

REGIONAL & COMMUNITY PLAN SUMMARIES

In addition to the community outreach provided as part of this planning process, during the process to develop Easton's new comprehensive plan, there was consultation with numerous current or prior general and subject-specific plans and studies prepared for the Town, County, and Region. Ideas generated from Easton's public engagement process are supported within these prior plans and give strength to their support within the Town.

Each of these following plans are summarised herein:

- Capital Region Economic Development Council Plan, 2022 Update;
- 2022-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CED) for the Lake Champlain – Lake George Region;
- Old Saratoga on the Hudson Waterfront Revitalization Plan, 2007;
- Washington County Housing Transition Plan, 2017;
- Washington County Shared Services Plan, 2022;
- Washington County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, 2017;
- Capital Region Workforce Development Strategy; and
- Town and Village of Greenwich Comprehensive Plan, 2023.

Capital Region Economic Development Council Plan, 2022 Update

The Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC) developed an area-wide investment plan for its eight-county region. The CREDC develops annual progress reports to review and refine these investment actions. The Principal Goals as outlined in the Plan include:

Table 1. Regional & Community Plans

| GOAL HEADING | GOAL |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Leverage & Collaborate | Leverage existing partnerships while building new collaborations across academia, the private sector, and government to make the Capital Region a destination of choice. |
| Open New Doors | Create ready access to capital by making it easy to identify existing sources and create new collaborative sources of funding to stimulate economic expansions. |
| Prepare for Tomorrow | Leverage the strength of the education system, from kindergarten through post-graduate, while collaborating with the public and private sectors to create a workforce that gives employers what they need and students what they deserve. |
| Build a Superhighway | Ensure that 21st Century infrastructure exists so the Capital Region will become the first destination for business in New York State and be accessible to build, grow, and expand business. |
| Bring Cities to Life | Capitalize on our urban centers within the Capital Region that have a history rich in vibrancy and return them to centers of influence that are alive with business, residential, and cultural programs that will revitalize them as active neighborhoods. |
| Celebrate & Optimize Our Surroundings | Attract visitors, new residents, and businesses by sustaining and optimizing our rural assets and working landscapes that provide a backdrop for the region. |
| Showcase Our Beauty | Capitalize on our inherited and created assets, leveraging the beautiful, natural environments, deeply rooted in history, arts, and culture, and use them as beacons and anchors to make our communities thrive. |
| Spotlight Our Strengths | Create and celebrate our distinct and comprehensive regional identity by reaching out to other geographies to feature these assets and make the Capital Region the first destination in New York. |

The CREDC prepared a “Regional Workforce Inventory” that builds on the 2021 Strategic Update and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the region’s workforce. The CREDC’s priority tradable sectors and targeted, in-demand occupations are as follows:

Tech and Electronics

Industrial Engineers
 Mechanical Engineers
 Electrical Engineers
 Mechanical Engineering Technicians
 Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians

Biotech & Life Sciences

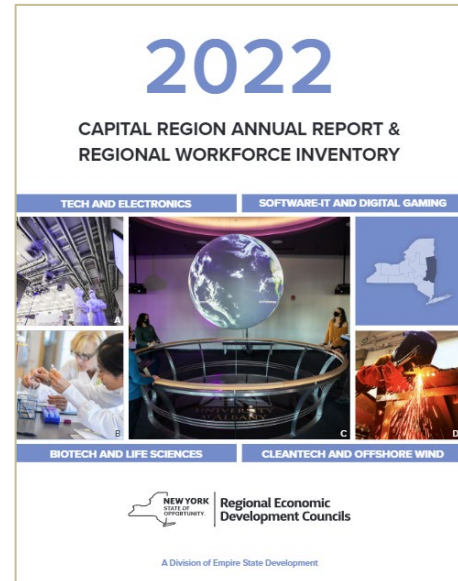
Chemist
 Biological Technicians
 Chemical Technicians
 Life Science Technicians

Software-IT/Digital Gaming

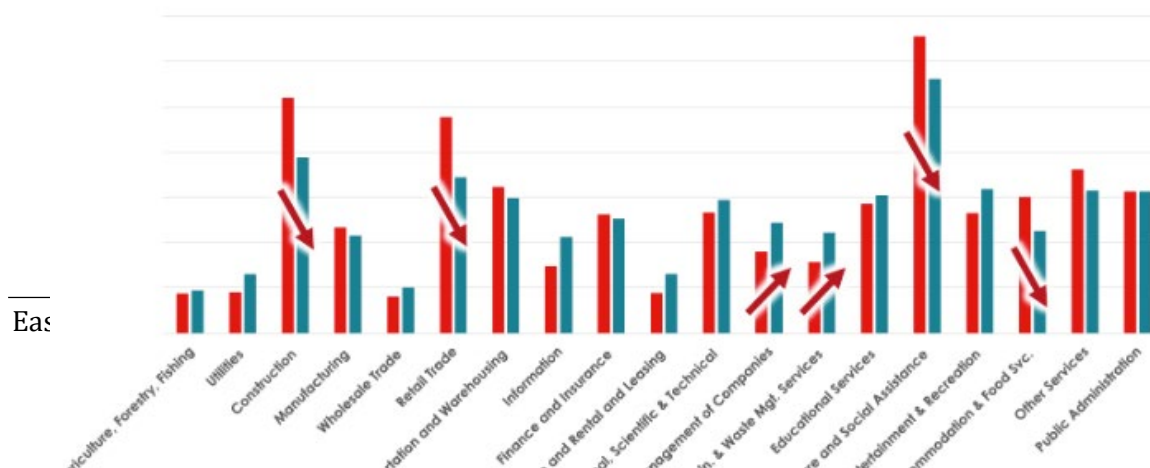
Software Developers, Applications
 Computer Systems Analysts
 Computer User Support Specialists
 Computer Network Support Specialists
 Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers

Cleantech/Offshore Wind

Welders
 Industrial Mechanics
 Electricians



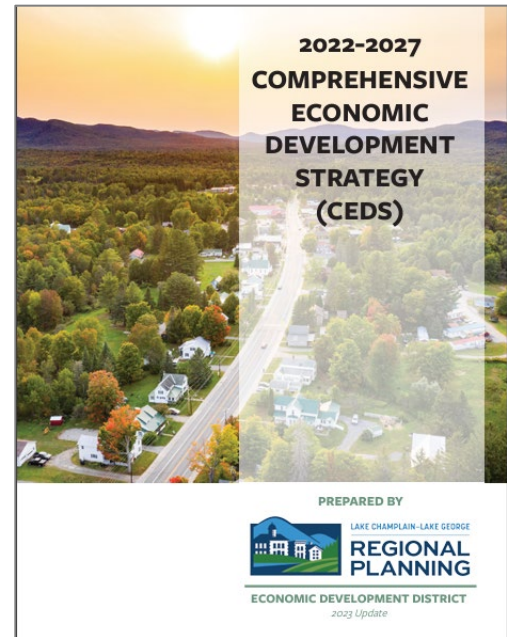
Industry Shift 2022: Last job vs. current search



2022-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Lake Champlain – Lake George Regional Development Corporation (LCLGRDC) recently updated the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which is utilized by federal agencies to help identify economic development needs and projects within the five-county region and target federal funding.

The vision is that the LCLG Region enjoys a lively entrepreneurial and business development sector that provides first-rate employment opportunities for its dynamic workforce who enjoy a high quality of life with stunning natural resources, world-class recreational opportunities, and vibrant community centers served by modern infrastructure.



Goals & Strategies in CEDs Pertaining to Easton:

Goal 1. Develop and Modernize Regional Infrastructure to Promote Equitable Economic Opportunities.

- Eliminate barriers to improve access to broadband and telecommunications services.
- Develop solutions to rural, inter-community transportation for residents, local workforce, and visitors.
- Support the development of initiatives that reduce the disposal of organic waste materials and expand markets for recyclable materials.
- Support greater utilization of renewable energy and building weatherization by local governments, residents, and businesses to reduce energy costs and combat climate change.
- Prepare the region for greater utilization of electric vehicles (EV) through the installation of EV charging infrastructure.

Goal 2. Enhance Quality of Life and Support Vibrant Community Centers.

- Support the development of diverse and affordable housing options.
- Support the provision of rural health care services.
- Support access to local food and value-added agricultural products.

- Improve economic opportunities and address barriers affecting traditionally underrepresented residents.
- Identify regional solutions to address sustainable emergency services staffing in rural areas.
- Expand opportunities for brownfield redevelopment, infill development, and adaptive reuse.

Goal 3. Promote Regional Collaboration & Outreach.

- Coordinate with stakeholders to address regional housing challenges.
- Implement regional economic development framework.
- Improve access to technical assistance and training for local government officials.

Goal 4. Support Entrepreneurship & Business Development Opportunities.

- Promote small business activity in community centers.
- Support business development assistance, including business succession planning and business counseling.
- Promote agribusiness and local food industries as a growth area for applicable parts of the region and adapt to changes in the agricultural product supply chain.
- Strengthen existing industry clusters and develop emerging clusters within the region
- Grow awareness and utilization of financial assistance resources available to businesses.
- Collaborate with local and regional tourism stakeholders to improve tourist experiences in the region.

Goal 5. Improve Workforce Readiness.

- Improve career readiness of high school graduates.
- Explore transportation options for improving mobility to workplaces.
- Support training opportunities to upskill the incumbent workforce.

Goal 6. Preserve Natural Resources and expand Recreational Opportunities.

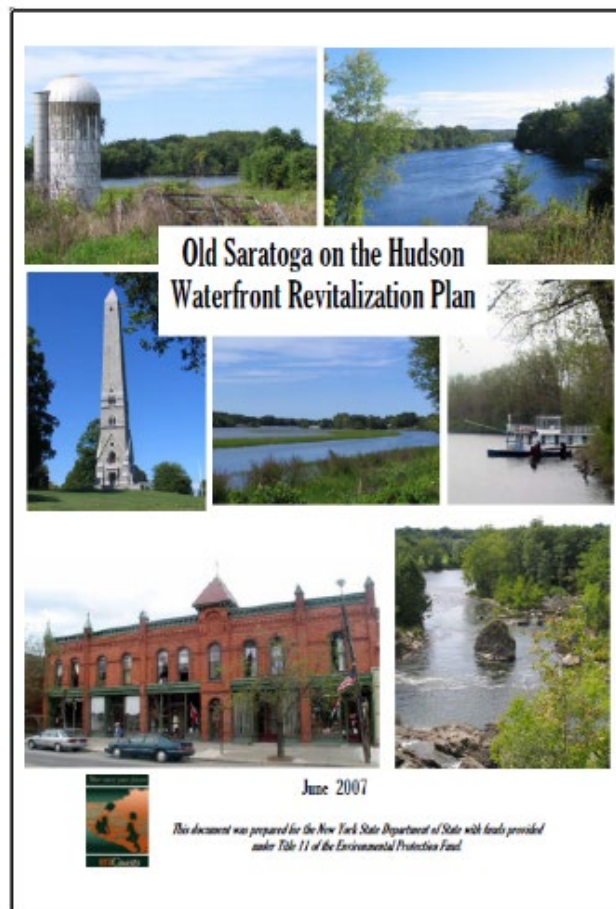
- Highlight the region as a leader in climate protection.
- Continue to maintain high water quality in area waterbodies.
- Protect prime farmland from urban sprawl and promote the growth of agritourism to support access to local products and improve economic opportunities for local agricultural businesses.
- Improve hazard mitigation and climate resiliency.

- Support the development of multi-use trails and supportive infrastructure for existing outdoor recreation facilities.
- Support projects and programs that enhance access and functionality of local waterfronts.
- Advocate for the provision of adequate staff resources to manage regional recreation amenities.
- Support sustainability growth of regional tourism attractions and amenities.

Old Saratoga on the Hudson Waterfront Revitalization Plan, 2007

This multi-municipal Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) provides a framework to revitalize historic and scenic areas and unite communities on both sides of the Hudson River. It covers portions of Easton and Greenwich in Washington County and the Villages of Schuylerville and Victory as well as the Towns of Saratoga and Northumberland in Saratoga County.

In Easton, the Waterfront Revitalization Area (WRA) boundary covers aspects of the Battenkill and Hudson River environments. As specifically described in its text, the WRA extending from Greenwich extending south along Route 40 across the Batten Kill to areas around NYS Route 29, to along Wilbur Avenue, and west along General Fellows Road, and south in the vicinity of County Route 113 to the Town's southern boundary.



The goals of this resource profile and strategy document are to:

- Celebrate and restore the area's waterfront heritage;
- Foster sustainable economic development;
- Connect the community's past with its future;
- Work to protect the area's rural and scenic landscape; and

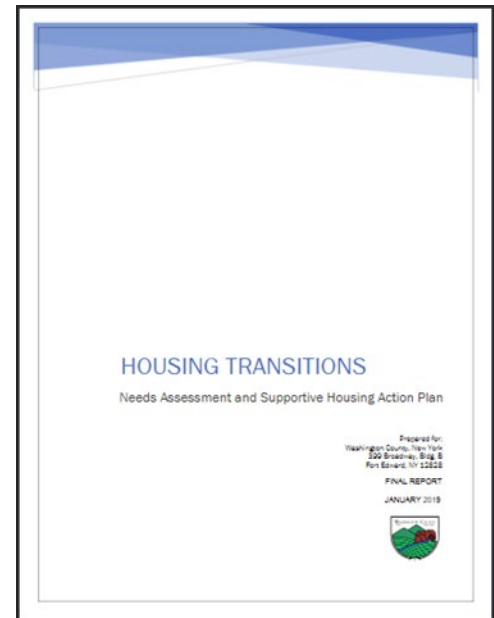
- Promote well planned, proportioned, high quality tourism development.

This document promotes tourism, through actions such as infrastructure improvements at the County Fairgrounds and Farm Museum (page 67) and continuing efforts at agri-tourism (page 68). It prescribes actions to preserve community character through improvements to major regional gateways, such as on the west side of Route 40 and southern entry into Town on Route 113 (page 69), plus it advocates for developing the regional network of trails (page 56).

Washington County Housing Transition Plan, 2017

Washington County was awarded a planning grant under the 2017 Community Development Block Grant Program. The plan's goal was to devise solutions to address the increasing and costly problem of providing transition housing for the homeless. The plan laid out the priority issues identified in Washington County and presented an action plan and funding sources to address the issues. The findings and recommendations will be considered in formulating the goals and objectives related to the Government, Land Use, and Community Services.

The plan includes an economic and demographic overview of the County with a focus on indices pertaining to the housing-insecure and at-risk community. At the time of the report, Easton households, as compared to Washington County towns, had the lowest percentage below the poverty level, third lowest receiving food stamps/SNAP, lowest without access to a vehicle, sixth lowest vacancy rate, eighth highest median gross rent, second lowest rent poor, twelfth fast-growing, and sixth lowest persons with disability.



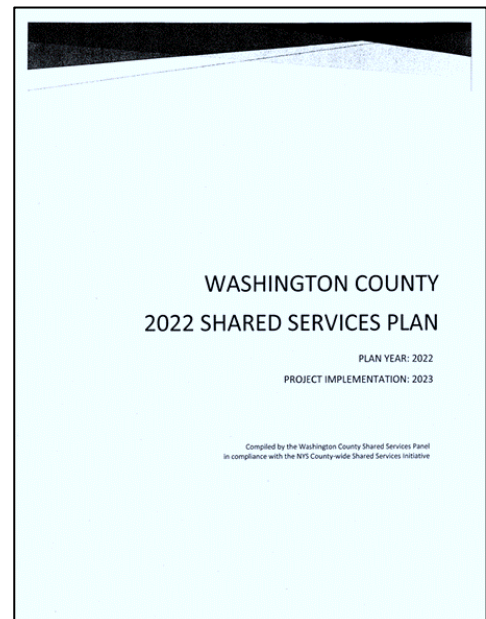
Key themes from the case study are as follows:

- Rehabilitation and reuse of existing vacant property for the purposes of supportive housing is a good strategy.
- Development of supportive housing should be geographically distributed.
- Access to transportation is a critical consideration to the location of supportive housing.
- New housing units should be accessible.
- Focus should be on developments that provide long-term housing solutions.

- Availability of supportive services is critical to keeping individuals and families stably housed.
- New housing developments should blend into the surrounding community.
- There is a need to right-size a development – balancing project size between something not overwhelming to the community while still large enough to meet the need for housing.
- Emergency housing is not a long-term solution but having some emergency housing located in Washington County is preferential to the status quo.
- Meeting the needs of the community will require a combination of different types of supportive and affordable housing developments.

Washington County Shared Services Plan, 2022

New York State enacted legislation in 2018 that requires all counties to annually convene a Shared Services Panel to bring forward projects that will result in taxpayer savings. Municipal entity participants with qualifying shared service projects are eligible to apply through the County for matching State funds equal to 100% of the savings achieved by these projects. The 2022 Shared Services Plan outlines ways in which municipalities within Washington County can work collaboratively by sharing services, creating efficiencies and/or costs. The Plan included the Town of Easton Supervisor as well as all the Town Supervisors and Mayors of other Washington County communities.



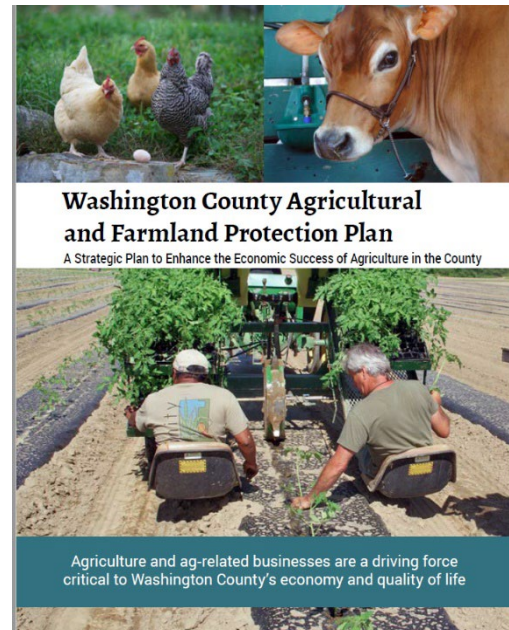
The 2022 Plan included four projects for implementation in 2023. As examples of the types of actions that were addressed within this shared services planning, these projects included:

- The construction of a shared-use highway facility for Washington County and the Town of Fort Ann.
- The shared purchase of a minivan by the Town of Granville and the Village of Granville for their senior citizen transportation program.
- Assessment services to be provided by the County for several additional Towns.
- Law enforcement services consolidation involving the Village of Fort Edward and the County Sheriff's Department.

Washington County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

In 2017, Washington County adopted a new county-wide agricultural and farmland protection plan. That plan noted that Easton had the most farming activity in the County.

The County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan includes a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWAT) analysis that informs the setting of a vision, goals, and strategic plan for agriculture in this region. Washington County desires to promote and take advantage of emerging local and distant markets; cutting-edge technologies and practices; renewable energy and cost efficiencies; and new opportunities to retain and expand agricultural commodities that are produced in the County. This plan is aligned with the Capital Region Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan and Capital Region Agriculture, Food, and Tourism (CRAFT) Business Hub Initiative goals and strategies.



The goals of the plan are as follows:

- Enhance the viability, diversity, and sustainability of agriculture, focusing on both niche and traditional farms, value-added processing, agri-tourism, packaging, and product aggregation and distribution operations.
- Promote recognition, awareness, and support of the critical role agriculture plays in the County with the non-farm community.
- Support and improve farm-support agencies and organizations, agri-infrastructure, funding, and educational opportunities to retain and grow agricultural enterprises.
- Protect the land base for farming and promote the environmental sustainability of farms.
- Increase markets for and visibility of local and regional food and agricultural products.
- Increase the number of and support to next-generation farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs operating in Washington County.

The goals are particularly pertinent to Easton and the long-term vision to maintain the agricultural landscape and industry with a goal to encourage preservation and diversification of agricultural activities. Based on the above goals, the County's agricultural plan includes the following strategies:

- **Strategy # 1:** Create an Effective Organizational Structure for Agricultural Economic Success.
- **Strategy # 2:** Create a Long-term, Systematic Approach to Agricultural Economic Development in Washington County.
- **Strategy # 3:** Collect and Analyze Data, Promote New Opportunities.
- **Strategy # 4:** Improve Broadband Internet Access and Cellular Coverage throughout Washington County.
- **Strategy # 5:** Increase Access to, and Training of, Skilled Labor for Agricultural and Forestry Operations.
- **Strategy # 6:** Create a Comprehensive Marketing Strategy that Promotes Both Farm Products and Farming in the County.
- **Strategy # 7:** Cultivate the Next Generation of Farmers.
- **Strategy #8:** Conserve Farmland.
- **Strategy #9:** Advocate for Lowering the Tax Burden on Farmers.



The County Agricultural Plan identifies areas within the County noted to be important farmlands to be considered for protection. It recognizes priority areas containing significant amounts of high-quality farmland and productive soils, as well as special areas containing productive farms and woodlands. It also highlights areas of scenic, environmental or historical significance in relation to agricultures and it identifies farms that define Washington County's unique community character, and areas are identified as important by reason of farm location, farm viability, or specific development threats. This plan and its accompanying map should be consulted when reviewing natural features and during efforts to advance land use goals and strategies in the Town of Easton.

[Capital Region Workforce Development Strategy](#)

The strategy outline in this document provides a focused look at the targeted industry sectors of Biotech and Life Sciences, Clean and Renewable Energy, and IT, Software, and Electronics. The following are categorical recommendations:

Network the workforce development system - Creating a regional ecosystem that is connected and easily navigable will help area employers more efficiently access and utilize workforce development programs and resources.

Proactively address barriers to entry - Proactively addressing challenges that inhibit people from entering the labor force, or being underemployed, can increase participation and retention rates of underrepresented populations that face increased barriers to entry and advancement.

Increase participation of under-supported individuals - Working to understand and accommodate the unique needs of women, BIPOC, disabled individuals, and other underserved and underrepresented groups can create more welcoming work environments and expand the labor force.

Promote meaningful careers of the future - Showcasing the Clean and Renewable Energy sector as an exciting field looking for entry-level talent will help increase the pipeline of workers.

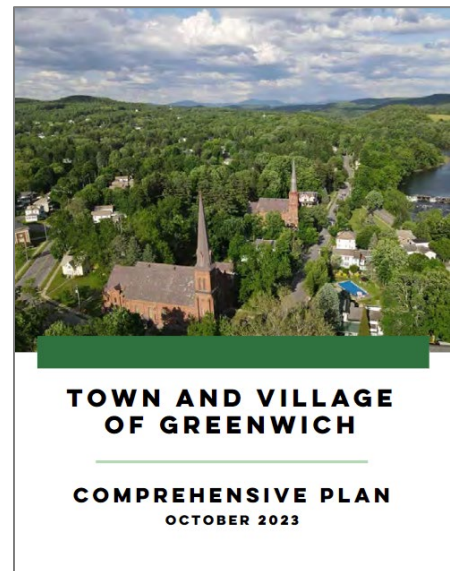
Create immersive opportunities to learn and develop skills - Creating opportunities for future workers to meet, work alongside, and learn from people from the Clean and Renewable Energy Sector early in their career decision-making process will attract more people to the field and build a pool of workers.

Fill gaps in top occupations - Expanding training capacity and enhancing the region's talent attraction campaign can help quickly meet the need to fill top-gap occupations.

[Town and Village of Greenwich Comprehensive Plan, 2023](#)

The Town and Village of Greenwich completed a joint comprehensive plan. This plan was prepared to reflect the two municipality's collaborative efforts and growing shared service relationships along with their overlapping needs, interests, assets, and experiences.

As the Town containing the southern portion of the Village of Greenwich and bordering the Hamlets of Middle Falls and Clark Mills, Easton is integrally connected to and affected by physical or policy changes to these population centers. The majority of Easton's population identifies as Greenwich through their postal code, school district, and commercial center.



The following recommendations in Greenwich's Plan are highlighted and have potential to impact Easton:

Greenwich Plan - Infrastructure Recommendations

- Prioritize establishing a Town Water District along the Middle Falls / Route 29 mixed-use corridor area to allow additional development.
- Improve communication to the public on planned infrastructure improvements and repaving projects.
- Work with the County to ensure broadband and internet access to support residents and businesses.
- Support additional EV charging infrastructure.
- Integrate sustainable practices into Town and Village operations, building renovations, energy use, waste handling, and other areas.

Greenwich Plan - Housing Recommendations

- Work with the County to identify County-wide senior housing needs and opportunities for local senior housing.
- Prioritize the provision of senior housing in future housing development projects, through updates to code standards that encourage greater accessibility within new development or incentives for providing age-restricted units.
- Establish a joint Town/Village housing task force.
- Consider creating a short-term rental permitting system to monitor their expansion so short-term rentals do not eliminate available housing stock.
- Allow accessory dwelling unit and barn conversions in the Village to increase the diversity and supply of local housing.

Greenwich Plan - Farmland & Agriculture Recommendations

- Create a local agricultural resources web page on the Town website to educate property owners on programs and financing available for agricultural landowners and operators.
- Encourage the County to collaborate with Cornell Cooperative Extension to develop a program to help match agricultural landowners with agricultural operators for leasing opportunities.
- Find a structure or partner for a permanent home for the Greenwich Farmers Market.
- Support the comfort food community's efforts to grow the local food and farm hub.

- Coordinate with the County to promote agritourism, including developing additional agritourism assets and educational opportunities and recruiting more local food enterprises.

Greenwich Plan - Parks & Recreation Recommendations

- Increase promotion and awareness of existing parks and recreation facilities through signage and online resources.
- Implement the Greenwich Revitalization Plan's vision for enhanced waterfront open space.

Greenwich Plan - Community Services & Events

- Support increased collaboration between the chamber and the school district to support the trades and local job opportunities.
- Explore opportunities for long-term support of the Greenwich Youth Center.
- Work with the school, chamber, youth center, and library in developing and promoting youth and teen activities.
- Continue to provide high-quality, rapid-response fire, rescue, and public safety services.
- Work with county and regional partners to explore opportunities for a regional public transportation system and maximize local transportation resources.
- Collaborate with neighboring communities, the County, local non-profits, and churches to provide more activities for senior citizens to overcome barriers to accessing those activities.