
Town of Bolton Comprehensive Plan Update Public Workshop #2 Summary of Results



The Town of Bolton Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) held a public engagement workshop on Friday, September 13, 2024 from 4pm-7pm at Bolton Town Hall. The workshop was an “open house” format, where participants were invited to drop-in any time and provide input on various topic stations setup around the room.

Laberge Group staff and members of the CPC were in attendance to facilitate and answer any questions. The meeting was designed to gain insight into the community vision for Bolton, obtain geographically referenced comments on maps regarding issues or needs in key locations, identify assets and challenges facing the Town, plus assess alternative priorities and ways to address them. Attendees were encouraged to place their ideas and opinions on poster boards using post it notes and sticker dots in order to develop a representation of the community’s values, beliefs and preferences.

Overall, 45 persons attended the workshop, with 35 who signed-in. This document describes findings from feedback received. It breaks down the input garnered at seven feedback stations.

In general, participants expressed they value Bolton’s unique character and setting and want a sustainable built environment. They associate importance with sidewalks and trails, seek enhancements to these types of mobility and outdoor recreation offerings, support actions to create a mix and affordability of housing, and economic vitality through bolstered water and sewer capabilities, advancement of child care options, plus they support leading for the future though environmental protection.

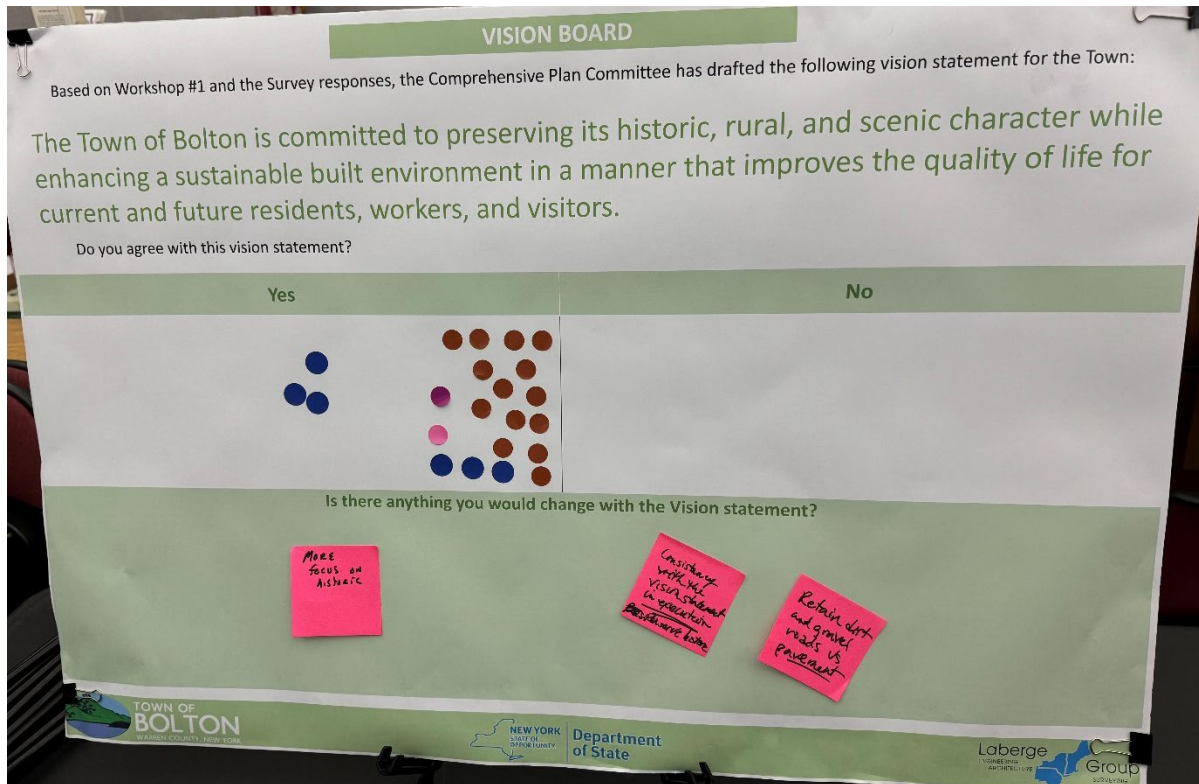
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Vision Board

This station prompted visitors to comment on the Plan’s vision. Instructions were: Based on Workshop #1 and Survey responses, the Comprehensive Plan Committee drafted this vision statement for the Town:

The Town of Bolton is committed to preserving its historic, rural, and scenic character while enhancing a sustainable built environment in a manner that improves the quality of life for current and future residents, workers, and visitors.

Do you agree with this vision statement? Is there anything you would change with the Vision statement?*



All participants who voted **agreed** with the vision for Bolton. Participants also commented:

- More focus on historic/ consistency with vision statement expectation – preserve historic; and
- Retain dirt and gravel roads vs pavement.

Proposed Principles & Goals

This station asked what attendees think about the proposed main principles of the comprehensive plan which were displayed on the boards under six headings: Housing Choices, Living Environment, Community Circulation, Place Making, Economic Vitality, and Leading for the Future. A participant was encouraged to use sticker dots to vote if they particularly supported a goal and they could provide comments using post-it notes to aid in deriving findings. A variety of responses and comments were presented around the needs for Bolton which are summarized by topic within the table that follows:

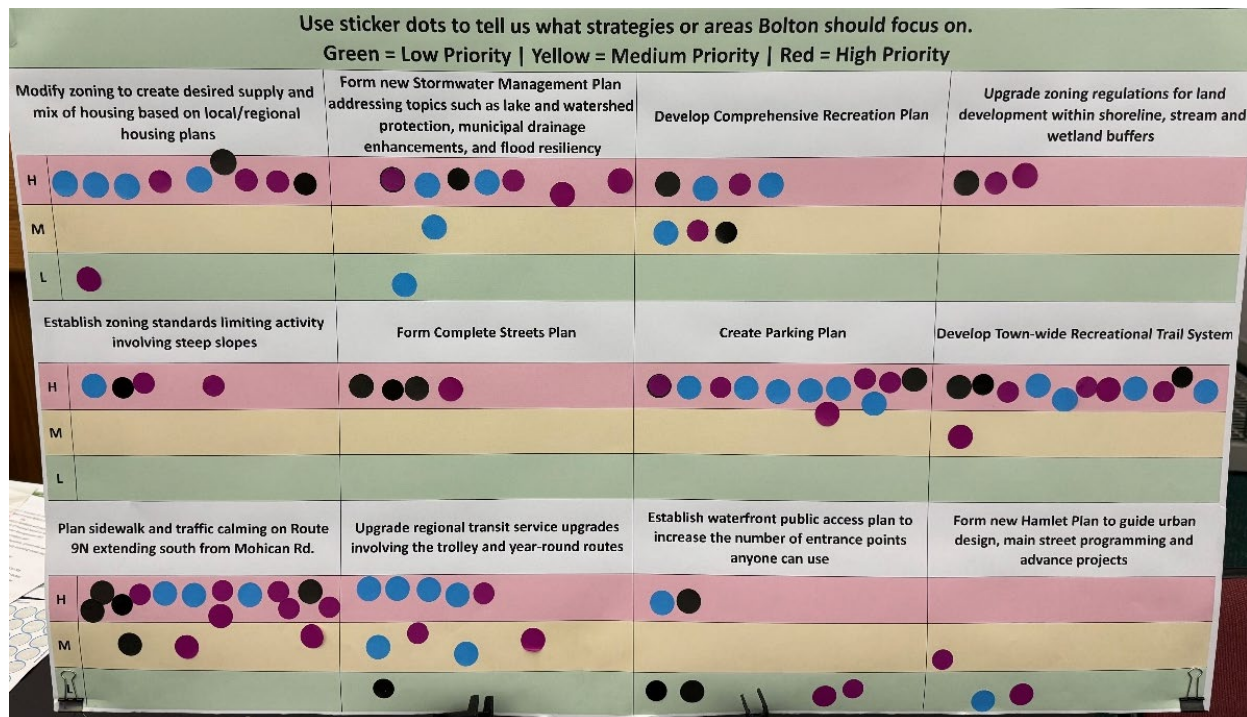
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<p><u>Housing Choices</u></p>	<p><u>Living Environment</u> Multiple people signaled they agree with this principle and associated goals</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasonable priced housing for families, new families, seniors & young single people (<i>multiple overlapping entries</i>). - Housing for seniors needs to also be accessible to allow for aging in place. - Housing for summer workers is lacking. - Short term rental policies so locals can buy homes and live in Bolton. - Use existing structures to remake into housing opportunities. - Housing choice is needed for young families and seniors who want to remain in Bolton. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibit ridgetop development/ don't allow on top of hill/ blend-into hillside (<i>multiple overlapping entries</i>). - Expand Septic capacity/ Extend Town septic further south (<i>multiple entries</i>). - Improve water lines. - Improve town water quality. - Tie this to the Recreation Hub Plan. - Balance environmental protection with land available for housing. - Flood/storm resilience. - Knotweed (invasive plant) is taking over (<i>this concern was affixed by Bixby Beach in the Hamlet Board below</i>).
<p><u>Community Circulation</u> Multiple votes supported the goal for complete streets development</p>	<p><u>Place Making</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More public transportation – potentially year round/ creative options/ trolley needs (<i>multiple overlapping entries</i>). - Form jitney service for seniors, workforce. - Parking. - Expand parking on purchased lands in back streets and change business district parking to one-sided parking for pedestrian safety and vehicular mobility. - Bike lanes and bike racks. - On expanding public access to waterbodies, a commenter supports more access to beaches, but not for more boats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for updating zoning for community growth and goals (<i>multiple overlapping entries</i>). - Adopt Dark Sky Ordinance/ Develop Dark Sky Astronomy Park @ Transfer Station (<i>overlapping/ related entries</i>). - Prohibit Ridgetop Development (<i>this cross-cutting issue shows-up under different principles</i>). - Initiate Schroon River Bike Trail. - Reopen old part of Bolton Historic Museum. - Enforce environmental design on new construction.
<p><u>Economic Vitality</u></p>	<p><u>Leading for the Future</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child care to support school. - Develop, adopt, and enforce best management practices for large volume commercial/sewer users. - Sewer/Water is a major issue (<i>cross-cutting issue</i>). - Parking passes for residents/tourists pay. - More recreation programs. - Review and adopt Recreation Hub Plan for Bolton – continue parcel acquisition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider alternate revenue sources – bed tax, user and parking fees (<i>multiple votes/overlapping entities/ and cross-cutting issue</i>) – summer/seasonal/ parking fees/ resident exemptions/maybe residents can purchase discounted season passes. - Improve energy efficiency Conservation (<i>multiple votes</i>). - Improve Septic System.

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Comprehensive Plan Strategies

This station asked respondents to indicate which strategies the Town of Bolton should focus on and whether a respondent thought/felt a particular strategy is a high, medium, or low priority.



Most strategies were identified as a high priority. The following are findings and commentary based on the responses:

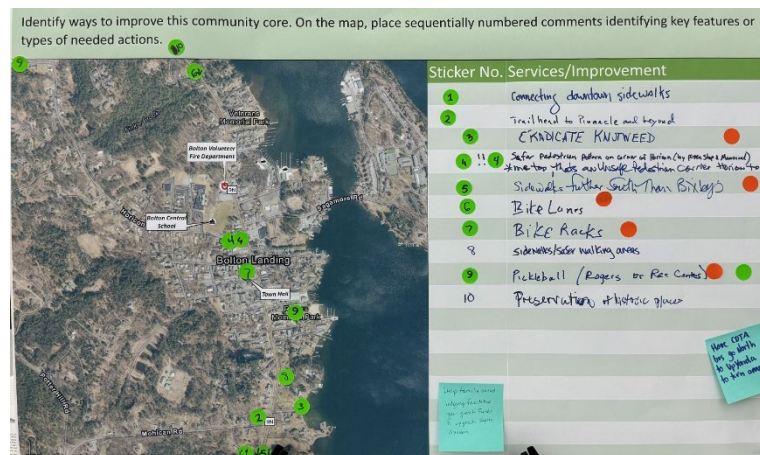
- The single highest response under any item displayed related to planning sidewalk and traffic calming on Route 9N extending south from Mohican Road, with 13 high priority rankings and three medium rankings (*the same notion was expressed on other boards*).
- A relative priority based on responses is to create a parking plan (12 high priority rankings).
- There were 11 high priority rankings supporting development of a town-wide recreation trail system, plus one medium ranking. This seems to identify importance of hiking in this community. While it is inferred, it may show that the HUB Study is influential and has legs.
- There were mostly high priority assignments for changing zoning to create a desired supply and mix of housing (nine high and one low). Fewer people responded regarding other potential zoning changes covering standards limiting activity on steep slopes or within shoreline, stream and wetland buffers, but when they did these items were ranked high.
- There is support for transit upgrades, but on a more medium priority basis or timeframe (five high rankings, four medium, and one low).
- 2/3 of respondents saw it as lower priority to increase the number of waterfront public access points.
- The goal that had the least responses and proportionately more low priority assignments was “Form new Hamlet Plan to guide urban design, main street programming and advance projects”.

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Places & Spaces - Bolton Hamlet Area

This board asked users to “Identify ways to improve this community core. On the map, place sequentially numbered comments identifying key features or types of needed actions.” Respondents keyed their thoughts and ideas to a numbered sticker which they placed on a map of the Town. If there was an additional comment for that location, respondents were encouraged to comment. Others could add a sticker on the board to indicate agreement with a comment.

- Notions in support of multimodal transport (*multiple comments*), with interests such as:
 - Sidewalks:
 - Create walking areas;
 - Connect downtown sidewalks;
 - Provide bike lanes/ bike racks;
 - Establish a safe pedestrian drop-off area at base of Horicon Ave.;
 - Have CDTA transit authority bus/trolley service extend north to Up Yonda Farm;
- Recreation:
 - Establish trailhead to Pinnacle and beyond;
 - Develop pickleball courts at public recreation lands off Edgecomb Road; and
- Preserve historic places (*no specific point/ location identified*).



Another board ‘Places & Spaces – Route 9 Corridor (South)’ captured geolocated recommendations on an aerial map depicting broad areas around the Route 9N corridor extending from Cotton Point Road in the south to Veteran’s Park in Bolton Landing.

This Board resulted in the capture of similar types of comments on development of the roadway, such as:

- Extended/ wider shoulders along the whole corridor.
- Establish sidewalks from the Huddle northerly.
- Provide pedestrian crosswalks by the Algonquin/ Chicks Marina.

Another idea presented was for dredging the Finkle Brook delta. This commentator was concerned for growth of this sandbar and its influence on navigation and recreation. They felt the Town has contributed to instituting physical stormwater practices/ measures upstream to slow flows and capture sediment and this physical work is important to lake environment management.

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Economic Vitality

Users were asked to rate alternative economic development strategies and add related thoughts.

Rate these economic development strategy recommendations for Bolton by picking three (3) pressing objectives. Use a Post-it to tell us in a few words any related thoughts

Strategies	Choose Top 3 Strategies
Create incentives for workforce housing	
Evaluate expanding water and/or sewer systems	
Forgo... to establish and expand commercial businesses	
Form working group to establish ways for child care services	
Implement planned improvements at ()	
Improve local telecommunication	

Participants most often expressed in favor of evaluating expansions of water and/or sewer and improving telecommunications, plus there was strong support for workforce housing incentives and forming a working group for advancing childcare. There was not much interest in planned improvements at NoRoWal Marina, but it was noted it is an essential part of off-street parking supply (*it may be that many in the community are not aware of Town control of this facility and economic development efforts around it*). Users also seemed to indicate there is a limited need for interventions to establish or expand commercial businesses.

Additional Comments

Some participants supplied written comments on topics of interest, as follows:

- Cut down/ round edges of curbing so vehicles get closer to curb and don't cut tires along Rte. 9N
- Open transfer station Tues. or Thurs.
- Establish area at transfer station for dropping-off items that may be taken by others for re-use.
- Concerned for loss of family-owned motels. Strict septic regulations without funding options like grants to help these businesses become compliant is resulting in the sale of lodging properties to private homeowners and investment companies. Without weekly turnover of guests, you will not need as many shops, restaurants, and marinas. It is again becoming Millionaire's Row; however, the millionaires will leave if there are not restaurants and shops.
- Without regulations, homes are being purchased for short term rentals.
- Housing prices are out of reach for first time home buyers and seniors looking to downsize.
- Concern for fewer students in the school system.
- Lack of volunteers for emergency services.
- The business district also suffers due to the lack of year round residents.
- Bolton Landing should consider restrictions of Short Term Rental owners – commentor wrote about efforts in Town of Hague to regulate this type use.
- Bolton hamlet – traffic issues and remedies:

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- To address bottle-necks on 9N, where delivery trucks take-up lane space – establish on-street “loading-zone” signage advising the availability of these from 7–am daily (in order to facilitate deliveries). These spaces would be available for visitors to park at all other times - as has been done in Lake Placid for many years.
- To address narrow travel lanes in hamlet: erect “flashing warning sign” at Bixby Road
 - “Narrow Lanes Ahead”
 - Watch for pedestrians!
 - Retract mirrors!
- Parking: partner with school (signage Public Use: June, July, August), blacktop lower field parking lot (encourage employers to direct their employees to use this lot).
- Sidewalks: There once was parking along east side of 9N from Rogers Park, south, but DOT eliminated that during reconstruction 10+ years ago (to “maintain even lanes”). At that time a few parking spots were created on west side of 9N along wall by Evergreen townhouses. That location is unsafe, barely enough space for cars, with no room for passengers to exit! Request State to realign driving lanes from Bixby Road north to Rogers Park to allow parking along east 9N, where sidewalks exist. This will increase parking plus make it safer for those who use those spaces.

Participants also made the following observations or asked questions to facilitators during the event:

- Regulate non-resident vacation rentals (*multiple comments*).
- Establish a gateway by Sembrich to help define this landmark, cultural and open space resource.
- Sembrich grounds can be pleasant place for people to take recreational walks.
- There is need for housing for families / there are households encountering housing stress.
- Are there ways to optimize utilization of courts for pickleball at Rogers Park?
- Establishing childcare influences whether young families locate in this community.
- There seems to be escalating demand for beaches and other Town public parks/ facilities.