LaBella suggested providing a table with the previous plan recommendations for the Committee and other stakeholders (e.g., Planning Board) to indicate their status and relevance. *Note: This exercise will occur prior to the "recommendation development" stage.*
- Committee spent the remainder of the meeting discussing Warrensburg's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which were noted on a virtual "white board" during the meeting. These pages are attached to this summary document.

ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Send Committee a copy of LaBella proposal	LaBella



ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
2	Post project update/information on Town website & social media	Labella/Town
3	Draft community profile	LaBella
4	Draft public engagement plan	LaBella
5	Public engagement items for July Jamboree	LaBella/Committee
6	Schedule August Committee meeting	LaBella/Committee

The preceding minutes represent the author's understanding of the matters discussed and decisions reached. If there are any corrections, clarifications, or additions to be made to these minutes, please contact the sender at ngreenberger@labellapc.com within five business days of issuance.

Respectfully submitted,
LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

Norabelle Greenberger, AICP

Cc: All Attendees

SWOT ANALYSIS

WHAT MAKES WARRENSBURG UNIQUE?

Workforce - people here that love to do what they do
Need more anchor stores - things for longevity, eateries
Main Street - hamlet increasing with APA to offer more real estate for businesses
Want Main St to be prosperous
Gateway to the ADKs - how to get people to stop & shop in stores
Want better parking (parking designated to Health Center)
Vacation rentals - need to work with the community - create better place/community involvement with the rentals
Diversify retail/restaurant offerings to attract new generations/visitors
What has changed since last Comp Plan - same priorities? Lots of beautification has already happened
What differently can be done?
Aspects of past plan that don't correlate with current zoning
Not enough housing
Why do people come here to begin with? Lots come for food + natural resources
Wealth of local resources -> how to improve access
School high ranking - sense of pride
High school taxes
Airbnbs/vacation rentals = why people come. How to transfer those \$ to improve other community amenities & so stay longer/in other seasons
Used to be a drive through town -> need to look forward to where will be in 10/20 years
School population declining
Need to grow and expand our business
How can we keep our residents & share wealth with airbnbs
Entertainment

Destination now because of short term rentals
Need to improve housing - poor rental housing stock
Main Street = impression of the Town
Mobile homes put onto properties - need to pass sunset law
Highway access
Infrastructure - existing + expansions = a plus; ability to have more hookups
Hamlet expansion N up Main - APA reviewing - redesigning based on APA review
Connecting homes to the sewer
Great Town services - snow shoveling, Parks & Recc, Hwy Dept
Convenient location (1 Hr to Albany airport), but quaint & surrounded by natural res.
All the services - healthcare, cleaners, etc. -> Need for tourism bent
Distinct downtown/well defined (vs. sprawl)
Historic buildings - asset (district)

SWOT ANALYSIS

IN WHAT WAYS DOES WARRENSBURG NEED TO IMPROVE?

NYSDO & Hwy Department working together on Main Street - work well together

Narrow Main Street

Parking

Curb appeal - making it easy to stop

County DPW - asset taking care of streets/sidewalks

County & Town work well together, no concerns about truck traffic - far enough from downtown

National Grid - opportunity to change the use on the site - housing site?

Difficulties for trucks fitting in road

Moratorium/historic district doesn't match up/include many historic buildings - non-contiguous

Lack of knowledge about the historic district - largest historic district in the ADK park (> 220 properties)

Tax incentives available to property owners

Misinformation on historic district



WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Meeting 2 Summary

Project Number: 2221521

Location: Warrensburg Town Hall

Date: September 15, 2022

Time: 10:00AM

	Name	Organization/Role	Email
Attendees:	Patti Corlew	Warrensburg Planning & Zoning Administrator	patti.corlew@townofwarrensburg.net
	Jim Hull	Warrensburg Code Enforcement Officer	jim.hull@townofwarrensburg.net
	Joyce Reed	Warrensburg Collection Clerk	joyce.reed@townofwarrensburg.net
	John Alexander	Warrensburg Deputy Supervisor	fundirectors@yahoo.com
	Laura Moore	Warrensburg Museum of Local History	Moorela2012@yahoo.com
	Sharon Sutphin	Warrensburg Planning Board Chairperson	nysutphin1@aol.com
	Teresa Whalen	Warrensburg Beautification Chair	taawhalen@yahoo.com
	Norabelle Greenberger	LaBella Associates	ngreenberger@labellapc.com
	Chris Round	LaBella Associates	cround@labellapc.com
	Trevor Lovitz	LaBella Associates	tlovitz@labellapc.com
	Michael Allen	ReGrowth Planning	mallen@regrowthplanning.com

Meeting Scope: Confirm plan themes (issues/opportunities); Coordinate first public event

Meeting Summary:

- Laura Moore, who coordinated Warrensburg's second comprehensive plan, was designated by the committee as the point of contact with the consultant team going forward.
- Committee discussed key themes/issues & opportunities identified by the Committee at the first meeting and related findings from the draft Community Profile. A summary is provided below.

Recreation and Tourism

- Interest in improving access to amenities for locals and tourists alike.
- How tourism can be expanded year-round, and less seasonally driven.
- Warrensburg's bounty of recreational resources, its parks, golf courses, the Hackensack Mountain, the beach and proximity to Lake George. A goal of the plan should be improving the regional visibility of these assets.



- The waterway is underpromoted. Warrensburg's unique siting at the confluence of the Schroon and the Hudson needs further promotion; residents of Warrensburg have true access and true use to both famed water bodies.
- Expanded event programming would increase the visibility of Warrensburg's exceptional recreational areas -- "We don't want to be the best kept secret." Examples: there used to be an informal vintage snow mobile race at Echo Lake; somebody wanted to have a kayak race on the Schroon.
- A strategic item in the Second Comprehensive Plan was increasing the visibility of the park on the river by using it as the venue for the weekly farmer's market. More programming of this sort should be pursued.
- Using rec field for more programming would increase its visibility, especially increasing traffic from other towns.

Short-Term Rentals

- Roughly 80 STRs currently operate in Warrensburg. STRs are a double-edged sword: Queensbury is restricting STRs, as is Lake George (through zoning, zoned out in some areas). In the Warrensburg code, a STR landlord who receives three complaints is brought into court.
- However, the growth of the STR industry has had the effect of reducing housing inventory, making it more difficult for young families to buy a home in town. Increased competition for housing with deeper pocketed families from downstate has compounded this issue.
- Overall, the committee agreed that the STR industry is not tipping the balance yet, but also acknowledged that STRs could potentially pose a problem in the future. Conversely, the LPC observed that housing repurposed as STRs are generally well-maintained and drive tourist expenditures in town. Committee member suggested the solution then is not regulatory, but by increasing housing production. "We need somebody to build homes."

Housing Development and Hamlet Expansion

- In order to spur development on Warrensburg's vacant parcels, the Committee agreed that additional infrastructure in the form of water and sewer lines are needed to entice developers, the cost being otherwise prohibitive.
- The Town is still petitioning the APA for the expansion of hamlet. Although it was generally understood that the APA would approve both expansion zones, the initial application was denied on the grounds of wetlands and scenic concerns.
- The Town also investigated obtaining a land use plan designation from the APA, which would expand local land use control. This however was not encouraged by the APA, largely due to the APA's interest in Warrensburg's riverine setting, some committee members suggested.

Supportive Housing and Aging in Place

- The Town would love to see some senior housing developed on the tract behind what was formerly Tops Supermarket.
- The Town holds a four- to five-acre lot on what was formerly a highway garage. The hamlet is going to give a small piece of this parcel to Warrensburg EMS to form a new ambulance district – the rest the town would love to see developed into a three-story senior housing development. Aging residents are living in homes too large for them (inventory that would be ideal for young families), making aging in place more difficult. Due to the absence of senior housing options in Warrensburg, elder residents are leaving the community to Queensbury, where a 500-unit senior housing facility exists.



- Warrensburg should be an ideal community for seniors, given its walkability and the Warrensburg Health Center. Committee member suggested contacting Habitat for Humanity, who worked on the senior housing project in Queensbury.

Rental Housing and SOGR

- The dearth of rental apartments in Warrensburg furthermore complicates aging in place. LPC members state there used be more apartments, but many have been bought up and converted back to single-family dwelling for the STR market.
- No policy framework in place for the regulation of long-term rentals.
- Strong demand for rental apartments in Warrensburg.
- Absentee landlords have led to dilapidated buildings.
- Aging inventory issue is compounded by lack of able-bodied contractors. Grant money is in hand but the State requires list of qualified contactors (shortage between exit 19 and 26). LPC members suggested expanding vocational training to address this shortage.
- Large white elephant residential structures are an issue. While the town enforcement apparatus can bring the property owners to court, the issue remains that the owners lack the funds to bring their buildings to code.'
- Lack of enforcement options to ensure proper upkeep. List of building codes (beyond height of grass) could be drafted to enforce maintenance for absentee Landlords.
- Typology of a two-family structure in Warrensburg is usually a single-family conversion, not purpose-built multifamily. Some Committee members suggested expanding accessible dwelling units (ADU) zoning to address rental shortage.
- Committee member interested in a sunset law for non-conforming uses (in the mobile home overlay districts). When the uses sunset, the mobile home would have to be moved off the lot and a permanent structure erected in its place. Currently, property owners in the mobile home overlay can replace the mobile home with a new vehicle, so long as it occupies the same footprint.

Economic Development

- Warrensburg's status as a "drive through town" which thousands of vehicles daily pass through on their way into the Adirondacks. Given the advantage of traffic volume, the Town needs to create more reasons for travelers to stop and stay in Warrensburg.
- More independent retailers with longer hours could draw in visitors the way other established independent retailers in Warrensburg do. However, retail is difficult in the present landscape as business owners can't find help, or can't afford it, or they have no desire to keep long hours.
- Marketing, outreaching, and placemaking were offered as another solution.
- Committee member suggested that the town needs additional anchor tenants, citing River Street Plaza and its opportunities for health care tenants and restaurants.
- A brewery is looking to locate in Warrensburg, either renovating a site or a new build. Tavern and bar land use designation only applies to parts of Main Street.

Historic Preservation

- Chain retailer that purchased a parcel that had been occupied by a historic structure on Main which it subsequently demolished, proved a divisive issue in the community. Some Committee members stated that the property owner had been wanting to sell the property for nine years and saw the construction of an anchor store as necessary for the Town's economic development, since no interest was generated in rehabbing the historic structure.



- Committee member noted the Warrensburg Historic District is non-contiguous, as not every building in the historic district is historic, and also noted that unlike other communities, not enough historic legibility survives in Warrensburg to effectively market that asset
- Committee member suggested that the value of Warrensburg's historic properties is worth finding buyers for and restoring them and suggested that the Town needs to better market these assets to attract investment and secure public and private financing. The preservationists in Town were not against the chain retailer altogether but its placement within the Town's historic core. Another Committee member countered that the chain retailer's site selection was constrained by the limited availability of parcels with an appropriate land use designation.
- "The Pillars" on Main was discussed as a representative case of the challenge of preserving Warrensburg's historic structures. To bring it to contemporary codes would require a \$2-3 million investment.
- The new gas station was offered as a success story of contextually built new development.
- Committee member noted that government incentives exist for rehabbing historic homes within the Historic District and also emphasized that a property listing within the Historic District comes with no constraints: there are no historic ordinances in Warrensburg that a property owner must comply with.
- New commercial development in Warrensburg is largely non-contextual. Committee member suggested that if form-based code or another type of zoning ordinance were to be implemented, well-capitalized national retailers could theoretically comply with more rigorous design standards.
- The renovation of the Town's historic bandstand was state-funded, at a total cost of \$310,000.
- A case study in maintaining historic character while attracting new investment, the Town worked with the pharmacy that replaced the Colonial Arms to create a design that maintained and pay tribute to the historic structure.
- Adirondack Architectural Heritage Architecture just received \$750,000 grant for Main Street Revitalization.
- Committee member suggested that new forms of capital and investment are clearly coming into Warrensburg, as evidenced by the STR industry, which could lead to new stream of financing, private or public, for historic preservation, in addition to securing public financing which will enable long-term residents funding to rehab their homes. For instance, Warrensburg received a community block development grant, \$400,000 dispersed over two-year period for home improvement. Over sixty pre-applications, \$75,000 per household.
- Warrensburg Beautification (est. 1984) worked with a consultant team in the 1990s to create a Main Street revitalization plan. The plan outlined focal areas on Main Street, which then received streetscape improvements and riverside parks (financed with grant funding from State and assisted by Warren County Planning). Committee discussed interest in focusing on key areas/buildings, rather than historic district as a whole.
- Committee members agreed that at Main Street supermarket plaza and the five-way intersection by the bandstand would be an ideal focal point of visual improvement efforts.

Public Outreach/Event Planning

- Comprehensive Plan FAQ was added to the Town's website. Committee member asked that LaBella confirm, as they couldn't find it.
- LaBella and the Committee then discussed scheduling the first public event and the event format. Committee agreed that the Warrensburg Elementary School would be the preferred venue for the event, held in the evening hours with catering from Oscar's.
- Committee member discussed Apple Festival planned for following day as an opportunity to advertise the event. LaBella indicated that they would prepare a flyer – either with visioning survey



questions or with event info – depending on whether they are able to finalize the venue location and date in time.

ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Produce flyer for public input to be distributed at the Apple Festival - <i>Complete</i>	LaBella
2	Book venue for first public event - <i>Complete</i>	LaBella
3	Produce and distribute flyer advertising first public event at Garlic Festival, Garage Sale, at Stewart's, around town, on town social media.	LaBella/Committee
4	Hold first public event in October	LaBella
5	Provide feedback on draft Community Profile	Committee
6	Provide additional stakeholder identification guidance - <i>Complete</i>	LaBella

The preceding minutes represent the author's understanding of the matters discussed and decisions reached. If there are any corrections, clarifications, or additions to be made to these minutes, please contact the sender at ngreenberger@labellapc.com within five business days of issuance.

Respectfully submitted,
LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

Norabelle Greenberger, AICP

Cc: All Attendees



WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Meeting 3 Summary

Project Number: 2221521

Location: Warrensburg Town Hall

Date: January 31, 2023

Time: 10:00AM

	Name	Organization/Role	Email
Attendees:	Patti Corlew	Warrensburg Planning & Zoning Administrator	patti.corlew@townofwarrensburg.net
	Jim Hull	Warrensburg Code Enforcement Officer	jim.hull@townofwarrensburg.net
	Joyce Reed	Warrensburg Collection Clerk	joyce.reed@townofwarrensburg.net
	John Alexander	Warrensburg Deputy Supervisor	fundirectors@yahoo.com
	Laura Moore	Warrensburg Museum of Local History	Moorela2012@yahoo.com
	Sharon Sutphin	Warrensburg Planning Board Chairperson	nysutphin1@aol.com
	Teresa Whalen	Warrensburg Beautification Chair	taawhalen@yahoo.com
	Norabelle Greenberger	LaBella Associates	ngreenberger@labellapc.com
	Chris Round	LaBella Associates	cround@labellapc.com

Meeting Summary:

- LaBella provided an overview of work undertaken since the last Committee meeting, including the public event and surveys, development and sharing of the draft vision statement, stakeholder outreach, conducting a future hamlet development focus group, and submitting two grant applications (Restore, A/GFTC) to support plan recommendations identified in the early planning process.
- Committee reviewed the draft goals. The goals are the organizing ideas under which the plan recommendations will be developed. Committee asked that Goal 1 be modified to "Support and grow local businesses and *new* entrepreneurship."
- LaBella provided an overview of the insight gained on Town recreation resources through one-on-one calls conducted with representatives from NYSDEC, SUNY ESF (Pack Forest), Camp Echo Lake, Hickory Ski Center, and Sinai Retreats. Committee provided the following comments:
 - Discussed previous plans for improving bike connections. Committee was unclear on the current status of prior plans (A/GFTC Lake George Warrensburg Bikeway)
 - LaBella noted the importance of staying informed about progress on the NYSDEC's Unit Management Plan (UMP) update for the State Forests in Saratoga and Warren Counties, as it will address future amenities and uses; there will be an opportunity for public feedback on the draft UMP.



- Pack Demonstration Forest is not routinely open, and not all areas are accessible. Most areas are closed to the public with locked gate; the only area open to the public is the area at/around the pond. Communication on what is open to the public (and when) is not provided. Interest in improving communication with SUNY ESF to better understand.
- Discussed prior history of forestry and training at Pack Forest.
- Former interpretive center at Pack Forest is in significant disrepair and would be costly to repair.
- Committee understands that the Lodge at Camp Echo Lake is closed in the winter.
- Committee indicated that – at a minimum – the main building at Sinai Retreats is winterized. It was open in the winter when under previous ownership.
- Committee provided the following feedback on the draft recreation recommendations (feedback in bold):

Previous Plan Recommendation	Reference Plan	Completed (Y/N/Ongoing)	Does the recommendation still have value/Comments
Clearly identify trail head to Hackensack Mountain	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	Ongoing	Need to make the recommendation clearer; how should the trail head be improved? Ensure that including all entrances.
Create linkage programs with Pack Forest	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	No	Continued interest. There used to be dog sledding races at Pack Forest. Need to establish regular communication with SUNY ESF to understand what could take place at this facility.
Develop canoe and kayak access points along Schroon River	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	No	Papermill Park has access, but ideally would be further from dam. Need to review all portages and promote different portage points/segments based on skill level. Many of the existing access points are not accessible or well-marked or are on private property. County Fairgrounds previously had a tubing business; parking at this location would make good candidate for water access. Work effort should be coordinated with Lake George and County; County may have this information mapped already. Discussed issues with kayaking on the rivers because of APA regulations: if a tree falls across the river, the NYSDEC cannot remove it.
Work with Hickory Hill to develop year-round destination recreational opportunities	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	Ongoing	Still a priority. Hickory undertaking many initiatives.



Expand and connect the eastern Warren County Bike System	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	No	Difficulty of making the connections given roadway limitations. State was not supportive of adding a bike lane to River Road because of road width. Bikers typically go to Exit 24 and ride loop or connect from Chestertown.
Create vehicle pull offs and parking.	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	Ongoing	Need to look further at this recommendation/what was meant. Town has several pull-off and parking areas along the river. Could be improved with programming or beautification.
Pursue further improvements to the Farmer's Market, such as increasing available parking and improving pedestrian safety	Town of Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan (2012)	Yes – Crosswalks and upgrades (sideway into market & rest area)	Town owns land next to the park, which they have been using for festivals. Discussed potential to look at relocating Farmers Market to an alternate location with more space and/or covered. Concerns related to traffic and safety at current location raised by some Committee members, particularly at a school bus stop near the farmers market.
Evaluate opportunities to increase the type and variety of features at the Town's parks and recreation facilities	Town of Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan (2012)	Ongoing	Still a priority
Expand connections to regional trail and recreation networks, including bicycle trails, snowmobile trails, the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor, and scenic byways	Town of Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan (2012)	Ongoing	Property ownership issues make this difficult
Consider the establishment of recreation fees for large-scale residential development	Town of Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan (2012)	No	Open to considering, but limited development potential. Didn't feel that would be an impediment to developing because of how low existing permit fees are in the Town. Opportunities to combine with STR permit fees.
Construct buffered bike lanes for most of the length of Route 9	Lake George-Warrensburg Bikeway (2019)	No	Not a priority. Don't want anything added to Route 9/don't think can accommodate.



The installation of a crosswalk signal actuation button that can be accessed by bicyclists without needing to dismount is recommended at Route 9	Lake George-Warrensburg Bikeway (2019)		
Improve physical and visual access to existing and new recreation and waterfront facilities.	River Street Streetscape Revitalization Plan (2015)	Ongoing	Need to delineate where and what facilities are. Lack of property owned by Town. Review NYSDEC UMP, as noted.
Hackensack Mountain: link paths, provide parking, mark and clear trails	Main Street Plan (1993)	Ongoing	School updated markers. These need to be updated again.
Cal Engle Park: establish strong pedestrian safe relationship between Main Street and historic riverfront through walkway.	Main Street Plan (1993)		Opportunities to close off Warren Street for events. Interest in looking into this, but need more events (and event organizers)
Additional Recommendations		Comments	
Collaborate to support Hickory Ski Center improvements			
Promote and formalize snowmobile trail map		Connecting the full corridor is wishful thinking. Routes are inconsistent and some poorly groomed. There is no big organizing entity that is clearing the trails or promoting them. Share County Recreation Map(s).	
Explore potential for facilities at Town-owned Harrington Hill Road property		ATV maybe?	
Work with the NYSDEC to market, improve, and expand access to Hudson River and Schroon River			
Establish more regular communication and collaboration with SUNY ESF			
Explore funding opportunities for Pack Forest interpretive trail and visitor center		Noted success at Stony Creek, First Wilderness Plan funded?	
Support increased collaboration between the Warrensburg CSD and recreational facilities			



Indoor recreation offerings needed for young people and seniors	
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- LaBella summarized the housing demand and capacity analyses. Committee noted that the buildout analysis doesn't account for the need to expand water/sewer to accommodate that demand.
- Committee provided the following feedback on the draft housing recommendations (feedback in bold):

Previous Plan Recommendation	Reference Plan	Completed (Y/N/Ongoing)	Does the recommendation still have value/Comments
Encourage the creation of apartments over businesses in the commercial districts to bring additional activity and customers to businesses while providing affordable housing options	2012 Comprehensive Plan	No	Committee doesn't feel that this is going to happen in the short-term (most buildings bought and sitting vacant), but it should be encouraged. Today sometimes the opposite is occurring, with ground floor storefronts being converted to apartments or remaining vacant. Need to bring in people with disposable income to support businesses. Discussed ongoing code enforcement issues. Apartments are an opportunity to generate income.
Revise zoning to allow/promote options in senior housing, including assisted housing, independent housing, accessory apartments, and similar uses within or near the hamlet area	2012 Comprehensive Plan	Yes – permitted, but not being utilized	Not much use of ADUs, but potentially will see increase as population ages.
Promote programs which can provide assistance to eligible homeowners to make repairs and improvements to their homes	2012 Comprehensive Plan	Ongoing	Support this recommendation.
Additional Recommendations		Comments	
Be proactive in redeveloping King Street property for senior housing			
Explore opportunities to fund upgrading of existing manufactured/mobile homes		Disagree with this recommendation. Prefer establishment of a Sunset Law for mobile homes.	
Monitor the expansion of short-term rentals so they do not eliminate available housing stock		Explore opportunities to limit number or areas where permitted once reach a certain threshold (TBD what that threshold is).	



Ensure that rental housing stock is well-maintained and in compliance with building codes	
Support the conversion of large single-family homes to multi-family units.	
Create minimum parking requirements for residential.	
Create requirements to fix up buildings within a certain amount of time after a property is purchased.	
Update zoning to allow apartment buildings in additional areas	

- LaBella provided background on the "Celebrate Warrensburg" goal and recommendations. Committee provided the following feedback on the draft Celebrate Warrensburg recommendations (feedback in bold):

Previous Plan Recommendations	Reference Plan	Completed (Y/N/Ongoing)	Does the recommendation still have value/Comments
Work with the real estate community to promote the assets of the Town to potential residents and businesses	2012 Comprehensive Plan	No	Make sure to include who is the responsible party for this (and all other recommendations)
Expand the features of the website for the Town, including allowing visitors and residents to search for services, map locations of businesses, and find dates for local festivals and events	2012 Comprehensive Plan	Ongoing	Still needs improvement/a priority.
Promote the many existing recreation amenities in the Town, to let residents & visitors know about the recreation opportunities available in the area	2012 Comprehensive Plan	No	Potential to connect County mapping to Town website
Coordination with Warren Chambers of Commerce and County Tourism Bureaus and other stakeholders can capitalize on collaboration to fully expand the identification of the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor in the region.	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	Yes	Committee feels less connected to "First Wilderness Heritage Corridor" / public doesn't associate with this area. More connection to Dude Ranch Trails – a State scenic byway
Implementation of First Wilderness Heritage Corridor orientation visitors' kiosks that provide corridor location,	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	Ongoing	One just added at Papermill Park



community destinations, and community history should be coordinated with all interested stakeholders.			
Make placement of route identification signs a priority in order to direct visitors along the new route's many segments located in Warren and Saratoga counties.	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan		Have a lot of signage in Warrensburg already
Enhance gateway into community through cooperative effort with the Town of Lake George.	First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Plan	Yes	DOT created guidelines for new gateway signage area in T of Lake George. Warrensburg Beautification partnered to make improvements, including signage and plantings.
Improve interpretation of the River Street corridor's historic resources and industrial legacy.	River Street Streetscape Revitalization Plan (2015)	Ongoing	Historical society with the museum have heritage trail information. Also have a handout, but could be improved upon. Working on website improvements.
Route 9 bridge over Schroon River: Relate town to river and industrial/economic heritage with implication of local work ethic and pride	Main Street Plan (1993)		
Additional Recommendations		Comments	
Explore the Warrensburg "brand" and develop a program for marketing/branding overhaul			
Develop a comprehensive wayfinding system to Town recreation and historic assets			
Celebrate the rivers through events and encouraging river supporting/fronting businesses			
Improve and develop gateway signage		Clarify to include other points of entry into the Town. Beautification has already completed improvements at the I-87/Route 9 entry.	
Celebrate the uniqueness of the Fish Hatchery			
Increase information available on recreational offerings on the Town website			
Develop a 5K race between Town parks			
Share information on available community spaces			
Promote Warrensburg CSD's unique programming assets			

- Committee discussed civic engagement. Fire department has decreased – partially due to increased State training requirements, but also general decrease in interest. Don't do as much outreach to schools because of reduced interest. Need to involve young people in the conversations, better understand and embrace their interests. Need to meet halfway if want to create and build excitement and involvement/volunteerism.



- Committee discussed idea of offering discounts to local businesses at STRs.
- Committee discussed idea of holding movie nights at the school or in a park downtown.
- Committee discussed need for a wifi café.
- Committee discussed opportunities to consolidate the school and repurpose elementary school for senior housing.
- Committee discussed interest in more festivals and events to support local businesses.
- Next Committee meeting will be held on March 21st at 10 AM.

ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Small business stakeholder calls	LaBella
2	Develop preliminary small business support & future hamlet development recommendations	LaBella
3	Update and expand upon housing, recreation, and celebrate Warrensburg recommendations	LaBella

The preceding minutes represent the author's understanding of the matters discussed and decisions reached. If there are any corrections, clarifications, or additions to be made to these minutes, please contact the sender at ngreenberger@labellapc.com within five business days of issuance.

Respectfully submitted,
LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

Norabelle Greenberger, AICP

Cc: All Attendees



WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Meeting 4 Summary

Project Number: 2221521

Location: Warrensburg Town Hall

Date: March, 21 2023

Time: 10:00AM

	Name	Organization/Role	Email
Attendees:	Patti Corlew	Warrensburg Planning & Zoning Administrator	patti.corlew@townofwarrensburg.net
	Jim Hull	Warrensburg Code Enforcement Officer	jim.hull@townofwarrensburg.net
	Joyce Reed	Warrensburg Collection Clerk	joyce.reed@townofwarrensburg.net
	Laura Moore	Warrensburg Museum of Local History	Moorela2012@yahoo.com
	Sharon Sutphin	Warrensburg Planning Board Chairperson	nysutphin1@aol.com
	Teresa Whalen	Warrensburg Beautification Chair	taawhalen@yahoo.com
	Norabelle Greenberger	LaBella Associates	ngreenberger@labellapc.com
	Chris Round	LaBella Associates	cround@labellapc.com
	Erin O'Donnell	LaBella Associates	eodonnell@labellapc.com
	Michael Allen	ReGrowth Planning	mallen@regrowthplanning.com

- LaBella provided a summary of the goals identified by the Committee at the previous meeting. During the previous meeting, the Committee discussed recommendations related to the recreation, housing, and Celebrate Warrensburg goals. The focus of today's meeting is on the two remaining goals related to the hamlet and small businesses.
- LaBella provided an overview of the hamlet redevelopment issues and opportunities identified by the Committee and the public during previous meetings, the fall public event, and the public survey.
- ReGrowth led the hamlet redevelopment recommendations conversation. The conversation began with an overview of the discussion and feedback from the January focus group.
 - ReGrowth discussed the different "character areas" along Main Street that exemplify different "design ages and interests" in Warrensburg's history. The three most prevalent being:
 - Village Hamlet: older buildings, pedestrian-oriented, multi-story, buildings closer to sidewalks (Horicon Street and the Bandstand areas mentioned as examples), historical architecture
 - General Commercial: setback farther from street; parking in front



- Highway commercial/industrial: buildings at either end of corridor; zoning allowed here for commercial; not an aesthetically welcoming entry to the community from the Adirondacks or from the south.
- Committee member noted that the current zoning informs the character of said areas. Commercial zoning ends at the health center. Zoning reflects how the town has historically grown over time.
- ReGrowth provided a summary of the feedback from the focus group:
 - Didn't specify a preference for any one character area.
 - Interest in smaller scale commercial development because they want to serve and accommodate the local population first and foremost. Counter argument to this was it's too small a population to support stores that aren't chains.
 - Prefer less dense "big" commercial here because it's historically been residential, but they don't want to be restrictions on types of businesses allowed.
 - Access management: if done correctly, it could increase foot traffic and make it easier to walk between establishments.
- ReGrowth reviewed two draft future land use maps (options): one expanding general commercial area off of Main Street and the other extending along Main Street and opened the floor to comments.
 - Committee felt that the option extending off of Main Street and into back streets would increase in traffic, will deter tourism, and anger residents. Much of the committee indicated that developers' main and/or only concern is ROI and traffic. Committee noted that there was great resistance to the proposal to decrease traffic by re-routing the flow when the supermarket was considered for a spot behind the post office
 - General committee preference to see the entire corridor be completely commercial/consistent zoning
 - Committee noted that available infrastructure plays a role
 - Hamlet Mixed Use zone is already extended beyond Main and allows mix of uses, but isn't occurring. Indication of preference for commercial uses to locate along Main Street where higher traffic.
 - Regarding extending the commercial zoning across the Schroon River (to River Street), the committee did not feel that changing the zoning would impact the type of development occurring in this area (previous restaurant in prime location currently being redeveloped as single-family residential) and also noted that this is a historic section of the Town.
- Discussed potential for design overlay along all or portions of Main Street:
 - Discussed design overlays applying to All of Main Street corridor versus only in historic areas. General preference to have consistent zoning along the corridor but have the design overlay vary depending on location.
 - Discussed "shall" versus "may" (requirement versus preference) and whether design overlays be mis-interpreted. Carefully written explanations would hopefully prevent this. Noted that these details would not all be finalized during Comprehensive Plan but, rather, during future zoning update process.
- ReGrowth discussed other potential hamlet land use recommendations/ zoning modifications, including short term rentals (STR) and rental properties. It may be advantageous to both the RE investors and the town if those seeking to build on more than one parcel were limited to one STR, the rest must be leased/long-term housing. For smaller rentals, i.e. 2-6 units, hamlet mixed use should be ok. Consensus was that those looking to build would prefer larger scale units (>10) and those would belong in core commercial: Committee agreed that daycares should be allowed on core commercial corridor.



Committee will continue to review the draft recommendations and provide additional feedback.

- o LaBella provided a brief overview of the small business stakeholder outreach feedback, including hiring challenges, interest in increased coordination re: hours of operation, interest in increased coordination with STR operators, the decreasing seasonal variations in business/sales, and varying impacts between new businesses and long-standing local businesses. Committee will provide feedback on the draft local business recommendations (handout provided).
- o LaBella discussed next steps. Committee prefers to have one additional meeting before the next public meeting. The next meeting was scheduled and logistics around the next (June) public meeting and avoiding other local events were discussed. Opportunities to increase attendance were discussed, including posting information on the signboards in front of the Town Hall and Fire House and direct outreach to members of the public that attended the previous meeting

ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Provide feedback on draft hamlet and local business recommendations	Committee
2	Finalize date of public event	LaBella
3	Prepare updated list of all plan recommendations	LaBella

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Respectfully submitted,
LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

Norabelle Greenberger, AICP

Cc: All Attendees



WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Meeting 5 Summary

Project Number: 2221521

Location: Warrensburg Town Hall

Date: May 8, 2023

Time: 10:00AM

	Name	Organization/Role	Email
Attendees:	Patti Corlew	Warrensburg Planning & Zoning Administrator	patti.corlew@townofwarrensburg.net
	Jim Hull	Warrensburg Code Enforcement Officer	jim.hull@townofwarrensburg.net
	Joyce Reed	Warrensburg Collection Clerk	joyce.reed@townofwarrensburg.net
	Laura Moore	Warrensburg Museum of Local History	Moorela2012@yahoo.com
	Sharon Sutphin	Warrensburg Planning Board Chairperson	nysutphin1@aol.com
	Teresa Whalen	Warrensburg Beautification Chair	taawhalen@yahoo.com
	Norabelle Greenberger	LaBella Associates	ngreenberger@labellapc.com
	Chris Round	LaBella Associates	cround@labellapc.com
	Michael Allen	ReGrowth Planning	mallen@regrowthplanning.com

- LaBella provided an overview of the June 20th meeting format and how the public would be asked to interact with the draft recommendations boards. For each goal area, one board will contain background information that informed the recommendations, and a second board will present ten related draft recommendations. The public will be asked to vote with their wallet using "Warrensburg bucks" for those recommendations in each goal area that they most strongly support. This exercise will help prioritize certain recommendations and inform implementation.
- The draft boards reflect the recommendations previously reviewed with the Committee (meetings 3 and 4), updated to incorporate feedback. The Committee was asked to review the boards and provide any additional feedback by the end of May.
- The Committee provided some feedback on the housing boards:
 - 10% of current water/sewer connections are multi-family housing, and ~15-16% of connections are multi-family housing and mixed use residential/commercial, combined. Committee discussed what is the ideal mix of rental versus owner-occupied housing.
 - Committee asked about the buildout analysis numbers. LaBella can update to make clearer.
- The Committee noted that there should be an opportunity for the public to submit additional ideas.
- ReGrowth presented the updated Future Land Use Map, which reflects a new compromise approach that was developed based on feedback from Committee meeting 5. The Committee provided the following feedback:



- Most feedback was focused on concerns with the messaging. Consultants need to make it very clear that the overlay recommendations is *not* restricting or preventing teardowns. The overlay recommendation would allow all uses and new development that is currently permitted; additional uses would be permitted when reusing an existing building. General feedback that this is not clear in the boards currently.
- Committee member discussed merits of adaptive reuse versus incorporating unique design elements into new construction. ReGrowth noted that this approach is not always successful.
- Committee had some questions about extending the Core Commercial along Elm, Hudson, and River.
- Committee had some feedback on the potential new uses that would be permitted in those adaptive reuse circumstances. Consultant team noted that those specifics could be worked out during the zoning update process and reminded the Committee that the Town will be submitting a grant application for zoning updates.
- Committee in the end felt that the recommendation was a good compromise and would be well received if messaging is improved.
- LaBella discussed how the June 20th event will be promoted (emails to fall event attendees; signage at Town Hall & Fire House; press release; social media; flyers) and noted that the meeting will also be considered the “Committee Public Hearing” required prior to plan adoption.
- LaBella discussed next steps and the goal of having a draft Comprehensive Plan completed before the end of July to support the zoning grant application. The Committee will review the draft plan at their July meeting.

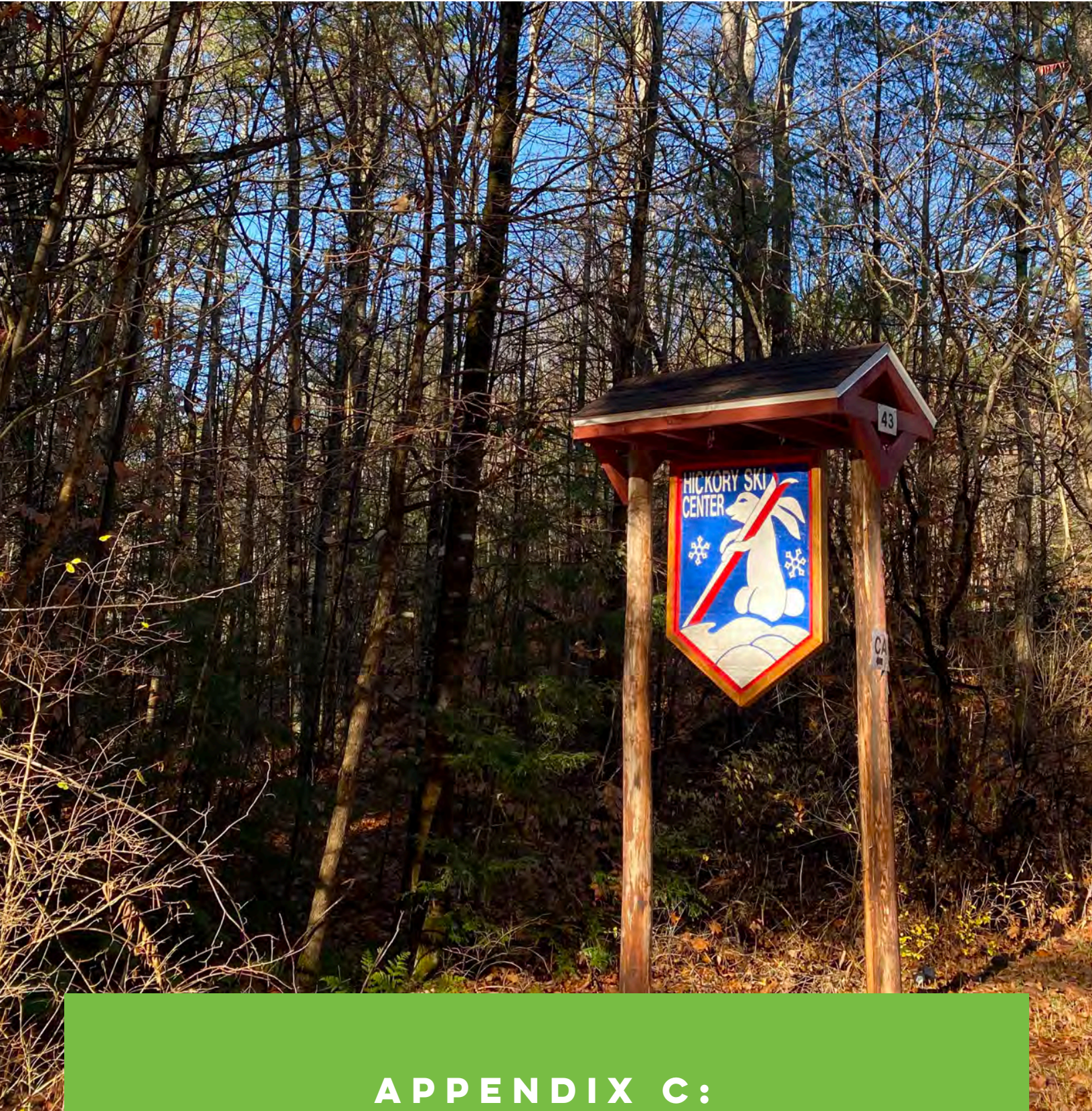
ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Provide feedback on draft meeting boards by end of May	Committee
2	Prepare updated material for June public event	LaBella
3	Publicize June public event	LaBella
4	Draft Comprehensive Plan by end of July	LaBella

The preceding minutes represent the author's understanding of the matters discussed and decisions reached. If there are any corrections, clarifications, or additions to be made to these minutes, please contact the sender at ngreenberger@labellapc.com within five business days of issuance.

Respectfully submitted,
LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

Norabelle Greenberger, AICP

Cc: All Attendees



**APPENDIX C:
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

TOWN OF WARRENSBURG PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT
AUGUST 23, 2022

INTRODUCTION

The public outreach process for the Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan Update, will help the Town understand current issues, gain information from the public, clarify its vision, goals and priorities for the future, and inform recommendation and implementation strategies. The Town would like to hear from all residents, landowners, business owners, and others who have a stake in the future of the community. The public engagement strategy aims to involve as many members of the community as possible. To encourage wide participation, a variety of public outreach methods are included in this strategy.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

The Comprehensive Plan Committee (the “Committee”) will act as a steering committee for the comprehensive planning process. The Committee will meet throughout the planning process and will be responsible for providing comments on draft reports and other components of the consultant team’s work. Committee members are liaisons to the community at-large and will be responsible for sharing information about the Comprehensive Plan with their neighbors and networks. Furthermore, members of the Committee will play an important role in ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan is grounded in the values and aspirations of the Warrensburg community.

Members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee include:

- John Alexander, Warrensburg Deputy Supervisor
- Patti Corlew, Warrensburg Planning & Zoning Administrator
- Gary Cooper, Town Resident
- Jim Hull, Warrensburg Code Enforcement Officer
- Laura Moore, Warrensburg Museum of Local History
- Joyce Reed, Warrensburg Collection Clerk
- Sharon Sutphin, Warrensburg Planning Board Chairperson
- Teresa Whalen, Warrensburg Beautification Chair

PROJECT WEBSITE

One or more new pages dedicated to this Project will be added to the Town Website which will contain information about the comprehensive plan update process and schedule, the Committee,

public engagement meetings, press releases, a document library, and an opportunity to provide input. As the Committee develops the Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives/Priorities, approved drafts will be posted on the website for review by members of the community. The Project Team will coordinate with Dani Oliver to upload information to the website.

COMMUNITY POTLUCK VISIONING WORKSHOP

A community potluck visioning workshop is proposed to provide information and facilitate discussions of key issues to be addressed in the comprehensive plan. The workshop will allow the public to offer their insights and perspectives on current issues facing the Town. After an introduction of the planning process, initial findings, and focus areas, the consultant team will lead a guided exercise to identify public priorities, along with key Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

The following are initial recommended topics to be addressed during the comprehensive planning process and introduced at the Workshop. The final list will be confirmed by the Committee.

- Main Street
- Economic Development
- Recreation and Tourism
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Others Identified by the Committee

The potluck will occur in the fall at a central community space, such as the firehouse community center. The exact date and location(s) will be confirmed with the Committee.

MAIN STREET WALKING TOUR

With Main Street as a key focus area of the plan, the consulting team will conduct a walking tour with the Committee and other stakeholders identified by the Committee to see key sites, identify issues and opportunities, look at problematic development, and get our feet on the ground to understand what is going on along this critical thoroughfare.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS/FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The consulting team will conduct in person and telephone interviews and/or focus group meetings with key stakeholders to identify issues and opportunities. Recommended stakeholders include members of the Town, Planning, and Zoning Boards, Code Enforcement Officer, business owners,

representatives from local and regional organizations, groups, and clubs; and others as identified by the Committee. Where feasible, outreach efforts will include school-age residents. The Committee and consulting team will discuss opportunities and ideas to engage this important population. The Committee and consulting team will work together to finalize a list of stakeholders.

SATURDAY STOREFRONT EVENT

A second public workshop will be held in the form of an open house where the public has all day on a Saturday to drop by and learn about the proposed recommendations in the draft Comprehensive Plan. The event will be held at the Town Hall, a community space, or a cooperating business location on Route 9. The specific location and date will be decided by the Committee. It is anticipated that this workshop will occur in the spring of 2023.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey may also be administered to collect input from the public on the vision, goals, and objectives/priorities. Surveys would be available online via SurveyMonkey and in a paper format. To ensure a wide reach, the surveys would be promoted via press releases and social media postings.

TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

Town Board representatives on the Comprehensive Plan committee will provide regular updates to the Town Board and public at the monthly Town Board meetings.

All community engagement events will be noticed on the Town's website and press releases issued to local print media. Informational flyers will also be posted at key locations throughout Town.



WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Public Meeting – Public Input Summary

Project Number: 2221521

Location: Warrensburg Fire House (18 Elm Street)

Date: October 27, 2022

Time: 5:00 PM

Meeting Summary:

The first public event for the Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan update was held on Thursday, 10/27 from 5-7 PM at the Warrensburg Fire House. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Comprehensive Plan process, review preliminary findings, and get public feedback on three core plan topic areas: housing; recreation and tourism; and Main Street and economic development. Participants were divided into three groups for topic-focused "breakout sessions"; the groups spent 20 minutes at each topic breakout area. The following is a summary of the public feedback from the event, organized by topic area.

Housing

- Short-term rentals (STRs):
 - While participants recognized the benefits of STR (improved properties, increased visitation, additional revenue to property owners) there was concern over the impact on the community (availability of housing for long term residents, overall saturation of STRs if left unchecked).
- Manufactured/Mobile Homes:
 - Concern over substandard mobile/manufactured housing in residential districts in the hamlet. The primary issues were aesthetics/upkeep and general health and safety considerations. Some participants speculated that absentee landlords were part of the problem and there are plenty of examples of attractive, well-maintained trailers/manufactured homes in the community.
 - ***Note** does the code enforcement/zoning enforcement department have the tools and resources needed to enforce existing property maintenance rules?*
- Senior Housing:
 - There is a strong desire to address the shortage of senior housing in the Town.
 - The issue is twofold: (1) seniors get desperate to sell their homes because they are unable to continue upkeep and they end up selling to whomever at whatever cost; and (2) seniors do not have a chance to age "in" community and end up isolated in Queensbury.
 - The Town-owned parcel behind the grocery store is a desired place for senior housing. It will be adjacent to EMS garage.



- ***Note** will the proximity to a sound generator (and possible brownfield) impede developers seeking LIHTC for senior housing there?*
- A senior housing arrangement in Indian Lake that could serve as an example
- Senior condominiums vs senior apartments may be worth exploring as they would allow for ownership by residents.
- Other:
 - Potential for development on Town-owned Harrington Hill property
 - Interest in developing a parcel of land owned by Episcopal Church
 - No apartments are available for rental
 - Quality/condition of rental units is in question
 - Warrensburg is a "complete community" (health center, walkable, library, services) that make it attractive for people to relocate to

Hamlet & Economic Development

- Development constraints:
 - Participants noted that despite having additional capacity to develop housing in the hamlet, there are topographic and regulatory constraints.
 - Schroon River is designated as 'recreational' by the Adirondack Park Agency. How does this interact with the local development review procedure? Participants referenced a project on Tannery Trail that has encountered issues with the Scenic River overlay (Schroon).
 - The hamlet is geographically constrained from growth in many areas and needs to expand in the directions it can. Developers indicate that there is a shortage of large properties for commercial development.
- Preferred uses:
 - Desire for more commercial development along Main Street corridor.
 - Specific commercial uses desired in the community which were suggested by participants include: a nail salon (walk-in, not by appointment), Tractor Supply, used furniture sales, light industry, lodging, movie theater, nightlife activities, sporting goods place.
 - There is a strong interest in having local cultural assets and attractions.
 - No space for seniors: very popular/successful in Lake Luzerne.
 - Do not want Warrensburg to become a place of "big commercial" entities.
- Zoning:
 - Hamlet needs to be able to accommodate new growth if it is to survive, but it needs to be moderated - don't want unlimited growth or to become like "any other town".
 - There is a desire to look at allowing additional uses in the hamlet, and/or expanding the area of the core commercial.



- Dollar General store was not appropriate for its current location. Would have been more appropriate further down the corridor.
- The Town is zoned primarily for single-family homes despite there being a desire and demand for multi-family dwellings.
- When asked about the size of multi-family dwellings there was consensus that 2-story buildings were more appropriate than 3-story.
- The group discussed the idea of mandatory set asides for 'affordable' housing. If the Town could offer streamlined approvals for a larger housing project, the developer in return could provide an affordable set aside. (Opportunity for local residents to leverage the attractiveness of their community to meet community goals.)
- Discussed the idea of a FBC from Schroon River bridge to Oscars. Build whatever you'd like so long as it is attractive and has appropriate site layout/ building placement (build to lines, minimum heights, etc.) this would be a 'hands off' approach to land use regulations.
- There is some ambiguity in zoning definitions (i.e., 'small commercial'). Clearer definitions of what is preferred and allowed would make things easier for residents, boards, and developers.
- Many participants noted a desire to expand the hamlet designation.
 - The southwestern end of River Street is not currently in the hamlet despite efforts to include it. This was noted as important. Many people felt that this will eventually become the most desirable real estate in the coming years.
 - Previous applications to expand to the north along Route 9 have been denied.
 - ***Note** opportunity to engage with proactive discussions with APA to explain community needs*
- Hamlet Aesthetics & Gateways
 - Large concern about losing all the older/historic buildings in town. Several are in serious disrepair and not likely to be salvageable due to high cost of repairs. Many owners are not doing anything to salvage them and may need an incentive or push to get going.
 - Many people expressed desire in having design guidelines or standards for new development to protect what they have and prevent the hamlet from becoming like every other town.
 - Gateways into the hamlet aren't just east/west, but also include approach from the south and north. Town has some Welcome signs but could be expanded or improved.
 - Eastern entry into hamlet is currently very unappealing, particularly on right side as you cross the bridge. Former vegetative screening of National Grid property was taken down.
 - Adopt-a-Highway program is in effect, and Masonic Temple maintains some landscaping. Could work to reinforce or expand this effort.
 - Many participants expressed desire for improved commercial signage, improved sign regulations. Current regulations do not make any sense, are always provided waivers or variances, and are not attractive.
 - Hamlet would benefit from more greenspace, greenery and street trees.



- Better wayfinding signage is needed for visitors and tourists.
- Roadways & Parking
 - When DOT narrowed the Route 9 corridor and put in sidewalks they created other issues. Sidewalks too close to road, lack of snow storage, loss of on-street parking.
 - There is a general need for more complete street features, pedestrian safety, bike lane, grass buffers and street trees.
 - Loss of on-street parking has been an issue. Some restaurants have moved to new locations to find better parking.
 - Traffic is an issue along main corridor. Timing of traffic lights need to be adjusted to provide better delays for turning movements and need for signalized crosswalks.
 - Some participants expressed interest in having a public parking study conducted.
- Other:
 - Moratorium debate in 2021 may have prevented a brewpub project and concern that it caused reputational harm to Warrensburg as being unfriendly to developers.
 - Don't want Warrensburg to become "Anywhere USA"; fear of what it is becoming.
 - Mixed thoughts on whether additional regulations (i.e., design guidelines) would impede commercial development, although some agreed that it would have been helpful on the recent Dollar General design and would not have discouraged them from locating here.
 - River is underutilized. Need to take better advantage of this resource and leverage it as a local asset and attraction.
 - No nightlife; all businesses close between 5 and 7 PM. Consider a First Friday type of event.
 - The hamlet currently suffers from being a "pass-through" corridor where people travel through it to other destinations, but don't have any reason to stop. This means locals have to deal with the traffic, but get none of the benefits. Hamlet revitalization will depend on being able to capture some of this activity.

Tourism & Recreation

- Town & County-Owned Recreation Facilities:
 - Fish hatchery is underutilized and unique resource with a pavilion and river frontage
 - Hackensack Mountain needs improved signage, parking, and trail maintenance. Historically had a ski lift/trails
 - Farmers Market created a destination, which increased Riverside Park's usage
 - Amphitheater by the health center is never used
 - Papermill Park is being discovered and utilized but requires additional work to finish. Needs event programming and improved access
 - Town controlled portion of Echo Lake is signed limiting use to "residents only." This is not welcoming and needs to be reconsidered.



- State-Owned Recreation Facilities:
 - Pack Forest is well used with trails, skiing, and equestrian activities
 - State needs to increase engagement with community to adapt facilities for local needs and market.
- Privately-owned Recreation Facilities:
 - Hickory Hill owner has good community relationship. Open to residents for free hiking several times per year. Needs to expand offerings to year-round and offer additional tourism amenities on-site.
 - Cronin's Golf Course allows free public access during winter for XC skiing
 - Former Sitting Bull Ranch is at key location for a chairlift to serve Hickory Hill. Without chairlift, the use of the ski mountain (6th steepest ski area in the northeast) is limited and cannot support high costs of snowmaking
- Water-Based Recreation:
 - Prior plan promoted water-based recreation on Hudson and Schroon.
 - Town doesn't own/control any waterfront suitable for access.
 - Consider engaging NYSDEC to explore expanded access and land acquisition
 - ***Note** need better map of waterfront land*
- Untapped Recreation Opportunities:
 - Opportunity to have ATV facilities; many ATVs passing through Town. Potential use for Town owned/former watershed lands on Harrington Hill Road
 - Opportunities for indoor recreation (pool? Bowling?)
 - Town not capturing all the benefits of snowmobiling.
 - Ashes Hotel is a destination, as is Hickory
 - Possible to acquire Warren County Surplus bridge (not suitable for vehicles/traffic-retired) and repurposing it for a snowmobile crossing of Schroon River at Papermill Park
 - ***Note** need to better understand snowmobile routes*
 - Explore expanding mountain biking trail opportunities (Pack Forest and Hickory Hill)
- Other:
 - Opportunity to improve connections between STRs and local businesses with discount cars to encourage shopping locally. Could be organized by Chamber of Commerce.
 - 5 Heritage Trails in Warrensburg, but poorly marked
 - Idea of having a 5K run that would go between the various Town parks
 - County's letterboxing maps/brochures were big success



- Improved wayfinding needs
- Beautification Committee has been successful in improving parks
- Lack of visible, adequate parking is a deterrent to visitors

MEMO

Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan

Focus Group Meeting Summary
Future Hamlet Development
January 17, 2023 2:00pm - 4:00pm Library



Focus Group Summary

Eight local Warrensburg residents and property owners sat down in a focus group meeting with the comprehensive plan consulting team to discuss future development in the hamlet. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss opportunities in both economic development and historic preservation which would help strengthen Warrensburg and identify a long term vision.

Warrensburg can be a place which welcomes both tourists and locals, however residents felt that it was important that we work to ensure future development serves the needs of local residents first. Local goods and services should be easily accessible without having to park and walk long distances. Smaller, more locally-owned types of businesses are generally preferred over larger or more corporate institutions which often feel out of place or undermine locally-owned stores. Residents also felt that smaller business operations were better suited to finding replacement tenants in the event they leave, especially compared to larger corporate designs which tend to be custom-fitted to a single type of use. They felt that the size and scale of future development was often more important than the use.

As this region grows, so too will the traffic congestion. With limited area to expand, Warrensburg should look for opportunities off of Main Street for infill and redevelopment opportunities which can meet more local needs, perhaps helping to alleviate some of the congestion on the main corridor. Incorporating more mixed-use development would help to provide much needed additional housing stock in the hamlet as well as take better advantage of the limited space we currently have for growth.

Preserving the local historic character of the hamlet is important to Warrensburg's identity and attraction, however they wished there was a better support structure in place to assist property owners with renovations and repairs necessary to maintain some of the properties. This could include resources for finding financial support and education on the opportunities of historic property ownership. The different support agencies and groups are somewhat fragmented and would be more effective working as a collective whole. Property owners felt that attracting new business from outside is currently difficult without more confidence and assurance that it will be worth the investment required. It was viewed that more incentive and certainty is needed to entice investors.

Warrensburg can be a place for a mix of both contemporary and historic designs, but it is important that the zoning helps to steer new development to the areas of town appropriate for it, or ensures that it is done appropriately for where it is located. Some revised zoning, including the potential for a more "form-based" zoning or design guidelines were suggested as potentially being very helpful in this regard. However, it was noted that the town must follow through on zoning requirements and be consistent with reviewing applications for it to be effective. It was believed that this would go a long way to providing more investor confidence and certainty, as well as some general beautification efforts to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the business district.

WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Business Owner Stakeholder Outreach Summary

Background

Over the course of three months, the consultant team reached out to 16 Warrensburg business stakeholders by email and phone. The selected business stakeholders were chosen in consultation with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee with the intent of representing the broad variety of establishments that comprise the retail landscape in Warrensburg. The consultant team conducted a series of interviews with seven local business stakeholders in Warrensburg. Interviewed businesses encompassed those engaged in retail trade, as well as food services, and included businesses at various stages of tenure in Town. These range from long-established institutions well into third generation family ownership, new entrants into the Main Street shopping scene, and a prospective owner currently navigating the process of opening a Main Street business. Additionally, a representative from the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce was interviewed, as was an owner of a non-retail business.

The full list of interviewed individuals is as follows:

- Suzanne Tyler. ED Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce, January 5, 2023.
- Todd Trulli. Owner, George Henry's. February 8, 2023
- Belle Tyniec. Owner, Junk & Java. February 13, 2023.
- Darby Langworthy. Prospective brewery owner and operator. February 16, 2023.
- Jennifer Nadler. Co-Owner (third generation) and manager, Jacob & Toney's. February 24, 2023.
- Joq Quintal. Manager (third generation), Oscar's Smokehouse. March 2, 2023.
- Shale Miller, Owner of Miller Designs

Interview Content

The content of the interviews, including scripted questions, was guided by topics of interest to members of the Advisory Committee. Latitude was allowed in the interviews for business owners to express their thoughts on topics of particular importance to them. Responses from interviewees are synthesized by relevant topic areas in the following write-up.

Seasonal Fluctuation

The seasonal nature of doing business has long been of concern. Businesses fare well in the boom summer months when an influx of travelers heading northward into the Adirondacks cause profit margins to swell. However, during the "off-season" (usually understood to last from October to March), it is local residents who keep businesses afloat. For larger employers, the off-season has traditionally meant annual layoffs, sometimes as much as one-third of the total workforce.

However, in the course of interviews, the perspective emerged that this seasonal dynamic might be changing. The established operators shared that since the pandemic the once-reliable seasonal downturn has been less pronounced. One of these business owners, the head of a 100+ year old local institution, attributed this to shifting residency patterns resulting from the pandemic. Whereas before second homeowners in the Adirondacks would close their houses come fall, increasingly these individuals have been winterizing

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their homes and staying later into the winter, altering the usual annual ebbs and flow. For one owner, this change has been marked enough that they no longer need to layoff staff in the off-season. For another owner, this trend already existed somewhat prior to the pandemic but accelerated as a result. The dead season of mid-January to late-March is no longer reliably dead, with sales up since COVID and since years prior.

However, this promising trajectory may be less applicable to businesses lacking the regional visibility of Warrensburg's more well-known institutions. One business owner said that the seasonal downturn is still very much real for his business. However, these owners see potential for Warrensburg to strengthen its year-round visitation. One owner noted that "While Lake George closes in the winter, Warrensburg doesn't" and noted such assets as Hickory Hill (and more popular nearby ski resorts such as Gore Mountain) and that with more inter-business coordination, aided by Town government, Warrensburg can strengthen its wintertime draw (the holiday lights on the bridge over the Schroon being an example of an existing effort to replicate).

Tourism & Accommodations

Interrelated with the topic of seasonality is tourism. Tourist expenditures constitute a vital segment for every business interviewed. However, nearly all interviewees expressed the view that accommodation has historically and continues to act as a constraining factor in allowing Warrensburg to develop as a tourism destination in its own right.

The question of whether accommodations can or should evolve in Warrensburg elicited a variety of views. One interviewee noted that the existing motel outside of Town is outmoded and small and noted that new boutique hotel ventures haven't appreciably altered the accommodation landscape. However, the same interviewee expressed skepticism that established hotel chains would open in Warrensburg, despite the proximity to Lake George, due to lack of demand.

Another interviewee, while expressing the view that Warrensburg will never fully emerge as a regional destination due to its lack of accommodations, at the same time stated that this is fine as the Town should play to its strengths – namely, affordability, regional services, high-visibility niche institutions, and Route 9 thru-traffic.

Airbnbs & STRs

While multiple interviewees expressed recognition that the emergence of the short-term rental (STR) industry (e.g., Airbnb, Vrbo) has gone some length to address Warrensburg's lack of accommodations, they for the most part stated that STRs do not exist in great enough numbers to appreciably alter the nature of their businesses. One interviewee suggested that the popularity of STRs is even beginning to wane as their prices have increased.

However, STRs on the whole enjoyed broad popularity among business owners, who view them as a net positive for the Town and for their establishments.

"Would you be willing to work with STR operators in offering coupons, menus & etc.?"

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The above question was put to interviewees in response to interest from the Advisory Committee in capitalizing on the growth of the STR industry and to identify avenues for coordination.

All interviewed business owners stated they would be willing to provide STR operators with their menus, with three stating that they have already been approached by STR operators for this reason. One owner stated that every STR operator should already be doing this, that a critical part of hospitality lies in the promotion of local experiences to your guests.

The managers of the longstanding businesses, while stating they would gladly share their menus, stated that they were operating more or less at capacity (one even saying that the business is more or less running itself).

An owner of a new business, although receptive to the idea, stated she doesn't require much promotion due to the local retail niche she occupies combined with her high-visibility location on Main.

"Any other ideas on how to connect with tourists?"

The above question was put to interviewees in conjunction with questions about STRs. A range of ideas were elicited from respondents, encompassing such topics as event programming, physical planning, and marketing.

Event Programming:

Multiple respondents alluded to the World's Largest Garage Sale in mixed terms. Some suggested that the Town and Chamber perhaps leaned too heavily on this event, to the point where they are not active enough in pursuing a broader variety of events. Others raised complaints around parking and the chaotic environment during the event. Interviewees shared ideas for alternative/additional events to be coordinated either by the Town, Chamber, or another body.

One suggested (in conjunction with broader efforts to increase winter visitation) a "light it up Warrensburg event" wherein houses along Main Street are encouraged to decorate and light up their homes, similar to light displays on gateway bridge. Others suggested food-centered public events, including cookoffs or a series of days where local businesses rent food trucks and cook and sell their food out of these trucks at the Recreation Field, similar to a similar event hosted by the Town by the bandstand during the summer. An interviewee suggested that the event could be billed as something such as "Warrensburg Wednesdays," and could be accompanied by a local band.

Underlying interviewee responses was a perception that Town businesses do not enjoy the same formal promotion that accompanies the Garage Sale, and that this is an area in which they feel underserved.

Physical Planning of the Gateway

Interviewees emphasized the visual improvement of the area nearest the Adirondack Northway exit – the "Gateway into Warrensburg," which in turn is the gateway to the

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Adirondacks. Some mentioned the poor first impression the gateway into Town makes on prospective visitors, largely related to land uses present in this area of Main Street. Expanding placemaking efforts along the gateway was also mentioned as a key strategy in connecting with visitors.

Marketing and promotion:

Multiple of the interviewed businesses expressed a desire for the Town to reevaluate its promotion and outreach strategy to better connect with tourists. Some ideas generated included creating a map of all the stores, restaurants, and other points of interest in Town, to be both displayed by Town Hall but also disseminated to business owners for distribution.

In the same vein, another interviewee expressed the view that the visual identity of Warrensburg needs a refresh or rebrand, particularly in the realm of conceiving unified promotional and marketing materials. The Chamber is a resource that the Town should lean into for the realization of its tourism goals, and the Town should also pursue grant funds to support marketing and promotion.

“Would you be open to a ‘First Friday’-type event where businesses stay open later to encourage locals to come out and support Town businesses?”

All business owners stated that they would be willing to participate in this or a similar weekly event. The only concerns about the idea that were raised were related to staffing. However, in general business owners seemed interested in working together under the right circumstances.

Inter-business Coordination

Related to the above question is the fundamental question of how businesses work with one another. Most interviewees evinced a spirit of cooperation and unity with other businesses in Town and a desire to work with one another in support of a common goal. Positive attitudes toward collaboration among business owners hold great potential for future coordinating efforts.

However, these responses were often framed against a more negative sentiment regarding existing levels of cooperation. Multiple interviewees expressed a wish to see business owners more carefully coordinate their hours of operation so that business closings do not cluster around the same days and times, and so that similar businesses are not closed on the same days every week. Sundays in particular was identified as a day when many businesses are closed, making it hard for locals to shop and eat then. There are opportunities for businesses to amend their operating hours to address this shortfall.

On a similar note, two interviewees shared that irregularity in hours of operation frustrate locals, noting that some businesses in Town need to improve in keeping their stated hours of operation and improve transparency regarding hours of operation (ie, Google Maps).

Establishing a Foothold

A common perception exists that the fortunes of businesses in Warrensburg diverge based on how long the business has been in Town. Long-standing institutions enjoy high regional

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visibility and generate business in their own right. For these establishments, business in recent years has been very well and will likely continue on this track independent of assistance from the Town or even from any extra promotion and outreach by the businesses themselves.

However, for new entrants into Warrensburg's Main Street scene, establishing a foothold can be more challenging. The advice of a relatively new, successful business owner to prospective operators is to "know your lane and hammer it really well so people will make the trip into Town specially to patronize you" (referring to the model of established institutions). Carving out a niche can be particularly difficult for new restaurants. Several interviewees expressed the view that the proliferation of new restaurants has led to significant market overlaps that will make it challenging for these businesses to survive the lean winter months. As one interviewee said, "three businesses opened within the last six months that all essentially served the same purpose."

Other segments identified as potentially underserved are the non-food/retail market, breweries/distilleries, and outdoor dining, all of which are less prevalent (or currently non-existent in Warrensburg today. One interviewee stated, "there is incredible unmet demand for retail in Warrensburg." Breweries, in addition to being a new local use, have the potential to draw a younger crowd in addition to catering to locals and could help the retail character of the Town evolve in a new direction.

Labor, Recruitment and Retention

The interviewed longstanding institutions reported that retention has not been an issue, with good pay, a "family environment," and the allure of a small business as reasons for the low rate of turnover.

Conversely, other interviewee described staff recruitment and retention as their defining challenge and that retention has been increasingly difficult despite good pay and bonuses. The State minimum wage and seasonal staffing needs were cited as additional staffing challenges.

Route 9: Strengths and Challenges

A throughline in interviews with business owners was the strategic advantages associated with operating a business on Route 9. All agreed that the high visibility of the roadway was a considerable boon to their business. However, critical comments regarding Route 9 centered on how to increase "curb appeal," increase the duration of visitation, and zoning.

Suggestions to improve Route 9 (and increase business visitation) included more visible pull-off opportunities and public parking along Route 9 and increasing "curb appeal" either through parks or streetscape improvements.

Lot and zoning conditions along Route 9 were also cited as a challenge for new business development along Route 9, specifically the small lot sizes and alternating zoning patterns along Route 9 ("going back and forth between commercial and HMU"). Required separation distances from schools and houses of worship for businesses selling alcohol makes locating businesses, such as breweries, difficult. Opposition to redevelopment was also cited as a reason for the challenging landscape for business site selection. An interviewee suggested

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extending the commercial development farther north up Route 9 to address these challenges; however, they noted that this area is constrained by the lack of infrastructure and APA land use restrictions.

Another interviewee suggested that a surplus of retail vacancy exists in the Town and along Route 9, and the Town or Chamber can help prospective business owners by acting as a clearinghouse for these properties, in addition to providing greater support in navigating, streamlining, and demystifying the required paperwork associated with opening a business.



TOWN OF WARRENSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Public Workshop for the Warrensburg Comprehensive Plan Summary

Project Number: 2221521.03

Event Summary

A public meeting was held on June 20th, 2023 at the Warrensburg Firehouse to gain feedback from the people of Warrensburg on the Comprehensive Plan Update draft recommendations. There were 25 attendees in total, in addition to 3 consultants from LaBella Associates and 1 subconsultant from ReGrowth Planning. The event was opened with a presentation of the Comprehensive Plan process. The presentation included context/reasoning behind the Comprehensive Plan Update, current progress made, and goals for the future. The presentation was followed by an opportunity for verbal comments by attendees and then a workshop activity aimed at gaining feedback from recommendations developed by the committee. Results from the workshop were compiled and analyzed after the event. Opportunity for additional input was provided to community members that were not able to attend the public meeting through the creation of a publicly available survey that includes the information covered in the meeting.

Summary of June 20th Event Feedback

The interactive portion of the event was focused on getting feedback on the draft Plan Recommendations, which were organized around 5 goal areas: Supporting Local Businesses, Improving Housing Diversity, Encouraging New Development (that respects local identity and character), Expanding Recreational Opportunities, and Promoting Community Identity and Assets.

Community members were able to circulate around the two rooms where materials pertaining to draft recommendations were set up. Community members were asked to "vote with their wallets" for their favorite recommendations. Each community member was given 10 "Warrensburg Bucks" per goal area and had the opportunity to choose how to "spend" their money by dropping it into an envelope associated with each recommendation. This indicated the level of support for certain ideas. The consultant representatives were situated near each of the boards to answer questions, provide guidance if necessary, and to take note of any verbal comments made. A blank board asking for additional input was also set up to allow community members to provide insight and recommendations on certain topics or to provide other ideas that weren't represented on any of the other board.

Full results from the "Vote With Your Wallets" exercise are included in tabular form at the end of this memo. A summary is provided below.

Expanding sewer infrastructure to all areas of the hamlet was by far the most favored recommendation to help encourage new development while preserving local identity and character. Expanding commercial development along the Main Street Corridor and revising the zoning code to create more consistency and predictability in application reviews were also among the top three recommendations for this goal. Expanding the commercial core zoning to selected areas south of the Schroon river was considered the lowest priority based on this exercise.

Promoting an increase in housing diversity was a goal area that saw quite an even distribution of support. Monitoring the expansion of short-term rentals so that they do not eliminate available housing stock was found to be the highest priority, though revising current zoning to provide for more affordable housing was a close second. The third most popular recommendation was to be proactive in redeveloping the Town-owned property on King Street for senior housing. Based on this exercise, ensuring that rental housing stock is well maintained and in compliance with building codes was less of a priority for participants.

Of the recommendations to improve and diversify Warrensburg's recreational opportunities, finding opportunities for indoor recreation is a clear priority. Working with Hickory Ski Club to support the development of year-round recreational opportunities and improving facilities/infrastructure for the Hackensack Mountain trails were also important recommendations to consider. Of all the recommendations, pursuing further improvements to the farmer's market to address traffic and safety concerns received the fewest votes.

To promote and celebrate Warrensburg's assets, participants felt strongly that celebrating rivers through events and supporting business with river frontage was a priority. Celebrating the uniqueness of the Warren County Fish Hatchery and expanding the Town's website to improve access to local resources were the other two recommendations that received the most votes. Installing visitors' kiosk at key locations received the least support from participants.

Support and grow local businesses and new entrepreneurship was another goal area that received more evenly distributed support for recommendations. Participants voted most for promoting apprenticeship and job opportunities through collaboration between the Town, school, chamber, and local businesses. Working with the Chamber to develop a local business discount program for distribution to short term rental operators and conducting a parking study to evaluate the need for additional public parking were also key recommendations noted by participants. Developing a market analysis to identify opportunities for diversifying and expanding local businesses received the least votes.

The verbal and written feedback that was taken covered many different ideas and topic

areas. Most responses focused on development opportunities within the hamlet as well as recreational activities that could be made available to the Town. Community members also asked that the materials organized by LaBella be made available to the community for later review. A summary of these additional comments is provided below and organized by goal area.

- Housing:
 - Town should use its watershed property at Harrington Hill / Alden Ave to develop apartment buildings and multifamily housing.
- Recreation:
 - We don't need additional parks; we should focus on upgrading the parks that are already in Town.
 - Better canoe access should be provided at Veterans Park & Papermill Park
 - Multiple community members mentioned wanting skiing facilities available near Town.
 - New/refurbished fishing pier on Water St
 - Update Warrensburg Rec Park – pickle ball, new dug out, real ice rink.
 - Use Calvin Engle Park to host "Food Truck Fridays," similar to the Town of Oregon.
 - Rename Calvin Engle Park (many community members were not familiar with this name and had to refer to a map before recognizing the park)
 - Town members had multiple ideas for expanding indoor recreation, including a bowling alley, indoor swimming pool, movie theater, ice rink, etc.
 - Provide a shuttle to the farmer's market to alleviate some of the issues with parking.
 - Hire a flag person/traffic conductor to direct traffic in a safe way around the farmer's market.
 - Multiple community members mentioned their desire for a dog park or for dogs to be allowed at existing parks.
 - Multiple community members mentioned the need for comprehensive database of the town's recreational resources since there are many available but there is limited information on how or where to access them.
 - One community member suggested a recreation/resource coordinator be hired for the Town to act as a point of contact for tourists and community members that are looking to utilize the town's assets.
 - Possibly link with/copy the County's recreation department in providing information to people.
 - Recreation opportunities specifically aimed at teenagers, such as game nights or a teen center.
- Business:

- Explore additional funding for Chamber.
- Promotion:
 - Better promote the Warrensburg Heritage Trail System
 - Consider a unified marketing approach to give a consistent feel throughout the Town. This includes updating the town website, for aesthetic reasons but also to disperse information in a user-friendly way.
 - The Town should update signage to be more consistent and evocative of a unified town identity.
 - Another community member agreed but wanted regulations around signs to be somewhat flexible and not too restrictive.
 - Musical entertainment should be organized for events within the town, such as garage sale week or at the farmer's market.
- Hamlet:
 - One person expressed the opinion that an overlay zone may not work for the Town and voiced concern that strict design guidelines may be cost prohibitive to many individuals looking to renovate/develop their properties.
 - The Town should consider expanding the hamlet to capture economic activity from the Northway interchange
- Other:
 - Food security/independence and electrical infrastructure as being two major topics that should also be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Electric charging stations at Richards Ave & Town Hall

Summary of Online Feedback

In an effort to garner as much public involvement as possible, LaBella also created a survey to get input from community members that weren't able attend the meeting in person. The survey was based on the recommendation boards at the public meeting and asked participants to rate each recommendation on a scale of 1-10. The survey was available on the Town's website as well as the town's Facebook page from June 26 to July 7. A total of 5 surveys were collected. The top 2 recommendations for each goal are listed below:

Goal: Encourage new development while preserving local identity and character

1. Revise the zoning code to clarify goals, expectations and procedures for more consistency and predictability in application reviews.
2. Expand commercial development opportunities along the Main Street corridor with new allowed uses.

Goal: Increase Housing Diversity

1. Support programs that can provide assistance to eligible homeowners to make repairs and improvements to their homes.
2. Ensure that rental housing stock is well maintained and in compliance with building codes.

Goal: Improve and diversify Warrensburg's recreational offerings

1. Pursue further improvements to the Farmer's Market to address traffic and safety concerns.
2. Improve signage, trail markers, and parking at all Hackensack Mountain trailheads.

Goal: Promote & Celebrate Warrensburg's Assets

1. Expand the features of the Town's website to improve access to and promote local resources, including events, businesses, and recreation.
2. Work with the real estate community to promote the assets of the Town to potential residents and businesses.

Goal: Support & Grow Local Businesses and New Entrepreneurship

1. Continue to expand broadband access.
2. Increase collaboration between the School, Chamber, Town, and local businesses to support apprenticeship programs and job opportunities.

These results largely complement the input received at the public meeting, with at least one of the top two survey recommendations for each goal also appearing in the top 3 recommendations from the "Vote With Your Wallet" exercise.

Table 1: "Vote With Your Wallet" Exercise Results

Goal: Encourage new development while preserving local identity and character		Goal: Increase Housing Diversity		Goal: Improve and diversify Warrensburg's recreational offerings		Goal: Promote & Celebrate Warrensburg's Assets		Goal: Support & Grow Local Businesses and New Entrepreneurship	
1. Develop an overlay district along the main street corridor which provides design guidelines for new construction on site planning, building massing, landscaping, parking, walkways, access management and lighting.	\$22	1. Support programs that can provide assistance to eligible homeowners to make repairs and improvements to their homes.	\$24	1. Improve signage, trail markers, and parking at all Hackensack Mountain trailheads.	\$27	1. Work with the real estate community to promote the assets of the Town to potential residents and businesses.	\$20	1. Ensure continued support and funding for the Town's Economic Development committee.	\$14
2. Expand commercial development opportunities along the Main Street corridor with new allowed uses.	\$32	2. Monitor the expansion of short-term rentals so they do not eliminate available housing stock.	\$39	2. Work with Hickory Hill to support their work developing year round destination recreational opportunities.	\$35	2. Expand the features of the Town's website to improve access to and promote local resources, including events, businesses, and recreation.	\$30	2. Increase collaboration between the School, Chamber, Town, and local businesses to support apprenticeship programs and job opportunities	\$39
3. Revise the zoning code to clarify goals, expectations and procedures for more consistency and predictability in application reviews.	\$31	3. Ensure that rental housing stock is well maintained and in compliance with building codes.	\$14	3. Pursue further improvements to the Farmer's Market to address traffic and safety concerns.	\$17	3. Continue to install visitors' kiosks at key locations.	\$9	3. Work with the Chamber to develop a local business discount program for distribution to short term rental operators.	\$35
4. Revise the Sign Code to clarify requirements, providing illustrations and examples to help illustrate	\$26	4. Support the conversion of large single family homes to multi-family units	\$11	4. Work with private property owners to explore expanding connection to regional trail	\$22	4. Continue to enhance gateways into the community, including adding gateway signage at additional entrance	\$23	4. Encourage the chamber to develop a First Friday type event.	\$22

requirements for better consistency.				and land water-based recreation networks.		locations.			
5. Continue beautification efforts and physical enhancements at the main gateways entering the hamlet to welcome visitors and mark their arrival into Warrensburg.	\$18	5. Encourage the creation of apartments over businesses in the commercial districts.	\$8	5. Promote the use of Calvin Engle Park and adjacent Warren Street for events.	\$23	5. Explore the Warrensburg "brand" and develop a program for a marketing/branding overhaul.	\$28	5. Encourage the Chamber to increase collaboration between businesses, including hours of operation and staffing.	\$13
6. Expand sewer infrastructure to all areas of the hamlet, beginning with high-priority residential areas.	\$43	6. Be proactive in redeveloping the Town owned King Street property for senior housing.	\$33	6. Identify locations for indoor recreation facilities.	\$42	6. Develop a comprehensive wayfinding system to Town recreation and historic assets.	\$12	6. Support growth of new recreation based businesses (e.g., ski, fishing, mountain biking shops).	\$25
7. Expand the Commercial Core zoning to selected areas south of the Schroon River on River Street.	\$16	7. Update zoning to further encourage additional senior housing and apartments.	\$18	7. Work with the NYSDEC to market, improve and expand access to the Hudson and Schroon Rivers.	\$26	7. Celebrate the rivers through events and encouraging river supporting/fronting businesses.	\$43	7. Develop an economic development / market analysis to identify opportunities to diversify local businesses, expand operations over multiple seasons, and stabilize revenues.	\$10
8. Improve maintenance and access management along Route 9 to reduce traffic and enhance the visual appeal of the corridor.	\$21	8. Revise zoning to allow or promote more affordable housing options including smaller lots, duplexes, rentals, and energy efficient housing.	\$37	8. Establish more regular communication and collaboration with SUNY ESF regarding Pack Forest use.	\$23	8. Celebrate the uniqueness of the Warren County Fish Hatchery.	\$33	8. Facilitate commuting to employment and services, including exploring reinstating the summer trolley service.	\$20

		9. Update zoning to include appropriate minimum residential parking requirements.	\$21	9. Support increased collaboration between the Warrensburg CSD and recreational facilities.	\$26	9. Promote Warrensburg Central School District's unique programming assets.	\$23	9. Conduct a parking study to evaluate the need for additional public parking.	\$33
		10. Consider developing alternative location where mobile homes can be relocated.	\$28			10. Share information on available community spaces for rent.	\$26	10. Continue to expand broadband access.	\$31



Floyd Bennett
Memorial Bandstand
Town Est. 1813